

MOTHER TERESA DEFAMED; CBS PETITION STARTED

At the end of May, William Donohue told the media, "In the 12 years that I have been president of the Catholic League, I have never witnessed a more vicious attack on Catholicism than what appeared this week on the Showtime program, 'Penn and Teller.'"

Donohue was referring to the episode, "Holier Than Thou," that aired May 23, 24 and 27. It was a frontal assault on Mother Teresa and her order of nuns, Missionaries of Charity (as well as Gandhi and the Dali Lama).

What began as a comedy quickly morphed to vitriol. Indeed, as the show progressed, the level of anger became palpable and the degree of distortion became mindboggling. This was no comedy—it was Nazi propaganda right out of the Leni Riefenstahl school of filmmaking.

The Mother Teresa that the world has come to love and revere was made to look like a cruel, exploitative, self-serving nun who ripped off the poor. The show says Mother Teresa intentionally let the poor suffer, providing neither beds nor bathroom facilities. "She had the f—ing coin and pissed it away on nunneries," said Penn. As for the nuns who worked with Mother Teresa, they were referred to as "f—ing c—s."

Donohue said it did not bother him when they called him "Catholic Boy" on the show (though the term "Jew Boy" would never cross their lips), nor did it concern him when they talked about "f—ers like Bill Donohue [who] only see good in her." But when they mocked the Catholic Church's teaching on the meaning of suffering, and when they said of the poor that "They had to suffer so that Mother F—ing Teresa could be enlightened," then they were behaving like monsters.

We mailed a tape of select portions of this broadcast to many interested parties, including the bishops. And we held a press conference outside the hotel where Viacom was holding its annual stockholders meeting. More needs to be done—we need your help.

We have launched a nation-wide campaign demanding that CBS initiate a probe into this matter. Why CBS? Showtime is owned by Viacom, and Viacom owns CBS (its most prominent company). To see what Donohue wrote to Sumner Redstone, the CEO of Viacom, see p. 4.

Please get your family and friends to sign our petition (see p. 5). It is important to rally as many people as possible, so make copies and pass it along.

QUICK VICTORY

The venue: New Orleans
The issue: Bigotry
The winner: Catholic League
The loser: Nation of Islam
Time of Fight: Few Hours

On June 14, William Donohue e-mailed and faxed a letter to the seven members of the New Orleans City Council requesting that they intervene to stop New Orleans Police Superintendent Edwin P. Compass from allowing the security chief of the Nation of Islam, Captain Dennis Muhammad, from conducting sensitivity training for the police. Within a few hours, Muhammad was canned.

Donohue told the City Council members that he was “appalled that a close associate of Nation of Islam leader Minister

Louis Farrakhan has been chosen to give sensitivity training to the New Orleans Police Department.” He likened this choice to “having David Duke advise public school teachers on how to conduct Black History Month events.”

In his letter, Donohue said the following: “Farrakhan is anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic and anti-gay. He has mocked Catholicism, ridiculed the pope and insulted Catholics everywhere with his vitriolic comments. In short, he’s a bigot. Common sense, never mind common decency, argues against any Nation of Islam official lecturing the police on tolerance. I ask that you intervene to find someone with impeccable credentials to carry out this task.”

On the same day, the offer to the Nation of Islam official was rescinded.

MEET THE NEO-XENOPHOBES

Xenophobia is the fear of strangers, and it typically refers to foreigners or recent immigrants. But there is a new expression of xenophobia afloat in our culture today, and it is one that is harbored by many of our cultural elites: it is the fear of the faithful.

This new strain of xenophobia is evidenced by those who warn that we are fast becoming a theocracy. Why do they say such things? Because they fear the faithful. Or, to be more specific, it is the rise of activism among people of faith, particularly Christians, that brings out the phobia of our elites. And nothing scares the daylights out of these deep-thinkers more than when traditional Catholics, evangelical Protestants and Orthodox Jews come together on moral issues.

Take Nicholas von Hoffman, a noted writer, who today pens a column for the *New York Observer*. He recently wrote of Christians, "Like the Islamists, with whom they are brothers under the skin, they are intent on imposing a Christian form of sharia [Islamic law] on believers and non-believers alike." Christians also remind von Hoffman of Communists: "The Communists represented an external threat by a foreign power; Christian subversion constitutes an internal threat by a domestic power with a foreign agenda."

