

KANSAS CITY STAR COVERS FOR SNAP

Recently, news broke that a former Penn State football coach, serving under head coach Joe Paterno, was allegedly sexually abusing young boys. Although Paterno immediately notified the Athletic Director, he did not call the cops. David Clohessy, SNAP's director, is now calling for Paterno to be investigated. Yet when Clohessy learned in the 1990s that his brother Kevin, a priest, was a child molester, he covered it up.

The *Kansas City Star* is working with SNAP, and its lawyers, against Bishop Robert Finn. Only once, in a brief story in 2003, did it mention that Clohessy's brother was charged with molestation; even *then it never reported that he refused to call the cops*. And in a big puff piece on him in September, it never mentioned this story. The cover up is sickening.

Nor does the *Star* ever bother to question the spurious lawsuits that SNAP lawyers have been bringing. Isn't it more than just a little curious that the Catholic Church is being singled out for hundreds of "repressed memory" lawsuits? A Nexis search connecting "repressed memory" with "minister" yields 551 stories; "rabbi" yields 71; and though the nation's teachers vastly outnumber priests, there were 1208 stories on "teachers" and 1855 on "priests."

Between 2009 and 2010, there was a 42 percent increase in false accusations against priests. The data didn't come as a surprise to California attorney Donald H. Steier. Last year, he testified that "One retired F.B.I. agent who worked with me to investigate many claims in the Clergy Cases told me, in his opinion, about ONE-HALF of the claims made in Clergy Cases were either entirely false or so greatly exaggerated that the truth would not have supported a prosecutable claim for

childhood sexual abuse.” An independent newspaper would report such stories. The *Star* is not one of them—it’s in bed with SNAP.

KC STAR OMITTS STORY ON TOP EPISCOPAL BISHOP

On November 7, SNAP held a press conference in front of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph to bring attention to a case involving an Episcopal priest, Bede Parry, who is being charged with molesting young boys while he was studying to be a Catholic priest. Parry was thrown out of the Benedictines of Conception Abbey in Missouri back in 1990; then he left for Las Vegas; eventually he became an Episcopal priest there. The person who knew about his record of abuse and still allowed him to join the clergy of the Episcopal Church was the Episcopal Bishop of Nevada, Katharine Jefferts Schori; today she is the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the U.S., located in New York City.

On November 8, the *Kansas City Star*, which has been relentless in its pursuit of clergy abuse by Catholic priests, said nothing about this case. Is this because it involves another religion? Or is it because it implicates a woman clergyperson, thus getting in the way of the narrative that Catholic bishops have some kind of special “old boy” network that inhibits them from being forthcoming? No matter, to think that the person who is the head of the Episcopal Church in the U.S. is named in a cover-up involving the sexual abuse of minors—and isn’t even mentioned in the *Star*—speaks volumes about its politically driven agenda against Bishop Finn.

It is important to note that *at no time* was Bede Parry a priest in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Nor is it true that the Diocese is named in the lawsuit.

KANSAS CITY PRESS CONFERENCE

The Catholic League press conference was held outside *the Kansas City Star* on November 10. Without solicitation—simply by word of mouth—a sizable crowd of local Catholics joined Bill Donohue, Vice President Bernadette Brady and staff members Alex Mejia and Don Lauer. All were there in support of Bishop Robert Finn and against the *Star*-SNAP alliance.

[Link to Photos from Event](#)

TAKING AIM AT BISHOP FINN

Bill Donohue

This ad, written by Bill Donohue, was rejected by the Kansas City Star, without explanation. The close relationship between the newspaper and SNAP is disturbing, but to turn down \$25,000 is still surprising. The Star can impose a gag rule on us, but it cannot control us. Indeed, this ad was printed in the Northeast News, a weekly suburban newspaper. We intend to let everyone in Kansas City, Missouri know about this matter.

There is nothing wrong with asking legitimate questions about the way Bishop Robert Finn handled the Fr. Shawn Ratigan matter. But there is something wrong about not asking

legitimate questions about the politics of those out to sink him. First, let's recap what actually happened.

Last December, crotch-shot pictures of young girls, fully clothed, were found on Fr. Ratigan's computer; there was one photo of a naked girl. The very next day, the Diocese contacted a police officer and described the naked picture; a Diocesan attorney was shown it. Because the photo was not sexual in nature, it was determined that it did not constitute child pornography. This explains why the Independent Review Board was not contacted—there was no specific allegation of child abuse.

