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Family Voice AUSTRALIA

VoxPoint

May 2016



The dangers of redefining marriage

Also inside:

- *The battle for our children*
- *RadioGay*
- *University of Sydney: religion under fire*

Editorial

RadioGay



Some years ago, a Canadian internet radio station called *RadioGay* contacted us after discovering our website.

Same-sex "marriage" had been legal throughout Canada since July 2005. *RadioGay* recorded a live interview over the phone, trying to convince us that it would inevitably come to Australia too. Below is an edited account of some of the questions and answers:

How do you believe people become homosexual?

Homosexuality is not inherited. If it *were* caused by genes, then an identical twin whose identical sibling was homosexual would also be homosexual – 100 per cent of the time.

But that is not the case. Reliable, peer-reviewed studies have shown that where one identical twin is homosexual, the other is *heterosexual* in the vast majority (more than 85%) of cases. So genes, or hormone exposure in the womb, cannot be the main cause.

Children have many different influences while growing up. Various life experiences – including grooming by an older homosexual or lesbian, bullying by peers or siblings, or family dysfunction – may sometimes lead to same-sex attraction.

Why shouldn't gay men and women have the same marriage rights that heterosexuals have?



Homosexual people already have the same rights as heterosexuals. Every man has the right to marry a woman and vice versa.

What if a man wants to marry a man?

That is not marriage. Throughout history, marriage has been recognised as the lifelong, exclusive union of a man and a woman.

Slavery was abolished 200 years ago. Women's rights have been acknowledged for 100 years. Why are Australians lagging behind on homosexual rights?

South Australia led the world in giving women both the right to stand for parliament and the right to vote in 1894 – and it was a Christian group, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, that made all the difference in getting that law passed. But giving rights to women is very different from giving rights to couples on the basis of dangerously unhealthy sexual behaviour.

Face it – you are on the losing side. Gay marriage and gay adoption are going to come to Australia. If two lesbians with an adopted daughter come to live next door to you, what would you do?

We would befriend them. They are all fellow human beings whom God loves. But we would not support legalising same-sex couple adoption.

Why not?

Every child, if possible, needs both a male and a female parental role model. Same-sex couple adoption – intentionally setting out to deprive a child of a father or a mother – is not good public policy.

* * * * *

Contrary to the wish of Canada's *RadioGay*, marriage is still defined in Australia as a man-woman union. Since 2006, no fewer than 14 private bills related to legalising same-sex marriage have been introduced in the House of Representatives or the Senate, only to lapse or be defeated.

But the battle is far from over. Australia is expected to face a federal double dissolution election on 2 July.

If the Coalition wins, we could face a plebiscite on same-sex marriage by December. If Labor wins, there will be a parliamentary vote on a bill to legalise same-sex marriage by October. Following a change in the Labor Party platform, almost all Labor MPs are now likely to vote yes.

Sadly, there will be no "level playing field" in the pivotal debate on the institution that is the foundation of the family and society.

Many mainstream media articles and opinion pieces have been blatantly biased against the man-woman meaning marriage has always had. TV stations have refused to air gently-worded, paid advertisements for true marriage – while giving free coverage to the other side.

There is even blatant bias on social media. Without any justification, Facebook has deleted truthful news items from the FamilyVoice page – such as the clear rejection of same-sex marriage by the Austrian parliament, and the scathing critique by the US Chief Justice of the majority US Supreme Court same-sex marriage decision. Whatever happened to free speech?

The federal election will be a watershed moment. The FamilyVoice survey of candidates will be important as never before.

Before you go to the polling booth, visit our website (www.fava.org.au) and select the survey page to inform your vote on family, faith and freedom issues.

And pray for our nation.

David and Roslyn Phillips

VoxPoint

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We seek to honour God's name and advance His kingdom.

We promote God's wise ways for a healthy society where marriage is honoured, human life is respected, families can flourish and fundamental freedoms are enjoyed.

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The battle for our children

Senator Cory Bernardi says the 'fight back' against the destructive agenda by socialist academics has just begun.



Senator Cory Bernardi

The senator was among the courageous MPs who spoke out in the federal Coalition party room on 17 March against the Safe Schools Coalition Australia.

Devised by Roz Ward, a lesbian Marxist from La Trobe University, "Safe Schools" has been marketed as an "anti-bullying" program. But a video of the official program launch on 13/6/14 shows Ms Ward declaring that it is "*not* about stopping bullying" – rather, its aim is to normalise and celebrate homosexuality and transgenderism.[1]

The day after he spoke out about "Safe Schools" dangers, Cory Bernardi's Adelaide electorate office was trashed by a group of rowdy socialist students. One, aged 14, was driven to the office by his parents!

"One has to ask what are we doing to the next generation, when some parents think that sort of thing is OK," Senator Bernardi said. "Lefty totalitarians have trashed my office and threatened my staff because their agenda has been exposed."

And it is not only Marxist-socialists who have attacked the senator for seeking to protect children from premature sexualisation by "Safe Schools". On 23 February, federal Labor leader Bill Shorten called Senator Bernardi a "homophobe" for daring to raise parental concerns.

But media reports have highlighted even more worrying programs. Children as young as four are being treated as sexual beings and told they can choose their gender.

A new program, *Early Start Initiative* by Early Childhood Australia, is being rolled out in childcare centres and kindergartens. Among other things, it will explain cross-dressing and take toddlers on tours of opposite-sex toilets.[2]

A new book, *The Gender Fairy,* tells preschoolers that only they – not a doctor or parent – can decide whether they are a boy or a girl, or what clothes they should wear. A "fight back" is long overdue.

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5uNocBCw3Q
2. *Herald Sun*, 6/3/16.



Mark Brake, *The Australian*

Students trash Bernardi's office after he criticised the "Safe Schools" program

Bendigo principals reject 'Safe Schools'

***Principals of Bendigo secondary colleges have declined to join the Safe Schools Coalition (SSC), saying their schools already have meaningful programs in place to protect LGBTI students** (Bendigo Advertiser, 19/4/16).*

Eaglehawk Secondary College principal Noel Claridge said his teachers were advised on how to provide all students with an inclusive environment. He said any compulsory "Safe Schools" roll-out after 2018 should ensure it is respectful of *all* groups of people – implying that the current program does not do that.

