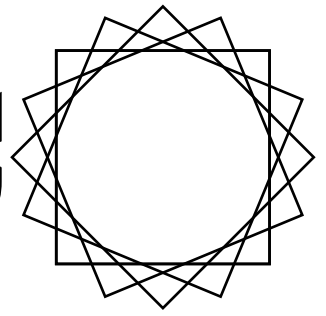


THE MADDOX MAGIC



The Truth is Out There

by Kyle Maddox

This year is election year, which means we have hope of a new leader for our country. But this year, we also have negative campaigns. The candidates this year seem to be quite fond of slinging mud at one another, in one form or another. We've all heard it, from emails claiming Senator Obama is of Islamic faith to claims of Senator McCain being imprisoned by Iraqi militants.

I think the most important thing during this election year is to discover where the candidates actually stand on the issues. We can rarely rely on supposedly biased news stations to give us the information in a straight, completely unbiased form.

The reasons we choose a candidate are simple. We agree with him or her on their politics, we think his merits qualify them, and their morals are those that match our own. The fact is, for each person, these three things might be completely different.

First and foremost, politicians should be agreed upon on the basis of their political views. Difficult issues like the economy, tax policy, education, and foreign affairs are just a few. As a voting population, or future voting population, we are obligated to discover for ourselves what these issues mean to us, and if we wish to influence the matters of this country and even this world, we have to find out what these issues are and choose a candidate that supports our position.

Secondly, we should find a candidate that we think is ready to lead this great nation. We cannot pick someone without the qualifications necessary to deal with matters of state, settle disputes between other countries and our own, and even to execute the word of the law as laid down by the Constitution and the rulings of Congress.

The third reason we like or dislike a candidate is his or her moral set. This also ties into some of the issues. Moral issues include the abortion debate, civil rights for people with alternative lifestyles, and religious matters. These issues and many others are used against candidates over and over, usually in a negative light. These moral stances are the type one does not change to receive votes, or should not. In many ways, these

issues decide how or why a voter or future voter likes or dislikes a candidate.

If we are to affect our society and world in the easiest and most accessible way, then discovering our own and the candidates' positions on these matters is vital. But we cannot rely on unfounded claims that we receive in our email inboxes. We must look for an unbiased source. It may seem difficult to find such a source in this information age where one click to the Internet can lead to loads of information, some true, some false.

I find that however we look at it, the only way to decide if a source is unbiased or is presenting true information is to verify it with more sources. If we hear something on the news, we should watch other news stations to make sure that it is not just a matter of the newscaster's opinion. If we read something online, we should look to find other, credible sites that agree.

To be a few steps above animals, we must affect our world on a great scale. And the best way to do that, the easiest and most efficient is to vote for our leader and representatives. If we don't learn what the issues are, and where we and candidates stand on them, then we might be choosing the wrong person for the job. If too many people who don't know vote, we may lead our country straight into the ground. I know I don't want to see that, how about you?



(This logo belongs to AARP's Divided We Fail campaign dedicated to nonpartisanship.)

On the Issues



- Abortion

Supports Roe v. Wade and believes that sex education should be reformed to prevent pregnancy.

- Economy

Supports tax cuts to the middle and lower classes and greater regulation of businesses to prevent another financial crisis.

- Technology

Supports grants to R&D firms and tax cuts for corporations who seek to invent new and useful technology.

- Energy and Oil

Supports investing heavily in alternative energy sources, so long as they are safe. Wants to reduce foreign oil dependency and stop spending \$800 million on foreign oil a day.

- Education

Supports investing in early childhood education as well as education finance reform for public schools.

- Healthcare

Supports creating guaranteed healthcare for those that need it most as well as increasing funding to public healthcare programs.

- Abortion

Believes Roe v. Wade should be repealed except in cases of rape or incest.

- Economy

Supports tax cuts for every class in an attempt to divert and help reduce the fallout from the recent financial crisis.

- Technology

Supports making every school and library getting internet access, also for continuing the ban on Internet tax, as well as training teachers in sophisticated technology.

- Energy and Oil

Supports nuclear energy research, wishes to decrease foreign oil dependency within twenty-five years.

- Education

Supports grant bonuses to new teachers and heavily supports at-risk programs, as well as funding for schools for low national test scores.

- Healthcare

Supports a \$5000 grant to families with health insurance and giving public health care to private businesses.

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