

# On The Matter Of Gay Marriage

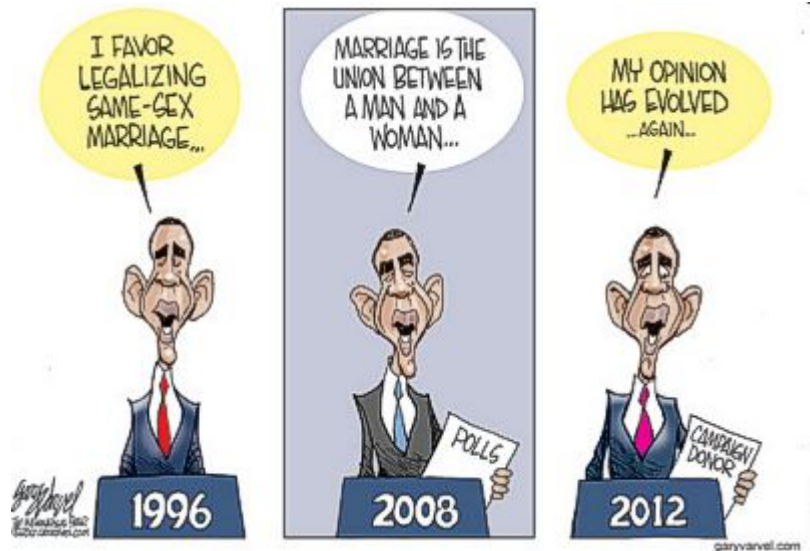
By MacPundit

**Note:** President Obama has changed his position on the issue many times. His supporters like to say he has “evolved.” His detractors say he has simply flip-flopped for political expediency. This article discusses the topic more comprehensively than have the media or politicians on either side. It is the discussion I think we should be having.

## Gay Marriage – What about it?

In the late ‘50s and early ‘60s, we beatniks (yes, we) scoffed at the institution of marriage, proclaiming that it was just a piece of paper. “If you want to set up house with a member of the opposite sex—or the same sex, for that matter—then you do not

need a legal document or the official approval of some religion to do it.” – we said. We argued that neither an official government document, nor the blessings of a church could enhance, protect, or sustain a commitment, which had been freely made between two people. “As long as the relationship continues to appeal to both parties and the commitment remains strong, then we will stay together. But if our feelings or priorities change, we always have the right to end the relationship.” After all, there seemed to be so many unhappy—even abusive—marriages that we stated with profound certainty that the institution of marriage was an archaic idea that sometimes caused more harm than good. For one, we said,



it was too easy to get married and too hard to get divorced. It was not too many years later that hippies asserted the same position and in the ensuing years millions of Americans established de facto marriages by simply “living together.”

Were we right? Well, as with many matters having to do with humans in their sometimes equivocal process of being, for some, the answer (as one of my favorite beatniks wrote) is “blowing in the wind.” But if we are to develop a truly informed opinion about marriage, there are some things we need to consider—things we beatniks failed to explore too deeply, if at all. At the very least, we should know something about the origins of marriage as we know it today. At the top of the list are the reasons our ancestors created the institution of marriage and why subsequent societies have assiduously protected and honored it for so long. This knowledge will also give us an informed basis upon which we can consider the matter of “gay marriage.”

**Note:** While human mating practices such as polygamy (many spouses) or more commonly, polygyny (many wives) can be found throughout our history they were and are the exception rather than the rule and have been associated with certain religious beliefs or practiced more often by the most powerful men in society—or when war had killed off large numbers of men. To these, we could add polyandry (one wife with many husbands), although this practice has been quite rare. But for my purposes here, I will restrict the discussion to the most common and enduring form of human mating: The civil institution of monogamous marriage as established and administered by the state.

## Origins And Reasons

The concept and definition of marriage as the practice of committed, monogamous, legalized mating of men and women able to produce children is, in fact, ancient. A case can be made

that some form of it existed in early civilizations that predated written history. But what is more relevant is that *the formal establishment of marriage as a state-decreed institution predates all three major religions*. In other words, marriage was not originally established for religious reasons. It was not created in order to satisfy the moral tenets of a church or other formalized set of religious beliefs. Therefore, any informed argument designed to consider the idea of *legalized civil gay marriage* should not be framed as a religious or moral one. Such moral judgments must be considered separately because *the history of marriage is solidly established as a civil expedient*. Simply put: Religious faith is not a prerequisite to legal marriage.

The origin of civil marriage is well-documented and its purpose is clear. Around 1750 B.C., Sumerian traditions were codified by Hammurabi, the king of Babylonia. Widely known as "Hammurabi's Laws" or "Hammurabi's Code," customs and traditions developed and practiced by the Sumerians, were formally organized and written into law. This meant that the state could prosecute on its own behalf those who broke the law. Among these new laws and as an essential element of a larger need to organize, sustain, and preserve their cultures and states, and to create a secure environment to ensure the perpetuation of the species, Babylonia and other ancient societies established the institution of marriage.

