

End Times Lullabies - Book One, Context

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End Times Lullabies

Book One, Context

Greg Forest



END TIMES PRESS

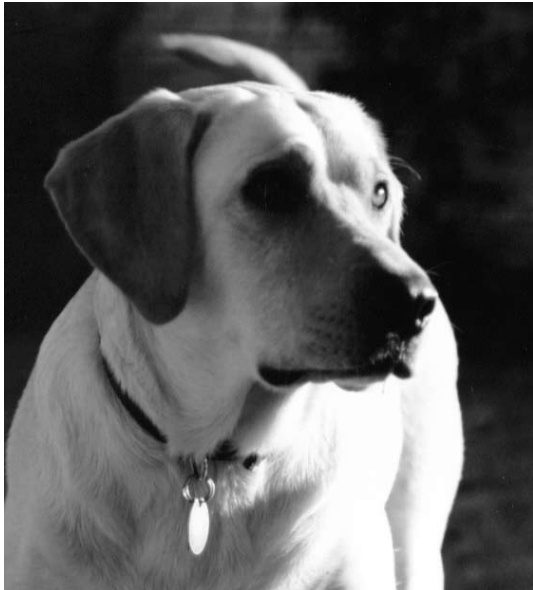
**This book is dedicated to my greatest asset in life -
my friends - blessedly too numerous to mention.**

Being the Kerrmudgeron that I am it is amazing I have any
and their encouragement keeps me going.

Also I would like to thank my partner and buddy

Budreaux Vasserhund Galoote

for his constant companionship and loyalty.



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PREFACE

Is this a diary, a rant, both? Welcome my friends to my dualist ranting diary of world events as seen through the eyes of cowboy narcissism as we approach The End of Western Civilization. When I say “Western” I’m not talking about the cowboy kind – that will long endure here in the Texas Hill Country. Whether the rest of the world goes down the tubes or not, I predict that cowboys will still be ridin’, ropin’ and wranglin’ up in Bandera, Texas after The End. It’s the “Civilization” part that we will witness an end to. High tech or not, we are heading for barbarism unless world governance is turned over to me – an unlikely prospect.

It seems like no matter where you are coming from on the political or theological spectrum, there is an upcoming End Times in your mythology. The Christians think it will be the return of Jesus, the Muslims await their 7th Iman and New Agers will be dancing naked under the moon at Machu Picchu come the 2012 Winter solstice. Environmentalists predict our end in global warming and pollution. The 2nd Great Depression is right down the road (February 2009 should do it).

Theocon or neocon, tree hugger or commie – everyone seems to yearn for The End of the World As We Know It. Many people’s belief system can’t hold up without a good Armageddon and they spend their waking hours setting up events to move in that direction. Any way you look at it, we’re fucked.

My personal date and reasoning for the coming End Times is as follows:

I am going with The End date of December 21, 2012 because the Mayans were supposed to be real smart and its the solstice. They may not have had cell phones or even wheels but they were star gazing and entrail reading adepts. Their stars and guts told them that we are out of here in five years. But rather than the return of Quetzalcoatl the Winged Serpent, I think The End will arrive with the coming of the Elder Gods and Cthulhu feasting from the Metaphysical Picnic Basket of Cornucopia. For me it is a much more entertaining scenario – a soul eating octopus-looking evil deity and its henchthings raiding our dementia with agonizing torture and fabulous prizes for all.

The reasoning for Cthulhu’s return is simple. We are unworthy of existence. Given a whole universe to play with and explore we still have our minds focused on the dunghill of our cultural past. Had we been

given an appliance to deify, we would worship the owner's manual. We are spiritual zeros and the whole of the ascended realm knows it. By eating our souls, Cthulhu and his hoards will turn our thoughtless, self-serving hopes and dreams into a tasty light snack; in effect recycling our souls into junk food. The ingredients are all there for a great product; even if sorely lacking in nutritional value.

God forbid we have something as mundane as an asteroid or plague take us out - where's the entertainment value in that? If you can't watch The End from the sidelines on Fox News, where's the fun and what's the point? Without a Protracted End, there would be no advertising revenue for the TV networks. Let's tune into Faux News on the Last Day:

"We go now to our man on the scene, Bob Duhmas. Bob what have you got for us?"

"I'm down here looking at the sky, it is starting to glow and the asteroid is now much brighter than the sun. Shit!"

"And now a brief word from our spo



1997 – On The Brink of X-Day

On the morning of July 5th, 1998 at 10am, the X-ists will drop down from orbit in their pleasure saucers, hover over the field across the street from my home and lower the ramp so my friends and I can board. We will be among the lucky few to escape the coming devastation. Similar to the Christian Rapture, the Rupture will have us witnessing the conflagration from our sky boxes in the clouds. I'm throwing a party the night before and am packing light.

I am not alone. There are many who believe The End is coming. I have survived number of Ends in my life - The End of my heroin addiction, The End of my marriage, Childhood's End - but never The End. A new millennium is coming. Or is it? To enjoy the future one has to arrive there. There are a number of people who think the future won't get here or at least not the future that travels to us by chronological default.

The year 2000 and any events that may visit with it are primarily

Christian concepts. Even the dating system revolves around the perceived date of the birth of Jesus. Consequently most End Time beliefs in Western culture are also Christian. The New Millennium has little significance in the Islamic, Hebrew, Chinese, Hindu or Buddhist calendars. Fortunately there are some New Age theologies that also believe the coming century may not get here or when it does will not stay long in human terms. The Mayan Calendar is coming to an end, the UFOs will soon be landing and Edgar Cayce himself said Atlantis will rise under great planetary conflagration. Regardless of the End Times vehicle, the gullible are holding their collective breath.

It is likely that what I've found in my search for an overview of the coming millennium will anger some people; especially Christian people. I offer no apologies. It is their beliefs that I am commenting on, not my own. The concept of End Times is not new to our lifetime - The End is a core concept of both modern and ancient Christianity.

When starting my research I was going to try to rate or meter different philosophies and theories by the degree of outlandishness. After a few days of reading this became impossible as they all seem to be equally outrageous. So I will have to let some of these theories speak for themselves.

THE MAJOR THEORIES

Christian: Since Jesus walked the earth, Christians have believed that The End is near. The return of Christ and the earthly changes associated with it are the core of the theology. The Kingdom of God is coming and it will not be pretty for non-believers. Dogmatic adherence is your only salvation. When I do the math on this premise, it looks very unlikely. Since the founding of Christianity 2,000 years ago, all Christians thought they lived in End Times. To date they have all been wrong. If the approximately 4 billion Christians who came before us are any indication, the correct prediction of Christ's return during an adherent's lifetime is zero for four billion and still falling in likelihood every day— not a very good batting average.

NewAge*: The New Age also has a number of belief systems that call for "The End of the World As We Know It." Most New Age belief systems do not regard themselves as a religion as much as a spiritual study system. Sects like Scientology use a great deal very high tech terminologies in their system trying to mask bullshit under the guise of something arrived at by logic. When asked what their religion professes, they will deny that is a religion but more of a metaphysical and holistic scientific

study of the nature of Man. Edgar Cayce adherents site the raising of Atlantis from the sea bottom off the coast of Bimini a sign that The End is near. Nostradamus sees the Bear of the North and the Eagle of the west joining forces to defeat the Antichrist in a great final earthly battle. We were recently treated to a media blitz regarding the Heaven's Gate UFO cult which is one of many who are preparing to board the spaceships and move on to a higher place.

** rhymes with "sewage"*

Old Age: Every culture has its Origin of Man theory. When you create a mythos regarding The Beginning, it stands to reason that The End must also be factored in. Unfortunately many of these cultures and belief systems are now extinct (again making "End Times" a relative term – End Times have already occurred for the Toltecs for example) but there still remains enough fragments of the Babylonian, Mayan and other cultures that we can at least make some educated guesses as to what they believed regarding The End. To date, like their Christian counterparts, they have all been wrong.

Science: We can't leave The End to just religious folks. There are a few science cults that also believe The End is on the way due to environmental pollution, genetic engineering or some other scientific faux pax. Ozone depletion will cause global warming, melt the poles and drown us all. A genetically altered virus could escape and kill us all. A extraterrestrial object will impact with Earth and blow us all to smithereens. Although science uses logic and minute observation to make these predictions, again it becomes a belief system when a conjecture has yet to become a Scientific Theory. Until you can actually prove something, a scientific theory is just another belief system with a technical litany (see Scientology and Intelligent Design for more information).

Other/My Theories: Basically that is what this whole treatise is about - my non-belief. Primitive cultures believe in primitive things - Thunder Gods, The Great One In The Sky, angels, demons and a host of other non-worldly creatures. For all our high technology, theologically and spiritually speaking, we are still quite primitive. We now robe ourselves in technology but still cling to the good old days when we describe the properties of subatomic particles with descriptions like, "strangeness" and "charm."

One common thread that weaves its way through almost all these End Times theories is the destruction of all who do not believe. Non believers are a thorn in the side of any theological system - there are always

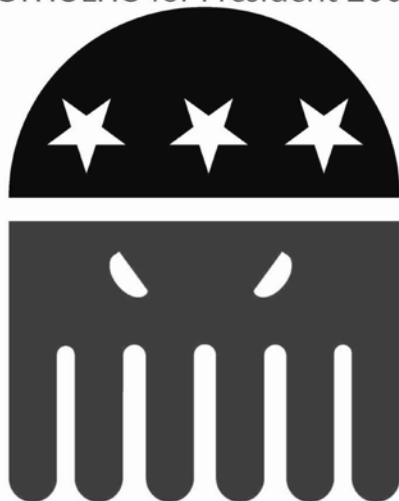
some wise-ass folks out there that try to apply common sense or logic to theologies and the results of their studies are usually the same - the fall from the light of spiritual grace into the dark realm of logic. Logic many explain a great many things but it is not something warm and fuzzy that you can snuggle up in bed with or tithe to; hence being discounted by God-Mart shoppers at their big box mega-churches.

I admit to starting this project correctly biased and gratefully remain that way now. I regard my spiritual and intellectual development as too important to just buy something off the rack at God-Mart. When shopping belief systems I prod every piece of fruit, weighing and tasting. The last thing I want to adhere to is an outdated hand-me-down religion devised by primitive crackpots. We're in the twenty-first century now and flat earth theories don't hold up too well unless you are a politician running for the Texas legislature.

I'm sure many readers will construe this book to be a rant against religion - primarily Christianity. There are myriads of End Time theories and the Christians authored the lion's share; not me. If some of these theories look a little absurd, it is because they are.

My plan is to write one volume of End Times Lullabies each year until The End in 2012. I theorize that as I hone my skill set, the project should improve over time into something decent. Of course I have the same theory about my life and, well....

CTHULHU for President 2008



Why Settle for the Lesser Evil?



TOM "THE HAMMER" Delay

Roe vs. Wade Gets A Whippin'



End Times Lullabies

First Verse

Buddy Can You Spare Some Change?



ELECTION 2008

The recent election cycle was very entertaining and I found myself all over the political map. My neighbors probably didn't know what to think. In May I had a Ron Paul sign up in the yard - he was the first presidential candidate I had ever actually pulled a dollar out of my pocket for. I donated professional services in the form of a gig in San Antonio for Dennis Kucinich but Paul was the first to get any of my hard-earned bucks.

Shortly thereafter the American people, in their wisdom, laughed the only two major party candidates speaking to the truth off the primary campaign stage. The choices narrowed to lesser of evil.

Election day I had an Obama sign proudly irritating most of my neighbors and for the first time in a long time voted for a winner. The election results had me elated at the prospect of some actual change and, as always, pessimistic about the likelihood of the complete paradigm change necessary to transform our society back into something that could even loosely called, "civilized."

Just before the election I wrote the following piece for Hill Country Happenings, our local entertainment monthly. Reading it now it reveals to me what an angry old fart and how wonderfully self righteous I'm becoming. The piece was in response to a page of cliché wingnut rants about the evil Democrats, gays and abortionists. What follows are rants from over a period of years on issues that refuse to leave the realm of the contemporary.

The Times They Are A Changin'

I must confess that when my friend from the Right says, "You tell the lie often enough and people will begin to agree with it," I concur. Repeated lies are the GOP/FOX stock in trade. We have heard mountains of whoppers from George Bush & Co. and now torch bearer John McCain, coming up short on policies and the issues, is proudly marching forward with his campaign of character assassination, innuendo, and cognitive dissonance.

Concerning the current economic crisis, it is not surprising that McCain supporters believe it popped up from out of nowhere in the last two years. You betcha! It was those terrorist Democrats that took our economy down last year and today's meltdown could never occur on a GOP watch. I beg to differ. The reason we are in this economic mess is that we

have been following a failed “anything goes for Wall Street and Big Corporations” policy for years. The last bailout, the savings and loan crisis, was caused by the same forces and, in many cases, the same people causing this one.

George Bush’s record speaks for itself. I am happily NOT one of the few, the proud - the 23% of the American people who think he’s done a great job. If I recall correctly Bush won in 2004 with over 50% of the vote. With approval ratings now lower than Nixon’s, that means that over half the people who voted for him now think he’s a loser.

We should learn our lessons from each economic crisis but some folks are just hard headed.

“We will learn from this crisis to prevent the next one, with much stricter oversight. No more wild over-leveraging, no more liabilities concealed from the public and from shareholders, no more bundling of assets to maximize profits by assuming insane risks. Those days are over on Wall Street. With new rules of public disclosure and accounting, my reforms will make certain those betrayals of shareholders and the public trust are never repeated.”

- John McCain, 1989

Fannie and Freddie? The fact that Rick Davis, John McCain’s campaign manager, received \$30,000 a month for five years from Fannie and Freddie and some as recently as last month says it all to me. McCain’s current chief financial advisor, Phil Graham, head cheerleader for deregulation ideology is one of the primary architects of the derivatives scheme destroying our banking system and economy. Take cops off the beat and you will have more crime. Take regulators off the banking and insurance industries and you reap this bountiful harvest of greed, corruption and recession.

Folks seem to have forgotten names like Charles Keating and Lincoln Savings or Neil Bush and Silverado Savings and Loan. More importantly, they have forgotten the name of the Senator at the center of the last banking scandal, John McCain. The sub-prime mess is being blamed by the GOP on the people that took out the mortgages. Update for my Republican friends: The people who took out mortgages and couldn’t pay them are on the street. They tried and died and are now either homeless or renters – its a simple fact. They gambled and lost. They are no longer on the stage of the mortgage meltdown crisis yet the problem persists and is growing. Why?

The problem is not the property or the borrower, it is the leveraging of a simple \$100,000 mortgage into a high risk \$10,000,000 portfolio asset. Does the word, “derivative” sound familiar? The next step is insuring these risky portfolios using “credit default swaps” to avoid banking and insurance regulations – yet another risky investment derivation on the risky derivative! It makes your head spin. The problem is that there are no reserves at the underwriters – these financial instruments are and always have been nothing but accounting fluff and blue sky.

Greenspan is the captain that hit the iceberg and Bernanke is the first mate now assigning lifeboat seating to first class passengers only. This economic crisis happened on purpose. The bailout was planned. GOP mission accomplished. George Bush & Co. robbed the nation’s piggy bank while in office and now he’s stealing the silverware on his way out the door. It is likely that we will see some long overdue RICO prosecutions when Obama appoints the new Attorney General.

Just look at the facts. The Republican defenders of small government and fiscal restraint have created the largest and most expensive government in history. Rather than getting the government off our backs they have now inserted it into our bedrooms, emails and phone calls. Since the GOP took the White house in 2000 our national debt has skyrocketed - so much so that the counter on the Treasury Department’s web site ran out of digits when we crossed \$10 trillion. Wages are down, the dollar is no longer the currency of foreign reserves and foreign investment in government issues has dried up. The hedge fund crash is only weeks away, unfortunately just before the election, and McCain wants me to wring my hands over an old hippie 60’s radical? I’m shaking in my boots!

My friend Rand McCullough said it best back in 2003, “The GOP and George Bush are spending money like a crack whore with an American Express card.” It’s the taxpayer’s (and their grandchildren’s) credit card being charged for this bailout. GOP, you had your turn at bat, tried your no-holds-barred economic policies and struck out.

After choosing a campaign staff of the lobbyist A-Team, McCain’s claim that he’s going to run them out of town when elected rings a bit hollow. Like all politicians, he will, “dance with them what brung ‘um.”

McCain claimed that Obama’s inexperience at the national level disqualified him as a presidential candidate and then chose Sarah Palin as his running mate. Say what? If I was Kay Bailey Hutchinson, I would be fuming! After all the water Kay has carried for the GOP, this is the thanks she gets? Kay could hold her own against Biden anywhere but McCain picks a candidate so horrendous that she has to be kept off the Sunday morning shows and can’t even appear intelligent during the few softball

interviews she has granted to date. Beyond the talking points, usually spouted inappropriately or out of context, she has said absolutely nothing. Palin has also been “palling around” with some pretty scary folks at the AIP.

An obvious comparison underlines the bottom line for me: McCain graduated 894th in a class of 899. Palin required five colleges to get a BA in journalism. The fact that her husband, her oldest son and her soon-to-be son in law are all high school dropouts says a lot to me about her stand on education.

Obama came up from a single-mom food stamp household to where he is today through his intelligence, talent and hard work. I think of the Obama story as the essence of the American dream – anyone who works hard can achieve greatness in the United States. In America, the sky is the limit. The GOP labels him an elitist. I think the American public would be best served with an “A” student in the White house this time. We owe ourselves excellence for a change and heaven knows we need it.

As for our Founding Fathers and the separation of church and state, they can speak for themselves:

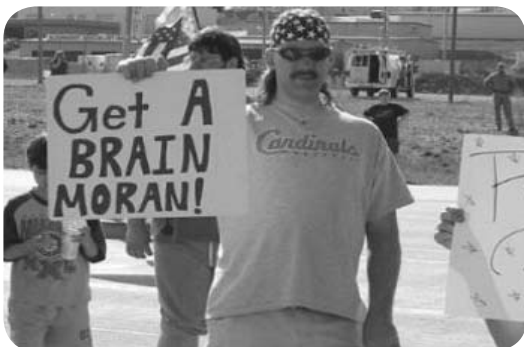
“Question with boldness even the existence of a god.”

- Thomas Jefferson (letter to Peter Carr, 1787)

“When a Religion is good, I conceive it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not take care to support it so that its Professors are obliged to call for help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.”

- Benjamin Franklin (October 9, 1780;)

You have two choices this presidential election, you can vote for McCain or you can vote for America.





AND THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU IN CHAINS

September 2006

*“Put your hand inside
Put your hand inside
put your hand inside the puppet head”*

- They Might Be Giants

My right wingnut buddy James sure has it out for those “lying Democrats.” I consider myself an Independent but, in the interest of enhancing my political credentials, I too want to be on James’ Short List of Liars. So let’s play Orwellian Oratory! All of the following, except one sentence is totally true - can you find the lie?

When Ken Mehlman’s hand gets inside the puppet heads of the GOP cadres, they never bark the same tune. They hardly ever complain in lock-step unison and verbatim about the damnable lying Democrats that are ruining the country! I admire the spin Mehlman and James are trying to put on the Plame Case; or rather the Blame case. As all good Bush supporters know, the White House and everyone in it knew nothing about the leak. They would never leak sensitive classified information for political gain or vendetta. It is, of course, the Democrat’s fault.

Novak never testified to the Grand Jury that the leak came from two sources. Armitage didn’t come out of the closet last week and Karl Rove never testified earlier that he was the other source. All of the following statements from the current administration have been proven to be irrefutably true:

We never imagined that commercial aircraft could be used as weapons.

Saddam was directly involved in 911 and was a Bin Laden buddy.

Saddam had WMD and probably nuclear weapons targeted at the U.S.

Bin Laden can run but he can't hide.

The war would pay for itself through Iraqi oil revenues.

We would be greeted in Iraq as liberators – not occupiers.

The Taliban was destroyed. The Afghanistan mission is complete.

We are turning the corner in Iraq and the opposition is in their last throes.

Tax cuts will create millions of jobs and help the middle class the most.

We never imagined the levies would fail.

The new Medicare plan will cost 400 billion.

Global warming is a fantasy concocted by the lying Democrats and people who hate our troops. It is actually caused by gay flatulence.

The outrageous lies James is so hot under the collar about are certainly not coming from the GOP-heavy Senate Select Committee chaired by a front line GOP Bush apologist, Roberts of Kansas. The Committee's findings are all lies. It's the Democrats fault.

At the time of the leak, Richard Armitage was not Deputy Secretary of State. He wasn't appointed by George Bush nor confirmed by a GOP senate. His boss was never Colin Powell. Colin Powell never worked for George Bush. There's not a GOP operative in the bunch. The Armitage/Novak leak was the only one. Judith Miller doesn't exist; nor does Matthew Cooper. Vivica Novak's relationship with Karl Rove's attorney,

Robert Luskin doesn't exist either. Karl Rove was never fired from the Bush senior campaign for leaking to Novak. These are all just lies from the Democrats.

The Democrats lied about how it appears that the Plame leak was in direct response to Joe Wilson's opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal. Joe Wilson didn't know what he was talking about – there was lots of Nigerian yellow cake uranium in Saddam's hands. The timing of outing Plame and Joe Wilson's article was purely coincidental. The White House and the GOP would never dream of demonizing their detractors. It is also coincidental that both Powell and Armitage resigned the Bush administration soon after this debacle and that Armitage is now on the board of directors of Conoco. GOP loyalty has no rewards. This will all die down now that there is a lawsuit on the whole issue pending against Vice President Dick Cheney, his former Chief of Staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Presidential advisor Karl Rove and other unnamed senior White House officials, for their alleged roles in the Plame outing.

Dick Cheney would never in a million years recently describe the majority of the American people as "terrorist appeasers," nor would Rove or Rumsfeld.

The GOP will likely continue to control Congress with God and Diebold on their side. Recent polls show the American public waking up to the lies of the Bush Administration and that Bush supporters, even within the GOP, are a shrinking minority. Finding the false sentence was real hard.





FACTOID

OK I guess I'll say it here first.

STATISTICAL FACT:

1/2 of US population are of less than average intelligence.

Remember that the brain challenged have to have something to believe in too. It might be victory in Iraq, the imminent return of Jesus or a flat earth but you can rest assured they will not be crusading for anything that requires more intelligence than they have. Approach these "dums" with pity not anger - they literally don't have the brains to come in out of the reign.



Sometimes you want what is known as a "fighting chance" against tyranny. The Ghandi approach won't work against corporate armies. The right to bear arms is NOT for a militia to be formed to protect our shores from foreign incursion, it is for defense against the kind of government we are watching evolve right here.

There is a quandary coming up for the Right. How do you balance gun rights with a compliant citizenry? Compliance is harder to enforce against an armed populace. Oddly enough there seems, at least to me, to be little correlation between having an armed populace and gun violence.

Canada is often cited as an example of a gun totin' country with little gun violence but the most obvious to me is Switzerland where every male between something like 18 -50 has an automatic weapon and pistol in the closet ready to rock. That is their military - everyone serves annually both in the rank-and-file and on call 24/7 at home ready to be called up fully armed from their TV dinners. Gun-related murders are almost nonexistent in Switzerland. Even armed to the teeth, our yodeling Swiss compadres prefer bludgeoning and stabbing over guns when performing their violence. It is so much more civilized.

THE WWWEB OF DECEIT

Dispatches from a slacker with broadband time to spare.

Posting on YouTube about how it seems that Ted Nugent's antics over big guns are hiding his insecurity over the size of his penis.

August 25, 2007

Message From Gayle:

lol, Liberals make me laugh, your comment on nugent displayed your ignorance. Of course its more important to have a bigger gun than a bigger dick, you fool. What world do you live in, This is a world of evil people that want to kill you, WHAT IS DOES THE SIZE OF A MAN's PENIS have to do with ANY-THING. LOL, wow, Liberals are so ignorant its hilarious. Good luck with that...HAHAHAHAHA

Reply to Gayle

Hey Gayle,

OK. Support your theory and post a video of your dick and your gun. We'll see which is bigger. Wouldn't want your friends to think you have a little gun would ya?

Ted Nugent is just a has-been like Chuck Norris who can't get a decent gig in their chosen field. Why? They suck at what they do. Norris can't act and Nugent can't play anything but cliché licks from Rock Star Guitar 101. When was the last time Nugent saw his name on any chart in the last 30 years? When was the last time someone tried to assault his home? The dude is paranoid AND a loser.

For shit's sake I have a .223 Mini 14 w/30 round bananas, Glock 17, and a modified Ruger 10-22. Scares the shit out of little-dicked guys. Also a couple of plinking 22s. In terms of armament, I'm hung like a horse (well pony) but still try to feed my dick better than my gun.



Florida/Texas Creationists

I was thinking about Texas (home) and Florida. What would happen if the Supreme Court decided that ALL education was completely a state's rights issue?

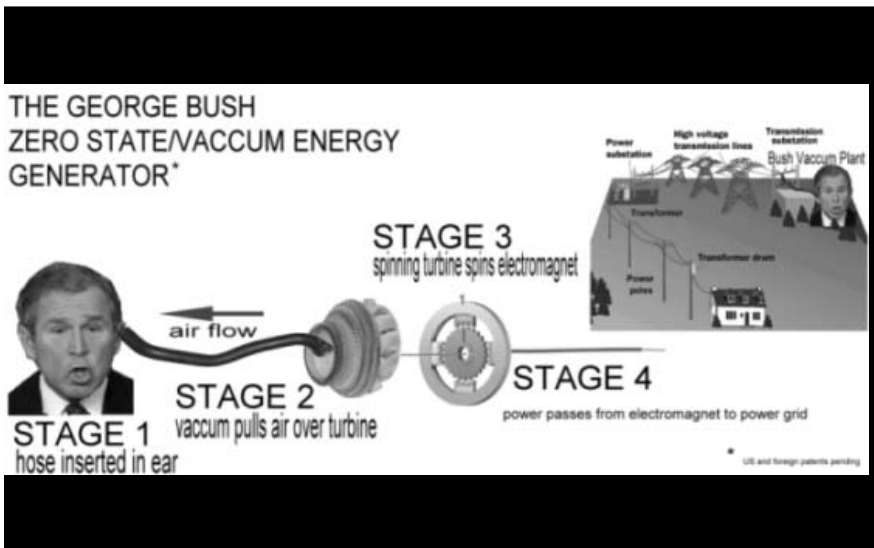
What would happen if Texas and Florida decided that biblical (no caps on purpose) science is the only thing to be taught in public schools?

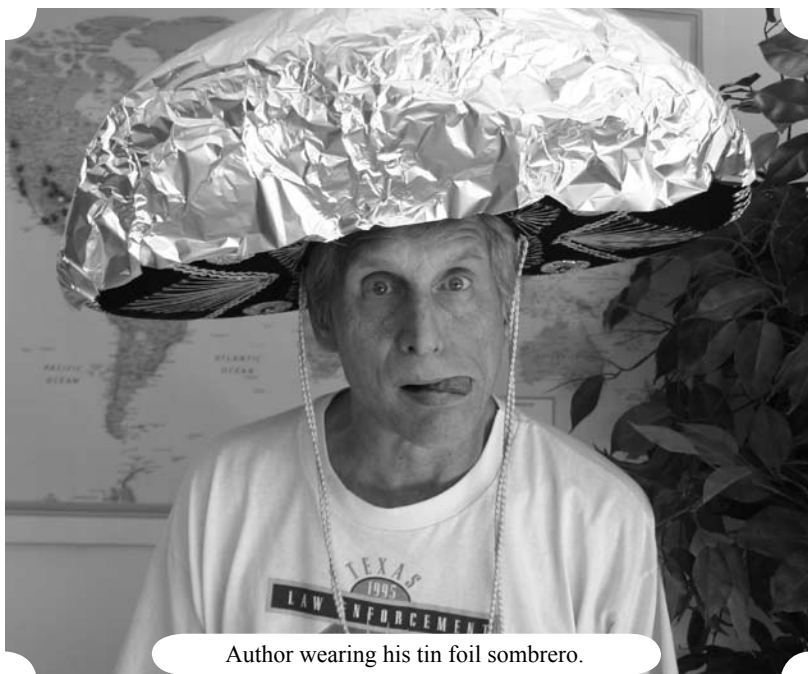
Fifteen, twenty years go by and Texans are wondering why they are all so poor and can't find decent jobs. Everyone is doing manual labor or cleaning pools except of course their corporate and secular bosses. That's my silver lining - the world is generally run by the smarter and better educated. The theocons are grooming their kids for slavery. They want conformity - not ingenuity.

I submit that the theocons would get even more irate because they would perceive their corporate employers as discriminating against Texans and Floridians because of their religion; not their ignorance. Corporate HQ needs people that can think and these states can't provide thinkers.

I know that the big corporations love compliant, dumb and low-paid workers but somebody has to run the office and make strategic company decisions. I doubt that there are many sane stockholders, Christians included, that want corporate policy to be faith driven.

I can't for the life of me figure out why Christian parents would want to hobble their children to a life of menial and low-paid jobs. Only so many of them can punch tickets at the Creation Museum - even at minimum wage.





Conspiracy Theory

Circa 1995

Authors Note: *This essay is from around 1995. In the thirteen years since, it seems quite poignant to look back on what I thought our problems were at that time. Our brave new world is here.*

There is a conspiracy afoot in the United States; diabolical and evil. It has extended its tentacles into every aspect of our society and could well mean the end of the republic. It has found its way into American economics, politics, industry and more importantly in to each and every home. Socioeconomically, it affects both the highest and the lowest of our society. It knows no racial, religious or ethnic boundaries. It is an equal opportunity destroyer. It is not a drug conspiracy, it is not the Communists or Socialists, it is not the skinheads or the John Birch Society; not even the Illuminati or the Council on Foreign Relations, although all do the heinous bidding of the conspiracy. This conspiracy is so fiendish and efficient that it doesn't need the secrecy of dark smoky rooms. The ac-

tions and the results of those actions are a matter of public record and are in plain view to any who would care to look long enough to see it.

This conspiracy is not ancient; in fact, it seems to have reared its ugly head within the last twenty years or so. The members of the conspiracy are numbered in the hundreds of millions and that number grows daily. The most amazing modus operandi of this scheme is that the vast majority of those participating in the conspiracy don't realize they are doing so. What they are doing is sealing their doom and that of their children.

What cabal could be capable of pulling off something of this proportion? Who could be directing this undermining of the country? Every one of us. The Conspiracy of Sheep. Each of us probably considers ourselves to be patriots. This is America; land of the free. This is a democracy and in the end the American public decides what our government will do. We are the masters of our own destiny aren't we? Hardly.

In the United States today the literacy rate is falling yearly at an alarming rate. Why? There has been increasingly lower amounts of money funded for education year after year and educators have been placing increasing value on what students can memorize not what they know or can figure out.

It is not in the interest of the United States and those who rule the country to have an educated and informed public. Those in power in Washington continue to lower the real dollar amount set aside for education each session of Congress. If there was an informed and educated public, they might start to question some of the policies that fly in the face of common sense and see through the smokescreen of political rhetoric and double talk that keeps the bottom line issues obscured.

A few of the more obvious examples: While the health problems directly related to cigarette smoking have become more obvious with the release of the results of each study on the matter, evidence indicates that in fact cancer and lung disease related to smoking is probably the largest current threat to public health. The US government still subsidizes and underwrites the growing of tobacco. If the position of the government is to subsidize tobacco growers, then why waste any of the taxpayers money combating lung cancer?

Recently the United States invaded Panama under the guise of an operation called "Just Cause". It could perhaps be more accurately described as "Operation Just Cuz." Why did the President order the invasion of another sovereign country? Just cuz he could get away with it. We removed the notorious Manuel Noriega in the military conquest of a foreign country. This dictator, described by the President of the United States as a "thug", is now awaiting his fair trial in the US for his crimes against

American and Panamanian citizens. What seems to have been overlooked in Washington's political shuffling and posturing is that the United States created Manuel Noriega. Our government supported his rise to power in the first place.

