



GAY MARRIAGE

EXTRA:

**RODNEY CROOME'S ON-LINE FURTHER REBUTTAL
to BILL MUEHLENBERG'S REBUTTAL (in the book)**

WHY SAME-SEX MARRIAGE SHOULD BE ALLOWED

THIS CONTINUES THE AUTHORS' DEBATE ON THIS HOT TOPIC, & IS PART OF **WHY vs WHY™ GAY MARRIAGE**

RODNEY CROOME:

I will address individual issues raised by Bill Muehlenberg in his rebuttal and then end on a personal note.

On strategies for acceptance:

Mr Muehlenberg's belief that marriage equality is part of some over-arching gay "strategy" for "total acceptance" based on convincing the public homosexuals are "persecuted" is the kind of conspiracy theory blacks, Jews and other minorities will quickly recognise. Such theories cannot be proved or disproved. But history shows they wither away as the barriers of prejudice, fear and misunderstanding between different groups of citizens are overcome.

On religious freedom:

The religious freedom of those major churches opposed to marriage equality is not at stake here – at no stage have they been, or will they be, forced to solemnise same-sex marriages. Unlike churches, faith-based hospitals and welfare agencies are funded by tax-payers to provide essential services. The public expects them to treat equally all citizens who are in need of these services, including, for example atheists and unmarried opposite-sex partners. The same principle should apply to married same-sex partners.

On research:

I am disappointed Mr Muehlenberg ignores research I cite in *section 4* (in my part of **WHY vs WHY™**) which contradicts his view that marriage declines in places which allow same-sex marriages, and research I cite in *section 3* which clearly shows the benefits of marriage for opposite-sex partners *do* flow to same-sex partners where they can marry. He also wrongly declares that Australian opinion polls on marriage equality have been commissioned by "homosexual lobby groups".¹

On why I changed my mind:

It is true I was once indifferent to marriage equality (something which seems to contradict Mr Muehlenberg's belief in some grand gay strategy). My view changed because I informed myself about the importance of reform. My experience of being in an enduring, committed, loving relationship also played an important role.

As I have shown, there are many reasons for marriage equality. But there is one which is probably more important than any other. It is often unstated in debates about same-sex marriage, but it runs through almost everything else that is said on the matter.

I am talking about the quality of love, intimacy, happiness, care and commitment in same-sex relationships. At its best, the love between two men or the love between two women can endure all, sustain all, uplift all and conquer all. At its best this love is as good and true as any love. There are no studies which prove this and no legal decisions which uphold it. There is simply the experience of many tens of thousands of Australians lived quietly, joyfully and, in the face of discrimination, derision and ignorance, bravely.

For those of us who have known and lived this love, the justice of marriage equality is self-evident. For those of us who endure the injustice of marriage discrimination there is no possibility of rest until reform is finally achieved.

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¹ The 2004 Newspoll cited in section 7 was commissioned by SBS television news. The 2007 Galaxy Poll was commissioned by Get Up! The 2009 Galaxy Poll was commissioned by Australian Marriage Equality using the same question as the 2007 poll to ensure consistency.