

SHOULD NYT FIRE MICHELLE GOLDBERG?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a column by *New York Times* op-ed writer Michelle Goldberg that appears on the editorial page of today's edition; he ties it to her sordid past:

There are few columnists more passionate in their defense of abortion rights than *New York Times* op-ed columnist Michelle Goldberg. She is so obsessed with this issue that she can justify abortion for any reason and at any time during pregnancy.

In keeping with the position of pro-abortion zealots such as New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, Goldberg is also a proponent of allowing a baby born alive after a botched abortion to die without medical care. That is called infanticide.

Goldberg is incensed that President Trump is drawing attention to this Nazi-like practice. Today she goes further by claiming that "Abortion providers are *regular* targets of domestic terrorism." (My italic.)

There is no evidence to support such a wild accusation. Indeed, the one anecdote she offers has nothing to do with abortion. She cites a nut who three years ago fired a rifle at a pizzeria because it was the alleged home of a child sex trafficking ring involving Hillary Clinton.

Even more disturbing is Goldberg's history of promoting violence and anti-Christian bigotry.

Recently, while doing research on some other topic, I stumbled across [a New York Post article](#) by Rod Dreher from 1999 where he discussed left-wing intolerance. One of the stories he

mentioned caught my eye. Here is what he said.

"The intolerance hasn't been limited to student newspapers. A few years ago, a pro-life student group at SUNY-Buffalo set up a 'cemetery of the innocents'—4,000 wooden crosses symbolizing the number of unborn children aborted in one day. Pro-choicers stormed the exhibit and kicked the crosses down. Michelle Goldberg, a writer for the campus paper, urged readers to 'do your part and spit at [pro-lifers]. Kick them in the head.'"

I checked to see if this was the same Michelle Goldberg who today writes for the *New York Times*, and who has a history of demonizing conservative Christians—she calls them "Christian nationalists" who want to impose a "totalistic ideology" on America. It sure was. She was born in Buffalo and graduated from SUNY-Buffalo in the same time period as identified by Dreher.

Forget about abortion and Trump. There is a much bigger issue here.

Judge Brett Kavanaugh was condemned by many for what he allegedly did in high school. No one could corroborate any of the charges. Goldberg was in college, and we have indisputable evidence of her offenses.

Should the *New York Times* employ an anti-Christian bigot who promotes violence against them? Would the *Times* employ an anti-gay bigot who promotes violence against homosexuals?

Contact James Bennet, editorial page editor:
james.bennet@nytimes.com

NEW YORK TIMES' OFFENSIVE CARTOON IS NOT THE FIRST

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an offensive cartoon that was pulled by the *New York Times*:

The *New York Times* has withdrawn a cartoon published last week on the opinion page of its international edition that was flagrantly anti-Semitic. It showed President Trump wearing sunglasses and a yarmulke being pulled by a dachshund with the face of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (he is shown wearing a Star of David collar).

The *Times* has since apologized, and columnist Bret Stephens tried to put the issue to rest in a critical article on the subject today. However, this is not the first time the *Times* has been embroiled in a controversy over cartoons.

In March 2002, the *Times* published an editorial cartoon, "Terror Widows," that mocked widows of those who died on 9/11 for receiving money from the government and charities; one panel showed a widow lamenting her husband's death. After an outcry, led by widows and relatives who lost a loved one that day, the cartoon was pulled from the website of the newspaper.

Four years later, the *New York Times* showed how protective it is of Muslim sensibilities when it refused to publish the Danish cartoons. Muslims objected to an inoffensive depiction of Muhammad. That was enough for the *Times* to declare that it is wrong to publish "gratuitous assaults on religious symbols."

Then, in what will be remembered as one of the most revealing statements the *Times* has ever made about its treatment of Muslims vis-a-vis Catholics, art critic Michael Kimmelman wrote an article recalling how the Catholic League protested the 1999 "Sensation" exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

His interpretation of what happened was not the issue: the accompanying photo was.

Kimmelman favorably compared the Catholic League's free speech response to the photo of Our Blessed Mother—the one smeared with elephant dung, surrounded with porn cut-outs—to the violent reaction of Muslims angry with the Danish Cartoons. Incredibly, on the same page that the *Times* decried the cartoons that upset Muslims, it reprinted the offensive photo of the Virgin Mary!

