

# POPE CRACKS DOWN ON SEX ABUSE

Pope Francis has no stomach for any type of sexual abuse. His decision to revise the norms affecting these crimes, with more stringent penalties, is a welcome tonic. However, he does not need to be congratulated for this—he needs to be supported by those in a position to do so.

Child sexual abuse affects every organization where there's sustained interaction between adults and children. In the West, it's heightened by a sick culture eroticizing youth. From advertisements to TV—to say nothing of music videos and movies—we are inundated with hyper-sexualized portrayals and images, resulting in a morally debased milieu.

On racial tensions, many note the “root causes” of poverty and injustice. But the same persons show little or no interest in addressing the “root causes” of child sexual exploitation. As seen in the debate over gun control, those screaming loudest for stricter gun laws were typically silent on Hollywood's role fostering violence. The same is true about sexual exploitation—there's a reluctance to get Hollywood to address its role in furthering this problem.

The Church had a problem with sexual abuse in the 1960s and 1970s, but today it has the cleanest record of any institution. Today child sexual abuse is a problem in Hollywood, on Indian reservations, in the Orthodox Jewish communities, public schools, and the home (boyfriends and stepfathers are the worst offenders). Wherever it exists, it must be stamped out. Thank God Pope Francis is leading the way.