



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 9, 2017

## Canadian Catholic Schools Cancel Transgender Play Targeting Grade Schools

Catholic schools in Ontario, Canada, are being subjected to the usual litany of left-wing outrage — “homophobia,” “transphobia,” etc. — for canceling a pro-transgender play aimed at elementary-school students.

The play, *Boys, Girls, and Other Mythological Creatures*, concerns a boy who “feels boxed in by the restraints of gender,” according to an [open letter](#) from Jessica Carmichael, artistic director for Carousel Players, which is mounting the play.



The [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation \(CBC\)](#) interviewed Carmichael and described the play:

It centers around [a] child named Simon and his friend Abby, who put on their own play in which Simon transforms into Princess Simone.

This irks Simon’s brother, who joins the play as an evil king who banishes all things girl-related from the kingdom, forcing Simone to fight for her right to be her true self.

“And at the end of the play, the two brothers sort [of] talk about their conflict and the older brother says, ‘Are you my sister now?’ and Simon/Simone says, ‘Maybe, maybe not. I don’t know,’” Carmichael said.

Carousel Players says the play is aimed at children ages six through 10. But after the play, which has been performed in two dozen other schools in the Niagara region, was unleashed on unsuspecting grade-schoolers at Mary Ward Catholic School on April 25, five other Niagara Catholic School Board (NCSB) schools, plus two non-Catholic schools, canceled their upcoming performances, citing scheduling conflicts.

Carmichael understandably found this excuse a bit incredible, especially since some of the performances had been booked in September, but was unable to get much response from the individual schools or the NCSB, which passed the buck back to the schools’ principals. She therefore decided to go public with her frustration, posting the aforementioned letter on the Carousel Players website.

“I fear these cancellations may be based on misinformation, grown out of fear, intolerance, transphobia, homophobia and misogyny,” she wrote. She complained that a Facebook post criticizing the play — and, it would seem, accurately describing it as “teaching kids if a boy plays dress up he might be a girl” — was “surrounded by transphobic comments” reflecting “inherent bigotry” and “gross misinformation.” She even posted a screen shot of the offending remarks, which sound more like those of parents concerned about the confusion the play could create in their children’s minds than those of hatemongers.

Mark Crawford, playwright of *Boys, Girls, and Other Mythological Creatures*, [argued](#) that “the motivating factor for cancelling performances of this play is a few adults’ own fear, prejudice, and



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hatred” and said parents’ and school administrators’ concerns reflected “outdated, repressive, dangerous ideas that keep people unhappy, that keep people afraid, and that keep people from being who they truly are.”

According to [LifeSiteNews](#):

The performance at Mary Ward was donated by the Niagara Knights of Columbus Council, but financial officer Gary Tappay says he had no idea about the play until he read a review in the local press.

“We paid \$500 well in advance, and we asked them to make sure it was cleared by the Catholic school board for content and theme, and I never heard anything about it until I read the article,” Tappay told LifeSiteNews.

He became alarmed because the article said Carousel Players had consulted with Pride Niagara and that the play would be staged at First Ontario Place at St. Catharines.

“That’s when it twigged on me, this is going to be playing to an adult audience,” Tappay said. “Surely this is not the same play they’re going to be present at Mary Ward School. It was.”

After talking to Carousel Players, Tappay said he called the school principal, who agreed to attend the play with Tappay and NCSB chairman Father Paul MacNeil. Afterward, Tappay said they “all agreed it was not appropriate.”

John Crocco, director of education at NCSB, told the [Globe and Mail](#) that the principal “contacted Superintendent Mark Lefebvre to express his concerns that the play’s age-appropriateness did not match the Grade 1 to 4 range that had been recommended by Carousel Players — even in the updated curriculum that the Ontario Liberal government introduced in 2015.”

Carmichael, however, told LifeSiteNews that the curriculum “calls for discussion of gender identity and gender expression from Grades 1 to 8.” She maintained that because the Catholic schools are publicly funded, they are required to adhere to the curriculum and “can’t pick and choose how they are going to do that.”

She also said the NCSB arts consultant “sat on our committee, and helped us write our themes and curriculums connections which we send out with all of our marketing materials.” Crocco countered that the arts consultant “was aware of the play, based on the description Carousel Players provided, but was not present at a meeting with Carousel Players when the discussion regarding the curriculum links or themes took place.” Carmichael claimed that the provided description included the themes and curriculum connections.

Clinton Somerton of Campaign Life Coalition, which opposes the curriculum changes, praised the NCSB for canceling further performances of the play but urged the board to “be bold and outspoken in its commitment to protecting children.”

“It is our collective failure to resist the sexual militants that has allowed the situation to deteriorate to the point where such groups can virtually demand access to little children while fearful adults stand gaping and blinking helplessly,” he told LifeSiteNews.

Sadly, taxpayer funding of Catholic schools has left them vulnerable to such assaults. Indeed, Crocco assured the [Globe and Mail](#) that the NCSB is “‘fully inclusive, accepting and supportive’ and in line with recent changes to the provincial health and physical education curriculum.” It seems the board’s only real problem with the play’s transgender propaganda is that it was presented to children younger than



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the third grade.

“The Grade 3 curriculum ... begins to talk about cultural values, beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.,” Mr. Crocco told the paper. “There were students [at the play] in Grade 1 and 2.”

Does this mean that once a child reaches grade three, in-school presentations on “gender identity” and “sexual orientation” — even ones promoting teachings contrary to those of the church — are perfectly acceptable?

The NCSB would be wise to heed the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:6 (NASB): “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” And if concern over losing public funding plays into the board’s decisions, there’s always Matthew 6:24 (NIV): “You cannot serve both God and money.”



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