

# WORLD RELIGIONS AND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

A RESEARCH SUMMARY FROM THE MARRIAGE LAW PROJECT

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## INTRODUCTION

In the debate over the legal definition of marriage in the United States, clergy and believers can be found on both sides. Any brief review of popular articles or legislative testimony will make this clear.

This fact could lead one to conclude that the major world religions are evenly—or at least deeply—divided on the question of whether marriage requires both a man and a woman. This is not the case. An examination of the official or historic teachings of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism reveals overwhelming support for the view of marriage as the union of men and women, and virtually no official endorsements of the idea of same-sex “marriage.” Representations to the contrary may reflect the views of particular individuals, or of interest groups within religions, but they do not represent the official views of these religions.<sup>1</sup>

The following summary reviews the views of each of these five major world religions. It identifies (1) who is involved, (2) what they believe, and (3) how many people they represent.

How does one identify the position of a religious body on the definition of marriage? Explicit statements on the issue of same-sex “marriage” are obviously the easiest to identify. Where we have not found such a statement, we have looked at statements: (1) on the definition of marriage and/or (2) on homosexual behavior. If a religious body, for example, teaches that a Creator created the two sexes to live together in marriage, and/or teaches that homosexual behavior violates moral and religious principles, one can reasonably infer that this religious body supports the traditional view of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

One should also keep in mind that the question, “Does marriage require a man and a woman?” was not posed in a significant manner to any major U.S. religious community before 1960. Prior to that time, while the major world religions differed to various extents in their attitudes toward homosexual behavior, they all took for granted that marriage required a man and a woman.<sup>3</sup>

Since that time, homosexuality has become a major topic of controversy in at least Western societies (and scholars are looking for signs of it in all societies). Gradually, religious communities have responded to it. Between the 1960s and the 1990s resolutions spoke more to the morality of homosexual behavior. With few exceptions, the specific issue of the legalization of same-sex “marriage” was not on the table in the United States until the 1990s.<sup>4</sup>

The bottom line is that very few religious bodies have endorsed same-sex “marriage,” and those that have represent a very small fraction of believers in the world’s five major religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. To put this in more concrete terms:

1. In the United States, of 163,916,650 adherents of the five major religions, 160,049,690 are in religious bodies that affirm the classical definition of marriage (97.6 percent), while 3,030,930 are in religious bodies which support same-sex “marriage” (2.4 percent).

2. Worldwide, of 4,473,993,000 total adherents of the five religions, 4,465,577,850 are in religious bodies that affirm the classical definition of marriage (99.8 percent), and 6,394,530

are in religious bodies that support same-sex “marriage” (0.2 percent).

We will consider each major world religion in turn, with citations for our claims.

## CHRISTIANITY

“Christianity” is a term that can cover a diverse array of communities, and here we construe it broadly. Yet within this diversity, the overwhelming consensus among Christians is that marriage, by definition, requires a man and a woman. There are only minor exceptions (see part II.E below). These amount to 2.4 percent of Christians in the United States and 0.03 percent worldwide. We treat “Christianity” in terms of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Protestantism, and Latter-day Saints. Then we address “The Exceptions” (those religious bodies that endorse same-sex “marriage”).

### *Catholicism*

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that marriage requires a man and a woman, and is explicitly opposed to same-sex marriage.<sup>5</sup> There are an estimated 63,683,030 Roman Catholics in the United States, and an estimated 1,033,129,000 Roman Catholics worldwide.<sup>6</sup>

### *Orthodoxy*

Orthodox Churches understand marriage to be a relationship between a man and a woman, and are therefore opposed to same-sex “marriage.”<sup>7</sup> There are an estimated 3869,750 Orthodox in the United States and an estimated 225,000,000 Orthodox worldwide.<sup>8</sup>

### *Protestantism*

“Protestantism” is a more amorphous category. Aside from the bodies mentioned below in II.E, the Protestant Churches we can identify still define marriage as the union of a man and a woman, and none of them have endorsed the idea of same-sex “marriage.”<sup>9</sup> This includes churches in the following Protestant traditions, which include an estimated 75,273,277 members in the United States:

- Anabaptists,<sup>10</sup>
- Baptists,<sup>11</sup>
- Episcopalians/Anglicans,<sup>12</sup>
- Evangelical Quakers,<sup>13</sup>
- Independent Evangelicals,<sup>14</sup>
- Lutherans,<sup>15</sup>
- Pentecostals,<sup>16</sup>
- Reformed and Presbyterian,<sup>17</sup>
- Seventh-day Adventists<sup>18</sup> and
- Wesleyans/Methodists.<sup>19</sup>

Despite many controversies in the United States and elsewhere, these religions maintain the historic position.<sup>20</sup>

### *Latter-day Saints*

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.<sup>21</sup> Further, the First Presidency of the Church has issued a formal statement opposing the legalization of same-sex “marriages.”<sup>22</sup> There are 5,208,827 members of the church in the United States and 11,068,861 members worldwide.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Exceptions*

Some Protestant bodies have endorsed same-sex “marriage.” They have done so either by their own statements and/or by signing onto the Marriage Resolution. This Resolution, sponsored by the Marriage Project of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, states: “the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitments of civil marriage.”<sup>24</sup>

The first body is the Unitarian Universalist Association.<sup>25</sup> The Unitarian Universalist Association totals about 220,000 members worldwide.<sup>26</sup>

The second is the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) that was established as a denomination with a policy supportive of same-sex relationships. The MCC reports 44,000 members overall, which we count in both United States and worldwide.<sup>27</sup>

Third, a number of Quaker meetings associated with the Friends General Conference and/or the Friends United Meeting have endorsed same-sex “marriage.” Additionally, there are a few scattered meetings throughout the country that endorse same-sex “marriage.”<sup>28</sup> At the most, this includes 7,330 people.

Finally, in addition, to those discussed above, some unfamiliar religious groups (the Ecumenical Catholic Church, the Evangelical Anglican Church in America, and the Evangelical Catholic Church) have endorsed the Marriage Resolution.<sup>29</sup>

## JUDAISM

For Judaism numbers are difficult to calculate, since Judaism is both a religion and an ethnicity.<sup>30</sup> In the United States, there are an estimated 6,024,000 Jews.<sup>31</sup> In the United States, 6 percent of American Jews are Orthodox, 40 percent are Conservative, 39 percent are Reform, 1 percent are Reconstructionist,<sup>32</sup> and 14 percent have no affiliation.<sup>33</sup>

Jews in the United States seem to be deeply divided on the question of marriage. The Orthodox and Conservative movements oppose same-sex “marriage” at either the religious or civic level.<sup>34</sup> In direct contrast, both the Reform movement and the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF), support rabbis who officiate a same-sex commitment ceremonies and support same-sex civil “marriage.”<sup>35</sup>

If we add together Orthodox and Conservative Judaism on one side, and add Reformed and Reconstructionist on the other, and omit those unaffiliated with any of these bodies, then we find that 2,771,040 support marriage; 2,409,600 support same-sex “marriage” and 843,360 are undeterminable.

Worldwide, there are an estimated 14,433,000 Jews.<sup>36</sup> If we subtract the U.S. Jewish population (6,024,000) and assume that the proportion of unaffiliated Jews worldwide is analogous to the United States, then it would appear that 1,177,260 of Jews outside the United States are not affiliated with one of the four movements of Judaism. 3,868,140 are ei-

ther Orthodox or Conservative, and 3,333,600 are Reform or Reconstructionist.

## ISLAM

There are an estimated 4,433,000 Muslims in the United States, and 1,188,242,000 Muslims worldwide.<sup>37</sup> Although Islam has different branches, all are united in their belief that God has created two sexes, male and female, who have the duty to form a unique marital community.<sup>38</sup> While limited polygamy is allowed under Islamic law, being single is deeply frowned upon.<sup>39</sup> Muslims assume, as a matter of principle, that marriage involves the union of men and women.<sup>40</sup>

## HINDUISM

There are an estimated 1,327,000 Hindus in the United States,<sup>41</sup> and 811,337,000 worldwide.<sup>42</sup> The various branches of Hinduism consider marriage to be an important social and religious duty that is marked by a rite of marriage (viraha)<sup>43</sup> in which a man and a woman become “one spirit.”<sup>44</sup> Within the history of Hinduism, one finds a variety of views on homosexual feelings and behaviors, ranging from indifference to disapproval to strong opposition. Some of the strongest opposition to same-sex “marriage” can be found today in neo-Hindu movements.<sup>45</sup>