Consequently and most importantly, as a legal institution, marriage organized and made secure the granting of property rights and the protection of bloodlines. In time, as the needs of various societies required, such matters as the delineation and enforcement of personal responsibility for the protection and welfare of one's legal mate and children were added to and became common elements of the legal institution of marriage.

# **“Gay Marriage” is an oxymoron**

The reasons for the establishment of the institution of marriage as a legally codified set of laws are unambiguous: *Marriage was created to organize, protect, and sustain society for the very practical, important reasons given above.* Therefore, when we consider the dictates of nature and the reasons for the institution of marriage, the concept of gay marriage is incongruous with all of them. The purposes and intent for legalizing and documenting marriage were and still are very practical and are by their very nature, applicable only to members of the opposite sex. It is nature itself—not man, nor the state—that requires the union of two members of the opposite sex to ensure the perpetuation of the species. So, for what purpose would a responsible government expand marriage laws to include members of the same sex? *Same-sex marriage by definition is not only a fatuous notion; it is an oxymoron.*

## **Marriage is not a civil right**

So far as marriage-as-law goes, gay-marriage advocates in the United States correctly argue that marriage is a civil matter, not a church affair. But they abuse all logic when they further argue that since marriage is a civil matter, it is therefore a civil right and that because it is a civil right, it is unconstitutional to deny homosexual couples the right to marry. This is a fallacious argument. First, as shown earlier, civil marriage was created for rigidly practical reasons having to do with child-bearing members of the opposite sex, only. Second, while marriage is a civil matter, it is not a constitutionally-protected civil right. Where in the Constitution are we given the “Right to Marry?”

# Equal Protection

To deal with this argument, gay-rights advocates attempt to include marriage under the constitutional principles of equal protection and equal treatment. In other words, if opposite-sex partners can marry then so can we, they argue, because the Constitution guarantees equal protection and equal treatment. Yet this is merely a specious assertion. Is this what our founders intended when they wrote the Constitution? If so, what else should be included? How about polygamy? Or what if someone wants to marry his or her comatose mother or father or their three year old daughter or, for that matter, their pet? Or consider business partners that seek equal treatment before the law in an attempt to change their legal status from a business partnership to a marriage—in which case they could not be required to testify against each other.

The clear purpose of civil rights protections is to provide and assure every citizen of equal treatment *when such equal treatment conforms to the intent of laws that are based on social realities and are designed to enhance and promote the general welfare of the people*. But when the right to equal protection is invoked in a manner and for a purpose, which would controvert the intent of a good law, it should not be recognized or applied. Instead, if a society determines through diligent consideration that a law no longer serves to enhance and promote the general welfare of the people then it can and should (through lawful process) change the law. Again, good laws are created to improve and advance the general well-being of a society and the institution of marriage has for almost four thousand years, done just that.

It follows, then, that to brashly and suddenly dilute, diminish, or demote such a time-tested, socially critical law that has served countless civilizations so well for thousands of years without proper knowledge of either the reasons for the establishment of the law or the consequences, which would

ensue should the law be functionally altered in such a way as to literally remove the sound reasons for which it was created, would be grossly irresponsible.

## **Other arguments**

### **What about love?**

Should not people of the same sex have the right to love each other in the same manner as heterosexual couples? Of course all people should have the right to love whoever they choose—and in America, they do. We should all acknowledge that love enhances and makes better all things human. Yet, while we are guaranteed the right to love whoever we choose (the pursuit of happiness), it does not follow that the presence of love gives us the right to legally marry whoever we love. It is a matter of fact that love never had anything to with the creation of the civil institution of marriage. It is also a fact that while the institution of marriage is strictly limited to one man and one woman, this does not prevent others from loving whoever they choose.

### **Hospital visitation**

In states where this is an issue, we need to design fair and wise mechanisms (laws?) to allow appropriate members of clearly defined, established caring relationships such visitation rights.

### **To oppose gay marriage is a homophobic reaction**

In some instances, it may very well be. Yet, to say that everyone who opposes gay marriage is homophobic is, factually, incorrect. At worst, it is clear that such accusations are often designed to cast aspersions on the opposition in an effort to eliminate them as legitimate participants in the

discussion. “I am unable to sustain my argument intellectually, so I will assign false motives to you or destroy your character instead.” – comes to mind.

But whether opposition to gay marriage is engendered by homophobia or by moral or religious beliefs the central argument against gay marriage remains intact. In other words, such things as homophobia are irrelevant to the historically sound reasons presented here for the preservation and maintenance of legalized civil marriage between one man and one woman.

