

# **“SOUTH PARK’S” FORCED MORAL EQUIVALENCY**

On July 19, Comedy Central will re-air the “South Park” episode “Trapped in the Closet.” The cartoon, which originally aired on November 16, 2005, was removed from Comedy Central’s schedule of reruns in May by network officials after it angered Scientologists. Speaking to *Variety* magazine about episodes causing controversy, co-creator Matt Stone, cited “Trapped,” a December 7, 2005 episode called “Bloody Mary,” and his recent efforts to depict the Islamic prophet Mohammed. According to Stone, “the mantra has always been everything is fair game.”

Commenting on this is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“It is not accurate to put ‘Bloody Mary’ in the same category with ‘Trapped.’ ‘Bloody Mary’ not only ridicules Catholic beliefs, it does so in an obscene fashion. During the program, a statue of the Virgin Mary is shown ‘bleeding out her ass’ and spraying passers-by with the blood. After being called in to investigate, Pope Benedict XVI declares that the statue is merely bleeding out of the vagina. In addition, previous episodes of the show depicted priests as depraved lechers.

“There is no doubt that ‘Trapped’ lambastes Scientology. It mocks its celebrity adherents and portrays Scientology’s president admitting the organization is nothing more than a global scam. The program also portrays a version of Scientology’s creation story in a buffoonish manner. However, unlike ‘Bloody Mary,’ ‘Trapped’ is neither obscene nor vulgar.

“In addition, Comedy Central has recently been quite careful not to offend Muslims. Despite the creators’ attempt to depict Mohammed in the episode ‘Cartoon Wars,’ the network’s

top brass blocked out his cartoon image. Stone and co-creator Trey Parker then expressed their frustration with their bosses' hypocrisy by depicting Jesus defecating on an American flag.

"Putting 'Bloody Mary' in the same category with 'Trapped in the Closet' and 'Cartoon Wars' forces a moral equivalency that does not exist. Indeed, Scientologists are ridiculed, Muslims are appeased, and Catholic holy figures are depicted in the most degrading of fashions. It is obvious that the Catholic Church bears the brunt of Comedy Central's scorn."