



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 02, 2004

Why I'm Voting Today

by Michael in New York on [11/02/2004 01:40:00 AM](#)

I'm a registered Republican, though by now I guess I'd consider myself an Independent -- conservative on fiscal and foreign policy issues and what's considered liberal on social issues. I voted for Reagan and Bush Sr. (I actually really liked him and thought he was a great VP and good P but twelve years in power for the same group of folks was long enough) and Bill Clinton and Bill Clinton again. I was batting a thousand, actually, until Bush Jr. came along. I really didn't think much of Gore but couldn't possibly imagine Bush in the White House. I vote swapped with a friend in Florida and -- much to my amazement -- found myself voting for Nader in NYC where it was safe and wouldn't do any damage. For a few days, my friend and I thought maybe our vote had put Gore over the top and my gosh it almost did. But Bush became President.

And he has been far worse than I could ever imagine. As a fiscal conservative, I've been aghast at his reckless, wasteful spending, not to mention his squandering of an annual surplus. As an internationalist, I've been distraught to see Bush tear down the hard work of his father and disparage not just the UN but virtually every international organization and treaty the US is party to. As a respecter of law and order, I'm shocked that he would consider himself above both US and international law. As someone who is fond of oxygen, I've been choked up over his environmental record. As a social moderate, I'm furious that he has attacked the basic civil rights of Americans. As a Republican, I'm even more furious that he would toy with the Constitution of the United States for partisan advantage, turning a document that has always been a symbol of freedom into a symbol of division and hatred. As a believer in democratic capitalism, I've been in disbelief as Bush pretends to support democracy but continues to cozy up to corrupt monarchies in Saudi Arabia and military dictatorships in Pakistan and burgeoning empires in the Soviet Union -- I mean Russia -- while mocking and turning away from our historic allies and real democracies like France and Germany and Canada and Mexico and Brazil and so many others. As an American, I've been aghast that so many of my fellow citizens accepted Bush's decision to throw US citizens into a hole in the ground and claim he should never, ever have to justify to anyone anywhere and certainly not to a judge who he was holding or why. All in the name of freedom. As a human, I've been ashamed to see our nation directly responsible for the rape, torture, and killing of prisoners. All in the name of freedom. And not one person was fired or demoted or even reprimanded except the lowly soldiers caught on videotape and in photos.

But happily, my anyone-but-Bush attitude has turned into positive support for Kerry. He has a very good record on being

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