

Some Caucasian North Carolina Educators Find Book by African-American Author ‘Insulting to African-American Readers’

NORFOLK, VA – August 31 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Martha J. Ross Rodgers, an author for Jireh Publishers (www.jirehpublishers.com), is an African-American woman that writes motivational books on diversity and moving beyond racial, economic, and cultural stereotypes. Imagine her surprise when some members of the 2005 North Carolina Textbook Committee stated that her book “Awakenings” was “religiously insulting” and “insulting to African-Americans.”



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“Awakenings” is the “real world” story of a 15-year-old high school student that must beat society’s negative expectations of her, cultural prejudice and economic problems in order to achieve her dreams. Ross-Rodgers presented “Awakenings” and its accompanying workbooks to the Textbook Committee in hopes of it being accepted into North Carolina’s public school districts.

“I was in shock,” said Ross-Rodgers, “for the book makes no references to religion. And as for race, the book and accompanying workbooks encourage readers to identify and move beyond common stereotypes and expectations. The book is already being used in some public schools and programs. Plus, some Talent Search and Upward Bound programs at historically Black colleges and

universities are using this book!"

"This 'insulting' book has been approved and listed in California's Department of Education Legal Compliance Catalog. North Carolina's comments are especially shocking considering that the feedback received from African-American students, parents, and teachers has always been positive," Ross-Rodgers continued.

The praise for "Awakenings" extends beyond a single racial group though. One Caucasian newspaper reviewer of "Awakenings" wrote: "Awakenings is especially powerful in the fact that it transcends race, even though it has been described as a 'Black' book." Furthermore, "Awakenings" is currently being distributed in Malaysia, Africa, the Philippines, Korea, and Singapore.

"It is frightening to think that anyone can speak on what is good or bad for an entire ethnic group. In a sense, it reminds me of slavery... Caucasian slave owners consistently determined what was good and/or bad for their slaves. So to the Caucasian North Carolina educators who stated that "Awakenings" is "insulting to African-Americans," I too am insulted. It is insulting to me that you decided that "Awakenings" is "insulting to African-Americans" without first consulting them.

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