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## A Sign of Things to Come?

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The passage of Proposition 8 in California has reset the table with respect to the issue of same-sex marriage. Clearly, those pushing for legalized same-sex marriage thought that the decision of the California Supreme Court last May was the final word, and same-sex marriage would be an established legal reality in California. The fact that Proposition 8 passed on November 4 threw that assumption aside, and an ugly new chapter is opening.

*The Los Angeles Times* provides an eye-opening report into the response of Hollywood's cultural liberals to the passage of Proposition 8. Reporters Rachel Abramowitz and Tina Daunt open their article with this question: "Should there be boycotts, blacklists, firings or de facto shunning of those who supported Proposition 8?"

More:

*That's the issue consuming many in liberal Hollywood who fought to defeat the initiative banning same-sex marriage and are now reeling with recrimination and dismay.*

*Meanwhile, activists continue to comb donor lists and employ the Internet to expose those who donated money to support the ban.*

*Already out is Scott Eckern, director of the nonprofit California Musical Theatre in Sacramento, who resigned after a flurry of complaints from prominent theater artists, including "Hairspray" composer Marc Shaiman, when word of his contribution to the Yes on 8 campaign surfaced.*

*Other targets include Film Independent, the nonprofit arts organization that puts on both the Los Angeles Film Festival and the Spirit Awards; the Cinemark theater chain; and the Sundance Film Festival.*

The response of Hollywood is the temptation to blacklist anyone who supported Proposition 8 and to eliminate or marginalize their influence in liberal Hollywood. This response deserves a close look, for it almost surely represents the shape of the future when it comes to the issue of gay marriage.

For some time now, many legal scholars and observers have warned that the issue of same-sex marriage represents one of the most coercive dynamics in our culture. Where same-sex marriage is legal, the coercive effect is to punish anyone who will not recognize, endorse, or celebrate same-sex marriages. As groups like the Becket Fund have warned, churches and religious institutions are very vulnerable in this respect.

Now, as these developments in California unfold, it is clear that where efforts to legalize same-sex marriage fail, proponents will hunt down opponents of gay marriage for sanction and opposition. Note carefully the fact that Hollywood insiders and gay rights activists are scrutinizing the list of those who contributed to Proposition 8 support, looking for individuals, organizations, and corporations to isolate and punish. At least some are out to get people fired.

The opposition and outrage are also directed at churches and religious organizations. Take a careful look at this development. In all probability, it's the shape of things to come.



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