

her inside, insult by insult. I am aware that everyone will always have different opinions on this topic but everyone knows what it feels like to be insulted or hated. Most women go into the situation already judging themselves and that is why I feel it is important to behave with sympathy and sensitivity. Pro-choice Democrats understand and are willing to support the various choices available to women; including natural childbirth, adoption, and abortion. In Illinois, there are bills funding family planning programs, which administer contraceptives. Another bill assists low-income families receive prenatal care leading to healthy childbearing. Not only does the democrat party preach that women have the freedom to decide what to do with their bodies, but it also practices this belief by supporting whatever decision is made. I am not trying to devalue the anti-choice beliefs; instead, I am only trying to emphasize the importance compassion plays in this never-ending debate.

# Dems: Take it from Dean

By Andrew O'Rourke

Recently, DNC Chairman Howard Dean came under intense criticism from Republican lawmakers regarding his views on the state of the GOP. At a round-table discussion in California last week, Dean stated that "Republicans are not very friendly to different kinds of people. They're a pretty monolithic party. They all behave the same, and they all look the same." Dean was also quoted as saying that the current Republican Party is, by majority, a party of "white Christians" who pursue stubborn and stilted agenda.

Expected is the criticism Dean has received from the Republican brass, given the brazenness and straightforward delivery of his comments. However, greatly unexpected is the criticism Dean is enduring from his own party faithful. Many prominent Democratic lawmakers have actively distanced themselves from Dean since his comments.

Given, Dean was not the most popular of choices for Democratic Chairman. His controversial presidential run and straightforward attitude made him a very attractive choice to progressive Democrats. However, a house or senate member often unfortunately has to take a more conservative approach to comments made.

It is unfortunate that Democrats in positions of prominence are so wary to actively support the comments of one of their own. Instead, the party relegates itself to a constant position of defense, while Republicans are free to make accusations of any sort, honest or otherwise, with no retaliation whatsoever. If changes are to be made, the party has to relearn how to stick up for itself, otherwise aggressive Republican moves will continue to dominate the political landscape.

# Teens just as responsible for country's future

By Safeeya Jordan-Walker  
Vice President

The second day of November 2004 still remains fresh in my mind. I can feel the excitement and anticipation I experienced as I entered the voting booths that afternoon to cast my vote for the next president of the United States.

Contrary to the belief of many of my peers, I took great pride in knowing that I was making my voice heard through casting my ballot. I was also secretly hoping that millions of other young Americans had the same experience as me, for on that fateful Tuesday, I had just participated in an event that sets this county apart from many others in the world.

When I returned home to follow the election on television, I was shocked and saddened to hear that the young voter turnout was not that impressive in comparison to previous elections. Although many young adults did register, only a fraction of those actually came out to vote.

I believe that a change must come. Voting in elections is by far the most important way in which Americans, especially young Americans, can participate. We may rely somewhat on our leaders to make choices, but not before we make a few choices ourselves. Who we elect and what we vote "yes" and "no" on will have an impact on every single citizen, whether or not this impact is immediately apparent. We are at a vital age, an age where we begin to fully think for ourselves, an age when the responsibility to better this country is just as much ours as our parents'. We must embrace this responsibility, despite our reservations or uncertainties.

To ensure a happy, healthy, and safe future, young people must take a stand now. If we all wait to act later, we all may be too late.

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