

Just Desserts

Civil unions lack nutritional value.

I've totally changed my mind about civil unions. Back when Vermont first offered up a steaming platter of separate and almost equal, my gal and I joyously hopped a cross-country plane to celebrate our friends' nuptials. We sang, we toasted the brides, we drenched our hankies. But now that I've sampled marriage equality, I'm hungry for the whole enchilada.



I want my equal marriage rights and I want 'em now. I used to think that if they're serving civil unions, I should be grateful and take a helping. But civil unions have little nutritive value. Who wants synthetic, half-baked, marriage lite? Even with added medical benefits and bereavement leave, civil unions aren't marriage. They don't include scads of privileges and protections that come with real, aka legal, marriage. Regardless of how many equal-ish perks are rolled into a civil union serving, I won't be satisfied.

Why settle for discrimination? Am I any less wedded than my het neighbors? How much morning breath, blanket hogging, and peculiar showering habits do I have to love, honor, and cherish before my relationship is legally equal? Come on – look at me and my domestic partner, cruising the aisles of the home improvement center, munching popcorn in front of the TV, wearing each others sweats – we are soooo married.

Civil unions shouldn't even be on the menu. We're done with the appetizers. I hate to turn my back on a good hors d'oeuvre, but how can I be fulfilled with civil crudités when I see marriage flambée served to everyone else? I'm tired of watching hets scarf down the prime rib while me and my homeys gnaw celery sticks. We're not getting fed, just fed up.

Luckily, millions of friends and allies support marriage equality. Even not particularly gay-friendly folks approve of us gays and lesbians taking vows, but for some dumb reason they don't want to call it marriage. Calling our commitments *civil unions* is more acceptable to a lot of people. Could the objection really be a simple matter of vocabulary? Can separate ever be equal? Call me a valley girl, but I don't THINK so!

Consider the future. We are never going to get a classic hit song out of love and civil union, love and civil union, go together like a ... what? Wine and communion? That's going to fly about as far as Sally Fields without her nun habit.

Even if naming our marriages *civil unions* is a step up from no recognition at all, that strategy misses the point. It would be like calling a sizzling platter of shrimp scampi *slaughtered sea-scorpions in churned bovine secretions*. Who would eat that?

While people argue over terminology, wannabe-married couples are getting impatient for equal helpings of health insurance, retirement benefits, tax exemptions and every single one of those 1,049 state and federal rights we've heard so much about. I'm sending marriage discrimination back to the kitchen to disintegrate under constitutional scrutiny like the sodomy laws did one year ago this month (yay!).

If we keep shining the heat lamp of reason on it, you know marriage discrimination will melt away. As the Wicked Witch reminded Dorothy, all in good time, my pretty.

The route to freedom isn't straight. Ha ha. Queer people know that the way to our just desserts is to be out, visible and active. We have to keep being here, being queer and getting everybody used to it. I still come out at very opportunity, still share my wedding photos with friends, coworkers and the person in front of me in line at the post office. And I vote.

We all know the marriage equality vs. civil unions debate is more than mere semantics. Discrimination is unappetizing. Prejudice is distasteful. Segregation is unsavory. Civil unions are looking tired and wilted on the serving tray. Bring on the feast.

Writer Sally Sheklow and her wife dine out of wedlock in Eugene, Oregon. To support marriage equality visit www.dontamend.com

EDITORIAL Editor Ted Taylor
Executive/Arts Editor Lois Wadsworth **News Editor** Aria Seligmann
Contributing Editor Anita Johnson
Staff Writers Alan Pittman, Bobbie Willis
Calendar Editor Ben Fogelson **Contributing Writers** Brett Campbell, Rachel Foster, Jerry Harris, Kate Rogers Gessert, James Johnston, Sharleen Nelson, Mary O'Brien, Sylvie Pederson, Vanessa Salvia, Sally Sheklow, Lance Sparks, Martha Ulman West **Interns** Emma Juhlin, Kate Storm
ART DEPARTMENT
Art Director/Production Manager Kevin Dougherty
Graphic Artist/Webmaster James Bateman
Graphic Artists Todd Cooper
Contributing Photographers Kurt Jensen, Paul Neevel
ADVERTISING
National Sales Manager Mark Frisbee
Display Marketing Consultant Jennifer D'Angelo, Rob Weiss
Advertising Traffic Coordinator Geneva Miller
Classified Manager Jeffrey Stout
Classified Marketing Consultant Bob Britto

BUSINESS Director of Sales and Marketing Bill Shreve
Circulation Manager Deena Miller **Controller** Paula Hoemann
Distributors Bob Becker, Maggie Garrison, Yona C. Riel, Tim Risch, Jackson Stephens, Carrie Wedmore, Pedalers Express
Printing Signature Graphics
HOW TO REACH US BY E-MAIL:
 (letters): editor@eugeneweekly.com
 (advertising): ads@eugeneweekly.com
 (classifieds): class@eugeneweekly.com
 (personals): romance@eugeneweekly.com
 (calendar): cal@eugeneweekly.com
 (music/clubs/special shows): music@eugeneweekly.com
 (art/openings/galleries): visualarts@eugeneweekly.com
 (performance/theater): performance@eugeneweekly.com
 (literary arts/readings): books@eugeneweekly.com
 (movies/film screenings): movies@eugeneweekly.com
 (circulation): distribution@eugeneweekly.com

Eugene Weekly • 1251 Lincoln Street • Eugene, OR 97401 • 541.484.0519 • fax 541-484-4044

D is for DAD!
SWEET POTATO PIE
 Get Yo Daddy Some PIE!
 ★ HEMP clothing & gifts ★ Kickass GLASS
 ★ Hats, t-shirts, CDs, wallets
 ★ SEEDLESS, HEMPY'S, NAKED & more ...
EXTENDED SUMMER HOURS!
 Mon-Sat 10-9/ Sun 12-6 ★ Corner of 11th & Willamette

TONS of Gifts under \$10

buy sell trade

fashion that pays to be me

Buffalo EXCHANGE
 New & Recycled Fashion

131 E. 5th Ave (between Oak & Pearl) 687-2805 BUFFALOEXCHANGE.COM

Taste of India

Buffet Lunch Special

\$6.99 all you can eat. 7 days a week.

Sunday Dinner Buffet Special

\$10.99 all you can eat (children's prices vary).

★ Voted Best Indian Restaurant -Eugene Weekly Readers 1998-2000

Free soft drinks, tea, coffee. (With lunch buffet)

Catering available ♦ Full menu available to go
 7 Days a week 11:00-3:00 & 5:00-10:00
 2495 Hilyard St., Eugene, OR 97405 ♦ ph & fax (541) 485-9698 ♦ ph 485-9560
<http://tasteofindia.uswestdex.com>