

AUSTRALIAN ABUSE REPORT DEEPLY FLAWED

[This is an excerpt from a longer article of the same name; it can be found on our website.](#)

On October 6, Cardinal George Pell appeared in a Melbourne court on trumped up sexual abuse charges. He did so amidst a frenzy over a report issued in August by the Centre for Global Research at RMIT University, Melbourne, "Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church."

The authors of the report are two embittered ex-priests. Their goal, it is plain to see, is to justify a state takeover of the Catholic Church.

Desmond Cahill is lead author. In 2012, he testified before a committee of the Parliament of Victoria on the subject of sexual abuse. His agenda includes many reforms, ranging from an end to mandatory priestly celibacy to a fundamental restructuring of the priesthood. Most of all he wants to neuter the Church's authority. "The church is incapable of reform," he declares, "so the state will have to do it."

Co-author Peter Wilkinson was one of the founders of the dissident Australian group Catholics for Renewal. Writing in the online publication *Catholica*, he expressed "a growing conviction that the Church must now rely on outside secular authorities to give it moral guidance."

There is much about the Church they find objectionable. For example, they oppose the autonomy of diocesan bishops and the "monarchy" of the pope. They find the seal of the confessional extremely problematic, and manage to link it to the abuse scandal. Ditto for celibacy. In both cases, the link they establish is pitifully weak, if not non-existent.

This is particularly telling given that just recently Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended that the government overrule the seal of the confessional when it comes to reporting sexual abuse of minors. "Clergy should not be able to refuse to report because the information was received during confession," the Commission stated. Both of the men were consultants to this Royal Commission.

The authors know that if celibacy were the cause of sexual abuse, there never would have been a sudden increase in offenses beginning in the 1960s, so the best they can do is to say it plays a role "when combined with other risk factors." The truth is their opposition to celibacy reflects their politics, not the data.

Given their ideology, it is not surprising to learn that nowhere do they confront the overwhelming evidence which shows that *most of the sexual abuse of minors was committed by homosexuals*. This is typical of dissidents in the U.S. as well as Australia.

We know from the best data in the United States that 81 percent of the victims were male and 78 percent were postpubescent. When men have sex with men, that's called homosexuality. Furthermore, the 2011 report by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, cited by Cahill and Wilkinson, showed that in the United States *less than five percent* of the sexual abuse was committed by pedophiles.

Cahill and Wilkinson blame the Church's "homophobic environment" for the scandal. But if homophobia accounts for the sexual abuse of minors, why didn't the scandal take place in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s? After all, would not everyone agree that that would be the most likely time, in recent history, for so-called homophobia to balloon? Similarly, why did the explosion in priestly sexual abuse take place when sexual norms in the seminaries were relaxed, if not abandoned

altogether? Paradoxically, even the authors offer evidence that makes our point, not theirs.

Citing the 2011 John Jay report, they readily admit that “Men ordained in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s did not generally abuse before the 1960s or 1970s. Men ordained in the 1960s and the early 1970s engaged in abuse behaviour much more quickly after their entrance into ministry.”

Apparently, Cahill and Wilkinson have a hard time connecting the dots. Prior to the sexual revolution of the 1960s, which hit every institution in the Western world, including the Catholic Church, sexual abuse was not a major problem. Why? Precisely because of the reigning ethic of sexual reticence. It is when the lid came off that the rate of sexual abuse soared.

In other words, the more tolerant the Church became of homosexuality, and the less “homophobic” it became, the more homosexual priests began preying on young men. Not to acknowledge this is intellectually dishonest.

The authors are so thoroughly compromised that they make the positively absurd statement that “the majority of offenders were heterosexual even if they abused young boys.” This is twice wrong: (a) most of the victims were not “young boys”—they were adolescents, and (b) it is delusional to say that same-sex acts are acts of heterosexuality.

It is not hard to conclude that Cahill and Wilkinson are not objective researchers. They have an agenda: They seek to destroy separation of church and state, allowing the government to police the Catholic Church. But not to worry, the Church has survived these power grabs before, and it will survive this one as well.