



Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida

Florida Legislative Investigation Committee

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With same-sex marriage legal throughout the United States, a report issued 52 years ago by an obscure Florida legislative committee looks positively antiquated for its moralistic and ignorance-based views on homosexuality.

Nicknamed the “purple pamphlet” for the color of its cover illustration, this report was commissioned by the Florida legislature in 1963 to “understand and effectively deal with the growing problem of homosexuality.” It provides legislative recommendations on how to criminalize homosexual activities in Florida, asserting that “[h]omosexuality is, and for too long has been, a skeleton in the closet of society.”

In their committee report, the legislators comprising the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee—which was created in 1956 with the task of “hunting down gays and lesbians in Florida’s public schools, universities and government agencies”—acknowledge various different societal views concerning homosexuality but claim that:

“[w]e would, however, suggest that the Biblical description of homosexuality as an “abomination” has stood well the test of time.”

When it was issued in early 1964, this report stirred controversy for its graphic language (including a glossary of gay slang) and somewhat explicit photographs. This controversy helped lead to the committee’s termination by the Florida legislature in 1965.

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