


A gay couple ordered wedding programs. They got pamphlets about Satan, lawsuit says.

 [washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/01/17/a-gay-couple-ordered-wedding-programs-they-got-pamphlets-about-satan-lawsuit-says/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2018/01/17/a-gay-couple-ordered-wedding-programs-they-got-pamphlets-about-satan-lawsuit-says/)
By Eli Rosenberg

Courtesy of David Gottlieb

The day before their wedding in September, Stephen Heasley and Andrew Borg received a package containing what they thought would be the programs for their ceremony.

“Celebration,” their design said in bold letters at the top. “Welcome to Andrew & Stephen’s wedding.”

But when they opened the package, they say, they found 80 copies of a religious pamphlet instead of the 100 copies of the wedding program they had ordered. The pamphlet spoke ominously of sin, lust and temptation, according to a lawsuit they filed in United States District Court in Massachusetts.

“Fight the good fight of the faith,” read a copy of the pamphlet included in the lawsuit, titled “Understanding Temptation.” “The supreme tempter is Satan, who uses our weaknesses to lead us into sin.”

Heasley and Borg, both residents of Australia reportedly in their 30s, are suing the company they had hired to print their wedding programs, Vistaprint, alleging that the pamphlets “were clearly sent to intimidate, threaten and harass Plaintiffs because they are gay men.” The lawsuit charges that the two were discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. Vistaprint, a Dutch company, runs its operations in North America out of Lexington, Mass. Heasley and Borg were married in Pennsylvania.



The wedding program that Heasley and Borg said they ordered from Vistaprint. (Courtesy of David Gottlieb)

The lawsuit says the couple seeks a judgment declaring the company's conduct was unlawful as well as an unspecified award for the "economic damages, mental anguish and emotional distress" they have suffered as a result.

The couple had paid \$79.49 for the programs, according to the suit.

The pamphlet comes from a Catholic campaign called Battle Ready. The pages presented in the lawsuit do not include explicit references to homosexuality. They are illustrated with a picture of a soldier holding his head near an image of a medal.

"Satan entices your flesh with evil desires," it reads. "If you did not desire it, you would not be tempted by it."

In a statement, Vistaprint said it was conducting an investigation into what happened after it was notified of the incident when the lawsuit was filed Tuesday.

"To know that any customer could feel treated in such a way, especially during a time that should be filled with joy, is extremely disheartening," the company said. "We have never been more disappointed to let a customer down. Vistaprint in no way condones — and does not tolerate — discrimination against any of our customers based on their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation."

The company said it had learned that “the materials that were intended to be printed for one customer were incorrectly sent to this couple by a 3rd party fulfiller.”

In a statement, Heasley and Borg’s lawyer, David Gottlieb, said it was “unfortunate that not all corporations are tolerant of the wide array of lifestyles that make up their customer base.

“We are committed to holding Vistaprint and all companies who discriminate against members of the LGBTQ community accountable for their actions,” Gottlieb said.