

POPE BLAMED FOR GANG RAPE

Ian Buruma is not exactly a household name, but he is a hero to readers of the *New York Review of Books*. His fan base was obviously warm to his piece in the Beirut newspaper, *The Daily Star*, taking a shot at Pope Benedict XVI in the most ridiculous fashion.

Buruma began by recounting the brutal rape of a young woman by six men on a New Delhi bus in December. His quick segue to Pope Benedict XVI's speech on gay marriage, which was given a few days before Christmas, was not only awkward, it was a dead give-away: the pope was responsible for the gang rape.

Buruma admitted that the pope does not advocate violence against homosexuals, but in the end it doesn't matter. "I would argue that his speech [the pope's] actually encourages the kind of sexual aggression that can result in the savagery that took place in New Delhi."

Now if this were just the scribbling of another wingnut, it would matter little. But Buruma teaches at Bard College and has won several awards from prestigious institutions in the U.S. and Europe.

Curiously, he is the Henry R. Luce Professor of Democracy, Human Rights, and Journalism at Bard. What is curious about his post is that he is a strong opponent of human rights. To be specific, though he has written at length about Tariq Ramadan, he cannot bring himself to denounce the Muslim philosopher for refusing to condemn the Muslim practice of stoning adulterous women to death. Even more perverse, Buruma has trashed one of the most courageous defenders of human rights in the world, ex-Muslim and feminist Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

In other words, Buruma is a fraud. He cares not a whit about human rights, and is so in bed with the gay rights movement that he is utterly incapable of making critical distinctions.

Moreover, his idea of cause and effect is so debased that it would allow his critics to accuse him of driving Christian persecution in Muslim-run nations.