

Recognition of Foreign Marriages Bill 2014

Submission to the Senate Committee of Enquiry

Dr David van Gend

REJECTING THIS BILL IS A MATTER OF DEMOCRATIC SELF-RESPECT

On 12 August 2004, the Senate passed the *Marriage Amendment Act 2004* by 38 votes to 6, and so foiled an attempt by a homosexual couple who were “married” overseas to use the Australian courts to usurp our democratic process.

Exactly ten years later, the Senate will be considering a Greens Bill that asks us to accept exactly the same usurpation of our democratic process! That is extraordinary.

The *Marriage Amendment Act 2004* contains only two substantive clauses, and the second is the target of the Bill presently before the Committee:

Certain unions are not marriages

A union solemnised in a foreign country between:

(a) a man and another man; or

(b) a woman and another woman;

must not be recognised as a marriage in Australia.

Historically, the *Marriage Amendment Act 2004* was provoked by the actions of two Australian men who had ‘married’ under the 2003 laws of Canada – where homosexual ‘marriage’ was originally imposed by provincial courts - and then brought their case to the courts in Australia in order to achieve a similar judicial ruling in favour of homosexual ‘marriage’ in Australia.

The *Marriage Amendment Bill* was brought to the Parliament in 2004 as a matter of urgency because, as the Attorney-General Phillip Ruddock said at the time, “some parties have already sought recognition of offshore arrangements approved under the laws of other countries and would be seeking recognition under our law.”

Australian law does, as a matter of general principle, recognise marriages entered into under the laws of another country, with some specific exceptions. It is the government’s view that this does not apply to same sex marriages. The amendments to the Marriage Act contained in this bill will make it absolutely clear that Australia will not recognise same sex marriages entered into under the laws of another country, whatever country that may be.¹

There was bipartisan agreement in 2004 that such overseas laws should not be allowed to force the political process in Australia. Shadow Attorney-General Nicola Roxon gave Labor’s support to the long-held definition of marriage (used in family law) as expressed in the *Marriage Amendment Act 2004* – and this bipartisan approach stopped the imminent judicial usurpation of a vital political decision.

The present Bill before the committee asks Senators to abandon that bipartisan position and welcome the very usurpation of Australian politics by foreign courts or foreign legislatures that provoked the 2004

legislation. What a monumental loss of political self-respect in just a decade, if such a Bill were to be supported!

Such a move would be cultural cringe at its worst, and unworthy of us.

It would also be a failure of responsibility on the part of our elected representatives, since this Bill attempts to circumvent the open and transparent process of Parliamentary debate on meaning of marriage in Australia. If the Greens wish to redefine marriage in Australia to mean a relationship no different to homosexual couplings, let them move openly, once again, to change the meaning of marriage in the Marriage Act. They were defeated in such an open attempt in 2012, by a two to one majority in the Senate, and this new Bill is an attempt to sneak gay marriage in by the back door.

It is also disappointing that a central justification for this Bill is the spurious claim, in the Explanatory Notes, that failure to recognise overseas same-sex marriage will leave legislators culpable for “great mental anguish and sometimes mental ill-health” in homosexual citizens! The scientific basis of the claim is worse than dubious, and the proposal that we should pass national legislation as a form of “self-esteem therapy” is risible.

One does not overturn the foundational institution of society - trashing a child's right to both a mother and a father, violating a parent's right to teach their child sexual right and wrong, and traducing the biological truth of marriage - as an act of psychotherapy for depressed citizens. There are other ways to help.

This Bill should be rejected as a cynical circumventing of the great public question of marriage, as an unworthy maneuver that would subjugate our national policy to the courts and legislatures of other countries.

For those Senators (and their advisors) interested to consider the broader harms of any such Bill that would normalise homosexual “marriage”, I offer the following material. It is divided into:

- Marriage: *the biological & anthropological truth*
- First harm: *the deliberate creation of motherless and fatherless children*
- Second harm: *radicalising the child's sense of sexual right & wrong*
- Third harm: *suppressing conscientious & religious freedom*
- Fourth harm: *the sexual radicalising of marriage*
- Conclusion: *politics & just discrimination*

Thank you for your consideration of this case for rejecting the *Recognition of Foreign Marriages Bill 2014*.