A major network on US television claims that their news programs are "where more Americans get their news". That is probably true. The problem is that the media is hardly unbiased. The media selected George Bush as our new president months before the election and let us know about it each night on the evening news. The once close presidential race almost became a landslide as the media reminded us every night who the winning side was going to be. During the invasion of Panama, Manuel Noriega went, in the period of a few days, from "President Noriega" to "General Noriega" to "Mr. Noriega" to "Defendant Noriega". The actions of the United States military and the comments of their Commander in Chief have already sealed the fate of this "drug lord" without the benefit of the United States justice system. Are most Americans aware that we, through the instrument of the CIA and other government agencies, have been supporting drug lords for decades? As long as the drug lord's political enemies are our political enemies, our government has either turned a blind eye towards their activities or actively helped these "anti Communists". How short the American public's memory is when not long ago the CIA was implicated in the importation of heroin from the Golden Triangle. How soon we forget that George Bush was at one time head of the CIA.

The very fact that this New and Improved War On Drugs is looked upon by the Bush administration as a law enforcement problem not a sociological or health problem shows the lack of creative thinking at the top levels of our government. Since the days of Prohibition and Harry Anslinger, through the days of Richard Nixon's Operation Intercept and his War On Drugs, we have been fighting a Losing Battle. The question that hasn't appeared on the evening news is, "Why do people take drugs in the first place?" Our government's answer to this question is "because they are there". There has been no mention of poverty or a declining standard of living in this country as perhaps the engine powering drug abuse in this country. The new hard-line stance on drugs asserts that the estimated 20 million marijuana users belong in prison although not a single fatality, in a pharmaceutical sense, has been attributed to this particular drug. Marijuana has been classified as a "gateway drug" or a drug which leads to the use and abuse of other illegal substances. By making the possession of marijuana a criminal offense, one must obtain it from criminals; in many cases the same criminals that sell cocaine or heroin.

As Eastern Europe and the Communist world are experiencing

for the first time freedoms that the United States and Western countries take for granted, these hard fought liberties and freedoms are being chiseled away at here in our own country. The War on Drugs is indeed a war. The government and media would have us think that this war is against drugs. It is a war against people and in most cases poor and disadvantaged people.

There is a great deal of economic injustice in the United States today. Racism is becoming tolerated and is even somewhat vogue with some young people. The victims of this racial and economic injustice are aware of their second class status and are not very happy about it. There are sour winds blowing in the underclass and the 1990's may see a great revival of political unrest in the inner cities. History has proven that the only effective weapon against political unrest among the under classes is effective propaganda delivered by the media to keep the middle class out of the struggle and increased police action against the targeted socioeconomic groups. Orwellian tactics are the only defense against a major political uprising.

The War On Drugs is the perfect vehicle to accomplish the goal of establishing a national police state. In the name of law and order, rights established by our forefathers, paid for and defended with the blood of American patriots can now be rescinded. Keeping the underclass in its underplace is not easy, their numbers are vast and growing daily. It requires a great deal of surveillance, search and seizures, shakedowns and other violations of human rights. The goal stated of the government is not to wipe out drugs but to wipe out *illegal* drugs.

What is the common denominator for the vast majority of illegal drugs? The drugs considered the greatest threat to both public health and the political status quo are all either organic substances occurring in nature or derivations of organic substances easily distilled in home laboratories. It is not in the interest of the multi billion dollar pharmaceutical industry to have a large portion of the U.S. public imbibing in drugs they don't manufacture. There is very little outcry over the massive abuse of America's old legal favorite, alcohol. With the new public awareness of the drunk driving problem, the alcohol moguls have trimmed down their usual "party 'till you puke" to the more acceptable "party 'till you puke, but don't drive". The manufacturers of the other popular legal highs such as Valium and Xanax continue to praise the effectiveness of their drugs as cure alls for depression, anxiety and other psychological disorders. We are becoming a nation of drug-addled zombies.

Make no mistake about it; these industries and the government are not engaged in a War On Drugs. They are engaged in The War On Drugs

They Can't Profit On. The price of legal drugs is sometimes as much as thirty times its cost to manufacture. It is a given that companies like Lilly have already recouped their R & D and tool up expenses somewhere in the 40 billion dosages they have sold worldwide to date. The lowest street junky rip off artist would not be able to get away with such obscene profits.

The government should wake up. Not only is it in its best interest to keep us illiterate and uneducated but also to keep us stoned on enough mood altering drugs to overlook the fact that this country is being sold down river. The tasteless pabulum of the network nightly news is no longer enough.

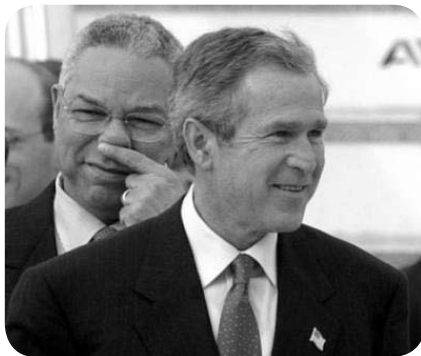
It is very good business to have a large section of the population drug dependent. In the last few years with "public awareness" of the drug problem growing, the treatment center and prisons have become the growth industries of the 90's. Seemingly sprouting out of every street corner, alcohol and drug treatment centers are becoming as common a fixture in American society as Safeway stores. A media blitz has been informing us of these saintly treatment centers where the suffering addict can find "people who care" and who genuinely want to "help". "Help" from these facilities can run the suffering addict from between \$5,000 and \$30,000 dollars a month. Additional help with your anorexia, dyslexia, phobias, codependency, overeating and dysfunctional families is available at a small extra charge. It is not in the interest of this burgeoning new industry to have a mentally healthy populace as mental health is a multibillion dollar industry.

Most treatment centers in the United States today revolve around an Alcoholic Anonymous type 12 step program. The first thing a recovering addict must come to grips with is the fact that he or she will never have a grip. They must surrender to the fact that are absolutely powerless against drugs or alcohol. They don't stand a chance of being able to join the rest of America partying 'till they puke. One drink, one puff off a joint and you are hopelessly hooked starting the whole cycle again. The concept of self control or being responsible for your actions in any mental state does not enter the picture. The addict is powerless against the demon and always will be. The only defense against the demon is, you guessed it, continuing therapy.

In the inner cities the quality of life is rapidly deteriorating. The chances of getting a part of the American dream is rapidly disappearing. When offered the choice between poverty and remaining a legal member of the disadvantaged, or illegal wealth and prosperity by moving a little crack, the decision of a ghetto youth becomes a no-brainer.

When making diatribes against the evils of spending your life on drugs, the government offers no alternatives to the life in the inner city.

This conspiracy has its members. Millions of members in this country alone. Who are those that unwittingly conspire to destroy this nation and people? We are.



Colin Powell demonstrating olfactory acumen

This just in . . . Those lying and thieving, tax and spend Democrats are at it again. They have a lot of nerve overriding a presidential veto. With our economy in a slump, the last thing we need is any hindrance to trade or commerce. Are we going to let the entire national economy go down the tubes just because some wimps in West Virginia want clean water? Just who are these people who want cleaner water for their children? Liberal Democrats with a gay agenda - that's who!

Both the Dow and NASDAQ took a leap off the cliff this week with equity plunging almost 10% from previous highs. White House spokesperson Dana Perino brushed criticism aside when she stated, "Only the little people will be hurt. Large investors - particularly those who have been shifting capital and equity investments overseas, will not affected."

With Haliburton and other U.S. corporations fleeing the U.S. for more favorable tax and extradition environments, the only demographic likely to feel any pain are the 401K portfolios of gay illegal alien abortionists.



You Don't Have A Clue

From: googleboy

Date: 07 Oct 2005

Time: 06:55:28

You people aren't going nuts, you are nuts. Let's review evidence why the media isn't ignoring you because it's biased but because you're lunatics without a shred of evidence.

1) CBS attempted a hatchet job on Bush right before the election. Dan Rather thought he had evidence but it turned out to be poor forgeries.

2) Your anti-Bush poster girl, Cindy Sheehan, got almost non-stop exclusive coverage of her moronic rants for a month, until Hurricane Katrina hit and made some real news.

3) Before the rain and winds even stopped the media went about systematically blaming George Bush for everything remotely connected with Katrina including causing the hurricane for not signing Kyoto. It was the most overblown, irresponsible disaster coverage the U.S. has ever witnessed. You people have made fools of yourselves and the press, whenever it indulges you, comes out looking foolish too. No wonder Fox News has the highest ratings by far - they're the only ones that even pretend to be fair and balanced anymore. Comment by googleboy — October 6, 2005 @ 9:14 am

Re: You Don't Have A Clue

From: Greg/Date: 07 Oct 2005

Just a few reminders for our short-memored googleboy:

1. During the Dan Rather Debacle there was one thing GWB couldn't, wouldn't and didn't do - deny the allegations. Rather than find some Guard buddies from Alabama (which he couldn't) to stand up and say Bush served, he gets Rove to attack the typing font, not the allegations. So googleboy, you think Bush served his time in Alabama in an honorable fashion? On what evidence?

2. Cindy Sheehan is just asking what Bush won't tell us and many of us would like to know: What is the mission and time frame for our war in Iraq? Can't answer that one truthfully either as we all know that the U.S. is going NOWHERE with a dozen new military bases in Afghanistan and Iraq. Of course the bases in Afghanistan are right along the path of a proposed oil pipeline that GWB and cronies deny is being planned. Like GWB tells us, "It's not about oil."

3. Easy for you to say googleboy, do you live in New Orleans? Obviously Brownie was totally incompetent and had no place in the position in the first place. And of course cutting FEMA funding every year since he took office didn't help. Just like 911 and aircraft as weapons, Bush couldn't "imagine that the levies would fail." I don't think Bush is necessarily evil, just not up to the job. He has shown his incompetence from the day he took office. And even a googleboy like yourself has to admit he has been less than candid, when not outright misinforming us, about the war.

4. And Fox has the highest ratings because people like yourself love being misinformed. You watch an hour of Fox, digest the GOP talking points of the day cheer O'Reilly and Hannity and think yourself informed. Hint googleboy - you're not. Its not news dude - its entertainment for the naive. News is facts - not opinion. Not that Fox is the only network seeped in opinion but they were the trailblazer of biased newstainment. What counts to the networks is not informing the public or truth - it is market share and stock holder value. Truth is ugly and doesn't sell. Lies sell easy and folks like you lap it up because it validates your own political immaturity. The GOP lemming theory of politics, "Gee if 58 million other Americans agree with me I must be right eh?"

Add to that the previously mentioned fact that 1/2 of the U.S. population are of less than average intelligence. So where are these under-thinkers located? Lets try looking at scholastic results by region and gee - golly - the states with the worst educational systems are ALL red states. Why do college professors generally lean to the left? Its called education dude - something that the red states could do with more of. But no - we have to have intelligent design - not math.

UPDATE: December: Oh forgot to mention - when you were writing about "forgeries" What's your spin on the "Yellow Cake" dossier from Italy? You know, the one that GWB and neocon cronies put up as "evi-

dence” of Saddam’s nuclear program? Yeah dude, let’s talk forgeries.

Democrats dissing MoveOn in the Senate? Hillary looking for Universal COVERAGE instead of Universal CARE? What are you people thinking? You appear to be money begging sycophants; sucking up to Bush and corporate fascism. Obey your masters, dance with who brung you and forget about the rest of us. Your campaign pledges are as insincere as the GOP’s. I just donated to Ron Paul.



DUH, THE NEW DEMOCRACY – USE THE TOOLS

Okay, I confess. I voted for Kerry and supported him in the last election. Part of the price I pay for such a sin is getting almost daily mail solicitations from the Democratic National Committee or allied organizations seeking my monetary help to fight back the rising tide of Far Right. They underline everything wrong with the Bush administration but offer up no hard policies other than to fight Bush on this or that issue. No solutions or new vision are offered. I get lame questionnaires asking me my opinion on no-brainer issues (e.g. “Do you think the United States imperils its future by such massive deficit spending?”) but see no real muscle in the arena. I have been sending them back with notations like, “Donations and support resumes when you grow a spine.” Exiting Iraq wasn’t on the questionnaire.

The Democrats and progressives in general have an incredible opportunity to correct a great many wrongs in the next two election cycles. Unfortunately the Democrats will probably drop the ball because they are on the same retainers from their corporate election-funding masters as their opponents. If Hillary Clinton is the best they can put forward to unify and set this country back on course, they are again doomed. Boy, I hate to say it but a Clinton victory in 2008 would be about the worst thing that could happen regarding unifying and fixing this country. It would only start another four years of hard political strife and only delay solutions for another half decade at least. I think America needs solutions now – not

in 2012. The Clinton legacy of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which was going to bring, “competition, diversity and lower costs to consumers,” clearly reveals that the Democrats are turning tricks to the same corporate johns. At least according to my cable TV content and bill.

So how do I do my part? How do I see the face of Congress change without filling Hillary Clinton’s war chest? I donate to the campaigns of specific candidates rather than to the Democratic Party or maybe even a GOP candidate if one can be found who doesn’t believe in unicorns and a flat earth. It’s the new American democracy – one dollar, one vote. So instead of sending Hillary a plug nickel, I can shoot a check off to the Feingold, Kucinich, Conyers and Saunders campaigns with the written stipulation that is for the specific candidate campaign expenses – not to be passed up to the national party. Disaffected GOP members can use the same strategy.

Democrats want my support? How about a platform that I think (and pollsters confirm) the American people could get behind? How about public financing of federal elections. An exit from Iraq. A rollback of all tax cuts to the rich. Increased tax cuts for small business, low and middle income Americans.





THE NEW FACE OF DISSENT

(Excerpted from Hill Country Happenings)

1971

I was hanging out with about 3,000 of my closest friends in front of the AstroWorld Hotel with our backs to the fence surrounding AstroWorld. We had come to pay homage to a great American, Spiro Agnew, who was addressing a fund-raiser inside the hotel. Vice President Agnew had been awarded the prestigious, “Pig Of The Year Award” from the readers of Space City News, the local alternative rag. A pleasant group of long-haired hippie peacenik agitators going under the moniker of the Red Coyotes seemed to be the ones rousing the most rabble. At least it was their handout that brought me and two buddies to the Astroworld Hotel to hand the Vice President of the United States the head of a pig on a platter.

To make a long story short, it was a big night for more than just the demonstrators. The Houston police were out in force and gleefully gave everybody a good butt kickin’ and ride downtown. The charges wound up being, “abusive language,” “inciting to riot,” “failure to move on,” and “loitering.” In those days the faces in the crowd were young, the mainstream American public was just starting to get on the antiwar band wagon.

It was the body bags returning to almost every community in America that finally brought the mainstream public to listen to the voice of dissent with new ears. But it was late in the game when the mainstream

- the clergy, the unions, women, WW II vets, the elderly and finally legislators joined the youth of American in the streets. Perhaps the reason why the Vietnam War resistance was driven by youth was that the draft was in place at the time and it was indentured youth, mostly poor, that were being sent to die in the rice paddies of Indochina. In 1971 dissent came from the young, the angry and the frequently unmannered.

The line between protest and civil disobedience was frequently crossed and there was a great deal of anger on both sides of the picket line in 1971.

2005

Fast forward thirty-five years to the face of dissent here in Kerrville Saturday September 24th on the courthouse lawn. There was an antiwar protest but there was no youth, anger or bad manners. The faces of the local protesters was not that of long-haired agitators but folks that looked more like farmers, ranchers, business people, homemakers, contractors, and just plain folks. This issue seems to finally be crossing party lines - people of all political flavors are starting to question our rationale in Iraq. The protesters certainly put any differences they might have had aside on the courthouse lawn.

Regardless of what side of the issue you're on, the stakes as viewed from both sides are high - the vision of the future America globally. Both sides view their version of the future passionately. Fortunately we live in Kerrville where we can have a civilized, if heated, dialog between each other at the checkout counter without sparking a riot or shoot out. The Hill Country is full of good people who may not agree on a number of issues but we can keep it civil. I have no doubt the Republicans here in Kerrville are as saddened by the loss of our local boys as the demonstrators. Our community is paying the price of war in blood too and, agree or not, like it or not, we are all in this together. This was no group of college kids ranting political existentialism over a bong. These are people that care deeply about their country and the direction its heading. They were outspoken but soft spoken.

The media was woefully absent except The Free Press and Taxpayer's Watch. Instead of burning Nixon in effigy, a moment of silent reflection was shared before releasing yellow balloons into the blue Texas sky to pay honor to James Keihl, Cody Orr, Cody Eckhard and the other local soldiers who have fallen in Iraq. There was no Country Joe and the Fish with the "Fish Cheer," only the group quietly singing together:

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE

Words and music by Pete Seeger

*Where have all the flowers gone? Long time passing
Where have all the flowers gone? Long time ago
Where have all the flowers gone? Girls have picked them every one
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?
Where have all the young girls gone? Long time passing
Where have all the young girls gone? Long time ago
Where have all the young girls gone? Taken husbands every one
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?
Where have all the young men gone? Long time passing
Where have all the young men gone? Long time ago
Where have all the young men gone? Gone for soldiers every one
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?
Where have all the soldiers gone? Long time passing
Where have all the soldiers gone? Long time ago
Where have all the soldiers gone? Gone to graveyards every one
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?
Where have all the graveyards gone? Long time passing
Where have all the graveyards gone? Long time ago
Where have all the graveyards gone? Covered with flowers every one
When will we ever learn? When will we ever learn?*

©1961 (Renewed) Fall River Music Inc

There was no agenda other than to join with like minded folks for a lap around the courthouse in protest and in tribute to those who have fallen. The turnout for the march was small but that's to be expected. It takes guts to protest in Kerr County. The friend who called me to tell me about the march didn't show up.

Even though some of my Republican friends are having second thoughts about Iraq, they aren't likely to do so publicly at the courthouse. After all, this is Kerr County, Texas - a Republican stronghold since the days Texas was run by Yellow Dog Democrats. If I'm not mistaken, Kerr County voted for a Republican president, going against the southern grain, the year I was born (1952) and hasn't looked back since. Back then it was cool, I like Ike too. George Bush isn't Dwight Eisenhower.

It is great to see folks out protesting this immoral war but until we get our torches and pitchforks and really march on the castle, demanding real accountability, I will await the flying pigs to rescue us.

Not only are we arming the “insurgency” but I believe we are also funding them. Does anyone recall the \$200,000,000 in US currency seized in a drug raid in Mexico a few months back? A curious exercise would be to see if any of the serial numbers match those of the \$9 billion in cash we shipped into Iraq - bundles of cash that were handed out like trade show trinkets at the beginning of the war. Tracking where this money comes back from would be an interesting experiment. I am of course assuming that Bush & Co. made note of the serial numbers before handing out the cash. Follow the money.

SOCIALIST HEALTH PLAN #666

There is the incentive in a nutshell - greed; yours not the insurance industry's. OK you spend \$7,500 a year in insurance for iffy coverage. Would you rather spend \$5,000 in taxes and keep the other \$2,500, while getting full coverage? You bet.

Another counter to the argument is the “choice” issue. Hey the folks in countries with single payer (don't use the S-word “socialized medicine”) have all the choices we do and more.

If you are rich you hop in your Gulfstream and head for Zurich/Houston for treatment. If you are a hot shit doctor, you aren't compelled to play with the single payer system - you can have your own private practice that operates out of a private hospital and serve the elite for as much as the market will bear.

But folks like me at the bottom of the health care food chain will have the choice between living and dying. Yup. I'm all for more choice. Best of both worlds.



Nightmares and a Fairy Tale Ending

January 23, 2006

I had trouble sleeping last night. I lay awake staring at the ceiling thinking to myself, “What if they actually put up Hillary next election?” I saw a future where President Clinton The Second at her first Iraq/Iran War (Operation Just Deserts) Press Conference sounded like Rumsfeld Lite. I saw an apoplectic Bill O’Reilly (now on PBS) haranguing against “The Lesbian Agenda Against True Christian Americans.” Heavens to Betsy! I wasn’t even asleep and already in a nightmare. Although, mercifully I forgot my dreams, I tossed and turned all night.

This morning, a bit tired and haggard from the restless night, I asked myself, “Is this what its come to?” Where matters of life and death, of righteousness and evil are bantered about on our public media like a sale on cell phone skins or sexy underwear? Is everything now just a sound bite? Is the media interested only in viewers and profits and not content? Is the news a commodity of varying monetary value sold on the ideological spot market like budget socks at Wal-Mart? Sadly, the answer appears to be, “yes.”

The GOP is much better than the Democrats at sound bites and media control. Of course it helps if your contributors own the media. The GOP knows not only their base but has a much better hand on the pulse of the American public. They know that most Americans don’t have the time or inclination to question the diatribes from Fox News and the other media outlets. The American public likes Bill O’Reilly. They assume what they’re being told are the facts of the matter. I’m sure they think the corporate masters of the media have their best interests at heart and wouldn’t dream of being biased. And dang it! They probably have no trouble sleeping at night.

So if the news is to be only a form of entertainment and, in the end it is all about the corporate bottom line, there is a bright and rosy scenario possible that would make most Americans very happy and give the media a market-share field day like they haven’t seen since September 11th. It is a script right out of Hollywood with global blockbuster written all over it. Its a license to print money. It is The Perfect Fairy Tale Ending.

Upon the re-election of Al Gore as president in 2008, a very wide vista of possibilities for economic exploitation of the American media consumer appears. World headlines scream, “Gore Elected President Again!” First we would see a good year of recrimination. Fox News ratings will go through the ceiling! Bill O’Reilly is canonized in a ceremony similar to the one in the Senate Offices that recently declared Rev. Sun Myung Moon as God and Messiah. (I always wondered why the Christian Right didn’t flip out over that one. I guess because Rev Moon God is a Person Of Faith.)

Court TV gets the second Tom Delay Trial and generates record profits for that quarter. The Military Channel can cover the tribunal trial of Rumsfeld live from Cuba.

Sony Pictures will announce “All The President’s Men II” has broken all box office records. “The Ohio Protocol” even out grosses “The Passion Of The Christ” but that was no surprise with Brad Pitt as John Kerry and Bruce Willis as George Bush. I thought Dennis Hopper overplayed Rove a bit though. Random House announces three new presses and 2,000 new jobs as they tool up for the plethora of new jailhouse authors whose scathing personal memoirs demonize their GOP cell mates. The money is flying everywhere! The Patrick Fitzgerald Action Figure is outselling GI Joe!

Eight years after Al Gore was denied his presidency through a great miscarriage of justice, he finally takes office. The will of the people prevails. How delightfully exploitable and incredibly American. Perhaps tonight I will have a wet dream instead of a nightmare. Ain’t that what dreaming is for?

GOP - WAY UNCOOL

There is a reason that the right wing appropriates rock songs to push their product. Rock songs are cool. Republican candidates aren’t. By using rock music as the bed of their commercials they are hoping that some of the “coolness” will rub off on them.

Unfortunately it doesn’t work. It is merely trying to polish a turd. The turd still stinks regardless of the key or tempo.

I think that political candidates should only use music from people who share the same values and agenda.

Republicans would have to choose from a list of Ted Nugent, Souza marches, 101 Strings or Perry Como’s Greatest Hits. The Democrats get all other artists.

I think the Republican theme song should be a parody of an old song from film, “Singin’ In The Pain.”

Even more appropriate would be a nice funeral dirge.

“A man is accepted into church for what he believes—and turned out for what he knows.”

“Faith is believing what you know ain’t so.”

- Mark Twain

“Peace On Earth, Goodwill To Men.”

December 2005

How many times do you think you will hear that phrase in the next few weeks? I already have a half dozen Christmas cards (I know to be politically correct I should say “holiday cards” but I have yet to hear of Mohammedmas, Jehovahmas or Holidaymas) with that catch phrase on it. The last one I got I just stared at a minute and all at once it came to me, “They have this backwards!” We are going to need the goodwill first to get to the peace. And, sadly, I find very little goodwill being spread around.

Sure folks make donations to disaster relief funds, they donate to charities and take other actions that could be construed as goodwill – and then turn around and hate their neighbors because of a political or theological difference.

*“Hate your next-door neighbor,
but don’t forget to say Grace.”*

- “Eve Of Destruction,”
Written by Barry McGuire

Our nation is in trouble. Big trouble. Washington is spending money like a drunken sailor and we have a war on our hands with no exit strategy except to, “go the distance” whatever that means. Our children’s future is in jeopardy. We are in jeopardy. Things are a mess.

So how do we solve these mounting problems? The new American Way - we scream at each other. The problems I listed above are large and looming larger as the New Year rushes to greet us. But I don’t see these issues as the big problem. To me, the big problem is the contentiousness that all parties are bringing to the table. Nobody seems willing to compromise these days. There is no middle ground between us.

To the Far Right compromise equals defeat. To the Far Left compromise means kowtowing to the GOP agenda. I don’t think this country has a chance for long-term survival when all the issues are put before us in black and white terms. The issues have only two sides in the political and theological arena today: good and evil. Whoa! Is that a can of worms to open or what? How do we reply to Pat Roberson calling for the assassination of foreign leaders? We don’t.

How have we spread goodwill as a nation in the last year? Thinner than the butter on a piece of Yemeni toast. We turned our backs on the poor of New Orleans by having political appointees with no disaster relief

experience running the effort. We turned our back on the Western world by telling them that in global policy, "Its our way or the highway."

We have cut funding for everything that has anything to do with the physical betterment of our people. We have denigrated every policy put forward by the present administration. No matter what side of the line you are on, everyone is fightin' mad. With only a dialog of contention going on, how do we come together and actually get things done? In 2005 we don't.

Can the Right give a little? Probably not. Can we lower the abortion rate by making contraceptives more available? Nope. Can the Left concede that perhaps gay rights can go to the back burner until we get this war sorted out? Nope. Everyone has an agenda and it has to be addressed now. No compromise. No prisoners. No deal.

The presidency is being hobbled by revelations that many of the GOP leaders are corrupt. Duh. But don't think that the Republicans invented political corruption – I recall quite a few Democratic con men in my time. It seems that money talks and normal citizens walk. Both political parties bow down to the almighty dollar. How are Christian conservatives winning hearts and minds? By spending big bucks. Why do the Democrats have a problem touching the hearts of the common folk? By selling out to big contributors. I admit that the Bush administration seems to have taken political cronyism to new heights but to think this administration invented political corruption is to go into pretty deep denial. Until we have serious campaign finance reform, we are going to be getting the candidates before us that are well financed. The issues and platforms are not important; in fact if you watch political candidates TV commercials – they are utterly without substance. Candidate A is for the family, the working folk and a strong defense.

So who isn't? What do these empty homilies tell us? Nothing. So we vote for vacuous candidates that have only one mission in mind. Getting reelected.

We are coming into an important year in 2006. We might have a chance to redefine who we are and where we are going. Are we going to reach out to those who need it or are we going to beg for CIA torture exemptions?

Are we going to pull our collective heads out and actually try to do something to improve the lot of those less fortunate or buy a new Hummer? Can we even find some goodwill as a nation to spread around? I certainly hope so.

U.S. CONSTITUTION AUTHORS SAY BUSH IS OUTSIDE THE LAW

I need to get a few things out of the way for my GOP friends before I fire up this rant. From the GOP playbook of snappy responses to criticism of George Bush, I have the following responses:

GOP RHETORIC # 1

“Why do you hate America?”

ANSWER: I don’t. At least not the America built by our founders and the blood of patriots since. The America whose bedrock is the Constitution and The Bill Of Rights (most notably the 4th Amendment for this argument). That’s the America I love.

GOP #2: “Why do you hate our troops? Why would you endanger them?”

ANSWER: I support our troops. I have a certificate of appreciation from the Base Commander and Task Force Commanders of Operation Enduring Freedom presented to me inside the wires at Camp Delta by the 142nd Texas National Guard in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2003. Two months later, here in Kerrville, I produced a, “Celebrate America and our Troops” concert at the Point Theater where dozens of patriotic musicians did their part to let the troops know we’re behind them. It was cold that day and I didn’t see many Republicans in the audience. Abhorring the policies of the Bush administration doesn’t equate with hating our troops - and I don’t care how many times Bill O’Reilly says it. It is a lie.

GOP #3: “Why are you supporting the terrorists?”

ANSWER: Only an idiot (see O’Reilly above) would say that not supporting Bush and the GOP is supporting terrorists. This kind of talk is not productive and mean spirited. If you think Ann Coulter, calling Moslems, “a bunch of rag heads” is productive dialog, I feel sorry for you.

One last caveat to help the Right understand something. From your diatribes I doubt that you are aware of the fact but I’m going to let you in on a liberal secret although it has not yet been cleared by headquarters: Bill Clinton is no longer president. Since there is not a thing we can do about the past, why don’t we focus our dialog on the present and the

future? The Bush administration is the author of these policies - today - now. Come join us in 2006.

Wingnuts Roasted by an Open Fire

December 2005

First I would like to say I am offended that James, my wingnut talk radio host buddy, would close his article quoting his friend Kevin by saying that my not being very happy about the Bush administration's eavesdropping on U.S. citizens makes me, "A Democrat, stupid or a liar" For the record, I am not a Democrat, stupid or lying to you about the extremely serious nature of my charges against Bush & Co.

In James' first sentence he tells us what former intelligence judges think about Bush's program. Like most GOP pundits he only tells half the story. He makes no mention of what the *sitting* judges think of the program. That's out there in the news too James but, oddly, FOX News doesn't report it so you and your fellow Foxbots are in the dark about what is really going on. The sitting judges are horrified - Google that my friends.

Lets jump a little further down where James starts his "Liberal Democrats, Bush haters and assorted pacifists...." This paragraph is the core of the whole article around which the rest revolves.

As I tell James almost every time we talk, I rely on common sense when guiding my political views. I don't listen to FOX, I don't listen to the DNC or GOP. I look out at the world, see what is really happening, not what I am told, and then form an opinion. In my opinion, George Bush knew this was both wrong and illegal from the day he started doing it.

Sorry but if preferring peace to war makes me a pacifist, you can label me pacifist all day long. I fully support both my government and George W. Bush in monitoring phone calls from "known terrorists operating outside the U.S. to people inside the U.S. including citizens." That's what Bush told us he was doing and I have no problem with that.

What I have a problem with is that Bush categorically denied that he was eavesdropping or data mining on U.S. citizens talking to other U.S. citizens. Well at least he denied it until he was caught. Then it turns out, "suspected terrorist sympathizers" and now grows into, "tens of millions of U.S. citizens." James, I have news for you and your GOP buddies, yes there is a war on terrorism and the U.S. public is not the enemy. When he mentions that the FISA laws need to be changed to give the President more latitude not less, I'm not in disagreement there either - but it might be a

good idea to change the laws instead of breaking them.

Put the shoe on the other foot if you can for just a moment James, if Bill Clinton had done this, how would you have reacted? Honestly, think it though. You would react the same way I am now - with outrage.

When I was a young lad and did something wrong I would protest to my parents, "But Johnny and Bill and Frank did it too!" That defense didn't carry much weight with my parents and doesn't ride well with me today. I took my licks knowing that my defense was facetious. Bush isn't man enough to take his licks. James, the GOP memory hole syndrome has struck again! Do you really think Roosevelt and Truman were "peace-time" presidents? Did you read that sentence you wrote? Do you really believe it because Ken Mehlman says that's what happened? That is not just revisionist - that is lying and an insult to every person in the U.S. Armed Forces that served in World War II.

Face it folks, the dew is off the lily for the Bush administration. But don't despair, there is room for hope and James, it is within your own party. Bush never had good approval ratings with his political rivals and it was a close election. This drop in approval ratings is coming from his former supporters that are waking up to their own common sense - they aren't joining the Democratic Party, they are just abandoning this particularly un-American regime that has betrayed them and their values. When they actually sit and think about it; perhaps letting a bit of outside light into their dark closets - they come to the same conclusions of their fellow citizens who now make up over seventy percent of America - Bush and the GOP are not leading us anywhere we want to go.