## BUDDHISM

Buddhism is perhaps the hardest of the five major world religions to analyze in terms of the question of the definition of marriage. There are a reported 2,701,000 Buddhists in North America, and 359,981,000 worldwide.<sup>46</sup>

Buddhism has three major traditions: Mahayana (56 percent), Theravada or Hinayana (38 percent) and Tantrayana or Lamaism (6 percent).<sup>47</sup> In addition, there are Buddhist renewal movements which emerged in Japan following World War II. The Buddhist community has three segments: monks, nuns, and laity people. Monks and nuns are celibate, while laity may marry.<sup>48</sup>

Much of Buddhist practice involves the effort to transcend one’s body as part of the quest for nirvana. This lends itself to at least three pos-

sible Buddhist perspectives on marriage. The first is neutrality. Jose Ignacio Cabezon argues that Buddhism is neutral about homosexuality. He acknowledges criticisms of homosexuality in the tradition, but argues that they are reflections, especially by monks, of a more general anti-sexual hostility.<sup>49</sup> This comports with the statements of others that “Buddhism is not concerned with the ceremony of marriage”<sup>50</sup> and regards it as a “secular” function.<sup>51</sup>

Yet Cabezon himself acknowledges a “tension” within Buddhism, where an anti-sexual tradition competes with the tradition “of the sexually active and procreative householder.”<sup>52</sup> He also recognizes that Buddhism has developed in strongly familial societies, although he is reluctant to acknowledge any firm connection between the Buddhism and the family-ism.<sup>53</sup>

The second perspective, then, would affirm both sides of the tension. One could argue that Buddhism simultaneously affirms both monasticism and marriage, while tolerating homosexuality to a greater or lesser extent, depending upon the particular culture involved. This seems like a reasonable description of Asian countries with strong Buddhist traditions.<sup>54</sup> One can argue, therefore, that at the very least, Buddhism in these countries does not endorse same-sex “marriage.” The Dalai Lama has not spoken definitively on the matter of homosexuality, but alluded to the inappropriateness of homosexual sex, an act that runs contrary to the natural functioning of the body.

However, one Buddhist group in the United States has adopted a third interpretation. An offshoot of the Nichiren Shoshu movement, the U.S. branch of Soka Gakkai International, has begun to offer wedding ceremonies for same-sex couples.<sup>55</sup> This branch has 350,000 members (or 0.09 percent of the worldwide number of Buddhists).<sup>56</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The preceding review of the five major world religions makes one thing clear: the overwhelming consensus across these traditions is that mar-

riage, by definition, requires a man and a woman. In the United States, this represents the views of 160,049,690 adherents of the five major world religions, or 97.6 percent. Worldwide, this represents the views of 4,465,577,850 adherents of the five major world religions, or 99.8 percent.

As we have seen, these traditions vary in the extent to which they speak officially to any issue, with Christianity and Islam on one end of the spectrum, and Hinduism and Buddhism on the other. In any case, those religious bodies that have endorsed same-sex “marriage” represent a small number of the adherents of the five major world religions.

As we have also seen, in the U.S. bodies supporting same-sex “marriage” represent the views of only 3,030,930 adherents of the five major world religions, or 1.8 percent. Worldwide, they represent the views of only 6,394,530 adherents of the five major world religions, or 0.2 percent. By any definition, this is minuscule.

We have noted, however, that virtually every one of these religious traditions has dissenting voices. Some of these are academics that are attempting to reinterpret their tradition to support their views. Others are clergy or activists who are supporting campaigns to legalize same-sex “marriage.” Whether these efforts at reinterpretation will be successful over the long run, in any or all of these religions, remains to be seen. In the meantime, despite the cacophony of religious voices in the debate over the legal definition of marriage, especially in the United States, it should be clear where the balance of official religious opinion lies.

The question of how relevant that opinion should be to courts is a different question. In the United States, where religionists and secularists contend for cultural pre-eminence and church-state questions are bitterly contested at every turn, one can find many answers to this question. The purpose of this summary, however, is merely to state the facts. Others must take it from there.

