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The Pornography of Power: Lust for Empire Has Weakened America

By [Emily Wilson](#), [AlterNet](#). Posted **July 25, 2008**.

Veteran journalist Robert Scheer on the media's complicity in war, the rise of the neocons and how even Nixon got some things right.

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Robert Scheer has been a journalist for 30 years, over which time he has interviewed presidents Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, as well as other major political figures. For years a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times* and now for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, he's currently the editor-in-chief at [Truthdig.com](#) and represents the left point of view on KCRW's political radio show "Left, Right and Center." In addition to print and radio, Scheer has also worked in movies: He played a reporter in Warren Beatty's "Bullworth" and was a project consultant for Oliver Stone's "Nixon."

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Scheer is the author of eight books, among them, *Playing President: My Close Encounters with Nixon, Carter, Bush I, Reagan, and Clinton -- And How They Did Not Prepare Me for George W. Bush* (Akashic Books, 2006). His latest is *The Pornography of Power: How Defense Hawks Hijacked 9/11 and Weakened America*. In it, Scheer takes on the United States' foreign policy, arguing that our military budget, which amounts to more than the rest of the world's combined, has gotten completely out of control. AlterNet writer Emily Wilson recently sat down with Scheer at a restaurant in San Francisco to hear his views on the federal government, the media's complicity in war, the rise of the neocons and how even Nixon got some things right.

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Emily Wilson: You write in the acknowledgements that you had one book in mind, but your editor wanted you to do this book. Why did he want this book?

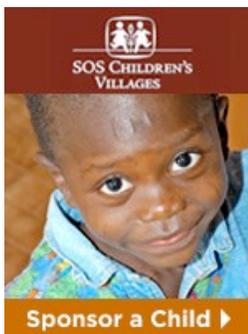
Robert Scheer: I had just given a lecture to this libertarian convention. It was called "Ike was Right," and it reflected some of the evolution of my own thinking. I no longer am enamored of the big federal state, because most of what it does I oppose -- particularly once Clinton cut the welfare program. We no longer have a federal program to aid poor people. We don't have a poverty program. And Clinton, with his [Financial Services Modernization Act](#), managed to give the banks everything they wanted and take away more rights from the state. It used to be that in California we had a limit on interest payments. States had reasonable, populist-inspired controls over corporations. And then there's the [Telecommunications Act](#). We used to believe communications should be in part locally owned to have diversity and so forth; that's all gone bye-bye with the Telecommunications Act. So there you go: You have three things the Clinton administration, presumably a progressive administration, did that took away three reasons that I would care about the federal

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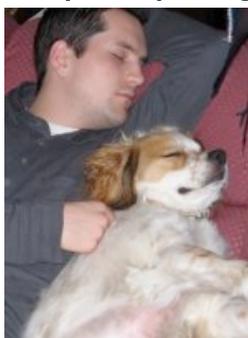


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government.

... Now, as my book lays out, six out of ten dollars of the discretionary budget go to the military, and in Congress they're scrambling over how to use the other four out of ten for the other things we care about. So my concern is, all right, let's let California keep its money, let's keep it on a state level -- and in my book I even argue that's what the founders had in mind. I quote George Washington, who's my great hero in this book: They knew if you got into empire you weren't going to have representative democracy. Because when you're on the local level, people can be informed, they can demand the truth, there isn't classification, there isn't national security -- and when you get to empire and foreign adventures (being) the norm, not the exception, is to be lied to and not to discover the truth for 20, 30, 40 years or whatever. The Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which Johnson and McNamara said was the basis for expanding the war to North Vietnam, was based on a lie, that they knew to be a lie when they went to the nation and said we were attacked. They knew there was no evidence of an attack. We didn't learn that for 20 years.

So my feeling before I went to the libertarian convention was ... what do I think about the federal government? We needed the federal government when a guy like Roosevelt was our president and we could set some standards of child labor and the right to organize unions, and pay people adequately, and health and safety and so forth. But what the federal government has come to mean is basically an arm of the military industrial complex that favors big business and big agriculture. We'd be better off with the states just keeping their tax dollars and using them to educate their people, and fix their levies, and deal with their subprime mortgage scandals, and all the other things we want money for.

