

# GENOCIDE CURRICULUM: Schools Anger Activists

By Thomas F. Coleman  
For Update

Political leaders, educators and community activists are gearing up to attend an Aug. 11 meeting of the State Board of Education in Ontario on Aug. 11, to protest what they call "bureaucratic homophobia."

Speakers plan to condemn a proposed Model Curriculum on Human Rights and Genocide because it does not mention the genocide of Gays in Nazi Germany and because it does not address current issues involving the civil rights of Lesbians and Gay men in the United States.

Additional criticisms will focus on under-representation of the disabled, Japanese-Americans and American Indians in various sections of the proposed model curriculum.

The public meeting is at 1 p.m. at the Red Lion Inn, Keller-Peak Room, 222 N. Vineyard in Ontario.

Speakers who want to address the topics should sign up in advance by contacting the State Board of Education at (916) 445-9016.

## The Background

On July 9, 1987, the State Board of Education unveiled its proposed Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide. The so-called "model" curriculum was presented to the board at its meeting in Sacramento.

A state law passed in 1985 directed the Department of Education to develop this model curriculum. The law was ambiguous as to which

historical references to genocide should be included. It was also vague as to which aspects of human rights should be addressed — and so these matters were left to the discretion of the Department of Education.

Early in 1987, members of the Lesbian and Gay community obtained a draft of the model curriculum. A review of the document revealed that the Nazi genocide of homosexuals in Germany was not mentioned. Also, no reference was made to the emergence of the Gay and Lesbian rights movement in modern times.

Similarly, no Gay or Lesbian organizations were referenced in the "resource" section of the curriculum.

The bureaucrats and consultants who prepared the draft were contacted by Gay and Lesbian academics and activists who expressed anger and concern regarding these omissions. Books and articles on the subject of Gay genocide were mailed to Sacramento.

Superintendent Bill Honig and appropriate staff members received letters of protest regarding the apparently deliberate exclusion of Gay genocide, the Gay and Lesbian rights movement and Gay community resource material from this curriculum.

A wide variety of groups participated in this protest: the Gay and Lesbian Youth Advisory Council of San Francisco, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Southern California ACLU, the Los Angeles Human Rights Com-

mission and more.

Supt. Honig and the department responded with assurances that these omissions would be corrected before the draft was presented to the State Board of Education. The community breathed a sigh of relief.

The community breathed too easily. Despite these promises from the superintendent and the department of education, the curriculum to be presented Aug. 11 does not address Gay genocide or other concerns of the Lesbian and Gay community.

## The Curriculum: An Objective Analysis

The curriculum is divided into three sections: the main text, a list of references and community resources, and an appendix containing discussion of various issues in detail.

In the main text, references are made to religion four times, political views three times, and race, culture, language and gender twice each.

In addition, the Holocaust, Armenian genocide, Black slavery, Japanese-American camps, the oppression of women, Native American issues, apartheid in South Africa, the Ukraine famine and the Cambodian massacre are each mentioned once.

There are no references to the disabled or to Lesbians and Gays.

In the list of references and resources, the following groups are specifically mentioned: Armenian

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and Ukrainian books, articles or community organizations, seven times; Jewish, five times; Holocaust (in general) four times; religious, twice; and Blacks, Slavic, Polish or disabled groups, just once each.

There are no references for Native American, Japanese-American, Cambodian or Gay and Lesbian groups, books or articles.

In the supporting texts appended to the model curriculum under consideration, the following groups are given varying amounts of space: Armenian, 28 paragraphs; Jews, 24 paragraphs; Blacks in South Africa, 20 paragraphs; Cambodian, 16 paragraphs; Ukrainian, 14 paragraphs; American Indians, 11 paragraphs; the disappeared in Argentina, 10 paragraphs; religious persecution, seven paragraphs; and Japanese-Americans, one paragraph.

In addition, Black slavery in the United States and the Ugandan massacre each receive one sentence, and the Gypsies and the handicapped each receive one word.

There are no references — not even a single word — for Gays and Lesbians.

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