Ernie Fleming, Principal of Bendigo South East College, said he did not think joining the SSC would be a meaningful way of addressing the issue. His school already had six or seven initiatives in place to safeguard the wellbeing of LGBTI students.

FamilyVoice Victoria director Peter Stevens welcomed the news. "The 'Safe Schools' program deliberately leaves parents in the dark about what children are being taught," he said. "The Bendigo principals' decision respects the role of parents, not of others, to educate their children about their sexuality."

Bible stories out, sex lessons in

Religious instruction, now banned from Vic classrooms, will be replaced by a program promoting feminist ideology, gender theories and casual "hook-ups".

Victorian children will no longer have the option of learning about key parts of our nation's Christian heritage – such as Bible stories of the Good Samaritan, David and Goliath, and many others.

Instead, the Andrews Labor government is implementing a new compulsory program with a misleading name, *Building Respectful Relationships* (BRR). Many parents who know about it are horrified.

Like the "Safe Schools" program, this program has strong links to La Trobe University's Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS).

The program's authors claim, without any valid evidence, that the program will prevent domestic violence by promoting the theory that "gender" is a fluid concept.

"We all want to prevent the growing levels of domestic violence," said FamilyVoice Victoria director Peter Stevens. "But misrepresenting the facts is not the way to achieve it. It is incorrect and unhelpful to insist that men are always the perpetrators and women are always the victims.

"As we have seen in a number of recent tragedies, women can sometimes harm their husbands and even their own children."

The program includes fairly explicit sexual content, with Year 8 students aged 12-13 asked to study advertisements for sexual partners in dating websites or local newspapers.

"BRR fails to indicate that this method of 'hooking up' is in any way harmful," Mr Stevens told *VoxPoint*. "Students are even asked to write their own ads! The program guide says teacher must ensure the ads include a 'range of ages and sexualities'.

"And like 'Safe Schools', BRR promotes dangerous transgenderism theories. Telling children who are confused about their gender that their feelings are who they really are is not helpful – given research showing that without specific treatment, almost all such children will lose those feelings over time."

A Department of Education and Early Childhood Development spokesperson told *VoxPoint* the program will be "included in the curriculum from Prep through to Year 10".

Letters to the editor



Thanks for support

My heartfelt thanks to the thousands who have been in touch after the recent trashing of my electorate office by leftist students. Thankfully my team members were unharmed. They, like me, have been buoyed by the messages of support and offers to help clean up the mess.

The ransacking was the tip of the iceberg of what is to come as we challenge the leftist agenda of big government and decaying society. After a social experiment lasting decades, the full catastrophe is slowly being felt.

People feel less safe, we have a growing racial divide, our educational standards have declined, our politicians are less respected, our media less trusted, our families are failing and our government is on an unsustainable economic path.

These are the direct results of the so-called "progressive" agenda that has been working insidiously within our governing structures for many years. The fight back has just begun.

Cory Bernardi
Senator for South Australia

Greg Sheridan

On ABC's *Q&A* (4/4/16), *Australian* journalist Greg Sheridan said he's changed his attitude towards same-sex "marriage". He said he cannot continue to deny children the protection that marriage affords them – such as those who have been adopted by a same sex couple or who have suffered the breakup of a heterosexual marriage.

He argued that if same-sex couples are able to adopt children, they should also be able to marry, in order to give the child the same degree of security and sense of normality a real marriage provides.

That is really putting the cart before the horse! Same-sex "marriage" only compounds a bad situation for the child. It risks giving the child the impression that a same-sex relationship is normal.

Child adoption by same sex couples ought to be banned. Colombia is leading the way in this, and shows more respect for the rights of the child than we do.

Brian Fyffe
Carnarvon, WA

Manipulation of research

Recent newspaper articles related to the "Safe Schools" program illustrate how susceptible social science research is to manipulation for political or ideological purposes.

Professor Keith Nugent of La Trobe University says the "Safe Schools" work was subject to ethical approval and peer review – but how independent can an ethics committee be when a large component of people reviewing the work are dependent for their livelihood on the institution? And when groupthink is so prevalent in academia, how effective is peer review?

Coming from more than three decades in biological research to the ethical review of about 500 social science research projects, I soon realised how much more difficult it is to ensure rigorous findings in social science.

The selection of subjects likely to confirm a researcher's stance, the vagueness and subjectivity of the terminology, and the willingness of researchers to accept even the most implausible self-reporting, provide fruitful grounds for manipulation of the results.

Eric Lockett
Rose Bay, Tas

Violence in the home

Could one of the reasons for the growing incidence of violence against women and children be because the husband and wife roles are no longer how God intended them to be?

God says men are to love and respect their wives. Wives are to respect and honour their husbands. Both are to love and nurture their children. Children are to obey and respect their parents. Neither parent is to provoke their children to become angry.

Australian families need to get these roles sorted, God's way.

Maisie Semple
Ferny Hills, Qld

Alarming HIV figures

The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released the latest figures for HIV infections at a Boston conference in late February.

At current rates, one in six US men who have sex with men will be diagnosed with HIV during their lifetime – compared with one in 473 heterosexual men.

For black US men who have sex with men, the figure is one in two. For Latino men who have sex with men, the figure is one in four.

The CDC's 2015 guidelines for STD treatment includes the statement: "The most reliable way to avoid transmission of STDs is to abstain from oral, vaginal and anal sex or to be in a long term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner known to be uninfected."

It is sad but true that the gay lobby has never been concerned about risks or health – rather, it is almost entirely focused on legitimising "gay sex".

Dr Arthur Hartwig
Nerang, Qld

Shorten's *ad hominem* attack

Federal Labor leader Bill Shorten wants to define homosexual unions as marriage, and he defends the "LBGTIQ" (Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgender Intersex Queer) Safe Schools Coalition by calling traditional marriage supporters "homophobes".

