

What Did Nov. 7th 2006 Mean to Members of LGBT Communities?

Election Highlights

Same-sex Marriage Ban Rejected in Arizona in Historic First

By David Crary

Arizona became the first state to defeat an amendment to ban same-sex marriage Tuesday, bucking a strong national trend by refusing to change its constitution to define marriage as a one-man, one-woman institution. The measure also would have forbidden civil unions and domestic partnerships.

"We knew all along that once voters were informed about the true impact...they would oppose this hurtful initiative," said Steve May, treasurer for Arizona Together, which organized opposition to the measure. "They made the right decision."

A total of eight states voted on amendments to ban same-sex marriage: Colorado, Idaho, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin approved them. Similar amendments have passed previously in all 20 states that have considered them.

Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, noted that the bans that succeeded won by much narrower margins, on average, than in the past. He said it was a sign that "fear-mongering around same-sex marriage is fizzling out."

Conservatives had hoped that ballot measures to ban same-sex marriage might increase turnout for Republicans, though the GOP had a rough night, losing control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 12 years, with the Senate majority still to be determined.

*Taken from the Advocate.com 11/09/06
http://www.advocate.com/news_detail_ektid39285.asp*

Record Number of Gays Elected To Office

(Washington) The wave that swept Democrats to victory on Tuesday led to unprecedented success in electing openly gay candidates.

Sixty-seven candidates endorsed by the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, an organization that helps LGBT candidates gain office, were elected in national, state and local races.

"Some of the victories were historic" said Victory Fund president Chuck Wolfe.

"This is the tipping point election for openly gay candidates," said Wolfe.

"We're proving that qualified, well-prepared candidates matched with committed donors means gays and lesbians can move from having a stake in policy to actually making policy. There's no reason to sit on the sidelines with our fingers crossed anymore."

The 67 winners were among 88 Victory Fund endorsed candidates - the most the organization has ever fielded. Thirty-seven of them were running as openly LGBT for the first time.

Among the winners was Patricia Todd, who will represent District 54 in the Alabama State House. Todd is the first openly gay person ever elected to any office in the state.

Kathy Webb will represent District 37 in the Arkansas State House. She is the first openly gay person ever elected to any office in the state.

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National and International LGBT News

South Africa Passes Gay Marriage Law

(Cape Town, South Africa) South Africa on Tuesday became the fifth country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage.

The government made last minute changes to the bill, removing language which created separate categories for same and opposite sex unions. It passed the National Assembly 230 to 41.

The new law allows the "voluntary union of two persons, which is solemnized and registered by either a marriage or civil union".

The government had originally proposed allowing only civil unions for same-sex couples - something that LGBT rights groups and constitutional law experts said created a "separate but equal" status that would be challenged in the Constitutional Court.

A provision in the new law that allows churches to refuse to perform same-sex marriage continues to rankle gay groups but overall reaction has been favorable.

"In large part, the Act signals a rejection of previous attempts to render lesbian and gay people as second-class citizens. It demonstrates powerfully the commitment of our law-makers to ensuring that all human beings are treated with dignity," said Fikile Vilakazi, a spokesperson for 17 LGBT groups.

The new law is called the Civil Unions Act, and while it allows gays to marry, the Marriage Act defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

The LGBT groups called on the government to harmonize the two laws to avoid confusion and legal challenges.

"A parallel administrative system for the two statutes only increases the burden on state machinery and is likely to lead to confusion. In addition, it continues to reinforce the notion that there is a need to separate same-sex couples from other marriage forms, in some way," the groups said in a statement.

Passage of the bill beats a December court imposed deadline to end discrimination against same-sex couples in South Africa.

Last year the Constitutional Court ruled that denying same-sex couples the rights of marriage was unconstitutional. It said that if Parliament fails to act by the December deadline the the law automatically be changed to include same-sex unions. But, it gave no specific direction on how the law should be changed. Last year the Constitutional Court ruled that denying same-sex couples the rights of marriage was unconstitutional. It said that if Parliament fails to act by the December deadline the the law automatically be changed to include same-sex unions. But, it gave no specific direction on how the law should be changed.

