

General Butt Naked and Promise Keepers wage spiritual war

The D.C. convention drew many fanatics.

American evangelical movements have never lacked curiosity. In recent years, the American public has witnessed Jim and Tammy Fae Baker fall from grace, endured Pat Robertson's aborted presidential bid and laughed at countless public-access whackos who tirelessly

Toby Coleman
GUEST COLUMNIST

spout their crazed mantra daily to those drunken and insane enough to actually watch public access television. Saturday, Oct. 4, the country's newest evangelical movement — an all-male group named the Promise Keepers — descended upon Washington, D.C., drawing numbers which, at first count, rivaled the Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam

demonstrations of the '60s. Crying, singing and falling to their knees to repent for their sins, these men were drawn — according to organizers — by a feeling of responsibility for the moral and social deterioration of our culture due to men abandoning their families.

Responsibility is always a good goal. This movement, however, encourages it in an interesting way. This all-male movement has a distinct flavor to it, going as far as to chant, "Jesus" in a defense-like manner.

These actions, while unusual in church, are not uncommon in this movement — started by a former University of Colorado football coach, Bill McCartney. McCartney started the organization six years ago with the hope of filling sports stadiums with thousands of men dedicating their lives completely to Jesus.

Having a dream is great, but who are these people? Born-again Christians have always been an eclectic and fascinating group encompassing a broad spectrum of society.

Former President Jimmy Carter is a Born-again Christian, and so is former

General Butt Naked, a Liberian civil-war-mercenary-turned-evangelical preacher.

It's unnecessary to bore you with Carter's inspiring revival, as the General's story is much more curious and amusing. Born Joshua Milton Blahyi, the General led the Butt Naked Battalion, which charged into conflicts nude except for lace-up leather shoes. Like some of the men in attendance last Saturday, the former-general-turned-street-preacher was converted under biblically strange circumstances. Apparently, God appeared to him during battle, telling him that he was a slave to Satan.

Men in the audience had a variety of stories like the General's. Some were raised within the church and had become regulars in these stadium events. Some came to grow spirituality (which must be harder than growing corn).

Still others came because something grabbed them, inspiring them, in the uplifting words of one man, to get with a church. David Davidson — an attendee at the weekend's events who grew up Jewish — first experienced Jesus while tripping on mushrooms.

In Davidson's words, "Why would Jesus come to me when I was tripping mushrooms?"

Why, indeed. This story not only gives the exact recipe for an incredibly bad trip, but it raises a question of the credibility of the charismatic evangelical style of the movement hoping to end the moral downward spiral of our society.

No one can question the good intentions of the Promise Keepers, who hope to uphold a higher moral standard by accepting their familial responsibilities. The men who attend these events, however, seem to be after a confused sense of community — a community which tells its members that the moral degradation of America is caused by the failure of "men of God" to stand together.

These men of God know how to treat women, becoming good husbands, good providers, good caretakers. The Promise Keepers' message was relayed best by a woman who stood at the fringe of the gathering, who sincerely asked, "Doesn't God want them to be head of the household?"

So, inherent in this huge, male-only

gathering is one lingering question: What do these guys want? Are they simply looking for an outlet in which to confess their sins, hug and cry? Or is there something more under their puffy, tear streaked faces? General Butt Naked tells us that he continues to fight a spiritual war. Reverend Billy Graham — everyone's favorite evangelical preacher — told the crowd that "God is calling us to battle, for this is warfare, and (Christians) are at the center of the battle."

All this battle talk does tend to make one nervous, especially when directed to an enormous crowd of emotional, very religious men. For my money I'd like to see a lot more crying and singing and a little less talk of doing battle.

These men are diverse, but some of their stories call into question their interpretation of spirituality. Their movement, paved with good intentions, seems to assert that reverting to a Donna Reed/Cleaver-esque ideal will cure our society's ills. And they seem willing to do real live battle for those beliefs.

Toby Coleman is a columnist for The Chronicle of Duke University.

NIKE LUCKOVICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

AN AIDE MISPLACED HIS KEYS, SO HE CALLS FRIENDS TO HELP HIM GET IN. WELL, UNBEKNOWNST TO ME, THEY GO TO THE WRONG PLACE, JIMMY THE DOOR AND LO AND BEHOLD, ITS THE WATERGATE!...



IF NIXON HANDLED SCANDALS LIKE CLINTON DOES

Coach Dean Smith's retirement will leave a hole in the heart of many

UNC's basketball coach established a great legacy on and off the court.