Although it horrifies my Democratic and liberal friends, I have books in my home library by Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Pat Buchanan and the like. Why? Its called balance. I like to hear the position from the horse's mouth (or ass) so to speak and second hand diatribes about an author by a ranter who has never read what he is ranting about flips my common sense switch again.

I doubt there is a single GOP citizen in the area who has a Noam Chomsky or Michael Moore book in their library. They know all they need to know about those authors- they are all liars - FOX news says so. End of issue. Anyone who disagrees hates America, God, the troops. Mom and apple pie. I guess that would be me.

- *"You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free."*

- John 8:32

Saint Ron Paul

A lifelong liberal and here I am giving money to Ron Paul. Aside from Kucinich, he's the only one not talking out both sides of his mouth. It is refreshing to see a politician bought and paid for by voters instead of PACs and special interests. He will owe everything to the voters - not big money.

The Dems have fallen down on the job and I don't see how a Wal-Mart/Carlyle Group candidate can resonate much populism. Hillary has dirty and bloody hands already.

Ron Paul is the turd floating in the punch bowl of our nasty political system and I cheer him on. Sorta. Actually I'm pulling for Huckabee - a sure loser in the general election. But if Paul were to get the nomination and it was him or Hillary, the GOP might just get my first vote.

I have never given a dime to a presidential candidate until I threw \$10 at Ron Paul. Why?

TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ.

Sure he is a social dinosaur but a Dem Congress isn't going to let him get much of that agenda accomplished. The Commander in Chief can bring all the troops home with a phone call - Repugs, Dems and Carlyle Group be damned. Ron Paul is ready to make that call.

From what I can see of the Dem front runners, they all want the war to continue at least through 2013 - what are they smoking? Hope they save me the roach.

I view the Dems ignoring the mandate we gave them to end the war and call Bush out as a betrayal. Last time I looked, impeachment was still off the table when it should be the only thing on the table. Ron Paul could be my payback to the lily-livered sycophant Dems. Can you say Nader?

Regarding Ron Paul's racism, I get riled sometimes when we lefties get a little too outraged at the truth.

How many of you white liberal gals would go walking alone in Harlem at 3am? I would guess very few. Why? Because of unspoken racism. Your brain is telling you that the statistical likelihood of being raped or assaulted by a person of color in that neighborhood is quite high.

Statistical facts can sometimes be unpleasant. Does that make statistics racist?

Causing such mental stress on our troops is just another part of the greater goal. Wear them down, separate them from homes and families long enough, expose them to constant mayhem and danger from “civilians” and you can see this is just the lead up to the post Posse Comitatus U.S. With the Dominionists slowly infiltrating the military, there won’t be a problem putting down domestic Satan-lead “insurgents” after the riots sparked by martial law after the next 911 which is surely on the planning boards. Has anyone seen my tin foil cowboy hat?

VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTINGS

I was taking to an old shooting buddy yesterday about the events at VT. We both recalled that when we were boys we learned about shooting and gun safety through the NRA. We would get our proficiency ratings from target shooting with .22s. We wondered if today the number of shooters that actually get any training has gone down. I doubt that inner city gangs get much NRA training. If testing for a driver’s license is OK, why not at least a firearms proficiency test for gun ownership? It may not cut down on beserking nut jobs going postal but perhaps would lower the number of accidental shootings.

So we concluded that it wasn’t the guns but our culture that brings horrible events like this into our living rooms. And at the top of the cultural pyramid is the President who is underlining the fact that the best way to resolve your problems is through senseless violence.

Monkey see, monkey do. You can make up bullshit arguments in your head to justify your violent acts. And when your religious culture reflects the same values - death to unbelievers, well a melting pot of violence is born; especially when the mega corporations that make weapons own our elected officials and profit handsomely from said violence. Their bottom line dictates a vested interest in continued and expanded violence.

I don’t see any correlation to our easy access to weapons as germane to the issue. As Michael Moore pointed out, Canadians have more guns per capita than we do. Their ratio of violent crimes is much lower. Every Swiss male between 18 and 50 has an automatic weapon in his closet at home for when he is called up every year for mandatory military service yet murder by firearm is rare in Switzerland.

We are a culture of violence and ignorance and damn proud of it. That’s the problem. The shooter at VT probably rehearsed in front of a full length mirror - posturing to see how much he looked like Bruce Willis or Tom Cruise and whether he could reload faster than Clint Eastwood.





End Times Lullabies

Second Verse

You Can Bank On This



YOU CAN BANK ON THIS

Version 1.0, October 2007

I've been watching the news over the last few months regarding the "sub prime" mortgage debacle and am bracing myself for the rest of the bad news. It appears that mortgage and housing problems are just the tip of the economic iceberg and that a hard-core credit crunch along with its accompanying recession is upon us. When I ask myself how things came to this, the only answer I can come up with is unethical and unbounded greed.

I am going to use the smallest sector of the economy I know of – myself - as the case in point for just how trusting and gullible a credit consumer can be and how greedy the banks are. I would like to apologize to the bankers here at my local branch of Wells Fargo. I understand that Kerrville bankers do not set national corporate policy and although there is blood on the hands of local bankers, the knife itself is wielded by Wells Fargo corporate headquarters.

Like most Americans, I have credit cards. Prior to December 2006, I was what I consider to be the dream customer for my banks. I made my payments on time, usually about 30% above the minimum payment so that I would see some progress on the balance. I had five different credit accounts and but was able to budget my monthly debt service into my meager earnings. I was a good boy and was playing by the rules. I was a responsible credit consumer until the banks pushed me into being the bad credit demon writing today.

While most Americans were asleep at the political wheel, the banking industry lobbied for credit "reform" and, like most well-funded corporate issues, the then-GOP Congress enacted the new bankruptcy bill; in effect closing the doors to personal bankruptcy. The primary reason was "bankruptcy abuse" which turned out to be a red herring when the hard data was in – many Americans entered bankruptcy for the most common of reasons – an inability to pay medical expenses. There was now a new layer of protection for the banks from middle and lower class credit defaults.

Less than one month later, being the "customer oriented" folks that they are, the banks continued to kick the consumer while

they were down by lobbying the GOP Congress for and getting yet another law passed that effectively doubled the monthly minimum payments on all credit card accounts. The banks dug their own grave with this witless piece of unmitigated greed disguised as “consumer credit reform.” Like most GOP “reforms” it was nothing of the kind. The bankers wanted a better looking bottom line for the next quarter and got it at the expense of driving a great deal of their loan portfolios into default over time. Here is how the banks go out of their way to “serve you better:”

Doubling of Monthly Minimums. My new credit card statements began arriving just 60 days after the legislation was enacted. Being self-employed, my income varies widely month to month but I have the math skills to average my income and predict how a given month will look. Before the legislation my monthly debt service at the minimum payment level was about \$650 a month. I was proud of paying down around \$800 a month consistently on these debts. A phrase, “pride before the fall” comes to mind.

My newly “reformed” monthly minimum payment was now over \$1100 a month; almost double what I signed on for. It was not many months after that I fell behind on one of my accounts. That is where the real fun began for the bankers.

Universal Default. This is another great program the banks and lenders have come up with to serve you (for lunch). When I fell 30 days behind on my Bank of America card, my other credit card companies decided to better serve me by increasing my 11.5% interest rate to 31% because I was under “universal default.” It made no difference to them that I was current on payments and always had been – I had come up short with their buddy Bank of America and I was going to pay them more as penance. This banking policy kicked in with a vengeance and before I knew it I was in default with just about all my cards. Let’s take a look.

Before Credit Reform: Monthly payments of around \$800 which was \$150 more than the required minimum.

Just after Credit Reform: Monthly minimum jumps to around \$1100 which was \$300 more a month than could be possibly paid.

90 Days after Credit Reform: I fall in arrears with BOA and many of my creditors, regardless of payment history or current account status, jump on the default penalty bandwagon.

For every month I run late or under the minimum, I am slammed with late fees, penalties and every other charge the banks can dream up. Even pouring more money into my credit black hole did no good. In less than a year, without putting another dollar on my cards, I have gone from good customer to scum of the earth defaulter with no legal recourse. My personal debt almost doubled over the next year (a usurious 31% on top of penalties, fees and other charges add up quickly) while the bankers thumb their noses at me.

Now, almost two years later, the chickens have come home to roost and the lenders are screaming for a bailout. They made billions of bad loans and somehow the American consumer is to blame? My question is why bail out the bankers who created these demonic banking products and not the consumers that are being preyed upon?

The banks make horrifically bad business and policy decisions and now it is up to the U.S. taxpayer, the victims of these failed policies, to bail them out? Why don't I ever hear about Congress bailing out consumers? The solvency of the bank's shareholders (the Saudis) portfolio is paramount – the middle class can eat from dumpsters.

The rebuttal from the banks and collection agencies goes something like this, "You signed the agreement..." Yeah sure. Everyone I know reads the full text of their credit card agreement, even the 4-point font on the back page that has the really juicy stuff like how they can change the terms of the agreement at any time and for any or no reason. To me, that is not a contract but an open-ended

attempt to make sure that I can be milked for every cent possible. Imagine any other business that demands you sign a contract that says in essence that there is only one side to the deal and the deal can be changed by the other party at any time.

We wouldn't stand for this kind of treatment from any other industry sector but will stand meekly by while the banks rob us of our hard-earned money. This is all going on while the banking industry is spending billions on advertising themselves as, "your partner in success," "helping you build your future" and telling us that, "our customers come first."

Is this to say there is no place for personal responsibility? No, of course not. There are lots of people with credit cards that can't make payments, never could and never will but I wasn't one of them until the rules of the game were changed unilaterally. Is there no place for due diligence when vetting a customer for a loan?

From the U.S. House Subcommittee on Financial Institutions Oversight Hearing on Abusive Credit Card Practices is a list of practices that your banker uses to "serve you better."

- Unfair and deceptive telephone and mail solicitation advertising misleading teaser rates to add-ons such as, "debt cancellation and freeze protection," which are essentially insurance products dressed up in a weak regulatory structure to avoid state insurance regulators.
- Unfair penalty interest rates, sometimes as high as 35% or more, including the widespread practice of the previously mentioned "universal default."
- Imposing punitive penalty interest rates retroactively, that is on balances from previous billing cycles.
- Imposing higher late payment fees, often levied under dubious circumstances, even when consumers mail in payments 10-14 days in advance.

- Utilizing billing cycle trickery such as changing the due date, making the due date a Sunday but not posting on the weekend and shortening the time between when a bill is mailed out and when the payment is due.
- Increasingly targeting bad or unknown credit risks such as students or persons with a previous poor credit history as the “growth sector” of their portfolios. How many times have you seen the moniker: “Bad Credit? No Credit? No Problem” from businesses that want to charge usurious rates? This is mainstream banking we’re talking about - not pawn shops
- Imposing unfair, pre-dispute mandatory arbitration as a term in credit card contracts to prevent consumers from exercising their full rights in court and the growing use of these arbitration clauses in unfair debt collection schemes.
- The practice of baiting and switching balances from one card to another. When you transfer a balance from one card to another because of a lower interest rate, it changes your credit score, at least with that lender – you now have a larger line of credit than was offered when the card went into effect. Now, because your balance is larger due to their come-on, you are a higher credit risk and the interest rate rises again.
- Reducing credit limits unilaterally and without advance notification to the customer.

I’m not sure how many local banks are using these practices. Wells Fargo is the only local bank I have experience with. I tried to contact them for rebuttal, but the calls have gone unreturned.

If you are seeing similar practices at other local banks, please let me know and I will see how they respond to your concerns. As many of these practices, in terms of ethics and customer service, are indefensible, I expect to quote a great deal of, “no comment” even locally.



YOU CAN BANK ON THIS

Version 2.0, April 2008

I should think long and hard about a career as a finance writer. Going into this series I knew next to nothing about the banking industry and it's practices except that I felt that I was always on the short end of the stick when dealing with bankers. It turns out that the industry is writing this for me – at least the villainous part of the tale. I probably don't have the heart for hard core financial writing – unfortunately the end of the story always seems to drift towards the tragic.

I should preface this installment with my reiteration that the people here in Kerrville at Wells Fargo are some of the nicest and most customer service oriented people I know. They always have a smile for me and a biscuit for my dog at the drive through window. They count the change in my personal 401K each time I have to redeem my tin can full of quarters. It is not local and branch bank employees giving the industry a bad name and jeopardizing our economy, they are just doing their jobs and doing it well. I like my local bankers – I just can't stand their bosses - much like the sinner and the sin.

Not minutes after transmitting last month's article I got the new list of "services and fees" from our old friend Wells Fargo. They added more fees and "products" with which to serve me. All of which added up to more fees for me and every customer at the bank. No added value or service to the customer – in fact the rule of thumb

for the last decade or so regarding financial services has been, “less services at a higher cost.”

Wells Fargo has brought many new and innovative banking practices to the Hill Country since buying out Norwest. I’m sure many readers are familiar with some of these policies.

Local Check Cashing: Have you ever received a check from someone who banks at Wells Fargo? Have you ever shared with them your experience in cashing it? Wells Fargo charges people who do not hold Wells Fargo accounts \$5 for the honor of honoring their checks. After checking your ID, getting your fingerprint and demanding you cash the check in the lobby if it is over a certain amount; they grudgingly fork over your money to the intended recipient. When I make that check out to the landscape company or another small contractor, I have to keep in mind that when I write the check for \$100 it is really \$95 if the person I’m paying wants to cash it at my bank rather than deposit it. That is about as low and unethical as I thought you could get. It turns out that I lack imagination – there is no ethical “bottom” in the world of 21st Century banking products and services.

Saving For The Future: Here’s a sweet deal that makes saving for the future with Wells Fargo idiotic:

Wells Fargo Money Market Savings Plan

** No fees for large balance or direct deposit.*

Balance	APY	Bonus APY
\$0 - \$999.99	0.05%	0.55%
\$1,000 - \$2,499.99	0.15%	0.65%
\$2,500 - \$9,999.99	0.25%	0.75%
\$10,000 or more	0.55%	1.06%

** Source: https://www.wellsfargo.com/savings_cds/moneymarket 02/22/08*

In this wonderful savings scenario, and not the worst of those offered, you deposit \$10,000 and get the super generous rate of 1.06% listed above, you will only lose about 3.5% or \$340 an-

nually against inflation. Ten years out your \$10,000 is worth around \$7,460. Ten years of saving gets you 25% less buying power. This is the same company that takes your hard-earned cash, pays you 1% and loans it to your neighbor at 13-32%. Guess where the difference goes? Well it ain't the local economy.

Here's another example of this same account "product" - if you had a balance of \$299 in the account, your monthly interest earned would be about .16 cents. In the small print you may notice a monthly bank account service fee of \$3-10.

Let's take a look at this savings plan for the more down in their luck:

Working Stiff Savings Scenario:

You deposit \$299 in your savings account. You make and no further deposits and watch your money "grow."

Each month at the low end rate of .05% you will earn a screaming 16 cents in interest on your savings. You will be assessed a \$3-10 fee each month for being poor. With \$10 monthly fees, at the end of the first year, your \$299 has grown to \$179. By the end of the second year you will be down to a \$59 balance. The account will reach a zero balance (or more likely a negative balance – just because there is no money in the account doesn't mean the fees will stop – they will still want to serve you) within the first quarter of year three. So the next time you hear an ad that says Wells Fargo is your partner for the future, it is a future of your poverty they are talking about. Of course with a \$1,000,000 deposit you will probably get a rate that almost matches inflation and a free toaster. If you have \$100,000,000, you probably already have your retirement assets fully vested in a Cayman or Swiss bank foreign currency account. Hey I'm not an accountant but this is what Excel was spitting out using their published rates.

Most of the good news is actually just more bad news; but not all. In the case of Citibank, shares of Citigroup have plunged 42.5 percent during the last five months. That has to hurt even a Saudi Prince a little. Part of the reason could be traced to conversations much like the one I had with them last week. After making a reasonable settlement offer (declined), I reminded my "customer

service” rep that I didn’t create this problem – their banking “credit card reform” legislation was the cause. The response was classic:

“We didn’t change the laws, your elected representatives did.”

”Oh,” I replied, “So the hitman is guilty but the mafia Don who puts out the contract has no complicity?”

That’s when my customer service conversation ended with Citigroup hanging up on me. I hope their stock continues to tank – after all, it is owned by the Saudis and now the Gulf Arab emirate of Abu Dhabi has picked up almost 5% of Citigroup.

Gee we are busting our butts and getting poorer to enrich our pals the Arabs so they can send another planeload of terrorists into the U.S. This is free trade at its neocon and patriotic best.

Recently another national banking firm familiar to Hill Country residents, Bank of America, decided to better serve their customers by massively raising the credit card account interest rates to between 700,000 and 2,000,000 of their customers. In most of these cases, the interest rate was raised 10% or more. What did these customers do to deserve this abrupt change in their accounts? Absolutely nothing.

This is how Bank of America treats its customers in current good standing on their accounts. Bank of America is bleeding money with a horrifically bad portfolio and their solution is to make their customers pay for it. These account changes are not tied to the customer’s credit score and the criteria for choosing which customers will be targeted is not disclosed by the banks.

In all fairness BOA will let you pay out the balance at your current interest rate but you have to allow the account to be frozen and surrender the card. There appears to be someone pulling on a crack pipe in the bathrooms of banking corporate headquarters. I can hear the gears turning in his/her drug-addled brain now.

“Let’s see. If we double the interest rate on our good customers there is a chance that they will either comply and pay up or pay off the balance in its entirety. If they don’t or can’t pay up we hit them with late fees, penalties and even more interest – giving us more cash in the next quarter and I will get the huge bonus I deserve for such brilliance. Snort. Snort.”

Of course 90 days out the bottom line will look a bit better but they will probably have a couple million less good customers while retaining the deadbeats. 180 days out, soon after our coke snorting bank executive cashes out his zillion dollar golden parachute for a job well done, the bank is in much worse shape.

My abject apologies to all the crack heads, you're not that stupid - only a banker could have this pipe dream. All these practices are targeted at the consumer credit market. There are other factors in the credit sector that are also waiting like vampires to suck the lifeblood from our economy. Here are some other creatures that go bump in the night that you may be hearing about soon:

Sub-prime mortgages: There has been enough about this all over the media but suffice to say that lenders made some very bad loan products available that were sold deceptively and now the results are becoming apparent with the highest mortgage default rate in almost 30 years.

Credit Default Swaps: This Wall Street financial instrument came into being recently and I'd never heard of it. When I saw the exposure of these companies and the value of what they are insuring, it took my breath away. This unregulated quasi-insurance product has been the rage of the decade and is a variation on the "derivative" investment strategies that served us so well in the 80's.

Off regulatory radar, this industry has grown from \$900 billion in 2000 to over \$45 trillion now – twice the value of the entire U.S. Stock Exchange, according to the New York Times. How's that for exposure? Citibank and BOA are both big players in this market.

"Derivatives (especially swaps) expose investors to counterparty risk. For example, suppose a person wanting a fixed interest rate loan for his business, but finding that banks only offer variable rates, swaps payments with another business who wants a variable rate, synthetically creating a fixed rate for the person. However if the second business goes bankrupt, it can't

pay its variable rate and so the first business will lose its fixed rate and will be paying a variable rate again. If interest rates have increased, it is possible that the first business may be adversely affected, because it may not be prepared to pay the higher variable rate. This chain reaction effect worries certain economists who posit that since many derivative contracts are so new, the effect could lead to a large disaster”

-Wikipedia

Overall Equity Devaluation: With a glut of foreclosures and more still on the horizon, home values have dropped as much as 20-30% in some markets. Although it starts in the housing industry with the building sector not far behind, many other equity holdings such as commercial real estate and overly reckless leveraged buy-outs are soon to feel the pain.

The stock market this year to date has been anything but rosy. That it is still above 10,000 is a testament to it's heartiness and flexibility. The banks and Fed are financing all this activity too. It is not growing any sector of our economy except debt.

401K Wakeup Call: Make sure to pay close attention to your 401K statement for the first quarter of 2008. If you're still growing your nest egg, you have a great administrator for your plan. It is more likely that you will see a significant decrease in your retirement funds.

So where to from here? One thing that is indisputable is that the U.S. economy, like all others, is a faith-based enterprise. It only works to the degree that the participants have faith in its strength, fairness and profitability. When markets lose money, investors lose faith and withdraw. Consumers feeling the value of their homes and retirement decreasing, circle the wagons, tighten their belts and make due with less. Boom or bust, bear or bull it is all about perception to investors. Unfortunately our current administration has stood staunchly in the way of any kind of banking reform. Let me quote Eliot Spitzer, Governor of New York,

“...Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC). The OCC has been in existence since the Civil War. Its mission is to ensure the fiscal soundness of national banks. For 140 years, the OCC examined the books of national banks to make sure they were balanced, an important but uncontroversial function. But a few years ago, for the first time in its history, the OCC was used as a tool against consumers. In 2003, during the height of the predatory lending crisis, the OCC invoked a clause from the 1863 National Bank Act to issue formal opinions preempting all state predatory lending laws, thereby rendering them inoperative. The OCC also promulgated new rules that prevented states from enforcing any of their own consumer protection laws against national banks. The federal government’s actions were so egregious and so unprecedented that all 50 state attorneys general, and all 50 state banking superintendents, actively fought the new rules.”

But the unanimous opposition of the 50 states did not deter, or even slow, the Bush administration in its goal of protecting the banks. In fact, when my office opened an investigation of possible discrimination in mortgage lending by a number of banks, the OCC filed a federal lawsuit to stop the investigation.”

A little ethics would go a long way. Perhaps the enforcement of current banking laws and their review might be in order. In their myopic 90-day view the industry seems to be losing its grip on the larger picture. Slow, steady and predictable growth would probably be favored by most investors and would certainly be better for our overall economy.

I can hear the Right screaming,

“Managed economies?!?! That’s socialism!”

Well sorry to have to fill you in but our economy has been managed for a long time by some of the greediest and most inept of the banking elite. Don’t forget that the Federal Reserve is not a Federal agency but a privately owned bank covering their butts and losses with our money.

As a consumer it is also time to step up to bat and look at a life based on what you can afford rather than what you want. If you

find this or a similar dialog going on in your head,

“That gorgeous 41” HDTV down at Wal-Mart certainly is a steal at only \$1099 and I have \$2,000 left on my card...”

STOP. THINK. Get out your calculator and figure what \$1099 will cost you over three years at a low 13.9%. Trust me, it is no bargain. The best and only weapon against banking abuse is an old, tried and true method. Its called cash and carry.

Afterward: I would like to thank all the readers that shared their banking or credit card experiences with me. I received more email and comments on this article than any other to date. I didn't think that a possible recession was on the minds of may local residents. Our economic malaise is not only in local minds but pocketbooks too.

I am happy to report that Wells Fargo and Bank of America were the only local banking entities I got complaints about. If you feel that I am being hard on banks, that the U.S. economy is going great, that bankers are benevolent and that everything is just fine, be sure to vote for John McCain this fall who has pledged much more of the same if elected.





YOU CAN BANK ON THIS -Redux

September 2008

I usually love saying, "I told you so." Not so in this case. When I predicted the current economic crisis, I was wrong. I was about six months off my prediction of a Dow Industrial at 10,000. It should be there any day now with the market shedding close to 1,000 points this week. Being right is no consolation when the working people are having their economic world shattered.

And the worst is yet to come. Today on the radio I heard something that sent a chill down my spine. The term, "banking holiday" is being bandied about; a nice way of saying that the banks are insolvent.

How did we get to this place? The pundits will be talking all over the map about "easy money" and "loose credit," but the bottom line is that we are here for two reasons: corporate greed and a lack of oversight and enforcement of the current laws against such an oc-

currence.

When John McCain says the fundamentals of our economy are sound and strong, I have to stop an minute and ask what the heck he is talking about. I have a suspicion of what the GOP regards as “fundamentals” but to me it might include the stock market, the insurance industry, the energy industry, the amount of private equity held in our country and by whom and the strength of the U.S. dollar and credit markets. If I am missing something here, please fill me in.

Remember the term, “credit default swaps, (CDS - economic STD)” that I brought to these pages a few months ago? I mentioned that you probably had never heard of this multi-trillion dollar debt gorilla waiting in the wings. He is waiting no longer and is coming to bite us on the butt. Behind that third quarter 401K statement you will be getting in a couple months, showing your retirement funds tanking, is our evil little CDS. Fidelity, as one example is holding \$80 billion in these derivative Ponzi schemes. Don’t forget the exposure to our economy of just this portion of the financial market is larger than all the equity in the Dow 500.

Let’s take a look at some of the earlier times that GOP administrations told us the economic fundamentals were sound.

In 1929, the day after the Stock Market Crash, Herbert Hoover (R) told the nation that this was a market adjustment and the fundamentals of the economy were sound. The economic Titanic was sinking and the GOP of the era didn’t even make an effort to rearrange the deck chairs.

What were the causes of the Great Depression? The same causes, by the same people that are causing the 2nd & Greatest Depression we will be seeing in the months and, sorry to say, years ahead.

In 1987 Wall Street experienced what is now known as Black Monday. At the time then president Ronald Reagan (R) told us it was a market adjustment and that the economic foundations were sound. It was the beginning of the second largest economic recession in U.S. history. Oddly enough the exact same culprits pulled stakes out of their hearts and rose from the grave to feed on the blood of the U.S. economy today.

And now, with the return of a GOP backed Gilded Age, we are looking at conceivably the largest global economic meltdown in history. We were told that banking regulations were unnecessary and that market forces would regulate our economy. Wrong. Duh.

What did the GOP do to reduce economic crime? They took all the cops off the beat. Bush and company essentially told banking regulators to take eight years off and they did. The bankers know what is best for us and can be trusted to self-regulate.

Another thing you won't ever hear on the mainstream media, especially the cognitively dissonant Fox News, is that by the end of this month it is likely that the FDIC will have expended over half its reserves floating the failed banks. The biggest, strongest and long enduring economic powerhouses are all crumbling. How long do you think it will be before the smaller banks and insurance companies start bellying up? I hazard a guess that you CAN hold your breath - it won't be long.

When IndyMac went south, we injected 15% of the FDIC total reserve to hold the bank up. When Lehmann announced insolvency the Fed injected \$80 billion into the mess. The result? A sixteen point bump for the market. The next day we heard about problems with AIG and the market dropped over 400 points. The next day the Fed announced an injection of \$180 billion to hold up AIG. This gave the market a huge bounceback - 30 points before tanking almost 500 points the day after. Savvy investors are not buying into the idea of borrowing our way out of debt and for the first time in my lifetime I heard talk of the U.S. government defaulting on its debt. I don't care how old you are, it is unlikely you have ever heard this before.

As if loaning \$180 billion to AIG at pawn shop rates is going to secure their bottom line and survival. All it does is get enough money in the pipe so the wealthy have a chance to bail out on our nickel while they still can. Just ask the HR person at your workplace if you are holding any part of AIG and, if you are, you will see some very bad news regarding your retirement account in the very near future. This is from the guys telling us that Social Security would be better served if AIG and Lehmann were investing your retirement for you.

The GOP solution of borrowing money from the Chinese to bolster our economy is a recipe for huge failure. The Chinese are just waiting for our decline - the money needed to rebuild our economy is sitting in their banks - compliments of our lame attempt to be “globally competitive.” In terms of labor, to be as globally competitive as the GOP would like us to be we would have to work for 19 cents an hour and a bowl of rice. I doubt this is what U.S. workers are striving for but it would sure make Wal-Mart happy as a robber baron clam.

So we have CEOs of the largest banks and insurance companies in the world being rewarded for failure. The value of the stocks they were steward of is a fraction of what it used to be. These people of unmitigated greed walk away with multi-million dollar severance packages and leave the American people holding the bag. The GOP is all about privatization for profits and government bail-outs for losses. If this isn't economic redistribution and welfare for the rich, I don't know what is.

McCain says that if we tax the billionaires their capital will flee the country. Billionaires have no sense of patriotism. Take a look at Halliburton. For years now they have been raping us with invoices from Iraq for work that was substandard and in many cases never even performed. So what does this icon of GOP patriotism do in thanks to the nation that built the company? They move their corporate headquarters to Dubai where there are no corporate taxes or criminal extradition. And we are STILL giving this Quisling company no-bid contracts.

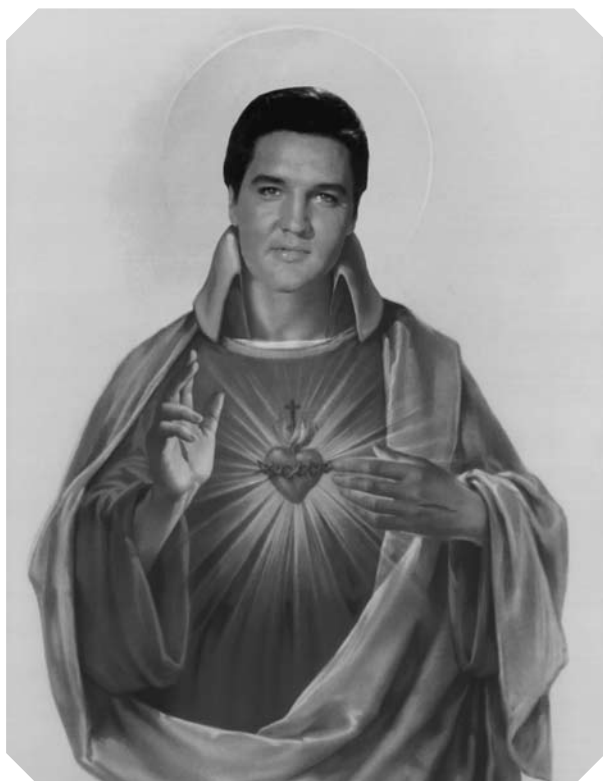
Speaking of the Chinese, there is an old Chinese curse that comes to mind, “May you live in interesting times.” Hang on to your hats friends, interesting will be the least of it. Regardless of who wins the next election, you have a front row seat to the economic Armageddon so desired by the GOP. Enjoy the show.



End Times Lullabies

Third Stanza

He Shall Return to Redeem Us.



God's Crib Notes

diapers for followers of the baby Jesus

I am asked all the time why I am so opposed to religion. I'm not. I am opposed to ignorant, narrow-minded and bigoted people, puffed up with righteous surety about my walk with their god getting in my face and my government about it.

I am opposed to proudful ignorance. Most Christians have never read the Bible and never will. They can't even recite the Ten Commandments. It is all hypocrisy and I will have no part of it.

If the Dominionists and Evangelicals would just do their religious thing in the privacy of their own homes and churches, I would have no problem with religious beliefs. It is when their "code of ethics" becomes codified into mine without my input that I come unglued and irreverent. They want respect? They need to give some.

Rolling back the clock and looking at conservative religious viewpoints - they have been consistently on the wrong side of every moral and ethical issue that has come to us in the last two millennia. Who were the staunchest opponents of the emancipation of slaves, women's right to vote, and civil rights? Southern crackers with a Bible in their hands and malice in their hearts. Cotton Mather's descendant's want to make sure that since they hate having fun, they want to make sure you can't have any either.

Fuck 'em. I'm going to have big fun and right now!





BIBLE WORD COUNT STUDY

A numeric study of Biblical word frequency.

A Quick Look at the “Good Book”

Is a literary work just the sum of the words and concepts contained in it? No. A key aspect that sets great literature apart from the more mundane is to evoke thoughts and feelings in the reader that go beyond the plain statements of the words. The use of metaphor, sarcasm, the design of parables and parodies come to mind as having a different connotation than the literal reading. A literary piece doesn't always literally mean what it says.

Books and stories are constructed with the brick and mortar of words and the selection of the specific words chosen by the author underline what the author is trying to say and can further reveal, through the use of frequency study, the pathology of intent.

I contend that you can take any literary work, scramble the words randomly – resulting in gibberish, and still, through statistical analysis of the words and their frequency, discern the core concepts of any given work. Any beauty or eloquence in sentence construction may be lost but core concepts remain and can be revealed.

