

RHODE ISLAND'S SELECTIVE INTEREST IN SEXUAL ABUSE

[Bill Donohue](#)

Rhode Island is the latest state to demonstrate its selective interest in combatting the sexual abuse of minors. It is *only* interested in probing the Catholic clergy, having zero interest in probing the clergy in every other religion. Furthermore, it has no interest in investigating the on-going crisis in the public schools.

Therapists, coaches, camp staff, doctors, psychiatrists, those who work with the disabled, and every profession where adults regularly interact with minors, are given a pass.

The biggest abusers of minors are, without doubt, live-in boyfriends. But don't expect Peter F. Neronha, Rhode Island's attorney general, to go after them. Why? There's no money in it. Also, the former Catholic likes going after the Catholic Church. As soon as he became AG, he set his eyes on the Church.

When blacks are subjected to disproportionate stops by the police, it is called racial profiling. What Rhode Island is doing to priests is religious profiling. Yet the media are silent about this egregious injustice. They wouldn't be silent if Neronha investigated sexual harassment on the job, selecting *only* reporters to probe.

Neronha's report covers cases of alleged abuse dating back to 1950, when Harry Truman was present and Elvis Presley was 15. It was determined that 75 accused members of the clergy (66 of whom were priests) were responsible for victimizing 300 minors.

Guess what else Neronha found? What every other investigation

has found: 83 percent of the victims were male, and 74 percent of them were postpubescent. This means that homosexuals did most of the damage. Get it straight: When adult males have sex with postpubescent males, it's called homosexuality, not pedophilia. But don't expect Neronha or the media to report on this fact. The cover-up continues.

When did this happen? As always, it was during the sexual revolution, in the 1960s and 1970s. As I pointed out in my book, [*The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*](#), libertinism as an idea was born in the 1960s and the acting out largely took place in the 1970s. That's what Rhode Island found as well.

The last time there was a known instance of the sexual abuse of minors by the Catholic clergy in Rhode Island was 15-years ago in 2011. When was the last time a minor was violated in their public schools? Last year, when a school bus monitor allegedly sexually abused three special needs students. One was in kindergarten.

Is Neronha going to tackle the public schools? He should.

Ten years ago, when *USA Today* rated every state in the union on the sexual abuse of minors, it gave Rhode Island a "D." When the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights investigated this issue during the 2017-2018 school year, it concluded that Rhode Island was one of the worst in the country; it ranked in the bottom ten. More recently, the Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, a statewide advocacy group, found that there were six allegations of sexual abuse in 2024.

The AG's report reads as though the sexual abuse scandal is ongoing in the Catholic Church and that Neronha's office did yeoman work in uncovering it. Wrong on both counts. We are talking about old cases where the bad guys are either dead or have been kicked out of ministry. *Not one of the 75 members of the clergy mentioned in the report is in active ministry.*

Moreover, it was the Diocese of Providence did most of the data gathering, without which Neronha could not have issued his report.

One young person who is molested is too many. But when the Catholic Church has largely put this problem behind it, and when it is still extant in other quarters of society—especially in the public schools—it smacks of anti-Catholicism, pure and simple.

We are blanketing the Rhode Island media and lawmakers about this injustice. We are also contacting approximately 140 parishes in the state.

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