

Dear Senators,

I will try to keep my submission brief, I originally wrote a longer argument to try and address every aspect of why I feel our marriage laws are unjust but to be honest I feel a lot of my points will be better made by those with a better understanding of law and politics than myself (not to mention more eloquently written than I can manage). Instead I thought I'd just share a brief story that sums up why I am for marriage equality.

My younger brother is gay (that isn't my reason you understand, I'll get to it but I'm trying to give some context first). My father was born just a couple of years after the second world war, to say that he had a hard time coming to terms with my brother's sexuality would be something of an understatement. It took me a long time to understand that my father's reaction wasn't born out of disgust of my brother but rather fear *for* him. In the world my father grew up in violence against homosexuals was a simple reality, something to be expected, and something he didn't want to see happen to his beloved son.

When I spoke to my father about his fears I took solace in the fact that the country I live in is not the country he grew up in, that while discrimination is still very real there is no longer the silent acceptance that allows such filth to flourish. I told myself that I lived in a country that had come to it's senses and now accepted homosexuals as full members of society just as it had previously done with women, migrants, indigenous australians and so on and so forth.

Except that's not really true, is it Senators? Because in the eyes of the law I'm more of a citizen than my brother is, which is my clumsy way of saying that I have more rights than he does. One more, to be specific: I am a heterosexual and have the inherent right to marry the person I love if I choose to. My brother cannot.

There are plenty of good practical reasons that we should have marriage equality, reasons of taxation, of partner's rights and so on. As good as those reasons are however, for me they pale in comparison to this one: that every argument I've heard against marriage equality is based on the silent acceptance that my brother is somehow lesser than me, somehow inherently undeserving of the same right I enjoy without ever having to fight for it. This idea, that someone might be less than a full person due to their sexuality is not only abhorrent, it's just wrong.

To be clear, when I say 'wrong' I mean it in both senses of the word, that it is unjust certainly but also that it is obviously incorrect. Regardless of his sexuality my brother is no less than I am. My brother is as good a citizen as I am, as good a man as I am and he should be treated as I am. To do any less isn't just being unfair to him, it is being unworthy to ourselves, to our country and, one day, to our own sons and daughters.

I thank you for taking the time to read this and hope you didn't mind indulging my personal anecdote in lieu of a more structured legal or political argument.

Thanks again,

Cameron Glenroy Mathew Anderson.