The words, “stab” and “knife” could appear frequently in a crime novel. The words “happy” and “my friend” might be found more frequently when numbering the words of a children's book; more than would be found in a random selection. In cryptology, word and letter frequency analysis are used as the baseline when trying to break any code. Simple character replacement codes are

naked to this method of decryption.

When applying this principle to religious and sacred texts many questions arise that beg an answer. Would surveying the words used assaying a sacred book or treatise reveal much of the core principals for which that text is famous? Furthermore do these revealed patterns of word frequency tell us anything about the underlying theology? And finally, do the beliefs and actions of adherents to a faith have any correlation to word frequencies within their sacred texts?

To put this idea to the test, I have decided to use what is the most common sacred text in my region – the 1611 King James Version (KJV). Word searches include the text of both the Old and New Testaments. Utterly invaluable to my search has been the Bible research web sites, biblegateway.com and christnotes.org where one can search through many versions and editions of the bible for words, concepts, talking points and catch-phrases. I suspect that biblegateway.com may have noticed some of my earlier articles on this subject as they no longer return a total count on a query at this time. Entering a word search in many online databases or searchable CD-ROMs will result in a list of the the number of times the word, phrase or concept occurs.

I must reveal and confess my agnosticism and plainly state that this piece is being constructed from a biased viewpoint. It is the worst kind of science to follow only the data that supports your premise, ignoring all countering data and arguments. This essay is not science and I am guilty of this point-to-point logic methodology but at the end of the day, numbers are numbers.

Keep in mind this is an examination by a layman to support the premise that the words in the KJV reveal the core of it's theological agenda and that many adherents are in full synchronization with the concepts revealed by the numerical frequency of certain words, phrases and concepts.

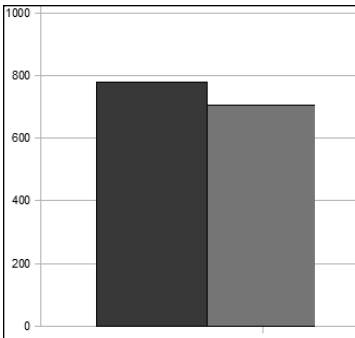
Word counting is easy but drilling down on concepts is a bit more problematic and will be addressed in subsequent essays. I welcome any rebuttals and arguments against these preliminary results – it is likely that there are errors in the minutiae. “The sun appeered this morning,” is a valid statement, regardless of its bad

spelling.

I have been examining the KJV to see how many times different words and concepts appear in it and their ratio to each other. The results are very interesting and I think that this corner of Bible research could bear freethinking fruit. Hopefully statisticians and other academics will examine this in greater depth.

Let's take a look at some words in the "Good Book" and see at what frequency they occur. It is my contention that if you strip the Bible down to its component words, the resulting underlying concepts are anything but good news.

A good place to start would be at the beginning – the core concepts of good and evil.



WORD

OCCURANCES

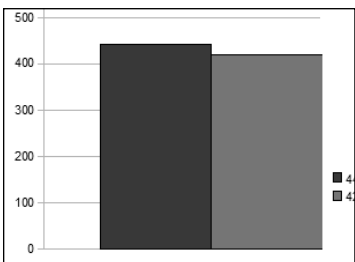
GOOD

778

EVIL

707

As you can see, statically the words are in a dead heat and have less than a 5% variance in the portion of total word count. This Biblical dualist view of primary moral forces is almost perfectly balanced between the two. As seen below, the concepts of love and hate are also statically very close.



WORD

OCCURANCES

LOVE/AFFECTION

442

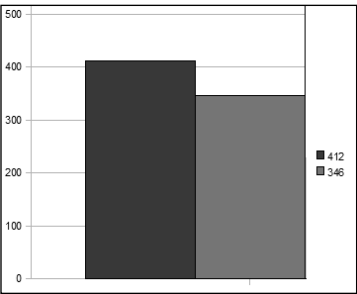
HATE/DESPISE

420

"As far as I can remember, there is not one word in the Gospels in praise of intelligence."

- Bertrand Russell

A Matter of Life and Death

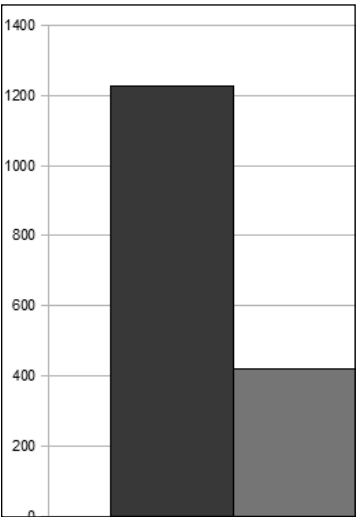


WORD

OCCURANCES

LIFE	442
DEATH	420

Statistically the KJV makes mention of life and death on about par with each other. It could be accurately described as either life or death affirming. When we look at one of the major causes of death in the Middle East since time immemorial, war, we see in the figures below that violence is the default KJV setting for human interaction. The Bible is three times as likely to make mention of war than peace. This is not surprising – times of peace are not that newsworthy; there is no conflict and therefore not much to write about.



WORD

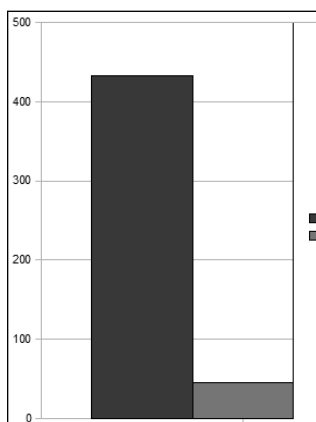
OCCURANCES

WAR	1225
PEACE	420

When we drill down a bit further, the statistical trending becomes a bit more out of balance and trending toward the violent. In the KJV destruction is brought to the dialog almost ten times as much as creation. The Bible seems to be much more about tearing things down than building them up.

“The Bible is not my book and Christianity is not my religion. I could never give assent to the long complicated statements of Christian dogma.”

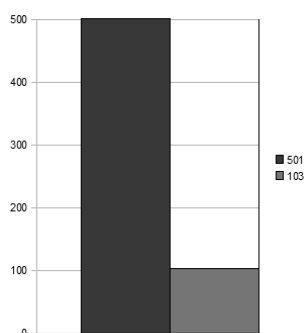
- Abraham Lincoln



WORD OCCURANCES

DESTROY	443
CREATE	45

Of course the best way to have death, war and destruction is to instill fear into the population being governed. Being fearless is about 1/5 as likely to be found in the Bible as being fearful. This seems to be a theme recurring in modern times.



WORD OCCURANCES

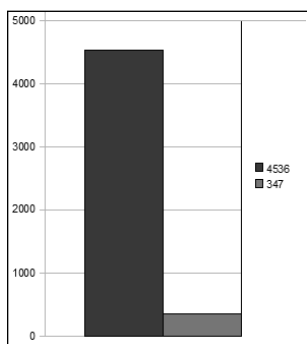
FEAR	501
FEAR NOT	103



The Battle of the Sexes Bad News for Women

The statistical variance between the sexes is glaringly apparent throughout the KJV. After looking at the simple search of “man” and “woman,” I felt I should dig deeper to try and shore up the feminine side of the statistics. I hate to massage data but without doing so the first chart results with women mentioned only

347 times to the 4536 for the men. I try to put a better face on the statistics.



WORD

OCCURANCES

MAN

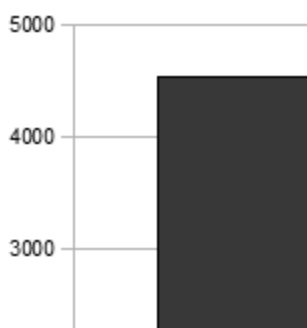
4536

WOMAN

347*

In addition to the word “woman” I increased the feminine word count by adding daughter (505), Harlot (48), Whore (65), Virgin (64), Wife (373) and Concubine

(37) which now brought the aggregate total to 1439; still a four to one leaning towards the masculine. The term “free woman” is only used in the KJV in reference to the end of a period of servitude.



WORD

OCCURANCES

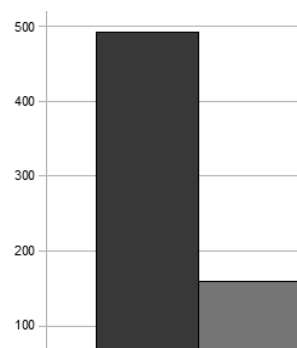
MAN

4536

WOMAN

1439*

In the same vein are the concept of killing and healing. Again the violent wins three fold in this comparison. These figures alone should slay you.



WORD

OCCURANCES

KILL/SMITE/SLAY

493

HEAL

160

“It ain’t those parts of the Bible that I can’t understand that bother me, its the parts that I do understand.”

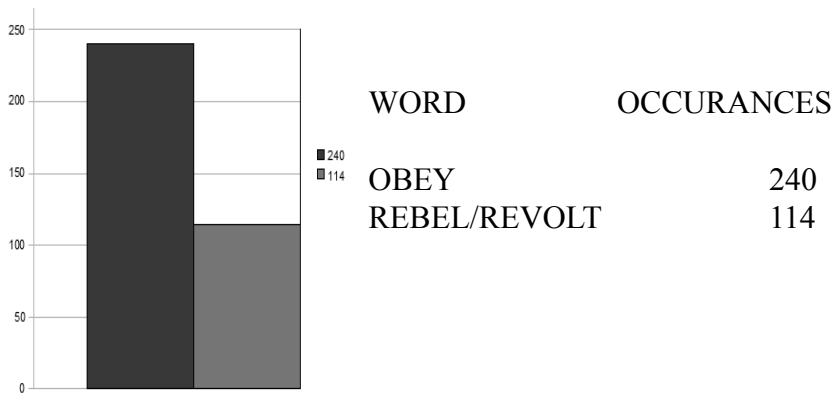
- Mark Twain

And the Truth Shall Set You Free?

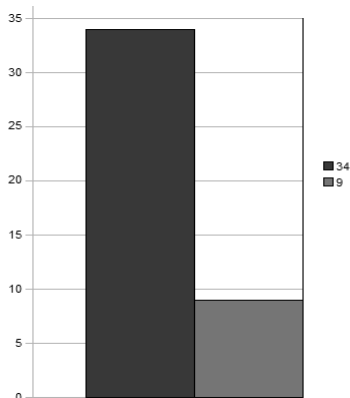
The concept of personal empowerment that is put forward by many Christian sects these days is not reflected in either the old or new testaments of the KJV. Servants and slaves are six times more likely to be mentioned in the Bible than a free man. There are many “freedom fighters” in the Bible – at least from the Hebrew point of view. The concept of freedom is most commonly found in gaining freedom for the Hebrews from one of their many oppressors. Individual or personal freedoms are not a Biblical concept.

WORD	OCCURANCES
SERVANT/SLAVE	926
FREE MAN	160

Of course the best slave or servant is the obedient one; not likely to rebel or revolt against their masters. The trend continues when regarding obedience and revolt.



“I contend that we are both atheists. I just believe in one fewer god than you do. When you understand why you dismiss all the other possible gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours.”
- Stephen Roberts



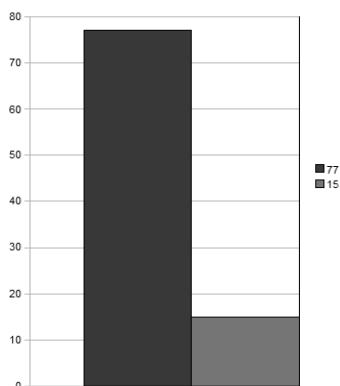
The Pitiful Record

Pity is handed out parsimoniously in the KJV. One would be three times more likely to be reminded to “pity not” rather than pity the suffering or less advantaged.

WORD	OCCURANCES
NO PITY/PITY NOT	34
PITY	9

Joe Six-Pack Theology

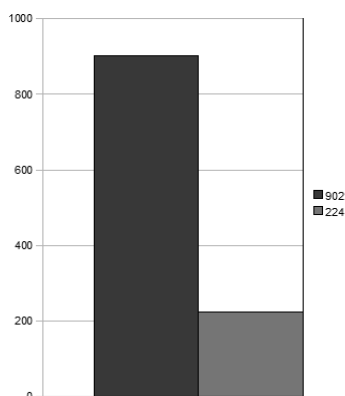
Imbibing in wine (and frequently women) is a common occurrence in the Bible. Remember the Biblical hero Lot? You know, the only man righteous enough to escape alive from Sodom and Gomorrah? He was also a drunken pedophile who knocked up both his virgin teenage daughters and blamed the booze. Actually I’m not sure of the virgin part as Lot offered his daughters to the sex-crazed crowd back in Sodom. Better a daughter raped than a guest sodomized. Samson’s drinking problem also bit him in the butt when trusting Delilah as his hair design consultant.



WORD	OCCURANCES
DRUNK	77
SOBER	15

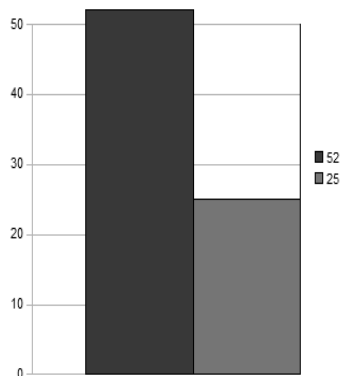
“When they tell us to get down on our knees and repent, they are basically asking us to bend over and get screwed.”

- Father Benedict Johannen



The Truth of the Matter

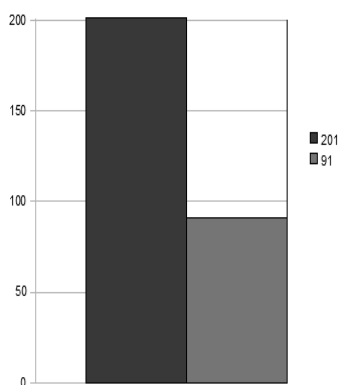
WORD	OCCURANCES
LIE	902
TRUTH	225



Don't Worry Be Happy

Sadness is twice as likely to be the Biblical state of mind than happiness. According to many theologies we are born to suffer so this comes as no surprise.

WORD	OCCURANCES
SAD	52
HAPPY	25



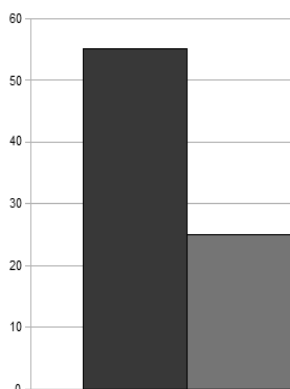
Good Times Bad Times.

WORD	OCCURANCES
PLAGUE/FAMINE	201
PROSPER	91

"A bishop keeps on saying at the age of eighty what he was told to say at the age of eighteen."

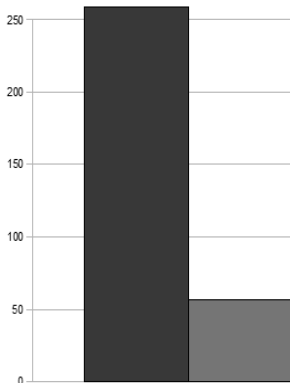
- Oscar Wilde

My Darling, You Weren't Wonderful Tonight



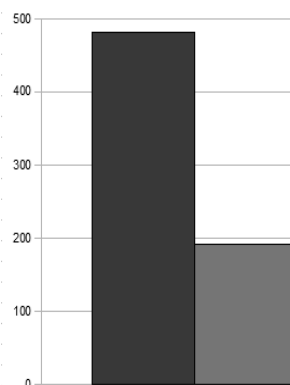
WORD OCCURANCES

TERRIBLE 55
WONDERFUL 25



WORD OCCURANCES

WEAK 57
STRONG 259



WORD OCCURANCES

KNOW NOT 481
KNOWLEDGE 191

"I do not find in orthodox Christianity one redeeming feature."

- Thomas Jefferson

In conclusion I would like to share the word count on a few other things and concepts that can give the seeker an idea about underlying theological priorities in the “good book.”

WORD	OCCURANCES
UNICORN	9
TALKING DONKEY	1
FREEDOM	2
EQUALITY	1
EDUCATE	0



This isThe End, my only friend, The End.”
-Jim Morrison

End Times beliefs can be entertaining and easy fodder for a skeptic’s word processor - allowing us all to have a good laugh at our Own Demise. They can be also harmful and at least theorectically deadly. Why is it that many people welcome events that would cause global suffering on a scale never seen before? There must be some underlying feeling of guilt to believe that judgement is nigh and we are worthy of destruction. It is a proven fact that people who believe they only have a short time to live do odd and sometimes



MORALITY

The Bible comments on General Morality

- Slavery is acceptable and is an everlasting institution. Slaves are to obey their masters in everything
LE 25:44-46, DT 16:17, EP 6:7, CN 3:22, TS 2:9, PE 2:18
- Human sacrifice is acceptable.
JG 11:30-39
- Cannibalism is acceptable at least as a punishment. God will cause you to, "eat the fruit of the womb, the flesh of the sons and daughters the Lord has given you."
DT 28:63
- Fairness and Honesty is not always necessary. The touching story of Hagar.
GE 34: 14-26



WOMEN

Women.

- Women are chattel to men. They are their husband/father's property.
LE 26: 44-46, DT 16:17,
- You may sell your daughter into slavery.
EX 21: 7-11
- A virgin must marry her seducer.
EX 22: 16-17
- Virgins are the spoils of war.
NU 31:18
- Women must be silent in church.
1 CO: 14: 34-36
- "... Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law ..."

Matthew 5:18



ARE YOU READY FOR THE END?

Here is a short list of just a few historical and contemporary prophecies concerning End Times.

- AD 30, Jesus himself predicted his return within the lifetimes of his contemporaries.
- AD 500, Hippolytus of Rome, predicted AD 500.
- AD 1000, Christian authorities worldwide predicted the end at the millennium.
- AD 1500, Martin Luther predicted no later than 1600
- AD 1697, Cotton Mather predicted 1697.
- AD 1832, Joseph Smith, predicted "within this generation."
- AD 1874, Charles Taze Russell, predicted 1914.
- AD 1980, Jeanne Dixon, predicted the 1980s.
- AD 1970, Hal Lindsey, predicted the 1980s.
- AD 1990, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, predicted 1990.
- AD 1993, David Koresh, predicted 1993.
- AD 2005, Multitudes of clerics profess the End is near.

In each and every case (as history will prove correct) these prophecies, some by the greatest Christian theologians of the past, were dead wrong. Here is the only prophecy the Bible has to offer: **DEATH** DT 18 20-22, EZ 14-9 Yet even with their lives and souls at risk, many clerics still postulate that they know the mind of God and His time and place. Repent! The End is Near! But the End is no nearer now than ever and one should turn their backs to those who would usurp God's power by making false prophecies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

THE BIBLE LITERACY GROUP
PO BOX 2241
KERRVILLE, TX 78029-2241

How well do you know your Bible?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE REALLY SAY?



ABOUT:

- ABORTION?
- FAMILY VALUES?
- BUSINESS & FASHION?
- MORALITY?
- WOMEN?

The answers may surprise you...



ABORTION

“Suffer the little children to come unto me,”
- Mark 10:14

Although it almost goes without saying, this pamphlet defines abortion as:

“The willful termination of a pregnancy as a result of outside forces resulting in the death of the fetus.”

The words “willfulness” and “outside forces” underline the differences between an abortion and a miscarriage.

The word, “abortion” is not in the Bible although the act (by the above definition) is not only condoned but commanded by God.

Hosea 13:16 “Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped”

2KI 15:16 “Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all that were therein, and the coats thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.”

“Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.”

Psalms 137:9

**THE BEFORELIFE. THE AFTERLIFE.
EVER THINK ABOUT THIS LIFE?**



FAMILY VALUES

The Bible comments on Family Values:

- The Bible asks true believers to sacrifice their firstborn
EX 22:29.
- The Bible recommends slaying your family and friends.
DT 13:6-10
- The Bible says it is permitted to sell your daughters into slavery.
EX 21:7-11
- The Bible says those who abandon their families for God will be rewarded.
MK 10:29, LK 18:29
- The Bible recommends you hate your family.
LK 14:26
- Offer your virgin daughters to a perverted crowd for sexual sport.
GE 19:8
- Incest and impregnating your daughters while drunk is the mark of one “favored” of God.
GE 19:32-36
- Polygamy is encouraged.
GE 31:17, DT 21:15, JG 8:30
- Divorce is prohibited.
MK 10:2-12, LK 16:18
- One is prohibited from calling his father, “father.”
MK 23:9
- You will be happy if you dash your little ones against the rocks.
PS 137:9
- A man’s enemies are the members of his own family.
MT 10:2

“Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. - MT 19:17



BUSINESS & FASHION

Business.

- Hired help must be paid daily. **LE 19:19**
- Money should not be loaned at interest to other believers. **DT 23:19-20**
- You shall make no oaths or vows. (e.g. contracts). **MT 5:33-37**
- You shall not take another believer to court but shall let the church settle the matter. **1CO 3:18**
- No work whatsoever, even the lighting of a fire, shall be done on Saturday.
EX 20:8-11, 31:15-17, 34:21, 35:1-3
- 10% of gross revenues are to be given to the Lord. **LE 27:30-32**
- The love of money is the root of evil.
1TI 6:10

Fashion.

- God forbids the use of blended fabrics (cotton/polyester). **LE 19:19**
- God forbids cross-dressing. **DT 22:5**
- God forbids long hair. **1CO 11:14**
- God forbids any kind of molten images or carvings. **EX 20:4 DT 27:15**

“... Neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.”

Leviticus 19:19

*Note: All Biblical quotations are from
The King James Version.*

**ARE YOU ON A MISSION FROM GOD?
WOULDN'T YOU RATHER BE ON A MISSION TO HIM?**

radical things. Regardless of theology, most Endtimers profess that mankind has been a very bad child and is due for a big spanking from Father. This belief, bordering on masochism, is common to many faiths and belief systems. Mankind can only be purified by fire. If not metaphoric Godly fire then the more mundane nuclear, viral or genetic variety should suffice.

A valid question is “why do people want to believe the end of the world is coming?” What is so wrong with the world that people will trade the present bird in hand (no matter how flawed it may be) for the eternal bird in the bush? Why is it when graced by God or Chance with the greatest gift bestowable, sentience, that mankind rips open the mouth of the Gift Horse and demands more?

“Gee God thanks for my life, the Universe and this way cool planet but its not enough. I want to live in a mansion on a street paved with gold and want to do it forever. I earned it. Got that God?”

Pascal’s Wager underlines that belief is a harmless covering of your butt against eternal damnation - a theological hedge fund. What harm can believing have? If the belief system is not true, what have you lost? On the other hand if there is a God and he is going to judge us, then believing could come in very handy in the afterlife. This is a strong and compelling argument to a slave. Of course the only thing you lose is control of the one life and existance that is not speculative - this one. I know, almost to a certainty, that I am alive here and now. I intend to enjoy it to the fullest. Belief in most theologies does not enhance my experieince of life but rather hinders it and greatly reduces my options - who I can marry, associate with, love, hate, and, most importantly, what I can think. Just about all the major theologies ban something I like doing. Their abstinence and sacrifice are OK for them but count me out. As my friend Rand McCullough put it, “I’m living it up before the meltdown.”

If life is a a veil of tears, which can also be argued with success, then the theological product of an afterlife becomes marketable. Historically life has been so hard that an afterlife without poverty and disease looks pretty attractive in contrast. Whether it is Jesus or UFOs coming to save us is not important - what is important is that we preceive that we need saving and are incapable of

our own salvation. Living in peace with my neighbor? Trying not to steal, lie or kill? Impossible! Only through the intervention of Something Bigger could we attain such goals.

The essential history of religion started 40,000 years ago in a cave. Mogump, just a normal everyday caveman, was hiding with his clan in a cave during a great thunderstorm. Mogump was as scared as everyone else in the Clan - the Thunder God was obviously pissed. Now Mogump's clan had a leader Jubank (it is theorized that this is the origin of the term "Jewish Bankers) who was a bully. Jubank got all the chicks and best food and this pissed off wimpy Mogump to no end. Why should Jubank have all the fun just because he was stronger and a better hunter? Mogump finally had enough. He went to the front of the cave and prostrated himself before the storm. In a loud voice, with the whole clan watching, he babbled some nonsensical mumbo jumbo and then clearly told the Thunder God to cease and desist. And damn a couple of minutes later the storm stopped and the sun came out. It wasn't long before Mogump had the best food and all the chicks. When Jubank complained that storms were still recurring, Mogump replied that the Thunder God needed appeasement with a human sacrifice. Adios Jubank. The others fell in line. If things got hard, Thunder God wanted MORE chicks and food. This was the first great theological product. It is called the same thing in the Mafia - protection.

The theological protection business went great for decades. Shamans would shake their rattles of bones and skulls and eventually the storm would subside. The problem was that it only took a couple of centuries for the clan to figure out that any of them could howl at the storm with the same results the descendants of Mogump were getting. This created the first theological marketing crisis. You can't sell what is freely available to all.

Mogump III, the great grandson of the founder of religion, knew that he and his kind could be in trouble. He fasted and went into a cave for a week. When he came out the greatest theological product yet developed was born. This product sold like hotcakes and to this day is the hottest selling religious commodity. Immortality.

And what a product! You could only get it through autho-

rized dealers - no outlet stores or factory seconds, no discounts or fire sales. It was expensive - you had to spend your life in obedience and tithing to Mogump and crowd. You had to give up your best food and virgins to the priesthood but what a pay off!

The great thing about selling immortality is that there are never dissatisfied customers. Once the product of immortality is tried and tested, the customer is immortally silent. Keeps your customer support costs down.

The United States Institute for Theological Engineering and Applied Divinity documented this success when they released Instant Absolution™ to the general public a few years ago. For a one time payment of \$100, you were forgiven all sins - past, present and future, and could choose the afterlife of your choice. Ganja Keg Party At Topless Beach™ or Christian Family Reunion Down by the Riverside™, it didn't matter. If you were in any way dissatisfied with your Afterlife, the Institute has a 24/7 toll free line to register complaints and you could exchange your afterlife for any other or get triple your money back. Since 1994 the phone has yet to ring.

"The difference between a cult and a religion is market share."

Theocon Heroes

Pat Robertson

Presenting himself as calm, reasonable and respectable, Robertson only rehashes the same elitist Christian theories that have been pandered by such hucksters for centuries. Mr Robertson believes that we are living in End Times and that the return of Christ and a worldwide theocracy is imminent. That could be one of the core reasons that his bid for the United States presidency went nowhere fast. Few people want a man in the White House who believes it to be his duty to push the nuclear button to bring about Paradise on Earth. Robertson would push that button believing he was doing us all a favor and his Christian duty. This former presidential candidate, who actually won the Iowa primary, has miniscule knowledge of the U.S. Constitution:

“They (the liberal left) have kept us in submission because they have talked about the separation of church and state. There is no such thing in the Constitution. Its a lie of the left, and we’re not going to take it anymore.”

-Pat Robertson, November 14, 1993

“The Constitution of the United States, for instance, is a marvelous document for self-government by Christian people. But the minute you turn the document into the hands of non-Christian and atheistic people they can use it to destroy the very foundation of our society.”

- Pat Robinson, December 30, 1981

It seems our ex-presidential hopeful knows very little about the First Article of the Constitution. According to Robertson the Constitution only works when applied by Christians. Other belief systems - or lack of - are so flawed and misguided that they don't belong in the democratic process. Democracy, according to Robertson, was designed to propagate Christainity.

The last thing Robertson wants is democracy. His rantings border on sedition. One of the biggest problems with most Christians is that they are sore losers. They just hate it that a number of their positions are in the minority and the government and society have to listen to the will and wants of the majority of the population. They are running scared in the United States. The changing demographics of the nation are sad news for Fundamentalist Christians. All kinds of heathen non believers are coming to the US and breeding like rabbits. There are now more Hindus residing in the US than Jehovah's Witnesses and that situation, from the Christian point of view is only going to get worse.

Robertson also has an expert grasp on economics. If a Christian theocracy was ruling the US, it would cost the government and taxpayers a great deal less than governance by democracy.

“The potential savings in the national budget from the elimina-

tion of police, criminal courts, standing armies, pollution control agencies, drug enforcement and many poverty programs is almost beyond calculation."

- Pat Robertson, (1991)

Robertson sounds like the DEA when quoting such figures. When the DEA or Justice Department throw statistics at you like "Over 3 billion dollars in lost productivity was debited from American business last year due to drug use." I doubt they take into account all the coked out yuppies on Madison Avenue and Wall Street working overtime into the wee hours. How about the musician that plays an extra tune because he has a good buzz on?

Robertson doesn't bring into account that although we may not need police or courts, his system would still require enormous resources to round up all the non-believer and burn them at stakes - no matter how expediently. Of course after we have all been consigned to flame, costs would be reduced significantly - fewer mouths to feed. Home heating costs could be dramatically reduced for the first couple years by piping the heat created from burning heretics into the homes of the true believers - also reducing our need for imported oil. There is no room in Robertson's version of Christinity for the non-believer. But of course this intelligent and reasonable man uses only love to convert you. He will weep and pray for you as he drops the torch to the kindling at your feet.

How anyone could follow this guy is beyond me. He has the mark of the Beast. Have you ever noticed how the physical features of these guys change after a few years of televangelizing? Jim Bakker was the first one that came to my attention. Over a period of approximately 18 months of watching PTL, I noticed that Jim's mouth got bigger, his lips fatter with crow foot lines around the edges. This is from the penis of Satan. Look closely and you will see that Robertson has the same symptoms.

Another manifestation of Satan working through the "Christian" church is bad haircuts. If your preacher's hairdo is larger than his brain case, beware - the Lord of Evil is at work. All these guys do essentially is beg for money. God must be having some trying financial times because they are all doing it. They know in their

hearts that money is the power and the glory and they are all slaves to Mammon. A priest or preacher that didn't solicit donations would be as refreshing as unlikely.

Regardless of what the Bible or Christ says, Christianity is in the judgement business. The Christian Right judges us every day and finds us sorely wanting. Forget rendering unto Ceasear, render unto them. What we need is a return to that Old Time Religion - when it was illegal to be anything but a follower.

If the Bible is literal truth - every word, then we will indeed see great marvels in our time. Most Christians think of ZOG in Revelations as Russia. Zog is going to align with many other nations, primarily those in the Mideast, to attack Israel. They will be turned back at the last minute by the hand of God. If I am to take this literally, the Russians are going to mount horses and chariots, grab their bucklers and swords and march to Jerusalem. Salvation of the Jewish nation doesn't need the hand of God in this scenario, it needs the hands of Jewish patriots on the triggers of Uzis. An army equipped with swords, no matter how large, doesn't have much of a chance against 21st century weaponry. The Bible is very specific - they are going to attack with chariots and swords, it doesn't say a thing about Scud missiles or automatic weapons. I think such a campaign would be a pretty hard sell in Russia these days. I don't think Islam will buy into this scenario either. But its a great opportunity for Biblical literalists to retreat into their vast wilderness of stupid metaphors.

"It may be that ministers really think that their prayers do good, and it may be that frogs imagine that their croaking brings spring."

"... why should we worship our ignorance, why should we kneel to the Unknown, why should we prostrate ourselves before a guess?"

"My objection to Christianity is that it is infinitely cruel, infinitely selfish, and, I might add, infinitely absurd."

- Robert Ingersoll

More Christian Niblets

“The courts are merely a ruse, if you will, for humanist, atheistic educators to beat up on Christians.”

- Pat Roberson, October 1990

“You say you’re supposed to be nice to the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians and the Methodists and this, that, and the other thing. Nonsense. I don’t have to be nice to the spirit of the Antichrist.”

- Pat Robertson, 1991

“[The] feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians.”

- Pat Roberson, August 1993

“There is something in the ominous in the air, and I am intrigued by both the horror and hope of what lies ahead.”