I am available to give further information and clarification if the Committee is to hold a public hearing.

Yours faithfully,

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MARRIAGE: THE BIOLOGICAL & ANTHROPOLOGICAL TRUTH

Marriage is not a social invention to be refashioned according to political whim; it is a social recognition of timeless biological reality: male, female, young.

The father of modern anthropology, Claude Levi-Strauss, called marriage “a social institution with a biological foundation”. He notes that throughout recorded history the human family is “based on a union, more or less durable, but socially approved, of two individuals of opposite sexes who establish a household and bear and raise children.”

All our marriage laws and customs exist to reinforce this biological foundation, helping bind a man to his mate for the sake of social stability and for the sake of the child they might create.

Not all marriages do create children - but typically they do, and the institution exists for the typical case. If adult sexual relationships did not have the momentous consequence, typically, of creating a child who needs nurturing for many years, there would be no need to urge the binding contract of marriage on sexual partners.

Even the atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell had a firmer grip on this reality than modern gay activists. He wrote, in his 1929 book ‘Marriage & Morals’:

It is through children alone that sexual relations become of importance to society, and worthy to be taken cognizance of by a legal institution.ⁱⁱ

Self-evidently, homosexual relationships cannot create children, so society has no institutional interest in regulating such friendships. They are of importance to the individuals involved, and demand neighbourly civility, but they do not meet nature or society’s job description for marriage.

Such primal matters as the relationship of mother and baby or the biological nature of marriage are beyond the authority of any Parliament to repeal. G.K. Chesterton wrote, “This triangle of truisms, father, mother and child, cannot be destroyed; it can only destroy those civilisations which disregard it.” The destroyers are at the gates in the form of pressure groups and politicians who propose to establish “homosexual marriage” in law and so:

- institutionalise the motherless or fatherless family;
- normalise homosexual behaviour in culture and in the education of children;
- suppress religious freedom with the full weight of anti-discrimination law;
- and, in the words of gay legal activist Paula Ettelbrick, “provide true alternatives to marriage and radically reorder society’s view of reality”.ⁱⁱⁱ

The day we cut marriage adrift from the rock of nature, from the mammalian order of male-female-young, is the day we lose any fundamental reason to deny “marriage equality” to any consenting adults, whether polyamorous or incestuous. And that way, madness lies.

Such is the disintegration of a civilisation that disregards “the natural and fundamental group unit of society”, as acknowledged in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and disregards the child’s birthright to grow up “in the care and under the responsibility of his parents”, as affirmed in the *Declaration on the Rights of the Child*.

Resisting this disintegration depends on delineating the four main harms to children and society of “homosexual marriage”, and so waking up the public to the consequences of such a revolution.

FIRST HARM: THE DELIBERATE CREATION OF MOTHERLESS & FATHERLESS CHILDREN

The heart of opposition to same-sex marriage is that it means same-sex parenting, and same-sex parenting means that a child must miss out on either a mother or a father.

That's because marriage is a compound right under Article 16 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: "the right to marry and to found a family". Therefore homosexual marriage involves both the legal recognition of an exclusive relationship and the right to form a family by adoption or artificial reproduction – but any child created within that "marriage" would have no possibility of being raised by both her mother and her father.

This is the issue of justice:

- that a child has the birth-right to both a mother and a father;
- that same-sex marriage makes it impossible for a child to have both a mother and a father;
- therefore same-sex marriage is unjust and must be opposed.

Or as David Blankenhorn wrote in 'The Future of Marriage':

Marriage is fundamentally about the needs of children. Redefining marriage to include gay and lesbian couples would eliminate entirely in law, and weaken still further in culture, the basic idea of a mother and a father for every child ^{iv}

Of course, there are already tragic situations where a child cannot have both a mother and a father, such as the death or desertion of a parent, but that is not something we would ever wish upon a child, and it is not something a government should ever impose upon a child. Legalising same-sex marriage would impose that deprivation on any child created within such a marriage.

