

The Matrix

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The Matrix is dedicated to the creation of a culture of ACTIVE conscience and consciousness in our communities to replace the current culture of fear and silence. To this end, *The Matrix* provides an outlet that engenders dialogue and fights dehumanization.

*Prohibit sharply the
rehearsed response.*

W.H. Auden

Readers,

Welcome to *The Matrix*, nexus of ideas and action. Our goal at *The Matrix* is to promote social awareness and involvement. This issue focuses on the upcoming presidential election and a few key topics to consider at the polls November 2. Of course, we haven't covered them all, so don't be afraid to get your hands dirty in your own quest for the truth. Ask questions; seek answers.

We envision *The Matrix* as an interactive reading experience. Want to be part of the discussion? Don't be a passive member of society; act on what you believe. Submit art or articles or write a letter to the editor. Most importantly, don't be silent.

We create this magazine because, like Italian author Natalia Ginzburg, we believe that "every day silence harvests its victims. Silence is a mortal illness." Don't be a victim of the disease.

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*Nothing exists except atoms and empty space;
everything else is opinion.*
-Democritus (ca. 400 BC)



**WELCOME TO
THE
CONVERSATION**

It's Time!

Ah, elections! A time of division in this great, united country of ours. A time to protest and turn against our neighbors and a time to adamantly demand that others change *their* views. It is a time of tradition, support, speeches, debates and leadership. And it is a time for finger pointing, screaming, sign making, chanting, heckling and hating.

Americans can have different opinions. We aren't afraid to be friends with people of different races or genders. We aren't afraid to tell people that we think a certain TV show is stupid. So why then are we afraid to tell them what we think of abortion? Why do we mumble under our breath about the John Kerry sign in a friend's dorm room window, or grimace at someone's Bush/Cheney button?

I say, share your opinion! But do not expect those who disagree with you to suddenly change their minds. Do not judge your new friend because she is a Republican. Or a Democrat. Realize that by sharing your opinion you have done what our forefathers dreamed of: you are deciding. So have your opinion, share your opinion and allow others to share theirs. And on Election Day, vote according to your beliefs. Know you are making a difference in your country, and that by allowing others to be different you are cultivating a new America: one where differing political opinions do not mean violence or hatred.

-Erica Grundin

New Election Vocabulary

Language is the primary tool we use to interpret and construct our reality. The effectiveness of this tool is dependent upon the vocabulary we have at our disposal to build ideas of what the world is, what it has been and, most importantly, what it could be. Our imagination and our ability to analyze is more limited by our language than we would like to think. To be trapped within a vocabulary is to be trapped within an idea, a mindset that may not contain any Truth beyond our own interests. In an effort to provide more tools to better to interpret reality, we have compiled a new vocabulary list for this election season.

- Adam Oswald, *Matrix* Ed.

Anomy or anomie: 1. Social instability caused by erosion of standards and values. 2. Alienation and purposelessness as a result of a lack of standards and values. 3. Personal disorganization resulting in unsocial behavior.

Malversation: Misconduct in public office.

Perspicacious: Having or showing penetrating mental discernment; clear-sighted.

Jejune: 1. Not interesting; dull. 2. Lacking maturity; childish.

Meretricious: 1a. Attracting attention in a vulgar manner. b. Plausible but false or insincere; specious. 2. Of or relating to prostitutes or prostitution.

Look for more "New Election Vocabulary" throughout this issue.

All definitions are from the American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition.

On a cloudy afternoon this past August, I joined 20,000 other Washingtonians in the Tacoma Dome parking lot for a chance to see and hear presidential candidate John Kerry. We stood in line for a few hours just to get in, and then waited around in the parking lot for a few more hours before he showed up. After the wait, I wondered if my trek would be worth it; I was an unenthusiastic John Kerry supporter. I planned to vote for him, but I wanted to know how much he reflected my views.

Radio personality and author Garrison Keillor emceed the event, which was one of the best parts of the afternoon. His gentle words of reassurance let us know that even though he was late, John Kerry was still coming, and that though we may have been nervous for the election in November, we had no reason to worry. To pass the time he said, "I can't think of anything better to do than stand in a parking lot and sing with a bunch of Democrats." He proceeded to lead us all in pitiful rendition of "America the Beautiful" (pitiful because no one knew any of the words except the first verse and chorus). House Representative Norm Dicks and Democratic Senator Patty Murray each gave short speeches.

Most of the people at the rally were what you might call run-of-the-mill Democrats. The occasional long-haired radical or steel-union worker added to the mix. The union-workers behind me and the Bush supporters protesting the rally yelled slogans and profanities at each other across the street. Most of the people were white, clean-cut and well dressed. Interestingly, the crowd of hand-picked supporters chosen to stand on the stage behind John Kerry as he spoke were much more diverse than the people standing around me.

Kerry's speech was exactly what I expected and not all that surprising. Like most political speakers, he made broad generalizations and appealed to our emotions. Contrary to what you may have heard, he is an eloquent speaker. Right off the bat, he played the military-service card. The man who introduced him was a veteran and a former Republican. Everyone and their mother has been trying to convince us that they have the veterans on their side. And frankly, I'm sick of it.

What Wasn't Said

By Amy Post

Sure, the veteran vote is important, but so is my vote!

It was immediately apparent to me John Kerry was attempting to appeal to the swing-voters. I wish he would stop trying to appeal to those who can't make up their minds and start addressing those of us who are already planning to vote for him but need more reason to feel good about it.

And what about all those people who simply aren't voting because they don't like Kerry *or* Bush? He should stop trying to appeal to those in the middle of the road and start appealing to non-voters. Many people simply do not vote because they don't identify with a single candidate, or because they don't see a distinct difference between the candidates. Kerry is cultivating an image of someone who is different from Bush but not so different to shake up the status quo. In order to win the election, John Kerry *must* appeal to as many voters as possible. But by doing so,

he alienates me.

I want my candidates to make radical policy reforms, and thus I don't find much appeal in John Kerry, or many Democratic politicians for that matter.

Kerry covered all the big issues in his speech: health care, education, the economy, terrorism and the war in Iraq. Basically, he pointed out that George W. Bush was doing a bad job and he promised to do better. Bush's incompetence and the need for new leadership in this country was his common message. When he spoke about his policies he didn't go into great detail. For specifics on policy, he instructed us to visit his website. He decried Bush's "family values" rhetoric as a way to dodge the real issues. I agree Bush is just blowing smoke when he talks about values; what do "values" mean anyway? Rarely do they actual translate into



Senator John Kerry at the Tacoma Dome Rally - August 2004. Photo by Amy Post.

action. I wish Kerry would have spent more time talking about specific changes he would make in policy rather than Bush's faulty values.

