

Real World Graduation: Question 57: Talk Shows

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Question 57

You are watching a talk show on TV. The host is conducting an interview with three guests. Each of them, including the host, gives their view on the topic at hand. You are trying to determine which of the four people on the show is most likely to be correct about the issue being discussed. Which is the most efficient method to determine who is correct?

- a) The host is correct because it's their show, and they are not allowed to lie on TV
- b) The person who looks most like a nerd is probably the smartest of the four, so they are most likely to be correct.
- c) The most attractive person is probably correct because people like attractive people, and they likely were told the correct answer in advance.
- d) If a government official is part of the discussion, then they are likely to be correct.
- e) If a member of the clergy is part of the discussion, then they are most likely to be correct.

Answer to Question 57

This is trick question. There is no way to judge the accuracy of the guest's opinions based on the information given.

Answer a) is incorrect because a talk-show host is not responsible for anything said on the air, unless it is specifically libelous or defamatory. If a host were to make a conclusion based on outright lies, there is still no direct penalty to the host.

Answers b) and c) are incorrect because appearance is a very poor determinant of anything other than appearance.

Answers d) and e) are incorrect because one's profession is not necessarily a good indicator of accuracy.

The important point to remember is that the person who is most likely to be correct is the one who provides the greatest amount of relevant and verifiable facts coupled with a conclusion based on sound logic that considers the relevant facts. Such a situation rarely occurs in television, since most "discourse" and "debate" consists of either five-second "sound bites", political party "talking points", or self-righteous socialists telling you that you are evil unless you agree with them. In television, the emphasis is nearly always on drama over substance.