

NEW YORK TIMES EARNS SPOT IN “1619 PROJECT”

Bill Donohue

Coming on the heels of a bloody summer, much of it driven by racially charged rhetoric and behavior, the new school year has begun. But not without calls to address racism. Elementary and secondary students are being primed to learn about America's irredeemably racist past, present, and future.

The favorite resource for educators is the “1619 Project.” It is a proposed curriculum being disseminated by the *New York Times* that seeks to revise American history. According to this version, America was not founded in a revolution in 1776; it was founded in slavery in 1619.

This vision of the Founding is now working its way into school curricula across the nation. It has been formally adopted in Chicago, D.C., Buffalo, Newark, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem. Thousands of classrooms around the nation will implement this radical interpretation of American history.

The “1619 Project” is the work of Nikole Hannah-Jones. Her contribution is not the result of her training: She is neither a historian or a professor. She is a journalist. And while she complains about systemic racism, Hannah-Jones, whose mother is white and father is black, insisted that no white people work with her on the Project.

Prominent historians of America's founding have panned her work. In a letter that these leading scholars signed, they charged the “1619 Project” with “a displacement of historical understanding by ideology.” Pulitzer Prize winning historian Gordon Wood accused this initiative of being “so wrong in many ways.” Another winner of this prize, James McPherson, said that it “left most of the history out.”

Hillsdale College president Larry Arnn succinctly summed up the problem with Hannah-Jones' creative enterprise. The "1619 Project," he said, is "an ideological campaign to undermine Americans' attachment to our founding principles and to the Constitution by making slavery—rather than the principles of liberty that ended slavery and preserved our liberties for nearly 250 years—the principal focus of American history."

Students will be taught that Africans were forcibly taken from their homeland and brought to the New World as slaves. They will not be taught that slavery has existed in every part of the globe, and that Africans were bought by Europeans from their African slavemasters; they were not captured. Nor will students learn that slavery was abolished in the United States in 1865, but it took until 1981 for Africa to make it illegal (it still exists in parts of Africa today).

Most important, students will not learn that the Founders could have decided to justify slavery, making no overtures toward liberty. That is what virtually every other nation has done. Instead, they crafted the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the net effect of which was to lay the philosophical and legal foundation for the eventual demise of slavery. The Civil War was fought precisely to realize the Founders' vision of liberty.

No nation has made more progress in realizing equal opportunity than the United States. We recently twice elected a black president and have done more to end systemic racism than any other nation. One of the reasons why so many people want to come to our shores—often illegally—is because we are the envy of the world. It is our unparalleled freedom and prosperity that draws so many minorities to come here. But none of this will be taught to students subjected to the "1619 Project."

To make matters worse, the *New York Times* has no moral leg to stand on. The following report was sent to all schools in the

six cities listed above that have adopted the "1619 Project." The version that the schools received included an introductory note.

"1619 PROJECT": PROPOSED REVISION

The *New York Times* rolled out its "1619 Project" on the alleged racist origins of the United States with great fanfare. It would be inexcusably hypocritical not to include the newspaper's own contribution to racism in classroom instructions.

The family that owned the *New York Times* were slaveholders. To wit: Bertha Levy Ochs, the mother of the paper's patriarch, Adolph S. Ochs, was a rabid advocate of slavery, continuing a tradition set by her slave-owning uncle. She lived with her father's brother, John Mayer (he dropped the surname Levy), for several years in Natchez, Mississippi before the Civil War. He owned at least five slaves.

Ochs' parents, Julius and Bertha Levy, were German Jewish immigrants who met in the South before moving to Ohio (where Adolph was born). When the Civil War broke out, Bertha wanted to be actively engaged in her pro-slavery efforts and moved to Memphis to support her Confederate-fighting brother (Julius was on the Union side).

When Bertha died, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, to which she belonged, draped a Confederate flag over her coffin. Adolph even donated \$1,000 to have her name engraved on the founders' roll of the Stone Mountain Confederate Memorial. He sent a note saying, "Robert E. Lee was her idol."

Adolph was raised in Knoxville, Tennessee, and at age 20 he became the publisher of the *Chattanooga Times*. In 1900, the paper ran an editorial saying that the Democratic Party, which he supported, "may justly insist that the evils of negro suffrage were wantonly inflicted on them." After he purchased

the *New York Times* in 1896, he moved to New York. When he died in 1935, the United Daughters of the Confederacy sent a gift to be placed in his coffin.

Most Americans are mature enough not to blame the *New York Times* today for the racist beliefs and practices of its ancestry. In doing so, they show prudence. But are they too generous in their assessment? According to the wisdom of the "1619 Project," they are absolutely too forgiving.

If this were all there was to the racist history of the *New York Times*, we could give it a pass. But we cannot. Its racist record runs deep.

In 1910, the *Times* covered a heavyweight boxing match between the black heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson, and Jim Jeffries, the former heavyweight champion who came out of retirement for the fight. Jeffries, dubbed the "Great White Hope," was expected to win. He lost.

The sports writers for the *Times* put their money on Johnson, but not before issuing a dire warning. "If the black man wins, thousands and thousands of his ignorant brothers will misinterpret his victory as justifying claims to much more than mere physical equality with their white neighbors." In other words, stupid blacks might want political, economic and social rights as well, and that would not be auspicious.

In the 1920s, after a race riot in Washington, a *Times* editorial waxed nostalgic, speaking about conditions prior to the Great War (World War I.) "The majority of Negroes in Washington before the Great War were well behaved," adding that in those happy days, "most of them admitted the superiority of the white race and troubles between the two races were unheard of." They wanted more than "mere physical equality."

Also in the 1920s, Adolph Ochs invited a black singer, Roland Hayes, to lunch at the *New York Times*. His father, Julius, was

so angry he left the building. According to Iphigene, Adolph's progressive daughter, Julius believed that while "we love the Negroes," it is important to "keep them in their place; they are fine as long as they stay in the kitchen."

In 1931, in one of the most infamous racist events in the 20th century, two white woman accused nine black teens of rape. It turned out to be totally false. Adolph's *Chattanooga Times* was quick to condemn the alleged rapists. An editorial read, "Death Penalty Properly Demanded in Fiendish Crime of Nine Burly Negroes." The trial reporter for the paper called the defendants "beasts unfit to be called human."

Matters did not change throughout the 1940s. The NAACP, while noting that this southern arm of the *New York Times* was somewhat better than its competitors, it was still "anti-Negro." That is because the papers were in the hands of Arthur Ochs Sulzberger. While on a Red Cross tour of England during World War II, he expressed horror at the sight of black American soldiers "fraternizing" with white women. "Rape by Negroes is just one degree worse than by whites, and black illegitimate children just one degree more unfortunate than white ones." That is what he told General Dwight Eisenhower.

Arthur's workplace policies were also tinged with racism. A Newspaper Guild survey taken in the 1950s found that of the 75,000 newsroom employees he commanded, just 38 were black. Bad as he was, he was still better than other family members. He fought, successfully, to end the practice by the *Chattanooga Times* of publishing racially segregated obituaries.

Even though those who ran the *New York Times* made progress with racial relations in the 1960s and 1970s, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Jr. said in the 1980s that the paper was "just miserable to women, miserable to blacks."

It was miserable to blacks in another way. By championing the

life of Margaret Sanger, a notorious racist, it shows, and continues to show, how much further it needs to go before its racist past is behind it.

Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, referred to blacks as “weeds” and “human waste” in need of “extinction.” But to the august *New York Times*, she was known in 1980 as a “modern heroine.” At the end of the decade, she was cited as a “legendary pioneer.” In 1992, she was labeled a “strong-willed woman.” In 2006, the eugenicist was branded “courageous,” and in 2014 was noted as a “pioneering feminist.”

Never once did the New York Times call Margaret Sanger out for what she was—a white racist who lied to the public about her real motives. “We don’t want the word to get out that we want to exterminate the Negro population.” She had little to worry about—the “newspaper of record” kept the truth from the public. It still does.

It’s not just the defense of notorious racists that bedevils the newspaper—it has been accused of promoting racism in its workplace.

In 2016 two black female employees in their sixties filed a class-action lawsuit against Mark Thompson, the CEO of the New York Times Company. They argued that “deplorable discrimination” exists in the workplace. “Unbeknownst to the world at large,” their deposition says, “not only does the Times have an ideal customer (young, white, wealthy), but also an ideal staffer (young, white, unencumbered with a family) to draw that purported ideal customer.”

For all of these reasons, any school that adopts the “1619 Project” as a model to discuss the history of racism in the United States has a moral obligation to inform students of the racist legacy of the *New York Times*. Not to do so would be intellectually dishonest. If we are to have a national conversation about race, we must tell the truth about the role

that this newspaper has played in contributing to racism in the United States.

THE WAR ON HOMESCHOOLING

Bill Donohue

Collectivists and egalitarians, by which I mean those who embrace a left-wing ideology, have always hated the family. They see it as the source of inequality, a problem in dire need of a corrective. That corrective, of course, is the state.

Their analysis is correct. The family, the smallest cell in society, is the heart of inequality: men typically have held more power than women; parents have more power than children; older siblings have more rights than younger ones; and inheritance spawns wealth differentials.

To those who value parental rights, none of this is a problem. Indeed, it is no more of a problem than observing that men are typically taller than women. Therefore, no remedy is needed. But to collectivists and egalitarians, all manifestations of inequality are a problem. The only power strong enough to “fix” this problem is the state.

This is not a new phenomenon. Plato wanted children raised collectively, maintaining they were “common property.” Children do not belong to their parents—they belong to the state.

Today’s enemies of the family know they cannot literally take the kids away from their parents—though they would like to—so they settle for laws that weaken parental control. They are

particularly incensed over parents who are devout Christians and who espouse conservative values. They are the enemy that must be defeated.

Enter Elizabeth Bartholet, professor of law at Harvard Law School. Her recent article in the *Arizona Law Review*, "Homeschooling: Parent Rights Absolutism vs. Child Rights to Education & Protection," has garnered much attention. It should. She delights in making the case to crush homeschooling, and much more.

Currently, 3-4% (close to 2 million) children are being homeschooled. Moreover, as many as 10% of all students are homeschooled at some point; the numbers are growing. Bartholet wants this to end.

She deeply resents the "near-absolute" power that parents exercise. The legal argument upon which parental power rests, she says, "is based on a dangerous idea about parent rights—that those with enormous physical and other power over infants and children should be subject to virtually no check on that power."

Of course, if children are to be reared by adults who are not their parents, those persons would, necessarily, have "enormous physical and other power" over them. But that kind of power imbalance is okay with her: it's the child's parents who are the problem. She objects to their "monopoly," as though this were somehow unfair. She believes it is.

