

# DISSIDENCE AND DEVIANCE IN THE CHURCH: CONNECTING THE DOTS

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the sex abuse scandal in the Catholic Church by examining the relationship between heterodoxy and sexual deviance. Donohue holds a doctorate in sociology from New York University. He has taught college courses on the family and has authored books and articles that address the subject of human sexuality. Here are his remarks:

“It is well known that Paul Shanley, a former priest of the Boston Archdiocese, was a serial child molester. Indeed, he not only practiced pedophilia, he publicly justified it and even went so far as to say ‘the kid is the seducer’ in sexual encounters between adults and children. Shanley also endorsed bestiality. That he remained a priest for more than decade after this was disclosed is not in a dispute. Nor is it disputed that he was promoted to pastor by Cardinal Law *after* it was known that he attended the first conference of the North American Man/Boy Love Association in 1978; at the time he was the representative of Cardinal Medeiros for sexual minorities.

“Shanley’s twisted views on sexuality were not an anomaly. In a 1977 book published by the Catholic Theological Society of America, *Human Sexuality: New Directions in American Catholic Thought*, author Father Anthony Kosnik argued against traditional Catholic teaching on sexuality. He maintained that we must jettison the view that holds fornication, adultery, homosexuality, sodomy and bestiality to be intrinsically evil acts. Showing the wide cultural variance in sexual taboos, Kosnik concluded that priests must understand that ‘God is surely present’ in homosexual

relations that are marked by 'sincere affection.' This book was widely used in seminaries at the time but was condemned in 1979 by the bishops. Kosnik, however, remained teaching in a seminary until 1982.

"It is time we connected the dots between dissidence and deviance. While the latter is not always caused by the former, it provides intellectual cover."