



Faulty Towers

By William A. Borst, Ph.D.

Social change in America is a constant. No American institution has undergone a more radical change than the college campus. The college was once an *Ivory Tower*. This poetic reference to the Book of Solomon, *thy neck is like a tower of ivory* (7:4) is a beautiful image that projects the head or intellect as separate from the rest of the body. In a metaphorical sense college was a four-year period where students could retreat from the troubles of the world to find comfort and solitude in intellectual pursuits.

WOLFE CRIES

The radical transformation on the college campus is the theme of seventy-four year old social critic Thomas Wolfe in his latest book, *I Am Charlotte Simmons*. The author of such works as *The Right Stuff* and *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Wolfe writes of a fictitious Dupont University, which is a disturbing amalgamation of Stanford, Harvard, and Duke universities. A kindred spirit with the 19th century genre of romantic fiction, popularized by Victorian novelist Thomas Hardy, Wolfe traces the gradual corruption of an eighteen-year old *wunderkind*, Charlotte Simmons as she learns the rhythm and beat of post-modern hedonism at Dupont. Given to intellectual visions of grandeur, Charlotte naively succumbs to the temptations of unrestricted moral hedonism that has permeated the very pillars and yards of her university's structure.

The college years were once an *Ivory Tower* of singular reflection. At Dupont they serve as a quadrennial binge of parties, sexual experimentation, and drunkenness. The requisite privacy for personal modesty was impossible, amid the sordid universe of co-ed bathrooms, *sexiles*, and serial *hookups*. According to Wendy Shalit, the author of the helpful book *A Return to Modesty*, under those conditions it becomes *Social Pathology's gain*.

Wolfe has captured this degrading state of university life, putting to rest the myth that college was a haven for the young and the innocent. His literary masterpiece, despite its profane realism, is a blunt reminder that the target of Betty Friedan and the cultural Marxists were women, such as the flesh and blood Charlotte Simmons of the West.

THE CATHOLIC TENT

Among the Catholic population, the standard response to the slippery slope of modern collegiate hedonism is to evoke the

theme of Sinclair Lewis' novel, *It Can't Happen Here*. While the *nude dorm, queer prom and pornography-for-credit of Wesleyan University* have not yet made it to the Catholic campus, given the incremental accommodation with modernism of most Catholic schools, that day is not far off.

No one understands the gravity of the moral decline of the Catholic college more than Patrick J. Reilly, the Founder, and President of the Cardinal Newman Society organized in 1993. Taking an ironic leaf from the original Newman Society's Catholic presence on the secular campus, the CNS's purpose is to restore that identity to the Catholic campus.

The Cardinal Newman Society is named for the great English churchman and Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, John Henry Newman (1801-1890).

In his book, *The Idea of a University*, Newman expounds with wonderful clearness of thought and beauty of language, his Theory that education should be moral training rather than instruction. He sought to establish a Roman Catholic Hall at Oxford to provide students with the advantages of both Catholicism and university training.

Reilly had his first taste of the secular incursions made on the Catholic campus while a student at Fordham, a Jesuit university in the Bronx, N.Y. He tried to use his position on the school newspaper to combat the wave of pro-abortion secularism engulfing his campus. For his trouble he received vile attacks and even a few death threats, which he did not take too seriously. After graduation he continued his concern about the loss of Catholic identity on the college campus and formed the CNS.

In a radio interview, Reilly expressed his concerns about the *systemic problems* in Catholic higher education. Without hesitation, he stated that the college that had scored the worst in his survey had been Georgetown University. Holy Cross was *bad too*. What surprised him the most was *the number of employees, faculty members at these Catholic colleges who are very active in abortion or assisted suicide movement*.

Reilly was more disturbed by the college presidents' passive response to Eve Ensler's vulgar play, *The Vagina Monologues*. The president of Loyola of Chicago insisted that the play *wouldn't have been the vehicle he would have chosen*. Women's groups often use fundraisers for something such as fighting domestic violence to bring

the noose of their twisted camel into the Catholic tent. Finally, in 2004 the CNS produced a comprehensive nine-part report on this alarming situation in Catholic academia.

THE REPORT

The major accomplishment of the Cardinal Newman Society resides in its 56-page report, *The Culture of Death on the Catholic College Campus*, co-authored by Reilly and researcher Erin R. Butcher. It is the most extensive indictment of Catholic education ever published in the United States. It documents five years of scandal, moral decline and subversion of Catholic principles on its college campuses. The Report is a clarion call, a warning of the precipitous decline of the Catholic image on many of its college campuses. It lists school activities that promote or implicitly condone premarital sex, homosexual unions, contraception, abortion, and euthanasia. The CNS intends to make its Report available to every bishop, educator, lay leader, and parent in the nation.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The CNS Report begins with citations from Pope John Paul II's 1990 encyclical, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (From the Heart of the Church) that states unequivocally that *Catholic teaching and discipline are to influence all university activities*. Catholic colleges should not recognize, sponsor, or provide facilities to student clubs that advance the Culture of Death. They should encourage their employees to actively promote a Culture of Life on campus or at least respect their institution's pro-life mission.

