

We Chose

For those of us on the left or right that have our hearts in the process, post-election can alternatively be exhilarating or painful. It is a tough choice. Should we stay and fight or flee to the UK to be with Gwyneth Paltrow. Hmmm. Gwyneth.

It is time for some healing balm. As I look over the Democratic victory, I am reminded that there is less to this than meets the eye. In defeat or victory, it is useful to remember the true nature of our electoral contests. We'd like to think that these exercises in citizenship settle the representation of the voters for this cycle. Unfortunately, this is not the case. These contests are really a determination of which set of well-connected rats hold dominion over the cheese.

Too cynical you say. Where is the evidence to the contrary? Corruption and sleaze is a defining characteristic of the party in power. Each public good is purchased with a generous dollop of payoffs and goodies to the well connected rats. Outright theft of cheese works for these rats too, but it is unnecessary. Some rats are just too unsophisticated to hold real power.

What has happened in our country is that the well connected rats have managed to finesse the citizen voter with a combination of selective spending, selective taxation, and media manipulation. It is no longer enough for the average voter to rabidly support his choice and vilify the opposition. He has to be for a change in process...a limitation of options for both the legislature and the executive...that restricts the rats' access to the cheese.

Wonk 1/14/2007