When Fr. Ratigan discovered that the Diocese had learned of his fetish, he attempted suicide. When he recovered, he was immediately sent for psychiatric evaluation. It is important to note that Bishop Finn, who never saw any of the photos, did this precisely because he was considering the possibility of removing Fr. Ratigan from ministry. After evaluation (the priest was diagnosed as suffering from depression, but was not judged to be a pedophile), Fr. Ratigan was placed in a spot away from children and subjected to various restrictions. After he violated them, the Diocese called the cops. That's when more disturbing photos were found. At the same time, Bishop Finn contacted an attorney to do an independent investigation into this matter.

Fair-minded persons may question whether the Diocese was too lenient, but unless there is reason to believe that a crime has been committed, there is no cause for contacting the authorities. Yet the Diocese—unlike the officials of other organizations faced with the same situation—contacted a police officer and a lawyer immediately. [Note: in 2007, a huge investigation by the Associated Press of teacher sexual misconduct revealed that Missouri school districts were guilty of “backroom deals” that allowed molesting teachers to “quietly move on.” So where is the dust-up about this? Where are the calls for grand jury probes?] Why, then, the attempt

to get Bishop Finn?

What's driving the anti-Finn campaign is politics. The major players are the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and attorneys Rebecca Randles and Jeffrey Anderson. Their goal is not justice. Nor is it child welfare. Their goal is to sabotage the Catholic Church.

Here's how it works. Anderson, who is worth hundreds of millions, helps to fund SNAP. SNAP works with Randles, a protégé of Anderson, and together they find new "victims"—adults who just now seem to remember being groped decades ago. Indeed, upwards of 20 new lawsuits have been filed since Ratigan was nailed in May. SNAP, ever coy, then holds a press conference, making wild accusations. Importantly, no one in Finn's office is prepared to comment *because Randles has yet to file suit*. In other words, SNAP and Randles ambush the Diocese, garnering a high media profile, and then press the authorities to indict Bishop Finn.

What is SNAP? It sells itself as a victims' advocacy organization that represents those who have been abused by any authority. This is a lie. It concentrates almost exclusively on the Catholic Church. How do I know? For one, just check its website. More revealing, last July I asked trusted sources to register at a SNAP conference outside of Washington, D.C. The entire event was dedicated to discussing ways to undermine what they called the "evil institution," namely the Catholic Church. No one from SNAP has contested a single comment attributed to the speakers as described in my report, "SNAP Exposed."

Here's how SNAP manipulates the media. At the meeting, attendees were instructed how to hold a press conference: "Display holy childhood photos"; Use "feeling words"; Say, "I was scared" or "I was suicidal"; "Be sad, not mad"; "If you don't have compelling holy childhood photos, we can provide you with photos of other kids that can be held up for the

cameras.” The unmistakable goal is to feign sorrow and stage the event.

SNAP’s director, David Clohessy, began his activist career by working for ACORN, the now discredited far-left wing organization. In 1988, while watching the movie, “Nuts,” he had a revelation: his memory exploded with tales of being molested by a priest 20 years earlier. Three years later, his attorney, Jeffrey Anderson, sued the local diocese; working with Anderson for the first time was Rebecca Randles. The time gap in both instances is striking.

Clohessy wants Bishop Finn behind bars for not moving fast enough on this matter. But when Clohessy was working for SNAP in the 1990s, he refused to contact the authorities when he learned of a man who was sexually abusing young men. That man was his brother, Kevin, a Catholic priest. Feeling conflicted, David wondered, “he’s my brother; he’s an abuser. Do I treat him like my brother? Do I treat him like an abuser?” He chose the former. “He [Kevin] told me he was getting help, getting treatment.” This is understandable. What is not understandable is his outrage at bishops when they voice the same sentiment about their brother priests. The duplicity is sickening.

Is SNAP really upset about child porn, or just when a priest is involved? Dr. Steve Taylor is a psychiatrist who is in prison for downloading child porn on his computer. He is not just an ordinary shrink with a sick appetite—he worked for SNAP for years. Before his conviction, Barbara Blaine, the founder of SNAP, intervened on his behalf and wrote to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners asking them to give consideration to Taylor’s alleged humanitarian work—she didn’t want him to lose his license. Had Taylor been a priest, her reaction would have been vengeful.

At the July SNAP conference, Blaine spoke about priests who believe they have been mistreated by the authorities and want to countersue. She said they may have “a legal right,” but

they “don’t have a moral right to do so.” This is what SNAP means by justice. When lawsuits were flying in 2002, after revelations about the Boston scandal, many priests who claimed innocence decided to countersue. SNAP actually declared such lawsuits “brutal” and “un-Christian.”

