

Electile Dysfunction

The struggle for justice will go on, regardless.

I am so ready for this election to be over. The constant hype is getting to me. I've become crabby and intolerant, which if I could make a commercial, I'd say is a sign the terrorists are winning. And by terrorists I mean the fear-mongering, xenophobic, boogey men running our country.

My nerves are frayed. Yesterday the phone rang and, mistaking the call for yet another automated get-out-the-vote appeal, I nearly hung up on my own wife. Talk about a threat to the sanctity of marriage.

Don't get me wrong, I'm glad the voter registration drives are so vigorous, really I am. I'm counting on all the newly registered voters to turn the tide and get us out of this crazy right-wing quagmire. But I've had it with the campaigning and the bickering and the constant smear. I can't take any more.

No, I haven't lost my enthusiasm for regime change, for keeping marriage discrimination out of the state Constitution, or for facilitating procurement of medical marijuana. You know we need it.

Neither have I put away my lawn signs/door signs/window signs/bumper stickers/campaign pins – even though they haven't done much to repel the steady stream of over-earnest, door-to-door canvassers. And yes, I've voted (yes on 31, 32, 33, & 34; no on 35, 36, 37 & 38) and hand-delivered my ballot to a county elections drop box.

But this fever pitch is getting old and tired and so am I. Let's face it, come Nov. 3 the campaigning will be over. We'll wake up to the election results, cheer our victories, mourn our losses, and put away our lawn signs/door signs/window signs/bumper stickers/campaign pins. We'll dust ourselves off and get on with life. Regardless of the outcome, we'll still be who we are and doing what we do.

It's not like politics ends on election day. I hope to God(dess) we will have a new president. And I will be seriously bummed if the Constitution is changed to say I can't marry my own wife. But the struggle for justice will go on. If Kerry wins I'll be pressing him to do the right thing. If, curse the thought, Bush wins (or re-steals) the election, I'll join the uprising. Luckily (and thanks in no small part to Michael Moore) we're already mobilized, informed, and pissed off enough to keep the momentum going.

Naturally, I'd rather be celebrating. I hope to be cheering on all the good things a Kerry administration will do with the taxes they wrest from the greedy grip of tax-evading corporate outsourcers and collect from that famous fraction of Americans earning over \$200,000 a year.

I'll be thrilled to enter a prosperous era of jobs, health care, education, and peace. And oh, how I will dance in the streets if our Pablum first lady is replaced by the powerful, smart, and worldly (not to mention kick-ass feminist) Theresa Heinz Kerry. Unabashed woman muscle in the White House – bring it on!

Give me a Kerry cabinet filled with the likes of Wesley Clark, Dennis Kucinich, and Carol Mosely Braun. I'll certainly be singing *Hallelujah* if the retiring Supremes are replaced by Kerry appointees who pass the litmus test, i.e. upholding our Constitution and all our inalienable rights. (Radical!)

It will be major party time when national justice is restored, à la convictions against the real criminals who've committed treason, war crimes and crimes against humanity – the biggest liars and cheats who are still getting away with it. Come on America (or international court), bring Bush, Cheney, Rummie, Ashcroft, Wolfowitz, Rice and Rove to justice. I'm ready for front page news of those goons behind bars (and Martha free!).

I'm keeping hope alive. My sanity depends on it. I know the wheels turn slowly, but I'm looking forward to victory, and may it come soon. I'm ready for democracy to be restored and the light at the end of the tunnel turned back on.

Sally Sheklow has been a part of the Eugene community since 1972 and is a member of the WYMPROV! comedy troupe. Her column, which began at EW in 1999, also runs in several other newspapers and magazines around the country and Down Under.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

priority for his administration. We all remember the "smoke 'em out" remark, but it seems the only smoke we've seen is the one associated with mirrors.

It turns out that, according to the *New York Times* report, "Three years after the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency has fewer experienced case officers assigned to its headquarters unit dealing with Osama bin Laden than it did at the time of the attacks." It also appears that the unit involved in this investigation is stretched so thin that it cannot do any meaningful work.