The bottom line is this: When it comes to publishing cartoons or photos that are anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic or anti-Muslim, the *New York Times* has one standard for Jews and Catholics and another for Muslims.

COMMON SENSE CATHOLICISM: THE RIGHT TONIC FOR WHAT AILS US

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on his new book:

My new book, [*Common Sense Catholicism: How to Resolve Our Cultural Crisis*](#), has just been published. It declares war on virtually every politically correct idea, demonstrating just how out of touch with reality the deep thinkers are.

“From my years spent as a college professor, I can testify that some of the stupidest people I have ever met teach college.” I define stupidity as “a lack of common sense, as in sound judgment.” I also write that “it is entirely possible to be well educated yet not possess common sense. This is especially true of intellectuals—they are more likely to lack

common sense."

What is it that makes many intellectuals stupid (I hasten to add I am not indicting all of them)? Above all, they believe in neither human nature nor nature's God. And because they get that wrong, they get everything wrong.

The Founders understood human nature, and that is why, despite obvious flaws, America has enjoyed unparalleled freedom and prosperity. That is now imperiled, mostly because of the deep thinkers who reject nature and nature's God. Their stupid ideas are the reigning ideas in education and in our cultural institutions. They have also found their way into law and public policy.

No institution in society better understands human nature than the Catholic Church. Its teachings are a repository of wisdom. The Church is not at war with nature, or nature's God; on the contrary, it is at home with them.

The contrast between the norms and values of the dominant culture, and those that inhere in Catholicism, shine brightly. This is brought to light when we consider the goals of the French Revolution, namely, freedom, equality, and fraternity. These were, and still are, noble ends, but they were completely obliterated by the intellectuals and the architects of the French Revolution, and they are now imperiled by the contemporary wizards of our day.

The dreamers understand liberty as license; the Church knows better. The blue-sky thinkers envision a world where male-female differences, and the inequalities that mark the economic classes, will be eliminated; the Church knows better. The bookworms do not seek fraternity in tradition and religion—they hate both; the Church knows better.

We live in strange times.

There was a time, not too long ago, when it was illegal to

burn the American flag on a courthouse lawn, but it was legal to erect a Nativity scene in the same spot. Now the reverse is true.

When TV bloomed in the 1950s, we never even saw the bedroom of Ralph and Alice in "The Honeymooners." Now there is nothing we don't see.

It seems like only yesterday when men who thought they were women, and vice versa, were housed in the asylum. Now they are housed in the university.

Up until just recently, we rewarded those who worked hard. Now college students are told that working hard is a microaggression, a sign of patriarchy that must be eradicated.

Respecting Western civilization was the norm for most of my life. Now the professors want to tear it down.

From the beginning of Hollywood movies, up until at least the 1970s, priests and nuns were portrayed positively. They have since been trashed.

The bottom line is this: Freedom, equality, and fraternity have been distorted by the brainy ones who think they know better. They don't.

The deep thinkers believe human nature and the Almighty are a fiction, and as a result they have created a social and cultural mess. Moreover, their own lives, and the ideas they entertain, are a colossal train wreck.

Common Sense Catholicism is the only cure for the stupidity that these geniuses have bequeathed.

ARIZONA GOV. WHIPS MILITANT SECULARISTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a courageous decision by the Arizona governor:

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey is standing fast against militant secularists who want him to take down a social media post that sends Easter greetings; the post also cites a Bible verse.

Ducey, who is a practicing Catholic, is not bowing to pressure from anti-religion activists, saying that his official Facebook page will continue to offer greetings recognizing a variety of religious holidays. He cited Christmas, Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, Palm Sunday, and Passover as examples.

Other leaders, in and out of government, should take note of Ducey's stance. Contrary to what many in the mainstream media think, the Arizona governor will not pay a political price for his decision. If anything, it will endear him to most voters.

Social media is often overrated. A new Pew Research survey discloses that 10% of Twitter users account for 80% of all tweets. Who are they? Mostly women (65%) who are left-of-center and college educated. In other words, the voice of this small cluster may be loud, but it is not representative of the public. It is best not to take them too seriously.