Although unremarkable, I thought his speech was pretty good. I liked what he had to say about education, health care and the environment. He promised a more transparent energy policy and cleaner water. "We can't drill our way out of this oil crisis; we must invent our way out," was one of the more clever things he had to say. Lowering unemployment and cutting down on outsourcing of jobs were stated as goals. Kerry believes health care is a right that must be available to all. One way he plans to do this is by lowering the cost of the most expensive care. *Yes, this was what I wanted to hear! But, I wanted more!*

John Kerry wants to make teaching a more lucrative enterprise, as well as provide more funding for after-school and mentoring programs. He promised to send more people to college. When someone from the audience shouted at him to explain how he planned to do that, he skirted around the issue for a minute, but then gave a specific answer. However, his answer was disappointing. In order to make college more affordable, he proposed changing how student loan interest rates are determined by floating the rates on the marketplace. While this may lower interest rates, it may also raise interest rates. In the bigger picture, changing interest rates won't make a big difference in the affordability of college.

Increasingly, I began to feel that Kerry's grandiose statements were not backed up with the policy changes required to make the United States a better place.

The last part of his speech was about the War on Terrorism and the war in Iraq. He said he will "fight a more effective, smarter war on terrorism" by using the best intelligence in the world and cooperating with other countries. He also said that we shouldn't go to war when we want to but only when we have to. I appreciated his comments about international cooperation and becoming more energy independent so we would never have to fight any (more) resource wars. However, I wish he would have gone into specific detail as to how he plans to get us out of Iraq.

Before the rally I had already made up my mind *not* to vote for Bush for myriad reasons. I wouldn't dare vote for Nader after the debacle that went down four years ago, even though I may feel that he has the most appealing platform. By process of elimination that leaves me with only one feasible option. The whole thing did make me feel better about voting for Kerry. His speech was good, but not great. I do agree with John Kerry when he says he is a more qualified leader than Bush. So I guess I'll just have to trust Garrison Keillor's assurance that everything is going to be all right. And vote John Kerry for president.

Visit www.johnkerry.com for specific information on his political platform.



President Bush supporters outside the Kerry Tacoma Dome Rally. Photo by Amy Post.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

THE WAR IN IRAQ HAS COST THE UNITED STATES \$140,566,820,000.

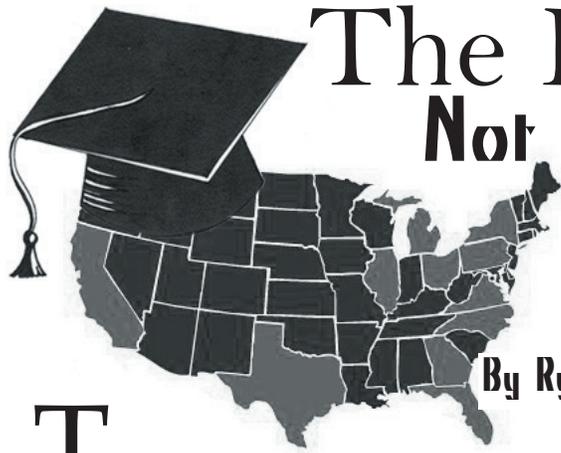
THE WAR IN IRAQ HAS COST THE AMERICAN PEOPLE \$499 PER PERSON.

THIS AMOUNT COULD HAVE PAID FOR 6,814,372 FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS.

THIS AMOUNT COULD HAVE FULLY FUNDED GLOBAL ANTI-HUNGER EFFORTS FOR 5 YEARS.

JUST SO YOU KNOW.

All data as of October 17, 2004. source: costofwar.com



The Electoral College: Not Quite as Smart as it Sounds

By Ryan Healy

That “great” institution devised by some of our founding fathers to protect us from ourselves – the Electoral College – has once again come to my attention. As the 2004 presidential election nears, I can’t help but wonder, are we in for another debacle in Florida? I think to myself, “Ryan, what could you do to solve the problems with the system?” Then I wake up from my dream where I can control these kinds of things, and I wonder if there isn’t just a better way to elect a president.

The original purpose of the Electoral College (as opposed to a direct popular vote) was to prevent the electorate from voting only for people from their own region. Today many see the Electoral College as just another way the government prevents us from exercising our constitutional rights. And they may have a point. But the truth is, the way the College runs now is not how it was originally intended. Let me quickly show you why.

First, the creators of the College didn’t envision political parties, so their emergence changed everything. Before, the top vote-getter became president and the second vote-getter became vice president. One major change was the 12th amendment, which states electors would cast one vote for president and one for vice president, thus eliminating the chance of a tie. Now the political parties vote for these positions as a pair; heaven forbid two people with conflicting ideas could achieve anything together. But the real problem is how the votes from individual states are distributed.

If I am running for president as a member of the Prohibition Party (it’s real, look it up) and win 51 percent of the votes for a state, I would get all the electoral votes for that state. That may force me to be a more national candidate. But, if my party were to continually win in that state, I could marginalize my opponents, the Beer for Everyone Party (not real, don’t look it up). Take Washington state for example: the popular vote has gone to a Democrat in the last four elections, and predictions say, a fifth. That means a vote by a Republican in Washington state has not affected the outcome of a presidential election in 20 years.

This flaw in the system could be easily fixed and has been in two cases. In the states of Maine and Nebraska, electoral votes are awarded in proportion to the number of congressional districts a candidate wins. So if I get 60 percent of the congressional districts, I would get 60 percent of the Electoral College votes for that state. On the ballot in Colorado this November is an initiative that, if passed, will switch Colorado from a winner-take-all state to a system where the electoral votes are cast in proportion to the popular vote. To me, this method appears to be a more effective way to elect a president and I hope some day all states would be just like Maine, Nebraska and hopefully Colorado.

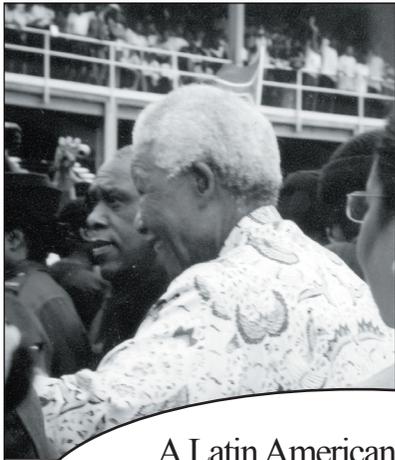
I know you’re thinking, “Who cares? My vote doesn’t count anyway. So why bother?” Well your vote does count, but not in the way you may think. You still have to vote, because in states like Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania your vote could make the difference between your candidate winning or losing. Even if your state isn’t close now, it may become close as an election gets down to the wire. So get out and vote, despite your suspicion that it doesn’t count. And as far as the Electoral College goes: I say let’s fix it, not throw it out. It’s like a car. If something is broken, you don’t just buy a new one. You fix it. And unless the mechanic (government) lies to you, everything is all the better.

New Election Vocabulary...

Ultrior: 1. lying beyond what is evident, revealed, or avowed, especially being concealed intentionally so as to deceive. 2. lying beyond or outside the area of immediate interest. 3. occurring later; subsequent.

Syncretism: 1. reconciliation or fusion of differing systems of belief, especially with partial success or a heterogeneous result. 2. the merging of two or more originally different inflectional forms, relating to language.

International Experiences Bring International Perspectives: Students share global perspectives through words and pictures



Nelson Mandela at a rally during his 2004 visit to Trinidad. Photo by Amy Post.