What is really angering Bartholet is the fact that conservative Christians do most of the homeschooling: they are at least a majority and may account for as much as 90%. She calls them "religious ideologues." If the homeschoolers were secular left-wing ideologues, like her and her colleagues at Harvard, that would not be a problem.

She accuses these homeschooling Christian parents of "isolating their children from the majority culture and

indoctrinating them in views and values that are in serious conflict with that culture.” What they need, she contends, is “exposure to the values of tolerance and deliberative democracy.”

Herchutzpah is astonishing.

It is certainly true that many parents who homeschool their children seek to protect them from the rot that marks much of the dominant culture: internet pornography, violent video games, obscene lyrics, anti-Christian fare, and the like. They also seek to provide an alternative to school curricula that teach their children to disdain our Judeo-Christian heritage and lie about our nation’s historic fight for liberty. Moreover, it is not the parents who are promoting the sick idea that we can change our sex—it’s the nutty ones in academia.

As I pointed out in *Common Sense Catholicism: How to Resolve Our Cultural Crisis*, there are more bizarre ideas taught in the colleges and universities today than at any time in history. It is so crazy, in some quarters, that there is very little difference between the asylum and the academy. As for the need to teach tolerance, there is less of it on the average college campus today than there is in any institution in our society. That is why Bartholet’s interest in teaching tolerance to homeschoolers is risible.

Bartholet maintains that parents who homeschool their children are a threat to their safety. Parents can “subject them to abuse and neglect free from the scrutiny that helps protect children in regular schools.” She really needs to do her homework before sounding so sophomoric.

To those who have written about this subject, as I have, we know that the public schools not only tolerate unspeakably high rates of sexual abuse, they have resisted, via their unions, the establishment of a nationwide data bank. It is

this which allows molesting teachers to be moved from one school district to another—it's called "passing the trash"—ensuring even further abuse.

The Catholic Church went through this problem from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. Fortunately, it has made enormous progress. But the public schools are still stuck in neutral. Bartholet seems oblivious to all this.

"Teachers and other education personnel have long been responsible for a significant percentage of all reports to CPS [child protective services], larger than any other group." This flies in the face of all the evidence. She is apparently unaware of the U.S. Department of Education studies, and the reports by the Associated Press and *USA Today* on this subject.

Bartholet can get downright nasty. She says families that choose to homeschool their children do so "because it enables them to escape the attention of CPS." In other words, not only do these vile Christian parents abuse their children, they choose homeschooling *because* they want to abuse them with impunity.

I say she is nasty because the source she cites does not support her outrageous claim. The source she names in a footnote says that "anecdotal evidence" shows that "some abusive parents...have taken advantage of lax homeschooling laws to hide their children from mandatory reporters." That is very different from what she said. She said families deliberately choose to homeschool their children so they can escape scrutiny.

Bartholet really looks like an amateur when she cites *New York Times* columnist Michelle Goldberg as a source showing that abuse and neglect in homeschooling is on-going. When Goldberg was in college, she advocated violence against innocent persons. To be specific, when she was at SUNY-Buffalo she wrote a piece for the campus newspaper urging readers to "do

your part and spit at [pro-life students]. Kick them in the head.”

Bartholet also cites a book by Michael and Debi Pearl, homeschooling advocates, accusing them of promoting child abuse. For instance, their book recommends spanking. But they explicitly say this should never be done when a parent is angry. The fact that a few irresponsible homeschooling parents who read their book and abused their adopted children hardly proves Bartholet’s point. Not only that, the Pearls specifically recommend against adopting children from foreign countries. The abused children in question were from foreign countries.

The recommendations made by Bartholet are rich with hyperbole. We need to rid ourselves of homeschooling, she contends, because of what it allows. “Parents can choose to beat their children, starve them, or chain them up, free from scrutiny by any who are required to report suspected abuse and neglect.” Her hatred of Christians is palpable.

To top things off, it is striking to read a Harvard law professor rail against the U.S. Constitution. She calls it “outdated and inadequate by the standards of the rest of the world.” Most people worldwide, she fails to say, live under tyrannical regimes. What bothers her are negative rights, such as “Congress shall pass no law.” She wants this model supplanted by positive rights, such as “Everyone must.” A better prescription for tyranny could not be found—it’s why dictators love to dictate.

Bartholet wants to bestow children with positive rights. So when children are given rights, they can claim that their parents accede to their interests. This has always been the dream of radical egalitarians.

Her number-one recommendation is that there should be a “general presumption against homeschooling.” The burden, she

says, must fall on parents who need to justify their request. She allows for "exceptions," but in those instances the parents need to jump through an array of hoops, all of which are designed to weaken their status and enhance the power of the state.

Parents must submit their "intended curriculum and education plan"; offer proof of their credentials; submit to testing "on a regular basis"; allow "home visits by school authorities"; allow background checks, etc.

In other words, if they make the cut, parents who are permitted to homeschool must give up their parental rights and bow to the edicts of the state.

This is just the beginning. Bartholet wants to extend the reach of the state to police the private schools, singling out religious ones. "Religious and other groups with views and values far outside the mainstream operate private schools with very little regulation." This means, she says, they are being deprived of "exposure to alternative perspectives."

Translated this means that Christians who homeschool their children are not teaching the values Bartholet wants to instill in them.

This would surely mean, for example, that these children are being deprived of learning that it is a pregnant woman's right to have her child killed in utero by someone who is not a doctor. The children would also learn that it is okay for boys and girls to rebel against their nature and switch their sex by adopting the services of someone who will mutilate their genitals.

Bartholet is upset because kids who are homeschooled are beyond the reach of the state and are being given values she abhors. She knows better than their parents what values they should have, and wants to subject them to her tutoring. This is the mindset of a despot.

This all boils down to one thing: In the mind of radical egalitarians, the number one enemy is the family. The family is the heart of inequality and the source of traditional values. It must therefore be weakened, if not annihilated.

Parents have every right to homeschool their children. To be sure, there is a role for the state to play, but it must be focused, reasonable, and limited. What Bartholet wants is to eliminate homeschooling and crush religious schools. The exceptions she offers are a ruse, designed to make her appear conventional. If she were the only one making this argument, it would not matter, but the fact is there are many like her walking the halls of academia.

Parents who do not homeschool need to vigorously support those who do. At stake is much more than the right of parents to homeschool their offspring—at stake are the rights of all parents.

Egalitarians seek a world run by social engineers. Indeed, they see themselves as possessing godly powers and brook no compromise. They need to be resisted and defeated at every turn.

MAKING SENSE OF THE ACLU'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Bill Donohue

Many critics of the ACLU have been saying that its response to coronavirus, which has generally been to support the shutdown of the U.S. economy in the name of public health, is inconsistent with its founding principles. Where they err is

assuming they were founded on principle. They were not. After writing a Ph.D. dissertation and two books on the organization, it is clear that its current political stand is consistent with its lack of principles from the beginning.

The ACLU's first response to COVID-19, issued March 2, stated that "individual rights must sometimes give way to the greater good." It argued that "people can sometimes be deprived of their liberty through quarantine," noting "this is how it should be."

This is not an indefensible position. But it is strange coming from an organization that has consistently rejected the need to balance individual rights with the common good. Roger Baldwin, the founder of the ACLU, said he would not serve on a jury because he did not want to be part of convicting anyone. When I asked him how society could function without punishing offenders, he answered, "That's your problem."

The ACLU's interest in protecting the public health is also new. In the 1980s, it passed a policy against state laws that criminalized the intentional transmission of AIDS to an innocent unsuspecting person. When I asked one of its officials, Gara LaMarche, to explain, all he could say was "homosexuals have rights."

If the public health is now a concern for the ACLU, it should have called for an independent investigation of New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's March 25 order sending hospitalized nursing home patients with the virus back to their residence; AP estimates that his edict resulted in the deaths of 4,500 patients. The ACLU has said nothing. Indeed, its New York affiliate commended him for leading a "valiant effort to protect New Yorkers from the coronavirus. His actions have undoubtedly saved lives." It was referring to his release of prisoners, not his treatment of nursing home patients.

One might expect that the health-conscious ACLU would support

President Trump's ban on travel from China, but instead it opposed it. "These measures are extraordinary incursions on liberty and fly in the face of considerable evidence that travel bans and quarantines can do more harm than good." Yet when it came to the internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans during World War II—that surely represented "extraordinary incursions on liberty"—the national office supported it (the Northern California affiliate did not).

The ACLU's professed interest in public health came to a screeching halt once protesters took to the streets following the death of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. This showed the political colors of the ACLU more than anything.

How can thousands of people gather together—making social distancing virtually impossible—without endangering the public? According to the health gurus at the ACLU, this is impossible. No matter, gone was the quaint idea of balancing public health concerns with civil liberties.

There was, however, one exception: it blamed the police for arresting protesters, accusing them of allowing the demonstrators to be "exposed to COVID-19 risk." That is how the ACLU chapter in Ohio put it. It expressed no interest in addressing how the protesters, jammed together, were endangering the health of innocents: it was only when they were in police custody that the alarms went off.

In Milwaukee, the ACLU complained when those arrested for violating the law—they would be the violent ones—were taken in buses and vans in crowded quarters. The looters had no masks, the defenders of freedom said. In Washington, D.C., the ACLU was angry with the police for using tear gas or pepper spray, making it "difficult to breathe." It did not comment on why the police were forced to resort to such actions in the first place, and never once condemned the violence. It saved its contempt for the cops.

Prior to the riots, the ACLU supported the stay-at-home orders issued by governors. The ACLU of Minnesota said that “measures like this have overwhelming support from public health experts trying to protect our collective well-being during this unparalleled crisis.” When the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down the governor’s extension of a stay-at-home order, the Wisconsin affiliate condemned the court for ignoring health warnings, thus “jeopardizing the health of all Wisconsinites.”

“Snitch patrols” in New York City and Los Angeles have been authorized by their mayors: they urge residents to turn in anyone who violates social distancing rules by calling a government hotline. The New York mayor even ordered the police to arrest swimmers. “Anyone tries to get in the water,” said Bill de Blasio, “they’ll be taken right out of the water.” The ACLU has said not a word.

Illegal aliens and prisoners have occupied much of the ACLU’s resources during this time. Its second statement on the virus called on the Trump administration not to enforce immigration laws. This was quickly followed with a call to release “vulnerable people from immigrant detention, jails, and prisons.” It sued California Gov. Gavin Newsom for not reducing the population in all of these facilities. In states throughout the nation, it based its position on social distancing needs—not public safety—and even developed its own epidemiological model to project the death toll in jails.

While some of these measures are novel, at bottom they are consistent with the ACLU’s policies on prisons. In 1972, it launched the National Prison Project, dedicated to strengthening the rights of prisoners. This initiative was sparked by University of Virginia professor and ACLU operative Philip Hirschkop. Three years earlier he co-authored an article, “The Unconstitutionality of Prison Life”; the title accurately conveyed his goal and that of the ACLU as well.

