



## **Anti-Gay Groups Active in Massachusetts: A Closer Look**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Matt Foreman, Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**

#### **Legislators and media:**

#### **Take a closer look at the extreme views of Coalition for Marriage members**

The “Coalition for Marriage”—comprised of 15 national and local groups—is leading efforts to deny same-sex couples equal marriage rights in Massachusetts. These groups portray themselves as representing mainstream, respectable American “family values.”

In fact, the leading and most wealthy organizations in the coalition are not conservative but reactionary. They espouse views rejected by the vast majority of the people of Massachusetts. For example, the coalition is led by the Massachusetts Family Institute, whose President is Ronald Crews. As a Georgia state legislator, he opposed abortion rights, sought to create “covenant marriages,” which are much harder to leave, and lobbied the Georgia Department of Education to teach creationism in the classroom.

The coalition’s leading organizations routinely use extremist, incendiary rhetoric. A commentary on the Massachusetts Family Institute website says, “The war over same-sex marriage and the war against Islamic totalitarianism are actually two fronts in the same war . . .” Concerned Women for America called newly married gay Canadian couples seeking to enter the U.S. “a new threat to US border security,” describing one couple that tried to enter as a married couple “the latest pair of ‘domestic terrorists.’”

Many of these groups now claim that “marriage” is the issue, and otherwise seek “respect and tolerance” for gay people. In reality, the majority of these groups oppose *any* policy, program or legislation that provides any protection or legal equality for gay people. In fact, *all* the coalition members oppose sexual orientation nondiscrimination laws (which Massachusetts has had since 1989), safe schools initiatives aimed at stopping harassment and violence against students perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, and the inclusion of crimes motivated by anti-gay bias in hate crimes laws. The four largest coalition members even lobbied against victim compensation benefits for the surviving partners of those killed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

While coalition members are outside the mainstream on many social issues, they are most extreme around rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. These groups consistently make shocking, unfounded, and indecent statements about gay people. The Traditional Values Coalition claims that “sex with children—even grammar school kids—is a primary goal of homosexual activists.” Coalition member and parent organization of the Massachusetts Family Institute, Focus on the Family, believes that homosexuality is “treatable” and “preventable,” - concepts rejected by medical science for decades. The Massachusetts Family Institute website links an article titled “The gay youth suicide myth,” even though there is broad consensus within peer-reviewed, scholarly research on the profound extent and impact of harassment and violence against gay youth.



Finally, coalition members frequently talk about the power and wealth of the gay lobby. In fact, a review of income statements shows that the annual income of the Coalition for Marriage exceeds that of organizations advocating for equal marriage rights in Massachusetts by a margin of six to one (\$168 million to \$25 million).

**For more details on the anti-gay Coalition for Marriage's across-the-board opposition to legal equality for gay people and its broader reactionary agenda, see the attached report from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute.**

## **Positions of Coalition for Marriage Members – A Sampling**

### **The Massachusetts Family Institute**

Has called for changes in Massachusetts' divorce laws to require "counseling" before divorce is granted. Posts on its website the commentary of Maggie Gallagher, who recently argued that "polygamy is not worse than gay marriage, it is better" because "at least polygamy...is an attempt to secure stable mother-father families for children." Links to an excerpt from the book *The Pink Swastika* suggesting that Nazism is intrinsically linked to homosexuality.

### **Coalition for Marriage Chair & Massachusetts Family Institute President Ronald Crews**

As a Republican Georgia State Representative from 1992 to 1998, Crews promoted the teaching of creationism in the classroom, opposed abortion rights, and promoted "covenant marriage" legislation that would make it much harder to get divorced. When he was defeated for reelection Crews blamed his loss on "homosexual activists who moved into my district just to be able to vote against me." He then went to work for the Christian Coalition.

### **Focus on the Family**

Claims that "same-sex parenting situations make it impossible for a child to live with both biological parents, thus increasing their risk of abuse." Opposed efforts by New York's Republican governor and mayor to include gay partners in services and benefits for 9/11 victims as advancing the "gay agenda."

### **The Family Research Council**

Opposes no-fault divorce and supports requiring mutual consent of both spouses before divorce is granted. As a Louisiana legislator, FRC head Tony Perkins drafted the first "covenant marriage" law in the U.S., which "only allowed for divorce in what they saw as the biblically licit cases of adultery and abandonment."

### **Concerned Women for America**

Called newly married gay Canadian couples seeking to enter the U.S. "a new threat to US border security," describing one couple that tried to enter as a married couple "the latest pair of 'domestic terrorists.'" Said surviving same-sex partners of those killed on 9/11 were "trying to hijack the moral capital of marriage."

### **Traditional Values Coalition**

TVC chair Lou Sheldon said, in reference to homosexuality, "we believe in intolerance to those things that are evil; and we believe that we should discriminate against those behaviors which are dangerous to individuals and to society." In 1978 Rev. Sheldon sought to ban gay people from teaching in California and in the 1980s supported two California referenda seeking the internment of people with AIDS.

## The Bay State Republican Council

**Opposes “efforts to include sexual orientation as a category for preferential treatment status under civil rights statutes” and “granting homosexuals special privileges, including marriage, domestic partnership benefits, and child custody or adoption.”**

### Massachusetts Catholic Conference

Archbishop Sean O’Malley warned that legalizing gay marriage “would worsen the breakdown of the American family and exacerbate the problems of poverty, child abuse, and human suffering already wrought by ‘widespread cohabitation and galloping divorce rates.’” Earlier in 2003 the Vatican issued a statement accusing gay and lesbian parents of “doing violence” to their children by virtue of being gay.

## Anti-Gay Groups Active in Massachusetts: A Closer Look

by Sean Cahill, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute Director

This report documents the extreme agenda of some of the national and local anti-gay groups lobbying the Massachusetts legislature to ban marriage equality for same-sex couples and oppose more limited forms of partner recognition. It is our hope that legislators will take a second look at these groups and their claims, and reject their divisive, inaccurate claims about gay and lesbian people, as well as the impact of marriage equality for same-sex couples.

### Across the Board Opposition to Legal Equality for Gay and Lesbian People

National religious right groups active in the Bay State include Concerned Women for America, Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council and the Traditional Values Coalition. Local groups include the Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston, the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the Massachusetts State Council of the Knights of Columbus, the Bay State Republican Council, and the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts.

“In short, we believe in intolerance to those things that are evil; and we believe that we should discriminate against those behaviors which are dangerous to individuals and to society.”

*Rev. Lou Sheldon  
Chairman*

*The Traditional Values Coalition*

### Opposition to Sexual Orientation Nondiscrimination Laws

All 15 members organizations of The Coalition for Marriage (the Coalition) oppose sexual orientation nondiscrimination laws, including the law passed by the Massachusetts legislature 15 years ago. The Coalition opposes these laws “because we do not believe that a person’s sexual behavior is comparable to other protected categories such as race or sex—characteristics that are inborn, involuntary, immutable, innocuous and/or in the Constitution.”<sup>1</sup>

Lou Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition (TVC), which is a member of the Coalition for Marriage, wrote in a February 2003 report to TVC’s members, “We are not tolerant of behaviors that destroy individuals, families and our culture. Individuals may be free to pursue such behaviors as sodomy, but we will not and cannot tolerate these behaviors...In short, we believe in intolerance to those things that are evil; and we believe that we should discriminate against those behaviors which are dangerous to individuals and to society.”<sup>2</sup> The Bay State Republican Council “oppose[s] efforts to include sexual orientation as a category for preferential treatment status under civil rights statutes.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Coalition for Marriage (n.d.). *Position Statements: Homosexuals*. Retrieved January 26, 2004, from <http://www.marriagepreservation.org/position.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Sheldon, L. (2003, February). Discrimination and tolerance. *Traditional Values Coalition Special Report*, 21(1).

