

ROUNDING UP CAMPUS NEWS SINCE 1900

# ELECTION 2008

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## The Pulpit meets the Platforms

As this election draws in religious voters, their perspectives on church and state are now beginning to shift

By Sommer Ingram  
Staff writer

The “wall of separation” between church and state may be faltering. Or maybe it was never as strong as many assumed.

For years America has hidden behind that snazzy phrase, possibly in hopes of avoiding the fact that religion and politics, church and state, God and government, will inevitably clash.

“The religious views of people always influence political views one way or another,” said Dr. Thomas Myers, associate professor of political science. “Historically, I religious views have been in the background, but in recent decades, they have been thrust more into the forefront of politics.”

Dr. Peter Lillback, president and professor of historical theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Dallas and author of *Wall of Misconception*, challenges the long-standing principle of an impenetrable wall separating the church and the state.

“The title of my book is a parody on the phrase ‘wall of separation,’” Lillback said. “It suggests that while there is a wall, it isn’t what everyone thinks it is. The wall should be brought back down to the level of a wall separating friends or neighbors.”

Lillback contends that God and government should absolutely not be separated. The notion of absolute separation is something picked up by the Supreme Court that should be abandoned, he said.

“Religion and morality are indis-

pensable support for our political prosperity,” he said, paraphrasing George Washington’s 1796 farewell address. “Church and state should be distinct, but they aren’t enemies. They should be able to cooperate with each other.”

Since the presidential election of 2000, there has been a noticeable trend of evangelicals becoming more politically involved and reportedly identifying themselves with the more conservative Republican Party.

“Bush and his campaign members were able to really energize and activate religious conservative voters to a degree that I believe was unprecedented,” said Dr. Dwight Allman, associate professor of political science. “Coming out of the ‘04 election, evangelical Christians represented the central pillar of coalition and voters Bush needed. They were a new and significant force in the Republican party.”

Four years later, things are different. Religion still plays a vital part in the political process, but evidence points to the fact that a substantial majority of the evangelical world is shifting away from its traditional political views.

“The direction now being taken will take time to determine,” Myers said. “But I think we are seeing a long-anticipated rebirth of the Republican moderate.”

With a new generation of evangelicals on the rise, a fresh agenda is taking form.

“I think what we’re seeing here



Illustration by Ben Humeniuk

is a generational divide,” Allman said. “Younger evangelicals whose religious views are a very important factor in politics seem to be breaking in a different way than those before them.”

Traditionally, the Christian’s role in politics has been to stop two moral issues bordering on the classification of “taboo”: abortion and same-sex marriage.

“There are issues that have been confused with evangelicals and by evangelicals, such as abortion,” said Randy Woodruff, assistant vice president for video and electronic marketing, who volunteers for the campaign of Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill. “I think as the church, these issues are worthy of debate, but confusing our evangelical message with those issues is a mistake. We’ve got-

ten a little off-track.” Issues of poverty, which are historically concerns of the Democratic Party, have been emphasized more by the traditionally conservative evangelical world, adding another dimension to the evangelical platform.

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## Students pitch in with campaigns

At BU and beyond, young adults playing key roles in race

By Sommer Ingram  
Staff writer

This year’s presidential election is sweeping across the nation in a whirlwind, and college students are right in the middle of all the action.

This generation of college students is becoming more involved politically not only by voting, but by being active in campaigns from the local all the way up to the national level.

Politicians are recognizing the increasing need to change their schematics to target young voters and are taking younger people onto their campaigns to accomplish this feat.

“It’s all about being able to connect,” Fairfax, Va., soph-

omore Vincent Harris said. “Politicians are realizing this and are hiring people in college to work on their campaigns that understand what’s going on online and how to connect with young voters because they need our demographic. Being able to mobilize people will only get more and more important as the years go by.”

After Harris interviewed former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee for a political Web site he ran, Huckabee took him on board to help with his e-campaign. Harris worked for the campaign for nearly nine months starting last May. He traveled with the campaign and was with Huckabee during his victory in the Iowa straw poll.

