



It's not a real choice. It's an apparent choice. Like choosing a brand of detergent. Whether you buy Ivory Snow or Tide, they're both owned by Proctor & Gamble.

- Arundhati Roy

An election cannot give a country a firm sense of direction if it has two or more national parties which merely have different names but are as alike in their principles and aims as two peas in the same pod.

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

The fate of the country does not depend on who you vote for at the polls...it does not depend on what kind of paper you drop into the ballot box once a year, but on what kind of man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning.

- Henry David Thoreau

If voting changed anything, they'd make it illegal.

- Emma Goldman

PITTSBURGH ORGANIZING GROUP elections OFFENSIVE!

It's not just Bush, it's the system.

Nov 3 POST-ELECTION DAY RALLY AND MARCH. Come demand an end to war abroad, justice at home and real change. Software Engineering Institute (4500 Fifth Ave., Oakland). 5:30pm.

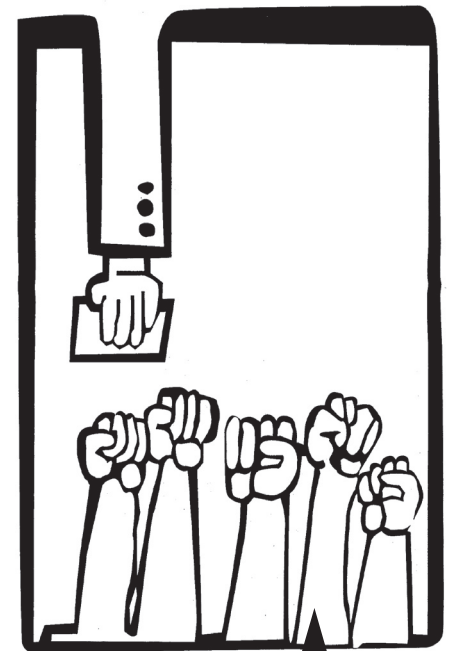
*Other peace & justice events this week
(not organized by Pittsburgh Organizing Group)*

- Nov 4 Save Our Transit protest. State Office Building (300 Liberty Ave., Downtown). 10:00am.
- Nov 5 Justice for Janitors Solidarity Rally. Centre City Towers (Smithfield and Seventh St., Downtown). 11:45am.
- Nov 6 Forum: "Building a Progressive Movement." William Pitt Union Ballroom (5th & Bigelow, Oakland). 10am-3pm.
- Nov 6 Anti-War Rally and March. William Pitt Union Patio. 3:30pm.

Agitate. Educate. Organize.



DON'T JUST VOTE



TAKE ACTION FOR REAL CHANGE

AREN'T YOU TIRED OF HOLDING YOUR NOSE AND VOTING FOR THE LEAST REPULSIVE CANDIDATE?

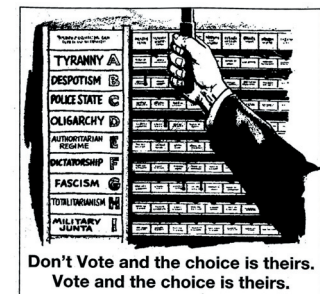
The Bush regime has divided Americans like never before. From a disastrous war based on lies to an economic meltdown that has left thousands jobless, the nation is traumatized. It seems only reasonable to wish for the golden days of Clinton and to oust Bush at any costs. Once Kerry is elected, everything will return to normal. If only if it were that simple...

It is true that the lives of poor people could be marginally better under Kerry. States would end up with slighter larger Medicaid budgets. Reproductive rights would be less vulnerable to attack. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge might remain free. Those are good things all, but it is not the end of the discussion.

The differences between the two Skull and Bones Yale alumni multi-millionaires are not as dramatic as some would like us to believe. Kerry's rhetoric may be laced with well-crafted statements about his allegiance to the poor, but the reality is that he supported welfare reform, repressive crime legislation and drug policies that have ended up putting more people behind bars than ever before. Kerry says "wrong war, wrong time" but he plans to pursue the war on terror with a militarist fervor equal to his political rival while having similar objectionable policies regarding Israel, Cuba, Venezuela and Colombia.

