

THREE CHEAP SHOTS ON TV

"Moesha" is a comedy that features African American actors. The Halloween episode that aired October 30 was overall quite good, containing an anti-drug message. But what we didn't like was a scene where young Moesha got dressed as a nun and jumped into a man's arms with her legs wrapped around his waist. Pat Scully discussed our complaint with top people at UPN. They understood our point and offered to relay it to others.

On the October 31 episode of "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," they showed a Jesus-figure doing exercises trying to get in shape. While that was in bad taste, what crossed the line and made it offensive was the decision to show him exercising while tied to a cross. We tried to get NBC to understand our objection.

Then there's David E. Kelley, the talented TV writer and producer who has a problem with Catholicism. As soon as his new show aired, "Boston Public," we started getting complaints. In the November 9 episode, which Kelley wrote, there was a scene where a gay football player notes he is being recruited by Boston College, "a *Jesuit* school." The player fears that if BC finds out he's gay, they won't want him, etc.

Kelley knows this is a fiction but that doesn't stop him. Write to him at David E. Kelley Productions, 10201 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90035.

CATHOLIC BASHERS STUFF HILLARY'S COFFERS

On October 25, Hillary Clinton had a fundraising event at New York's Roseland Ballroom. Among those in attendance were at least seven celebrities who have a record of Catholic bashing. Consider the following:

- Ben Affleck played in the anti-Catholic movie, "Dogma," and admitted that "The film is definitely meant to push buttons"
- Molly Shannon is best known for her crude portrayal of a Catholic school girl on "Saturday Night Live"
- Nathan Lane played "a Catholic priest who cruises the altars for quickies" in a 1995 movie called "Jeffrey"
- Dennis Leary made obscene jokes about Christ and defamed the Catholic Church in his 1997 "Lock-N-Load" show on HBO
- Cher released an anti-Catholic song called "Sisters of Mercy" on her new CD
- Whoopi Goldberg insulted the pope on the September 26, 1997 edition of "20/20"
- Harvey Weinstein's Miramax distributed the anti-Catholic film, "Priest," and produced the Catholic-bashing movie, "Dogma"

The Catholic League's concerns were made available to the media via this statement:

"Hillary Clinton is not responsible for the Catholic-bashing record of her fundraising friends, but she is responsible for running with them. These are not just some anonymous contributors—they are among her best friends. Is there anyone who believes that she would run in the same circles with those who mock blacks, Jews or gays? As far as Catholics are concerned, there is literally no difference between the gang

of eight that stuffed her coffers last night and the John Rockers of this world. But we won't ask her to return the cash: we'd rather just get the word out about who her real friends are."

THE BIGGEST ANTI-CATHOLIC BIGOT ON THE BLOCK?

Subscribers of the New Yorker who are anti-Catholic (not a few we would guess) have come to adore James Carroll. Carroll is a former priest who today competes with many former priests and seminarians as the biggest anti-Catholic bigot on the block. With his latest book, we think he's won.

Constantine's Sword, the Church and the Jews: A History will be available January 10. Its thesis is available now, thanks to a blurb on the website of Carroll's publisher, Houghton Mifflin: "The Church's failure to protest the Holocaust—the infamous 'silence' of Pius XII—is only part of the story: the death camps, Carroll shows, are the culmination of a long, entrenched tradition of anti-Judaism." In other words, the Church created Hitler.

Carroll has a long and infamous career of bashing the Church. Whether he's ripping the Church for canonizing Edith Stein, blaming Pius XII for the Holocaust or going bonkers because the Church has had it with nuns who believe in a do-it-yourself religion, Carroll can always be counted on to take the side of the anti-Catholics. That's because he is one.

Look for the big media to eat this one up. Between the deceitful John Cornwell (*Hitler's Pope*), the embittered Garry Wills (*Papal Sin*) and the anti-Catholic James Carroll

(*Constantine's Sword*), the Catholic-bashing appetite in this country is positively gluttonous.

That so much of the hatred comes from those who were once Catholic—or still claim to be—says something. About them. To lug around this much pent-up rage about a voluntary organization that they've walked away from is a sign that serious self-inflicted damage has been done. Its time they spent less time in a library and more time in a gym. We'd all be in better shape if only they would.

ENOUGH, ALREADY!

In the November *Catalyst*, we ran a story, "Their Idea of Fairness," wherein we reported that Insight Media had a catalog of videos and CD-ROMS for students that included some good selections on religion, but also some lousy selections on Roman Catholicism. We told our members that head of the company, Jeff Morris, failed to respond to a letter by William Donohue, so we asked them to write. And did they!

Morris called on November 6 and again on November 9, both times crying uncle. He said he was deluged with mail and wanted to make amends. He not only agreed to be more sensitive about this issue in the future, he said that his staff would screen new videos on Catholicism.

