



## Archives and Records

### Finding Aid

**COLLECTION NUMBER:** Coll.27  
**TITLE:** Papers of the Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry

#### COLLECTION SUMMARY

**Creator:** Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry  
**Title:** Papers of the Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry  
**Extent:** 8 boxes  
**Repository:** The History Project, Archives and Records

Finding aid prepared for The History Project, Archives and Records Department by Amy Kennedy, Volunteer, under the supervision of Libby Bouvier and Andrew Elder, 2008-2009.

#### SUBJECT TERMS

##### *Subject Names:*

- Civil Rights
- Constitutional Conventions
- Constitutional Interpretation
- Interfaith
- Gay Rights
- Gay Marriage
- Marriage
- Marriage Rights
- Religion
- Religious Coalitions
- Referendums
- Same Sex Marriage

##### *Subject Topics:*

- Civil Rights - Massachusetts
- Civil Rights - United States
- Constitutional Law - Massachusetts
- Constitutional Law - United States
- Gay Couples - Legal Status, Laws, etc - Massachusetts
- Gay Couples - Legal Status, Laws, etc - United States
- Gay Liberation Movement - Massachusetts
- Gay Liberation Movement - United States
- Gay Rights - Massachusetts
- Lesbian Couples - Legal Status, Law, etc. - Massachusetts

Lesbian Couples – Legal Status, Law, etc. – United States  
Lesbian Rights – Massachusetts  
Marriage - Massachusetts  
Marriage – United States  
Same Sex Marriage – Law and Legislation – United States

## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

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## **HISTORICAL ABSTRACT**

Historically in Massachusetts, and in other states, attempts by same-sex couples to apply for and receive marriage licenses were met with refusals by public officials to grant a license to same-sex couples.

As a response to those attempts a lawsuit was filed in Suffolk Superior Court in Massachusetts on April 11, 2001 by lead attorney Mary Bonauto, of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, GLAD.

The case, *Goodridge v. Dept. of Public Health*, had 7 plaintiff couples who had applied for and were denied marriage licenses in Massachusetts. The court ruled against the plaintiff couples in May 2002. GLAD attorneys immediately appealed the case directly to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC).

Oral Arguments were heard in the case March 4, 2003, and in November, the Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff couples, allowing city and town clerks in the Commonwealth to begin issuing marriage licenses to same sex couples as of May 17, 2004.

The organization, Freedom to Marry Coalition of Massachusetts (FTMC-FreedomtoMarry.org) had been engaged in grassroots education, advocacy and lobbying in support of civil marriage rights for same sex couples since 1993.

The FTMC also played a key role in the founding and growth of the Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry, RCFM. The RCFM was formed by a group of clergy who met informally at a FTMC function in 1997. One of the co-founders was Rabbi Howard Berman, (see also The History Project, MS. COL. 26, Howard Berman Collection).

The RCFM was a group of more than 700 clergy, congregations, and organizations from 23 faith traditions, including the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the Unitarian Universalist Association and Reform Judaism, Roman Catholics and others. Not many Roman Catholic Priests signed the declaration of support. On the 1000 signer Declaration of

Support there was one Catholic Priest (Apostolic) who signed. There were members of various Roman Catholic parishes who would later sign a statement of support targeted at non-clergy Catholic supporters of same-sex marriage rights.

From 1997, RCFM spanned approximately 8 years, from the period of time preceding the Goodridge Case to after the favorable ruling to the constitutional convention in Sept. 2005, where the anti-gay amendment banning same sex marriage was defeated, until the organization officially disbanded in 2007.

Administrative personnel ran the day to day operation of RCFM. These included Executive Director, Rabbi Devon Lerner; Outreach Coordinator, Alex Hivoltze-Jimenez; Assistant Director, Margaret (Maggie) Crowley; Program Manager and Administrator (part-time), Carlos French; and a loaned intern from the Freedom to Marry Coalition, Katie McDonough. The position of Director of Community Outreach was proposed and created in 2005. Before that time, Alex Hivoltze-Jimenez held the position of political director. All positions were paid positions except the internship. Two clergy acted as executive directors of RCFM, the first, and longtime director, was Rabbi Devon Lerner. Later, The Rev. Anne Fowler, who served as president of the board of directors, would serve as acting executive director.

