



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on February 7, 2011

Grocery Chain Attacked for Shielding Children From Photo of Elton John and Same-Sex Partner

The accompanying story, entitled “Elton’s Baby,” related how the two homosexual men had employed a surrogate mother to bear a child for them.

When several customers objected to having the controversial photo in plain sight at the store’s checkout, managers decided to simply cover the magazine with a shield that, explained Harp’s president and COO Kim Eskew, “can be used at the manager’s discretion to cover the front of magazines when they receive complaints from our customers.” Eskew said that a store might decide to cover magazines with photos that are “sexually provocative or too revealing” or that have headlines that are “too suggestive for some customers.”



In the case of the Elton John photo, “our store manager received some complaints and, as has been our custom, placed the shield over the cover of the magazine,” Eskew said. The shield included the simple explanation, “Family Shield. To protect young Harps shoppers.”

Apparently, however, in the store’s corporate opinion pressure from homosexual activists trumped the concerns of their customers. When a woman walking through the store spotted the shield over the magazine, she took a picture of the display and sped it on to the homosexual activist group Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), as well as the ACLU, Anderson Cooper, and Ellen DeGeneres with the [message](#), “This was taken at my local grocery store. I was shocked and horrified. Can you help bring attention to this?”

After the woman’s photo made its way on to various talk shows and several homosexual websites, Harp’s corporate headquarters were inundated with calls demanding that the store remove the shield.

Within a short time the offending shield was taken down, with Harp’s corporate headquarters issuing an apology and explanation from Eskew. “When we began receiving complaints at our corporate office, we reviewed the magazine in question, removed the shield and are selling the magazine in all our locations today without any shield,” Eskew said. “Our true intention is not to offend anyone in our stores and this incident happened at just one of our 65 locations, which when brought to our attention we reversed.”

On [GLAAD’s blog site](#), Aaron McQuade thanked the woman who took the photo for helping to expose the grocery chain’s “anti-gay actions” and for “speaking out against the belief that anyone would need to be ‘shielded’ from an image of a happy family.”

Photo of Elton John: AP Images



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