

The Daily Beast Publishes In-Depth Report On Lawsuit Filed By Wigdor LLP Against Nicholas Sparks And Epiphany School Of Global Studies

June 14, 2019 • News & Press

On Thursday, June 13, 2019, *The Daily Beast* published an in-depth exposé titled “[Author Nicholas Sparks Tried to Ban LGBT Club and Student Protests at His Christian School, Emails Reveal](#)” regarding a lawsuit filed by Wigdor LLP on behalf of former headmaster Saul Hillel Benjamin against best-selling novelist Nicholas Sparks and the private school he founded, The Epiphany School of Global Studies. A six-day trial in the case is scheduled to begin August 14, 2019 in the Eastern District of North Carolina.

The Daily Beast article included emails written by Nicholas Sparks, which were introduced to the Court as evidence in connection with the parties’ summary judgment submissions, in which he appears to resist Mr. Benjamin’s efforts to increase diversity at the school:

“In one stern message, Sparks chastised the former headmaster for ‘what some perceive as an agenda that strives to make homosexuality open and accepted.’ In another, he put forward a motion to ban student protest at the school, an impulse that came directly in response to two lesbian girls planning to announce their orientation during chapel. In a third, while listing complaints against Benjamin, he cites ‘misplaced priorities at the school level (GLBT, diversity, the beauty of other religions, as opposed to academic/curricular/global issues, Christian traditions, etc.).”

Mr. Benjamin was eventually forced out of his position as Headmaster, with Mr. Sparks and The Epiphany School refusing to honor the severance terms of his employment contract, according to the Complaint. The lawsuit, which also contains claims of disability discrimination and defamation, further alleges that Mr. Sparks made false statements to various members of the school community that Mr. Benjamin suffered from a mental disorder such as Alzheimer’s disease, and then used that misdiagnosis to somehow justify unlawfully terminating Mr. Benjamin’s employment.

In response to *The Daily Beast* article, Mr. Sparks issued a statement defending his actions.

EXCLUSIVE: Emails show author Nicholas Sparks tried to ban the LGBT Club at his Christian school <https://t.co/blZpxYNm7e>

– The Daily Beast (@thedailybeast) [June 13, 2019](#)

Mr. Benjamin is represented by Wigdor LLP Founding Partner [Douglas H. Wigdor](#), Partners [Lawrence M. Pearson](#) and [Michael J. Willemin](#).

Statement from Wigdor LLP Partner Lawrence M. Pearson:

“The emails written by Nicholas Sparks speak for themselves. Despite Mr. Sparks’s attempts to downplay his discriminatory actions, he does not get to decide what is or isn’t “news.” We look forward to vindicating Mr. Benjamin’s rights at trial in August.”

[Read The Daily Beast article here](#)

[Read the Full Complaint Here](#)

The Daily Beast

“Author Nicholas Sparks Tried to Ban LGBT Club and Student Protests at His Christian School, Emails Reveal”

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

HuffPost

“Unearthed Emails Appear To Back Suit Accusing Nicholas Sparks of Racism, Homophobia”

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Newsweek

“Twitter Reacts to Report That Nicholas Sparks Tried to Ban LGBT Club, Student Protests at His Private School”

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Variety

“Nicholas Sparks Responds as LGBT Discrimination Claim Resurfaces”

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

The Cut

"Nicholas Sparks Didn't Want an LGBTQ Club at His Private School"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Fast Company

"The most damning parts of the 'Daily Beast's explosive Nicholas Sparks exposé"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Vulture

"Nicholas Sparks Didn't Want an LGBTQ Club at His Private School"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Advocate

"Nicholas Sparks Tried to Stop an LGBTQ Club From Forming at His School"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Pink News

"Author Nicholas Sparks in legal battle over attempt to ban school LGBT club"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

The Mary Sue

"Faith-Based School Cofounded by Nicholas Sparks Accused of Homophobic, Racist Policies and Ideology"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

UPROXX

"'The Notebook' Author Nicholas Sparks Hits Back At Claims He's Homophobic And Racist"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Perez Hilton

"'The Notebook' Author Nicholas Sparks Accused Of Banning LGBT Club At School He Founded"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

TheBlaze

"Best-selling novelist Nicholas Sparks under fire for reportedly trying to ban LGBTQ club at his Christian school"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Rolling Stone

"In Advance of 'The Notebook' Musical, Nicolas Sparks Accused of Homophobia After Release of Damning Emails"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

People

"Author Nicholas Sparks Accused of Banning LGBT Club at School He Co-Founded: Report"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Washington Post

"Emails show author Sparks objecting to pro-gay 'agenda'"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Deadline Hollywood

"Author Nicholas Sparks Dismisses Allegations of Homophobia & Racism As Broadway Readies For 'The Notebook' Musical"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Business Insider

"Nicholas Sparks reportedly tried to ban an LGBTQ club at the private prep school he founded, emails show"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

VICE

The Daily Beast Publishes In-Depth Report On Lawsuit Filed By Wigdor LLP Against Nicholas Sparks And Epiphany School Of Global Studies

"Throw Nicholas Sparks And 'The Notebook' Into The Trash"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Refinery29

"Nicholas Sparks Accused of Trying to Ban LGBTQ+ Club At His School"

June 14, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Jezebel

"Smarm Man Nicholas Sparks Didn't Want a Club for Gay Students at His Private Prep School"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Entertainment Weekly

"The Notebook author Nicholas Sparks hits back at claims he is anti-gay"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Esquire

"Nicholas Sparks, Author of Your Mom's Second and Fifth Favorite Novels, Allegedly Tried to Ban an LGBT Club"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Queerty

"Leaked emails reveal author Nicholas Sparks' true feelings about LGBTQ people and they're not nice"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

Heavy

"Saul Benjamin, Former Headmaster Suing Nicholas Sparks: 5 Fast Facts You Need to Know"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)

AV Club

"Nicholas Sparks tried to ban an LGBTQ+ club and student protest from his school, like a villain in a book"

June 13, 2019

[Read PDF](#)

[Read Online](#)