

# Findings

## Connecting the Dots of the Homosexual Agenda *The Effort to Revolutionize Sexuality, Gender, and the Family*

By Alysse ElHage



In the spring of 1969, gay commune founder, Carl Wittman, wrote an article he called, “The Gay Manifesto.” It would become one of the most powerful founding documents of the early homosexual rights movement. In the article, Wittman outlined his “Imperatives for Gay Liberation,” including the following three:

- Free ourselves: come out everywhere; initiate self-defense and political activity; initiate counter community institutions.
- Turn other gay people on; talk all the time...
- Free the homosexual in everyone.<sup>1</sup>

Wittman died of AIDS in 1986. But if he were alive today, he would probably consider his words somewhat prophetic, when he saw the political and cultural influence of the homosexual rights movement he envisioned over three decades ago. In 2009, the homosexual community is a politically powerful and culturally popular faction with representation in the government, medical community, mainstream news media, education, and pop culture.

At the federal, state and local levels, homosexual activists and their allies are pushing their agenda through targeted efforts to gain protected status in civil rights laws and policies, full marriage and parenting rights, and gay-friendly policies and programs in schools. While these initiatives may appear to be separate, they are actually interconnected

parts of a broader agenda that has less to do with “equal rights” and everything to do with normalization. Homosexual activists may not talk publicly about freeing “the homosexual in everyone,” but the agenda outlined by early activists such as Wittman remains the same today—to radically alter the nature of sex, gender and the family.

### The Agenda

While it is often portrayed as a civil rights effort, the homosexual rights movement actually began as a revolutionary endeavor. According to historian Barry Adams:

*“Gay liberation never thought of itself as a civil rights movement for a particular minority, but as a revolutionary struggle to free homosexuality in everyone, challenging the conventional arrangements that confined sexuality to heterosexual, monogamous families. For gay liberation, there was no ‘normal’ or ‘perverse’ sexuality, only a world of sexual possibilities ranged against a repressive order of marriage, oedipal families and compulsory heterosexuality.”<sup>2</sup>*

From the beginning, the agenda of the homosexual rights movement went far beyond equal rights for homosexual men and women, to total societal acceptance of homosexuality and sexual freedom in general. Homosexual activist Dennis Altman, writing in his 1982 book *The Homosexualization of America, the Americanization of the Homosexual*, explained: “... the new gay culture represents an affirmation of sexual play and experimentation that goes far beyond the repressive norms most people in this society, including many homo-

sexuals, have internalized.”<sup>3</sup> According to Altman, the homosexual rights movement had four functions:

1. *Defining a gay community and identity;*
2. *Establishing this identity and community as visible and legitimate within the broader society;*
3. *Winning specific demands for legal equality, and*
4. *Challenging the general heterosexism of the society.<sup>4</sup>*

By the late 1980s, the leaders of the homosexual rights movement used less offensive language when describing their agenda, but the overall goal remained the same. As homosexual activists Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen explained in their 1989 book, *After the Ball*, which is considered a more modern gay manifesto, “In brief, we’re fighting for a tomorrow in which it simply doesn’t occur to anyone that there’s anything more unusual about being gay than about preferring praline ice cream to double dutch chocolate: in which it would be bizarre to point your finger and yell, ‘Queer!’ as to point your finger and yell ‘Certified public accountant.’”<sup>5</sup>

### The Strategy

The homosexual rights movement has successfully employed several key strategies in their efforts to bring about the radical social change that was envisioned by early activists. Two key strategies suggested by Kirk and Madsen are (1) desensitization of the public to homosexuals (and homosexual behavior), and (2) the portrayal of homosexuals as victims. **Desensitization.** Kirk and Madsen summarized their “recipe for desensitizing” heterosexuals in two words: “Keep

Talking.” The message is simple: the more the public hears about homosexuality and sees it portrayed in positive ways, such as on television or through the news media, the more normal it will seem. As Kirk and Madsen explain, “The free and frequent discussion of gay rights by a variety of people in a variety of places gives the impression that homosexuality is commonplace.”<sup>6</sup> However, they add a word of caution, noting, “In the early stages of the campaign, the public should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself. Instead, the imagery of sex per se should be downplayed, and the issue of gay rights reduced, as far as possible, to an abstract social question.”<sup>7</sup>

Kirk and Madsen point to the visual media, particularly television, movies, and magazines, as a prime medium through which this desensitization to homosexuality can be brought about. They describe television as “a gateway into the private world of straights, through which a Trojan horse might be passed.”<sup>8</sup>