I listen to my friend describe the scene after her weekend trip to UNC at Chapel Hill. "It's incredible," she says. "You walk down the street and there are posters and signs in the windows of stores and small businesses that say things like, 'Dean, you'll be missed' or 'We love you, Dean.'" I shrug at this comment, because I don't know why the fuss is being made.

Christen Balady
STUDENT COLUMNIST

She goes on: "He was the most incredible coach in basketball history. And what's really cool about all of this is now we have such a better chance to beat UNC than we did before."

Is it fair that we at this university are celebrating Dean Smith's resignation? My friend is absolutely correct; Smith was the most incredible coach in basketball history with a NCAA record for career victories.

But I don't think Chapel Hill's reluctance to let Smith go lies solely in the fact that he brought in the wins. He was a great coach because he cared for his players.

Smith knew the amount of energy needed to successfully coach a college basketball team, and he knew that this season he wouldn't have enough.

"If I can't give this team enthusiasm," he said, "I would get out. And that's honestly how I feel."

Scott Williams, a former UNC basketball player who now competes for the Philadelphia 76ers, tells the story of how he traveled to North Carolina from California to play for Smith. Shortly after his move, Williams' father shot his mother to death and then killed himself. It was Smith who delivered the news to Williams, consoling the devastated freshman who was so far from home.

"With the death of my parents, I remember him being the one who told me and him being so supportive," Williams said. "At that time in my life he took on the role of a second father, and he didn't have to. After my parents died, he said he didn't care if I scored a point, got a rebound or blocked a shot. He just wanted me to get an education and grow up to be the person my parents wanted me to be."

How dare we bask in the glory of the retirement of this man? We should not assume that UNC's basketball team is in jeopardy simply because of Smith's retirement. He has built a solid foundation for his team that may last for several seasons, and his successor, Bill Guthridge, has coached by his side for 30 years.

Let's also not forget that Smith was only on the sidelines, not dribbling and shooting. Although Smith may be an excellent leader and strategist, players as successful as Michael Jordan have also contributed to Smith's impressive record. Wonderful coach or not, Smith would not have more wins than any other collegiate coach had he led a team of nearsighted, 5-foot-4-inch Neanderthals.

Dean Smith is not dead; he has only retired. He is still able to inspire Chapel Hill and ignite his players. Until this basketball team defeats UNC with a win attributable to Smith's resignation, let's stop being cocky.

Dean, you'll be missed.

MORE LETTERS

Students, show your team some support

As I contemplated writing this letter, my biggest fear was that I would sound like my father did when I was attending this university. My intention is not to cause guilt, but rather to encourage a change in attitude. I would urge you to show greater appreciation and support for what head coach Jim Caldwell and his players have achieved this year on the football field.

When I was a student at this university the legal drinking age was 18, and I did more than my share of partying. My college experience was as much one of social maturation as it was of education. I tell you so you know that I can relate to the social experiences many of you want to have.

Throughout my life, I have always chosen to root for the underdog. Wake Forest football is no different. I loved campus athletics then, and I love them today. I attended all of the home games as a student and looked forward to many of the away games as an opportunity for a road trip.

Many students of today act more like Los Angeles Dodger fans, arriving late and leaving early, than college football fans. The emphasis on partying in the parking lot is hard for me to figure out. *The game is inside!* The opportunities for students to party and meet at school still appear to be plentiful even in today's increasingly competitive academic

environment — what is so attractive about hanging out in the parking lot for three hours on a Saturday?

I am asking you as Deacon football fans to appreciate the talent our team has, and to support the effort our team makes on Saturday. The athletes are your neighbors, friends and fellow students. They give all they can to beat the teams we love to beat. The players need and deserve our participation in their effort to succeed.

Brian Heelan '81
Winston-Salem

ARAMARK must offer healthy choices

I am writing in response to the article highlighting eating habits of females in the Oct. 2 issue of the *Old Gold and Black*. After reading the nutritional information printed in the article I was even more disgusted by my limited choices here.

I thought items such as pasta with marinara sauce, stir-fry Chinese and rice pilaf were a few healthy options out of all the greasy food that is offered on campus.

I was appalled to find that the aforementioned foods, which can and should be prepared healthfully, contain 12, 24 and eight grams of fat, respectively.

This is mostly due to the haste at which those who prepare the food wish to get things done. Marinara sauce doesn't need oil — try water.

