Five years after the clergy sexual abuse scandal, the Catholic Church has made significant reforms, state legislatures have passed new laws, and the idea of holding institutions accountable is broadly accepted. But a hero of this story remains unsung: the plaintiff’s lawyer. (Really.)

LEGAL LEGACY

By Timothy D. Lytton

THIS YEAR MARKS the fifth anniversary of The Boston Globe’s Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage of clergy sexual abuse. The Pulitzer citation praised the Globe for its “courageous, comprehensive coverage of sexual abuse by priests, an effort that pierced secrecy, stirred local, national, and international reaction and produced changes in the Roman Catholic Church.” Yet while the news media have received well-deserved recognition for their part in exposing the abuse and focusing attention on the need for institutional reform, little attention has been paid to the underlying role played by lawyers. Although the tort system is more often maligned than celebrated, it was the work of plaintiffs’ lawyers that brought the scandal to light in the first place. Pleadings, discovery documents, and depositions in hundreds of cases during the course of more than two decades have provided most of the information underlying media coverage of the scandal. Lawyers have faced journalists a steady supply of compelling stories of both personal suffering and official inaction and the Making of a Modern Delicacy,” will be published

When Rudy Giuliani took to New Hampshire late last month, his speech at the Palace Theater in Manchester was meant for any but the few dozen of the former New York mayor is about running for president. But when Giuliani walked out on the sidewalk and large snowflakes came down on his bald head, he offered a clear signal that he is beginning to think more like a presidential candidate and less like a big-city mayor. “It makes it feel like winter. It’s beautiful,” Giuliani end of the weather.

Mayer’s story can be made even more compelling by proclaiming its beauty. The latest victim is Denver’s John Hickenlooper, who was the subject of an expose this week in The Denver Post. The storm closed city the week before Christmas. The storm closed city the week before Christmas. The storm closed city the week before Christmas. The storm closed city the week before Christmas.

The theory is simple. If a commercial message is “ambient” — meaning, in the industry jargon, that it’s expressed through an unsolicited, unobtrusive place, or a tort system struck an overpass — it’s more likely to reach the mind of a potential victim in ways that allow for perception and warning protests. In this way, the Cartoon Network is not alone, it’s actually just one of many thousands of marketing blitzes shaping up new ways to get around our perceptual defenses, whether the message is painted on an airplane or spread out to us from an airplane tray table.

Anti-stuttering advertising from Hugh Unlimited and签名 for Fast Company and the Huffington Post.

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TERROR NETWORK

For today’s marketers, desperate times call for desperate measures

By Adam Hanft

LAST WEEK, THERE was a successful terrorist attack in Boston. The perpetrators were Turner Broadcasting and the Cartoon Network, and they succeeded in hijacking something that every American holds dear: our attention. For a moment, Boston and Baghdad and Mary Cheney’s pregnancy were shoved aside by a hail of billboards and annoying jingles imploring us to eat our airplane tray tables.

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It was lawsuits that first publicly pointed a finger at church officials and focused attention on the need for institutional reform. But whereas tobacco and gun litigation have focused on the marketing and sales practices of businesses, clergy sexual abuse litigation has helped publicize the institutional failures that facilitated decades of child sexual abuse.

By contrast, clergy sexual abuse litigation has brought powerful public pressure to policy making, drawing attention to the role of church officials and placing the issue on the agenda of church and government policy makers. Tort reform advocates—pointing to what they see as unbridled assaults on basic freedom and society—argue that tort litigation is an ineffective and unnecessary crutch for public policy making. The story of how lawyers brought clergy sexual abuse to the public’s attention and promulgated the Catholic Church to change its ways suggests otherwise.

P rior to the filing of a 1984 lawsuit against the Diocese ofarseille in France, all reports about clergy sexual abuse were kept in the closet. But the story of how lawyers brought clergy sexual abuse to the public’s attention and promulgated the Catholic Church to change its ways suggests otherwise.

Critical Faculties | Christopher Shepa