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Emily Wilson is a freelance writer and teaches basic skills at City College of San Francisco.

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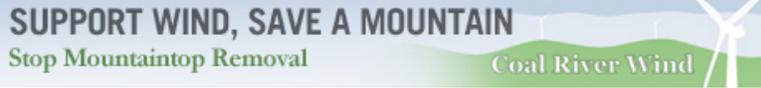
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Catchy title. Ugly subject.

Posted by: ranchero42 on Jul 25, 2008 12:23 AM
 Current rating: 5 [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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I've noticed that the Alternet website has more truly patriotic Americans per square inch as any I've seen. I enjoy the unvarnished language (mostly) and it does my heart good to see so many people interested in change. I think this will be a very important book, and what I've seen of it so far has left me uncharacteristically speechless. I haven't come late to the idea that the way this country does business needs to change radically, but the deep-rooted systemic damage implied here kinda fucks me up. Sorry I posted first, because I know there are better people at dealing with this, I hope I read some good ideas soon.

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Robert Scheer is Going Soft ...

Posted by: mmckinl on Jul 25, 2008 12:26 AM
 Current rating: 3 [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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I certainly agree with his historical analysis, even his opinion of John McCain but to be enthusiastic about Obama is to have had one's head in the sand over this last month.

Barack Obama has gone way right in his approaches to Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Israel, Palestine, FISA, Social Security, Health Care, Trade, runs around with Senator Chuck Hagel R- Nebraska and there are rumors of that Barack may keep Gates on as Secretary of Defense.

Mr Scheer could have said he would hold his nose and vote for Obama, I would respect that, but saying "I am quite enthusiastic about Barack Obama." at this point, loses big points as far as I'm concerned.

vote green...

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- » **RE: obert Scheer is Going Soft ...** Posted by: freshlemon
- » **RE: obert Scheer is Going Soft ...** Posted by: Crazy H
- » **RE: obert Scheer is Going Soft ...** Posted by: ranchero42
- » **Please, please, please don't pull another Nader on us.** Posted by: Hans B
- » **RE: NADER NOW** Posted by: grkjr

So far, talk between the two candidates have been meaningless

Posted by: Richard House on Jul 25, 2008 12:45 AM
 Current rating: 5 [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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Robert Scheer: " I don't know what McCain or Obama will do when one becomes president." He's right, who knows?

Some questions I would put to Obama: Will habeas corpus and posse comitatus be restored? How about the \$600 billion war and defense budget – will they cut that in half and use it for America's people and its infrastructure?

What about the tens of millions of \$\$\$ being poured into "End Game" detention camps under contract with Halliburton – will Obama get to tell the American people what that's really about? And the parasitic health insurance companies who made \$93 billion in profits; how about full health care coverage for all instead?

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Will spying on Americans end? Torture? Will getting rid of GW Bush and Cheney make a difference – after all, in Berlin you were saying American and Europeans have to fight the war on terror more then ever – will you continue the fear mongering and concentrate on getting rid of the god-damn religious extremists instead?

What about giving more priority to fighting the war on poverty in America? So far, all I've seen is a campaign of personalities and platitudes who come from a two-party corporate political system.

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» **RE: So far, talk between the two candidates have been meaningless** Posted by: Lauren

» **RE: So far, talk between the two candidates have been meaningless** Posted by: Yehudi61

» **RE: So far, talk between the two candidates have been meaningless** Posted by: Dianka

Scheer's got it half right

Posted by: Sojourner on Jul 25, 2008 12:56 AM

Current rating: 5 [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

[Report this comment]

Blaming the media for letting Iraq happen makes sense. The dislike of Saddam added to the greed for Iraqi oil when fueled by war hysteria repeated an American mistake at least as old as the Civil War.

Our media is supposed to know American weaknesses as well as our strengths. With media economic problems along with the takeover of media by neo-con sympathizers, our msm is useless. The shift to local news events means decentralized media and more responsibility. But at the national level, we are in deep doo-doo.