## ENDNOTES

*The Marriage Law Project is based at the Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C. This summary was prepared in July 1999 and updated in November 2000, January 2001, and July 2002. Comments, corrections, and suggestions for improvement are welcome.*

<sup>1</sup>For lists of clergy, congregations and religious movements that support same-sex "marriage," see Lambda Defense and Education Fund, *Marriage Resolution: Selected Signatories* at <[www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/pages/documents/record?record=142](http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/pages/documents/record?record=142)>; Partners Task Force for Gay and Lesbian Couples, *Where to Get a Religious Blessing: Gay-Welcoming Denominations in the United States* at <[www.buddybuddy.com/blessing.html](http://www.buddybuddy.com/blessing.html)>; We Are Family, *Religious Organizations Working for Gay & Lesbian Inclusion* at <[www.waf.org/religious.htm](http://www.waf.org/religious.htm)>.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that the affirmation of homosexual relationships, or even of "gay and lesbian rights," does not necessarily translate into support for same-sex "marriage." For instance, significant groups within the "mainline" Christian denominations in the United States (i.e. the United Church of Christ) support various rights and protections for homosexuals, but none has endorsed same-sex "marriage." See <<http://www.ucc.org/theology/same-sex.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup>Persons with same-sex attractions have probably lived in every society and each of the major world religions has responded in various ways to homosexual behavior. See *HOMOSEXUALITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS* (Arlene Swidler, ed., Trinity Press International, 1993). However, none of the five major world religions have officially endorsed same-sex "marriage" in the past, despite the recent allegations of various scholars. For a review of controversies over the medieval church, compare JOHN BOSWELL, *SAME-SEX UNIONS IN PRE-MODERN EUROPE* (Villard Books, 1994), with Robin Darling Young, *Gay Marriage: Reimagining Church History* 47 *FIRST THINGS* (Nov. 1994), 43-48, or Brent Shaw, *A Groom of One's Own? The Medieval Church and the Question of Gay Marriage* *THE NEW REPUBLIC* (18-25 July 1994), 33-38, 40-41. See also Peter Lubin & Dwight Duncan, *Follow the Footnote, or, The Advocate as Historian of Same-Sex Marriage* 47 *CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW* 1271 (1998).

<sup>4</sup>Debates about the morality of homosexual relationships began earlier in European churches, particularly in Holland and the Scandinavian countries. Even in Holland, however, wide public debates over same-sex "marriage" did not begin until the 1990s. It was not until Dec. 19, 2000 that the Dutch Parliament approved "An Act for the Opening Up of Marriage," that redefined marriage to include same-sex couples in the spring of 2001. Most Scandinavian countries have chosen to address same-sex relationships as "domestic partnerships" which are different than marriages in certain respects. Other countries that are rapidly expanding their official recognition of same-sex couples, such as Australia, Canada, and the Republic of South Africa, have also done so only in the past decade.

<sup>5</sup>The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is a "covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life..." *CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH*, 1601. It also teaches that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered" (at 2357, quoting Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Persona humana* 8), and that "[h]omosexual persons are called to chastity" (at 2359). In addition, the Chairs of the Committee on Marriage and Family and the Committee on Domestic Policy of the U.S. Catholic Conference issued a "Statement on Same-Sex Marriage" on July 24, 1996 which states, "[W]e oppose attempts to grant the legal status of marriage to a relationship between persons of the same sex." The full text of the Statement can be found in *ORIGINS*, Vol. 26, No. 9, 132-133 (Aug. 1, 1996).

<sup>6</sup>OUR SUNDAY VISITOR *CATHOLIC ALMANAC* (personal communication).

<sup>7</sup>Only one Orthodox church has pronounced on the question of marriage and its relation to homosexuality. "God wills that men and women marry, becoming husbands and wives. . . . Homosexuality is to be approached as the result of humanity's rebellion against God, and so against its own nature and well-being. It is not to be taken as a way of living and acting for men and women made in God's image and likeness." *Synodal Affirmations on Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and the Sanctity of Life* Orthodox Church in America: Tenth All-American Council, July 1992.

