

The StudentVote

Student Debate in '04

With debates between presidential candidate John Kerry and incumbent George W. Bush coming up, students can see another way to look at the campaign: from the student's point of view. With Mac LeBuhn arguing against the Republican platform and Jason Dubiel arguing against the Democratic platform, RMHS students can decide for themselves for whom they shall vote in 2004. Between the war in Iraq, debating family values, and many other issues, the debate between left and right rages on.



By Mac LeBuhn
IN-DEPTH EDITOR

Republicans are a lot like cheerleaders. They have to work really hard to make a fumble look good. However, it'll take a lot more than cheerleaders to get Dubya & Co. win another campaign.

I was joking about the cheerleaders; Republicans are still evil. Students, especially those of voting age, have a lot of reasons to focus on this election. The leaders of the executive and legislative branches have done little to help students in America, or, broadly speaking, teens in general.

One of these students may have parents below the poverty line. Another may have parents earning over a million a year. Doubtful, but possible. You may be one of these students. Both of these families are receiving tax cuts. According to the June issue of "Mother Jones", the one with parents earning \$10,000 a year got enough tax cuts to pay for one medium Domino's pizza per month. With parents earning \$35,000 a year, a lucky family could buy, with half a year of tax cuts, six tickets to the Green Day show at the Vic Theater off of eBay. There'd be enough left over for gas. On the other hand, if your family earns \$100,000 a year, each month you could buy a new iPod and 40 new songs to listen. That's a lot of Green Day music.

What all that Green Day music won't tell you is that the incumbent president of the United States has sent the country into colossal and unmatched debt, cut taxes for those who don't need tax cuts, sent the tone of civil rights talk back a century and misled the American public into thinking that he truly is a compassionate, Christian conservative.

Christian Conservative

A Christian conservative? I've never heard a greater idiom. Strangely, right-wingers seem to forget that this "born-again" man is the man that just set assault weapons back on the street, poor people go it alone and desecrated millions of acres of pristine forest. Let someone else be the Good Samaritan. It never ceases to amaze me that because of a few biblical references and a willingness to legalize discrimination in the form of banning gay marriage, people think George W. Bush is going to provide something along the lines of compassionate conservatism. If George Bush stays in office, an overtly Christian administration will be remembered in terms of hypocrisy and bigotry. It has so far.

Let's see what some Bush-style Christian influence can do for women.

W for Women?

Dr. David Hager was appointed by the Bush administration to the FDA's Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee. This is a man who edited a book that included the essay "Using the Birth Control Pill is Ethically Unacceptable." Hager also recommended women replace medication such as Midol to treat premenstrual syndrome with Scripture and prayer. This isn't exactly the National Organization of Women in office. A TIME article reports Hager won't prescribe contraceptives to unmarried women. Better start praying.

Public Education

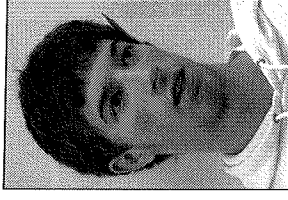
For those of you involved in public education (i.e. everybody) Bush has left you behind. How did he do this? In a 1984-esque move, George Bush chose the misnomer "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) to revolutionize education. To be fair, Bush did revolutionize education. Kind of like how the French Revolution revolutionized Marie Antoinette (hint: they cut off her head).

The beheading: the National Education Association reports that funding is still a full \$7 billion behind what was proposed in the authorizing legislation for NCLB. Whack!

Bush's work with students has been so shameful that a bill that reduced funding for education and health care for this year's budget was passed under cover of darkness. Literally. The House of Representatives did not vote on the bill until 2:39 a.m. of April 11, 2003, with a margin of five votes.

The website FactCheck.org, a non-partisan group dedicated to reviewing political advertisement for truthfulness reported on a Bush-Cheney ad on education. Ad (ha) verbatim: "...the president's reforms give parents the tools needed to measure a child's progress." If giving people tools involves spending adequate money, the Bush administration isn't so good with that. Susan B. Neuman, a former U.S. Department Education assistant secretary who helped implement NCLB said, concerning the legislation: "In [the most disadvantaged schools] in America, even the most earnest teacher has often given up because they lack every available resource that could possibly make a difference. . . . When we say all children can achieve and then not give them the additional resources . . . we are creating a fantasy."

