

♀ FACE OFF: ♀

One man, one woman 36 prohibits civil rights

Jacob Ray
The Clackamas Print

Measure 36 doesn't discriminate against same-sex couples, its just preserves the institution of marriage between a man and a woman. Measure 36 puts very simple wording in our state constitution saying that marriage is between one man and one woman.

Yes, two people who love each other should be allowed to commit to each other, but that doesn't have to result in marriage. Friends commit to each other, parents commit to a child, and people commit to their pets. All of those are types of love, all produce commitment; none of them are marriage. Marriage is a special union for a man and a woman. I'm all for giving same-sex partners the title of a union, but marriage is too sacred of a thing to be changed. There are plenty of different rules that apply to marriage, such as, one can't marry more than one person at a time, or a person who is already married, a close relative or under the age of 17; and a man can't marry another man and a woman can't marry another woman. These are rules that are intact for the good of individuals and society. It's the same for everyone; same-sex couples aren't singled out. If we change these rules to say that any two people who love each other can marry, who's to say that any three



can't? I mean, if two gay people can marry, why can't a bisexual marry two partners—or a polygamist and his eight wives (or husbands)? To be fair we'd basically have to let every person marry whoever they want. Pretty soon marriage would just be a word used to say that two people are together; it wouldn't be anything special.

The argument against measure 36 is that gay and lesbian couples want the same benefits (i.e., insurance and health care) as heterosexual couples, and I believe that if the right legal documents are filed, same-sex couples can have pretty much close to the same benefits. If a man gets health coverage through his job, his wife is going to have to pay additional to have the same. In some situations a little extra effort is needed.

I have no problem with same-sex partners, and like I said before, I have no problem with calling it a union. But if we let just anybody marry, then what have those 34 years of marriage my parents have really meant? They were nothing more than "in love?" I know we're in a new millennium and a lot is changing, but sometimes certain things need to stay the same because they were meant to be that way—for now, at least.

**Only the "I" statements reflect the views of the writer; sources were collected from www.voteyeson36.org.*

Ben Maras
The Clackamas Print

Something queer is going on in the realm of the Oregon constitution this November, as citizens from all over the state will be allowed to vote on a constitutional amendment (Measure 36) which would prohibit gay and lesbian couples from marrying. Regardless of one's stance on homosexuality as a sexual orientation or practice, such an amendment would do more harm than good.

I will not try to argue the morality of the gay and lesbian lifestyle, as that would be fruitless in persuading the general public. Instead, I will argue the case against radical change to the constitution, assuming that the general public can set aside their personal beliefs on homosexuality for this brief time.

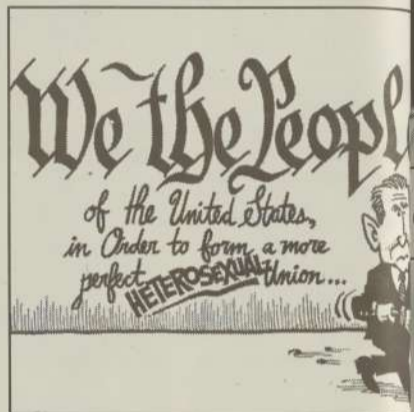
The first point to be made is that the Oregon constitution, in all of its lifetime, has not been used to prohibit civil rights. If it passes, it would only create one of the greatest "slippery slope" situations our nation has ever faced. How far off is it from banning interracial marriage? Or how about prohibiting left-handed Americans for marrying (something that the Bible is also strongly against, when interpreted literally)?

The counter-argument is that outlawing gay marriage would not be prohibiting civil rights, as they were never allowed to marry before. This does hold some water, until one considers that by following that logic, it could be deduced that not abolishing slavery would have been acceptable, because the slaves came to America as slaves, and never had freedom in America, something to which I am sure very few of the proponents of Measure 36 believe.

Why should the minority be allowed to express their will on the majority? This is something I don't believe that the American people should be allowed to vote on. As warned by the great thinkers such as Alexander de Tocqueville and John Steward Mill, one of the biggest things we have to fear about democracy is tyranny of the majority.

It's time for the government to step in, to prevent the majority from expressing what may be an unfair and uneducated opinion (there's a reason, after all, that the framers of the constitution were against democracy).

I urge the American public to vote "no" on Measure 36. A vote "no" is not a vote for gay and lesbian marriage; it is a vote to keep from dangerously amending the constitution, to leave things how they are now. It is not a vote against the sanctity of marriage, but a vote to defend the sanctity of the rights of every Oregonian, because doing otherwise would be a step backward in the great history of our nation.



"I think the term 'marriage' should be reserved for one man, one woman. But I have no problem with [homosexuals getting together] and calling it something else."



Kelsey Rauch

"I don't see why it's necessary...homosexuals aren't trying to push their beliefs onto heterosexuals, so why are heterosexuals trying to push their beliefs on us?"

STUDENT POLL: What do you think about Measure 36?



Hilary Finley

"I do believe marriage is between a man and a woman, but I'm against the measure."



DeShelly Hamilton

"I see no problems with guys marrying guys and girls marrying girls... [who ever makes person] happy."



Kelly Stratton

"You should be able to marry whoever you want."



Ryan Crawford

"They have the right to do whatever they want. They're not hurting me; they're not hurting anybody."



John Herbert

"Whose business is it? They're not bothering anybody!"



Lisa Lively

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