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Through Rainbow-Colored Glasses

By Christine Dinsmore

If your extended family is anything like mine, you will probably have someone lean across the Thanksgiving table and sputter, “And what are you thankful for?” I’m bracing for that question. The political news has been so dreadful that I will feel a bit narcissistic focusing on my own good fortune.

So, what am I thankful for? On the political front, the best news is that George W. Bush isn’t twins. On the personal front—Barbara Bush is not *my* mother.

It turns out that the compassionate conservative acorn doesn’t fall far from the compassionate tree. Barbara was at her best when she regaled the folks in the Houston Astrodome, made homeless by Hurricane Katrina, with her theory that “so many of the people in the arena here, you know, were underprivileged anyway, so this is working very well for them.” Didn’t it make you want to take those pearls and shove them down her throat?

Oops, be kind. It’s the holidays.

I’ve had my fill with all these self-proclaimed compassionate people, though, especially the Bible-thumpers. Like the Rev. Pat Robertson, say? The media reported that the televangelist had determined that Katrina wreaked havoc on the Gulf Coast because the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences chose Ellen DeGeneres to host the Emmy Awards. His proof that God’s hand was behind this retribution for the sin of inclusiveness? Well, remember the last time she emceed? Right after 9/11.

It turns out that Robertson didn’t really blame Katrina on Ellen. It was just an urban legend. But the sad part is, based on his past reckless statements, it so easily could have been true. After all, Robertson did suggest that the United States assassinate Hugo Chávez, the democratically elected president of Venezuela. And why wasn’t the reverend arrested? What would have happened to an imam in Iran who proclaimed that *our* president should be assassinated? Well, if the bumbling CIA could find him, he would be in deep trouble.

I really am a peace-loving soul, but my temper gets the best of me when hypocrisy oozes from the religious zealots. They give a bad name to zealotry. I mean religion.

As I pass the mashed potatoes and the candied yams this holiday season, I'll be reminded of the wonderful things that have evolved throughout the years.

Dick Cheney said "lesbian" and "daughter" in the same sentence—even if it was with his Darth Vader snarl. John Edwards and John Kerry both got to say "lesbian" and "Dick Cheney's daughter" over and over and over again. Lynn Cheney insisted that everyone but Dick apologize for saying "lesbian" and "Dick Cheney's daughter." All this in one presidential campaign.

Really, there's nothing to celebrate on the political home front. It's hard to believe that the Bush-Cheney tag team has had an even more punishing effect on the world than predicted.

As a businessman, George W. Bush bankrupted every company he got his hands on. He was always bailed out by his father or Papa Bush's friends. Now it's as if Dubya is CEO of the United States. And Daddy can't get him out of this mess. The tragedy is playing out like the Enron scandal. The CEO screws up and walks away relatively unscathed, and we, like the Enron employees, are left penniless and shafted.

The September *Newsweek* poll showed Bush's approval rate had plummeted to 38 percent. I'll be mulling this over just about apple pie time, with the question: Who *are* these 38 percent of people who think he's doing a good job? And am I sitting next to any of them at the family Thanksgiving table?