“Bush Genocide: Enemy of Humanity” Photo by Melissa Joy, Leon, Nicaragua, April 2004.

A Latin American Perspective on U.S. International Politics

By Hannah Brandt

Having recently returned from Peru for the third time, I will now attempt to express my understanding of the anti-Bush sentiment I experienced during my last visit. Latin Americans (those interested in international politics, that is) have not always been anti-Bush. In fact, they sympathized and expressed solidarity with the U.S. after the tragic September 11 attacks. My sister, who was living in Argentina at that time, sent me a newspaper article reflecting the sorrow the Argentine community felt for the US people.

On my most recent visit this past summer, I noticed the political climate had

changed since I first traveled to Peru in 1999. Anti-Bush pins were well-distributed. Anti-Bush sentiments, largely stemming from web pages and Michael Moore films (popular among Peru’s elitist class) impacted me. 9/11 did not only affect the U.S.; it was rather like a “tragedy play” on the “world stage.” Latin American sympathies changed drastically, however, when the Bush administration pursued an eye-for-an-eye approach to promoting a “peaceful” world. Most Latin Americans, in particular the Peruvians (because I know them the best), do not agree with this type of retribution.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

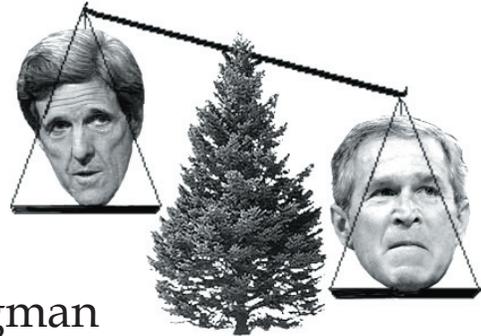


A labor demonstration against Pepsi and the United States. Photo by Melissa Joy, Guatemala City, Guatemala, January 2004.



“No to War! Peace for the Palestine and Iraq communities.” Photo by Ashley Miller, Jaen, Spain, 2003.

The Campaign Against the Environment



By Charles Bergman
Professor of English

In the second presidential debate, a citizen finally asked the candidates a question about the environment. It was the only time the environment was discussed in all three debates. The global environmental crisis is widely considered the single greatest threat facing the world in the 21st Century. Yet we've heard barely a peep from the candidates.

Let me say it plainly here: for anyone who cares about environmental issues—from sustainability questions like oil and energy, or air and water; to wilderness and wildlife issues like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, forest management and the protection of endangered species—President George W. Bush has been the worst president in history.

The League of Conservation Voters gave George W. Bush an “F” grade on his first two years in office. As the League President Deb Callahan, said, “President Bush is well on his way to compiling the worst environmental record of any president in the history of our nation.”

John Kerry, by contrast, gets very high marks from the League of Conservation Voters (92 percent). He has been an environmental advocate since the first Earth Day in 1970.

Most environmental advocates—whether republican or democrat—no longer view air pollution, water pollution, or population growth as the greatest threat to the environment. They view George Bush and Dick Cheney as the single greatest threat to the health of nature.

Yet in the presidential debate, Bush said, “I guess you could say I’m a good steward of the land.” Such a claim is

part of a large strategy to confuse the issue and mislead the public. The president’s pollsters have told him one of his great weaknesses is his record on environmental issues. He has pursued a policy of regulatory stealth attacks against environmental laws, and most troubling, of the repression and manipulation of science.

Yet polls show that US citizens overwhelming support strong environmental protections. It’s a bi-partisan issue. According to various polls, republicans and democrats support alike stronger environmental legislation and tougher enforcement by a 4 to 1 margin.

**George W. Bush and
his administration
have disregarded the
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scientists on global
warming and
greenhouse gasses.**

Political Rhetoric and Environmental Damage Control

His own pollsters have advised Bush to change his language on environmental issues. He has been encouraged to use language that makes him appear a friend of the environment, while pursuing policies that attempt to dismantle a century of environmental protection and recovery.

Let me give an example.

In March 2003, republican pollster Frank Luntz, of Luntz Research Companies, wrote a 16-page memo, now infamous among environmentalists. In the memo he wrote, “The environment is probably the single issue on which republicans in general—and President Bush in particular—are most vulnerable.” Luntz goes on, “Not only do we risk losing the swing vote, but our suburban female base as well.”

Rather than urge the president to alter his environmental positions to reflect the widespread concern for nature and wildlife among Americans, Luntz urged Bush and other republican candidates to develop an environment-friendly rhetoric to cloak their anti-environment actions.

The best example relates to global warming. Bush and his administration have disregarded the warnings and studies of thousands of scientists on global warming and greenhouse gasses. There is an overwhelming scientific agreement about global warming, and Bush actually promised in his first campaign for president to limit the amount of carbon dioxide power plants emit.

He broke that promise. The main strategy? The claim that we need more study. It’s like trying to hide an elephant in the living room.

Yet the administration has had to fight its own agencies on the environment. In 2002, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a study claiming that global warming is a serious problem. It was shunned by Bush and company.

Scientists agree we are pumping more carbon dioxide that the Earth’s system can safely assimilate.

In February 2004, the Union of Concerned Scientists, a nation-wide organization that includes many Nobel laureates, declared the process through which science enters into the Environmental Protection Agencies has been manipulated. The federal agencies that have been charged with watching over the environment—EPA, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and many others—are increasingly seen as the enemies of environmental protection.

You don't have to believe scientists. Go to Glacier National Park: it is fast becoming the National Park with No Glaciers. Go to Glacier Bay, in Alaska. The glaciers there are retreating so fast, you can see it happen from year to year.

Instead of dealing with pollution, fossil-fuel emissions and global warming, Bush has been urged to rename the problem while employing various stalling tactics. According to Luntz's memo, republicans should not call the problem "global warming," a phrase which is too threatening and scary. Rather, they should refer to it by the more benign and less-troubling name of "climate change."

At Luntz's urging, Republicans have developed the rhetoric of "balance" and "common sense" as often as possible when discussing the environment.

There you have it in a nutshell. Since Bush has been president, for example, not one new species has been added to the Endangered Species list—though hundreds of candidate species await action. The administration has shifted the costs of superfund toxic waste clean up sites from polluters to taxpayers. Wetland

protection? The administration proposed to redefine "waters of the United States" to exclude millions of acres of wetlands from protection by the Clean Water Act. It has also weakened the rules governing water pollution from gold, copper and other hard-rock mines. It has exempted the Department of Defense from compliance with a number of environmental laws.

Don't try to deal with the environmental issues, but rather deceive the public into thinking the administration is a friend of the environment while rewarding polluters.

Republicans and the Environment

The environment should not be a partisan issue. Democrats and republicans should care about it equally. Republicans have, historically, played a very important role in the growth of the US environmental movement. Richard Nixon, a republican, was president when the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act were all passed—the most notable record of environmental legislative achievement in the world. In his 1970 State of the Union address, Richard Nixon said that the environmental cause "is as fundamental as life itself."

