

BIASED REPORTING ON EX-PRIEST



Bill Donohue comments on media bias in stories about an ex-priest:

John Feit was arrested this week for killing a young woman in 1960. The only newsworthy aspect of this story is that he is an ex-priest.

AP, CNN, NBC, as well as many other media outlets, accurately referred to Feit as an ex-priest. But not all were fair, the most prominent of which was the *Washington Post*. Its headline read, "Break in 'Unholy' Cold Case: Police Arrest Former Beauty Queen's Priest in Her 1960 Killing."

Notice that the victim is a *former* beauty queen, but her alleged victimizer is *not* a former priest. Indeed, the reader doesn't learn of Feit's former status until several paragraphs later.

Other instances of bias were evident in stories posted by KPHO/KTVK in Phoenix: its headline said, "Priest Suspected in 1960 Murder of Texas Beauty Queen Arrested in Scottsdale." Two ABC affiliates, one in Scottsdale (ABC15), and the other in Sacramento (ABC10), were just as bad.

ABC15 told its audience, "Father John Feit Update: Priest Suspected in 1960 Murder Case Arrested in Arizona" (it has since amended its headline to refer to him as an "ex-priest"). ABC10 said, "Father John Feit Arrested for 1960 Murder Case."

One thing is for sure: If an ex-priest does something meritorious, such as rescuing a woman in distress, don't look for the media to identify him as a priest.

By the way, Feit left the priesthood 46 years ago, ten years after he allegedly killed the woman.