The RCFM was primarily funded by grants and donations from member organizations and individuals. An example of the 2005-2006 budget included \$75,000 in grants and \$101,000 in donations. Grants included the Gill Foundation, Mass Equality, and the Unitarian based Fund for a Just Society.

Funding allowed the RCFM coordinators to speak to numerous congregations and other gatherings, organize religious support in the form of signers to the Declaration of Support for the Freedom to Marry, and lobby against attempts to pass a constitutional amendment at constitutional conventions banning gay marriage by those opposed to same sex marriage rights, such as Mass Resistance.

The success of the RCFM was evidenced by the funding, innovation, and grassroots support for same sex marriage in Massachusetts. The RCFM remains today a very successful social justice model not only in the realm of LGBT equal rights in Massachusetts but nationally in the general area of civil rights and liberties.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The collection, 7 record cartons, includes documents and printed materials, photographs and digital media, and oversized newsprint.

The materials cover topic areas such as administration, lobbying, religious services, constituent information, legislator information, and event planning including statements, press releases, event planning documents, declarations of support, materials on how congregations contact the public on controversial subjects, and administrative documents outlining the day to day administration of the coalition.

Also included were numerous banners and signs used at various functions of the RCFM. These banners portray various congregations support for same sex marriage rights. Banners were used at events at the State House, at various places of worship, press conferences and rallies.

Media and Oversized items in Series I are in two separate boxes, as noted in the finding aid.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SERIES**

### **Series I: Conferences, Worship Services, Song Lyrics**

**Series I** consists of materials pertaining to the various programs and events of the RCFM. Included in this series were clergy testimonials, highlights of the RCFM's history and work, Call to Conscience Campaign, RCFM Declaration of Support, grant information and the 2005-2006 budget.

**Series I** is further divided into 2 subseries:

**Mixed Media Box (see Box 7)**, containing DVDs, CD-ROMS, of advertising materials as well as administrative computer backups.

**Oversize Box (see Box 8)**, containing newsprint clippings and also copies of complete newspapers concerning same sex marriage in Massachusetts.

### **Series II: Administrative and Operational Materials and Documents**

**Series II** contains items mostly about the administration of the coalition. Included are documents on fundraising, donations, house parties, canvassing, staff information, resumes, the admin. Database, volunteer documents, holiday cards sent out by the coalition, the Goodridge Decision Press Conference materials and general operational information. Also included in this series is the master list and congregational lists of the signers to the Declaration of Religious Support for the Freedom to Marry.

### **Series III: Partner Organizations, Clergy, Congregations and Lobbying**

**Series III** consists of information and materials on partners and partner organizations, clergy, Roman Catholics, congregations, and lobbying. Included within this series are denomination position statements, such as United Church of Christ, Religious Society of Friends, Dignity Boston (Catholic LGBT organization), Episcopal Church, African American Groups, Temple Israel, and Unitarian Universalists. Items in the series pertaining to the Catholic Church include Cardinal O'Malley's statement on the Roman Catholic Church's opposition to same sex marriage rights in MA. Also included are testimonies supporting same-sex marriage rights from Roman Catholics. The materials on lobbying primarily are guidelines for contacting and lobbying legislators.

### **Series IV: RCFM Program Events**

**Series IV** includes mainly RCFM program event materials. These include the Jason and DeMarco concert information, materials from an interfaith panel about the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So," "Neither Fair nor Just (2006), and "Stand Up For Marriage Equality" documentation.