In other words, if Catholics and Protestants lobby against abortion and gay marriage, they really are no different than Islamic fascists who murder "the infidel" and throw homosexuals off rooftops. Similarly, Christians who protest the removal of "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance are cut from the same cloth as Communists who commit genocide.

There is no way to understand why an educated person like von Hoffman would write such nonsense apart from citing his irrational fear of Christians. He is a true neo-xenophobe, casting the Christian as the stranger.

William A. Donohue

George Will is known to millions through his syndicated columns and Sunday-morning appearances on ABC-TV. He is a man of enormous intellect. But when it comes to the subject of religion, he is a dunce.

Will released an article this past spring complaining that "many Christians are joining today's scramble for the status of victims." He concedes that attacks on Christmas observances are real, but he does not hesitate to add that they are simply "petty insults and indignities." And, he says with extreme confidence, haven't we noticed how well "The Passion of the Christ" did at the box office? And have we not taken stock of the fact that the millions who have read *The Da Vinci Code* "are getting religion, of sorts"? For kickers, he throws

in the success of the *Left Behind* series.

Will needs a reality check. Christians aren't complaining merely about a few ACLU types seeking to ban crèches from public property, but about school superintendents, store owners, diversity consultants, town council members, multicultural specialists, activist judges—as well as an army of radical lawyers—all of whom have declared war on Christmas (as well as every public celebration of religion). In the name of inclusion, they are promoting censorship, and there is nothing petty about that.

Will's other argument blows up in his face: it proves the exact opposite of the point he wishes to make. Yes, the Mel Gibson's classic proved there is a strong appetite for religious-based movies, but the fact that he was roundly condemned by many in the Hollywood community for making such a film is the real issue. Why, Will should ask, in a country that is largely Christian, has it become near impossible to make a movie about Christianity (at least one that doesn't insult Christians)?

And why does George Will cite a book that trashes the heart and soul of Christianity, and a series that is nothing but anti-Catholic, as proof that religion is alive and well? For whom? The bashers?

Charles Krauthammer, the psychiatrist-pundit, said it best when he recently wrote the following: "The Op-Ed pages are filled with jeremiads about believers—principally evangelical Christians and traditional Catholics—bent on turning the U.S. into a theocracy. Now I am not much of a believer, but there is something deeply wrong—indeed, deeply anti-American—about fearing people simply because they believe. It seems perfectly O.K. for secularists to impose their secular views on America, such as legalized abortion or gay marriage. But when someone takes the contrary view, all of a sudden he is trying to impose his views on you. And if that contrary view happens to

be rooted in Scripture or some kind of religious belief system, the very public advocacy of that view becomes a violation of the U.S. constitutional order.”

It's time the neo-xenophobes gave it a rest. Christians are the backbone of this country, and we're not about to be marginalized by those who are positively phobic about us.

EUGENICS, ROCKEFELLER AND ROE V. WADE

By Rebecca R. Messall, Esq.

This article is taken from its fuller version in the fall 2004 issue of Human Life Review, available in its entirety at www.humanlifereview.com.

Everyone knows that the infamous Roe v. Wade opinion legalized abortion, but almost no one knows that legal abortion was a strategy by eugenicists, as early as 1939, to “genetically improve” the population by “reducing” it. In writing his opinion, Roe’s author, Justice Harry A. Blackmun, relied directly and indirectly on the work of these British and American eugenicists. Eugenics is easiest to describe as being the Darwin-based theory behind the Nazis’ plans to “breed” a race of human thoroughbreds. After Hitler, eugenic theorists advocated global control over who has babies, and how many. It has been called “population thinking.” America’s richest families promoted eugenicists and their many social initiatives, including *Roe*.

One of the clearest links between the eugenics movement and U.S. abortion policy is visible in the American Eugenics

Society's (AES) 1956 membership records, which includes a Planned Parenthood co-founder, Margaret Sanger, and at least two presidents, William Vogt and Alan Guttmacher. The AES had an ugly history of multiple ties to prominent Nazis in Germany. AES members assisted Hitler in crafting the 1933 German sterilization laws. Unbelievably, in 1956—after WWII—the AES membership list included Dr. Otmar Frieheer Von Verschuer, who had supervised the ongoing “science” experiments of Dr. Josef Mengele at Auschwitz.