<sup>8</sup>This figure was obtained by adding the members of the following churches: Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America, the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Diocese of North America, the Apostolic Orthodox Catholic Church, Armenian Apostolic Church, Armenian Apostolic Church, Diocese of America, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of India, the Orthodox Church in America, the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate in America, hPatriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in America, Romanian Orthodox Church in America, the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada, the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, the True Orthodox Church of Greece, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America. Numbers come from the *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 70<sup>th</sup> Ed.* (Eileen W. Linder, ed., Abingdon Press 2002), 348-361.

<sup>9</sup>In some cases, individual pastors or specific congregations disagree with the official position of their denomination, either singly or as an organized interest

group, but none of these pastors or congregations can be said to represent the official position of their denomination. Thus, one can find web pages of gay/lesbian caucuses within many churches, even though there may be virtually no likelihood of the denomination ever agreeing with them.

<sup>10</sup>The term "Anabaptist" includes churches from the Brethren and Mennonite traditions. There are an estimated 443,918 Anabaptists in the United States. Mennonite and Brethren in Christ World Directory 2000, 1. One such statement reads: "We understand the Bible to teach that sexual intercourse is reserved for a man and woman united in marriage and that violation of this teaching is a sin. It is our understanding that this teaching also precludes premarital, extramarital and homosexual sexual activity." *Resolution on Human Sexuality*, General Conference Mennonite Church, July 1986.

<sup>11</sup>There are an estimated 25,931,676 million Baptists in the United States. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 347-361. Two such statements are: "Marriage is God's idea established in the order of creation to be a permanent union of one man with one woman (Gen. 1:28, and 2:24) . . . and . . . any action by the government giving homosexual unions the legal status of marriage denies the fundamental immorality of homosexual behavior." *Resolution on Homosexual Behavior*, Southern Baptist Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 1996. "We affirm that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Homosexuality is not a 'valid alternative lifestyle.' The Bible condemns it as sin. It is not, however, unforgivable sin." *American Baptist Resolution on Homosexuality*, adopted by the General Board of the American Baptist Churches, October 1992. <<http://www.sbc.net/sexuality.html>>.

<sup>12</sup>The term "Anglican" includes both Anglicans and Episcopalians. There are an estimated 2,320,861 Anglicans in the United States, and 79,649,000 Anglicans worldwide. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 305-317, 2001 *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA BOOK OF THE YEAR*, quoted in *WORLD ALMANAC AND BOOK OF FACTS, 2002*. One such statement reads: "This Conference . . . in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage . . . while rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture." Resolution 1.10, Lambeth Conference, 1998. In June 2002, part of the Canadian church (Greater Vancouver diocese of New Westminster) voted in favor of same-sex blessings, (not marriage) causing a split. One third of the bishops left the meeting in protest, they formed the Anglican Communion of New Westminster. In response, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote he stood by the Lambeth conference. In July 2002, the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas began authorizing limited blessings for both gay and straight unmarried couples.

<sup>13</sup>There are reportedly 36,814 people affiliated with Evangelical Friends (Quaker) churches in North America and 100,000 worldwide. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 352, and <<http://www.evangelical-friends.org/>>. Evangelical Friends congregations do not support same-sex "marriage" and at least one yearly meeting, the Southwest, has specifically condemned it. "We declare that our sexuality is God's gift, and that sexual intercourse is to be enjoyed, as the Scriptures teach, only within the marriage of one man and one woman. We reject and utterly oppose homosexual activity, especially the "blessing" of same sex unions, as sinful and displeasing to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." Minute Declaration by Southwest Yearly Meeting (March 1994) at <<http://www.qjs.net/~daruma/swym1.html>>.

<sup>14</sup>There are an estimated 4,500,919 Independent Evangelicals in the United States. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 347-361. One such statement reads: "We also affirm that sex is a gift from our loving Father to be enjoyed within the sacred bonds of marriage between husband and wife." *Pornography and Obscenity Resolution*, adopted by the 56th Annual Meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals, 1998. The NAE represents an estimated 43,000 congregations nationwide. See <<http://www.nae.net/about.html>>.

