

NEW YORK TIMES PRINTS BOGUS OP-ED

In a recent op-ed article in the *New York Times*, Harvard law professor Lawrence Lessig said the Catholic Church failed to protect children “for hundreds of years,” yet offered no evidence to support his outrageous claim. Most of the abuse, which involved post-pubescent males, occurred between the mid-60s and the mid-80s. Moreover, for him to say that the problem is “worsening” because the Church is allegedly taking a leading role preventing victims from compensation is complete and utter nonsense: all the data show that in recent years the Church has done a better job addressing this problem than any other institution.

Lessig had the gall to say that the Church is standing in the way of repealing sovereign immunity: anyone who is even vaguely familiar with this subject knows it is the public school establishment—not the Church—that benefits from, and resists changes to, this discriminatory state doctrine. He really fell on his face when he hailed New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey: she was the one seeking to insulate the public schools from being treated the same way in law that private [read: Catholic] schools are with regards to the statute of limitations. In other words, Lessig was siding with those who want to *keep* sovereign immunity. He’s in good company: last March, the *Times* decided not to back the bill by Assemblyman Vito Lopez that would have treated private and public institutions equally. Instead, it backed the Markey bill that shielded the public schools.

Bill Donohue spoke to this issue saying, “When I submit letters or op-ed page ads to the *Times*, they typically request that I offer proof of my assertions. I have no problem with that. But I do have a problem when op-ed page submissions strewn with factual errors are accepted without emendation.”