

# Constitutional rights must be protected

**BRUCE KOROL**  
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

With an anticlimactic flourish last Friday, the Alberta Human Rights Commission delivered another blow to freedom of expression in this country by concluding that Stephen Boissoin faces penalties for having exposed gays to contempt and hatred.

This ruling stems from a letter written by Boissoin to the Red Deer Advocate in 2002 that took aim at homosexuality and gay activism. Boissoin claimed that gay activists were "spreading a psychological disease" and that homosexuals are "just as immoral as the pedophiles, drug dealers and pimps that plague our communities."

Darren Lund, who recently attacked the Operation Christmas Child project of Samaritan's Purse in the pages of the Calgary Herald, filed the human rights complaint against Boissoin, seeking financial compensation and a public apology that would reflect an understanding from Boissoin that his views were "inappropriate."

After his victory, Lund jubilantly said that "you can't hide behind saying something is my opinion or my belief and that somehow allows hate speech."

However, not even the litigation-happy EGALE (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) supported Lund's complaint, stating in 2005 that "It is far better that Boissoin expose his views than have them pushed underground. . . . Under the glaring light of public scrutiny, his ideas will most likely wither and die."

Hear, hear. We should be allowing all "hate speech," not limiting it by kowtowing to the whims of someone's agenda or hurt feelings before a kangaroo court that is all too eager to make an example out of some politically incorrect soul.

Unfortunately, the government of Alberta intervened in this case against freedom of expression.

Not content to let their

Human Rights Commission carry out its prosecution, the government proactively sought to make an example out of Boissoin. The government parroted the line that the province has the right to limit all forms of "discriminatory" expression and that freedom of expression is subject to a limitation.

Our tax dollars paid to advance the argument that Boissoin crossed that arbitrary line by "creating an atmosphere that is conducive to discrimination" and "encouraging discrimination in employment tenancy and in goods and services."

The natural consequence of making forms of speech illegal is that those who put forth different or unpopular political or religious opinions will be subject to prosecution. Court cases across Canada make it clear that Christian opposition to homosexual sex is one of the surest ways of getting crucified.

In 2002, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission ordered the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Hugh Owens to each pay \$1,500 to three gay activists because of the publication of an advertisement that quoted Bible verses on homosexuality. Four years later, this was overturned by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal after the court ruled that the message, though offensive, didn't reach the level of inciting hatred.

In 1999, Toronto print-shop owner Scott Brockie was ordered to pay a gay activist group \$5,000 for refusing to print their letterhead. The human rights commission also made him print the material and apologize. Brockie subsequently lost in the Ontario Court of Appeal.

In British Columbia, Chris Kemping, a teacher at a high

school, was guilty of "conduct unbecoming as a member" by the British Columbia College of Teachers for a series of editorials he wrote to a local newspaper defending traditional marriage while condemning the homosexual lifestyle.

The British Columbia Court of Appeal upheld the disciplinary action of the College in suspending the teacher for having participated in public debate.

Bishop Fred Henry was on the receiving end of a human rights complaint in 2005 for articulating his Church's teachings on same-sex marriage.

Lesson: Dare speak out, and the speech police will come after you.

It's important to let all people — even hatemongers — air their thoughts. If you disagree, then write a letter in response, as the intervening Canadian Civil Liberties Association argued in this case. Wouldn't you want to know precisely the full extent of someone's thoughts, like those of Boissoin?

Banning "hate speech" forces all people to retreat behind societally acceptable views of moderation, killing vigorous discussion and healthy debate.

Furthermore, this charade has dragged on for years, wasting the time and money of Boissoin and all Alberta taxpayers.

And pending almost certain appeal, this case could be dragged on for quite a while longer.

Had this been ignored, Boissoin's obscure letter would have been long forgotten instead of getting endlessly circulated on the internet.

This isn't about defending the content of Boissoin's letter. This is about defending Boissoin and all Canadians from the purveyors of political correctness and those who are vehemently opposed to free and open discourse.

BRUCE KOROL IS A STUDENT-AT-LAW WITH THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION FOUNDATION. E-MAIL: BKOROL@CANADIANCONSTITUTIONFOUNDATION.CA

word alderman  
an attack of the v  
those smart, cap  
In fact, gimme a  
those salts becau  
write the word  
eral more time  
umn is done.

