

Spring Equinox, 2004

The Chron

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“The chronogram — a centuries-old literary form — follows a simple but demanding rule: when all letters corresponding to Roman numerals (*c*, *d*, *i*, *l*, *m*, *v*, and *x*) are added together, they produce a sum equivalent to a specific year of the Christian calendar. The single words *memory* and *memento* are thus chronograms of the year 2000 ($m \times 2$); so are *A moment for feasts & prayers* ($m \times 2$) and *A year to pay homage to the dead* ($m \times 1 + d \times 2$).”

Harry Mathews wrote the above paragraph as an introduction to his eight-page story: “Clocking the world on cue: the chronogram for 2001”. Both the title and the story were chronograms of 2001. The story contains 2001 *i*'s and not a single *c*, *d*, *l*, *m*, *v*, or *x*.

Today, we will write our own chronograms of 2004. Some will be headlines; others will be opening sentences or paragraphs for imaginary newspaper articles. The goal is to capture the essence of this year, politically, culturally, or even poetically. I will compile your creations into a small newspaper of sorts, *The Chron*, and send it to you as a souvenir of the Spring Equinox, 2004.

Here are the Roman numerals:

I = 1

V = 5

X = 10

L = 50

C = 100

D = 500

M = 1000

Here are some Roman numeral combinations you can use in your chronograms of 2004:

MMIII — no V, X, L, C, or D

MDDIII — no V, X, L, or C

DDDDIII — no V, X, L, C, or M

MDCCCCIII — no V, X, or L

MDCCCCLLIII — no V, or X

Of course, many other combinations are possible, but consider yourself warned: using V's or X's may be a bit of a challenge.

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Bush to bomb Mississippi

Says Iraqi WMDs Found in Hattiesburg

(AP) George W. Bush told Congress today that he was going to blast the Southern state "back to the stone age. That'll teach those appeasing bastards not to push it with us."

NEWS

Is it Saddam? It is!

Dean dims first in Iowa

Marines kidnap Aristide

Miss Martha is in prison

US damns Aristide's Haiti

White House misinformation

No imminent threat in Iraq

WMDs in Iraq? Zip. Darn it.

190 perish in Madrid trains

In Iraq -- might makes right?

Saddam Hussein is not in Iraq

Two-groom marriage is hit in SF

Saddam's arrest in bunker in Tikrit

SF news: kissing men & kissing women!

Astronomers find thingie: "It's Sedna!"

Terror stuns Madrid -- Spain quits Iraq

Beware the ides of this month, Aristide!

Fiery Madrid happening seats antiwar party

Dumb President: "Iraq strategy is working!"

Caucusing, Olympics, election of a president

Martha's lies will define her chic, cool heart

Boy meets boy, ties knot -- in SF, not Missouri

Your choice candidate: Kucinich, Kerry, or Dean?

"Chenille cell decorations, Part II" by Martha Stewart

Gay men, lesbians, happily wed in San Francisco County, CA

More habitat destroyed as Bush wages war on Hussein's Iraqis

John Ashcroft is a big, fat hippopotamus, according to locals

PREDICTIONS

Mississippi Boy Returns Home

Mired in Iraq -- and on to Iran?

This just in: Bush hid his own WMDs

Illegal lying caught, Bush impeached, war ceasing!

Marches on Washington: will justice catch up with Dubya?

Corrupt, lying Bush concedes to Kerry -- no more lies & lying liars

SPORTS

Libyan bicyclist hopes for Olympic gold

Baseball League salary reaches two million dollars per inning

Justin bares Janet's nipple at Superbowl.

Can this cause censorship comedy?

Janet Jackson's costume-reveal titillates nation.

FCC opens breast probe on CBS XXX cover-up.

Excess of Internet searches (beats 9/11!)

COLUMNS

Dear Diary: I did it!

FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT

Giant squid fished out of sushi menu

Lord of the Rings' cinematic conclusion

WEATHER

Chicago, Illinois: cold, dark days last

Melbourne floods cause catastrophic street-surfing injuries near beach

EDITORIAL

A year for pruning & trimming this Bush