But he thereby commits the "ad hominem" fallacy: that is, he attacks the integrity of the person, not their argument. Bill still hasn't shown why we really need to redefine marriage and support the Safe Schools Coalition program.

We actually do care about the LGBTIQ community, who need help.

Timothy Dragan
Narre Warren South, Vic

Archbishop Porteous

Anti-discrimination laws are intended to bring justice. Unfortunately, when these laws are misused to push a political agenda, injustice and discrimination follow.

An example is the case in Tasmania where Archbishop Porteous is accused of breaking the law because he respectfully explained church teaching on marriage.

In jurisdictions around the world that have legislated for same-sex "marriage", this legislation, combined with anti-discrimination laws and aggressive rainbow politics, has resulted in a grave loss of universal human rights and freedoms. Examples listed in Google include "Asher's Bakery" and "Barronelle Stutzman".

When the US Supreme Court judges ruled 5 to 4 that same-sex marriage was constitutional, the states that had voted against same-sex "marriage" by referendum were forced to have it. Democracy, human rights and freedoms are overruled. Lawyers shouldn't have such power.

It's not fair that the media is so biased in favour of rainbow politics. It's sad that we can't have a balanced debate with equal input from both sides, free of nasty slurs like "hate speech", "bigot" and "homophobe".

Herminie Swainston
Palm Beach, NSW

The dangers of redefining marriage



by Dr David van Gend, family doctor and president of Australian Marriage Forum

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VoxBrief May 2016

FamilyVoice AUSTRALIA

Redefining marriage is a dangerous idea. It redefines everything from parenting and kinship bonds to sexual morality and acceptable religious doctrine.

G.K. Chesterton warned "This triangle of truisms – father, mother and child – cannot be destroyed; it can only destroy those civilisations which disregard it."[1]

The destroyers are at the gates. To resist them, we must reassert the truth of marriage and the harms of homosexual "marriage" – specifically that it would:

- ***force future children to miss out on either a mother or a father;***
- ***impose radical homosexual education on all of our children;***
- ***silence conscientious objectors with the big stick of anti-discrimination law;***
- ***radically deconstruct the bonds of parenting and kinship, and the very notion of male and female.***

What defines marriage?

Marriage is a social and religious recognition of pre-existing biological reality. All of our marriage laws and customs exist to reinforce this biological foundation, helping bind a man to his mate for the sake of social stability, and, above all, for the sake of any child they might create.

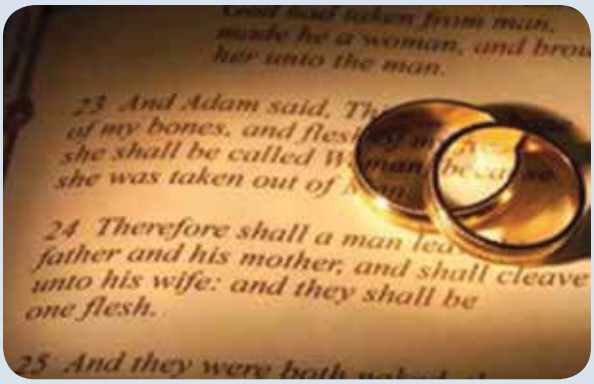
Not all marriages create children – but typically they do, and the institution exists for the typical case. Married couples who cannot have children are still fully married because they fulfil the twin criteria of marriage: they bring together the two great halves of nature, male and female, in a "one-flesh" union. They are still able to give adopted children the mother and father relationship they need.

A homosexual couple does not bring the two halves of nature together in a one-flesh union. They cannot give a child, even an adopted child, the mother and father relationship a child needs.

This is not a religious argument. Atheist philosopher Bertrand Russell understood the child-centred reason for marriage: "It is through children alone that sexual relations become of importance to society, and worthy to be taken cognizance of by a legal institution."[2]

Homosexual relationships obviously cannot create children, so society has no *institutional* interest in regulating such friendships. They are of importance to the individuals involved, but such relationships are not *marriage.*

A recent observation of this came from the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, John Roberts, in his dissenting judgement on same-sex "marriage" in June 2015:



> *"Marriage … arose in the nature of things to meet a vital need: ensuring that children are conceived by a mother and father committed to raising them in the stable conditions of a lifelong relationship."*[3]

The ancient legal codes of Hammurabi and King Dadusha in Babylon nearly 4000 years ago elaborate social conditions for valid marriage similar to our own, including the need for a formal contract and a public ceremony.

King Dadusha would have understood the Bishop of London's sermon, from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, at the 2011 Royal Wedding of William and Catherine:

> *"First, [marriage] was ordained for the increase of mankind... Secondly, it was ordained in order that the natural instincts and affections should be hallowed and directed aright... Thirdly, it was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort that the one ought to have of the other."*

The Bishop's basic rationale is anthropological, not theological: that marriage exists to nurture a new generation, to discipline the feral instincts of males to constructive ends, and to be what John Locke called "the first society" of husband and wife, mother, father and child.

Homosexual and bisexual relationships are recorded in history, but never an institution of homosexual marriage – since it served no vital social purpose. As early as Homer we find the word "gamos" to describe the man-woman relationship which we recognise as "monogamous marriage". The Romans gave us the word "matrimony", made up of "mater", meaning mother, and "monium", meaning state or condition. So matrimony is the institution built around motherhood.

A rare aberration that proves the rule was the case of Emperor Nero – whom historian Tacitus described as "corrupted by every lust, natural and unnatural": "The emperor, in the presence of witnesses, put on the bridal veil. Dowry, marriage bed, wedding torches, all were there. Indeed everything was public which even in a natural union is veiled by night."[4] "Disaster followed," he wrote, referring to the subsequent fire of Rome. The fire led Nero to torture and execute Christians as scapegoats, including the first Bishop of Rome.

So is it any surprise that as homosexual "marriage" makes a comeback, Christian leaders like the Archbishop of Hobart, Julian Porteous, are again being thrown to the lions?

The truth is that marriage is given to us by nature and affirmed by every culture, because man and woman are uniquely empowered to nurture new life.

