



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 16, 2010

## Apple iPhone Application Debate Continues

At the start of this month, Apple's Application Store removed a religious iPhone application called the "Manhattan Declaration," in response to demands from gay activists groups. The Christian group behind the application is now proposing an updated version of the application that they hope will be considered less controversial.

The Blaze writes, "In November, a petition from Change.org pushed Apple to pull the app, a pledge that 'speaks in the defense of the sanctity of life, traditional marriage and religious liberty,' and calls on Christians to 'adhere firmly to their family convictions.' "



Change.org asserted that the application "supports homophobia" and that the Declaration is "full of hateful and divisive language."

The organization took issue with a survey found in the iPhone application that posed questions relevant to the tenets of the Manhattan Declaration:

- Do you believe in the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman? Y or N
- Do you believe in protecting life from the moment of conception? Y or N
- Do you support same-sex relationships? Y or N
- Do you support the right of choice regarding abortion? Y or N

Applicants earn 25 points for each correctly answered question, and when they complete the survey, they are guided to the full Manhattan Declaration, where they are asked to sign the petition and send it to others.

In addition to releasing an updated application, supporters of the Manhattan Declaration launched an ad campaign against Apple's censorship, even calling Apple's CEO Steve Jobs "Big Brother."

A leading opponent to the application is the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). The group contends that any application that suggests homosexuality and abortion are immoral will be opposed:

The makers of the application say they have removed the quiz and will resubmit the application. But simply removing the quiz does nothing to address the underlying problem, which is that this application tells people to pledge to oppose equality for gay and lesbian couples.

Tell Apple to stay strong in the face of pressure to reinstate this application — and to stand behind its commitment to keep these hurtful attitudes out of its app store.

Claims that the application is homophobic rest on the Declaration's reference to homosexual relations as "immoral," but the Manhattan Declaration asserts that marriage is simply an "objective reality" according to Christian tradition.



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*Daily Caller* objects to allegations that the application is “divisive” because it does not call for violence or hostility against those who disagree with the doctrines supported in the Declaration.

One blog site, *Gawker*, contends that the controversy plaguing the Apple store is solely the fault of Apple’s CEO:

CEO Steve Jobs designated the store as a place with ‘freedom from porn’ and from risqué fashion spreads, illustrated gay literature, political caricature and other controversial content.

Now every time Apple approves an app, it implies moral endorsement of the content of that app. Rejections likewise carry an implied moral condemnation.

*The Blaze* summarizes *Gawker*’s point: “Because the company has set a precedent for determining what is and is not ‘appropriate’ content, the app store will remain censored to some degree.”

A spokesman for the Manhattan Declaration, Michelle Farmer, asserts that if Jobs is going to make moral determinations, he should be well-informed before doing so:

We’re making the argument that if Apple CEO Steve Jobs would take a look at the Manhattan Declaration himself, he’d seek it’s not written with any rancor. It’s written on a very even keel. There’s no name calling, no offensive rhetoric. It restates firmly, without any kind of animosity toward anybody, the central moral teachings of the Catholic, Orthodox, and Evangelical traditions.

Whatever the outcome, Apple is sure to upset a large group of its customers.



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