

SAMANTHA BEE'S SHOW SHAKEN; SPONSORS FEEL THE HEAT

The Catholic League strategy to crush Samantha Bee's TBS show, "Full Frontal," is paying big dividends. As a direct result of our efforts, four major advertisers have discontinued advertising on her show: Verizon, Procter and Gamble (P&G), Wendy's, and Ashley HomeStore.

This is a credit to all of those on our email list who contacted officials at each of the companies asking them to pull their ads.

For us, the controversy began long before Bee used an incredibly obscene word to describe the president's daughter; her filthy outburst happened on her May 30 show.

We have been at war with Bee for years. It has gotten so bad that she once condemned Bill Donohue—flashing a picture of him on the screen. She distorted what he said so she could set up her assault.

Bee has attacked Jesus, Our Blessed Mother, Pope Francis, the College of Cardinals, bishops, priests, Catholic hospitals, and the Catholic League. Yet she remains in good standing with Turner Broadcasting, the parent company of TBS.

Perversely, the day after Bee made her vile comment about Ivanka Trump she was given an award by the Television Academy for bringing about "social change." She sure has—she has contributed mightily to the degradation of our society.

Following her May 30 show, many of the companies that advertised on that show did not do so on her next show, June 6. Among the more prominent companies that did were Verizon and P&G. That's when we decided to enlist our supporters asking them to email an official whose address we supplied.

Donohue also wrote to the CEOs of both companies.

We were delighted to learn that neither company advertised on Bee's show of June 13; Verizon even called us about this matter. But we noticed that her show picked up the sponsorship of Wendy's. So we targeted the hamburger chain.

We were elated when Wendy's did not advertise on Bee's show of June 20. Then we set our sights on Ashley HomeStore. Within a few hours, an official from the furniture store called to say they were pulling their ads. He did not mince words. This explains why Donohue called on Catholics to patronize the store.

They ran a previous episode on June 27, and they are airing re-runs on July 4 and July 11; these shows rely on previous advertisers. Therefore, the next test is July 18: New advertisers will air on this new episode.

No reputable company should ever be associated with Samantha Bee's show. Let's see what happens July 18.

BILL FLYNN R.I.P.

William J. Flynn, former chairman of Mutual of America, died on June 2. Bill Donohue attended his wake. Flynn was 91. Donohue issued the following remarks when his friend died:

"Bill will be remembered for many things, but above all it was his role in brokering peace among warring factions in Ireland in the 1990s that made him an international star.

"Over the past several years, Bill and I dined together many times, sharing our thoughts on many subjects. He was a rabid supporter of the Catholic League and a generous contributor.

“Unlike so many other persons who made it big, Bill did not have a big head. To that point, he did not go on endlessly telling stories about his accomplishments, which were many. Instead, he wanted to talk about problems facing the nation.

“Bill’s love for the Catholic Church was palpable. He did regret the diminution of its prestige in recent years, but he never got discouraged.

“His love for Ireland was also a huge part of who Bill was. He had the patience, and the determination, to engage elites on the national and international stage. And he knew how to win.

“His wife, Peg, and his two children, William K. Flynn and Maureen Welsh, will obviously miss him. But so will I, and all of those who were lucky enough to know him.”

Bill Flynn loved his country, his ancestral home, and the Catholic Church. He will be sorely missed.

25 YEARS AND COUNTING

William A. Donohue

July 1st marked my 25th anniversary as president and CEO of the Catholic League. It’s been a great run, and I am not about to pack it in. On July 18, I turn 71. Fortunately, God gave me pretty good health and a whole lot of energy.

When I took over in 1993, the league was in financial and organizational ruin. I told the board of directors to give me plenty of rope—don’t try to micromanage me—and if I didn’t produce, then they should yank me. Fortunately, they granted me the authority, and matters quickly turned around.

