

Submission
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INQUIRY INTO ADOPTION BY SAME SEX COUPLES

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On behalf of the Australian Christian Values Institute I would like to thank the NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice for the opportunity to provide the following comments to the Inquiry into whether NSW adoption laws should be amended to allow same sex couples to adopt.

Would adoption by same sex couples further the objects of the Adoption Act?

The proposal to allow same sex couples to adopt children sets the scene for a new stolen generation. Both the objects of the Act, and the adoption principles, emphasise that adoption must be in the best interests of the child, both in childhood and later life, and must be the paramount consideration in adoption law and practice. It is the view of the Australian Christian Values Institute that the adoption of children by same sex couples would not further the object of the Act, nor would it comply with the object of the Act. The right of an adult to have a child must be balanced by the greater rights of the child, including the right to be raised by a mother and father in the best of all possible circumstances. Children for adoption should not be used to legitimise or enhance same sex lifestyles. It is in the "best interests of the child", whenever possible, to be raised by a mother and a father together.

The adoption of a child by a same sex couple would mean that adoption authorities would have to make a conscious decision to expose the child to the increased risk of a life of social disadvantage, ill health and gender confusion.

Social disadvantage

Valid research has shown that children do best, scholastically and socially when raised by a mother and a father who are committed through marriage to each other and their children. In 1996, Professor Sarantakos of Charles Sturt University, carefully matched families with three types of parents – married heterosexual, cohabiting heterosexual and homosexual/lesbian. Their primary school age children were independently assessed on criteria including school academic performance, social and sporting skills, and parental support. The children of the married heterosexual couples achieved the highest scores and the children of the homosexual couples the lowest. The average achievement score of the children of married parents, cohabiting parents and homosexual couples was 7.7, 6.8 and 5.5 respectively (1). In the USA, official departmental figures have shown that 90 per cent of homeless and runaway children, 80 per cent of rapists, 75 per cent of adolescent patients in drug abuse centres and 85 per cent of imprisoned youth grew up in fatherless homes (2).

It is now well established that "Research clearly demonstrates that children growing up with two continuously married parents are less likely than other children to

experience a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and social problems, not only during childhood, but also in adulthood” (3).

Gender complementarity

The gender complementarity of a man and a woman in a committed long-term relationship is the best way to teach children the value of gender. Heterosexual relationships respect and model the difference and complementarity of the male and female genders. It is in the midst of this tension that a child finds his or her gender identity. A same sex relationship cannot do this. Children available for adoption should have the inalienable right to become a heterosexual adult if they choose to do so when they become an adult. This right is less likely to be applied if they are raised in a same sex family. A 1993 study showed that between 8 per cent and 33 per cent of adult respondents raised by homosexual couples said they considered themselves homosexual or bisexual. This percentage is far above the norm of about 1.5 to 2.5 per cent of the adult population. (4).

Family stability

In general, homosexual relationships do not offer the same stability and permanence as do heterosexual relationships. A number of studies conducted over the past few decades show that the average homosexual relationship is far from stable and monogamous. Indeed, it can instead be characterised as highly unstable and promiscuous (5). A Kinsey Institute study found that only one per cent of sexually active homosexual men had fewer than five lifetime partners (6). Another study found that “Even if we set aside infidelity and allow a generous definition of long-term relationships as those that last at least four years, under 8 per cent of either male or female homosexual relationships fit the definition. In short, there is practically no comparison possible to heterosexual marriage in terms of either fidelity or longevity” (7). It should be pointed out that while lesbians are much less promiscuous than male homosexuals, they still have a large number of partners. One study found that about 55 per cent of lesbians had between one and ten partners ever, while 35 per cent had between 10 and 100 partners (8). Children should not be made available for adoption by same sex couples because there is a higher risk of family breakdown.

Health

Children raised by same sex parents would appear to be at greater health risk than children raised by heterosexual parents. This is because homosexual practices are unhealthy and dangerous. Homosexual activities cause bodily harm to oral cavities, lungs, penis, prostate, bladder, anus, perianal areas outside the rectum, rectum, colon, vagina, uterus, pelvic area, brain, skin, blood, immune system and the other body systems (9). This has been well documented in journals such as *The Lancet*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, and *the British Medical Journal*. A number of practices entail serious health risks, as they involve the use of urine and faeces.

A 1992 study found that “fisting” is practiced by some 42 per cent of the male homosexual community. Another practice called “golden showers” was practiced by 29 per cent, and that 37 per cent of male homosexuals engage in sadomasochism (10). The report also found that 15 per cent of male homosexuals and 19 per cent of male bisexuals had sex with animals. (11). The 1995 Australian SMASH report found that 70 per cent of homosexual men with regular male partners engaged in “rimming”, 20

per cent engaged in sado-masochism, and 25 per cent engaged in group sex (12). As unpleasant as these findings are, and accepting there may be variations over time and place, they are too significant to be ignored or dismissed.

While some heterosexuals engage in some of these practices, the heterosexual percentages are in the 2-5 per cent range (13).

A male homosexual is 14 times more likely to have syphilis than a male heterosexual and eight times more likely to have hepatitis (14). American research has found that 47 per cent of male homosexuals have a history of alcohol abuse compared to 24 per cent of males generally. Thirty per cent of homosexuals – both male and female – are problem drinkers compared to 10 per cent of the general population (15). An update of the SMASH report found that 33 per cent used marijuana at least weekly, and 16 per cent used heroin, cocaine or speed at least monthly (16).

If adults wish to take these risks it is their choice. Because of the physical closeness of families, it is an unacceptable health risk to children to hand them over for adoption to same sex homes where these activities and diseases are more likely to occur.

Sexual abuse

The lifelong emotional health damage done to victims of pedophilia is now well understood and condemned. Many homosexuals regard pedophilia, especially when committed by other homosexuals, as repugnant and strenuously oppose it. However, pederasty (male pedophilia) remains endemic to the male homosexual community. Homosexual pedophiles victimise far more children than do heterosexual pedophiles. The ratio is more than 7 to 1 (17). Banners at homosexual events have been seen proclaiming, "Sex before eight or else it's too late." Others march in parades under a flag marked with the letter "P", dressed as bears, and make a point of handing out lollies to watching children. Around the world homosexual lobbies are in the forefront of campaigns to lower the age of consent. These are danger signals that cannot be ignored. If there is any doubt about this, the Committee should err on the safe side to ensure that the best interests of the child are protected. Adults can choose for themselves whether or not they wish to frequent homosexual venues, vulnerable children who are being considered for adoption would have no choice.

Conclusion

If the law or policies were to be changed to allow adoption by same sex couples, it would expose children to the increased risk of a future life of social disadvantage, ill health, sexual abuse and gender confusion, than would otherwise occur if they were adopted by heterosexual married couples. If adoption by same sex couples was allowed, it would be like playing roulette with the future of children who are to be adopted. It would set the scene for another stolen generation.

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