



## The Tyler Clementi Foundation to Biola University: Stop Teaching Being LGBTQ is a Sin. #LGBTQnotAsin

For Immediate Release:

**Media contact: Rich Harrington, (603)731-9811, [rich@tylerclementi.org](mailto:rich@tylerclementi.org)**

La Mirada, CA— On November 28, 2017, The Tyler Clementi Foundation, whose mission is to end online and offline bullying in schools, workplaces, and faith communities, submitted a list of grievances and requests to Biola University in response to two instances of religious-based bullying and harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) communities.

1. Alan Shlemon lectured at a Biola University-sponsored event entitled *Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion*, where he endorsed sexual orientation change efforts that are not only unscientific and dangerous to LGBTQ students, but also violate standards set by the American Psychological Association.
2. The Nashville Statement, signed by members of Biola University's faculty, conflicts with university policy, which states, "All members of the Biola Community are expected to treat one another with respect and Christ-like compassion." While Biola claims to support and protect all students, it continues to use its exemptions from federal Title IX nondiscrimination protections to bully and harass LGBTQ students.

"By paying Alan Shlemon to disseminate dangerous, unscientific misinformation about sexual orientation change efforts on campus, and by enabling a climate of fear among faculty who disagree with the anti-LGBTQ Nashville Statement, Biola University has reinforced the anti-LGBTQ narrative they already face because of their Title IX exemption," said Erin Green, a former Biola student and Faith Coordinator for the Tyler Clementi Foundation. "Biola University has a moral, ethical, and professional responsibility to create a safe and welcoming environment for *all* students, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. "

"As a Christian and mother of a college student who died by suicide after being cyberbullied on campus because of his sexual orientation, I am hoping that Biola University will follow Christ's commandment to love their neighbor as themselves," said Jane Clementi, co-founder of the Tyler Clementi Foundation. "Biola University cannot simultaneously abide by the Christ-like compassion of the Golden Rule, while also supporting policies, speakers, and laws that harm our children."

Only one Biola professor, Wade McNair, Psy.D., has felt able to make a public statement about these issues via his personal social media, which provides him a certain amount of cover from retaliation: "This semester, I received two messages from two different students. One is still at Biola and one that has graduated, both having taken my undergraduate course. In both messages my students validated the need for me to continue to teach at Biola as an LGBT-safe faculty member. Both shared their stories and the joy and hardship of being LGBT, a Christian, and a student at Biola. The recent choices by Biola have left me disappointed and questioning my decision to teach here. But the student impact is the priority and I encourage all other LGBT-safe faculty to stay strong and reflect the love of Christ and the value of each human being created in His image! We make a difference!"

The Tyler Clementi Foundation is asking the administration within Biola University to respond in writing to our request, attached to this press release, by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 1, 2017.

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The Tyler Clementi Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to end online and offline bullying, harassment and humiliation.



## Tyler Clementi Foundation Requests For Biola University

November 28, 2017

The Tyler Clementi Foundation, whose mission is to end online and offline bullying in schools, workplaces, and faith communities, formally submits the following requests to Biola University based on the following two grievances. To prevent faith-based bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) students and populations, we ask that these requests please be addressed promptly, in writing, by 5:00 PM on Friday, December 1, 2017, via email to Erin Green, Coordinator of Faith Programs at the Tyler Clementi Foundation: [erin@TylerClementi.org](mailto:erin@TylerClementi.org).

**Grievance 1:** On September 30th, 2017, Biola University paid Alan Shlemon to lecture on Biola's campus. Shlemon, a Biola graduate, co-hosted the seminar, *Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion*. His bullying of LGBTQ populations, which includes supporting sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE), were well-known and well-documented prior to the seminar.<sup>1</sup> During Shlemon's lecture, SOCE were endorsed in presentation slides and handouts. After the seminar, Biola University refused to release the recording and video of the event to the public because, according to Brenda Velasco, Director of Communications at Biola University, "The public could perceive conversion therapy was endorsed."<sup>2</sup>

In response, the Tyler Clementi Foundation makes the following requests:

