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REBUTTING RIGHT WING WATCH'S “Ten Horrific Things Kim Davis’s Attorney Has Said About Gay People”¹

In seeking to malign and discredit Liberty Counsel and its client, Kim Davis, Right Wing Watch has merely discredited itself by misrepresenting the words and actions of Mat Staver.

Below are the allegations from Right Wing Watch, and corresponding facts from Liberty Counsel to show that those “Ten Horrific Things” are horribly fallacious.

(1) Labels Gays ‘Demonic’ For Staver, the battle against gay rights is part of a spiritual war, since he believes that the gay rights movement is “doing the bidding of the Devil” and is part of the spirit of the Antichrist and “demonic.”

FACT: Staver never stated that gays were demonic. As the statement itself attests, Staver is saying that there is a spiritual conflict between those pushing a “gay rights” agenda and those seeking to preserve Judeo-Christian values and religious freedom. He does not say anything about individuals, and he never labeled anyone “demonic.”

(2) Defends Bans On Homosexuality While he has portrayed himself as a defender of freedom and liberty at home, Staver has actually praised moves in Russia, India, Malawi and Nigeria to outlaw homosexual relationships or speech in favor of gay rights. The group also defended U.S. anti-sodomy laws by citing [PDF] a satirical essay that joked about how gays “will sodomize your sons.”

FACT: Staver has never supported laws in Russia, India, Malawi or Nigeria. Staver did express opposition to the Obama administration for using the State Department funding to force countries to change their laws on abortion or marriage. Liberty Counsel did not use the satirical essay to defend anti-sodomy laws, but to simply highlight shockingly similar statements about adult-child sex written a few years later in the Journal of Homosexuality.

¹ Brian Tashman, “Ten Horrific Things Kim Davis’ Attorney Has Said About Gay People,” *Right Wing Watch*, (9/9/15) (Last accessed at 9/16/15 at <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/ten-horrific-things-kim-davis-attorney-has-said-about-gay-people>.)

(3) Compares Gays To Terrorists The Liberty Counsel founder has claimed that there is no need to negotiate or compromise with gay rights supporters because they are acting like terrorists.

“It’s kind of like with these terrorists, it’s hard to negotiate with terrorists because they have a zero-sum game,” he said of gay rights advocates during the debate about Indiana’s so-called religious freedom law. “It’s hard to negotiate with these people who simply are irrational and are inventing things that just simply don’t exist.”

FACT: Staver did not compare gays to terrorists. Staver distinguishes the individual from the agenda put forth by certain leaders, some of which have little or no interest in rational dialogue, compromise, or accommodation.

(4) Thinks Gays Will Force Us To Be Gay Prior to the 2012 election, Staver warned that the Obama administration was planning to impose “in-your-face forced homosexuality” upon the nation. He also charged that society would “just simply cease to exist” under marriage equality.

FACT: Staver’s statement references the Obama Administration, not “gays.” Also, he did not say that the Administration was going to force everyone to be “gay,” but that it would impose laws, rules, regulations and policies that would compel people to accept and embrace homosexual conduct regardless of religious beliefs or other constitutional protections. Staver did not say that society would cease to exist if same-sex couples are called “married,” but that attempting to redefine the basic societal institution would weaken it, and with a weakened foundation, society itself would be weakened, and that society still depends on male-female sexual unions to exist.

(5) Paints Gays As Child Molesters Staver, who once warned that gay people seek to “groom” and “entrap” children, recently claimed that the Boy Scouts of America’s decision to “allow homosexual young boys in the Scouts and allow homosexual leaders in the Scouts” will lead to “all kinds of sexual molestation” as the organization transforms into “a playground for pedophiles to go and have all these boys as objects of their lust.”

FACT: Staver never said that all gays were child molesters; nor did he say that “gay people” seek to “groom” and “entrap” children. Sexual abuse in the ranks of the Boy Scouts has been a problem for decades, as detailed by journalist Patrick Boyle in *Scout’s Honor*. The decision to permit boys who might be sexually attracted to boys and men who might be sexually attracted to boys into an organization where boys and men spend a great deal of time together in close quarters will provide greater opportunities for sexual misconduct.