Homosexual activists have been extremely successful at employing the “Keep Talking” strategy through the media, as anyone who watches television or the movies today can attest. From popular sitcoms, such as the award winning, “Will and Grace,” to Bravo’s, “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,” television is flooded with programs that portray homosexuals and the homosexual lifestyle in an attractive manner. Also consider the 2005 movie, “Brokeback Mountain,” which includes graphic scenes of homosexual sex between two married men and was marketed to a mainstream audience. Even pop music has become a medium through which homosexuality is promoted. Kate Perry’s song, “I Kissed A Girl,” includes the lyrics: “No, I don’t even know your name/ It doesn’t matter/You’re my experimental game/Just human nature ...”<sup>9</sup>

**Victim Imagery.** Another key strategy of the homosexual rights movement involves the portrayal of homosexuals as victims. This strategy is one that is extremely important to the public policy areas they are targeting.

*“In any campaign to win over the public, gays must be portrayed as victims in need of protection so that straights will be inclined by reflex to adopt the role of protector. ... The purpose of victim*

*imagery is to make straights feel very uncomfortable; that is to jam with shame and self-righteous pride that would ordinarily accompany and reward their antigay belligerence, and to lay groundwork for the process of conversion by helping straights identify with gays and sympathize with their underdog status.”<sup>10</sup>*

Homosexual activists have become extremely adept at portraying homosexual, bisexual and transgendered individuals as victims and in convincing government leaders, the mainstream media, the medical and education establishments that they are in need of special protections. The victim imagery is used in every arena, including schools—where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) students are depicted as at risk for bullying, violence, harassment, and self-harm and in need of special protections—and in public policy debates about same-

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sex “marriage”—where proponents argue that denying same-sex couples full access to the rights and privileges of marriage reduces them to “second class citizens.”

### **Specific Demands**

In February 1972, the National Coalition of Gay Organizations formerly adopted the “Gay Rights Platform” at a meeting in Chicago, which detailed the specific federal and state-level demands of the homosexual rights movement. Those demands can be summarized as including the following points:

- Repealing all laws criminalizing sex acts and behaviors (sodomy laws, as well as laws against prostitution, and laws prohibiting cross-dressing and transvestism)
- Revision of civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing and public accommodations
- Implementation of pro-homosexual sex education in schools
- Repeal of all state laws restricting marriage to a man

and a woman, and the number of marriage partners, along with the extension of marriage benefits to same-sex and cohabiting couples.<sup>11</sup>

Homosexual advocacy groups are working to implement these demands at the federal, state and local levels nationwide, including right here in North Carolina.

### **Sodomy Laws**

The decriminalization of sexual acts between homosexuals (such as anal and oral sex) has been a top priority for the homosexual rights movement since it began, and for good reason. It is difficult to convince the public that a lifestyle is legitimate and natural, if the behaviors that define it are illegal. Prior to the 1970s, sodomy laws were on the books in most states, including North Carolina, with many dating back to the 1600s.<sup>12</sup> Typically, these laws defined homosexual behaviors, as well as sex with animals, as unnatural, unhealthy and dangerous for society, and instituted various legal penalties for committing them. Most of these laws were overturned in the 1970s, although sodomy laws remained on the books of 13 states, including North Carolina, through 2003.<sup>13</sup> In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its controversial ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas*, overturning Texas’ sodomy law as unconstitutional. In the 6 to 3 decision, the Supreme Court declared that the government has no authority to regulate private sexual acts between consenting adults.<sup>14</sup>

The ruling was a major victory for the homosexual rights movement. The *Lawrence* decision also had a powerful impact on the same-sex “marriage” debate. In fact, both the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and the California Supreme Court used language from *Lawrence* to justify their decisions to legalize same-sex “marriage” in their states.<sup>15</sup>

North Carolina’s sodomy statute is still on the books. Equality North Carolina, the state’s largest homosexual advocacy group, is currently promoting HB 100—Conform State Law to *Lawrence v. Texas*, which would modify the statute and establish sodomy in this state as a legal and protected activity, as long as it is conducted between consenting adults and is not for hire.<sup>16</sup> Not only is this bill unnecessary, since the *Lawrence* ruling is

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the current law of the land, but it would also establish a pro-sodomy law in North Carolina. Should the Supreme Court ever reverse itself on Lawrence, or limit the scope of the ruling in a future decision, North Carolina would be stuck with a pro-sodomy statute on the books, if HB 100 were enacted.<sup>17</sup>

## Civil Rights Laws and Policies

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, and national origin. From the beginning of the homosexual rights movement, its leaders desired that “sexual orientation” be added to the list of protected categories in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations.<sup>18</sup> More recently, in an attempt to include transgendered individuals, that effort has expanded to include “gender identity” and “gender expression” in these special protections.

