

Cleaning House

A woman's work is never done.

Hypocrites

A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered. — Proverbs 11:9

Citizens of Idaho are currently pondering the ramifications of the seedy conduct of Senator Larry Craig. A sixty-two year old man seeking anonymous sexual encounters in airport bathrooms is pitiable image to consider. Nonetheless, my compassion is tempered because of his public record against gay and lesbian people. In truth, Larry Craig has been notorious in Idaho as a closeted gay man for many years. It staggers the imagination that it took an arrest in a public restroom to alert his congressional colleagues about his off-duty activities — which speaks volumes about how self-serving and purposely blind some politicians are. In my opinion, Craig's fundamental problem lies not with his sexual orientation, but rather his unwillingness to live his life honestly and openly. Instead of a dignified retirement after thirty-plus years of public service he will be forced to slither out the back door branded even by his own party as a liar and a hypocrite.

Larry Craig's fate is of statewide and, arguably, national interest, but a local hypocrite, Roy Atwood, President of New Saint Andrews College, has a more immediate impact on community life in Moscow.

In a letter dated August 31, 2007, submitted to Moscow City Council for action during at September 4, 2007, meeting, Roy Atwood argues against a proposed city ordinance which would govern the operation of boarding houses.

His letter concludes with a four-point summary:

1. [The proposed ordinance] does not address the principal problems of behavior in "Party House" neighborhoods.
2. [It] Unnecessarily intrude[s] city government into families and homes that are not now and never have been a problem.
3. [It] Will likely lead to arbitrary and selective enforcement with discriminatory intent, and,
4. [It] Will actually encourage housing arrangements that will potentially lead to more of the kinds of problems the changes are intended to solve.

Okay, boys and girls, buckle on your crampons and we'll join Roy on the slippery slope he has elected to scale. My view from the top is considerably more panoramic than the one Roy describes, but I warn you in advance, the downward slide is precipitous.

1. Party House Problems

Roy Atwood knows something about "Party Houses." A private home, known to intimates as "The Compound," was owned by a (former) Christ Church member and rented to several NSA students. The amenities included a casino, and the sale of alcohol to minors. It out-partied most party houses, and eventually when investigated (internally by the elders) cost the innocent members of the congregation \$1000 of their tithes to pay off outstanding gambling debts to the home owner. Of course, the multiple crimes committed at this group home were never reported to civil authorities, but robust slaps on the wrist were distributed to all the little lawbreakers, and Roy lost his eldership . . . but not the leadership of NSA. For a complete understanding of this sordid tale of knuckle-brained junior Kirker hi-jinks visit dougspotch.org. The site features primary documents, along with editorial commentary. As usual, cover-up and minimize was the first line of defense for the Kirk. Think Nixon or Bush II White House and you'll have a clear understanding of Kirkish modus operandi.

Of all the egregious offenses committed in non-sectarian Party Houses, and no doubt there are many, none approach the gravity and repulsiveness of the year-and-a-half [serial molestation](#) and the separate but concurrent and equally stealthy seduction of a very young woman perpetrated by a former NSA student and a former Greyfriars (seminary) student on the children of boarding-house owners. The criminal behavior of those men should have be sufficient cause to bring the boarding-house scheme to a dead stop. But it was not. Two years to the month after the events were brought to the attention of the civil authorities, NSA officials continued to busily to recruit boarders:

—Forwarded Message—

From: Christ Church
Sent: Mar 23, 2007 11:52 AM
Subject: Housing NSA students

Dear Kirkers,

If you are interested in housing a New Saint Andrews College student, please contact me, Aaron Rench. Prospective students are looking for various housing options from apartment rentals to boarding families.

Please feel free to call me with any questions or email me with a short description of the housing opportunity — something that could be forwarded on to interested students.

My phone is 882-1566 and email is arench@nsa.edu.

