

To XXXXX, Head of (Educational) Standards and Accountability (Herts County Council Education Leadership Team)

Dear XXXXX,

Re: The Black Flamingo reading book

It has come to my attention that at least one secondary school in Hertfordshire, and possibly many others, is using a text for its Year 9 English students called 'The Black Flamingo' by Dean Atta.

The book is a collection of poems or writings which seems to follow the life of a young boy or teenager growing up and thinking he is same sex inclined and/or deciding he is gay. There is no balance, such as it could be a phase teenagers go through, which could be just that, temporary feelings or whether non-gay affirming parents could have any input into his feelings or that his self-perceived orientation is as a result of pro-gay media and education system pressure which is so all pervasive. There are a few fleeting references to the value of wisdom of parents eg warning against HIV (no mention of other STI's prevalent amongst msm's) but it is nowhere near strong enough and the mother is helpfully pro-gay anyway.

Nothing is mentioned about the negatives of a gay lifestyle, the fact that it is not heteronormative nor that the ex-gay community is now very large, presumably because the people involved have discovered the pro-gay lifestyle is unnatural and so bad they have rejected it. The ex-gay community is totally ignored by the pro-gay media and the pro-gay education system which shows how biased it is and its contempt for heteronormativity.

James Parker has written an article in Christian Today (I was a gay activist – then Christianity saved my life, 29.8.26, <https://www.christiantoday.com/news/i-was-a-gay-activist-then-prayer-and-therapy-saved-my-life> ) charting a journey into and then out of homosexuality. He pretty much implies that the gay lifestyle tragically killed his homosexual ex-partner, fortunately James had abandoned the gay lifestyle by then.

One of the worst bits in the book is page 117 - 120 when the character Michael, arranges a meeting with an older man of 19, called Alex and is preparing for sexual relations because P117 mentions taking condoms and the following page has suggestive comments on what happened. On P119 Michael is described as kissing the older man and high on weed; 'I'm high on weed and about to lose my virginity'. Throughout the book there is drug taking, then goes on to how he moves into doing drag, P349 confirms that he has slept with at least one other man (unclear what ages both were) and P356 gives confusing advice on coming out as gay.

Can you please answer the following questions for me and other concerned parents, grandparents, voters and taxpayers of Hertfordshire:

Please confirm the age of the character Michael when he was having sexual relations?

The legal age for sexual relations is 16. If Michael was under that age this book is encouraging an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Even if this is classed as fiction, it is highly misleading, insensitive and unethical that this book should be used as a text for Year 9 or any secondary school student.

The taking of banned substances like weed (cannabis) is illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Why is this glorified in the book and why is there no warning to parents that the book contains drug use?

Why is there no warning as to the sexual references and pro-gay, pro-drag, pro-trans stance in the book?

Why is there no balance about the gay lifestyle and why is such a book allowed when it is so obviously biased against heteronormativity and includes illegal drug taking and potential offences under the Misuse of Drugs and Sexual Offences Acts?

Who authorised the use of this text for use in Hertfordshire schools?

This text should not be being used in the Herts school system and I request that you order its suspension of use immediately. It would also be helpful if you would replace books like this with ones that are pro-heterosexual, stress heteronormativity, and promote stable, traditional married family life.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian

Mass Resistance UK