Adapted from Gay365.com 11/14/06
<http://www.365gay.com/Newscon06/11/111406SAFMAR.htm>

"Gays Elected to Office" Continued from Page 1

Al McAffrey, who will represent District 88 in the Oklahoma State House, is the first openly gay person ever elected to the Oklahoma state legislature.

Jamie Pedersen became the third consecutive openly gay person to be elected to represent District 43 in the Washington State House

Ed Murray, who will represent District 43 in the Washington State Senate, is a former state representative and becomes the first openly gay state senator in Washington history.

Jolie Justus becomes the first openly gay state senator in Missouri history.

Matt McCoy, who becomes the first openly gay candidate ever elected to the Iowa legislature. McCoy, a sitting state senator, came out during his last term.

In Hawaii, Kim Coco Iwamoto won a seat on Hawaii's statewide Board of Education making her the country's highest-elected transgender official.

And, Judge Virginia Linder will join Rives Kistler on the Oregon Supreme Court, making it the first state ever to have two openly gay Supreme Court Justices.

Thirteen states, however, still have no openly LGBT state legislators: Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Wyoming.

Adapted from Gay365.com
[11/08.06http://www.365gay.com/Newscon06/11/110806victory.htm](http://www.365gay.com/Newscon06/11/110806victory.htm)

Opinions and Editorials

Stumping for Marriage in New Jersey

By James McGreevey

The New Jersey supreme court decision was an important step in the right direction toward recognizing marital equality for our community. Having previously supported pro-gay legislation in matters of adoption and child care, the court understood that a simple question was before it: Namely, should gay New Jerseyans be afforded the right to marry (with its attendant privileges, rights, and obligations) just as straight Americans are?

The court claimed the responsibility to ensure that committed gay couples receive a legal mechanism identical to marriage, but stated that it was for the state legislature and governor to decide if *marriage* as a term of art would be used.

Marriage as an institution, word, and symbol is inextricably linked to the concept of a committed, monogamous relationship. Among our most cherished national institutions, marriage, at its best, conjures ideas of warmth, love, and nurturing. Marriage ought to be enshrined in legislation for our gay community.

To use any word other than *marriage* for committed, monogamous gay relationships implies that our status, whether single or committed, is something less than that of straight people and their relationships. Words and rhetoric are critically important in denoting meaning and for imparting notions of societal worth.

Some progressives have worried about the timing of the court's decision, coming right before an important election. But the unequivocally right thing about this victory is the timing of its announcement. It was not political. The state supreme court announced the decision because of the mandatory resignation date of the chief justice, not because of an election. It would have been wrong and injurious to the state supreme court's reputation to hold the decision until after the election, or to announce it prior, because of electoral concerns.

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Come On, Is a LGBT Life THAT Tragic?

By Bethany Nanamaker, Queer Query Editor-In-Chief

If we were to make conclusions about human beings based on their films, we might end up with the conclusion that members of the LGBT community are particularly prone to tragedies. A disproportionate amount of LGBT characters seem to end up unhappy or dead when compared to their straight counterparts. While living my ordinary, less-than-tragic life, I am left wondering the reasons why LGBT characters in film so frequently experience immense tragedy. More importantly, what are the implications of portraying LGBT characters as victims of tragedy for people questioning their sexual orientation or considering coming out to loved ones?

Let's consider the Oscar-nominated "gay cowboy" flick of 2005: *Brokeback Mountain* is a typical gay tragedy. One of the film's main characters, Jack Twist, dies from a vicious hate crime. His wife covers up his identity as a gay man. The other main character situation is not that much better; Ennis Del Mar leads the rest of his life isolated from the rest of the world and never comes to terms with his identity. Hmm . . . I certainly wouldn't want to come out, if that's all I have to look forward to.