Cordially,

Aaron

2. Unnecessary Intrusion by Government into Problem-free Private Homes

This is a richly ironic argument, and, I mean *rich*

literally. There are big bucks for the big boys in Christ Church who run boarding houses. Between 2000 and 2005 several elders, deacons, and privileged laymen raked in the dough from providing room and board to NSA students. Led by their pastor, these entrepreneurs include:

- Minister
Douglas Wilson, 19 boarders
- Parish Elders
Dale Courtney, 18 boarders
John Grauke, 13 boarders
Jim Nance, 9 boarders
Wes Struble, 6 boarders
Matt Whitling, 13 boarders
- Christ Church Deacons
Eric Burnett, 11 boarders
John Carnahan, 2 boarders
Tom Garfield, 1 boarders

Roy Atwood neglected to mention in his City Council letter that he enjoys the financial benefit provided by his own boarding-house operation. The all-time big winner in the Kirk Boarding-House Stakes is Chris Schlect, Academic Dean of New St. Andrews, who during this five year period boarded a total of 37 students in his North Polk Home.

The list on this site identifies only Kirk leaders. Many Kirkers run boarding houses. Thanks to the contemptuous attitude toward community ordinances displayed by the shepherds, we can not be surprised at the sheep follow their example. The total number of boarders between the years 2000–2005 appears to be 309. (It should be noted that some of these students were living in homes outside city limits which are not governed by city ordinance. Until 2006 Doug Wilson was not subject to city ordinances regarding boarding houses. He is now.)

You may wonder why the boarding statistics end in 2005; the following email answers that question.

—Original Message—

From: [Christ Church](#)

Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2006 9:06 AM

To: office@christkirk.com; TrinityReformedChurch@gmail.com

Subject: students in church directory

Due to problems we have faced with boarding students, the church directory will only include the email addresses and cell phone numbers of students that board with families. If you are in an apartment or student house we will be happy to publish your address. If you need the address of a boarding student you will have to call or email them personally. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Christine LaMoreaux, Administrative Secretary Christ Church - Anselm House
205 East 5th Street P.O. Box 8741
Moscow, ID 83843
office@christkirk.com
Voice: (208) 882-2034
Fax: (208) 892-8724 www.christkirk.com

Apparently the “problem” that Ms. LaMoreaux refers to is that the church directory served as a source for the local addresses of boarding students. It is true that the church directories provided irrefutable information regarding boarding houses, but they were not the sole basis for accurate data. In 2006 NSA students circulated a petition asking merchants and citizens to support the presence of NSA in the Central Business District of Moscow. It was signed by many NSA students who listed their Moscow addresses, and since it was entered into the public record at a city council meeting it became a public document. Since 2006 the church directory has not included local addresses for boarding students. The NSA boarding scam continues unabated but has “cleverly” chosen to conduct their sub-rosa business in a deliberately surreptitious fashion.

If you think church authorities were unfamiliar with the city code which controlled the number of boarders in residential neighborhoods, think again. Leaders were well aware of CUP requirements. A visit to zonemoscow.com documents the motivation behind their behavior

and the history of their familiarity with the relevant ordinances.

3. Selective Enforcement

College towns across the nation face the challenges connected with unregulated group living arrangements of college students. When the proposed changes in the boarding house/Party House ordinance was presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission many citizens testified to the problems associated with living near these kinds of homes. Their concerns are legitimate and must be respected. These citizens have the right to expect the protection and enforcement of ordinances which ensure the right to the quiet enjoyment of their property. There is no evidence that NSA boarding houses were the target of the proposed changes — indeed, as Roy knows, they were not singled out by name in the public testimony. They are however, in my opinion, a significant part of the problem.

To my knowledge, NSA is the sole institution in this town that initiates and invites public scrutiny by advertising on its website the opportunity to live in a boarding house.