<sup>3</sup> Bay State Republican Council. (n.d.). Individual liberty. Retrieved March 1, 2004, from <http://www.baystaterеспублиcouncil.homestead.com/IndividualLiberty~ns4.html>

As of early 2004, over 128 million Americans, or 45% of the U.S. population, live in a city, county, or state that outlaws sexual orientation discrimination. Fourteen states have sexual orientation nondiscrimination laws, as well as hundreds of municipalities. In an additional nine states, executive orders protect public sector employees against sexual orientation discrimination.<sup>4</sup> Nondiscrimination laws prevent discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations on the basis of real or perceived sexual orientation. They protect everyone, and do not constitute “special rights” for anyone. In fact, this concept has no legal basis: as Rutgers University Law School Professor Suzanne Goldberg notes, “no such ‘rights’ exist.”<sup>5</sup>

Gay rights laws enjoy bipartisan support from U.S. voters. In a study of public polling during the 2000 presidential election, 56% of Republicans, 70% of Independents, and 75% of Democrats supported sexual orientation nondiscrimination laws.<sup>6</sup> These levels of support are likely higher in Massachusetts. According to a 2003 Gallup poll, nearly nine in 10 Americans support the principle of sexual orientation nondiscrimination, if not the laws required to enforce this practice.<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, most of the national anti-gay groups active in Massachusetts have made an industry out of opposing legal equality for gay and lesbian people. Over the past three decades they have launched more than 100 anti-gay ballot initiatives and referenda to repeal or prevent sexual orientation nondiscrimination laws, safe schools programs, partner recognition, and, most recently, marriage. During these campaigns they deploy defamatory tactics to attack gay and lesbian people and gay rights legislation. For example, in 1978 they sought to ban gay people from teaching in California, and in the mid-1980s two California referenda sought the internment of people with AIDS.<sup>8</sup> In fact, The Traditional Values Coalition’s Lou Sheldon led the 1978 campaign, and supported the AIDS internment initiatives.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Opposition to Same-Sex Partner Recognition Through Domestic Partnership and Civil Unions***

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Campaign. (2003, December). Statewide anti-discrimination laws & policies. Author. Retrieved February 5, 2004, from [http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Your\\_Community&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1338](http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Your_Community&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1338)

<sup>5</sup> Goldberg, S. (1995). Civil rights, special rights and our rights. In Berlet, C. (ed). *Eyes right! Challenging the right wing backlash*. Boston: South End Press. p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> Yang, A. (2001). *The 2000 national elections study and gay and lesbian rights: Support for equality grows*. Washington, D.C: The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

<sup>7</sup> Newport, F. (2003, May 15). Six out of 10 Americans say homosexual relations should be recognized as legal; But Americans are evenly divided on issue of legal civil unions between homosexuals giving them legal rights of married couples. *Gallup News Service*.

<sup>8</sup> Donovan, T., & Bowler, S. (1997). Direct democracy and minority rights: Opinions on anti-gay and lesbian ballot initiatives. In Witt, S. and McCorkle, S. (eds.). *Anti-gay rights: Assessing voter initiatives*. Westport, CT: Praeger. pp. 114-117; Vaid, U. (1995). *Virtual equality: The mainstreaming of gay and lesbian liberation*. New York: Anchor Books. pp. 67, 113.

<sup>9</sup> Hardisty, J. (1999). *Mobilizing resentment: Conservative resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*. Boston: Beacon Press. p. 106.

The Coalition for Marriage also “opposes[s] the creation of civil unions or domestic partnerships.”<sup>10</sup> When Acting Governor Jane Swift extended limited domestic partner benefits to some state employees, the Massachusetts Family Institute denounced this as “special rights for a particular group. These are not equal rights since the decision is only for homosexual couples...Our nation, as well as this commonwealth, was founded on equal rights as asserted through our founding documents. Allowing special rights for a particular group denies these principles and has damaging and far reaching consequences.”<sup>11</sup>

*The Coalition for Marriage argues that “the people” and “the Legislatures” should have the right to decide on rights for same-sex couples, but when the Boston City Council passed a domestic partnership law, it was organizations from this Coalition that sued and successfully got the domestic partnership program struck down.*

The Mass. Family Institute ridicules domestic partner health insurance—offered to employees in long-term, committed relationships—as “sex partner subsidies to homosexual employees.”<sup>12</sup> This characterization of same-sex couples as mere “sex partners” is deeply offensive, especially to life partners who have been together for decades.

The Bay State Republican Council “oppose[s] granting homosexuals special privileges, including marriage, domestic partnership benefits, and child custody or adoption.”<sup>13</sup> In fact, allowing gay and lesbian people to protect their families through having joint legal custody of their children, or through the right to be considered as adoptive parents does not constitute “special privileges;” It is simply equal treatment under the law.

### ***Opposition to Judicial Review and the Courts’ Role in Our Democracy***

Anti-gay groups often imply that their proposals would allow domestic partnerships, which provide some of the benefits of marriage to gay couples, and civil unions, which can provide a separate form of equality at the level of state policy but none of the federal benefits of marriage. Yet these same groups oppose domestic partnership and civil unions. The Coalition for Marriage argues that “the people” and “the Legislatures” should have the right to decide on rights for same-sex couples, but when the Boston City Council passed a domestic partnership law, it was organizations from this Coalition that sued and successfully got the domestic partnership program struck down.

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<sup>10</sup> Coalition for Marriage (n.d.). Position statements: Civil unions. Author. Retrieved January 26, 2004, from <http://www.marriagepreservation.org/position.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Massachusetts Family Institute. (2001, September 10). Massachusetts Family Institute criticizes acting Governor Swift over the extension of special rights for homosexuals. Author. Retrieved March 4, 2004, from <http://www.mafamily.org/Press%20Room%20Folder/Press%20Releases/PressRelease20.htm>; Massachusetts Family Institute. (2001, August 16). Massachusetts Family Institute criticizes acting governor’s decision to extend domestic partner benefits. Author. Retrieved March 4, 2004, from <http://www.mafamily.org/Press%20Room%20Folder/Press%20Releases/PressRelease15.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Massachusetts Family Institute (2003). Issue in focus: Same-sex marriage. Author. Retrieved December 16, 2003, from <http://www.mafamily.org/samesexmarriage.htm>

<sup>13</sup> Baystate Republican Council. (n.d.). The family. Author. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.baystaterеспублиcouncil.homestead.com/Family~ns4.html>

In the wake of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, many religious right groups have cried “judicial tyranny,” portraying legislatures as more democratic than courts. For example, the Catholic Action League called for the Massachusetts State Legislature to impeach and convict for “abuse of office” the four justices who voted for marriage equality for same-sex couples, so the Governor could appoint new justices “who will respect their oath of office.”<sup>14</sup> Yet when they disagree with a legislative action, they challenge such that law in court.

