



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 1, 2010

## Apple Removes Religious iPhone Application

Apple's Application Store recently removed a religious iPhone application called the "Manhattan Declaration," prompting protests from a Christian group.

The [Daily Caller](#) reports that Apple removed the application last week after a Change.org online petition demanded its removal, calling the Declaration a "hate fest" full of "hateful and divisive language."

Change.org also claimed that the application "supports homophobia" and alleges that Apple's "efforts to restrict choice is bad business."



Change.org's assertions reveal a stark misinterpretation of the 2009 Manhattan Declaration, which "speaks in defense of the sanctity of life, traditional marriage, and religious liberty."

In an effort to support the tenets of the [Manhattan Declaration](#), the iPhone application included a survey with four questions that were each worth 25 points:

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

Upon completion of the survey, users are then guided to the full Manhattan Declaration, where they may sign the petition and send it off to others.

Assertions that the application is homophobic rest on the fact that the declaration calls homosexual and polyamorous relations "immoral," but the section of the Manhattan Declaration pertinent to marriage innocuously calls marriage "an objective reality" according to Christian tradition.

Furthermore, the *Daily Caller* notes that there is no language in the application or Declaration that calls for violence or hostility against anyone who does not adhere to similar Christian traditions.

Michelle Farmer, spokeswoman for the Manhattan Declaration, addresses the unfair interpretation of the content of the Manhattan Declaration: "We're making the argument that if Apple CEO Steve Jobs would take a look at the Manhattan Declaration himself, he'd see 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."

Farmer adds, "It's just appealing to things that people want to come together on, that millions of Americans agree on."

Yet Apple continues to defend its decision, citing its policy that Apple applications "must not contain any obscene, pornographic, offensive or defamatory content or material of any kind ... or other content or materials that in Apple's reasonable judgment may be found objectionable by iPhone or iPod touch



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users.”

It may be a mere coincidence that Apple donated \$100,000 to oppose a ban on gay marriage in 2008, as noted by the [Huffington Post](#).

However, it seems Apple has a case of political correctness run amok. In the past, Apple also removed an application called “Freedom Time” — a countdown of the final days until the end of George W. Bush’s administration — an act that brought the company under fire as well.

Meanwhile, the Manhattan Declaration is awaiting a response from Steve Jobs after attempting to make contact with him on Monday via a faxed letter that asked Jobs to reinstate the application “in the spirit of civil discourse.”

The Manhattan Declaration issued a statement regarding the application’s removal: “Given that there are 300,000+ apps available, it is surprising to us that there couldn’t continue to be an app focused on the sanctity of human life, marriage as the exclusive union of one man and one woman and religious liberty — views that millions of Americans have in common. The Manhattan Declaration is written in respectful language, and it engages the beliefs of those who differ in an honest, thoughtful and civil manner.”

*Photo: AP Images*



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