

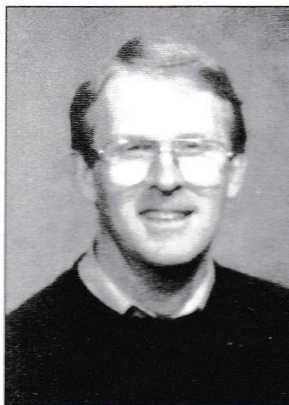
Against The Current: The Cost Of Speaking Out For Orientation Change

By Chris Kempling, Psy.D., R.C.C.

It has become increasingly difficult to speak publicly about orientation change or make any valid criticism of homosexual behavior in Canada. Homosexual activists have been quite successful in pressing their agenda to normalize their lifestyle and have worked vigorously to silence opponents.

Several religious leaders have been targeted recently, including the outspoken Roman Catholic Bishop of Calgary, Alberta, Bishop Fred Henry. He has been called before the Alberta Human Rights Tribunal for a pastoral letter that was read from the pulpits in his diocese. The letter basically outlined the Catholic church's teaching on sexually immoral behavior, but it was released to the media by an unauthorized person. Bishop Henry has also been threatened by the Canadian tax department to refrain from speaking out on marriage or risk losing the charitable status of his church.

There are other examples as well. The largest school district in the province of British Columbia in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey was sued by one of its own employees, a homosexual kindergarten teacher, so that he could use books promoting same-sex families in his classroom. The Supreme Court of Canada eventually ruled that the school district's decision to forbid use of the books was influenced by the religious beliefs of some trustees and parents, and ordered the school board to reevaluate the books without any religious criteria. The gay kindergarten teacher was



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furiously when the school board rejected the books again because two were out of print and the third had a grammatical error in it. But two lesbian women are now suing the school board again, because the board had allowed religious parents from Christian, Sikh and Hindu religions to explain their concerns about the books in a public meeting, and the lesbians didn't like their statements. That case will be before the BC Human Rights Tribunal in August, 2005.

Another homosexual teacher has a lawsuit before the BC Human Rights Tribunal. He is trying to force the British Columbia Ministry of Education to change the entire British Columbia school curriculum for all grades and subject areas to include "queer studies" and "queer role models." If he is successful, even students in religious schools may be affected, as all private religious schools which accept government funding must prove that they are using the BC Curriculum.

The Persecution Continues

Then there's my case. On May 9, 2002, I was convicted of conduct unbecoming a member of the BC College of Teachers. The reason was because I expressed my opinion in my local newspaper. Between April 1997 and July, 2000, I wrote one freelance column and six letters to the editor of my town's newspaper, which questioned the wisdom of promoting the

homosexual agenda. I provided factual information on rates of promiscuity and disease infection, which had been previously published in scholarly journals. I said that many religions consider homosexuality to be immoral, that it may be caused by negative psycho-social influences, and that it was nothing to be applauded. I said that I would refuse to be a false teacher, compromising my faith to teach information which the Bible clearly says is immoral. I said this not in my classroom, or my staff room, but on the editorial pages of my local newspaper. I had thought that the editorial page was a place where all Canadians have the right to express their points of view, whether other people like them or not.

Free Speech Must Be Defended

I highly value the freedom of the press, and all points of view should be represented in our newspapers, including those opposed to ours. But, as a man by the name of Heyward Broun once said, "Everyone favors free speech in the slack moments when no axes are being ground." And how true that is.

I appealed the conviction to the BC Supreme Court, but lost my appeal in February of last year. If this verdict is upheld by the courts, teachers will not be able to write privately to their own supervisors to question a new curriculum resource, or write privately their own elected officials on a matter of public policy, nor will they be able to address the topic of homosexuality in post-graduate research papers. I was disciplined for doing all of these things. This is an unacceptable restriction of freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and freedom of intellectual expression.

The College presented no complaints about what I had written publicly from teachers, none from students, none from parents, and most importantly, none from any member of the gay community. The people who did disagree with me did so by writing their own letters to the editor, and I fully support their right to do that.

The Catholic Civil Rights League, the Christian Legal Fellowship, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, and the Christian Teachers Association have banded together to form the Canadian Religion Freedom Alliance to assist in my defense. My union, the BC Teachers' Federation, is also supporting me. The case was heard on April 21-22, 2005 and the decision has been reserved at the time of this writing. Joining the College of Teachers in opposing me was the BC Civil Liberties Association, which believes I should be suspended indefinitely unless I publicly recant, and the BC Public School Employers Association.

Efforts To Silence Me Continue

My school district supervisors have also decided to silence me. They have disciplined me repeatedly for speaking out, including for advertising my intention to offer orientation change therapy services through my private practice. On March 31, 2005, I was required to appear before a formal hearing of the Quesnel School Board to explain why I publicly criticized the government's same-sex marriage legislation as a spokesperson for my political party. They suspended me without pay for three months, even though not one homosexual person has complained about what I wrote. The school board ignored its own contract requirement forbidding discrimination against employees for political affiliation or political activity. I've filed a Human Rights complaint against the school district for religious and political discrimination.

The Chairman of NARTH's Scientific Advisory Committee, Dr. A. Dean Byrd, is currently considering acting as an expert witness on my behalf in the tribunal hearing to be held on October 25, 2005 in Quesnel.

People have been quite interested in my case. On March 4, 2005, I addressed the UN Commission on Human Rights in New York City. On June 6, 2005, I was invited to Ottawa to speak to the House of Commons Committee investigating the impact of the government's same-sex marriage legislation. The committee is dominated by those in favor of the legislation, however, and the government wishes to see a country-wide same-sex marriage bill by the early summer. [Ed. Note: The bill subsequently passed.] But 35 of the government's own members are opposed to the bill.

There is a great deal of uncertainty and divisiveness over this issue in Canada. Frankly, it has been a long nine year struggle for me, speaking out against the homosexual agenda. But I continue to do so because I care deeply about the well-being of children, and wish to ensure that they receive accurate information about orientation, and orientation change. Furthermore, it is very distressing to be disciplined merely for advertising the services of my private practice and speaking out on behalf of my political party. Currently, I am working temporarily as a dump truck driver to stay financially solvent. Those who wish to contribute to my trust fund may do so as follows: Christian Public School Teachers Legal Defense Fund, c/o Mr. Jim Sagert, Trustee, 798 Beaubien Avenue, Quesnel, BC Canada, V2J 1S5.

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