Such was the case with the American Center for Law and Justice, founded by the Christian Coalition’s Rev. Pat Robertson, which filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts—a member of the Coalition for Marriage—to strike down Boston’s municipal domestic partnership policy in 1998-99.<sup>15</sup> The Center for Marriage Law and the Alliance Defense Fund, two other Coalition members, filed a similar lawsuit against domestic partnership benefits in Portland, Maine.<sup>16</sup>

### **Opposition to Safe Schools Programs Using False Claims that Gay People are Pedophiles**

Massachusetts’ Safe Schools Program is a national model for making schools safe for gay and lesbian youth, the children of gay and lesbian parents, and those who are perceived to be gay, bisexual, or gender variant. It was adopted because of the harassment and violence that these youth face in school, which leads to higher dropout rates and a higher risk of suicide.<sup>17</sup> Still, groups in the Coalition for Marriage oppose this program. The Family Research Council (FRC) argues gay and lesbian youth are not any more likely to be harassed in school, and that reports of gay teen suicides are exaggerated,<sup>18</sup> and the Massachusetts Family Institute website includes a link to an article titled “The gay youth suicide myth” by conversion therapy advocate Peter LaBarbera.<sup>19</sup>

The Family Research Council argues that reports of gay teen suicides are exaggerated. This does not reflect the consensus among peer-reviewed, scholarly research on the extent and impact of harassment and violence against gay youth.

<sup>14</sup> Catholic Action League. (2003, November 18). Catholic Action League condemns SJC decision on same-sex marriage. Author. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.frmcgivneyassembly.org/CatholicActionLeague.html>

<sup>15</sup> Barillas, C. (1999, July 9). Mass. high court repeals Boston DP ordinance. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.dataounge.com/dataounge/news/record.html?record=4439>

<sup>16</sup> WorldNet Daily. (2003, August 13). City Sued over ‘domestic partnerships.’ Author. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.intheday.com/articles.php?articleId=619>

<sup>17</sup> Faulkner, A., & Cranston, K. (1998). Correlates of same-sex behavior in a random sample of Massachusetts high school students. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88(2): 262-6.

<sup>18</sup> Dailey, T. (2004, February). Homosexuality and children: The impact for future generations. The Family Research Council: *Homosexuality and Children*, 15(5). Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?I=FP02K&v=PRINT>

<sup>19</sup> For a review of the social science research on anti-gay harassment and violence and its impact on youth, see Cianciotto, J. & Cahill, S. (2004). *Education policy issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth*. New York: Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Available at <http://www.thetaskforce.org/library>

The Family Research Council,<sup>20</sup> Peter LaBarbera, the Traditional Values Coalition (TVC) and others have long argued that gay people seek to abuse children. TVC’s report, “Homosexuals Recruit Public School Children” claims that “homosexual militants” have an ongoing “campaign to legalize sex with children,” and are “pushing for aggressive recruitment programs in public schools...Sex with children—even grammar school kids—is a primary goal of homosexual activists.” The report warns, “As homosexuals continue to make inroads into public schools, more children will be molested and indoctrinated into the world of homosexuality. Many of them will die in that world.”<sup>21</sup>

Claims that gay activists seek to legalize sex with grammar school-age children are vile lies. All the major gay rights organizations support age of consent laws that treat heterosexual sex and homosexual sex equally. Gay people oppose child sexual abuse and support laws that help prevent and punish such abuse.

The claim that homosexuals are more likely to molest children has been definitively refuted by peer-reviewed social science research. A 1998 study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* noted that 90% of pedophiles are men and that 95% of these individuals are heterosexual.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the limited research indicates that gay men and lesbians are *less* likely than heterosexuals to sexually abuse children. Two studies that examined the sexual orientation of convicted child molesters found that less than 1% in one study and 0% in the other were gay or lesbian.<sup>23</sup>

“Since homosexual couples can’t reproduce, they will simply go after *your* children for seduction and conversion to homosexuality.”  
 Rev. Lou Sheldon  
 Chairman  
 Traditional Values Coalition

### **Opposition to Parenting in Gay and Lesbian Families**

Many of the national and local anti-gay groups oppose parenting by gay people, claiming that this harms children. Focus on the Family claims that “same-sex parenting situations make it impossible for a child to live with both biological parents, thus increasing their risk of abuse.”<sup>24</sup> In a full-page ad placed in the *Boston Globe* January 23, 2004, Focus on the Family also implied that gay marriage would lead to gay parenting in the future, not that it would protect existing lesbian and gay families raising children: “Same-sex marriage advocates and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court are asking our state and nation to enter a massive, untested social

<sup>20</sup> Sprigg, P. (2003). Questions and answers: What’s wrong with letting same-sex couples ‘marry’? *Family Research Council in Focus*. Issue No. 256. Retrieved December 3, 2003, from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?I=IF03H01&f=PG03I03>

<sup>21</sup> Sheldon, L. (n.d.). Homosexuals recruit public school children. Activists use issues of “safety,” “tolerance,” and “homophobia” as tactics to promote homosexuality in our nation’s schools. *Traditional Values Coalition Special Report*. 18(11).

<sup>22</sup> Holmes, W. C., & Slap, G. B. (1998). Sexual abuse of boys: Definitions, prevalence, correlates, sequelae and management. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 280(21), 1855–1862.

<sup>23</sup> Jenny, C., & Roesler, T. A. (1994). Are children at risk for sexual abuse by homosexuals? *Pediatrics*, 94(1), 44; Groth, A. N., & Birnbaum, H. J. (1978). Adult sexual orientation and attraction to underage persons. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 7(3), 175–181.

<sup>24</sup> Stanton, G. (2003, August 27). Is marriage in jeopardy? Focus on the Family: Marriage and Social Issues: Marriage and Family FAQs. Retrieved October 3, 2003, from <http://family.org/cforum/fosi/marriage/FAQs/a0026916.cfm>

experiment with coming generations of children. We must ask one simple question: Is the same-sex ‘family’ good for children?” Given that at least 8,000 children are being raised by two lesbian or two gay parents in Massachusetts, according to the 2000 Census, parenting by same-sex couples is not some “massive, untested social experiment.”<sup>25</sup> It’s the lived reality for thousands of Massachusetts residents.

Maggie Gallagher, whose commentary is posted on the Massachusetts Family Institute (MFI) website, has testified at two recent U.S. Congressional hearings against same-sex marriage.<sup>26</sup> She also testified against same-sex marriage in front of the Massachusetts legislature, and her testimony is posted on the MFI website.<sup>27</sup> Last summer, Gallagher wrote that legalizing same-sex marriage, “would mean the law was neutral as to whether children had mothers and fathers. Motherless and fatherless families would be deemed just fine.”<sup>28</sup>

“Polygamy is not worse than gay marriage, it is better. At least polygamy, for all its ugly defects, is an attempt to secure stable mother-father families for children.”