Those who want to stamp out religious greetings from public officials are a menace to freedom. They are not liberals of old. No, they are today's totalitarians.

Kudos to Gov. Ducey.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF RELIGION SURVEY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new survey on religion:

A new Pew Research Center survey, "Changing World: Global Views on Diversity, Gender Equality, Family Life and the Importance of Religion," offers many fascinating insights on these subjects. What it has to say about religion, in particular, has grave political implications.

Almost 6 in 10 Americans (58%) believe that religion plays a less important role today as compared to 20 years ago. Just as many (57%) believe this is a bad thing for society.

The survey also found that 73% say religion plays an important role in their lives (47% said it is "very important" and 26% said it is "somewhat important"). A Gallup poll released last December came to the same conclusion: 72% said religion was important to them.

Does this matter? Two months into his presidency, Donald Trump's job approval with those who are "highly religious" was 51%; it was 32% with those who are "not religious."

What these surveys suggest is that the issue of religion in public life could be problematic for Democrats. They are, as every survey in the past few decades suggests, the party of secularists, many of whom have grown more extreme in recent years. A look at the Platform of the two parties underscores this phenomenon.

The 2016 Republican Party Platform cites "religious freedom" six times; it also cites "religious liberty" six times. The 2016 Democratic Party Platform has no mention of "religious liberty," and its references to religious freedom, and to

religion more generally, raise some serious issues.

One of the three times where “religious freedom” is cited in the Platform is simply a nominal reference to the role of religious freedom in civil society. The other two evince the Platform’s political colors.

“We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate.” Nowhere does it define what a “progressive vision of religious freedom” means, or how it differs from other visions. But we are not left in the dark: This sentence appears in a section titled, “Guaranteeing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights.”

In other words, when the First Amendment right to religious liberty collides with the non-constitutionally recognized rights of homosexuals and the sexually confused, the former must yield. The majority of Americans who think that the declining role of religion in society is a bad thing are not likely to applaud.

The other normative reference to religious liberty notes that Donald Trump’s “vilification of Muslims” is proof that this “violates the religious freedom that is the bedrock of our country.” It does not attempt to show a cause and effect, but it is interesting to note that the only time religious freedom is cited as “the bedrock of our country” is in reference to the rights of Muslims, not Christians or Jews (upon which our Judeo-Christian heritage is anchored).

Besides Muslims, the 2016 Platform of the Democratic Party shows great respect for the religious rights of Indians.

We are told of “our sacred obligation to the Indian nations and Indian peoples”; it fails to note how many Indian nations there are in America. No matter, we also learn of the need to respect “tribal sacred places” and of the right of Indians to “maintain and pass on traditional religious beliefs,

languages, and social practices without fear of discrimination or suppression.” Even the “religious rights of Native prisoners” merit a shout-out.

If the Democrats showed as much respect for the religious rights of Christians and Jews as they do Indians, they would even the playing field with Republicans on this issue.

Finally, it is ironic to note how adamantly the Platform opposes “attempts to impose a religious test,” given the enthusiasm that leading Democrats have shown for imposing a religious test on Catholic candidates for the federal bench. So what’s the difference? The difference can be explained by what I left out.

Here is the sentence in its entirety. “We reject attempts to impose a religious test to bar immigrants or refugees from entering the United States.” Score another win for Muslims.

As the survey found, the role of religion in American society is waning, and most do not believe that is a good thing. To turn things around, we will have to have *both parties* committed to the religious liberties of all people of faith, and not just a few protected groups.

CHRISTIANS ASSAULTED FROM ALL SIDES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest attacks on Christians:

Muslim fanatics, so-called Islamists, are the most violent enemy of Christians in the world. While it is considered

controversial to even mention this today, even less reported is the non-violent counterpart to these barbarians: militant secularists. The latter are growing in influence by leaps and bounds, even to the point of accommodating the Islamists.

According to CBN News, thus far this year there have been well over 1,000 attacks on French Christian churches and symbols, most of them Catholic. That's an increase of 17 percent in one year. As everyone knows, radical Muslims are to blame.

