

To whom it may concern

I believe that the institution of marriage is only applicable to the union between a man and a woman who make a lifelong commitment to enter into such a union for the primary purpose of providing a secure and positive environment for any children who may be born from the union.

Marriage is not just entered into because of a loving relationship between two people although that often is the primary attraction factor. All people have the right to marriage and this right is afforded all Australians. If your life style choice of partner means that an individual selects a partner of the same gender then this lifestyle choice has determined the identity of your relationship and a name for this relationship may be adopted such as de facto the label given to unmarried heterosexual couples.

Many male & female couples do not pursue marriage because they are unwilling to commit to the constraints that a marriage relationship applies to the relationship such as lifelong faithfulness, cost and commitment of children etc.

It is important to our nation that we do not devalue marriage to just a private, personal loving based relationship because if that occurs then the majority of our children will no longer be afforded the opportunity to be born into a family where they have a mother and a father who are committed to one another for life, who become committed parents that are able to offer these children a quality of life that is secure, nurturing, gender balanced and as extensive research has show, the best practise model of parenting in which children thrive and ultimately succeed in life.

This whole debate is not one of equality but a push by a small group of people who wish to have their particular life style choice affirmed by the general public. In our democratic society it is good for people to have a say and voice their opinions but there are also a small number of values within our society that may be discussed but ultimately are non-negotiable and marriage is one such value.

The vast majority of Australians support and see marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman, I therefore urge the elected members of our parliament to consider what the members of their constituency regard as important and make a decision that reflects this stance.

Ingrid Gattari