### **Series V: Music and Song Lyrics, Hymns, Press and Other Statements**

**Series V** includes music and song materials, W.O.W – Witness our Welcome Event, Materials on "Stop the Anti-Gay Amendment," RCFM's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration materials, Roman Catholic Launch Statement supporting marriage equality, and

press materials on RCFM's response to Focus on Family's "Love Won Out" anti-gay, anti same sex marriage campaign. Also included in this series are numerous RCFM banners and signs of congregational support.

## **SERIES AND FOLDER LIST**

### **Box 1**

#### **Series I: Conferences, Worship Services, Song Lyrics**

Folder 1: Interfaith Services  
Folder 2: Music  
Folder 3: Song Lyrics, Hymns  
Folder 4: W.O.W. Witness Our Welcome 2003  
Folder 5: Praise Songs for Equal Marriage March  
Folder 6: RCFM 7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Awards Presentation  
Folder 7: RCFM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Awards Presentation  
Folder 8: Stop the Anti-Gay Amendment  
Folder 9: Roman Catholic Launch Statement  
Folder 10: Press Statement: Responding to Focus on Family's "Love Won Out" conference  
Folder 11: Mass Equality Packet of Materials and Documents pertaining to administration and operation, includes proposed 2005 budget (marked confidential and left in collection).

#### **Mixed Media SubSeries I: Electronic Media (see Box 7)**

Folder: VHS Tape: RCFM Conference 2/6/01  
Folder: VHS Tape: "Gays and God: Being LGBT and a Person of Faith" (3 copies)  
Folder: DVD Disk: May 17<sup>th</sup> Video – Same Sex Marriage (2 copies)  
Folder: DVD Disk: Saving Marriage (9 Copies)  
Folder: CD – Rom: RCFM Business System (letterhead, envelope, mailing label, business card, templates, fonts, logos, spec. sheet – Electronic Materials/logos)  
Folder: CD-ROM: RCFM Computer Backup 9/18/05 (1 copy)  
Folder: CD-ROM: Con Con 11/9/06, Constitutional Convention Rally Photos (1 copy)  
Folder: CD-ROM: RCFM Photos 04-05 (1 copy)  
Folder: CD-ROM: Directory Information (1 copy)  
Folder: CD-ROM: RCFM Database 12/28 (1 copy)  
Folder: CD-ROM: Service File, May 15, 2003, Aug 2005 Backup  
Folder: CD-ROM: Computer Backup Jan 25, 2006

#### **Oversize Sub Series II: Newsprint (see Box 8)**

Folder: Newsprint, clippings/photos, Freedom to Marry, Same Sex Marriage  
Folder: Misc. Clippings/Newsprint, Same Sex Marriage  
Folder: Misc. Clippings/Newsprint, Same Sex Marriage  
Loose Newspapers: Same Sex Marriage