In the 1980s, the ACLU made its first foray into economic

rights. It stunned traditional civil libertarians who considered this an egalitarian social justice matter, not a civil liberties issue. So it was hardly surprising that its response to coronavirus would include a demand for paid leave, singling out McDonald's workers as a victimized group.

The ACLU's egalitarian agenda is so strong that when it was faced with the coronavirus pandemic, the march for equality eclipsed traditional civil liberties concerns. It asked California state officials for disaggregated zip codes so it could determine "the impact of the coronavirus on traditionally marginalized groups." Who might they be? It named "LGBTQ" people. Government officials pushed back, invoking the privacy rights of its citizens, but the ACLU—which used to prize privacy rights—was unimpressed.

On moral issues, the ACLU sued Arkansas to keep abortion services ongoing during the pandemic. Paradoxically, it said that incarcerated pregnant women should not only be released from prisons and jails, they should be "prioritized for release." It never explained why these women were entitled to preferential treatment.

When the ACLU was founded in 1920, it listed among its ten objectives every right encoded in the First Amendment except for the free exercise of religion. So it was only fitting to learn that executive director Anthony Romero told a reporter that he rejected every request to open up churches. Governors across the nation opened liquor stores before churches, and the civil libertarians had no problem with that.

Interestingly, when the New York affiliate learned that Cuomo allowed for gatherings of up to 10 people for religious services and Memorial Day celebrations, it sued on behalf of a protester, citing preference for people of faith and veterans. Religious liberty was conveniently used as leverage, not as a right worth defending.

The ACLU's selective departure from traditional civil libertarian policies is a reflection of its origins. The popular notion that the ACLU was founded as a non-partisan defender of individual rights is pure myth.

When the *American Mercury* published a critical article on the ACLU in 1936, it threatened a libel suit. After an initial dustup, both sides agreed to have H.L. Mencken render a judgment. He decided there was nothing libelous about it. The free speech champions instantly branded him a fascist.

The ACLU was founded to defend the rights of labor, not free speech. It was so far left that it supported Stalin's totalitarian regime. Baldwin even admitted that "Communism is the goal." Big government was never a problem.

This is important to note now, especially when we recently suffered through the virus and the violence that dominated the spring. It matters because the ACLU, from the beginning, was never the force for freedom that many people believe today, including its critics. No organization that purports to advance the cause of freedom can simultaneously work to promote the cause of totalitarianism. It simply cannot be done.

In 1928, Baldwin wrote a book, *Liberty Under the Soviets*, that celebrated Stalinism, and he did so knowing of the oppression that was ensuing there. Emma Goldman, a noted champion of radicalism, went to Russia to see how the revolution was going, but was distressed by what she saw. She told Baldwin of the absence of liberty, yet he persisted in his defense of Stalin's tactics.

In 1934, Baldwin wrote an article for a communist publication, *Soviet Russia Today*, that explained his true interest. "I champion civil liberties as the best non-violent means of building the power on which workers' rule must be based...When that power of the working class is once achieved, as it has

been only in the Soviet Union, I am for maintaining it by any means whatever."

That is not the voice of a champion of civil liberties, but it is the voice of the ACLU's founder. So when the ACLU today defends stay-at-home orders, making an exception for protesters whose cause it supports, it is acting the way it began. It is a highly politicized organization that seeks to transform an America it has long found wanting.

After moving to the center in the 1940s and 1950s, the ACLU turned left again. More recently, under Romero, it has condemned the free speech rights of board members who publicly disagree with its policies and has kept files on contrarian officials, seeking to purge dissidents. Principled civil libertarians such as Alan Dershowitz, Michael Myers and Wendy Kaminer have thrown in the towel. The late Nat Hentoff was also incensed.

In other words, the ACLU, which began by defending a totalitarian government against the rights of individuals, has forced the few principled board members it had to resign. This clears the way for Romero to remake the organization in the mold of its founding: The ACLU is a far-left entity whose goal it is to disable America.

To further this end, Romero decided to do something that was not consistent with its founding. Two years ago the ACLU decided, for the first time, to formally dive into electoral politics. Look for it to become a leading voice in the presidential campaign.

If we add to the ACLU's far-left agenda its almost hysterical hatred of President Trump, its COVID-19 policies make a great deal of sense.

The First Outrage from the New Archives

Ronald J. Rychlak

One of the Soviet Union's most effective disinformation campaigns was the charge that Pope Pius XII, leader of the Catholic Church during World War II, failed to provide moral leadership during the Holocaust. This has been variously attributed to anti-Semitism, attraction to Nazism, fear of Hitler, a desire to centralize papal power, and maybe half a dozen other false motivations. This disinformation campaign was instituted after the pope's death in 1958, despite the enormous praise that he had received from Jewish leaders and other Catholic and non-Catholic sources during and after the war.

Of course, the Soviets were not actually concerned about the reputation of an already deceased pope. However, by associating any pope with the Nazis, they could discredit the papacy, the Catholic Church, Christianity, and maybe even the concept of religion itself. That served the interests of atheistic Soviet leadership, and it was the same approach that had been used after World War II to discredit religion in heavily Christian areas that were suddenly under the Soviet thumb, such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Croatia.

When the disinformation campaign was launched in the early 1960s (building significantly on the post-war efforts in Eastern Europe), Pope Paul VI authorized four Jesuit priests access to still-sealed Vatican archives so that they could publish the "Acts and Documents of the Holy See" in 11 large volumes. Those documents reveal many heroic efforts to save

victims (Jewish and other) from the Nazis. However, despite this publication, until quite recently most of the archives relating to the war years remained sealed.

On March 2 of this year, the archives were made available to accredited scholars. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus, they remained open for only about a week. So, not many scholars got to see them, and not many new relevant documents were discovered. (My own appointment, scheduled for June, seems unlikely to happen.)

One researcher however, Father Hubert Wolf, a professor of Church history at the University of Münster, found a document that he claims proves the pope was an anti-Semite. His “new evidence” is from September 1942, when Myron Taylor, President Roosevelt’s personal representative to the pope, gave the Vatican a report on the mass murder of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto. It said about 100,000 Jews had been massacred in and around Warsaw and that an additional 50,000 were killed in the Ukraine. The Allies asked whether the Vatican could confirm this information. That report isn’t new. I first wrote about it in the 2000 edition of *Hitler, the War, and the Pope*, and I expanded on it in the 2010 edition.

The new part is an “Appunto,” an internal memo written by Msgr. Angelo Dell’Acqua. He would later (1967) go on to become a high-ranking official, but at this time he was a simple prelate in the Secretariat of State.

Dell’Acqua had been ordered to look into the claims that the Nazis were “systematically evacuating the ghettos, the Jews were being transported to death camps and shot, their bodies were being turned into fat and their bones into fertilizers, and not a single Jew is alive in East Poland and the German occupied parts of Russia.” Dell’Acqua could not confirm all the claims. He could confirm massacres but not death camps. As such, he said that the U.S. report could not be automatically accepted, “since exaggerations easily happen, also among

Jews.” Wolf claims that this statement captured Pius XII’s anti-Semitic motivation for not openly condemning the Nazis. The argument is preposterous.

As an initial point, the statement was not from the pope but from Dell’Acqua. As such, there is no reason to attribute such sentiments to the pope. Digging deeper, however, it must be noted that exaggeration had been common in similar reports during the First World War, so caution was warranted. Moreover, the accounts of rendering the bodies and bones in this report were exaggerations. Most telling, however, is that Dell’Acqua warned that “any joint American-Vatican protest could be harmful, not so much for the Holy See as for the persecuted Jews, fearing retaliation measures by the Nazis.”

Looking across Dell’Acqua’s life, he was no anti-Semite. Rising through the ranks to become a bishop and then a cardinal, he eventually was one of Pope Paul VI’s closest associates and joined the pope for his historic visit to the Holy Land. In fact, according to his *New York Times* obituary, Dell’Acqua “was a guiding administrator” at Vatican II, which clarified and strengthened Catholic-Jewish relations.

The Vatican, by the way, did not dispute the American report on Nazi atrocities. The immediate response was that it too had received reports of “severe measures” taken against the Jews, but that it had been impossible to verify their accuracy. The reply went on to note that “the Holy See is taking advantage of every opportunity offered in order to mitigate the suffering of non Aryans.”

In an official summary prepared by Myron Taylor of conversations that he had with the Pope in that month – September 1942 – the U.S. diplomat spoke of how “the parallel efforts of His Holiness and President Roosevelt for the maintenance of peace were energized by their very spiritual qualities.” Reporting on Pius XII’s attitude, Taylor wrote: “Despite all propaganda, His Holiness would never propose or

approve of peace by compromise at any cost" and "there can be no compromise of moral principles." He added that "we need have no fear that any pressure from outside the Vatican will ever make it change its course."

At this very time, Pius was working through Cardinal Spellman of New York with the American bishops on a statement regarding persecution of the Jews. The US bishops had two things going for them that neither the pope nor the European bishops did. They lived with a free press, and neither they nor their people were subject to retaliation from the Nazis. So, their words could do some good and would not cause great harm.

In November (about six weeks after the report from the Allies), the American bishops published their statement, announcing:

"Since the murderous assault on Poland, utterly devoid of every semblance of humanity, there has been a premeditated and systematic extermination of the people of this nation. The same satanic technique is being applied to many other peoples. We feel a deep sense of revulsion against the cruel indignities heaped upon Jews in conquered countries and upon defenseless peoples not of our faith.... Deeply moved by the arrest and maltreatment of the Jews, we cannot stifle the cry of conscience. In the name of humanity and Christian principles, our voice is raised."

The bishops repeatedly invoked Pius XII's name and teachings with favor. In a letter published at this same time, Pius expressed his thanks for the "constant and understanding collaboration" of the American bishops and archbishops.

Six weeks later, in his 1942 Christmas statement broadcast over Vatican Radio and reprinted around the globe, Pope Pius XII said that the world was "plunged into the gloom of tragic error," and that "the Church would be untrue to herself, she would have ceased to be a mother, if she were deaf to the

cries of suffering children which reach her ears from every class of the human family." He spoke of the need for mankind to make "a solemn vow never to rest until valiant souls of every people and every nation of the earth arise in their legions, resolved to bring society and to devote themselves to the services of the human person and of a divinely ennobled human society." He said that mankind owed this vow to all victims of the war, including "the hundreds of thousands who, through no fault of their own, and solely because of their nationality or race, have been condemned to death or progressive extinction."