Of course, there are already situations where broken families reform as a homosexual household, and nothing can or should be done about that. What we must not allow, however, is the situation where government facilitates the deliberate creation of motherless or fatherless families.

That offence against the child, inherent in any institution of "homosexual marriage", is the primary reason why the proposed reform is wrong, and likewise why any law is wrong that compels a child to live without a mother or without a father - such as single or same-sex surrogacy or IVF, and same-sex stranger adoption.

Even the pseudo gay-marriage of a civil partnership can allow for this abuse of a child's birthright. That is the case with Elton John and his civil partner, David Furnish, who in 2010 created baby Zach using an anonymous egg donor in India, a vial of their blended sperm and a rent-a-womb. The old rock star needed "someone to love into my old age". Too bad if baby Zach needed a mother's love, because the men ensured that Zach could never know her. Spurious "equal rights" for rich homosexuals to obtain a child, at the cost of authentic "equal rights" for all babies to enter the world with their own mother and their own father.

Demands for gay marriage, as Australian ethicist Professor Margaret Somerville observed, "force us to choose between giving priority to children's rights or to homosexual adults' claims." The claims of homosexual adults always take priority with the progressive media, who frame the debate narcissistically in terms of the desires and "equal rights" of adults. Who, then, will defend the child's point of view?

A child has the right to look up and see the only two faces on earth that reflect her own: the woman and the man who together gave her existence. A little girl should not have to look up and see two "married men" as her parents. Neither man can be a mother to her; they cannot guide her as a mother would when she is growing from girl to woman, nor model for her the complex relationship of husband and wife. Likewise, any boy needs his father's companionship and example to help him become a man; no matter how competent and caring a lesbian partner may be, she cannot be a dad to a little boy.

In essence, “homosexual marriage” asserts that a mother, or a father, simply does not matter to a child. Its acceptance in law would violate a child’s fundamental right to grow up “in the care and under the responsibility of his parents” and would subject children, without consent, to a government-sponsored experiment on their emotional development.

On this question of emotional development, sociologist David Popenoe states the obvious: “Few propositions have more empirical support in the social sciences than this one: Compared to all other family forms, families headed by married, biological parents are best for children.”

In the last decade or so, predictably, a number of studies have been published that attempt to show that children of same-sex couples, in particular lesbian couples, do just as well as children of married biological parents.

‘Research and ye shall find...’

On the whole these are very poor quality studies, with too small a sample size to be significant, too biased a self-selection process to be representative, no control group to give objectivity to the findings, and so on.^v But they have achieved their political goal of muddying the waters as to outcomes for children under various parenting models.

More importantly, such studies fail to address the underlying question of justice. Take the analogy of children reportedly ‘stolen’ from their Aboriginal mothers. Just because a study might show that such children are doing very well at school a decade later, competing well in sport and apparently well integrated with their peers – does that say anything about the injustice done to them at the start, by wrongfully removing them from their parents?

The same applies to children deprived of a mother through government-approved homosexual marriage and adoption. No matter how well they turn out years later, according to the crude measurements of social science, nothing can make up for the initial harm done to the inner life of that little child.

Predictably, some people also raise the scenario of an abusive mother and father and argue that it is better for a child to have two loving same-sex carers than a dysfunctional pair of biological parents - yet neither option gives a child what she needs. We must reject both, restraining parents who would inflict abuse while also restraining governments who would inflict laws that institutionalise the motherless or fatherless child.

SECOND HARM: RADICALISING THE CHILD’S SENSE OF SEXUAL RIGHT & WRONG

If we normalise homosexual marriage we normalise homosexual behaviour with the full force of anti-discrimination law. Education would have to comply with the new normal. Children will have to be taught that homosexual relations are no different to the old mother-father model of marriage.

