

Politics and the Environment: Observations and Conclusions

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In creating the Yale course in the spring of 2004 on which this book is based, we and the student course organizers Heather Kaplan and Kathleen Campbell sought to answer some basic questions regarding the relationship between politics and the environment:

- If people say the environment matters to them, as millions of Americans do, does it matter when they vote?
- If the environment influences a proportion of voters, where might the environment matter in the 2004 elections?
- Do the environment and the candidates' concern for the environment affect political strategy in a closely contested presidential election?
- How is the relationship of politics and the environment understood by different organizations and people within them, including the many speakers who participated in our series of lectures and contributed to this volume – pollsters, reporters, leaders of non-profit advocacy organizations, members of Congress past and present, and officials who have worked in presidential administrations?

The observations that follow emerge thanks to the generosity of our speakers. They came from a wide range of political vantages, including Republican and Democrat, to contribute their insights to create a series of provocative lectures in the course at Yale, all captured in this book on the environment in the 2004 presidential election.

KEY FINDINGS:**POLLING ON THE ENVIRONMENT MAY UNDERSTATE ITS IMPORTANCE TO VOTERS**

Several contributors note that few polls put the environment on a top-ten list of issues that decide how someone will vote. When a poll asks what Kellyanne Conway, a Republican pollster, calls an open-ended question – such as “What’s the most important issue that influences your vote?” – the environment may receive “two, three, sometimes a whopping four percent. Sometimes that’s within the margin of error of the entire poll.” But such questions, she continues, lead us to think in terms of “our little circle” rather than our full “orbit.” Although such questions may lead voters to list the war or the economy as “most important,” she adds, “that doesn’t mean people don’t care about the environment.”

Chris Marshall, a Democratic pollster, offers a similar perspective. “Voters don’t normally volunteer the environment as their top issue. It is, however, an important issue.”

Numerous speakers in this volume discuss a memorandum, prepared by Republican pollster Frank Luntz, that was provided in 2003 to the *New York Times* by the Environmental Working Group, which posts the memo on its website. The so-called “Luntz memo,” which the *Times* suggested has influenced the current administration, opens with a dramatic claim: “The environment is probably the single issue on which Republicans in general – and President Bush in particular – are most vulnerable.”

Supporting the claim that the environment matters as an election issue, the websites for the Bush and Kerry campaigns prominently display the environmental records of each candidate.

THE EVOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Although voters tend to view Democrats as protectors of the environment – Chris Marshall discusses a recent Gallup poll that gives Democrats a 33 percent advantage on the environment over Republicans – many of our contributors give credit to Republicans for major initiatives that led to the laws, policies, and programs that constitute environmental policy today.

Jim DiPeso, Nat Reed, and others recall the history of the environmental movement and the role that Republicans such as Teddy Roosevelt, Richard Nixon, and Gerald Ford played in promoting a conservation philosophy and environmental concerns. In the fullest historical narrative in the book, DiPeso traces a line of leadership from Abraham Lincoln – the first Republican President, who signed legislation that set aside the Yosemite Valley as a public park – through Richard Nixon, who presided over creation of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

With the election of Ronald Reagan came a change, some speakers suggest, in Republican efforts on the environment. John Podesta observes that Republican leadership shifted “away from northeastern moderates and toward more reflexively anti-government conservatives in the South and in the West.” Podesta argues that advocates of the “Sagebrush Rebellion,” which pressed for state control of federal lands, assumed important leadership roles in the Reagan administration and that the Republican party’s ties to extractive industries like the oil, gas, and coal industries became stronger. “All of these factors conspired,” he continues, “to push Republicans like Jim Jeffords” – a moderate from Vermont – “first out of the policy-making loop and eventually out of the party entirely.”

Jim DiPeso notes that his organization of Republicans for Environmental Protection (REP America) was established to provide a voice for what he calls “Theodore Roosevelt Republicans” who retain a strong commitment to the conservation heritage of their party. But even when Roosevelt was fighting to protect national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges, says DiPeso, there existed “two strains of thought within the Republican Party, one viewing conservation as a necessary underpinning of national strength and well-being, the other viewing conservation skeptically as an impediment to freedom, enterprise, and prosperity.” Battling between those opposed views, says DiPeso, “gets to the nub of the environmental debates we have today. To what extent should we exploit natural resources to meet today’s wants and needs, and what should we do, if anything, to protect resources on behalf of unborn generations? These questions expose a fault line, within the Republican Party and within the nation at large.”

