

RIHANNA'S FLIRTATION WITH CATHOLICISM

[Bill Donohue](#)

On the cover of the latest edition of *Interview* magazine, Rihanna is dressed as a sexy nun, wearing bright red lipstick adorned in a black and white habit. This is not the first time she has appropriated Catholic garb.

In 2018, she was dressed as a bishop in an exhibition, "Heavenly Bodies," at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. One reviewer offered a detailed description of her outfit. "The lavishly embroidered and jeweled robes matched the garments' accompanying 'mitre,' a kind of headdress for bishops." The Vatican loaned the mitres and some other items.

While Rihanna's presence at the New York event was not disrespectful—she won the applause of Cardinal Timothy Dolan—the photo on the cover of *Interview* is meant to be provocative, even edgy. Why she chose to depict herself as a tramy-looking nun is unclear.

Mel Ottenberg interviewed her for the magazine. Most of what they said is what we would expect from foul-mouthed adolescents. He said toward the end, "This is such a sick interview, by the way." She replied, "I love it."

But there is a side to Rihanna that is serious, and it is ennobling. She cares deeply about her two children, saying, "The well-being of your kids, you worry about that constantly. Nobody warns you that having kids means you're going to worry every second of your life." It should be noted that she spontaneously mentioned her kids—she was not asked about them.

When she was later asked about having more children, she answered, "As many as god [sic] wants me to have. I don't know

what god [sic] wants, but I would go for more than two. I would try for my girl. But of course if it's another boy, it's another boy."

God is on Rihanna's mind.

In an interview she gave last year to *Relevant* magazine, she said, "I have been in a place where I felt like maybe I had disappointed God so much that we weren't as close." She also knows what it's like to surrender to God. "When you give God complete control, it's very hard not to be fearless."

The devil is also on her mind.

"The devil just has a way of making you feel like you're not good enough, and that you're not worthy of God being close to you. It's really not the truth, but you wind up feeling like that."

Those are not the words of some blasphemous celebrity. Rihanna is no saint but her flirtation with Catholicism has redeeming qualities. Hope she stays the course.

VATICAN DOCUMENT IS AT ONE WITH SCIENCE

[Bill Donohue](#)

The Vatican Declaration on Human Dignity, *Dignitas Infinita*, shows once again that the teachings of the Catholic Church are at one with science. Ironically, this comes at a time when many elites in the scientific community are out of step with well-established scientific truths. To be specific, the conviction that the sexes are interchangeable and not fixed by

nature is not based on science. It is based on politics.

The document affirms that “Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter.”

The saliency of this principal finds expression in the Church’s rejection of ideological colonization. Gender theory not only plays a central role, it “is extremely dangerous since it cancels differences in its claim to make everyone equal.” Similarly, gender theory “intends to deny the greatest possible difference that exists between living beings: sexual difference.”

To deny sexual differences, the Vatican says, is to eliminate “the anthropological basis of the family.” This can lead to a situation where it becomes acceptable to dictate “how children should be raised.” It needs to be emphasized that “biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.”

Pope Francis’ exhortation on this issue, *Amoris Laetitia* (2016), is cited in the document. “We cannot separate the masculine and the feminine from God’s work of creation, which is prior to all our decisions and experiences, and where biological elements exist which are impossible to ignore.” Importantly, the Vatican statement also says that “sex-change intervention” is problematic because it “risks threatening the unique dignity the person has received from the moment of conception.”

To the average person, especially Catholics, this document makes perfect sense. But unfortunately we live in a world where many elites are in a massive state of denial.

Just this week, the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota announced—to great fanfare—that puberty blockers have harmful effects, including cancer, and that it is not at all certain that they

can be reversed (as the “gender-affirming” cheerleaders in medicine have claimed). This was hardly breaking news to most people, but to the anti-science crowd, it was bad news.

The Associated Press latest style book, now available, advises journalists not to use the term “female” anymore because it “can be seen as emphasizing biology and reproductive capacity over gender ideology.” Another triumph of politics over science.

