



Video Review:

It's Elementary--Gay and Lesbian Issues in the Classroom

Reviewer: Karen Jo Gounaud
President, Family Friendly Libraries
(703) 440-3654

It's Elementary, It's Slick...It's Alarming

There's a sophisticated new arrow in the gay activists' quiver: a polished, well-produced video called *It's Elementary*. This film is high-quality and very effective-- a direct testimony to the talent, determination, and funding of gay activism.

It's Elementary is a clarion call for those of us with opposing opinions to come forth with our own masterpieces of salesmanship. But if this film is any indication of the status of the culture clashes, traditionalists are way behind.

Produced by Academy Award winner Debra Shasnoff, along with Helen Cohn and the Women's Educational Media in San Francisco, *It's Elementary* visits six American primary and middle schools from New York City to San Francisco.

The main vehicles advancing the film's agenda are the brilliantly framed discussions with children and teenagers. The producers effectively record (and carefully edit) the participation of students in activities addressing lesbian and gay issues from a positive and pro-active perspective.

Even the simple music by Jon Herbst succeeds in underscoring the message of the film: the importance of expanding the "gay is OK" message into the school environment. The music then becomes subtly sinister when the film portrays news accounts of "gay-bashing," or when it spotlights "anti-gay" politicians and others who do not accept the concept that homosexuality is normal.

One of the most effective scenes revealed, in an elementary classroom, that the beloved music of the film *The Lion King* was the work of a gay musician. The overwhelmingly positive reaction of the children was powerfully reflected in their faces.

The children were also encouraged to join in praise of a young essay winner who wrote proudly of her two lesbian "moms." (One might wonder who had actually written this mature sounding essay--the young child, or her mother.) One school housed a gay and lesbian family photo display. And some of the most articulate teachers in the film

were openly gay, speaking directly and convincingly to the children about their belief in the legitimacy of a gay lifestyle.

"Indoctrination" is not too strong a word to describe what was really going on with those classroom activities. Criticism of homosexuality was invariably equated with racism and ethnic bigotry.

What was *missing* from the class discussions and the film's other presentations was equally revealing. There was never any mention of the scientifically proven promiscuity and disease crisis in gay male life, or the relationship between disease and anatomical unsuitability.

Missing also were the explicit sex lessons which are so often targeted toward children as AIDS education, on other occasions where public relations is not the issue.

Of course the existence of another school of thought--the reparative-therapy approach aiming toward reversal of the condition--was excluded from this work. No mention was

made of the many counseling programs that offer compassionate help for all hurting, sexually confused people.

And there was no acknowledgment of the fact that reasonable people who reject the gay agenda *also reject* "gay bashing," as well as the rock-throwing mentality it represents.

It's Elementary is alarming because the reactions of people in the video--adults, youth, and especially the children--indicate that the foundation for acceptance of homosexuality as a legitimate, healthy alternative to heterosexuality has already been successfully laid down in our country. In fact, within an unknown but growing number of American schools and classrooms, both public and private, affirmation of a sexually deviant minority has been advanced to a *much greater degree* than most citizens realize.

After I shared this film with the parents of a gay young adult, the couple labeled this a "bait and switch" vehicle. *It's Elementary*, they observed, seemed to be asking for respect for homosexual people; in reality, it was preaching respect for the homosexual *condition*. They believed the producers were using a subtle process of effectively and deceptively re-educating children, especially young children, incrementally to the point of accepting behavior that would ordinarily be seen as outside the norm.

The observant parents recognized that the authority figures in the film were clearly leading the young students to the assumption that being gay *can't be bad* because of the good things gay people have done.

This "sanitized presentation" of homosexuality, as the reviewing parents described it, obviously was intended to make it hard for the kids watching the film to discern facts from propaganda. They cited one boy's statement, describing the effect this lesson on homosexuality had had on him:

"The foundation for acceptance of homosexuality as a healthy alternative to heterosexuality has already been successfully laid down"

"It's kind of like vegetables: you don't know [you'll like homosexuality] until you try."

"What's the big whoop?" asked another child flippantly in response to tales of some parental concerns. Some children were even outspokenly critical of their own parents' negative attitudes about homosexuality.

This is not surprising when you consider: Today more than ever, homosexual activists--with perhaps only a 1-3% presence in society--are successfully "dumbing down" our ability to make accurate moral and socio-psychological discernments through their growing influence in government, business, the media, and even religion. An important part of that agenda has included the redefinition of several con-

cepts: our understanding of what constitutes religious bigotry, family values, human rights, and even our basic conceptions of right and wrong.

Decades of subtle and not-so-subtle propaganda materials such as this video--and organized political efforts like the one that culminated in this film's distribution--have been stunningly effective.

We must protect children from educational materials that contradict historic truths about family. The survival of the family needs all the armor of truth we can supply. *That truth is elementary*, and it is imperative. There's no time to waste. Let's get together and *get it done*.



[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]

[Faint, illegible text, likely redacted]