Christian families in the area have also opened their homes to New Saint Andrews students. . . . Once students submit their deposit or fees confirming that they'll be attending in the fall, the College is then able to release the housing information it has and give confirmed fall enrollees opportunity to explore their options directly with housing providers. ([NSA](#))

4. Encourage Problematic Housing Arrangements

This redundant iteration of undocumented conjectures in Roy's laundry list of objections is not worth refuting.

It is fair to ask why and how my husband and I became involved in this issue. We are not city residents and the boarding houses have no immediate impact on us. In truth I have been aware of the boarding houses for many years prior to my husband's letter of complaint to the city. My response to the question is plain and straightforward. Two and a half years ago I was approached by an acquaintance who lived near a Kirk boarding house. She was tired of having her driveway blocked by NSA student's cars, she was tired of having trash thrown on her lawn by boarders, and she was tired of the boarder generated disruptions in her quiet residential neighborhood. Despite expressing her concerns repeatedly to the home owners no resolution to the problems were initiated. On several occasion she complained to appropriate city authorities. They showed minimal interest and failed to enforce existing city ordinances which would have resolved the situation.

To fully understand her dilemma another element must be introduced into this narrative. Many members of our community are well aware that publicly, or indeed privately, standing against Kirk leadership comes with a high price. For Christ Church/Trinity Reformed members, shunning is usually an effective measure to force compliance. If that technique fails to bring dissidents into line, economic sanctions including firing from Kirk-related employment is a useful (and used) tool. Kirk imposed "punishment" ratchets up from that point, but is not germane in this discussion.

Non-Kirk residents of Moscow are aware that painful economic consequences become real possibilities if one opposes Kirk leadership on civic issues. These tactics include boycott of businesses and letters to employers and state officials alleging a variety of imaginary and repugnant offenses. In short, the woman who spoke to me was afraid of the consequences to her family business if she insisted the city enforce the boarding house ordinance and, yet, she really wanted to be able to enjoy her home and yard as she had for the many years prior to the arrival of the boarding-house operation. (It is a sad, indeed, tragic, state of affairs, that a church should be identified with such un-Christian behavior.)

Because she was aware that I have publicly challenged the Kirk on other civic issues she wondered if I thought there was anything that could be done. Hence, my husband's letter. And, now, almost two years later, we are finally hopeful that the City Council will enact legislation that will protect not only her property rights, but the rights and privileges of other property owners who have endured the Party Houses and Boarding Houses without any effort on the part of city officials to mitigate the situation.

For me, the second part of my reasoning for publicizing the boarding-house scheme is far more compelling than the first. It is my firm conviction that any organization which claims to be guided by the gospel of Jesus Christ but in reality is structured and operated like the Mafia voluntarily forfeits the respect that they might, in ordinary circumstances, expect to enjoy. In this specific situation, I have publicly and privately expressed my view to Doug Wilson, many elders and officials, and church members that Doug's leadership and the elders and deacons who provide the toadying, self-serving apparatus who enforce his decrees are an unmitigated disgrace to the gospel. I willingly accept the ridicule and harassment from the Kirk as the natural consequence of my statements. And I hold no grudges. You don't have to be a Christian to understand that if you stick your hand into a hole in the desert you are likely to be bitten by a rattlesnake. Nonetheless, I beg the leadership and the membership of Christ Church to turn away from their infamous love of feasting and imbibing the deliberately selective inbred fellowship and, instead, turn with sincerity and good will, understandably not in my direction, but to the rest of Moscow, who do not deserve the ill-treatment they have received at your hands. I pray that you will abide by the words of Scripture that command Christians to "be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves" (Rom. 13:1-3).

I beg you to honor and observe our city ordinances. Please apply for the necessary permits to operate boarding houses and comply with the lawful parameters described in the ordinance. At that point, this sorry issue will quickly fade into well deserved oblivion.

Rose

Posted by Rose on Saturday, September 1, 2007, at 10:49 am | Filed under [Nuisance Andrews](#), [My Own Private Idaho](#), [Politics](#), [Whited Sepulchres](#) | [Print](#)

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