

# NEW YORK TIMES COVERS FOR ISLAM



Catholic League president Bill Donohue notices a glaring omission in today's *New York Times*:

I read with interest the front-page story in today's *New York Times* about the plight of a woman in Afghanistan who was raped and then ordered to marry her rapist. The reporter spoke about this outcome as a "cultural practice," showing "the power of cultural norms," reflecting an "Afghan custom."

All of this is accurate, but incomplete. As a sociologist, I noticed something missing: never once was there any mention that this "cultural practice" is rooted in Islam. Religion, of course, is the most defining element in any culture, and not to cite Islam—and particularly Shariah—is irresponsible. It would be like discussing culture in Ireland or Latin America without mentioning Catholicism.

They even have a Department for Prevention of Vice and Promotion of Virtue in Afghanistan which enforces Shariah laws. The *New York Times* deserves credit for publishing this story, but it discredits itself when it intentionally omits the root cause of the oppression of women in Afghanistan.

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# HHS OFFICIAL COLLAPSES UNDER SCRUTINY



The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held a hearing today on why the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) was denied a grant it typically receives from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to combat human trafficking.

The USCCB grant proposal was awarded a score of 89, yet it was denied the grant. Two other organizations, with scores of 74 and 69, were given a grant. The hearing sought to determine whether the USCCB's opposition to abortion referral killed its chances.

In his opening statement, George Sheldon, Acting Assistant HHS secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, said that "HHS did not establish a preference for grantees that would require each individual subgrantees to provide referrals for family planning and the full range of legally permissible gynecological and obstetric care."

The following exchange between Sheldon and Rep. Trey Gowdy calls into question Sheldon's veracity:

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "The truth be told, if the Catholic bishops had scored a 100, you still wouldn't have picked them."

George Sheldon: "That's not necessarily accurate."

Gowdy: "Well, would you have—if they scored a 100? Is an 89 not enough?"

Sheldon: "Well, I'm dealing with the facts in front of me."

Gowdy: "Assume this fact then: If they scored a 95, would that have been high enough?"

Sheldon: "I cannot without looking at the facts, the other applicants—I cannot respond to...."

Bill Donohue says, "Anyone who can't figure out what is going on with the Obama administration is either hopelessly partisan or in sheer denial."

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## **CATHOLIC MESSAGE ON WORLD AIDS DAY**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on World AIDS Day:

It is important to remember a few relevant facts on World AIDS Day:

- No private institution on earth provides more HIV/AIDS services than the Catholic Church. Indeed, it accounts for more than a quarter of all the services worldwide.
- In the United States, Catholic diocesan agencies play a major role tending to those with AIDS. In 1989, for example, the Archdiocese of New York established the first AIDS nursing home in New York City (this was the same year that homosexual activists stormed St. Patrick's Cathedral during Mass).
- In Africa, where AIDS has taken a heavy toll, the efforts of the Catholic Church counseling sexual restraint has yielded impressive results.

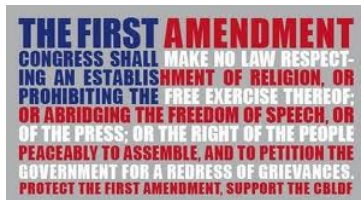
Just a few weeks ago, while in Benin, Africa, Pope Benedict XVI spoke to this issue with his customary authority. He said that AIDS "clearly calls for a medical and pharmaceutical response." But he hastened to add that "Above all, it is an

ethical problem. The change of behaviour that it requires—for example, sexual abstinence, rejection of sexual promiscuity, fidelity within marriage—ultimately involves the question of integral development, which demands a global approach and a global response from the Church.”

In other words, AIDS will not be resolved by science, technology and morally neutral sex education programs. For the most part, AIDS is caused by behaviors that violate the natural law. Its resolution, therefore, lay in observing the cardinal virtue of temperance, not in the promiscuous distribution of condoms.

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## “PROSELYTIZING” IN A FLORIDA SCHOOL



Patrick Capriola, the assistant principal at the Bannerman Learning Center, a school in Northeastern Florida, is suing the principal, Linda Turner, and the Clay County school district, claiming that Turner violated his Constitutional rights by sending emails of a partisan political and religious nature. He maintains that by doing so she subjected him and other employees to her proselytizing efforts.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue weighed in as follows:

Even the brazen members of the sensitivity police may smart at some of the “crimes” committed by Linda Turner. She happens to believe that oil exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska makes sense; evidently, Patrick Capriola disagrees. So what? He is right to contend that there is a

First Amendment right in play here, but it is not his right to curb her right to free speech—it is hers to exercise. It is one thing for a school district to prohibit employees from emailing their colleagues, it is quite another to register objections based on their content.

It is Turner's Christian beliefs that really bothers Capriola. Turner is accused of sending emails he objects to, which include the following: she told the faculty to "enjoy God at work at the North Pole"; she requested that they pray for rain in Texas; and she said her faith "may move mountains."

Let's concede that some might find these missives disagreeable, or even worse. But to beckon the heavy hand of the state to police these matters is not only astonishing, it is pernicious.

One more thing. It is not altogether shocking to learn that a Christian believes her faith "may move mountains." After all, when he won the Democratic primary in 2008, Barack Obama promised that when he is finished governing, "we will be able to look back and tell our children that this was the moment...when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal." And he said he could do this all by himself!