- Billy Graham, Storm Warning

“I’ve been fighting against the Jews and niggers and for our Lord Jesus Christ and the white race ever since I was a child. And most of the time we’ve been losing... We had lost the fight for the preservation of the white race until God himself intervened in earthly affairs with AIDS to rescue and preserve the white race that he had created. So AIDS is a great racial miracle. I praise God all the time for AIDS.”

- J.B. Stoner, Aryan Nations

“I tell christians, “If you had two children and one had to be bribed (heaven) and threatened (hell) to do what he was supposed to do, and the other one just did it because that’s what he knew was the right thing to do, which would you consider the better person?”

- Greg Irwin

“God established patriarchy when he established the world. God established a patriarchal world. If we’re going to have true refomation in America, it is because men once again, if I may use a worn out expression, have righteous testosterone flowing through their veins. They are not afraid of the contempt of their contemporaries. They are not here to get along. They are not even here to take issue. They are here to take over!”

- Randall Terry, Operation Rescue

“Democracy is the next-best government.”

- Pat Robertson

“Everything is falling into place. It can’t be too long now. Ezekiel says that fire and brimstone will be rained upon the enemies of God’s people. That must mean they’ll be destroyed by nuclear weapons... Gog, the nation that will lead all of the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the north... Gog must be Russia... now that Russia has set itself against God... it fits the description of Gog perfectly.

- Ronald Reagan, 1971

“I take Him shopping with me. I say, “OK, Jesus, help me find a bargain.””

- Tammy Faye Bakker

“No, I don’t know that atheists should be considered citizens, nor should they be considered patriots. This is one nation under God.”

- George Bush

The Belief that man is outfitted with an immortal soul, differing altogether from the engines which operate the lower animals, is ridiculously unjust to them. The difference between the smartest dog and the stupidest man—say a Tennessee Holy Roller—is really very small, and the difference between the decentest dog and the worst man is all in favor of the dog.

- H. L. Mencke

Pagan Worship is a Pauling

Paul, although claiming Jewish roots, may have originally been a follower of Mithraism, a cult more popular in the first century than nascent Christianity. Persian in origin, it is hard not to see the similarities to Paul's version of Christianity in this precursor theology. Mithraism had sacraments (seven, like the Catholic church) baptism and communion, with bread and water and the Eucharist hosts were signed with a cross which had nothing to do with crucifixion. Paul was an annoyance to the followers of Yeshua. The gospels admit that the apostles of Jesus did not believe he was resurrected at the offset.

All the believers, including Jesus himself, thought the Second Coming would occur before his original followers (disciples) would die. The early communities were so sure of the impending coming that a bishop in Syria and his parish marched into the desert to meet the Messiah and were on the verge of dying of thirst when pagan police rescued them (Hippol, in Danielel 4:18:1fff)

Handy Biblical Quotes

II Kings 2:23-24

And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.

Deuteronomy 25:11-12

When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets:

Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity her.

1 Samuel 18:25-27

And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son in law: and the days were not expired.

Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son in law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

Mormons

The Mormon church was founded by confidence man Joseph Smith. Smith was very big on prophecy and made many. Here are a few:

1. Smith predicted that Independence, Missouri was to be the center of Zion and that all the saints would be preserved and rejoice together in the land of Missouri. In fact they were driven out of Missouri with little rejoicing.
2. Smith predicted that the church would return to Zion (Missouri) in 1836. Didn't happen.
3. "Verily, thus saith the Lord: it is wisdom in my servant, David W. Patten, that he may perform a mission unto me next spring." (prediction made in April, 1838, Patten died in October of the same year)
4. Predicted that the Coming was "nigh - even 56 years should wind up the scene" (prediction made in 1835)

The late N. Eldon Tanner, a councilor to the prophet, once

preached “When the Prophet speaks, the debate is over.” Apostle Boyd K. Packer justified a large purge of intellectuals in the early 1990s by saying, “There is a temptation for the writer or the teacher Of Church history to want to tell everything, whether it is worthy or faith promoting or not...Some things that are true are not very useful.”

Jospeph Smith died in a gun battle in which he killed two and wounded one. Hardly a good checkout for a lamb of God. But Smith was not without a deep sense of irony. I would be hesitant to join a religion whose central figure started with the letters M-O-R-O-N. On the other hand I think every guy could use more mons.

Jehovah’s Witnesses

Of all the Christian sects the JWs are one of the most prolific in predicting the End and His return. Again the magic number of 144,000 pops up - signifying again the few lucky enough to be saved. You have to hand it to the JWs though when it comes to the End of the World - they know their stuff. Due to diminishing theological market share due to the accuracy of their proclamations, they are currently not giving exact dates, but they have made some spot-on calls in the past.

<i>1st Armageddon October</i>	<i>1914</i>
<i>2nd Armageddon</i>	<i>1915</i>
<i>3rd</i>	<i>1918</i>
<i>4th</i>	<i>1925</i>
<i>5th</i>	<i>1940’s</i>
<i>6th</i>	<i>1975</i>

Their current accuracy rating is pretty low as the last time I checked the world was still here and Jesus, nor anyone similar, seemed to be running things. The JWs underline a problem not just for their sect but for Christianity in general. Christianity doesn’t sell well unless you can convince your market that their time is running out. Christianity without Apocalyptic immediacy won’t sell. It

brings to mind a parable.

Johnny is told that Santa Claus is coming this year with his new bike. Christmas morning no bike. Same thing next year... and the next. By the fourth Christmas, Johnny no longer believes in Santa. The miracle of Christian Apocalyptic teachings is that anyone will buy into it. Each generation since the first century has been the End Times Generation. "Jesus is coming soon!" has been their headline banner for two thousand years. I suppose "soon" is a relative term.

The Watch Tower organization was founded by "Pastor" Charles Taze Russell and emerged from an Adventist background. Earlier Adventist William Miller, predicted the return of Christ in 1843 and then again in 1844. Although some disillusionment followed, a new date of 1874 was set. To the Millerites 1874 was the end of the 6,000 years of human history. Although the physical manifestation of Christ did not occur, the viewpoint changed to Christ's appearing on earth in 1874 in "spirit." Christ remained here on earth until 1916. Most of us seem to have missed the memo.

In the early 1920s the movement stated that Armageddon would occur and the Kingdom would have "full sway." The usual disappointment followed with a loss in hundreds of thousands of followers and market share.

In the 1930s the movement changed its name to the Jehovah's Witnesses. As time progressed the movement began to predict the end would occur within the lifetimes of those who were present at the events of 1914. As the number of people filling this requirement declines, the more unlikely the prediction becomes.

It is estimated that within 10 years there will be no JWs left that fill the bill of being around "in 1914 when Christ was enthroned as king in the heavens." At least one True End has occurred in JW teachings - the end to their specific predictions. In November 1995 they back peddled a bit and started deleting references to the generation of 1914 and haven't made a specific date prediction since.

From Charles Taze Russell to Pat Robinson, there is a recurring theme of false prophecy in Christian "leaders"; a death penalty crime in the Bible.

Christian Identity Movement

Armageddon in the eyes of this Christian racist movement involves, of course, a race war between the “true” Christians and the Cursed of Ham. All who are not white and don’t adhere to their warped theology (like most other rightist cults) are damned, less than human and worthy only of extinction. Extinction can be helped along its way by the violent actions of these groups:

“Yes we’re going to cleanse the Land. We’re going to do it with a sword. And we’re going to do it with violence. “Oh” they say, “Reverend Gail, you’re teaching violence.” You’re damn right I’m teaching violence! God said you’re going to do it that way, and it’s about time somebody is telling you to get violent, whitey.”

- William Gale, Ministry of Christ Church, 1983

In Identity theology the modern era is the “last dispensation” perceived to be a time of depravity, reaching its climax in the seven year tribulation called the “Rohowa,” a holy racial war. Members feel it their duty to bring these events to reality. Members are armed and thought of as “soldier saints/saviours.” The Kingdom will come about only with the death and destruction of non-whites and nonbelievers. They are seeing the signs in the modern era that Armageddon is forthcoming. They recite “sexually mutilating people (abortion),” sodomite homosexuals waiting in their lusts to rape, negro beasts that eat the flesh of men, seed of Satan Jews sacrificing people in darkness.” Another great enemy of this group are the other misguided Christians that don’t agree with them.

The sad part about all this is that these folks are serious and arming themselves to the teeth. Where twenty years ago it appeared that domestic terrorism was going to come from factions of the left and for political reasons, it appears going into the new century that the terrorists will be fundamentalist religious believers, primarily Christian and Moslem. The domestic threat will be almost entirely Christian.

Even the “Jew controlled” media is having problems using

the term “Christian terrorists.” It was not announced that the Federal Building in Oklahoma City was bombed by Christian terrorists even when that is the truth of the matter. McVie’s attorneys in preparing his defense were pointing the finger at some of these shadow religious groups. It is a new turn in legal defense when a murder suspect instead of claiming, “The Devil made me do it,” now declares, I am just fighting for Jesus.” Of course murder for Christ is justifiable - its not even homicide as non-whites and non-believers aren’t even human.

“The white youth of this nation shall utilize every method and option available to them to neutralize and, quite possibly, engage in the wholesale extermination of subhuman non-Aryan peoples from the face of the North American continent. Men, women and children, without appeal, who are of non-Aryan blood shall be terminated or expelled.”

- Pastor Richard Butler

William Pierce’s “*The Turner Diaries*”, a novel accepted as the guidebook for white supremacist Christian terrorism, points to what may be a busy year for the white supremacist Christians

“It seems some bar codes are mysteriously starting to show up with 2 letters underneath the code - the letter “F” and the letter “H”! And according to researchers, they stand for forehead or hand. And the purchaser must have the required moark in their forehead or hand before purchasing.”

- Terry Watkins

Every man thinks God is on his side. The rich and powerful know he is.

- Jean Anouilh

Armageddon(s) That Came True

In 1209 the entire population of Beziers, France was annihilated by the Catholic Church for heresy. When local residents refused to give up the names of their heretic neighbors, the Catholic Church razed the town to the ground and killed all occupants. At least 20,000 were slain or burned in an “auto-de-fey.”

Nostradamus

*“The year 1999, seventh month,
From the sky will come a great King of Terror:
To bring back to life the great king of the Mongols
Before and after Mars to reign by good luck.”*

I interpret this more literally: it appears that this prediction looks like Freddie Krueger in a UFO landing to clone Genghis Kahn - the next winner of the Martian Lotto. Lucky for us, it is not the end of the world as Nostradamus predicted events until 3797.

UFOs

When you boil down most theologies including Christian, Judaic, Hindu and Islamic to the core essence, they are all UFO cults. They all have a few common points:

1. Mankind was created and did not evolve.
2. Mankind is very special.
3. The creator(s) of mankind live in the sky.
4. There are good sky creatures and bad sky creatures and they are battling for control of us.
5. There is something we have that they don't and they want it bad.
6. The good sky creatures will return to set things straight.

Ask any just about any religious person to point to Heaven or Paradise and they will point to the sky. Same for the location of God.

As End Times scenarios go, the UFO theories are actually some of the more benign. They range from a selected 144,00 to millions if not billions of us being saved by the Visitors. The scenarios run from the most vague to specific time and datelines with accompanying “signs.” In essence the story runs that there are benign and friendly aliens out there coming (or already here) to save us from ourselves.

The time table for the mass arrival of aliens on Earth ranges from 1974 (oops!) to 2012. Very few UFO adherants believe that anything will happen after that time period. Some UFOists (Heaven’s Gate among them) have already jumped into action with the World Meditation of September 23, 1996. This sent a psychic beacon (at frequency 16:20 by the way) out to the Visitors that we are ready for them. (Ashtar by Alton, Sheldon, Nidle, Jason Dunlap and Bil El Masri)

Since the days of Betty and Barney Hill, reports of UFO abductions have been becoming increasingly frequent. There are those that adhere to the idea that millions of people have been abducted by the visitors. The abductees are generally paralyzed in some manner, brought to a space ship and have been the victims of unsolicited medical experiments and procedures. They then wake up in their beds with missing time and sore butts. Sounds to me like too many Qualudes at the Greek bathhouse or a roffie date rape.

There are also many conspiracy theories regarding ETs and our government. Claims that the government is covering up alien presence is a very popular point of view. Few consider what the reasons for this alleged cover up would be.

Transcript from Presidential Meeting with JPL, SETI and the Joint Chiefs

“Mr President, we have finally decoded the message from Sirius B. As you know yesterday when the signal was discovered we knew immediately that the source was intelligent in nature. We have used

a simple mathematical algorithmic matrix - a sort of alien Rossetta Stone if you will - that was imbedded in the header of the message to decode it. The message is short and to the point sir.”

“Well what does the damn message say?”

“Sir, it only runs a few lines. Let me put it up on the overhead.”

“Greetings Earth people.”

“We have received your signals.”

“We know where you are.”

“We are coming soon.”

“You are all going to die.”

“I think we can hold off on an announcement at this time.”

If one looks at both the physical evidence (cattle remains) and the accounts of those kidnapped, there is a recurring theme that causes me to offer up another theory. My theory is that the aliens, or at least the most common variety, are bovine and gay. They seem to have a thing about cow genitals and anuses.

When I was a kid, I noticed that my cocker spaniel puppy, Sandy, would sniff the anus of every dog he came in contact with. I asked Grampa why Sandy did that. He told me that once a long long time ago, before humans were on earth, the dogs were having a big barn dance. Dogs have a different set of manners and canine protocols. Upon entering the barn each dog had to hang his anus on a hook by the door. Well in the middle of the dance a horrible fire broke out and all the dogs rushed for the door. In their haste they grabbed just any anus on their fast exit and to this day dogs are still sniffing around trying to find their own factory installed asshole.

Could it be that the aliens are in the same predicament? Could some great galactic event have caused sentient extraterrestrial anuses to be misplaced and that the visitors are just looking for their own or perhaps replacement assholes? With the number of cattle rosettes coming up missing after alien mutilations, I think a strong case can be made for the aliens being bovine in nature. After all, the

cows get their buttocks removed and I have yet to find an instance of human abductees returning from their encounter sans butt. They may probe and sniff us a little but it appears that it is really cow anuses that they want to take home.

It was the final meeting of the Galactic Council. Knowing of the imminent doom of the Council and Federation of Planets, the Council made a last minute grasp at what may be the only hope left for the survival of the Universe. The great anti-matter Subspace Matrix Generator was running low on cow rectums. This is why the cow is held sacred in India - the anus of a cow is the key to the energy matrix of the universe and is much sought after by off planet visitors. If enough assholes can be collected soon enough, the universe will not end. Perhaps George Lucas could weave this into the Star Wars storyline to give it a touch of authenticity. Luke Skywalker sent on his most perilous mission yet - to primitive Earth to steal the bovine booty.

The most common type of aliens around these days are the bug-eyed Greys. These appear to be the henchmen of the more human appearing Masters. There are a number of variations on these creatures but most aliens are basically humanoid in nature - two arms and legs, big head and huge eyes are in style this season. Where are they coming from? Personally I think they are coming from Sirius (just because of the similarities in Dogon and Egyptian myths). I am not in the majority and my guesstimate is currently in fourth place. It appears that we are of interest to a variety of aliens.

Andromedans travel in the "sombbrero" type craft which are powered by 5 crystals plugged directly into the pilots brain. These crystals are powered by the pilot's "life force" or "energy field." These craft are small, used for scouting and generally carry a crew of three. There is also a torpedo shaped craft utilized as a "Mother Ship" that can carry 5-10 thousand people. These craft are five miles long and can be berthed in even larger "Mother of All Ships" which are approximately one hundred miles long.

Arcturians utilize the more familiar saucer type craft. They are tendered also by huge mother ships. When going atmospheric, they descend and land on struts. Entry and exit from the craft is through a levitating field directly under the craft. Their mother ships

are even larger than those of the Andromidans and are designed to last one thousand years with proper warranty maintenance.

Pleiadians have a variety of ships including beamships and atmospheric vehicles all of which get over 40 parsecs a gallon.

Michael Gordon Scallion

King of the Earthquake predictors.

I have a friend who tunes into Art Bell almost every night and accepts what he hears as gospel. Scallion was pretty popular a few years ago and predicted some pretty hairy shit. By Christmas 1995 waves were to be lapping on the steps of the State Capital in Austin, Texas (about 250 miles from the coast) due to horrible earthquakes. I suspect that Scallion followers are still waxing their surf boards in the rotunda. When I was leaving for a trip to California six months later I was advised that the Big One was imminent and should not travel to the west coast. The business of predicting earthquakes and volcanoes, especially around the Pacific Rim, is pretty easy.

I normally don't display my psychic abilities but some of my past predictions have been right on the money. On June 5th, 1974 I predicted that the sun would rise repeatedly within minutes of dawn and have been proven correct every day since.

As I write this sentence it is May 1997, I predict that within the next 90-120 days there will be an earthquake of at least magnitude 5 in the Western Pacific Basin. It will flood low lying areas and cause great loss of life and property. My vision showed many brown people in boats.

"It is a curious thing that God learned Greek when he wished to turn author—and that he did not learn it better."

"A casual stroll through a lunatic asylum shows that faith does not prove anything."

- Frederick Nietzsche

There's a Lot to be Thankful For

Looking at the Mark Foley debacle over the last week, I was wondering what defense the Christian right would come up with to coverup the fact that they support Foley and Hastert. They went back to their original playbook – The Bible. It is, of course, the victim's fault.

I was on local radio the other day with commentator James Williamson when, while ranting about the “gay agenda” James dropped what I call the “Lot” bomb. He said, like many before him, that the United States was headed to hell in a hand basket because of our tolerance of gays. He said we would be justly punished just like Sodom & Gomorra. To any skeptic familiar with the Old Testament and the full story, that can be opening a can of worms.

What our friends who promote “Family Values” seem to overlook is the rest of the story of Sodom & Gomorra. The Biblical hero of this tale is Lot – a pillar of family values. In brief and paraphrasing modern evangelists, a crowd of homo Sodomites wanted to have sex with the defenseless angels/messengers from God staying at Lot's place. Like any good family values man and father, Lot offers the crowd his two virgin daughters to be raped as an alternative to his houseguest getting cornholed and traditional family values are born.

Fleeing the city, we know that Lot's wife looked back upon the burning city (probably at the only town that voted for Gore in the Middle East) and was turned into a pillar of salt. That is where most Christians end the sermon.

It is not much later that these daughters, once offered by Lot as sexual bait to a band of rapists, wind up pregnant by Lot himself. Let's take a look at the closing argument in the rape and incest trial of Lot in the Heavenly Courtroom.

“Lot, you are charged with sexual solicitation involving a minor, statutory rape, incest and drunkenness. How do you answer these charges?”

“I am innocent your Honor. These girls wanted babies so

they got me drunk and seduced me. And they both did it more than once. It's their fault!"

"Case dismissed and you girls are banished from the Kingdom!"

So there you have it. According to the Bible the offering of your daughters to sexually deranged strangers for sexual abuse, the rape of young innocents, drunken incest and pedophilia are family values and God will reward those who commit such acts devoutly. Blaming the victims is as old as, well, the Bible.

If you think the story ends there, think again. Follow the daughters to Samaria and you will come to the first of the Bible's God-sanctioned abortions. (Hosea 13:16) There's a Lot to love for these family values.

AMAZON.COM RELIGION

Reader Book Reviews

Regarding the single-helix spiral representaion of DNA on the back of "Of People & Pandas."

You secular heathenists quit commenting on the DNA coil on the book cover. What you are viewing is CHRISTIAN DNA which, as any thinking person would know, is GODLY DNA and that is why it appears different from that of a MONKEY! Or the monkey-derived secular humanists. In fact it is Dobson's own DNA semi-spiral being displayed.

Also mocking the fact that there were dinosaurs on the ark doesn't help your case one bit. Noah is not a Biblical hero for nothin' - have you ever SEEN what a pair of brontosauruses can shit in the period the ark was afloat? Now shoveling that much crap - still a Fundie mainstay - is an act of heroism.

Posted by: BAKslider on Mar 25, 2007 10:25 AM

Political Intelligent Design

1987 - Under President Reagon, Creationism was banned

from high school science classes.

The judge that heard the Dover case was put forward by Rick Santorum and appointed by GWB. The judge was predisposed to intelligent design. His scathing judgement was that ID is hokum.

Get a Christian Loan Officer

There needs to be a numeric, Federal definition of usury. If you are looking for a deal on credit, you will be in luck if you are Christian, Muslim or Jewish. The Bible forbids loaning money at interest to fellow believers. So the first question to ask your loan officer is if they are Christian or Jewish. Then ask them if they are devout. If so, ask for the interest-free God mandated rate of 0%. Gosh, bet they become less Christian on the way to showing you the door. Of course any bank or lending institution that will not make free loans to fellow believers are TOOLS OF SATAN!!!

“If thou lend money to any of My people, even to the poor with thee, thou shalt not be to him as a creditor; neither shall ye lay upon him interest.”

- Exodus, 22:24

“And if thy brother be waxen poor, and his means fail with thee; then thou shalt uphold him: as a stranger and a settler shall he live with thee. Take thou no interest of him or increase; but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon interest, nor give him thy victuals for increase.”

- Leviticus, 25:35-37

“Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother: interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of any thing that is lent upon interest. Unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou putteth thy hand unto, in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.”

- Deuteronomy, 23:19-20

RADIOACTIVE: Moment of Truth, Show #24

In The Name Of Jesus

Hi and welcome to this edition of “Moment Of Truth.” I’m your host Greg Forest and today we’ll be looking at a theological subject; something not talked about in the Christian world; a historical tidbit that every first year seminary student knows about but is never the subject of sermons.

How many times have you heard the term, “In the name of Jesus?” Most Christian prayers end with the term. It is easily the most-used phrase in the Christian lexicon. It appears that the name of Jesus is something Very Important to Christians

If we are talking about a rabbi from the first century that lived in Jerusalem, had disciples and taught a message of peace and redemption. If we are talking about the man in the New Testament, it appears that for the last nineteen hundred years or so, Christians have gotten it wrong. The name of their god is Yeheshua or Yeshua; the modern translation being Joshua or Josh. When was the last time that you heard anyone say, “In the name of Joshua we pray?”

Here’s how it went down. In first century Jerusalem there were three languages extant in the region, Aramaic, Greek and Hebrew. The real name of Jesus looks something like this

ישוע

Much as scholars were well versed in Latin in the last few centuries, the scholars and scribes of the first century were well versed in Greek. The Greek alphabet had no corresponding character for the sound “sh”. So in translating from Aramaic and Hebrew to Greek and later Latin, the “sh” in Yeshua, was replaced by the “s” sound. From this first mistranslation his holy name was further changed; as an example there is no “j” sound in the old English alphabet.

The name progressed from the Hebrew Yeshua, to the Greek Iesous, to the Latin Jesu and finally arriving as the modern English

“Jesus.” There are some that argue, somewhat convincingly that, the name attributed to Jesus is derived from the earlier pagan source - Isis.

Around the third century Christian scholars, the fathers of today’s faith, discovered the mistake and decided to let it ride. Why would the church want worshipers to use the wrong name, and perhaps the name of a pagan god when addressing their deity? Two reasons come to mind: first that the name, “Jesus” was so ingrained in the belief system that it would be very hard to change and second that the infallible church would be admitting to a pretty serious linguistic, perhaps even theological mistake.

So the next time you hear the words, “In the name of Jesus,” keep in mind that there was and is no, “Jesus” except as a mistranslation and that the name of Jesus is not important enough for modern Christians to get right.

TEN COMMANDMENTS?

It is interesting that many Christians purport that the foundation of our society and legal system is the Bible and the Ten Commandments. When the argument comes up that Biblical commandments and sayings have no place in the public, tax-supported arena the reply that it has nothing to do with religion. The commandments are the basis of any enlightened society - Christian or not.

There are a couple of problems with this argument. First, if the Ten Commandments in the Bible are non-theological recommendations, then I will eat my hat. The Ten Commandments ooze religion and I give the first four (presumably listed in order of importance by the Author) commandments as examples of this non-theological approach:

1. I AM the Lord Your God
2. You shall have no other gods before Me
3. You shall make no graven images
4. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain

I am still waiting 40% of the way through the command-

ments for something that has anything to do with morality or ethics. We finally get some hits.

5. Honor your father and mother
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not bear false witness
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or property

So looking at these, the most widely accepted of the versions of the Ten Commandments, you can see that God comes first and any moral or ethical construct is secondary at best.

The second argument that comes to mind is the fact that Moses was given the Ten Commandments from God twice after shattering the first tablets in a fit of childish anger. The two versions, both the infallible words of God, are different.

And what about the other commandments? Exodus and Leviticus are packed full of commandments, here are a few God-given Commandments that have fallen by the wayside in the practice of modern Christianity. I wonder why?

EIGHT MORE COMMANDMENTS

1. The Feast Of The Unleavened Bread you shall keep
2. Every male first born livestock are to be given to God
3. You shall honor the Sabbath (not even building a fire)
4. You shall observe the Feast Of Weeks.
5. Three times a year all your men shall appear before the Lord
7. The first of the first fruits you shall bring to the house of the lord your God.
8. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

It is some comfort to me that when standing at Judgement, I will be able to stand before Judgement, lift my head proudly and claim I never boiled a young goat in anything.

The Twelve Disciples

You would think that the true believers and authors of the New Testament would have gotten their editorial shit together over the span of almost two thousand years but no. The gospels revolve around Jesus but his family and disciples are the key secondary players. With such importance given the disciples, one would think that they would be able to name who the disciples were. After all these are the founders of the religion and the most revered only second to Jesus. The gospels each name different disciples.

MATTHEW

Peter
Andrew
James son of Zebedee
John
Phillip
Thomas
Matthew
Bartholomew
James son of Alphaeus
Simon
Judas
Lebbaeus

JOHN

Simon/Peter
Andrew brother of Simon/Peter
James son of Zebedee
Simon the Cananite
James son of Alphaeus
Judas son of James
Judas Iscariot
Matthew
Thomas
Andrew
Phillip
Bartholomew
Lebbaeus
Thaddeus
John (Banerges brother of James)

MARK

Simon/Peter
Andrew
James
John
Simon
Andrew
Phillip
Bartholomew
James
Judas Iscariot
Thaddaeus
Thomas

LUKE

Simon/Peter
James
John
Simon (the zealot)
Andrew
Phillip
Bartholomew
Matthew
Thomas
James (Alpheus)
Judas (son of James)
Judas Iscariot

OF HUMAN BONDAGE

“If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the ... wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever. And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power; seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.”

- Exodus 21:2-11

Hey but on the Other Hand

Posted by: BAKslider on Dec 16, 2007 9:45 AM

I've been dissing folk-o-faith for awhile but I have to admit, not at all grudgingly, that the LDS has served a great purpose, at least in my life.

If you have ever been in a foreign country lost and not speaking the language, just look for fresh-faced young people dressed like someone in Leave It To Beaver - and you have your regional Mormon Missionary. They know the lay of the land, culture and the language. They are always ready to help a fellow traveler, believer or not. After this happened to me in more than one country I found a respect for at least the strength and conviction of their mission - regardless of how I felt about it's tenets.

When Focus On The Family sends 1,000,000 English-language KJV Bibles to the tsunami victims in Indonesia and calls it relief, I have to give credit to the Mormons who probably had the sense to send food, water and medicine. If a few copies of the Book of Mormon wound up on the menu, I would hazard a guess that it was in the native language.

Crazy as their theology may be, I have never met a Mormon I didn't like. Really.

What to Wear for the Rapture

I agree that they should go home and await the rapture. Speaking of the rapture, did you know that when you are raptured up, you actually are physically removed from the face of the earth and go up into the clouds for a skybox seat at Armageddon? It's true! Only problem we have found is that when you rapture out - even though you -physically- disappear, your clothes are left behind.

To show your respect for God and modesty, we are now offering a clothing line of heavenly rainments that will be awaiting you when you arrive in the clouds. You don't want your fellow raptureres to see you nekid do you? In the most popular colors, pearly white, heavenly pink and sky blue. RatureWear (tm) today.

RE: Do not bear false witness

Posted by: BAKslider on Dec 16, 2007 9:05 AM

Precisely the point my friend. I believe that your particular faith, among many others, is founded on a person bearing false witness.

Have you ever taken a REASONABLE look, an OBJECTIVE look at what the core precepts of your faith are and found them wanting? Of course not. That would be objective and objectivity mixes with faith like oil mixes with water.

Biblical Head Scratchers

Who was Adam the son of?

Luke 3:38, Follows the lineage of Christ, the son of God,

“... Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”

Following this lineage are we not all sons of God?

Does God have an opposite?

Exodus 3:14

“And God said to Moses, I AM THAT AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Ephesians 4:4-16

“There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all..”

How many sons of God are there?

Romans 8:14-17

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; For ye have received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified.”

Are the sons of God also gods?

John 10:34

“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?”

Are any sons of God less than others?

Colossians 3:4

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then shall ye appear with him in glory.”

What is the goal of prophets and teachers?

Ephesians 4:11-13

“And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

We are being raised to perfection.

How many minds are there?

Deuteronomy 4:39

Exodus 3:14

**CHRISTIAN
ORG CHART**

GOD

JESUS

Jerry

Men

Cattle/Livestock

Women

Unbelievers

Democrats

Greg Forest



Falwell commenting on Forest's penis

“Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.”

What is a human being?

Genesis 1:26

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

OUR likeness?

Is man finished or in process?

John 3:2

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

How much can we and should we attempt?

John 14:12

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I shall do also: and greater works than these shall he do.”

I’ve got a little Bible Literacy Project underway. I think more people should read the Bible - all of it. Why? Any person who has the constitution to make it through the whole book objectively can to nothing but walk away. Keep in mind that Biblical Literists believe in unicorns (11 instances in King James) and I think that unicorn breeding should also be an public school elective. Or take Hosea - we should take the pregent women of our enemies and “rip them up.” Yes the “good book” has a template for ethics that all

good school children should aspire to. So the next time a Fundie says the Bible prohibits abortion remind them of old Hosea (among a couple others) and the Bible's insistence by God that abortions be performed by sword and devoutly.

Commentary on Chocolate Jesus Outraging Christians

Where is the outrage? Where is the truth? Why is everybody concerned with the naked Jesus? It's the chocolate part that gets me! This evil artist portrayed Jesus in DARK CHOCOLATE when everyone knows that WHITE CHOCOLATE would have been more appropriate and accurate.

I ask all reasonable Christians to ask themselves, "Would I rather eat the penis of a DARK or WHITE chocolate Jesus?" Unless you're black and gay, the answer is simple.

Obviously the artist didn't know Jesus was white and spoke English with a lilting Southern drawl. In fact he even called himself Jay-sus-uh, just like Jerry Falwell.

The new Christian candidate. So Christian that the campaign speeches are spoken in tounge! And the base gets it!

Mel Gibson is a Fucked Up Mess

Hey "Road Warrior" was one of the greatest films ever made and when Mel teams up with Glover, it's great entertainment.

Have you ever wondered about Gibson the director? All his films have recurring themes: long-haired men in dresses or skirts being tortured. If I were making films like that folks would call me gay and sick.

With the "R" rating that *"The Passion"* received for its almost two hours of violence and torture, it underlines to me that an accurate portrayal of the life of Jesus is not suitable for children.

The difference between being “devout” and being “nuts”:

1. *“I am Napoleon.” Nobody else agrees. You’re nuts.*

2. *“This wafer is transubstantiated into the body of Christ.”*

Millions agree. You’re devout.

- Thomas Szasz

Theology on the Corporate Clock (with full benefits)

Author: Greg M. Forest at Fund-mis

Date: 1/23/95 12:14 PM

Priority: Normal

TO: Laurie M. Evans at FUND-BO3

Subject: History of the Mother Church

Message Contents

hi,

I guess I should start off with a caveat that although a practicing member of the Church of the SG, I probably will not be for much longer. It's time to start my own cult and downline marketing. Why be an acolyte when you can be a demigod? Why pay for church icons when you can create and sell your own? Why should anyone else's ordination be more certifiable than mine? The Chapel of the Pope of South Austin and it's splinter cult, The Eternal Church of the Type “O”, will probably be scisming on down the road before too long. But I will try to give you a brief history of “Bob” and the CSG because, after all, this is where bullshit enlightenment called me from (collect of course).

