

American Tarot Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN TAROT ASSOCIATION REGARDING THE REJECTION OF REIGNING MISS CANADA PLUS AS PAGEANT JUDGE BECAUSE SHE READS TAROT CARDS

It is with great disappointment the American Tarot Association reads of the decision by the Miss Toronto Tourism officials to reject the reigning Miss Canada Plus as a pageant judge solely because she reads Tarot cards. However, the most disturbing things regarding the report are the grossly ignorant and damaging statements made by the Miss Toronto Tourism officials regarding those who use Tarot. Their actions and comments have not only displayed religious bigotry toward Ms. Conover, but also blatantly defame people all over the world who use the Tarot as a tool of self discovery and empowerment.

The Tarot deck was created in the fifteenth century in northern Italy. The cards were manufactured for use in a trick-taking game very much like modern Bridge. Even today, the game remains popular in parts of Europe.

Most scholars agree the earliest known decks reflect a Medieval Christian mindset (though the illustrations also draw upon other sources, including mythology). Many authoritative sources believe the earliest Tarot trump cards depict an allegory, or symbolic story, which appears to illustrate the triumph of God's will over all. While cards like Death and the Devil do appear in the deck, these concepts likely do so because they appear in the Bible. Given that the earliest Trump series incorporate images of the Christian resurrection (Judgment) and the appearance of the transfigured Christ (or the dawning of the "New Jerusalem"), no well-informed person or organization would ever associate the cards with demonism or Satanism. Modern decks associate the cards with all kinds of philosophies and trends, but the cards themselves are neither Satanic nor Demonic in origin.

There are millions of Tarot readers worldwide. They are business executives, doctors, lawyers, teachers, housewives, writers, engineers, students, and any other profession that can be named. They are neighbors, sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers. Tarot reading empowers readers and others to think through their options and come to decisions on their own. The cards are used to gain insight into personal growth opportunities, to aid in meditation or concentration practice, to explore options or alternative answers to questions, or to enhance creativity through brainstorming. Within the last few years, the cards are even beginning to appear in therapeutic settings. Such spiritual and internal seeking is a healthy part of the human condition, and should be encouraged, not dismissed.

This incident reflects badly on the diverse and vibrant city of Toronto. Although the Miss Toronto Tourism organization is not affiliated with the city of Toronto's tourism branch, the American Tarot Association strongly encourages the city of Toronto take action to remove itself from any implied affiliation (through the use of the name) with the Miss Toronto Tourism organization. The ATA also calls on the Miss Toronto Tourism organization to issue a public apology not only to Ms. Conover

but to the global community that they have insulted with their statements.

The American Tarot Association strongly encourages an investigation by local government officials into this case and urges them to protect their citizens from such actions. The ATA also calls on all citizens everywhere to boycott events such as these in which such bigotry is encouraged, and to write their local officials and lawmakers that such actions and comments will not be tolerated in 21st century society.