We now have empirical evidence.^{vi} After the courts in Massachusetts, USA, legalised homosexual marriage in November 2003, school libraries were required to stock same-sex literature; primary children were given homosexual fairy stories like *King & King*^{vii}; some high school students were even given an explicit manual of homosexual advocacy entitled *Queer in the 21st century*.^{viii}

This conquest of the curriculum and usurping of parental influence over the moral education of their child is, in my view, a major cultural goal of the homosexual movement. Under the cloak of “celebrating diversity”, laws for homosexual marriage will “impose conformity” in public attitudes and the curriculum. As parents in Massachusetts have learned, there is no celebrating the diversity of a parental opinion that opposes the homosexualisation of their child’s curriculum.^{ix}

Australian parents can still bring pressure to bear on homosexual propaganda in schools but Massachusetts parents cannot: the year after Massachusetts legalised homosexual marriage, primary teacher Deb Allen told

national public radio about giving graphic depictions of same-sex behavior to Year 8 student: "If somebody wants to challenge me I'll say, give me a break - it's legal now." ^x

If Australia normalises homosexual marriage, the Australian Education Union's 2006 gender identity policy would be swiftly implemented: "Homosexuality, bisexuality, transgenderism and intersex need to be normalised. All curriculum (sic) should be written in non-heterosexist language." (Section 3.3.3)

In Canada, where homosexual marriage has been legalised, "Gay-Straight Alliance" clubs are being set up in schools across the country, ostensibly to reduce gay-based bullying but in effect to normalise homosexual identity and relationships. In a gravely misguided move, the Australian government is now doing the same by funding the so-called 'Safe Schools' programme, which involves the formation of 'Gay-Straight' clubs.

But if same-sex attraction is correctly understood as a complex irregularity of sexual development that causes deep grief to many of those affected, is "normalising" that irregularity only going to cause more grief?

The American College of Pediatricians, a conservative medical group represented across 47 states, makes the following observations "on the promotion of homosexuality in the schools": ^{xi}

- Declaring and validating a student's same-sex attraction during the adolescent years is premature and may be harmful.
- Many youth with homosexual attractions have experienced a troubled upbringing, including sexual abuse, and are in need of therapy.
- The homosexual lifestyle carries grave health risks.
- Sexual reorientation therapy can be effective. Students and parents should be aware of all therapeutic options.
- There is no evidence that pro-homosexual programs, such as on-campus student clubs, ease the health disorders of homosexual youth.

But doesn't that go against the notion that gay people are "born that way"? That it is a natural and unchangeable condition, and therefore a matter of justice that we allow them equal marriage rights?

Such is the power of myth. The American Psychiatric Association said we cannot draw a 'born that way' conclusion: "There are no replicated scientific studies supporting any specific biological etiology for homosexuality". Even the avowedly pro-gay American Psychological Association cannot reach a "born that way" conclusion:

No findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors. ^{xii}

The director of the Human Genome Project, Francis Collins, notes that "sexual orientation is genetically influenced but not hardwired by DNA, and whatever genes are involved represent predispositions, not predeterminations." ^{xiii} There is no justification, then, for claiming that homosexuality is biologically determined. All one can conclude is that the phenomenon is multi-factorial in origin, with predisposing and precipitating factors; a deeply ingrained but potentially modifiable psychological condition, not an innate identity.

Senators at the May 2012 enquiry into the *Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2010* heard from a man, Ron Brookman, who had been actively homosexual for most of his adult life but is now married with three children. ^{xiv} Such men are not meant to exist under the "born that way" theory.

Consider the clinical findings: confusion over sexual identity is quite common among teens but it is usually a passing phase. The extensive *National Health and Social Life Survey* across the USA in 1994 found that some 8% of sixteen year olds identified as gay – but, significantly, the number halved within two years to just over 4%, and halved again by age twenty-five so that only 2.8% still thought they were gay.

What that means is that most sexual confusion in adolescence – a full three-quarters in this study - clears away if left to itself.

