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Estes's parting shots:

# Every person deserves a fair shake

By BRIAN ESTES

Commentary



In the last issue of the fall semester, I wrote a political column titled "Estes's parting shots."

I been noticeably silent on the field of politics ever since. So, now is the time to demonstrate what's been on my mind with the final edition of "Estes's parting shots."

The topic for today is the conservatism in the economic realm. Conservatives say that they believe in a free market.

They say they believe each individual and company should depend on themselves and themselves alone to make their way in the financial world, and that government should limit – or in other words, totally cease from making reforms in the economic sphere.

On the surface, this seems fair. If

it's your economic future, why should anyone else be accountable for it?

Indeed, a major question raised by conservatives is – why is it fair to penalize large corporations and institutions for being successful? Why should the capital that they've earned be redistributed in an effort to balance things out?

Well, if you weren't looking closely, you wouldn't recognize the veiled power this gives to large corporations and super wealthy individuals.

It seems that some have figured out that the best way to ensure one's economic success is to make it much more difficult for others to ensure their financial success.

If you can limit what others can do, it leaves a bigger piece of the pie for you.

And I would challenge conservatives' claim that the government does not make attempts to regulate free enterprise. It just isn't regulated in favor of the ordinary man.

When given the chance, conservative presidents will fill the Supreme Court with judges they feel with uphold the interests of economic conservatives.

Time and experience has proven this to be the case. Michael Parenti, in his book "Democracy for the Few," tells us that "justices have more commonly identified with the landed interests than with the landless... (with) the industrialists rather than the workers."

Parenti brings up a good example in the Supreme Court decision on Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward. The issue at hand, as explained by Parenti, concerned the fact that local community members were looking for affordable education.

Dartmouth College, originally a private school, was turned into a public school by the New Hampshire state legislature.

Their reasoning was that education is of the highest public concern. However, the decision was short lived.

The Supreme Court returned Dartmouth to a private institution, stating that the legislature had no right to make amends to the college's charter.

Of course, members of Congress and the executive office are apt to the same type of thinking. It takes an

obscene amount of money to be a viable candidate for just about any office.

Where does that money come from? "The Irony of Democracy" by Thomas Dye and Harmon Zeigler, state that some of the top contributors to the campaigns of Republicans and Democrats in 2004 included the commercial banking, the oil and gas, and the real estate industry, the Goldman Sachs law firm, Microsoft, Wal-Mart, and Time Warner.

They support these candidates expecting that they will remember them once in office.

So what's the solution? Is it right for government to make regulations of our free enterprise system? Yes, when a corporation's method of achieving an economic gain infringes on the ability to do so, which I believe it does.

That is one of the great benefits of having reforms on the free enterprise system, to check the power of corporations.

We're not asking for handouts. We just want a fair chance to make our way in the economic world, as conservatives would tell you is each individual's responsibility.

## An inconvenient disaster: Gore movie a big disappointment

By NICOLE POWELL

Opinion Columnist



I must say after watching the movie "An Inconvenient Truth," I really wanted to bash the hell out of it.

Granted, the global warming parts were moving and inspirational. I actually left and wanted to go on expedition trips to help save the environment.

Much of the movie feels like a PBS fundraising special. Al Gore casually commands the stage of a seminar room, preaching to a studiously multicultural choir of admirers.

Gore cracks self-deprecating jokes - "I am the former next president of the United States" - shows "Futurama" clips and climbs into a cherry-picker to make a point about the magnitude of temperature changes. He is surprisingly entertaining.

The part about this documentary that pissed me off were the in-between parts. It was a horrible example of a man who failed at the presidential elections.

At one point, I thought the man was going to break down in tears. You may have even heard me chuckling in the back of the room.

Oh, and let's not forget the fact that his electric bill was announced to the whole world after the documentary hit the shelves at a high of around \$2000 per month.

So here we have this man who is spreading the word that we should all consider and be aware of the deteriorating earth, and yet he sits back and enjoys the qualities that he is preaching at us not to use so much.

Yes folks, the former vice president's 20-room home and pool house devoured nearly 221,000 kilowatt-hours in 2006, more than 20 times the national average of 10,656 kilowatt-hours.

Do we dare say how much a year his utilities cost? Oh ok, I can't help but

tell you. Gore's average yearly utility bill is \$30,000! Yep, his bills are more than I make at my job in a year.

Hummm... makes me almost want to film a documentary about two-faced Democrats who try to hide the fact that although he may have a passion for something, he in reality doesn't really give a crap.

Okay, Gore and his family try to offset that carbon footprint by purchasing their power through the local Green Power Switch program – electricity generated through renewable resources such as solar, wind and methane gas, which create less waste and pollution.

My question is, can the average American family afford to do the same? I don't think so.

Jeez...I wonder what his utilities would be without the Green Power Switch program?

Nonetheless, in my opinion, the documentary was educational minus the self-pity parts and I think the globe should have been taken away after his bills were announced!

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

I would like to commend Dr. Dawn Larsen, professor of theatre at Vol State for bringing an interesting and intellectually provocative play, "Five Women Wearing the Same Dress," to the Palace Theater this past weekend.

Although certainly some of the subject matter was controversial and the language 'adult,' the dialogue was handled with thoughtful and sensitive performances by a delightful and talented cast.

Dr. Larsen could have chosen a work that would raise no eyebrows and push no envelopes.

Instead she courageously brought us a thought-provoking play that questioned stereotypes and promoted tolerance in diverse points of view, while making us laugh.

I appreciate Vol State's support of Dr. Larsen in giving her students and Gallatin the chance to experience theater at its best: entertainment, as well as a challenge to the intellect and emotion.

- Donna Hartley Lucas