If I was gong to start at the beginning, I was raised primarily as a Christian Scientist. It runs in my father's side of the family, whats left of them, and is among the most flawed beleif systems on the planet today. To even presume to call their approach “Science” Christian or otherwise is an affront to anybody who can tie their own shoes without assistance. I'm only Jewish on my mother's side of the family.

After diving into the late sixties and chemically altering my brain enough to come to the realization that their IS something out

there, I went on my 15 year spiritual quest. Before that I never gave much thought to it but a bit of designer chemistry brought to the fore the symbolism common to all cultures at the subconscious level and got me to a wondering. I tried every product on the God-Mart shelves to different degrees and was walked away dissatisfied with all.

One of the more wacko high points on the road to knowledge were the Urantia Group, who have figured it all out and put it in a book heavy enough to anchor battleships with. It runs about 2500 biblethin pages and is full of the most arcane bullshit you can be literarily exposed to. The only saving grace of the book is a very interesting story of the life of Jesus. To give you some flavor, one of the chapters in the book might be titled like this:

“Concepts of BioRational and SupraCongenial Thought Matrix”

- article by Celestial Scribe Wonagod on Hemax 4, 6th Dimensional Level, approved by the Sub Galactic Council of Elders 2938.3492.3

I know it sounds lofty but basically the book is an org chart of beings above our lowly physical plane and a guide on how to better tow the corporate spiritual line.

Another great offshoot that kept me entertained for about a year was the Stelle Group out of Stelle, IL. These guys had a prophet named David who was the subject of a then popular subculture book, “The Ultimate Frontier.” David was chosen by Ascended Beings in this incarnation to lead mankind into the Edgar Caycee type light. He was tutored by Living Masters who had been specifically reincarnated to act as his teachers. At adulthood, David founded his church and community in Stelle. The End is coming and they were gettin ready. Unfortunately David got caught with his hand in the cookie jar or his dick in a housewife - I’m not sure which and the Stelle Group had to excommunicate their Living Perfect Master. David now has his own cult in Ft. Worth and I guess the Stelle Group is accepting application for a new CEO (Chief Executive Oracle).

The one thing in common I found on all the paths I trod was that you can’t have good religion unless it’s the one true religion. Why would anyone settle for less?

NETRANT AGAINST THE AMERICAN “GOD TAX”

On May 12th, 2008 at 10:05 am, Greg Forest, Kerrville, TX said:

Churches should lose their tax exemption. Almost all of the “charitable” work they do has a cover charge for the recipients. You want a free meal and bed from the Salvation Army? You have to sit through a sermon first. Most if not all Christian “charity” is based on similar templates. “Our church donated money to go to Bolivia and build a “school.” A school run by proselytizing zealots.

My tax dollars are being spent for the church infrastructure such as roads, sewer and other utilities. My tax dollars educate their kids in public schools. I get only grief in return for my involuntary “god tax” that amounts to over \$1,000 annually for every citizen in the country.

Churches own over 25% of all prime real estate in the U.S. Imagine the property taxes that could be collected. I would be all for exemption if no religious belief was excluded but only “correct” religions need apply. Forget Spaghetti Monsters and the true guide to the light J.R. “Bob” Dobbs, they aren’t “godly” enough to qualify.

What is really cool is that in a country where there is supposedly a separation of church and state it is the state (IRS) that will define legally what a religion is. How’s that for separation?

If anyone should get a deduction, it should be the non-religious folks who are being forced to subsidize superstition.

You NEVER hear about the “render unto Caesar” from the churches. Modern Christians ignore the emancipation offered by Jesus and lean toward the slavery offered by Paul.

They are woefully silent about how they treat the poor and how they worship the mighty dollar. Jesus had a few things to say about these issues and, like a Pollyanna skipping through the flowered meadow covering her ears singing, “La di da,” the new Christian right just inserts fingers into their ears and continue in their adulation of the dark side.

Keep in mind that if Satan is the great deceiver the last garb he would wear would be that of a cloven-hoofed Michael Moore. Nope, according to the Bible, The Dark One will be using the name

of Jesus to forward his agenda. Probably complete with a teleministry, small brain, big hair and loud mouth. My vote is for Hagee.

***Commenting on “The View” host Sherri Shephard
when she admitted not knowing if the world was round.***

Hey you heathens! Give the gal a break. When asked about how she would answer her child’s question, she said she would go to the library for the answer. Thats right folks, a library. She would walk into the library, find the Bible and show her son the incontrovertible truth that the Earth is flat. She will use library research to prove the flat earth. So much for your heretical “blind faith” argument.

P.S. That’s why the term, “Christian Scholars” is oxymoronic.

Your Genitals Will Roast

Posted by: BAKslider on Jul 24, 2007 7:29 AM

Its really quite simple. The agenda for these folks is the death of 99.9% of the world’s population and nothing less. These folks want you to die and when that is done, roast in tortuous hell for eternity. Your agonizing death is just not punishment enough for not following godly dogma. But like most things, there is a bright side. The theology also demands that god spend the rest of his eternity torturing unbelievers - what must be a boring task after a couple millennium of 24/7 magma-boarding.

I have a hard time with any theology that calls for the vast majority of the world to die and suffer but that is at the top of the Xtian right agenda. your death. my death. and may all the unbaptized babies suffer and roast eternally too. There is nothing a kind and loving god enjoys more than throwing another fagot (or is that faggot?) on the hell fires of your agony.

Similar to “enhanced interrogation techniques,” the heathen afterlife will find you getting your eyes gouged out, your genitals roasted, your tongue cut out - everything just short of a merciful death. This is the layout of the most popular afterlife destination spot - and, according to the Christnuts, most people overwhelmingly choose this over spending eternity in “heaven” with Falwell.

Oh well at least I know I will be in good company when I rub UV400 Hell Sun Block on Paris’s shoulders.

Okay, back to earth. Here is the reality. It has been estimated that in the last 50,000 years about 106 billion humans were born. Of the 100 billion people born before the six billion living today, every one of them has died and not one has returned to confirm for us beyond a reasonable doubt that there is life after death. This data set does not bode well for promises of immortality and claims of an afterlife.

The Four Pillars of Skepticism

Skepticism, or at least my brand of it, is essentially using common sense, reason and logic to come to conclusions about the world, its nature and my own place in the scheme of things. Anecdotal evidence is given little weight unless accompanied by other evidence.

I will be using Christian teachings as an example because these are the teachings that most of us have some familiarity with but my skepticism extends to all theologies. I don’t put much stock in dancing naked around a tree under a full moon as valid theology either. Fun perhaps but not valid.

When someone puts forward a premise or statement – theological, political or otherwise, I use my Four Pillars of Skepticism when coming to a probationary conclusion about what I have been told. All my beliefs or conclusions are probationary – that is the wonderful part of being a Free Thinker, you are allowed to change your mind and position as new evidence comes to light. What I be-

lieve today may not be what I believe next year.

The Four Pillars

Common Sense - not to be confused with intuitive impressions.

Ethics and Morality - does it fit within the boundaries of what I regard as ethical and moral?

Mathematical/Statistical Likelihood - how does the math add up? Is it logically consistent?

Cost Benefit – who are the beneficiaries of the premise? Who loses?

Common Sense

Argument: The Earth is flat because the Bible says so. The Bible says the Earth is flat and round like a pancake, floats on water and the sky is a canopy supported by four pillars. The heavens and stars are close enough to build a tower to.

The Christian scientific argument that has been carrying water for the last 2,000 years is best summed up by St. Augustine (354-430), an early church father:

“But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on the opposite side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours, that is on no ground credible. And, indeed, it is not affirmed that this has been learned by historical knowledge, but by scientific conjecture, on the ground that the earth is suspended within the concavity of the sky, and that it has as much room on the one side of it as on the other: hence they say that the part which is beneath must also be inhabited. But they do not remark that, although it be supposed or scientifically demonstrated that the world is of a round and spherical form, yet it does not follow that the other side of

the earth is bare of water; nor even, though it be bare, does it immediately follow that it is peopled."

My first impression standing upon the Earth (especially in West Texas or Kansas) is that St. Augustine is correct and the world is flat. My senses tell me that it is flat – I neither detect nor experience any curvature. This outlook only becomes problematic when I view the shadow of the Earth against the Moon each month and wonder where that round shadow comes from.

Also I have gone continually westward until I arrived back at the place I started. When flying over the planet – the seas and land masses correlated completely with a map of a spherical earth.

Intuitively I detect a flat Earth but common sense dictates that it must be round when my horizons and viewpoint are widened a bit.

Moral and Ethical Boundaries

Argument: Actions commanded by God in the Bible are righteous, good and kind. We should obey all of God's commandments.

A common belief among contemporary Christians is that God hates abortion. Few Bible students realize that God not only condones abortion but, at times, commands it. According to the Bible, abortion or the murder of infants are not evil acts if done devoutly to the greater glory of God.

"Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces and their women with child shall be ripped up"

"Happy are those who seize your children and smash them against a rock."

Ripping unborn children from their mother's womb to knowingly terminate a pregnancy and kill the baby is the classic definition of abortion. This treatment of the Samaritans and others of Israel's

enemies, whether commanding, executing or condoning the deeds, does not fit within the boundaries of what I define as moral or ethical.

The Mathematical or Statistical Likelihood of Validation

Argument: Jesus is returning to Earth in glory very soon – probably in my lifetime. In the New Testament, Jesus proclaims that he will return within the lifetime of his audience.

On the other hand he also says he will return like a thief in the night and no one will know the time. How many Christians, since the time of Jesus, have believed they were living in End Times? All of them. How many people would that be? Counting back the 40-50 generations from present day back to the 1st Century, I would guess around six billion people. How many of these people were correct in this assumption? Since Jesus has yet to return, they have all been wrong to date. So, looking at the statistical likelihood of Jesus' return in our lifetime, the batting average for this belief is 0 for 6,000,000,000. It is statistically very likely that contemporary Christians, regardless of their certitude and conviction are as wrong as their forbearers.

Spiritual Cost Benefit Analysis

Who gains and who loses? I believe in equality between all people. This is not a Biblical tenet – particularly in regards to women. The following excerpts appear to be blatant misogyny to me:

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

or:

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”

Call me New Fashioned but I believe in equality for all - including women. Obviously this was a passage by men, for men to keep the milder sex in their proper, Biblical place – at the back of the bus. When I ponder many other historical social issues such as slavery, women’s suffrage, segregation, civil and voting rights I always seem to find the theological far Right in opposition to every ethical and moral advance in our society since its inception. These positions to me appear to be diametrically opposed to the clearly stated mission and message of Jesus.

The Downfall of Science in Theological Arenas

Being a skeptic doesn’t mean that you can only believe in things that you can see, touch, hear, smell, weigh or measure. Science has done a great job in making our lives longer, healthier and more diverse but there are many places where science cannot and doesn’t tread that have a great deal of validity in our daily lives.

I have yet to see a scientific paper published that has been able to tell me how much love weighs, what is the color of sadness or how many giga watts are generated by hatred. Just as religious texts are rarely accurate when addressing the physical and scientific world, science falls short of quantizing the import and depth of human emotion, compassion and the quest for righteousness.

“Skeptical scrutiny is the means, in both science and religion, by which deep thoughts can be winnowed from deep nonsense.”

“A celibate clergy is an especially good idea because it tends to suppress any hereditary propensity toward fanaticism.”

- Carl Sagan

The Race is On ID - Indentity Design

Posted by: BAKslider on Feb 10, 2008 9:05 AM

Screw identity. We're all in this as Americans or not. Identity politics are only decisive. Face it - ancestor worship is ridiculous. Regardless of your race or culture - just roll back the clock 500 years and not a one of us has an ancestor that wasn't a superstitious, ignorant, short-lived and violent savage. This is something we should honor, retain or pay homage to?

So when I see people ask me to respect their race or culture, I ask "why?" What makes your background more worthy of respect than anyone else's? Oh! I see. You've been victimized and disenfranchised. And the solution? Whine that your demographic is discriminated against? Gee if you were an American 1st and a -fill-in-the-blank 2nd, we wouldn't have this problem.

Simplistic thinking? Yup. Inaccurate? You decide or let Fox.

People into identity politics are those that are resisting change - not fostering it. The agenda should be empowerment for all of us - regardless of origins. So lets just take origins off the table.

If you can tell me the benefits of identity politics, please share.

Letter to the Discovery Institute

Hi,

As per the subject line above I need to let you know that I'm just a lowly writer and musician. I really don't have much of a leg to stand on here. If I have directed this to the wrong person, put on a tin foil hat and please bear with me for a moment before hitting the "delete" key..

I should preface that I don't agree with most of the Insti-

tutes's findings but in the interest of intellectual and ethical honesty, I have to share a thought or two.

The universe is expanding. Picture this expanding universe as information rather than matter for just a second. With the correct information (location and density of atoms and their components in an element for example) matter can be replicated. Scientific measurement to date seems to point to a universe expanding at an accelerating rate.

When looked at as information first and matter second, the universe seems to look a lot like a computer file being decompressed. A large amount of information (eventually all information) is compacted into a smaller density (eventually a data singularity) for later decompression.

I think it might be possible to build a valid mathematical model of the observable universe as an information decompression algorithm. A model easily replicated by others. In essence, the universe is being unzipped as we speak at measurable velocities. Perhaps the act of measuring the expansion velocity is just another component of the decompression where a larger body of information comes into existence by the mere inquiry.

The problem for mainstream science would be displaying another instance of such a "natural" algorithm. I don't think there is an example of such an information algorithm. Algorithms, to my knowledge, are designed.

It might be possible to build a model for intelligent design that is rock solid - at least in terms of the math and verifiable by all academicians. Many fragile theories are now being upheld by their supporting math rather than experimental observation.

OK. I'm heading back to planet 10. Hit delete or you guys do the math ;)

Sincerely Anything but Yours,

- Greg Forest

Weekly Jesus Briefing – Show 1 (of none)

November 24, 2006 – Thanksgiving

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Weekly Jesus Briefing. The life, words and mission of Jesus are brought to life in this inspirational series that reflect what Jesus and his life were truly all about. You may be surprised at what you hear on these podcasts but every single word and topic comes directly from the mouth of Jesus of Nazareth through the gospels. The briefings are sponsored by the United States Institute for Theological Engineering and Applied Divinity. And now here's your host, the Reverend Doctor Swami Greg Forest, MDMA.

Segment 1

Greetings friends and neighbors. Welcome to the first installment of the Weekly Jesus Briefing. I would like to thank the kind people at the United States Institute for Theological Engineering and Applied Divinity for sponsoring the program. They are located on the web at thegodinstitute.com. The Institute's current major project is showing people how to get in step with the marching orders given to us by Jesus.

This week is Thanksgiving and we, as Americans living in the 21st Century, have a lot to be thankful for. First I give thanks for the fact that the demon-worshipping Satanist sycophants in the White House and Congress have been emasculated by the U.S. voters. The people with real values have finally spoken at the polls and that is something to be very thankful for.

I would also like to take time to thank the people who have given us much of what we regard as bountiful in our lives. I would like to start with all the scientists through the ages, from Galileo to Stephen Hawking who looked outside the box bringing real treasure and miracles to us all. Running against the winds of primitive theology and in some cases horribly punished by the powers of darkness, the work of scientists has given meaning and comfort to our lives. One hundred years ago in the United States the life expectancy was about half of what it is today. Instead of focusing on giving us a

more bountiful afterlife, these scientists and visionaries have given us something that really counts, a better, longer and higher quality here-life. Science is still under the gun of theology but in the end, when all the votes are tallied, science will win the battle simply because it works.

Do science, logic and reason have to be the enemy of religion? Not at all. If your religion demands you believe in talking donkeys, unicorns, dragons and virgin births, the long term looks pretty disheartening. If you can name one beneficial technology of Biblical origin, I will concede the point.

Many Fundamentalists proclaim that their numbers are growing by leaps and bounds. True. Looking a bit closer you can see that they are just stealing followers from other Christian denominations with less entertainment value. Methodists may be crossing over to the Evangelical but according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people who answer the question, “What is your religion?” with, “None” has doubled in the last ten years from 8 percent to over 15 percent. This figure has been doubling every decade since the 1970s and if this trend continues we are only about twenty years from a secular majority in the United States. Oh Happy Day!

The Religious Right frequently denounces, “atheistic Europe” because most Europeans don’t attend church or align themselves with any particular sect. Why? It may have something to do with the fact that in Europe for over 1,500 years Christianity was mandatory. After fifteen centuries of bloodshed between rival Christian sects, Europe finally said, “Enough!”

I am thankful for those of you out there who read their Bibles with a pinch of objectivity. The people who worship Jesus are out to destroy the world, the people who follow Jesus are going to save it and these podcasts are going to show you how. Here is a common dialog in my community:

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “Hi Dr. Greg, what church do you go to?”

GREG: “I’m not a religious person. I don’t attend church.”

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “You don’t believe in God? In Jesus our Lord and Saviour?”

GREG: “No.”

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “Why not?”

GREG: “That is a long story but to give you one quick example, I can’t worship a god who is not all-powerful.”

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “But my God is all powerful! He created the universe. He created you!”

GREG: “Well I can think of two things your god is not capable of.”

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “And what would they be?”

GREG: “Your god is incapable of unconditional love or the ability to change his mind.”

FEMALE CHRISTIAN: “Uh uh...”

GREG: Thanks for your call. Seems pretty silly that a bunch of humanly flawed individuals have the unmitigated gall to lay down the laws of what God can and can’t do. But they do and they have sold it to millions of Americans. When we return we will take a quick look at some of the ground we will be covering in subsequent broadcast but first a word from our sponsors at the Institute.

COMMERCIAL BREAK FOR INSTITUTE PAMPHLET

What Does The Bible Really Say, About . . .

Abortion.

Definition of abortion: “The willful termination of a preg-

nancy as a result of outside forces resulting in the death of the fetus.”

The word, “abortion” is not in the Bible. The act of abortion is. Abortion is not only condoned but commanded by God if performed devoutly.

2KI 15:16 “Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.”

Hosea 13:16 “Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up”

Family Values.

The Bible asks true believers to sacrifice their firstborn.
EX 22:29.

The Bible recommends slaying your family and friends.
DT 13:6-10

The Bible says it is permitted to sell your daughters into slavery. **EX 21:7-11**

Those who abandon their families for God will be rewarded.
MK 10:29, LK 18:29

The Bible recommends you hate your family. **LK 14:26**

Offer your virgin daughters to a perverted crowd for sexual sport. **GE 19:8**

Incest and impregnating your daughters while drunk marks one “favored” of God. **GE 19:32-36**

Polygamy is encouraged. **GE 31:17, DT 21:15, JG 8:30**

Divorce is prohibited. **MK 10:2-12, LK 16:18**

One is prohibited from calling his father, “father.” **MK 23:9**

You will be happy if you dash your little ones against the rocks. **PS 137:9**

A man’s enemies are the members of his own family.
MT 10:21

Fashion.

God forbids the use of blended fabrics (cotton/polyester).
LE 19:19

God forbids cross-dressing. **DT 22:5**

God forbids long hair. **1CO 11:14**

God forbids any kind of molten images or carvings.
EX 20:4 DT 27:15

Business.

Hired help must be paid daily. **LE 19:19**

Money should not be loaned at interest to other believers.
DT 23:19-20

You shall make no oaths or vows. (e.g. contracts).
MT 5:33-37

You shall not take another believer to court but shall let the church settle the matter.

1CO 3:18

No work whatsoever, even the lighting of a fire, shall be done on Saturday. **EX 20:8-11, 31:15-17, 34:21, 35:1-3**

10% of gross revenues are to be given to the Lord.
LE 27:30-32

The love of money is the root of evil. **1TI 6:10**

General Morality/Religion.

Slavery is OK and is an everlasting institution. Slaves are to obey their masters in everything.

LE 25:44-46, DT 15:17, EP 6:7, CN 3:22, TS 2:9, PE 2:18

Human sacrifice is OK. **JG 11:30-39**

Canibalism is OK at least as a punishment. God will cause you to,

“eat the fruit of the womb, the flesh of the sons and daughters the Lord has given you. **DT 28:53**

And now back to our irregularly scheduled programming . . .

Welcome back to our first Thanksgiving broadcast brought to you direct from the studios here at the Anal Roberts School of Broadcast on the campus of United States Institute for Theological Engineering and Applied Divinity in beautiful Lynchburg, Virginia.

I was talking about things to be thankful for and there are many. If you look out at much of today's world you see poverty, starvation and repression everywhere. What is odd is that many people here in America would like to have more of these problems right here at home. I'm thankful that they're the minority. I am

thankful for all the folks that come by the web site and check in. I get much more hate mail than praise but many who have previously professed to Christianity are now followers of Jesus. Here's another common dialog in my town:

"Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal savior?"

"Nope, but if I did the operative word would be personal."

"So you aren't a Christian?"

"Nope. I'm a follower of Jesus."

"So what's the difference?"

"Faith. You don't have to worship Jesus to do what he tells you."

The best way to get to Jesus is through his words. Grab your Bible. Throw out the Old Testament. Throw out everything after the gospels and you have your starting point. Read the gospels and then read them again. Don't listen to Paul – he is the pagan that hijacked the teachings of Jesus. We'll cover that in one of our subsequent broadcasts. Open your heart and truly listen to the words and immerse yourself in the context of those words. You will find a friend and guide unlike any other if you will but open your eyes.

Let us also be thankful for our secular society. Although many would like to have a theocracy here in America – the bottom line is that theocracy is un-American to the core. When you are told that America is a Christian nation, founded by Christians, ask yourself why the words, "Jesus Christ" don't appear in the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution or the Bill of Rights. Its not that some folks didn't fight hard for such inclusions – its that the folks molding our nation thought it would be a bad idea. Remember that America was founded by Europeans and they had a belly full of

theocratic governments. That's why they came here.

Well I'm getting a bit ahead and full of myself here so let's open the lines to take a few of your calls.

GREG: Joan from Charleston, welcome to the show.

JOAN: "Thanks for taking my call. Let me get this straight – you are advising people to follow Jesus but not to worship him? Have I got that right?"

GREG: "Thank YOU for calling Joan. You've summed it up in a nutshell. I think that faith is actually an impediment to doing the work set out for us by Jesus."

JOAN: "Where did you find that in the Bible?"

GREG: "Pretty much in the words of Jesus himself or more accurately what he didn't say. There is no place in the gospels that I can find where Jesus proclaims himself to be God. He might call himself the Son, even Messiah but I can't twist anything in the gospels to construe that Jesus thought himself to be the creator of the universe."

JOAN: "Well Greg you better try reading your Bible again. Paul, Peter and the other apostles all claim Jesus to be god and that God's Kingdom will only occur through the return of Christ."

GREG: "OK. Joan, please quote me a gospel verse where Jesus proclaims his absolute divinity. Please tell me where in the gospels are the words, "I am God. Worship Me."

JOAN: "Well he didn't say it like that..."

GREG: "Why not? Could it be for much the same reason that our founding fathers of our country didn't proclaim it either? Could it be because it's not true?"

JOAN: “I feel sorry for you Greg. You have closed your heart to the mysteries of Christ. You’ll pay for it too.”

GREG: “I also feel sorry for you Joan. You have to turn off the common sense you’ve been given to believe what you do. Rationale or logic won’t fit in your theological world view even though the truth is right under your nose. Thanks for your call.”

GREG: “Bob in Sioux Falls, you’re on the air.”

BOB: “Hi Greg. I understand where you’re coming from. There are so many religious hypocrites out there that it turns many people off to religion but do you have to throw the baby out with the bath water?”

GREG: “What do you mean?”

BOB: “Well just because there are some hypocritical, even amoral people out there calling themselves Christians, why do you have to strike out at all Christians? Many of us are normal, good people just trying to get on with our lives and let Christ guide it. Why get down on us?”

GREG: “Why not let Jesus guide your life instead of Christ? Why not heed the message and ignore the pagan idolatry?”

BOB: “What makes you think that Christianity is a pagan mythology?”

GREG: “Well that’s probably more than a whole show’s worth of information but here’s something you might be able to do to get more information. Bob, do you have a computer and an internet connection?”

BOB: “Uh Greg. How do you think I’m listening to your podcast?”

GREG: “Duh. My stupid. Try this Bob, go to Google and enter Mithra into the search. That’s M I T H R A, Mithra.”

BOB: “What’s Mithra?”

GREG: “Not what, who. He’s the guy you worship as Jesus.”

BOB: “Yeah sure. Where did you come up with that crazy idea?”

GREG: “It wasn’t me. It was the Apostle Paul, self-described enemy of the followers of Jesus. Trust me on this Bob, just Google “Mithra” and I think you’ll be surprised. Uh oh. We’re running out of time. Just look it up Bob.”

BOB: “I’ll do that. Will you take my call after I’ve done it so I can blow holes in your theory?”

GREG; “I sure will. I look forward to it. Thanks for calling.”

We have to go to a break but when we get back I will share some great websites and other online resources for your Bible studies and give you a preview of our next podcast. We’ll be right back.

COMMERCIAL – RAPTUREWEAR™

Welcome back. We’ve run out of time for this installment of the Jesus Briefing but let me give you a few websites to visit to help you out with your Bible studies. A great site I use as a research tool is biblegateway.com. This is a great site! You can search for words or concepts from many different editions of the Bible. My favorite is The King James Version (that’s the 1611 version). Another great web site that helps put Fundamentalist beliefs into focus is Landover Baptist Church at landoverbaptist.com. Pastor Deacon Fred Smith wields the righteous sword of God against the unsaved and unwashed. They are doing great work.

Let talk for a moment about next week’s podcast. The title of the program is “The Bible as The Good Book? Why?” As we

all know the Bible is described as the “good book.” Exactly why is that? I will share with you the results of one of the Institute’s new findings regarding the Bible and I think you will find the results shocking. In the weeks to come we will also be looking at Biblical heroes and draw a clear roadmap that will set you on the path to following Jesus. Thanks for tuning in to the program and I wish you pod speed on your mission to follow the teachings of Jesus. See you next week.

Thanks for tuning in to the Weekly Jesus Briefing. The program is produced by J.R. “Bob” Dobbs. Our engineer is Charles Bobson. The Jesus Briefing is a project of the United States Institute for Theological Engineering and Applied Divinity who is solely responsible for its content. Any reference to deities, living or dead is purely coincidental. Join us on the web at thegodinstitute.com. Until next time, this is your announcer, Bezelbubba, hoping you’ll join Dr. Greg again next week for another Weekly Jesus Briefing. And always remember it is your choice to be on a mission FROM God or on a mission TO Him.

Let’s play a quick round of FlatuBrain™

My doorbell rings and when I answer it I am greeted by a man who looks horrible. He is on crutches and has a cast on one arm. Both of his eyes are black, his nose is broken and his whole face is black, blue and swollen.

“Hi Greg. Last night I was assaulted and beaten senseless by ruthless gang members. You owe me big time.”

“I do,” I reply, “how do you figure that?”

“I took the beating so you wouldn’t have to. That’s why you owe me.”

I dissect his argument and close the door. A minute later I pass by the window and see him down the street. My visitor is no longer using crutches, nor does he have any bandages or signs of a beating and he is merrily strolling down the street. Obviously there was no beating.

And you ask, “And the point is . . .?”

The next person who knocked on my door told me that Jesus died for my sins.

On Line Review Rebuttal to Christopher Higgins Detractor

1.0 out of 5 stars Authored by Demons!

Reading reviews is a sure ticket to Hell! Don't read this.,

February 5, 2008,

By Gregory Forest "BAKslider" (Red State, TX USA)

Praise Jesus for creating me born in sin to suffer and die and then suffer some more! I love the one-star reviews. They're the ones that get read.

I wish that people of faith would try to keep in mind that those of us that don't believe in imaginary sky god/men, are the most discriminated against group of people in the U.S. More than people of color, more than women, gays or any of the other people the Bible tells us are lesser beings.

We are hated and despise for using common sense and logic - the primary tools of Satan and demons. We looked at the issue and came to the conclusion there are no such things as talking donkeys, unicorns or virgin births and never have been. Sorry, that's just the way it comes out for some folks. Some people need more evidence than provided in the Bible to believe.

I have heard religious right folks flaming all other creeds & secular humanists on the media 24/7 and I am glad that someone is fighting back. Do mainstream congregations speak out against Fred Phelps? Nope - you folk-o-faith have to stick together. We're fair game but can't respond in kind?

If Christians would take their god and go home and worship in their homes, with their families and congregations and leave the rest of us alone, I would say "give them a walk" but all I ever see on the media is how great, powerful, loving and obviously in need of money your god is and how much I need him and he needs me or

my bucks.

If you would just leave rest of us alone we would gladly reciprocate but you can't leave us alone can you? Christianity never has and cannot stand on its own. People are not drawn to it - so to keep the faith alive believers must brainwash their kids and proselytize like there's no tomorrow. Ooops! I forgot - you think there is no tomorrow.

No, you must get in my face about your god and wonder why I take offense?

On the planet I come from if someone approached me and started witnessing for Jesus, it would be as polite as walking up to me picking your nose, eating the boogers while scratching your ass and asking if I want a taste. In your face religion is as tasteless as you view this book to be. Can't you just open your heart and life to Jesus by making him your personal savior? The operative word being "personal." I expect this review to remain posted about as long as my tenure in heaven.

In a previous lifetime, I was a 1st Century college student in a Religious Philosophy class. My thesis assignment was to create an original and totally new religion that would transform the world. I turned in 20th Century Christianity as my new religion. I got an "F" and was kicked out of school for plagiarism - there was nothing new under the Son in my construct.

A Historical Perspective on Politics of the Religious Right

Ask any Christian if they support slavery, they will say no. Or ask about women voting. Is that OK? Most will say yes. How about civil rights? Probably support it.

In each case it was the Religious Right that opposed all these progressive concepts and, in many cases, it was the mainstream Christians that made such social changes possible; so don't throw out the baby with the bath water.

Dobson, Falwell and the like are nut jobs out shucking for

bucks. And folks who don't know better buy in. Half the folks in the world are dumber than average - the Fundy/GOP base. I mean would there even be a GOP if logic/reason was applied to their platform by US voters? I think not.

Remind folks that not long ago, Christians just as devout, indignant, sure of themselves and filled with the righteousness of God burned women for flying on broomsticks in the night.

Prior to this generation zillions of Christians thought Jesus would return in their lifetime. The batting average to date? Each and every one of those zillions was dead wrong. What makes this generation so sure they're right? World events? Pestilence, plague, war and famine? Of course they are signs of End Times since none of these things has ever occurred in the last 2000 years.

Time to follow Jesus, give up the pagan idolatry and walk the walk.

Towards the Truth

(Addressing to the USTEAD Grand Assembly, May 2004)

Thank you all for coming. This is the first in a series of lectures regarding subject matter that is both controversial and, at times, can be highly charged with emotion. I'm not here to tear down anyone's belief or faith but to encourage dialog between us all. I believe that creation was designed to work harmoniously in the best of cases, not with discord and that the best path to harmony is meaningful discourse. Please keep in mind that my intention here is to leave you with more questions than answers. If I had all the answers, I'd be a Mega Lotto winner basking on a beach; I certainly wouldn't be here today. To get to answers, you have to start with questions and this series is nothing but a long list of questions. It is my premise that it requires both intellectual and spiritual honesty to arrive at conclusions that have some validity. Let me stress that validity, within the contexts and confines of this lecture series, means to be in harmony with God's laws. I'll be talking much more about that later.

We all have closely held beliefs - be they religious, political,

economic or of any other nature. We are all biased. By our nature, we tend to support what we do and the choices we've made. We take pride in our assumptions. Although we use information from other sources, the ultimate opinion is ours and we are very proud of our conclusions. When other people make the same assumptions, our position becomes validated and reinforced – regardless of the position's validity. We justify every action with what we regard as a “logical” reasoning to bring us to our positions.