Everyone who cared understood the papal message that year. The Polish ambassador to the Holy See thanked the Pontiff, who "in his last Christmas address implicitly condemned all the injustices and cruelties suffered by the Polish people at the hands of the Germans." British records reflect the opinion that "the Pope's condemnation of the treatment of the Jews & the Poles is quite unmistakable..." The Dutch bishops issued a pastoral letter in defense of Jewish people the following February, making express reference to the Pope's statement. Moreover, a well-known Christmas Day editorial in the *New York Times* praised Pius XII for his moral leadership in opposing the Nazis:

"No Christmas sermon reaches a larger congregation than the message Pope Pius XII addresses to a war-torn world at this season. This Christmas more than ever he is a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent... When a leader bound impartially to nations on both sides condemns as heresy the new form of national state which subordinates everything to itself; when he declares that whoever wants peace must protect against "arbitrary attacks" the "juridical safety of individuals"; when he assails violent occupation of territory, the exile and persecution of human beings for no reason other than race or political opinion; when he says that people must fight for a just and decent peace, a "total peace"—the

“impartial judgment” is like a verdict in a high court of justice.”

A similar editorial from the *Times of London*, pre-dating the Christmas address and commenting on the Pope’s statements in general, said:

A study of the words which Pope Pius XII has addressed since his accession in encyclicals and allocutions to the Catholics of various nations leaves no room for doubt. He condemns the worship of force and its concrete manifestation in the suppression of national liberties and in the persecution of the Jewish race.

Even the Axis powers knew to whom the Pope was referring. The Germans were conspicuous by their absence at a Midnight Mass conducted by the Pope for diplomats on Christmas Eve following the papal statement. According to a Nazi report on the Christmas address by Heinrich Himmler’s Superior Security Office to Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop’s office:

“In a manner never known before, the Pope has repudiated the National Socialist New European Order... It is true, the Pope does not refer to the National Socialists in Germany by name, but his speech is one long attack on everything we stand for... God, he says, regards all people and races as worthy of the same consideration. Here he is clearly speaking on behalf of the Jews... [H]e is virtually accusing the German people of injustice toward the Jews, and makes himself the mouthpiece of the Jewish war criminals.”

German Ambassador Diego von Bergen, on the instruction of von Ribbentrop, warned the Pope that the Nazis would seek retaliation if the Vatican abandoned its neutral position. When he reported back to his superiors, von Bergen stated that the pope “is no more sensible to threats than we are.”

Despite all of this, Wolf would have us believe that Pius XII was an anti-Semite who did not make his opinion of the Nazis

or the Jews known for reasons mentioned in a report from a low-level assistant. Ridiculous.

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BETRAYED BY VICTIMS' ADVOCATES

The following is a first-hand account of a clergy sexual abuse victim. Last year, he met with Catholic League staff in New York City; we are protecting his anonymity. Some of what he recounts was previously noted by Catholic News Agency.

As an adolescent victim of homosexual clergy abuse, I know the challenges that men face in coming forward. Many of us are silenced in shame after being abused by our homosexual superiors. Aggravating the recovery process is that, despite the evidence, there is an ongoing agenda to cover up the homosexual nature of the abuse crisis, disenfranchising more than 80% of us victims.

Recovery is difficult enough without predatory advocacy groups and their lawyers trolling us for profit and politics. The added torment of being told the problem isn't related to homosexuality only compounds our pain. For this reason, I am grateful to the Catholic League for giving me the opportunity to relay the difficulties facing victims of homosexual abuse in particular, with all due respect and recognition of the grief suffered by victims who were subjected to heterosexual abuse.

For all of us men who were robbed of the opportunity to allow our sexual identities to mature before being assaulted, the abuse may be ruinous, to the point that some victims never speak of it. Sadly, the odds of suicide attempts are 2-4 times higher among women and a staggering 4-11 times higher for men compared to those who are not abused. These statistics do not account for the compounded effect of betrayal of our faith caused by our spiritual fathers.

I never spoke a word about my abuse until seven years later, feeling safe only to disclose under the seal of confession. The problem was that I didn't know that the priest behind the confessional screen was an active homosexual. So, when I confessed to him, and he offered to help me, I didn't know I was being solicited.

I was 22 years old, it was 1989, and there was no public knowledge of the predatory homosexual cadre in our Church. Over the ensuing 18 months the priest from the confessional provided pastoral counseling, but I was also subjected to lewd homosexual conversation and harassment. It was complicated, I was benefitting from his counseling as I was preparing for medical school and hoping to get better, so I tolerated his sporadic foulness. I became dialed into my faith like never before, attending mass and praying on my knees every night. I seemed to be recovering. But that all ended one night when he phoned me, ostensibly drunk, blurting out the most appalling sexual propositions. It was truly devastating. After that I could no longer sit through a mass. I left the Church, vowing I would never speak about my abuse again.

Decades would pass before I found myself in professional counseling. Not knowing I had PTSD, I was dealing with severe anxiety. I didn't intend to tell the psychologist about the abuse, however, he got to the source, and thus began my recovery. I was 44 years old, with a wife and four kids. We had made the difficult decision years earlier to educate our kids in Catholic schools.

I'd like to share some experiences I had in the recovery process to benefit other survivors and their families to learn from my mistakes, and for members of the Church to understand what happens to us victims when we step forward. Recovery is a difficult course to navigate with plenty of bad actors and hidden agendas out there.

The first step I took after coming forward was to learn what happened to my abuser. I found the "Bishop Accountability" website and read that he had been incarcerated in Oklahoma for assaulting boys there. On that webpage I saw a banner ad for a group called "Road to Recovery".

I reached out, and had an immediate response by founder and former priest, Bob Hoatson. In that first email he asked if I would like an attorney. I was surprised by this, it wasn't why I was contacting him, I declined the solicitation and told him I only wanted to get better.

I took his counsel thinking he was an expert on clergy abuse. He appeared on CNN with Anderson Cooper and was in countless newspaper articles. He became a significant influence on me. Ultimately, under his influence, I brought a suit against the Church and I would leave the Church, again. I drew the line when Hoatson encouraged me to get my children out of the Church. Nonetheless, my family was going to mass without me with a negative effect on us.

Hoatson introduced me to the petulant attorney, Mitchell Garabedian, at the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) conference in Chicago. SNAP proclaims to be a support group for survivors, but what I experienced was anything but support for survivors. SNAP invited the shark attorneys, used the victims like chum, and watched the frenzy unfold.

I saw Jeff Anderson, the mega-sex abuse plaintiff attorney, giggly and excitedly prance around the conference to funnel

money to SNAP. All the attorneys raised their hands to show how much they “cared”, but it was an obvious pledge to their motherlode, SNAP. Anderson offered to match all donations up to \$50,000. I thought Anderson was entirely inappropriate and found his exuberance personally offensive for the occasion. I watched in disbelief as survivors were subjected to the machinations of SNAP.

After the victims were commoditized with attorneys in the conference room, we broke into small groups. I was looking forward to this part, thinking someone could tell me how to break through. Our group leader, Patrick Wall, was an ex-priest. I thought, “surely these ex-priests, Hoatson and Wall, must be good people and can help.” Instead, what happened in my small group had no therapeutic value. From my years of training in medicine, my assessment was that Mr. Wall had no skills in facilitating a group like this. There were about 10 men in my group and nothing was accomplished. Nothing.

Then, Wall told us he was an attorney working in Jeff Anderson’s practice. My heart sank, my eyes welled up with tears. I went to the SNAP conference to get better, and I had hoped they would help, but all I saw was SNAP aligning victims with attorneys for money and to weaponize victims against the Church.

I left the small group session deflated, and sat in the hallway. A woman came asking if I was OK. I told her that SNAP wasn’t what I thought it was going to be. She said, “I’m sorry that you feel that way.” I asked if she was part of SNAP. She said no, “I am an attorney, here to see how I can help.” She handed me her card. I felt sick and had to get out of there.

I found David Clohessy, the president of SNAP, in the hotel lobby. He authored an article about my abuser. I wanted to know where he got his information and where I could learn more. When asked, he couldn’t remember writing the article. He couldn’t give me any information about my abuser. I thought,

“how can someone write an article and not remember a single thing about it?”

What I’ve come to learn over the years is that SNAP will regurgitate negative news about the Church to multiply the exposure. That’s why Clohessy didn’t remember his article. He did not offer to help me, he only apologized for not knowing anything.

Soon after the conference, a whistle blower, Gretchen Hammond successfully sued SNAP. She witnessed SNAP taking kickbacks from the attorneys. I was happy and felt vindicated that someone stood up for victims against SNAP.

Fast forwarding through the years, I was able to prosecute my abuser with a loophole in the statute of limitations. He was convicted, sentenced to prison, and will likely expire there. On December 23rd, 2017, I had a remarkable and unexpected reversion to our Faith. Being back in the Faith brought joy that superseded the happiness I was seeking in counseling.

Hoatson made some disparaging remarks about my return to the Church and my communication with him fell off. In reflection, I realized how he funneled victims to Garabedian, manipulating them much like SNAP. I asked Hoatson what his financial relationship was with Garabedian, he only said “Mitch takes good care of me.”

In September of 2018, I was traveling across the Great Rift Valley in Africa, leading a team on a medical mission. I received an email from Hoatson in our satellite-equipped safari truck. He sent me his press release in response to the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report. It read, “homosexuals don’t rape minors, predators rape minors.” He went on, “sure, some homosexuals rape minors, and some heterosexuals rape minors,” leading the reader to believe that there is no difference. He also implored Catholics to embrace homosexual and transgender priests.

I confronted him, asking him to add facts to his press release and tell the truth. I replied, "Bob, I was raped by a homosexual and you're telling the press that I wasn't. How do you think that makes me feel?" He told me I was the only survivor who felt that way. I reported this to Cardinal Tobin, in New Jersey, where Hoatson's organization is located. I learned that I am not the only survivor who feels disenfranchised by the position that homosexuality has nothing to do with the crisis.

The effort to protect and harbor active homosexual priests in the Church adds insult to victims' injury. Many point to "clericalism" as a cause. Alright then, let's recognize that homosexuals far and away outpace heterosexuals in using clericalism as a means to an end. Can we stop with this politically correct nonsense? We are the Church, forever counter-cultural, with no duty to bow to the gay agenda.

Sometimes I hear words of hope. Like Pope Francis' statements on homosexuals in ministry. Recently our local rector sent out a notice about screening homosexuals from entering the seminary. In response, I immediately sent a \$1,000 donation in gratitude.

Today, SNAP continues to smear our Church. Recently, Clohessy appeared in my city with TV coverage accusing our Bishop of not including my abuser on a list of accused, highlighting my abuser on the news. But he was never in this archdiocese. I contacted the TV station and SNAP multiple times asking them to correct their false reporting but they never responded. SNAP created false news, smeared the Church, their mission accomplished. SNAP also recognized Bob Hoatson with an award last year.

Navigating the recovery process is tough. There are forces vying for victims' money and souls. However, for me, it was my return to the Catholic Faith that pulled me through the effects of abuse. I am grateful to God for that.