Similar findings were made in a large study in 2007 by Savin-Williams, which found that three-quarters of adolescents who had some initial homosexual attraction between the ages of 17-21 changed to experience heterosexual attraction only. By contrast, fully 98% of heterosexual students remained heterosexual into adulthood. Another large study of some 14 000 young people by Ott and Corliss in 2010 found that two thirds of those who thought they might be homosexual eventually became exclusively heterosexual.

In my view, initiatives to “celebrate gay identity” among confused adolescents would be likely to encourage some young men to “come out” at school when, left alone, they might have got over their confusion and avoided the harm of a homosexual lifestyle.

Even using the simplest, most objective measure of harm - the burden of venereal disease (and in Australia it remains the case now, as for the last 25 years, that around 85% of new cases of AIDS are in “men who have sex with men”^{xv}) – it is obviously harmful to lock a young man into a lifestyle that he might have avoided, were it not for the assertion in schools of homosexual normalcy, an assertion that will become compulsory with the normalising of homosexual marriage.

The political justification for Gay-Straight Alliances, or the various “Safe Schools” programmes around the country, is that there is a plague of gay-based bullying in our schools, and the only way to counter that is through celebrating homosexuality. That justification, however, is doubtful.

In one large study comparing a thousand homosexual and heterosexual adults in the UK, published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* in 2003, the researchers found no increase in bullying of gay men compared to heterosexual men, whether at school or subsequently, whether verbally or physically.^{xvi} “Reports that gay and lesbian people are vulnerable to such experiences because of their sexuality are often taken at face value”, these researchers noted, with other studies failing to draw a comparison to heterosexual students.

In other words, there are many reasons to be bullied at school – for being too smart, too dumb; too fat, too weak; or for being “gay” even when you are not gay. That is something many young people go through, and the claim that homosexual people suffer disproportionate bullying appears to be “taken at face value”.

Another contentious claim of the gay marriage lobby is that depression and suicide among gay men is the fault of homophobic society, so that if society rejects gay marriage and does not celebrate homosexuality in schools, it is culpable for the despair and death of homosexual citizens. This same British study was more circumspect:

It may be that prejudice in society against gay men and lesbians leads to greater psychological distress... Conversely, gay men and lesbians may have lifestyles that make them vulnerable to psychological disorder. Such lifestyles may include increased use of drugs and alcohol.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2010 found the prevalence of illicit drug use by homosexuals to be more than double that of heterosexuals (34% to 14%) while the rate of excessive alcohol intake was 25% to 16%. Such behaviours are certainly risk factors for depression and suicide, but are they somebody else’s fault? In Canada, where gay marriage was legalised in 2005, homosexual lobbyists in 2009 still cited drug and alcohol abuse as several times higher amongst gays.^{xvii}

So are we to understand that substance abuse by heterosexuals is their own fault, but the elevated rate of intoxication in the gay scene, with its consequences for depression and suicide, is the fault of homophobic society?

The research of University of Western Australia's Rob Cover finds: "the relationship between the legalisation of marriage and GLBTIQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer) youth health and wellbeing is more complex and it is important not to assume that legislative amendment leads directly

by itself to a reduction in youth suicidality."

From my observations, the pressures that depress a young gay man are more intrinsic than extrinsic: the sense that something has gone wrong deep inside; the depressing and degrading effect of what he perceives as compulsive sexual encounters; the unresolved anger at what he sees to be the cause of his sexual confusion, such as childhood abuse by a male.

Psychiatrist Dr Jeffrey Satinover brings perspective to this multi-factorial suffering:

Some of this is in fact, as activists claim, because all-too-often he experiences from others a cold lack of sympathy or even open hostility. But it is not true, as activists claim, that these are the only or even the major stresses. Much distress is caused simply by his way of life - for example, the medical consequences, AIDS being just one of many (if also the worst). He also lives with the guilt and shame that he inevitably feels over his compulsive, promiscuous behavior; and too, over the knowledge that he cannot relate effectively to the opposite sex and is less likely to have a family.^{xviii}

It trivialises a homosexual person's suffering to blame it primarily on the external environment. The associated claim that Parliament must legalise homosexual marriage or be culpable for gay depression is political blackmail. One does not overturn the foundational institution of society, with all the harm that entails, as an act of psychotherapy for some depressed citizens.