We are reluctant to come to a new conclusion about an old-belief; it underlines the fact that we were capable of being mistaken by having a wrong opinion before the new and transforming revelation. Where I was raised this was called, “being set in your ways.” Even if we travel with the herd, in the end, we are all still individuals. No matter how closely our viewpoints match those of others, we are, each of us, on our own page. We tend to congregate in groups that share most of our values and beliefs; constantly reinforcing them; but never all of them. There is always some small degree of dissention in any group of people – in fact people suffering from a multiple personality disorder are probably having huge debates internally all the time. I've never heard of such a patient where the “good” personality battles with the other “good” personality.

I will be quoting a great deal of Biblical scripture in the series because, at this point in time, the Bible seems to be a foundation stone of theology in our society. It is a book with which we are all at least somewhat familiar and can be the “Rosetta Stone,” if you will, to interpreting contemporary ideologies.

Let's set some context for the discussion, and a discussion it will be - because this is more about what you think than what I think. I'm here to learn from you. I hope to have a lively discussion with you at the end of this introduction. Now on with the show! Let's have a look at two of the main characters in this lecture series, The Prince of Lies and The Prince of Truth.

THE PRINCE OF LIES

What constitutes a lie?

Most of us would answer succinctly, “What is a lie? That

which is not true.” Duh. Fair enough. OK, let’s approach this in a slightly different way. This afternoon a man told me that he had seen a guy with a bass boat back his boat and pickup truck all the way into the river. Both boat and truck are under ten feet of water. Is this fact or falsehood? I think we would all answer that we need more information to come to a conclusion. Which leads us to our next question:

How is truth discerned from falsehood?

What facilities do we use to ascertain one from the other? In the case of the sinking bass boat, we might ask questions like, “How well do I know this witness and how reliable is the testimony?” or “Have I heard about this from other people or the media?” If we are really truth seekers we may even hop in our car, drive to the boat ramp, jump in the river with our snorkel and see if the boat and truck are really down there. And should we find the submerged evidence, this will only validate the story for us individually; but only for us. If we breach the surface yelling to onlookers on the shore, “Yup its really down there!” they will have to take our word for it unless they jump in too – I could just be spouting a huge “big fish” tale. Is it really possible for the folks on the shore know the difference until they dive in? Is it not more likely that, to save time and effort, they will simply take my word for it on faith; for whatever I say? They probably don’t want to get their feet wet. Coming to valid truths involves not just getting your feet wet but sometimes a total immersion in contrary propositions.

Why do lies exist?

Have you ever met a pathological liar? Well maybe not pathological but someone who always exaggerates or misstates the facts? The guy who backed his truck and boat into the river might boast by spreading his hands that, sunken boat aside, he caught a fish, “this big.” The measurement, “this big” gets smaller and the distance between his hands diminishes, as he gets closer to a tape measure or a scale. Know anyone like that? I think we all do. Now these aren’t necessarily bad people – just, “prone to tall tales.” We laugh it off and use a grain of salt in our dealings with them.

When the fellow says “it will be ready Friday,” he means Monday. We just factor the degree of untruth into the equation and go about our way. Lies exist because we let them. We never ask, “Joe Bob, why did you tell me the fish was three feet long when it was only eighteen inches? Or “Why did you tell me Friday when you knew it would be Monday?” We rarely lift our voices in protest to being misinformed. I suppose it could be construed that we are party to the lie somewhat because we did not reveal it for what it was or address the person saying it. What a pain that would be.

Why do people use lies?

Why are people driven to lie? Our reasoning is common, it could be genetic, a character flaw, upbringing, social pressures or any of a number of other reasons. We exist in a society beset with untruth. What advantage can disseminating an untruth have? Many advantages, if the lie is believed. The problem is compounded by elaboration.

When a core premise is untrue, only further falsehood can be used to support it. Likewise the truth can be assembled from small pieces of valid evidence. When I ask Joe Bob point blank about the size of his fish, he is more likely than not to expand on the original lie than admit to lying. “Well it looked big when it was still in the water but when I got back to shore and put my glasses on and put it on the scale, well it sorta shrunk,” Joe Bob would explain. If you keep questioning him, the tale of lies he will weave becomes more complex, and sad. “The eye doctor told me to come in for a new prescription.”

What benefit does Joe Bob feel he gets from lying? Does he feel so inadequate that his every deed has to be exaggerated just to make him feel worthy? Has he found that lying actually gets him places in life where honesty fears to tread (maybe he’s a politician)? What benefit can having your credibility and in a moral sense your very honor compromised by almost everything you say?

I suspect that many people lie because it is easier than telling the truth. Accepting a lie is easier than discerning the truth. It is said that knowing the truth is much easier than seeking it. On the other hand getting to the truth of things is much more difficult.

Imagine what the world would be like if police officers just walked away from a crime suspect because the suspect told them, “I didn’t do it! You have the wrong person!” Getting to the truth is what keeps law enforcement awake nights and gives prosecutors ulcers.

Is deception indeed an aspect of evil and truth of good?

Do good people always tell the truth? Do bad people always lie? We have all heard of people taking the stand in a court trial, swearing to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. And then proceed to lie through their teeth. There are incentives in life that make lying advantageous; a criminal will generally deny the criminal act. The criminal has time behind bars looking at him if he is indeed guilty and tells the truth. The politician risks not being reelected if the truth be known. The corporation may lose money if the truth be known. There is a world of incentive for dishonesty. Thus we live in a fundamentally dishonest society.

Do we count petty dishonesty? Is there a place where tact outweighs being honest? Your Aunt Mabel asks you if you like her new hot pink and plaid evening gown? The gown is obviously horrendous but you tell her it looks gorgeous. We all do. So does this mean that dishonesty, in some situations like vanity, is not only acceptable but desired? Are you compromising your core values of trying to speak the truth when you compliment Aunt Mabel? Most of our society can live with the “Little White Lie”; the lie in the cause of goodness; or at least diplomacy. Is someone who compliments Aunt Mabel trustworthy in other matters of fact?

What should our reaction be to falsehood?

We all say that we turn our backs and deaf ears on liars. We don’t believe them. But is that what we do? Do we weigh the information we are given objectively? Are we more inclined to take as fact information that agrees with our philosophy and world view? You bet! I am as guilty as anyone in supporting my beliefs with the views of other people.

Can our closely held assumptions blind us to the truth?

Of course they can. My assumptions point me to what I re-

gard as the truth or the facts of the matter. It is always hard to me to look at something I had regarded as truthful and found it invalid at a later date. I was comfortable with my preconception and the newly revealed fact has rained on the parade of my truth. Disconcerting as it may be, the only way to proceed honestly is to reconfigure my assumptions to include the newly revealed information. It requires me to change. It requires me to grow. It brings me closer to a personal revelation about the nature of the world regarding me. Many people, regardless of the facts (with a little “f”), cling to their Truths (with a capital “T”). In many cases they have to – as in the case of religion, to accept a fact contrary to religious teaching or dogma can pay the penalty of eternal damnation. To many, this is incentive enough to blindly accept that which may or may not be factual. Why seek answers when you already have all of them? In the recovery business, 12-step programs are very popular. The 4th step involves a “fearless moral inventory.” If you really approach it fearlessly, you are bound to find some shortcomings in yourself – unless you are perfect. One of the problems I had when in a recovery program was by the time I has worked my way through the fourth step, I found I had no business in a 12-step program. Much like, “be careful what you pray for”, “be careful what you seek”, can open a large can of worms if truth is the elusive quarry.

Is the truth immutable or subject to continuing revelation?

Most would address this question as a no-brainer. The Truth is eternal many would say. Set down at the beginning of time and etched into the fabric of the universe forever; unassailable and immutable.

The next lecture in the series will look at the different faces and aspects of, “truth.” I will see you at tomorrow’s symposium. Thank you for coming.

(standing ovation and tumultuous applause)

Recent Fundamentalist Focus

(Email to my friend Jennifer)

Not too many folks 'round here that I can share my research with but knowing you are unemployed with oodles of time to burn

....

I was looking at books of the Bible in terms of what books Fundamentalists hold the most dear. The top two most-revered books, by far, are Leviticus and Revelations. Leviticus gives Fundamentalists the fuel for hatred and the righteous indignation they suffer at the hands of anyone who believes differently. It also grants divine right to slay said heathens. Leviticus is where they get their position on gays for example.

Revelations is the bogey man waiting in the shadows to do justice at the End of the Game. A couple of cool trends noticed:

Number of times the word, “Jesus” is in Leviticus = 0

Number of times the word, “Jesus” is in Revelations = 7

In Revelations the name of Jesus is called on four times in the first seven lines of chapter 1 and twice in the last chapter - once each in the last two lines closing Revelations.

The name of Jesus is only mentioned once in the remaining twenty chapters - in chapter seven. The second most revered chapter of the Bible and their “money shot” ending makes very little mention of Jesus. Twenty-two chapters with nineteen silent on Jesus makes Revelations the New Testament book with the least mention of Jesus.

So... Modern Fundamentalist Christians are basing the worship protocols and focus on their god on the contents of these two books - one that doesn't mention their god at all and one that mentions Jesus the least when telling their god's “new” story.

This is another example of the things that glare out at me that other folks, especially believers, never consider.

The End Run/Times Mission

I don't know why it is rarely mentioned but the agenda, the end play, the goal of all of Christianity is the return of Jesus. You can split hairs from there regarding how the stage must be set for such an event but the common denominator across all Christian sects is that everyone else must die. And then be tortured for eternity. This is the law of the loving God who created us to suffer for his entertainment.

Any other version of Christianity is non-Biblical. The Bible condemns us all to torment, death and more torment as the default setting of human birth. You are born a sinner and are doomed from that moment. The only alternative to death and torture is to suck up to an imaginary being. I don't have to have any respect for this belief system that calls for my death and suffering before I even take my first breath in life. Enough is enough. You can believe in talking donkeys if you want but please don't try to teach my kids they exist. I mean really, you've already convinced Congress.

The problem isn't religion - it's recruiting. Christianity is not so righteous that it stands as a beacon of goodness and all that is wholesome. Christianity cannot gain adherents through its precepts or simple attraction. It would die out in one generation if parents quit pounding God into their kids heads and fear and anguish wasn't the prime motivation for joining up. Christians can have my respect when they reciprocate. Since their creed forbids reciprocation, I ain't holding my breath.



ISLAMIC ORG CHART

ALLAH

Mohammed

Mullahs

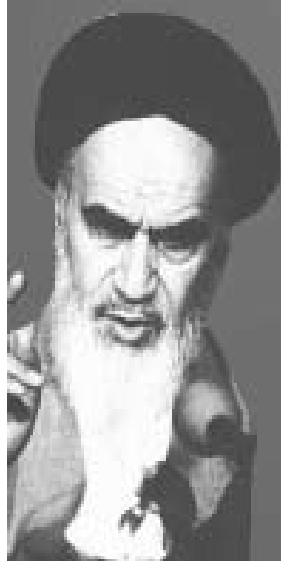
Men

Cattle/Livestock

Women

Unbelievers

Greg Forest





DREAMS OF THE SILVER SCREEN

And now for the last award for the evening and the one you have all been waiting for, the award for Best Twenty-second Imaginary Film. The nominees are:

“Jimmy Peters for “The Gay Jewish Banker Conspiracy”

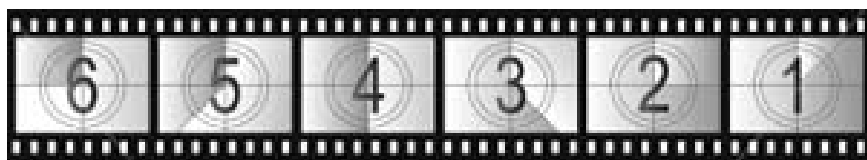
“Mitt Romney for “I Moron, The Mormon Story”

“LonelyGurl235 for “My Viral Soap”

and

“Greg Forest for “The Greatest Story Ever Bold”

and the winner is . . .



THINKING PROBLEM

BLACK

CONCERNED MOTHER (V.O.)

The change was gradual, he didn't turn this way over night. If I'd paid more attention . . .

**SLOW FADE IN:
INT. KITCHEN DAY**

CONCERNED MOTHER

I might have noticed the signs. Its not the kind of thing that you think can happen to your family. Its so sad...

**FADE TO:
EXT. MALL PARKING LOT DAY**

GIRLFRIEND (AIRHEAD BABE)

Like, I just can't relate to him anymore. He doesn't even seem like the same dude. He doesn't like to do the same things we used to do. He just seems so like far away . .

**FADE TO:
INT. CHURCH DAY**

PRIEST

When I asked him why I hadn't seen him at services lately, he got defensive and said he had better things to do. Better things than to attend to his soul and the church? I tried to counsel him but it...

FADE TO:

INT. VIDEO GAME PARLOR DAY

BEST FRIEND

The dude is just not the same. Instead of going to the tractor pull last weekend he wanted to stay home and watch a Nova special. Can you believe it? The dude is definitely screwed up in the head all of us hope that...

FADE TO:

INT. CLASSROOM DAY

TEACHER

It's a shame this had to happen to such a good student. He showed so much promise. Now he's become disruptive in class and is always trying to buck time-honored traditions. When he isn't trying to be the class clown he's...

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN DAY

CONCERNED MOTHER

We tried everything but nothing seemed to work. We couldn't even communicate with him - it was like he was on another planet. We're at a loss. I just want him back. We all do.

CUT TO:

INT. LABORATORY DAY

DR. FOREST

Hello, I'm Greg Forest and I've seen scenes like this countless times and have seen the grief that can come if

you or someone you love.. has a thinking problem.

MONTAGE

High tech building, classrooms. labs with posters of Jesus, 10 Commandments, Brittany Spears and G. Bush, etc.

DR. FOREST

Here at the Forest Institute for Problem Thinking we can help you and your family just as we have helped thousands in the past learn to deal with a thinking problem. In this nurturing and caring environment . . .

FADE TO:

Clockwork Orange techniques to modify behavior, shock treatments for reading The New Yorker, watching PBS, etc. Pleasure centers stimulated with pictures of Bush, Jesus and American flag.

DR. FOREST (V.O.)

And using the latest in behavior modification technology pioneered by U.S. Armed Forces in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, our proven results leave the sufferer free from a troublesome life of deep thinking. It's not an easy path but with the help of God, family and our proven techniques, recovery is now possible - even likely.

CUT TO:

REFORMED THINKER (ON PHONE)

OK. Sounds good. I'll pick you up after church so we can get to the Sarah Palin rally early. ... Yeah way cool! Oh yeah! Much better! I hardly think at all now thanks to Dr Forest and my Higher Power. 30 days today without a thought!

CUT TO:

DR. FOREST

Less than 5% of our clients return to problem thinking after having completed our program. Don't you owe it to yourself, your family and your peace of mind to log on today at problemthinkers.org and take the first step towards recovery? Life doesn't have to be ruled by thinking. Let our trained staff of caring professionals bring an end to your thoughtful suffering.

(ANNOUNCER VO)

Help is just a click away. Contact us today for a happier and thoughtfree tomorrow. You and your loved ones will be glad you did.

**FADE TO:
INSTITUTE LOGO**

NARRATOR

The Forest Institute helping families help themselves since 1984.





NATIONAL SECURITY

SCENE ONE DAY/EXT

LA snapshots. Aerial view of Los Angeles basin. Cars on freeway. Down streets to industrial park. Achmed, a Middle Eastern man carrying a briefcase, gets out of car in parking lot in front of small office building. Looks around over his shoulder before he enters the building.

SCENE TWO INT/DAY

The door opens and Achmed enters a large warehouse room. Four men are playing cards around a table. Another man is laying on a couch watching cartoons on TV. All jump to attention as Achmed enters the room. Dialog in Arabic. Subtitled.

ACHMED

Idiots! Why aren't you looking out? Five of you and not one of you near a door or window. What if I had been the police? You wouldn't have known about it until they kicked in the door. Fools. Farage, Ali, take the door. Mustafa, cover the alley door!

Ali and Mustafa jump up and move to their respective places.

ACHMED

The rest of you listen closely.

Achmed walks to the center of the room where a cargo van with a "Wilson Cleaning Service" logo on the side is parked. The van's back doors are open. Just inside the doors is a blue 55-gallon oil drum with a small box attached to the side of the barrel with a green light blinking on it. Next to the van is a table. Achmed walks over, opens his briefcase, pulls out manila envelopes and puts them on the table.

ACHMED

Here are our escape routes. Haji, you will be leaving for Frankfurt via Chicago as soon as you arm the device.

Haji nods.

ACHMED

Mustaffa, you and Farage will be leaving together for France via Houston as soon as you pick up Ali at the airport. Ali will be heading for Lisbon. You will head for the airport as soon as you pick up Ali. Leave the car in the long term lot and then split up. Mohammed and I will be following shortly after we have sanitized this location and have planted the bad leads for the FBI

MUSTAFA

Achmed, did we get the go signal?

ACHMED

Yes. We are going in tomorrow morning. With Allah's blessing, we will be celebrating in Yemen with our brethren within 72 hours. We will show the infidels that no place is safe for them; that we can strike them with impunity. All is in readiness. You all have my thanks. Allah be praised!

The last item pulled from the briefcase is a small cell phone-looking device. Achmed walks over to the van and oil drum and places his hands on the drum in almost a caress. He opens a panel on the oil drum and inserts the small device into it.

ACHMED

The device is the great equalizer. When it explodes the casualties will not only be in human lives but in the morale of the United States. They will see the futility of opposing us. We will strike with the Prophet's Fist. We will turn the Federal Building into dust and everything for a three mile radius will be irradiated. Perhaps even more depending on the winds. Zoom to the oil drum and zoom into control box with blinking green light and a digital timer set to 30:00:00. It is not counting down.

CUT TO:

INT. REGIONAL FBI HEADQUARTERS

A digital clock on the wall clicks over to 08:00. Pan around the room to FBI agents suiting up for a SWAT team bust. Agents are checking each other's gear and high-fiving each other. A door opens and Special Agent Higgins walks in and over to a small lectern with a white board behind it. On the white board are floor plans, arrows and circles showing an assault plan.

AGENT HIGGINS

Okay pipe down. I need your attention. Hold it down!

Agents pipe down and turn towards lectern.

AGENT HIGGINS

I have just received the go code from the Director while driving in. Gentlemen this is no drill. We are going in this morning. Our waiting is over. One hour from now it will be over. Your months of hard work are about to pay off. Its a no knock warrant. We are going tokick their doors in and hit them hard.

Cheers from the troops.

AGENT HIGGINS

The Director will be joining us via a video conference link in a few moments. Right now I'd like to say that I'm proud to be leading this team and know you will do the best job possible in bringing the targets down.

FBI CORPS

Hurrah! You got it! We're there!

Agent Higgins walks over to the white board and picks up a pointer. He describes the assault deployment and highlights locations on the white board.

AGENT HIGGINS

Surveillance reports that all the suspects are now in the building. The assessment team is in place and we have the key power, cell phone and radio jamming stations in the neighborhood now. At exactly 09:00 we are cutting the power and land lines to the building. The Control van will be down the street and will begin jamming cell phone and radio frequencies. On Elm street behind the target, Assault Van 2 will prepare for ingress through the parking lot and alley in back.

As soon as Assault Van 1 is in place in front of the building, they will give the go command. Do not, I repeat do not move towards the target or let yourself be seen until you get the go from Team One Leader. Understood?

FBI CORPS

Understood. Yessir!

AGENT HIGGINS

On my command we go in both entrances simultaneously. Flash bangs and entry. If possible take down the targets without killing them. Shoot to kill if you must but kneecapping them would be better. We would like to ask them a few questions. They will be shipped off to Guantanamo for an all expense-paid vacation in the sunny tropics.

(AGENTS LAUGH)

Agent Higgins puts down the pointer and looks at his watch.

AGENT HIGGINS

Okay its time. Bill would you turn on the video link?

Agent Bill walks over to a wall screen display and punches a few buttons on a box nearby. The screen comes on with the FBI logo. At the bottom of the screen blink the words, "Stand By For Transmission." The agents gather around the screen. The screen goes black for a moment and the face of The Director appears.

THE DIRECTOR

Good morning gentlemen. Am I coming through alright?

AGENT HIGGINS

Yessir. Loud and clear.

THE DIRECTOR

Good. Men this morning we are going to strike a serious blow to the enemies of our nation. This morning's operation is the culmination of a long investigation spanning the entire country. Over 1200 agents have spent months investigating and getting the

THE DIRECTOR (cont)

evidence necessary to gain the entry warrants we will be serving in a few moments. We going to take them down. Hard.

FBI CORPS Cheers. Applause.

THE DIRECTOR

Allow me to share with you this message from the Attorney General,

Screen changes to Attorney General reading statement

ATTORNEY GENERAL

“Dedicated men and women of the FBI. Today will mark the turning point in our war against those who would try to tear down this nation. Your hard work has made it possible to bring to justice those who work to destroy our society and our way of life. These agents of evil have been working for decades against this nation. They thought they could use our laws against us, openly propagate their misguided philosophy and tear down the very fabric of our nation.”

FBI CORPS nodding their heads in agreement.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

As your Attorney General and fellow American, I thank you for your selfless dedication to duty and the sacrifices all of you have made to get to this point. I salute each and every one of you. May God protect you on this sacred and patriotic mission. Good luck.”

Attorney General fades from screen and the Director reappears.

FBI CORPS

Cheering and applause

THE DIRECTOR

Good. Well gentlemen, that's it. Double check your load out. We mount up in ten minutes. Any questions?

FBI CORPS

Shaking heads and "No Sir!"

THE DIRECTOR

Then good luck. I'm turning you back over to the tender mercies of Agent Higgins for final briefing. We're counting on you.

Applause breaks out and agents high five and backslap each other. Agent Higgins turns to the white board.

AGENT HIGGINS

OK. We have a few moments before we deploy. Let's go over it one more time...

SCENE THREE EXT/DAY

In a nondescript cop car, four agents are parked two blocks down the street from the terrorist building. Agent Rollins in the passenger seat is looking down the street through binoculars at the terrorist building. Agent Martin is in the drivers seat.

AGENT MARTIN

So, what do you see? Any sign of activity?

AGENT ROLLINS

Not since the leader returned. They seem to be laying low.
What time is it?

AGENT MARTIN

8:50 The assault team is due in eight minutes.

AGENT ROLLINS

Do you want me to walk down past the building and get a
closer look?

AGENT MARTIN

Our instructions are to sit tight and serve as observers
and, if absolutely necessary, backup. I doubt the terror-
ist SWAT commandos will be needing much of our help.
Unless we get other instructions, we hang here.

SCENE FOUR INT/DAY TERRORIST HIDEOUT

(dialog now in accented English)

Ali is watching through a window near the front door. He appears somewhat bored. Down and across the street to Ali's right comes a young woman in a braless t-shirt and short shorts walking her dog up the street towards the FBI surveillance car. Ali grabs his binoculars and focusing them, follows the girl up the street. As she walks towards him he focuses on the girls breasts. As she passes and walks away from him he focuses on her butt.

ALI (to himself)

Look at that whore. She is almost naked. Does she have no modesty? No shame?

View through binoculars shows the girl passing behind the FBI surveillance car. Ali can see Agent Rollins looking back towards Ali through binoculars. Ali flips out.

ALI

Achmed!! There is a surveillance team down the street watching us! It looks like FBI! Four men.

Achmed rushes over to the window and grabs the binoculars from Ali. He looks down the street and sees the FBI stakeout.

ACHMED

Shit! How did they find us? Check Mohammed and the device. See if they have the back door covered too.

A group of the terrorists runs to a wall with weapons laying against it. All of them grab assault rifles and one of them grabs an RPG launcher.

ACHMED

Hurry! Hurry! They could be preparing to storm us any second. Ali, any sign of other police?

ALI

Not that I can see. Just that one car.

One of the terrorists that just left the room returns.

TERRORIST

Achmed, There are two more surveillance cars out back - one at each end of the alley. Four men in each. No sign of SWAT.

ACHMED

Return to your posts. Stay alert. Stay calm. Mustafa you know our instructions. Under no circumstances are we or the device to be taken. Make the rounds make sure everyone has body armor, their goggles and gas masks on and stays alert.

MUSTAFA

Yessir! I wonder how they found us?

ACHMED

We must have a traitor among us. No one knew of this plan except the team and our control. The leak had to come from this group. Keep that in mind. When the assault begins, we may have one of our people shooting the wrong direction. Be ready to trigger the device. It will only take out a few blocks instead of the original target but that will have to do. In no case will we allow the device to be captured. Do you understand?

MUSTAFA

Completely. I am ready to enter Paradise today. I was just hoping to send more of the infidels to hell with my departure.

ACHMED

You are a good soldier Achmed you will surely be rewarded this day in Paradise.

MUSTAFA

God is great. Peace be upon you

ACHMED

And with you. I know you will not hesitate. I will prepare the device.

Achmed spins around and addresses the men.

ACHMED

You men, into your defensive positions! Cover all the entrances. Make sure your goggles and masks are on, they are sure to try flash bangs and gas on entry. We will show these American cowards how true martyrs meet their death. We will take many of them with us and even if they prevail, the detonation of the device will make their successful assault a moot point when we vaporize two city blocks and irradiate at least a square mile. Quite a surprise indeed. I regret that the plan has changed and it appears there will be no escape plan. I look forward to meeting you in Paradise this day. God Is Great!

TERRORISTS

God is great!

Achmed points to a KAMIL, nearby terrorist, handing him small walkie talkie.

ACHMED

You! I want you to remove your body armor and stroll up the street as if you have not a care in the world. Like you are walking to the store. I am sure they are monitoring. Take this radio put it in your jacket pocket and hit the transmit button twice if you see incoming SWAT teams.

Kamil obliges, putting down his AK47 and taking off his body armor.

SCENE FIVE INT/DAY BACK OF SWAT VAN

The swat team are on benches in the van. Agent Higgins, now in full battle armor moves to the rear of the van and turns to address the troops.

AGENT HIGGINS

OK men. This is it. We are only five blocks away. Check everything one last time. Remember we would like to take the suspects alive but are authorized to use deadly force if necessary. Remember the suspect is a wacko, he has spent years working against our culture and may try anything. Stay on your toes.

SCENE SIX EXT/DAY

Kamil walks out the front door and starts walking down the street. As he gets to the first corner he sees the SWAT van coming down the street from about 5 blocks away. Kamil's hand hits the transmit button on his radio twice.

ACHMED

Get ready! SWAT is on the way! They will be kicking in the doors in seconds! Stand brave men.

Down the street the SWAT van careens around the corner and heads down the street towards the warehouse.

ACHMED

Farage! Get to the window with the RPG. When the van stops in front of the door, fire directly into the van. Wait until it stops. Do not fire too early. I want to kill them all!

Farage loads a grenade into the rocket launcher and crouches next to the window by the front door, pulling the mini blinds apart with his fingers to see the street outside.

At the end of the alley in back of the warehouse another SWAT van turns and heads toward the warehouse.

MUSTAFA

Another SWAT van is coming down the alley! They are coming!

ACHMED

Hold your fire! Wait until they attempt entry. Make them pay dearly for their assault. I am arming the device.

Achmed runs over to the bomb and starts typing into a keypad on it. He grabs a joystick looking device and, in close up we see his hand depress the trigger. With the other hand he punches in a few more keystrokes. The display on the side of the bomb now blinks with, "DEVICE ARMED. PRESSURE TRIGGER ACTIVATED!! "

ACHMED

The device is ready. Stand by men. Hold your stations. We go to glory!

Pan around the warehouse shows terrorists bracing themselves for the assault. They are pros - focused and filled with resolve. Inside the SWAT van commandos huddle around the back door as the van slows to a stop. One of the soldiers kisses a cross around his neck. The van stops, the doors swing open and the troops scramble out arms ready.

Inside the warehouse, Farage slowly pulls the blinds up halfway, shoulders the RPG and targets on the approaching SWAT van.

FARAGE (to himself)

Steady now. Don't shoot too quick. Steady...

View over Farage's shoulder we can see the RPG pointed directly at the approaching van. We track the RPG launcher as it follows the van.

FARAGE

Steady....be calm...

Farage's finger tightens around the trigger of the RPG as he tracks the van's approach. The van is almost right in front of the warehouse.

SCENE SEVEN WAREHOUSE TWO DOORS DOWN INT/DAY

A half dozen long haired hippies are sitting around a shipping table passing a bong and toking. Behind them are shelves full of bongs, hookahs and other pot paraphernalia. Hippie One takes a long pull. Holds it. His cheeks puff out, his face turns red and he collapses in a fit of coughing.

HIPPIE ONE

ARGHH. Jeez. This Amsterdam hydro skunk kicks butt!

The other hippies nod and HIPPIE TWO grabs the bong from HIPPIE ONE and flicks his lighter to take a draw.

SCENE EIGHT TERRORIST WAREHOUSE INT/DAY

From inside the warehouse we watch as Farage tracks the van with the RPG. Amazingly, the van keeps rolling past the warehouse.

FARAGE (SHOUTING)

What!? Where are they going? Is this some trick?

ACHMED (FROM THE VAN)

What is wrong? What's the problem? Talk to me!

FARAGE

They are not stopping! They have driven past us!

From the back of the warehouse, MOUSTAFA turns around.

MUSTAFA

They passed us in the alley too. They are stopping two doors down.

ACHMED

This may be a trick. Stand by. Hold your fire but be ready.

SCENE NINE OTHER WAREHOUSE INT/DAY

In the warehouse two doors down, HIPPIE TWO is pulling on the bong as gas grenades come through the window in the front and rear of the building. Flash bangs explode. The front doors buckle inward and SWAT team members swarm through door, guns at ready.

HIPPIE ONE (SCREENING EYES)

Whoa.... Dude.

SWAT TEAM MEMBERS

On the ground. Hands on your head. This is the FBI. Throw down your arms.

HIPPIE ONE (COUGHING THROUGH GAS)

Arms? FBI? What the fuck is

SWAT team commando throws HIPPIE ONE to the ground with an assault rifle to his head and slaps plastic handcuffs on him.

Panning around the room the SWAT team members are sitting on the other hippies.

SWAT TEAM MEMBERS

Clear. Clear. Clear.

SCENE TEN TERRORIST WAREHOUSE INT/DAY

Terrorists are clustered around front window peering out at the SWAT van down the street assaulting the hippie warehouse.

ACHMED

What's going on? What's happening!?

FARAGE

They passed us by and attacked the warehouse two doors down! They fired gas and made entry.

MUSTAFA

Same back here! They went in the warehouse down the alley!

ACHMED

I don't believe it! They have assaulted the wrong warehouse! Stand by. They will soon realize their mistake. Stay ready!

SCENE TEN OUTSIDE HIPPIE WAREHOUSE EXT/DAY

The hippies, now handcuffed, are being led single file from the building and into a paddy wagon. From around the corner news vans start arriving and cameramen pile out and start filming the arrests.

SCENE ELEVEN NEXT DAY TERRORIST WAREHOUSE INT/EVENING

Shot is on TV set of FBI DIRECTOR at a press conference.

FBI DIRECTOR

...months of investigation and hard work we have brought this ring down. Operation Pipe Dreams will show these purveyors of drug paraphernalia that we have a No Tolerance view of their activities. Tommy Chong might have been a hero to drug users but now he is a felon and

will be convicted and sentenced. The Attorney General's plan went off without a hitch and we can all sleep safer tonight knowing that Tommy Chong and his henchmen are behind bars and will be served justice in a swift manner. We will continue to...

Camera pulls back from TV and pans across a now empty warehouse.

SCENE TWELVE OUTSIDE FBI HEADQUARTERS EXT/EVENING

FBI Director starts down front steps and is being quizzed by reporters.

REPORTER ONE

Director? How many busts were made today? Where are you holding Tommy Chong?