<sup>15</sup>There are an estimated 8,519,942 Lutherans in the United States. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 347-361. One such statement reads: "Marriage is a lifelong covenant of faithfulness between a man and a woman." *Sexuality: Some Common Convictions* as adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 9 November 1996.

<sup>16</sup>There are an estimated 14,571,357 Pentecostals in the United States. *YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002*, 347-361. One such statement reads: "We also affirm that sex is a gift from our loving Father to be enjoyed within the sacred bonds of marriage between husband and wife." *Pornography and Obscenity Resolution*, adopted at the fourth conference of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America, 20 October 1998. This organization represents all of the major Pentecostal Churches in the U.S. including: Assemblies of God, Church of God, Church of God in Christ, Church

of God of Prophecy, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, International Pentecostal Holiness Church.

<sup>17</sup>There are an estimated 4,579,066 Reformed Christians in the United States. YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002, 347-361. One such statement reads: “[S]ince a Christian marriage performed in accordance with the Directory for Worship can only involve a covenant between a woman and a man, it would not be proper for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform a same-sex union ceremony.” Minutes of the 203rd General Assembly (1991), Presbyterian Church U.S.A., p.395

<sup>18</sup>There are an estimated 880,921 Seventh-day Adventists in the United States and 9,906,530 Seventh-day Adventists worldwide. YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002, 347-361. One such statement reads: “Sexual abuse of spouses, sexual abuse of children, incest, homosexual practices (gay and lesbian), and bestiality are among the obvious perversions of God’s original plan.” *Official Statement of Concern on Sexual Behavior* at <[http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/main\\_stat35.html](http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/main_stat35.html)> The Adventist Church adopted an official statement in 1999 delineating their position on homosexuality “Seventh-day Adventists believe that sexual intimacy belongs only within the marital relationship of a man and a woman.” *Seventh Day Adventist Position Statement on Homosexuality* at <[http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/main\\_stat46.html](http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/main_stat46.html)>.

<sup>19</sup>There are an estimated 13,132,347 Wesleyans in the United States. YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002, 347-361. One such statement reads: “[W]e do not endorse same-sex marriage or the raising of children by homosexual partners through birth, adoption, or foster care.” Petition 22613-CS-71-D, adopted by the 1996 United Methodist General Conference.

<sup>20</sup>Most Protestant groups have caucuses or groups that endorse same-sex unions, even though their denomination or movement as a whole does not. This includes some Baptists, Congregationalists, Disciples, Episcopalians, Mennonites, Methodists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, and Quakers. There are no reliable estimates of either membership or influence. For websites with listings of pastors, congregations, and movements, see note 2 above.

<sup>21</sup>*The Family: A Proclamation to the World* (September 23, 1995) at <<http://www.lds.org/library/display/0,4945,161-1-11-1,FF.html>>.

<sup>22</sup>*First Presidency Opposes Efforts to Legalize Same-Gender Marriage* LDS CHURCH NEWS at 5 (Feb. 19, 1994).

<sup>23</sup>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Media Guide, Key Facts and Figures* at <<http://www.lds.org/media2/library/display/0,6021,198-1-168-10,FF.html>>.

<sup>24</sup>Lambda Defense and Education Fund, *Marriage Resolution: Selected Signatories* at <<http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/iowa/documents/record?record=142>>.

<sup>25</sup>Most Unitarian Universalists consider themselves to be non-Christian, but because its roots are in Christianity, the UUA is included here with other Christian religions. Unitarian Universalist Association at <[uua.org](http://www.uua.org)>.

<sup>26</sup>Official UUA Statistics at <[www.uua.org/statistics](http://www.uua.org/statistics)>.

<sup>27</sup>YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES 2002, 347-361. See also <[www.ufmcc.com/perrybio.htm](http://www.ufmcc.com/perrybio.htm)>.

