

## Equality for Everyone

*“They say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself”  
-Andy Warhol*

Two hundred years ago, our founding fathers signed a document declaring independence and equality. Written in that document are Thomas Jefferson’s famous words, *“All men are created equal.”* Eighty years later another renowned president, Abraham Lincoln, also spoke of equality in the Gettysburg Address. In the 1950’s as the civil rights movement kicked off and again during the 1960 feminist movement the fairness and equality of our nation was tested. It is safe to say that equality is the foundation of the United States.

Knowing our past difficulties with equality, one might think that by now we would have figured out that in order for democracy to work everyone needs to be treated fairly. Why then is there still an ongoing brawl? Fighting still are people who are homosexual. If they don’t already get enough grief for just being themselves, they aren’t even entitled to the same rights as people who are heterosexual. Technically homosexuals have the same rights in housing, jobs, government benefits, and other rights... except for the right to marry. That’s when the majority of Americans look away and ignore inequality.

There are many arguments some people use as to why gay marriage shouldn’t be legal. Most are ridiculous and are backed with hate and misunderstanding rather than truth. Some examples of these senseless reasons are: the right to gay marriage is a special right; marriage is supposed to ensure that our species lasts; same-sex marriage violates the sacredness of marriage; and gay parents cannot raise children as well as straight parents. All of these reasons have no proof to back them up.

If ninety percent of the American population already has the right to marry, why in the world would allowing gay people to do the same be a “special right?” During the civil rights movement, did

we not establish that all citizens are equal? Under the Equal Protection Clause as part of the Fourteenth Amendment in the Constitution it declares that “*no state shall...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*” This is no “special right.” Any American citizen is *equally* protected under the law. If straight American citizens are allowed to marry under the law, wouldn’t gay American citizens also be allowed to marry if everyone has the “*equal protection of the laws?*” As observed by Justice Kennedy in the court case “Romer vs. Evans,” gay and lesbian Americans do not need special rights to protect them because under the current law, all Americans are already protected. If all this is true, why then is same-sex marriage still prohibited in most states?

As far as I know, our species is not in any danger of dying off. There are plenty of problems humans have to face but becoming extinct is not one of them. If anything there is too high a number in our population; we have already almost used up the resources we have here on earth. Whoever thought that marriage ensures that humans last on Earth is obviously living on a different planet than the rest of humanity. There are plenty of people to go around, and plenty of hungry people at that.

Same-sex marriage violates the sacredness of marriage. Wait a minute, allowing people to marry violates marriage? That doesn’t make any sense. If you’re concerned about the sacredness of marriage, maybe your efforts would be put to more use fighting for tighter divorce laws. By forcing people to marry someone they don’t have an attraction for, the whole idea of marriage is thrown upside down. When you marry you are supposed to marry for love; when you marry someone you don’t love you are asking for trouble. Divorce rates are only going to get higher.

Some argue that gay parents cannot raise children as well as straight parents. Well, there are a lot of bad parents out there. Society allows criminals, murderers, people addicted to drugs, alcohol, gambling, and other bad examples to be parents. Are these people any better at parenting than gay

couples? Psychologists say that it is not the gender of the parents that nurture the child but the love of the parents. Studies have shown (see <http://www.bidstrup.com/parenbib.htm>) that children who grow up with homosexual parents are not any worse off than if they had grown up with heterosexual parents. A few researchers have even found that children of homosexual parents have shown a higher tolerance toward diversity and differences.

None of these explanations for why gay marriage shouldn't be allowed have any backbone. Many leading countries in the world allow gay marriage, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Canada, Sweden, the Netherlands. In the United States, eight states and the District of Columbia have already allowed gay marriage. It is time for the rest of us to climb aboard the train of equality and make gay marriage legal everywhere.

*“Democracy arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal.” -Aristotle*

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