## **Box 2**

### **Series II: Administrative and Operational Materials and Documents**

- Folder 1: Photocopies of checks for Donations for RCFM. (removed from collection)
- Folder 2: Online Merchant Data (removed from collection)
- Folder 3: Paypal Information for RCFM
- Folder 4: Fundraising Requests/Correspondence
- Folder 5: RCFM/Mass Equality Fundraiser, Oct. 19, 2006
- Folder 6: Photos of Fundraising Stoles
- Folder 7: Fundraising House Parties 4/07
- Folder 8: RCFM Fundraising Board/call lists
- Folder 9: Materials and Designs: RCFM T-Shirts
- Folder 10: RCFM Declaration Forms
- Folder 11: RCFM Signatories: Declaration of Religious Support
- Folder 12: RCFM Signer Lists (A)
- Folder 13: RCFM Signer Lists and Forms (B)
- Folder 14: RCFM Signers 2004
- Folder 15: Unitarian Universalist Assoc. Signers Dec. 2004
- Folder 16: RCFM Signers 2005
- Folder 17: RCFM Signers May 2006
- Folder 18: Unitarian Universalist Assoc Signers May 2006
- Folder 19: RCFM Declaration Signers
- Folder 20: RCFM Catholic Signers
- Folder 21: RCFM New Signers
- Folder 22: RCFM: Over 1000 Signers of the Declaration of Religious Support
- Folder 23: RCFM Bank Statements
- Folder 24: RCFM Invoices
- Folder 25: Freedom to Marry Foundation, Inc. Financial Statements, year ended—  
December 31, 2004
- Folder 26: RCFM Bank Statements 2003
- Folder 27: RCFM Resumes/Ads
- Folder 28: RCFM Job Descriptions
- Folder 29: RCFM Position Proposal: Director of Community Outreach
- Folder 30: RCFM Employee Records/Data
- Folder 31: RCFM Database 2005 by Region
- Folder 32: Travaglini-Lees Amendment (Anti-Marriage Campaign)
- Folder 33: RCFM Volunteer Materials
- Folder 34: RCFM Fundraising Materials
- Folder 35: Press Conference Originals
- Folder 36: Press Conference: Pre-Goodridge Decision
- Folder 37: RCFM 2003 Historical Papers/Documents
- Folder 38: RCFM Document – Accomplishments July 12- Nov 23, 2006
- Folder 39: Holiday Cards 2005
- Folder 40: Clergy Lists/Press Conferences
- Folder 41: Press Release: Prayer Breakfast – Awards
- Folder 42: House Party Canvassing Materials (A)
- Folder 43: House Party Canvassing Materials (B)
- Folder 44: House Party Canvassing Materials (C)
- Folder 45: Media Packets – Canvassing
- Folder 46: Misc. Materials/Press Release Drafts
- Folder 47: Press Release Bishop Gayle Harris, 1000 Signer/Misc Documents
- Folder 48: Quincy Zoning Restrictions on Religious Signs/U.U. Church

Folder 49: RCFM 2004 Leases; Includes PO's on Convention Sound Equipment  
Folder 50: Caterer Information  
Folder 51: Website Development Information  
Folder 52: RCFM Logo  
Folder 53: Postage Meter/Constant Contact Info

### **Box 3**

#### **Series III: Partner Organizations, Clergy, Congregations and Lobbying**

Folder 1: Partner Organizations: NARAL – National Abortion Rights Action League Information  
Folder 2: Partner Organizations: NGLTF – National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
Folder 3: Partner Organizations: HRC – Human Rights Campaign  
Folder 4: Draft Statement Senator Marian Walsh  
Folder 5: Representative Sr. Fleur – Remarks from the Constitutional Convention in February  
Folder 6: United Church of Christ, U.C.C.  
Folder 7: Religious Society of Friends  
Folder 8: Dignity Boston – LGBT Catholic Organization  
Folder 9: African American Organizations (Black Justice Coalition)  
Folder 10: Bishop Thomas Shaw – Episcopal Diocese  
Folder 11: Rev. Irene Monroe, Curriculum Vitae  
Folder 12: Materials: Boston Area Sexuality and Spirituality Institute  
Folder 13: Democracy Project  
Folder 14: Ray Hammond Testimony on Same Sex Marriage  
Folder 15: Temple Israel  
Folder 16: "It's Wrong to Vote On Rights" materials  
Folder 17: NGLTF Taskforce – Same Sex Couples  
Folder 18: Building Support for Same Sex Marriage—The Bible and Same Sex Marriage  
Folder 19: RCFM Sermons  
Folder 20: Wedding Kit  
Folder 21: Research/Polls from Research-PR Firm  
Folder 22: NY Supreme Court Decision 2005  
Folder 23: Goodridge Decision (excerpts)  
Folder 24: Quotes for Marriage Equality Meeting  
Folder 25: Testimony Books  
Folder 26: Same Sex Wedding Guide  
Folder 27: Denominational Position Papers (A)  
Folder 27: Denominational Statements (B)  
Folder 28: Misc. Clipping/Article/Open Letter to MLK, Jr.  
Folder 29: Biblical Responses  
Folder 30: Same Sex Publications: Saints and Sinners Press Kit  
Folder 31: U.U.A – (Unitarian Universalist Assoc)  
Folder 32: Clergy Referral Forms  
Folder 33: Conservative Keshet Rabbis (gay friendly)  
Folder 34: U.U.A. (Universalist) Call List (Lynn, MA)  
Folder 35: Clergy Lists  
Folder 36: Lawmaker/Clergy Lists  
Folder 37: Rabbis List—Signers/non-signers, March 2007  
Folder 38: RCFM Clergy Referral Forms (Filled Out)  
Folder 39: RCFM Clergy Referral Forms (blank)