Likewise, there are less insidious means to address the perennial problem of bullying - for all students - than by normalising homosexual behaviour in the curriculum and thereby confusing and corrupting every child's sense of sexual right and wrong.

THIRD HARM: SUPPRESSING CONSCIENTIOUS & RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

In a graduation address at Champion College in Sydney in 2011, former PM John Howard said:

Changing the definition of marriage, which has lasted for time immemorial, is not an exercise in human rights and equality; it is an exercise in de-authorising the Judaeo-Christian influence in our society, and any who pretend otherwise are deluding themselves.^{xix}

Canadian Queen's Counsel, Barbara Findlay, declared, "The legal struggle for queer rights will one day be a showdown between freedom of religion versus sexual orientation". Asked about this showdown, Obama-appointee to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Chai Feldblum, answered, "In almost all cases sexual liberty should win, because that's the only way that the dignity of gay people can be affirmed in any realistic manner."

Laws normalising gay marriage are the big stick needed for "queer rights" to beat religious freedom into legal submission. And "any who pretend otherwise are deluding themselves".

And so, in Massachusetts under its gay marriage law, when the adoption agency Catholic Charities was compelled by authorities to place children equally with homosexual couples, it had to cease its services.^{xx} A recent judgement of the *European Court of Human Rights* found that if same-sex marriage is legal in a member state, then any church that refuses to marry same-sex couples would be guilty of discrimination.^{xxi}

The Church of England has been given an exemption from performing homosexual marriage in the recent laws passed in March – but already, a wealthy homosexual couple is taking the church to court to challenge this "discriminatory" law.^{xxii}

There should be no pretence in our Parliament that churches can be guaranteed lasting exemption from the law of homosexual marriage.

Equally, the individual will be given no exemption from holding approved opinions on homosexual marriage and parenting. David Blankenhorn observed,

Once this proposed reform became law, even to say the words out loud in public – ‘Every child needs a father and a mother’ – would probably be viewed as explicitly divisive and discriminatory, possibly even as hate speech.

The cases of intimidation of individual conscience by homosexual orthodoxy are piling up every day.

Consider the recent hounding and sacking of the head of Mozilla, Brendan Eich, for daring to give a donation to a political campaign defending the time-honoured definition of marriage.^{xxiii} Or consider Mrs Stutzman, a florist in Washington State. This delightful small-business owner has a friend and client of many years – Rob, a gay man – who then marries under Washington State’s new law. He asks her to do the flowers for his ‘wedding’. After long reflection she decides that she cannot, in Christian conscience, give the work of her hands for a same-sex ‘wedding’, and gently explains that to her friend. He sues her and she is vilified in social media. The attorney general and the civil liberties union join in the attack and she is swamped with hate mail. The legal expenses and toxic publicity may well cost this gentle Christian grandmother her florist business.^{xxiv}

Even in Queensland the gay lobby attempts to enforce its orthodoxy. My own commitment to “say the words out loud in public: every child needs a father and a mother” has indeed been considered discriminatory and worthy of inquisition by the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland. My case, although relatively trivial, is yet another example of the contemptible “hate-speech” laws that increasingly strangle free argument in a free society and will tighten their grip once homosexual marriage is normalised with the force of law.

Queensland’s leading newspaper, the *Courier Mail*, published a forum in June 2011 entitled “Gay marriage: the case for and against”. I gave the case against, opening:

If you hold to the old-fashioned idea a baby deserves both a mother and a father, the president of the Queensland branch of the Labor Party, Andrew Dettmer, calls your views "abominable". The state Labor conference recently voted to destroy the timeless meaning of marriage and redefine it to include a pair of men or a lesbian couple, and Dettmer slurred opponents as being no better than racists: "Discrimination against people on the basis of their gender or their sexual orientation is just as abominable and just as unsupportable as discrimination on the basis of race."^{xxv}

Those on my side of the debate might shrug off the abuse of being no better than racists, but those on the other side are more diligent in taking offense: my next paragraph was cited by a gay activist in Sydney as “vilifying the homosexual community”:

Yes, it is discrimination to prohibit the "marriage" of two men, but it is just and necessary discrimination, because the only alternative is the far worse act of discrimination against children brought artificially into the world by such men, compelled to live their whole lives without a mother. Now that approaches the abominable.