Stir-fry can be cooked just as quickly with Pam cooking spray as with a gallon of Wesson oil. Rice pilaf can be steamed, not fried.

I think it will be helpful and informative to have nutritional information posted, but ARAMARK may want to re-evaluate its preparation techniques before it disgusts the rest of the campus.

True, this will not cure eating disorders, but many eating disorders are tipped off by disordered eating habits. If we had more choices of healthy, low-fat foods then we wouldn't be driven to eat yogurt and lettuce at each meal.

Furthermore, the last thing this campus needs is a Burger King. More greasy, fatty fast-food isn't going to help decrease disordered eating, but will instead increase campus-wide eating levels. Why else have the sales at Kentucky Fried Chicken gone down?

If the faculty is seriously concerned about the student's eating habits, I encourage the administration and ARAMARK to come up with some solution where there is a variety of healthy choices all day.

After 7 p.m. there is absolutely no healthy option besides a bagel and yogurt.

ARAMARK can say that the Benson University Center has a "variety," but that's not what I call burritos and chicken fingers. ARAMARK has a monopoly — it can serve and charge whatever it pleases and it knows that we still have to buy from it.

So, in reality we are not consumers; the theory of supply

and demand is not applicable here. If ARAMARK is going to be given this campus monopoly of our meal cards and of us, the least it could do is act concerned about what its captive consumers eat.

Sarah Shivers
Freshman

Complaining is taking over campus

This university can, at times, appear uncaring and business-like in its policies and decision making.

For example, the prices around the Quad are high, convenience or not. If someone decides to enjoy a nice day by strolling through the grass on the Quad, he or she is committing a felony. No parking spaces. And we all are familiar with the grade inflation debate.

However, I think that this university is a great place and that we should all be thankful we are here.

The vast majority of the faculty care about the students and want them to do well.

For this reason, they implement policies for our safety, provide us with modern technological tools and build better facilities around campus.

I think that a little constructive criticism is good. The administration needs feedback, but not unthoughtful thrashing. Letters like sophomore Drew Sprague's "Why is concrete taking over campus?" in the Oct. 2 issue of the *OG&B* take the complaining and whining too far.

To answer his question, "Am I the only person who appreciated the two dirt paths?" I say yes, he probably is. Think about a rainy,

muggy day when you have other things to worry about and the last thing you need is a mud puddle to complicate things. If you like dirt paths that much, go walk the cross-country trails.

Sure, we lost some trees out there at "Hearn Plaza," but we gained some tables to sit and study on, some nice walkways without dirt and a chance to honor people that are special to us with personalized bricks.

The new sidewalks are the lesser of two evils; either we have dirt paths that continually get worse or we build what we currently have and sacrifice some trees. Plus, the area looks so much nicer than before because it matches the surrounding buildings and appears better kept.

So far I do not think there have been any casualties from the gravel "quicksand" around the tables. The gravel is a good idea because grass would be trampled away too easily. I am no architectural design expert, but even if this gravel is, by university standards, "tacky," it still remains highly practical. How this relates to basketball uniforms I am still trying to figure out.

There are too many other problems in university life, and in life in general, to complain about such petty grievances. I was here for summer school as well, and although the construction was at times inconvenient, I lived. At least we get the chance to attend college and receive a first-class education, which is more than I can say for many people I know.

Next time, how about a little constructive criticism like, "It sure would be nice if we could get some new water fountains in Reynolds Gymnasium."

Ben Wilson
Junior

SG will now provide bus rides to games

As a part of Student Government's ongoing commitment to assist students in attending university activities in a safe and efficient manner, we are pleased to invite all students to put down their car keys this weekend and ride the bus to the Wake Forest/Maryland football game.

This initiative originated in the Campus Life Committee of SG and has been assisted by funds from the Division of Student Life and the Athletic Department.

The initiative provides for bus service for the last two home games.

With the frightening instances of drinking and driving in our society, SG felt that students could benefit from a free, continuous shuttle service to and from home football games.

This service also helps to provide transportation to those students that don't have the ability to get to off-campus events.

This weekend, we encourage you to meet us between Davis Field and Davis House, bring your friends and ride the bus to Groves Stadium.

Continuous service will be provided from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., so you may leave at your leisure. We look forward to seeing you this Saturday, and GO DEACS!!!

Scott Plumridge

SG President

Tina Carlucci

SG Speaker of the House

Ryan Marsh

SG Treasurer

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