- I. WE REQUEST a formal and public apology to the entire student body and faculty of Biola University for inviting and paying Alan Shlemon to participate in the seminar, *Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion*.<sup>3</sup>
- II. WE REQUEST that Biola adopt, university wide, American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines on SOCE.
  - A. WHEREAS the APA "...advises parents, guardians, young people, and their families to avoid sexual orientation change efforts that portray homosexuality as a mental illness or developmental disorder and to seek psychotherapy, social support, and educational services that provide accurate information on sexual orientation and sexuality, increase family and school support, and reduce rejection of sexual minority youth."<sup>4</sup>
  - B. WHEREAS Biola University's Rosemead School of Psychology has already accepted this standard.
  - C. WHEREAS to be in compliance, Biola University must resolve to adhere to standards set by the APA university wide.
  - D. WHEREAS the Tyler Clementi Foundation is officially working with LGBTQ Biola students to file APA and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) complaints against Biola University for the open endorsement of SOCE on its campus.

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<sup>1</sup> Alan Shlemon commonly lectures on this with a similar title used at the Biola Seminar. For more information, see: <https://www.str.org/articles/homosexuality-know-the-truth-and-speak-it-with-compassion#>.

<sup>2</sup> Direct response and quote from Brenda Velasco, Director of Communications at Biola University when asked for a public release of the seminar during a phone conversation on October 27th at 11:30 a.m. with Erin Green.

<sup>3</sup> See attachments to this document, which provide evidence from Shlemon's portion of the the seminar, *Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion*.

<sup>4</sup> American Psychological Association, Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation. (2009). Report of the American Psychological Association Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbcc/publications/therapeutic-resp.html>. "Resolution on Appropriate Affirmative Responses to Sexual Orientation Distress and Change Efforts." American Psychological Association, American Psychological Association, [www.apa.org/about/policy/sexual-orientation.aspx](http://www.apa.org/about/policy/sexual-orientation.aspx).

<sup>5</sup> See "Does Rosemead support reparative/conversion therapy?" at <http://www.rosemead.edu/about/faqs/>.





- III. WE REQUEST that Biola University no longer officially invite or pay individuals or organizations like Alan Shlemon, who promote information about SOCE and LGBTQ populations not supported by rigorous, peer-reviewed science and the standards set by the APA and other mainstream medical and mental health professional organizations.
- IV. WE REQUEST that the video of the seminar, *Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion*, be released to the public.
- V. WE REQUEST a Biola University-sponsored seminar that addresses the peer-reviewed, scientific, and medical concerns related to SOCE. This seminar should include a representative of the APA's Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation.

**Grievance 2:** Within the first 30 days after the Nashville Statement was released, ten Biola University faculty members signed on. Now, there are over a dozen. The Nashville Statement's vicious, anti-LGBTQ principles reverberated throughout Christian campuses across the country. For example, article VII of the Nashville Statement says, "WE DENY that adopting a homosexual or transgender self-conception is consistent with God's holy purposes in creation and redemption."<sup>6</sup> However, Biola University's policy on same-sex attraction acknowledges that students may self-identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual: "Biola University believes that students are best supported if they are able to share their questions, struggles, or their self-understanding with trusted others, including those in Student Development."<sup>7</sup> In addition, Biola University houses its own LGB Christian group, *Sustinere*.<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that Biola University does not even acknowledge transgender students.

In response to the conflict between Biola University policy and article VII of the Nashville Statement, the Tyler Clementi Foundation makes the following requests:

- VI. WE REQUEST that Biola University make a formal and public denouncement of article VII of the Nashville Statement.
- VII. WE REQUEST that ALL Biola University staff and faculty be given the same freedom to respond to the Nashville Statement without fear of retaliation from university administration.
- A. WHEREAS some Biola University professors are on record fearing their job security due to their LGBTQ-affirming beliefs.<sup>9</sup>
  - B. WHEREAS Biola University has argued that faculty members who signed the Nashville Statement were exercising their "academic freedom," the university must actively ensure that ALL faculty have that freedom.

