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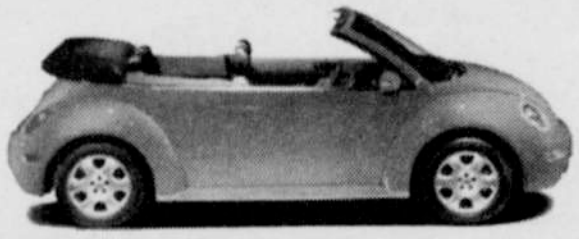


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NATIONAL news

BUSH ON GAY ADOPTION

"The ideal in society is to raise children with a man and a woman," President Bush said in response to a question about a Florida law that prevents gay men and lesbians from adopting. Excerpts from the exclusive Oval Office interview appeared in the Jan. 28 edition of *The New York Times*.

"As president, I will always be aiming for the ideal. I don't know about this particular case," he said in declining to comment on the lawsuit that the U.S. Supreme Court recently declined to accept. Plaintiffs include Portland fathers Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau.

Bush went on to say, "I believe children can receive love from gay couples, but the ideal is—and studies have shown that the idea is where a child is raised in a married family with a man and a woman."

But, in fact, that isn't what the studies show. Most of the work demonstrating the benefits of male/female parenting compared that with single-parent or divorced situations where it was clear that the emotional and financial support of two parents was beneficial.

The few studies that have looked at the children of same-sex couples have found the kids to be statistically pretty normal in terms of their developmental issues and problems. However, those studies have looked at only small numbers of gay families and only over a short period of time.

"There is not a single legitimate scholar out there who argues that growing up with gay parents is somehow bad for children," Judith Stacey told the *Times*. The New York University sociology professor has conducted a literature review of those studies. She said, "The debate among scientists is about how good the studies we have really are."

Winnie Stachelberg, political director of the Human Rights Campaign, added: "Myths should not dominate discussions about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender families. Adoption should be about what is best for the child, not appealing to a political base. With so many children in foster care in need of permanently nurturing homes, it's critically important that we put science before ideology when making family policy decision."

What has been largely overlooked in this debate is Bush's use of the term "gay couples." It is a shift in tone for an administration that seldom uses the word "gay," more often referring to homosexuals. Furthermore, he acknowledged that gays can make loving parents, albeit perhaps not the ideal. But he also implied that the ideal is not always possible. Surely James Dobson is biting his tongue.

—Bob Roehr

EXTREME RIGHT-WING JUDGES RENOMINATED

The National Stonewall Democrats slammed President Bush's call for the swift confirmation of unqualified federal judicial nominees Feb. 15.

"It is dangerously unethical for President Bush to promote the quick confirmation of judicial activists whose rulings he himself has not examined," said Dave Noble, NSD executive director. "President Bush recently admitted that he did not know that the state of Florida prohibits gay residents from adopting children. Yet, it was his recess appointment—William Pryor—who cast the deciding vote days earlier to uphold this ban. If President Bush refuses to review the records of his own nominees for lifetime appointments, then the Senate should."

Bush resubmitted seven judicial nominees Feb. 14 that the U.S. Senate had temporarily held for review last year. Two of those nominees, California Supreme Court Justice Janice Rogers Brown and 11th Circuit Court Justice



Justice Janice Rogers Brown



Justice William Pryor

William Pryor, hold radical records of anti-gay judicial activism.

Pryor, serving temporarily through a recess appointment, recently cast the deciding vote to uphold Florida's ban on allowing gay residents to adopt children. Shortly after the ruling, Bush told *The New York Times* that he was unaware of such a ban. As attorney general of Alabama, Pryor linked gay families to pedophilia and bestiality while urging the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold sodomy laws in Texas. He also used his position to promote anti-gay organizations with taxpayer resources.

Brown also holds an ideological judicial record that has consistently attacked the stability of gay families. In 2003, she was the only justice on the California Supreme Court to rule against recognizing the right of gay residents to legally adopt their children. Brown argued that allowing a gay parent to legally adopt the biological child of his or her partner "trivializes family bonds."

—Sarah Dougher

FORUM CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF QUEER CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

A national celebration of the 40th anniversary of the GLBT civil rights movement will be held May 1 at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

From April 25 to May 1, Equality Forum 2005 and National Celebration will feature more than 70 programs, parties and events. The entire week is free.

A record 30 states and the District of Columbia will hold receptions April 30 in Philadelphia's "gayborhood." Queer pioneers, heroes and national and international executive directors are invited. Seven of the states that passed anti-gay marriage amendments in 2004 will be in attendance, including Oregon, which will be represented by Basic Rights Oregon.

"From Empire State Pride Agenda to Equality California, and Kentucky Fairness to Equality Iowa, red states as well as blue states are holding state receptions," said Malcolm Lazin, Equality Forum executive director. "There is no such thing as a federal election. States elect congressmen, senators and the president. States will be won by strengthening grassroots activism."

Equality Federation, an association of statewide queer advocacy groups, will hold a national meeting April 29.

"Equality Forum has made an active commitment to the importance of statewide and grassroots activism," said Toni Broadus, Equality Federation executive director. "The National Celebration will provide an invaluable networking opportunity to energize the movement."

Included among the Equality Forum 2005 programs is "State Activism: From Red to Yellow."

An image from *Gay Pioneers*, a video created by Equality Forum to honor early activists