ACCUSED PRIESTS DESERVE BETTER

Bill Donohue

There is justified anger on the part of the Catholic laity over the way molesting priests were handled by the bishop. That anger is still with us today, even though the bishops have made great progress in dealing with clergy sexual abuse. Most cases we hear about today are old cases and the offenders are dead or out of ministry.

There should be more anger today over the rights of accused priests. They are assumed guilty until proven innocent. Many in the media have portrayed all priests as predators, and prosecuting attorneys have acted with a vengeance that is as disturbed as it is dangerous. But don't look to the ACLU or any liberal activist organization to come to their defense. They are treated unfairly, both in the courts and in the court of public opinion.

It is never chic to defend the rights of those accused of sexually abusing anyone. That is understandable. But being chic has nothing to do with virtue, and there are two cardinal virtues that are apropos: justice and fortitude. Accused priests deserve justice as much as alleged victims do, but to do that takes fortitude. There is much to learn from the way the accused are being treated outside the Church.

One does not have to like Bill Cosby or Harvey Weinstein (I fought with the latter for decades) to like what their lawyers are saying in their defense. There are some lines of defense that are not only persuasive, they have direct application to accused priests.

As everyone knows, the #MeToo movement has had its sights set on Cosby and Weinstein from the beginning. Given that both men are high profile celebrities who have been accused of serial sexual offenses, this is understandable. But that doesn't mean that everything done in the name of this cause is justified.

Cosby's lawyers recently appealed his conviction for sexual assault to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. In their filing, his lawyers made a veiled reference to the #MeToo movement. "Cases exist in which the outcomes were deeply influenced by public panic fueled by the nature of the allegations pledged, the media, and other special interest groups. The criminal justice system teeters on a dangerous precipice in such cases."

Andrew Wyatt, Cosby's spokesman, was more specific. He raised concerns about "the impact of #MeToo hysteria on the bedrock principles of our criminal justice system."

The "public panic" cited by the lawyers is what sociologists call a "moral panic." It refers to an irrational reaction to alleged offenses, one that yields a poisoned environment in which to adjudicate them. There is little doubt that the #MeToo movement has set off alarms that threaten to allow emotion to override reason in dealing with alleged sexual offenses, the result of which compromises the due process rights of the accused.

Donna Rotunno is Weinstein's defense lawyer. She was asked about the #MeToo movement.

"If we have 500 positives that come from a movement, but the one negative is that it strips you of your right to due process and a fair trial, and the presumption of innocence, then to me, not one of those things can outweigh the one bad," she said. "We can have movements that strip us of our fundamental rights." Similarly, she said that this movement "allows the court of public opinion to take over the

narrative” and “puts you in a position where you’re stripped of your rights.”

What about the women accusers? “Yes, he’s a powerful guy. But I think that because he’s a powerful guy, they would use him and use him and use him for anything they could.” When asked if all women accusers should be believed, Rotunno answered, “I believe women who I believe the facts and evidence support their cases, but I think it’s very dangerous to believe all women without looking at the back story—the rest of the evidence.”

Everything that these lawyers have said about their clients is true of accused priests these days. Even more so.

A moral panic has indeed arisen in cases of clergy sexual abuse. It is fed by a hostile media, late-night talk-show hosts on TV, cable outlets like HBO, and others. Old cases of abuse are presented as if they are new, leaving the false impression that the scandal is ongoing. Pernicious generalizations about priests—and sick jokes—are made with abandon. Movies spread lies about the Catholic hierarchy. And so on.

This has less to do with the #MeToo movement than it does with vintage anti-Catholicism. It is no secret that the cultural elites harbor an animus against Catholicism. These kinds of atmospherics make it difficult for accused priests to get a fair trial. Add to this the cherry picking of accused priests by state attorney generals, and the table is set for conviction.

What Weinstein’s lawyer says about women accusers is certainly applicable to priest accusers. Some are telling the truth but others are lying through their teeth, seeking revenge against an institution they despise. And just as Weinstein is a “powerful guy” who is easily exploited because of who he is, the Catholic Church is a “powerful” institution that is also

easily exploited.

Rotunno is also right to say that "it's dangerous to believe all women" accusers. Similarly it is dangerous to believe the accounts of all those who claim to have been victimized by a priest. If someone has been truly molested, the evidence should support his claim. If the evidence is solid, he is entitled to justice, however that plays out in court.

The bishops are leery about appearing insensitive to victims, and their fears are realistic. But when there is good reason not to believe a word the accuser says, there is no virtue in remaining silent. Patently bogus charges need to be rebutted with vigor. At stake are the due process rights of accused priests.

It would do the Catholic Church wonders if more aggressive attorneys such as those employed by Cosby and Weinstein were hired. No priest should be a sitting duck for rapacious victims' lawyers. I might add that Rotunno is a Chicago lawyer who went to a Catholic college.

It is not certain how many priests have been victimized by vindictive accusers and their lawyers. Some of them are high profile priests.

In February we learned that Msgr. William Lynn, who was sentenced in 2012 for child endangerment when he was secretary for the clergy at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, will be retried again—his conviction was twice overturned—on March 16. But it is an open question whether his accuser, Danny Gallagher, a.k.a, Billy Doe, will be called to testify.

Gallagher is one of many priest accusers who are of suspect character, yet this has mattered little to the courts or the media. Ralph Cipriano, who has done the best work of any journalist on this case, rightfully described Gallagher as "a former drug addict, heroin dealer, habitual liar, third-rate conman and thief," who nonetheless was able to shake down the

Church for \$5 million in a civil settlement.

How could this have happened? Gallagher told two social workers for the archdiocese what allegedly happened to him at the hands of priests and a layman. Cipriano says that the details he offered—"the anal rapes, the punches, the threats, the claims about being tied up naked with altar sashes, strangled with a seatbelt, and forced to suck blood off a priest's penis—all those graphic details were dropped from his story" when he spoke to the police.

Worse, the defense lawyers were kept in the dark about this and also never learned of the explosive affidavit by detective Joe Walsh; he questioned Gallagher before the trial. He provided many stunning inconsistencies in Gallagher's account, concluding that he was an inveterate liar.

In January we learned that Father Roy T. Herberger from the Buffalo diocese filed a libel suit against his accuser who claimed that the priest abused him in the 1980s. The Diocese of Buffalo put the priest on administrative leave in June 2018, pending an investigation, and then concluded that the allegation was unfounded. He was returned to active ministry in December 2018.

Attorney Scott Riordan, who was hired by the diocese, did a report on the accuser. He found there was no record of him being at the school at the time when he was allegedly molested. The accuser said he was assaulted in the rectory of St. Ann church, but the priest had no key to get in as the parish was run by the Jesuits. The accuser said much of the abuse occurred in the priest's home in Lackawanna, but the priest never owned or rented a house in that neighborhood. And the inside of the home that the accuser described was found completely wrong by the owners.

It is not just in the United States where these travesties of justice are taking place.

Cardinal George Pell, who is in an Australian prison for alleged sexual abuse (awaiting a final appeal) was accused as far back as 1962. The case was dismissed because nothing could be substantiated. His accuser had been convicted 39 times for offenses ranging from assault to drug use. He was a violent drug addict who drove drunk and beat people.

In 1969, Pell was accused of doing nothing to help an abused boy who pleaded for help. But Pell was not in Australia that year—he was in Rome. At a later date he was accused of chasing away a complainant who informed him of a molesting priest. But Pell did not live where this allegedly happened, and the accuser was later imprisoned for sexually abusing children.

When Pell was accused of joking about a notorious molester priest's sexual assaults at a funeral Mass in Ballarat, it was later found that there was no Mass that day and the priest whom Pell was allegedly joking with was living someplace else when the alleged incident took place.

The occasions that got Pell imprisoned have also been called into question. One of his accusers was an alcoholic, a drug addict, and a thug who beat and stalked his girlfriend. His co-accuser also had a record of violence. As for the two choirboys who claimed Pell abused them, one has since died of a drug overdose, but not before telling his mother, on two occasions, that the alleged incident never happened.

These are three of the most high profile cases where a priest has been accused by men whose characterological profile is seriously impaired.

There is another priest, Father Gordon MacRae, who is still in prison in New Hampshire for crimes he vehemently denies, and whose accuser, Thomas Grover, has a history of theft, drugs, and violence. Even his former wife and stepson call him a "compulsive liar" and a "manipulator."

Lest anyone think that I will defend any accused priest, let

me be clear: I will defend the due process rights of any accused priest, but will not exculpate any priest who is guilty of an offense. The Catholic League is here to defend the Catholic Church against wrongdoing: We are not here to defend wrongdoing committed by the Church.

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

Bill Donohue

The following is an excerpt from a longer piece that is posted on our website under Annual Reports/Year in Review.

When the year began, I was anxiously awaiting an opportunity to defend the Catholic Church in one of those storied debates sponsored by the Oxford Union. The debate was scheduled for February. But in early January, about a month after being invited, I was disinvited.

We learned that some sources in the U.S. notified those in the U.K. about me, giving them information they deemed problematic. Why invite someone who may win when the pretext of the debate was to put the Catholic Church on the defensive? So while the Oxford Union proved to be cowardly, we took their decision as a backhanded compliment. It was a smart move on their part. It was also intellectually dishonest.

On the education front at home, students from Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky were slammed by the media for abusing an Indian activist in our nation's capital at a March for Life event. A video of the event surfaced showing the activist approaching the students, looking for a confrontation. We called out those who unfairly attacked the students, and there were quite a few who did, including

Catholics. The students behaved well, unlike the activist, the media, and pundits.

When those in the arts, education, the entertainment industry, and the media go after Catholics, they usually assault our sensibilities. Bad as that is, nothing is worse than having the heavy hand of government chime in: the power of the state is unparalleled.

In this regard, there was bad news and good news in 2019. The bad news is the extent of such assaults at both the state and federal levels. The good news is the Catholic League was on the winning side in case after case.

Senators Kamala Harris and Mazie Hirono showed their anti-Catholic colors by attacking a Catholic nominee for a job on the federal bench. Brian Buescher was nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court of Nebraska, but his alleged crime was his membership in the Knights of Columbus.

The senators reckoned that there was no place in government for practicing Catholics. To wit: The Knights accept the Church's teachings on marriage, the family, and sexuality, and that is a non-starter for those wedded to the gay and pro-abortion agendas.

We were among the first to come to bat for Buescher, and our effort paid off. After much haggling, he was seated on the court in August.

There was a Trump nominee for a seat on the U.S. District Court for Western Michigan that we took issue with. Michael Bogren said there was no difference between Catholic farm owners refusing to rent their property for the purpose of a gay wedding and the Klan's right to discriminate against blacks.

