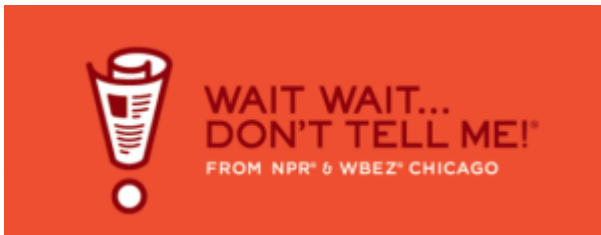


NPR'S RESPONSE TO CATHOLICS FAILS



Bill Donohue comments on how National Public Radio (NPR) is responding to complaints about the offensive episode of “Wait Wait Don’t Tell Me” that aired

December 6:

On December 8, I issued a news release objecting to the latest episode of “Wait Wait,” and also asked those on our email list to contact NPR. Many did. The episode was downright offensive: it made a veiled reference to Jesus with his hands on his genitals.

Here is how NPR responded to it critics. “Wait Wait is a comedy show that pokes fun at the news. The goal is always to make people laugh. I regret that we did not succeed in this case.”

The “news” that NPR decided to deride was neither a major national or international story: it was about an outreach program aimed at young people in the Diocese of Brooklyn. More seriously, NPR is very selective about who it wants its audience to laugh at. For example, never once has NPR come even close to mocking Muhammad, and no sexual references have ever been about him, including on “Wait Wait.”

When the Danish cartoons that poked fun at Muhammad were published in 2005 and 2006, NPR refused to publish them on its website. NPR explained its decision to self-censor by saying, “the cartoon is so highly offensive to millions of Muslims that it’s preferable to describe it in words rather than posting it on the Web....By not posting it on the Web, we demonstrate a respect for deeply held religious beliefs.”

We are asking House Speaker John Boehner to take up the issue of defunding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the parent company of NPR. Until Catholics are afforded the same degree of respect for their “deeply held religious beliefs,” they should not have to subsidize attacks on their religion. This is hardly the first time that NPR has ridiculed Catholics, but doing so at Christmastime makes it all the more egregious.

Contact NPR's media relations director, Isabel Lara:
ilara@npr.org