

**Submission of Endeavour Forum Inc.**

**To the Senate Enquiry into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2012**

**Co-ordinator: Babette Francis**

**Submission compiled by Moira Kirkwood**

Endeavour Forum is an association dedicated to supporting family values. Our goal is to educate elected representatives and the general community on situations facing families in our society. We uphold the status and dignity of women, and maintain that men and women are equal but different. This is in contrast to feminism, which asserts that men and women are, not only equal, but the same. We respect the marriage relationship, and uphold cooperation between the sexes. Such a position is consistent with reality and natural science.

Website: <http://www.endeavourforum.org.au/>

In accordance with our stated values and goals, we strongly support marriage between one man and one woman, as has been self evident on the basis of biology in all cultures and religious backgrounds throughout recorded history.

We respect the inalienable dignity of every human person, and uphold an exercise of human rights of each person. These include all democratic rights, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the right of parents to choose the kind of education which their children are to receive. These are clearly set forth in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

We maintain that authentic tolerance constitutes mutual respect for those whose deeply held beliefs and values are irreconcilable. This applies equally to both sides of a debate. If it applies to one side only, that is very far from being tolerance.

**The proposed Bill:**

*The proposed Bill claims to seek removal of “discriminatory” reference from the Marriage Act 1961 to allow all people, regardless of sex, sexuality and gender identity an opportunity to marry.*

It has been observed that, prior to 2004, marriage was not defined in the Act, and that the Marriage Legislation Amendment Act 2004 inserted a definition into s 5(1) of the Act, that reads:

“Marriage means the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.”

Clearly the reason why it was not necessary to include a definition at the time the Australian Constitution was drafted, is that the above definition was self-evident, as it always has been throughout history.

It is unbelievable that our Government could seriously consider tampering with an institution,

based on biological science and human reason, which is, and has always been, the corner stone of society. Persons of each generation have a right to recognition of family relationships, traced in a family tree, of parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts, cousins and so on. The proposed legislation would wantonly destroy the most cherished relationships and produce chaos.

“Discrimination” has become a buzz word with ambiguous connotation, as it is now assumed that making any distinction is always unjust. Not so. There is also just discrimination based on human reason in accordance with justice and the common good. Children are not permitted to vote or to hold a driver’s licence. Those without medical qualification are not permitted to provide medical services. The list may go on indefinitely.

### **Marriage and family are inviolable in the context of human rights**

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16 states:

- (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
- (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

Only a man and a woman can found a family. Biological science is immutable. The family, as the natural fundamental group unit of society, is entitled to protection by our Government. When such protection is not maintained, and when the rights of children are subordinated to desires of adults, Government fails in one of its most fundamental duties.

Sexual relationships are private, and are not regulated by Government. The only reason for marriage legislation is to safeguard the right of every child to the loving care and protection of his or her natural parents. Intending spouses need to make a commitment, not only to each other, but to the raising and education of children who may be born of the union. Children born out of wedlock are at a disadvantage.

### **Rights of homosexual persons and same-sex couples:**

These persons already have the same rights and freedoms as other citizens in Australian society, in accordance with social justice. Former injustices have been removed.

There is a very clear distinction between homosexual persons, and radical activists who seek to impose a redefinition of marriage on society. They are definitely not one and the same. This is illustrated by a highly commendable article written by a homosexual, Richard Waghorne. In it he says that opposition to same-sex “marriage” does not mean opposition to homosexuals.

*“Explaining that you oppose gay marriage as a gay man tends to get a baffled response at first. This is understandable given how quickly the debate on gay marriage can collapse into allegations of homophobia. The message, explicit or implicit, is often that being anti-gay marriage means being in some way anti-gay.*

*I have watched with growing irritation as principled opponents of gay marriage have put up with a stream of abuse for explaining their position”.*

[richardtwaghorne.wordpress.com/2011/04/05/gay-marriage/](http://richardtwaghorne.wordpress.com/2011/04/05/gay-marriage/)

Same-sex couples are now entitled to the same social security benefits as those in a heterosexual relationship.

Homosexual persons have a right to marry, but a same-sex union is not marriage. Sexuality which is not life-giving is incapable of producing offspring, so there is no need for a commitment for the upbringing of offspring. Such a relationship is factually not equal to marriage.

Same sex couples are already free to make a commitment to each other on a social level, in the presence of guests with celebrations provided by “gay friendly” services. Government has no role in such an arrangement.

Proponents of SSM do not want to marry, but to change the meaning of marriage, which has deleterious consequences for all members of society.

This is abundantly clear from factual evidence of the situation in countries where legislation of same-sex marriage is in place. The consequences of civil union legislation are identical.

#### **Abolition of rights and freedoms in consequences of legalisation of same-sex unions:**

Once same-sex “marriage” has been given the power of law, lobbyists receive unprecedented power to coerce anyone to participate in violation of conscience rights. Marriage celebrants (religious or secular) can not legally refuse to conduct a same-sex “wedding”. Those who provide catering services, photographers, florists, etc. are likewise placed under compulsion. Although such services are readily available from those who have no conscientious objection, those who do have their rights violated.

