

More College News

READER'S COMMENTS

If the events of 9/11 have taught us anything, it is that every religion has its fanatics.

The October issue of THE COMPASS proves that fanaticism is also alive and well in Christianity. I am referring to the full page devoted to the extremist Christian rhetoric concerning the evils in celebrating Halloween. I found it ironic that the author had such strong convictions that she would write this lengthy dissertation on such a controversial subject, but yet would not sign her name.

A history of Halloween dating back thousands of years was given in the article. I wonder if, while doing her historical research, the anonymous author discovered the similar backgrounds of two other holidays we all celebrate—Christmas and

Easter. Both these holidays also have roots in pagan societies that date back thousands of years. They each involved the worship of various gods and superstitions surrounding evil spirits—just as in Halloween.

The point is, no matter what these holidays meant to the societies that celebrated them thousands of years ago, for the majority of Americans today they are honored in the spirit of innocent, good clean fun.

Only the lunatic fringe on both ends of the spectrum—Satanists and religious zealots—sees something sinister.

Lisa Finch
Kill Devil Hills, NC

WRITER'S RESPONSE

Thank you for expressing your opinion. But I wasn't trying to convince you to give up what you believe in. Instead, I was retelling the history of Halloween and what people should do instead.

I was also trying to say that instead of representing something "evil" for "innocent, good, clean fun," we should do it in the spirit of "goodness." Why celebrate this holiday with dressing kids up in devilish costumes and say that it is done for "innocent, good, clean fun?" You call trying to scare people for candy "innocent, good, clean fun?" To me, it is like robbing a bank. Of course, we know that little "innocent" kids are doing it, but why not have a party instead of allowing little kids to walk outside in the dark, dressing like little monsters. It is a lot safer.

Another thing that I thought about is how can a holiday with a word meaning "to honor or set aside as holy" be set aside for a day of dressing people in monstrous costumes? Take the first six letters of Halloween, which is "hallow." According to the American Heritage Dictionary, it is defined as making of setting apart as holy. Why do we allow little children to dress up as little monsters or evil creatures on a day with "holy" in its meaning? Also, it is defined as respecting or honoring greatly. Do you "honor" this pagan holiday by dressing kids in demonic costumes?

To me, I could care less whether you celebrate it or not. I prefer not to, but as the old saying goes, "Different folks, different strokes."

SHARPTON VISITS ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

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Rev. Al Sharpton, founder and president of the National Action Network, visited Elizabeth City State University on October 31 as a part of a voter empowerment program sponsored by the North Carolina National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Pasquotank branch of the NAACP and the ECSU chapter of the NAACP. During his approximately 60 minute talk, which

was attended by many Rev. Sharpton said that the only way for people to show their displeasure with what he said, or major policy issues with the Bush administration, is to get out and vote in the November midterm elections.

Rev. Sharpton lashed out at the Bush foreign policy, calling the president's preoccupation with capturing terrorist Osama bin Laden and bringing down the government of Saddam Hussein "bogeymen foreign policy."

"We say, Mr. President, we need to talk about how the economy is weak, but he says we can't because the bogeyman is coming," Sharpton said.

"But the bogeyman is not coming," he added. "Bush needs to answer our questions and the way to do that is by voting."

Sharpton said that African-American need to always keep in mind how far they've come and also the efforts of people like Martin Luther King, Jr.

"There's a sickness, an epidemic

caused by Negro amnesia that causes us to forget who we are, where we came from and how we got there. We should be the first at the polls on election day." He added: "Too many of our people suffered to get us to where we are today." Rev. Sharpton has been active in the civil rights struggle for more than two decades. He ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. senate in 1992 and 1994. He failed in his bid to become mayor of New York City in 1997.

ESSAY CONTEST 2003

THE ELIE WIESEL PRIZE IN ETHICS

SUGGESTED TOPICS

Reflect on the most profound, moral dilemma you have encountered and analyze what it has taught you about ethics.

How can human beings move beyond hate and toward reconciliation?

Explore ethical responses to fanaticism, hate and violence.

What ethical issue concerns you the most and what concrete proposals would you make to deal with it?

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 2, 2002

ELIGIBILITY: FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE JUNIORS AND SENIORS DURING THE FALL 2002 SEMESTER

Students must complete an Entry Form along with their Faculty Sponsor. Any interested professor may act as a Faculty Sponsor and endorse the quality and authenticity of the student's essay. In addition, students are asked to include a letter from their Registrar verifying eligibility.

FIRST PRIZE: \$5,000

SECOND PRIZE: \$2,500 THIRD PRIZE: \$1,500

HONORABLE MENTIONS: \$500 EACH

Contest entry form, detailed guidelines and further information are available online at www.eliewiesel.com, or by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

The Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics
The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity
529 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1802
New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.490.7777



ATTENTION DECEMBER GRADUATES!

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO POST THEIR MEMORIES OR GOODBYES IN THE COMPASS, PLEASE CONTACT ANTONIO BARROW AT 331-7126 OR VISIT JOHNSON HALL ROOM 111.

COME OUT TO THE JAZZ CAFE ON DECEMBER 4, 2002. THIS JAZZ CAFE WILL BE FORMAL. COME OUT AND READ POETRY, SING, DANCE, AND ENJOY THE JAZZY ATMOSPHERE.

JOIN THE DELTAS ON EVERY THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH FOR GROUP PRAYER IN THE JOHNSON HALL LECTURE ROOM. ALL ARE WELCOME!