

# OPINION

## Gay marriage, abortions are not the enemy

By Sarah Weber  
copy editor

It was the third week in October when I started to have my doubts about whether the Kerry campaign could pull this one off. While I still inwardly rooted for the democratic underdog Tuesday night, I watched the numbers roll in with a kind of sober acceptance. President Bush is a strong leader and if most of the country feels safer under his watch, so be it.

I was bewildered to find out the next morning that I was sadly mistaken. As members of the media and both parties tried to make sense of the election results, a somewhat shocking discovery was made. Apparently the American people's biggest concern is not terrorism, Iraq or the sluggish economy. Instead, the people heading to the polls were most fearful of gay marriage and abortion.

The most important issue cited by voters, according to exit polls gathered by CNN, was morality. The economy and terrorism came in second and third.

Now I can sleep at night knowing that America took a hard look at the candidates and decided to vote for the man they felt would better protect the country. But

knowing that Americans are more concerned with other people's personal affairs than the war and the state of the nation's economy is very hard to swallow.

I can appreciate that many people are heatedly anti-abortion, and voters in 11 states decided Tuesday to outlaw gay marriage. But the opposition to these issues is deeply muddled in religious beliefs and last I remember, this is a nation founded on the separation of church and state.

Supreme Court cases have long backed the people's right to have beliefs. It also has a tradition of keeping people's beliefs from infringing on the rights of others. Recall Civil Rights cases and *Roe v. Wade*. Many people were upset with the ending of segregation and giving women the right to choose. But quite frankly, it didn't matter what they thought. Pivotal moments in our country's history, moments that defined the freedoms that we have today, were often very unpopular.

I don't know if we can blame the Bible-belt Republicans, our highly religious president or just the shortsightedness of the American people, but something has

gone terribly wrong. We should have been asking ourselves how well the candidates could handle the war in Iraq, whether they could spur a job producing economy and how they could help protect our nation's borders. But somehow, voters' eyes were turned from the real issues and focused on the personal beliefs of the candidates.

Suddenly, the possibility of giving gays and lesbians the right to visit each other in the hospital, share health care benefits and raise kids in a loving home became more horrendous than the still at-large bin Laden. The ability of a mother to choose what is happening in her body is more devastating than the lack of jobs.

Gay marriage and abortion are not the enemy, people. And I hope 10 years from now we will look back at this election and be embarrassed. I hope we will look at homophobia the way we look at racism - with disgust.

President Bush still may have been the right choice when we take a look at the real issues. But when we consider the blind and hateful reasons why he was re-elected, we have to, once again, wonder about his legitimacy.

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**Penn State Erie,  
the Behrend College;**  
First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building,  
Station Road, Erie, PA 16563.  
Contact The Beacon at:  
Telephone: (814) 898-6488  
Fax: (814) 898-6019  
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## In mourning for America

By Carolyn M. Tellers  
beacon assistant

It is with great sadness that I write this, in honor of a great country that once was prosperous and flourishing, with a bright future. It seems that the threat to that shining place, which took root and grew in the last four years, is to be allowed to continue to grow and spread over the next four years. Unless something can be done to prevent that from happening, it seems as if we will be forced to watch.

Will we sit idly by in hibernation, or watching in numb horror as the death toll of our men and women continues to rise in Iraq, as the conditions in our homeland continue to worsen with recordbreaking trends in unemployment and lack of health care?

Will people continue to sleep as the current administration continues to make moves to help their (former?) companies profit from those actions? Actions such as the war for oil (err, I mean Iraqi freedom) and selling national forest lands to logging companies?

Will we sit idly by as the current administration continues to lessen the separation between state and church for its

own right-wing fundamentalist reasons? What will happen to the constitutional right to freedom of religion? Or is it only one privileged religion?

Those in power need to take off the rose-colored glasses. They need to quit fighting wars for their own gain and instead focus on helping our own country's declining health. Thousands of people are without jobs (or jobs that pay enough to live on) and affordable health care or insurance. It seems that throughout the country, the majority of available jobs are McJobs.

To myself and countless others, the future looks rather dismal after Wednesday's announcement. As I watched the news announce the results of the presidential election, I felt as if I were watching someone I care about bleeding to death, the red covering the map of our country.

Perhaps it is foolish to be upset about the outcome. Perhaps the president will improve the conditions of our country, help improve health care, the economy, education, the environment and truly end the war overseas. Hey, these rose-colored glasses aren't so bad after all.

## Elections should've been settled at WrestleMania XXI

By Ray Immeckus  
editorial columnist

Bush is "a papa's boy, a brainless donkey with an ulterior motive. He's got an eager trigger finger, and an even lower i.q."

Kerry is "left wing, a regular tree hugger. An overhyped war hero with a rich wife and more positions than a prostitute."

This past Tuesday morning, at around 1 a.m., I sat staring at my computer screen, pondering whether there was any political ideology I could possibly tackle for this post election issue. Over the last year, both the positive and negatives relating to all things Bush or Kerry had been flogged to death by the media.