This one-way street favored by SNAP also manifests itself in other ways. While it always protects the names of its accusers, it demands that we know the names of accused priests, including those who are dead. Moreover, it will not release the names of its donors. Yet they condemn the Catholic Church for lacking transparency.

In August, SNAP accused New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan of covering up an alleged incident involving a teenage girl who said she was “inappropriately touched” by an 87-year-old priest. Dolan knew nothing about it until the cops were called. SNAP has yet to apologize. It also accused Dolan of “acting secretly” about a previous case where a priest was suspended. But Dolan was not in New York at the time—he was the Archbishop of Milwaukee. Moreover, at the SNAP conference, Dolan was accused of shielding 55 molesting priests. This is libelous. But it is what we have come to expect from these people—a SNAP official once spat in the Archbishop’s face.

SNAP is so anti-priest that its Kentucky chapter leader once lobbied state authorities to warn residents when Catholic priests who have been accused, *but not convicted*, of sexual abuse move into their neighborhood. Just priests. A few years ago, in California, a boy’s father alleged that his son had been abused by a priest in the 1990s. The case was dismissed. The alleged victim, now a grown man, said it never happened. When SNAP then learned that this innocent priest was appointed to a sex abuse panel, it went ballistic. In SNAP’s mind, once a priest is charged, he’s guilty, no matter what the verdict says.

The reason why SNAP wants to bring down Bishop Finn is because

it always shoots for the top. In September, Clohessy admitted that his goal is to bring down the pope. "We're not naïve," he said. "We don't think the pope will be hauled off in handcuffs next week or month. But by the same token, our long-term chances are excellent." This kind of thinking explains why SNAP recently blasted the Vatican's new guidelines on sex abuse *the day before they were released*.

SNAP is so hateful that it even endorses Gestapo-like tactics used against the Catholic Church. Last year, the world was stunned to learn of a Belgium police raid on Church facilities, looking for evidence of wrongdoing. The bishop was detained for over nine hours; the police even went so far as to drill into the tombs of two deceased cardinals looking for documents. And what did Barbara Blaine say? "If children are to be protected, the actions of Belgian law enforcement must become the norm, not the aberration."

While fascistic means are acceptable to SNAP, it knows it can't get away with that in the U.S. So it elects to work with those who are flooding the Diocese with lawsuits. This way it can drain its resources, tie up the courts and seek to turn the public against the Catholic Church.

Randles was one of the lawyers who was behind the bundled lawsuits that led to a 2008 settlement with the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Those lawsuits included claims dating back to just after World War II. Now she's back, representing clients who just now seem to recall being abused many moons ago. The timing couldn't be more convenient. The SNAP-led crowd is now claiming that the settlement, which held that the Diocese had to take steps to curb abuse, was violated. Their proposed remedy represents the fulfillment of their dreams: they want the Diocese to cede control of its operations.

Between 2009-2010 (the latest years for which data are available), there was a 42 percent increase in false allegations against priests. So-called repressed memory

figures prominently in these bogus charges. A few years ago, researchers at Harvard Medical School studied this phenomenon and concluded that it has no scientific basis—it is purely a cultural invention. Harvard psychology professor Richard J. McNally also studied this subject. “The notion that the mind protects itself by banishing the most disturbing, terrifying events is psychiatric folklore.” He added, “The more traumatic and stressful something is, the less likely someone is to forget it.”

Randles is now charging that not only did the Diocese know what was happening, and did nothing about it, those in charge actually *encouraged it*. Here are some examples, all filed recently. In the case of Fr. Stephen Wise, the suit charges that “The Diocese ratified Wise’s sexual abuse of the plaintiff by encouraging him to commit the abuse and encouraging him to continue committing the abuse.” In the Fr. Michael Tierney case, the suit claims, “the sexual abuse of minors became a collective objective of the Diocese.” And in the Fr. Mark Honhart case, the suit also claims, “the sexual abuse of minors became a collective objective of the Diocese.”

In one sense, this kind of language is useful: it is positive proof of the anti-Catholic mindset. In their vision, the Catholic Church is the font of all evil, with the pope at command central. All of this might have been believable if it had been said by nativists 150 years ago, or by those in the asylum today, but to think that such malicious fiction is being trumpeted in 2011—by lawyers no less—is mind-boggling.

Clohessy recently wrote to the prosecutors of Clay County and Jackson County. “Jailing Finn, once his guilt has been determined or admitted, would be an unprecedented and effective step toward preventing future clergy sex crimes and cover ups, in Kansas City and elsewhere.” So Bishop Finn either admits his guilt or is found guilty. There is no other option. That’s exactly the way they think.

