



# OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## Catholic reader ashamed of school trustees

Dear Editor:

This year, as a Catholic parent of a child attending St. Peter's school, I had the honour of working on two committees that were very popular with our children. Please note the "Lunch time Activity Club" and the "Crafts-n-Laugh Committee" were both coordinated by non-Catholic parents of children at our school.

On Tuesday, May 21 I attended a Halton Roman Catholic School Board meeting and watched helplessly as the rights of these parents were stripped away. I watched the tears form in the eyes of a non-Catholic friend as she was told, in essence, 'you can bake cookies for us but we will not give the right to vote on issues regarding usage of our schools, programs, curriculum, school budget priorities, school code of student behaviour, selection of principals, methods of reporting to parents and the community, and review of board policies at the local level.'

At this meeting seven of 12 trustees voted for a policy requiring parents who sit on school councils to be Catholic.

I also listened as Trustee Rev. R. Cote spoke eloquently in defense of these parents and their rights, which helped to put my faith back in the Roman Catholic church. "Our faith teaches us to share with and accept all people, and that both partners in a marriage are created equal", said Rev. Cote.

As a concerned parent, I do not understand these dinosaurs we call trustees, nor do I accept their hard-line approach. It reminds me of the story of the Second World War Japanese soldier in the jungle, who many years later did not know the war was over!

I would like my non-Catholic friends to know I feel only shame for the trustees who did not support them. These trustees did not speak for me!

Elizabeth Wilson  
Milton, Ontario

## Hyde doth protest too much over book

Dear Editor:

Since last week, I've been racking my brain as to how I ever managed a successful career in journalism, served as a director of various community organizations and raised two children without the wisdom of Milton District High School student Andrew Hyde.

In his column of May 17, "Lead Foxfire and survived", Hyde intimates that he's "enlightened", while parents who stand against Foxfire are "uninformed, self appointed protectors, censor-happy guardians, naive critics...". Why all the names Andrew? Sounds an awful lot like adolescent rage to me.

Hyde claims that we have to look past the never-ending cursing, cursing and obscenities, the racial and religious slurs, the attack against mothers and grandmothers and God, the scenes of Satanism and slaughtered kittens, botched abortions and sexual violence in order to "identify the underlying themes, the enlightened views" of Foxfire and it's author, Joyce Carol Oates. Okay Andrew. Let's.

At 17 — struggling to grasp the possibilities of life, failing at so much that had once seemed conceivable and Foxfire is there, drawing their anguish, raising their rage. At 17 — powerless, washed in isolation and Foxfire is there, speaking their language, acting out scenes from their lives, offering them the power of belonging to a new wave of gang violence that is sweeping the land. At 17 — sensitive, impressionable, looking for truth and Foxfire is there, muttering profanities, practising vulgarities and shedding darkness on life and every moral issue of our time.

At 17 — hormones raging, energy pulling and pushing them in a thousand different directions and Foxfire is there, weaving words into magic, running subliminal suggestions together so that they can never quite fathom what is really being said.

And what is really being said is the same thing that is being said everywhere: Turn against your God. He is dead. Turn against your country. It is corrupt. Turn against your parents. They are stupid. Turn against the opposite sex. They are your enemies. Turn against each other. You can trust no one. Except of course, the Halton Board of Education, who knows what's best for you. What a desolate and heartbreaking message to be giving our youth.

But what's even more heartbreaking is that this message is producing a whole generation of Andrew Hyde types; socially stunted, emotionally ravaged and spiritually insensitive young people who can't differentiate between 'enlightenment' and Paul Bernardo.

Gloria Lawrenson  
Oakville

## RC board took a big step backward

Dear Editor:

On Tuesday May 21 the Halton Roman Catholic School Board voted to adopt a policy that will deprive me of a right accorded other parents in my children's school. That right is to sit, as a volunteer, on the school council and have a vote in matters relating to policy, staff selection and curriculum.

The reason? I am not Roman Catholic. This policy affects all non-catholic par-

ents in inter-faith marriages whose children attend Roman Catholic schools, even though they are separate school supporters and designate their tax dollars to this board. As a regular volunteer at St. Peter's School I have contributed numerous hours towards the success of various programs. By implementing this discriminatory policy, the Halton Roman Catholic School Board has sent me a message that says loud and clear 'as a non-Catholic parent you are not welcome in our schools'.

In an effort to get the board to reconsider their position on this disgraceful policy, I

urge all non-Catholic parents who perform volunteer work in the Halton Roman Catholic school system to reconsider whether they want to work for free for a board that has stripped them, because of their religion, of any decision-making positions on school councils.

The seven trustees who voted for this policy should be ashamed of themselves for taking the largest step backwards I have even seen in parental rights in Canada.

Alison Filteau  
Milton

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