

**Submission
No 55**

INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW

Name: Mr Kyall Shanks

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To Whom It May Concern

I am a 19 year old male from NSW, I recently finished my HSC and am soon heading down to Melbourne to begin my tertiary studies. I myself am an openly gay member of my community and an Australian citizen. Growing up in a rural area there were not many other gay people my age in the area, and after coming out I realised why.

Coming out in a small area such as my own is a difficult enough ordeal as it is, without having to deal with the bigotry and xenophobia. Going through high school was difficult when some people would make me feel ashamed of how I was born. Even now, in this area, I am afraid to hold my partners hand for fear of the stares and comments we may receive. I am also anxious and nervous telling people we are a couple.

I feel however, that if things did begin to change, even if it was slowly, that more and more people would begin to become more accepting to the idea of homosexuality.

Today I heard a four year old tell my mother how it was weird that a lady on television was in love with another lady, this particular child not having homophobic parents. It makes me upset, and confused, as to why a four year old would question homosexuality, when his parents were fine with it. The problem, I realised, is our culture.

I feel that if the government allowed gay marriage, it would not only help now, but help future generations to realise that there is nothing wrong with being gay. The government is one of the highest forms of authority in Australia, so if our government, my government, began openly showing support and rights for homosexuals, I feel that it would change the culture of our country, making it a fairer place for all.