“I’ll never forget right after he won the straw poll,” Harris said. “It is amazing how much he’s done on so little. His methods have gotten out there and prove that



David Poe/Lariat staff

Allen senior Cody Shultz works at Sen. Hillary Clinton’s Waco campaign office Monday night. Baylor students have become involved at all levels of presidential candidate campaigns.

money doesn’t buy votes. If you asked people last June about Huckabee, no one would guess he’d make it even this far.”

Harris was the main blog-

ger on Huckabee’s Web site and also videotaped Huckabee as he traveled and post-

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## Decisions on Iraq war still affect candidates

Nearly 5 years after voting to authorize war, politicians feel feedback

By Anita Pere  
Staff writer

With the fifth anniversary of the American military presence in Iraq on the horizon, American public opinion has necessitated that presidential candidates talk candidly on their views of the controversy and remedies for the situation.

In a Gallup poll taken this month, 31 percent of Americans said they disapproved of the Bush administration’s maintenance of the Iraqi war. This figure increased from 24 in percent Feb. 2007. A majority of Americans have not backed the administration’s Iraq workings since March 2004, a mere year after the onset of the conflict on March 20, 2003.

Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., debated Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., in Austin Feb. 21. When the war was inevitably brought up, she took

a firm stance of opposition, saying she would devise a plan within two months of taking office to bring troops home.

She said the purpose of the U.S. military surge in Iraq was to hand off the responsibilities of governance to the Iraqi people. At a rally for Hillary Thursday evening in Austin, Bill Clinton spoke out about Iraq’s slow progression to reach self-governance. He said the Iraqi leaders will be forced to end their procrastination and make tough decisions once American troops are withdrawn.

Dr. Thomas Myers, associate professor of political science, said the Clintons’ rationale is to spin in their favor Hillary’s initial support of the war, “to blur or get around that vote she regrets.”

He referred to President Bush’s original resolution to act in Iraq.

Obama, however, is able to say he never supported the war, as Clinton did initially.

The camp of presidential candidate Rep. Ron Paul’s, R-Tex., maintains that he is the lone candidate to

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# Facing the Issues

See how your candidates stand on the things you care about most.

For complete candidate positions, including past voting records, visit our Web site at [www.baylor.edu/lariat](http://www.baylor.edu/lariat).

Positions compiled from candidate Web sites by Brandon Nine.