## **Homosexuality is unnatural and/or immoral**

As stated earlier, opposition to gay marriage based on these reasons is another matter entirely and they have no place in this discussion.

## **Anti-gay marriage is anti-gay**

Again, for almost four thousand years, civil marriage has applied to heterosexual couples only and to oppose gay marriage for the reasons given here does not in any way pass judgment on homosexual behavior. So to say that anyone who opposes gay marriage is anti-gay simply reveals one more attempt by gay marriage advocates to misdirect the discussion away from the real issues toward disingenuous, inflammatory accusations, which they hope will arouse base emotions in those people who are woefully ignorant of the four thousand year history of civil marriage—why it was established in the first place and why it has endured for so long.

Recently, I watched a clip on television of the actor, Sean Penn, in which he shamed all Californians who voted for Proposition 8—a California ballot proposition passed in the November 4, 2008 general election that changed the state Constitution to restrict the definition of marriage to opposite-sex couples and eliminated same-sex couples’ right to

marry. Penn's patently judgmental and demagogic diatribe was clearly intended to accuse all Californians who voted for Proposition 8 of being anti-gay, homophobic bigots of the worst kind. Instead of engaging them in an informed and intelligent discussion he self-righteously and unfairly condemned them all.

As is too often the case, instead of choosing to engage in intelligent, informed, constructive debate Penn chose to appeal to the prejudices, emotions, or special interests of his audience rather than their intellect or reason. It is an old and deplorable tactic—particularly of the Left. Unfortunately, and to the detriment of our society, this tactic is a standard practice of many Liberals in America. To be fair, however, we must not underestimate the level of ignorance on both sides of the political landscape in the U.S. There is hardly a day that finishes without having heard more than one statement or accusation that is grossly inaccurate. So who knows, maybe Penn actually believes that anyone who opposes gay marriage must be a homophobic bigot. Whatever the case, the result is the same: We simply continue to talk past each other; nothing meaningful is accomplished and the integrity of our society is diminished.

## **Some final thoughts**

A case can be made that we Americans are currently experiencing a kind of collective, cultural Attention Deficit Disorder. The news cycle is such that often news is old within hours. The Internet, cell phones, and other technologies have dramatically increased the pace of virtually everything we do. Unfortunately, one debilitating unintended consequence of this phenomenon is that we too often fail to take enough time to seriously consider important issues of the day. Perhaps worse, is that this lack of inspection extends to our media who regularly fail to do the kind of comprehensive reporting that would provide us with the information we need in order to form



intelligent opinions. Instead, our major media outlets produce biased news and commentary, which amount to nothing more than agenda-driven propaganda. As a result, the American electorate has never before been so uninformed and misinformed as it is today. It is for this reason that bloggers like myself do what we can to inform and expand discussions on important matters that affect us all.

Finally, the fact that civil marriage was created in order to assign personal responsibility to child-bearing couples for each other and for the children they bear is undeniable. Without such regulation, societies decline, inexorably, into chaos and eventually fall. Whenever the integrity of the family unit—a child bearing man and woman—has been compromised, nations fail. Therefore, anything that would or could diminish the intrinsic value of the naturally imposed (by nature) family unit and its time-tested critical role in maintaining the overall integrity of a society should be avoided at all costs. The very idea of gay marriage is anomalous with the fundamental intent of civil marriage. Its adoption can add nothing of practical value to our society and could in reality weaken the purpose of that which has served countless societies so well for so long.

---

## **Obama And Socialism**

*By MacPundit*

### **Is Barack Obama A Socialist?**

This article is about President Obama's deception, a corrupt media, Socialism and Marxism. But before we continue, I want

to make a distinction between Marxism and Socialism. In the simplest terms, which is fine for my purposes here, Socialism is a milder form of Marxism than Communism. It is said that Communism is red and Socialism is pink.



There has been much speculation about whether Barack Obama is or ever was a Socialist/Marxist. Simply put, his academic and political history strongly suggests that he was, and despite his occasional pleadings to the contrary, there is

no credible evidence to refute the proposition that he remains at least a Socialist at heart. Obama and Socialism have a documented history together.

It is more than noteworthy to point out that his long history of Socialist leanings has been assiduously buried by our so-called mainstream media. They have either not done their homework or – and I think this is the case – they know it but do not want you to know it. Whatever their reason, their failure to do so is inexcusable and will forever mark them as, perhaps, the most corrupt media in U.S. history. Moreover, the very fact that the media withholds important, potentially critical information from us reveals their arrogance and sense of superiority. They believe they know best, that we the people are not as capable as they are to make wise decisions about our own welfare. Their small-minded, intellectual self-indulgence would be laughable if not for how seriously it impacts our political discourse.

