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Do you wish for your name to be withheld from publication?: No

Do you wish for this submission to be confidential?: No

Your submission:

The meanings of words have evolved over time - gay did not always refer to a homosexual person, just as politics and religion have intermingled over the centuries to reflect the opinion of the masses.

Marriage never existed as a sacred bond to link a man and a woman until death under the eyes of God. It was used as a financial guarantee for middle and upper-class families. Marriage has changed and in this day and age it is perceived as a union of love and equality. Religion and politics should not be mixed as Australia is a multicultural nation with many varying religions and cultures.

I don't believe that being gay is a choice. It IS a choice to suppress one's feelings and to live a life of lies and denial, although that would not be life at all. My mother believes otherwise but then again, she is not gay and has not experienced the love nor discrimination that I have faced from my own friends and family. I chastised myself for 21 years because I was brought up conditioned to think that being different is bad. Sometimes love just surprises us.

At the end of the day, the question that we should be asking ourselves is "Do we really believe in equality?". With anti-discrimination laws in place do we believe that financial equality should be denied to lovers simply because of their sex? Do we believe that homosexual persons cannot love someone and commit to a life-long relationship just as heterosexual persons can? Do we believe that gays are any less deserving of happiness in life as "normal" people?

I write to express my support for the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill of 2009 because I have a vision for a different future - one that holds both love and promise.