Meanwhile, the female coach of the South Carolina women’s basketball team, which won the championship on Sunday, said that men should be allowed to compete against women in women’s sports. “If you consider yourself a woman and you want to play sports, or vice versa, you should be able to play.” Let’s see how everyone reacts if a flood of men want to play on her team next year.

The Catholic Church is not at war with science. But many of the elites in the scientific community are. Worse, they have influenced legions of others in elite positions. The biggest losers are women, or what journalists used to call females.

ATHEIST FELON WINS RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

[Bill Donohue](#)

An atheist inmate at an upstate New York prison won in a backdoor fashion when he joined five of his fellow prisoners in a lawsuit asserting religious rights to witness the April 8 total eclipse despite a prison lockdown. In a settlement agreement, the six felons will be permitted to view the

eclipse.

The law firm representing the inmates said the agreement “will allow our six clients to view the solar eclipse in accordance with their sincerely held religious beliefs.” Granting religious rights to the five prisoners who belong to a religion is not the issue: the issue is granting religious rights to the atheist. That is absurd.

The root of the problem lay in the boneheaded decision recently made by the Woodbourne Correctional Facility to grant the request of the atheist, Jeremy Zielinski, to recognize atheism as an official religion. The fact that he is a convicted serial rapist (he previously served time for raping a child) is reason enough to deny him anything but the most elementary of rights. But the ruling by the prison declaring atheism to be a religion still needs to be reversed.

To say that atheism is a religion is an oxymoron. It makes as much sense as talking about true fiction. Atheism is the absence of belief in God, thus its negation is also its disqualifier: the proposition that atheism is a religion implodes. Moreover, the Secular Humanist Association defines atheism as “religious disbelief.”

To be sure, there are websites, such as quora.com, that argue otherwise. It says that “The Supreme Court has recognized atheism as equivalent to a ‘religion’ for purposes of the First Amendment on numerous occasions.” The “numerous occasions” amount to two, and it is wrong on both.

In neither decision (*McCreary County, KY v. ACLU* and *Torcaso v. Watkins*) does it mention the words “atheist” or “atheism” even once. The website says that in the latter decision, it “specifically included ‘Secular Humanism’ as an example of religion.”

Not so fast.

It is true that Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black (a former Klansman who joined the KKK to fight Catholics) rendered a footnote in *Torcaso* that named "Secular Humanism" as a religion that does not believe in God. But unlike Buddhism, which fits this description, Secular Humanism does not. Black's assertion is contradicted by the American Humanist Association.

It defines Humanism as "*without theism and other supernatural beliefs*" (its italics). It says its mission "is to advance humanism, an ethical and life-affirming philosophy free of belief in any gods and other supernatural forces." The organization further contends that "More than two-thirds of people who identify as humanists and who are members of the American Humanist Association also identify as atheists."

To blow an even bigger hole in these myths about atheism and Secular Humanism, consider that according to the Atheist Revolution, "secular humanists go beyond atheism, rejecting not just the notion of god(s) but of anything supernatural."

This does not mean that atheists and non-theists have no rights. The International Religious Freedom Act, signed by President Obama, says that "The freedom of thought and religion is understood to protect theistic and non-theistic beliefs as well as the right not to profess or practice any religion."

Just don't call atheism a religion and waste time weighing the "religious" rights of atheist felons. They have none.

WHITE HOUSE IS WRONG ABOUT EASTER EGG ISSUE

[Bill Donohue](#)

The Biden administration is claiming that conservative critics of its Easter Egg ban on religious symbols and themes are wrong, and that this policy has been observed by previous administrations.

They are the ones who are wrong. We proved it on April 3rd: click [here](#) to read our news release on this subject and see for yourself a picture of a Catholic missionary shrine that was painted on the New Mexico Easter Egg submission in 2002. It obviously passed muster with the administration of President George W. Bush.

The White House is now saying that it is following the rules established by the American Egg Board (AEB), and officials there say they are following rules established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Searching for “Easter Egg Roll” on the USDA website yields articles such as, “How long can I store bread?” There is one titled, “White House Easter Egg Roll”; it is about the 2018 event. When trying to access it, the reader is taken to “Page Not Found.”

Why was this page scrubbed?

