

Submission for the Inquiry into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill

I do not support the bill because I do not believe the traditional definition of marriage is discriminatory. The definition of marriage is and always has been a lifelong union between a man and a woman. This has transcended historical and national boundaries and is deeply respected by a large proportion of people from all cultures and religions.

It is not discriminatory to say that marriage has a particular definition. As soon as you define something, it excludes other meanings. Would it be discriminatory to say that men cannot be called women? Of course not, it's a matter of definition and nature. Therefore it's not discriminatory to say that a same sex union cannot be called marriage. It's a matter of definition and nature. The current amendment seeks to change the definition of marriage to two persons in life-long union. Would that not be discriminatory to those who would like to have a marriage consisting of three people or more people? The JONES bill (section 3) would lend itself to this kind of ambiguity.

Same sex civil unions already have broad rights and freedoms. To call them marriages will not enhance their rights or freedoms. Thus, I disagree with bill put forward by BANDT et al. [section 3 (c)] which aims to recognise the freedom of sexual orientation and gender identity as fundamental human rights. Sexual activity is a matter of choice, not orientation. Therefore I would support a freedom of sexual choice, enacted in a civil union, as a fundamental human right. However, freedom is a freedom to choose, which would be obsolete if sexuality was an inevitable orientation. There is no scientific evidence to support that sexuality is an indelible orientation. Therefore, it is unnecessarily emotive and biased to call this bill a protection of fundamental human rights. The traditional marriage act does not prevent the fundamental human right and freedom to choose your sexuality or behaviour.

Changing the definition of marriage will ultimately be to the detriment of society, of which marriage is the fundamental building block. By nature, the family unit is designed to have the love and support of a biological mother and father. To change the definition of marriage would change the nature of the family unit, and destroy the truth that gender identity is crucial to a child in family formation. This could lead to the kind of absurd thinking that gender identity is a social construct, and we should not even have pronouns such as he and she, as has been evidenced in some pre-schools in Sweden - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14038419> . This will lead to widespread confusion about self and gender identity.

In short, I do not believe the traditional Marriage Act is discriminatory, and I do not believe that the recent Amendments are going to increase equality.

Your sincerely,
Clive Buultjens