

Child abuse in various societies

Sociology



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The paper "Child Abuse in Various Societies" is a good example of a sociology essay. There have been several news reports on child abuse in various societies. The type or kind of abuse range from physical, verbal, psychological or emotional, and even sexual abuse. In various states in America, there were reports which revealed that people of authority are the ones who perpetrate abuse against children. It is disturbing enough that the victims were identified to be the unsuspecting and defenseless kids in school or in the local community. It is more unnerving that Catholic priests have been identified as perpetrators of sexual abuse against children in their respective parishes. The current discourse hereby aims to present information from various articles outlining the recent court cases involving Penn State and the Catholic Church in terms of the manner by which these 'agencies' responded to child abuse when they were faced with it. In the article entitled "Hand of God", which is also a documentary film, the story of a boy, named Paul Cultrera was disclosed as he was reported to have been molested by a parish priest of St. James Parish, at Salem, Massachusetts in the 1960s by a certain Father Joseph Birmingham (Hand of God, 2007). The information from the article revealed the manner by which Paul was sexually abused and had opted to keep the traumatic incident a secret for many years. The Catholic Church, through the archdiocese of Boston, allegedly undertook several cover-ups of Father Birmingham's sexual abuse of young boys through moving the priest from one parish to another (Hand of God, 2007). In retrospect, the course of action was reported and evaluated to be more detrimental in the long run since moving the priest contributed to more children being victimized.

Similar incidents were reported in another article entitled, "The Silence",

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where the Catholic Church's priest and lay minister at St. Michael in Alaska, were revealed to have instigated a series of sexual abuse among Native Alaskan children. The name of the priest was revealed as Father George Endal, and the layman who was reported to be training to become a beacon was identified as Joseph Lundowski (The Silence, 2011). In this particular situation, the Catholic Church response was for the bishop of Fairbanks, Donald Ketler, to recommend the identified parish priest and laymen who perpetuated the abuse, to go back to their respective parishes and to "return to all of the villages where the abuse occurred and apologize to the victims in person" (The Silence, 2011, par. 6).

Concurrently, for sexual abuses which had been reported in Penn State, the article entitled "Dr. Drew: Abuse shatters a young brain", disclosed that football coach Joe Paterno and the university's president were charged for sexual abuse. Likewise, the same article also revealed that the assistant football coach, Jerry Sandusky, was also charged with allegations of sexual offenses (Dr. Drew: Abuse shatters a young brain, 2014). Both Paterno and the president were reported to have been outlasted by the Penn State; while no conclusive verdict has yet been disclosed for Sandusky. Those who were interviewed as to their reaction and response on the subject indicated that children who were victims of sexual abuses have tendencies to keep quiet and not to report the matter due to fear or the apprehension that they would not be believed. As such, these children grow to manifest troubled behavior through the apparent social stigma associated with the abuse. It was emphasized that the impact on children of sexual abuse include: "drugs, alcohol, and risky behavior" (Dr. Drew: Abuse shatters a young brain, 2014, par. 11).

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From the reactions of people who were viewed from a news report entitled “Homosexual PDA Turns Heads in Mississippi”, it was evident that there are people who openly oppose and discriminate on homosexual relationships and behavior, especially with regards to a public display of affection (PDA). The report presented several scenarios and instances where gay couples were intentionally placed in a restaurant to exhibit PDA and to solicit diverse views of the clientele. Mostly, women and old people remained conservative in their views and beliefs that homosexuality is not acceptable and an abhorrence to religious values. Some people, especially young and male, have revealed increasing tendencies to accept homosexuality in society. (Homosexual PDA Turns Heads in Mississippi, 2014)

Comparing how the Catholic Church and the Penn State addressed sexual abuse in their respective settings and jurisdiction, it was evident that the Catholic Church instituted more conservative methods of correcting the actions of abusers than immediate ouster for Penn State. The course of action could be evaluated in terms of the alleged lifetime commitment for priests to serve in the Catholic faith. There were no known legal sanctions that would terminate the religious vows of priests and remove them from their respective roles and responsibilities as priests – despite the sexual abuse allegation or charges. From the articles, the priests who were charged with sexual abuse were transferred, moved to other parishes, or made to apologize for their untoward behavior. For Penn State, the sexual abuse charges, when found guilty, has no other course of action except for termination.