



Media Advisory for
October 21, 2008

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MEDIA ADVISORY— PRESS CONFERENCE

New Research Findings Support Marriage Equality for All Americans

Candidates and state initiatives have it wrong: new studies and real couples reveal that denial of marriage harms the health of lesbians and gay men

WHEN: Press Conference—Tuesday, October 21, 2008, 9:00 AM PST

WHERE: National Sexuality Resource Center (at Westfield Center)
835 Market Street Suite 517
San Francisco, CA

Can't Attend? Conference In! Dial-in Number: 1-309-946-5100 Participant Access Code 15175
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WHAT: Three new research studies, two of which are slated to be released in the March issue of the National Sexuality Resource Center's peer-reviewed journal *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, demonstrate that separate is *not* equal. Clear evidence points to the benefits of marriage for same-sex couples—findings so critical that the journal and authors have agreed to release the articles to the public six months early. Leading researchers will discuss new data, joined by couples and singles who have already felt the personal impact of denial of access to marriage. The panel will address questions including:

- How does denial of marriage impact the mental health of lesbians and gay men?
- How many same-sex couples take advantage of legal opportunities to marry, and are their relationships more or less stable than those of opposite-sex couples?
- Do marriage initiatives or amendments cause psychological harm to gays and lesbians?
- How does relationship recognition affect end-of-life preparation and death concerns of older gays and lesbians?

The press conference on October 21 at 9:00 AM PST will release the studies' main findings, discuss previously established research, and present the real stories of same-sex couples.

WHY: Initiatives limiting equal access to marriage are on the ballot across the country. Anti-equality proponents imply that gay marriage 'harms' traditional marriage, but the real—and under-reported—story lies in what this research uncovers: proof of the psychological benefits of full access to marriage rights for same-sex couples and evidence of the harm that denial of these rights can cause.

WHO: Speakers at the press conference will include:

- **Marvin Burrows**, denied health insurance and pension benefits after the death of his partner of fifty years.
- **Gary J. Gates, PhD**, lead author of "Marriage Registration and Dissolution by Same-Sex Couples in the U.S.," Senior Research Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

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- **Ellen D.B. Riggle, PhD, Sharon S. Rostosky, PhD** authors of “Impact of Marriage Amendments on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Citizens: The 2006 Election.”
- **Brian De Vries, PhD**, lead author of “Relationship Recognition and Preparations for End of Life Among Lesbian and Gay Boomers.”
- **Gilbert Herdt, PhD**, lead author of “I Do, But I Can’t,” anthropologist, and director of the National Sexuality Resource Center at San Francisco State University.

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About the NSRC

The mission of the National Sexuality Resource Center is to equip advocates, academics and researchers with the knowledge, skills and resources to improve lifelong sexual literacy and sexual well being for all Americans. The National Sexuality Resource Center, the Center for Research on Gender and Sexuality and the Department of Sexuality Studies comprise the National Centers on Sexuality at San Francisco State University. Visit us at nsrc.sfsu.edu.