

It's disingenuous to talk of "healing" and "reconciliation" in the context of politics, which is essentially about power. I hope that those of us who did not agree with how the Republican Party used its power in Bush's first term will dig in our heels and continue to fight in the second term. There is no "reconciliation" possible between, for example, those who think all abortion should be illegal, and those of us who believe in keeping it safe and legal, because neither side is prepared to give way on this issue. I hope that over the next four years, the 49 percent of us who did not give this administration a mandate to play God will continue to make our voices heard and to plan for 2008.

Harriett Smith  
Eugene

**RESPECT FOR KERRY**

God bless, John Kerry. We are a country of "sunshine patriots," by which I mean, we love winners and hate losers. Everyone has an opinion on what Kerry did wrong but their critiques are more vanity and hubris than wisdom. Bush won because he rode the crest of a cultural movement 20 years in the making. And he still needed every emotional trick to pull it off. That is one dimension of the election Kerry could not influence no matter how much logic and reality he threw at it. They hung a scarlet letter around his neck. He could have acquiesced to it and parroted Bush. He chose a different course. The grueling campaign process can transform a person regardless of the outcome. Can anyone seriously suggest that this campaign changed Bush in any detectable way? Yet with Kerry I saw change and growth in his quest for the presidency.

I respect John Kerry and see in his wife, children, and step-children an articulation of American and family values that fills me with pride. I hope that his transforming journey does not end here. John Kerry returns to the Senate with his dignity and principles intact. I look forward to him becoming a champion for the perspective and policies he so effectively presented.

So begins the second act and I advise like minded citizens to roll up their sleeves and accept the challenge before us. Their time will pass and our time will come.

Richard Young  
Eugene

**OUT OF TOUCH**

Well, America's Democrats had a golden opportunity and blew it by selecting an ultra-left and shameless panderer to lead their charge. They have only themselves to blame. It was they who chose Kerry in the state pri-

maries.

That they could not defeat arguably the most inept and dangerous megalomaniac ever to sit in the oval office speaks volumes about the state of the left in America today. Sure, they still control our schools and much of the media, but are out of touch with mainstream voters and weren't smart enough to recognize it.

As Bush and his cronies continue to lead America down the road to disaster, Democrats must shoulder much of the blame for the results.

Jerry Ritter  
Springfield

**THE PEOPLE SPOKE**

Lemmings ...

Jacob Swearingen  
Eugene

**BEING THANKFUL**

I have always been sad to acknowledge that too many people on Earth continually exist under the strangling intents and whims of leaders who are inept, corrupt, mean-spirited or a combination. I am sadder about this truth: Our traditionally immune American necks somehow ended up in such hands for the past four years.

I am saddest about this truth: Most of the American public actually voted to keep such a grip on them for another four!

I can only find solace in the words of H.L. Mencken: "In this world of sin and sorrow, there is always something to be thankful for. As for me, I rejoice that I am not a Republican."

Amelia Good  
Corvallis

**RUN FOR OFFICE**

Like many progressives, liberals, democrats, moms, dads, lesbians and gays, regular hard working folk, I am sad, frustrated and deflated "the day after" the 2004 election. I spent my day shocked and close to tears as Sen. Kerry gave his concession speech in Boston.

However, I am heartened by many things today. Peter DeFazio will continue to serve us in the Legislature, Kitty Piercy is our new Eugene mayor, and 84 percent of Oregonians turned in a ballot.

This is NOT the time to let the air out of our sails. We have worked hard for change, with volunteers lending their efforts alongside the great people of MoveOnPAC, ACT and more — we got out the vote and worked to make sure that the voices of all Oregonians and Americans were heard. The result wasn't what I wanted, but I feel way better having

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