The first harm: forcing children to miss out on a mother or father

Marriage is a compound right under Article 16 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights:* "the right to marry and to found a family".[5] Therefore, same-sex "marriage" would involve both the legal recognition of an exclusive relationship and the right to form a family by adoption or artificial reproduction – but any child brought into that "marriage" would miss out on their mother or father or both.

Of course, there are already tragic situations where a child misses out on their mum or dad, such as the death or desertion of a parent – but that is not something we would ever wish upon a child, and it is not something a government should ever impose upon a child. There are also situations where broken families reform as a homosexual household. What we must not allow, however, is the situation where government deliberately facilitates the creation of motherless or fatherless families.

Some people raise the scenario of abusive parents and argue that it is better for a child to have two loving same-sex carers than dysfunctional biological parents – yet neither option gives a child what they need.

Others insist that because same-sex couples already have children by adoption or surrogacy, nothing is going to change with same-sex "marriage". That is not correct. A number of states prohibit same-sex couples from adopting or creating a child by surrogacy, but a federal law for same-sex "marriage" would overrule state prohibitions on same-sex parenting.

As this debate forces us to choose between giving priority to children's rights or homosexual adults' claims, society is faced with an inescapable choice. Significantly, when 1200 Australians were asked to choose between these conflicting claims, they chose by a margin of three to one to prioritise to the rights of the child to both a mother and a father over the rights of two men to marry and start a family.[6]

What, then, do we make of the bland assurances that it doesn't really matter, that science shows there is "no difference to kids" raised by homosexual couples. Such claims are not true, either on the social science front or, more movingly, these testimonies of adults who were raised by lesbian couples.

US woman Heather Barwick said:

> *"A lot of us, a lot of your kids, are hurting. My father's absence created a huge hole in me, and I ached every day for a dad. Same-sex 'marriage' and parenting withholds either a mother or father from a child while telling him or her that it doesn't matter. That it's all the same. But it's not."*[7]

Melbourne woman Millie Fontana said:

> *"There's all this talk about equality for women, for gay people, for everybody, but where's the equality for children when it comes to this? I am in a position to explain to you the kind of damage it does to a child."*[8]

As far as the scientific evidence goes, sociologist David Popenoe states the obvious: "Few propositions have more empirical support in the social sciences than this one. Compared to all other family forms, families headed by married, biological parents are best for children."[9]

That is the settled science of forty years of research. Therefore, any institution that deliberately promotes an alternative model is, statistically speaking, disadvantaging the child.

Running counter to this established finding, a number of recent studies claim the children of lesbian couples do just as well as the children of married biological parents. On the whole these are poor quality studies, with a biased self-selection process, too small a sample size to be significant, no control group to exclude confounding factors, and so on.[10] They may create headlines, but are no scientific basis for public policy.



Same-sex 'marriage' would force a child to miss out on either their father or their mother, or both

There are only eight studies in this entire field that meet the gold-standard criteria of random sample selection and statistically adequate sample size. Of these, four find no difference for children in same-sex households and four find detrimental effects for such children.

Significantly, the four that find no difference are deeply compromised by subsequent findings of corruption in their database.

The most recent, and largest, peer-reviewed study (Sullins 2015[11]) finds that children raised in same-sex households have more than twice the rate of significant emotional problems compared with children raised by opposite-sex parents, and nearly four times the rate of those raised by their married biological parents. Based on these findings, no lawmaker should vote for a structure of parenting that is clearly detrimental to children.

Having said all that, social science shouldn't be the deciding factor. No "social science" really answers the question that must be asked: the question of the fundamental injustice and primal harm of wilfully depriving a child of their mother or father.

The second harm: imposing homosexual education on all of our children

If the law says same-sex "marriage" is normal and right, schools will have to teach that same-sex behaviour is normal and right. Children will have to be taught that the sexual behaviour of two men is no different to the relationship of the child's mother and father in marriage – and parents will have no say on the matter.

This is happening overseas.[12] After Massachusetts legalised same-sex "marriage" in 2003, school libraries had to stock same-sex literature, primary school children were given homosexual stories like *King & King*,[13] and some high school students were even given an explicit manual of homosexual advocacy entitled *Queer in the 21st Century*.[14]

In Australia, under the federally funded Safe Schools Coalition program created by the Victorian homosexual lobby, you can read the following at page 10 of the 2014 booklet, "OMG I'm Gay", (omitting the most explicit passage):

"I'm bisexual, so I ended up thinking of myself as having two virginities, my first time with a chick and my first time with a dude."

Parents who have objected to this program are already being sidelined and labelled "bigots", even when same-sex "marriage" is not the law of our land.

Three major arguments are used to justify these programs in our schools, and they are the same three arguments used to justify same-sex "marriage".

1. To combat bullying

The first argument is that there is a plague of gay-based bullying in our schools, and the best way to reduce that bullying is to celebrate homosexuality in the curriculum and affirm same-sex "marriage" in our laws. That is a doubtful proposition.

A large study published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* in 2003, comparing 1000 homosexual and heterosexual adults, found no increase in bullying of gay men compared with heterosexual men, whether at school or subsequently, whether verbally or physically.[15] The researchers noted, "Reports that gay and lesbian people are vulnerable to such experiences because of their sexuality are often taken at face value".

There are many reasons to be bullied at school – for being too smart, too dumb; too

fat, too weak; or for being "gay" even when you are not gay. It is important to address all bullying in schools, but an alleged plague of gay-based bullying does not justify imposing radicalised sex-education on all children.

2. To combat suicide and depression

The second argument is that if we do not celebrate homosexuality in schools and celebrate same-sex "marriage" in our culture, we are culpable for depression and even suicide in young same-sex attracted people. That is an increasingly common argument – and it is outrageous.

Last year, *Sky News* presenter Peter van Onselen suggested the Coalition would have blood on its hands because of its decision not to allow a vote on same-sex "marriage" in parliament.[16]

The director of Australian Marriage Equality (AME), Rodney Croome, was critical of an Australian Marriage Forum television ad aired during the Mardi Gras, saying it was "actually harming the many Australian children being raised by same-sex couples".[17]

Do you see how this game works? If anyone makes the case for keeping marriage between man and woman, the mere act of raising such an argument is claimed to "harm" children. Can the gay lobby not see their argument for the emotional blackmail it is?