Why don't I retire? After all, most of my friends are retired. I stay for one reason: I love what I am doing. I love fighting for justice, and to make right that which is wrong. I also love winning. While we don't win them all, our track record is clearly better than any comparable organization.

What are we fighting for? Respect. A fair hearing. An equal playing field. That's about it. What I want is a reasonable opportunity for the Church's voice to be heard. We don't have that. Instead, we have to endure a culture that is increasingly secular, irrational, and hateful.

The de-Christianization of Western civilization has not worked out for anyone. To make a fast comparison, consider such social ills as crime, delinquency, divorce, out-of-wedlock births, drug abuse, suicide, school shootings, homelessness, sexually transmitted diseases, and abortion. Now think about the most Catholic decade in American history—the 1950s—and make the comparison with today. The secularization of America has been an unmitigated disaster.

We have also become an increasingly irrational society. The sad fact is that the most educated persons in our society are also the most irrational. Most of them are white, and the worst among them have postgraduate degrees.

They are the ones who believe that a pregnant woman is not carrying another human life. They are the ones who believe that two men can get married. They are the ones who believe that a male who thinks he is a female is a female. It's all a fiction. If they were independent thinkers, they would be able to think straight. But they are not—they are the victims of indoctrination.

Our society has also become increasingly hateful. It's not enough to disagree anymore—it's important to silence opposing views. It's not enough to speak passionately about issues—it's important to engage in obscene attacks. It's not enough to win

on the issues—it's important to personally destroy the opposition.

This is the environment the Catholic Church finds itself in. To be sure, the Church has made some serious mistakes along the way. But if some of our teachers, i.e., the clergy, have failed us, our teachings have not.

The trio of maladies that I mentioned—secularism, irrationality, and hatred—are reflections of what is at bottom a breakdown in community and common sense.

Western civilization has witnessed radical individualism run amuck, destroying the prospect for community, or a collective sense of oneness. That's why America is so divided: our nation is coming apart at the seams, owing in large part to the loss of social glue that binds us together. As every Catholic should know, it's easy to think of ourselves first if we don't have time for Him.

Common sense is now a rarity, especially among the cultural elite and other big-sky thinkers. Their idea of helping the poor is not to empower them, but to drag the successful down. They work tirelessly to tell us of the harm that smoking does and then inform us in the same breath of the need to legalize pot; Marijuana, Si, Marlboro, No. They defend the most pornographic material on TV, the screen, and the Internet, and then condemn the Miss America pageant for the bathing suit competition. They invite the homeless to camp out in coffee shops and are then shocked to learn they destroy the place.

By contrast, Catholicism embraces community and possesses common sense. That alone merits a defense of the Catholic Church. To be exact, it is the job of the Catholic League to help make the Church's voice ascendant again. Somebody has to stand up to the roar of madness that surrounds us, and no entity is better equipped to do so than the Catholic Church.

The founder of the Catholic League, Father Virgil Blum,

believed too many Catholics were complacent. That was true when he started in 1973 and it is true today, though it is certainly not true of Catholic League members. You are the ones who energize me.

The Church has weathered many storms before. It's been beleaguered and besieged. It's been subjected to vitriol and violence. Yet it always rebounds. It will again.

There are those who counsel retreat, advising practicing Christians to carve out small enclaves to repair to, essentially withdrawing from the center of the dominant culture. That's a fool's errand.

This is not a time to quit the fight—it's a time to redouble our efforts. Anyone who thinks that things can't get any worse knows nothing about history.

Count me in. Hope you're in as well.

ELITES IMPOSE WESTERN VALUES ON AFRICA

Bill Donohue

The arrogance of Western elites should never be underestimated, and this is especially true of their vision for affecting change in the developing world. While they decry as ethnocentric the beliefs of many patriotic Americans—they are uncomfortable with those who see America as the greatest country on earth—they themselves exhibit an astonishingly ethnocentric bias by foisting Western ideas of sexuality on non-Western, non-white, nations.

