

MEDIA FLOAT NEGATIVE PIECE ON CHURCH

Recently, Bill Donohue saw an article on a British website, The Conversation, that was critical of the Church. Initially he did not respond, but decided to after learning it was picked up by Newsweek and was posted on the front page of Yahoo.

The author, Brendan Canavan, teaches marketing in England. He sought to account for the alleged collapse of Catholicism and, fortunately, provided links to articles that support his position. We say “fortunately” because the support is often thin, non-existent, or even contradictory.

He said the Church is one of the “most profitable brands in history.” This may come as a shock to a marketing professor in the U.K., but the Church is not a “brand.” As for its alleged “profitability,” the author linked to an article that detailed how *unprofitable* it is today.

Similarly, he concluded that the sexual abuse scandal “has irreparably” tarnished the Church. He linked to an article in a British tabloid that discussed how one man said he was molested 35 years ago, and mentioned a study about priestly sexual abuse that covered decades-old cases.

He cited the decline in Catholic congregations as a sign that it needs to become more relevant, yet the piece he linked to admitted that the trendy Protestant denominations have been in free-fall for decades. Hello! He says the Church’s problems with gays threaten a “schism,” yet the linked article never mentioned anything about a “schism.” That’s a big charge—it demands big evidence. There isn’t any.

To substantiate his position that the Catholic “brand” needs updating, he linked to articles that discuss the tobacco and

auto industry. Swell. Similarly, he said, "Research suggests that anti-gay and anti-science attitudes are turning people away from religion in the U.S." The linked article quoted one young woman, and she complained about politicians.

Newsweek and Yahoo have been had. But Donohue guesses they liked the story so much that the lack of supporting data were deemed irrelevant.