Then there was President Theodore Roosevelt, a century ago. A republican president, Roosevelt was a famous outdoorsman, a friend of John Muir and champion of environmental protection. Roosevelt said, "I do not intend that our natural resources shall be exploited by the few against the interests

of the many." He also said, "The rights of the public to the nation's natural resources outweigh private rights."

The Bush administration likes to compare itself to Teddy Roosevelt. Karl Rove, the president's powerful advisor, claims Bush is a great environmental president, in the mold of Theodore Roosevelt.

Such a comparison galls environmentalists. Robert Devine calls it "shameless hypocrisy." One prominent lifelong republican environmentalist reacts this way to such a claim. Russell Train was the first Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, and second head of the Environmental Protection Agency, under Presidents Nixon and Ford. As he writes in a recent essay, "The environmental clock is now running backwards."

On almost every front, the current administration has sought to weaken environmental laws and divert enforcement. Its strategy, however, is to avoid the public spotlight, wherever possible, and go through back channels. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., calls it a "stealth attack" on the environment.

Exhibit A: Energy and the Middle East

I'll end with a single example—energy policy, which President Bush likes to tout. In his debate, he went so far as to claim he supported developing alternative sources of energy to deal with our gas-guzzling culture.

Given the way the energy policy was developed, this strikes many as utterly misleading. Shortly after his inauguration, President Bush launched the National Energy Policy Development Group. It was chaired by Vice President Dick Cheney, and is commonly known as "the energy task force." The group was run in near-total secrecy.

The energy task force was made up almost entirely of people with energy-industry pedigrees. It was run strictly behind closed doors. Not one environmentalist was part of the task force. The only people consulted were, practically, industry insiders. When the Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group was finally released in May 2001, it became the basis for the administration's energy bill.



Photo by Amy Post

Almost every recommendation in the report was a boon to industry, transferring billions of dollars to the oil, coal and nuclear industries. The report focused on deregulation, subsidies and tax breaks for polluters in the energy industry.

As Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. writes, "Conspicuously missing from the task force report is a thoughtful discussion of conservation." As Cheney told one group, "Conservation may be a sign of personal virtue, but it should not be the basis of a comprehensive energy policy."

Yet consider the following facts:
 -1-mile-per-gallon improvement in fuel efficiency in cars could double the yield that would ever be extracted from drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;
 -2.6-mile-per-gallon improvement would produce more oil than Iraq and Kuwait imports to the United States combined;
 -8-mile-per-gallon improvement would eliminate the need for all Persian Gulf oil imports to the United States.

The United States uses 25 percent of the world's oil and sits on 3 percent of global reserves. The Persian Gulf has 65 percent of the world's oil reserves. No war will free us from dependence on Middle East oil. Extraction is no long-term answer to rising gas prices. The United States currently has its worst energy efficiency in 20 years. The conservative Cato Institute called the Bush-Cheney policy on drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge "nonsense on stilts."

The Earth Matters

George W. Bush has united environmentalists against him. Kerry has a record of strong support in the Senate for environmental protections. Yet the real issue is the absence of the environment from this presidential election. It should focus not only on the candidates' records, but also on their visions of the future. What would they do to address global warming? What do they see as the role of energy conservation, including auto fuel economy? How will they move the United States to a more sustainable future?

The country—and the world—needs our best thinking, not deceptive rhetoric and closed-door deals, to address the world's worsening environmental issues.

Author's Note: For anyone interested in learning about the record of George W. Bush's administration on the environment, please see *Crimes Against Nature* by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and *Bush Versus the Environment* by Robert S. Devine.



Photo by Amy Post

Do Something About It.

G.R.E.A.N.

7:30 pm Wednesdays, UC Grey Area

Feminist Student Union

8:30 pm Thursdays, Lute Lounge

Student Activist Coalition

8 pm Mondays, Wang Center

Harmony

email harmony@plu.edu for meeting times.

Do you want to help with layout and design
 for the next issue of The Matrix? Good,
 because we want you, you sexy beast! Email
 us at: matrix@plu.edu.

a m e r i c a n s p l e n d o r



men
spit on floors

a face
slams the door

steam
opens pores

injuries
made sore

loneliness
screws whores

the rich
ask for more

the poor
are ignored

only god
is adored

Poem:
Mariesa Bus

Illustration:
Greta Jaeger

EXPANSION, INFLATION AND THE INCONSEQUENTIAL EMPLOYEE: THE ECONOMY AND HOW REPUBLICANS & DEMOCRATS HAVE SHAPED IT.

By Chris Green

Editor's Note: Over the last 25 years, the economy has been declining. This article illustrates some facts that point to the reasons for this decline.

Wages

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that during the Kennedy (D) and Johnson (D) presidencies (1961-69) the average wage in 2001-equivalent-dollars, for non-supervisory workers (over two thirds of the U.S. workforce) was \$13.60. During the Nixon (R) and Ford (R) years (1969-77) it was \$15.14, and it was \$15.03 under Carter (D) (1977-81). During the Reagan (R) and Bush I (R) years (1981-93), it was \$13.91. Wages decreased to \$13.60 during the Clinton years (1993-2001). Thus, while the economy and CEO pay have shown exponential growth over the recent decades, author Robert Pollin contends in *Contours of Descent*, that wages for the average US worker have stagnated or declined.

The Reagan/Bush I Years

Massive military spending fueled high-tech sectors and kept the economy afloat, but other sectors such as manufacturing did poorly. During those years entitlement and social security programs retained budget surpluses. The astronomical federal deficit of the late 1980s was due to the military spending and the interest resulting from that debt. The deficit was used as an excuse to attack social programs. The administration of George W. Bush is imitating its republican predecessors by again using social welfare programs as scapegoats for a high military-caused deficit.

During the Reagan/Bush I years companies were given the green light to fire union organizers and received tax incentives to move overseas. Noam Chomsky in *Rogue States* quotes a May 1994 *Business Week* article stating that when Reagan took office, U.S. industry "conducted one of the most successful anti-union wars ever, illegally firing thousands of workers for exercising their rights to organize."

The Clinton Years

In 2001 and 2002, *Boston Globe* columnist Derrick Z. Jackson provided interesting figures from a variety of experts. He estimated if the minimum wage had kept pace with the growth of the productivity of the U.S. economy since 1968, it would be \$13.80. If it had kept pace with the increases in CEO pay since 1990, it would be \$21.41.

Norm Chomsky quotes Federal Chairman Alan Greenspan as explaining to the Senate Banking Committee in February 1997 of the great possibility for "sustained economic expansion" thanks to "atypical restraint on compensation increases [which] appears to be a consequence of greater worker insecurity." In other words, outsourcing of U.S. jobs and repression of unions made the job market more competitive for workers and lowered job security. The resulting decline in wages and increase in short-term and temporary employment allowed corporations to make huge profits, creating the appearance of a booming economy. At the same time, The Economic Report of the President cited economic success due to "significant wage restraint" and "changes in labor market institutions and practices."

