

About that Bible-and-Playboy photo illustration

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This [post](#) by GetReligion editor Terry Mattingly is a classic specimen of the genre: some great media criticism, with sprinkled asides of conservative boilerplate. Before detailing his mixed reaction to Ashley Fantz's [article](#) on evangelicals and pornography, Mattingly offers this take on the article's [controversial photo illustration](#), in which a man hides a copy of *Playboy* in his Bible:

That staged illustration didn't freak me out, truth be told, although I must admit that I share many readers' doubts that CNN would have run the same photo with a Playboy inside a Koran.

Of course they wouldn't, but it's not the same thing. There's a difference between offending the majority and offending the minority--power differentials matter. More importantly, Muslim reverence for the physical artifact of the Qur'an is of a whole different order than Christian reverence for the Bible. Replace CNN's Bible image with a Qur'an and the implications are significantly changed--just like the [Danish cartoon controversy](#) was a much bigger thing than the (unintentionally?) ironic [Jesus-With You Always](#) drawings.

Of course, some Christians revere the physical Bible more or differently than others. I found that the [CNN image](#) made me slightly uncomfortable, but I can't articulate any real problem with it--and it certainly illustrates the story effectively. What do you think?