

bian Advocates and Defenders asked the office to reject two anti-gay ballot initiatives for failing to meet constitutional requirements by making sweeping changes to many laws.

A group called Massachusetts Citizens for Marriage filed two ballot initiatives Aug. 1 to change the state constitution to deny gay and lesbian couples the right to marry. According to GLAD, the ballot initiatives could threaten existing laws protecting children who live in nontraditional households, throw into doubt existing workplace benefits extended to same-sex couples and others, and prevent the Legislature, the courts and cities and towns from taking any future action to grant protections to individuals who are not married.

"The changes they seek are far broader than a ban on marriage for same-sex couples," attorney Jennifer Levi said. "They also seek to ban the extension of any marriage-like benefits, protections and responsibilities to any individuals who are living in nonmarital family relationships. This would affect unmarried couples and, depending on the issue, could also affect the rights relatives have in relation to each other and the rights of a married person vis-à-vis some other person."

Although the Massachusetts Constitution provides for citizen-initiated petitions for legislation and amendments, it has strict requirements regarding what topics are open for public debate. The process, which was adopted in 1918, included restrictions on public lawmaking particularly where minority rights are at issue. Petitions that address matters relating to powers of courts or are inconsistent with individual rights may not be the subject of a statewide election.

NATIONAL

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation officials successfully have lobbied the Game Show Network to pull what they considered an offensive episode of *Match Game* from future rotations.

The episode, which aired during the mid-1970s, featured a segment in which host Gene Rayburn asked the question, "Doris just got married and found out her husband was a blank." Celebrity guests Dick and Barbara Gautier answered, "Fag."

According to entertainment media director Scott Seomin, GLAAD was alerted about the episode, called the network and asked executives to remove the show from future rotations. He said they agreed and apologized for airing it the first time.

Just Out contacted Dick Gautier for his



Actor Dick Gautier (right, with Patty Duke) says he's sorry for using an offensive epithet on national television

thoughts on the matter. The actor/artist quickly apologized for using the epithet but explained the context in which it was used.

"First of all it was a different time, a less sensitive and P.C. time," Gautier wrote. "Having done at least 20 musicals on Broadway and all over the country and working closely with a lot of gay performers, many of whom I still consider my friends, the word of choice among this group was exactly that. 'Gay' was not in widespread use at that time."

"I'm sorry if a 25-year-old show offended anybody, but that word was drummed into my head by my gay acquaintances and the people I worked with for many years. And when you must answer a question quickly, your 'good taste editor' isn't always engaged."

Earlier this summer GLAAD condemned writer/director Kevin Smith for mocking gay men in *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*. The film went on to gross \$11 million during its opening weekend.

Is the Bush White House taking "don't ask, don't tell" literally?

Even though AIDS czar Scott Evertz is the administration's only openly gay appointee, he is not being allowed to talk to the press. According to the August issue of *POZ*, the magazine wanted to ask the White House Office of National AIDS Policy director about his views, "but after many requests for an interview, the White House press office refused, saying Evertz wouldn't be doing any media 'for at least a couple of months'—the Bushies are no doubt keeping him under wraps until they can drum the party line into his head." □

Compiled by News Editor JIM RADOSTA, who can be reached at jim@justout.com.

REDUCING THE NATIONAL HET

The Human Rights Campaign released a comprehensive report Aug. 22 analyzing the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau figures.

The biggest surprise was the impressive geographic diversity for gay and lesbian families, with these couples residing in 99.3 percent of all counties across the United States. The numbers are significant because they challenge widely held myths and demonstrate these families are a vital part of society, HRC says in the report.

The 2000 figures for same-sex unmarried partner households provide a wealth of information about a previously unrecognized constituency. These numbers will provide researchers and policymakers at every level of government compelling arguments for why they need to take care of the needs of gay and lesbian families, HRC asserts.

The robust census findings include:

- In 2000, gay and lesbian families totaled 601,209 with 304,148 gay male families and 297,061 lesbian families.

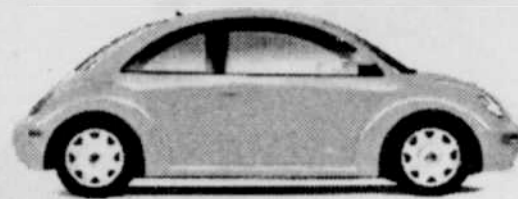
- In 1990, the U.S. Census Bureau reported 145,130 total gay and lesbian families—81,343 male and 63,787 female. The 2000 numbers represent a 314 percent increase.

- Gay and lesbian families live in 99.3 percent of all counties in the United States, compared to 1990 when gay and lesbian families reported living in 52 percent of all counties.

- HRC estimates that the census count of gay and lesbian families could be undercounted as much as 62 percent.

- Gay and lesbian families live in 97 percent of all U.S. Census Bureau tracts (64,241 out of 66,304).

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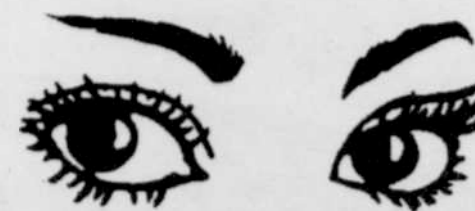
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