We contacted every member of the Senate Judiciary Committee expressing our concerns about his remarks, calling on the

chairman of the Committee, Sen. Lindsey Graham, to reject his nomination. Bogren got the message—the tide was turning against him—and he withdrew his nomination on June 11.

When Ralph Northam, the governor of Virginia, appointed an out-and-out anti-Catholic bigot, Gail Gordon Donegan, to a state council on women's issues, we went into high gear: we launched a massive protest, enlisting everyone on our email list. Three days later she resigned.

Rep. Brian Sims is another anti-Catholic bigot. The Pennsylvania legislator badgered an elderly Catholic woman for eight uninterrupted minutes because she was praying outside a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. His behavior, which was unprovoked, followed an occasion where he aggressively attempted to intimidate teenage girls, hoping to stop them from protesting against abortion.

We contacted the Chairman of the Committee on Ethics, seeking censure. When that effort failed (the operative code dealt with conflict of interest issues), we redoubled our efforts. This time we supported a resolution to censure Sims broached by Rep. Jerry Knowles. After the summer recess, Sims, feeling the pressure, did something he previously refused to do: he apologized to the woman whom he victimized.

Our most satisfying victory of the year was the massive email campaign we orchestrated opposing an effort by a California lawmaker to break the seal of Confession.

This scurrilous attempt to allow the government to encroach on the religious rights of Catholic priests and their penitents was met with a frontal assault. California State Senator Jerry Hill introduced a bill that would require the clergy to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the authorities, without regard to circumstances.

Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez led the fight and we stood side-by-side with him. Hill was forced to amend his bill, but

while it was an improvement, it was still objectionable. On June 12, I wrote to Hill about his bill.

“Regarding SB 360, you have been quoted as saying that ‘the clergy-penitent privilege has been abused on a large scale, resulting in underreported and systemic abuse of thousands of children across multiple denominations and faiths.’ Could you please provide my office with documentation to support that claim? I will not be coy: I don’t believe you can. But go ahead and prove me wrong.”

He never replied. What was he going to say?

We continued to fight Hill, and succeeded in eliciting over 7,000 emails, letters that were sent to those on both sides of the issue. On July 8, on the eve of a scheduled hearing on his initiative, he withdrew his bill.

Dana Nessel, Michigan’s Attorney General, has it out for Catholics. In February, she held a press conference on a state investigation into allegations of clergy sexual abuse. She hit below the belt when she told residents to “ask to see their badge and not their rosary” when contacted by investigators.

We unloaded on Nessel on several occasions, and the good news is that both lawmakers and judges finally caught on to her act.

Michigan State Rep. Beau LaFave called her out for saying that a retired Catholic judge should not have been hired by Michigan State University to address sexual abuse. She complained about his ties to the Catholic Church, as if that should be a disqualifier.

A federal district court judge in Michigan who upheld the religious freedom of a Catholic foster care and adoption agency specifically cited Nessel’s “religious targeting” of Catholics. He was unstinting in his rebuke of her anti-Catholic bigotry.

In Pennsylvania, for the second consecutive year, the Catholic League filed an *amicus curiae* brief in the courts defending the rights of priests. We appealed to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in support of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown decision to fight a Superior Court's use of a grand jury report as the starting point in triggering the statutes of limitation. It was unprecedented: it sought to change the practice of allowing the clock to start at the time of the injury. At the end of the year, a decision was still pending.

Perhaps nothing caused more excitement in Catholic circles in 2019 than the 6,000-word essay by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on the origins of clergy sexual abuse; it was published in April. He was attacked by Catholic left-wing intellectuals for daring to cite the role of the sexual revolution, the role of homosexual priests, and the role of dissent in the Church, as causative agents of the scandal. We were delighted to defend him.

Media bias is nothing new but when *USA Today* ran a lengthy story in early October singling out the Catholic Church for fighting unjust legislation, and the Associated Press (AP) followed within 24 hours with a flawed survey of former priests accused of sexual misconduct, it made us wonder what was going on.

The idea that the Church should not defend itself the way every other organization does was mimicked by the *Star-Gazette* in upstate New York; it appeared the month after the *USA Today* piece ran. We also learned that even before the *USA Today* story ran, CBS and NBC, as well as internet sites, were screaming about all the money the Church was paying for lobbyists. Yet all of these organizations do not hesitate to acquire the best defense attorneys money can buy when they are in the hot seat.

In November, the Wisconsin affiliate of National Public Radio did a hit job on the Church by dragging up old cases of abuse.

Is there any institution in the nation that could not be subjected to the same scrutiny? In December, CNN weighed in with an incredibly inane story on old cases.

For years the media have been lecturing the Church about keeping molesting priests in ministry for too long. What happens when the abusers get the boot? The media complain that the Church is required to police them. How about other employers? Are they expected to “supervise” ex-employees who have been fired for sexual misconduct? No. The “rule” only applies to the Catholic Church.

After AP ran its story in October, similar stories appeared the next month in the *Denver Post*, *USA Today*, and WCP0-TV Cincinnati (the ABC affiliate). When we researched if there were any stories like this done on non-Catholic organizations, we found none.

AP did an investigation into the way diocesan review boards handle cases of alleged abuse. It suggested that defense attorneys hired by the Church were somehow unfair when they grilled the accusers. That is what they are supposed to do.

There are so many wholly indefensible comments made about priests on TV. In 2019, no one was more obscene than Trevor Noah of “The Daily Show.”

Noah got so vulgar and vicious on his Comedy Central show that in the spring we hand-delivered a searing letter to 22 top executives at Viacom (the owner of Comedy Central) asking them to rein him in. “There are other options we can take,” I said, “and I will not hold back. But I thought I should at least apprise you of this matter now in the hope that we won’t have to pursue other options.”

Noah got the message and pivoted: He laid off the Church.

As expected, organized atheists attacked Christians at Christmastime, but what was different in 2019 was the

brazenness of these groups—they attempted to cash in on Christmas.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State sent out a survey as part of its bid to gain new membership; it portrayed those who support religious liberty as proponents of discrimination. Freedom From Religion Foundation ran a full-page ad in the *New York Times* that demonized Christians for exercising their First Amendment right to religious liberty. They accused them of trying to impose a “theocracy” on the nation.

In both instances, these religion-hating organizations—they hate Christians the most, holding a special place for Catholics—used Christmas to raise money while bashing us. It was a new low.

The year 2019 led the Catholic League into battle on many fronts, and we came away with many key victories. This is a tribute to the Catholic League staff and, importantly, to our supporters, without whom we would never be able to score a single victory.

THE ACLU AT 100

Bill Donohue

This is an excerpt from a longer paper by the same name. It can be found on the Catholic League website.

The ACLU will celebrate its centennial on January 20, 2020. Always contentious, it has become the most influential civil liberties organization in the nation. Its reputation as a non-partisan organization that vigorously defends the free speech

rights of all Americans, independent of their ideology or political leanings, is well known. However, it is a reputation that can be seriously challenged. Indeed, as I detailed in *The Politics of the American Civil Liberties Union* (Transaction Press, 1985), it would be more accurate to say that the Union is the legal arm of the liberal-left.

Its reputation as a force for freedom can also be seriously challenged. As I argued in *Twilight of Liberty: The Legacy of the ACLU* (Transaction Press, 1994; new material was published in the 2001 edition), the Union entertains a vision of liberty that is increasingly libertine: its promotion of radical individualism works to undermine the kind of moral consensus that is a bedrock of free societies.

Today the ACLU leadership contends that the organization has been a consistent non-partisan catalyst for freedom since it was founded by ten distinguished Americans. This is factually wrong. There was only one founder of the ACLU: Roger Baldwin. Any organization that lies about its founding is not likely to tell the truth about other matters.

The ACLU was nominally founded to defend free speech rights, but its real interest was the rights of labor. Baldwin pushed the ACLU to the radical fringe of the labor movement, leading Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, to accuse him of aiding and abetting revolutionary movements. Baldwin was a Communist fellow-traveler.

Baldwin traveled to the “workers’ paradise” and in 1928 released a glowing account of what he saw. The title of his book, *Liberty Under the Soviets*, accurately conveyed his message. In 1934, he wrote an article for *Soviet Russia Today* that made plain his sympathies. He vigorously defended Stalinism.

Then, in 1939, Baldwin experienced the “biggest shock of my life.” That was when he learned of the Nazi-Soviet pact. When

I interviewed him in 1978, he told me that the pact meant that “the distinction between Communism and Fascism [was] no longer tenable.” It also meant that he had to seriously reconsider the propriety of having members of the Communist Party on its board of directors; he worked to get one thrown out of the ACLU.

During World War II, President Roosevelt ordered the internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans. Today the ACLU likes to brag how it challenged this initiative. On its website it lists over twelve highlights in its history. One of them reads, “The ACLU stood almost alone in denouncing the federal government’s internment of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans in concentration camps.”

This is pure myth. It is true that the Northern California affiliate opposed the internment, but the national organization did not—it defended the removal of anyone from military zones whose presence may endanger national security.

Though the ACLU took a moderate position on many issues in the 1940s and 1950s, in the 1960s it resorted back to its more radical ways. It was on social and economic issues that it turned decisively left. Egalitarians on the ACLU’s board started lobbying for economic rights, and in 1984 succeeded in developing a policy declaring poverty to be a civil liberties issue.

Does a homeless person have the right to sleep on sidewalks? What if the temperature falls below freezing and the police ask him to seek shelter, and he refuses to move? The ACLU says the homeless have a constitutional right to stay put. When this policy was implemented in the 1980s in New York City, three homeless persons froze to death—as a direct result of the ACLU’s “Project Freeze” policy.

As proof of its influence today, consider that the Chicago police force has been required to adopt the ACLU’s vision of

crime control. In a consent decree, whose strictures were written by the ACLU, the cops must prepare mountains of paperwork, slowing down their response to crime. The result? Chicago is one of the most violent cities in the nation.

Making matters worse is the ACLU's push to legalize *all* drugs. It also wants to legalize street prostitution, pornography, and gambling. Only someone drunk on individual rights would conclude that such activities contribute to the makings of a free society.

The ACLU is known as a strong proponent of women's rights. What is less well known is that opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment was long considered a pro-women position. For decades, beginning in the 1920s, the ACLU argued that women had enough rights enshrined in the Constitution, and did not need the ERA. The same radical judge on the ACLU's board who led the fight against the ERA did a quick pivot in 1970: She insisted that women could not be free without it. That is when the ACLU changed its position.

The women's right that the ACLU treasures above all is abortion.

In the late 1970s, Rep. Henry Hyde authored a bill restricting the federal funding of abortion. The ACLU, determined to cast his effort as an attempt to shove Roman Catholic doctrine down the throats of the public, summoned a lawyer to follow him into church on Sunday. She entered her spy notes in a 301-page brief, which got nowhere. When asked about this, Hyde said, "I suppose the Nazis did that—observed Jews going into the synagogues in Hitler's Germany—but I had hoped we would have gotten past that kind of fascistic tactic."