On Easter Sunday, March 31, AEB released a statement about the history of this annual White House celebration. The one reference to religion says this event does not show “preference to any individual religious or political viewpoints as AEB is prohibited from doing as a national Checkoff organization.” [Checkoff organizations are USDA entities that promote research about agricultural commodities

without endorsing producers or brands.]

It makes sense that AEB cannot show “preference to any individual religious or political viewpoints.” It’s a government agency. But that hardly settles the issue.

Public school teachers cannot show preference to any religion. But they are also banned from stopping students from religious expression. If a student in a music or art class decides to sing a religious hymn or draw a religious symbol, the teacher has no legal right to stop him.

Similarly, it is one thing for AEB not to promote religion; it is quite another for it, or the USDA, to prohibit individuals from depicting a religious theme in a government-sponsored event.

The White House is wrong historically and constitutionally. And the media are just as corrupt for not reporting this story accurately.

Contact the White House Press Secretary: Karine.Jean-Pierre@who.eop.gov

BIGOTED PLAYWRIGHT IS DEAD

[Bill Donohue](#)

Christopher Durang died on April 2nd. In its obituary on the homosexual anti-Catholic playwright, the *New York Times* predictably treated him with admiration, saying he had an “impish wit.”

Durang was an only child who grew up in a home with an alcoholic father and a mother who suffered from depression. He

attended a Catholic elementary school and, like so many gay Catholics, he turned his anger at the Church, calling its teachings on sexuality “pathological” and “unhealthy.” He never explained why, if gay sex is not unhealthy, so many homosexuals die prematurely of sexually transmitted diseases.

The most anti-Catholic, and celebrated, play that Durang ever wrote was “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You.” The *Times* obit branded it “an absurdist lacerating one-act” play. It said not a word about its vicious portrayal of Catholicism.

The obit mentions that when the play opened, Frank Rich, the longtime arts critic for the *Times*, said, “Only a writer of real talent can write an angry play that remains funny and controlled even in its most savage moments.” It omitted what Rich said two sentences later. In his 1981 review, he wrote that the play “goes after the Catholic Church with a vengeance.”

There were many other prominent non-Catholics who labeled the play anti-Catholic.

In 1983, the Anti-Defamation League called it “offensive, unfair and demeaning.” The American Jewish Committee agreed. In 1985, the National Conference of Christians and Jews said it was “a travesty of Catholic teaching.” In 1990, an editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* noted that the play “takes a brutal, satirical look at Catholic dogma.” A theater critic for the *Dallas Morning News* commented in 1998 that it was “the most virulently anti-Catholic play in American theater.” And in 2001, the *Phoenix New Times* labeled it “unmistakably anti-Catholic.”

None of these organizations and media outlets overreacted. Here is what I previously wrote about Durang’s masterpiece.

“The play features a malicious nun who is confronted by four of her former students. All of them are obviously dysfunctional, a condition directly traceable to their

Catholic upbringing. The play not only manages to mock virtually every Catholic teaching, it goes after Jesus with a vengeance—from the Nativity to the Crucifixion; the Virgin Mary is similarly disparaged. In the end, the nun shoots and kills two of her ex-students.”

The *New York Times* knows all about the anti-Catholicism that marks “Sister Mary Ignatius,” but it is not offended. This explains why it never mentioned anything about Durang’s bigotry in its obit. It is not the same newspaper it once was—on many fronts—having become the voice of the most left-wing activists in the country.

Contact the paper’s obit editor, William McDonald:
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RELIGIOUS EASTER EGGS OKAY UNDER G.W. BUSH

[Bill Donohue](#)

The Biden administration is wrong. The media are wrong. Snopes is wrong. Politifact is wrong. They are all guilty of misinformation: Religious Easter Eggs were allowed under President George W. Bush.

To see the proof for yourself, click [here](#).

This was the Easter Egg that was one of 51 that were on display in 2002. It represented the state of New Mexico; no one complained.

This Easter Egg is an image of El Santuario de Chimayo, a small shrine located in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of

Chimayo, New Mexico. It has been a place of worship since 1813, and is one of the most important Catholic pilgrimage centers in the United States.