In *Contours*, Pollin quotes a study commissioned by the NAFTA Secretariat and approved for release by the governments of Canada and Mexico but not the Clinton administration. Conducted by University of Cornell economist Kate Brofenbrenner, the study looked at the first years of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which encouraged the outsourcing of American jobs to Mexico. Brofenbrenner found that from 1993-1995 50 percent of all US firms, including 65 percent of all manufacturers that were subject to union organizing

drives, responded by making threats to move jobs overseas. These threats were carried out twelve percent of the time and otherwise dampened union organizing.

In the late 1990s, during the Clinton years, wages rose slightly from their earlier stagnation, though by 2000, wages still remained below their 1979 levels. Over the whole span of the Clinton years, the average wage was \$13.60, the equivalent of wages during the 1960s. The apparent economic boom of the late 90s was manufactured largely by short-term investment in Internet firms and the repeal of the 1934 Glass-Steagall Act. This repeal led to a decrease in governmental oversight in financial markets. As a result, stock investment fraud, exemplified in its worst degree by Enron and WorldCom, became more common. The wealth acquired from stock activities in the late 1990s overwhelmingly fell into the hands of those already in the top 10 percent of U.S.'s population. According to Pollin, the CEO to worker pay ratio in 1991 was 113:1; in 2001 it was 449:1.

Shortly after Clinton was elected, investors in the bond market showed disapproval at the new president's slight liberalism by withdrawing investments from the U.S. Although Clinton had vaguely promised modest new spending programs for the general population in his 1992 campaign, the capital flight showed who really controlled the economy. In order to appease stock and bond investors, Clinton focused his policy on balancing the budget, slashing government programs, primarily in transportation, housing and education. According to Bob Woodward's book, *The Agenda*, Clinton conceded during the same post-1992 election period that although his new policy focus would "help the bond market," it

In the past three years, the ratio of women's wages to men's wages has declined from 76 to 74 cents to the dollar.

would "hurt the people who voted [him] in."

Although there were low unemployment numbers during the Clinton era, these numbers do not reflect the poor quality of jobs. Also, like unemployment figures today, they did not count people unemployed for more than two years or people who worked as little as one day a month.

The Here and Now

Well, in the midst of ferocious combat about swift boats, forged documents and Dan Rather, what have President Bush and Senator Kerry had to say about the issues I have raised?

The Bush administration views outsourcing jobs as a new trade, as though people are a commodity. Presidential Economic Advisor N. Gregory reported in the February 2004 Economic Report of the President, "Outsourcing is a new way of international trade. More things are tradable than were tradable in the past. And that's a good thing."

Bush has been very anti-union, eliminating regulations designed to protect workers from repetitive-stress injuries and blocking airline strikes. Most dramatically, on national security grounds, Bush used the Taft-Hartley act of 1947 to order workers back to work and thus stop unionizing at 29 West Coast ports that stopped functioning because of threats of strikes.

A particularly vulgar example of the Bush administration's anti-union sentiment was the campaign against Georgia democratic senator Max Cleland during the 2002-midterm elections. Commercials approved by the White House were used by his opponent showing Cleland's picture next to those of Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. Meanwhile, the commercial's narrator declared that by supporting unionization for Homeland Security workers Cleland showed his "true colors," i.e. that he was unpatriotic if not pro-terrorist for supporting unionization of employees in the new Homeland Security Department. Cleland was defeated. After insisting that the department's employees should not have the right to unionize, Bush eventually conceded, but only after gaining the presidential right to outlaw union organizing in the department.

In regard to jobs and the economy, Bush has taken credit for the creation of 1.5 million jobs over the previous ten months. However, 900,000 jobs beyond these 1.5 million have been lost during the Bush administration. Job growth has barely kept pace with the natural rate of persons entering the labor force (teenagers, immigrants).

It is highly possible, given the massive defense and related spending as during the Reagan years, that there will be a sustained economic upturn in the next few years. However, this would be based on mortgaging the nation's future. According to Weisbrot, the federal deficit has ballooned to 5.6 percent of our Gross Domestic Product, the highest it has been since 1983, and the second highest since World War II.

The president's 2003 budget report to Congress omitted a Treasury Department report showing that if priorities (including Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy) remained the same, the federal debt would eventually grow to 44 trillion dollars. Then White House spokesman Ari Fleischer admitted the report was true. He declared that Social Security and Medicare would have to be "reformed" to reduce their costs. By "reformed" he likely meant privatizing Social Security and Medicare rather than funding them through a more progressive tax structure.

Kerry has a much more palatable program. He has proposed eliminating Bush's tax cuts for people with annual incomes of \$200,000 or higher to help reduce the U.S. deficits. He has stated that he is in favor of bribing firms to bring high quality jobs back to the U.S. from overseas by reducing corporate taxes. Unfortunately, such incentives are unlikely to sway companies that are used to subcontractors in developing countries who drive their employees mercilessly under horrible conditions. For example, in places like Colombia, paramilitary groups work to violently suppress labor organizers and aid workers. It is well known that the paramilitary groups work in conjunction with the Colombian military, a major

recipient of US aid (the continuation of which Senator Kerry fervently supports). Ralph Nader is the only candidate of any visibility who is truly addressing the issues I have raised.

Through struggle largely outside the electoral arena, US workers have gained precious rights that are currently denied to their counterparts in the developing world. The right to a safe working environment is one example of this. According to the Senate Committee on Industrial Relations, in 1914 alone, 35,000 U.S. workers were killed in industrial accidents and 700,000 were injured. By 2002, these figures had improved to only 5,534 injuries a year. Of those, 157 were police officers. But workers still struggle, perhaps with the maxim of Karl Marx in mind; "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need," he said. In a 1987 poll by the Rolex Corporation during the constitutional bicentennial, almost half of our good, if slightly illiterate populace, thought that statement originated in our founding document. They were wrong; but maybe if we followed it more closely we would have a more just society.

In 1955, women earned more of a percentage of men's salaries than they did in 1987.

If women were men with the same credentials, they would earn about 18 percent more.

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September 2004

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Gap, November 2004



Say some girls would rather
shop than be heard? No—
it's just the bird-width
of this election blurs, hums



at the edges of speeches
on care, on where you stand
on one mark in a bubble
to level a playing field



of some boys in Fallujah,
as if one vote short
was another thing wrong
with youth today and she



flees, clothed tiny, tinier,
danger—green as Astroturf
and body parts: wing, beak, cleat,
the cat's bell muffled, acoustics



anyway so good, so broad,
so wireless, she can hear—
everything, everywhere direction-
less
and iridescent for nectar.