In the Middle East and Africa, Christian persecution is routine. The Christian character of Mosul in Iraq is gone—Christianity has been obliterated. Eritrea, known as the “North Korea of Africa,” is under siege by a madman; women and girls are bearing the worst of the brunt.

In Nigeria, more than 2 million people, many of them Christians, are being driven from their homes by Islamists known as Boko Haram. During the first half of 2018, 6,000 Christians were killed in Nigeria, most of whom were women, children, and the elderly.

As University of Mississippi professor, and Catholic League advisory board member, Ronald Rychlak notes, “The only place in the Middle East where Christians face no restrictions on the practice of their faith is Israel.” That, too, is underreported.

On Easter Sunday, a reporter for the *Guardian*, Giles Fraser, offered the following astute observation. “Throughout the 20th century and into the 21st, Christians have been driven from the Middle East with bombs and bullets, and with hardly a bat squeak of protest from the secular west.”

Fraser is correct. Just last month, his own nation, the U.K., denied asylum to an Iranian Christian convert (from Islam) on the grounds that Christianity is not a “peaceful” religion (various books from the Bible were cited as proof). According to another British writer, Becket Adams, there is a “trend in

the U.K. of government officials taking explicitly anti-Christian positions.”

How bad is it getting? “If you’re a Christian living in the U.K., now might be a really good time to think about emigrating to the land of the free and the home of the brave,” Becket Adams says, “where the biggest nuisance for people of faith is an overabundance of options for worship.” He also noted that Sweden is deporting Christians seeking asylum to countries such as Afghanistan.

What’s driving this? A minister in the U.K. explains that this is all a reflection of “post-colonial guilt.”

Matters are better here at home, though militant secularists are targeting Christians and Jews at an alarming rate.

Government officials at the federal, state, and local levels, along with elements in the media, Hollywood, the artistic community, and higher education, are doubling down these days in their efforts to smear or otherwise denigrate people of faith. Ready to assist them are radicals who staff non-profit activist organizations, and the foundations that support them.

In the “civilized” world of the West, Christian men and women who take their religion seriously are subjected to bigoted inquisitions when being considered for a judicial appointment. Christian clubs on college campuses are denied the right to have Christians lead them.

Catholic schools are told they don’t qualify for matching corporate gifts because they teach Catholicism. More common is the practice of denying Christian organizations a religious exemption, even when it is clear that not granting the exemption effectively neuters their right to be Christian. They are told that by clinging to their Judeo-Christian teachings, they are interfering with the rights of others.

Jews are accused of “dual loyalties,” an anti-Semitic trope

that has recently resurfaced in elite quarters. The BDS movement, which is popular on many college campuses, is out to crush Israel. The fact that such bigotry is led by young people—including in the halls of Congress—makes this all the more disturbing.

If those who preach the virtue of tolerance meant what they say, we wouldn't have any of these problems. But they don't—they are content to lie for a living. Worse, they are the guilty parties in the West.

Is it any wonder that militant secularists rarely condemn radical Muslims? To be sure, the former don't want to live under Sharia law, but they are prepared to take that risk provided their Muslim allies keep whittling away at our Judeo-Christian heritage. This is a sick pact that has grown exponentially since 9/11. It needs to end before more damage is done.

TIME TO REIN IN TREVOR NOAH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on another bigoted remark by Comedy Central's Trevor Noah:

Last night Trevor Noah joked about the tragedy in France. On second thought, it is not clear whether he thinks the Notre Dame fire was a tragedy at all. "Why doesn't France ask for the Catholic Church to pay for the repairs? A billion dollars is nothing to them. It's like three child abuse settlements."

In this #MeToo world, everyone is walking on eggshells. But not when it comes to trashing Catholics. If the Catholic League were to follow the lead of so many other civil rights organizations, and social media activists, we would be calling

for Noah to be fired. After all, he is a repeat offender—he frequently assaults Catholic sensibilities with below the belt comments.

Instead of calling on Noah to be fired, we are calling on his bosses to have him treat Catholics the same way he treats other religious, racial, and ethnic groups, to say nothing of the LGBTQ community. If he continues, our response will be very different.