The AES lobbied successfully for involuntary sterilization laws in the United States, which claimed an estimated 63,000 victims. In 1927, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld those laws in *Buck v. Bell*, which was cited in *Roe*. Some states have recently extended official regret and/or apology for those laws.

The Catholic Church was, and is, the nemesis of eugenicists. Politicians in both political parties who position themselves against the Catholic Church and in favor of *Roe*, align themselves with a host of eugenic strategies and fallout—which include human embryo exploitation (nick-named stem cell research), the trafficking in fetal body parts and euthanasia. They also align themselves with the Rockefeller family dynasty, who funded eugenic scientists decades before Hitler put eugenic theories into practice and who supported many of the leaders of the American Eugenics Society.

The Rockefellers' support for eugenics began early in the twentieth century, and included support for the Eugenics Record Office. In 1913 John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (“Junior”) incorporated a group, which became a major force in supporting birth control clinics and played a pioneering role in the modern field of population studies.

As early as 1922, the Rockefeller Foundation sent money to fund German eugenics. Of Germany's 20-plus Kaiser Wilhelm Institute science centers, Rockefeller money built or

supported three which "made their mark for medical murder" under the Nazis. One institute was for brain research. During part of Hitler's rule, it employed Hermann J. Muller, a Rockefeller-funded American socialist and geneticist. It later received "brains in batches of 150-250" derived from Holocaust victims. Another center, the Eugenics Institute, listed its 1935 activities as follows: "the training of SS doctors; racial hygiene training; expert testimony for the Reich Ministry of the Interior on cases of dubious heritage; collecting and classifying skulls from Africa; studies in race crossing; and experimental genetic pathology."

Junior began funding Margaret Sanger in 1924. Surely he knew of her 1922 book, *The Pivot of Civilization*. In it Sanger railed against New York's Archbishop, calling his orthodoxy a "menace to civilization." Yet she admired Sir Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, whose ideal she called "the rational breeding of human beings." She said the Neo-Malthusians considered birth control as "the very pivot of civilization." She said, "Birth control... is really the greatest and most truly eugenic program."

When Frederick Osborn became president of the AES in 1946, the AES' journal, *Eugenical News*, published a state-by-state report on sterilizations. It also reported on the opposition by Catholic hierarchy, religious and laity. In Alabama: "Whenever sterilization bills are introduced the Catholics descend upon the capital in numbers—priests, nuns and laity—and attack the bill as "against the will of God" and "an attack on the American home." In Colorado, a 1945 bill failed passage due to "vigorous Catholic opposition." In Pennsylvania: "The Cardinal's office in Philadelphia immediately sent a letter to every legislator directing him to oppose the bill, and they were visited by the parish priests in their home communities."

Frederick Osborn was put in charge of the Population Council, a group organized and funded by John D. Rockefeller III. In

1956, Osborn addressed the British eugenics society. Osborn affirmed his belief in "Galton's dream" and proposed what he called "voluntary unconscious selection" by changing laws, customs and social expectations. To accomplish this voluntary unconscious selection, he advocated an appeal to the idea of "wanted" children.

In 1968, when many people wrongly believed that the eugenics movement had disappeared, Osborn published a book, *The Future of Human Heredity: An Introduction to Eugenics in Modern Society*. Osborn asserted that "less intelligent women" could be convinced to reduce their births voluntarily, in order to "further both the social and biological improvement of the population." He utilized a euphemism for racial minorities by urging that contraception be targeted to people "at the lower economic and educational level." Osborn recommended disguising the reason for making birth control "equally available." He said: "Measures for improving the hereditary base of intelligence and character are most likely to be attained under a name other than eugenics."

Writing his *Roe* opinion five years after Osborn's book, Blackmun's first four introductory paragraphs mention nothing about the newly decreed right of privacy in support of abortion, but he does state: "population growth, pollution, poverty, and racial overtones tend to complicate and not to simplify the problem." Blackmun directly cited the two men closely connected to the British and the American eugenics societies. Glanville Williams is cited twice. Christopher Tietze is cited three times and Lawrence Lader's book, *Abortion*, is cited seven times.