Folder 40: "Don't Let the Catholic Hierarchy Ban Equal Marriage" Stickers  
Folder 41: Catholic Priest Responses  
Folder 42: Roman Catholic Statement on Civil Same Sex Marriage  
Folder 43: Catholic Phone Banking  
Folder 44: Catholic Publications/Materials  
Folder 45: Catholic Statement of Support  
Folder 46: Roman Catholics for the Freedom to Marry (Advertisements 2006)  
Folder 47: Letter to Cardinal O'Malley  
Folder 48: Catholic Signers to the Declaration who wrote comments  
Folder 49: Roman Catholic Newsletters and Information  
Folder 50: Roman Catholic Testimonies  
Folder 51: RCFM Highlights 2004-2005  
Folder 52: New England Law Review Vol. 38 #3 2004 – Same Sex Marriage Materials  
Folder 53: "Creating Change Oakland" Conference, Nov. 9-13, 2005, Building LGBT Power.  
Folder 54: Hard Copies: Testimonies: Same Sex Marriage  
Folder 55: "Meeting Your Legislator" Materials  
Folder 56: Brockton Leaders for Equality  
Folder 57: Brockton Lobbying Efforts/documents  
Folder 58: Legislators – Materials and Information (note: throughout the lobbying materials, legislators are called "lawmakers" by RCFM personnel)

## **Box 5**

### **Series IV: RCFM Program Events**

Folder 1: EqualMarriage.org – website  
Folder 2: Episcopal Diocese of Mass – Bishop Tom Shaw, Letters to Legislators  
Folder 3: Misc. Kate's Legislators (Kate worked at RCFM in an administrative capacity)  
Folder 4: Postcard Drive/Initiative (filled out)  
Folder 5: Clergy Lobbying 2006 – documents/Advocacy Reports  
Folder 6: Legislative Questionnaire – (blank)  
Folder 7: RCFM Letters to Legislators 2006  
Folder 8: Talking Points, legislator Lists – Guides  
Folder 9: Letters to Legislators, delivered 11/9/06  
Folder 10: "Call To Conscience" Weekend  
Folder 11: Lobbying Materials – "From Soup to Nuts"  
Folder 12: Legislative Information and Documents  
Folder 13: Letters to Legislators – general  
Folder 14: Letters to RCFM from Legislators  
Folder 15: Lobbying and Churches – Guidelines 2006  
Folder 16: Packet and Legislators Nov 6, 2006  
Folder 17: Meeting with Legislators "Soup to Nuts" 2005 Soloman  
Folder 18: Contact Your Legislator – Flyers and Postcards  
Folder 19: Lobbying Postcards – Blank "Dear Legislator..."  
Folder 20: Legislators Contact Information  
Folder 21: State House Information  
Folder 22: State House Event Form  
Folder 23: "Stop the Anti-gay Amendment" Packet  
Folder 24: RCFM Response to Focus on Family "Love Won Out" Anti Gay Program  
Folder 25: Press Documents Marriage Equality Rally  
Folder 26: Misc. Photos, Contact Sheets and 8X10 Photo



