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## *Theocracy Alert*

### Sometimes it's the (Jagger) juxtaposing . . .

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August 16, 2005—It was a Dorian Grey self-portrait when the Christian Right felt “honored” that ethically-challenged Tom DeLay would be [headlining](#) their “[Justice Sunday II](#)” event.

Then the Associated Press [reported](#)

Federal prosecutors are seeking bank fraud charges against lobbyist Jack Abramoff, a key figure in investigations involving House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. . . . The charges stem from the 2000 purchase by Abramoff and his partners of SunCruz Casinos and the alleged use of a fake wire transfer of \$23 million aimed at influencing lenders to provide millions of dollars for the deal.

This news followed on the heels of a series of [articles](#) about the evils of gambling by another featured speaker at Justice Sunday II, Focus on the Family's James Dobson.

All this was going on while Louis Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition was again confirming his and “the movement's” hypocrisy, and as The Rolling Stones' “[Sweet Neo Con](#)” was playing in the news.

In December 2002, New York Times columnist Paul Krugman reported that House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, one of Washington's “most feared and bare-knuckled partisans,” had openly admitted he was “on a mission from God to promote a ‘biblical worldview’ in American politics.” DeLay's ethics problems and dirty politics are legendary. That made him a worthy cohort, as reported by Church and State magazine:

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Texas) is helping a controversial Religious Right group raise money to defeat a so-called “war on Christianity” in America and preserve the nation's alleged “Christian heritage. . . .

DeLay has endorsed a campaign by the Rev. Lou Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition (TVC), which claims in a recent fund-raising letter that it will raise \$12.6 million to “stop the all-out assault on Christians being waged by our government [i.e., the judiciary], by America's educational institutions, by the media and throughout popular culture.”

DeLay is the perfect corrupt hypocrite to represent the leaders of the evangelical Christian Right and their agenda. It also explains why Mick Jagger's lyrics apply to more than just George W. Bush: “You call yourself a Christian, I call you a hypocrite. You call yourself a patriot. Well, I think you are full of shit.”

“It is not enough to list the things *we as a moral people* oppose—so-called homosexual marriage, homosexual adoption, etc. Now is the time to assert what *mainstream Americans* believe and speak the *truth* even as we are *slandered and maligned by extremists.*” [italics mine]

Those are the words Rev. Louis P. Sheldon wrote to [promote](#) his new book. Let's start with Lou's claim to represent “moral people.”

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Rev. Sheldon—founder and chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition—[argued against](#) giving aid to the surviving members of gay and lesbian partnerships, many of whom had children. Is that what a “moral” man would do after such a horrific tragedy?

Is it moral to encourage intolerance and hate? Is it moral to oppose programs that would help men, women and children afflicted with HIV? Is it moral to advocate discrimination? Is it moral to suggest putting some people in concentration camps? Is it moral to oppose programs and legislation that would benefit the 8 to 10 million children currently being reared by same-sex parents? Is it moral to sponsor and support legislation specifically designed to hurt those same families?

Sheldon is guilty of [all the above](#).

In his self-promo Lou claimed to speak for “mainstream Americans.” That doesn’t seem to be the case, increasingly so. According to the new Pew Research Center for People and the Press/Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life [poll](#),

Today, 36 percent of Americans favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry, up from 32 percent in December 2004. The percentage favoring gay civil unions has risen as well. Currently, 53 percent favor allowing gays and lesbians to enter into legal arrangements providing them with many of the same rights as married couples; that compares with 48 percent last August.

Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry, is correct: “This is exactly what the right wing is afraid of. People have had a year of legal marriage in Massachusetts to see how ending marriage discrimination helps gay and lesbian families and hurts no one.”

The poll also had another finding that marked America’s movement away from Sheldon’s brand of bigotry and hate: “Support for gay marriage and gay civil unions has increased slightly among most religious groups. However, support for civil unions has *increased significantly among white evangelical Protestants*, from 26 percent in December 2004 to 35 percent today” [italics mine].

As for the so-called “homosexual agenda” that so terrifies Lou Sheldon *et al*, it was well expressed by Rep. Barney Frank in his speech on behalf of the Stonewall Democratic Federation at the 2004 Democratic National Convention:

Specifically, we want all people in the United States to enjoy the same legal rights as everyone else, unless they have forfeited them by violating the rights of others. We believe this should include some things that are, apparently, very controversial.

They include the right to serve, fight, and even die on behalf of our country in the military; the right to earn a living by working hard and being judged wholly on the quality of our work; the right for teenagers to attend high school without being shoved, punched, or otherwise attacked; and, yes, the right to express not only love for another person but a willingness to be legally as well as morally responsible for his or her well-being.

Aren’t these “traditional values”?

Last but not least is Rev. Sheldon’s claim of being “slandered and maligned by extremists.” When it comes to gay Americans and their families, no one’s rhetoric is more slanderous, hateful, immoral, or extreme than Lou Sheldon’s. Perhaps he would do well to remember some biblical edicts: “you shall reap what you sow” and “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

While all these “sweet neocons” were busy exposing themselves, so was notorious homophobe and ultra-conservative Rick Santorum (R-PA) in his [article](#) for Catholic OnLine. According to Sen. Santorum, the

pedophile sex-scandal and decades-long cover-up that rocked—and continues to rock—the Roman Catholic Church is the fault of the media and intellectuals:

those in the media and academia . . . have zealously promoted moral relativism by sanctioning “private” moral matters such as alternative lifestyles. Priests, like all of us, are affected by culture. When the culture is sick, every element in it becomes infected.

Perhaps Rick should have a talk with the rector of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Monsignor Eugene Clark. This pillar of the church—who frequently damned gays for “destroying the church” and “Catholic family life”—now finds himself named as “the other man” in a nasty divorce involving his personal secretary with whom, according to the [suit](#), he had a long-time sexual affair. The monsignor resigned on August 11.

Yes, senator, there is a sickness in the culture. It’s called “neocon ‘Christian’ hypocrisy,” as DeLay, Dobson, Sheldon, Clark and you so well illustrate. By the way, Senator, did you ever repay the Penn Hills School District?

In mid-November 2004, righteous Rick was caught bilking the taxpayers of Pennsylvania. The Penn Hills School District had been paying the charter “cyber-school” tuition for Santorum’s five children—a cost of \$100,000 over the last four years—even though they actually lived in Virginia. When the story broke, Santorum immediately responded, saying he would withdraw his children from the charter school and home-school them instead. In his official response, Santorum stated, “I want to thank the administration of the Penn Hills School District for the courtesy they extended to me during this time,” but said nothing about reimbursing the school district.

Mick Jagger does have a way with words . . .