



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 19, 2012

## Boxer Fights Back Over Misquote on Same-Sex Marriage

Make no mistake about it. International boxing champion [Manny Pacquiao](#) opposes the legalization of same-sex marriage. But contrary to the petition launched by a pro-homosexual group to get sporting goods manufacturer Nike to drop him as a spokesman, Pacquiao never expressed hatred for “gays,” and he never said that they should be killed.



Following the May 12 publication of an article on [Examiner.com](#), in which Pacquiao told reporter Granville Ampong that “God only expects man and woman to be together and to be legally married,” a group calling itself the “[Courage Campaign](#)” called on Nike to “Drop Homophobic Boxer Manny Pacquiao,” claiming, according to [Breitbart.com](#), that the Philipino boxer had spoken out against homosexual marriage by, in part, quoting a passage from Leviticus that reads: “If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death.”

The petition, which by May 18 had garnered some 25,000 signatures, challenged Nike: “Do not tarnish your brand. Stand with millions of LGBT and fair minded-people the world over. Drop Manny Pacquiao now. Hatred surely does not = Nike.”

But a close reading of the Examiner.com article makes clear that the reporter, not Pacquiao, had inserted the Scripture, and Pacquiao limited his comments to a Christian perspective on marriage. “God’s words first,” the boxer told reporter Ampong. “... obey God’s law first before considering the laws of man.” Pacquiao added that “God only expects man and woman to be together and to be legally married. It should not be of the same sex, so as to adulterate the altar of matrimony, like in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah.”

Ampong confirmed that the boxer had nothing to do with the reference to the Old Testament scripture. “Nowhere in my supposition and integration of my interview with Pacquiao did I mention that Pacquiao recited this Leviticus 20:13 nor did I imply that Pacquiao had quoted such,” the reporter was quoted by [HispanicBusinesss.com](#) as saying. Ampong added that “I have simply reminded in my column how God made it clear in the Old Testament time that such practice of same-sex marriage is detestable and strictly forbidden, in as much as God wants to encourage his people practices that lead to health and happiness and fullness of life.”

The reckless misquote, however, led to an ill-advised response by the [Grove](#), a popular shopping mall in



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Los Angeles where Pacquiao was scheduled to do an interview with the celebrity news show [Extra](#). "Based on news reports of statements made by Mr. Pacquiao," the Grove's management declared in a statement, "we have made it be known that he is not welcome at the Grove and will not be interviewed here now or in the future. The Grove is a gathering place for all Angelenos and not a place for intolerance."

On May 16, Pacquiao offered his own response, pointing out that he had not condemned or threatened homosexuals in the article. "I am against gay marriage, but I'm not condemning gays," the boxer said in an interview with the [Los Angeles Times](#). "I have family — a cousin — who's gay, and friends too. I'm just against gay marriage." He added with frustration that "I don't even want to talk about the issue, but I was asked about it, so I gave my opinion."

Pacquiao's management followed up with a press statement confirming that "Manny Pacquiao has never stated that anyone in the gay community deserved death. His statements were taken out of context, and were not his opinion. Pacquiao is simply against the marriage of anyone that is not man and woman as he believes is stated in the Bible."

During the Extra interview, which was moved to Pacquiao's home, the boxer expressed his regret for the mix-up. "To the gay community, I apologize," Pacquiao said. "I'm against same-sex marriage, but I'm not condemning you. My favorite verse is 'Love one another as you love yourself. Love your neighbor.' So I love everybody!"

Ampong, who had asked Pacquiao for a comment in response to President Obama's endorsement of same-sex marriage, wrote: "I sincerely apologize for the confusion my column has caused. I certainly do not represent Pacquiao nor his team."

No similar regrets were expressed by the folks at the "Courage Campaign," who simply dropped the original accusation against the boxer, noted that he had "apologized to the gay community" (but did not clarify what the apology meant), and continued demanding that Nike drop him.

[CBS News](#) noted that the 33-year-old Pacquiao, who is a Filipino congressman as well as a boxing champion, "has embraced Catholicism in recent months after marital trouble with his wife, Jinkee. Although he has always attended Mass before his fights, the boxer has taken up frequent Bible study, and he traveled from the Philippines to the U.S. in the company of a spiritual adviser and pastor, Jeric Soriano, now a regular presence in Pacquiao's life in Los Angeles and the Philippines. 'It's difficult sometimes, but God gave me a talent,' Pacquiao said. 'He gave me a wisdom and a knowledge.'"

Since 2005 Pacquiao has won 16 consecutive fights, besting such formidable opponents as Oscar De La Hoya, Juan Manuel Marquez, Miguel Cotto, Shane Mosley, and Antonio Margarito. However, the boxing world is waiting for a bout between him and [Floyd Mayweather Jr.](#), whom CBS News called "Pacquiao's only rival for pound-for-pound supremacy in boxing."

While it remains to be seen who is the better fighter between them, Mayweather was able to score some points with the Obama camp when he used the synthesized controversy over Pacquiao's supposed remarks to comment on Twitter May 16: "I stand behind President Obama & support gay marriage. I'm an American citizen & I believe people should live their life the way they want."

While the incident appeared to do little damage to Pacquiao's reputation, it did highlight the dishonesty and ill will that are fundamental elements of homosexual activism. The [Wall Street Journal's](#) James Taranto called it "a wonderful little example of the left's inverted idea of 'tolerance.' They'll tolerate you as long as you don't deviate from their orthodoxy."



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*Photo of Manny Pacquiao: AP Images*



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