

SUBMISSION TO THE MARRIAGE EQUALITY INQUIRY 2009

My name is Jonathon Woodgate, and I am a homosexual. My contact details are provided at the end of this submission. I currently live with my partner of twelve months,

We're currently planning our commitment ceremony, and even though we're excited about having our own special day to celebrate our relationship, we feel that we're still being discriminated against because our relationship isn't being recognised by the government that we elect.

Other nations around the world, South Africa, The Netherlands, Great Britain, Canada, Spain and Denmark – all of these nations have some form of recognition for same sex couples. Spain, a still very traditional nation with a high Catholic population, has welcomed legislative changes in favour of recognising same sex couples in that country's marriage laws. Although Spain's adoption of these changes was fairly recent, we have yet to hear of any major negative societal effects. The same might be said for any of the above-mentioned countries.

Recent changes to Australian law have provided that my partner and I are now recognised by Centrelink as a domestic partnership equivalent to a heterosexual defacto couple. These laws only apply to financial law, i.e. how much each partner receives in Centrelink benefits. My partner and I believe that recognition of our relationship ought not to be relegated to mere financial affairs. A relationship is not merely about how each person is able to financially support the other. There's more to a relationship than that.

Currently, as our nation's laws stand, marriage is defined as being between a couple where one person in the couple must be a man and the other person must be a woman, thus defining a heterosexual relationship. It's sad when a society wants to change a set of laws that the governments they elect want so desperately to keep. All I can say is that it isn't fair that our voice isn't heard by those whose jobs depend on us. We vote them in, why won't they listen? I want the same rights to a marriage as what my sister and her husband have.

Same-sex couples want the same rights to marriage as what heterosexual couples have. It's as simple as that. I honestly do not understand what the big deal is! How is it going to corrupt society? How is recognising same-sex marriage going to send society to hell? We just want to be the same as everyone else!

Sincerely,
Jonathon Woodgate