Hang on a sec  
a deep breath  
lapse across my  
full Victorian fai  
There, that's bet  
think Helen Red  
sung "I am Wo"  
ing attention to  
three letters in  
"man"?

Sisters, how h  
long with Helen  
grating us in ou  
them?

Yes, I admit to  
that the CCC an  
like Ald. Dale H  
were you thinki  
the battle, but I'  
amused at the h  
concept of solid  
hood.

When alderm  
Diane Colley-U  
Linda Fox-Mell  
against changin  
"councillor," th  
them, in spite of  
have the prerog  
ter membership  
hood — two X  
Here's how it  
hood is all abou  
women to have  
of course, you e  
right to choice l  
disagree with t  
Then, you get a  
you by the sam  
until then advo  
have a choice.

Listen to CCC  
Betty Donaldsc  
those X-chrom  
men: "They are  
past and they a  
they are outdat  
alderpeople ha  
ated and unma  
puppets of the  
They'd probabl  
nicated, too, if t  
could figure ou  
them of their X  
Cheer up, all  
Carry Nations  
Plenty of other  
Plenty of other  
loons remain t  
Why don't you  
about the worc  
two-thirds mac  
Better get righ  
now that your  
sue has had a v  
pail of cold wa

When alderm  
Diane Colley-U  
Linda Fox-Mell  
against changin  
"councillor," th  
them, in spite of  
have the prerog  
ter membership  
hood — two X  
Here's how it  
hood is all abou  
women to have  
of course, you e  
right to choice l  
disagree with t  
Then, you get a  
you by the sam  
until then advo  
have a choice.

Listen to CCC  
Betty Donaldsc  
those X-chrom  
men: "They are  
past and they a  
they are outdat  
alderpeople ha  
ated and unma  
puppets of the  
They'd probabl  
nicated, too, if t  
could figure ou  
them of their X  
Cheer up, all  
Carry Nations  
Plenty of other  
Plenty of other  
loons remain t  
Why don't you  
about the worc  
two-thirds mac  
Better get righ  
now that your  
sue has had a v  
pail of cold wa

NLAKRITZ@THEHE

rove rates and  
icity, and gas.  
reaucratic effi  
ting the time it  
projects from  
onstruction.  
ontroversy was  
ructure, but ac  
, both for needs  
and specific  
mers and envi  
est groups were  
there were real  
ts initial drafts.  
terested parties  
overnment bona  
ion of the probk  
place against a  
scandalous re-  
the EUB.  
earings on an  
gary 500kv line  
the EUB hired  
ators to assess  
hreat this pre-

y, this Maxwell  
s exposed, EUB  
ered, and the  
d to the starting  
e some time for  
egulators to re-  
n in which the  
eld.

helpful that the  
visited the most  
visions.  
, a proposal that  
ling at hearings  
where anybody

## Concern, not censorship

gary Catholic  
istrict is not en  
1 censorship by  
olden Compass  
libraries, class-  
and Scholastic  
ead, administra-  
their job by re-  
arents' concerns  
Compass, written  
eist Philip Pull-  
sy story that has  
ed as containing  
themes. Among  
oppressive pres-  
isterium suppos-  
ing the Roman  
h, and the depic-  
Age Eve in the  
12-year-old Lyra,  
characters.

een no talk of  
osing this book;  
ing reviewed as  
equested, to de-  
ropriateness for  
ing.

send their kids  
hool have a cer-  
tion that their  
n will not be ex-  
rial that compro-  
chings they are  
still in those

plete, the book may well be placed back on shelves or it may be put on a list that requires parental permission before a child can check it out. It might also be permanently removed.

That would not make it any different from hundreds of other books which are not on approved reading lists for children due to their content, their themes or their age-appropriateness.

Such decisions are made about school book lists all the time; some books are inevitably left out. It would be unlikely an elementary school library would have a copy of Lolita on its shelves, but that could scarcely be called censorship, either.

When parents in Surrey, B.C. protested about gay-themed books being introduced in the early grades, some of their concerns revolved around the fact that they did not feel kindergarten children were of an age for books about sexual orientation. They had to go to court to be heard.

In the case of The Golden Compass, the Catholic school division is putting parents' concerns first which is exactly