However, the complaints against Bill Clinton are half-truths. Scheer blames him for not vetoing legislation that was not veto-proof after the GOP took over the Congress in 1994. The banks wanted the legislation long before Clinton got into office. His veto would have been spitting into the wind. And if you look at the job growth under Clinton, the cuts in the welfare system don't look so bad.

Under Bush Jr. the lack of job growth has turned the welfare cuts into punishment of the poor. So Scheer's sense of history is framed by his support for Obama over Hillary.

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» **Bull-oney!** Posted by: edgeofnowhere

» **The "Contract With America" did not come from Clinton.** Posted by: Sojourner

» **RE: The "Contract With America" did not come from Clinton.** Posted by: CatDad

» **usterroristnation** Posted by: usterroristnation

It's all relative.

Posted by: kepstein7777 on Jul 25, 2008 1:41 AM

Current rating: 5 [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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You know the world's gone to hell when Nixon starts to look good.

I like the point about conservatism: that the folks in power today are everything but...Yet everyone seems to think they are. Very Orwellian.

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» **Conservatism doesn't mean purely one thing. It can change a lot with time and still be conservatism!** Posted by: yellow

» **This is an amazing post, yellow, one of your finest!** Posted by: PaulC

» **RE: This is an amazing post, yellow, one of your finest!** Posted by: yellow

Is Obama Betraying His Promise of Change?

Posted by: mmckinl on Jul 25, 2008 1:56 AM

Current rating: **Not yet rated** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

[Report this comment]

Written by none other than Robert Scheer ... in this issue of Alternet !

"Barack Obama is betraying his promise of change and is in danger of becoming just another political hack.

Yes, just like former maverick John McCain, who has refashioned himself as a mindless rubber stamp for the most inane policies of the miserably failed Bush administration. Both candidates are embracing, rather than challenging, the fundamental irrationality of Bush's "war on terror," which substitutes hysteria for rational analysis in appraising the dangers the country faces."

and he goes on ...

"Both (Obama and McCain) candidates supported the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which has everything to do with violating the basic freedoms of our citizens and nothing to do with making them safer. "

So which is it ?

"Barack Obama is betraying his promise of change and is in danger of becoming just another political hack."

or

"On the other hand, Barack Obama has shown a freshness of approach to a complex world. "

Methinks this interview is a tad old.

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» [RE: Is Obama Betraying His Promise of Change?](#) Posted by: Lauren

Big gummint isn't the biggest problem

Posted by: hagwind on Jul 25, 2008 4:45 AM

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Current rating: **4** [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

Mulling over Scheer's remarks about a strong federal government, and how he's been rethinking his support for the idea. True, the last (almost) 30 years are enough to give anyone pause, and Scheer's point that "when you're on the local level, people can be informed" is important. (I'd push the point further: on the local level, *we can inform ourselves*. And we do.)

But I've got my doubts. The period of U.S. decline was kicked off by "shrink the federal government" people. Clinton's welfare "reform" was a shrink-the-federal-government initiative. The appalling negligence that made Hurricanes Katrina and Rita so devastating was overseen by shrink-the-federal-government people -- or at least people who don't want the federal government to be effective; they do want a federal government big enough to give them high-paying, undemanding jobs. Any organization that has the power to do great good also has the power to do great harm. The U.S. federal government has done great harm, but it's done so while in the hands of the shrink-the-federal-government people. In other words, I'm not sure that bigness is the biggest problem here.

As for "states' rights" -- where *have* I heard that before?? -- I have this hunch that "let the states do it" is a more attractive proposition if you live in, say, California than if you live in, say, Louisiana, unless you're fairly privileged, in which case it doesn't matter much where you live. Massachusetts, where I live, might make out OK, but having watched the state's insurance reform develop over the years has persuaded me that a national single-payer plan is the only way to go: fighting for reform state by state is going to leave way too much power in the hands of the insurance companies.

And we all know (or should, if we've paid any attention to U.S. history) that businesses migrate to the states that restrict labor organizing, ignore workplace safety provisions, and overlook all kinds of pollution in order to offer low-wage, dead-end jobs to people with no other options. And when they run out of states, they go looking for countries that offer similar perks.