It is incorrect to assume that Randles and company are motivated mostly by money. No, their real goal is control—the control of the Catholic Church. Randles wants the Diocese to accept third-party supervision of these matters. She is asking for “continuing supervision,” explaining that she is “looking for a mechanism to enforce the provisions of the settlement agreement from this day forward, so that there is some form of continuing watch-dogging.” It doesn’t get much plainer than this.

The Catholic League stands by Bishop Finn without reservation. What’s at stake goes well beyond Kansas City. It should be clear by now that the ultimate goal is to have the Catholic Church cede its autonomy to the state. It’s what the Catholic haters have long wanted, and are now using Bishop Finn to dig a hole in the First Amendment.

PENN STATE LINKED TO CATHOLIC CHURCH

There was no end to the deep thinkers who compared the Penn State sexual abuse issue to similar cases in the Catholic Church. Of course, a better analogy would have been to compare the state university to other state institutions, namely the public schools. That’s where young people are most likely to be abused.

The “Occupy Wall Street” gang would be an even better analogy. All over the big cities, reports of sexual abuse have emerged among the occupiers. In fact, in many places the leaders of these urban barbarians have instructed the hippy-dippy crowd not to contact the authorities: they want to handle matters

like rape internally. Yet we hear nothing from the same critics of the Catholic Church. Instances like this prove again what the real issue is.

DOUBLING DOWN ON DEATH

In September, officials at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) ended funding to a program operated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) that helps victims of human trafficking. Their decision followed a lawsuit by the ACLU contesting the right of the USCCB not to refer trafficking victims to abortion and contraceptive services. The USCCB maintains that this entire episode evinces an anti-Catholic bias. The Catholic League agrees.

Many HHS career staffers recommended that the USCCB program be funded; they cited scores by an independent review board. But in a highly politicized ruling, Obama appointees rejected the advice of these veteran civil servants.

We said that it was imperative that others follow the lead of disgruntled HHS staffers and contact the HHS Inspector General's office with their complaints.

This comes on the heels of several assaults on religious liberty. The administration said Obamacare wouldn't threaten religious liberty, yet it wants to mandate that Catholic healthcare providers offer sterilization and contraceptive services. It also showed its stripes when earlier this year it decided it would no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act, a bill that defines marriage as being between a man and a woman. And just recently, the administration argued before the Supreme Court that government shouldn't be barred from policing the hiring policies of any church.

The lust for abortion is so thoroughly ingrained with many in the Obama administration that they will use any means possible to force the pro-life community to accept its radical agenda. They must be resisted. At stake is the right of a world religious body to practice its tenets with impunity. Moreover, the campaign to kill babies in the wombs of women who have already been victimized is doubling down on death.

BISHOP LORI DEFENDS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Bridgeport Bishop William E. Lori recently testified before the House Judiciary Committee on the subject of religious freedom. He is the Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) new "Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty."

In his testimony, Bishop Lori called on Congress to pass three pending bills focusing on protecting life and respecting conscience rights. Bishop Lori said the bills "go a long way toward guaranteeing religious liberty and freedom of conscience for religious employers, health insurers, and health care providers."

He also urged the House not to sign the Respect for Marriage Act that would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act which recognizes marriage as an institution reserved for a man and a woman.

USCCB president Archbishop Timothy Dolan made an excellent choice when he selected Bishop Lori for this post. The Bridgeport bishop did not disappoint in his testimony. Indeed, he laid out, in exacting detail, the threats to religious

liberty that exist today.

What is most disturbing about the nature of today's threats is that most stem from government, with the Obama administration leading the way. This is a condition that cannot be tolerated at any level of government, but it is particularly alarming when the federal government amasses its resources against the First Amendment.

Because of its wide network of social agencies, the Catholic Church is feeling the pressure more than other religions, making this a critical issue for Catholics across the nation.

ATTACK ON CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Recently, Catholic University of America was sued by a George Washington University professor, John Banzhaf, because the Catholic institution does not accommodate Muslim religious practices.

Banzhaf needs to be sued for bringing a frivolous lawsuit. He has no complainants—not a single Muslim at Catholic University came to him complaining about seeing pictures of the pope or the display of crucifixes in campus buildings. Nor did a single Muslim register a complaint with the administration of the university. This lawsuit, which follows a recent one filed by Banzhaf against Catholic University for moving towards single-sex dorms, stands not one iota of a chance of ultimately winning. Its purpose is to harass.

When Catholics enroll at Yeshiva University in New York City, they expect to see the Star of David and portraits of Moses. When Protestants enroll at the American Islamic College in Chicago, they expect to see the Star and Crescent. And when

Muslims enroll at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., they expect to see crucifixes and portraits of Jesus. Those who attend these private schools and object to such displays need to leave and apply to a community college or a state university.

