

The Marriage Act 1961 in its current form actively discriminates against same sex couples.

Not everyone wants to get married. However, an opposite sex couple has the right to make a decision about this issue. A same sex couple is not even allowed to make the choice- quite simply they cannot get married because they are of the same sex.

I am aware that there are many religious arguments against same sex marriage, but Australia is a secular society. There can be no justification for religious groups to impose their form of morality on the rest of society.

The discrimination against same sex couples is a glaring hole in Australia's human rights record. We cannot be selective about which human rights we wish to respect. Is there really any difference between a ban on same sex marriage and a ban on interracial and intercultural marriages? What about people who are born with intersex conditions or who are transsexual? Are they to be denied the right to marriage just because they don't fit neatly into a box which says "male" or "female"?

Discrimination on the basis of race, sex or religion is unacceptable in Australian society and illegal in some circumstances. Why then is it still acceptable to hide behind religion and "family values" to discriminate against same sex couples?

I am at a loss to understand why this discrimination persists in the 21st century. Every adult with legal capacity should have the right to marry another adult with legal capacity, regardless of their gender.