Nobody denies that same-sex attracted people suffer disproportionately from depression and emotional distress. But in my experience as GP, never once has their depression or distress been due to the "bigoted opinions" of straight society. It has always been due to something private and personal: perhaps the trauma of domestic violence from a lesbian partner, or self-disgust at their own compulsive sexual behaviour, or unresolved rage at childhood sexual abuse, or the spiritual grief of holding values that conflict with their unwanted sexual impulses.

We also know gay people have close to double the rate of substance abuse, both alcohol or drugs, compared with heterosexual people and this is associated with increased depression and suicide.[18]

The previously mentioned study in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* cautioned:

> *"It may be that prejudice in society against gay men and lesbians leads to greater psychological distress… Conversely, gay men and lesbians may have lifestyles that make them vulnerable to psychological disorder. Such lifestyles may include increased use of drugs and alcohol."*[19]

It trivialises a homosexual person's suffering to blame it primarily on the external environment. The associated claim that we must legalise same-sex "marriage" or be culpable for gay suicide is blackmail. One does not overturn the foundational institution of society as an act of psychological therapy for some depressed citizens.

3. Justice for people who are 'born that way'

The final argument for affirming homosexuality is a claim of justice: that gay people are simply born that way, so natural justice demands they should have equal marriage rights.

This moral argument has great influence on public thinking, but it is false and needs to be refuted.

No science supports the "born that way" theory. The American Psychiatric Association says: "There are no replicated scientific studies supporting any specific biological etiology for homosexuality".[20]

Even the avowedly pro-gay American Psychological Association states: "No findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors."[21]

The director of the Human Genome Project, Francis Collins, notes that "sexual orientation is genetically influenced but not hardwired by DNA, and whatever genes are involved represent predispositions, not predeterminations."[22]

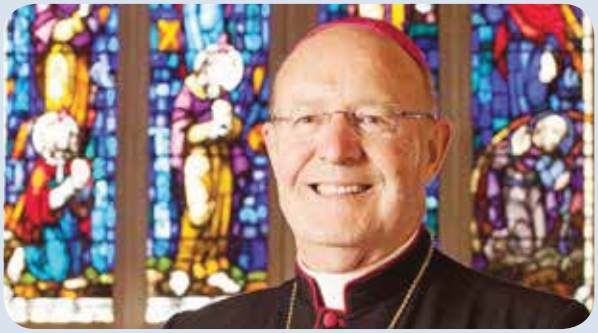
There is no justification, then, for claiming gay people are born that way; there is no simplistic gay gene or gay brain.

> **'There is no justification for claiming gay people are born that way.'**

In the same way, psychological mechanisms are not sufficient to explain all cases. One can only conclude that the phenomenon is multi-factorial in origin, with predisposing and precipitating factors – an ingrained but potentially modifiable psychological condition, not an innate identity.

Consider the clinical findings of spontaneous change in sexual orientation. A large study by Savin-Williams found that three-quarters of adolescents who had some initial homosexual attraction changed to experience heterosexual attraction only.[23] Another large study of some 14,000 young people by Ott found that two-thirds of those who thought they might be homosexual eventually became exclusively heterosexual.[24]

These studies show that most sexual confusion in adolescence clears away if left to itself. A policy to "celebrate gay identity" among confused adolescents would encourage some young men to "come out" prematurely at school. If left alone, most would get over their confusion and avoid the harms of a homosexual lifestyle.



Tasmania's Catholic Archbishop Julian Porteous faces legal action over a booklet defending man-woman marriage.

The third harm: suppressing conscientious & religious freedom

In a 2011 Campion College graduation address, former PM John Howard said:

> *"Changing the definition of marriage, which has lasted for time immemorial, is not an exercise in human rights and equality; it is an exercise in de-authorising the Judaeo-Christian influence in our society, and any who pretend otherwise are deluding themselves."*[25]

In 2015, Australia's Catholic Bishops published a pastoral letter entitled *Don't Mess with Marriage*. Rodney Croome of AME took offence at the booklet which simply conveyed traditional Catholic teaching on marriage to families of Catholic school students. Croome urged same-sex "marriage" supporters to complain to the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner."[26] In response, Tasmanian Greens candidate Martine Delaney did just that.

Significantly, the Bishops' pastoral letter included this passage: "People who adhere to the perennial and natural definition of marriage will be characterised as old-fashioned, even bigots, who must answer to the law."

There should be no pretence that churches can be guaranteed lasting exemption under same-sex "marriage" law. Equally, the individual will be given no exemption from holding government-mandated opinions on homosexual marriage and parenting. David Blankenhorn observed:

> *"Once this proposed reform became law, even to say the words out loud in public – 'Every child needs a father and a mother' – would probably be viewed as explicitly divisive and discriminatory, possibly even as hate speech."*[27]

Consider the hounding and sacking of the head of Internet company Mozilla, Brendan Eich, just for donating to a political campaign defending natural marriage.[28]

Aaron Klein, a father of five from Oregon, was fined $135,000 and lost his livelihood as a baker, just because a lesbian couple demanded he bake them a wedding cake and he, in good conscience, declined.[29]

In her recent Press Club debate, Senator Penny Wong said lesbian couples would simply avoid bakers who did not want to bake them a cake. But of course the opposite is true – the whole objective is to

identify those who do not comply with the gay agenda and force them to do so.

Any law normalising homosexual "marriage" would be a truncheon in the fist of the thought police, enforce approval of homosexuality via "human rights" commissions, and be a major step in "de-authorising the Judaeo-Christian influence in our society". Any who pretend otherwise are deluding themselves.

The fourth harm: the deconstruction of marriage & kinship

Chief Justice John Roberts, of the US Supreme Court, said in his dissenting ruling on same-sex "marriage": "It is striking how much of the majority's reasoning would apply with equal force to the claim of a fundamental right to plural marriage."