*Maggie Gallagher*  
 “Marriage expert” frequently cited by MFI

Such claims go against a large body of social science research, which confirms that children raised by gay or lesbian parents are not disadvantaged relative to their peers.<sup>29</sup> The vast majority of children’s advocacy organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics,<sup>30</sup> the National Association of Social Workers,<sup>31</sup> and the American Psychological Association (APA),<sup>32</sup> recognize that gay and lesbian parents are just as good as heterosexual parents, and that children thrive in gay- and lesbian-headed families. One APA publication reports, “not a single study has found children of gay or lesbian parents to be disadvantaged in any significant respect relative to children of heterosexual parents.”<sup>33</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ash, M., Badgett, M., Folbre, N., Saunders, L., and Albelda, R. (2004, February). *Same-sex couples and their children in Massachusetts: A view from Census 2000*. Amherst, MA: Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies.

<sup>26</sup> Links to articles and commentary by Maggie Gallagher are available at <http://www.mafamily.org/commentary.htm>

<sup>27</sup> Gallagher, M. (2003, July 14). The stakes: Why we need marriage. *National Review Online*. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-gallagher071403.asp>

<sup>28</sup> Gallagher, M. (2003, August 4-11). What is marriage for? Children need mothers and fathers. *The Weekly Standard*. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/002/939pxiqa.asp?pg=2>

<sup>29</sup> Stacey, J., & Biblarz, T. (2001). (How) does the sexual orientation of the parent matter? *American Sociological Review*. 66(2), 159-183.

<sup>30</sup> Perrin, E. C., & The Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health. (2002). Technical report: Co-parent or second-parent adoption by same-sex parents. *Pediatrics*, 109(2), 341–344.

<sup>31</sup> Ferrero, E., Freker, J. and Foster, T. (2002). *Too high a price: The case against restricting gay parenting*. New York: ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project. Available at <http://www.lethimstay.com/pdfs/gayadoptionbook.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Patterson, C. J. (1995). *Lesbian and gay parenting: A resource for psychologists*. Washington: American Psychological Association. Available at <http://www.apa.org/pi/parent.html>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Many same-sex couples are raising children. Estimates of the number of lesbian or gay parents in the U.S. range from two to eight million.<sup>34</sup> These figures include many single parents who are lesbian, gay or bisexual. Data from the 2000 Census indicate that 34% of lesbian couples and 22% of gay male couples<sup>35</sup> have at least one child under 18 years of age living in their home.<sup>36</sup> While these figures may not seem that high, when compared with parenting rates among married heterosexual couples (46% of whom are raising children), lesbian couples on the 2000 Census parent at about three quarters the rate of married straight couples, and gay male couples parent at about half the rate. Many more are parents of children who do not live with them, or are “empty nesters” because their children are away at college or living on their own as adults.

Last fall, Boston’s Catholic Archbishop Sean O’Malley warned that legalizing gay marriage “would worsen the breakdown of the American family and exacerbate the problems of poverty, child abuse, and human suffering already wrought by ‘widespread cohabitation and galloping divorce rates.’”<sup>37</sup> Earlier in 2003 the Vatican issued a statement accusing gay and lesbian parents of “doing violence” to their children by virtue of being gay.<sup>38</sup>

Again, there are no data to support claims that an increase in gay and lesbian parenting will lead to greater “poverty, child abuse and human suffering.” U.S. Catholics are still reeling from the child sex abuse epidemic involving at least 4% of all Catholic priests in the U.S., and 7% of priests in the Boston archdiocese, where I and my five brothers served as altar boys. Almost 11,000 children were allegedly sexually abused by 4,392 priests in the U.S. from 1950 to 2002.<sup>39</sup> “Abuse victims and their advocates said the [Boston] archdiocese’s report understated the problem and reflected only part of the cases of sexual abuse,” the *New York Times* reported.<sup>40</sup> This systemic and widespread abuse ruined many lives. Many have described the Catholic hierarchy’s practice of covering up the abuse and shuffling abusive priests from parish to parish, without warning to the parishioners, as criminally negligent. Patrick McSorley, one of Father John Geoghan’s 150 victims and an outspoken critic of the church hierarchy’s handling of the

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<sup>34</sup> Patterson, C.J. (1995). Lesbian mothers, gay fathers and their children. In D’Augelli, A.R., & Patterson, C.J. eds. *Lesbian, gay and bisexual identities over the lifespan*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 262.; Casper, V. & Schultz, S.B. (1999). *Gay parents/straight schools: Building communication and trust*. New York: Teachers College Press. p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Some individuals in these couples would not identify as gay or lesbian, but by some other term for homosexual. Others would identify as bisexual. Still others would not want to be categorized. But the critical point is that these individuals are in an amorous, long-term, committed, partnered same-sex relationship widely viewed as a “gay or lesbian” relationship.

<sup>36</sup> Simmons, T., & O’Connell, M. (2003, February). *Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households: 2000*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved September 18, 2003, from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/censr-5.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> Abraham, Y. (2003, October 3). O’Malley calls gay marriage a threat; Archbishop opposes definition change. *Boston Globe*.

<sup>38</sup> Congregation for the doctrine of the faith (2003, July 31). *Considerations regarding proposals to give legal recognition to unions between homosexual persons*. The Vatican: Author. Retrieved February 10, 2004, from [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents)

<sup>39</sup> Goodstein, L. (2004, February 27). Two studies cite child sexual abuse by 4% of priests. *New York Times*. pp. A1, A22.; Belluck, P. (2004, February 27). Boston sexual abuse report breaks down accusations. *New York Times*. p. A16.

<sup>40</sup> Belluck, 2004.

problem, killed himself in February 2004 at age 29. For Catholic Church leaders, especially of the Boston Archdiocese, to recklessly charge that parenting in gay and lesbian families will cause an increase in child abuse and human suffering and do violence to children is sad and ignorant.

If you take the claims of Focus on the Family, Maggie Gallagher, and the Catholic Church hierarchy to their logical conclusion, what is the policy outcome—taking children away from gay and lesbian parents? Already there are many thousands, if not millions, of children being raised by gay, lesbian and bisexual parents. Gallagher implies the laws should not be neutral in this regard. Legislators and members of the media should ask these anti-gay activists if they think the state should step in and take these children away from their parents.

### ***Opposition to Benefits and Services for Same-Sex Partners of 9/11 Victims***

Several national anti-gay groups now opposing marriage in Massachusetts sought to prevent gay survivors of those killed in the 9/11 attacks from getting benefits and services from the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund and the American Red Cross. Just a month after 3,000 people were killed in the worst terrorist attacks in U.S. history—attacks that involved the simultaneous hijacking of four airplanes—Robert Knight of Concerned Women for America accused “homosexual activists” of “trying to hijack the moral capital of marriage and apply it to their own relationships,” which he characterized as “counterfeit marriage.”<sup>41</sup>

In the wake of 9/11, New York Republican Governor George Pataki issued an executive order instructing the State Crime Victims Board to grant gay partners of the 9/11 attacks the same benefits as married spouses of victims. Pataki, New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and New York State Attorney General Elliot Spitzer wrote President Bush, urging that gay and lesbian partners of victims be eligible for the federal fund administered by the Justice Department. Focus on the Family’s James Dobson said “Pataki diluted the definition of ‘family’ by giving gay partners the same access to terrorist relief benefits that married couples have.”<sup>42</sup> Focus on the Family also criticized Pataki’s actions as advancing the “gay agenda.”<sup>43</sup> After the American Red Cross decided to provide services to gay surviving partners of 9/11 victims, Concerned Women for America criticized the group’s “broad and inclusive definition of family.”<sup>44</sup>

Forty-five members of Congress wrote Attorney General John Ashcroft, urging the federal government to adopt a policy similar to that promoted by Governor Pataki in New York State. Concerned Women for America’s Culture and Family Institute criticized the letter, claiming that

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<sup>41</sup> Johnson, J. (2001, October 22). Homosexuals seek survivor benefits intended for families. Cybercast News Service. Retrieved February 9, 2004, from <http://www.dadi.org/homogred.htm>

<sup>42</sup> Dobson, J. (2002, January). Dr’ Dobson’s newsletter. Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family. Retrieved February 9, 2004, from <http://www.family.org/docstudy/newsletters/a0019238.html>

<sup>43</sup> Focus on the Family, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation. (2002). *Hostile climate: Report on anti-gay activity*. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Washington: Author. p. 31.