Sure, it's tempting to blame all our problems on "big federal government" -- Reagan did, after all, and, hey, if it was good enough for Reagan . . . ?? But I do believe that most of the country's problems trace back, directly and indirectly, to a run-amok economic system that privileges corporations over people and has been allowed to trump the political system at every turn. Can the states working independently bring that economic system to heel? Don't think so.

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» [RE: Big gummint isn't the biggest problem](#) Posted by: Illiteratilumen

» [I agree with you hagwind](#) Posted by: PaulC

Rightwing Republicans have got to love AlterNet

Posted by: HughScott on Jul 25, 2008 5:05 AM

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Current rating: **4** [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

From my perspective as a Vietnam veteran, lifelong registered Republican and ardent Obama fan, AlterNet comments are becoming more and more negative towards my man, Barack -- the most inspiring leader I have even seen.

This is crazy. The choice freedom-loving Americans face in November has never been so stark or dramatic. If you want four more years of war, shredding the Constitution, destruction of the middleclass, etc., then vote for John McBush. Otherwise, support Obama and STOP THE NITPICKING!

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» [RE: ightwing Republicans have got to love AlterNet](#) Posted by: Lauren

» [If you love to nitpick, Lauren, how about doing it to McCain for a change.](#) Posted by: HughScott

» [RE: Rightwing Republicans have got to love AlterNet](#) Posted by: Dianka

» [RE: Rightwing Republicans have got to love AlterNet](#) Posted by: hagwind

» [Rather than nitpick on AlterNet, Dianka, express your frustrations through MoveOn.org like I do.](#) Posted by: HughScott

- » **I'm with you, Hugh** Posted by: hagwind
- » **Thank, hagwind. I was starting to feel lonely on this thread.** Posted by: HughScott
 - » **Don't be lonely, Hugh.** Posted by: Hans B
- » **Criticism is not nitpicking** Posted by: brunowe
 - » **The rightwing GOP got control of America through party LOYALTY, not nitpicking their candidates!** Posted by: HughScott
 - » **Defend the Constitution? But I Nit Pick...** Posted by: mcartri
 - » **But ARE you defending the Constitution when you replay the 2000 scenario?** Posted by: Hans B
 - » **"... if he[Gore]had won[In 2000].** Posted by: mcartri

Yup

Posted by: GreyFoxThree on Jul 25, 2008 6:25 AM

[\[Report this comment\]](#)Current rating: **5** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

Way to go Dictator Bush. Ran the country right into the ground because all he cares about is Global Domination. Very sad indeed.

JT

[Ultimate Anonymity](#)[< [Reply to this comment](#)] [[Post a new comment](#) >] [[Rate this comment: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5](#)]**We got brainwashed**

Posted by: Dianka on Jul 25, 2008 7:23 AM

[\[Report this comment\]](#)Current rating: **4** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

I never imagined a day when we would have a government that is so reactionary that Eisenhower and Nixon would be viewed as progressive in comparison. When I review (online) the policies and speeches of those two stalwarts of conservative ideology, I'm surprised by how progressive many of their ideas are compared to the politics of today, especially on social/economic issues.

I'm surprised by the degree to which we were indoctrinated by the Reagan era. Today's progressive discussion was considered flat centrist before Reagan. What we see in gov. today is so extremist that Bush & Co. would have been seen as just another nut-wing fringe group. Obama is called liberal in spite of his solidly conservative views.

I'm especially worried about the disinterest in social policies, specifically poverty. We aren't connecting the dots to see how these policies impact all of us. Welfare "reform", for example, has been a powerful tool for suppressing wages and wiping out unions while creating a massive (growing) bottom wage/no rights, Third World workforce right here at home, sparing corporations the cost and bother of exporting our jobs. Our "workfare" is, quite simply, indentured servitude, for the benefit of corporations that finance our political system, to the harm of the poor-to-middle classes.