So the environmental movement evolved, away from its foundations within the Republican party and from the strong leadership of

certain Republican leaders, to become a bipartisan effort benefiting from close working relationships between political leaders of both parties who shared a concern for the environment. As the political center shifted further west, a more exploitive and less resource-protective philosophy appeared to take hold in the Republican Party. This appears to have laid the foundation for the partisan debates over environmental protection that have occurred in recent years.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL INTEREST AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT

Another fault line, some speakers say, divides environmental interest from action. Kellyanne Conway observes that environmental concerns have been largely assimilated into our culture. At the grocery store, she notes, shoppers are asked if they would prefer paper or plastic bags for their groceries. Recycling is extensive in our culture, and mandatory in some communities. Even children's Saturday morning cartoons include environmental characters such as Captain Planet and Eco-Man.

But environmental assimilation, says Conway, seems not to impel the general public to environmental action. "The difference between people caring about the environment and voting on the environment is huge," she says. When asked, "Do you support the environment?" – a question that does not test intensity of commitment – 85 percent of Americans say yes. When asked to choose a level of intensity – active environmentalist; environmentalist but not active; or not concerned about the environment and not active – 69 percent of Americans place themselves in the middle category of inactive environmentalist. The environment shows "a larger gap between interest and engagement – between agreement and intensity – than other issues," says Conway.

This gap does not mean, however, that voters do not vote for environmental concerns. As stated by several speakers in the series, local initiatives now gather tremendous public support to preserve open space or to curb urban sprawl. Dan Glickman notes that in the 2003 election there were 77 initiatives nationwide that were intended to generate funds to protect parks, open space, and farmland as a means of reducing urban sprawl. Of these, 83 percent were passed by voters who thereby committed approximately \$1.5 billion for environmental protection at the local, county and state levels.

WHAT DOES THE “ENVIRONMENT” MEAN TO VOTERS?

The likelihood that candidates will target such environmental voters raises the question: What do voters mean by *environment*? Do they call themselves *environmentalists* if they want to protect wilderness or farmland? If they support pollution abatement or brownfield restoration? If they oppose development or seek to reduce the intensity of global warming?

A distinction between “the environment” and “environmental issues” was introduced by Deb Callahan, President of the League of Conservation Voters. “You need to think about the environment as a category,” she said, “not an issue. Lead in drinking water is an issue. Houston air pollution is an issue. Endangered species is an issue. These individual issues poll much more highly than ‘environment’ as a category, and that is even before the issue is personalized to an individual community.”

Many such issues emerge when people define society’s most important problems, as Chris Marshall explains. “Nobody doubts,” he says, that people care about “food, health, taxes, security, recreation, the influence of special interests, and the development that’s going on in their communities. Each of these might not be solely an environmental issue, but each one of these has a very important environmental component.”

MESSAGE MATTERS

How environmental issues can be presented to the voters attracted lengthy discussion, often beginning with the memo in which Frank Luntz warns that the environment is the single issue on which President Bush was “most vulnerable.” Jim DiPeso, Policy Director of Republicans for Environmental Protection, notes that:

Luntz calls on Republican candidates to talk about the issue more skillfully, in a way that doesn’t alienate swing voters or suburban Republican women. Don’t use scary words such as “roll-backs.” Instead, talk about “common sense” solutions grounded in “sound science.” Don’t talk about cost-effectiveness tests, which sound cold and heartless. Instead, talk about unnecessary regulations that hurt “moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas.”

The influence of the Luntz memo shows, according to DiPeso, in the President's proposed EPA budget, which he says states that "President Bush has focused on addressing these challenges in a common-sense, cost-effective manner based on sound science, and his 2005 budget builds on these successful principles." Every word is "carefully calibrated," DiPeso points out, to follow the Luntz memo.

Congressman Christopher Shays also discusses the influence of the Luntz memo, which suggests that the three words Americans look for in an environmental policy are "safer," "cleaner," and "healthier." A focus on rhetoric rather than reality, Shays suggests, might do more harm than good to Republican efforts to make progress in improving environmental policy. Shays states,

The Bush administration is masterful at framing its message on the environment with good titles like the "Clear Skies Initiative" and "Healthy Forests." But the truth is that many of the initiatives proposed by the White House exacerbate, rather than improve, the problems they target. This dichotomy of rhetoric and reality was clear throughout our debate on the energy bill, as well as in discussions of the Healthy Forests initiative and the Clear Skies initiative. In my mind, all three represent extraordinary missed opportunities to advance forward-looking, environmentally-progressive legislation.