Folder 27: Media Releases  
 Folder 28: Northeast Region of Central Conference of American Rabbis  
 Folder 29: RCFM Advertisements  
 Folder 30: Press Release Rabbi Jordan Millstein  
 Folder 31: RCFM Lobbying Materials and Talking Points  
 Folder 32: Media Interview Guide/PR  
 Folder 33: Talking Points  
 Folder 34: Press Contacts  
 Folder 35: Clergy Press Statements  
 Folder 36: Permission for Media Use RCFM  
 Folder 37: Clergy "Letter to the Editor 2007" Rev. Diane Teichert  
 Folder 38: RCFM Photos  
 Folder 39: Newswire Acct/Tax Info  
 Folder 40: Roman Catholic Statement Press Conference 2005  
 Folder 41: Signup Forms, Same Sex Couples Married, Clergy – Wedding  
 Folder 42: RCFM Donor Lists  
 Folder 43: Couples Forms/Media/Completed Couples Forms  
 Folder 44: Press Packet, Kits  
 Folder 45: Declaration of Religious Support  
 Folder 46: Jason and DeMarco Information, Ceremony and Materials  
 Folder 47: "For the Bible Tells Me So" Panel Discussion  
 Folder 48: Constitutional Convention Day, State House, June 14, 2007 (referred to as "con con")  
 Folder 49: 2005 Freedom to Marry Valentine Gala  
 Folder 50: New Hampshire Humanities Symposium, March 2007  
 Folder 51: RCFM Speaker Program  
 Folder 52: 1000 Signer, Declaration of Religious Support Certificate  
 Folder 53: 1000 Signer, State House Event, associated materials, includes some photos  
 Folder 54: 1000 Signer, Signed Certificate, photos, press kit  
 Folder 55: Programs, Fall 2003-Fall2004  
 Folder 56: May 2007 Constitutional Convention, (con con)  
 Folder 57: RCFM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Materials (2007)  
 Folder 58: RCFM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards Materials (2007)  
 Folder 59: RCFM 2006 Awards Ceremony, includes Sen. Diane Wilkerson as the 2006 Award Recipient  
 Folder 60: "Neither Fair Nor Just" 2006 RCFM Brochure  
 Folder 61: RCFM Demonstration in Response to Tremont Temple Liberty Sunday Mitt Romney Speech (Oct. 2006)  
 Folder 62: "Stand Up for Equality" Week (March/April 2006)  
 Folder 63: "Stop the Hate" Candlelight Vigil – RCFM Co-Sponsor Jan 2007, includes GMDVP  
 Folder 64: Prayer Vigil Against Violence Materials  
 Folder 65: Blessings of Joy and Thanksgiving Materials  
 Folder 66: Interfaith Programs – Same Sex Marriage  
 Folder 67: Misc Email, "Reclaiming our Values."  
 Folder 68: Interfaith Celebration  
 Folder 69: RCFM Celebration  
 Folder 70: Feb 2, 2005 Awards Luncheon, Prayer Breakfast, includes Bay Windows Article  
 Folder 71: RCFM Blessings of Joy and Thanksgiving, Old South Church 5/15/05

**Box 6**

**Series V: Music and Song Lyrics, Hymns, Press and Other Statements**

Folder 1: Interfaith Services

Folder 2: Music

Folder 3: Song Lyrics, Gospel, Hymns

Folder 4: "Witness Our Welcome" (W.O.W.) 2003 Event

Folder 5: Praise Songs for Equal Marriage March

Folder 6: RCFM 7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Awards Presentation

Folder 7: RCFM 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Awards Presentation

Folder 8: "Stop the Anti-Gay Amendment" Event/Materials

Folder 9: Roman Catholic Launch Statement, supporting Same Sex Marriage

Folder 10: Press Statement: Responding to Focus on Family's "Love Won Out" Anti Gay Program

Folder 11: Budget Proposal 2005, Mass Equality Packet (marked as confidential left in collection) "No Discrimination in the Constitution"

**Box 7: Media, removed from Box 1.**

**Box 8: Oversize materials, removed from Box 1.**