Last year, the *New York Post* featured three women in wedding dresses under the heading, "Married lesbian throuple expecting first child"[30], while in February this year the same paper introduced us to "the world's first gay married trio" in Thailand.[31]

Australian polyamorist Rachelle White told *Radio 6PR*, "I do think we need to address same-sex 'marriage' before we do move forward and look at polyamorous marriage."[32]

For if marriage is only about love and commitment, on what logical grounds can we deny "marriage equality" to three or four loving and committed adults? "Love is love is love … and love knows no boundaries..."

However, the destructiveness of this revolution goes well beyond marriage itself to the broader bonds of blood and belonging.

It is not just that the words "husband" and "wife" will be deleted from the Marriage Act; the words "mother" and "father" will also have to go from various documents such as passports or birth certificates. And as in Canada, the legal term "natural parent" would be replaced by the soulless term "legal parent".

"Those who say 'They're only words, who cares?' clearly don't know their Orwell," says Brendan O'Neill, the self-described "godless Brit".[33]

US-based lesbian activist Masha Gessen told the Sydney Writer's Festival in 2012:

> *"Fighting for gay marriage generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage when we get there. Because we lie that the institution of marriage is not going to change… It's a no-brainer that we should have the right to marriage but equally I think that it is a no brainer that the institute of marriage should not exist."*[34]

Culture warriors like Gessen want to remake marriage in their own sexually radical image. Monogamy is an essential "repressive" element that "has to go". At that same writer's festival, Australian gay activist Dennis Altman said:

> *"One of the things about gay male culture is that it is not a monogamous culture… There are many longstanding gay relationships. There are virtually no longstanding monogamous gay relationships. I happen to think that this is a good thing."*[35]

And we are being told that nothing will change with a redefinition of marriage!

Conclusion: politics and just discrimination

How, then, can we live respectfully with our homosexual friends, relatives and neighbours while still protecting the truth about marriage, and protecting the triangle of truisms, mother-father-child?

The number of same-sex couples in Australia is very small – only 1% of all couples according to the ABS *Australian Social Trends 2013*. And only one in a thousand children are raised in same-sex households.[36]

Given these tiny numbers, and given that same-sex couples already enjoy the same benefits as any other couple, just what is the terrible injustice that requires marriage and parenting to be redefined for the 99%?

There is none. There is only a terrible psychological push from 1% of society to affirm the unequivocal normality of homosexual behaviour: in our institutions, in our laws, our schools, even – in due course – our churches. That is the root cause of this campaign for same-sex "marriage".

We must not acquiesce, because granting the right for homosexuals to marry would mean losing:

- the right of future children to have both a mother and a father;
- the right of parents to guide the moral education of their children;
- the right of conscientious objectors to live in accordance with their beliefs.

Marriage is given by nature, strengthened by culture, and uniquely empowered to nurture new life. It can only be, and must remain, a man-woman thing.

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WA: Upholding marriage

FamilyVoice WA director David Lowe is working on a series of videos defending man-woman marriage.

FamilyVoice is producing the videos in association with some WA Christian film studios. Former homosexual activist James Parker, who spoke at last year's FamilyVoice WA dinner, is also involved.

"The mainstream media is very one-sided. It bombards us with sexual ideas that undermine marriage, ignoring realities especially about health, biology and children," Mr Lowe said. "God's complementary man-woman design for marriage remains the best for all of us. It is compassionate, not bigoted, to say so!"

Qld: Human rights inquiry

The FamilyVoice submission to the Queensland parliament's human rights inquiry said human rights are best protected by a Westminster system of government, where powers are separated.

"Sadly, Queensland lost an important part of this system when its upper house was abolished in 1922," said FamilyVoice Queensland director Andrew Lawton. "Today's government controls every debate and every committee. There is no accountability to an independently elected Legislative Council."

The Palaszczuk government wants a human rights charter similar to those in Victoria and the ACT. Many great statesmen have opposed such a move. Former NSW Labor Premier Bob Carr said parliament, not unelected judges, should decide our rights.

The late Chief Justice Sir Harry Gibbs, a Queenslander, said: "If a society is tolerant and rational, it does not need a bill of rights. If it is not, no bill of rights will preserve it."

National: Internet porn inquiry

FamilyVoice Australia has made a detailed submission to the Senate inquiry on the harm being done to Australian children through access to pornography on the internet.

The submission included evidence of huge numbers of boys and girls who are accidentally exposed to sex websites, including on friends' phones.

Porn is warping boys' sexual expectations and pressuring young girls to engage in acts that damage their bodies. Porn is also a key factor in the growing incidence of child-on-child sex abuse in schools and kindergartens.

FamilyVoice recommended default ISP-level filtering of harmful websites in the interest of protecting our next generation from the public health crisis of online pornography.

"... a free and open internet is vital. But in no other market and with no other industry do we have such an extraordinarily light touch when it comes to children." - *British PM David Cameron, July 2013*

SA/NT: Euthanasia bill (again)!

"South Australia has seen more bills seeking to give doctors the right to kill than any other state," says FamilyVoice SA director David d'Lima.

"Our House of Assembly is now debating the 14th bill since 1995. A number of MPs say we should follow other places such as Belgium, where they claim there is no problem with legal euthanasia.

"Such claims are simply wrong," David d'Lima said. "Belgium has seen a huge increase in euthanasia deaths since the practice was legalised in 2002. Many were not voluntary. So-called safeguards are routinely ignored."

Liberal MP Adrian Pederick spoke against the bill on 14 April, quoting a woman who wanted him to support legal euthanasia. "How are we going to manage funding for aged care into the future?" she argued.

Mr Pederick said such comments "lead us down a slippery slope". They should ring alarm bells.

NSW: Sexualisation of children

On 8 April, Dr David Sandifer gave evidence on behalf of FamilyVoice to the NSW parliamentary inquiry on the sexualisation of children.

One of the committee members said her daughter had been traumatised by seeing the sadistic and sexually explicit film *The Human Centipede* in year 6 – despite filters being installed on the computer. She suggested education might be a better solution.

Dr Sandifer said both good filters and education are needed. He praised UK PM David Cameron for achieving ISP-level filters in his country, despite "a lot of naysayers (claiming) it was not technically possible".