Sen. Barack Obama



Sen. Hillary Clinton

## Illegal immigration

## Health care

## War in Iraq

## Taxes

## International relations

## Energy independence

## Education

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allow illegals in good standing the chance for citizenship down the road.</li> <li>- Work with Mexico to improve Mexican economy in order to decrease illegal immigration at the source.</li> <li>- Crack down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants and improve immigration system to bring in more legal immigrants to fill jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Levy penalties for those who exploit undocumented workers while providing technological means to make background checks easier for employers.</li> <li>- Provide a path to earned legal status for illegal immigrants as well as job opportunities, particularly in the agricultural industries and cooperate with neighboring countries. Give federal aid to state and local governments near borders to control illegal immigration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide high-quality, low-cost health care universally to Americans purported to save the typical American family an average of \$2,500 by modernizing the health care system to reduce costs of dealing with grave illness.</li> <li>- Support small business by providing cheaper health insurance to financially deficient companies, reducing the self-employment tax, eliminating taxation on gains from a new business and expanding loan programs for these smaller agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create a universal healthcare system that offers the same health care choices for insured as members of Congress and lower premiums and is required for all Americans after it is made much more flexible and affordable.</li> <li>- Give tax credits to help working families afford health insurance and to small businesses so that high-quality health insurance is available at affordable rates, allowing companies to be more competitive in hiring workers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End the war in Iraq by removing much of the U.S. military presence within 16 months (some troops stay behind to protect embassies and diplomats; no permanent bases).</li> <li>- Press Iraqi leaders to reconcile by reminding them constantly that we are leaving and calling a convention to seek agreement.</li> <li>- Provide financial aid to Iraqi refugees both inside and outside the country.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- End Iraq war by bringing home all troops within first 60 days of Clinton administration.</li> <li>- Act as diplomatic mediator between different sectarian groups in Iraq.</li> <li>- Smooth the transition of power to the Iraqi government by providing financial aid toward reconstruction.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Give tax cuts to middle-income families while removing tax cuts from the wealthy.</li> <li>- Reduce college costs through a \$4,000 tax credit.</li> <li>- Provide middle-income workers a \$500 tax credit to offset tax deductions from paychecks.</li> <li>- Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower taxes for middle-class families.</li> <li>- Reduce the costs of college with a \$3,500 tax credit in order to make it more affordable to middle-class families.</li> <li>- Require mortgage lenders to communicate exact charges to pull back the cost of owning a home.</li> <li>- Strengthen labor unions.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use democracy rather than military force with friends and foes alike.</li> <li>- Fight global poverty by providing aid to poorer countries.</li> <li>- Strengthen NATO and seek alliances in Asia in order to increase our standing in the world.</li> <li>- Promote American business abroad.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish global coalitions to tackle global problems.</li> <li>- Seek to engage and understand nations and groups with which we do not agree.</li> <li>- Reach out and supply aid to developing countries.</li> <li>- Refocus research to compete in a global market toward physical sciences and engineering.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050 through a cap-and-trade system where corporations pay for emissions they release and replanting trees.</li> <li>- Create job-training programs for research into cleaner energy sources and technology.</li> <li>- Pass legislation requiring that 25 percent of U.S. homes be powered by renewable sources by 2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a cap-and-trade system that fines corporations that go over the emissions cap in order to reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent in the next forty years</li> <li>- Create an agenda to reduce energy consumption by 20 percent by 2020.</li> <li>- Double federal investment in basic energy research.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve pre-K education by providing voluntary, universal pre-school opportunities to all American families and affordable childcare that will serve to ease the burden on working families.</li> <li>- Increase funding for No Child Left Behind.</li> <li>- Make math and science education a national priority.</li> <li>- Expand summer learning and after-school activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve pre-primary education by creating childcare options for working parents and offering pre-K for all four-year-olds.</li> <li>- Give special attention to special needs kids.</li> <li>- Cut minority dropout rate in half through early-intervention mentoring programs.</li> </ul>

## voting locations

### Precincts 1, 2 and 4

Sul Ross Elementary  
901 S. 7th St.

### Precinct 3

Wiethorn Visitors Center  
1301 S. University Parks Dr.  
(voting in foyer)

### Precinct 5

University High School  
2600 Bagby Ave.

### Precinct 6

Bell's Hill School  
2125 Cleveland Ave.

### Precinct 7 and 9

Provident Heights Elementary  
2415 Bosque Blvd.

### Precinct 8

MHMR  
Center for Developmental Services  
3420 W. Waco Dr.

### Precinct 10

Dewey Recreation Center  
925 N. 9th St.

### Precinct 12

G. W. Carver Academy  
1601 J. J. Flewellen Rd.

### Precincts 13, 21,

Downsville Fire St  
7701 S. 3rd St. Rd

### Precincts 14 and

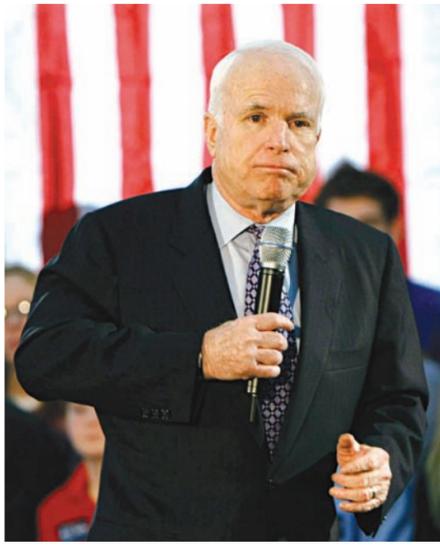
Multi-Purpose Cor  
1020 Elm St.