Boys Don't Cry, another Oscar-nominated film with a LGBT main character, is another queer tragedy. Brandon Teena, a transgender FtM, was also the victim of a hate crime. He was raped and beaten, a scene that is brutally depicted in the film. Later he is murdered. Again, not an encouraging message.

Lastly, consider the *The Laramie Project*, the 2002 HBO film based on the Moses Kaufman play. This play/film focuses on the tragedy of a hate crime in the town of Laramie Wyoming. Just as with the prior films, this film and play was high-profile on this campus and sent the same unfortunate message.

The queer tragedy is not a new trend. High-profile LGBT films of previous decades have likewise been tragic. In the LGBT tragedies of previous decades, these tragedies were frequently self-inflicted. In the 1966 film *The Children's Hour*, Martha's tragedy was the fact that she was a lesbian and this awful truth led her to commit suicide. In the 1970's film *The Boys in the Band*, the main character's speech at end of the film indicates that the tragedy of his situation is his own self hate. "If we could just quit hating ourselves so much," he murmured.

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Say What? Learning the LGBT Lingo

LGBT POLITICAL VOCABULARY 101

New to the LGBT political scene? Not quite savvy with the jargon? Maybe we can help! The following is a list of political and legal organizations that frequent LGBT political discussion:

ACLU: the **American Civil Liberties Union** is a nonpartisan organization devoted to the preservation and extension of the basic rights set forth in the U.S. Constitution. The ACLU has been defending the rights of members of the LGBT Community since 1936 through the courts.

ACT UP: the **AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power**, "is a diverse, non-partisan group of individuals ... committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis," according to the ACT UP website. The organization is dedicated to addressing the AIDS crisis through political action.

HRC: the **Human Rights Campaign** is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. Founded in 1980, the HRC lobbies Congress, provides campaign support to fair-minded candidates, and works to educate the public on a wide array of topics affecting GLBT Americans, including relationship recognition, workplace, family, and health issues.

LAMBDA LEGAL: the **Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund** is a United States civil rights organization that focuses on gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education, and public policy work. Lambda Legal carries out its legal work principally through test cases selected for the likelihood of their success in establishing positive legal precedents that will affect lesbians, gay men, bisexuals.

LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS: a political organization in the United States with state chapters and a national office in Washington, DC. The group consists of gays, lesbians and bisexuals who are also supporters of the Republican Party.

NATIONAL TRANSGENDER ADVOCACY COALITION: **NTAC** works for the advancement of understanding and the attainment of full civil rights for all transgender and gender variant people in every aspect of society and actively opposes discriminatory acts by all means legally available.

STONEWALL DEMOCRATS: a GLBT-rights group in the United States, affiliated with the Democratic Party. The word "Stonewall" refers to the famous 1969 Stonewall riots. The organization and is based in Washington, D.C. and currently has over 90 chapters.

*Adapted From: Reference.com
ACLU.org
NTAC.org
HCR.org*

A Friendlier Congress?

The Human Rights Campaign, an active PAC for LGBT citizens, endorsed a group of candidates in the 2006 elections for Congress. The following is a list of HRC endorsed candidates who won their races:

Key Senate LGBT Victories:

- Sherrod Brown (OH)
- Maria Cantwell (WA)
- Ben Cardin (MD)
- Bob Casey (PA)
- Amy Klobuchar (MN)
- Robert Menendez (NJ)
- Debbie Stabenow (MI)

Key House LGBT Victories:

- Michael Arcuri (NY)
- Melissa Bean (IL)
- Bruce Braley (IA)
- Gabrielle Giffords (AZ)
- John Hall (NY)
- Ron Klein (FL)
- Tim Mahoney (FL)
- Harry Mitchell (FL)
- Patrick Murphy (PA)
- Ed Perlmutter (CO)
- Joe Sestak (PA)
- Chris Shays (CT)
- Tim Walz (MN)

Editorial: Stumping in New Jersey Continued from Page 3

The court's decision will have *de minimis* impact upon New Jersey's U.S. Senate election. The war in Iraq, stem cell research, a woman's right to choose, and U.S. Supreme Court nominees will all play a more prominent role than the court's "gay marriage" decision in the calculus of New Jersey voters.

