

Anita Bryant—from orange juice to chasing gays

By Bernadine Ward

Editor's note: The following column was run out of sequence in last week's Tar Heel. We therefore are reprinting the article in its entirety this week.

At first glance, the lady (flanked by her children) is singing about orange juice—pure, wholesome, natural; she appears to be serene and calm. Appearances, especially in this case can be deceptive, for the lady is fire. Anita Bryant's fanaticism about orange juice has carried over into a new realm. Now, instead of rallying about round, seeded pulp, she attacks those deemed as "sexually abnormal."

Everyone, regardless of his feelings about Anita Bryant, must admit that she deserves applause for the methods she used to overturn a Dade County (Florida) ordinance. This ordinance would have prohibited housing and employment discrimination based on sexual affections or preference.

The methodology: appeal to emotions, not facts, get a Bible, associate with fire and brimstone preachers, shed buckets of tears, and there you have it—the perfect scenario.

This, however, is not a play and its consequences to homosexuals is reality.

Author Merle Miller, a homosexual was quoted in *Newsweek* as saying, "We may be moving to another McCarthy era; this time the enemy won't be Communism—it will be sex."

Sure enough, there has been, according to Bruce Vaelley, co-executive director of the National Gay Task Force, a "flurry of firings of homosexuals in Dade County." In addition, Oklahoma has passed a resolution endorsing Bryant's position. Not surprisingly, Bryant and her merry, Bible spouting crusaders may go national.

Even before the ordinance's defeat, a group in Los Angeles supported capital punishment for homosexuals and issued literature to this effect and a fire in a gay New York bathhouse killed nine men and injured 10 others. This is not to say that Bryant endorsed these acts, but her irrational reactions concerning homosexuality certainly do not help the situation.

Bryant did not defeat the ordinance alone; she did it with the help of thousands of Miamians who, though rightfully concerned about the effect homosexuality would have on children, were gullible enough to be swept into Bryant's unjustifiable viciousness towards those not heterosexual.

The orange juice songster claims she does not hate homosexuals, just homosexuality. But how it is possible to separate a human from a personality that defines him I don't know. Despite her professed "love" for gays, Bryant has called them "human garbage" and believes that "Miami's antidiscrimination law could protect the right to have intercourse with beasts." I find it extremely difficult to believe that Bryant has fond affections for garbage and beasts.

Bryant and her sheep, I mean followers, argue that "homosexuals would use the schools to influence children in favor of homosexuality or perhaps even to molest them." However, Dr. C. A. Tripp, author of *The Homosexual Matrix*, reported that no evidence that role models (in this case teachers) do any recruiting or that they affect sexual orientation in any way, exists.

Interestingly, much evidence proves the opposite. It is believed that sexual orientation is established by age 5 and earlier—before children start school.

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Obviously, any homosexual instructor who approaches or attacks children should be dismissed, but so should heterosexuals who engage in these practices.

Is Bryant really so concerned with "Saving Our Children," or is she using them to act out her desires to rid society of what she considers filth? Surely there are other areas of child welfare that need to be addressed immediately.

The *U.S. News and World Report* informed its readers that in 1975 alone "more than 200,000 American boys and girls, most below 5, died last year as a result of abuse by adults." And what of the thousands of cases

of parents who rape their children and force them to appear in pornographic films and magazines? Is it because these parents and perpetrators of such crimes are heterosexual and therefore automatically classified as "normal" that society is so slow in prosecuting them?

Using Biblical interpretations to deny human rights has occurred throughout history. This device was used as a justification for the oppression of Indians, blacks and women; it has been used to support segregation policies in America and

abroad, Bryant uses passages from Romans, Corinthians, and Leviticus in her efforts to ascertain that homosexuals are deprived of everything heterosexuals, by virtue of their sexual preference, are accorded.

That she prejudices all homosexuals as possible child molesters is an absurdity. Studies confirm that the majority of sexual attacks on children are heterosexual, not homosexual. The right to employment, education, housing, freedom between consenting adults—life—is the crux of the gay controversy, whether we want to believe it or not.

If one must oppose homosexuality, let the opposition have its basis on sound, logical reasoning, and proof of its detriment.

Let it not, like Anita Bryant's, be simply based on passages from a book—even if it is the Bible.

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