**The Tyler Clementi Foundation asks that these requests please be addressed promptly, in writing, by 5:00 PM on Friday, December 1, 2017, via email to Erin Green, Coordinator of Faith Programs at the Tyler Clementi Foundation: [erin@TylerClementi.org](mailto:erin@TylerClementi.org).**

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<sup>6</sup> See "Article VII" at <https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement/>.

<sup>7</sup> See "Sexuality & Relationships Policy" at <https://studenthub.biola.edu/undergraduate-student-handbook-sexuality-relationships>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://studenthub.biola.edu/sustinere>.

<sup>9</sup> This was acknowledged and admitted to by Biola Vice President, Dr. Deborah Taylor, on 11 Nov. 2017 during a formal meeting with Erin Green and witness, Pastor Danny Cortez.



## Tyler Clementi Foundation Requests For Biola University Supporting Evidence

November 28, 2017

1. Alan Shelmon's hard copy handout for his portion of the seminar- this corresponds to the slide on conversion therapy.
2. Conversion therapy endorsement Powerpoint slide presented during Alan Shlemon's presentation.
3. Biola's official statement posted to their website that denies that an endorsement of reparative therapy ever occurred despite the overwhelming evidence showing otherwise.
4. Maynard Hearn's eyewitness testimony of Alan Shlemon's presentation.



**TYLER CLEMENTI  
FOUNDATION**

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# Addressing Homosexuality: Clarity & Compassion

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. The culture believes:

1. It's cool to be "gay."
2. 10% of the population is homosexual.
3. Homosexuality is normal.
4. Homosexuals are born that way.
5. Your biological sex doesn't determine your gender identity.
6. Male and female are not the only gender identities.
7. Christians hate the LGBT community.
8. The Bible has been mistranslated and wrongly used to condemn the LGBT community.
9. The Bible is an outmoded piece of literature.

### B. Because of these cultural beliefs, Christians face many challenges.

1. Many Christians are believing that loving someone entails accepting their behavior.
2. Young believers think they face a dilemma: fidelity to their faith or to their gay friends/family.
3. Christians are buying into pro-gay theology.
4. Entire denominations are capitulating to pro-gay theology.

### C. Christians must proceed by following an important principle: Know the truth, but speak it with compassion.

1. We need to know the truth about what both Scripture and science say about this topic.
2. We need to speak that truth with compassion.
  - a. Learning the truth will drive us to have compassion.

## II. WHAT SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY

### A. Why should we care what science (or secular research) says?

1. God speaks through both Scripture (special revelation) and science (general revelation). Science, properly practiced (and not hijacked for political purposes) reveals what's true about the God's creation.
2. It's valuable to use a source of authority that non-Christians believe is trustworthy.
3. Science debunks a lot of the myths the culture believes.

### B. Is 10% of the population gay?

1. The most recent studies indicate that 10% of the American population is *not* gay.
2. Despite the inaccuracy of this figure, it was used for decades to promote the idea that "[homosexuals] are everywhere."

### C. Is homosexuality just as *normal* as heterosexuality?

1. Homosexual behavior *doesn't entail normal sexual use of the body*.
  - a. Human bodies are made for heterosexual sex.
  - b. Men who have sex with men (MSM), for example, use parts of their bodies in ways that don't work together.
2. Homosexual behavior *doesn't entail normal health risks*.
  - a. People who identify as LGBT experience higher than normal health risks.

### D. Are homosexuals born that way?

1. Research from twin studies provides evidence that homosexuals are not born that way.
2. Leading secular (and LGBT-identified) researchers claim homosexuals are not born that way.

### E. Do people choose to have same-sex attraction?

1. Most homosexuals never choose who they are attracted to.

## **F. What is one known cause of same-sex attraction?**

1. Homosexuality can result from a developmental process.
2. It's not about sex. It's about gender identity (*not* the same as culture's current use of this term).
  - a. Gender identity is a *subconscious* belief about what gender you believe yourself to be.
  - b. Opposites attract: You are attracted to the body that is opposite of your gender identity.
3. Three stages of gender identity development:
  - a. Gender identity phase
  - b. Nurturing phase
  - c. Erotic phase
4. This pathway to same-sex attraction makes sense of the experience of many homosexuals.

