

indifferent to this life, quite the opposite, holding that one's actions in time can have eternal consequence necessarily makes each and every transcendentally important. This is the drama of life, which makes life enjoyable.

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October 22, 2008

### A suggestion for oral argument

It seems to me that oral arguments would be much more useful if the judges were to provide the advocates ahead of time with a list of questions that the judges wish to have answered. This way, advocates would not have to prepare to discuss matters that the judges have no interest in, and the judges would also be able to have their questions answered immediately, without having to zone out during an otherwise off-topic presentation. Of course, this system would require that the judges be well prepared prior to argument and that the advocates have sufficient time to research the questions asked. But, the questions might also tip the court's hand, which could have a favorable effect on settlement.

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October 21, 2008

### More on Powell on Obama

JT comments on my criticisms of the Powell endorsement of Obama, observing that the GOP has moved markedly to the right during the Bush administration on social issues. First, I'm not quite sure whether that's relevant to my criticism; after all, Powell may be just as upset about the GOP's "conservative" economic policies, e.g. the Bush tax cuts, as he is about social policies. Second, many of the social subjects JT mentions the GOP had longstanding positions on pre-Bush, e.g. abortion. Powell has been with Republican administrations since the early 80s, so he can't credibly say now that he is dissatisfied with a GOP policy that every Republican boss he has ever had shared. Third, other subjects mentioned by JT, such as gay marriage, although not necessarily forefront issues prior to the Bush administration, were at least latent, in the sense that it's hard to imagine a GOP in the 1980s or 1990s coming out squarely in favor of gay marriage. Fourth, (and this largely relevant to my first point), some of the social subjects noted by JT are really *rationales* for federal action (or inaction) that a secular conservative might well agree with, for example, support for Israel or denying federal taxpayer funds for private scientific research (in stem cells). Thus, even assuming that Powell's abandonment of the GOP for Obama is based upon the GOP's social issue stands, it would seem, at least by the subjects JT has identified, that Powell ought to have been fed up with the GOP long before Bush was elected, and that the Bush presidency has maintained, basically, the status quo.

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October 20, 2008

### Chaput on Obama

This [article](#) reviews a recent speech by Archbishop Chaput of Denver criticizing certain prominent Catholics for their support of Obama. Among those Catholics chastised is Doug Kmiec, a rather conservative Catholic law professor, former dean of Catholic University of America Law School, and at present a professor at Pepperdine Law School. In his speech, Archbishop Chaput takes Kmiec and his ilk to task for blurring the moral questions presented by the current election season, especially the perennial (although clearly answerable) question of how to determine one's vote when one candidate is pro-life but otherwise basically non-Catholic in his orientation, but another is generally Catholic in his outlook but pro-choice. Archbishop Chaput's remarks underscore that abortion is a trumping issue, and that a pro-choice vote cannot be justified by reliance upon a candidate's family or poverty or war policies. Said the Archbishop:

I think his activism for Senator Barack Obama, and the work of Democratic-friendly groups like Catholics United and Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, have done a disservice to the church, confused the natural priorities of Catholic social teaching, undermined the progress pro-lifers have made, and provided an excuse for some Catholics to abandon the abortion issue instead of fighting within their parties and at the ballot box to protect the unborn.

[HT: [New Advent](#)]

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### Colin Powell's Obama Endorsement

Yesterday on "Meet the Press" General Powell endorsed Obama for president. One of the principal reasons he offered for his endorsement was his observation that the Republican Party has moved too far to the right during the Bush Administration. With all do