Efforts to get “sexual orientation” and “gender identity/expression” added to nondiscrimination policies and laws are under way at the federal, state and local levels, including in schools. At the national level, President Barack Obama has promised to help pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which homosexual activists have been pushing in one form or another for decades.<sup>19</sup> ENDA would prohibit employers from discriminating on the basis of “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” in their hiring or firing policies.<sup>20</sup>

At the state level, Equality North Carolina is promoting nondiscrimination legislation in the General Assembly this year. SB 843–Nondiscrimination in State Employment would add “sexual orientation” (defined to include “gender-related identity or expression”) to the list of protected classes in the State Personnel Act, which prohibits discrimination in hiring, promotion, and training of state employees. Additionally, SB 395–Carrboro Housing Discrimination would amend the Carrboro Town Charter to allow the town to adopt ordinances that prohibit “housing discrimination” based on “sexual orientation” and “gender identification/expression.”<sup>21</sup>

Getting these categories added to nondiscrimination policies and/or laws is an important part of the homosexual agenda because it grants homosexuals,

bisexuals and transgendered individuals the same protected status as African Americans, women and the disabled. It essentially equates sexual behavior and gender confusion—such as cross-dressing—to immutable (or unchangeable) characteristics, such as being born a specific race. It gives these behaviors protected status under the law, which limits or restricts the ability of religious employers, renters or other groups from exercising their religious beliefs and denying services (such as renting a room) to homosexual, bisexual and transgender individuals.<sup>22</sup>

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**Hate Crimes.** In 1990, President George H. W. Bush made history by signing the “Hate Crimes Statistics Act” into law. It was a significant victory for the homosexual rights movement because it included “sexual orientation” in the list of protected categories under federal law. The law directed the U.S. Department of Justice to “collect and publish statistics about crimes motivated by hatred based on” a number of categories, including “sexual orientation.”<sup>23</sup> More recently, homosexual advocacy groups are working to get “transgender-inclusive language” (i.e., gender identity/expression) added to hate crimes laws.

At the national level, President Obama has promised to help enact a key piece of legislation for the homosexual rights movement, the “Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act,” which expands federal hate crimes laws and includes “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” in the list of federally protected categories.<sup>24</sup> In this state, Equality North Carolina is currently pushing HB 207–Safer Communities Act, a bill that would add “sexual orientation,” which is defined as “actual or perceived heterosexuality or a person’s gender-related identity or expression,” to North Carolina’s hate crimes statute.<sup>25</sup>

Gaining legal protections for sexual behavior and gender identity/expression under hate crimes statutes is another attempt by homosexual activists to get the government to legitimize homosexuality and other alternative lifestyles. But it also represents a significant threat to religious freedom and free speech, particularly for Christians who object to homosexuality, bisexuality and transgenderism on biblical grounds. Adding pro-homosexual language to hate crimes laws (as well as to nondiscrimination policies and laws) ultimately leads to the silencing of any voices that dare to speak out against the normalization of homosexuality.

## Infiltrating the Classroom

In their quest to revolutionize the nature of sex, gender and the family, homosexual activists have targeted the classroom as a means of influencing the next generation. Through the schools, homosexual activists can effectively sidestep and undermine the teachings of the church and parents on the key issues of sexuality, gender, and family. In the classroom, they have a captive and impressionable audience, where young minds are easily molded to believe that sexuality is fluid, gender is a relative term, and a family is just a group of people who love each other.

**Sex Education.** The “1972 Gay Rights Platform” included the following demand: “Federal encouragement and support for sex education courses, prepared and taught by gay women and men, presenting homosexuality as a valid, healthy preference and lifestyle as a viable alternative to heterosexuality.”<sup>26</sup> Not surprisingly, homosexual activists are one of the leading proponents of comprehensive sex education (CSE) programs, which teach, among other things, that most forms of sexual expression are normal and healthy.<sup>27</sup>

According to the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), “Individuals have the right to accept, acknowledge, and live in accordance with their sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, heterosexual, gay or lesbian.”<sup>28</sup> Many CSE programs openly discuss sexual orientation gender identity and expression, and some actively promote homosexuality. For example:

- *Be Proud! Be Responsible!* includes the following scenario involving

a male homosexual relationship: “Allan: You know Gerald cares a lot about you, but he just doesn’t get it...Now he’s convinced he’s going to get HIV for choosing a gay lifestyle. You have tried to explain that it’s no more a choice to be gay than it is to be straight, it’s just the way you naturally feel about things.”<sup>29</sup>

