

IN FOCUS

Same-Sex Marriages

A broken bond



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If there is one single overused phrase in the '90s, it has to be "family values." It has been beat to death more than "Show me the money!" but unfortunately does not have a star-studded movie to accompany it.

We change the channel when we hear the phrase on the news, laugh when a politician mentions it, but sigh when thinking of the good ol' days when so-called "family values" were in America's homes. Family values are not just a thing of the past, long-forgotten in today's society and consumed by changing lifestyles and modern changes — or at least they shouldn't be.

Families can be what they used to, but many things are lessening their true merit. Pre-marital sex, a high divorce rate, adulterous activity

and cohabitation before marriage all have contributed to the decline of marital and familial stature. In our politically correct, multi-cultural, multi-lifestyle, don't-offend-anyone world, one other road block has been set up on the highway to real family values — homosexuality.

It has been wrongly accepted by our society and has infiltrated our lives whether we have liked it or not. There was a rumor that the childhood favorite "Sesame Street" even considered making one of the beloved Bert and Ernie homosexual to help children understand others' supposed lifestyles. I'm sorry, but hand puppets on PBS do not need to be gay!

Many argue that homosexuality is genetic rather than environmental and that gays should not be discriminated against because they have no choice but to go with their congenital instinct and draw the sexual intimacy of the same gender.

I counteract that argument by pointing out that many things have been proven to be genetic, such as violent tendencies, Alzheimer's and heart disease — but they are not treated as aspects of life to deal with and accept.

Homosexuality is a situation to overcome, and just like every other temptation of the world, there is a way to resist.

However, some have indeed accepted homosexuality as a part of their lives, and a portion of them do wish to exist with a mate in a monogamous relationship. Although I do not agree with homosexuality itself, I have to say that settling down with one person is much better than engaging in constant promiscuity.

So these monogamous lovers treat their relationship as an intimate union, one much like a marriage — so much so that some want to be allowed to be awarded a legal certificate of marriage for purposes of adoption, economics and personal satisfaction. It is bad enough that our world has come to the conclusion that homosexuality is unobjectionable, but we need to stop further demoralization by supporting the proposed bans on same-sex marriages.

Allowing gay lovers to participate in marriage is wrong because marriage itself was created for man and woman. Marriage is defined as a relation between man and wife. Some dictionaries that have succumbed to the mighty wrath of political correctness might define it more loosely as an intimate or close union, obviously making way for the same-sex explosion.

Marriage was originally intended to be the joining of a man and

woman into one; gay unions do not fit that mold.

One of the primary purposes of marriage is procreation. Initially, one man and woman engaged in a holy bond to reproduce and raise their offspring. Intimate relations between the two are just part of forming a loving, caring family atmosphere for their children.

Homosexuals cannot procreate and therefore should not be allowed to be married. A counterargument calls attention to the fact that some married couples are not able to have kids for medical reasons and states that those individuals should be banned from taking part in marital union.

That position might seem valid on the surface but ignores the fact that those couples would like to have children and are just physically unable. Since their purpose was to reproduce, their marriage is acceptable. Homosexuals might want to reproduce as well, but their lack of ability to bear children is because their actions are unnatural.

Same-sex marriages will also break the family down further. Despite the fact that today's families are anything but model units, they still hold their members together. Families provide support and encouragement as well as help in times of trouble even if they are

dysfunctional. Single parent families (like mine) fail to provide proper role modeling and leadership to their children, and families with parents of the same sex have the same characteristics.

Without sounding like a tear-jerking TV movie, it is possible to overcome the adversity and triumph despite the lack of dual parental guidance, but it is much easier for children when a mother and father are present.

In the words of Sen. Jim Jensen, "Marriage is the bond that keeps the family together ..." and same-sex marriages will simply not keep families together. Homosexuality will blossom from these gay unions, but children will be punished. Gay people will cut costs for insurance and taxes, but the family will suffer tremendously.

Our elusive family values will permanently succumb to the demoralization of America. Homosexuality is not something that should be protected and not discriminated against such as race or gender, but is a plague that affects many lost people. Our society needs to come to the realization that homosexuality is wrong, and the first step in reverting back to shunning the immoral act is banning same-sex marriages.

Free to love

Recently, state legislatures have been introducing and passing laws banning same-sex marriages. All of this has been a response to one Hawaiian judge's ruling on the issue. Circuit Court Judge Kevin Chang ruled that the state's government had failed to show a single compelling or logical reason for denying homosexual couples the freedom to marry.

And each argument that is proffered as "proof" of the insidiousness of homosexuality only furthers my distaste for the current state of some "American" ideals. Examination of some of the arguments reveals them to be fallacious and downright discriminatory.

