



**NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE COLLECTION OF  
MEDIA REPORTS ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE, 2004 GENERAL  
ELECTION**

**COLL2008-055**

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## Descriptive Summary

### Title

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Collection of Media Reports on Same-Sex Marriage, 2004 General Election

### Creator

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

### Extent

Number of containers: 2 boxes

Linear feet: 2 linear feet

### Date

September-December 2004

### Repository

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California

### Abstract

Newspaper clippings and printouts of articles posted to newspaper and other media websites ("WebClips") documenting the political battle over constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage put before voters in 11 states (Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah) in the general election of November 2, 2004.



## Administrative Information

### Access

The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

### Publication Rights

Researchers wishing to publish material must obtain permission in writing from ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives as the physical owner of the material. Note that permission to publish does not constitute copyright clearance. ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives can grant copyright clearance only for those materials for which we hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain copyright clearance for all other materials from the copyright holder(s).

### Preferred Citation

Box #, folder #, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Collection of Media Reports on Same-sex Marriage, 2004 General Election, Coll2008-055, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California

### Indexing Terms

This collection is indexed under the following terms:

Homosexuality—Law and legislation—United States  
Homosexuality—Political aspects—United States  
Homosexuality—Social aspects—United States  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (U.S.)  
Same-sex marriage—United States

### Acquisitions Information

Gift of the Sheri Lunn, former Communications Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, September 2008.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Lilly Insalata, October 18, 2008.

## History

The GLBT community has challenged the legal restriction of marriage to opposite-sex partners since at least 1970, when the Reverend Troy Perry, founder of the predominantly GLBT Metropolitan Community Church, presided over a ceremony between two women, issuing a church marriage certificate that would have exempted the couple from obtaining a marriage license had they been a man and a woman. Other efforts to circumvent the legal restriction were subsequently undertaken in Minnesota (1971), Kentucky (1973), Boulder, Colorado (1975), Washington, DC (1990), and Ithaca, New York (1995).

GLBT efforts to obtain legal recognition of same-sex marriage increased in the decade between 1995 and 2004. In 1996, the Supreme Court of Hawaii's consideration of a measure that would have legalized same-sex marriage in that state created considerable controversy. In response, anti-gay sentiment in the US Congress led to the passage of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which gives states the right to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages enacted in other states and denies federal benefits to same-sex marital partners. The measure passed even though same-sex marriage had not yet been made legal anywhere in the US, and despite the fact that it appeared to pose a conflict with the Constitution's provision for full faith and credit.

Despite the passage of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, the GLBT community's efforts continued, meeting with increasing success:

- In 2000, following a class-action suit begun in 1997, the state of Vermont instituted a form of "civil union", whereby same-sex couples registered as domestic partners gain access to some 300 state benefits and privileges in the areas of inheritance, property transfers, medical decisions, workers' compensation, insurance, and state taxes previously available only to heterosexual married couples.
- On June 26, 2003, the US Supreme Court's decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* struck down consensual sodomy laws across the nation. Legal scholars interpreted this decision as providing a foundation for the legalization of same-sex marriage, since without sodomy laws a primary justification for the denial of other civil entitlements (including marriage) could no longer be invoked.
- On September 19, 2003, governor Gray Davis signed into law the California Domestic Partners Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003 (effective January 1, 2005), extending to domestic partnerships virtually all the legal rights and responsibilities of marriage in California.
- On November 13, 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* that the state's ban on same-sex marriage was unconstitutional; town clerks began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples on May 17, 2004.
- Between February 14 and March 11, 2004 (when forced to cease by court order), the County of San Francisco issued marriage licenses to over 4,000 same-sex couples.
- Between March 3 and April 20, 2004 (when forced to cease by court order), Multnomah County, Oregon, issued marriage licenses to 3,022 same-sex couples.

Religious and social conservatives were alarmed by these developments, which they saw as a “capitulation” to the “homosexual agenda” and a threat to “order and morality”. In response, they succeeded in having constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage placed on ballots in 13 states—Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah—in the general election year of 2004 (Louisiana and Missouri voted on the amendments in the spring; the remaining states voted on them on November 2). Despite the efforts of the GLBT community against the amendments, in particular in Oregon (where the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force contributed more than \$900,000 in cash and kind, and the Human Rights Campaign spent another \$514,000), the amendments passed easily in all 13 states. The issue of “family values” energized evangelical Christians and the political right, and many political analysts believe that these voters tilted the vote in hotly contested Ohio to George W. Bush, ensuring him a second term.



## Scope and Content and Container List

This collection consists of newspaper clippings and printouts of articles posted to newspaper and other media websites (“WebClips”) documenting GLBT-related issues in the last quarter of 2004, in particular the political battle over constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage put before voters in 11 states (Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah) in the general election of November 2 (Louisiana and Missouri voted on, and passed, similar amendments earlier in the year). The newspaper clippings relate almost exclusively to the issue of same-sex marriage and the role the NGLTF played in the political battle. The webclips, taken from a wide variety of websites (including newspapers, television and radio stations, and organizations), cover a broader range of other GLBT issues, many of them local, in which the also NGLTF played a role. The materials are arranged by format (newspaper clippings and webclips), then chronologically by the date of publication.

### Box Folder

1	1	List of NGLTF staff, June 2004
1	2-44	Newspaper Clippings, September 28-December 2004
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1	3	October-December 2004
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1	5	October 14, 2004
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1	7	October 19, 2004
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1	10	October 22, 2004
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1	16-19	October 31, 2004 (4 folders)
1	20	November 2004
1	21	November 1, 2004
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1	24-28	November 4, 2004 (5 folders)
1	29	November 5, 2004
1	30-32	November 7, 2004 (3 folders)
1	33	November 8, 2004
1	34	November 9, 2004
1	35	November 10, 2004



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1	45	December 2004
2	1-70	WebClips, September 13-November 30, 2004
2	1	September 13, 2004
2	2	September 23, 2004
2	3	September 24, 2004
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2	5	September 26, 2004
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2	57	November 8, 2004
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2	63	November 23, 2004
2	64	November 24, 2004
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2	68	November 28, 2004
2	69	November 29, 2004
2	70	November 30, 2004