

“HATE ADS” REPUDIATED

The publishers of two more newspapers that ran the “Earth’s Final Warning” hate ads have apologized in print. Roger Kintzel of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and Michael E. Waller of the *Baltimore Sun* apologized to readers for running the anti-Catholic ads; they appeared on August 26 and October 8-9, respectively. William Cardinal Keeler of Baltimore criticized his local newspaper for running the ad.

The Catholic League has protested the propriety of running these Catholic-bashing ads whenever they appear. At stake is not a legal issue—we never question the legality of placing these ads—but a moral one. Our point is simply that no newspaper is forced to accept any ad.

The full page, single spaced ads, are the work of a Seventh Day Adventist splinter group based in Palm Beach, Florida. The Eternal Gospel Church has run dozens of these hate ads in dailies all over the country. Most recently, they ran in the *Marietta Times* of Ohio and the *Montgomery Journal* in Alexandria, Virginia. The league is awaiting a response from the publishers of these two newspapers.

In one sense, the ads are so dumb that it is tempting to discount them. On the other hand, the ads are definitely feeding anti-Catholicism and must be protested every time they run.

We’re still not sure who’s funding this group, but whoever they are, they’re loaded. Ads of this size cost upwards of \$100,000 each. In any event, we love checkmating them whenever we can.

SEXUAL ROULETTE

William A. Donohue

The Holy Father has often said that freedom is the right to do what we ought to do. What we ought to do can be found in the Ten Commandments and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Now contrast this with what the dominant culture teaches—that freedom is the right to do whatever we want to do—and the disharmony is evident.

When the popular understanding of freedom is applied to sexuality, it expresses itself in terms that lead to despair, disease and death. It is not a liberating experience to wind up with a broken relationship or a sexually transmitted disease—much less to die prematurely—but that is exactly what a liberty-as-license mentality delivers when applied to sexuality.

There is something else going on here as well. Catholics who accept the Church's teachings on sexuality do not, as a matter of course, take to bashing those with whom they disagree. But the contra is not true: many of those who reject the Church's teachings on sexuality literally despise the Church. Indeed, it is one of the driving forces of anti-Catholicism today.

Why can't the libertines just "let it be"? Because they will not be satisfied until all voices of moderation are silenced; they are the ultimate bullies. These crazed men and women would never die for their country, but they don't mind putting their lives on the line if it means playing one more hand of sexual roulette. Irrational though they are, they know exactly what they are doing.

And because of them, we all suffer. Sex may be a private affair, but it often has public consequences. Just ask the surviving family members of a hemophiliac who died of an AIDS-tainted blood infusion. Or consider the harm done to children

born out of wedlock, never mind the number of babies killed in their mother's womb.

The goal of sexual libertines is to break down every last barrier by destroying traditional moral authority. Don't take my word for it—listen to what *they* say. Take, for instance, a new TV show that will air in December called "Queer As Folk."

Already a hit in England, "Queer As Folk," will be picked up on cable by Showtime. According to the Showtime press release, the new series "initially stunned U.K. audiences with its graphic sex scenes, provocative dialogue and its unflinching portrait of an aspect of gay cultural life." *Variety* said it features "nude sex scenes" and an official at the network remarked, "It does push all the boundaries."

When "Entertainment Tonight" asked me for a comment on this show, I offered that Showtime's goal was to become the most irresponsible network on TV. That sounds nutty in one way, but it's not so nutty when you consider that what I call irresponsible they call controversial. "I dare, therefore I am," is what these man-boys believe.

In October, *Entertainment Weekly* did a cover story on "Gay Hollywood." So did *Variety*. What's going on here? Why are we so obsessed with homosexuality? We have Queer Studies on campus, gay days at theme parks and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered parades. They even have "gay weather" on a gay cable channel in New York.

The obsession with homosexuality is of a piece with the dominant culture's idea of freedom *qua* genital liberation. It is getting so sick that we now have over 100,000 websites that feature child pornography.

As I indicated, the worst consequences of this twisted notion of sexual freedom are AIDS and abortions. It is even sadder to note that while AIDS is regarded as a tragedy, abortion is

not. That is why feminists were delighted when RU-486 came on the market. How this could plausibly be regarded as an achievement, I do not know. The day after the Clinton administration gave its final okay to this “abortion without surgery” drug, women were told not to worry if they start bleeding after taking RU-486. That’s a good sign, they were informed, because that means the drug is working. And remember, this is known as women’s liberation.

In the minds of some, it is also a sign of women’s liberation to allow a child to die if that child was supposed to have been killed prior to exiting the mother’s body. On September 26, 15 members of the House of Representatives voted against a bill that would require doctors to give babies born alive during botched abortions the same care afforded other babies.

What is most astonishing about this is the lack of media attention this subject was given. Fifteen elected representatives of the United States are on record saying it is okay to let an innocent baby die in a hospital and hardly anyone is talking about it. And this includes those who are challenging these incumbents in the upcoming election.