Alison Mandaville

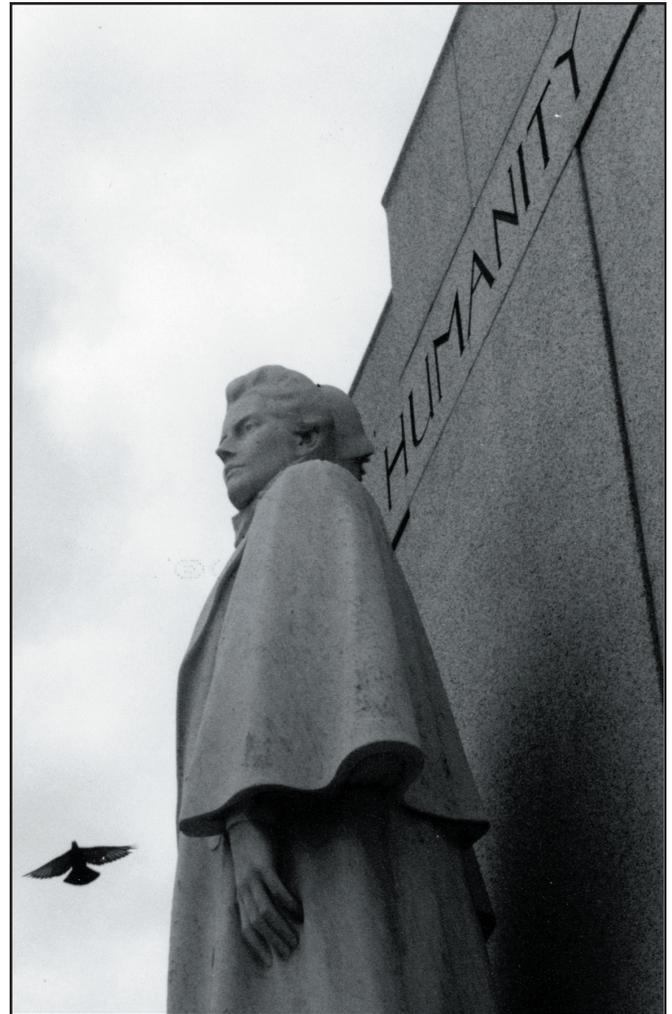


Photo: Ashley Miller, London '03. Matrix observation: Most female statues in the US capitol are nude and lustfully leaping from fountains. Where's the humanity in that?

Disturbing Facts about the Treatment of Women In Iraq

- 100 plus US servicewomen have been raped in Iraq and Afghanistan by US servicemen
- As of January 2004, at least 37 US service women have sought sexual-trauma psychological treatment after their tour of Iraq
- Iraqi women have been forced to bare their breasts when passing checkpoint at US gunpoint
- Iraqi women are often taken prisoner by US servicemen in an attempt to bring their alleged-terrorist male relatives out of hiding. Photos of nudity and/or rapes are often taken of these women. Women are currently being held in Abu Ghraib's notorious 1A cellblock where as many as 1,500 such pictures were taken in November and December 2004.
- Films are often made of rapes of these women by US service men and US hired mercenaries. Some of these films and photos have been distributed on the Internet and made available for purchase
- Some women prisoners are raped and impregnated by US troops and mercenaries
- Some women believed to be abused were killed by their families in honor killings or committed suicide upon release.

Iraqi Women Treatment by Their Countrymen

- Amnesty International reports violence against women has increased dramatically after the war than before the war.
- Iraqi women, who enjoyed relatively public lives before the war have all but disappeared from the public life. Remember the broadcasts of Iraqis flooding the streets during the toppling of Saddam statues? Did you notice any women in the crowds?
- The one woman on the Iraqi cabinet recently survived an assassination attempt.
- Car bombs are not the only threat in Iraq in this escalated time of violent chaos. Taking advantage of the unstable situation, some radical militia groups and Iraqi men are viciously and violently raping women and girls so that women and girls are afraid to leave their homes. Girls are not being sent to school for fear of abduction and rape.

Sources: Amnesty International, The Guardian, The New Yorker, Denver Post, La Voz de Aztlan

These are actual George W. Bush quotes. Notice the similarity between Bush's quote and the hymn below.

Liberation Theology and Democracy

By Debi Crutchfield

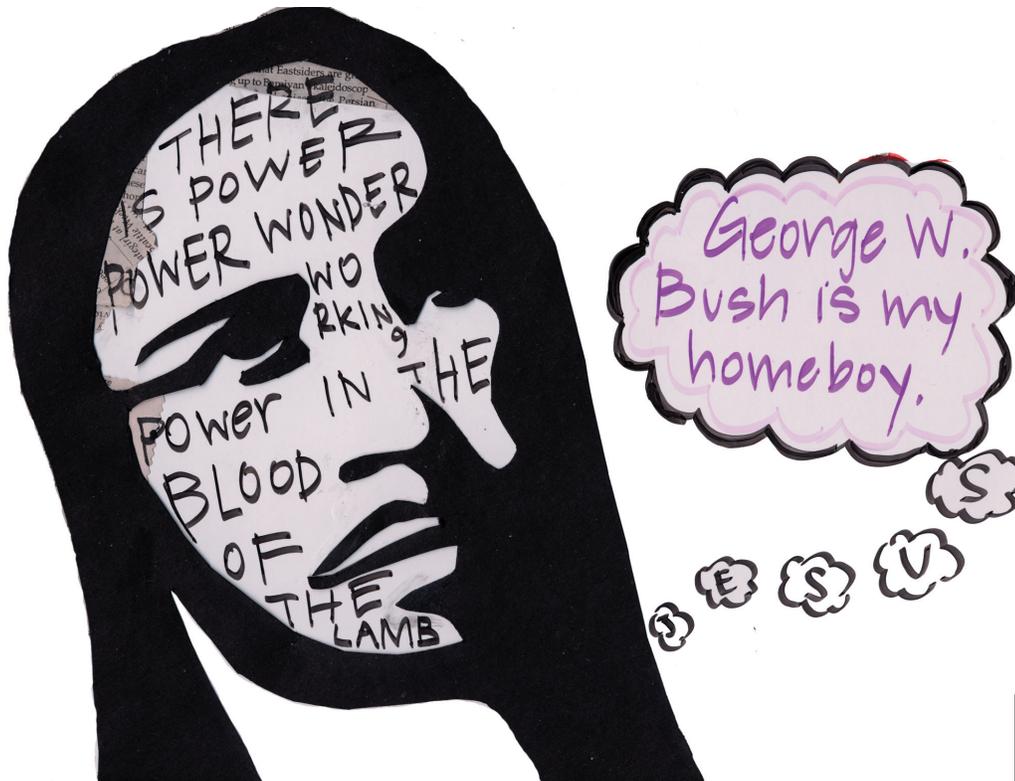
I wasn't sure what to expect in Theologies of Liberation and Democracy (RELI 227). However, our trek through US history, the founding fathers, the separation of church and state, civil religion and current US politics has been enlightening.

We recently gave presentations showing how the presidential candidates use theological language and images in their campaigns. We

debated whose side God is on, whether religious language is good or bad for US politics, and how this language affects secular and diverse populations in the U.S. One presentation unraveled what we're *not* hearing regarding the religious rhetoric in the campaign.

This safe place of exploration and personal searching is invaluable. Discussions conducted with mutual respect and maturity produced the

fruits of understanding and acceptance, in the spite of disagreement. Professor Kathi Breazeale's passion for liberation theology continues to open new doors for us as we meet every Tuesday and Thursday to "unpack" principles of liberation theology through analysis, questions and discussion.