### Precinct 17

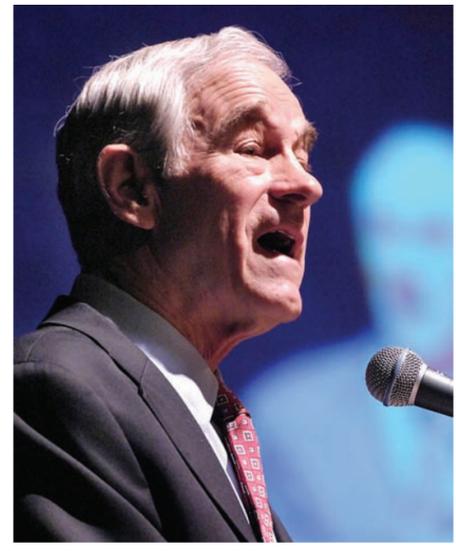
Timbercrest Baptis  
1625 Crow Drive



Mike Huckabee



Sen. John McCain



Rep. Ron Paul

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secure the border by building a fence with video surveillance by July 2010 and increasing the number of border patrol agents.</li> <li>- Prevent amnesty for illegal immigrants, barring illegals that refuse to register and leave the country from applying for citizenship for 10 years.</li> <li>- Eliminate the visa-lottery system in favor of a visa system that benefits highly educated applicants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build strong alliances with Mexico and other Latin American countries in order to encourage them to establish situations where there is greater political and economic freedom in order to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants out of those countries.</li> <li>- Keep government spending in check and holding down taxes in order to allow employers to hire the best workers they can find rather than the cheapest, which generally turn out to be undocumented immigrants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide no amnesty because 10 to 20 million people would be rewarded for breaking our laws.</li> <li>- Deny welfare to immigrants who were unwilling to take the necessary steps to enter our country legally.</li> <li>- End birthright citizenship in order to lessen incentive for immigrants to enter the country illegally because the know their children born here will be citizens.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce health care spending in the government from 17 percent to 11 percent of the GDP to reduce the budget deficit.</li> <li>- Eliminate corporate health insurance and replace it with a consumer-based system to make our economy more competitive and increase wages for the average worker.</li> <li>- Focus on preventive health care instead of chronic diseases, which make up 80 percent of health care costs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a \$2,500 tax credit for all individuals, provide a wide range of coverage options and allow people to get insurance from a variety of places in order to increase incentives for obtaining insurance coverage</li> <li>- Control medical spending through competition between medical providers to bring costs under control in order to provide affordable health insurance and allow access to medical insurance to all Americans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strive to create a free market for health care by removing federal regulations and encouraging competition.</li> <li>- Give doctors the power to negotiate collectively with insurance companies in order to lower the cost of decent medical care.</li> <li>- Allow every American the option to establish a Health Savings Account (HSA) without having to obtain a high-deductible insurance policy.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognize that the war in Iraq is a part of the war on terror and realize that we cannot let up unless al-Qaida is banished from the country.</li> <li>- Seek to provide a window of opportunity allowing the Iraqi government to succeed rather than looking for an exit strategy.</li> <li>- Support a regional summit dedicated to militarily and financially committing neighboring countries to stabilize Iraq.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send in extra troops to clear and hold insurgent strongholds, embed American personnel in Iraqi police units and halt sectarian violence in Baghdad with the long-term goal of producing a stable and secure Iraq.</li> <li>- Rebuild Iraqi cities and attempt to establish a working economy.</li> <li>- Call for international pressure on Iran and Syria, two of the largest aids to the Iraqi insurgents' cause.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediately set into motion a plan to withdraw troops from Iraq to avoid further deficit spending and dependence on other nations to fund the war.</li> <li>- Return to the requirement that Congress approve declarations of war rather than giving the president unconstitutional power based on responses to U.N. resolutions.</li> <li>- Leave Iraq completely in the hands of its new government.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide sweeping tax cuts enabled by lessened government spending and the establishment of the FairTax, which is based on spending rather than income, allowing middle-class families to save more money in the long run.</li> <li>- Make American products more competitive through the FairTax's lowering of corporate tax, which creates more jobs and allows middle-income families to buy more goods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cut taxes for middle class families by repealing the Alternative Minimum Tax, which will save the average middle class family about \$2,700.