That is the theme of a brilliant new book, *Target Africa*, by Obianuju Ekeocha, a Nigerian biomedical scientist who works in the United Kingdom. She is the founder of Culture of Life Africa, an organization that promotes traditional moral values, including a respect for the human dignity of the unborn.

Like most books, the subtitle more accurately describes the thesis: "Ideological Neocolonialism in the Twenty-First Century" is her focus.

When Europeans colonized Africa, most Africans showed them much deference; they learned to "look up to the White Man." Now Africans are dealing with a new variant of colonialism: Neocolonialism has less to do with explorers and traders than with cultural imperialists.

Who are these people? The do-gooders. Liberal elites from North America and Europe, armed with foundation money and research papers, have invaded Africa, projecting their secular values on to an unwilling populace. To be exact, they are trying to jam their anti-Christian notions of sexuality down the throats of Africans.

As Ekeocha details, these elites are the real masters of ethnocentrism. Every corrupt idea about family planning, marriage, and sexual expression that the West has entertained is being sold to Africans—it really is being imposed—as if it were the key to happiness and prosperity. It is neither.

Bill Gates' wife, Melinda, is one of the key global elites working to persuade Africans to adopt Western sexual values. The Ford Foundation, which funds the anti-Catholic American group, Catholics for Choice, is also interfering in African affairs. George Soros, of course, is involved, mainly through his Open Society Foundation.

The Canadians, the British, the French, the Danes, the Swedes, the Germans, the Norwegians—they all have their hands in the

cultural crevices of Africa. One of their most conspicuous traits, as Ekeocha points out, is their condescending attitude: The White Man, this time sporting a liberal agenda, knows best.

How do these global elites get their way? Money. Every dime they give through international organizations and governmental agencies comes with strings attached. Do it our way and you get the cash. Do it your way and you're on your own.

What is their way? A pro-contraception, pro-abortion, pro-homosexual platform, one right out of the playbook of radical feminists and radical gays. By hosting international conferences, inviting nothing but the most "progressive" scholars and scientists, the neocolonial masters make sure that Africa cannot decide its own fate. That will be done for them in New York and London.

The do-gooders are obsessed with African fertility rates. "Family planning" to the Planned Parenthood crowd means less children, the first weapon being contraception. Ekeocha objects on moral and scientific grounds.

Who appointed these white liberal global elitists to make such decisions for Africans? As Ekeocha sees it, "Western nations, organizations, and foundations wage war against the bodies of African women." She also objects to the shoddy scholarship used to justify this cultural invasion.

She cites the example of an English television personality who said the reason why Ethiopia suffers from famines is too many people living on too little land. But the population density of Great Britain, she notes, is more than three times the population density of Ethiopia. "So how can anyone living there tell the Ethiopians to control their 'wild' reproduction rate or forever face the scourge of famine?" Moreover, population decline is a problem in America and Europe, and a major one in Japan.

If Ekeocha's convictions were not representative of most Africans, she could be dismissed as holding to a minority view. But if anything, she is an accurate barometer of the cultural views held by the large majority of African men and women, making plain why so many Africans object to their neocolonial masters. What makes this so outrageous is the boasting by Western elites of their tolerance for diversity. That they have no tolerance for the traditional moral values of Africans is incontestable.

What right do global potentates have to "liberate" African women from their fertility? "I can say with certainty," writes Ekeocha, "that Africans love babies." To the chagrin of liberal elites, they do not ascribe to the morally debased views of *Cosmopolitan*. Why not? "With most African women faithfully practicing and adhering to a faith (mainly Christianity or, in some cases, Muslim), there is a high regard for the sexual act as a sacred and private trust between a husband and a wife." Not so in the West, she rightly observes, where the "trivialization of sex" is the rule.

Ekeocha buttresses her argument by relaying what happened at a 2014 African conference on family planning sponsored by the Gates Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, several U.N. bodies, and other international elites. Needless to say, they promoted hedonism.