The mystery of Blackmun's curious opening paragraphs in *Roe* may be solved by Lader's book, *Abortion*, which contains panicked rhetoric such as the following:

"The frightening mathematics of population growth overwhelms piecemeal solutions and timidity. No government, particularly

of an underdeveloped nation, can solve a population crisis without combining legalized abortion with a permanent, intensive contraception campaign.”

Glanville Williams (1911- 1997) was a Eugenics Society Fellow in England. Before citing Williams in *Roe*, Blackmun would have seen Williams’ explicit reference to eugenics:

“Contraception and Eugenics: The problem does not only concern the limits of subsistence, though this in itself is one of sufficient magnitude. There is, in addition, the problem of eugenic quality. We now have a large body of evidence that, since industrialization, the upper stratum of society fails to replace itself, while the population as a whole is increased by excess births among the lower and uneducated classes.”

Before *Roe*, Ireland’s future cardinal, Cahal B. Daly, had exposed Williams’ anti-Catholic rhetoric: “Examples of the technique occur on every alternate page...Christian moral teaching is ‘reactionary,’ ‘old-fashioned,’ ‘unimaginative,’ ‘primitive if not blasphemous,’ ‘restrictive,’ ‘irrational,’ ‘out-moded,’ ‘dogmatic,’ ‘doctrinaire,’ ‘authoritarian.’

“Contrasted with it are ‘enlightened opinion,’ ‘interesting medico-social experimentation,’ ‘progressive statutes,’ ‘empirical, imaginative humanitarianism.’”

Blackmun acknowledged the Catholic scientific view that life begins at the moment of conception, but thereafter Blackmun relied on books and articles espousing the science of eugenics. In fact, one book contains a subheading titled, “The New Eugenics,” and cites two men who can be described as maniacal eugenicists who were seemingly paranoid about a deteriorating human heredity. Blackmun cited an article, “The New Biology and the Future of Man”, which speaks for itself:

“Taken together, [artificial gestation, genetic engineering, suspended animation]...they constitute a new phase in human life in which man takes over deliberate control of his own

evolution... There is a qualitative change to progress when man learns to create himself...a reworking of values is required...Submission to supernatural power is not adaptive to a world in which man himself controls even his own biological future...What counts is awareness of the unmistakable new fact that in general new biology is handing over to us the wheel with which to steer directly the future evolution of man."

In March 1973, two months after *Roe* was handed down, Osborn's American Eugenics Society changed its name to the Society for the Study of Social Biology. The announcement said: "The change of name of the Society does not coincide with any change of its interests or policies." The group had already changed the name of its journal in 1968 from *Eugenics Quarterly*, to *Social Biology*. Commenting on the new title, Osborn remarked: "The name was changed because it became evident that changes of a eugenic nature would be made for reasons other than eugenics, and that tying a eugenic label on them would more often hinder than help their adoption. Birth control and abortion are turning out to be great eugenic advances of our time. If they had been advanced for eugenic reasons it would have retarded or stopped their acceptance."

This, then, is the ideological basis of the abortion industry.

CBS PETITION

As Viacom's flagship holding, CBS bears corporate responsibility for the outrageous "Penn and Teller" episode that was aired on Showtime attacking Mother Teresa. This was not a parody—it was hate speech. Portraying Mother Teresa as a

person who plundered the poor was sick enough, but calling her "Mother F-king Teresa" was a kick in the face, the kind of low-class invective that people of all faiths find despicable.

Accordingly, justice demands that those who orchestrated this hit job on Catholicism be held accountable. We have no confidence in Matthew Blank, Showtime's CEO, and thus we are petitioning CBS to exercise leadership in this matter.

Specifically, we want Leslie Moonves, CBS Chairman and CEO, and Nancy Tellem, President of CBS Paramount Network Television (Showtime is a Paramount studio), to lead the way. Like it or not, what Showtime did reflects badly on CBS.

[Leslie Moonves can be reached at 323-575-2600; or fax him at 212-975-1893. (We originally listed his Los Angeles fax number, but because so many tied up his line with the petition, it was disconnected—so now we're attacking his New York office.) Those who want to contact CBS online, please do so by addressing Nancy Tellem, President of CBS Paramount Network Television at nancy.tellem@tvc.cbs.com on the West Coast and on the East Coast mail to press@viacom.com.]