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower taxes based on less government spending to ease the strain on working families.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on renewed diplomacy and inclusion of other countries into our plans in order to have others by our side, helping accomplish our goals.</li> <li>- Crack down on international terrorism through surgical air strikes and raids by small, elite groups of soldiers rather than all-out war and applying pressure on al-Qaida leaders and supporters.</li> <li>- Continue supporting Israel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish alliances overseas by combating terrorism across the globe and helping other countries to quell insurgencies.</li> <li>- Provide an example by continuing to foster a competitive and open market through the use of technology and innovation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Withdraw from international organizations and trade deals (such as NAFTA) that infringe upon the independence and freedom of the U.S.</li> <li>- Pull back from meddling in other nations' affairs by bringing our troops home from the 130 nations we currently occupy.</li> <li>- Avoid intervening on the behalf of or giving aid to despised regimes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achieve energy independence by the end of second term as president.</li> <li>- Pursue all avenues of alternative energy sources (nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, clean coal, biodiesel and biomass).</li> <li>- Increase federal spending on energy research and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work to ensure we have clean air and water, sustainable land and "greenspaces" where development is forbidden in order to ensure that the environment is preserved.</li> <li>- Bring advanced technologies such as nuclear energy to the market more quickly in order to reduce overall carbon emissions.</li> <li>- Shift to other energy supplies besides oil in order to reduce our dependence on foreign fuels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with Congress to repeal federal regulations and taxes that impede the development of new energy sources, since these tools allow bureaucrats to devote resources to producers with better political standing in their eyes.</li> <li>- Establish a free market in energy so that the cheapest, cleanest, most reliable alternative fuel sources naturally rise to the top of the heap while encouraging energy conservation and innovation in energy production.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilize curricula based on the arts to better educate students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, which can improve abstract thinking vital for processing information.</li> <li>- Provide more public schools as well as introducing more charter schools to expand the options available to parents seeking the best education for their children.</li> <li>- Test teachers as well as students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expand parents' choice of schools for their children despite income differences by reforming federal financial support to allow parents to move their children from failing schools.</li> <li>- Try to make all schools competitive by allowing them to hire and reward the most effective faculty.</li> <li>- Pursue reforms that eliminate the "underlying problems" in our educational system by creating more accountability for schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abolish the Department of Education and place its functions in the hands of individual states. Remove federal subsidies to allow local taxes to fund schools so that teachers and parents can directly decide how best to allocate educational resources.</li> <li>- Provide teachers a \$3,000 yearly tax credit to ease financial strain and encourage teachers to stay in an underpaid, yet much needed, profession.</li> </ul>

Huckabee photo by David Poe/Lariat staff. All others, Associated Press.

<p>43 and 90 ation d. (FM 434)</p>	<p><b>Precinct 18</b> Bracks United Methodist Church 1005 LaSalle Ave.</p>	<p><b>Precincts 24, 25 and 57</b> Alta Vista Elementary 3637 Alta Vista St.</p>	<p><b>Precinct 30</b> Crestview Elementary 1120 N. New Road</p>
<p>89 mmunity Center</p>	<p><b>Precinct 20</b> South Terrace Neighborhood Center 2615 S. 12th St.</p>	<p><b>Precincts 26 and 56</b> Kendrick Elementary 1801 Kendrick Lane</p>	<p><b>Precincts 35 and 37</b> Dean Highland Elementary 1800 N. 33rd St.</p>
<p>st Church</p>	<p><b>Precinct 22</b> South Waco Elementary 2104 Gurley Lane</p>	<p><b>Precinct 27</b> Greater Zion Missionary Baptist Church 2625 S. 18th St.</p>	<p><b>Precinct 49</b> Highland Baptist Church 3014 Maple Ave.</p>

## Student standpoints:

TECHNOLOGY & POLITICS

How has the evolution of technology affected today's campaigns?



