

# Nicholas Sparks accused of being racist, homophobic in ex-employee's lawsuit

'The Notebook' author is being sued by Saul Hillel Benjamin, who worked for Sparks at the Epiphany School of Global Studies, which the writer founded in 2006. Benjamin claims Sparks was abusive and professed 'discriminatory views about African-Americans, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, and individuals of non-Christian faiths.'

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**'The Longest Ride' author Nicholas Sparks is being sued by a former employee of his school in North Carolina.**

Working for author Nicholas Sparks is anything but a walk in the clouds, a new lawsuit charges.

The "Dear John" writer is an abusive homophobic racist, the bombshell suit by a former employee says.

A lawsuit filed by the former headmaster of a North Carolina school run by Sparks says the "non-fiction" version of the author "feels free, away from public, to profess and endorse vulgar and discriminatory views about African-Americans, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, and individuals of non-Christian faiths."

The headmaster, Saul Hillel Benjamin, worked for Sparks at the Epiphany School of Global Studies, which the writer founded in 2006.

The school's stated goal is "improving cultural and international understanding through global education," but that was true in words only, the suit says.

The federal court suit says cultural diversity was the last thing Sparks wanted

and that he fought Benjamin's efforts to make the school more inclusive.

On one occasion, Benjamin said the "Dear John" writer told him he'd brought "disrepute to Epiphany" by going to an event that featured the head of local NAACP chapter, the suit says.

On another, Sparks told him the reason the New Bern school wasn't very diverse despite being located in a county that's 40% African-American was because "black students are too poor and can't do the academic work," the suit says.



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**Sparks is accused of 'professing' discriminatory views about 'African-Americans, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, and individuals of non-Christian faiths.'**

He also referred to bullied gay students as the "gay club," and discriminated against Benjamin because of his "Jewish heritage and Quaker faith."

And after Sparks booted Benjamin in November 2013 after just nine months on the job, he allegedly defamed him by telling Benjamin's wife he thought he had Alzheimer's — one of the subjects of Sparks' hit "The Notebook."

Benjamin's lawyer, Douglas Wigdor, said, "Apparently, despite the efforts our society has made, Mr. Sparks wants to travel back in time and vilify those who promote diversity and tolerance of all people regardless of their sexual orientation and race."

Sparks' lawyer, Theresa Sprain, said, "We deny these allegations" and "will vigorously defend this matter."

Spark's entertainment lawyer, Scott Schwimer, added that, "As a gay, Jewish man who has represented Nick for almost 20 years, I find these allegations completely ludicrous and offensive."

The K-12 school, which is also named as a defendant in the case, did not immediately return a call for comment.

The suit seeks unspecified money damages.