Following a recent anti-Catholic remark, we asked our supporters to contact Renata Luczak, the communications director for the “Daily Show.” This time we are asking our base to contact the head of Viacom, the parent company of Comedy Central.

Contact: Robert.Bakish@viacom.com

IRISH REPORT ON IRISH NUNS DEBUNKS MYTHS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the findings of an important Irish report on Irish nuns:

Another interim report by Ireland’s Commission of Investigation of the Mother and Baby Homes has been released, and it debunks some myths perpetrated by the critics of the Sisters of Bon Secours in Tuam, a town in County Galway. It also vindicates the position of the Catholic League.

Katherine Zappone, Ireland’s Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, said there is “little basis for the theory that rather than having died, the children were ‘sold’ to America.”

In fact, the report explicitly notes that “there is no evidence whatsoever that could support that theory.”

The report also shoots a hole in the theory that the remains of nearly 800 children were found in a septic tank on the grounds of the Mother and Baby Home. It concluded that “human remains found by the commission are not in a sewage tank.”

The Irish, English, and American media have dealt with these two issues dishonestly. Only the *Irish Times* made mention of the babies hoax; only the *Irish Independent* cited the sewage tank hoax; only the *New York Times* mentioned both. Those who depend on the BBC, and most American news sources, have been kept in the dark.

In this country, for the past several years, no media outlet swallowed the moonshine about both hoaxes more than Irish Central. Now that the report is out it is harder to do so. Irish Central has since acknowledged that the babies were not sold, but has still not owned up to its role in promoting the lie that the remains of 796 children were found in a septic tank.

No one floated the vicious lie that the nuns sold abandoned children to Americans more than Martin Sixsmith, Steve Coogan, Judi Dench, and the Hollywood crowd.

Sixsmith wrote the book about Philomena Lee, Coogan did the screenplay adaptation, and Dench played her character in the movie, “Philomena.” The number of bald face lies told about the nuns is staggering. Take, for example, an interview that Coogan granted to MSNBC in 2014 about the movie.

Richard Liu, the host, said at one point, “And you’re talking about a group of girls and women, out-of-wedlock, having children in these institutions [homes run by nuns for troubled young women], and their children were taken away from them.”

This is a lie: the nuns did not walk the streets of Ireland

seeking to rob kids from their mothers. In the case of Philomena, her father took her to the nuns to care for the baby she could not provide for.

Coogan replied to Liu that the home was “the only place that you could go to.” He is correct about this: no one was kidnapped—the women came to the nuns *voluntarily*. Moreover, the alternative was the street. Lucky for Philomena, her father placed her with the nuns—the same nuns who found her a job after her baby was born.

Coogan said these women were “effectively incarcerated against their will.” This is a lie: no one was “incarcerated”; Philomena did not live in a jail cell. The word “effectively” is interesting: either they were imprisoned or they were not. Coogan also says “their children were forcibly adopted.” This is another lie: Philomena voluntarily signed a contract when she was 22. No one “forced” her to give up her baby.

Liu says, “And then [the nuns] prevented [the women] from finding their children.” Coogan says that in Philomena’s case, “she was obstructed at every turn by both the government and the Church.” Two more lies: the Church didn’t stop anyone, and Philomena never set foot in the U.S. until 2013; this was long after her son died of AIDS. Contrary to what the film contends, she never looked for her son in the U.S.

It must also be noted that the babies were never “sold” to anyone, never mind the “highest bidder.” Did some American couples offer a donation to the nuns for their services? Of course. But one must be a fool not to recognize the difference between offering cash to buy a baby and writing a check as an expression of appreciation.

Regarding the “mass grave” sewage-tank hoax, anyone who was not an ideologue should have been able to figure that one out a long time ago.

In 2014, a reporter for the *New York Times*, Ed O’Loughlin,

wrote that “a dogged local historian,” Catherine Corless, “published evidence” that 796 children died in the Tuam Mother and Baby Home, and that the remains of “some” were found in the septic tank. In fact, Corless is not an historian—she is a typist.

