

Century Marks: Voices of 2004

Century Marks in the [December 28, 2004](#) issue

“Hostility toward America has reached shocking levels.”

—Advisory group on public diplomacy appointed by the White House

“It is unlikely that Iraq could have destroyed, hidden or sent out of the country the hundreds of tons of chemical and biological weapons . . . that officials claim were present without the United States detecting some sign of this activity.”

—report on Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)

“Those weapons of mass destruction have to be here somewhere . . . Nope, no weapons over there. Maybe under here.”

—President **George W. Bush** at a dinner for radio and TV correspondents, making light of the fact that the weapons of mass destruction his administration claimed were in Iraq have not been found (*Time*)

“I’m talking about people having a good time, these people, you ever heard of emotional release? You heard of a need to blow some steam off?”

—**Rush Limbaugh**, likening the torture of imprisoned Iraqis by U.S. guards to fraternity hazing (*Rush Limbaugh Show*)

“What we have shown is that all of us can disagree without being disagreeable.”

—**Barack Obama**, victorious African-American candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois (*Time*)

“[This is] the closest election that we have seen in this country in—about four years.”

—**Jon Stewart** (Comedy Central’s *The Daily Show*)

“Artists have the right to create any kind of movie they want, but an audience has the absolute right to pass judgment on it.”

—Rabbi **James Rubin**, interfaith adviser, on Jewish concerns about anti-Semitism in Mel Gibson’s movie *The Passion of the Christ* (*Boston Globe*)

“I want to wake up and read that Mr. Bush has announced a Manhattan Project to develop renewable energies that will end America’s addiction to crude oil by 2010. I want to wake up and read that Mel Gibson just announced that his next film will be called ‘Moses’ and all the profits will be donated to the Holocaust Museum.”

—**Thomas Friedman**, arguing that the only people with imagination in the world today seem to be the bad guys (*New York Times*)

“The conventional liberal political wisdom that people who are conservative on abortion are conservative on everything else is just wrong. Christians who are economic populists, peace-making internationalists, and committed feminists can also be ‘pro-life.’ The roots of this conviction are deeply biblical and, for many, consistent with a commitment to nonviolence as a gospel way of life.”

—**Jim Wallis**, saying that the Democratic Party should welcome pro-life support (*Sojourners*)

“The question is not are you better off than you were four years ago, but is your neighbor better off?”

—**Amy Sullivan**, a Democratic adviser explaining Catholic social teaching (*Lehrer Hour*, PBS)

“How ironic that a gentle message of inclusion is considered unacceptable while ads for beer are accepted and programs in which people eat insects and worms are considered entertaining. In a divided and fearful world, this message is not only needed. It could lead to healing.”

—United Methodist pastor **Larry Hollon**, protesting a decision by CBS and NBC to reject a United Church of Christ ad that welcomes gays and lesbians (*United Methodist Reporter*)