Here is how Ekeocha put it. "These wealthy prestigious organizations gathered in our capital [Abuja, Nigeria] with their conference in order to disparage our widely held cultural and religious views on life, love, marriage, and family. Their campaigns represented nothing less than an attack on the natural modesty and innocence of our vulnerable and impressionable young people." The conference, she explains, "was convened at the behest of the cultural imperialists who consider themselves our 'betters.'"

These same arrogant organizations are pushing the Western idea

of sex education in African schools. That means an emphasis on pleasure absent any reference to marriage. These sexperts are single-mindedly pursuing children, hoping the boys and girls will experiment at their young age. It never occurs to these busy bodies that they are sticking their noses into a society that rejects their idea of sexuality.

A 2014 survey by the Pew Research Center found that most Africans hold to conservative views on abortion, contraception, premarital sex, homosexuality, and divorce. The cock-sure elites think these poor Africans need to be enlightened, and that is why they persist in imposing Western standards on them. As Ekeocha puts it, the global do-gooders “want to circumvent African parents in order to indoctrinate their children.”

Progress against the spread of HIV-AIDS has been made in many parts of the world, though it remains a problem in much of Africa. What do the elites think the answer is? Condoms, of course. As usual, they are wrong.

No nation in Africa distributes more condoms than South Africa; it has the world’s largest condom plant. No nation in Africa has rejected this approach more than Uganda: it adopted a program that emphasizes abstinence before marriage, faithfulness in marriage or to one partner, and condoms as a last resort. Guess which nation is among the worst in combating AIDS and which is among the best? No matter, Western elites still push the condom model.

When Pew Research Center asked Africans about abortion, they found that the vast majority—80 to 90 percent—were opposed to it. “For us,” writes Ekeocha, “abortion, which is the direct killing of little ones in the womb, is a direct attack on innocent human life.”

In Africa, parents often give names to their children that reflect their idea of life. Chinwendu is a common name: it

means "God owns life." Chijindu means "God sustains life." Ndubueze refers to "Life is supreme." Ndudi means "There is life." Not exactly what Americans do. Instead, we find it adorable that Kim Kardashian and Kanye West named their son North West.

This is an uphill battle for Africans. The Dutch and the Scandinavians, in particular, are bent on promoting the wonders of abortion. Ekeocha knows what needs to be done. "If Western leaders can speak so unabashedly about the right to abortion, as if they are proud of the killing of their unborn, with matching confidence African leaders should speak about the dignity of the unborn child and his right not to be killed."

Western nations are obsessed with homosexuality—they can't celebrate it enough—but to Africans, this is a sick agenda. They value marriage as it was intended, namely, as a union between a man and a woman. For them, "male" and "female" are not fluid concepts—they reflect human nature.

When President Obama visited Senegal in 2013, he could have addressed many problems in Africa, yet he ignored them in favor of promoting acceptance of homosexuality. Ekeocha wrote him a letter explaining her disappointment. Here is an excerpt of what she said.

"What if our African values and religious beliefs teach us to elevate the highest good of the family above sexual gratification? What if African society is naturally wired to value the awesome wonder of natural conception and birth of children within the loving embrace of marriage? What if the greatest consolation of the African child is the experience of being raised by both a mother and a father?"

Ekeocha also takes umbrage with those who call people like her bigots. "But am I a hater for believing that a child should not be subjected to fatherlessness by the choice of two women?"

Am I a bigot for thinking it is wrong for homosexuals to exploit poor women through surrogacy? Am I a homophobe for seeing the biological fact that a procreative marital act can be accomplished only by a man and a woman? No, I am none of these things. Neither I nor anyone in my sphere of family or friends would ever condone or perpetrate an attack on a homosexual."

Everything she says is true and eminently defensible. Unfortunately, most of those inclined to agree with her—this is certainly true in America—lack her courage.

Though Ekeocha doesn't address multiculturalism in Western schools and colleges, much of what she says takes direct aim at it.