## **G. Can sexual attractions change?**

1. An ancient report (1 Cor. 6:9-11) indicates that homosexuals could change.
2. Thousands of testimonies of former homosexuals affirm that change is possible.
3. Scientific research affirms that sexual attraction is fluid.

## **H. Can people change their sex?**

1. Sex change through surgery is impossible.
  - a. You can be mistaken about your gender identity, but not your biological sex.
  - b. Your biological sex is unchangeable.

### III. SPEAK THE TRUTH WITH COMPASSION

#### A. For any context:

1. Avoid clichés that kill.
  - a. “Homosexuality is a choice [or lifestyle].”
  - b. “God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.”
  - c. “God hates the sin, but loves the sinner.”
2. Don’t treat homosexuality as the worst sin.
  - a. The Bible doesn’t teach this.
  - b. It creates barriers to healthy relationships.
3. Distinguish between public policy concerns and personal interaction with homosexuals.
  - a. Don’t let your anger/hostility towards political and public policies carry over into your relationships with friends and family who identify as LGBT.
4. Make conversational character a priority.
  - a. Avoid speaking in harsh, crass, and insensitive ways.
  - b. Remember, you’re an ambassador for Jesus. Speak in a way that represents Him honorably.
5. Follow a key principle: Be consistent.
  - a. Treat a homosexual the same way you would treat a heterosexual in a morally comparable situation.

#### B. For the church:

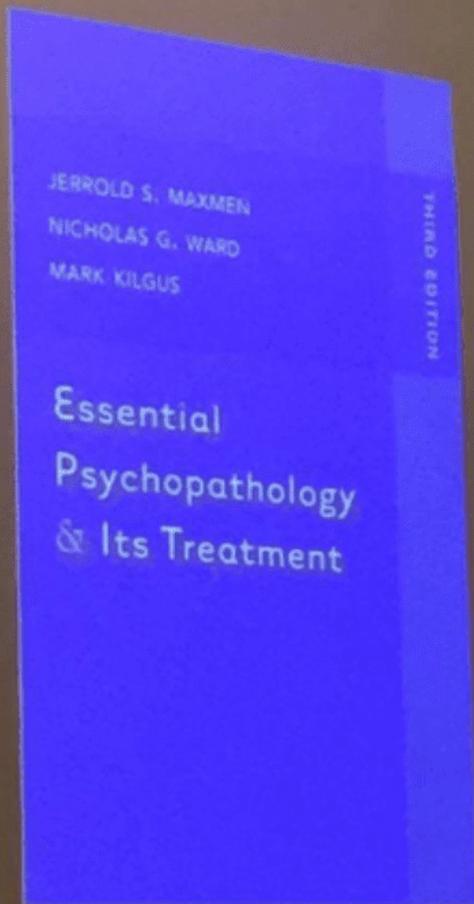
1. Welcome self-identified gays and lesbians to church.
2. Church leadership is off limits to practicing homosexuals (it’s off limits to *anyone* in ongoing, unrepentant sin).

3. For faithful Christians with same-sex attraction, treat them like other believers.
  - a. Christians with same-sex attraction are similar to Christians who struggle with other proclivities towards sin.
4. Don't make jokes about homosexuality.

**C. For your friends and family:**

1. Make it a high priority to maintain your relationship with them.
2. Don't confuse love with accepting behavior.
3. You don't have to decide between your faith and your friends/family who identify as LGBT.
  - a. You can keep your biblical convictions *and* your relationships.
4. Treat homosexuals as you would anyone else.
  - a. Be friends with them and treat them like your other friends.
5. Don't make homosexuality *the* issue.
  - a. Don't try to bring up homosexuality in every conversation.
6. Make a long-term difference, not a short-term statement.
  - a. Don't resort to quick and pithy statements about homosexuality or your convictions.
  - b. Think long term. Try to build a lasting relationship where your influence can last.
7. Make Jesus the issue.
  - a. If you want to share your convictions, share the Gospel.
  - b. People who identify as LGBT (and every person on the planet) need God's pardon.

