

Dear Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee,

This is my submission to your inquiry into marriage equality. I fully endorse the submission made by Australian Marriage Equality in favour of the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009.

As a gay man, it upsets me that I am legally treated differently from my housemates, friends and family. I pay tax like everyone else, but I'm expected to accept less as a citizen. So, do I stop paying my tax, no. How is it legally just to deny someone the ability of entering into a legal agreement - such as marriage, based on gender? After all, marriage is a legal agreement above all else, but it's also a public, formal announcement of a hopefully loving and meaningful relationship. While others may see it as having major religious significance and claim that their god and religion would not accept same sex marriage; what a load of offensive rubbish. It's not about religion and those that claim it to be will be the same lot that were against mixed race marriage, the aboriginal vote and what not. A bigoted, small minded bunch that make a lot of noise, but don't really represent all too many people. A group of people who have spent most of their time excluding, denouncing and being plain offensive to those that they do not see as one of them.

What do they (those opposed to marriage equality) have to lose?

They will lose their ability to have their offensive and morally destructive views legally upheld. Views generally based on misinformation, incorrect statistics, and if I remember correctly, falsified and dramatised quotes from religious texts such as the Bible - where homosexuality is actually no worse than masturbation, and less offensive than a woman who has sex before marriage; shouldn't we be stoning them?

What do same-sex couples and society have to gain?

That all Australians have the right to be treated as an equal and to feel as though they are an equal. That same-sex couples find the legal and social recognition that opposite-sex couples take for granted. That the children of same-sex couples can feel comfortable, knowing that their family is not seen as some sort of legal oddity, casting social doubt over their families normality and excluding them from their friends. The fact that it will have ripple effects to areas such as minimising bullying in school. Having experienced bullying and having seen the effects on others so many times, I know there is more riding on this than just marriage, but an opportunity to end segregation and discrimination based on someone's perceived sexual orientation.

What of our international reputation - do we want to be seen as country that embraces all, or a place that discriminates and thumbs down human rights?

It's not much fun being the one on the outer. Let's change that.

I support marriage equality.

Ta muchly,  
Edward Crossland