That this dark "secret" of Obama's history is carefully tended by the media and the Democratic Party is further evidenced by the lack of Barack Obama's college records and his personal

associations. (See: Media Hide Obama Associations) Why has he consistently refused to release his college records? (See: Obama School Records) When we consider his past radical associations and his own words, the obvious conclusion is that he does not want us to read college papers full of Marxist ideas and leanings. In his autobiographical book, *Dreams From My Father*, he wrote the following:

*To avoid being mistaken for a sellout, I chose my friends carefully. The more politically active black students. The foreign students. The Chicanos. The Marxist Professors (my italics) and the structural feminists and punk-rock performance poets.*

I'd bet that young Barry was not thinking of running for President of the United States when he wrote those lines.

As has become standard practice, President Bush released his college records. Of course it is now well established that the Bush Administration was far more transparent than is the Obama Administration, which Obama promised would be the most transparent ever. (See: Obama Broken Promises) The idea that the general public still knows virtually nothing about these things is absolutely amazing! Yet what may be even more amazing is that we the people have allowed the media to continue their protection of him without a loud and indignant protest.

## **Republicans are treated differently**

Keep in mind that the media was so desperate to find something negative on presidential candidate George W. Bush that when all else failed, CBS anchor Dan Rather actually ran a bogus story about Bush's National Guard service just days before the November presidential election. If it hadn't been for an alert Internet blogger he would have gotten away with it and Bush would most probably have lost the election. Thankfully, Rather

was found out and lost his job as a consequence.

Then there was the shameful spectacle of the media's savage assault on Sarah Palin. When they realized that she was gaining too much popularity, they sent a virtual army of reporters to Alaska to dig up dirt on her. They found nothing but that did not slow them down. In the absence of hard negative facts, they and other Obama supporters launched a relentless campaign of character assassination and personal destruction against her. They did all of this against someone who held the honor of being the most popular governor in America with an approval rating by Alaskan citizens that at times was as high as 90%.

Nevertheless, they were determined to destroy her. Incredibly, in June 2011 the New York Times and other left wing media attack dogs got their hands on 25,000 Palin emails and enlisted everyone they could find – including Times' readers – to pour through them in order to look for any dirt they thought MUST certainly be there. Imagine that! They were committed to reading 25,000 emails but because the task was so monumental, The New York Times' Derek Willis posted a plea to its online liberal readership: "Help Us Investigate the Sarah Palin E-Mail Records." But guess what? There was no dirt to be found. To their great disappointment, the emails revealed that Governor Palin was a highly devoted, competent, and honest manager of Alaskan affairs.

How shameful and pathetic to think that these same people continue to tout themselves as our journalistic elite. Yet, the naked truth is that the one person they should have (and should be) vetting is our president. Why? Because he is our president and is thereby the most powerful person in the world.

Below is just one video, which sheds at least some light on this incredible story of deceit and journalistic corruption.

NOTE: Since this video was made, Mr. Obama has made public what he insists is his birth certificate and the State of Hawaii has verified it. However, his college and other important records and documents still remain unavailable to the American public.

Recommended reading: *Radical In Chief* by Stanley Kurtz. It documents much of Barack Obama's Marxist and other radical associations and interests.

## **So what's wrong with Socialism?**

The simple answer is: It does not work for the people as well as Capitalism. History shows that it diminishes the human experience—the things we hold dear—things that enhance our lives—our freedom.

To understand why Socialism actually makes the human experience worse, we must accept certain truths:

1. Human beings are corruptible.
2. "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."
3. The more power a government has, the more corrupt it becomes.
4. The more corrupt government is, the more the people in government (the ones with the power) will make laws and regulations to maintain and extend their power over the people.
5. The more power government has over us, the less freedom we have—less freedom to make our own life decisions to decide for ourselves what we think is best for us. Less freedom to speak out against the government. Less religious freedom. Less freedom in every part of our lives.

Full blown Marxism takes virtually all power from the people and gives it to the state—the government. For those who like to argue theory, forget it. Various forms of Marxism have been

practiced many times. Communist Russia (the U.S.S.R.), Communist China, and Communist Cuba are obvious examples of failed Marxist political experiments. While it argues well on paper, the five truths given above unerringly doom it to failure. Perhaps it would work on another planet, but not on this one, not with the human race.