<sup>44</sup> The Culture and Family Institute of Concerned Women for America, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. p. 33.

lawmakers and “homosexual activists” were exploiting the “tragedy to ask Ashcroft to pave way for ‘domestic partner’ benefits.”<sup>45</sup>

The Traditional Values Coalition’s Lou Sheldon accused gay activists of “taking advantage” of the national tragedy to promote their agenda. Sheldon urged that relief assistance be “given on the basis and priority of one man and one woman in a marital relationship.”<sup>46</sup> Such a policy would have also left out unmarried opposite-sex partners of 9/11 victims. “We don’t devalue the loss of these innocent people,” Sheldon insisted. “But we think this is not the time to institutionalize such ‘partnerships’ and put them on the same level as marriage.”<sup>47</sup> Peter Spriggs of the Family Research Council also accused gay and lesbian people of “taking advantage of the grief and compassion that Americans do feel... To redefine the family based on our grief over the losses that people may have experienced as a result of the terror attacks would be bad law and bad policy.”<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps as a result of these objections, the initial interim regulations issued by the Department of Justice in December 2001 and the final regulations issued in March 2002 did not explicitly recognize same-sex partners, but instead left it up to states to determine who is eligible for victim’s compensation under the federal fund.<sup>49</sup> However, most states do not provide any legal recognition to same-sex partners, even those in committed, long-term or life-long relationships.

### **Other Claims**

#### **Comparing Gay Rights Advances, Gay People to Terrorism**

Several of the groups opposing marriage in Massachusetts have compared gay rights advances to terrorism. The Traditional Values Coalition’s Lou Sheldon compared the June 2003 U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down sodomy laws to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and either gays or the Supreme Court to the terrorists who struck that day:

This is a major wake-up call. This is a 9/11, major wake-up call that the enemy is at our doorsteps. This decision will open a floodgate. This will redirect the stream of what is morally right and what is morally wrong into a deviant kind of behavior. There is no way that homosexuality can be seen other than [as] a social disorder.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Concerned Women for America, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. p. 31.

<sup>46</sup> Sheldon, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. p. 33; Berkowitz, B. (2001, October 21). Religious right on the ropes. AlterNet. Retrieved February 9, 2004 from, <http://www.alternet.org/print.html?StoryID=11840>

<sup>47</sup> Lou Sheldon, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. p. 33.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Sprigg, quoted in People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. p. 33.

<sup>49</sup> People for the American Way Foundation, 2002. pp. 31-32.

<sup>50</sup> Bluey, R. (2003, June 27). Homosexuals push for same-sex marriage after sodomy ruling. Christian News Service.

Concerned Women for America warned in a September 2003 press release that same-sex marriage “pose[s] a new threat to US border security” calling a legally married Canadian same-sex couple trying to enter the U.S. as a married couple “the latest pair of ‘domestic terrorists.’”<sup>51</sup>

Former Boston Mayor and U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican Raymond Flynn, now a professional anti-gay activist, reacted to the Massachusetts SJC ruling by calling the issue of gay marriage “a ticking time bomb in America for the last several months that has exploded in Massachusetts. The voice of the American people is about to be heard.”<sup>52</sup> Family Research Council President Tony Perkins also used the time bomb analogy when he criticized President Bush for not going far enough in his 2004 State of the Union Address: “Sixty-four days ago the Massachusetts State Supreme Court tossed a cultural time bomb into the public square when they mandated the Legislature to create homosexual marriages. Disappointingly, in his State of the Union address, President Bush promised to help the families of America—after the bomb goes off and the damage is done.”<sup>53</sup>

### Gays + Democrats = A Domestic Al Qaeda

The Massachusetts Family Institute posts a lot of right-wing commentary on its website, including a column by Ann Coulter titled “Massachusetts Supreme Court abolishes capitalism!” and a piece by Dennis Prager titled “San Francisco and Islamists: Fighting the Same Enemy.”<sup>54</sup> Prager compares “secular extremism” to “religious extremism...One enemy is led from abroad. The other is directed from home.” Prager continues: “The war over same-sex marriage and the war against Islamic totalitarianism are actually two fronts in the same war—a war for the preservation of the unique creation known as Judeo-Christian civilization...”

Claiming that “the Left” is ignoring the threat of anti-American terrorism from groups active in the Muslim world, Prager says this is because “the Left is preoccupied first with destroying America’s distinctive values...So, if the Islamists are fellow anti-Americans, the Left figures it can worry about them later...” Warning that legalizing same-sex marriage represents “the beginning of the end of Judeo-Christian civilization,” Prager concludes, “This civilization is now fighting for its life—as much here as abroad. Join the fight, or it will be gone as fast as you can say ‘Democrat.’”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Kimball, J. (2003, September 29). Homosexuals Pose New Threat to U.S. Border Security. Concerned Women for America. Retrieved September 29, 2003, from

<http://www.cwfa.org/printerfriendly.asp?id=4629&department=cwa&categoryid=family>

<sup>52</sup> CNN. (2003, November 18). CNN Crossfire: Who can say I do? Retrieved March 8, 2004, from

<http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0311/18/cf.00.html>

<sup>53</sup> Family Research Council. (2004, January 20). FRC president Tony Perkins reacts to state of the union address.

Author. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=PR04A07&v=PRINT>

<sup>54</sup> The Massachusetts Family Institute. (n.d.) Timely commentary. Available at

<http://www.mafamily.org/commentary.htm>

<sup>55</sup> Prager, D. (2004, March 2). San Francisco and Islamists: Fighting the same enemy. Linked to the Massachusetts Family Institute website at <http://www.mafamily.org/commentary.htm>. Accessed March 5, 2004.

## Claims of Anti-Catholicism

The Massachusetts Knights of Columbus posts a letter on its website from former Boston Mayor Ray Flynn, now president of Your Catholic Voice. Flynn warns that “your Church and your family *are* under attack...anti-Catholicism is alive and well here in Massachusetts! Anti-Catholicism is, tragically, still an acceptable form of prejudice in America today.”<sup>56</sup> Despite Flynn’s alarmism, legalization of same-sex marriage—which is recognized in many Protestant and Jewish faith traditions—is no more anti-Catholic than the legalization of divorce for heterosexuals. “We are part of a pluralistic society and in no way pretend to force our religious preferences on other people,” Catholic Archbishop Sean O’Malley said at “The Summit of October to Save Marriage,” organized by the Massachusetts Family Institute in Wayland, Massachusetts in October 2003.<sup>57</sup> But in fact that is exactly what O’Malley is trying to do. Pointing this out, and challenging it, is not a manifestation of anti-Catholicism.