At the end of the day, it is not the Catholic Church that needs to “get its act together.” On the contrary, it is those who are at war with the Church’s teachings on sexuality that need to do a 180. For everyone’s sake, it can’t happen too quickly.

THEIR IDEA OF FAIRNESS

Insight Media is a company that has a big catalog of videos and CD-ROMS for high school and college students. On the subject of religion, its selection is generally quite good.

But generally isn't quite good enough, not especially when it's our religion that is singled out for bashing.

The selections that deal with Christianity are fine, as are the selections that cover everything from Animism and Buddhism to Voodoo and Transcendentalism. But when it comes to Roman Catholicism, their idea of fairness shines through: there are two listings, one called "The Inquisition" and the other "Roman Catholicism: Flowers in May." The former video needs no introduction but the latter one does—it examines the Church's "origins and growth into a political force in world events."

In September, William Donohue wrote to Jeff Morris, president of Insight Media, Inc. Donohue complained that the videos, "by your own description, offer a negative view of Catholicism." He drew a contrast with the depiction of other world religions, noting that Judaism and Islam received treatment that was respectful of their heritage.

Donohue continued by saying, "Something is at work here and I would like an explanation. Better yet, I would like you to reconsider this matter by including a) more videos on Catholicism, and b) videos that do not feed an anti-Catholic animus."

Morris has not responded, but perhaps if you write, he will. Write to him at Insight Media, Inc., 2162 Broadway, New York, New York 10024.

THE DEEPEST BIAS

When Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. said anti-Catholicism was America's "deepest bias," he might have had in mind the extent

to which well-educated people feel right at home expressing their bigotry towards Catholics. That's what comes to mind when we ran across an issue of *Booklist* that took due note of an anti-Catholic book, and yet failed to show outrage.

Booklist is published by the American Library Association and is thus relied upon by thousands of librarians as a guide in making new acquisitions. In the June 1 & 15 edition, there was a review of a new book by Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy entitled, *The Jesus Mysteries: Was the "Original Jesus" a Pagan God?* The reviewer, Steven Schroeder, opened his remarks by admitting that the book was anti-Catholic. But the worst he could say about this was that the bigotry of the authors' "diatribe" (his words) was "distracting."

On August 21, William Donohue wrote to Bill Ott, the editor and publisher of *Booklist* to know his thoughts on this matter. "Specifically," Donohue asked, "I would like to know how *Booklist* treats books that are patently anti-Jewish, anti-black or anti-gay. Has there ever been a diatribe against Jews, blacks or gays that was reviewed in *Booklist* and was treated in this manner? If so, please send me a copy of the review. If not, I'd like to know what's going on."

Ott has not answered Donohue's letter of August 21. Perhaps if Catholic League members bombard him with letters, he'll be jolted out of his comfort zone. Write to him at *Booklist*, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

A "LOST SOUL"

The new movie, "Lost Souls," has gotten more rotten reviews than any film in recent history. That's good news given that the flick is such a rip-off of things Catholic: its treatment

of exorcisms is particularly bad.

“Lost Souls” stars Winona Ryder. She plays a Catholic woman who sets out to destroy the Antichrist. Her less than convincing performance may have something to do with her antipathy toward Catholicism.

Her atheist father and her Buddhist mother raised Ryder on a commune in Northern California. Whether this accounts for her malady, it is not known. But no matter, there is no uncertainty regarding her bigotry. “I think it’s incredibly abusive,” the 28-year old actress said, “to tell children that there’s a devil and that if you do something wrong, you’re going to burn in hell. That’s a horrible thing to tell a child, and that’s my main problem with Catholicism.”

Winona was also quoted as saying, “I don’t believe in the devil; I believe in mental illness.” Talk about a lost soul.

DETROIT FREE PRESS BASHES CATHOLICS

The September 26 edition of the *Detroit Free Press* ran a cartoon by Mike Thompson on the subject of vouchers that was blatantly anti-Catholic. All six cells ridiculed school vouchers, but it was the last one that crossed the line with Catholics. In reference to a “Vouch-O-Matic” machine that destroys the constitution, sucks millions out of public education, blinds the voters and churns out wooden nickels, the sixth graph read, “To Order, Rush Your Tax Dollars To: The Roman Catholic Church c/o Kids First! Yes! ORDER NOW!”

Our response to the press was as follows:

"If there is one public policy issue that cannot be discussed without anti-Catholicism rearing its ugly head, it is school vouchers. Every time this issue is put to the voters, some bigot conjures up fears of a Catholic windfall. So it is not surprising that in Michigan, where a ballot initiative on vouchers is pending, that Catholic bashers would surface again. And they did, with the Detroit Free Press leading the way.