The U.S.S.R. completely collapsed. But before it failed its all powerful corrupt leaders wreaked havoc on the people economically, civilly, and spiritually. One economic plan after another failed miserably. Elections were all rigged—the outcomes strictly managed by the Communist Party. Opponents of the Party were terrorized. Political prisoners were sent to camps in Siberia. Freedom of religion was aggressively curtailed. Atheism was promoted. Its leaders routinely "eliminated" their opponents. It is estimated that Joseph Stalin was responsible for the murders of at least 20 million people—far more than Adolph Hitler. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

For decades, Communist China was not much different than the U.S.S.R. But after the collapse of the communist experiment in Russia and given their own failing economic system, the Chinese leaders decided it was time for a change. It was an existential decision. They chose Capitalism over Communism, at least for their economic system. They knew it had made the United States of America the most successful nation in the history of mankind. They knew that wherever it was practiced, it fed, clothed, housed and, generally, took better care of its citizens than any other economic system. Since then China has advanced dramatically economically and even though they still have a Communist government, the success of capitalism has brought more freedom to their people. Even so, they still have a long way to go. The quality of life of their people remains far behind ours and it will be a long time before we know their ultimate fate.

## Marxism light

A less onerous form of Marxism is Socialism. It is less onerous because the people are less restricted in the freedoms allotted to them. The problem is that the government still has too much power and, therefore, corruption, inefficiency and other deleterious consequences of big government inevitably diminish the quality of life of the citizens. It's the same old problem: The larger the government, the less freedom and quality of life for the people. Don't think so? Take a look at what is happening in Greece, Portugal, France, and other European countries right now. While you're at it, take a look at Venezuela.

## So what does work?

Of course that should be obvious by now. Again, the United State of America is the most successful nation in history. No other nation has come close when measured by freedom to its citizens, economic security, protection from foreign invasion, and much more. We have a constitution, which is unique in what it guarantees to its people. But it is also unique in its power in law. It is the law of the land and it was so designed that it is very difficult to change. In other words, it sets out a system of checks and balances—three separate and equal parts of government—that make it extremely hard for one part to gain power over any other part(s). Even more, it gives the power to the people. It gives us the vote, the power to elect or reject our leaders.

But as with all things human, our Constitution is not perfect nor is it invulnerable to human corruption. In fact its very existence depends on you and me—we the people. If we become ignorant, lazy, indifferent, or so stupid and greedy that we think our government should take care of all our needs, we will surely lose the great gift we have been given. Our great grandchildren will read that we were the ones that destroyed

America, the nation with the best system of governing ever designed. They will read about a wonderful nation that once existed—one in which their ancestors enjoyed things that they will never have. And they will shake their heads and wonder why we did such a thing. No, we will not be remembered as "The Great Generation" – that is unless we wake up and stand up and fight to preserve what our founders gave us.

## **We are in trouble**

We must make no mistake about this: Our current president has a different vision than that of our founders. It is a vision that our founders would have immediately recognized as one that would give far too much power to the government. Oh yes, they knew all about these things. That is why they warned us in advance about them. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, and many others, warned the people of their day and future generations to be diligent to prevent politicians from gaining too much power. They knew that if the government became too large and, thus, too powerful, the people would lose their power and if that happened the Republic would be destroyed. President Obama is at the very least a big government Liberal. I say "at the very least" because all indications are that he is a Socialist and given enough time and power he will take us there.

## **Still have some doubts?**

Consider these things carefully: In a little over 3 years, President Obama has increased the size of the federal government and its power dramatically. He has also added more debt to our nation (you and me) than all our presidents from George Washington through George H. W. Bush combined! He added \$5 trillion in just 3 years! He has added 10,215 new federal regulations that are costing consumers, businesses and the economy \$46 billion annually. This is more than five times the regulatory price tag of former President Bush in his first



three years in office. Just implementing those regulations has an additional cost of \$11 billion.

Of course he tells us that the spending was necessary because he inherited such a bad economy so he had to spend all that money and add all those regulations to save us from a depression. Yet only the uninformed buy that argument. The truth is that his policies have not only failed to improve our economy, they have made our situation far worse. Our debt alone could destroy us. Once other nations came to us to borrow money; now we are the greatest debtor nation in history. We owe China alone almost \$1 trillion. For every dollar the Obama government now spends it has to borrow about 40 cents. Each and every man, woman, and child in America now owes almost \$50,000 as their part of our national debt. Every newborn baby in America is born into debt. No enemy in our history has been able to hurt us as much as the Obama policies have. While he claims he believes in Capitalism, his policies say otherwise. Actions do speak louder than words. So we must all be very careful to not trust his words—no matter how well he delivers them—but instead we must consider what he does.

