

June 17, 2013 – For Immediate Release

Teen Suicide Sparks New Raffi Book On Social Media Reform

In response to the October 2012 suicide of Vancouver teen Amanda Todd, singer and author Raffi Cavoukian has written a book dedicated to her titled, *Lightweb Darkweb: Three Reasons To Reform Social Media Before It Re-forms Us*. In a voice both passionate and level-headed, Raffi implores systemic changes to make Internet use safe, intelligent and sustainable.

For decades Raffi's music has been the soundtrack for millions of children, and the Washington Post called him "the most popular children's singer in the English-speaking world."

"As a troubadour and tech enthusiast, as an ecology advocate and children's champion, " Raffi writes, "I'm moved to comment on what I sense is an opportunity and crisis of epochal proportions: a chance to optimize the social and environmental benefits of a digitally connected global village by acting quickly to subdue the perils of InfoTech's shadow."

Raffi puts the onus for social media safety squarely with the companies that created (and condone) the ongoing security risks, especially for young users. He takes on the bully culture that relentlessly targets kids for profit with digital precision.

After the Amanda Todd tragedy, Raffi's Centre For Child Honouring co-founded the Red Hood Project (redhoodproject.com), a grassroots movement for social media safety for young users. Its open letter to Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg demanding "safety by design" has a list of notable signatories including Carol Todd, Amanda's mother.

Citing possible generational impacts on intelligence, *Lightweb Darkweb* raises the intrusion of digital technology into early child development as a key issue. Stuart Shanker, a distinguished research professor at York University, calls this "a desperately needed message." Raffi's keen social media insights will be of interest to all users.

Jaron Lanier, Fritjof Capra, and Joseph Weizenbaum all figure in the stories with which *Lightweb Darkweb* makes the case for immediate social media reform. Online video sensation Annie Leonard echoes this plea, as do James Steyer, founder of Common Sense Media, and professor Howard Gardner of Harvard. Digital media authors Sherry Turkle (*Alone Together*) and Nicholas Carr (*The Shallows*) are among those who laud this book.

[Huffington Post](http://HuffingtonPost.com) recently published an excerpt from the book, and the June 17 [MacLean's](http://MacLean's.com) magazine includes an interview with Raffi in both the print and online editions.

Lightweb Darkweb is a book for our times: a call for social media safety by design, corporate social responsibility and clean electronics—a much-needed sustainable vision for the future of InfoTech.

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