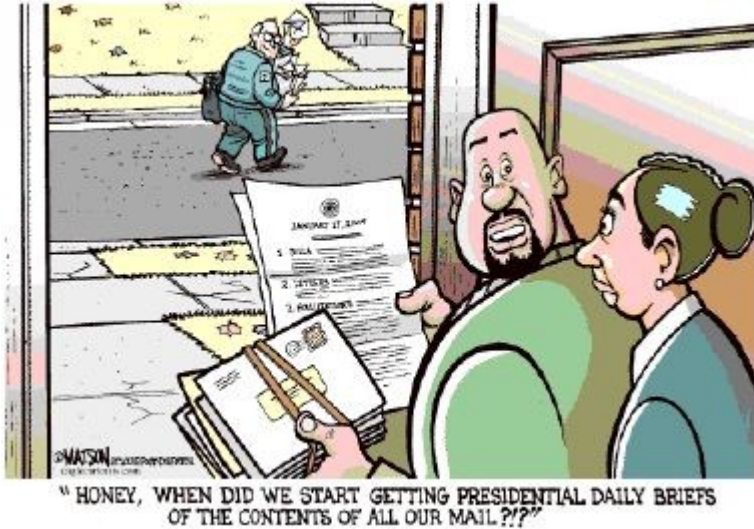


# Century Marks

Century Marks in the [February 20, 2007](#) issue



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**Put it to bed:** Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu, the former Anglican archbishop of Cape Town, has warned African churches against paying too much attention to the issue of homosexuality while ignoring other problems facing the continent. “I am deeply, deeply distressed that in the face of the most horrendous problems—we’ve got poverty, we’ve got conflict and war, we’ve got HIV/AIDS—and what do we concentrate on? We concentrate on what you are doing in bed,” Tutu told journalists in Nairobi during the World Social Forum (Ecumenical News International).

**Evolutionary design?** J. Scott Turner, a biologist specializing in termites, thinks the Intelligent Design movement is wrongheaded, but he wonders why some scientists and other academics become apoplectic when the word *design* is used with reference to nature. “Most people, when they contemplate the living world, get an overwhelming sense that it is a designed place,” he says. Darwin was supposed to have put the notion of design in nature to rest, but Turner asks: “If Darwin settled the issue once and for all, why does it keep coming back?” He argues that scholars should be open to asking questions like: “Is evolution shaped in any way by purposefulness or intentionality? What might purposeful evolution look like? Is design its signature? Can it be reconciled with Darwinism?” (*Chronicle Review*,

January 19).

**Guest register:** Mike Jones, the former male prostitute whose allegations against megachurch pastor Ted Haggard led to Haggard's dismissal from New Life Church in Colorado Springs, showed up at New Life for a recent Sunday service. When Haggard admitted last year to unspecified "sexual immorality," he urged the congregation to forgive and thank Jones for exposing his deceit. Jones reported that when he visited New Life several people shook his hand and said, "God bless you." Rob Brendle, associate pastor, greeted Jones, telling him, "I don't want to impose my religious beliefs on you, but I believe God used you to correct us, and I appreciate that" (AP).

**Unpeaceable kingdom:** It was an incident that could happen at any college: about 15 football players, possibly drunk, are alleged to have attacked some Palestinian students using feet, fists, brass knuckles and racial slurs. But it happened at an unlikely place: Guilford College, a peace-loving Quaker school in North Carolina. While only 10 percent of Guilford students are of Quaker background, the college has maintained its Quaker connections, unlike schools such as Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr. One assessment of the Guilford case is that there is a cultural divide on campus between athletes and nonathletes ([insidehighered.com](http://insidehighered.com), January 30).

**Speaking of Quakers:** The late Thomas R. Kelly, a Quaker educator and writer, earned a doctorate at Hartford Theological Seminary. Then he worked on another doctorate—in philosophy at Harvard. He completed the dissertation for the second degree, and it was published, but, struggling with some physical problems, he blanked out during his oral defense. His doctoral committee said he couldn't be considered for the degree again. Kelly fell into a depression, and then experienced a spiritual awakening in which he was "shaken by the experience of Presence—something that I did not seek, but that *sought* me." This experience freed him from a desperate striving for acceptance (*Weavings*, January/February).

**Mountaintop experience I:** In the early years of his papacy, Pope John Paul II slipped away from the Vatican more than 100 times for skiing trips, according to a book recently published by his long-term personal secretary. Three other Polish bishops would join him on these clandestine trips. The pope dressed like other skiers, escaping the notice of both Vatican authorities and journalists. On one occasion a young boy seemed to recognize him, crying out: "Pope, pope!" But one of the pope's companions told the boy to hurry on and join his friends. The papal party then left the slopes. In later trips the Vatican police accompanied the papal team

(AP).

**Mountaintop experience II:** On May 29, 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and his Sherpa climbing companion, Tenzing Norgay, became the first known persons to scale the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest. (George Mallory had attempted it in 1924 but died in the effort, and it is not known whether he made it to the top.) In the 1950s mountain climbing was a highly competitive and nationalistic sport, and since Hillary's feat was part of a British expedition, word was sent back to Britain about his accomplishment. The news reached the British Isles on June 2, 1953, the day of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation—news that put the icing on the coronation cake. It was “the last great day in the British Empire” (Ed Viesturs with David Roberts, *No Shortcuts to the Top*, Broadway Books).

**Know your history:** While many historians object to the No Child Left Behind program for public schools, partly because the program requires constant testing, a group of historians is urging the U.S. Congress to include history among the subjects that students are expected to learn. In some school districts money for history classes has shifted to subjects included in the No Child Left Behind tests (History News Network, January 7).

**Beyond belief:** Actor Tom Cruise, a member of the Church of Scientology, is being called Scientology's Christlike figure. “Like Christ, he's been criticized for his views. But future generations will realize he's right,” a Scientology spokesperson said (InTheNews.co.uk, January 23).