Dr Sandifer said the Safe Schools Coalition program is contributing to the sexualisation of children. Among other things, it links to explicit websites promoting harmful practices.

Vic: Hope for vulnerable babies

FamilyVoice Victoria director Peter Stevens has been promoting a bill that seeks to protect unborn babies and their mothers.



Peter Stevens with Dr Carling-Jenkins

Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins MLC (DLP) gave a powerful second reading speech on her Infant Viability Bill in the Legislative Council on 13 April, with further debate due in May.

The bill would make abortion illegal after the 24th week of pregnancy, when babies can survive and thrive outside the womb with medical help. The bill would require doctors to provide practical support to women who are distressed because of their pregnancy.

"Victoria has one of the most extreme abortion laws in the world," Mr Stevens said. "I have urged our MPs to support these important changes."

Tas: Concerns over education reforms

FamilyVoice Tasmania director Jim Collins has spoken out against proposals to lower the age of school entry and increase home schooling regulation.

The proposed Tasmanian Education Act will mandate a lower school age, starting at 4 years and 6 months, with kindergarten entry a year earlier. Home educators would face increased, possibly biased scrutiny under the draft reforms.

Mr Collins has been meeting with concerned parents, discussing the reforms – which mean moving further away from the role of parents as primary educators. "Research shows that home-educated students perform academically as well as or better than those in traditional schooling," he said. "There is no evidence that increasing regulation is a good thing."

FamilyVoice is preparing a detailed submission to the Tasmanian government on this issue.

Common sense prevails in smacking case

An Adelaide man has won his appeal in the SA Supreme Court against his earlier conviction of aggravated assault – simply for smacking his 12-year-old son.



News Corp

Justice David Peek: ruling praised

The father (43) smacked his son three times on the leg for repeated disrespectful behaviour. He told his son: "If you're going to act like a four-year-old, I'll treat you like a four-year-old!"

The man's ex-wife, who had not witnessed the incident, reported it to police. However, the boy said in evidence that the pain in his leg was not serious – it simply hurt a little bit for a day, and his thigh did not bruise.

Justice David Peek overturned the father's conviction on 21 March, saying the magistrate had erred in his approach to the issue.

"Many persons might be unable to comprehend how a parent could even be charged in such a situation," Justice Peek said.

"There is a clear distinction between an act done *bona fide* for the purpose of parental correction and an act actuated by malice or ill-will towards the child. The whole point of parental correction is that it will *not* be welcomed by the child, who will no doubt avoid it if at all possible."

FamilyVoice national research officer Ros Phillips has praised the ruling.

"Children need clear boundaries so they know what is, and is not, acceptable behaviour," she said. "They need appropriate sanctions when they cross the line.

"Parents have several options, including 'time-out' and the withdrawal of privileges. In this case, the father had used 'time-out', but was frustrated when it didn't work.

"Physical discipline can be effective, especially with younger children. It must be used with care and done in love, not anger, when the child has deliberately disobeyed a reasonable request."

An online *Advertiser* poll, asking if smacking is ever justified, found that 92% of respondents said "yes". ■

Transgender theory is 'child abuse'

The American College of Pediatricians has pointed out that the recent promotion of transgenderism is not based on facts, and could harm children.

"No one is born with a gender. Everyone is born with a biological sex," the College said in statement released in March 2016. "Conditioning children into believing a lifetime of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful is child abuse."

"When an otherwise healthy biological boy believes he is a girl, or an otherwise healthy biological girl believes she is a boy, an objective psychological problem exists that lies in the mind not the body, and it should be treated as such," the College of Pediatricians said. "These children suffer from gender dysphoria … a recognised mental disorder…

"Puberty is not a disease, and puberty-blocking hormones can be dangerous. Reversible or not, puberty-blocking hormones … inhibit growth and fertility in a previously biologically healthy child.

"According to the DSM-V [the official US guide to mental disorders], as many as 98% of gender confused boys and 88% of gender confused girls eventually accept their biological sex after naturally passing through puberty…

"Rates of suicide are twenty times greater among adults who use cross-sex hormones and undergo sex reassignment surgery, even in Sweden which is among the most LGBQT-affirming countries."

The statement indicates that government-funded school programs, including "Safe Schools" and "Building Respectful Relationships", could encourage identity confusion in many vulnerable children, leading to costly and dangerous medical interventions. ■

University of Sydney: religion under fire

The University of Sydney Union (USU) has moved to deregister and defund the Evangelical Union and the Catholic Society because these societies require members to uphold the societies' beliefs.

The USU has claimed that these groups are guilty of discrimination – despite the fact that the meetings and activities of both are open to everyone. The move would mean that the groups can no longer gather in lecture theatres or other university venues, or promote their activities during Orientation Week.



Evangelical Union leaders are elected by EU members, who are required to declare their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. If this requirement is not upheld, the way is open for an atheist "takeover" of a group formed to promote members' biblical faith.

Catholic Society President Francis Tamer told *VoxPoint* that university societies must require certain conditions to maintain their authenticity.

"The Women's Revue Society is allowed to restrict membership to women," he said. "The extreme Marxist group *Socialist Alternative* has not been asked to rescind its requirement that members accept its constitution, rules and principles. It seems odd that only religious societies have been chased about their membership requirements."

Mr Tamer is hopeful that the matter will be resolved to uphold freedom of association. "The Vice-Chancellor himself has taken an interest in the matter," he said.

USU President Alisha Aitken-Radburn declined to answer any *VoxPoint* questions. ■

Marriage has always been about raising children



Not all married people have children. Not all children are conceived within marriage. But the main reason marriage as a man-woman union has been recognised throughout history, by almost all cultures, is children – and their need to be raised in a stable, caring environment.

That environment has been shown, time and again, to be with their biological mother and father, publicly committed to each other and the children they have created together.

