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March 26, 2007

Roger Lawler
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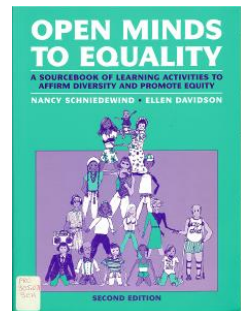
C.c.: Trustees (Wayne Buchholtz, Marion Thomson Howell, Denise Blum, Manuel da Silva, Louise Ervin, Joseph Gowing, Fr. Robert Héту, Judy Nairn, Greg Reitzel), Bishop Anthony Tonnos, Auxiliary Bishop Mathew Ustrycki, Auxiliary Bishop Gerard Bergie

Subject: Book with Gay-Agenda found in School

Dear Mr. Lawler,

This letter is to bring a serious matter to your attention. A Catholic teacher at a local Catholic elementary school turned in a book to us which appeared to be inappropriate for the Catholic school system. This person wishes to remain anonymous.

In 2006, the teacher discovered a book kit in the Teacher Resource section of the school library titled “*Open Minds to Equality: A Sourcebook of Learning Activities to Affirm Diversity and Promote Equity*” (henceforth, ‘Open Minds’).



We have enclosed a petition signed by parents who have children in the Catholic school system. They too feel this book is inappropriate and want to it to be removed.

We have studied the book. Although some of the content is unquestionably sound, there are serious problems with much of it. We believe this book will have the effect of undermining Catholic moral teaching on the issue of homosexuality. See the excerpt below from *Open Minds*.

Pg.16 paragraph 4
‘Open Minds to
Equality’



The het-
erosexism in our society fosters homophobia, the fear
and hatred of homosexuality which is grounded in
prejudice and stereotyping.

The above statement invents a straw man known as ‘heterosexism’ in order to legitimize the idea that those who disagree with the normalization of homosexuality, harbour



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‘homophobia’. The terms ‘homophobia’ and ‘heterosexism’ are part of a socio-political movement which seeks to normalize homosexuality and at the same time, to stigmatize all individuals who oppose homosexual acts (including by association, the Catholic Church) as having a phobia which manifests itself as irrational “fear and hatred” of homosexuals.

Nowhere in the book is the Christian understanding of homosexuality given. Nowhere in the book is a distinction made between homosexual acts and homosexual inclinations, something which the Catholic church has always maintained in it’s approach to this issue.

Section 2357
Catechism Catholic
Church



Chastity and homosexuality

2357

Basing itself on Sacred

Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity,¹⁴⁰ tradition has always declared that “homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.”¹⁴¹ They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no 2333 circumstances can they be approved.

Clearly, the church’s opposition to homosexual acts and to the promotion of homosexual practice as an acceptable lifestyle is not “grounded in prejudice and stereotyping” as the authors attempt to imprint upon educators and school children. Nor is it grounded in “fear and hatred”. The Catholic church’s opposition has to do with the recognition of natural law, sexual complementary and the divine revelation passed on to us in the Word of God and sacred Tradition. The church also teaches that while the act cannot be approved under any circumstances, we are to show compassion to homosexual persons. For the remainder of this letter, we will use the word “homosexuality” to refer to homosexual activity.

The effect of this book is to indoctrinate teachers and children to accept and celebrate homosexuality under the guise of “diversity” and “equality”. Although it covers topics such as discrimination against blacks, native Indians, disabled persons, etc., it serves the primary goal of gay-lobby groups, which is to normalize and celebrate homosexuality. The authors even gives guidance on how to disguise the homosexual agenda amongst other topics (pg. 113, see excerpt below):

Discussing Heterosexism with Students

Be sensitive to the values of your community. It is usually wise to discuss heterosexism as one form of discrimination among many and to put it under an umbrella of diversities that are important to educate students about. It is often advisable to focus on issues



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Open Minds contains a lot of material that promotes homosexuality. The following are just a few examples of pro-homosexual activities and lessons for children contained in the book. All of them attempt to normalize homosexuality in the mind of teacher and student:

Example 1
(pg. 152)

Teachers are supposed to tape record this script and then get children to role play.

Script: Grandfather's Tape

GRANDFATHER'S TAPE: PART ONE

I've been so sad ever since we've had to talk by tape. I've also been thinking a lot about my life and our lives since your parents got divorced and I haven't been allowed to see you.

You'll remember that when you were six I explained to you that I was gay. I told you that your grandmother and I were married and we had a daughter, your mother. I realized, however, that though I liked your grandmother and other women very much, I felt more attracted to men. Your grandmother and I decided it was best to get a divorce, hard as that was.

A couple of years later I fell in love with Peter. He was a teacher too. The hardest thing about our lives was being "in the closet." This meant that we had to hide the fact that we were gay. Otherwise it would have been possible to lose our jobs. We wouldn't be accepted in our church. Peter and I didn't live together for fear of being "discovered." We were afraid of losing the acceptance of some friends. As you can imagine, this was a very hard way to live.

Omar, you have always been wonderful! We had such good times playing ball, going to the park, and just talking. You accepted Peter as another grandfather. Thanks, Omar, for being a special grandson. Love, Grandfather.

The suggestion that divorce is an acceptable option is reason alone to question this book's suitability for use in Catholic education, much less the fact that it normalizes homosexuality.