On results: Eisenhower warned against allowing corporations to gain excessive power. The warning was forgotten with the Reagan admin., and we see the consequences today. Nixon hiked welfare aid and programs; as a result, families were able to maintain a measure of stability while working their way out of poverty. Increased access to education/skills training helped us develop a world-class workforce, moving people from poverty into the middle class. Until Reagan, over 80% of recipients used aid for under 5 years, moving into the workforce, becoming taxpayers and thereby repaying all the aid they had received. Public costs (health care for the poor, crime/prisons, foster care, etc.) fell. Our "failed" welfare system was highly successful, clearly serving the common good. By manipulating the public discussion, Americans grew to view the poor as useless freeloaders, forgetting that they are us. Divide (the masses) and conquer.

We've both lost our perspective and forgotten how to connect those dots.

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- » **Ha!! So true. Why does Nixon rock now!** Posted by: jreal

Throwing Away Your Vote

Posted by: freshlemon on Jul 25, 2008 7:30 AM

[\[Report this comment\]](#)Current rating: **4** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

No matter what your feelings are about the two presumed candidates, one of them will be elected. You can either throw away your vote by going Green Party, Nader or a write in, but make no mistake, it will be a throw away.

If you think that your only choices from the two party system are "bad and worse" you are giving up on the future of America. Nobody is going to care about your indignation over the options of leadership because one of these two will win the election.

You have two choices to make your vote count. You can vote for a doddering old fool who tells good dirty jokes but doesn't have a clue about history or current affairs and will allow corporations and Karl Rove determine policy for him, or, you can vote for the new kid on the block who talks about changes

and appears to take the business of heading the government very seriously.

You also must remember that a president must take into account that he is a representative of all the people...not just the ones who think like you. There will never be a "perfect" candidate for any political office.

Those of you who declare that you will vote for one of the more obscure party reps need to get over yourselves and make your vote count.

My vote will go to Senator Obama. We must get rid of these people who have stolen the Republican Party and turned our government into a right-wing religious farce and want us all to become slaves to corporate wealth and fear.

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- » **Perfect candidates** Posted by: Illiteratilumen
- » **RE: Perfect candidates** Posted by: jenlight
- » **RE: Perfect candidates** Posted by: Illiteratilumen
- » **RE: Perfect candidates? Jenlight, whom is yours?** Posted by: nightgaunt
- » **No Vote is Wasted.** Posted by: mcartri
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: jenlight
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: freshlemon
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: robert.noll
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: hagwind
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: CatDad
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote in a rigged election is assured.** Posted by: nightgaunt
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: Hans B
- » **RE: Throwing Away Your Vote** Posted by: outsideagitator

VOTING EVIL

Posted by: edgeofnowhere on Jul 25, 2008 7:58 AM
Current rating: **3** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

[Report this comment]

Voting for the "lesser of two evils" just gives you evil. "Holding your nose" while voting still stinks. Until the American people disprove the idea that there are only two political parties in this country and that they MUST vote for one or the other, they will continue to get those candidates that support war, a bloated military, and suppression of criticism. The democrats "lost" the last two elections, not because of third party votes. but because they did not offer what people wanted -- honesty and anti-war strength. Again, the dems are going to field a candidate beholden to the special interests, AIPAC, and the military -- a candidate who is going to CONTINUE the war in Iraq and INCREASE the war in Afghanistan, both of which are ILLEGAL and IMMORAL! I, and a huge number of Americans, are not buying the Lesser of Two Evils, and will be voting Green, Libertarian, Nader, Peace and Freedom or just writing in Ron Paul or Dennis Kucinich. WE DO NOT WANT TO VOTE FOR THE WAR CANDIDATE, REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT!! Hell, if McCain wins do you really think it will be all that different? Have you forgotten who OWNS the country? Get real -- Nobama is just a dem shill for the same guys who run Bush and McCain.

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- » **AMEN** Posted by: robert.noll
- » **AMEN II** Posted by: mcartri
- » **American People Don't Know What the Hell They Want** Posted by: sofla100
- » **RE: American People have been told What They Want** Posted by: nightgaunt
- » **RE: American People have been told What They Want** Posted by: rancho42
- » **RE: VOTING EVIL** Posted by: DaPoorChimp
- » **RE: VOTING EVIL** Posted by: rancho42
- » **RE: VOTING EVIL won't change anything. Racism?** Posted by: nightgaunt
- » **RE: VOTING EVIL won't change anything. Racism?** Posted by: rancho42

Scheer, you're on but a few things you may not have thought of.....

