Media Bias and Antics with Semantics

SUMMARY:

MEDIA BIAS: Many media outlets (such as newspapers, magazines, Internet sites, radio programs, TV shows, movies, etc.) portray Catholicism in a negative light.

ANTICS WITH SEMANTICS: Many media outlets use words (semantics) in tricky ways (antics) to do this.
Why would the media portray Catholicism in a negative light?

Two possible answers:

1. Many media outlets are sometimes anti-Catholic.

2. Many media outlets are trying to get attention (clicks, readers, listeners, viewers, etc.) and therefore, money (from advertisers).
Examples of click/read/watch bait

Each Christmas, Christians tell stories about the poor baby Jesus born in a lowly manger because there was no room in the inn. But the Rev. C. Thomas Anderson says baby Jesus may not have been so poor after all. FULL STORY
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF
Media Bias and
Antics with Semantics
IN AMERICAN CULTURE...
Media Bias

strategy #1: Making Catholics look stupid, mean, unhappy, like fun haters, etc.

Bill Maher, the king of interviewing fools and hiding from theologians

And now representing the Christian perspective: the biggest crackpot we could possibly find...

Sigh

American News Media
Media Bias
strategy #1: Making Catholics look stupid, mean, unhappy, like fun haters, etc.

Picture from December 28, 2013 Star Tribune article about the news highlights of the year:

From my letter to the editor:
I certainly hope there was no agenda behind this photo choice, but I'm left scratching my head as to why in the world you would have used it, especially considering the dozens of other remarkable pictures this pope has provided in 2013: Kissing and embracing the man with face tumors, paying his hotel bill after being elected, the cute little kid holding onto his leg during a papal event, washing the feet of teens in a juvenile detention center, presiding at Mass with 3 million young people on the Rio beach during World Youth Day, etc.
Media Bias
strategy #2: Making Catholicism look ancient, and therefore (somehow), bad.

“Chains” - Commercial voiced by Liam Neeson supporting an amendment in Ireland to make abortion legal.

https://youtu.be/j9W33wCm7Ao
Media Bias
strategy #2: Making Catholicism look ancient, and therefore (somehow), bad.

“Chains” - Parody of previous commercial.

https://youtu.be/E74Noy3sBMg
Media Bias
strategy #3: Using the Straw Man fallacy to make it look like Catholics are wrong.

Straw Man Fallacy: Making it look like you are right by misrepresenting what someone else believes.
Media Bias strategy #3: Using the Straw Man fallacy to make it look like Catholics are wrong.

Example of the Straw Man Fallacy being used:

I believe in the Bible.

WHAT?!?!?! You believe everything in the Bible is literally true?? What about SCIENCE, you idiot?!?
Example of the Straw Man Fallacy being used:

I believe abortion is wrong.

How dare you say that all women who have abortions are going to hell and should go to jail for life! You are such a misogynistic, anti-woman hater!
Media Bias
strategy #4: Changing or ignoring the story.

March for Life in Washington, D.C.
Every year on January 22nd (the anniversary of Roe v. Wade which legalized abortion in America)
Media Bias

strategy #4: Changing or ignoring the story.

2010 Story on CNN.com

Roe v. Wade anniversary marked by vigils, demonstrations
January 22, 2010 4:51 p.m. EST

Washington (CNN) -- Abortion rights supporters and opponents hit the streets of the nation's capital Friday to mark the 37th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court ruling establishing a woman's constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy.

Anti-abortion activists held a rally on the National Mall and marched to the Supreme Court, followed by a walk to Capitol Hill to urge legislative action.

An annual March for Life has been held in
Media Bias strategy #4: Changing or ignoring the story.

2010 Newsweek headline

“If you want to control the world, first control language.”

- Roger Scruton

If you control the way people write and speak, you can control thought. If you control thought, you can control belief. If you control belief, you can control action.
Antics with Semantics strategy #1

Use labels and name calling as often as possible. This will begin to convince others that their thoughts are wrong and mean even when their ideas are right.

(Sometimes referred to as an Ad Hominem fallacy)
Antics with Semantics strategy #2

Use a lot of buzzwords and phrases that make people feel either good or bad whenever they hear them. These words can be used (or not used) when trying to lead people’s minds in a certain direction.

- Truth
- Anti
- Pro
- Right
- Freedom

- Choice
- Traditional
- Progress
- Conservative
- Liberal
Antics with Semantics strategy #2

EXAMPLE:

CNN.com

Roe v. Wade anniversary marked by vigils, demonstrations
January 22, 2010 1:51 p.m. EST

Washington (CNN) -- Abortion rights supporters and opponents prepared to hit the streets of the nation's capital Friday to mark the 37th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court ruling establishing a woman's constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy.

Anti-abortion activists planned a rally on the National Mall and march to the Supreme Court, followed by a walk to Capitol Hill to urge legislative action.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

* 37 years ago Roe v. Wade established a woman's right to terminate pregnancy
* Activists on both sides of abortion issue plan rallies and vigils to mark the 37th anniversary of Roe v. Wade.
* March for Life wants law that protects life from "biological beginning"
* Abortion rights supporters led by National Organization for Women plan rally, vigil at Supreme Court.

Organizers of the annual March for Life back legislation saying that the "life of each human being shall be preserved and protected from that human being's biological beginning," according to the organizers' Web site.

Abortion rights supporters, led in part by the National Organization for Women, planned their own rally and vigil on the steps of the Supreme Court.

Terry O'Neill, president of NOW, said in a written statement that her organization, along with others, is "committed to protecting and expanding access to abortion, which is a basic, fundamental human right."
Antics with Semantics strategy #3

Simplify everything by making things an either/or instead of a both/and.

- Faith or Science?
- The Bible was written by humans or God?
- Read the Bible literally or metaphorically?
- Follow the Bible or the Church?
- Focus on Jesus or the saints?
- Jesus is human or divine?
- The Church is human or divine?
- Catholic teaching is liberal or conservative?
Antics with Semantics strategy #4

Make people think those who speak the loudest and proudest are always right.

I’M RIGHT ‘CAUSE I’M LOUDEST!!
THE DOCTOR’S PRESCRIPTION FOR
Media Bias and Antics with Semantics

Take Two Pills
a day
TREATMENT #1

Put on your Jesus goggles and recognize media bias and antics with semantics.

TREATMENT #2

Dig for the truth when necessary.