

# SALON.COM WEARS ITS BIGOTRY ON ITS SLEEVE

The February 6 edition of *Salon.com*, the online magazine, featured an excerpt from a notoriously vulgar book, "The Erotica Project." The selection, which was written by Lillian Ann Slugocki (she co-authored the volume with Erin Cressida Wilson), is an obscene portrait of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene. With graphic detail, Slugocki depicts them performing oral sex on each other.

William Donohue wasted no time contacting the media with the following comment:

"On December 14, 2000, I issued a news release entitled, 'Salon.com Slugs Catholics Once Again.' Now the struggling online magazine is back again, this time seeking to offend all Christians. That it has succeeded in doing so is clear, though it is not clear why. Is it because, like adolescents, they enjoy pushing the envelope? Or is it because they see in Christianity a force that must be defeated? No matter, the last time we checked, its stock was going for \$1 a share. The Penny Stocks can't be far behind, but we sincerely hope they tank completely before delivering up another one of their sick statements on Christianity."

Donohue also drew attention to an article by social scientist Charles Murray that appeared the same day in the *Wall Street Journal*. In an analysis of the culture war, Murray noted the "proletarianization" of our elites. He discussed the extent to which those at the top of the socio-economic scale have begun to imitate the behavior and outward appearances of those at the bottom.

Donohue picked up on this theme. "In the case of *Salon.com*," he said, "we can take it one step further. Marx referred to

the 'scum of the earth' as being members of the lumpenproletariat, and that, it seems, is the proper way to understand our online savants. The preppy boys and girls at *Salon.com* represent the lumpenproletarianization of our elites: they have more in common with the pimps and thugs who inhabit this social circle than with anyone else. Save for their bottled water."

Within no time we heard from Michael O'Donnell, *Salon's* CEO. "Don't you realize this was an excerpt from a book," he e-mailed us, "written by an independent author, and not a *Salon* writer?" He also drew attention to this excerpt being located in the "Sex" area of his magazine, "which is clearly intended for adults." He then asked, "How is this bigotry?"

Digging himself in deeper, he said, "*Salon* is a daily newspaper, reporting on the news of the day." Finally, O'Donnell said he was "a practicing Catholic whose uncle is a Catholic priest." He concluded by saying that we should direct our efforts at President Bush because he is in favor of capital punishment. "Didn't our Lord tell us "though [sic] shall not kill."

O'Donnell's defense is that this was just an excerpt from a book written by someone who isn't a *Salon* writer. Fine, then surely he wouldn't mind featuring an excerpt from *Mein Kampf* or *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. To deflect further criticism, he could place the excerpt in the "Diversity" section of his magazine. But does anyone, including O'Donnell, really believe this would happen?

Here's another problem. If *Salon* is a daily newspaper that reports on the news of the day, then why is it running excerpts from a book whose sales are so lousy that it was ranked 131,820 on the day the anti-Christian piece was published? And why is a publication dedicated to the news of the day printing malicious fictional tales? No matter, if O'Donnell should decide to print an anti-Semitic tract, we

suggest he tell outraged Jews that some of his best friends are Jewish, and that there's even a rumor that one of this cousins is part Jewish. That'll go over big.

Finally, the reason we don't hammer Bush for his position on capital punishment is the same reason we didn't blast Clinton for his position on gun control—neither has anything to do with anti-Catholicism. And, of course, the Lord never said, “though shall not kill,” but to know that one would have to be more than a practicing Catholic. He'd also have to be a literate one.