The New Mexico artist responsible for this submission is Stan Franklin, a resident of Bosque Farms, New Mexico. According to [one news story](#), he “chose a church theme to portray the Land of Enchantment. In pen, ink and acrylic paint, the drawing depicted the destination of the Good Friday Pilgrimage to Chimayo.”

When I learned of reports that prohibitions against displays of religious themes and symbols on Easter Eggs were commonplace before the Biden administration, I was skeptical. It took little time to investigate and prove them wrong.

Biden is the least religious-friendly president in American history, and attempts to rescue him from being tagged as such are pathetic. Mr. “Devout Catholic” is an embarrassment to practicing Catholics everywhere.

Contact the White House Press Secretary: Karine.Jean-Pierre@eop.gov

THE BUDDING RELIGIOUS TRAUMA INDUSTRY

[Bill Donohue](#)

Leave it to shrinks and therapists to find new victims to treat. One of their latest discoveries are those who allegedly suffer from religious trauma. The goal is to have this declared a mental illness.

Religious trauma is defined as “The physical, emotional, or psychological response to religious beliefs, practices, or structures that is experienced by an individual as overwhelming or disruptive and has lasting adverse effects on a person’s physical, mental, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.”

That’s a mouthful. According to psychologist Marlene Winell, who coined the term “religious trauma syndrome,” at its worst religious trauma “is basically mind rape.” She called it a syndrome in 2012 because “the condition needed a name.” Smart move: It’s always good to put a name to something no one knows what you are talking about.

It basically refers to people who have had a bad experience with overbearing religious parents, members of the clergy, and the like. There’s nothing new about that. But it is quite a leap to claim that the overly zealous suffer from a mental illness. If anything, those who make such claims might be the ones who need professional help.

Winell was raised by missionary parents in Taiwan. She says they were too strict. Having experienced what she calls religious trauma syndrome first-hand, she contends that this condition applies to “people who are struggling with leaving an authoritarian, dogmatic religion and coping with the damage of indoctrination.”

If there is one place in American society today where dogmatic insistence on a core set of beliefs is commonplace, it is not in your local church—it’s in your local college or university. They are the masters of indoctrination.

But to people like Winell, who holds a Ph.D. from Penn State University, to maintain that higher education is the real bastion of “mind rape” is heretical. Like so many shrinks, she lives in a bubble. Consider that she practices her magic with patients in Berkeley, California, home to some of the

most militant secularists in the nation. No matter, she is convinced that “There are so many places in the U.S. that are just saturated with religion.” Not where she lives.

Predictably, Winell says that liberal churches are not guilty of promoting religious trauma syndrome. She knows who the bad guys are and who their victims are. “There’s so much condemnation in conservative kinds of churches about being LGBTQ, that the trauma is felt as a direct attack on them.”

So where’s the evidence? In all my years of going to church I have yet to hear a single condemnation of LGBTQ people. In fact I have never heard a priest even mention anything about these people, and many wouldn’t even know what the acronym means.

Looking to find evidence to support Winell’s belief is not easy, though there was a journal piece in 2023 titled, “Percentage of U.S. Adults Suffering from Religious Trauma: A Sociological Study.” The researchers found that those who are the most likely to say they have experienced religious trauma, as determined by anxiety, stress, fear, depression, shame or nightmares, are mostly young people (18-34) and those with a college degree or graduate degree.

Many people suffer from anxiety and stress—for all kinds of reasons—so it is difficult to say what role religion played in these people; perhaps these conditions were due to something else and they conveniently attributed their malady to religion. It must also be said that bouts of stress are not necessarily a bad sign—they could be seen as functional to the task (e.g., the typical heart surgeon).

Also, if a person commits a shameful act, it is normal to experience shame. Indeed, it could be argued that in this situation, the most abnormal response would be shamelessness. But to those who look at the world through a secular lens, it is easy to conclude that religion is the problem.

It is not hard to figure out why young people are more likely to find religion disagreeable: their narcissism rebels against “Thou Shalt Not” commands. Similarly, the well educated are the most secular segment of the population, so their adversity to religion makes sense. What is more difficult to explain is why 21 percent of these “religious trauma” victims have been convicted of a crime. Maybe there really is something twisted about them.

