

Here comes the pride

Kris King – June 17th 2012

<http://www.rantinaminor.co.uk/2012/05/you-label-me-i-libel-you/>

Once again I am compelled to begin my post with an apology for the complete lack of any kind of ranty, word-based intellectual comestibles over the last few weeks. I'm afraid things have been stupidly busy around here again, with a large proportion of my time spent building a [website for my dad and his recently published book](#) (go there now and buy it, particularly if you like wizards, quests, and magic, and *especially* if you have kids). With all the running around (well, sitting down, if I'm honest) trying to organise things – server upgrades, domain registration, installing software – getting everything set up, and making absolutely sure that the whole thing was perfect and ready in time for an immovable, near-future release date, it sometimes felt like I was involved in planning a bloody wedding. And, do you know, that gloriously ham-fisted and clunky attempt at a segue leads me very shoddily on to what it was I wanted to talk about this week? The ongoing and now, thanks to certain presidents, very high-profile worldwide campaign for LGBT marriage equality.

So as not to be too hard on myself for that dodgy effort to marry (pun intended) the seemingly disparate subjects of my dad's website ([go there](#), go there now) and marriage equality, I should stress that I'd actually had this subject in mind for a post since a great friend and colleague of mine, the erstwhile Mrs Cwosby (formerly Miss Wendle – I shan't explain), had a fantastic bash at the National Marine Aquarium a few weeks ago in celebration of her recent wedding. Having taken place in the same week that President Barack Obama announced his tacit support for marriage equality, it seemed as if this serendipitous union (obvious and inevitable connotations intended) of headline news and events on my social calendar was announcing to me, via a nicely printed invitation with pictures of rings, roses, and an insistence on RSVP-ing ASAP or GTFO, what my next post should be about. You see, although Raves and I have no immediate plans to go trotting across life's imposing moors together on the matrimony pony, the world would still not be keen on the idea if we did.

Despite living in the super-modern and fabulously progressive twenty-first century, there are still ridiculous inequalities that have yet to be addressed, be they economic, social, or cultural. For most of us enjoying a nominally comfortable existence in the comparative utopia that is the western hemisphere in 2012, the form of disparity we are most likely to see between people is in the way they are treated by others. For those of us who fall under the pink and rainbow speckled banner of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, for example, we are compelled to go about our daily lives with the knowledge that, because we weren't oh-so-fortunate enough to have been born in to the right bodies, and with the desire to only ever rub our rude bits against and inside someone with the complementary wobbly parts (like sexual Velcro), a large number of those people who do feel, therefore, that the relationships we forge with others don't deserve the same level of recognition or protection – as if they're invalid, unnatural, or just plain "wrong".

To say that two people should not be allowed to marry because of the way their relationship is judged by others to be bogus is nothing more than offensively arrogant, self-righteous bullshit, and is exactly the kind of sanctimonious, posturing wankery one comes to expect from religion. Yes, scratch the surface of any opposing attitude towards LGBT rights and you will invariably find a dyed-in-the-wool bigot who bases their objections on some ancient text inspired by a tyrannical god, or the pious and venom-spitting pronouncements of the smug, beatific hypocrites who claim to speak on his behalf. I'm not saying that there aren't non-religious people who are anti-gay and will campaign against equal rights for LGBT folk, but they're exceedingly few and far between. If you fancy a challenge, try to find a non-biblical argument against marriage equality (or homosexuality in general) that doesn't, when you start taking it apart, ultimately devolve into making appeals to some ostensibly sentient, intelligent entity – even if it's just "nature".

"But homosexuality is unnatural", sayeth many intolerant arse-mongers without the slightest hint of intelligence or basic human decency. Unnatural, you say? You mean like how The Twitter you're using to espouse your spiteful idiocy is unnatural? Or like how the house you live in and the car you drive are unnatural? What about the incubator your dangerously premature baby relied on for those first

days of its fragile life? Is that natural? Did the hospital find it growing in a forest somewhere? And what is natural anyway? Well, shit, for a start; shit is natural. So is death. Pain is natural too. Do you know what else is natural? The parasitic wasp that feasts on caterpillars and eats them from the inside out, keeping them alive and in agony for as long as possible so that the growing wasp can enjoy fresh meat. Want to know another naturally occurring phenomenon? Homosexuality. It has been observed in over 450 different species in the animal kingdom (and, conversely, as the saying goes, homophobia has only been observed in one).

If your argument against homosexuality, and by extension equal marriage, hinges on whether or not it's natural (it is), you have no argument. So what next? How about the fact that such relationships don't produce children? Fantastic, well, that invalidates the marriages of straight couples who are voluntarily childless, infertile, or simply too old to have children, as well as straight single parents who have been widowed or deserted by their spouse. It also insults those straight people who manage to raise children perfectly well without feeling the need to get married, not to mention the tiny little issue of how there are plenty of LGBT relationships that result in children through IVF, adoption, or surrogacy. Obviously, this issue of children is yet another rotten plank in the argument of anti-equality knobbers who believe that children would somehow be turned gay by the influence of their gay parents, in much the same way that hanging around Gérard Depardieu and Emmanuelle Béart for long enough will turn you French (strangely, though, growing up with homophobic parents will often result in equally bigoted offspring).