The New Jersey Supreme Court rephrased the debate over same-sex marriage as a question of equality. It will be our responsibility to frame it as a matter of conscience.

*Adapted from the Advocate.com 11/07/06
http://www.advocate.com/exclusive_detail_ekid38621.asp*

Getting Involved Locally

But I want to help too!

By Bethany Nanamaker, Queer Query Editor

Sometimes living on a college campus in rural Ohio can be a little discouraging. All the exciting action seems to be going on in distant places so busy they use acronyms for names: D.C, NYC, and LA. But Bowling Green and the surrounding community does have organizations that play their part in both national and international campaigns. Looking for a place? Consider these options:

LGBT—Specific Advocacy Groups

EQUALITY TOLEDO: Equality Toledo works for equality for all Ohioans regardless of their marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, through education, anti-defamation efforts, and activism. On their agenda this year, Equality Toledo has teamed up with the University of Toledo College of Law Legal Clinic, Rainbow Area Youth (RAY), and Equality Toledo working to implement the Safe Schools Project, educate the community about the need for Safe Schools, and advocate for the rights of LGBT students and school employees.

TRANSCENDENCE: This registered student organization has a multi-faceted approach which includes actively opposing discrimination directed at gender-variant people. Transcendence advocates the creation of policies which protect transgender people from discrimination and foster a more inclusive and just environment for gender minorities at BGSU and in Northwest, Ohio.

VISON: This BGSU student organization is also committed to advocacy. Their constitution indicates these political commitments: To educate on issues of discrimination and harassment based on gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual identity of all students of BGSU and to advocate on behalf of members regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual identity.

Other student organizations that are committed to political change here at BGSU include: **the BGSU College Democrats, the BGSU College Republicans, NAARAL Pro-Choice BGSU, Amnesty International, and the Organization for Women's Issues (OWI).** Any of these options sound interesting? More information on each organization and how to contact them is available through BGSU's Office of Campus Involvement webpage:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/getinvolved/page12173.html>



Advocacy

"Editorial: LGBT Tragedies" Continued from Page 3

Reflections of a Golden Eye, a 1967 film about a military officer who lusts after a younger officer, also ends in suicide. In *Cat on A Hot Tin Roof*, the closeted character, Skipper, commits suicide after his homosexuality is revealed.

In earlier films, LGBT characters were "sick" characters. That was the tragedy. The LGBT character admits fault and guilt in his or her homosexuality. The LGBT character was considered deviant. Now in current films, the audience is being encouraged to believe that the deviants are the homophobic killers and the victims are the LGBT characters. The plots are queer sympathetic, which is an improvement, but it's not enough.

The LGBT films are still disproportionately tragic when they are compared to mainstream, heterosexual films. And while it's true that LGBT people experience a disproportionate amount of hate crimes when compared to heterosexuals, the fact that film shows this trend can be very detrimental. The LGBT identity is still the other. The LGBT identity is still something to be pitied. Maybe it's time to write and produce high-quality films that integrate communities. Maybe it's time to start writing and produce high-quality LGBT films that allow heterosexuals not fear or pity gays, but rather identify with them. Maybe it's time to write and produce high-quality LGBT films that don't scare closeted or questioning people away.

New York Plans to Make Gender Personal Choice

By Damien Cave

Separating anatomy from what it means to be a man or a woman, New York City is moving forward with a plan to let people alter the sex on their birth certificate even if they have not had sex-change surgery.

Under the rule being considered by the city's Board of Health, which is likely to be adopted soon, people born in the city would be able to change the documented sex on their birth certificates by providing affidavits from a doctor and a mental health professional laying out why their patients should be considered members of the opposite sex, and asserting that their proposed change would be permanent.

Applicants would have to have changed their name and shown that they had lived in their adopted gender for at least two years, but there would be no explicit medical requirements.