What the ACLU did to Hyde was no mistake. When it was founded in 1920, it listed ten objectives, including all the rights detailed in the First Amendment, with one exception: freedom of religion. This was no oversight. Baldwin, and many of his

colleagues, were atheists.

Freedom from religion has always played a much bigger role for the ACLU than freedom of religion. The list of religious expressions it objects to is quite long. In the 1980s, it worked to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status. It continues to this day trying to censor religious speech on public property, including nativity scenes. It is so terrified of religion that it has even objected to a nine-foot underwater statue of Jesus Christ placed three miles off the coast of Key Largo.

If there is one civil liberty that the ACLU is most known for defending, it is freedom of speech. It took only a few years after its founding to prove how insincere it was.

In December 1936, Harold Lord Varney wrote a critical piece about the ACLU in the *American Mercury*, an influential journal of opinion. The article, "The Civil Liberties Union—Liberalism à la Moscow," was a searing indictment of the ACLU's alleged non-partisan position. Most of what Varney said was undeniably true, but some of his comments exaggerated the Union's record. There certainly was nothing libelous about it.

Upon publication, the ACLU threatened a libel suit. This incident has been wholly ignored for decades by those who write about the organization, and by the ACLU itself. It amounts to a cover-up.

Varney seized on Baldwin's praise for the Soviet Union. "Repression in Western democracies are violations of professed constitutional liberties and I condemn them as such. Repressions in Soviet Russia are weapons of struggle in a transition period to Socialism." This, and similar statements like it, are what irked Varney. What followed was a series of hot exchanges between the ACLU and Varney. Then came the libel suit. It was not dropped until a compromise was reached, allowing both sides to save face.

In more recent times, the ACLU has been quick to hail its defense of neo-Nazis as evidence of its non-partisan approach. But everyone knows that these nuts pose no real threat. More seriously, why is the ACLU reluctant to defend the free speech rights of pro-life demonstrators, or conservative speakers on college campuses?

When it comes to other issues, its position on free speech is so far gone that it actually defends the sale and distribution of child pornography. It lost in a unanimous decision in the Supreme Court in 1982.

The author of the First Amendment, James Madison, never envisioned that freedom of speech would come to mean the defense of child pornography. Nor did he think that free speech would include dwarf-tossing, mud wrestling, sleeping in parks, and the right of demonstrators to block traffic on bridges. These are all official policies of the ACLU.

Today the most vocal critic of the ACLU is Alan Dershowitz, the former Harvard Law professor. He argues that he hasn't changed, the ACLU has; he charges that it has become increasingly political. I would say that it has reverted back to its hyper-partisan beginnings.

Ever since Dershowitz left Harvard and moved back to New York, he has been at the forefront of legal controversies involving President Donald Trump. He has mostly defended the president and has been relentless in calling out the ACLU—he was a former board member—for doing nothing in the face of gross constitutional injustices.

What irks Dershowitz are the numerous government raids on the homes, hotel rooms, and offices of those who have worked for the Trump administration. The authorities seized material protected by lawyer-client privilege. What has the ACLU done about it? Nothing. Why? Politics and money.

No one disagrees that the ACLU harbors a strong animus against

Trump. The money aspect is less obvious.

Under ACLU president Anthony Romero today, fund-raising has become more important than ever before. Dershowitz maintains that “after Trump took office, the ACLU has never become so cash rich, yet principle poor.” What matters most is the profile of today’s donors.

“The problem is that most of that money is not coming from civil libertarians who care about free speech, due process, the rights of the accused and defending the unpopular,” Dershowitz notes. “It is coming from radical leftists in Hollywood, Silicon Valley, and other areas not known for a deep commitment to civil liberties.”

The ACLU has always been political, but not until recently has it jumped into the political arena with both feet. In 2018 it officially overthrew nearly 100 years of policy when it announced its foray into electoral politics. It pledged to spend more than twenty-five million dollars trying to affect the November elections.

Ira Glasser, who preceded Romero, was blown away by this decision. He told the *New Yorker* magazine that this was “a transformative change,” one that “has the capacity to destroy the organization as it has always existed.”

The moderates in the ACLU have largely been purged. It was on the left from the beginning, but at least had its responsible moments. Now it is a totally politicized extremist organization, one that Roger Baldwin (whom I came to like), would not recognize.

ATHEISTS WHO ARE HATERS

Bill Donohue

When I studied at New York University for my undergraduate degree, no one had a greater influence on me than Sidney Hook.

Hook was one of the most brilliant political philosophers of the 20th century. He started as a Marxist and wound up a moderate conservative. He was also an atheist, though I never detected, or read about, any hateful comments that he ever made about religion, or people of faith. He was too decent a man to engage in hate speech.

There is no reason to believe that most atheists today are hateful persons; they simply don't believe in God. Unfortunately, when it comes to organized atheists, that's a different story: many are hateful persons, spilling their venom at innocent men and women who practice their faith. Among the worst are the atheist haters at Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF).

When FFRF is in the news, it is a sure bet it is trying to censor some person or religious symbol. It is known for what it is against, not what it is for, save hatred for religion. Recently, it got bent out of shape when Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt said he would speak at a Protestant church in Tulsa. What makes FFRF's beef so dishonest is its habit of ignoring politicians who use black churches for a rally. This goes on all the time.

FFRF is based in Madison, Wisconsin, a left-wing college town. It was founded in 1976 by Anne Nicol Gaylor and her daughter, Annie Laurie Gaylor. They regard themselves and their members as "freethinkers," to be distinguished from all of those close-minded persons who believe in God. They are too smart for that. Yet they have no idea how the world began or why we are here, choosing to believe in nothing. "Nothinkers" may be

a more apt way of characterizing them.

Last year at this time, FFRF featured Cecile Richards at its annual convention; she was the outgoing president of Planned Parenthood. She was a good choice: FFRF is passionately pro-abortion. So much so that Anne Nicol Gaylor once wrote a book, *Abortion Is A Blessing*. So much for the argument that “no one is really for abortion.”

Why are so many organized atheists rabidly pro-abortion? Sex. They believe in a pansexual world where everything goes, absent any judgment. For them, the three most dreaded words in the English language are, “Thou Shalt Not.” They don’t want to be told by anyone what they should and should not do, and they sure don’t want to hear from religious Americans.

One reason why FFRF is on the march these days is because of the lack of competition from American Atheists. There is great irony in this story: its former chief, David Silverman, was fired on April 12, 2018 for sexually assaulting women. Had he not sneered at “Thou Shalt Not” he might still be president.

Religious liberty is constantly under attack by FFRF. It recently became apoplectic when it learned that the Trump administration, under the tutelage of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, announced the formation of the Commission on Unalienable Rights. This entity, led by Mary Ann Glendon, the brilliant Harvard law professor who serves on the Catholic League’s advisory board, is charged with assessing human rights from the perspective of natural law and natural rights. These founding principles scare the daylight out of FFRF: that’s because they reflect our Creator, the source of our unalienable rights.

Religious symbols in the workplace bother FFRF. They want them banished. When it learned that employees in a municipal building in Taylor County, Texas had crosses on their desks, it went bonkers. Another worker had the gall to have a Bible

on his desk. To make matters worse, “God Bless America” signs were also found, including one on the door of the Veterans’ Service Office.

FFRF sees Christian symbols as analogous to swastikas. That’s why it had a fit with an Alabama school board in Cullman County when it added “In God We Trust” to school displays last year. In 2017, it wrote a threatening letter to Dan Hughes, mayor of Henderson County in Tennessee. Why? FFRF learned of a biblical verse from Psalms etched on the wall of the local county courthouse. It did not matter that the verse had been there for a half century without anyone complaining.

The good news is that FFRF loses more than it wins. Over the summer it took it on the chin when a federal appeals court overturned a lower court ruling on the constitutionality of allowing Lehigh County, Pennsylvania to keep its 75-year-old seal that has an image of a Christian cross. The Philadelphia appeals court noted that the seal did not amount to a government endorsement of religion.

The House of Representatives begins each legislative day with a prayer, a practice that has been observed since the First Continental Congress. In 2016, FFRF officials demanded equal time: it asked House Chaplain Father Patrick Conroy for the right to offer a “non-prayer” invocation. After they were denied, they sued. In 2017, they lost in federal district court. The next year they lost on an appeal to the D.C. Circuit Court. It was only fitting that they lost on Good Friday.

Veterans often rely on religion for peace and solace. When FFRF found out in 2007 that the Department of Veterans Affairs gave veterans spiritual assessments, asking about their religious practices, it sued. Chalk up another loss.

FFRF hates Christmas. If it can’t censor nativity scenes, it settles for a contrived competition, displaying some silly

secular symbols next to the crèches. This is another example of its “against” agenda: it is always against something that Christians like. Satanic displays, of course, meet with its approval. Though the atheists would like to stop the Catholic League from displaying its life-size nativity scene every year in Central Park, it cannot: we get a permit from the New York City Parks Department; the government cannot discriminate against people of faith in venues that are considered a public forum.

FFRF has a special hatred of Catholics. From time to time, it likes to take out newspaper ads imploring Catholics to leave the Church. I have never seen it ask Muslims to leave their mosques or Jews to leave their synagogues.

Whenever a Catholic is in the news for doing something wrong, FFRF pounces on it. But when Stephen Hicks murdered three Muslims near the campus of the University of North Carolina in 2015, it said nothing. That’s because Hicks was a militant atheist.

Lots of Americans who are not Catholic are proponents of school choice, but when this issue surfaces, FFRF chooses to make it a Catholic issue. For example, Trump’s Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, has been accused by FFRF of pushing a “theocratic agenda to destroy public, secular education.” The leading “theocrats,” of course, are Catholics.

In some parts of the country, it has long been considered acceptable to have polling stations in or adjacent to a church. Voters simply cast their ballot and leave. But the issue is not that simple for FFRF. Annie Laurie Gaylor zeroed in on Catholics when she addressed this in 2003, and her words were not measured. “Asking a feminist to vote in a Roman Catholic Church is like asking a black man to vote in a KKK hall.” That’s right—there is no difference between a local Catholic church and a facility used by racists and terrorists.

Whenever a pope comes to the United States, FFRF rears its ugly head in protest. It not only objects to spending public monies for security purposes (newsflash: the pope is a head of state, not just a religious leader), it objects when public institutions cooperate with his visit. In 2017, it was angered when it learned that the football team at the University of Michigan attended a papal audience. When it learned that the athletes were to receive a papal blessing, it said this was a violation of the First Amendment. It looked foolish again—no one paid it any heed.