Multiculturalism touts the notion that all civilizations are equal, contending that we should respect every culture, independent of its norms and values. Here's the irony: both of these positions, which are dear to the hearts of Western elites, are historically indefensible. Paradoxically, the brainy ones violate their own tenets with regularity.

Noted historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. maintains that what has distinguished Western civilization from the rest of the world are "those liberating ideas of individual liberty, political democracy, rule of law, human rights, and cultural freedom." That is our legacy. "These are *European* ideas, not Asian, nor African, nor Middle Eastern ideas, except by adoption." (His *italic*.) Western civilization is indeed superior to other civilizations.

It is equally absurd to say that we should respect all cultures. That would mean respecting those that practice infanticide and wife beating with impunity.

So the smug elites who foster the multicultural agenda are wrong on both counts. Yet, as Ekeocha makes clear, it is they who think they have some preordained right to impose their

morally debased notions of life and sexuality on the entire continent of Africa. Thus do they flagrantly violate their own precepts.

POPE SAYS GAY COUPLES ARE NOT A FAMILY

On June 16, Pope Francis said gay couples cannot be considered a family. The media knew he said this but, with few exceptions, they refused to run this story. The blackout was intentional. The Catholic League played a major role disseminating what the pope actually said about this issue.

The pope was speaking to an Italian family association, and following his scripted remarks, he made some unscripted comments. He denounced those couples who screen for abnormalities in the womb, likening the decision to a Nazi-like tactic. "Last century," he said, "the whole world was scandalized by what the Nazis did to purify the race. Today, we do the same thing but with white gloves."

The following media outlets covered this story:

AP, UPI, ABC Online, NBC NY, CNN, *Chicago Tribune*, *Hartford Courant*, *New York Times*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Portland Press Herald*, *Sentinel Sun*, *the Wall Street Journal*, and *the Washington Post*.

In the same spontaneous address, Pope Francis said only heterosexuals can form a family. "It is painful to say this today: People speak of varied families, of various kinds of family," but "the family [as] man and woman in the image of God is the only one."

With the exception of CNN and the Wall Street Journal, not one of the media outlets that covered the pope's remarks on abortion had a word to say about this comment (CNN downplayed its significance). Were it not for a few foreign sources—led by the German media outlet, Deutsche Press-Agentur—most of us would not have known of this admission by Pope Francis.

This matters not simply because of media bias, but because of something much more important: the manipulation of public opinion in the run-up to the World Meeting of Families. This Vatican event will take place in Ireland August 22-26. Gay activists are desperately trying to redefine the family to include homosexual couples.

Pope Francis threw a monkey wrench into their agenda. This is why the media intentionally decided to censor his remarks.

Kudos to Pope Francis for speaking truth to power, and shame on the media for engaging in a widespread cover-up.

MEDIA REPORTING ON POPE IS IDEOLOGICAL

Bias can be detected by what the media report and choose not to report. When it comes to Pope Francis, bias by omission is the most common ideological practice.

In May, the pope met with an alleged Chilean victim of priestly sexual abuse, Juan Carlos Cruz; he is a homosexual. According to Cruz, the pope said to him, "It doesn't matter [whether you are a homosexual]. God made you like this. God loves you like this." The Vatican refused to comment on whether this was an accurate account.

Subsequently, the pope met with the Italian Bishops' Conference. When the subject of gays in the seminary came up, the pope allegedly said, "If in doubt, better not to let them enter." Thus was he affirming what Pope Benedict XVI said in 2005: men who have "deeply rooted homosexual tendencies" should not be admitted to the seminary. The Vatican refused to comment on whether this was an accurate account.