## **Capitalism versus Socialism**

The winner is always Capitalism. Whenever capitalism has been allowed to work properly, it has provided more wealth to more people from rich to poor than any other economic system in human history. There is and probably never will be absolute equality in this world. That is a fact of life. Our Declaration of Independence speaks about all men being born equal but we must understand what it meant. It did not mean that every person is born as smart as or as talented as every other person. We all know that in those and many other things we are not equal. Some people are smarter, some are stronger physically, and so forth. What our founders meant was that we are born with equal rights—that even if we are not as smart as someone else, we still have equal rights. For example, we have

equal civil rights and equal protection under the law and we have a right to have equal opportunities. But under Marxism, rights are given or withheld by the government. Think about that. Our founders said that we are born with equal rights and that men should not have the power to give them to us or to take them from us. This is a very important distinction.

## Equal opportunity versus equal outcome

We must also understand the distinction between equal opportunity and equal outcome. President Obama often tells us that he wants to change America so that we all have equal opportunity. He says that it's about fairness. But he is being dishonest because we have already been guaranteed equal opportunity. So when he tells naive audiences that he wants to give them equal opportunities, he is making a specious argument designed to trick his listeners into thinking he will give them something they don't have. His purpose is to get their votes. Of course it only works with ignorant people.

A core problem with large central governments is that with enough power, corrupt politicians decide which groups get certain opportunities and which do not. (See: Big Government Is Our Enemy) This is precisely why our Constitution was designed to make it difficult for the federal government to gain too much power. The intent was to vest most of the power in the people. Mr. Obama knows



this. So I think he is trying to do something else—something that sounds very much like it is Marxist in nature. You see, he also says he wants to "redistribute the wealth" and that is clearly Marxist doctrine. Yet even though it sounds good, when put it into practice and for reasons already outlined here, it actually makes life worse for everyone. Former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher put it this way, "The problem with

socialism is that eventually you run out of other people's money."

## **It's common sense**

Here is a classic example: Imagine two students. The first is a hard working student who does her homework faithfully and pays attention in the classroom. She is an A student. Student number two is just as smart as the first student but she is not nearly as committed as the first. She is a C- student. But student number two does not take personal responsibility for her lack of commitment and thinks that her C- grade is unfair. So she asks student number one to give her some of her A grades. Well of course you know this would not happen. You know immediately that it is not about fairness, that it is about personal responsibility.

But what about student number three who is not as smart as one and two? She works just as hard as student number one but she just cannot seem to get her grades up to where she would like them to be. Would it not be fair if student number one gave her a couple of her A grades? Again, when we think this through the answer would most certainly be no. If the A student gave away some of her high grades it would create a misrepresentation of who both of the students are. It would, ultimately, hurt both of them.

## **The Myth Of Equality**

So what is to be done? How can we create a society in which everyone is equal in all ways? Well, we can't. Not on this planet. Not given human nature—our nature—and the undeniable fact that we are not born equal in all ways. You can't accept that? Really? Then I would very much like to hear your plan. I would like to know how you would turn lazy people into productive people, dishonest people into honest people, cruel people into compassionate people, criminals into law abiding citizens, and so forth. You see, we cannot make a perfect

world. I doubt that we can even agree on what a "perfect world" would look like. But what we can do and what America has done better than any other nation is to make things as fair and as compassionate as is humanly possible for all its people. And while the job is never finished, we will continue to improve the lives of our citizens as long as we do not allow smooth-talking politicians to "transform" our government into something that has never and will never work as well as what we already have.

---

## **ACORN**

## **ACORN**

## **Left-wing community organizing organization**

Barack Obama did legal work for ACORN, was one of their community organizers in Chicago, and has reiterated his staunch support of them in many speeches.

ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, a community organization of low- and moderate-income families that addresses housing, schools, neighborhood safety, health care, job conditions, and other social issues that affect its members. With a membership of over 350,000, ACORN is organized into more than 850 neighborhood chapters in over 100 cities across the United States, as well as in Argentina, Canada, Mexico, and Peru. The organization was born out of the American Civil Rights Movement. ACORN was founded in 1970 by

Wade Rathke, George Wiley, and Gary Delgado. Maude Hurd has been National President of ACORN since 1990.

## **Allegations of election fraud**

On September 7, 2004, a Columbus, Ohio grand jury indicted ACORN employee and felony parolee Kevin Eugene Dooley for election fraud. The indictment charges Dooley forged a signature to a voter registration form.

During the 2004 election, an ACORN member named Mac Stuart was working for ACORN's voter registration effort in Miami-Dade County. Stuart reported seeing ACORN workers copying voter registration forms, which is illegal under Florida law, and segregating voter registration forms for Republicans that were not subsequently turned into the County. After Stuart reported these irregularities to the election officials, ACORN fired him. Stuart filed suit against ACORN in May, 2005 for wrongful termination. ACORN counter-sued for defamation.