Interestingly, the official statement by the Mother and Baby Commission, issued on March 3, 2014, made no mention of a “mass grave.” Why not? If there were evidence of a mass grave surely that would have been the lead story. Instead, it says “significant quantities of human remains” were found in sewage chambers. That is disturbing but it does not support the wild claims of a “mass grave.”

Consider, too, that on July 12, 2016, another government interim report was issued and it, too, said nothing about any “mass grave.” It must be mentioned that even Corless, the source of the “mass grave” allegation, made no mention of any “mass grave” when she wrote about her findings in a 2012 article titled, “The Home”; it was published in the *Journal of the Old Tuam Society*.

Corless not only failed to mention a “mass grave,” she offered evidence that undermined her thesis. She wrote that, “A few local boys came upon a sort of crypt in the ground, and on peering in they saw several small skulls.” She mentioned there was a “little graveyard.” That is not the makings of a mass grave.

Corless said in 2014, “I am certain there were 796 children in a mass grave.” She offered no evidence, nor did she explain why—just two years earlier—she said there were “several small skulls” in a “little graveyard.”

The primary source for Corless’ “mass grave” thesis is Barry Sweeney. When he was 10, he and a friend stumbled on a hole with skeletons in it. In 2014, he was asked by the *Irish Times* to comment on Corless’ claim that there were “800 skeletons

down that hole.” He said, “Nothing like that.” How many? “About 20,” he said. He later told the *New York Times* there were “maybe 15 to 20 small skeletons.” In other words, Corless’ primary source contradicts her account!

When this story broke in 2014, Ireland’s Minister for Education, Ruairi Quinn, said the Corless account was “simply not true.” The local police said at that time that “there is no confirmation from any source that there are between 750 and 800 bodies present.”

Now that the latest Interim report has debunked the sewage tank thesis, Corless is trying to put a happy face on it. She said she is “very, very, pleased” with the report. The source of her happiness? She agrees with Zappone that some individuals must know more about what happened. That’s it? Yes. Not exactly something to hang your hat on.

The Church haters, naturally, are not going away, though even they must concede that no babies were sold and no septic tank strewn with bodily remains has been found. Still, there are holdouts.

We are now learning that there are some pictures that accompany the report, most of which have been redacted, that are allegedly troubling. Ready for the smoking gun? A blue baby shoe has been found at the Tuam site.

Look for Corless, the “dogged local historian,” to track down the other shoe and then declare victory. Such is life in the loser’s lane.

The media are not flagging this story because to do so would draw attention to their own biased coverage all along. So we are doing it. Score one for the Catholic League.

HOUSE CHAPLAIN LAWSUIT BY ATHEISTS ENDS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a lawsuit by atheists protesting traditional Congressional invocations:

The House of Representatives begins each legislative day with a prayer, a practice that has been observed since the First Continental Congress. The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), comprised of religion-hating militant secularists, wants equal time: in 2016 they asked House Chaplain Father Patrick Conroy for the right to offer a “non-prayer” invocation. They were denied and then sued.

In October 2017, FFRF lost in federal district court. On Good Friday, they lost on an appeal to the D.C. Circuit Court. The three-judge panel said the Congress has the right to write its own internal rules. They also said that the plaintiff, FFRF co-president Dan Barker, failed to state a claim that the court could affirm.

The Catholic League addressed this issue in 2016 and 2017, noting the fraudulent nature of Barker’s argument. He told the district court in 2016 that he has been a minister for over four decades. But that doesn’t count. What counts is the fact that he long ago renounced his belief in God: He is a devout atheist.

Father Conroy saw right through Barker’s bogus bid to offer an invocation. He noted that any guest chaplain must be “ordained by a recognized body in the faith in which he/she practices.”

The Catholic priest stressed that this time-honored rule is taken seriously. “For example,” he said, “I do not invite

member-recommended individuals who have obtained an Internet-generated ordination to serve as guest chaplains, even if they hold deep and long-standing religious beliefs.”

FFRF never stands for anything—it always stands against, or from—something. We hope they waste more of their money by appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court. Three strikes might just finish the entire organization.

FILM CRITICS LOVE “HAIL SATAN?”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the new movie, “Hail Satan?”:

I hope someone takes pictures of those waiting in line to see “Hail Satan?” I am sure it would be worth the effort.