The text inside Jesus's face is an excerpt from a hymn. Jesus DID NOT say "George W. Bush is my homeboy," although he has been known to sport the trucker hat with that logo.

These graphics were taken from a poster made by Chase Donnelly, Krissy Harbert and Pat Hearon for Religion 227.

DELUSIONS OF DEMOCRACY

By Angee Foster

I am a regular person – not a formal scholar of history or a student of political science – a normal American. But, I have observed an aspect of US history and culture that scares me. The United States has a legacy of causing turmoil and violence in developing countries in the name of democracy. While US military actions in Panama, Chile, Granada, Vietnam, Cambodia and Afghanistan in recent history are good examples of the United States’ failure to actually implement order, the current crisis in Iraq serves as a more relevant example. At the heart of the problem is an inability for US citizens and leaders to consider the true costs of war. From the president, to the media, to the average citizen, there is a distinct lack of concern for the well-being of the Iraqi people.

Some of the touted benefits of democracy are stability and consistency. Because one stated goal of the invasion of Iraq was to create a democratic nation, our military should have been equipped with a plan of action once the occupation of Baghdad was accomplished. Instead, total chaos broke out. An official of the United States’ own post-invasion team noted that coalition soldiers’ “utter indifference” to the rioting that ensued was “chilling” and the administration’s reaction to the violence could be described as flippant at best with Donald Rumsfeld telling the media simply that “freedom’s untidy.”¹ The truth is, war is untidy and the Bush administration’s lack of foresight set the stage for the long, drawn out war that has emerged from the chaos. The same post-invasion team official noted that “anarchy set the stage for insurgency.”¹ The Bush administration did not outline a clear plan for accomplishing one of the U.S.’s key goals: order and eventual democracy. This left our military and the Iraqi people directionless and in crisis.

The embarrassment of weapons of mass destruction aside, the supposed goal of Operation Iraqi Freedom was to free the Iraqi people from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein’s unjust rule. However, it is understandable that Iraqis perceive our occupation of their nation as a new form of tyranny. From day one, US military campaigns have cost thousands of Iraqi civil-

ian lives. Americans and US leaders are totally ignorant, or at least sadly unfeeling, to the plight of the Iraqi people they supposedly want to free. In June 2004, over a year after the declaration of Operation Iraqi Freedom, journalists Douglas Jehl and Eric Schmitt commented that “the broad scope of the [shock and awe] campaign and its failures, along with the civilian casualties have not been acknowledged by the Bush administration.”² As coalition troops occupy Iraq after pummeling it with an air attack of far greater violence and magnitude than the attack on the Twin Towers, the U.S. has understandably become the oppressive force the Iraqi people resist.

When the U.S. was attacked on 9/11, its citizens unified against the abstract evil of terrorism, and consequently, every nation that “harbors terrorists.” The people of the United States rightfully reacted with sadness, anger and a distrust of the people who committed a true atrocity against them. What many Americans fail to realize, however, is that the Shock and Awe campaign – the sustained air strike the US Air Force carried out against Baghdad in the first two days of the Iraq War – was many times more destructive than what occurred in New York City and the Pentagon.

This is not to minimize the horror of what happened in the United States, but rather to demonstrate it is unrealistic to expect the Iraqis to welcome coalition forces to their country. To date, the Iraq war has cost nearly 15,000 Iraqi lives.³ Our outrage over the deaths of 3,000 civilians should help us understand the situation in Iraq. Undoubtedly, it is human nature to rally against any foreign group that causes destruction and loss of life. The Iraqi people are not fighting against democracy; they are fighting to preserve their livelihood and sovereignty.

I am one person who sees the means that my country has chosen to resolve conflict as questionable. Perceived or real, United States self interest lessens the U.S. led Coalition’s credibility in the Arab world and the international community. If the United States truly wants to create democracy in a failed state, a

TYRANNY

COST

INDIFFERENCE

ATROCITY

OUTRAGE

QUESTIONABLE democratic approach that involves multilateral cooperation would be more effective. Our own Declaration of Independence states the ideals that freed the U.S. from Britain's rule, stating, **SELF-INTEREST** "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

If we truly believed in this, we would apply it to the whole world, not just ourselves. Equality, liberty, and stability (Life and the pursuit of Happiness) make up the foundation of democracy; war and oppression are not appropriate tools for demonstrating our most

basic and dearly held values. I agree that Iraq was in a sad state before the United States' invasion, **EQUALITY?** but I do not have hope that it **LIBERATION?** will improve now that we are there. We will never truly make a positive difference until we see Iraqis as "created equal" and endowed with "unalienable rights." **DEMOCRACY?**

¹ Dickey, Christopher. "Freedom's Just Another Word." Newsweek: Web-Exclusive Commentary, 09/29/04. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6132803/site/newsweek>.

² Jehl, Douglas and Schmitt, Eric. "Errors Are Seen In Early Attacks on Iraqi Leaders." The New York Times Late Edition (East Coast), 06/13/04.

³ Jeffrey, Simon. "3000 Iraqi Dead Named." Guardian Unlimited, 09/16/04. www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,2763,1306272,00.html.

THE BARE FACTS:

**MINIMUM ESTIMATE OF IRAQI CIVILIAN DEATHS SINCE 2003:
13,278**

**MAXIMUM ESTIMATE OF IRAQI CIVILIAN DEATHS SINCE 2003:
15,357 ¹**

**AMERICAN MILITARY DEATHS IN IRAQ SINCE WAR BEGAN (3/
19/03): 1,101**

AMERICAN MILITARY DEATHS IN AFGHANISTAN: 136 ²

¹ as of October 17, 2004. source: www.iraqbodycount.net
² as of October 17, 2004. source: www.antiwar.com/casualties

NEW ELECTION VOCABULARY...

Agenda: A list or program of things to be done or considered.

Motive: 1. An emotion, desire, physiological need, or similar impulse that acts as an incitement to action.

Repent: 1. To feel remorse of self-reproach for what one has done or failed to do; be contrite. 2. To feel such regret for past conduct as to change one's mind regarding it. 3. To make a change for the better as a result of remorse of contrition for one's sins.

Q: Who's controlling your media?



Rupert Murdoch. Courtesy of slate.msn.com.

A: Rupert Murdoch

Murdoch is the fourth most powerful billionaire in the world, according to Forbes Magazine. His company owns TV Guide, 24 magazines, Fox Broadcasting Network, HarperCollins, 20th Century Fox and 130 English-language newspapers (including the London Times and the New York Post.) He also started Fox News Channel, the number one 24-hour news channel. He unapologetically censors the information that comes out of his media empire. All news sources may be inherently biased, but this conservative media mogul's influence extends to all corners of the globe.

Not sure why this is a big deal? Here's something to consider: for the 2000 Presidential election, Murdoch made George W. Bush's cousin, John Ellis, responsible for Fox's Election Night vote counting process. In this position, Ellis made Fox the first news network to declare Bush the winner. With an alleged 6.8 million viewers that night, Fox had a major influence in public opinion concerning the election. You might think that hiring a relative of a candidate would be considered a conflict of interest. Apparently not. Months prior, Ellis stated, "I am loyal to my cousin, Governor George Bush of Texas. I put that loyalty ahead of my loyalty to anyone else outside my immediate family." Fair and balanced journalism? Hardly.