The Report provides several recommendations for reestablishing the public Catholic presence on its campuses. Schools should ban campus speakers who have publicly supported any aspect of the Culture of Death. They should carefully screen prospective employees and college representatives to ensure that no one connected with the college is connected to the Culture of Death.

SECTION 2: ABORTION ADVOCATES TARGETING COLLEGE STUDENTS

Catholics have to realize that their children are the direct targets for the hedonist worldview that animates the Culture of Death. Every major abortion advocate has a formal program that reaches out to Catholic college students. Some have chapters on college campuses. Together they wield an estimated \$100-\$150 million in assets. Their threat to Catholic education and the spiritual welfare of its students is incalculable.

SECTION 3: COLLEGE OFFICIALS & EMPLOYEES

The Report documents several examples of college administrators, faculty and staff who have engaged in public activities or statements that advocate the Culture of Death. Although they represent a small minority of Catholic employees the corruptive damage one rotten apple can wreak is sizable. The Report sites several examples, including a Boston College law school professor who is on the board of directors of Death with Dignity National Center, and a Georgetown University philosophy professor on the board of the Compassion in Dying Federation. Two Georgetown women's

studies professors are employed by Planned Parenthood. Mercyhurst College has a Gay Straight Alliance and some of its professors are on record as endorsing same-sex marriages. Pro-abortion politico Carol Mosley Braun teaches management at DePaul University in Chicago, while Geraldine Ferraro is on the Fordham University law school Board of Visitors and teaches public policy at Georgetown.

SECTION 4: CAMPUS SPEAKERS & HONOREES

The Report recognizes that there should be open discussions on a college campus but official actions and policies of every Catholic college should conform to Christian teachings and traditional moral values. This means providing facilities and support for campus speakers and honorees whose public actions and statements do not promote or advance the Culture of Death. The Report documents over 200 instances of campus speakers and honorees who have been public advocates of the Culture of Death.

This includes 17 visits and lectures by former president Bill Clinton at Georgetown, research in human cloning and embryonic stem cell research at Assumption College, and Holy Cross. NARAL president Kate Michelman spoke at Boston College law school and radical feminist Gloria Steinem spoke at Fairfield University, CT. Pornographer Larry Flynt spoke at Georgetown while NOW President Kim Gandy appeared at Loyola University of New Orleans. Several Democratic presidential candidates, all representatives of the Culture of Death, including John Kerry, Dennis Kucinich, and Wesley Clark, appeared on many Catholic colleges.

Holy Cross graduate Chris Matthews, notorious for his Culture of Death views on abortion and homosexuality, gave the commencement speech at his alma mater in 2003, amid a furor where the Bishop of Worcester declined to attend. The following year, Holy Cross's valedictorian was Nicole Mortorano. Her address was an upsetting pastiche of left-wing platitudes and homosexual agitprop. Any mention of Jesus or Catholic tradition was lost somewhere between references to Jesse Jackson and Abigale's Gay-Straight Alliance Week, attesting to the school's apparent Catholic alienation.

SECTION 5: COLLEGE WEBSITES

The Report lists several Catholic college Websites that have links to Culture of Death organizations, such as Planned Parenthood, NARAL, NOW and the Feminist Majority Foundation. The Report lists references to *health centers*, a common euphemism for abortion agencies. The most offensive schools in this category are Georgetown, LaSalle University in Philadelphia and Seton Hall, N.J.

SECTION 6: HEALTH SERVICES

This section addressed three major concerns: employee health insurance, which covers contraceptives, availability of contraceptives for students, or the referral of students to contraceptive agencies. One of the Report's highlights was the result of a phone survey of human resources personnel at the 13 Catholic colleges in California. The Report was concerned with the California Supreme Court's decision requiring most religious employers to offer medical insurance with these anti-life services to its employees. The question was moot in nine of these schools, which already had

insurance that covered these services. The Report also confirmed the shocking fact that both the College of Santa Fe and Rockhurst in Kansas City offered *emergency contraception* to its students.

SECTION 7: STUDENT ACTIVITIES & INTERNSHIPS

A Catholic College is responsible for ensuring that campus events and activities are consistent with its Catholic mission. The Report identifies pro-abortion student clubs, including the Reproductive Choice Coalition at Boston College law school, Hoyas for Choice at Georgetown, and a NOW chapter at St. Ambrose University. The Report also documents student newspapers that promote illicit sex and contraception, including advice columns, such as *Sex and the University*, in *The Heights* at Boston College and *Sex on the Hilltop*, in *the Hoya* at Georgetown. The Report found several instances of internships for Villanova students at Planned Parenthood and as a *clinic escort* for Planned Parenthood at Nazareth College in New York State.

