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Marriage has a pre-political foundation, based on biological realities and moral obligations. The indisputable fact of sex differences between men and women, with the inherent potential for offspring, is fundamental to the pre-political foundation of marriage. The institution of marriage between man and woman has provided the basis of family and social order for millennia. It has stood the test of time and should not be tampered with or redefined by the state.

Advocates of same-sex 'marriage' seek to challenge this wisdom and redefine traditional marriage. They want to abandon the tried and true and redefine marriage as a union for the gratification of two consenting adults. When the state moves to give homosexuals the right to 'marry' (actually a contradiction in terms) or equivalent rights to those who are married, it is also taking on for itself the power to declare what constitutes marriage. Marriage loses its pre-political independence and becomes a creation of the state, albeit an artificial one subject to the whims of lawmakers. This is social engineering on a reckless scale, uprooting the very foundations of society without regard for the solid and well-tested grounds on which those foundations have been built.

Such redefined 'marriage' is an artificial creation of the state and in direct conflict with the natural established order. Unlike true marriage, same-sex 'marriage' would be a fragile institution that would need to be artificially sustained and validated. No doubt the state will employ the power of public education for this end, and assert itself against individuals and entities that refuse to recognize the redefined legitimacy of same-sex 'marriages'. Now the state finds itself using its power against at least two of society's foundational civil institutions: the family and the church. Surely a recipe for massive social upheaval and division.

There are sound grounds for distinguishing marriage from other relationships and granting it a privileged status in comparison to other relationships. It has been well established that marriage provides the best environment for raising children. Also, marriage regulates the relationships between men and women in a way that benefits both men and women as well as society. Compare China's current problems with growing numbers of unmarried men with findings from the Social Sciences on the benefits of marriage for men:

Married men drink less, fight less, and are less likely to engage in criminal activity than their single peers. Married husbands and fathers are significantly more involved and affectionate with their wives and children than men in cohabiting relationships (with and without children). The norms, status rewards, and social support offered to men by marriage all combine to help men walk down the path to adult responsibility.

(Why Marriage Matters, Second Edition: Twenty-Six Conclusions from the Social Sciences, Centre for Marriage and Families, Institute for American Values (New York), September 2005.)

Since marriage is "the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life", as defined in Australian law, spouses are generally protected from being forced to give evidence against each other. This interesting provision is given with regard to the sanctity of marriage and its value to society. Being forced to give evidence against a spouse may do irreparable harm to the relationship and the law would rather protect the marriage relationship in view of its recognised value to society. In other words, the value of authentic marriage and society's interest in preserving marriage is reflected in this consideration in the law. Non-married relationships, being of no particular or inherent benefit to society, don't deserve this privileged provision.

There is another consideration relevant to this proposal. Such an amendment would be open to exploitation by criminals who could conceivably claim that witnesses against them were in a de facto or same-sex relationship with them, and thus avoid the requirement for a fellow criminal or accomplice to give evidence. Think of the possibilities and the legal tangles we may create for ourselves there all because we decide to tamper with the natural order of things as reflected in current laws as they stand.

yours faithfully

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