Masterful framing by Frank Luntz extends to his presentation of an advantage held by Democrats who seek a message to attract environmental voters. "A caricature has taken hold in the public imagination," says Luntz:

Republicans seemingly in the pockets of corporate fat cats who rub their hands together and chuckle maniacally as they plot to pollute America for fun and profit. And only the Democrats and their goodhearted friends from Washington can save America from these sinister companies drooling at the prospect of strip mining every picturesque mountain range, drilling for oil on every white sand beach, and clear cutting every green forest.

Chris Marshall says that his group's polling shows that voters respond strongly to charges that Republicans side with what Luntz called *fat cats*. "Bush can be damaged on the environment," says Marshall, "particularly with a corporate/special interest message." He notes that in surveys conducted to determine what messages resonated with the public, "the number one message out of all the ones we tested was that 'Corporate polluters have too much influence.'"

The number two message, according to Marshall, makes what he called a *health and legacy* argument. Its themes include "protecting the health and safety of our families" and "leaving our children the legacy of a clean environment." Thinking also about future generations, Congressman Christopher Shays urges voters to push leaders to ask "what history will say of us." He draws on an analogy offered by a historian, David McCullough, concerning how we now judge American actions from before our Civil War. Much as we now wonder how humans could once have owned humans, said McCullough, a century from now we may wonder how residents of the earth could have abused the earth. "History," expects Shays, "will not be kind to us."

Economic pressures on working families lead some speakers to predict the greatest win-win message for any politician: We can create new jobs by developing new environmental technologies. Deb Callahan tells the story of a roundtable discussion in Minnesota with environmentalists and labor union officials. After one environmentalist who advocated encouraging wind power mentioned the potential to avoid building six power plants, a representative from the AFL-CIO responded that fewer power plants could translate to fewer jobs. Amending his message, the environmentalist suggested that developing new energy sources could create new jobs and new businesses. That interaction, says Callahan, shows the potential "to frame the conversation in a way that brings the communities together." Robert Semble of the *New York Times* credits the Bush administration for its work to encourage development of fuel cells (albeit, a solution that is "way, way, way in the distance") and asks for more efforts to help Detroit, with subsidies if needed, to move beyond gas-guzzlers to fuel-efficient vehicles. Jim DiPeso, after stating his worry that energy dependency could lead to global conflicts, in response to a question argued that the most promising tactic for uniting bipartisan environmental advocates would be to pursue economic development by pursuing clean energy.

Discussion of energy and the environment leads some of our contributors to propose a message linking the environment to another issue that polls indicated was of significant concern to voters – security. Chris Marshall puts it this way:

Security has been a big thing during the Bush administration. A big part of that is oil from countries where people would like to blow us up, and there are a lot of people who'd like to promote higher gas mileage, for example, as a way to decrease that dependency. This makes the environment become a security issue.

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., of the Natural Resources Defense Council, offers a version of the security message: If the U.S. can raise the fuel efficiency of motor vehicles by 7.6 miles per gallon, he says, the fuel savings would equal “all the oil that we import today from the Persian Gulf.”

The security message extends, according to polling by Kellyanne Conway, beyond international and homeland security. “Security to people,” she says, “is also the security to allow things to stay the way you know them to be, want them, and expect that they will remain.” That link of environmental quality to personal security fits a story told by Robert Kennedy, Jr. who says he learned recently that his blood contains elevated levels of mercury, which he suggested may have been caused by consuming fish caught in the Northeast over many years. “A child born to a woman who had similar mercury levels would almost surely show permanent IQ loss,” he says. Much mercury reaches eastern waterways through atmospheric deposition and originates from coal-fired power plants in the midwest. Kennedy’s story, which included claims that the coal industry has donated more than \$100 million dollars in support of George W. Bush and that his administration has eased pressure on the coal industry to cut mercury emissions, pulled together a medley of messages including *fat cat*, *personal security*, *new jobs with new technologies* and *health and legacy*.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Linked to discussion of how to present a strong environmental message, one question was repeated more than any other during the lecture

series: Why in the 2000 election did Al Gore fail to deliver environmental messages as powerful as those in his book, *Earth in the Balance*?