# Essential Psychopathology and Its Treatment



“While many mental health care providers and professional associations have expressed considerable skepticism that sexual orientation could be changed with psychotherapy and also assumed that therapeutic attempts at reorientation would produce harm, **recent empirical evidence demonstrates that homosexual orientation can indeed be therapeutically changed in motivated clients**, and that reorientation therapies do not produce emotional harm when attempted.”

W. W. Norton & Company; 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (March 30, 2009)

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Nov 26, 2017

## Statement on "Addressing Homosexuality: Clarity & Compassion" Seminar

Oct. 6, 2017 | By Biola Staff

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On September 29-30, 2017, Biola University's Christian Apologetics Department hosted the weekend seminar "Addressing Homosexuality: Clarity and Compassion." It was attended by apologetics students as well as open to the general public. Biola professor of Christian apologetics Sean McDowell taught the seminar. A guest lecturer from outside the university, Alan Shlemon, also presented certain apologetic and social perspectives, including a reference to conversion/reparative therapy. It is important to note that Shlemon did not share the research in support of conversion/reparative therapy, but rather he was sharing resources from multiple secular sources on sexual fluidity.

Articulate critics of the speakers' positions attended the seminar, and their participation was welcomed. They responded literally dozens of times to points the speakers made, criticizing the speakers' logic, offering alternative interpretations of Scripture and bringing up additional research.

The university welcomes such discussion and also has a long history of inviting guest lecturers to speak on a variety of topics with a wide array of opinions. Guest lecturers should not be assumed to represent the positions of Biola University.

While we value academic freedom by inviting discussion on such topics, we also do not as a university endorse reparative therapy. For example, the university's Rosemead School of Psychology has a statement against the practice of reparative therapy. This is true for the therapists Biola trains and the therapy given to Biola's own students. This position is also consistent among Biola's Counseling Center staff.

Additionally, Rosemead requires its doctoral students to receive their own therapy (Didactic therapy). For therapists who would like to work with Biola students they must sign, as part of their application, that they understand this non-endorsement of reparative therapy.

Tags: [Conversion Therapy](#)

### COMMENTS

Erin Green | Oct. 10, 2017 at 8:26 PM

If Shlemon wasn't supporting conversion therapy, why do his printed handouts prove otherwise and directly correlate to it being a viable option? Also, how about an apology to the LGBTQ community for the dissonance between your messaging. The fact that you even have to make this statement is an admit that something was not right here.

Reid Bode | Oct. 12, 2017 at 5:54 PM

If Biola rejects conversion therapy, yet invites a speaker who supports it to provide a "wide variety of opinions," it SHOULD NOT be up to the attendees to provide a counter-opinion. I can not believe that the University would permit this with any other stance explicitly against its policies. Why was this the exception?

K Jackson | Oct. 12, 2017 at 7:53 PM

I love that Biola, the Biola Counseling Center, and Rosemead have clarified that it does not endorse reparative therapy. As an LGBTQ-identified alum, I found that the BCC was a safe and caring place. I also agree with Erin that there's some dissonance here. To me, it feels like there's a hint of gaslighting in this statement. The statement seems to imply that there was an overreaction and Shlemon was not supporting conversion/reparative therapy. Shlemon is open about his approval of reparative therapy, and the study he cited was co-authored by a founder of the National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH). It feels irresponsible of the university to invite Shlemon without more clearly denouncing reparative/conversion therapy. I know too many people who have been devastated by conversion therapy to allow any affirmation of the practice. From the handouts, it looks like part of the seminar was dedicated to being compassionate to the LGBTQ+ community. I appreciate Biola's emphasis on being a loving community. I hope that we can continue to be compassionate to each other.

Gail B | Oct. 14, 2017 at 7:05 PM

I am also relieved to hear that Biola Counseling Center no longer supports the use of reparative therapy. If reparative therapy is defined as providing counseling to change ones sexual orientation (or same-sex attraction), then I received a form of reparative therapy via two different counseling interns (one of them a Rosemead student and the other a Fuller student) during the years 1995-1998 while I was a student at Talbot School of Theology and for a year after I left the school. The therapists were both very kind people and I have no desire to say anything negative about either of them but I also feel very strongly that any form of counseling which endeavors to change something as fundamental to a person as their sexual orientation is very damaging under any circumstance.