In August 2004 a lawsuit was filed in Albuquerque alleging that New Mexico Secretary of State Rebecca Vigil-Giron improperly exempted individuals who registered to vote through canvassers from requirements that some new registrants submit ID at polling places. In a court case, ACORN director Matt Henderson invoked his Fifth Amendment rights when asked if his group made illegal copies of voter registration cards before submitting them. The Albuquerque Tribune claims he told them this was done.

In January 2005 two ex-ACORN workers were convicted in Denver of perjury for submitting false voter registrations.

Federal indictments allege two counts each of voter registration fraud. Prosecutors said the indictments are part of a national investigation.

ACORN was investigated in 2006 for submitting false voter registrations in St. Louis, Missouri. 1,492 fraudulent voter

registrations were identified, some from the dead and others for underage voters who were not aware they had been registered by ACORN.

ACORN was investigated in 2007 by King County, Washington for filing false registrations. An elections department employee called 400 phone numbers that were provided on the cards from a sample of those turned in by ACORN. Of the 400 phone numbers, only two were good, and both people denied filling out voter registration cards. On July 26, 2007, felony charges were filed against seven ACORN employees including supervisors for filing 1762 false registrations.

**Note:** Because of scandal and videos that showed Acorn employees in the act of supporting illegal activities, Congress cut off any further tax-dollar support and Acorn subsequently changed its name.

ACORN is one of far too many very troubling Barack Obama associations. He has been closely allied with this organization for years and even though, as a non-profit group, they are not supposed to endorse political candidates, not only have they have endorsed Barack Obama, the Obama campaign has given them \$800,000 to help fund their work. What is their work? Besides neighborhood activism and other activities, they have registered over 1 million new voters, virtually all of whom will vote for Barack Obama and other liberal candidates. Non-partisan they are not, and honest they are not. Let's look at their record.

## **Partial ACORN Record**

**AR 1998** A contractor with ACORN-affiliated Project Vote was arrested for falsifying about 400 voter registration cards.

**CO 2004** An ACORN employee admitted to forging signatures and registering three of her friends to vote 40 times.

2005 Two ex-ACORN employees were convicted in Denver of perjury for submitting false voter registrations.

**FL 2004** A Florida Department of Law Enforcement spokesman said ACORN was "singled out" among suspected voter registration groups for a 2004 wage initiative because it was "the common thread" in the agency's fraud investigations.

**MI 2004** The Detroit Free Press reported that "overzealous or unscrupulous campaign workers in several Michigan counties are under investigation for voter-registration fraud, suspected of attempting to register nonexistent people or forging applications for already-registered voters." ACORN-affiliate Project Vote was one of two groups suspected of turning in the documents.

**MO 2007** Four ACORN employees were indicted in Kansas City for charges including identity theft and filing false registrations during the 2006 election.

2006 Eight ACORN employees in St. Louis were indicted on federal election fraud charges. Each of the eight faces up to five years in prison for forging signatures and submitting false information.

2003 Of 5,379 voter registration cards ACORN submitted in St. Louis, only 2,013 of those appeared to be valid. At least 1,000 are believed to be attempts to register voters illegally.

**NC 2004** North Carolina officials investigated ACORN for submitting fake voter registration cards.

**NM 2005** Four ACORN employees submitted as many as 3,000 potentially fraudulent signatures on the group's Albuquerque ballot initiative. A local sheriff added: "It's safe to say the forgery was widespread."

2004 An ACORN employee registered a 13-year-old boy to vote.

Citing this and other examples, New Mexico State Representative Joe Thompson stated that ACORN was “manufacturing voters” throughout New Mexico.

**OH 2007** A man in Reynoldsburg was indicted on two felony counts of illegal voting and false registration, after being registered by ACORN to vote in two separate counties.

2004 A grand jury indicted a Columbus ACORN worker for submitting a false signature and false voter registration form. In Franklin County, two ACORN workers submitted what the director of the board of election supervisors called “blatantly false” forms. In Cuyahoga County, ACORN and its affiliate Project Vote submitted registration cards that had the highest rate of errors for any voter registration group.

**MN 2004** During a traffic stop, police found more than 300 voter registration cards in the trunk of a former ACORN employee, who had violated a legal requirements that registration cards be submitted to the Secretary of State within 10 days of being filled out and signed.

**PA 2008** An ACORN employee in West Reading, PA, was sentenced to up to 23 months in prison for identity theft and tampering with records. A second ACORN worker pleaded not guilty to the same charges and is free on \$10,000 bail.

2004 Reading’s Director of Elections received calls from numerous individuals complaining that ACORN employees deliberately put inaccurate information on their voter registration forms. The Berks County director of elections said voter fraud was “absolutely out of hand,” and added: “Not only do we have unintentional duplication of voter registration but we have blatant duplicate voter registrations.” The Berks County deputy director of elections added that ACORN was under investigation by the Department of Justice.

