

HUMOR

Incurious George

The very hungry capitalist

So I'm at a party chatting with a Log Cabin Republican—y'know, one of those guys who puts the moron back in oxy-moron. He tells me he's furious this president wants to "cut the throats" of gays and lesbians, and he says he thinks Bush should be tried for war crimes. Then he tells me he'll probably still vote for him "because at least I know where he stands."

Mama said there'd be gays like this.

Apparently, swing voters in my own swing state feel more comfortable voting for a flop than a flip-flop. But what they don't understand is that they don't know where this president stands at all. I actually had a pro-choice woman tell me she "just couldn't believe" that Bush would appoint judges to the Supreme Court who would overturn *Roe vs. Wade*.



The Gospel According to Marc
by Marc Acito

I responded by reaching over and shaking her, hoping it'd make her come to her senses.

To further understand our commander-in-grief, I bought myself a copy of *The Pet Goat*, the book that kept the prez glued to his seat for those seven minutes on 9/11. It tells the gripping tale of a barnyard animal with a voracious appetite: "The goat ate things. He ate cans and he ate canes. He ate pans and he ate panes. He even ate capes and caps."

In an instant I knew what the president was thinking that morning: "Man, this story sucks."

But *The Pet Goat* got me thinking. You see,

back in 1999, all 50 governors were asked to list their favorite childhood books. Dumb-ya voted for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, which was published in 1969, a year after he graduated from Yale. No wonder he was a C student.

As Bush said in February 2001, "You teach a child to read, and he or her will be able to pass a literacy test."

Interestingly, both *The Pet Goat* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* are about the virtues of overconsumption. After the goat stops a thief from stealing the farmer's car, the farmer says the goat can stay and "eat all the cans and canes and caps and capes he wants." Likewise, the very hungry caterpillar literally eats holes in the pages of his book and is rewarded for his gluttony by turning into a butterfly.

Reckless overconsumption—now that's what Bush and the Republican Party are all about: bankrupting our nation by running up the biggest annual deficit in history, while simultaneously encouraging Americans to spend our way out of recession.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar was the only book candidate Bush would read on the 2000 campaign trail, probably because it doesn't have any confusing words like caps and capes.

Unfortunately, Democrats followed suit. For instance, Sen.

Hillary Clinton read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to children at the Chappaqua Library when she got her library card in 2000. And even Teresa Heinz Kerry got in the act when she read it to Head Start kids in May of this year. It seems more politicians have read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* than the 9/11 Commission Report.

And therein lies our problem. John Kerry still hasn't articulated a clear alternative for a nervous electorate. You know something's wrong when a clenched-jawed preppy announces, "Who among us doesn't like Nascar?"

Well, senator, for starters, those of us who use phrases like "who among us."



To make matters worse, President Bush makes several good points in his speeches—if you're an idiot. If the rest of us don't start reaching over and shaking these swing voters, the Republicans are going to continue to party like it's 1899.

I'm so frustrated it makes me want to scream louder than Howard Dean.

We need this election to end like an episode of *Scooby-Doo*, with someone pulling off Bush's face, revealing Dick Cheney's instead.

"Why it's Old Man Cheney!" we'll cry.

"That's right," he'll grumble, "and I woulda gotten away with it, too, if it weren't for that pesky Michael Moore."

Liberal Americans need to ask our swingin' friends: Who's going to keep our troops safe—the guy whose Air Force Reserve records must've been eaten by a goat? Or the guy who saved lives in Vietnam?

And who's going to gain the cooperation of the world to get us out of this mess? The guy who drew more protesters worldwide in a single day than anyone in the history of humankind? Or the multilingual internationalist who excels at subtle diplomacy?

As Bush himself said in August on CNN: "Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we."

At least, for once, he told the truth.

And that, my friends, is *The Gospel According to Marc*. **J**

MARC ACITO's book, *How I Paid for College: A Novel of Sex, Theft, Friendship and Musical Theater*, is available at bookstores everywhere.

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