Those who would like to simply sign this petition and drop it in the mail, please copy the form below. We provided a P.S. section so that you can sound off in a personal way.

Mr. Leslie Moonves
CEO, CBS TV Network
7800 Beverly Blvd., Room 23
Los Angeles, CA 90036-2112

Dear Mr. Moonves:

What Showtime does ultimately reflects on CBS, and that is why I am writing to you. The vile episode of "Penn and Teller"

that defamed and attacked Mother Teresa was no comedy—it was hate speech. Surely you would have to agree with this assessment, and surely you are in a position to hold those responsible for this obscene assault.

You, Sumner Redstone, and all those associated with Viacom and CBS, have spoken publicly about the need for tolerance and an end to bigotry. We Catholics ask that you now make good on your word and see to it that the appropriate sanctions are applied to the offending parties.

Sincerely,

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BIAS AND HYPOCRISY IN BROWARD COUNTY

On May 27, a news story appeared in Florida's *Sun-Sentinel* regarding the "Controversy" exhibit at the Broward Art Guild. The article said that one of the artists, Michael Friedman, had complained to Mary Becht, Director of the Broward County Department of Cultural Affairs, about the "Yahoo!" entry by Alfred Phillips; it showed President Bush being sodomized. [Note: it was not because the work was anti-

Bush that anyone objected, it was because it was seen as anti-gay. We know this because anti-Bush artwork that had nothing to do with gays or sodomy was not seen as controversial.]

Becht agreed it was offensive and told the guild's director, Susan Buzzi, to move it to "a less prominent space within the gallery"; it was subsequently "set near a corner of the gallery facing the wall." The irony is that Friedman's own contribution was allowed to stand: it showed Pope Benedict XVI surrounded by swastikas.

On May 31, William Donohue wrote a letter to Ms. Becht (which was faxed that day and mailed for next-day delivery), in which he said, "I would like to see equal treatment afforded the anti-Catholic art of Michael Friedman that you gave to the work by Alfred Phillips." In short, Donohue wanted Friedman's offensive work set next to Phillips' offensive work.

On June 2, Donohue left a message for Becht to call him explaining her response. She said she never received a letter, though we have proof that it was delivered and signed for by someone in her office on June 1. So we faxed it again. She faxed back an evasive letter that refused to come to grips with the request that was made.

Consequently, Donohue wrote to the following persons requesting that they address this matter in a serious way: Broward County Commissioners; Broward Cultural Affairs Council Members; Broward County Administrator; President, Greater Ft. Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau; Florida Arts Council Members; Secretary of State.

In his letter, Donohue explained the nature of his complaint and then offered the following remarks: "The decision by Ms. Becht to remove a piece of artwork she agrees is offensive while allowing an equally offensive piece to remain speaks volumes. It speaks volumes about her tastes and what offends her; it speaks volumes about her authority; and it speaks

volumes about what is tolerated in Broward County.”

Thus far, the responses we have received are all of the “art conveys different things to different people” sort of commentary. Now if this were true, then logic would dictate that the work by Phillips be put back to its initial spot in the gallery. After all, just because Friedman and Becht find it objectionable, who are they to speak for everyone else?

We suggest you write to Mary Becht, Director, Cultural Division, Broward County, 100 S. Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301.

SPLIT DECISION ON TEN COMMANDMENTS

On June 27, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered two opinions on the display of the Ten Commandments that all sides found wanting. It said it was okay to put a 6-foot granite replica of the Ten Commandments on public land in Texas, but it was not okay to put framed copies of the Ten Commandments in a Kentucky courtroom. The high court split 5-4 in both decisions.

In the very building where the Supreme Court said there could be no display of the Ten Commandments in the Kentucky courtroom, there is a frieze of the Ten Commandments. But because the context was seen as making an historical statement, it was not considered problematic. The question boils down to whether the message is seen as a government endorsement of religion.

Justice Antonin Scalia expressed exasperation with the

majority opinion's inconsistency. He noted that the Supreme Court opens each session with a prayer, and that the inaugural oath closes with "so help me God." He wondered, then, how the Supreme Court could possibly mandate governmental neutrality?