The following media outlets reported on the former story:

New York Times

Associated Press

Philly.com

Boston Globe

Daily News

Houston Chronicle

NBC News

New York Post

Union Leader

San Diego Tribune

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Sun-Sentinel

ABC 7 Eyewitness News

CBS News

Chicago Sun-Times

Time

Los Angeles Times

CNN

The following media outlets reported on the latter story:

Union Leader and CNN

Why the disparity? Ideology. The big media are pro-gay and will report on any story attributed to the pope that fits with their ideology. They will not report on stories that do not. It's really that simple. And that dishonest.

VICTORY FOR CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

On June 26, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a California law requiring crisis pregnancy centers to inform women about the availability of abortion and contraception was unconstitutional. The 5-4 ruling was narrowly drawn and did not decide related issues.

Writing for the majority, Justice Clarence Thomas found the law to be an unconstitutional abridgment of the free speech rights of the crisis pregnancy centers. The law was not content neutral. Indeed, it was content based, meaning that it specifically targeted the speech of these abortion-alternative centers.

The majority noted that under the law, “licensed clinics must provide a government-drafted script about the availability of state-sponsored services....One of those services is abortion—the very practice that petitioners are devoted to opposing.” Thus, the ruling said, “the licensed notice plainly ‘alters the content’ of the petitioners’ speech.”

This was a significant victory for the pro-life community. Those who are principled defenders of free speech also had reason to celebrate.

VIRGINIA SCHOOL BOARD REJECTS CLERGY BAN

When the Catholic League learned of some disturbing proposed changes to a sex education curriculum in Fairfax, Virginia, we wasted no time swinging into action. We won on what we considered to be the most pressing issue—a bid to silence the voice of the clergy. Here's what happened.

The Fairfax County school board voted June 14 on proposed changes to the sex education curriculum. Many of the revisions were deeply disturbing, both from a moral and a pedagogical perspective.

The Family Life Education Curriculum Advisory Committee was the body making the proposals. The list of changes read like a page out of the gay rights agenda, so thoroughly out of touch with reality were they. What bothered us most of all was the proposal to eliminate the clergy from the list of competent advisors to young persons who are confused about sexuality.

No reason was given why priests, ministers, rabbis, imams, and others, should be eliminated as a resource to students struggling with sexual issues. To make matters even more absurd, after recommending that the clergy be stricken from the list of advisors, the document prepared by the Advisory Committee said, "Emphasis will be placed on tolerance and nondiscrimination of all people."

Tolerance and nondiscrimination? What the Advisory Committee was proposing was intolerance and discrimination. Indeed, the proposal smacked of religious hostility, a scourge that the U.S. Supreme Court recently said (see the Masterpiece Cakeshop decision) was constitutionally prohibited.

Bill Donohue put this question to school authorities: "Is the Fairfax County school board prepared to spend large sums of

money on a lawsuit challenging its discriminatory initiative?" Evidently, they got his message: The proposal to ban the clergy from counseling young people beset with sexual problems was unanimously voted down.

On other matters, the proposals passed.

The Advisory Committee set anchor with the gay rights agenda by denying human nature. It said individual identity will be described as "sex assigned at birth, gender identity (includes transgender), gender role, and sexual orientation (includes heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual)."

"The first two identities constitute pedagogical nonsense," Donohue said. "Sex is not assigned—it is determined by the father. Gender identity is a misleading term: boys who think they are girls, and girls who think they are boys, deserve to be treated for their mental disorder, not pandered to by school officials."

Prior to the revisions, students in the Fairfax County school district learned that abstinence was the one and only 100 percent effective method of preventing sexually transmitted diseases. This was changed to say abstinence is the "most effective" method. Yet there was no new scientific research that merited the change. Indeed, it was being done for purely ideological reasons: to conform to the gay agenda, the Advisory Committee sought to include drugs alongside abstinence.

For example, a drug is available to those who are HIV-negative but who have a relatively high risk of contracting HIV. It is called pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP. One of the proposals, which passed, sought to teach students about this option.

