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What Republicans Worry About

By [Molly Ivins](#), [AlterNet](#). Posted [June 6, 2006](#).

Republicans are concerned with gay marriage and the burden of the estate tax on the rich, while the rest of us question war, economy, environment and civilization.

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Also by Molly Ivins

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Thank goodness the Republicans are around to tell me what to worry about. The flag-burning crisis -- here in Austin, there's that pall of smoke rising from the West every morning (it's from an area called Tarrytown, where they burn hundreds of flags daily).

You didn't know hundreds of flags were being burned daily? Actually, you can count on your hand the number of incidents reported over the last five years. For instance, there was one flag burned in 2005 by a drunken teenager and one by a protester in California in 2002. This appalling record of ravishment must be stopped. You're clearly not worried about what matters.

Gay marriage, now there's a crisis. Well, OK, so there isn't much gay marriage going on here in Texas. None, in fact. First, we made it illegal. Then, we made it unconstitutional. But President Bush is all concerned about it, so I guess we have to alter the U.S. Constitution. Gus and Captain Call (of "Lonesome Dove" fame) will be an item -- with who knows who waiting in line right after them.

Also of great concern to Republicans is God Almighty, who, rather to my surprise, has been elected chairman of the Texas Republican Party. That's what they announced at the biannual convention in Fort Worth this week: "He is the chairman of the Party." Sheesh, the Democrats couldn't even get Superman.

Also weighing down the nation with a heavy burden is the estate tax, which the Senate will try to repeal this week. The estate tax applies to around 1 percent of Americans, and I have yet to find any record of it costing anyone a family farm or business. It affects only very, very, very rich people, of whom you are probably not one. And they don't, actually, need another tax break.

These are the things we are supposed to be worrying about, and you notice that it frees us of quite a few troubles we might otherwise fret about.

The war in Iraq? No sweat. Impending war with Iran? We're carefree. The economy? Hey, did you see that employment report? Well, ignore it. Budget out of control, shipwreck ahead? Never mind -- Bush doesn't. Worst class divisions since the Gilded Age, rich so much more enormously richer than everybody else, country starting to get creepy? Don't worry, be happy.

Torture, massacre, extraordinary rendition, hidden gulag of prisons in foreign countries, Guantanamo, and massive violations of international law, American law and the Constitution? Well, you can see why gay marriage is a far greater menace.

Wipe out for the environment; hundreds of regulations and laws changed to favor those who exploit and damage natural resources; all so common, no one is keeping track of them all? Let her rip. Global warming? In the first place, it's Al Gore's issue. In the second place, it's a downer. In the third place, who cares if it's too late in a few years?

Homeland security/war on terror? With the highly excellent disposition of anti-terror funds once more judiciously applied by the Department of Homeland Security, we truly have nothing to worry about. We're ready to stop terrorist attacks in Wyoming, and there are no important cultural sites in New York City, so let's rock.

Oil crisis? Ha! What oil crisis? You want a \$100 rebate you can then give the oil companies? Hey, we're going to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and that should see us through ... oh, about nine months.

Windfall profits? You think the oil companies are ripping us off for windfall profits? Who? ExxonMobil? Why, they would never!

I believe what we have here is a difference over moral values. The Republicans are worried about the flag, gay marriage and the terrible burden of the estate tax on the rich. The rest of us are obviously unnecessarily worried about war, peace, the economy, the environment and civilization. Another reason to vote Republican -- they have a shorter list.

Molly Ivins writes about politics, Texas and other bizarre happenings.

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The Demos have been more than willing accomplices.Posted by: Sojourner on Jun 6, 2006 12:36 PM [\[Report this comment\]](#)

Recall that when Bush was elected, the challenge was, "Now we shall see whether the GOP knows how to govern, instead of being the complaining minority party." They don't know how to govern, because they don't trust or believe in government.

Another writer on AlterNet today argues that all we have seen in the last six years are excuses for plundering the public coffers, making the rich richer, and sending our youth off to die in a pointless war. We bought the PR slogan of "war on terror" (you cannot war on an emotion) and soaked up the BS like SpongeBob.