Example 2
(pg. 90 &
98)

A
discussion
worksheet
for groups
of 4
students.

"Family Structures"

Since this chapter aims to help students empathize with feelings of those hurt because of difference, and not to name and analyze the differences themselves, we discuss family structures here. In "Laura's Situation" it is possible, but not explicit, that Laura's mother and the woman she lives with are lesbians. If your students raise issues about gay or lesbian families, you may choose to explain that you will teach about stereotypes and discrimination toward lesbian and gay people soon and defer extended discussion until then. If, however, students exhibit significant misinformation, bias, or interest, suggesting that this topic should be addressed now, or if you feel ready to address it now, go to Chapter 6 and see lesson "Females/Males: The Way We're Supposed to Be" p. 111.

Laura's Situation

Laura invited six girls from her Girl Scout Troop who are working together on an activity to her house on Saturday to finish the project. Only two are coming. Laura overheard some of the other girls say that their parents wouldn't let them go because Laura's mother lives with another woman.

Brainstorm 5 or 6 feeling words to describe how Laura might have felt and why.

What kind of difference was used to exclude Laura?

As a Friend

You are a friend of Laura's and have been to her house many times. You know that her mother and the woman she lives with are kind, responsible women. They're lots of fun to be with. Your parents have often said that Laura has a terrific mom. What could you do now?

The exercise will expose Catholic children only to a positive portrayal of lesbianism. Homosexuality here is portrayed only in positive terms: "kind", "responsible", "fun" which is an obvious propaganda ploy to normalize the lifestyle. It even suggests that homosexuals raising children are a normal "family structure", which clearly violates Christian teaching based on natural law and Scripture.

If one were to argue that exposing Catholic children to the existence of homosexual households is necessary, shouldn't Catholic teaching on homosexual practice and sexual morality be the engine for that lesson? You would agree, we hope, that sections 2357, 2358 and 2359 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church are absolutely vital for a proper moral and pastoral understanding of the homosexual issue. In fact, these sections should **always** form the framework of any Catholic discussion on homosexuality. Yet this book contains no such framework.



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Example 3
(pg. 17)

A subtle suggestion to teachers on starting homosexual education as early as kindergarten.

Children's Voices

It would be easier for me to be open about my lesbian moms if teachers would talk to kids about lesbian and gay parents, and they would tell them that they weren't bad.

Child, age 8

Part of the reason some of the kids felt uncomfortable is that we weren't talking about it until third grade. And I think that kindergarten, first grade isn't too young.

Child, age 10

from the video "Both of My Moms' Names Are Judy"

There can be no doubt that one of the effects of *Open Minds* is to promote the acceptance of homosexuality in schools. It's also clear by the writing and constant references to United States public school systems, that the authors write of an American experience and that it is a decidedly secular book. We are concerned how an American, secular book, that promotes homosexuality found its way into our Catholic school as a teacher resource.

The clever subtlety with which *Open Minds* is written, presents a **grave danger to those** who may not be mature in their Catholic faith. The book begins with broad concepts with which everyone agrees: equality, justice, non-discrimination. Then it builds on the reader's acceptance of these ideas by naming legitimate racial/ethnic groups who have suffered discrimination (blacks, Jews, etc). Finally, it hooks the immature Catholic reader by mixing homosexuals and children of homosexuals into the list of racial/ethnic groups who suffer "institutional discrimination". By this point the reader has been deceived into thinking "*well, homosexuality must be the same kind of thing as race, something inborn*" and "*well, I'm against racism, I'm against anti-Semitism so I guess it's ok to think of opposition to homosexuality in the same way – it's discrimination*". Over this gradual progression of thought, the reader has unwittingly come to reject their own religious belief. Ironically, if this deceives a teacher, they might someday perpetuate discrimination against Catholics. How? Having been utterly convinced that opposition to homosexuality **is** discrimination, they will join in the cycle of labeling those they encounter who hold to traditional beliefs about homosexuality as "homophobes". They'll join in the vicious cycle of marginalizing and silencing authentic Catholic voices, even within the Catholic school system.



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We believe it's important not only to remove this and any similar books currently in our school system, but also to understand how such a resource could have been placed in a Catholic school.

We respectfully request a written response to the following questions and then a meeting in person to discuss the issue:

1. Will you remove this book/kit from all Waterloo Region Catholic schools? By what date?
2. Are there other homosexual propaganda books in the schools? An illustrated children's book which depicted homosexuals raising children was also found.
3. How did this book enter our Waterloo Region Catholic elementary school(s) as a teacher resource?
4. What safeguards are in place currently to screen pro-homosexual books or other material which opposes Catholic teaching?
5. What new safeguards will you develop to ensure that all books & resources in Waterloo Region schools adhere to Catholic teaching and are faithful to the Magisterium of the Church?

Please note that we are not blaming anyone. We are simply representing the concerns of a faithful Catholic teacher and now, of Catholic parents with whom we've shared this information. On their behalf, we wish to ensure that only legitimate Catholic teaching reaches their Catholic children. We look forward to a spirit of cooperation with the School Board.

We would appreciate a response in writing as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Jack Fonseca
Communications Director
Defend Traditional Marriage & Family™

Enc.: petition signed by just a few of the concerned Catholic parents who believe this book is inappropriate and request its removal.

