

To Whom It May Concern,

This is why we're not excited. I strongly believe the Government needs to stand up and lead our country not by giving bigots the right to vote but rather legislating for human rights for all of its citizens.

Attached is mail our same sex family received. This homophobic propaganda is the distinction that undermines our human dignity, diminishes our families and discriminates against us in violation of our basic right to equal legal treatment.

My partner and I want to express the desire to publicly proclaim and celebrate our love and commitment but it's also to protect our son, to ensure legal and social recognition. It's extremely disappointing that many of us get treated as second class citizens despite the fact we are expected to contribute to society.

Some day, same-sex couples in Australia will have the legal right to marry. That is inevitable. As with every major human rights advance, from the abolition of slavery to allowing women and the indigenous to vote. Our son's generation will look back and wonder how anyone could have opposed such a basic human right.

Allowing same sex marriages affords our children the same protections and benefits as children raised by opposite sex parents.

The exclusion of same-sex relationships from marriage and the invention of a different word to describe our unions represents LGBTI and our relationships in particular, as abnormal, pointless and as less worthy than heterosexual unions. It's not a pleasant feeling.

Sometimes I worry about what would happen if I was injured. The last thing my partner Monique would need is to have the legitimacy of our relationship questioned by hospital authorities. If I died, Monique does not need to have the grief of loss compounded by having to prove that she is authorised to make my funeral arrangements. In a married relationship, these matters are rarely called into question, and the validity of the relationship can be easily demonstrated if necessary through production of the marriage certificate.

Civil unions can provide some or all of the rights and obligations of civil marriage. As long as we are denied the equal right to marry, alternative regimes do not fix the discrimination. For example; registering the relationship, change of name, creating a Will, beneficiaries and legal rights to children despite being documented on the birth certificate.

Same-sex marriage is already a reality in a growing list of countries. Come on Australia!
As Harvey Milk said, 'hope will never be silent.'

Thank you for taking this into consideration.

Kind Regards,

Alison Carlsen

Points to ponder in legalising same-sex marriage

1. From the beginning of history, and in every culture around the world, a man and a woman have come together in a life-long union for the purpose of companionship, and the bearing and nurturing of children. This union is called marriage. One reason for this is the biological impossibility of a same-sex couple producing children. To this we would add that this is the design of our Creator: 'in the beginning God made them male and female' (Matthew 19:4).
2. Therefore a homosexual or lesbian couple are dependent upon a third party if they want children. A surrogate mother is open to exploitation, as is a sperm donor. In either case, the child is torn away from one biological parent in a legally sanctioned act, if homosexual marriage is legalised.
3. Every child has a biological mother and father. It is their expectation, and right, to know their mother and father, and be raised by them under normal circumstances. Many children are deprived of a mother and/or father, but the State does not sanction such situations or arrangements for the raising of children as would be done in legalising homosexual marriage. Indeed, the State has said 'Sorry' for such State-sanctioned removal of children from their biological parents in the recent past.
4. Homosexual couples have all the legal rights of heterosexual couples by way of civil unions and *de facto* relationships- apart from that of adopting children in some jurisdictions.
5. The term 'marriage equality' is emotive but misleading. Marriage is not a right for everyone in our society. Our laws do not allow children to marry, do not allow a person to marry a brother or sister (incest), do not allow marriage to more than one man or woman at a time (bigamy and polygamy), and do not allow marriage to animals (bestiality).
6. *The desire to legalise homosexual marriage is about 'normalizing' homosexual behaviour. Many homosexual couples are not interested in getting married. In the Netherlands only 20% of homosexual couples are married, compared to 80% for heterosexual couples. In New Zealand only 12% of homosexual couples got married in the two years after legalisation of homosexual marriage.*
7. Children growing up in a legally-sanctioned homosexual marriage face confusion and a high risk of emotional instability. They face the inevitable question of why they have 'two daddies' or 'two mummies'. A little girl should not have to see two men posing as her parents. A teenage boy should not have to ask his dad, 'Where did I come from' and be told, 'Ask your other dad'. Children will have difficulty relating to members of the opposite sex in a whole new way, unrelated to single parenting.
8. Every child has a right to a mother and a father. While adult homosexuals seek their rights under the banner of 'marriage equality', the rights of the child are being denied. Homosexual marriage will legally sanction the denial of the rights of the child.
9. It is our desire that the State assist every child born in Australia to grow up with their birth mother and father, while making provisions for those denied this basic human right. 'Bless the little children!' (Mark 10:16).