Fernando Alfaro | Oct. 18, 2017 at 2:38 AM

I wish I could get back all the money and time I wasted on trips to and from Christian therapists' camps, seminars and sessions. Many were directly or indirectly connected to Biola and other Christian organizations. Instead of an apology or even a mere acknowledgement of any wrongdoing, this nonsense and illegal for minors practice of "reparative therapy" continues to be spoken of as legitimate in Biola circles. Best thing I ever did was to leave its toxic circle of influence. My former best friend, a Biola student, told me he would NEVER have become my friend, had he known I was gay. Others were less direct, but just as noxious.

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## **Maynard W. Hearn's firsthand perspective to Alan Shlemon's presentation.**

There have been concerns about Shlemon's presentation being a recorded instance of an endorsement for reparative therapy within an academic setting that claims to adhere to APA regulations regarding reparative therapy. Myself and fellow attendees have produced photos taken from a portion of Shlemon's powerpoint presentation conducted on Biola's University campus, and a copy of those photos can be produced upon request.

Reviewing my earlier statements, Shlemon's rhetoric was one of unconcern towards members of the LGBTQ community that was distinct from his fellow speaker; as a Master of Apologetics from Biola, Shlemon's work was thinly substantiated, ignorant in presentation, and desperate for peer review. His arguments had not been refreshed with current research on several of the topics he covered (namely, the act of anal sex and sexual health as well as the mental health community's concern with causes for depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder amongst the LGBT population) with the exception that they serve to support his own position; any refuting evidence or factoids, he chalks up to "playing politics," and "hijacking" by the LGBTQ population.

During his own presentation, I witnessed not clarity or compassion, but the "playing of politics". He encouraged his audience to discount decades old research not because a greater understanding had arisen amongst a community of experts, but because the interviewees were "criminals". He delved into the surprising territory of anal sex, showing slides of cellular tissue of

both the rectum and vaginal walls, and yet completely neglected to mention the strong push for sexual health in the LGBTQ community, inferring, and later agreeing to, 'recklessness' as a general attitude towards sex in the aforementioned community. He then discussed 'male homosexuals' mental instability exclusively, and only within the context of his asserted 'pattern' of a female gender identity operating in a male homosexuals's subconsciousness. He failed to include the startling number of indicators that contributed to LGBTQ suicide rates, depression, homelessness, alcoholism, and sexual abuse; things that the conservative church arguably has had a hand in. Instead, he went for an alternative and insufficient theory he could not support. It was based on this alternative theory that he mentioned the practice of reparative therapy, stating that it 'achieved results' among willing, voluntary participants, and that licensed professionals would not perform it without patient consent/request of those specific services (the quote he used came from the text *Essential Psychopathologies and Its Treatment*, 3rd Ed. It should be noted that, to my knowledge, the 4th edition does not hold this view). At the time he said these things, it had not been made clear whether a currently licensed or practicing mental health official could corroborate his claim.

Herein lies the crux of my concern: without appropriately citing medical sources regarding the

risks of increased suicide ideation or depression, and after spending hours devaluing the recommendation of the APA while shoddily explaining the concerns he described as reckless and dishonest, he stated that 'results' could be achieved within this highly controversial practice, without the presence of a licensed professional on the matter available, to a room full of general laymen and academics not in psychology but theology; furthermore, no official faculty lecturer was present from either the Biola Theological department or the Rosemead school of

Psychology. The entire lecture and teaching was recorded--if such a recording still exists, the APA may be interested in viewing this footage.

I am not equipped to express the legal ramifications of this oversight; I am not a lawyer. But I can express the disturbing alarm that gripped me the entire day of this presentation.

Shlemon's own words betrayed his lack of compassion and clarity, and provided an untrue and poorly aggregated picture of the contemporary gay neighbor and made himself to be a poor example of Christ's goodwill. My worry is that more Christians may have departed the event with

the erroneous intent of leveraging their relationships with the hope of 'convincing' their neighbor to seek a risky psychotherapy protocol, instead of being quick to listen and serving the immediate and pressing needs of the community.

Thank you.

Maynard W. Hearn

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