In the Texas case, there was a statue of the Ten Commandments that was donated by a private group and placed on grounds outside the state capitol in Austin. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice William Rehnquist said "of course" the Ten Commandments are religious. But, he said, "Simply having religious content or promoting a message consistent with a religious doctrine does not run afoul of the Establishment clause."

The split decision didn't please either side in this debate, and the fact that the justices failed to divine an operating principle upon which these decisions can be made only ensures further controversy. For the past half-century, Supreme Court justices have issued more contradictory and confusing opinions on the public expression of religion than on almost any other area of constitutional law. Their latest contribution is illustrative of the conundrum.

ZEALOTS RAP AIR FORCE ACADEMY

It is one the most hyped-up, politically driven scams in recent history, though aside from the Catholic League, virtually no one has labeled it as such. We are talking about the hit job on the U.S. Air Force Academy that zealots have waged against it. Much of the blame goes to Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the Yale Divinity School: they were the ones who fired salvos at the Academy, generating media interest.

Having been put on the defensive, officials at the Academy had no choice but to investigate the religious climate at the institution. The charge? Non-Christians were being treated unfairly. Indeed, 55 cases of religious discrimination were alleged to have taken place.

On June 22, an Air Force Academy panel released its findings. To begin with, it said that the much touted "55 complaints" were "in reality a collection of observations and events reported by about thirteen people, and purported to have taken place over a four-year period." Second, what was not reported by the media were comments made by members of various focus groups that undercut the charges completely. Third, many of the alleged offenses weren't examples of bigotry at all.

For example, in the cadets' focus group, it was learned that "Reverse discrimination is rampant and evangelical Christians are under attack." Some of the cadets are in despair: "The Air Force I signed up for didn't say I had to leave my religion at the door." Other cadets said the Academy is too "politically correct" and that "Christian cadets are now being discriminated against." The AOCs (Air Officers Commanding) said that "the pendulum has swung too far and now open discussion is discouraged among the cadets." And so on.

Interestingly, ten years of cadet survey data show that there is less a problem with religious intolerance at the Academy than any other expression of hostility. Yet none of this was reported.

On June 28, the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee held a hearing on this subject. Below is the text of the letter written by William Donohue to the members of that subcommittee.

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Dear Congressman:

As one who was honorably discharged from the U.S. Air Force in 1970, and as president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, I read with great interest the report on the religious climate at the Air Force Academy that was released on June 22.

What I found most disturbing is what the media are not reporting: the fact that the most-often cited examples of bias against non-Christians do not constitute bias at all; the fact that the Academy now risks becoming a place that is inhospitable to religious expression; and the fact that many Christian cadets and officers believe that an anti-Christian environment now exists.

To be specific, for cadets to put a flyer in the dining hall advertising the showing of "The Passion of the Christ" is hardly an example of bias against non-Christians: a) no coercion was involved b) it was not a government-sponsored initiative—it was undertaken solely by cadets, and c) flyers are commonly distributed in the dining area advertising films. Indeed, the real problem is with those who want punitive sanctions against the so-called guilty parties. Such a remedy smacks of an anti-Christian bias, as well as intolerance for free speech.

Another one of the alleged examples of religious insensitivity is the singing of "God Bless America." That this was actually listed as an example of bias demonstrates a complete disconnect from reality. Worse, it shows that patriotism is now on trial at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

That the Yale Divinity team objected to a Protestant minister at a Protestant service asking Protestant cadets to chant, "This is our chapel and the Lord is our God," proves beyond a doubt the rank bigotry of this group. To make such a charge fully discredits anything these individuals have to say about any alleged religious bias.

All of this would be comical if it were not taken seriously. Tragically, it is. Make no mistake about it, the real danger is that Academy officials are being pressured to remedy a problem which has been blown way out of proportion, the effect of which is to stifle freedom of speech about religious matters and to intimidate Christians from expressing themselves about their faith.

In short, this is a scam: ideological zealots who want to purge our society of the public expression of religion—especially Christianity—are making trumped up charges to validate their crusade.

I urge you to see through this issue clearly and not be bullied by those who would have you believe that the Air Force Academy is in need of drastic reform. Religion plays an integral role in our society and it is doubly important to most of the men and women in our armed forces. Anything that unfairly hinders religious expression will only hurt the nation as a whole.