REPORTER TWO

How many suspects were apprehended? How many agents are still...

The Director holds up his hand to signal a stop to reporters questions.

FBI DIRECTOR

No more questions at this time please. Let me just say this.

Looking directly into camera.

FBI DIRECTOR

To those who would try to poison our children, our faith and our way of life, be warned.

FBI DIRECTOR (cont'd)

We are vigilant. We have the resources. Most importantly we have the will. We will find and prosecute each and every one of you. You can run but you can't hide. God bless America. No more comments at this time thank you.

As camera pans back we see the Director looking over the crowd of reporters and onlookers. A van with a "Wilson Cleaning Service" logo with Achmed and Farage in the front seats comes down the street and stops next to the limousine the Director is climbing into. Achmed is grinning.





THE TRIAL

SCENE ONE

NIGHTTIME EXTERIOR/INTERIOR

Background music for titles: “Jesus Loves Me But He Can’t Stand You” by Austin Lounge Lizards. The scene opens with a view of a shot coming down a sidewalk into a residence. Through the front door and into Slacker Manor. Once inside the house, music is heard. The view follows the floor as it passes through the house. It proceeds down the hallway towards the bedroom. From the bedroom comes the sound of athletic lovemaking. As the shot proceeds down the hall into the bedroom, articles of clothing pass through the shot ending up as underwear at the foot of the bed. Shot pans to end of the bed and two pairs of feet can be seen. Lovemaking noises become louder and more frantic.

GREG

Oh God! Oh God! I’m coming . . .Aaaaaachrgh!!!

Pair of feet pointing down quit wiggling. Pair of feet pointing up starts kicking against the other feet.

SHEILA

Greg, are you okay? Greg? Greg! Oh. My. God.

A shot of the feet shows the feet pointing up getting out from under the feet pointing down. Camera remains on feet. Out of frame you can hear:

SHEILA

Oh shit! Oh shit! Sound of the telephone being picked up, dial tone, nine one one being called.

DISPATCHER

Emergency dispatcher. Do you have an emergency?

SHEILA

Yes! My God! I think he's had a heart attack. I think he's dead.

DISPATCHER

Calm down ma'am. Can you give me your address?

SHEILA

Uh. Yes its over on Fairview drive off of West Main...

Scene and volume of phone conversation fades to black silence.

A flash of white on the screen then again and again faster and faster with foley effects. Still scenes of a life passing by march across the screen. Black screen erupts into blinding white tunnel. As POV moves down this tunnel abruptly ends in a flash of white light with accompanying foley effect.

SCENE TWO

DAY/INTERIOR HEAVENLY HOLDING TANK

Fade up from white. Close up of Greg lying on his side on a bright white couch. Greg's eyes open and he casts a look around the room. The room is completely white - so white that you can't tell where the floor or the wall start and

there is no way to judge scale or distance. Greg sits up on the bed and groans - putting his head in his hands.

GREG (TO HIMSELF)

Jesus! Where the hell am I? Where's Sheila? What's going on? What the fuck is happening?

Greg raises his head and opens his eyes. A look of total bewilderment crosses his face. POV shot over shoulder shows 6-10 people radiant and dressed in white standing in front of Greg. They appear out of nowhere.

GREG

Oh my God! Grandma! But you're d.. Oh my God. Grandma what are you doing here?

A kindly looking lady walks over to Greg and takes his hand.

GRANDMA

Greg you poor boy. We're here to greet you and, if possible, help you on your way to the afterlife.

GREG

Afterlife? You mean I'm, I'm . . .

GRANDMA

Yes Greg you have passed on. You are dead. You are no longer in your earthly vessel. Your soul has arrived in the hereafter.

GREG

The tunnel of light, my life passing before me. It was real?
Is this Heaven?

GRANDMA

No Greg. This isn't heaven. This is just a place for you to
adjust to the situation before The Trial.

GREG

Adjust to being dead? What trial?

GRANDMA

Your trial before Almighty God of course. The trial where
you answer for your sins.

Pregnant silence.

GREG (DISMAYED)

So when is this trial?

GRANDMA

Very soon. Greg, you need to prepare yourself for the
worst. Frankly, your prospects of entering Heaven are not
good.

GREG

I suspect not. Is that why Uncle Harry and Grandpa aren't
here?

GRANDMA

Yes. They both spurned God's eternal love for them and are now paying the price. It's probably too late but I would advise you to beg the Almighty's forgiveness and throw yourself at his mercy. You really have no other options. Not that it will help but being unrepentant will only shorten the trial which is all the time you have left before eternal torment.

GREG

So where do I sign up for conversion? Is there a form I fill out? Do I need to accept Jesus as my saviour personally and all that?

GRANDMA

A sign up form? Greg, I will pray for you. We all will. You poor disillusioned boy. Please remember that we love you and that God does not want you to suffer. This is all your doing, so bear it bravely and with true regret in your heart.

The time you spend in trial is the last you will experience before Eternal Torment. I probably shouldn't tell you this, but, your best defense is to try to prolong the proceedings. A long-winded confession could buy you some time.

GREG

That's my defense? Stall for time? Doesn't God show mercy?

GRANDMA

I have to leave now. Remember we love you. That God loves you and everything, even the anguish and torment that may lie ahead is all part of His plan. He really doesn't want us to suffer but well the unrepentant have to be dealt with some way. We will pray for you...

Grandma and the others fade into nothingness during her last statement. Greg is left alone in the white room. He sits and places his hands in his head. Fade to white.

SCENE THREE

DAY INTERIOR HEAVENLY HOLDING TANK

Fade up from white. Greg sits up and opens his eyes. Before him is a sharp dressed man wearing a dark Armani suit and looking quite dapper. From his head protrude two small horns.

GREG

Hello? And you are?

THE DEVIL

I'm your defense attorney. Lucifer H. Satan at your service.

GREG

You're the Devil?

THE DEVIL

You got it.

GREG

And you're supposed to defend me?

THE DEVIL

Right.

GREG

And how do you propose to do that? Can I get another attorney?

THE DEVIL

Our defense is to throw you at the mercy of the court. As slowly as possible of course to delay a decision. And you can't get another attorney. I'm it. Sorry.

GREG

Sorry? What chance of winning do I have with the Devil as my advocate?

THE DEVIL

Precisely? A snowball's chance in Hell.

GREG

Great. Then why go through the trial at all? Why not just dump me in Hell and be done with it?

THE DEVIL

According to God's Word all must be tried and judged. It's really a mere formality but I have experience and you

THE DEVIL (cont)

should just let me do the talking. Listen, I'm not real excited about this gig either but we all have our crosses to bear. You'll have to trust me.

GREG

Trust the Devil? The Father Of Lies? So how many of these cases have you defended?

THE DEVIL

Ninety-seven billion, four hundred sixty-three million, four hundred ten thousand, six-hundred and two.

GREG

And how many cases have you won?

THE DEVIL

I'm optimistic you could be the first if we handle this right. You just need to let me do the talking. We can try for mitigating circumstances.

GREG

Mitigating circumstances?

THE DEVIL

Well when you were on Earth you didn't worship me or kill anyone. You deeply regret having made some of the life choices you did but were never really a diabolically evil person deserving of eternal torment. Then you throw yourself on God's mercy.

GREG

And go straight to Hell.

THE DEVIL

Like I said. This trial could be the one. Prepare yourself.
It's showtime.

Fade to white.

SCENE FOUR

DAY/INTERIOR CELESTIAL COURTROOM

Fade from white. Greg and the Devil are standing in a small courtroom. There are no tables or chairs. In the small spectator section are Greg's relatives with Grandma wiping tears from her white hankie.

There is a large bench with three pedestals for judges, the center one being higher and more prominent. A low thunderous noise fills the room and three blinding white spectres materialize in radiance onto the judges seats. The bailiff in a starched white stormtrooper uniform clears his throat.

BAILIFF

Hear ye, hear ye. Court Of Heaven is now in session. The Most High And Honorable Father, Son and Holy Ghost presiding. Please be seated.

Greg looks around for a chair and shrugs.

BAILIFF

In the matter of Greg Forest vs. God, case number 97,463,410603. No plea is necessary. Court is in session.

THE FATHER

What is the nature of this soul? Speak of his sins. Let the prosecution proceed.

From across the courtroom a new character materializes. Dressed and coifed as a televangelist.

JERRY FALWELL

Your Heavenly Honor. This should be a very short proceeding. A great deal of detail will be unnecessary. The case is cut and dry. We have a serious and unrepentant sinner who has spent a lifetime reveling in debauchery. Who has taken Your Name in vain numerous times and has blasphemed in almost every manner possible.

He is a fornicator, an adulterer, a liar and cheat. As I said the case I will present will be brief and damning. Eternally so.

THE FATHER

The defense's opening statement.

THE DEVIL

Almighty and Merciful God. I still don't understand why you let a jerk like the Reverend Falwell into Heaven much less act as prosecutor. Is Billy Sunday or the Reverend Phelps too busy? Anyway. I intend to prove that Greg was not such a bad guy, he did lots of good things in his life. Although he may have blasphemed in his day, he did it all in good fun. He never thought he would wind up here. How can you blaspheme or desecrate that which you don't believe in? To Greg you were no more real than the Easter Bunny.

Greg groans and shakes his head.

THE DEVIL

All in all he was a pretty good guy and deserves mercy. I shall prove...

THE FATHER

Call your witnesses.

JERRY FALWELL

Your Omniscience. The prosecution calls Mildred Haverton to the stand.

*A mousey church lady dressed in white walks to the bailiff
before the witness stand*

BAILIFF

Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

MS. HAVERTON

So help me God.

HOLY TRINITY IN UNISON

I will.

JERRY FALWELL

Ms. Haverton, what is your function in Heaven?

MS. HAVERTON

I work in the Sins Accounting Unit. I am a certified Heavenly Accountant specializing in the quantizing of sexual sins.

JERRY FALWELL

Are you familiar with the accused, Greg Forest?

MS. HAVERTON

Yes. Very familiar. I am his sex sins case officer. I have been tracking him his whole life. Well at least since puberty.

JERRY FALWELL

And what are your conclusions?

MS. HAVERTON

That Mr. Forest is deserving of the most damnable torment. That he should...

JERRY FALWELL

Just the facts and data Ms. Haverton.

MS. HAVERTON

Yes. Of course. Forgive me. Statistically Mr. Forest is one of the sex sin elite. He scores in the 98th percentile for overall sex sin. It is the highest category there is for a heterosexual.

JERRY FALWELL

I see. What sex sins specifically is Mr. Forest guilty of?

THE DEVIL

Objection. The defendant hasn't been proven guilty of anything yet. These are still merely allegations.

THE FATHER (BORED)

Overruled.

MS. HAVERTON

Specifically Mr. Forest is guilty of excessive masturbation, fornication, adultery, sodomy, not to mention the myriad of lustful thoughts that drive him to these self-defacing acts.

JERRY FALWELL

I don't think we need to go into all the grisly details. Let's look at masturbation. Was Mr. Forest a frequent masturbator?

MS. HAVERTON

The word "frequently" falls short I'm afraid. Mr. Forest was a chronic masturbator; from the age of 12 up to and including the day of his demise. The numbers are quite shocking.

JERRY FALWELL

Pray continue.

MS. HAVERTON

Well, since age twelve Mr. Forest has committed 36,154 separate acts of masturbation which took over 5,619,234 strokes. He spilled exactly 21,734,845,321 viable sperm. That is almost 22 billion potential souls destroyed by Mr. Forest. If you add it up, Mr. Forest spent fifty-four 24-hour days of his life over a period of forty years stroking himself

GREG

Do you mean to tell me you count every stroke and sperm? You've got to be kidding? Don't you have anything better to do? Get a life for Christ's sake....

Jesus to the left of The Father on the dais, awakens upon hearing his name and raises his head, lifts his eyebrows and turns toward Greg.

THE FATHER

SILENCE.!

The Devil groans and shakes his head.

MS. HAVERTON

I am in the service of the Lord and bless every sin I count as bringing you closer to Heavenly Justice.

THE DEVIL

Ms. Haverton, in the course of your duties were you never personally aroused by Mr. Forest's sexual exploits?

MS. HAVERTON

I should say not! No. Never. I entered Heaven an eighty-seven year old virgin, the only one on Earth at the time and am thankful for every day I get to serve the Lord counting the sins of others.

JERRY FALWELL

Thank you Ms Haverton. We have no more questions.

GREG

I get no witnesses? No right to cross examine? No character references?

JERRY FALWELL

It doesn't work like that. You are before the Heavenly Tribunal. Your only rights are as a habeus corpse. You in a state of limbo, in neither Heaven or Hell. The only rule of law that applies here is God's Law and you have broken every one. Now let us proceed.

GREG

I Object! I should at least be permitted to speak in my own defense.

THE DEVIL

Your Honors. A moment with my client please.

THE FATHER

Granted. Briefly.

The Devil pulls Greg aside and whispers.

THE DEVIL

What the Hell do you think you're doing? I told you to let ME do the talking. You are hastening your demise in this court. You don't argue with God.

GREG

And why the hell not? I think He has a few things to answer for too.

THE DEVIL

Don't forget he is an angry and vengeful God. Piss him off and you are out of here faster than you can find a marshmallow and a stick. He wrote the book and can throw it at you.

GREG

So I'm being railroaded to Hell by God's kangaroo court? I'm fucked. Is that what you're telling me?

THE DEVIL

I'd advise you to try and watch what you say. Shut up and let me do the talking.

GREG

And what are you whispering for? Doesn't God know everything? Like the contents of this conversation?

THE DEVIL

I'm just going through the motions for your sake.

Devil turns to God.

THE DEVIL

Thank you Your Almightyness.

Falwell prances before the dias.

JERRY FALWELL

Almighty One, forgive me. As disgusting and numerous as his sex sins are, his sins directly against You Holiness are the most appalling. Mr. Forest is an avowed blasphemer and heretic. We call Father Pedro Hidalgo Garcia Vegas to the stand.

A character materializes in the courtroom wearing the garments of a Middle Ages Inquisitor.

BAILIFF

Do you solemnly swear to tell the whole truth so help you God?

FATHER VEGAS

So help me God.

HOLY TRINITY IN UNISON

I will.

JERRY FALWELL

Father Vegas, What is your function here in Heaven?

FATHER VEGAS

I am on the Council of Heresy and Blaspheming. I serve as its Chairman.

JERRY FALWELL

And are you familiar with the defendant Greg Forest?

FATHER VEGAS

Yes Reverend I am.

GREG (in an aside to The Devil.)

Hey! What's a Roman Catholic doing in Fundamentalist Christian Heaven?

THE DEVIL

Probably a death bed conversion. I dunno. Beats me.

Jerry Falwell gives them a angry look and clears his throat.

JERRY FALWELL

Ahem. Having monitored Mr. Forest's theological development, how would you describe his activities?

FATHER VEGAS

In a word? Disgusting. Horrific. Mr. Forest has openly mocked, derided and blasphemed God for over half of his adult life.

JERRY FALWELL

Only half?

FATHER VEGAS

Well yes. Before mid life Mr. Forest was a student of a variety of Christian, New Age and Eastern religions.

JERRY FALWELL

But never the One True Religion?

FATHER VEGAS

Never. He was even in proximity to salvation on two occasions when he went to tent revivals to hear the band. On both occasions he failed to drop to his knees and accept God's love. He channel surfed past Pat Robertson dozens of times.

JERRY FALWELL

Could you describe his actions after he moved away from all religions?

FATHER VEGAS

Well, he called himself the Pope of South Austin for almost two years. He paid \$10 to the demonic Church Of The Subgenius to be coronated as Pope. He later paid the same church \$35 to be defrocked. At the time he was boasting that it would help his theological resume. Another example would be his web site where he openly shows his disdain for God's truth by publishing numerous articles on Bible Errancy,

Father Vegas crosses himself. The Devil looks at Greg sadly as if all hope is lost.

FATHER VEGAS (cont)

Abominations in the Bible and other similar titles. He openly mocked the Faith of our Fathers. Once when mocking Your Son, Our Lord he was warned that he would wind up in Hell for his actions.

JERRY FALWELL

How did he respond to this offer of Eternal Mercy? This warning?

FATHER VEGAS

I'd rather not say... It is too profane.

JERRY FALWELL

Father you must tell us. You are absolved for the words you must speak but speak them you must.

FATHER VEGAS (SOBBING)

Mr. Forest said, and I quote, "Jesus can go fuck himself and the virgin he rode in on."

The courtroom is silent. Jesus looks up. The Devil looks at Greg with a raised eyebrow. Greg nods and rolls his eyes. Father Vegas is on the verge of tears. In the specator gallery, Grandma looks like she is choking on a turd and the lady next to her faints.

JERRY FALWELL

That's alright Father. YOU didn't say those things. Are there any other indications of Mr. Forest's behavior.

FATHER VEGAS

You can look at his life from a very early point and see that he was slipping into Darkness. When he got to college he started reading a great deal of demonic books on a wide range of subjects. J.R.R. Tolkein, Timothy Leary, William Burroughs, even Godless Atheist Communists like Marx, Trotsky and Lennin. Crazy New Age books too - Velikovsky, Castaneda . . .

JERRY FALWELL

An awful lot of reading. How often did Mr. Forest read the Bible?

FATHER VEGAS

That is the really sad part. Mr. Forest is very well versed in the Good Book but only sees evil in its pages. He has been taken by Satan for a long time and to him black is white. Good is Evil.

But to answer your question about how much Mr. Forest read the Bible, I would have to answer more than most. Even true believers.

JERRY FALWELL

And still he didn't see the Light?

FATHER VEGAS

Apparently not.

JERRY FALWELL

Father, in your opinion, is Mr. Forest worthy of Eternal Salvation?

FATHER VEGAS

No. He can't even see worthy from here.

JERRY FALWELL

Your witness Satan.

THE DEVIL

Father Vegas. What was your function before you arrived in Heaven?

FATHER VEGAS

I was a scribe for the Roman Catholic Church.

THE DEVIL

You are no longer Roman Catholic?

FATHER VEGAS

No. I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior on my death bed. It just goes to show the infinite mercy of the Father to those who truly repent. Here I am in Heaven while my Catholic brethren are all in flaming torment.

THE DEVIL

And while a scribe for the church, what were you duties?

FATHER VEGAS

To transcribe proceedings. Basically take notes so that it could be proven later that all rules and protocols were followed.

THE DEVIL

Rules and protocols?

FATHER VEGAS

Well. You have to dot your i's and cross your t's.

THE DEVIL

And what manner of proceedings did you transcribe?

FATHER VEGAS

Oh the usual; marriage pre-nups, a few real estate matters, and wills but mostly interrogations and confessions.

THE DEVIL

Most commonly who was being interrogated?

FATHER VEGAS

Mostly witches, heretics and blasphemers.

THE DEVIL

You worked for the Inquisition?

FATHER VEGAS

Yes.

THE DEVIL

So these proceedings that you transcribed were usually while the subjects were being tortured?

FATHER VEGAS

Interrogated. Compassionate physical persuasion is sometimes necessary to get at the truth. Sinners will lie if you don't motivate them to truth.

THE DEVIL

I see. And do you think Mr. Forest would have been a candidate for such questioning had he lived in those times?

FATHER VEGAS

Without question. He would have gone to the stake without his testicles - confession or not.

THE DEVIL

Was there no time in Greg's life that he gave of his time and talent to God?

FATHER VEGAS

Hmmm... Not that I can think of.

THE DEVIL

Perhaps I can jog your memory. Do you recall that for almost four months when Greg was only fifteen years old that he acted as a church organist in Lebanon, Tennessee? In a church worshipping what you call the One True God.

Turning to the dias.

THE DEVIL

No disrespect intended Your Wonderfulness.

FATHER VEGAS

We didn't count that period in Mr. Forest's plus column.

THE DEVIL

And why not?

FATHER VEGAS

Because in his heart he thought the congregation to be morons. He was only playing organ for the church because it was a Hammond B-3 and he would play demonic blues music in the church late at night when he thought nobody was listening. He even lied to the pastor and told him he was "practicing for Sunday." Well, I was listening, and noting.

Devil looks at Greg for help. Greg shrugs his shoulders.

THE DEVIL

And Mr. Forest never made a conversion? Not even at his death?

FATHER VEGAS

No.

THE DEVIL

Would the court reporter read back Mr. Forest's last words in life. Precisely the last three sentences.

COURT REPORTER

"Oh God. Oh God. I'm coming!"

THE DEVIL

That would seem proof positive that Mr. Forest had a death bed conversion and was looking forward to seeing God.

Devil turns and winks to Greg who is shaking his head.

JERRY FALWELL

That is ridiculous. We know the context in which those comments were made and Mr. Forest didn't think he was going to this Heaven did he?

THE FATHER

Evidence is disallowed.

THE DEVIL

So any of Greg's good acts, any acts of charity, any helpful deed, these are all to be disallowed?

THE FATHER

Yes. He did not accept My Son as his Savior and Lord.

Jesus wakes up again and preens.

THE DEVIL

Then I guess I rest my case.

GREG

Hold it! Can I say a word or two in my own defense?

JERRY FALWELL

It will do you know good and believe me we've seen every delaying tactic you can imagine. Don't think you will buy yourself much time.

GREG

Even calling these proceedings a trial is laughable. The verdict was in before I arrived on this side. If you can indeed look into every heart and deed, then you know my intent. You know my regrets.

You know my aspirations. You also know that none of these things were bad. Yet you stand in judgement of me merely because I refuse to kiss up to your Son.

Jesus looks offended. The Devil signals Greg to shut up.

GREG

When I was alive I used to tell people that I was a follower of Jesus not a Christian. When they asked what the difference was I told them that following Jesus did not require faith. And I tried to guide my life by that concept. It looks like talking the talk is more important than walking the walk.

JERRY FALWELL (looking at his watch)

And your point is?

GREG

What is most astounding from what I've seen of Heaven is who is not here. Lots of good people who led decent lives and did their best by everyone are absent. The cream of the

GREG

crop of the human race is missing. If you send me down, I know I will be in good company and the victim of a selfish, stupid and childish god.

JERRY FALWELL

Enough delays. Well I guess that pretty much closes the proceedings. I rest my case.

THE DEVIL

Oh Great One. I was hoping for just one victory, just one case I could win in all the billions I've brought before you. You could use giving me just this one victory to taunt me for the billions to come. Let this one case remain in Heaven. Your image as loving and forgiving would be reinforced. This one act could make you much more marketable in the atheistic 21st century

THE FATHER

There are rules. There is a price for admission to Heaven. It is your heart, mind and soul. You must give me your all to enter within.

THE DEVIL

I'm sure Greg would be glad to do just that. Wouldn't you Greg?

The Devil looks at Greg who has a blank look on his face.

THE DEVIL

Greg, this could be a very very rare chance at leniency. You could be the first case I've ever won. Speak and let God know how you love him. How you repent of your life and continue only to serve Him and praise his name.

All eyes turn to Greg who is still standing dumbfounded. He looks around the courtroom into every face.

THE FATHER

SPEAK NOW BEFORE JUDGEMENT. DO YOU BELIEVE? WILL YOU GIVE YOURSELF OVER TO CHRIST, THE FATHER AND HIS SPIRIT. SPEAK NOW FOR ETERNITY. DO YOU REPENT?

Greg walks over to stand directly in front of the dais. He turns back to The Devil and winks and gives the thumbs up.

GREG

God, sir, thanks for letting me speak my piece and for this one last chance . Not only no but fuck no you imaginary piece of theological crap. I didn't want anything to do with you when I was alive and that hasn't changed a bit. I can't worship a god I don't even like. Go suck eggs.

Greg turns to The Devil

GREG

Thanks for trying. You almost got me off the hook there. Sorry you didn't win the case. But don't despair, there will be others.

THE DEVIL

Well I tried my best. This won't be the last you will see of me.

GREG

I bet. And Reverend Falwell, I definitely wouldn't want to live in any neighborhood near your bigoted self. This place is the pits and you deserve to lick boots for eternity. You're a slave and a bloated turd. It suits you.

JERRY FALWELL

I serve. I don't lick boots and you my friend are going straight to Hell. Great God Almighty Lord of the Universe, what is your decision?

THE FATHER

GUILTY. ETERNAL TORMENT. NEXT.

A thunderclap occurs and a crack is seen in the whiteness at the back of the courtroom. The Devil grabs Greg's arm and turns to lead him out of the courtroom.

GREG (over his shoulder)

And You, Your Holiness. You are a poor excuse for a god - all three of you. You should be ashamed of yourselves. I can't kiss your ass but you probably don't have any ass left after all the kissing done on it by your followers.

THE DEVIL

Come on. Its over. Save your breath. They can't hear you.

The crack in the wall has widened and flames appear in the distance beyond. Sounds of anguish and torment are in the background. Greg and the Devil walk through the crack in the wall. The wall closes behind them.

JERRY FALWELL (out of frame)

Halleluah! Another victory for God! Another sinner finds justice.

THE DEVIL

Turn left Greg.

Greg looks to the left and there is a door that says, "The Pit" on it. The door swings open and the Devil gently pushes Greg towards it.

GREG

That was a pretty lame defence you put up on my behalf but I want you to know there are no hard feelings.

THE DEVIL

That's comforting. Come over here.

Greg walks through the door which slams shut behind him. He is in a small stone chamber.

GREG

Well I guess we ought to get this over with. Where do I get my pitchfork?

THE DEVIL

Always the clever one. And now look where you are. Have any regrets now?

GREG

Not really. I'm sure Hell is no picnic but Heaven looks like it could be worse.

THE DEVIL

An intriguing idea. Well are you ready?

GREG

Do it.

The Devil reaches over and opens another door. The door opens into a beautiful meadow filled with color. A science fiction two-moon sky and waterfalls in the background. An idyllic setting. There are a number of people in the distance by a river who turn and start waving.

GREG

What's this?

THE DEVIL

Heaven. At least for you.

GREG

Heaven? But wasn't I just condemned to Hell? Is this part of some devilish torture?

THE DEVIL

No Greg. Do you remember me and your Grandma telling you that God didn't want anyone to suffer?

GREG

Yeah. So?

THE DEVIL

Well He doesn't. Its true.

GREG

So why did he create Hell?

THE DEVIL

He didn't. There is no such thing.

GREG

But there is a Heaven?

THE DEVIL

Of sorts. Each has to stake his or her own claim.

GREG

Well if THIS is heaven, where did we just come from? You know the Lord of Judgement and all that?

THE DEVIL

That was Heaven.

GREG

O.K. Let me see if I'm getting this right. This is Heaven and that is Heaven too?

THE DEVIL

Now you're starting to get it. You see this Heaven, like all heavens, is a construct of its inhabitants. You see a green meadow and old friends partying and Rev. Falwell sees judgement of sinners and hellfire. Its what they want to see.

GREG

So Falwell and all those Fundamentalists think they're in Heaven?

THE DEVIL

I guess you still don't get it. Falwell IS in his Heaven. He got exactly what he wanted when he died and is quite happy with his lot. As are Ms. Haverton, your Grandma and all the others there.

GREG

They don't get tired of it? They can't break out of it?

THE DEVIL

They can and most do eventually - Vegas has been here for over seven centuries - his faith is strong. They spent their whole lives hoping to get there. They love watching the judgement of others and counting sins.

They are bean counters and are in paradise of their own construction. You have experience with these types. They

THE DEVIL

refuse to see the truth. We have a saying here, “You can lead a Fundamentalist to Truth, but you can’t make him think! Heh heh.

GREG

Ouch. Keep your day job. Yeah, well what about God himself? Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They aren’t real?

THE DEVIL

Real to those who believe in them. They are a construct of their believers faith. A communal delusion if you will.

GREG

And this is my delusion?

THE DEVIL (DEMATERIALIZING)

I think you’re catching on. Go and enjoy yourself. Catch up on old times. This heaven is just a way station on your journey.

GREG

To where?

THE DEVIL

The journey to yourself, the Source and everything of course. Nice meeting you. I’ll probably see you around.

The people have walked up the slope to Greg and are all smiling at him. As they approach, they are all recognized as old friends that have died before. One is holding out a guitar.

GREG

And these people are just a construct of my imagination?

THE DEVIL

Not at all. You are giving and receiving a great compliment from the people who love you. They can't imagine a heaven without you in it and, well, here you are. Just as you are with those important to you. Including me. All of you are creating this. I told you it's a communal delusion. Well gotta run.

The Devil turns and walks away, slowing fading until invisible. Greg watches for a few moments then turns to the people now approaching him. One comes forward and hands Greg the guitar.

DANNY

Wanna jam?

GREG

You bet!

Credit roll with Austin Lounge Lizards, "On The Other Side."

AFTERWORD

Whew! That should be enough piss and vinegar to hold me for a year. The next volume, “End Times Lullabies, Book Two - The Beginning of the End” will pick up the story next year. My scribblings will wander off the template into the realm of fiction mixed with philosophical chestnuts enough to make your head spin. Here is a short excerpt:

Screaming through the atmosphere the outer hull of Buck's shuttle was glowing white hot. On the bridge, Capt. Buck was fondling the breast of the scanning officer.

“Hey sweetheart, anything following us?”

“No sir. Could you grab the other tit too?”

“Not a problem,” Buck responded, “I try to help out the crew as I can. Keep sharp, I think they're still after us.”

“I just can't say no to that big penis sir. It drives all the female officers and crew crazy. Some of the guys too.”

“Which penis?”

“The one on the left side, the fat green one.”

Buck thanks his lucky stars that he had the surgery on the last trip to Planet Pleasure and now wears underwear briefs with pockets.

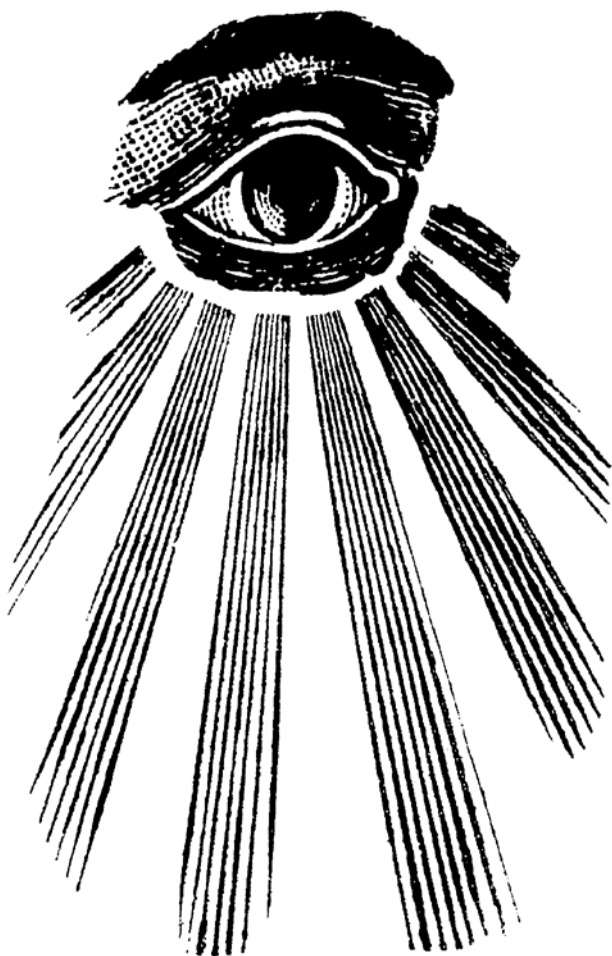
Klaxon alarms sound loudly across the bridge bringing everyone frantically back to their consoles.

“Captain we have incoming! Closing at Mach 2. Atmospheric ram jet fighters! There transponders are off but their emission signature is that of Chaney brigade fighters!”

The greatest traitor to the human race, Chaney, was now in command of alien assets given him by the Greys when Captain Buck returned from Analingus IV. The battle for mankind's future was on. The fighters set in attack formation were racing towards “Slackfilled Ass” with their targeting radars screaming.

“Fire at will,” commands Buck.

stay tuned for more of Captain Buck and the quadrosexual aliens next volume...



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