Most Christians and Jews, of course, will be engaged in Passover and Easter events this weekend, having no time for nonsense. But those who hate religion will have plenty of time, and they are sure to be accessing their horns and brooms for this Satanic gala.

It is not an accident that this documentary opens during Holy Week. The Christian haters have a long history of living parasitically off of Christianity.

For example, American Atheists always holds its annual convention over the Easter weekend. This year they are in Cincinnati, hoping to draw double digits. It won’t be easy given that their past president, David Silverman, who was an entertaining guy, albeit a dunce, is no longer with them: he

was fired for having some big problems with money and women.

A number of years ago, Christopher Hitchens, the angry atheist, refused to debate me on MSNBC on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of Holy Week. In fairness, he hadn't done very well debating me on many previous occasions, so it was a smart move. But he did agree to debate me on Good Friday at 3:00 p.m. Such a brave man.

Hollywood liberal movie reviewers have finally found a religious movie they like—"Hail Satan?" works for them. But is this really a film about a religion? It is based on The Satanic Temple, a ragtag bunch of weird-looking people. The august *New York Times* says that "it's probably not even a religion." Hollywood News disagrees, noting it is "hardly your average religion."

The director of the movie is Penny Lane (no relation to Lois). "I'm a lifelong atheist," she said in a recent interview. "Somehow, I never realized that that is so weird." Ironically, being an atheist is less weird now than ever before in American history, so the timing of Penny's epiphany is bizarre.

The Detroit founder of The Satanic Temple is Jex Blackmore. She is featured in the movie dragging a cross through the streets of Detroit wearing a crown of thorns. Unfortunately for Jex, she is no longer with the Satanic outfit. She had to be let go for calling for the death of all presidents (at least Trump wasn't singled out).

Why do the critics love this flick? Satan, we learn, is not a bad guy. In fact, *Variety* calls him a "freethinker." That settles the issue.

The consensus of movie critics, as noted by Rotten Tomatoes, is that the film "challenges preconceived notions of its subject with a smart, witty, and overall entertaining dispatch from the front lines of the fight for social justice." Maybe

they will join Bernie Sanders' campaign. Buttigieg might be a better choice. Hope they decide shortly.

How do these happy Satanists demonstrate their dedication to social justice?

The *New York Times* observes that they have adopted "a stretch of highway in Arizona and picked up litter with pitchforks." Excellent choice of utensils. But is that all there is? No, they have "collected socks for the needy." Not a word about shoes.

The British *Guardian* is much more observant, noting that the happy Satanists also collect "menstrual products to distribute to local shelters." Not a word about what the guys get, nor, for that matter, what the trans people get (the latter is surely an oversight).

What the movie reviewers don't tell the reader is that these Satanists hate Catholics. Penny Lane, for instance, says there never was anything evil about Satanists, attributing the "myth" to Catholics. They also deny the existence of a Black Mass, contrary to overwhelming evidence.

Huffington Post says The Satanic Temple stands for "compassion, liberty and justice for all." That is a lie. They have absolutely no compassion for the rights of unborn babies.

In January, I had an exchange with one of the wizards from this group, asking him why abortion is such a big issue for them. "It isn't abortion per se," I was told. "It's personal freedom." Here's what happened next.

"But if the personal freedom of a woman to have an abortion results in the wholesale denial of personal freedom for her baby," I asked, "how is that a victory for liberty?" His reply: "Because it isn't a baby." He didn't say if it was a turtle.

The *New York Times* got cute by saying the movie is rated "R" for "compassion, empathy, scientific understanding." The *Los Angeles Times* was more honest, saying the "R" was for "graphic nudity, and some language."

One final thought. These same movie critics who are enamored of a film about Satanists refused to review "Unplanned," the movie about Abby Johnson and her sickening experiences working for Planned Parenthood. It all circles back to abortion: the Satanists love what practicing Christians abhor.

No matter, "Unplanned," despite the media blackout, did stupendously at the box office. It remains to be seen if the receipts for "Hail Satan?" will cover the theaters' electric bill.

I hope someone sends me a picture of the theater-goers.

Contact *Magnolia* *Pictures'* PR office:
publicity@magpictures.com