"Surgery versus nonsurgery can be arbitrary," said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the city's health commissioner. "Somebody with a beard may have had breast-implant surgery. It's the permanence of the transition that matters most."

If approved, the new rule would put New York at the forefront of efforts to redefine gender. A handful of states do not require surgery for such birth certificate changes, but in some of those cases patients are still not allowed to make the change without showing a physiological shift to the opposite gender.

In New York, the proposed change comes after four years of discussion among health officials, an eight-member panel of transgender experts and vital records offices nationwide. It is an outgrowth of the transgender community's push to recognize that some people may not have money to get a sex-change operation, while others may not feel the need to undergo the procedure and are simply defining themselves as members of the opposite sex.

Transgender advocates consider the New York proposal an overdue bulwark against discrimination that recognizes an emerging shift away from viewing gender as simply the sum of one's physical parts. But some psychiatrists and doctors are skeptical of the move, saying sexual self-definition should stop at rewriting medical history.

"They should not change the sex at birth, which is a factual record," said Dr. Arthur Zitrin, a Midtown psychiatrist who was on the panel of transgender experts convened by the city. "If they wanted to change the gender for all the compelling reasons that they've given, it should be done perhaps with an asterisk."

The change would lead to many intriguing questions: For example, would a man who becomes a woman be able to marry another man? (Probably.) Would an adoption agency be able to uncover the original sex of a proposed parent? (Not without a court order.) Would a woman who becomes a man be able to fight in combat, or play in the National Football League? (These areas have yet to be explored.)

At the final public hearing for the birth certificate proposal last week, a string of advocates and transsexuals suggested that common definitions of gender, especially its reliance on medical assessments, should be abandoned. They generally praised the city for revisiting its 25-year-old policy that lets people remove the sex designation from their birth certificate if they have had sexual reassignment surgery. Then they demanded more freedom to choose.

Michael Silverman, executive director of the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, said transgender people should not have to rely on affidavits from a health care system that tends to be biased against them. He said that many transgender people cannot afford sex-change surgery or therapy, and often do not consider it necessary.

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Humor Page: Fun with Politics!



Republicans, Gays Bond Over Mutual Contempt for Foley

In an historic partnership, Republican leaders and gay rights activists have joined forces to repudiate Congressman Mark Foley, who resigned last Friday after his sexually explicit messages to underage male Congressional pages came to light. In an alliance that would have been unthinkable a week ago, the Republican National Committee and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force have come together to create a widespread awareness campaign denouncing Foley as both a gay and a Republican. Entitled "Not One of Us," the campaign seeks to build awareness about what it means to be both conservative and homosexual, and to unequivocally deny Foley entry into either group. "The actions of Mark Foley don't reflect well on gays or Republicans," said NGLTF and the RNC in a joint statement released today. "Quite frankly, we're all screwed come November unless we can clear this up in a hurry."

"Mark Foley is not gay, he is a pederast," intones the announcer's voice on one radio ad released by the campaign. "And Mark Foley is not a Republican; he is a moderate with occasional conservative leanings. Foley: Not gay, not Republican, not our values."

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Lesbian Moms Replace Soccer Moms as Hot New Polling Demographic

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In the 2000 election, pollsters talked up the importance of the "soccer mom" vote. In the 2004 election, "security moms" were the demographic du jour. For 2006, a new demographic has been identified by political pollsters as potentially playing a significant role in the result of the upcoming mid-term elections: "lesbian moms."

The emergence of the lesbian mom as a crucial election demographic was first reported in polling conducted by Zogby International in July 2006. According to Fritz Wenzel, communications director for Zogby, "We never thought of this group before as a voting bloc that could heavily influence the election. In fact, we never thought much about lesbians at all. But then a couple of our women pollsters starting complaining that all lesbians seem to do anymore on television is have babies. That got us thinking - lesbians must have a lot of children in real life too."

The typical lesbian mom is described as a woman in her mid-thirties to mid-forties who is partnered and has at least one child living with her under age 12, typically conceived using a sperm donor. She may or may not be the child's birth mother. Lesbians moms are also politically liberal.

