

Ad for Greeley novel raises furor among editors

At least 11 papers turn down request

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Several diocesan newspaper editors defended their refusal to accept ads for Father Andrew Greeley's new novel as routine decisions based on established policies for reviewing potential advertising.

And one diocesan editor who agreed to accept the ad said she was "feeling a bit used" after the public relations agency promoting the book began capitalizing on the rejections.

An advertisement for Father Greeley's latest novel, *Fall From Grace*, published by Putnam, was turned down by at least 11 Catholic newspapers, while five other publications, three of them national, accepted it.

On March 22, two days before the publication date of *Fall From Grace*, Rosner & Liss Public Relations of Chicago issued a press release saying Catholic papers had "banned" ads for the book. It quoted Father Greeley as accusing the papers of censorship and trying to hide a church problem.

"I am dismayed that 30 years after the (Second) Vatican Council, Catholic editors are still afraid to trust the Catholic laity to make their own decisions about reading," the press release quoted Father Greeley as saying. "They permit the most extreme Catholic conservatives to, in effect, censor the advertisements."

An editorial written for the March 26 issue of Boston's archdiocesan paper, *The Pilot*, by the editor in chief, Father Peter Conley, said Father Greeley and his public relations agency looked for controversy in their ad requests.

"Nothing succeeds like an alleged persecution; the artist unappreciated, the prophet unrecognized; the liberating insights that become 'banned in

Boston.' This ploy always works!" wrote Father Conley.

The novel is described in the ad as "a candid story of two poignant problems plaguing contemporary society — the battering of women and the abuse of children by priests."

"It was the reference to sexual abuse of children that offended" the Catholic editors rejecting the ad, Father Greeley was quoted as saying. "Censorship is bad enough. Even worse is to pretend to their readers that the problem of sexual abuse of children by priests does not exist."

Several attempts by Catholic News Service to contact Father Greeley for

comment were unsuccessful.

The ad was rejected by papers in the archdioceses of Boston, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Miami, and St. Louis and the dioceses of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Joliet, Ill., as well as by *Our Sunday Visitor*, a national weekly. It was accepted by diocesan papers in Milwaukee and Oakland, Calif., by *America* and U.S. Catholic magazines and by *National Catholic Reporter* newspaper.

Rosner & Liss reported that Patricia Morrison, editor of the *New Catholic Explorer* in Joliet, had accepted the ad, but she told CNS March 26 that she had only inquired about the adver-

tisement and agreed to consider it once she saw a copy of the book.

"I never called to say we weren't taking it but I never said for sure we were either," Morrison said.

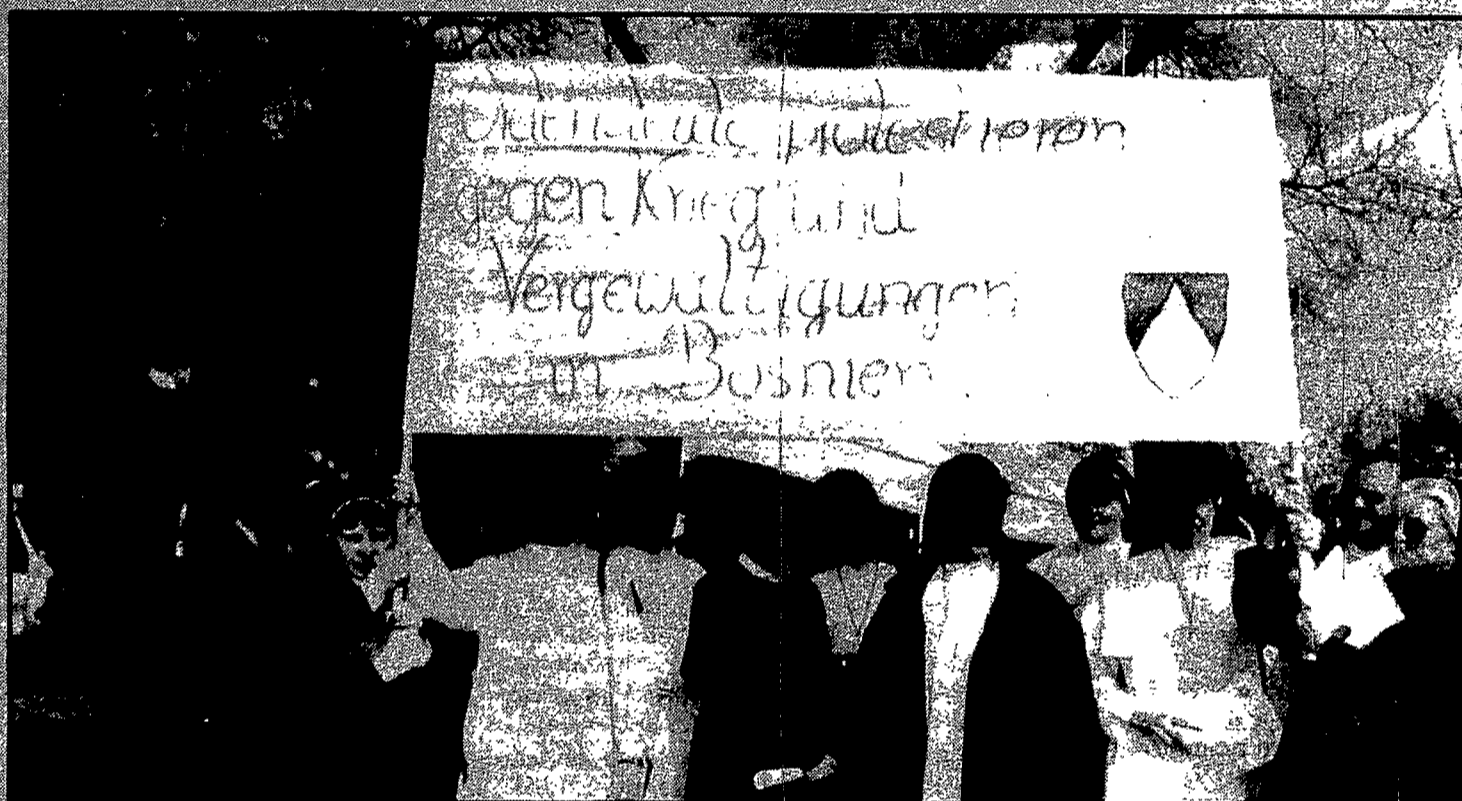
Editors of Catholic papers who rejected the ad bristled at the suggestion that Father Greeley's book was singled out for hostile treatment.

Jesuit Father Tom Widner, editor of *New World*, the Chicago archdiocese's paper, said he weighed the book ad against his paper's advertising guidelines before rejecting it.

The policy says advertising should be rejected if the subject matter is

Continued on page 7

Religious decry war, rape in Bosnia



In Bonn's government quarter March 23, about 100 nuns and monks protest against the systematic rape of women and girls during the war in the former Yugoslavia. The monument (at left) is of Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of West Germany. The poster reads 'religious protest against the war and rape in Bosnia.'

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The Woman I Love - Bishop Sheen \$3

BOOKS
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