
Arguments For And Against Legalizing Gay Marriage

By order of the Supreme Court, California began legally marrying gay and lesbian couples. According to Brookings.edu the first same-sex couple to be wed were two men, named Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, from San Francisco, who had been a couple for fifty years.

More ceremonies will follow. The US should choose to legalize it in all fifty states. To understand why imagine your life without marriage. Not just your life if you didn't happen to get married. What I am asking you to imagine is life with no possibility to get married.

Re-enter your childhood, but imagine your first crush, first kiss, and first date, all strengthening your hope for marriage as a way for you to be together forever. Re-enter your first serious relationship, but think about it knowing that marrying the person is out of the question.

Imagine that in the law's eyes you and your lover will never be more than friends. And now add even more weirdness. Imagine becoming an adult in your community, your culture, without marriage and the bonds of family and partnership that go with it.

What is this weird world like? It has more sex and less commitment than a world with marriage. It is a world of fragile/broken families living on the shadowy outskirts of the law, a world marked by fear of loneliness or abandonment in crisis or old age, a world not even civilized, because marriage does not exist.

Few heterosexuals can imagine living in such a strange world, where love separates you from marriage instead of connecting you with it. Many don't bother to try. Instead, they say same-sex couples can go off and get married if they have a lawyer and drawing up of paperwork. As if heterosexual couples would settle for anything like that.

Even a moment's reflection shows that some people are still going to say "Let them eat contracts." No one excuses you from testifying in court against your partner, or entitles you to Social Security survivor benefits, or secures U.S. residency for your partner if he or she is a foreigner. I could go on and on.

Marriage is not just a contract between two people. It is a contract that two people make, as a couple, with their community. (Which is why there is always a witness) Two people can't go into a room by themselves and come out legally married. The partners agree to take care of each other so the community doesn't have to. In exchange, the community makes them a family, binding them to each other and to society.

This is a fantastically fruitful bargain. Dissent Magazine states that marriage makes you healthier, happier and wealthier. If you are a couple raising kids, marrying is likely to make them healthier, happier and wealthier, too. Marriage is our first and best line of defense against financial, medical and emotional meltdown. It provides a partner who is willing to help you through it all. It stabilizes communities by making responsibilities and creating a networks. And its absence can be disastrous, whether in cities or countries.

Also stated by Brookings.edu “In 2008, denying gay Americans the opportunity to marry is not only inhumane, it is cruel.” History has turned a corner: Gay couples (Including gay parents) live openly and for the most part comfortably in mainstream life. This will not change, ever.

Dissent Magazine also states that because parents want happy children, communities want responsible neighbors, and employers want productive workers, society has a powerful interest in recognizing and supporting same-sex couples. It will either fold them into marriage or create alternatives to marriage, such as publicly recognized and subsidized couple. (Not married) Conservatives often say same-sex marriage should be prohibited because it does not exemplify the ideal form of family. They should consider how much less ideal an example gay couples will set by building families and raising children out of wedlock.

Nowadays, even opponents of same-sex marriage generally concede it would be good for gay people. What they worry about are the possible secondary effects that could happen. ProCon.org asks what if gay marriage becomes a vehicle for polygamists who want to marry multiple partners, egalitarians who want to rewrite family law, or secularists who want to stop religious objections to homosexuality?

Beyond noting that same-sex marriage no more leads logically to polygamy than giving women one vote leads to giving men two (That gay marriage requires only few and modest changes to existing family law) and that the Constitution provides protections for religious freedom.

I'll also note that these arguments bring homosexuals into marriage lessness in order to stop heterosexuals from making bad decisions. We wonder how many heterosexuals would give up their own marriage, or for that matter their own divorce, to discourage other people from making poor love choices.

Honest judgement requires acknowledging that same-sex marriage is a significant social change and is not risk-free. I believe the risks are modest, manageable, and likely to be outweighed by the benefits. Still, it's wise to guard against unintended consequences by trying gay marriage in one or two states and seeing what happens, which is exactly what the country is doing.

But at the same time, honest opposition requires acknowledging that there are risks and unwanted consequences on both sides of the equation. Some of the unwanted consequences of allowing same-sex marriage will be good, not bad. And not legalizing gay marriage is risky in its own right.

America needs more marriages and the best way to encourage marriage is to encourage marriage by bringing gay couples inside the tent. A good way to discourage marriage, on the other hand, is to rule it as bad in the minds of millions of young Americans. Conservatives who object to redefining marriage risk redefining it themselves, as a civil-rights violation.

There are two ways to see the legal marriage of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon. One is the start of something beautiful. (An experiment that jeopardizes years of social norms) The other is as the end of something beautiful. (An experiment in which gay people were told that they could have all the love they could find, but they could not even think about marriage) If I take the second view, it is on conservative (In fact, traditional) grounds that gay souls and straight society are healthiest when love and marriage all walk together.

Works Cited -

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