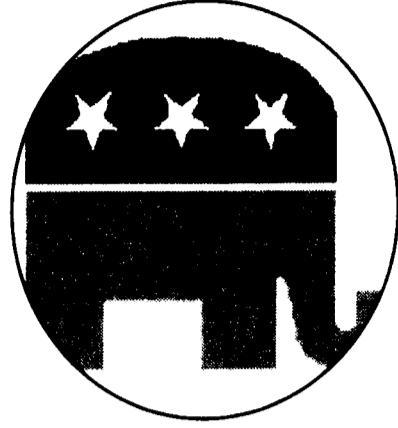


STUDENT LIFE

Primary Progress



- **President George Bush** defended his stance on the Iraq War in a press conference on Wednesday March 19, the fifth year anniversary of the United States attack. Bush stated that he believed the invasion by the United States has made our country and the entire world safer.

Bush acknowledged that the lives lost and money spent on the war had exceeded his expectations, but that he still believes that America should stay the course.

"Five years into this battle, there is an understandable debate over whether the war was worth fighting, whether the fight is worth winning, and whether we can win it," Bush said. "The answers are clear to me. Removing Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, and this is a fight that America can and must win."

- **John McCain**, the Republican candidate for the presidency, mirrored President Bush's statements when he said that the United States was "standing on the precipice of winning a major victory against radical Islamic extremism."

McCain did, however, criticize the handling of the war after the initial success the United States had.

"The problem with Iraq, in my view, is that it was mishandled after the initial success," McCain said this week after a visit to Iraq.

McCain stated, though, that his visit to Iraq had shown him that the situation had improved in the last year, but was quick to point out that al-Qaeda was not nearly defeated. He maintained that immediate withdrawal from Iraq would give them reason to proclaim a victory and would allow them to strengthen as a group.

- **Hillary Clinton** and **Barack Obama**, the democratic presidential hopefuls, contrasted McCain and Bush's conservative stances on the war on Wednesday, March 19.

"Where are we for all of this sacrifice?" Obama wondered. "We are less safe and less able to shape events abroad. We are divided at home, and our alliances around the world have been strained."

Obama also noted that the Iraq War had now lasted longer than the Civil War, World War I and World War II.

Clinton lobbied for a massive withdrawal of troops that would take place as soon as she took office, but mentioned that she knew withdrawing troops could bring about a certain amount of danger.

"Every one of you who has served knows with drawing troops can be as dangerous as inserting them," Clinton said.

- The **Pennsylvania primary election**, which is to be held on April 22, has taken on huge significance as one of the final primaries before the Democratic convention. The choice between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination could be decided on that day.

• There has been no decision yet concerning the counting of Michigan Democratic primary votes. The state was stripped of their delegates after the Democratic National Committee concluded that they had switched the date of their primary to a date too early in the year. When the Michigan State Senate didn't come to a decision on Thursday, March 20 it made it nearly impossible for a rescheduled primary event to occur that would be counted towards the official vote.

• A poll released on Wednesday showed that President Bush currently has an approval rating of 31 percent, which is the lowest of his entire presidency. 67 percent of the American citizens polled by CNN did not approve of the way that Bush is handling the presidency.

The 31 percent approval rate is a 40 point drop from 71 percent, which was his approval rating five years ago just before the beginning of the Iraq War.

Upcoming events on campus

- Alternative rock band Third Eye Blind will be performing on Friday, April 4 at the Junker Center. Tickets are now on sale at the RUB desk and are \$15 for students and \$20 for the general public. Doors will open at 7 p.m. and the concert will begin at 8 p.m.
- There will be a gaming night on Friday, March 21 at the Reed Building in room 112, 113 and 114 at 7 p.m. There will be free pizza and if you're considering attending, bring soda to share with the group.
- The International Student Organization is hosting A Night on the 8th Continent in the McGarvey Commons on March 27 at 5:30 p.m. It will be an opportunity to try various types of International Cuisine. Students can sign up at the RUB desk and the event is free. For more information contact eyr5015@psu.edu.
- Environmental strategist and author Andrew Winston will be on campus as part of the Speaker Series on Monday, April 7. He will be speaking at 7:30 p.m. in McGarvey Commons and is free to both students and the general public.
- Literary non-fiction author Joe Mackall will be speaking as part of the creative writer's series on Thursday, March 27 in the Smith Chapel at 6 p.m. Mackall has written several books and has written for numerous publications, including *The Washington Post* and NPR's *Morning Edition*.

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