Thanks to you, Morris got the message. So please, when we list names and addresses of offending parties, write to them as soon as possible. Over and over again, we have seen how it can make a difference.

AN UNSEEMLY MIX OF POLITICS AND RELIGION

The 2000 elections will be remembered for lots of things, few of them honorable. Among the long list of dishonorable things, count the unseemly mix of politics and religion that colored so many of the races. To be specific, the extent to which candidates carried their campaigns into houses of worship was appalling.

Though Republicans and Democrats were both guilty of stumping in churches and synagogues, there is little doubt that the most egregious abuses took place by Democrats in African American Protestant churches. Indeed, it sometimes looked like we had two constitutions—one for black Protestants and one for the rest of the nation. That, in fact, is the way Jesse Jackson, Jr., congressman from Illinois, put it.

When asked about the phenomenon of candidates campaigning in black churches, Jackson said, “Certainly there’s a separation of church and state. But in our community there’s little distinction between our religion and our politics....And so in many African-American churches born out of experience in this country, the role of the churches has evolved into a very, very active political institution which has been very effective for a number of causes in the black community.”

The clincher was Jackson’s answer to the question, “And that supersedes the law?” To which the congressman replied, “Absolutely. Oh, absolutely.” Translated this means that because of the historical nexus between churches and political activism in the African American community, it is okay for blacks to ignore the First Amendment.

The Sunday before the election, Hillary Rodham Clinton campaigned in eight African American churches. In every case, she was greeted with unrestrained enthusiasm and every case she campaigned from the pulpit. No one said a word though the one time that New York's Archbishop, Edward M. Egan, spoke on the question of abortion, Planned Parenthood of New York and Catholics for a Free Choice came down his throat.

Both pro-abortion organizations blasted Archbishop Egan for his homily of October 29 urging Catholics to vote for those "who share our commitment to fundamental rights for the unborn." The Archbishop's appeal was also made in the form of a letter he sent to all parishes in the New York Archdiocese.

The Catholic League immediately rose to Archbishop Egan's defense with the following news release:

"There is a cruel irony in the lecture Archbishop Egan received from Planned Parenthood of New York and Catholics for a Free Choice. Both organizations have spent the entire fall campaigning for pro-abortion candidates and have never uttered one word of criticism at those ministers and rabbis who have allowed their churches and synagogues to become a playground for Republicans and Democrats seeking election. Now they have the nerve to criticize Archbishop Egan for simply exercising his freedom of speech.

"Planned Parenthood and Catholics for a Free Choice have something else in common: both have their origins in bigotry. Planned Parenthood was founded to promote the eugenic ideal of limiting the African American population and Catholics for a Free Choice was founded as an explicitly anti-Catholic organization. Neither has any moral authority to advise any Catholic leader on any subject.

"What's really bothering the pro-abortion lobby is Archbishop Egan's willingness to engage the culture. They'd better get used to it."

What is needed is for all future candidates for elective office to sign a pledge saying they will not campaign in any house of worship. This is something the league will seek to do next time around.

ABC'S "POLITICALLY INCORRECT" CONTINUES ITS ATTACK ON ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The October 27 episode of ABC's "Politically Incorrect" triggered a record number of complaints to the Catholic League. The discussion was Halloween and how it relates to paganism. The show's host, Bill Maher, commented how "Christianity is grafted on paganism"; media critic Holly McClure agreed. Actor Guy Torry then remarked, "Halloween was started in the Catholic Church," a quip denied by McClure. The most important exchange occurred next.

McClure: "We are so ignorant on the whole reason why we do it [celebrate Halloween]. We just go along like sheep to the slaughter."

Maher: "Which is the perfect description of religion itself. I mean, what is scarier than drinking the man's blood every Sunday? That's not a spooky ritual? Here kids, drink his blood and eat his body. Like that's not pagan? What can be more pagan than that?"

The league announced to the press its response to this episode of "Politically Incorrect" in the following news release:

"The relentless assault on Catholicism that emanates from

'Politically Incorrect' suggests an animus against Roman Catholicism that is deep-seated. We will ask our members to flood the offices of ABC with phone calls, faxes and letters.

"Thus far, Olivia Cohen-Cutler, the new vice president of Broadcast Standards & Practices at ABC, has shown little interest in addressing the anti-Catholic virus that Bill Maher willfully spreads on his show. It is time she acted responsibly by directly confronting this issue."

Members are urged to contact Cohen-Cutler by writing to her at 2040 Avenue of the Stars, 5th floor, Century City, CA 90067. It would be useful to know what Maher's problem is and what ABC is going to do about it.

CHURCH VANDALS HIT MARYLAND, ALABAMA, ALASKA

Catholic churches and Catholic religious symbols continue to be vandalized in many parts of the country.