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"Lesbian Moms" Continued From Page 7

"Not all lesbian moms identify as Democrats - some are members of the Green Party and others reject party labels altogether as a product of the repressive patriarchy - but they can really tip the balance of power in Congress to the Democrats," said Wenzel.

When asked about the chance of lesbian moms playing such a prominent role in the election, President Bush responded, "Well, heck I don't care what ethnicity you are - we've got all kinds in this country. Italians and Chinese and Mexicans and Irish. If you are a citizen of The United States, you have the right to vote. And that's why we have to keep fighting the war on terror."

Press Secretary Tony Snow later explained to Bush that he was asked about lesbian moms, not Lebanese moms. Bush looked confused by the explanation.

Taken From Fake Gay News. Com

<http://fakegaynews.com/index.php/2006/09/lesbian-moms-replace-soccer-moms-as-hot-new-polling-demographic/>

"Republicans, Gays Bond" Continued From Page 7

On a legislative level, notorious homophobe Henry Hyde (R-IL) and famously gay Barney Frank (D-MA) have teamed up to co-sponsor HR-567, entitled "Mark Foley: Not On Our Team." While the legislative combination of ultraconservative Hyde and noted liberal Frank is indeed unprecedented, the co-sponsorship seems to be working well. "Both parties have a common interest, so it is a logical legislative marriage—well, civil union," said a spokesman for Hyde. "Let's not dwell in semantics. The point is, they both really, really hate Mark Foley."

The Log Cabin Republicans, who have long hoped for a highly visible gay Republican, have recanted their wishes in recent days. "Look, when we said we would love for this country to have a gay Republican in office, we meant the kind who liked grown men, not teenage boys," said Log Cabin board member Rick Johannes. "For starters, teenage boys can't vote."

Next week, Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA) will co-host the televised special "Across the Aisle and Away from Foley," which is being billed as the nation's first bicameral, bisexual teach-in. It is also the first event to be covered live from the Capitol by both C-SPAN and LOGO. While both parties agree that the gay/Republican coalition is a necessary alliance in light of recent events, both also hope that they can soon return to their pattern of mutual loathing.

Taken From Fake Gay News.com

<http://fakegaynews.com/index.php/2006/10/republicans-gays-bond-over-mutual-contempt-for-foley/>

"Gender Personal Choice" Continued from Page 6

Another person who testified, Mariah Lopez, 21, said she wanted a new birth certificate to prevent confusion, and to keep teachers, police officers and other authority figures from embarrassing her in public or accusing her of identity theft.

A few weeks ago, at a welfare office in Queens, Ms. Lopez said she included a note with her application for public assistance asking that she be referred to as Ms. when her turn for an interview came up. It did not work. The woman handling her case repeatedly addressed her as Mister.

"The thing is, I don't even remember what it's like to be a boy," Ms. Lopez said, adding that she received a diagnosis of transgender identity disorder at age 6. She asked to be identified as a woman for this article.

The move to ease the requirements for altering one's gender identity comes after New York has adopted other measures aimed at blurring the lines of gender identification. For instance, a new shelter policy approved in January now allows beds to be distributed according to appearance, applying equally to postoperative transsexuals, cross-dressers and "persons perceived to be androgynous."

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority also agreed last month to let people define their own gender when deciding whether to use the men's or women's bathrooms.

Joann Prinzivalli, 52, a lawyer for the New York Transgender Rights Organization, a man who has lived as a woman since 2000, without surgery, said the changes amount to progress, a move away from American culture's misguided fixation on genitals as the basis for one's gender identity.

"It's based on an arbitrary distinction that says there are two and only two sexes," she said. "In reality the diversity of nature is such that there are more than just two, and people who seem to belong to one of the designated sexes may really belong to the other."

Taken From NyTimes.com 11/07/06

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/07/nyregion/07gender.html?page_wanted=2&ei=5087%0A&em&en=f42092003237dd10&ex=1163134800