That was it. For that heinous paragraph saying that a child should not be deprived of a mother and for alluding to the Labor president’s choice of words, a family doctor is forced to attend “conciliation” for alleged vilification. Of course I had nothing to conciliate. I said to the complainant: “You are a gay activist; I am a family activist - so we disagree! Free men in a self-governing society argue their case; they don’t run to the nanny and set government lawyers onto their opponent.” This worthless complaint was withdrawn unconditionally, but not until the process had cost me time and money – and as Mark Steyn points out, with all State Censors “the process is the punishment”.

The essential purpose of “anti-vilification” provisions is to intimidate conservative and Christian opinion and confine public discourse to that deemed acceptable by our betters. Any law normalising homosexual marriage will be a truncheon in the fist of the thought police, enforcing decadent opinion on sexuality via their “human rights” commissions. It will be a major cultural triumph for advocates of state authority over individual conscience; it will be a major step in “ de-authorising the Judaeo-Christian influence in our society”.

FOURTH HARM: THE SEXUAL RADICALISING OF MARRIAGE

Some gentle souls can't bring themselves to think that gay activists mean any harm to marriage; surely we are just sharing the benefits of marital stability with a wider number of people?

They need to pay more attention.

Listen to US activist Michelangelo Signorile, who urges gays "to fight for same-sex marriage and its benefits and then, once granted, redefine the institution of marriage completely."

Or Paula Ettelbrick, former director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund:

Being queer means pushing the parameters of sex, sexuality and family, and transforming the very fabric of society... We must keep our eyes on the goals of providing true alternatives to marriage and of radically reordering society's view of reality.

Listen to Russian lesbian activist Masha Gessen on ABC Radio, speaking to the Sydney Writer's Festival in 2012:

... fighting for gay marriage generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage when we get there. Because we lie that the institution of marriage is not going to change... It's a no-brainer that we should have the right to marriage but equally I think that it is a no brainer that the institute of marriage should not exist.^{xxvi}

These are not the words of homosexual people who just want to fit in with the established norms of marriage.

No, these are the words of culture warriors who want to complete the sexual revolution, bringing their 'liberated' model of sexual hedonism and experimentation to sweep aside the bourgeois, hetero-normative, patriarchal structure of marriage and family.

Monogamy is the essential repressive element that has to go in gay marriage. On the same Sydney Writer's Festival panel, Australian gay activist Dennis Altman speaks honestly about the nonsense of homosexual 'monogamy' and faithfulness:

Now I am going to speak now as a gay man: one of the things about gay male culture is that it is not a monogamous culture. All the evidence we have suggests that monogamy is a myth. There are many longstanding gay relationships. There are virtually no longstanding monogamous gay relationships. I happen to think that this is a good thing. I happen to think that this puts sex in a much better perspective than the concept that we are being fed.^{xxvii}

As the prominent US activist Andrew Sullivan says, gay marriage can only be "monogamish", not monogamous; open marriage, not faithful marriage "to the exclusion of all others".

That is because there is no longer any consideration of the child as central to marriage, who needs the stable context of faithful parents. There is only consideration of the 'romantic', narcissistic needs of gay adults. So Andrew Sullivan writes that the essence of marriage "is not breeding" but instead "a unique and profound friendship". All about adults, not kids – so who needs fidelity and stability?

Such a radically adult-centred perspective also begs the question: if the essence of marriage is just a "profound friendship", then why not grant "marriage equality" to all profound friendships, including groups of adults and consensual incestuous partners?