"The offensive cartoon by Mike Thompson in yesterday's paper is not an isolated incident. Indeed, he got his cues from Ron Dzwonkowski, editor of the editorial page, and publisher Heath Meriwether: the editorial on school vouchers in last Saturday's Detroit Free Press ended with the crack, 'Catholic priests are expected to preach at least one of their sermons on vouchers with the theme 'eyes wide open.' Amen.' This editorial obviously gave Thompson the green light to bash Catholics, and he did just that.

"The *Detroit Free Press* owes Catholics an apology. Even Geoffrey Fieger would have to agree with us on this one."

Dzwonkowski defended the cartoon in a column he ran on September 28. You can write to him at Detroit Free Press, 321 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Michigan 48226 or e-mail him at dzwonk@freepress.com.

MICHIGAN STATE PRESIDENT ACTS PRESIDENTIAL

After William Donohue registered a complaint on October 12 against the student newspaper at Michigan State University, he received a call on October 18 from the president of the

school, Peter McPherson. McPherson conveyed his sincere outrage at the offense and read to Donohue a public statement he released on the subject. Here's what happened.

The campus newspaper of Michigan State University, *The State News*, printed a cartoon in its October 10 edition that showed a Christ-like figure nailed to a cross. Across the figure's chest was written "Public Schools" and atop the cross was the inscription "Proposal 1"; the latter referred to a school voucher initiative on the ballot in November.

William Donohue commented to the media as follows:

"There is a problem with anti-Catholic bigotry on the campus of Michigan State University. Last June, I wrote to the general manager of *The State News* concerning a cartoon series called 'Fetus X' that featured a blasphemous treatment of Jesus. Berl Schwartz was quite understanding of my objection and requested that I write directly to the offending editor-in-chief, David Miller. This time I am contacting the university president, Peter McPherson.

"It will not do to say that the newspaper is not a campus publication because it receives no school funds. It is distributed on the campus and is understood as the school's *de facto* newspaper. There is little doubt that if *The State News* spoke against a gay rights initiative by hanging Matthew Shepard from a cross, the paper would be confiscated immediately (and imagine putting 'Morality' across his chest for added emphasis!)."

Donohue had a constructive conversation with the school's president and pledged he would inform Catholic League members of McPherson's presidential response to his complaint.

PETA RIPS OFF CATHOLIC IMAGERY

On October 3, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) launched an advertising campaign that showed The Shroud of Turin along with the words, "Make a Lasting Impression—Go Vegetarian." The international campaign, which originated in Turin, Italy, argued that Jesus was a vegetarian; it began on the eve of the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. Many Catholics believe that Jesus was wrapped in The Shroud of Turin.

The Catholic League issued the following news release on this subject:

"PETA wants the world to believe that eating meat is immoral. To that end, it seeks to appropriate symbols held sacred by Christians all over the world. But this latest campaign is a misappropriation: it hijacks Catholic imagery in service to a secular crusade.

"In July, PETA dropped its 'Jesus Was a Vegetarian' campaign after the Milwaukee-based Priests of the Sacred Heart registered a complaint; it was the priests' Sacred Heart imagery that PETA was abusing. Now PETA is back, this time ripping off The Shroud of Turin to make a political statement.

"PETA has a track record of offending Catholics. In 1996, the Catholic League went after the animal rights group for slandering Boys Town. In that instance, PETA was upset with the Catholic institution for doing research on animals, and in the course of doing so, engaged in a 'malicious libel' against the famous home for troubled boys. In 1997, PETA continued its war on Boys Town when one of its members dressed up as Satan while screaming from the roof of the hospital.

“If PETA were as ethical in dealing with Catholics as it is in dealing with cats, there wouldn’t be any problem. It’s time they took an ethics course taught by someone who knows the difference between the sacred and the profane, as well as the difference between mice and men.”

CENSORING RELIGIOUS ART

About a year ago, we raised a ruckus over the dung-splattered Virgin Mary at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. At the time, we maintained that it was apparently acceptable to deface religious art, but it wasn’t okay to display it in a reverential manner. Not, at least, if the art in question has any connection with public monies or public property. As recent events have disclosed, we were right.

A huge mural adorns a wall used for handball at an intermediate school in a high crime area. A neighborhood resident decided to commission a local artist to pay tribute to the 27 youngsters who have been killed, but he ran into trouble with school officials. Why? Because the mural features Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. So it was painted over. The school is in Brooklyn.

In Santa Fe, New Mexico, a mural at César Chávez Elementary School is now slated to be painted over. The reason? Our Lady of Guadalupe is depicted on the wall.

This is what we’ve come to in this country: religious art can be shown on public property just so long as it passes as hate speech. Otherwise, it must be banned.

CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

The Catholic League urges all members who are veterans to join the Catholic War Veterans. It is a splendid organization that proudly represents the interests of these loyal men and women. It should be noted that no religious group in America comes close to Catholics in the number of war dead.

Write to Cmdr. Ignatius M. Paolilla, 55 East 4th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. Dues are \$25 per year. Qualifications are at least a 90 day stint and an honorable discharge.