Many studies have found that secular-minded people are much more likely to suffer from depression than their religious counterparts. We also know that psychologists are the least religious of all professors. So when the typical psychologist studies those who are disproportionately secularists, finding negative traits associated with religion is to be expected.

Dr. Darren M. Slade runs the Global Center for Religious Research, and his work on the subject of religious trauma led him to a rather harsh conclusion. “Using ‘mental illness’ as an insult or as a means to attack a belief system is not only inappropriate, but it also displays a lack of understanding and empathy.”

That’s being kind.

BLOWING UP THE DEI AGENDA

[Bill Donohue](#)

DEI training (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) cost American business \$8 billion a year, and while there are some signs that it is peaking, it is not for lack of trying. For example, since 2019, “Belonging” has been added to this scam, hence DEIB. This is a classic case of empire building.

Democratic pundit James Carville recently said that his party was sending messages that are “too feminine.” He’s right. What he said is also true of business—we are witnessing the feminization of the workforce.

We can thank a professor—who else?—for adding the “B” to DEI. Eric Carter at Vanderbilt says that diversity, equity and inclusion are not enough. “People want to be more than merely integrated or included. They want to experience true belonging.”

Traditionally, a sense of belonging has been fulfilled by the family, or by tribes and clans. Many turn to religion to satisfy this primordial need. It took until now before anyone thought we should find it on the job.

Brene Brown is an expert in assessing “belonging.” She cautions that it is not the same as “fitting in,” which she despises. “‘Belonging’ is being your authentic self and knowing that no matter what happens, you belong to you....Belonging doesn’t require us to change who we are; it requires us to BE who we are.”

Sounds nice. But in the real world there are employees who come to work with a pierced tongue and metal hanging from their nostrils. They don’t want to belong—they want to be different. Now their quest to be different may be an expression of their “authentic self,” but if choosing not to belong matters more to them, then why should co-workers who find their appearance, and their hygiene, disgusting be treated as if they are the problem?

Daniel Buford and his colleagues at the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond are also regarded as experts on “belonging.” They hate striving for perfection—that’s a white man’s hang-up. “Striving for perfection leaves us all feeling short, left out, and lacking belonging.”

Tell that to teams who compete in the Olympics. Striving for

perfection—in unison—creates strong bonds. Indeed, the same is true of all team sports, starting in elementary school. It is the slackers who find it difficult to belong. That's why athletes have clubs, and slackers have none.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation is a left-wing organization that boasts of its opposition to “othering.” Never heard of it? Neither did we. So let us introduce you to it.

“Othering” is the opposite of “belonging.” According to an Oxford Reference, “A Dictionary of Gender Studies” says the phenomenon of “othering” is “a process whereby individuals and groups are treated and marked as different and inferior from the dominant social group.”

This sounds suspect. Among the most “othered” people in Silicon Valley and Hollywood are Trump supporters and people of faith. They are loathed. But this would never occur to the gurus of “belonging,” which is why they list homosexuals and migrants as victims of “othering,” not MAGA fans and practicing Catholics.

“Othering” is such a bonanza that there is even a guy at the University of Berkeley who runs the Othering and Belonging Institute on campus. This creative empire builder apparently has little need to belong, which is why he likes to separate himself from the rest of us by using the lower case to identify himself. He goes by john a. powell.

How can we recognize “othering”? One website that addresses this issue gives us an example. “Attributing positive qualities to people who are like you and negative qualities to people who are different from you.”

Apparently this is bad. But if it is, why are the same people who are pushing DEIB also pushing Critical Race Theory (CRT), the pernicious ideology that demonizes white people? Are not the practitioners of CRT—those who celebrate racial divisions—blowing up the DEIB agenda? They can't have it both

ways. But it's a sure bet this never occurred to them.

There are other contradictions baked into this hoax.

PowerToFly is a website with chock-a-block info on "belonging." Its idea of "belonging" means that "Direct communication is preferred over back-channeling." But if this is true—and it is—then why would they give a shout-out to working at home? "The benefits of remote work for diverse talent are recognized."

