

# MEET THE REAL CENSORS

On October 13, 1998, Bill Donohue held a demonstration in the street outside the theater that hosted “Corpus Christi,” the Terrence McNally play that depicted Christ having sex with the apostles. Donohue did not seek to have the government censor the play, but there was a protest of his right to protest the play. The *New York Times* commented on his demonstration: “The protest began with a fiery speech from William A. Donohue, the president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. Holding a bullhorn inside an area barricaded by the police, Mr. Donohue shouted criticisms at the opposition. ‘You are the real authoritarians at heart,’ he said. ‘We’re the ones that believe in tolerance, not you phonies.’”

The *Times* noted that Donohue assembled 2,000 people on a rainy night and was greeted by a counter-demonstration of 300. Who protested his right to protest? People for the American Way, the National Coalition Against Censorship, PEN American Center and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. They wanted to censor Donohue.

In 2001, when Indiana University-Purdue University hosted “Corpus Christi,” Donohue was asked to join 11 state lawmakers and local residents in a lawsuit against the university. He refused to do so, citing his objections to censorship. Instead, Donohue asked the school’s chancellor to allow the distribution of a statement he wrote objecting to the play, making sure that all attendees got a copy. He agreed. That’s how Donohue operates.