SCHOOL YEAR ENDS IN CONTROVERSY

The 2004-2005 academic year is over, but some controversies linger. For example, the Catholic League is involved in a case in Washington state protesting the treatment of Catholic students by an irate teacher.

At the end of the school year, we learned of a public high-school teacher who has a long history of exhibiting anti-Catholic behavior in the classroom; so much so that many Catholic parents do not allow their children to take his

classes. When asked to get involved, we did.

We contacted the superintendent of schools in the area registering a complaint. Things got worse when the offending teacher read to his class the letter that we sent. The result was predictable: the student whose father contacted the Catholic League was ostracized from other students. So we complained again, this time more forcefully.

The superintendent has not been insensitive to our complaint, and has met with the teacher and the parents of the student. In so many words, he is saying that he is doing what he can, given his authority. Indeed, he acknowledges that harassment and intimidation has occurred. We are hopeful that he will succeed in getting this teacher to stop venting his bigotry in the classroom. If not, we will up the ante.

We found a most reasonable public school principal in New Hampshire. When we learned that a novel by Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees*, was being taught to eighth graders, we were concerned. The book, while fine for college students and even those in high school, may be inappropriate for middle-school students. The problem with the book is that it mixes Catholicism with a folk religion practiced by the characters in the novel, thus sending a message to young readers that Catholicism sanctions ideas and practices that are really heretic.

Our suggestion was to have the teachers alert the students to the fact that the book should not be taken as an example of what Catholics believe. The principal agreed with this suggestion and even said he would share our letter with all the teachers; the principal is himself a Catholic and does not want the students to be misinformed about his religion.

In a case that garnered public attention, a six-year old Christian student at Culbertson Elementary School in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, was asked to pick a favorite book for

his mom to read to the class. He picked the Bible. The kindergartner's mother, Donna Busch, was denied (on the usual church and state grounds). So she sued.

This same Philadelphia-area school allows Jewish parents to read books about Judaism and to teach the students about the dreidel game. Moreover, they can put a Star of David and a menorah on a calendar and songbook. But Christians are not given the same rights. Indeed, Christmas decorations are banned and the Christmas tree has been dubbed a "giving tree." The suit charges religious discrimination.

They make them tough in Texas. As the school year ended, the school board in the West Texas town of Odessa voted unanimously to add a Bible class to its high school curriculum. It will be taught as a history or literature class, something that is constitutionally legal: while it is not legal to teach religion, it is legal to teach about it. Not surprisingly, the ACLU and People for the American Way complained, but got nowhere.

Why would anyone mind what a student was reading during recess? Most teachers don't, but a principal at Karns Elementary School in Knox County, Tennessee did. What he objected to was a ten-year old reading the Bible. The kid's parents are suing.

Planned Parenthood, which receives a hoard of money from the taxpayers, doesn't like competition and that is why it was delighted when the ACLU filed suit against an abstinence-only program in northwestern Pennsylvania that also receives federal funds. The suit claims that such programs amount to religious indoctrination. In short, Planned Parenthood and the ACLU are worried that if young people pick up on the abstinence message, its pro-abortion message will suffer.

When a student in Napa, California painted a castle-in-the-sky mural on a school wall, anti-religious students complained

that the castle in the clouds looked too much like heaven. The student acquired a lawyer to defend him.

The right of little kids to sing a religious song in a public school is being challenged in New Jersey and Louisiana. A second grader at Frenchtown Elementary School in western New Jersey has been denied the right to sing "Awesome God" at a talent show. And a kindergartner at Terrytown Elementary School in Terrytown, Louisiana was banned from singing "I Can't Give Up Now."

The problem with "Awesome God" is that its lyrics mention "Our God is an awesome God." But God is not even mentioned in the other song. However, because one of the lines says, "I don't believe he brought me this far to leave me," the principal banned the song because she believed the "he" refers to God.

Finally, the same ACLU that cites legal precedent for the right of a student homosexual group to meet on campus says that Christians in Kent, Washington should not have an equal right to do so.

So this is what we've come to: an anti-Christian culture pervades public education. The real shame is that it is happening in a society where better than 8 in 10 are Christian.

HATE MAIL

The following hate mail was sent to us from McAllen, Texas. The group is fictitious, though the message is not: it is the kind of mail we receive on a regular basis. Its effect on us? Like water off a duck's back.