Posted by: Spiritgirl on Jul 25, 2008 9:48 AM
Current rating: **3** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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During the Reagan years much was over-hyped and distorted, into convincing the public of that "rugged individualism" was good, and "government was bad". Regulation "by the government" was bad, and "do it yourself individualism" was good. Society was neglected as an outcome. When I say society - I mean for the good of the many, was replaced by what's good for "me". A by-product of that "shift" was that the left hand (the thinking populace), didn't realize what the right hand (the greedy) was or has been doing.

The American public bought the myths (think cowboys and indians movies), while the right was busy de-regulating everything (finances, telecommunications, energy, etc.) so that they and their cronies could do

exactly what they wanted to make money. Of course the S&L scandals weren't enough of a wake up call. And while many people were taken by Enron it still wasn't enough. Not enough to make the public stop and seriously consider - IT WASN'T JUST ONE BAD APPLE IN THE BARREL, PEOPLE!

Now all through the last 25-30 years the media - which is supposed to be "the watchdog" of a "free & democratic" country have been bought out and we the public have been dumbed down. So now we have a fiasco that's happening. Bush was right Wall Street got drunk, but so has Washington on the power that they have amassed and the avarice is still flowing. Congress is missing in action, the economy is in shambles, people are being evicted, etc., etc.

And we the people are allowing ourselves to be duped and defrauded. To be divided by petty trivial nonsense at a time when we need to come together to throw the bums in jail and take back our country.

The paper says "There comes a time when tyranny must be overthrown...and in order to form a more perfect union, We the people do hereby declare..", what more must be said! We must hold the Administrative, Legislative, and Judicial feet to the fire and demand accountability, now!!!

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>> **RE: Scheer, you're on but a few things you may not have thought of....** Posted by: babs

Being Realistic and Doing the "Best We Can"

Posted by: sofla100 on Jul 25, 2008 12:27 PM

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Current rating: **5** [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

I don't think we should let our ideas and beliefs get the better of us when it comes to supporting Obama. That's because an American political candidate will only get elected if he shows enough support for the ideology and beliefs of a majority of those voting. Therefore, it's not about "holding one's nose" at the voting booth, but much more about being realistic and pragmatic. The majority of Americans have been raised on the credo of "duty, honor, country" and the belief that America is always a positive moral and democratizing force in the world. They don't really want to believe we go to war for access to commodities (like oil), to extend the influence of Presidents (like Bush) or to support our "Israeli allies." They don't want to believe that we illegally imprison and torture people, as at Guantanamo. They don't want to believe that much of the big defense budget is tied in with the demands of defense contractors and the Congressmen that benefit from defense company lobbyists. So, there is a lot that Americans and the American Media turn a blind eye towards. Therefore, in the end, we support Obama because even though the road is very long towards real freedom for the American people and the people of the World, a tiny bit of light comes from the direction he (Obama) faces. We support Obama because the ways of the world are the ways of the world. And, we have to do the best we can.

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>> **RE: Being Realistic and Doing the "Best We Can"** Posted by: grkjr

Great Title

Posted by: jreal on Jul 25, 2008 12:45 PM

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I always said that Focks News is the SMUT channel. All these folks with their supposed "moral values" all watching smut and digging every bit of it.

And then when you talk to these folks, you find out that their head is full of smut.

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Lust for Power. It's why we have a first term senator

Posted by: lindat on Jul 25, 2008 1:34 PM

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Current rating: **2** [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

with no record of accomplishments and 130 "present" votes to dodge hard issues with the audacity to think he should be president.

Lust for power.

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>> **GOP talking points! How refreshing!** Posted by: ranchero42

>> **RE: GOP talking points! How refreshing!** Posted by: outsideagitator

>> **And that bearded guy from Kentucky/Indiana/Illinois** Posted by: mcartri

The sickness of empire is deep and supported by many.