Jacyn Reddic  
Senior  
The Woodlands

I think it has made it more open for public discussion. I think people can be more easily informed now about the issues and what's going on. But I also think it's taken away any minimal amount of privacy the candidates had because everything is out there.



Joshua Sanders  
Junior  
Houston

It lets you reach a lot more people like the younger crowd rather than focusing on the bigger money. You get the lower income, which are college students and other people. ... Most college students will read something on Facebook or MySpace before they read something on the newspaper because Facebook is more accessible than going somewhere and trying to get a newspaper.

# Technology gives new angle to races

By Shannon Daily  
Staff writer

Previous generations have supported their favorite presidential candidates through attending rallies, passing out fliers and wearing campaign pins.

Now, in addition to these methods, social Web sites such as YouTube, Facebook and MySpace have become popular ways for the youth of America to show their loyalty.

Katy sophomore Jeff Fralick is the creator of one of the Facebook groups specifically for Baylor students in support of Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama.

"This election all the candidates have realized that the Internet is the way to talk to us, and it's working. There's record numbers of kids talking about politics, like it's the cool thing again to talk about politics," Fralick said.

Fralick said that he believes youth are getting involved in politics again because Internet technology has given it a fresh face.

Politics is about discussion and interaction, Fralick said.

"And now it's actually feasible to have someone have a discussion on the Internet," he said.

"A lot of the campaigns have done a good job of really bombarding us on the Internet through Facebook, and MySpace and YouTube," he said.

Because Baylor is a non-profit organization and doesn't endorse a specific party or candidate, Fralick said, he knew it would be more dif-

icult to campaign for his candidate on campus.

The Facebook group he started provided him and other Obama supporters a place to virtually get organized.

The Facebook group also provided an easy way for the Obama campaign organizers to contact students, Fralick said.

"It was kind of unintentional," Fralick said. "The office found all of our groups and e-mailed us through the Facebook group."

Rockwall senior Blake Buchanan is another student taking advantage of Internet technology for the upcoming election.

He is the creator of a Facebook group in support of Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee. Among other things, he uses this group to help broadcast Huckabee's YouTube videos.

"From our own campaign I can definitely say YouTube has been huge for Mike Huckabee, especially since he doesn't have the kinds of funds some of the other candidates have," Buchanan said.

"It's a really effective, cheap way to communicate with everybody immediately."

Buchanan said candidates have been smart to start hiring Internet savvy people to get their Web sites and video feeds up and running.

"I've learned the most about candidates through watching clips of them on YouTube," he said.

While he's noticed Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton promoting

her Web sites recently, Buchanan said, he believes Obama has gotten the biggest benefit from his online work.

Buchanan said he's glad to see this expansion to the Internet happening, "because it really seems to be connecting with college students. It turns out maybe they really do care about politics."

While Buchanan keeps up with television news channels such as CNN and MSNBC, "it's tough because you have a television at home, but you have computers everywhere," he said.

Buchanan said he believes connections through MySpace and other media groups have given the younger generation an initiative to get involved.

"I was able to see the last election and how all that went because I was old enough to vote. I think with this election, the numbers of people involved for our generation are hard to ignore," Buchanan said.

Houston senior Elise Wasser agreed that Internet technology would make candidates seem more accessible to the younger demographic.

"I would say it helps them get more excited, but I don't know if it'll affect the number of people that actually vote," Wasser said.