Deb Callahan of the League of Conservation Voters, who was field director in 1988 for Gore's first campaign to win the presidential nomination, depicts him back then as a campaigner who drove her "crazy" with his focus on the environment. She would take him to "a room of senior citizens at a retirement home" in hopes he would discuss health care and social security, she says, "but he talked about climate change." John Podesta, chief of staff to President Clinton, supposes that Gore's advisors in 2000 urged him to avoid pushing the environment. Since that was Gore's passion, according to Podesta, his failure to raise it may have cost him twice. Voters who cared about the environment turned to Ralph Nader, candidate for the Green Party, and voters who cared about dynamism in a candidate saw Gore as wooden. Gore's advisors, "took his passion away from him," says Podesta. "Al Gore has a core," continues Podesta, and the environment, "is at the center of that core."

When Al Gore arrived at Yale, students in a class session before his formal talk had the chance to ask him what everyone wanted to know. One of the students, Elizabeth Wyman, writing soon afterward for her hometown newspaper in New Hampshire, the *Keene Sentinel*, reported the exchange:

In a private meeting with the former vice president, students probed Gore on his seemingly contradictory rhetoric and actions. One asked why candidate Gore seemed to evade the issue of the environment during his 2000 presidential bid against Governor George W. Bush. Gore replied that it wasn't he but the media who failed to address the issue. He contended that he did talk about the environment, but his words never made it through the 'media filter' to be covered by the newspapers and television networks. Gore attributed this lack of media coverage to a popular perception that there was no disagreement between himself and Bush on the issue. 'The Bush campaign lied about their basic posture on the environment,' Gore argued – including Bush's campaign pledge to regulate carbon dioxide, the primary culprit of global warming, a promise Bush abandoned shortly after taking office. 'Our system used to have antibodies in it that would eat up big lies,' Gore lamented.

Speaking later to an audience of 1,000 in Yale's Battell Chapel, Gore likened his experience with media filtering to experiences of John Kerry who, said Gore, has made speeches about the environment that are "almost invisible to the American people" because the media has an "A list and a B list of issues, and the environment is not currently seen on the A list."

THE MEDIA'S ROLE IN REPORTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND POLITICS

One issue raised by Gore surfaced often: the role of the media. Arriving the week after Gore's speech, Robert Semple of the *New York Times* told his audience that he had heard from students that Gore had made a "a wonderful speech. He was funny and self-assured, and everybody in the room here said: 'Where was this guy four years ago?' I would ask the same question."

Answering the critique that the media had filtered away Gore's environmental message, Semple compares methods of campaigning:

When Al Gore ran for president, like Kerry today, he had a lot of environmental information on his website. And like Kerry he mentioned it in individual speeches. But just as individual speeches are different from websites, so a debate between two candidates is different from political speeches. There are orders of magnitudes of importance in the way that we campaign in this country.

If Gore had wished to make the media see the environment as a campaign issue, Semple continues, Gore should have repeatedly made it a debate issue, as Kerry now can, "one-on-one with George W. Bush" in the presidential debates.

As noted by Elizabeth Shogren of the *Los Angeles Times* and Eric Pianin of the *Washington Post*, soon after the 2000 election the environment received a great deal of attention in the media – thanks largely to conflict that had been absent during the campaign. Within months of taking office, Pianin recalls:

The President had repudiated the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, disavowed a campaign pledge to regulate carbon

dioxide, challenged scores of Clinton administration regulations, including a tougher standard on arsenic in drinking water, and put in place policymakers throughout his bureaucracy who had strong ties to industry.

Such rapid repudiation of environmental efforts by the previous administration, Shogren said in response to a question, brought the environment to the front pages partly because newspapers look for change and conflict.

The Bush administration's refusal to give meaningful answers to press questions, says Pianin – such as why soften the standard for arsenic in drinking water? – helped make the Administration's first year what he called “a public relations disaster.” And then, he continues, the attacks of “9/11 came along, and all of these issues were just sort of swept aside, along with most other domestic policy issues.”