Posted by: nightgaunt on Jul 25, 2008 1:43 PM

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Current rating: **5** [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

Just the fact that Obama's fiction of 'change' that is going to be very much the same. Just check out with whom he associates with and are giving him directions. That should be enough. I am not swayed by appearance or promises---just the facts.

Maybe because I have trouble with empathy and am more empirical in my analysis of them. Most of the marketing doesn't work on me either. I think most people like enough of what the Dominionists want to go along with it.

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» [Oooh, Dominionists! Is this another comic book fanzine...](#) Posted by: ranchero42

» [RE: Dominionists: Use a search engine lately Ranchero42?](#) Posted by: nightgaunt

» [Seek Widely and Ye Shall Find...](#) Posted by: ranchero42

Politics, pragmatism and realism

Posted by: CJC on Jul 25, 2008 3:51 PM

Current rating: [5](#) [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

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A hearty amen to HughScott, hagwind, freshlemon, and sofia100.

Our next president will either be Barack Obama or John McCain. Voting green or Nader or anything else may make some feel self-righteous and better than the rest of us, but no one but you will remember how you voted. At a Obama platform discussion among some Democrats in my city last night someone reminded us that Nader got enough votes in 2000 to give Bush the election. I think the state mentioned was NH, and maybe there were others. All the hoorah in FL wouldn't have mattered if Nader voters had mostly voted for Gore.

Now, how many can honestly say that there would have been no difference between Gore and Bush?? It's even imaginable that 9/11 would have been prevented, because the Bushies completely dismissed the threat of terrorism and ignored many warnings until 4 planes were hijacked. And then in the afternoon of 9/11 Rumsfeld and/or Cheney brought up Iraq.

Had Gore won there would have been a constant barrage of complaints from the likes of many of us about how he wasn't progressive enough etc etc etc, and there would have been no way to know how horrific the path would be that we are now going down.

Let's not muck it up again by complaining that Obama isn't perfect, or even as good as we want him to be. But McCain - give me a break.

Use your heads folks.

And thanks to Robert Scheer for his provocative thoughts.

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» [On 2000](#) Posted by: Hans B

» [RE: On 2000](#) Posted by: CJC

» [RE: Politics, pragmatism and realism](#) Posted by: outsideagitator

» [RE: Politics, pragmatism and realism](#) Posted by: CJC

The Lesser of Two Demons or What Is Spiritually Correct

Posted by: Mr. Terrific on Jul 25, 2008 7:44 PM

Current rating: [4](#) [[1](#) = poor; [5](#) = excellent]

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I will vote for the Green Party ticket. Barack Obama is the choice of those behind the power structure that was, is and has been for a long time. Call it the Illuminati, Freemasons, The Royal Family, Rothschilds, Rockefellers, Shiffs, Warburgs and the like, along with the Military Industrial Complex and Multinationals.

The problem is, if you know in your heart something is wrong and do it anyway, how does it make you feel? In the long run, is or was it worth it? Sometimes perhaps yes for those who can accept their choices and conscious, time can only tell.

However in my experience with my own mistakes in life, I have had to learn the hard ass way, that ramifications can be long and extremely painful. I will vote my heart on this one. Barack will make history as the so-called first Black President. There was actually others BEFORE him long ago before I was born.

Look into the Five Black American Presidents by: J.A. Rogers along with other works by this great man such as, Nature Knows No Color Line and Sex & Race Volumes I, II & III along with From Superman to Man.

The questions to ask are, other than the color of the man in office, will things change for the better for citizens in this country, Palestine, South and Central America or other so-called lesser developed nations or will they become worse?

Love Over Hate. Peace Over War;

Terrific

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» [RE: The Lesser of Two Demons or What Is Spiritually Correct](#) Posted by: CJC

» [RE: The Lesser of Two Demons or What Is Spiritually Correct](#) Posted by: Mr. Terrific

WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP

Posted by: ElRoy60 on Jul 26, 2008 7:51 AM
 Current rating: **1** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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>> RE: WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP Posted by: [ranchero42](#)

Talking bout lust.....