- *Reducing the Risk*, a CSE curricula used in North Carolina, includes the following scenario for students to act out: “Tony and Dylan have been to a party and then go to Tony’s home to be alone. They start to kiss and undress each other. Dylan reaches into his jacket pocket, and realizes that he doesn’t have the condom he planned to use. He says, ‘I think somebody stole the rubber I had.’ What can Tony and Dylan do to avoid unprotected sex?”<sup>30</sup>

Equality North Carolina is one of the groups behind legislation this year that would revamp the state’s Abstinence-Until-Marriage (AUM) law and open the door for CSE to be taught in the state’s public schools. The bill, known as HB 88–Healthy Youth Act, would implement a two-track system for sexuality education in North Carolina that places students in a CSE program in grades 7, 8 and 9, unless parents opt out and ask for their children to be placed in an AUM program. Shortly before this magazine went to press, the bill was amended on the House floor to state that students would not be placed in either track of sexuality education if students do not produce a signed consent form. While this amended bill is now more family-friendly, this does not change the intention of the bill sponsors to switch North Carolina’s default sexuality education from AUM to CSE. The proposed CSE program includes language requiring the teaching of “respect for marriage and committed relationships,”<sup>31</sup> which may include homosexual, bisexual and multi-partner relationships. As of this writing, HB 88 awaits consideration in the Senate.

Homosexual advocacy groups are adamantly opposed to AUM sex education because of its emphasis on hetero-

sexual sex within the context of marriage as the best choice for young people. According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), AUM programs “assume that LGBT people do not exist, or that they will remain celibate their whole lives, or that it simply doesn’t matter if they contract sexually transmitted diseases.”<sup>32</sup> The NGLTF

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also claims that AUM programs promote “inherent sexism and antigay bias” and contain “gender stereotyping,” where “boys are presented as sex-crazed; girls as less interested in sex than in finding love.”<sup>33</sup> It is also instructive to note here that the NGLTF, in its effort to push for CSE advocacy, employs the previously discussed strategy of portraying homosexuals as victims by claiming that AUM programs say that “it doesn’t matter if [LGBT people] contract sexually-transmitted diseases.”

**Anti-Bullying/School Safety.** In North Carolina, homosexual activists are currently pushing legislation (HB 548–School Violence Prevention Act) that would mandate a statewide anti-bullying policy that includes specific characteristics of bully victims, including “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression.”<sup>34</sup> Although legislation has been introduced that would mandate a more general anti-bullying policy and protect all students (HB 776–No Bullying Anyone at Public Schools), Equality North Carolina objects to any law or policy that does not include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity/expression” in the list of protected categories. That is because once these pro-homosexual anti-bullying policies are in place, it makes it much easier for homosexual advocacy groups to get into the schools to promote the acceptance of homosexuality as a normal and healthy behavior through teacher and student training, and to silence any opposition to this message.<sup>35</sup>

Pro-homosexual anti-bullying policies are a major component of a broader initiative by homosexual activists to use

the safety issue to infiltrate the classroom. The safe schools initiative was created by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), which has been very successful at convincing school systems that LGBT students constitute a significant minority in schools who are at risk for violence, discrimination, and self-harm, and are therefore in need of special protections.<sup>36</sup> More importantly, they have been able to convince educators that the only way to protect LGBT students is to provide them with a welcome and accepting environment—a “safe” place where no sexual behavior, lifestyle, or gender expression is deemed unhealthy or abnormal. Other components of pro-homosexual safe schools initiatives include: nondiscrimination policies; teacher and staff training by pro-homosexual groups, such as GLSEN; and Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), which are in-school, student led clubs for LGBT students.<sup>37</sup>

### **Redefining the Family**

Perhaps the most “in-your-face” examples of how homosexual activists are advancing their agenda are in the areas of marriage and family. Across the nation, including in North Carolina, homosexual activists are engaged in efforts to revolutionize the nature of family, particularly through the redefinition of marriage and by seeking broader rights to adoption and child custody. Obtaining the rights to get married and to parent children not only gives homosexuality normalcy, but essentially destroys the institutions designed for opposite-sex couples—institutions that for all time and across all civilizations have always meant male and female, mother and father.