Wasser also said while Facebook and MySpace groups may work for some students, it wouldn't work for those who don't like to broadcast their political views.

At the moment there are only Baylor specific Facebook groups in support of Obama and Huckabee.

## WAR from page 1

oppose the war since its inception.

"I rise to urge the Congress to think twice before thrusting this nation into a war without merit-one fraught with the danger of escalating into something no American will be pleased with," he said before the U.S. Congress Sept. 4, 2002.

Dr. Richard Riley, professor of political science, said Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has put himself at a disadvantage by supporting the war effort, "pretty much in lock-step with what the President is doing."

Myers acknowledged McCain's standpoint and said, "that's where John McCain is weak."

Riley said he thinks McCain, a former prisoner of war, would emphasize upholding the anti-torture tenants of the Geneva Convention, something the current administration has let slide. Despite these great concerns, Riley and Myers said they don't think the candidates' stances on the war will greatly impact how voters will cast preliminary ballots.

"They probably give (the war) a little less thought than they did six months ago," Riley said. "The public seems to be a little less concerned about the war and more concerned with the economy now."

Nevertheless, he said, voters should consider U.S. foreign relations and tension in the Middle East, as well as Eastern Europe and Asian nations of turmoil such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, when deciding which presidential hopeful gets their vote.

## Signs of the time

People around Texas come together in support of their favorite presidential candidates.

Right: Waco residents and some of their pets gather at a Thursday rally for Mike Huckabee in Waco. Below: Supporters of Sen. Hillary Clinton and Sen. Barack Obama take to the streets in Austin Feb. 21 before the CNN Democratic debate. Left: Children with an Obama sign kneel in front of Clinton campaign signs in Austin on Feb. 21.



All photos by David Poe/Lariat staff

## HELPING from page 1

ed the videos on the site. "I think it's huge that so much of campaigning is now being done through the Internet," he said. "New media is the wave of the future, especially with our generation."

Houston sophomore Christopher Paxton agreed that technology is clearing a new path for young people to get involved politically.

"I believe the generation gap is also a technology gap," he said.

"Young people are technologically savvy and can fill the positions candidates need in that area. We play a huge part in helping them interface with technology and getting out their message on a wide scale."

Over the summer Paxton worked for Rep. John Culberson, representative of the seventh district of Texas. His jobs included everything from sifting through e-mails, talking to constituents over the phone and giving tours.

"I learned a number of job skills and refined my people skills," he said. "I gained very good experience, especially in the realm of getting up and going to work every day. It really is a discipline that can't truly be learned just by being in college."

Paxton also worked for Charles Bacarisse, former district clerk of Harris County, when he ran for county judge. Like Harris, Paxton was put in charge of shooting videos of the campaign and putting them on the official Web site.

Though Paxton is interested in a political career, he said working for a politician or volunteering for a campaign shouldn't be restricted to just those interested in that field of work.

"It's definitely a great way for all young people to get involved," he said. "You learn so much about the legislative process that even people who aren't interested in this career need to know as citizens of this country. The government's size and scope are so large that it really touches everything in your life. This is something that can benefit anyone."

Some college students are taking their campaigning efforts to the next level. Greenville junior Jordan Powell took the school year off to work for Huckabee. He began his work in the summer of 2007, and then stayed on as the national campaign manager's assistant.

"I was offered a unique opportunity that I didn't think I could pass up," Powell said.

"I've worked on campaigns before, but I have been in school so it wasn't quite the same experience. I can always come back to school, but this is a chance that might not come around again."

Powell put together TV commercials and worked as the campaign's research director for some time.

Powell said the jump from being a college student to working on a presidential candidate's campaign was a big adjustment.

"In the political world, people can often come off as intimidating," he said. "I just had to learn to interact with people and present myself as someone who may only be 20 years old, but who can stand shoulder to shoulder with them."

Powell said that there are too many issues that affect the college generation to just sit by and not be a part of the action.

"For me, it's more than just casting a vote," he said.