## An Obsession with Homosexuality

Although many of the national groups active in Massachusetts purport to advocate a “pro-family” agenda, they pay much less attention to many pressing family problems. Three of the national religious right groups active in the Coalition for Marriage have websites that allow users to search all of the documents available on the site. Searches using a few keywords found the following:<sup>58</sup>

- The Family Research Council, a \$5 million-a-year group that “shapes public debate and formulates public policy that values human life and upholds the institutions of marriage and the family,” had 203 documents on its website containing the word “homosexual,” but only 37 with “poverty,” 26 with the words “domestic violence,” 18 with the words “health insurance,” and only two with the words “child support.”
- Concerned Women for America, a \$12 million-a-year “public policy women’s organization,” had 602 documents on its website that contained the word “homosexual,” but only 97 referring to “health care,” 80 with the word “poverty,” 70 with the word “divorce,” and six containing “child support.” The Concerned Women for America website had only 71 documents containing the word “rape,” 19 with the words “domestic violence,” and no documents on “pay equity.” This is especially striking given a June 2003 survey of over 3,000 women conducted over two years by Princeton Survey Research Associates, which revealed that the top concerns of American women were domestic violence and sexual assault, and equal pay for equal work.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Flynn, R. (2004, January 29). Letter reproduced in *Knights News*. Linked to the Massachusetts Family Institute at [http://www.massachusettsstatekofc.org/Knights\\_News.htm](http://www.massachusettsstatekofc.org/Knights_News.htm). Accessed March 5, 2004.

<sup>57</sup> Abraham, Y. (2003, October 3). O’Malley calls gay marriage a threat; Archbishop opposes definition change. *Boston Globe*. <http://www.boston.com>. Accessed October 3, 2003.

<sup>58</sup> Website searches were conducted on October 2, 2003.

<sup>59</sup> Peterson, K. (2003, June 23.) USA’s women have “new set of priorities,” poll suggests. *USA Today*. Retrieved October 10, 2003 from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2003-06-23-womens-poll\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2003-06-23-womens-poll_x.htm)

- Focus on the Family, a \$126 million-a-year religious right behemoth with more than 1,000 employees, mentioned “divorce” in 841 documents, “homosexual” in 740 documents, “poverty” in 212 documents, “domestic violence” in 85 documents, “health insurance” in only 36 documents, and “child support” in a mere 20 documents.

### **A Broader Reactionary Agenda**

While the Coalition for Marriage member organizations claim to represent the people against “judicial tyranny,” many member organizations advocate a reactionary political agenda that is not supported by a majority of Americans. For example, many of these organizations also oppose affirmative action, reproductive choice, immigration, teaching evolution in schools, the failed Equal Rights Amendment that would have banned sex discrimination (passed by Congress in 1979 and ratified by 35 states before the seven-year ratification period expired), and military combat service by women.

Dr. Ron Crews, who holds a Ph.D. in ministry from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Illinois, has been president of the Massachusetts Family Institute since 2001. He served as a Republican State Representative in Georgia from 1992 to 1998, when his bid for re-election failed because of his reactionary views. He even blamed his loss on “homosexual activists who moved into my district just to be able to vote against me.” Crews sponsored the Georgia Defense of Marriage Act when it passed in 1996, and sought legislation allowing “covenant marriage,” which would have made divorce more difficult by requiring spouses to enter counseling, prove adultery or abuse, or live apart for two years before being allowed to divorce.<sup>60</sup> He was a leader in the fight to ban partial birth abortions, and also lobbied the Georgia Department of Education to teach creationism in the classroom, without success.<sup>61</sup> Following his defeat for re-election in 1998, Crews served as legislative director for the Georgia Christian Coalition.

### ***Opposition to No-Fault Divorce; Advocating the Requirement of Mutual Consent for Divorce***

The Family Research Council promotes an end to no-fault divorce and the requirement of mutual consent for divorce, as well as “covenant marriage” laws now in effect in Louisiana, Arizona and Arkansas.<sup>62</sup> Covenant marriages are much harder to enter into and harder to dissolve. When Tony Perkins, now head of the Family Research Council, was a Republican State Representative in Louisiana, he drafted the first covenant marriage law, passed in 1997. A Family Research Council document states that:

after consulting with...a group of pastors in his district...he drafted a bill that only allowed for divorce in what they saw as the biblically licit cases of adultery and abandonment. Perkins said he wanted to start with a high standard, the

<sup>60</sup> Wise, M. (2004, February 15). Ex-Georgia legislator leads foes of gay marriage. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

<sup>61</sup> Abraham, Y. (2003, November 18). Transplant targets gay marriage. *The Boston Globe*.

<sup>62</sup> Maher, B. (n.d.). Why marriage should be privileged in public policy. Washington, D.C.: Family Research Council. Retrieved March 4, 2004, from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=IS03D1&v=PRINT>

biblical ideal for marriage, because he knew that he would have to compromise in the legislative process.<sup>63</sup>

It is important to note that spousal abuse is not listed as a “biblically licit” reason for divorce.

The Family Research Council (FRC) praises “state marriage promotion efforts” including “restricting no-fault divorce.” Arguing that “abandoning fault divorce was a huge mistake,” FRC’s Brigit Maher endorses “legislation to restrict no-fault divorce, which require[s] mutual consent, longer waiting periods, or classes for divorcing parents before a divorce can be obtained.”<sup>64</sup> Concerned Women for America’s Jan LaRue also denounces no-fault divorce as a reason why many people support marriage equality for gay couples:

The biggest problem we have in getting people, especially younger ones, to understand why marriage is devalued by the existence of a counterfeit is that much of the public does not value marriage at all. Adultery is no big deal. No-fault divorce is tolerated. Absentee fathers and mothers devalue marriage...<sup>65</sup>

While it is not clear if the Massachusetts Family Institute supports an end to no-fault divorce, its website contains links to the national groups noted above that do. MFI’s *Massachusetts Marriage and Family Report 2002* calls on “public policy opinion leaders” to “encourage policies that discourage divorce without counseling.”<sup>66</sup>

### **Opposition to Feminism**

Phyllis Schlafly is one of several conservative leaders and pundits whose “timely commentary” is posted on the Massachusetts Family Institute’s website. She helped defeat the Equal Rights Amendment in the mid-1980s. A book titled *Feminist Fantasies* and linked at the bottom of Schlafly’s essay, “Will Massachusetts Abolish Marriage?” claims, “No assault has been more ferocious than feminism’s 40-year war against women, and no battlefield leader has been more courageous than Schlafly. In a new book of dispatches from the front, feminism’s most potent foe exposes the delusions and hypocrisy behind a movement that has cheated millions of women out of their happiness, health, and security.” Schlafly’s Eagle Forum works closely with Concerned Women for America and other members of the Coalition for Marriage through the closely named “Coalition to Protect Marriage” and through other coalitions. The Coalition to Protect Marriage sponsored “Marriage Protection Week” in October 2003. Archbishop Sean O’Malley spoke at a Massachusetts event October 2, 2003 that was organized by the Massachusetts Family Institute and the Coalition to Protect Marriage.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Wilcox, B. (n.d.). Sacred vows, public purposes. Washington, D.C.: Family Research Council. Retrieved March 4, 2004, from <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=WT02G2&v=PRINT>

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> LaRue, J. (2003, September 16). *Talking points: Why homosexual “marriage” is wrong*. Washington, D.C.: Concerned Women for America.