Adoption agencies have been forced to close because they could not in conscience place children with same-sex couples.

The rights of parents are likewise violated in being prevented from withdrawing their own children from homosexual propaganda made compulsory in schools. In some cases such “education” is of a pornographic nature, and seriously age inappropriate. Children are at risk of suffering psychological damage as a result. This grossly unjust legislation is in place in Massachusetts, in Canada, in the UK and in Spain. We do not want it in Australia.

#### **So-called “hate speech” crime:**

In places where democratic freedom of speech and conscience have been replaced by a dictatorial bureaucracy controlled by thought police, anyone who seeks redress of injustice suffered, who refuses to affirm and promote a homosexual lifestyle, or who expresses even the mildest and most innocuous criticism, is liable to be charged with a “hate” crime. It seems incredible that stating that a child has a right to a mother and a father could be interpreted as “hatred”, yet that is a charge that can be laid.

The radical activists (not to be confused with homosexual persons), have secured a protected (i.e. privileged) status, which is at variance with a principle of equality before the law. This is on a claim that homosexual persons are victims of violence. Anyone may be a victim of violence, and, if equality is to be maintained, criminal justice may step in irrespective of whether a victim is homosexual or not.

Yet there have been cases where homosexualist activists have clearly been perpetrators of incitement to violence, and the victim has no redress.

An example is the case of Melanie Phillips, a UK columnist, who received death threats as a result of criticising plans to insert homosexual materials into all subjects in the curriculum of British schools. She said “I have been subjected to an extraordinarily vicious outpouring of hate and incitement to violence through emails, the internet and in mainstream media...

The reaction to this statement reveals a basic totalitarian mindset that is behind the homosexualist agenda ... Indeed, the total inability of those who subjected me to such abuse to realise that they are, in fact, spewing out the very hatred, intolerance and incitement to violence of which they are accusing others, would be hilarious were it not so terrifying.”

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/death-threats-against-uk-columnist-for-opposing-homosexualist-agenda/>

In Annapolis, Maryland, a fourteen year old girl, Sarah Crank, likewise received death threats for saying “I really feel bad for the kids who have two parents of the same gender”.

The story went viral on homosexual activist websites. The threatening language used was gross and profane.

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/14-year-old-homeschooled-girl-receives-death-threats-for-defending-marriage>

### **Faulty nature of arguments promoting SSM:**

Arguments have been made which attempt to blur the factual difference between a homosexual and a heterosexual union in relation to qualification for marriage. They are patently false.

For example it has been pointed out that some marriages are childless. If a heterosexual couple is unable to procreate due to age or infertility, or if they choose to have no children, childlessness is due to a characteristic of a person. In the case of a homosexual couple childlessness is due to the nature of the union.

It has been suggested that, if a same-sex couple can produce a child by artificial reproductive technology, it means that they can procreate. Not so. That child is not theirs as a couple, although one partner may be a parent. Such a child in the light of biological science has a mother and a father. The child becomes a toy in an adult game of make believe.

### **Is opposition to same-sex “marriage” a religious issue?**

SSM may easily be refuted on the grounds of biological science and human reason, without reference to religion. However we all have a right to freedom of conscience, religious or otherwise.

People of faith have been accused of “imposing their religious belief on others, and causing war”. That is a false argument. It is an obvious historical fact that ideological activists have imposed their beliefs on entire nations, irrespective of whether the ideology is religious, atheistic, political,

sociological or economic.

There have been instances of imposition of ideology of every kind, leading to oppression, and, in some cases, war. Twentieth century history was marred by world war, marked by atrocities perpetrated by secular and, in fact, anti-religious, dictators, resulting in the death of millions.

**Conclusion:**

It has been clearly demonstrated in all studies that children raised by both their natural married parents in a stable relationship have the best opportunity to fulfil their own potential as human beings, and as future citizens.

In the case of children who can not be raised by their natural parents, others may take responsibility. The primary purpose of adoption is to provide children with an adoptive mother and an adoptive father, each of which have distinctive, although complementary, roles, essential to child-rearing. To enable childless couples to raise children is secondary.

Marriage between a man and a woman has predated both governmental and religious institutions. It produces a natural family without dependence on the state. Same-sex unions come into being only by governmental intrusion into family life, and enforcement by the state is the only means of keeping such unions in existence.

No right can be more important than that of every person to live in accordance with those values and principles, religious or otherwise, which are of primary importance to that person, and to raise children accordingly. Values such as marriage, family, parental rights, freedom of speech and freedom of religion have made Australia the great nation it is. Courageous Australians have given their lives to protect our cherished freedom. Please do not be misled into sacrificing it to satisfy demands of radical activists.

Thank you for an opportunity to participate.

Endeavour Forum Inc.