

Bush's 'culture of life' doesn't measure up

J. Bryant Roberts
Staff writer

President Bush, speaking to the National Association of Evangelicals Convention in Colorado on Thursday, pandered to Christians by touting his conservative agenda. From abortion to gay marriage, Bush claimed to be "working to build a culture of life."

Truth in the words of a politician is measured by the effect of his policies. Christians should know that Jesus Christ explained this by saying, "You will know a tree by its fruit."

Do Bush-Cheney policies provide evidence of this culture of life? Let's examine some "fruit."

It is interesting to note that Jesus Christ was, by all accounts, a man of peace. His teachings never advocated the killing of human beings for any reason. While claiming to follow these teachings, Bush has sent thousands of young men and women to face death and dismemberment in a foreign land. Although fewer than a thousand have died in combat, more have suffered lost limbs and other disfiguring injuries, while others have committed suicide, bringing

the total casualty count to more than 10,000.

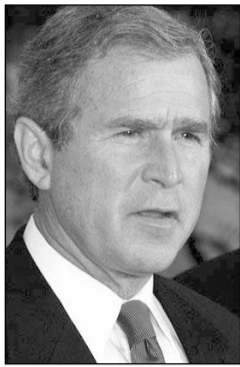
Today, 560 Americans are dead, and more die almost daily. Add to that number the tens of thousands of Iraqis who have been slaughtered in this war, throw in more tens of thousands of civilians dead in Afghanistan, and show me this "culture of life."

I'm not seeing it.

A Christian friend recently told me that he supported the Bush war plan because Muslims were planning to "take over the world and kill all the Christians." So, let me try to add this up.

These Muslims would have to amass an army that could defeat any force present on Earth today and be able to transport this army to all points of the globe with all the support needed for such a war of world domination.

There is only one nation capable of fielding such a force today, and it's not Yemen or Djibouti. Worried about my friend's assertion, I have,



George W. Bush

from time to time, driven out to Pensacola Beach to watch for the great Iraqi invasion that so threatens America.

What? You think that's ridiculous? Of course it is. I might as well be looking for weapons of mass destruction in the Iraqi desert.

I asked my Christian friend if he was willing to send his children — he

has three pre-teens — to face death in Bush's pre-emptive war. He was not. I doubt that Jesus would send them either.

My point is this — if we are going to cloak ourselves in the flag of our choice, be it Christian or Buddhist or Mothers Against Drunk Driving or the Ku Klux Klan, let's be true to what that symbol stands for.

Historically, death and destruction occurred when despotic leaders hid behind the cross of Christ.

The Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition were two of many attempts by brutal men to rid the world of those who refused to submit

to their rule.

None of these cruel endeavors were inspired or condoned by the "Prince of Peace."

Speeches promoting a kinder, gentler nation and a culture of life should be followed by actions that match those lofty words.

Such words, without deeds, are relegated to the trash pile of hypocrisy.

Christian people, including Bush, should either stand up for the teachings of Christ or stop calling themselves Christians.

World domination through death and destruction of warfare was never part of Christ's agenda.

The National Association of Evangelicals cannot hope to evangelize honest, compassionate Americans by encouraging those who use deception and fear to further personal political goals.

As president, Bush has the power to create his culture of life.

While ignoring the teachings of Christ, Bush has initiated an aggressive, unprovoked war against a nation incapable of defending itself, creating the opposite of his desired culture — one of death.



Courtesy of www.thehollandsentinel.net

Shoppers flock to Wal-Marts as the stores pop up all over the landscape, but are the mega-stores good places to shop?

Wal-Mart: A necessary evil?

Megan Martinez
Commentary Editor

Wal-Mart is a profit driven store that preys on people's weakness for a good bargain, and has no scruples when it comes to putting a smaller mom and pop grocery store out of business.

But this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Wal-Mart may be guilty of the above accusations, but what successful business isn't?

Many people must bargain shop in order to obtain the proper food and supplies they need to have a decent quality of life. Wal-Mart is able to provide these people with lower, affordable prices that smaller, more expensive grocery stores can't.

Wal-Mart is also popular with college students, who don't always have a lot to spend on food and enjoy shopping at all hours of the night.

One of the reasons that smaller stores are more expensive is that they have to struggle to compete with Wal-Mart, but prices are just another weapon wielded in the warfare of business.

Why let consumers be price-gorged by smaller, independent stores just because the people who run them aren't part of a big corporation?

Even though Wal-Mart is in many ways similar to a small nation, offering products and services ranging from deli meat to tires, it is, for the most part, ruled by a benevolent demigod. Sure, the store sells only edited versions of CDs, but it isn't like you are required to buy them there.

In a small town that is miles from a large city, Wal-Mart's extensive selection of services can be priceless.

Nevertheless, this gives Wal-Mart a bad reputation as a monopoly.

But who is making this accusation? Is it the millions who shop there, taking advantage of low prices and large selection? Or is it the smaller businesses that are unable to compete with Wal-Mart?

In addition to providing consumer goods, Wal-Mart also provides jobs. This can mean a lot in a small town where jobs are few and low paying. Wal-Mart offers jobs beginning at minimum-wage levels and offers extras such as stock options, discounts and benefits for its employees.