<sup>66</sup> Massachusetts Family Institute. (2002). *Massachusetts Marriage and Family Report 2002*. Author. Available at <http://www.mafamily.org/Marriage%20Report2002.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> Abraham, Y. (2003, October 3). O’Malley calls gay marriage a threat; Archbishop opposes definition change. *Boston Globe*.

Other national anti-gay groups advocate the following reactionary policies:

- The Traditional Values Coalition, Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, and Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum (which works closely with CWA) oppose reproductive choice, the teaching of evolution in public schools and comprehensive sex education. They also promote prayer in public schools.<sup>68</sup>
- The Family Research Council supports a school prayer amendment to the U.S. Constitution and would like to abolish the Department of Education.<sup>69</sup> Concerned Women for America also seeks the abolition of DOE.<sup>70</sup>
- Phyllis Schlafly opposes statehood for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico (predominantly African American and Latino jurisdictions), supports making English the official language of the United States, and opposes the combat service of women. She brags about her leading role in defeating the Equal Rights Amendment.<sup>71</sup> She also opposes President Bush's immigration reform proposal, singling out Mexican immigrants in particular for her vitriol.<sup>72</sup>

### **Outspending Gay Rights Groups by At Least a Six-to-One Margin**

Members of the Coalition for Marriage portray gay people and gay activists as politically powerful, well-funded elites. For example, Traditional Values Coalition Executive Director Andrea Sheldon slammed President Clinton for speaking at a Human Rights Campaign dinner in 1997, denouncing "an American President kissing up to the wealthiest extremists of the left."<sup>73</sup> The Family Research Council recently wrote, "The Human Rights Campaign and the other groups in the homosexual lobby have very deep pockets. Big corporations, elite foundations, and Hollywood celebrities underwrite the homosexual lobby with tens of millions of dollars every year."<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> People for the American Way. (n.d.). Right wing organizations: Traditional Values Coalition. Retrieved March 1, 2004, from <http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=8992&print=yes>; Concerned Women for America. (2002, September 12). Georgia school board ponders creationism. Retrieved March 5, 2004, from <http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=2059&department=CWA&categoryid=education>; CWA and Eagle Forum are cosponsoring a lobby day in Sacramento, California March 10, 2004.; Concerned Women for America (2004, February 23). Join CWA at the State Capitol! Retrieved March 5, 2004, from <http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=5290&department=FIELD&categoryid=misc>

<sup>69</sup> People for the American Way. (n.d.) Right wing organizations: Family Research Council. Retrieved March 1, 2004, from <http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=4211&print=yes>.

<sup>70</sup> People for the American Way. (n.d.) Right wing organizations: Concerned Women for America. Retrieved March 1, 2004, from <http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=3151&print=yes>

<sup>71</sup> Eagle Forum (n.d.). Description. Author. Retrieved February 26, 2004, from <http://www.eagleforum.org/misc/descript.html>

<sup>72</sup> Schlafly, P. (2003, January 15). U.S. social security for Mexicans? Eagle Forum. Retrieved February 26, 2004, from <http://www.eagleforum.org/column/2003/jan03/03-01-15.shtml>

<sup>73</sup> *Bay Windows*. (1997, November 27).

<sup>74</sup> Conner, K. (2003, April 28). Fundraising letter. American Renewal. The Legislative Action Arm of the Family Research Council.

In fact, the financial resources of the nine member organizations of the Coalition for Marriage for which income data are available dwarf the revenues of national and local gay rights advocacy organizations by a margin of at least six to one (\$168 million compared to just \$25 million).<sup>75</sup> These groups range from Focus on the Family, with \$126 million in revenue in 2002, to the Massachusetts State Council of the Knights of Columbus with \$593,512 in revenue in 2002. It is important to note that the Massachusetts Family Institute (MFI), with just over \$400,000 in revenue in 2002, is a member of the Family Policy Councils of Focus on the Family, which had \$126 million in revenue at its disposal to use in Massachusetts.

The Coalition for Marriage organizations for which we could not find data also have enormous resources and clout, including the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts, the Center for Marriage Law, and the Traditional Values Coalition outside its Education and Legal Institute. If the revenue and assets of these groups were added to the \$168 million they possess, gay and pro-gay groups would be at an even more extreme disadvantage than the six-to-one ratio we can definitively state (See Table 1).

As evidence of their massive wealth, the Family Research Council on February 27, 2004, launched a \$2 million ad campaign to thank President Bush for his support of the Federal Marriage Amendment, purchasing full-page ads in most major U.S. newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.<sup>76</sup> This campaign uses more resources than the entire 2003 operating budget of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the group that litigated *Goodridge vs. DPH*.

## Conclusion

The anti-gay, religious right has targeted Massachusetts in part because they know it has historically been a leader in the movement for civil rights and human rights in this country. While right now they are focused on gay marriage, they advocate a broader reactionary agenda not supported by most Bay State residents. We urge fair-minded legislators to take a closer look at the arguments used by groups seeking to write discrimination against gay and lesbian families into the Commonwealth's Constitution. Legislators face a clear choice between the forces promoting ignorance, prejudice and second-class citizenship for gay people, and the forces promoting legal equality. We urge you to make the right choice.

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<sup>75</sup> Financial information on these organizations was obtained from Guidestar.com, which posts the IRS Form 990's (or 990EZ) for non-profit organizations that may accept tax-deductible contributions. In turn, this information comes from the IRS Business Master File of 501(c) nonprofits. 501(c)(3) organizations with \$25,000 or more in annual revenue are required to file "990's" with the IRS. We were not able to obtain financial data on 6 of 15 member organizations of the Coalition for Marriage. There are a number of possible reasons: (a) some of the sponsoring organizations are not 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations eligible to accept tax-deductible contributions (religious organizations, for-profits, such as Bott Broadcasting, and political advocacy 501(c)(4) organizations are not required to file 990's; (b) the organization may be registered under a different name with the IRS; (c) the organization may be the program of a larger organization; (d) the organization may have lost its 501(c)(3) status; and (e) the organization may have been recently formed.