The impression was left by the media that Muslim students are behind this assault on the First Amendment. We said it would behoove Muslim leaders to denounce this lawsuit. The bigot here is Banzhaf, not Muslims.

SUSAN SARANDON'S WILLFUL IGNORANCE

At a theater surrounded by her tony friends in the Hamptons, actress Susan Sarandon recently discussed her 1995 movie, "Dead Man Walking"; the film was based on a book by Sister Helen Prejean that condemns the death penalty. During the discussion, Sarandon said she sent a copy of the book to the pope, saying, "The last one, not this Nazi one we have now." After she received such a positive response from the crowd, Sarandon referred to the pope again as a Nazi.

Susan Sarandon's ignorance is willful: those who have hatred in their veins are not interested in the truth. The fact of the matter is that Joseph Ratzinger (the pope) was conscripted at the age of 14 into the Hitler Youth, along with every other young German boy. Unlike most of the other teenagers, Ratzinger refused to go to meetings, bringing economic hardship to his family. Moreover, unlike most of the others, he deserted the Hitler Youth at the first opportunity.

When he was elected pope in 2005, Rabbi David Rosen, director

of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, said it was “rubbish” to maintain that Ratzinger chose to belong to the Hitler Youth. He not only spoke kindly about the newly elected pope, he added, “enrollment was compulsory.”

Anti-Defamation League president Abe Foxman called for Sarandon to apologize for her comments, we didn't. Her comment was obscene and any apology would have been hollow. Sadly, it's what we've come to expect from her.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM HOSTS “HIDE/SEEK”

In November, the Brooklyn Museum of Art began hosting the exhibit “Hide/Seek.” Included in the exhibit was the video that the Catholic League protested last year when it was shown at the Smithsonian. The video, “A Fire in My Belly,” which features large ants running across the body of Jesus on the Cross, was pulled from the Smithsonian after we protested.

The anti-Catholic exhibit was sponsored by the most anti-Catholic foundation in the United States, the Ford Foundation, and was being shown in New York's most anti-Catholic museum.

For decades, the Ford Foundation has given lavishly to Catholics for Choice, an anti-Catholic front group that has twice been condemned by the bishops' conference as a fraud; it has no members.

The Brooklyn Museum of Art was home to the “Sensation” exhibit in 1999 that featured elephant dung and pictures of female genitalia inserted on a portrait of Our Blessed Mother; we led a demonstration in front of the Museum.

Last year we exercised our First Amendment right to free speech by objecting to the video at the Smithsonian exhibit. Those who liked the anti-Catholic "art" lied about us by saying we called for the video to be censored. What they really wanted to do was silence us. They failed.

For two reasons, we did not stage a demonstration outside the Museum this time: a) we won the big prize when Smithsonian officials *voluntarily* bowed to public pressure and withdrew the vile video, and b) the video has been shown many times since at other venues across the nation (we are not in the business of chasing dog and pony shows).

Addressing this issue, Bill Donohue stated, "We are still waiting for the bigots to cut a video showing ants running all over Muhammad's body, or maybe that of Martin Luther King's. Then they can tell Muslims and blacks they just don't understand the benign message behind the video. Good luck."

After we issued our statement to the press, Museum director Arnold Lehman attempted to spin the "Ants on the Crucifix" video.

For Lehman, there is no such thing as anti-Catholic art. Catholics who disagree are apparently too stupid to appreciate the complexities of these masterpieces. For example, he found nothing anti-Catholic in the "Sensation" exhibition. With "A Fire in My Belly," Lehman said that the ants crawling over Jesus is actually a statement about "human suffering and death." Guess us stupid Catholics missed that one, too.

Better yet was John Tamagni, the chairman of the Museum's board. In response to a letter sent by Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, who properly asked for the video to be pulled, Tamagni said, "nothing in the exhibition was meant to be offensive." This would include such spectacular fare as full frontal male nudity; scenes of naked men kissing; sado-masochistic images; and photos of AIDS-ravaged corpses.

Perhaps they were meant to ennoble. Guess us stupid Catholics missed that one, too.

The fact of the matter is that the artist who made the vile video died of self-inflicted wounds: he died of AIDS. The homosexual, David Wojnarowicz, hated the Catholic Church (had he lived by its teachings, he would not have self-destructed). He once referred to Cardinal John O'Connor as a "fat cannibal," and labeled the Catholic Church a "house of walking swastikas." Sounds like the words of a bigot.

But perhaps us Catholics are too stupid not to understand that these words were really meant to endear the artist to the Catholic community.