(6) Wants Gay Rights Supporters Out Of Office Staver had strong words for members of Vermont’s legislature who voted for a bill legalizing same-sex marriage in the state, saying that they were unfit for office: “It is a sad day in America when elected officials are clueless about the definition of marriage. If

they cannot understand this basic human relationship between a man and a woman, then they are not competent for public office.”

FACT: Staver never said that “gay rights supporters” should be booted out of office. He questioned whether elected officials who do not understand and support the importance of marriage between a man and a woman should be elected.

(7) Warns Gay Marriage Will Cause A Crime Wave Staver predicted that the legalization of gay marriage will lead to a new generation of criminals, claiming that the children of two women are more likely to turn to a life of crime:

He even claimed that transgender people will use the Employment Non-Discrimination Act to rape and kill women and girls: “So you can go into these restrooms or changing rooms, if you’re a man, and want to go in and molest, or watch, or sexually assault young girls.... This will ultimately, in addition to colliding with religious liberty, in addition to forcing a radical agenda on people, this also will put individuals at risk and ultimately result in significant damage and even death of some individuals.”

FACT: Staver did not say that “gay marriage” will cause a crime wave, but that raising children without either a mother or a father has proven to be detrimental to the children’s development. Peer reviewed long-term studies have shown that children raised by two men or two women have higher rates of dysfunction, including higher rates of drug abuse, crime, and psychological problems, than do children raised by a mother and father.

Staver’s statement pertained to the then-proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which included the broad term “gender identity.” This term has been used in other laws to allow men who say they identify as women to access private spaces reserved for women and girls. This provision could place women and girls at risk by providing opportunity for men who want access to vulnerable targets for improper purposes.

(8) Blames Gay Marriage For Bank Failure During the 2008 Wall Street meltdown, Staver said that the failure of two of the country’s biggest banks, Washington Mutual and Wachovia, was a price they had to pay for supporting gay marriage: “Washington Mutual and Wachovia, both of which actively promoted the homosexual agenda, have come to realize that anti-family policies will bankrupt the bottom line.”

FACT: Staver never said that “gay marriage” was the cause of bank failure. Staver was commenting on the fact that the two banks had very publicly supported redefining marriage, as well as other controversial issues, and that taking such positions contrary to the values of many of their customers would lead to customers taking their business elsewhere, which affects a business’s bottom line.

(9) Warns Gay Marriage Will Destroy Civilization Staver believes that marriage equality “has a catastrophic consequence for our religious freedom, for the very function of the family, for marriage, for our human existence, for civil

society and for any area of our liberty” as it leads to “the unraveling of the United States.”

“Same-sex marriage is the beginning of the end of western civilization,” he said in an interview last year. “It really is, it’s that serious.”

In 2013, Staver claimed that gay marriage would be “the beginning of the end of America.”

FACT: Staver’s comments, taken out of context, reference the ripple effect that attempting to redefine marriage will have on the institution, as well as other societal institutions that depend upon strong families. As has occurred and is occurring, attempting to redefine marriage creates conflicts with religious freedom, destabilizes families, and adversely affects children, who are the next generation upon whom society will rely. Destabilizing families will destabilize society.

(10) Wants War To Fight Gay Marriage Staver’s opposition to gay marriage is so fierce that he has even threatened to wage a revolution to fight it:

“This is the thing that revolutions literally are made of. This would be more devastating to our freedom, to our religious freedom, to the rights of pastors and their duty to be able to speak and to Christians around the country, then anything that the revolutionaries during the American Revolution even dreamed of facing. This would be the thing that revolutions are made of. This could split the country right in two. This could cause another civil war. I’m not talking about just people protesting in the streets, this could be that level because what would ultimately happen is a direct collision would immediately happen with pastors, with churches, with Christians, with Christian ministries, with other businesses, it would be an avalanche that would go across the country.”

He said that while he would prefer a non-violent revolution, “you never know what happens.”

FACT: Staver never advocated war or violence. As stated by some of the U.S. Supreme Court Justices who dissented in the Court’s marriage opinion, taking the matter of marriage away from the democratic process will not end the debate. This is a huge cultural shift that will cause conflicts. And sadly, we have seen how Floyd Corkins used violence against the Family Research Council when he entered their building in Washington, D.C. with the intent to kill the employees because they believed in marriage as the union of one man and one woman. He is now in prison. Staver has always spoken against violence of any kind, no matter the origin, and has called for civil and respectful dialogue.