Posted by: Ky Lake Dave on Jul 27, 2008 3:31 AM
 Current rating: **1** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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While Elizabeth Edwards is battling breast cancer. John Edwards was busted in LA Hilton by reporters. He was attempting to sneak out of the hotel after spending the night in Rielle Hunters hotel room. When confronted by the reporters questions about staying in Ms Hunters room he ran to a bathroom and played tug of war with the door with the reporters while they asked questions till hotel security intervened and escorted John Edwards out of the Hilton. What a PIG! How completely disrespectful to his wife and family. His wife is fighting CANCER damnit and this calus son of a bitch is screwing around on her! Thank GOD this prick did not get the Democratic Nomination. This story has not been reported by CNN. Not reported by MSNBC. ABC News. Nothing on ALTERNET. Only Fox News is reporting this story. Alot is said about Fox but other news outlets and Alternet are obviously only reporting what "they" think we should hear.

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Nixon's Opening To China Wasn't To Make Peace, But Continue The War

Posted by: jooljetkmae on Jul 29, 2008 3:34 PM
 Current rating: **Not yet rated** [1 = poor; 5 = excellent]

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On Nixon, Robert Sheer writes:

"...in opening to China and in developing detente with the Soviets, he undermined the whole basis of the Cold War. He said, communist is nationalist, not internationalist, and it's capable of change. And he was right."

First of all, Nixon said no such thing in his retrospective defense of U.S. Indochina policy "No More Vietnams", published in 1985. In that book he defended the line that Ho Chi Minh was just a communist exploiting Vietnamese nationalism.

Nixon did make peace with China, but with the intent of continue Washington's long and bitter war of aggression against Vietnam.

At the start of his administration Nixon proceeded to launch a savage campaign of destruction against the countryside of Cambodia, and the peasant society living there (See: [Bombs Over Cambodia](#)). He did this in part in retaliation for Sihanouk's disobedience (His government had rejected U.S. aid three days

before JFK was assassinated in 1963), in part to destroy the peasant society of Cambodia, in part cut off the NLF's food supply in Cambodia, and in part to prepare the way for the U.S. exit from Indochina. He succeeded in all his aims in this regard, and then proceeded to recruit China to the cause of continuing the war against Vietnam after the U.S. exit from Indochina. And help Washington continue the war against Vietnam China did, after the puppet governments the U.S. set up in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia quickly fell in 1975.

The December 1975 secret meeting between Ford, Kissinger and Indonesian dictator Gen. Suharto gets a lot of attention because the declassified transcript of the meeting makes it clear that President Ford would support the coming Indonesian invasion of East Timor.

The three men also discussed Indochina. In their discussion of Indochina Kissinger said that "The Chinese want to use Cambodia to balance off Vietnam...". In other words, they are going to use Cambodia to continue the war against Vietnam. And use Cambodia to continue the war against Vietnam they did. It wasn't hard to do. Just give enough weaponry and encouragement to a fanatically nationalist regime in Cambodia and they'll attack Vietnam from the south (South Vietnam used to belong to Cambodia. A source of extreme bitterness against Vietnam among many Cambodians). With great savagery, the Pol Pot regime launched what it believed would be the military campaign that would help Cambodia be reunited with its former eastern half. Provoked beyond all endurance by murderous cross border attacks by the Khmer Rouge, Vietnam retaliated by invading and occupying Cambodia. China retaliated with a brief but destructive invasion of northern Vietnam in February 1979. (See: [Sino-Vietnamese War](#)).

The net result of this is that Vietnam was bled dry by the costs of trying rebuild South Vietnam and its occupation of Cambodia. The combination of the continuation of the war through China, plus Washington's relentless economic warfare against Vietnam, led an exhausted Hanoi to hoist the white flag of surrender in 1993, as it "agreed" to pay off the debts of the hated puppet Saigon regime. When the deal was finalized in 1997, the Vietnamese government made it clear that they were "agreeing" to the terms of the deal because Washington would continue its economic embargo against Vietnam if they didn't. If there is a case of a more odious debt in history, then I would like to see it. So the net result of Nixon's opening to China was that China helped play a role (a very counterproductive and destructive role, in my view) in the eventual total U.S. victory in Indochina.

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>> **This is a fascinating post! Thank you! n/m** Posted by: PaulC

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