Some of us didn't need the last six years to know this about the GOP. I'm happy to see that it took lying and cheating to steal the election in Ohio. I was beginning to fear that Americans were too stupid to realize that the GOP believes that being rich is all that matters, so steal wherever you can. Unfortunately, the political party that wins gets to set the nation's agenda. So stealing all you can is how we do business now.

I wish I could believe that the pathetic activities in Congress now were the dying moans of a GOP that can see "the times they are a changing." But I feel no assurance that an opposition to what has been done will emerge.

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[» RE: The Demos have been more than willing accomplices.](#) Posted by: CTvoter

PrioritiesPosted by: outtolunch on Jun 6, 2006 12:39 PM [\[Report this comment\]](#)

I was having a discussion with a coworker on Election Day 2004. We were watching the exit polling and they were asking people what was the most important issue. At the top of the list was "values" which is just code for things like gay marriage. My coworker is a staunch Republican who opposes gay marriage. I asked him if he thought gay marriage was more important an issue than Iraq, terrorism, health care, the environment, the budget deficit, the economy and without hesitation he said "yes". I truly didn't know how to respond. It's hard to have a discussion with people who have such misguided priorities. I think that's why Democrats have such a hard time in the heartland. There's this perception among people in this part of the country that Democrats and liberals just don't understand how they think. And after the conversation with my coworker, I think they're right. I don't understand his line of reasoning. Usually if I meet someone who disagrees with me on an issue, I can at least understand why they feel the way they do. But with people like this, I'll never get them. We on the left think issues like gay marriage are minor and certainly not worth deciding elections over. But there are lots of people who really do feel strongly about these cultural issues and until we attempt to understand where they're coming from, we'll never win elections.

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The Dem's compliancePosted by: thecamster on Jun 6, 2006 1:04 PM [\[Report this comment\]](#)

Molly, you forgot to mention the Democrats' role in the charade. So eager to maintain the status quo, so frightened by the prospect of conflict, so convinced that roughhouse leads to tears.

Of course, now the Republicans are in such deep trouble the Dems can be expected to emerge tentatively from their self-imposed retreat and start flexing their somewhat atrophied ideological muscles.

They might even be emboldened to challenge the Republicans on some meaningful issues. Raise some issues the Republicans don't want raised.

Hey, it could happen!

(With due deference to Conyers, Murtha and Feingold)

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George W. Bush: The LAST Republican President

Posted by: Tom Degan on Jun 7, 2006 12:38 AM [\[Report this comment\]](#)

It doesn't take a degree in political science to be able to see, quite clearly, that this is the beginning of the end of the most corrupt, incompetent administration since the invention of dirt. Meanwhile, the GOP in the House and Senate are trying to distract our attention from the corruption of the executive and itself by screaming about gay marriage and flag burning and the "Death Tax". How pathetic. How gut-bustingly pathetic. Are you embarrassed to be an American yet?

The GOP has to be destroyed. Utterly. Totally. They have slit the throats of the poor and middle class and must never, ever be allowed to govern this country again. The challenge of the next two and a half years is to make damned good and sure that George W. Bush is the very last republican president in American history. All conservatives, real conservatives need to regroup and form a new, more moderate party. You won't be able to call yourselves "republican" so don't even think about it. Next year at this time identifying oneself as a republican will be the equivalent of calling oneself an idiot. Besides, the leaders of that party, whether in the White House or the Congress are closer to fascism than conservatism. Besides, five years from now many of them, the president and vice president of the United States included, will be serving long prison terms.

In the months that follow the "Party of Lincoln" (Doesn't that term just make ya wanna giggle?) will do all it can do to rig the system further in the favor of the uber rich. They know damn well that the grand old party is over in November. Watch the damage they do between now and then.

Pray for peace.

Tom Degan
Goshen, NY
Degan's Daily Rant
<http://tomdegan.blogspot.com/>

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[» Oh, I almost forgot: GOD BLESS YOU MOLLY IVINS!!](#) Posted by: Tom Degan

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