In the aftermath of 9/11, says Pianin, the Republican administration has handled environmental issues with increased skill and has done more to “spruce up” the President's “environmental image and undercut his critics than the Democrats have done in capitalizing on Bush's missteps.” Part of the Administration's spruce-up, continued Pianin, came from “clever packaging and sort of Orwellian labeling”:

The President's proposal for rewriting, and in some cases weakening, the Clean Air Act is called the “Clear Skies” Initiative. His new forest management program to give logging companies greater access to old-growth trees is benignly called the “Healthy Forest” Initiative.

When asked why more stories were not written about Bush administration environmental policy, Shogren said that newspapers expect the unexpected. When she presents an environmental story to her editor, she added, now he may say: “Oh, another roll back of an environmental regulation. We know that's what the Bush administration is all about.”

News coverage may be reduced, says Shogren, due to a practice by the Bush administration of announcing major environmental initiatives late on Friday afternoons. That timing, which can limit the opportunity for reporters to analyze policy and solicit commentary, “happened more at the beginning of the Bush administration, but it still happens at times now,” she says. “I think there is a very aggressive effort to manage the media, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.”

Both Shogren of the *Times* and Pianin of the *Post* warn that critics of the Bush administration can lose credibility through overstatement. “One of the reasons I think people say that the Bush administration’s record on the environment can’t be as bad” as critics say, says Shogren, is “because that’s true.” Pianin notes that the administration had recently taken substantive steps such as “abandoning efforts to rewrite the Clean Water Act to sharply reduce the number of streams or wetlands protected from commercial or residential development” after the President met with leaders of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and other organizations that represent millions of people who hunt and fish.

Like Semple of the *New York Times*, Shogren suggests that the environment is not likely to become “one of the top issues the media covers” unless the candidates themselves “start sparring over it. Once they start arguing about an issue, it becomes a big issue in the media.” Pianin adds that Kerry had been briefly effective in making a case – which he later seemed to drop – that creating a progressive environmental policy which developed alternative sources of energy might mean in future that, as Pianin puts it, “U.S. troops wouldn’t have to die in the Middle East fighting for oil.”

Shogren discusses several reasons to think that environmental debate could attract attention. Although polls show that few people name the environment their most important issue, polling also shows “that the vast majority of Americans want stronger environmental protections, as many as 75 percent. Even the majority of Republicans want stronger environmental protection.”

Americans also believe that “one of the issues where the candidates are farthest apart,” continues Shogren, “is on the environment.” That belief finds support in the much-discussed “LCV score,” given by the League of Conservation Voters to members of Congress since 1970 and also to other politicians as a report on their support for the environment. On his most recent LCV Presidential Report Card, President Bush received an F – the first failing grade given to a president in LCV’s history. In contrast, as Deb Callahan told her audience, as of early spring 2004 when her organization decided to endorse John Kerry for president, he had what amounted to a “nearly perfect environmental voting score”: a 96 percent lifetime rating. (Al Gore’s lifetime score, she added, was only 64 percent.) Such scores themselves are open to debate. Chris Henick, formerly Deputy

Assistant to President George W. Bush, objected that the LCV score failed to give sufficient credit to consensus action on the environment and included some issues, such as international family planning and campaign finance reform, that should not be called environmental. In any event, the contrast between John Kerry's nearly perfect score from the LCV and George Bush's Presidential F creates potential for the sort of conflict that in past has helped, Shogren says, bring the environment to the front pages.

IN A CLOSE ELECTION, THE ENVIRONMENT CAN MATTER

Many speakers contend that the environment may matter in the 2004 election because, like the 2000 presidential election, this year's seems likely to be close. When President Bush four years ago won the Electoral College but lost the popular vote, in six states the margin of victory was fewer than 8,000 votes. As the 2004 presidential election approaches, it appears, once again, that the margin of victory nationally, and in certain "swing" states – which analysts define based on such factors as closeness of the vote count in the 2000 election, number of registered Democrats and Republicans, or the votes for Ralph Nader in the 2000 election – could be extremely small.

Although polls may indicate that the environment is "not the highest priority issue in people's minds," says Dan Glickman, "selectively and on a targeted basis, I believe that environmental issues will be very significant in certain key states and among certain constituencies." Some environmental groups, such as the LCV, will target specific swing states precisely because they believe that the environment will matter there. On Earth Day 2004, President Bush traveled to Maine and Florida to discuss the Administration's initiatives on wetlands and the Everglades – visits that suggest he too is aiming environmental messages at swing states.

