

Letters

“Kerry and Edwards lacked integrity and credibility.”

ing as a nurse on a Navajo reservation. Oh, and my firefighter cousin. The list goes on. Imagine my surprise to learn they have inferior moral values, well out of the mainstream. Heaven help us, indeed.

LINDA TUYN
BINGHAMTON, N.Y.

IT'S AMAZING THAT ONLY DUMB PEOPLE voted for Bush. Smart people knew better, but alas, outside New York and California, there aren't any smart people, only drooling, knuckle-dragging religious zealots. Maybe next time some of the dumb people will be enlightened enough to elect a liberal agenda supported by gay activists, anti-war activists, anti-religionists, feminists, celebrities, street poets, George Soros, Michael Moore and "young people."

MICHELLE ELAN-TREMBLANT
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, ARGUABLY OUR greatest president for keeping the republic intact while a raging Civil War threatened to tear it apart, espoused a simple philosophy during his first campaign for the nation's highest elective office, in 1860: "When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that's my religion." If you listen very carefully—following Karl Rove's Machiavellian mix of wedge issues like gay marriage, reproductive rights and evangelical "moral values" to win the election, even if it meant capitalizing on our deepest divisions—you may hear the sound of our 16th president weeping for us.

DAVID M. PETROU
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE PLACES MOST AFFECTED by the September 11 terror attacks—New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut and Washington, D.C.—all went overwhelmingly for Kerry. I'm hurt that the Red States turned their back on America and cared more about hating gay people than about our lives.

RAJATH VIKRAM
BRONX, N.Y.

ELECTING KERRY MAY NOT HAVE stopped the next terrorist attack from occurring, but it would have sent an undeniable message to those who have not yet

chosen the path of armed resistance against the United States: Americans hold their leaders accountable. I am appalled that so many on the political right cited moral values as a justification for keeping this administration in office while conveniently overlooking the war profiteering, grotesque human-rights violations and thousands of Iraqi civilian deaths that have occurred as a result of its policies. Blindly partisan Republicans can choose not to hold Bush responsible for all his wrongdoing, but our growing list of enemies most certainly will. We will all suffer as a result.

MICHAEL J. MCCORMACK
MANCHESTER, N.H.

WHY WON'T ANYONE STATE the obvious? Bush was vulnerable on many points; the Democrats were energized and organized. But in the end you vote for the man. Even voters who didn't want Bush chose him for his honesty. Kerry seemed phony, and they didn't want him even more.

RICHARD THOMPSON
KULA, HAWAII

IF THE MORAL VALUES THAT DEMOCRATS are supposed to embrace in order to win elections involve denying fellow citizens equality and dignity, then Republicans can

have them. I would rather have a party that loses now, but believes in the moral value of treating all citizens with respect, than a party that appeals to people's worst fears and intolerance. For all of you who consider "Massachusetts" to be a winning political insult, I encourage you to visit us. I am confident you will find

strong, loving families and communities just like those I find when I travel around our great country.

MIKE KOEHLER
SOMERVILLE, MASS.

AS A BISHOP AND LEADER OF A DENOMINATION, I generally shy away from blaming the church for various problems. But the presidential election showed that the Christian church is failing as a teacher of the Gospel. Until Election Day we could blame George W. Bush for the atrocities in Iraq. But now we, the people of the world's

supposed leader in democracy and freedom, have guilt on our hands for ratifying the least moral president we have had in years. The church's failure is shown by the fact that so many supporters of Bush cite moral values as their reason for electing him. What God do these people worship? Do they really think a country stained with the blood of 100,000 dead is a moral improvement over one stained blue dress?

That sort of thinking must break God's heart. But yes, ultimately it is the church that is to blame. Rome obsesses ad nauseam about abortion. The mainline Protestants let Third World conservatives hold them back from real progress in equality out of fear of breaking up their communions. The

evangelicals are more concerned about Old Testament rules than Jesus' message of love. Meanwhile, a president who attacks a country based on false assumptions, loses the respect of most of the world and strives to write discrimination into our Constitution is touted for his moral values. If Bush wants to be our moral leader, he should truly point us toward God's love and away from the culture of fear and hate that until now he has promoted.

THE MOST REV. MARK S. SHIRILAU
Archbishop and Primate
Communion of Ecumenical Churches
IRVINE, CALIF.

I AM ABSOLUTELY FASCINATED BY THE county map in your election edition ("A Red-Letter Day"). It shows a lot of Red voters in the Blue States, but not many Blue voters in the Red States. The Democratic leadership should hang it on the wall and learn from it.

BOB WOLF
MONT VERNON, N.H.

I READ NEWSWEEK'S NARRATIVE OF THE 2004 election with morbid fascination. American political campaigns are a cold-blooded board game, with winning the only acceptable reason for participation. Fair play, common decency and the ability to know right from wrong have been purged from consideration. Your reporting team skillfully exposed the underbelly of a process that has lost touch with any human reality. Our citizens, our environment and