**Attacking Marriage.** For the most part, homosexual activists have effectively used the courts to advance their efforts to redefine marriage. Currently, the courts of three states have redefined marriage to include same-sex couples: Massachusetts (2004), Connecticut (2008), and Iowa (2009). In addition, the Vermont legislature passed a law in April 2009 that legalized same-sex “marriage” in that state.<sup>38</sup> Connecticut soon followed suit and legislatively legalized same-sex “marriage” there. The California Supreme Court also legalized same-sex “marriage” in 2008, but that decision was overturned by the voters in November with the passage of Proposition 8. Additionally,

two states currently recognize the same-sex “marriages” performed in other states: Rhode Island and New York.<sup>39</sup>

A key target for homosexual activists are the federal and state Defense of Marriage Acts (DOMA), which define marriage as only between a man and a woman. President Obama has promised to repeal the federal DOMA, which in addition to defining marriage for the purposes of federal law, also protects states from being forced to recognize the same-sex “marriages” of other states.<sup>40</sup> Currently, 37 states have DOMAs, including North Carolina.<sup>41</sup> If the federal DOMA is repealed, even states with DOMAs could be forced to recognize the same-sex “marriages” of states, such as Massachusetts.

In addition to trying to completely redefine marriage, homosexual activists are also using more subtle attempts to break down the institution through the enactment of domestic partnership benefits and civil union laws, which grant homosexuals some or all of the rights and privileges typically extended to married couples. The President has promised to help pass legislation that would extend all of the legal rights and benefits of marriage to same-sex couples.<sup>42</sup> According to the NGLTF, seven states currently have “broad relationship recognition laws,” such as civil unions and domestic partnership benefits.<sup>43</sup>

In response to these attacks on marriage, 30 states have passed Marriage Protection Amendments to their state constitutions, defining marriage as only between a man and a woman, and protecting it from redefinition by the courts or state legislatures.<sup>44</sup> Legislation that would give North Carolinians the opportunity to vote on a Marriage Protection Amendment has been introduced in the General Assembly for six years in a row, including this year. But Equality North Carolina and their allies in the General Assembly are doing all they can to defeat the legislation by ensuring it never makes it out of committee and onto the House or Senate floor for a vote, where it would likely pass by an overwhelming margin.<sup>45</sup>

**Redefining Parenthood.** In May 2008, the North Carolina Court of Appeals issued a landmark decision in *Mason v. Dwinnell*, a case involving a custody dispute between a lesbian couple, who used

in vitro fertilization (IVF) to have a child, and later ended their relationship. The appeals court granted joint legal custody of the child to the biological mother and her estranged lesbian partner. The case is significant in that it represented the first time an appellate court in North Carolina has recognized custodial rights for non-parent homosexual partners.<sup>46</sup>

*Mason v. Dwinnell* is an example of ongoing efforts by homosexuals to expand the biological and legal barriers to having children. As with their efforts to redefine marriage, homosexual activists have turned to the courts to force a redefinition of parenting on society through lawsuits involving child custody or visitation rights, or through attempts to amend state laws that prohibit or restrict adoption by homosexuals.

In November 2008, a Florida circuit court struck down the state’s 31-year-old law banning homosexuals from adopting.<sup>47</sup> According to the NGLTF, six states restrict adoption by homosexuals in their adoption laws, such as by restricting non-married couples from adopting.<sup>48</sup> North Carolina law prohibits adoption by unmarried couples and only allows married couples and single individuals to adopt. Because it is silent on the issue of adoption by homosexuals, the door is open for one partner in a homosexual relationship to adopt a child.<sup>49</sup>

In recent years, homosexual activists have turned to a legal procedure known as “second parent adoption,” where a same-sex partner “is allowed to adopt his or her partner’s biological or adoptive child without terminating the legal rights of the first parent.” As of November 2008, only four states allow second-parent adoption through specific statutes.<sup>50</sup>

## Conclusion

The homosexual rights movement has come a long way since its beginnings as a revolutionary faction, eager to throw off the yoke of the heterosexual oppressor. While homosexual activists may speak in the language of human rights and equality, the revolutionary goal of the early movement—to “free the homosexual in everyone”—has not changed. The efforts by homosexual activists to gain protected status under civil rights laws and policies, implement pro-homosexual programs in schools, and force the redefinition of marriage and family onto society

through the courts are all part of the same radical agenda. What they ultimately seek is to create a new norm—where sexuality and gender are fluid and interchangeable, and where neither is based on biological factors but on the feelings, desires and experiences of individuals themselves. The end result is a society where sexual experimentation and gender “nonconformity” are fully embraced as normal and protected by special status, and where anyone who dares to say otherwise is judged bigoted and intolerant, and immediately silenced.

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