

# OBAMA NOMINEE'S CATHOLIC PROBLEM

In a few weeks, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Dawn Johnsen to be assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel. Catholic League president Bill Donohue says the Catholic community should be given a heads up:

“As past staff counsel for the ACLU and legal director of NARAL (the most extreme pro-abortion group in the nation), Dawn Johnsen has done more than consort with the enemies of Catholicism—she has actively sought to undermine the Catholic Church.

“In the late 1980s, Johnsen worked on a lawsuit, *United States Catholic Conference v. Abortion Rights Mobilization*, that sought to strip the Catholic Church of its tax exempt status; she helped to prepare briefs securing standing for the plaintiffs. Thus, she is not simply a critic of the Catholic Church’s pro-life position—she wants to cripple the institution.

“Most Americans are repelled at the thought of a doctor jamming a scissors into the head of a baby who is 80 percent born. But not everyone. For example, Johnsen calls the term partial-birth abortion ‘intentionally provocative,’ but there is no evidence that she has ever described this hideous procedure that way.

“As soon as President Clinton took office in 1993, he took the occasion to sign five executive orders overturning abortion restrictions. Dawn Johnsen wrote every one of them. But it is more than abortion rights that motivates her—she wants to punish the Catholic Church.

“U.S. bishops strongly oppose the Freedom of Choice Act, a law

so draconian that if it were enacted (Obama has said he will sign it) it could force Catholic hospitals to start performing abortions or have their funding pulled. Who helped to write this bill? Dawn Johnsen.

“To say that Johnsen has a Catholic problem is a monumental understatement.”

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## **NEW YORK STATE BILL ON SEX ABUSE: BASED ON ERRORS OR LIES?**

Two days ago, *The National Catholic Register* ran a story on its blog about a bill before the New York State legislature on child sexual abuse that harshly treats private institutions while going easy on public ones. “In a detailed statement responding to criticisms of the bill,” the story says, “[Assemblywoman Margaret] Markey said that public schools have handled abuse cases well in recent years, whereas the Catholic hierarchy ‘has relied on secrecy, quiet transfers and threats to hide abusers when the threat of public disclosure emerges.’” When the Catholic League asked Markey’s office for a copy of her statement, we were told by Rosemary Lategano that the story was wrong—there was no such statement. We then called the newspaper and obtained a copy of it.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commuted on this today:

“Was Markey’s office in error? Or were we lied to? One thing is for sure: Markey is wrong about the facts. She says the public schools have shown ‘increasing sensitivity’ to cases of child sexual abuse, and that they ‘routinely move swiftly to

respond to allegations against employees.'

"In 2007, the AP did a major report on this subject. It concluded that child sexual abuse in the public schools was 'a widespread problem,' saying there was 'a deeply entrenched resistance toward recognizing and fighting abuse.' Moreover, offending teachers are moved from one school district to another, so often that they are called 'mobile molesters.'

"Two years earlier, author and education John Seryak concluded that 'The problem in education dwarfs the Catholic Church problem.' And a year earlier, Dr. Carol Shakeshaft, the nation's leading authority on the issue, estimated that 'the physical abuse of students in schools is likely more than 100 times the abuse of priests.' So common is the transfer of offending teachers that it is called 'passing the trash.'

"Markey's bill is based on faulty assumptions and erroneous data. It also unfairly discriminates between Catholic schools and public schools. And her office is either incompetent or devious."

Contact Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver:  
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## **NEW YORK TIMES EMBRACES DISCRIMINATION**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in today's *New York Times*:

"It was reported yesterday that accusations of misconduct against New York City public school teachers are at an all

time high. Thanks to Richard Condon, Special Commissioner of Investigation, we know that about a third of those accusations involved sexual abuse: there were 595 such accusations, of which 105 were substantiated by his office. The *New York Times* did not report on this story—it was published in the *New York Post*. Nor did the *New York Times* run a story on a recent report regarding priestly sexual abuse: a grand total of ten credible accusations were made last year across the United States.

“Anyone who is serious about seeking justice would begin by addressing the public schools. But not the *New York Times*. Its editorial today never mentions the public schools. Indeed, it begins by saying, ‘For decades, priests who preyed sexually on children did so with shocking ease and impunity.’ Why were priests singled out? What was the motive? The editorial also talks about ‘shuttling abusive priests among parishes.’ In the public schools, shuttling abusers is so common—to this day!—that it is called ‘passing the trash.’

“The *Times* today endorsed a bill that would allow victims to sue even if the abuse took place in the 1960s. But only if the abuse occurred in a private institution. Under the bill the *Times* likes, the current protections afforded public school teachers—alleged victims have only 90 days to file a claim—remain in place. Yet the *Times* has the audacity to say that ‘The bill does not explicitly target any institution,’ knowing full well that unless the bill explicitly negated the 90-day rule for the public schools, the net effect would be to discriminate against Catholic schools.