Wal-Mart is a necessary evil that isn't going away anytime soon. Branching out to provide a Web site, Wal-Mart is easily accessible even to the bed-ridden. Where else are you going to buy an edited CD, get new tires and have your hair cut all under the same roof?



Megan Martinez
Commentary Editor

MTV bastardizes more music videos

Liz Mathews
The Bulletin (Emporia State U.)

(U-WIRE) EMPORIA, Kan. — The Federal Communications Commission has struck again, with a bit of help and a little overexposure compliments of one Ms. Jackson.

After the Superbowl incident, Viacom — the company that owns MTV, Comedy Central and Nickelodeon, among others — was blasted as the event's sponsor. As a result of the titillating tidbit, the FCC and others in D.C. are working to redraw the boundary lines of appropriateness on television.

Now, that's all fine and dandy, except the current result is another wave of censorship, MTV-style.

Post Janet, seven videos were pulled from daytime spots on MTV and pushed back after the 10 p.m. hour. This isn't anything new as MTV already set the precedent for cutting or shifting time slots for racy videos like offerings from Cher and Madonna.

This latest rash, though, brought something a little different to the table. Rather than just push back the videos, six have been added back to the lineup — with modifications.

On the chopping block were Britney Spear's "Toxic," which had her singing and rolling around in a see-through stocking covered in glitter.

Blink 182 had a girl-girl kiss that was cut from the version now shown on MTV, and Maroon 5's "This Love" now has rose petals flowing across the screen to hide what's been called a "PG-13 romp in bed."

Then there's Incubus, who had it's "Megalomaniac" video pushed back because of



Courtesy of www.mtvhome.de

MTV is now censoring artist videos, blurring the line between art and indecency.

political content because of depictions of Hitler and people drinking oil.

Once again, MTV has shown that despite its desire to dominate the 13 to 24 market, it's the first to crumble under pressure from the feds.

Of course I didn't really care to see Spears rolling around mostly naked or the lead singer of Maroon 5 (who looks a lot like the singer from Train ...) gettin' busy with a 30-something model. But the rose petals are just obnoxious.

As for the same-sex kiss, isn't that the pot calling the kettle black after MTV aired Madonna locking lips with Spears and Christina Aguilera, who had two men kissing in her "Beautiful" video?

What's really disturbing, though, is pushing back a video for "political content." Musicians who use music as a tool to express political view-

points should be able to do so without worrying about their videos getting cut by a station that is little more than a tool of the FCC.

As one representative of a company representing hip hop artists put it in a Rolling Stone article, "It's an election year, and no one wants to be made an example."

According to MTV reps, it was a matter of handling the cultural tide.

So, yes, basically, the kind people at MTV have willingly admitted to buckling under pressures from conservatives and the FCC in one fell swoop.

This is setting a startling precedent of its own. Companies are already tuning down their videos (does this mean the end of bootylicious rap videos?) to make sure it can make it onto the air.

What happened to freedom of expression, you know, the one that goes hand in hand with the freedoms of speech and assembly in the ole Constitution?

There's always a fine line between art and indecency, but MTV has blurred that line and wandered straight into censorship by editing videos to make them appropriate for mass consumption.

Maybe those artists have a particular fan group or demographic in mind when they're making the videos. Instead of splicing and dicing, show these videos after 10 p.m. or midnight so those viewers can still catch the videos they want to see without wondering what the original used to look like, pre-MTV.

In the meantime, though, I'd like to see a full video — racy content, political messages and all — and decide for myself whether I'm going to keep watching or just change the channel.

Letters to the Editor

Use 'political correctness' correctly

J. Bryant Roberts' article "Political Correctness Stifles Change" paints a very negative picture of political correctness, yet the author fails to express what he would like to say.

Should political correctness not be an issue?

Instead, the author notes the death of an Iraqi woman who was an activist, not to be confused with someone who is politically incorrect. Roberts praises Mel Gibson for his movie on the death of Jesus, which faced criticism for its inac-

curacies, anti-Semitic undertones and gory nature, not for the substance of the film.

The issue of political correctness is not censorship, it is respect for people of different races, ethnicities, religions and sexual orientations.

This said, what exactly does Roberts wish to declare that currently cannot be said today without drawing criticism, other than slang or derogatory comments?

Roberts also believes that Martin Luther King Jr. was not a proponent of political correctness, but King's activism was his strong

point, not political incorrectness. King did not advocate the use of slang terms for his own race or other group of people, which is what political incorrectness has come to represent in this country.

Roberts obviously is confused between what insightful and influential words are.

— Travis Braidwood
Pensacola

Alumnus checks out Voyager Web site

I just wanted to say how thor-

oughly impressed I am with the online version of The Voyager.

I graduated two years ago and nothing remotely close to this existed when I was there.

This provides a great way for alumni, such as myself, to stay on top of what is happening at UWF.

After seeing it for the first time, I quickly e-mailed a number of my alumni friends informing them of the existence of the online version. Thanks for working so hard on this.

— Brad Wales
MBA '02

VOYAGER

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voyager@uwf.edu
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