"It's doing what I can to get the message out about the candidate I believe will do the best job. Sometimes it's possible for age to just be a number. When you encounter the right people that give you the right opportunities, all that matters is that you take them and run."

## RELIGION from page 1

"I think that certainly more evangelicals are picking up on issues around social injustice," Woodruff said. "Even issues dealing with the environment and global warming are gaining attention."

For once, the front-running Republican candidate, Arizona Sen. John McCain, doesn't seem to have the steadfast support of the evangelical world. Republican presidential contender Mike Huckabee, on the other hand, has drawn a considerable amount of attention and support.

"It is notable that young evangelicals are enthusiastic about Huckabee," Allman said. "He's running against many traditional views of Republican politics with his critique of the tax policies of the establishment of conservatives, as well as making poverty a big issue. He is an interesting phenomenon."

Former presidential candidate Mitt Romney, a proclaimed Mormon, began his campaign by attempting to sway the evangelical world to his ballot. It is becoming clear that McCain will have to focus his campaigning efforts more on this demographic to win the support he needs.

"Romney tried to woo this constituency without realizing how problematic his views were for most of this world," Allman said. "McCain has his work cut out for him if he wants to gain the votes of the religious people. It wouldn't surprise me if those who voted for Bush don't support McCain."

In fact, it seems that Obama has reached out to this electorate and endeavored to cross the barriers sometimes perceived between the Democratic Party and evangelicals.

"Clearly Obama is anxious to try and build a bridge to these religious people," Allman said. "The Democratic Party has really been hurt by

## Student standpoints: RELIGION & POLITICS



Jason Ratcliff  
Sophomore  
Fayetteville, Ark.

Do your religious views play a role in your voting decisions?

They do and they don't because morally that says a lot about how the President is going to make decisions if they are on the fence about things. Not to the point of saying if this person is Catholic, Jewish or Muslim I am not going to vote for him.



Steven Owens  
Freshman  
Kansas City, Mo.

Is the use of religion by politicians a turn-off?

I think it's an essential thing. It's necessary for them to express their viewpoints to us so that we can know that, and not so much influence it but have a basis on it.



Austin Cook-Lindsay  
Freshman  
San Angelo

Do your religious views affect your views on controversial issues like abortion and same-sex marriage?

As a Christian my belief in God and relationship with God affect everything I believe. At the same time you have look at what's going on in America, the country, and the world.

the perception that if you're religious, you can't be Democratic. Obama is very eager to try and win over some of these religious voters that sort of share the same views as him."

But for those evangelicals who don't see a candidate with strong ties to evangelical Christianity and who aren't satisfied elsewhere, it is possible that the end result will be a significant decline in the evangelical vote this November.

"The majority of self-identified evangelicals are very conservative politically, economically and socially," said Dr. Roger Olson, professor of religion at George W. Truett Theological Seminary. "Many will vote reluctantly for McCain, but many will stay home and not vote at all."

The fact that some citizens use

their faith as the sole determinant of whether they vote for a candidate proves just how big a role religion plays in the political process.

"The idea of a wall of separation has at least two important dimensions," Allman said. "We are fine in the institutional meaning of the phrase in that we don't have a national church like some other countries. In that sense, the wall is every bit as strong and evident as it ever was."

Allman said the dimension that most refer to when speaking of a violation of church and state deals more with the culture of politics in relation to our nation.

"In other words, the political and public culture that prevails and shapes us as citizens," he said. "In the last decade or so, religion has

become more evident and assertive in the public square, but I don't recognize it as a threat to the institutional separation of church and state. What we're talking about is more of a cultural equation."

What will make the difference in this election is a body of voters anxiously anticipating a change. In order to get that change, liberals, conservatives and evangelicals alike will come together to see it through.

"It is clearly a time for change, an opportunity to branch out from our traditional roles and our traditional views," Lillback said. "Our candidates represent a new and distinctive era. This election year is most certainly an interesting time for the evangelical world and the rest of the nation alike."