"This is irresponsible," Donohue said. "Schools should not be in the business of pushing drugs on sexually reckless students—they should be promoting counseling, with an eye

towards abstinence. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that 'Anal sex is the highest-risk sexual behavior for HIV transmission.' Moreover, just last month, the CDC found that 70 percent of new HIV infections are among gay and bisexual men, the riskiest sexual practice being anal sex."

Donohue asked, "Why is there no mention of the dangers of anal sex in this document? Students are told to stop smoking, are they not? They are not told to try electronic cigarettes. Why is the Advisory Committee dodging its responsibility? The answer is obvious: the members do not want to depart from the gay agenda."

We did not get all that we wanted, but we did succeed in securing rights for the clergy. Without that victory, there would be nothing stopping gay rights activists from taking over the school district, setting the stage for similar outcomes in other parts of the country.

GAY ACTIVISTS LOSE IN BAKER CASE

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June that a Colorado baker could not be forced against his will, grounded in his religious beliefs, to make a wedding cake that affirmed a "marriage" between two homosexuals. The 7-2 ruling is a victory for religious liberty.

The high court ruled that the baker, Jack Phillips, was the victim of religious hostility made manifest by the Colorado Civil Rights Commission; it had concluded that the baker had to abide by the gay couple's wishes.

“The commission’s hostility was inconsistent with the First Amendment’s guarantee that our laws be applied in a manner that is neutral toward religion,” Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote. As expected, the decision was closely tailored to the specifics in this case.

In 2012, Charlie Craig, his mother, and David Mullins went to the Phillips Masterpiece Cakeshop in Lakewood, Colorado, to order a wedding cake to celebrate the “marriage” of the two men in Massachusetts. Phillips did not refuse to sell them any of his baked goods, but he said he could not accede to their request. “I do not create custom designs that conflict with my conscience,” he said. For the same reason, he said, he doesn’t make Halloween cakes.

While this victory is important, regrettably it focused heavily on the bigoted remarks made against Phillips, calling into doubt how the case may have been decided absent religious hostility.

We were happier with the concurring opinion of Justice Clarence Thomas, signed by Justice Neil Gorsuch. They noted that in addition to Phillips’ religious liberty claims, his right to freedom of speech was operative as well. The Colorado Civil Rights Commission violated both rights.

FLAWED SURVEY ON BAKER YIELDS FALSE NEWS

In a Washington Post web blog following the Supreme Court ruling on the Colorado baker, Eugene Scott informed readers that most Americans disagree with the decision. That conclusion is not validated by the data he cites.

“Most Americans don’t support allowing gay Americans to be denied services because of the religious convictions of the business owner,” Scott said. He was right about that. But the wording of the question was deceitful, skewing the results.

Scott cited a survey recently taken by the Public Religion Research Institute that supports his conclusion. The survey question he refers to asked, “Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose allowing a small business owner in your state to refuse to provide products or services to gay or lesbian people, if doing so violates their religious beliefs?”

It is hardly surprising to learn that 60% of Americans oppose such a right. But the issue before the Supreme Court dealt with forcing a baker to *customize* a wedding cake for two men who claimed to be “married” to each other in another state.

The baker, Jack Phillips, did not say to the gay men that he will not serve them—they were free to buy whatever they wanted from his bakery. But to ask him to *personally inscribe* a wedding cake for them was to make him complicit in their undertaking. For religious reasons, he could not do so.

Phillips has a history of not customizing cakes for events he finds objectionable. “It’s never about the person making the request,” he said. “It’s about the message communicated on the cake.” It is for reasons such as this that in the Supreme Court ruling, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote a concurring opinion, joined by Justice Neil Gorsuch, arguing Phillips could have won on free speech grounds alone.

The wording of a survey question can be designed to elicit a predictable response. For example, what if the public were asked the following: “Do you favor or oppose the right of a Trump-hating photographer to decline a request by the president to take pictures of him at an event celebrating his achievements?”

In short, the survey question by the Public Religion Research

Institute was flawed, leading to false reporting by Scott.
Both should have known better.