There is one important distinction, however. While Bush's cowboy diplomacy has undermined American power abroad, Kerry, the consummate multilateralist, would attempt to consolidate world support behind a kinder, gentler U.S. imperialism. Hence, it could be easier for Kerry to continue the occupation of Iraq, to fight new wars and to pass oppressive trade agreements such as CAFTA and FTAA.

Since Bush and Kerry have received huge amounts of \$\$ from many of the same corporations, it should come as no surprise that both support policies that serve the monied elite. Indeed, the elected party is just the changeable mask on the face of corporate power. Kerry and Bush are part of the same system, and unless we change that system peace and justice will remain forever beyond our grasp.



While it seems cliché to blame "the System," we can't ignore the fact that a system based on hierarchy, power and money thrives on exploitation, misery and inequality. Homelessness, poverty, homophobia, inadequate health care, environmental devastation, sexual assault, domestic violence, war, gun violence and many other horrors

George Bush		John Kerry	
Yes	No	Yes	No
☒	☐	☒	☐
Iraq Occupation			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Directed Energy Weapons			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Israel's Apartheid Wall			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Cuba Embargo			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Plan Columbia			
☒	☐	☒	☐
PATRIOT Act			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Kyoto Agreement			
☐	☒	☐	☒
Corporate Globalization			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Same-Sex Marriage			
☐	☒	☐	☒
Single-Payer Health Care			
☐	☒	☐	☒
Prison Industrial Complex			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Death Penalty in some cases			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Pro-Life Judges			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Skull & Bones			
☒	☐	☒	☐
Living Wage			
☐	☒	☐	☒
Protest Pits			
☒	☐	☒	☐

that plague society will not be solved by corporations or by voting for a new face in the White House.

How do corporations derive so much power? It comes from the fact that we give our implied consent to corporate rule everytime we fill our gas-guzzling SUV with gas, buy a supersized Big Mac, or purchase things we don't really need. Corporate power is deeply ingrained in our way of life and thrives on our unwillingness to challenge the economic and political system that sustains it. It is no coincidence that alongside the deluge of such messages as "buy more and everyone benefits" we hear that "your vote counts" and "voting is the most important right you have." Both are myths. Just as rampant consumerism is not economic security, a vote every four years is not true democracy.

Real democracy means direct decision-making in which people participate and have direct control over the decisions and resources that matter in our lives, schools, hospitals, neighborhoods and workplaces, and the state of the world we hand off to our children. Direct democracy is voting with your feet, your hands, your voice and your imagination every day of the year.

You can buy food from a local farmers market or the East End Food Co-op, work in a community garden, ride your bike instead of taking a car, or volunteer at Free Ride and help others repair or build bicycles. You can come to a protest or join a local peace and justice group. Check out the Thomas Merton Center (www.thomasmertoncenter.org), Black Voices for Peace (www.bvfp.org), CodePink (www.codepink4peace.org) or Pittsburgh Organizing Group (www.organizepittsburgh.org).

You can educate yourself, your friends and your family. But don't rely on a corporate media that parrots the government line. Try community-based, non-corporate, participatory media (pittsburgh.indymedia.org), tune in to Democracy Now! (9am, M-F, WRCT-FM) or Rust Belt Radio (6pm, T, WRCT-FM), or read The NewPeople, a local monthly peace and justice newspaper. You can find copies at libraries, bookstores and various small family-owned businesses. Better yet - become a member of the Thomas Merton Center and have The NewPeople delivered to your home (www.thomasmertoncenter.org).

As long as we remain complacent and refrain from questioning the system itself, or our participation in it, we become an integral part of the system and so are complicit in the horrors it perpetuates. Our ultimate vote needs to be one that goes beyond quick fixes and reform. Sure, Bush is a monster. But it's not just Bush, it's the system. Don't just vote - get active.



Our dreams cannot fit in their ballot boxes.