These and a plethora of other criticisms and castigations of each candidate have been hammered into our collective minds over the last year. Bush and Kerry's campaigns have been more blood-thirsty and brutal than in past history. It seems that the aims of this year's ads have been to generate a deep seeded hate among the voting public for the opposition, rather than support for each individual ad's candidate.

Every election year has its share of

"hate ads," but the multiplicity of this sort of ad has been much more evident in the previous months. Many find them nauseating and hypocritical. But I say keep 'em coming.

More over, I'd like to see tv spots that show no mercy for the opposition. Imagine Bush unleashing a nimety of four and five letter words slamming Theresa Heinz Kerry, only to have John respond by challenging GW to a no holds barred cage match in the middle of the White House lawn.

Pandemonium would ensue, all hell would break loose and not even George Bush Sr. could save himself from this one.

Now if you believe that I've been brainwashed by Vince McMahon and his studio wrestling minions, you'd be incorrect. If you think that I'm just another typical college student, who's too busy getting drunk to bother caring about the well being of my country, you'd only be half wrong.

However, if you see me as someone who is not at all intrigued or interested by politics, but at the same time realizes the importance of being politically cultured, congratulations, you figured me out.

I just feel that politics are dryer than

Jerry Seinfeld's jokes and all I'm asking for is some more verbal abuse and little Undertaker-esque ass kicking every once in awhile.

If we could somehow put a more vehement twist on campaigning and elections, a lot of problems could be solved. Voter turnout would most definitely increase, since there are masses of young men and women like myself, who just need a little bit of kick, and a few thrills to catch their interest; a plot Schwarzenegger would love.

I leave you with quotes from two of my favorite personalities, one from writer Hunter S. Thompson and the other from actor/governor/terminator, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

After reading this duo of insults, try to tell me that a growth in excerpts like these, with crudeness and a touch of creativity, would not make politics just the slightest bit more enjoyable.

"Bush is a natural born loser with a filthy rich daddy who pimped his son out to rich oil mongers. He hates music, football and sex, in no particular order, and he is no fun at all."

"Kerry is a girly man."



## Republocrat: Indecisive in 2004

By Amy Pogson  
editorial columnist

How to look beyond the words and images and discern the quality of the man? This was a question that I asked myself for many months, and that I found myself asking again on Tuesday as I drove to the township building where I would cast my vote. How do you judge the true thoughts and intentions of another person?

This election left me asking many difficult questions, questions that I couldn't begin to know how to answer.

Was the war in Iraq wrong? Yes, but what role did the President's intentions play? If he truly believed that his actions were right, that he was pursuing the best interests of our country, does this create a justification for the war? What is the extent of responsibility? Should Americans finish what they have started regardless of the consequences of pushing ahead? When should Americans ask for help? To what extent should other countries have to take responsibility for the actions taken by the United States?

At this point, what do we owe Iraq? What are our obligations? Which quality is more important in a President, thought or action? Does thought mean inaction and action mean a lack of thought? Which candidate can best react to the unexpected? Who will have the presence of mind and the character to make good decisions in difficult situations?

Turning these questions over in my

mind, I found myself paralyzed. People asked me who I was going to vote for and I couldn't reply. The editor of the Beacon hinted that I should write editorials about the election since I am a Republican and he thought that it would counterbalance the many Democratic viewpoints that are often presented. I avoided these political editorials. I found it difficult to side with and defend my party. I also found it difficult to reconcile my beliefs with some aspects of the Democratic Party.

My indecision drove me crazy. I began to have dreams about not knowing who to vote for. I was filled with a sickening uncertainty when I opened up the newspaper to read about the campaign.

In short, the election presented me with a giant dilemma. While I had always been taught that voting is a sacred responsibility, a duty that should never be taken for granted, I honestly could not, in good conscience, cast a vote for either candidate. I felt that my vote mattered and that I should be careful to make a good decision, but at the same time I didn't see a good decision available. Both candidates had good points and bad points; I couldn't full-heartedly agree with either of them.

Despite my uncertainty, I continued to consider the candidates and the election and I made a discovery: my ideas about politics were too idealistic. This struck me as strange because I had never really seen myself as idealistic before. I have

always tried to see the practical side of the world, to not fool myself by hoping for the best when the best may not be an option.

Yet, in this particular situation I was hoping for the best. I was looking for a potential President who was more than a man. I wanted him to be an embodiment of the people, someone who would speak profound words and make wise decisions for them. I wanted him to be a leader of leaders. Someone who would strive to do what was right, without getting caught up in politics and party disputes.

Consequently, I set the bar too high. The potential President I was looking for did not exist in the candidates and may not exist anywhere. I realized this in the days before the election as I became more and more anxious about my decision. I remembered something that one of my favorite professors said to me when I was debating between two potential majors. "Nothing will ever be perfect," he said. "Sometimes you just have to pick the best of your options and hope that the rest falls into place."

I thought of this advice as I pulled the lever on Tuesday and made my choice. I picked the one I thought best and decided to let the rest fall into place from there. Now my only hope is that the rest of the country can do the same. The choice has been made, right or wrong, for better or worse, and perfection is not a possibility. We can only hope for the best.

**Write a letter to the editor that's not about politics...I dare you!**  
email [beaconletters@aol.com](mailto:beaconletters@aol.com)