

A.P.A. Supports Same-Sex Marriage

NARTH has learned that the American Psychological Association not only supports the legalization of same-sex marriage, but is now using its financial resources to actively lobby for it.

In the past, the A.P.A. has been politically pro-active on homosexuality through boycotts, engaging in court actions, and strongly affirming homosexuality in its publications.

Now, A.P.A.'s Public Policy Office is working in concert with other advocacy groups to plan judicial lobbying strategy to oppose DOMA (The Defense of Marriage Act). DOMA would allow individual states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages if they became legal in Hawaii.

A.P.A. distributed a "Question and Answer" document on DOMA which was targeted for distribution to the audience they believe will help their cause--"moderate to progressive" House of Representatives members. A.P.A.'s goal is to "counter the attempts of conservative think tanks to portray same-sex marriage as harmful to children and families" (Report of the A.P.A. Public Interest Policy Office to the Council of Representatives, August 1996).

Most recently, A.P.A. sent out an "!!!Action Alert!!!" report calling DOMA an "anti-gay" bill which--according to the A.P.A.'s analysis of legislators' values and motivations-- "attempts to exploit anti-gay prejudice in an election year." Psychologists were advised to send their senators a letter, which A.P.A. provided, in order to express their opposition to DOMA.

Going further, A.P.A.'s Action Alert states: "DOMA is an example of prejudice rooted in negative stereotypes. Lesbian and gay relations are not a threat to family values. Most gay men and lesbians want intimate relationships and are successful in creating them. Gay couples frequently make substantial commitments to each other that endure for decades." (Note the use of the careful term "substantial commitments"; in fact, research indicates that most gay relations do not last, are typically non-monogamous, and evidence more dysfunction.)

Clearly, the A.P.A.--which should be the sounding board for the views of all of its broadly diverse membership--has decided to represent only gay activism. The organization has moved from a concern for civil rights, to the assumption of an explicit advocacy posture on this and many other social issues.

Not surprisingly, NARTH has formed to fill the void in information. Now, our task is to break through the wall of silence built by the major professional organizations which seek to restrict NARTH's free communication with other psychotherapy professionals (see story, front page).

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