

BOOKLIST REVIEW

MARCH 2005

Tying the Knot: The Union That's Dividing America. 2004. 82 min.

Shot on video, this briskly paced, compelling documentary explores the turbulent controversy surrounding same-sex marriage. The film contains interviews with several lesbians and gay men in long-term relationships who feel they should have the same legal rights as heterosexuals. Meanwhile, such opponents of gay marriage as Focus on the Family's James Dobson argue against the practice. Two particularly poignant passages document the legal battles of a lesbian Florida police officer and a gay Oklahoma farmer who are engaged in legal battles following the deaths of their respective partners. One imaginatively directed sequence, featuring commentary by a historian, cleverly uses silent film clips and stock newsreel footage to chronicle the history of marriage. This timely, first-rate examination of an explosive issue also covers recent clashes between gay marriage activists and politicians, including U.S. president Bush. —*Brian Wilson*