



Creep of the Week: The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

By D'Anne Witkowski
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Did you know that gays are rioting across the country against the Mormons? Oh, you know how gays are. Do something to spite them, like passing an anti-marriage amendment in California, and before you know it, we're all, "Bitch, it is ON!" And then we kick your ass while our friends cheer us on because you're queer and the Bible says that's sick.

Oh, wait, I'm confusing gays with drunken frat boys who think they're Christian.

What gays do, apparently, is take to the streets in vengeful, angry mobs and send white powder to Mormon churches. At least that's what it said in the New York Times Dec. 5. Granted, it was in the form of a full-page ad, not in an actual article with a byline that would presumably be fact checked.

Given the dire financial state of U.S newspapers, the Times was probably thrilled to sell a full-page ad to anyone, let alone to The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty. So it's hard to blame them for printing it.

Still, the ad is a load of crap, positioning the Mormon Church as a victim of the big, bad gays, angry about getting their right to marry taken away.

The ad, which carries the big bold headline, "No Mob Veto," is basically an editorial the Times wouldn't actually print unless they were being paid. It positions the Mormons, who gave more than \$20 million to the Yes on 8 campaign, as the real victims of Prop. 8.

It's true that some Mormon temples were vandalized, some services disrupted, some powder-filled envelopes mailed out, presumably by "angry queers." People who engage in such activities are, without question, total dicks. They're also a very small minority.

Granted, there are a lot of people pissed off at the Mormons about what happened in California. Rightly so. While the No Mob Veto ad claims Mormons are being targeted for "merely participating in the debate," the truth is that the campaign against marriage equality by the Mormon Church goes back a decade. Their work to strip a minority group of rights that had already been legally granted was zealous and dogmatic. It's not hard to imagine why gays are angry.

"I am always struck that those in power, those who manipulate the truth to maintain oppressive structures, present themselves to the public as the ones being persecuted," Rev. Dr. Miguel de la Torre told the Human Rights Campaign. "Make no mistake, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty is a powerful organization with an agenda of imposing a narrow religious view upon the rest of America. As we Hispanics say, 'que vergueenza' (what a shameful act)."

"One of the deepest tragedies of the Yes on Proposition 8 campaign in California was its bearing false witness - more plainly stated, its lies - about the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons," said Rev. Rebecca Voelkel of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "In response to the passage of Proposition 8, faithful, honorable,

patriotic Americans from every walk of life and of many sexual orientations and gender identities gathered to say no to lies and yes to love, truth and the American way. To name these overwhelmingly peaceful gatherings as mobs dishonors me, my family, members of my church and so many others who participated in them."

The No Mob Veto project is yet another lie in the arsenal of the anti-gay marriage movement seeking to portray gays and lesbians as people to be feared, not respected and certainly not protected.