Revolutionized indeed.



By Jason Dubiel
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

While watching the Republican Convention comfortably at home, I couldn't help but notice how often the cameras would flash to the activity outside the convention. The cameras showed an awful scene: unruly liberals, hundreds of whom were arrested.

Then I thought about the type of person presidential hopeful John Kerry is, and liberal was one of the last words to cross my mind. I first thought of Kerry as a fraud, anarchist, and a flip-flopper. Is this what you want your future president to represent?

VIETNAM VETERAN

John Kerry. You sure most Americans appreciate your service in Vietnam. But if there's any truth to allegations brought up during your campaign, you'd be a pathetic excuse for a commander-in-chief.

Kerry received three Purple Hearts in Vietnam. Quite impressive, right? Well, it's too bad that one of those medals came after he shot himself with a grenade launcher, according to Fox News. Yet, he still received the Purple Heart, even though military guidelines say that a soldier must receive a wound while engaged with an enemy that requires medical treatment. Even many of Kerry's own fellow veterans have stated that he is undeserving of his honors and also that he helped keep Americans in Vietnam by protesting the war.

After becoming dissatisfied with the war effort, Kerry came back to the U.S. to protest Vietnam. One significant picture shows him with a gun on the lawn of the White House decked out in army fatigues. He has also been accused of not doing his duty while in Vietnam, which led to the death of a Vietnamese toddler, according to the Washington Times. Because Kerry was not manning the radar on the boat he was in, his fellow soldiers opened fire on an approaching boat they didn't recognize, which resulted in at least one death of a young boy. Just from his Vietnam "experience," Americans can see how Kerry is a fraud and an anarchist, as well as a murderer.

Our current president, Dubya, may have dodged service for a little while, but he has led our country through crisis and taken steps to combat terrorism. Under any type of leadership by John Kerry, our country would become subject to the United Nations' opinion in nearly all matters of foreign relations.

FLIP-FLOPS ARE FOR SUMMER ONLY

Personally, I've never been a big fan of the flip-flops trend. They're extremely uncomfortable and I can't stand anything being stuck in between my toes. John Kerry's a flip-flopper, or an indecisive politician, when it comes to important issues in Congress, and that makes me especially uncomfortable about him potentially becoming our next president.

To illustrate Kerry's indecisiveness, here's a small sample of recent voting he has partaken in, as stated by Vice President Dick Cheney in his speech at the Republican National Convention. He voted for going to war in Iraq, but voted against funding it. He voted for the Patriot Act, but in a later session of Congress, he voted against it.

Granted, Dubya is also a moderate in respects towards Republicans, but he has taken strong stances on critical issues and professed them loud and clear. And at the same time, Kerry has run a very poor overall campaign in which it took him until the end of August to finally make a stance and defend allegations against him.

Besides Kerry's indecisiveness, he's also a liar. According to newsmag.com a non-partisan website, John Kerry's official website posted that Kerry served on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for eight years and also as the Vice Chairman of the committee. However, Kerry was never on the Senate Select Committee for even one minute. Bob Kerrey, however, did serve eight years on the Senate Select Committee when he was senator from Nebraska. It wasn't a case of mistaken identity, but a failed attempt at stolen identity. And we've already seen through former President Bill Clinton that Democrats can't lie, so why should Kerry be any exception?

THE HOME STRETCH

We have about a month and a half until election time and polls show President Bush with a small margin over Kerry. Bush is at approximately 50 percent, while Kerry is at about 45 percent in recent polls. With filmmaker Michael Moore saying 70 percent of our country is liberal, how is this possible? Nonetheless, I urge all RMHS students to make their opinion heard, even if Illinois is typically a Democratic state and go vote if you can. And if your one of the many students that can't vote, you can still participate in the election by becoming an election judge, campaigning with one of the political parties, or by trying to involve more students in the election.