SECTION 8: THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Eve Ensler's inane play has carved its own sordid niche on many Catholic college campuses. At least 30 schools have offered the play and some, such as Georgetown and Holy Cross, have made it a tradition in concert with the remaking of Valentine's Day into an event of female liberation, which they call V-Day. One episode involves the female seduction of a thirteen-year-old girl, later *upgraded* to a sixteen-year-old by a 26-year-old lesbian who plies her with vodka before seducing her. The play declares it as the girl's *politically correct salvation*. With the painted face of irony adorning it, the proceeds from the play at St. John Fisher College in New York supported a rape crisis center at Planned Parenthood. The CNS Report has been instrumental in getting several of these schools to stop producing their tawdry exhibition of self-indulgence.

SECTION 9: STUDENTS VIEWS AND LEARNING

The Report summarizes the overall effects of its hundreds of anecdotal examples that point to a disquieting conclusion. Too many students are leaving their Catholic college campuses without a greater love and appreciation of their Catholic faith. Instead they are emerging with a worldview that bears little difference from the secular ideas that permeate the Culture of Death. The complete Report is available from Reilly at www.cardinalnewmansociety.org or by mail from The Cardinal Newman Society @ 10562 Associates Court, Manassas, VA 20109 @ a cost of \$3.00 each.

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Patrick Reilly maintains that *alarm bells should be ringing on almost every college campus and in every diocesan chancery*. He hints that it could be the same blind ignorance that embraces the lesbian agitprop of the *Vagina Monologues* and looks the other way as the clergy sexual abuse problem is passed from one generation to the next.

Reilly calls for a *rescue operation* for the soul of Catholic education be re-instituted. He regards this battle in positive terms, as

the single best opportunity *we have to begin a dramatic reversal in the Church*. Reilly contends that victory on the Catholic college campus is the key in the struggle of faith over secularism in America. He realizes that the moral tug-of-war going on at these campuses is but one battlefield in the larger dimension of the Culture War, the conflict between Catholic moral principle and the degenerative ideas of academic freedom and secular idealism run rampant. *We have different understanding of salvation and it doesn't come from being sexually molested, especially in light of the sexual abuse scandal of a number of Catholic priests throughout the country over the course of the last thirty years.*

Many students on the profiled campuses could not fathom the nature of the CNS's protests. Many of the universities are fighting back with lawsuits. They say CNS is *harassing the schools*. Reilly is optimistic. After ten years of existence, the membership continues to grow.

Reilly is enlisting bishops from all over the country to demand that the Catholic colleges in their dioceses adhere to the principles of Pope John Paul II's 1990 encyclical *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. His lofty goal will only become a reality when Catholic college presidents summon the courage to defy the conventional wisdom and the cultural semantics of the times. They must protect the Catholic traditions of their institutions and confront the feminist and homosexual organizations that apparently have assumed the roles of leadership on their campuses.

To get their attention, Catholic college graduates should withhold donations from their alma maters until their presidents address the gravity of the moral decline on their campuses. Otherwise the once pristine atmosphere of the *Ivory Tower* will continue its degeneration into something like the 1970s British TV spoof, *Faulty Towers*.

William A. Borst is a weekly talk show host on WGNU radio. He is the author of Liberalism: Fatal Consequences and his new book, The Scorpion and the Frog: A Natural Conspiracy which are available from him at PO Box 16271, St. Louis, MO 63105, for \$17.50 ppd. (Consequences) and (Scorpion) for \$19.95 soft and \$35 hard ppd.

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Anaheim, California News

The Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation has had the privilege and pleasure of planning 21 annual conferences on **FAITH • FAMILY • FREEDOM** in California. The first four events were held 1983-1986 at the downtown Los Angeles historic St. Peter's Church under the spiritual direction of Fr. John A. Houle, S.J., member of CMF's Council, saintly survivor of Chinese Communist persecution.

The following seventeen years the Conferences have taken place in Anaheim, Orange County with many loyal friends and always new friends from infants to seniors. The Conferences were enhanced by the presence of the Norbertine Fathers, seminarians, students from St. Michael's Abbey in Silverado where CMF's Council member Abbot L.K. Parker, O. Praem. became the first Abbot.

Regretfully, we must announce that the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation will no longer have a Conference in Anaheim, California. We are very grateful to the generous, courageous, prayerful volunteers who served throughout these years in making the Conferences resonate with solid doctrine, lasting truths, and joy-filled friendships.

Notable appreciation from all of us goes to Marge DeClue and her family for their steadfast, unselfish support, and also, we thank each member of all of our committees for their dedication and interest. May God bless them abundantly for their devotion to the **FAITH • FAMILY • FREEDOM** programs.

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ST. MATTHEW 6:20-21

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