**TX 2004** ACORN turned in the voter registration form of David



Young, who told reporters "The signature is not my signature. It's not even close." His social security number and date of birth were also incorrect.

**VA 2005** In 2005, the Virginia State Board of Elections admonished Project Vote and ACORN for turning in a significant number of faulty voter registrations. An audit revealed that 83% of sampled registrations that were rejected for carrying false or questionable information were submitted by Project Vote. Many of these registrations carried social security numbers that exist for other people, listed non-existent or commercial addresses, or were for convicted felons in violation of state and federal election law.

In a letter to ACORN, the State Board of Elections reported that 56% of the voter registration applications ACORN turned in were ineligible. Further, a full 35% were not submitted in a timely manner, as required by law. The State Board of Elections also commented on what appeared to be evidence of intentional voter fraud. "Additionally," they wrote, "information appears to have been altered on some applications where information given by the applicant in one color ink has been scratched through and re-entered in another color ink. Any alteration of a voter registration application is a Class 5 Felony in accordance with § 24.2-1009 of the Code of Virginia."

**WA 2007** Three ACORN employees pleaded guilty, and four more were charged, in the worst case of voter registration fraud in Washington state history. More than 2,000 fraudulent voter registration cards were submitted by the group during a voter registration drive.

**WI 2004** The district attorney's office investigated seven voter registration applications Project Vote employees filed in the names of people who said the group never contacted them. Former Project Vote employee Robert Marquise Blakely told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that he had not met with

any of the people whose voter registration applications he signed, “an apparent violation of state law,” according to the paper.

*(Originally published October 20th, 2008)*

---

# **Father Michael Pfleger**

## **Father Michael Pfleger**

### **Radical Catholic Priest**

Michael Louis Pfleger (born May 22, 1949) is a Roman Catholic priest and social activist in Chicago, Illinois.

Pfleger’s social activism has brought him attention throughout Chicago and beyond. He has often collaborated and associated with African American religious, political and social activists such as Jeremiah Wright, Joseph Lowery, Jesse Jackson, Cornel West, and Louis Farrakhan.

On March 28, 2008, Pfleger invited Jeremiah Wright, former pastor of presidential candidate Barack Obama, to deliver a blessing at Saint Sabina during a visit by poet Maya Angelou. Wright had been criticized by political pundits for making what they considered anti-American statements in a sermon, but Pfleger came to Wright’s defense. “I wanted him to come here so he could see that people really stand with him and support him while he’s under all this attack. America, unfortunately, has been really cheated of knowing the real Dr. Wright,” said Pfleger. In a statement on Saint Sabina’s website, Pfleger wrote, “Dr. Wright is one of the great biblical scholars of

our country and the best of preachers in the prophetic tradition. Dr. Wright has been shamefully demonized by 30 second sound bites that have tried to re-define him into someone other than who he is."

## **Controversy during 2008 presidential election**

On May 25, 2008, Pfleger gave a sermon at Trinity United Church of Christ, then the church of Presidential candidate Barack Obama, where he mocked Hillary Clinton, Obama's opponent for the Democratic Party nomination. Pfleger imitated Clinton by saying, "I really believe that she just always thought, 'This is mine. I'm Bill's wife. I'm white, and this is mine. I just gotta get up and step into the plate.' Then out of nowhere came, 'Hey, I'm Barack Obama,' and she said, 'Oh, damn! Where did you come from? I'm white. I'm entitled. There's a black man stealing my show!'"

After hearing about Pfleger's remarks, Obama said he was "deeply disappointed in Father Pfleger's divisive, backward-looking rhetoric". Pfleger later released a statement through St. Sabina that read, "I regret the words I chose Sunday. These words are inconsistent with Sen. Obama's life and message, and I am deeply sorry if they offended Sen. Clinton or anyone else who saw them." On May 31, 2008, Obama resigned his membership in Trinity Church, saying that his campaign had caused the church to receive excessive media attention. On June 1, 2008, Pfleger released a longer apology to the St. Sabina parish regarding the incident and its aftermath.

On June 3, 2008, Cardinal George asked Pfleger to take a temporary leave of absence from St. Sabina. George said in a statement, "I have asked Father Michael Pfleger, Pastor of St. Sabina's Parish, to step back from his obligations there and take leave for a couple of weeks from his pastoral duties, effective today. Fr. Pfleger does not believe this to be the

right step at this time. While respecting his disagreement, I have nevertheless asked him to use this opportunity to reflect on his recent statements and actions in the light of the Church's regulations for all Catholic priests. I hope that this period will also be a time away from the public spotlight and for rest and attention to family concerns." Pfleger resumed his parish duties on June 16, 2008.

*(Originally published October 20th, 2008)*