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## Bigotry Always Has Its Reasons

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## BIGOTRY ALWAYS HAS ITS REASONS

By Donald E. Wilkes, Jr., dangerous that can be conceived,"

UGA Professor of Law Macaulay explained. "Such, sir,

to both same-sex and different-sex allowed, they should be available to the extent civil unions are to be different sex. (It also follows that marry each other as do persons of correctly framed, there can be no bar same-sex couples from doing should have the same right to heterosexual or homosexual) Persons of the same sex (whether doubt how it should be resolved do-get married. Once the issue is what different-sex couples may gay marriage issue is whether other individuals or groups. The tifiably denies an individual or the state may use its authority to group a right which it grants to when the state unfairly or unjusissue. A civil rights issue exists gay rights issues, a civil rights sex marriage issue) is, like other The gay marriage issue (or same-

and Canada is on the verge of dohave legalized same-sex marriage The Netherlands and Belgium

man Catholics because of alleged a proposal to grant full civil rights peculiarities of the Catholic faith. grant equal rights to English Robefore had opposed a proposal to the same persons who a few years around alleged peculiarities of against the proposal revolved to English Jews. The arguments a reason." When Macaulay said is, that bigotry will always find "Whatever the [group] be which it Jews, and were being raised by ments advanced by opponents of that, he was referring to argupolitical thinker, said: "The truth great nineteenth century English Thomas Babington Macaulay, the proving the truth of something they are smoke-screens for bigotry, are scrutinized, it is evident that ments. But when those arguments rest their opposition on valid arguriers to same-sex marriage claim to The opponents of removing barin the claimants. their opposition on alleged defects

ing of bigots." has in every age been the reason-

in the individuals or groups seeking civil rights protection. consist of finding alleged defects ments, and those arguments often beneath a smoke-screen of argurights by concealing their bigotry Bigots oppose the advance of civi

claimants, and they love to base reasons for opposing civil rights scrofulous. Bigots can always find who performed them were morally ral and perverted and that those argued that such acts were unnatuprivate consensual acts of adults and opponents of legalizing the premised on male chauvinism; suffrage wallowed in arguments that blacks were inferior to white persons; opponents of women's by the expansion. The proslavers defects in those who would benefit involved pointing out alleged private sex acts among consenting and the segregationists argued against expanding civil rights ments. Typically these arguments adults, there were plenty of opponents equipped with lots of argusuffrage to females; and when the ponents with reasons for denying ery had reasons for retaining slavriage, or ending criminalization of regation or bans on interracial marissue was abolishing racial segthe vote to women, there were op ery; when the issue was extending abolish slavery, defenders of slav-When the issue was whether to their opposition on stated reasons of persons who ostensibly base cantly expanded, the expansion has occurred over the opposition time civil rights have been signifi This happens often. Almost every

use of arguments to mask bigotry sition are classic examples of the sex marriage give for their oppo-The reasons opponents of same-

men to be the most odious and

time, be pronounced by intolerant liarities of that [group] will, for the

civil rights issues are involved not born," or that civil rights because"homosexuals are made

mental public policy.

They argue, for example, that no

is proposed to tolerate, the pecu-

doesn't iprotect behavior patterns, or that same-sex marriage "has sinful, immoral, and unnatural homosexual relationships are evil, sexuals are degenerates, or that is a bigot who thinks that homopatterns" or immorality, unless one sex marriage involves "behavior are the notions that banning sameumscientific, bigoted nonsense. So is an acquired or learned trait is But the notion that homosexuality cause it] is an issue of morality. nothing to do with civil rights [be-

example). The view that marriage same-sex marriage are bigots who use this argument against women to brood mares. Those I might add, the vision of marriage is all about breeding children was held by the Nazis, and reduces es among the elderly are a good pable of having children (marriagthough one or both of them is incaried, and many couples marry even of producing children to get maris absurd, since it has never been on the ground marriage "is an Some oppose same-sex marriage required that couples be capable institution for procreation" but this

a civil institution, not a religious irrelevant in the context of governreligion, these grounds are utterly marriage is grounded on matters of is not a Christian republic. To to marry. There may be Islamic to marry them or a church in which couples do not need a clergyman the extent opposition to same-sex republics, but the United States have religious beliefs to marry, and sacrament. It is not necessary to secular. Under the law marriage is governmental activities, must be and policies which, like other control government marriage laws Biblical interpretations cannot Christian religious doctrines and perform same-sex weddings, but course, to refuse to accept or and religious faiths are free, of is not a religious issue. Churches government and public policy; it same-sex marriage is an issue of and theology. But the issue of the Bible, the Christian religion, pose same-sex marriage based on Then there are those who op-

> by secular governments. nation 2. Worthy of Death 3. Repstitution of marriage as established cannot be applicable to the civil inin the realm of the sacerdotal; they sex marriage are inapposite except these "reasons" for barring samecivil rights is defended by arguing is open and unashamed: denial of robates." At least here the bigotry At a recent demonstration at the rights). But being theological, (and hence unworthy of equal same-sex marriage, are depraved that gays, the people who advocate is sin," and "Sodomites: I. Abomipervert and pervert," "Homo sex ried signs citing the Bible which to bar same-sex marriages caramending the Georgia Constitution Christian Coalition supporters of screamed, "I now pronounce you state capitol building in Atlanta,

by far, the dumbest." allowed to join the institution ... is, marriage will collapse if gays are sense peddled by opponents of gay marriage," Cynthia Tucker writes ry in all ages. Of all the nonthe argument that "traditional reasoning is the reasoning of bigot never lack a pretense and that their relationships are detested by these Once again, we see that bigots opponents, i.e., because of bigotry and why? Because gays and gay share the institution with gays, marriage simply don't want to higotry. Opponents of same-sex ment against civil rights conceals couples also. Once again, an arguextending marriage to same-sex are in no way infringed upon by valid and protected as before and demean marriage. But how would ent-sex couples will remain just as it do this? Marriages of differinstitution of marriage and will ens the sanctity or integrity of the permitting such marriages threatfrom marrying each other is that seek to bar persons of the same sex A favorite argument of those who

a human right, not a heterosexual privilege." bigots need to learn: "Marriage is A T shirt available from dontamend.com says what the

> Festival 18:3 (May 14 2, 2004) Athens Hanne Rights