“There is another bill that would create an equal playing field. But the *Times*, of course, never even mentioned it. We can only guess why.”

Contact NYT senior editor of the editorial page, Robert Semple, at [semple@nytimes.com](mailto:semple@nytimes.com)

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# SALLY QUINN SHOWCASES BIGOTRY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on an article by Robert S. McElvaine, a professor at Millsaps College, that is posted on the joint blog site of the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek*, "On Faith":

"Does Pope Benedict XVI hate women, Jews and Muslims? Or is he just insensitive? One thing is for sure, we know he presides over a religion that holds 'immoral' teachings on sexuality.

"Now this is the kind of rant we would expect to find on the bathroom wall of a summer camp in Martha's Vineyard, but, alas, it appears in the pages of Sally Quinn's blog. This is her idea of dialogue.

"Want to read hate speech? Read the voluminous comments attendant to McElvaine's article. If we have room we will reprint some of them in the May edition of our monthly journal, *Catalyst* (there is a lot of competition among bigots so only the best make the cut). In any event, we will surely reprint some of the really choice remarks in next year's annual report on anti-Catholicism. Either way, we will be fair to Quinn and note the central role she played in fomenting intolerance.

"Over the past few months, the culture war has hit a fever pitch. But as we saw in Connecticut last week—an attempted fascist takeover of the Catholic Church by lawmakers blew up in their face—our side is up to the task."

Contact Sally Quinn at [quinns@washpost.com](mailto:quinns@washpost.com)

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# POPE IGNITES CONDOM DEBATE

On his flight to Cameroon yesterday, Pope Benedict XVI was asked about the Catholic Church's position on fighting AIDS. He said, in part, "One cannot overcome the problem with the distribution of condoms. On the contrary, they increase the problem."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue had this to say:

"Last year, Edward C. Green, director of the AIDS Prevention Research Project at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, wrote that 'In every African country in which HIV infections declined, this decline has been associated with a decrease in the proportion of men and women reporting more than one sex partner over the course of a year—which is exactly what fidelity programs promote.' As for condom use, Green said, 'Many countries that have not seen declines in HIV have seen increases in condom use, but in every country worldwide in which HIV has declined there have been increases in levels of faithfulness and usually abstinence as well.' The Catholic Church, it is well known, has been at the forefront of such programs. It also operates more hospitals and related medical centers for AIDS patients than any other private institution in the world.

"If condoms were the answer, then why is it that New York City, which under Mayor Michael Bloomberg has given away *tens of millions* of free condoms, has an HIV rate *three times the national average*? Furthermore, the promiscuous distribution of condoms in New York has coincided with a spike in sexually transmitted diseases of all sorts. Isn't it time we learned that condom worship is irrational?"

“Anyone who thinks that condom distribution, education and/or research is going to solve a problem which is mostly a function of behavioral recklessness is positively clueless. Not only that, such persons unwittingly contribute to the problem by diverting attention and resources away from that which works.”

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## **Abuse Data: Gay Rate Increases**

Data collected on priestly sexual abuse have consistently shown that 81 percent of the victims are male. The data in the latest study, the 2008 Annual Report on this issue, show that 84 percent of the victims were male.

For years we have been told that homosexuals are over represented because priests only had access to boy altar servers. But there have been girl altar servers for many years now, yet straight priests are even less represented now than before. There is obviously a serious problem here, but cowardice and political correctness stand in the way of an honest discussion.

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## **NEWSDAY IS MORALLY BANKRUPT**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue offered the following comments about *Newsday*, the Long Island daily:

“There are two bills before the New York State legislature that address the sexual molestation of minors. One is sponsored by Margaret Markey; the other is by Vito Lopez. The Catholic Church favors the Lopez bill, and that is because, unlike the one that *Newsday* likes, it does not discriminate on the basis of location: it applies to private and public institutions alike; the Markey bill gives public institutions a pass.

“Over the weekend, *Newsday* ran several stories on the bills, and in every one of them it failed to tell the truth. Never once did it tell readers that the Markey bill does not apply to the public schools. The closest it came was in a news story that mentioned that Sean Dolan, spokesman for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, took issue with those like Michael Armstrong, a spokesman for the Markey bill. ‘While Dolan said the bill unfairly targets the Catholic Church, Armstrong said it would apply to victims in any institution—private or public—including schools.’ Armstrong is wrong. And since when does an unsubstantiated opinion substitute for accurate reporting?