<sup>28</sup>Meetings endorsing same-sex “marriage” include Baltimore (MD), Hartford (CT), South Berkshire (MA), Mt. Toby (MA), Putney (VT), Beacon Hill (MA), Middlebury (VT), New Haven (CT), Hanover (NH), Cambridge (MA), Burlington (VT), Portland (ME), Yarmouth (MA), Storrs (CT), Amesbury (MA), Smithfield (RI), Farmington (ME), Fresh Pond (MA), Northampton (MA), Acadia (ME), Narramissic Valley (ME), Orono (ME), Monadnock (NH), Dover (NH), Framingham (MA), Midcoast (ME), Waterboro (ME), Brunswick (ME), Westerly (RI), Barton-Glover (VT), Wellesley (MA), New Bedford (MA). These meetings are part of the Baltimore (4,376 members) and New England (4,273 members) Yearly Meetings. Two Meetings in North Pacific Yearly Meeting, with 330 members, also endorse same-sex unions. Information was provided by the New England Yearly Meeting office, North Pacific Yearly Meeting Office and <<http://www.bym-rsf.org/abym01.html>>. For more information see <<http://www.fgquaker.org/>>. At the most (assuming that all of the members of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting favor same-sex “marriage”) 7,330 Quakers favor same-sex “marriage.”

<sup>29</sup>None of these groups are listed in the YEARBOOK OF AMERICAN AND CANADIAN CHURCHES, which otherwise includes small groups such as the Pentecostal Fire-Baptized Holiness Church (223 members) and the Primitive Advent Christian Church (345 members). For this reason, membership statistics for these groups are not included in the numbers in this report.

<sup>30</sup>Ilanit Berblich, director of Public Relations and Communications for ARZA/World Union, North America, at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations headquarters in New York City provided the number of 1.5 million additional Reformed Jews worldwide (email of July 30, 1999).

<sup>31</sup>2001 ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA BOOK OF THE YEAR *quoted in* WORLD ALMANAC AND BOOK OF FACTS 2002, 684.

<sup>32</sup>Judy Harrison, *Embracing Reconstructionism* BANGOR DAILY NEWS (Jan. 16, 1999).

<sup>33</sup>Bernard Lazertwitz, J. Alan Winter, Arnold Dashofsky, and Ephraim Tabory, *A Study of Jewish Denominational Preferences: Summary Findings* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK vol. 97 (David Singer, ed. The American Jewish Committee, 1997) 130. In the absence of further information, we have therefore removed the 14% from all our calculations.

<sup>34</sup>“The Orthodox Union views with great dismay the current effort to portray homosexuality as morally equivalent of heterosexual monogamous relationships and as constituting a valid ‘alternative lifestyle.’” RESOLUTIONS (The Union of

Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, 1998) 48; “We will not perform commitment ceremonies for gays and lesbians.” The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly, March 25, 1992.

<sup>35</sup>In 2000, reversing previous practice the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinical group of Reform Judaism, issued a resolution supporting the decision of its clergy to officiate at Jewish same-sex commitment ceremonies. The conference resolved “that the relationship of a Jewish, same gender couple is worthy of affirmation through appropriate Jewish ritual” but does not require rabbis to perform such ceremonies if they object to them. See <<http://www.ccarnet.org/cgi-bin/resodisp.pl?file=gender&year=2000>>. The JRF, like the UUA and MCC, has endorsed the Marriage Resolution. Lambda Defense and Education Fund, *Marriage Resolution: Selected Signatories* at <<http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/pages/documents/record?record=142>>.

<sup>36</sup>ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA 2001 BOOK OF THE YEAR *quoted in* WORLD ALMANAC AND BOOK OF FACTS 2002.

<sup>37</sup>Id.

<sup>38</sup>See, e.g., the entries on “Marriage and Divorce” in THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD, Vol. 3, 48-54 (Esposito, ed. Oxford University Press, 1995), and in FARUQI & FARUQI, THE CULTURAL ATLAS OF ISLAM (Macmillan, 1986), 149-151.

<sup>39</sup>While Islam officially allows men to have four legitimate wives, polygamy is only widespread in non-Arab Muslim West Africa. In Arab countries the proportion of polygamous marriages is lower, and continues to decrease. For more on these trends, see Philippe Fargues, *The Arab World: the Family as Fortress* 339-374 in BURGIERE, ET AL, A HISTORY OF THE FAMILY, Vol. II: The Impact of Modernity (Harvard University Press, 1996).