This president must be held accountable in this election for the blatant misdirecting of our intelligence and military resources to an ill-planned war in Iraq and the deceitful misleading of the public and Congress on the rationale for a preemptive strike on a country that was not directly threatening us! His arrogance has not only sent our brave soldiers to an unnecessary war with no exit strategy in sight, but has also made us more unsafe by alienating us from the international community with which we need their cooperation to combat terrorism.

*Terry Solini
Corvallis*

DIVIDER & UNITER

President Bush's role of "divider/uniter" may painfully be what this country has needed. He has divided our country with a polarizing, black and white, "for us or against us" thinking stance that has alienated countries that, if not friendly, have at least supported us. He has divided his own party to the point where some members of the radical right faction are actively encouraging moderate Republicans to leave the party. (Bill Moyers' PBS interview 9/3). He has even increased intolerance amongst, and within, different faiths.

Where he has been a uniter is in how the policies and arrogance of his administration have galvanized the Democratic Party, disappointed and angered Republican moderates to where their fear of four more years of Bush has them working to elect John Kerry for president in 2004; and moved apathetic and cynical non-voters to register to vote.

I'd have preferred some other catalyst than the failings over four years of the Bush administration, like: the greatest loss of jobs since the depression era, some 1.6 million; an average rise of \$3,000 in costs per family for health care in Oregon; an overwhelming budget deficit where there was surplus before Bush took office; inadequate funding for homeland security; and the instigation of a poorly planned war based on unquestioned and fabricated information, that has not made us safer, has killed thousands, and it seems has swelled the ranks of terrorists.

I am grateful for the kick in the butt many of us have needed to pay attention, to get active, rather than continuing to let this kind of detrimental governance occur. Amazing that I could wind up thanking the man, who is hopefully, on his way out of office.

*Marilyn Marcus
Eugene*

WRONG DIRECTION

Measure 35 is a step in the wrong direction. When there is government controls on

the price of medical care and medicine, then and only then should there be government controls on the liability of insurers and doctors in malpractice suits.

Proponents of Measure 35 claim that caps on settlements will keep the cost of medical care in check. However, Measure 35 does not provide caps on what doctors can charge patients, insurance companies can charge doctors, nor guarantee that caps on settlements will result in lower medical costs. The only guarantee that is provided is that people can receive less in settlements when the doctor has been proved to be negligent.

The public is angry that there has been no government controls to curb the cost of medical services and medicine. Both state and federal government have failed to put in place any government controls to protect the American consumer. For 20 years the cost of medical care and medicine has risen disproportionately to the inflation in other sectors. Nothing, not a single thing, has been done! And now, there's a measure that will protect negligent doctors from high malpractice insurance premiums, which does not guarantee lower or even stabilized medical costs to the consumer.

Measure 35 fails to cap health care premiums, what doctors can charge patients, and prices on medications. Measure 35 only provides protection from high insurance rates for negligent doctors, and fails to provide little else!

Don't be fooled by measure 35. Vote no!
*Len Goforth
Springfield*

SOCIALISTS STAND

The Lane County Chapter of the Socialist Party, USA, at its October meeting, declared its prime target in the upcoming political campaign to be the defeat of George W. Bush. It is the contention of the chapter that the policies and initiatives undertaken by Bush are clearly more oriented toward the doctrines of Fascism as exemplified by the regimes of Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Francisco Franco in the '30s and '40s.

Citing as examples of the fascistic undertakings of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, et al., the chapter points to the preemptive war in Iraq, the denial of civil rights to "suspected" terrorists and their imprisonment without the right to counsel or without specifying the charges against them. The chapter also expressed its outrage at the strip searching of male and female prisoners without specifying that charges are being made against them.

Furthermore, the Lane Socialists object to the practice by Secretary Ashcroft's Department of Justice of identifying books checked out of local libraries without the knowledge of the person who checked out the book in question. The Socialist Party is also concerned that those who are dissident about Bush's policies are being targeted as "unpatriotic" and are ridiculed for the exercise of their rights to dissent.

Also targeting by the Socialists and by other progressives is the Hyde Amendment which excludes abortion from the comprehensive health care services provided to low-income people by the federal government through Medicaid, a further erosion of rights of women under the doctrine of *Roe v. Wade*.

It is the opinion of the Lane County

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