What I'll attempt to do here is present a point-counterpoint discussion and expose some inherent weaknesses in opponents' arguments. I'll give a brief synopsis of what an opponent might say, then how I think the argument carries no weight.

Genetics

Homosexuality may be genetic, but it doesn't mean we have to accept it — since there are many other genetic disorders (e.g. Alzheimer's, heart disease, etc.) that modern science is trying to alleviate. Just because it is genetic doesn't mean we have to accept and live with it.

Initially, this might seem to be an argument that would dissuade someone from supporting homosexuality and same-sex marriages.

However, the way I interpret this

argument is that science wants to eliminate some of these diseases. And that's what they are — diseases.

Homosexuality is not a disease. It is not a condition in which one's life is at stake — in the same sense of heart disease.

Moreover, finding a therapy for Alzheimer's disease would not be the same thing as "curing" homosexuality. Alzheimer's disease, or any other disease, changes who you are. It transforms you from Being A to Being B.

On the other hand, homosexuality is who you are. Although it does not compose your entire make-up as a person, it is part of your being.

Being homosexual is analogous to being born a male or female, being born white or black. It would be ridiculous for someone to say that genetic therapy should be used on these particular segments — as it would be "something one shouldn't accept or live with."

Procreation

Homosexuals cannot procreate. The intention of marriage is procreation, therefore homosexuals should not be allowed to marry.

Ridiculous. There are married heterosexual couples out there who, through no fault of their own, biologically cannot have children. Shouldn't we — to be consistent — deny them the right to marry? Of course not.

But the opponents' counter-argument usually states that these couples' intention was to procreate — they just can't — so it would be acceptable for them to marry.

OK, but what about couples who choose not to have kids? Some of my friends are married and they have professed to never want to have kids. Whether this becomes a reality is irrelevant — but the fact of the matter remains that they don't want children. Should they have been stopped before they were married? NO.

Crumbling of civilization

Homosexuality has caused the downfall of great civilizations — like that of the Greeks. Same-sex marriages would just cause the further crumbling of American morality and put our civilization into a downward spiral.

This is political scapegoatism at its finest. Politicos in this country no longer have communism, Japan or any other foreign element to point to as a threat. So in an effort to have an agenda, they have chosen a group that much of society is all too ready to blame.

And to say that the Greek civilization collapsed because of homosexuality is as ridiculous as saying the Titanic sank because it was transporting rich people.

Although homosexuality was a part of Greek civilization, it wasn't the cause of its demise. Wouldn't a more probable cause be the barbaric hordes and the rise of the Romans?

Civil Rights

This seems to be an argument that

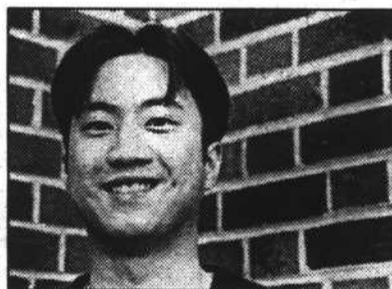
opponents tend to gloss over or ignore. They attach disclaimers such as *I'm not in favor of discrimination, but I am in favor of preserving the sanctity of marriage.*

But when you deny a segment of the population the right to legally be joined, it is discrimination. Just as it was once true, and is partially true today, that interracial marriages were not accepted. But we don't discriminate against such unions. So why should homosexuals not be allowed to have same-sex marriages?

Allowing same-sex marriages would not ruin the sanctity of marriage. Heterosexuals have done a good job of destroying the covenant of marriage — without any help from external "forces" like homosexuals. In a country where more than half of all marriages end in divorce, I don't think we need to be blaming same-sex couples for our disintegrating values.

And isn't encouraging monogamy among couples the ultimate goal? Encouragement of monogamy could only strengthen families — increasing the viability and "sanctity" of marriage.

Regardless of the behavioral, religious or genetic aspects of homosexuality and same-sex marriages, it all boils down to the legal and civil issues. Is there something wrong with same-sex unions? No. When two people enter into a relationship where-



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upon they state their intention to be together forever, I find it commendable in any regard — whether it be a hetero- or homosexual couple.

Additionally, there are other laws out there that you might not support — perhaps the speed limit — but try to follow. Shouldn't same-sex marriages be legitimized under the law at the very least?

The civil rights of a segment of our great democracy are at stake here. Are we willing to discriminate against people — who pose no threat to our own families — because of a few politicians who buy into the hysteria created by a few ultra-conservatives? I can only reiterate that this is political scapegoatism. Who would be next? The buck has to stop here.

Allow same-sex marriages — it's the right thing to do. Love and understanding is what we all need.