Lord Daniel Brennan, former Chair of the Bar Association in the UK, wrote in March 2012:

After all, if you can abolish the most important pre-condition of marriage – namely that it requires a person of each sex – why should you be able to retain other pre-conditions, such as limiting it to only

two people? In the Netherlands, where same-sex marriage was introduced in 2001, “cohabitation agreements” have been used to give three-way relationships a measure of legal recognition.^{xxviii}

Nearer home, James Dominguez of Bisexual Alliance Victoria prefers four-way relationships. He told *The Australian* in May 2012: “Some time in the distant future we should look at the idea of plural marriage”.^{xxix} In the immediate present he lives in a bisexual polyamorous foursome, awaiting true “marriage equality” for groups of loving adults.

And only this year, April 23rd 2014, the New York Post featured three women in wedding dresses under the heading, “*Married lesbian throuple expecting first child*”.^{xxx}

But no, there’s no slippery slope! Instead, there is the working out of logical principle, the expanding of the newly elastic meaning of marriage.

Just how far will this adult-centred principle of marriage undermine natural marriage? In April 2012 an incestuous relationship came to the European Court of Human Rights. Patrick Stuebing from Leipzig argued that he and his sister had the right to a “family life”. The case had inspired calls to legalise familial sexual relations. The ECHR refused, saying it was necessary for “the protection of marriage and the family” to punish incestuous relationships.^{xxxi}

So far so good, but for how long will increasingly progressive judges uphold this quaint notion of “the protection of marriage and the family” once “homosexual marriage” has breached the levee of sexual taboo that alone protects the natural order of marriage and family life?

Much will depend on political reassertion that the basic unit of mother-father-child is “the natural and fundamental group unit of society”, and that for the sake of the child, and of social sanity, it must be defended as such.

CONCLUSION: POLITICS AND JUST DISCRIMINATION

What, then, is the way forward? How can we live respectfully with our homosexual friends and neighbours while still protecting the truth about marriage, and protecting the near-sacred bond between mother and child, which is at the heart of marriage?

Frank Brennan, the former Chair of our National Human Rights Consultation Committee has written:

I think we can ensure non-discrimination against same-sex couples while at the same time maintaining a commitment to children of future generations being born of and being reared by a father and a mother.^{xxxii}

Non-discrimination against same-sex couples is exactly what Federal Parliament achieved in 2008, when 85 pieces of legislation were amended by a bipartisan majority. There is now no unjust discrimination against same-sex couples.

Commitment to children of future generations requires that we discriminate, justly, between two quite distinct social projects: the widespread public task of marriage-and-family, and the rare private commitment of gay partnerships.

The number of same-sex couples in Australia is indeed very small, involving only 0.4% of all adults according to the ABS *Australian Social Trends* 2009. By contrast, 52% of Australian adults live in a registered marriage.^{xxxiii} The 0.4% figure accounts for one third of the 1.2% of Australian adults who identify as homosexual; this compares to the 97.5% who identify as heterosexual, according to the major 2003 study *Sex in Australia*.^{xxxiv} Respect even for tiny minorities is necessary, but appropriate discrimination in favour of the vast social goods of marriage, children’s rights and freedom of conscience is also necessary.

In the second half of 2012 Federal Parliament considered and firmly rejected homosexual marriage, voting it down by a two to one margin. In the face of ongoing pressure, serious politicians must reassert one unifying policy: that no law shall be enacted or allowed to stand which tends in any way to diminish the ideal of “a mother and a father for every child”. Such a policy will exclude same-sex marriage, with its intrinsic right to adoption and artificial reproduction, and will also exclude surrogacy, stranger-adoption and IVF for single people or same-sex couples. That is a principled, child-centred position that honours the “natural and fundamental group unit of society” – mother, father, child.

Justice has already been done, and possibly overdone: homosexual couples now enjoy practical equality with married couples in every way short of marriage. The process must stop short of marriage, because marriage is about something much deeper than civil equality; it is about a natural reality – male, female, offspring – which society did not create and which only a decadent party like the Greens, so out of touch with nature and with timeless human culture, would seek to destroy.

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