For three years, Father Thomas Flowers, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Church in Chesapeake City, Maryland has led his church and the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus in erecting small crosses at a prominent roadside. This year they ran into trouble.

As they usually do, Father Flowers and the Knights installed a sign explaining that the crosses represent the number of abortions that occur in one day. The crosses are put on the property of a convent of the Sisters of St. Basil. But this year all 73 crosses were vandalized; the violence occurred sometime between late Friday, October 20 and early Saturday,

October 21. Father Flowers reported the incident to the FBI as a hate crime. He told the Catholic League that the KKK had been quite active in the area north of his parish.

In the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama vandals struck at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church in north Shelby county. Windows were broken, furniture was damaged, books were strewn about, an antique cello was destroyed and money and property were stolen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Anchorage, Alaska was desecrated on November 10. The vandals stole the church sound system and two rugs, separated the main altar from its footing, fractured a plastic baptismal basin and smashed a wooden sacristy in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Clifton, New Jersey was the scene of a cross burning on the property of St. Brendan Catholic Church on November 14. Joan C. Boyle was arrested and charged with desecration of venerated objects under the state's bias crime statute. She used an accelerant to set fire to the cross, saying it was her way of publicizing the plight of the homeless.

There is no evidence that these incidents are in any way connected. As far as the Catholic League is concerned, this is all the more disturbing since it suggests a random outbreak of violent anti-Catholicism.

“CRIME NOT OF HATE, BUT OF LOVE”

When 73-year old Dennis Heiner went before State Supreme Court Justice Thomas Farber, he knew he could get a year in jail and

a \$5,000 fine. His crime? Painting over the dung-laden portrait, "The Holy Virgin Mary," that was featured at the Brooklyn Museum of Art last year.

But on November 14, Justice Farber slapped Heiner with a \$250 fine. Farber concluded, "this was a crime committed not out of hate but out of love for the Virgin Mary."

DISHONEST ANTI-VOUCHER TV ADS PULLED IN MICHIGAN

In October, a Florida appeals ruled that a school voucher program that targeted poor families was constitutional. But in November, ballot initiatives that would allow vouchers lost in Michigan and California.

The Catholic League, which views school choice as a civil right, gets involved in the issue when anti-Catholicism emerges. That is why it jumped on a patently dishonest set of TV ads that the anti-choice contingent in Michigan was pushing. After the Catholic League contacted virtually every TV outlet in the state, the ads were pulled from many from stations.

Television ads, run by "ALL Kids First!", showed a disabled child in a wheelchair featuring the statement, "private schools are allowed to reject disabled students like Angelica." But as the Michigan Catholic Conference said, "this is a deliberately false statement and represents a new low in political campaign advertisements in Michigan." In fact, Michigan law bars discrimination against persons with disabilities independent of whether the school is public or private.

The Catholic League outlined its concerns in a statement to the media:

“There are no taboos in the portfolio of the anti-school choice forces in Michigan. They have distorted the truth, promoted anti-Catholicism and have now resorted to out and out lying. Instead of making their case on the merits of the voucher plan, they engage in demagoguery in order to scare the dispossessed from claiming their rights. Indeed, their interest in the well being of the handicapped is on a par with their interest in the poor: they will exploit both groups in order to protect their monopoly.

“Ironically, the same forces which today feign concern for the handicapped were the very ones who lost in 1993 in their bid to stop public funds from being spent on handicapped children who attend sectarian schools; the Catholic League was proud to file an amicus brief in *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School District* on behalf of the handicapped.

“It is bad enough to work against the poor and disabled without also lying about it. It is time the leaders of the anti-voucher movement took a course in character education. But not in a public school.”

Whenever the day comes when this issue can be resolved without demagoguery, vouchers may well win in the end. In the meantime, everywhere this issue emerges, it is fodder for anti-Catholics. Which is why the Catholic League will continue to monitor school choice.

BORDERS PROMOTES CORNWELL

Borders is one of the nation's largest bookstore chains. It has every right to carry John Cornwell's dishonest screed on Pope Pius XII, *Hitler's Pope*, but it has no moral right to promote the book as if it were the gospel truth.

The October issue of the catalog, "Inside Borders," has an ad for Cornwell's book that describes Pius XII as "arguably the most dangerous churchman in modern history." A Borders' store in Milwaukee actually has Pius XII tagged, "the most dangerous churchman in history."

We wrote to Robert Di Romualdo, chairman of the board of Borders, but have yet to hear from him. Write to him at Borders Group, Inc., 100 Phoenix Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. It is one thing to advertise a controversial book, quite another to take editorial liberties by writing a blurb that is patently biased.

We are not asking that Borders not sell the book. Our objection rests solely with the irresponsible ad that Borders is promoting.