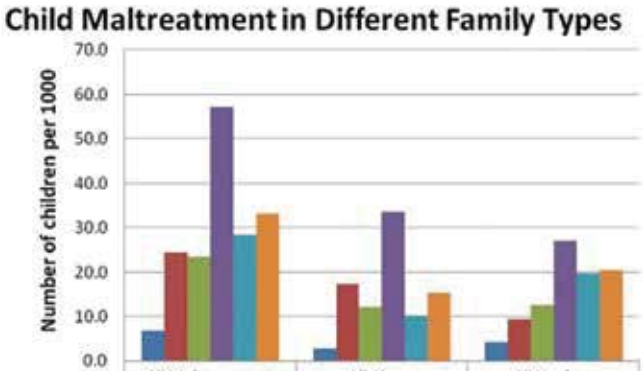
There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. But a very large 2010 US survey of child abuse and neglect ("NIS-4") studied abuse and neglect reports from six different family types and found that families headed by two biological married parents were safest by far on every measure.

Six different family types

The six different family structures studied in NIS-4 (Chapter 5.3) were those where the child was living with:

- two married biological parents
- two married parents (eg one biological parent married to a stepparent, or two married adoptive parents)
- two unmarried parents (eg two cohabiting biological parents, or two cohabiting adoptive/ legally recognised parents)
- one biological/legal parent cohabiting with a partner unrelated to the child
- one biological/legal parent
- no parents

The research is summarised in the table and graph (right).



	All Maltreatment	All Abuse	All Neglect
Married biological parents	6.8	2.9	4.2
Other married parents	24.4	17.4	9.3
Unmarried parents	23.5	12.1	12.6
Single parent with partner	57.2	33.6	27.0
Single parent no partner	28.4	10.2	19.6
Neither parent	33.2	15.3	20.4

Biology matters – so does marriage

It is noteworthy that the most dangerous family type is where one biological parent is living with a partner unrelated to the child – far more risky than a single parent family.

Two cohabiting biological parents are safer for children than a single biological parent. They are about as safe as one biological parent and a stepparent or two married adoptive parents, but are nevertheless much more risky for children than two married biological parents. Where the welfare of children is concerned, biology matters. So does marriage.

Same-sex couple families not excluded

The NIS-4 study did not specifically identify children raised by same-sex couples, nor did it specifically exclude them. Same-sex couples cannot naturally procreate together, so families with children raised by same-sex couples would generally fall into the following categories:

- two married parents (one biological parent married to a stepparent, or two married adoptive parents)
- one biological/legal parent living with a partner unrelated to the child

The percentage of same-sex couples in this survey would have been small, but that fact does not negate the finding that the risk of abuse and neglect is likely to be lowest when children are raised by their two married biological parents.

The US NIS-4 methodology – based on a large randomised sample, with independent evaluation – is far superior to that of most same-sex couple parenting studies, which tend to have small, non-randomised samples recruited from volunteers, self-evaluation, and invalid or missing controls.

And while NIS-4 did not specifically identify same-sex couple families, a recent analysis of data from a large randomised sample has thrown further light on the safety of this family type.

Further relevant research

Research by Dr Paul Sullins, published in the peer-reviewed *British Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, analysed data from a representative sample of 207,007 children – 512 with same-sex parents – from a US National Health Interview Survey in the years 1997-2013.

The survey, answered by the parents, covered many questions related to their children's health and wellbeing. The results reveal that, on eight out of 12 measures, children raised by same-sex couples had nearly double the risk of emotional, mental health or developmental problems compared with children raised by their two biological parents.

For example, 17% of children in same-sex couple families had serious emotional problems, compared with 7% of those with opposite sex parents.

Bullying and "homophobia" have often been cited as the cause of such problems. But Dr Sullins found no difference between the two groups in self-reported experience of having been bullied. The reasons for the greater incidence of emotional ill-health in same-sex couple families must lie elsewhere.

Kids do best with "natural" parents

Both the UK Oxford Dictionary and the US Merriam-Webster Dictionary agree that the word "natural", when applied to parents or children, means "related by blood" (not adopted).

Despite the protests from some in our society, there has long been a community recognition that "blood is thicker than water", and an observation that children tend to be happier in intact birth-parent families than blended stepfamilies.

There is overwhelming evidence from valid science that children generally do best with their biological married mum and dad. Changing the meaning of marriage, in a way that would deny the need of children, all things being equal, to be raised by their two natural opposite-sex parents, could have unforeseen consequences for future generations.

Our Stories

Why we do what we do at FamilyVoice



Jerome Appleby

Assistant Policy Officer

What is your background?

I grew up on the west coast of South Australia and moved to Adelaide to attend university where I completed a double degree in Arts/Laws. I have previously worked as a solicitor in a legal practice and as a pro-family advocate for the Australian Family Association.

Why do you think the work of FamilyVoice is important?

Family values are under attack. We urgently need to preserve the family as the basic unit of society, to provide a strong foundation for our children. FamilyVoice is a crucial voice for Christian values, which are increasingly lacking in our community.

What do you treasure about family?

Family means the world to me. I am blessed to have grown up with six siblings and to have had a mother who raised me to follow Jesus Christ. The family is often described as the "domestic Church".

Did you know?

In his spare time, Jerome likes to hike, ride, and head to the beach. He enjoy watching movies and is a fan of Alfred Hitchcock and James Stewart.

What is your role at FamilyVoice?

As a certified practising accountant, I have been national treasurer since 2004. I have been pleased to help FamilyVoice develop into a national organisation. I recently joined the inaugural governing board as FamilyVoice continues to grow and be used by the Lord into the future.

Why do you think the work of FamilyVoice is important?

The work of FamilyVoice is vital in presenting the truth about matters affecting families to decision makers, at both federal and state levels.

We also partner with churches, providing them with information on what is happening in society.

What does family mean to you?

The importance of the family cannot be overstated – the Bible begins with a marriage and ends with a marriage. The family was instituted by God for the good of His people and is the best place for raising children.

My wife Christine and I have been blessed with eight children who range in age from 35 to 12.

> "The family was instituted by God for the good of His people."



Peter Downie

National Treasurer

Did you know?

Peter owns and operates a law firm called DL Legal. The firm has supported pro-life advocate Graham Preston with his legal challenges in Queensland and Tasmania.