FFRF doesn't like Catholic judges. It is therefore not surprising to learn that it thinks we have too many Catholics on the Supreme Court. It has a special hatred of Catholic male judges. In 2014, it took out a full-page ad in the New York Times objecting to the Hobby Lobby decision (which did not involve a Catholic company) because the five Catholic male judges voted to sustain religious liberties.

"DOGMA SHOULD NOT TRUMP OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES. ALL-MALE ALL-ROMAN CATHOLIC MAJORITY ON SUPREME COURT PUTS RELIGIOUS WRONGS OVER WOMEN'S RIGHTS."

Translated this means that it was furious with the ruling that sustained the right of an evangelical Christian owner not to pay for contraception in his healthcare plan for workers. FFRF blamed the male Catholics for the decision.

FFRF never says a word about the fact that one third of the Supreme Court is Jewish, though Jews make up only two percent of the population. Nor does it say anything negative about Sonia Sotomayor: not only is she not a practicing Catholic, she is reliably pro-abortion and always follows the gay agenda. She is the kind of Catholic FFRF likes.

Aside from the late Christopher Hitchens, the famous atheist whom I debated on many occasions, it would be hard to find anyone who hates Mother Teresa (now St. Teresa of Calcutta).

Hard but not impossible. FFRF does.

In 2003, FFRF condemned the Madison Metro System in Madison, Wisconsin because it put a picture of Mother Teresa on its bus pass for the month of April; its practice was to choose a prominent person each month for this honor. The fanatics at FFRF saw this as a violation of church and state. To show how much FFRF hates Catholics, when the May pass featured a picture of Rev. Martin Luther King, it said nothing.

In 2016, atheists took to the streets of Washington, D.C. to promote their cause. That agenda, of course, meant an agenda of hate. FFRF was there, of course, and no doubt was loving it when atheist Penn Jillette went on an obscene rant against Mother Teresa.

Owing to the clout of conservative evangelical Christians, FFRF has often set its sights on them, as well as Catholics. In 2012, it was so incensed about conservative Christians who allowed politicians to speak at their churches, that it actually sued the IRS for not enforcing its rules. Naturally, it said nothing about African American churches inviting candidates for public office to address their congregations. In 2014, FFRF claimed victory when there was none: FFRF withdrew its lawsuit after the IRS simply clarified its strictures.

I am saving the best for last. In 2018, the IRS revoked the tax exemption status of NonBelief Relief, an agency incorporated by FFRF for failing to file its Form 990 for three consecutive years. FFRF then sued the IRS, claiming the tax-exempt status was unfairly revoked.

In October, it held its annual convention, featuring speakers no one ever heard of, which is precisely what we would expect from a group of "Nothinkers." They really are a sorry bunch of losers.

GIVING UP ON THE POOR

The greatest enemy of the poor are those who champion their cause. It sounds counterintuitive. How can this be? Because most of those who lead the charge against poverty have no personal stake in their cause.

Unlike Mother Teresa, who made it clear that helping the poor must begin with those who carry their banner, most of the professional champions of the poor believe that writing a check—with other people's money—will solve the problem. It rarely does.

To be sure, the aged, the disabled, and the infirm benefit from a safety net. Similarly, as the late Daniel Patrick Moynihan observed, social security did more to alleviate poverty among the elderly than any other factor. But when the subject switches to able-bodied men and women, the check-writing approach fails. Indeed, it typically makes matters worse by fostering dependency.

There is a ton of empirical evidence to back up this observation. Yet in many influential quarters, all the data in the world mean nothing. Ideology wins every time. The latest gambit to catch fire is called Universal Basic Income, a scheme that many Democrats running for president are inclined to support. Each candidate is outdoing the other by promising to provide more goodies than Santa Claus ever did, funding their gambits by playing Robin Hood.

Offering a guaranteed annual income is not a new idea, but the latest incarnation is novel: credit the Silicon Valley with giving birth to it. Those who live there are overwhelmingly wealthy and overwhelmingly burdened with guilt. Every one of

them became rich through hard work and ingenuity, but they are convinced that those at the bottom of the income scale do not possess these attributes. Which is why they want to send them a check.

Forget about the racist assumptions—the successful ones are either white or Asian and the ones at the bottom are mostly black or Hispanic—the fact remains that these schemes are bound to fail.

Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, is leading the cause for a universal income. He broached this idea while speaking to Harvard graduates in 2017. His net worth exceeds \$55 billion, meaning that his stash is bigger than the GDP of over 100 nations.

Zuckerberg and his rich left-wing friends in the Silicon Valley have endorsed a policy that would give a monthly stipend to those who live in Stockton, California, 80 miles away. The plan is to make Stockton the first city in the nation to participate in a test of the Universal Basic Income policy. It will begin by selecting 100 people, each of whom will receive \$500 a month for 18 months. It will begin next year; they hope to make it available to everyone citywide.

They haven't determined who the lucky first 100 people will be, but they'll figure it out. The goal is to see to it that none of the 300,000 residents live in poverty. Not sure how they will keep illegal aliens from moving to Stockton—there is no talk of a wall (not yet anyway)—but again, the rich boys will figure it out.

The good news for the recipients is that there are no conditions on how the money is to be spent. They can spend their money on food and shelter or on booze and heroin. Everything goes. No questions asked.

Chicago is the first big city to give serious consideration to Universal Basic Income. A bill was introduced last year that

would give \$500 a month to 1,000 Chicago families. Following the Stockton model, they can spend their money on anything they want. The politicians are still studying this issue. If it passes, let's hope Chicagoans don't buy any more guns.

No one has given the idea of Universal Basic Income a lift more than Barack Obama. When he spoke in Johannesburg, South Africa last year, at an event honoring Nelson Mandela, he endorsed the initiative. "It's not just money a job provides," he said, "it provides dignity and structure and a sense of place and a sense of purpose."

Yes, a job can do all that. But the Universal Basic Income policy does not require anyone to work. The effect of giving a handout to able-bodied persons who are not in the labor market is fundamentally different from giving social security to retirees who paid into the fund for decades.

Alaska has had something like this program for a long time. Rich with oil money, it has provided a universal income to virtually everyone for decades. The few economic studies done on this initiative indicate that it has not had any noticeable effect on overall employment (though part-time rates have spiked). What has not been studied is the effect on able-bodied persons at the bottom of the income scale who are not working.

Alaska, of course, is not typical. It has tens of billions of oil money to play with, and since the program is not aimed at the poor, the effect on the middle class is similar to the effect of social security on seniors, which is negligible. These people have their dignity precisely because they have earned the money they live off of, something which is not true of many in the lower class.

Obama may mean well, but what he is promoting is likely to retard the upward mobility chances of the poor. He has a proven track record of doing just that. To wit: African

Americans are doing much better economically under President Trump's growth-oriented approach than they did under Obama's redistributive policies.

"I'm surprised how much money I've got," Obama told the South African audience. So are many Americans—his net worth is over \$40 million. He added that he would have no problem paying "a little more in taxes" to pay for Universal Basic Income. Again, it's the multimillionaires (and multibillionaires) who sponsor such programs. They know full well that the effect of new taxes on them has almost a zero effect as compared to the burden levied on the middle class who must pay the lion's share of this pipedream.

As usual, little attention is being given to the unintended consequences of a Universal Basic Income policy. Why shouldn't the recipients receive \$1500 a month, instead of \$500? What will the proponents say when the recipients demand a raise? What will the sponsors say to those not selected to participate in their scheme?

What effect will the program have on those who should be working, but have now elected not to? How will it affect hard-working persons living just above the poverty line knowing that their taxes are going to some who prefer to hang out on the corner rather than seek a job? How will they feel when they learn that the cash allotment is being spent on drugs, not groceries? What will happen if the program goes bust? Are the proponents ready for the riots?

Universal Basic Income is the latest expression of what social scientist Charles Murray once called our "custodial democracy." He meant by that the tendency of government to essentially take custodial responsibility for the welfare of the poor. In the end, it does more to foster paternalism than anything else.

Pope Benedict XVI, in his magisterial encyclical, *Caritas in*

Veritate, said that subsidiarity—the Catholic principle which teaches that those closest to the problem are best suited to fix it—is the “most effective antidote against any form of all-encompassing welfare state.” He expressly called upon us to practice solidarity with the poor, but to do so in ways that do not promote paternalism.

The most effective way to help the poor is to strengthen their families. The family, not the state, is the greatest determinant of upward mobility. Unfortunately, decades of welfare policies, especially from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, helped to cripple inner-city minority families, the results of which are still with us.

It is not good enough to have good intentions—results matter. Low unemployment rates garnered through tax-incentive programs for corporations mean much more in the end than the most well-intentioned welfare programs that wind up disabling the needy. But the champions of the poor, most of whom made a fortune through the market economy, say that their route to success cannot work for the poor. They are as wrong as they are condescending.

From my own work with the disadvantaged in Spanish Harlem, I saw first-hand how core education principles—sticking to the basics, offering structure, demanding discipline, and assigning homework—paid off. My students did well because much was demanded of them. When we lower the bar of expectations for the poor, we lower their prospects for success.

What accounts for success? One way to find out is by studying Asians. Why are they a success?

Asians do well in school, and well in the workforce, for one very basic reason: they are extremely disciplined. Impulse control is not a problem for them—their two parent families have seen to that—and that alone is an incredibly important variable accounting for academic excellence. When intact

families are a rarity, so is impulse control, and so is success.

Catholic schools cannot make up for all the damage done to children in poor one-parent families, but they do a better job than their counterparts. A new study published by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, conducted by a professor and one of his doctoral students at the University of California-Santa Barbara, sheds light on why.

“First, students in Catholic schools are less likely to act out or be disruptive than those in other private or public schools. Second, students in Catholic schools exhibit more self-control than those in other private and public schools. Third, regardless of demographics, students in Catholic schools exhibit more self-discipline than students in other private schools.”

Regarding the role that religion plays, the researchers concluded, “Don’t underestimate the power of religion to positively influence a child’s behavior. But in the absence of that, schools can adopt courses or programs that might foster self-discipline.”

All of this takes work. Impulse control does not come naturally to children, yet without it, success—in any field—is elusive. No one needs to have it instilled in them more than kids who live in poverty and crime-ridden neighborhoods. Once the value of self-discipline is inculcated, progress can be made.

This is what the champions of the poor should be concentrating on, not giveaway programs. But they are too hostile to traditionalism to speak to the virtue of self-control. That would be moralistic. And they are too opposed to religion, especially Catholicism, to promote school choice initiatives. So they fall back on their check-writing schemes.

Mother Teresa said that helping the poor should be an act of

love, and that love should cost: it should cost those who work with the poor to enhance the condition of the needy. Universal Basic Income does none of this. It is nothing but another cheap trick played by some very rich Americans who harbor a patronizing attitude toward the poor. They are the poor's greatest enemy.