How can this be? How can there be "direct communication" with those on Zoom? And what does remote work have to do with facilitating "diverse talent"?

The geniuses behind the "belonging" craze need to grow up. They can't be celebrating diversity—how different we are—at the same time they are celebrating "belonging." Nor can they be celebrating "inclusion"—inviting everyone in—when it is well known that the most tightly knit groups in the world are in-groups, those that exhibit a strong sense of belonging precisely because they *exclude* most people.

To say that the DEIB agenda is a racket is an understatement. It's also built on contradictory principles.

PROTESTERS EVICTED FROM ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

[Bill Donohue](#)

A group of protesters invaded St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City Saturday night during the Easter Mass. Standing front and center, they unfurled a banner with a depiction of

an olive tree and the inscription, SILENCE = DEATH. They were screaming "Free Palestine"; their allies were heard shouting similar chants from the street. Security quickly escorted them out of the Cathedral.

The big media acted according to script. It was not covered by the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* or the Associated Press, though the latter two found time to cover Trans Visibility Day on Sunday. CBS and NBC ran a story on the protesters, but ABC and PBS said nothing. MSNBC ran one story on St. Patrick's Cathedral and five on Trans Visibility Day. The winner was CNN: it had no coverage of the church-busters but aired ten stories on Trans Visibility Day.

At least some of the protesters claim to be affiliated with Extinction Rebellion. Founded as a climate change organization in the U.K. in 2018, they have now taken up the anti-Israel cause, championing Palestinian rights. They demand that leaders in the western world stop genocide and ecocide.

Extinction Rebellion falsely claims to practice civil disobedience, and they are portrayed that way by their friends in the media. The truth is that they are not unaccustomed to violence; they are also known for taking over bridges and damaging property.

Extinction Rebellion is funded by rich individuals and organizations, among them being the Children's Investment Fund Foundation. Left-wing professors, such as America's Noam Chomsky, and eco-extremists such as Greta Thunberg, applaud their goals and tactics.

St. Patrick's Cathedral was recently invaded by LGBT radicals, and now it's the pro-Palestinian protesters who have crashed the Cathedral.

These are not activists. They are domestic terrorists. They could have taken over a Broadway play or a concert at Madison Square Garden. But that wouldn't excite them. Disrupting an

Easter Mass excites them.

At bottom, they are angry at God, which is why they chose St. Patrick's Cathedral to vent their anger. In doing so they are committing the greatest sin of all—the sin of pride. Their rejection of God and their exalted sense of who they think they are explains their sorry condition.

They also hate Jews and Catholics. Jews were the object of their protest—they want Israel to disarm so Hamas can win—and their venue was the nation's most iconic Catholic church.

Until these domestic terrorists are prosecuted, convicted and sent to prison, these kinds of Satanic acts will continue. They can be stopped, but the authorities in New York City and New York State have no interest in doing so.

EASTER EGG ROLL CENSORS CHRISTIANITY

[Bill Donohue](#)

Since 1878, American presidents have celebrated Easter by having an “egg roll” party on Easter Monday; it is held on the South Lawn of the White House. At today's event, Biden administration officials have made it plain that they will not tolerate any reference to the Christian roots of the holiday.

Starting months ago, National Guard families were told that their children could submit artwork that honored this annual event; they had until January 22 to do so. Submissions were expected to adhere to seven guidelines, most of which are unobjectionable. There was one, however, that was clearly out

of place.

"The Submission must not include any questionable content, *religious symbols, overtly religious themes*, or partisan political statements (*italics added*)."

Why was it necessary to censor Christianity? Easter is the quintessential Christian holiday. Who would be offended if a child portrayed a crucifix on an Easter egg? Aren't those who say they would be offended the real problem? Why is the Biden administration giving into bigots? Whatever happened to respect for diversity? Why the need to secularize an event grounded in religion? Taking Christianity out of Easter is like taking motherhood out of Mother's Day. Why bother?

Until now, no president has ever censored Easter. It took our "devout Catholic" president to do so. Looks like he's the one being rolled.

Contact the White House Secretary: Karine.Jean-Pierre@who.eop.gov