

WHY ARE THE BOY SCOUTS BEING SUED?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on lawsuits filed against the Boy Scouts of America:

Several states have passed laws suspending the statute of limitations for crimes involving the sexual abuse of minors; they provide for a look-back period, usually 1-3 years, where offenses that previously were time barred can be filed. In those states that have not passed such laws, attorneys for Boy Scout victims filed a lawsuit yesterday in federal court in Washington, D.C. seeking to establish the nation's capital as a legitimate venue for such suits.

The lawyers are taking a novel approach: the Boy Scouts of America were incorporated in D.C. in 1910, and six years later it received a congressional charter there. Ergo, D.C. should qualify as a proper venue to hear a national case against the Boy Scouts. Will it work? No one knows.

Leaving this atypical case aside, the larger question is: Why are the Boy Scouts the subject of a wave of new lawsuits? Many would say it is because the suspension of the statute of limitations allows the suits to be filed. That is true. Still, why are the Boy Scouts being hit so hard? There is no avalanche of lawsuits against the public schools, even in states where they are subject to being sued under new laws.

The reason the Boy Scouts are being sued is the same reason why the Catholic Church is being hit with a flood of new lawsuits: both are bastions of traditional morality.

In the summer of 2000, six Boy Scouts and one adult leader walked on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles. They were roundly booed by delegates and some held signs expressing their displeasure. These homosexual activists

and supporters were unhappy with Boy Scout rules prohibiting homosexual Scouts and leaders.

The pressure was enormous and eventually the Boy Scouts caved. In 2013, homosexual scouts were allowed, and in 2015 so were homosexual leaders. In 2017, girls who considered themselves to be boys were welcomed.

The Boy Scouts, like the Catholic Church, are a rich target. The first Scout Oath, published in 1911, required boys to pledge that they would be “morally straight.” This was considered unexceptional until the dawn of the gay rights movement: ever since it has been seen as a dog whistle to bar homosexuals.

Ironically, just as in the case of the Catholic Church, the typical victimizer in the Boy Scouts was not a pedophile—he was a homosexual. This, of course, is almost never acknowledged. In fact, in the lawsuit attempting to establish Washington, D.C. as a proper venue to file suits, it accuses the Boy Scouts of acting as “magnets to tens of thousands of pedophiles.” In truth, homosexuals infiltrated the Boy Scouts, not pedophiles.

It is worth noting that there has never been a wave of lawsuits charging the Girl Scouts with sexual abuse. That is because the leaders, being women, rarely commit sexual crimes against minors. It must also be said that in the case of the Boy Scouts, it was not heterosexual men who created the problem. Moreover, the relative scarcity of heterosexual pedophiles—they are disproportionately homosexual—is another telling factor that is generally overlooked.

This is perverse. Those who are mostly responsible for these crimes in the Catholic Church and in the Boy Scouts are the very ones being given a pass. We don't need, nor should we desire, witch hunts. What we need is a commitment to the truth and the prudential exercise of reforms. To do that, however,

requires fortitude, a cardinal virtue that is unfortunately in short supply.