Polling indicates that the environment matters particularly to some groups of voters, including suburban women (often referred to in the 2000 election as "soccer moms") and women in general. Chris Marshall says that 60 percent of environmental voters are women.

Young voters, whose education often has exposed them to environmental issues, according to Kellyanne Conway, are swelling the ranks of voters who register as independents. "Now a dozen states," she says, "can claim close to a majority if not a plurality of unaffiliated inde-

pendent voters.” The importance of this trend, as it affects the environment and politics, is explained by Conway in this way: “The thing about the environment . . . is that it has the potential to have tripartisan support. It really is one of those areas – unlike abortion, guns, gay marriage, or even tax reform – where a reasonable common-sense policy about environmental concerns is able to attract magnetically Republicans, Democrats, and Independents.”

Although the environmental awareness and concern of voters such as young independents is not well tested in the context of a presidential election, Chris Marshall summed up their potential impact: “If you can target one percent or two percent of people” who will respond to environmental issues, “one or two percent of people can make all the difference in the world.” As evidence, he offered some much-discussed numbers from the 2000 presidential election: “In Florida, Al Gore lost by 537 votes while Ralph Nader was picking up 97,488 votes. If about a half a percent of Ralph Nader’s voters had voted for the real environmental candidate – Al Gore – George Bush would never have been elected President.”

Versions of Marshall’s claim, that a majority of Florida’s vote went to candidates whom voters viewed as defenders of the environment, ran through other talks. Looking beyond any one state, Kellyanne Conway suggested during discussion with students that Democratic failure to engage environmental voters had national implications: Gore’s expectation that he could count on his environmental reputation to lure environmental votes led him to fail nationwide to energize his strongest base of voters. Perhaps some felt too apathetic to vote for Gore. Perhaps some felt too uninspired to urge friends not to vote for Nader, running as the nominee of the Green Party – which had, along with a name that evokes the natural world, a platform that devoted many planks in 2000 to calls for “environmental sustainability.”

For the election of November 2004, contributors to this volume suggest, the environment is likely to be a key issue in Florida and other swing states where the margin of victory was small in the 2000 election and is likely to be so again. The votes in just these swing states, where some voters will scrutinize the candidates’ environmental records and their commitment to protect the environment, could decide the outcome of the 2004 presidential election.

The talks in this volume, taken together, suggest also that environmental issues could have national implications for the 2004 election.

Since Americans nationwide value the environment and seem to perceive the current candidates as far apart on how to protect it, voters may respond strongly to a candidate who communicates environmental values to the nation. The view that voters wish to hear candidates discuss the environment received new support in May 2004, after our speaker series ended, when the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies completed its first national poll on the environment. Most Americans, the poll suggests, want to hear more from candidates about plans for the environment.

A candidate who chooses to engage the issue of the environment one-on-one in presidential debates and other major venues may find, as suggested by Semple of the *New York Times* and Shogren of the *Los Angeles Times*, that such engagement lifts the environment to the front pages – raises it in the hierarchy that Semple, elaborating on comments by Al Gore, describes as categories of A issues, B issues, and C issues. Through prominent debate, national issues may arise: Who delivers sound science? What legacy should we pass to future generations? Which environmental solutions make common sense? Can we create new jobs by developing new environmental technologies? Is conservation, for which Republicans receive historic credit, still conservative? Is protecting our environment also good for our national security and our personal security? How will history judge Americans' treatment of our planet?

And if candidates do not engage in such debate, a related issue arises. Now that candidates have been scored as far apart as the grade of A from the grade of F on an environmental report card, will voters disdain a candidate who seems unable to contest or capitalize on so large a disparity? Will voters turn away from a candidate who cannot communicate what Podesta calls a "passion" for an issue about which they also care? Will they fail to turn out and vote in 2004 if the environment is not part of the core message of at least one of the presidential candidates?

If the environment has "magnetic" appeal to Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, as one Republican pollster claimed, who among the candidates in 2004 will generate the messages – whether about *fat cats*, *common sense*, *personal security*, *sound science*, *clean technologies*, *new jobs*, *good health*, *enduring legacies*, *history's verdict*, *clear skies* or something more powerful – that resonate with environmental voters and attract their votes? If Green

voters swung the last Presidential election, why would anyone suppose that green voters – or environmental voters, however defined – will not swing the presidential election of 2004?