“Paul Vitello wrote the following last week in the *New York Times* about the Markey bill: ‘The disparity is built into the legal protections granted under existing state law to all public workers and agencies: to sue a public employee or agency for damages of any kind, a person is required to file a claim within 90 days of the alleged injury. A victim of childhood sex abuse by a public school teacher, for instance, has 90 days after turning 18 to file notice of a claim.’ Moreover, under Markey’s bill, someone who alleges he or she was molested in a Catholic school when JFK was president could now do so. *Newsday* knows this, but fails to say so. Instead, it publishes a piece by Joye Brown telling the Rockville Centre Diocese ‘to do nothing to stand in the lawmakers’ way.’ In other words, roll over and drop dead.

“We are contacting every parish on Long Island telling them

about the lies and the anti-Catholicism of *Newsday*.”

Contact editor John Mancini at [john.mancini@newsday.com](mailto:john.mancini@newsday.com)

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## **NOMINEE TO HEAD FDA DEEPLY FLAWED**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds to news that President Obama will nominate Margaret A. Hamburg as the director of the Food and Drug Administration:

“In 1994, I received a letter from Dr. Hamburg, New York City’s Health Commissioner, complaining about ads the Catholic League had placed in New York City subways. The ads read, *‘Want to Know a Dirty Little Secret? Condoms Don’t Save Lives. But Restraint Does. Only Fools Think Condoms Are Foolproof. Remember, Better Safe Than Sorry.’*

“Hamburg admitted that abstinence was the best way to stop HIV infection, but she nonetheless labeled the ads ‘misleading.’ Why? Because, she said, ‘Condoms, if used correctly and consistently from the start to the finish’ are effective. In response, I said it was ‘blatantly irresponsible—both medically and morally—to endorse subway ads by the Gay Men’s Health Crisis that were racist, vulgar and dangerous.’

“Hamburg’s interest in abstinence, it turned out, was a ruse. Two years earlier she opposed a sex education curriculum in New York that stressed abstinence over safe sex presentation in the classroom. Worse, her efforts to fight AIDS show how irresponsible she is.

“In the early 90s, so-called sex clubs—the very places where HIV was being transmitted—were still open, even though gays were dying left and right. And what did Health Commissioner Hamburg say? Keep them open. By that time, gays were having sex in bookstores—legally! ‘The clubs range from bathhouses and bars to movie houses and bookstores where patrons pay an entrance fee to have sex in open areas and closed rooms,’ said the *New York Times*. Hamburg compromised: no fellatio or anal intercourse was allowed, but masturbation was okay. When HIV rates continued to increase, she questioned, ‘Is it still a lack of education? Is it burnout and a sense of hopelessness? Is it denial? Is it recklessness? We don’t fully understand.’ After all the funerals, she was the one in denial.

“In other words, Hamburg’s judgment is deeply flawed.”

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## **OBAMA IS NOT OPPOSED TO ALL HUMAN CLONING**

On the morning of March 9, President Obama signed an executive order on stem cell research that also included a statement on human cloning. Many media outlets quickly released a story with headlines like that of the Associated Press, “Obama Calls Cloning ‘Dangerous, Profoundly Wrong.’” On the same day, at 1:40 p.m, Obama’s press secretary, Robert Gibbs, was asked about the cloning issue and he said, “I think the executive order—I don’t have it in front of me—simply bans human cloning.”

Commenting on this is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“Media reports which said that President Obama banned human cloning were wrong. So was White House Press Secretary Robert

Gibbs.

“What Obama did was ban cloning *for human reproduction*. Which means he left the door wide open for the federal financing of human cloning that does not result in having the embryo implanted in a mother’s womb. In other words, he did not rule out cloning human beings for research purposes. So it may be possible to clone human embryos and then cut them up, if desired.

“I was misled on March 9. While I criticized the president for permitting the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research, I commended him for his ban on human cloning. As it turns out, my congratulatory remarks were without merit. I therefore rescind my commendation.”

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## **CHILD RAPE IN NEW YORK STATE: LOCATION MATTERS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue tells of the real-life consequences of what would happen if a bill by New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey passed today:

“An 18-year-old who was allegedly raped by a public school teacher the week after Thanksgiving is out of luck—the 90 day clock allowed by law to file a claim for an offense in a public institution is up. But a student who was allegedly raped in a Catholic or Jewish school when JFK was president could bring suit (for one year, there is no time limit on claims affecting private institutions). After a year, a student in a Catholic or Jewish school would still have 3,650 more days to file a claim than a victim from the public schools (the current five year period to file a claim would be

expanded to 10 years).

“There is another bill, sponsored by Vito Lopez, that would not discriminate on the basis of location. Eric Schneiderman, chairman of the Senate Codes Committee, says that the glaring disparity might be addressed in future legislation. ‘Just because it [the Markey bill] does not broaden the rights of victims 100 percent does not mean we should not try to broaden their rights somewhat.’ His argument collapses, of course, when considering the Lopez bill: it would cover 100 percent of the victims. It’s time lawmakers like Schneiderman explained why the Markey bill, which promotes discrimination, is a more just outcome than the Lopez bill, which does not.”

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