<sup>76</sup> Family Research Council. (2004, February 27). FRC Action and Pro-Family Coalition Launch \$2 Million Ad Campaign. Author. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.american-renewal.org>

**Table 1: Annual Income of Coalition for Marriage Member Organizations VS. Members of MassEquality**

**9 Coalition for Marriage Members for Which Income Data is Publicly Available**

Focus on the Family	www.family.org	\$126,251,827
Alliance Defense Fund	www.alliancedefensefund.org	\$15,998,907
Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston	www.bmaboston.org	\$1,291,742
Concerned Women For America (CWA)	www.cwfa.org	\$11,999,881
Family Research Council	www.frc.org	\$9,730,169
Massachusetts Family Institute (MFI)	www.mafamily.org	\$408,858
Morality in Media Massachusetts	www.moralmedia.net	\$1,247,956
Massachusetts State Council, Knights of Columbus	www.massachusettsstatekofc.org	\$593,512
Traditional Values Coalition	www.traditionalvalues.org	\$581,783 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$168,104,635</b>

**National and Local Members of MassEquality, the Marriage Equality Coalition**

Human Rights Campaign/HRC Foundation	www.hrc.org	\$17,334,997
National Gay & Lesbian Task Force/NGLTF Foundation	www.nglftf.org	\$5,121,163 <sup>b</sup>
Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)	www.glad.org	\$1,500,000 <sup>c</sup>
Freedom to Marry Coalition of Massachusetts	www.equalmarriage.org	\$200,000 <sup>d</sup>
Mass. Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus	www.mglpc.org	\$100,000 <sup>e</sup>
Freedom to Marry Foundation	www.equalmarriage.org	\$50,000 <sup>f</sup>
Greater Boston Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays	www.pflag.org	\$98,000 <sup>g</sup>
Bay State Democrats	www.baystatestonewalldems.org	\$5,000 <sup>h</sup>
Gay and Lesbian Labor Activist Network (GALLAN)	Not Available	\$3,000 <sup>i</sup>
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action	www.jewishalliance.org	\$125,000 <sup>j</sup>
Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry	www.ftmmass.org/rcfm	\$15,000 <sup>k</sup>
Citizens for Participation in Political Action (CPPAX)	www.cppax.org	Not Available
National Organization for Women Massachusetts Chapter	www.gis.net/~massnow/	\$46,000 <sup>l</sup>
Western Massachusetts LGBT Political Alliance	www.wmassalliance.org	\$8,000 <sup>m</sup>
National Log Cabin Republicans	www.lcr.org	Not Available
ACLU of Massachusetts	www.aclu-mass.org	\$950,000 <sup>n</sup>
Bisexual Resource Center	www.biresource.org	\$20,000 <sup>o</sup>
LGBT Aging Project	www.lgbtagingproject.org	Not Available
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$25,576,160</b>

Information retrieved from Guidestar.org (IRS 990 forms) unless otherwise noted on October 1, 2004

- a. The revenue listed is for FY 2001 of the TVC Education and Legal Institute only. Financial data on the broader Traditional Values Coalition is unavailable.
- b. FY2002-03 audited financial statements.
- c. 2003 Income
- d. Conversation with Josh Friedes, legislative director, Freedom to Marry Coalition, March 4, 2004.
- e. Conversation with Arline Isaacson, board co-chair, MGLPC, March 4, 2004.
- f. Conversation with Josh Friedes.
- g. Conversation with Gretchen Frasier, board president, Greater Boston PFLAG, March 5, 2004.
- h. Conversation with Steve Driscoll, board co-chair, Bay State Democrats, March 5, 2004.
- i. Conversation with Harneen Chernow, board co-chair, GALLAN, March 4, 2004.
- j. Conversation with Sheila Decter, March 4, 2004.
- k. Conversation with Marty Rouse, Mass Equality, March 4, 2004.
- l. Conversation with Patricia Sanders, Director, NOW Massachusetts, March 8, 2004
- m. Conversation with Stacy Roth, executive director, LGBT Political Alliance of W. Mass., March 8, 2004.
- n. Conversation with Carol Rose, executive director, ACLU of Mass., March 8, 2004.
- o. Conversation with Sheeri Kritzer, treasurer, Bisexual Resource Center, March 8, 2004.

## **The Coalition for Marriage Organizations<sup>77</sup>**

### ***Alliance Defense Fund***

The Alliance Defense Fund is a national group that, according to its mission statement, “provides the resources that will keep the door open for the spread of the Gospel through the legal defense and advocacy of religious freedom, the sanctity of human life, and traditional family values.”

### ***Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston***

The Black Ministerial Alliance is a 40-year-old organization representing 80 Boston area African American churches.

### ***Center for Marriage Law***

The Center for Marriage law is affiliated with the Columbus School of Law at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and is dedicated to strengthening “the institution of marriage and to affirm the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman,” according to its website.

### ***Family Research Council***

The Family Research Council is a Focus on the Family spin-off, Washington, DC-based Christian-advocacy group. It has been active in dozens of anti-gay ballot campaigns.

### ***Focus on the Family***

Focus on the Family is a national, Colorado-based Christian advocacy and media group whose mission is “to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in disseminating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to as many people as possible.” It has been active in dozens of anti-gay ballot campaigns.

### ***The Massachusetts Catholic Conference***

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference is the lobbying and public policy arm of the four Roman Catholic dioceses of Massachusetts.

### ***Massachusetts Family Institute***

The Massachusetts Family Institute is the state affiliate of the Colorado Springs-based Focus on the Family that has coordinated the fight in Massachusetts to amend the state’s constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

### ***Massachusetts State Council, Knights of Columbus***

The Knights of Columbus is a Roman Catholic fraternal group.

### ***Bay State Republican Council***

The Bay State Republican Council is a grassroots group formed in 2001 that promotes the election of Republican candidates in local, state, and federal elections.

### ***Catholic Action League of Massachusetts***

The Catholic Action League of Massachusetts is an advocacy and public policy group.

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<sup>77</sup> *The Boston Globe*. (2004, January 8). Coalition Members. Author. Retrieved January 30, 2004, from [http://www.boston.com/news/specials/gay\\_marriage/coalition\\_marriage](http://www.boston.com/news/specials/gay_marriage/coalition_marriage); All information in this section is from this *Boston Globe* article unless otherwise noted.

### ***Concerned Women for America***

Concerned Women for America is a Washington, DC-based religious advocacy group dedicated to protecting and promoting “Biblical values among all citizens,” according to its mission statement. CWA has played a leading role in dozens of anti-gay ballot campaigns.

### ***Family Policy Councils of the United States***

The Family Policy Councils are a loosely affiliated coalition of state groups under Focus on the Family, such as the Massachusetts Family Institute.

### ***Massachusetts Citizens for Life***

The Massachusetts Citizens for Life is an advocacy group opposed to legal abortion, human cloning, and euthanasia.

### ***Morality in Media Massachusetts***

Morality in Media promotes “decency in the media” and “strongly upholds traditional family values and Judeo-Christian precepts.” It is an affiliate of the Christian Coalition.<sup>78</sup>

### ***Traditional Values Coalition***

The Traditional Values Coalition is a national organization made up of 43,000 churches that condemned National Public Radio at a congressional hearing in July 2002 for being “anti-Christian, anticonservative, and anti-traditional values.”<sup>79</sup> TVC is rabidly anti-gay and heavily focused on anti-gay politics. Nine of its “Top Ten Reports” on its website are fully or partly about homosexuality; the tenth is about transgender issues. Seven of the 10 reports have the word “homosexual” in their title. It has also been active in dozens of anti-gay ballot campaigns.

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This is a policy brief of the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute**.  
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<sup>78</sup> Barstow, L. (2000, October 26). Remarks to morality in media event, Bear Hill Gold Club, Stoneham, MA. Retrieved February 3, 2004, from <http://www.moralmedia.net/tips5.html>

<sup>79</sup> *The Boston Globe*, 2004.