Know who's controlling your news. The source of the information is more important than the information itself.

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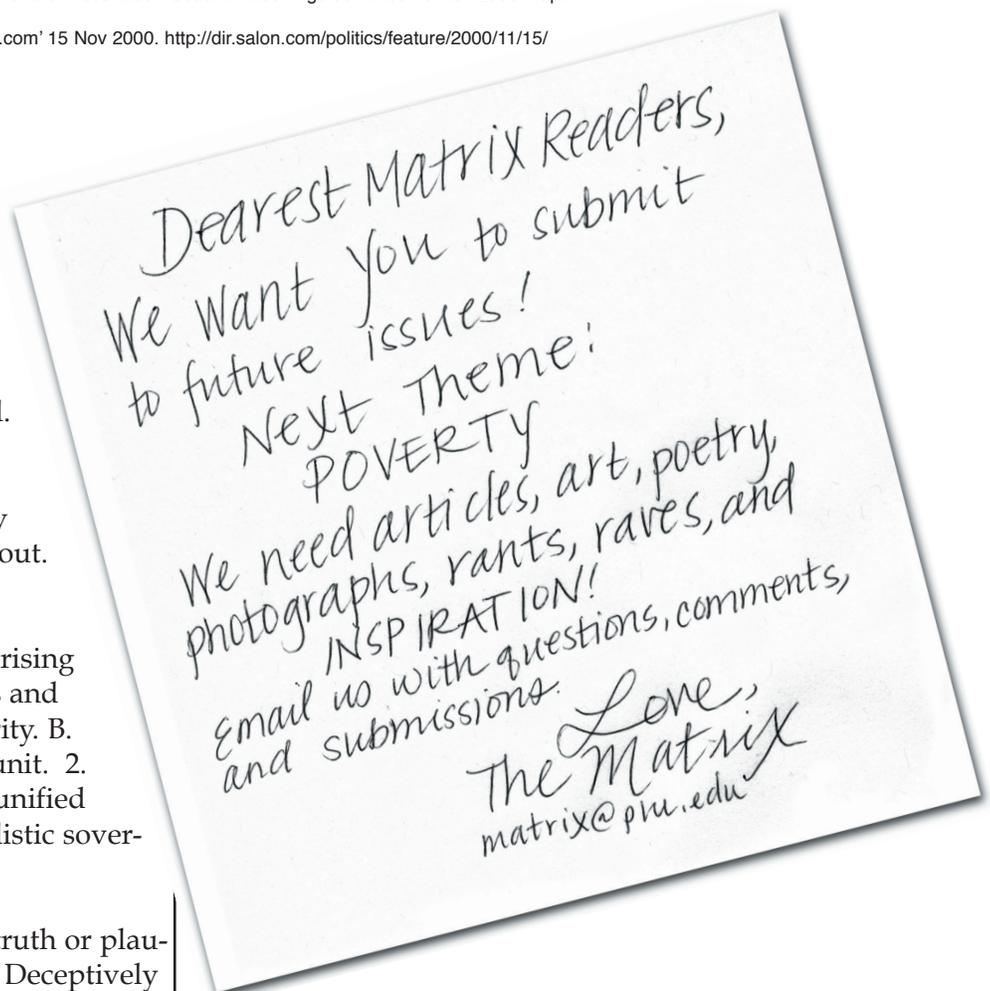
New Election Vocabulary...

Mendacious: 1. Lying, untruthful.
2. False, untrue.

Calumniate: To make maliciously or knowingly false statements about.
The noun form is calumny.

Empire: 1a. A political unit comprising a number of territories or nations and ruled by a single supreme authority. B. The territory included in such a unit. 2. An extensive enterprise under a unified authority. 3. Imperial or imperialistic sovereignty or domination.

Specious: 1. Having the ring of truth or plausibility but actually fallacious. 2. Deceptively attractive.



People will go to great lengths to have their voices heard. Join the conversation.



Number of “subversive” theses Martin Luther nailed to the door of the Catholic church: 95

Pounds of tea dumped into Boston Harbor by patriots: 9,000

Years Nelson Mandela spent in prison: 27

Pages of Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s *The Gulag Archipelago: 1918-1956*: 512

Years Julia “Butterfly” Hill spent living in an old growth redwood to prevent its harvest: 2¹

Nobel Peace Prize winners arrested for protesting Iraq War: 2²

Total dollars raised by Bush/Kerry campaigns combined: 649,192,845³

Protesters arrested at 2000 Republican National Convention: 450⁴

Protesters arrested at 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City: 1821⁵

Average hours spent waiting in line to vote in Venezuela’s August recall election: 7⁶

Voter turn-out for that election: 80%⁶

US voter turn-out for 2000 Federal elections: 51.3%⁷

Number of PLU students who attended Rock the Vote: 350

Closest place to vote from PLU: Trinity Lutheran Church

All you have to do November 2nd to have your voice heard: Vote

Simple things you can do...

Watch the news (not Fox see p17)

Canvass

Talk to your friends

Visit and decide for yourself:

www.johnkerry.com

www.georgewbush.com

www.amnestyinternational.org

www.now.org

www.moveon.org

www.npr.org

www.offourbacks.org

www.commondreams.org

¹ Vanderford, Audrey. “The Legacy of Luna.” *Women and Environments International Magazine* 52/53 (2001): 45-46.

² Wilgoren, Debbi. “Peaceful Protest Ends in Peaceful Arrests; Nobel Winners Among 68 Detained Activists.” *The Washington Post* 27 Mar 2003: B1.

³ <http://www.opensecrets.org/presidential/index.asp>

⁴ www.wsws.org/articles/2000/rnc-s12.html

⁵ www.etext.org/politics/mim/elections/nycnrcarrests.html

⁶ Glaister, Dan. “Massive Turnout as Venezuela Goes to the Polls.” *The Guardian* (London). 16 August 2004: Foreign Pages 9.

⁷ <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0781453.html>

A professor put this up; a student took it down.

Whoever Steals
These Pictures Is a
Thief
and an Opponent of
FREE
SPEECH
and a
Liberal
(or is that redundant?)

A student submitted this sign to The Matrix after removing it from a bulletin board in Eastvold that features colorful pin-ups of our presidential candidates. The pictures are all anti-Kerry and pro-Bush. As far as the editors of The Matrix know, all the pictures are still up and intact. For a different perspective than you've encountered here (and a hearty chuckle), check them out. By the classrooms in Eastvold (2nd floor, use the side entrance).

The Matrix believes in the right to freedom of speech and press. This professor was exercising his right to free speech by posting his opinions about Senator John Kerry. By equating liberal with thief, is this professor encouraging or discouraging freedom of self-expression? Is this simply immature name-calling or is this attack in fact a hindrance to the very thing it claims to promote?