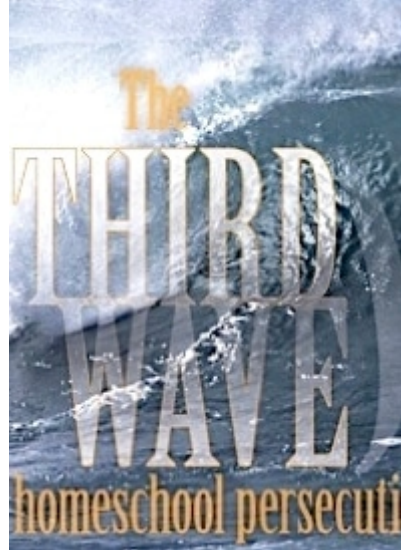




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on February 1, 2011

“Third Wave” of Persecution Coming, Warns Homeschool Leader

Homeschoolers beware! A “third wave” of persecution that “seeks to curtail or crush the homeschooling movement — specifically, the Christian homeschooling movement — is coming,” warns Michael Farris, chairman of the Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA).



As homeschooling has exploded in popularity over the past few years, opponents have typically attacked it on two false fronts, says Farris, who has been one of the most visible leaders in the home education movement over the last two decades. The first assault “was based on the argument that homeschooling simply could not deliver a proper program of academic instruction,” explains Farris, an assertion that has been “decisively proven false and is no longer believed by any credible person on any side of the homeschooling debate.”

In fact, studies consistently show that America’s homeschooled students — over two million according to the latest government statistics — score close to the 90th percentile on standardized tests, earn higher GPAs than the national average, and have a higher college graduation rate compared to the overall student population.

The second attack posited that homeschooled children do not have access to the same level of socialization that public school students enjoy. Critics like to paint a picture of these kids as cloistered in their homes all week, except for the weekly homeschool co-op meeting, where moms clad in denim jumpers walk them through irrelevant arts-and-craft projects. In truth, homeschooled students typically enjoy a wide array of dynamic options for socializing with peers as well as adults, including community service, part-time jobs (which they have more time to pursue than their public school counterparts), college classes — and yes, homeschool co-ops, where they’ll learn skills as diverse as beekeeping and business management.

Because the quality activity options for homeschooled students are so wide-ranging, “the vast majority of people who know a child who has been homeschooled for a number of years would simply laugh at the idea that there are socialization problems from this approach to education,” says Farris.

While the first two assaults on homeschooling were based on demonstrably false assumptions, the coming attack, warns Farris, will be founded on the essentially accurate assertion that Christian homeschooling parents — who in terms of both numbers and education philosophy dominate America’s homeschool culture — are teaching their children values that mainstream education elites believe are



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detrimental to the homeschooled kids themselves as well as to society as whole.

And what are those values? Farris lists just a handful of the most “dangerous” to an evolving society: the beliefs that “[h]omosexuality is a sin,” that men “should be the leaders of their families,” that “Jesus is the only way to God,” and that “[a]ll other religions are false.”

There are others, but the point is that these views, which once represented the foundation of a stable American society, are being forced out of the mainstream and being replaced by a homogenized secularism that will no longer tolerate traditional Judeo-Christian values.

Farris lines up an alarming set of impressive writings from even-tempered law professors who warn of the coming need to overpower the independent-minded attitudes of homeschool families who place the authority of God and family above that of the state.

For example, Farris quotes Northwestern University law professor Kimberly Yuracko, who asserts in a *California Law Review* article that there are constitutional limits on the rights of homeschool parents to “teach their children idiosyncratic and illiberal beliefs and values,” and who recommends greater government control over the educational choices for children whose “parents want to teach against the enlightenment.”

Likewise, writing in the May 2010 installment of the *William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal*, George Washington Law School professor Catherine Ross voices deep concern over the choice of many “traditionalist Christian parents (both fundamentalist and evangelical)” to opt out of the “meaningful oversight” offered by public schools, thus denying their children exposure to the “constitutional norm of tolerance” that they would learn in that setting. “In order for the norm of tolerance to survive across generations,” writes Ross, “society need not and should not tolerate the inculcation of absolutist views that undermine toleration of difference.”

Equating sound biblical values with intolerance, Ross argues that the state has a vested interest in limiting “the ability of intolerant homeschoolers to inculcate hostility to difference in their children — at least during the portion of the day they claim to devote to satisfying the compulsory schooling requirement.” She recommends the addition of mandatory civic curricula that would counter the biblical values many homeschool parents want their kids to embrace with values that press for the tolerance of behaviors, lifestyles, and beliefs these parents view as objectionable — and sinful.

According to another elitist professor, Martha Albertson Fineman of the Emory University School of Law, the ultimate goal should be the elimination of all private, Christian, and homeschool options, making public school absolutely mandatory and universal. Of course, writes Fineman, parental interests “could supplement but never supplant the public institutions where the basic and fundamental lesson would be taught and experienced by all American children: we must struggle together to define ourselves both as a collective and as individuals.”

Farris notes that this notion that state educational dictates trump those of faith and family comes directly from the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), which mandates (Article 29) that their educational experience prepare children “for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin....”

Harking back to Hillary Clinton’s best-selling epistle on the importance of state authority, Farris points out that the “‘it takes a village to raise a child’ crowd believe that all children are children of the village. Any parental decision-making authority regarding education is a mere delegation of a core power from



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the government, and all prior claims over the development of the hearts and minds of children reside with the village and not with the family.”

While Farris focuses on the harassment that Christian homeschoolers will likely face in the future for insisting on teaching biblical values to their children, he emphasizes that the elitist mentality driving anti-homeschool sentiment is not narrow-minded in its approach. “... all homeschoolers — regardless of their religious affiliation — will be impacted” by the UN-inspired doctrines of the humanist elites driving America’s secular education agenda,” writes Farris. “They have taken dead aim at the broad concept of parental rights, although their foremost objection is to the philosophical content of Christian education.”

Writing specifically to those whose decision to homeschool their children is based on their Christian faith, Farris emphasizes the need for continued solidarity among like-minded individuals, families, and groups, as well as perseverance in the face of opposition. “This is not the time to be abandoning state homeschooling organizations,” he writes. “We all know that God used and blessed state organizations ... to build, inform, motivate, and turn out the team to win battles in state after state. Local support groups that pass along critical information about legal and political threats are also absolutely essential to our future defense, as they were in the past.”

Above all, he counsels, “Truth is on our side. Freedom is on our side. The American Constitution is on our side. And all of that matters, so long as we remain faithfully on God’s side. Stand up for Jesus, and He will never leave us or forsake us.”



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