<sup>40</sup>There are, of course, “gay Muslim” groups based in the United States who communicate on the internet. Even these groups recognize that because sex outside of marriage is strongly condemned in Islam, there is not room for their ideology. They concede that to gain support, Islamic sexual morality must be reinterpreted and relativized. See, e.g., from Shahid Dossani, *Being Muslim and Gay* <[www.angelfire.com/ca2/queermuslims/](http://www.angelfire.com/ca2/queermuslims/)> (“Of course, sex does play a very major role in the social rules of Islam. Specifically, sex outside of marriage is strongly condemned. If one were to accept this notion of morality, then there would be no way out of this morass of sinfulness”). A sympathetic commentator concedes that, “It is difficult to imagine that gay rights will be won by a gay movement analogous to what we witness in the United States and other Western countries. . . . officially there is nothing but condemnation, whereas unofficially there may be more toleration than was customary in Europe before postmodernity” Khalid Duran, *Homosexuality and Islam* 181, 193-194, in HOMOSEXUALITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS (Swidler, ed., Trinity Press International, 1993).

<sup>41</sup>2001 ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA BOOK OF THE YEAR, *quoted in* the WORLD ALMANAC AND BOOK OF FACTS 2002, 684.

<sup>42</sup>Id. 684. 70% of Hindus are Vaishnavites, 25% are Shaivites, and 2% are neo-Hindus and reform Hindus.

<sup>43</sup>See Simon Weightman, *Hinduism in A NEW HANDBOOK OF LIVING RELIGIONS* 287-288 (John R. Hinnell, ed. 1997).

<sup>44</sup>Edith Turner & Pamela R. Frese, *Marriage in 9 ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION* at 218 (Mircea Eliade, ed., 1987).

<sup>45</sup>In an article detailing Hinduism’s view of homosexuality, Arvind Sharma writes that “Dharma and Artha literature is somewhat opposed to [homosexual behavior]” but that as “a religion Hinduism is perhaps more tolerant of homosexuality than it is as a culture.” Arvind Sharma, *Homosexuality and Hinduism* in HOMOSEXUALITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS (Arlene Swidler, ed., Trinity Press International, 1993) 68. On the other hand, according to Sharma, modern India’s “Neo-Hinduism is now so hostile to [homosexuality] that no community admits of homosexual practices...” Id., 70, *quoting* G. MORRIS CARSTAIRS, *THE TWICE-BORN* (Indiana University Press, 1967) 320.

<sup>46</sup>2001 ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA BOOK OF THE YEAR, *quoted in* WORLD ALMANAC AND BOOK OF FACTS 2002, 684. The numbers of Buddhists vary widely.

<sup>47</sup>*Year in Review 1998: Religion* ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA ONLINE at <[http://members.cb.com/bol/topic?tu=1&tbl\\_id=136729](http://members.cb.com/bol/topic?tu=1&tbl_id=136729)>.

<sup>48</sup>See Malcolm David Eckel, *Buddhism* in THE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO WORLD RELIGIONS 194 (Michael D. Coogan, ed., 1998).

<sup>49</sup>J.I. Cabezon, *Homosexuality and Buddhism*, 81-82 in HOMOSEXUALITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS (Swidler, ed., Trinity Press International, 1993).

<sup>50</sup>CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS, *POPULAR DICTIONARY OF BUDDHISM* 125 (1997).

<sup>51</sup>Edith Turner & Pamela R. Frese, *Marriage in 9 ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION* at 218 (Mircea Eliade, ed., 1987).

<sup>52</sup>J.I. Cabezon, *Homosexuality and Buddhism*, 83 in HOMOSEXUALITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS (Swidler, ed., Trinity Press International, 1993).

<sup>53</sup>Id.

<sup>54</sup>For complementary and contrasting views on this point, compare Cabezon with the discussions of Asian family traditions in BURGIERE, ET AL, A HISTORY OF THE FAMILY, 2 vols. (Harvard University Press, 1996).

<sup>55</sup>*Marriage Digest* at <<http://abacus.oxj.edu/pub/marriage/digests/v01.n015>>.

<sup>56</sup>Information obtained from Soka Gokkai International U.S. Communication Department. Even if all branches of Buddhism eventually reinterpreted their doctrines to endorse same-sex “marriage,” and the calculations in this report modified accordingly, 91.9% of the adherents of the five major world religions would still affirm the classical definition of marriage.