

I am a gay man and have been in a same sex relationship for 16 years. In fact, as a 60 year old man, I have been in only two relationships in my life, one with a woman and the other, my relationship with my current partner.

As a very proud member of the Gay community, I feel very strongly that the Australian legal jurisdiction discriminates against me and my community in not allowing us to enter into formal relationship on the same basis as the heterosexual community. The issue of formal recognition of gay relationships will continue to be debated and divide the community until society values all relationships, regardless of their sexuality. This is not an issue that is going to go away. The phenomenon of gay men and women coming out to their family, friends, employers, work colleagues and community was unique in widening the audience of Australian citizens who see the current laws as unjust, not from just the gay community to potentially, every person who knows a gay person. It is my belief why this is why the Australian society has progressively moved to accepting gay marriage as a equitable concept, beyond the willingness of legislator's, to remove this form of discrimination.

All of the arguments I've seen against removing the legal recognition of gay relationships can be either refuted, are unfounded or are totally patronising but at a simple personal level, my argument is that Australian society has no basis to say that my relationship with my partner is any less than the relationship of a heterosexual couple. The laws are unjust and discriminate against us, in not allowing us to express our relationship in a formal sense, in exactly the same way as any other Australian couple and in fact, in exactly the same way as any of our siblings are able to do.