Having dispensed with such a ridiculously silly idea (particularly when, by extension, it dictates that straight parents will only ever produce straight children), we move on to one so monumentally stupid that it would take a city planner handing over all architectural and engineering decisions to a four-year old whose greatest wish is to build a skyscraper entirely out of blancmange in order to look rational by comparison. This is the tragically bonkers idea that marriage equality would be a slippery slope towards legalising both paedophilia and the right of people to marry their pets or items of furniture. Because, in the festering, diseased mind of an anti-gay bigot, where brain matter has seemingly been replaced with the contents of a family-sized tin of Spam, children, dogs, horses, even four-wheeled hostess trollies (either in beech or with brushed-steel effect finish) *all* have the same legal standing, mental capacity, and rational ability to sign a contract. What must it be like to live in such a person's world, constantly regarding the occupants of their front-room aquarium with suspicion because of the ever-present threat those philanderous cardinal tetras must pose to the sanctity of their marriage?

Just as a fish's lustful thoughts for your spouse will have them plotting to seduce your better half while you're at work, thus destroying your lifelong commitment to one another, so to will the demands for equality under the law from homosexuals end up causing irreparable damage to the integrity of your marriage ... or not, as anyone with two neurons to rub together will tell you. Once all of the other piss-poor, ill-conceived, jelly-brained arguments have been exhausted by apologists for discrimination and bullying, this is where they frequently end up; baseless pleading that marriage has some kind of special, other-worldly preciousness to it that, while it can't ever be quantified or explained, it will *definitely* go away if you let the botty-botherers, gender-benders, and women in comfortable shoes try to share in it. It's like how you can be struck dumb with the astonishing beauty of a sunset one minute, then in the next feel like you're watching a giant, disgusting orange sore that oozes infected, foul-smelling pus all over the horizon as soon as you discover that a gay likes it.

By suggesting that the sanctity, or value, of existing marriages can in any way be harmed, not just by LGBT people, but by *anyone* outside of the individuals that comprise them, is to declare all matrimonial relationships more fragile than a dandelion in a hurricane. To imagine that two random strangers, who may live on the opposite end of the entire fucking planet, could have a fatally detrimental impact upon your marriage is to concede that there is **absolutely no value whatsoever** to your relationship. "We've been together for forty amazing years, had three beautiful children, and seven grandchildren. But a couple of gay guys 200 miles away in Kidderminster have gotten married – it's all over, honey, pack your fucking bags and get out – we're done". If your relationship can be tarnished into worthlessness by the unrelated actions of people you will never meet in your lifetime, what kind of bitter divorce row are you going to end up in when one of you farts in bed or leaves a buttery knife in the jar of marmalade?

The value of a marriage is embodied solely within those who compose its structure and, as such, it can never be harmed by external forces; if it fails, it only ever does so from the inside out. I don't recall the parade of straight couples marching their way into news rooms and government offices the world over to complain at how Kim Kardashian's 72-day marriage (or, before that, Brittany Spears'

55-hour drunken vow-spree) was causing demonstrable harm to their wedded bliss. Similarly, I'm unable to find the merest trace of any of the campaign groups who formed to lobby governments in order that they might prevent Zsa Zsa Gabor from walking up the aisle for the ninth time. As I said, marriages can only be destroyed from within and, at the end of the day, the only threat posed to them by the gay community exercising its right to marry is when the marriage in question is of the lavender variety where one of the participants is secretly gay (makes you wonder whether there's an ulterior motive for the vociferousness of their protestations).

Whenever you hear someone talking about the sanctity of marriage, you can bet your arse, and the arse of almost anyone with an arse, that religious belief is likely the predominant influence behind the opinion being expressed. For centuries, religion has tried desperately to convince people that not only have they got something to say on the subject of marriage but that they are the sole arbiters of its very *definition*. "Marriage is between one man and one woman", they insist, "the bible says so!" Of course such asinine proclamations require that great pains are taken to ignore how the bible also says that a marriage is between a woman and her rapist (at the insistence of her father and for financial remuneration), between a man and his concubines, between a man and many women (who he owns as property), or between a woman and her deceased husband's brother – naturally the woman doesn't get a say in any of these scenarios being, as she is, the inferior product of the rib-funded desires of a bored and horny animal-namer.

Religion must also, in these arguments, completely gloss over the fact that marriage, and the concept of bonding ceremonies and rituals of union, pre-date any of the religions we have today by around *15,000 years* (maybe more). They don't own the definition any more than they were responsible for its creation in the first place, and to complain about it changing betrays not just a pious arrogance but also complete blindness to their own history. Many christian sects, for instance, used to consider marriage a massive sin, believing instead that chastity was the only way one could gain admission to the Cloud Land Après-Vie party; only when they realised a few centuries ago that there was some serious coin to be made by charging the gullible peasants to have their unions blessed by the man upstairs did they do a complete volte-face and jump aboard the bliss bus, giving weddings a churchly thumbs up. In nearly all things religion fails to set the standard or lead the march, instead choosing to follow behind secularism like a grubby, ambulance-chasing lawyer trying to figure out how best to exploit the situation for its own ends.

When it comes to complaining about the "redefinition" of marriage, the one faith that needs to keep its fucking mouth shut is the Church of England. So short its memory that, while bitching recently about the erosion of "traditional" marriage over the government's plans to bring about equality for the LGBT community, they conveniently forgot (as they always do) that the establishment of their *entire* institution was predicated on granting the divorce of **one man**. In 1534, King Henry VIII (the fat one who burst) severed all ties with the catholic church, told the pope where he could stick his infallibility, and established the state church so that he could ditch his wife and marry again without the clergy constantly telling him he was going to hell for it. Five hundred years later and we've got the self-same moral brigands daring to position themselves as the defenders of "traditional" marriage while using their considerable influence to deprive others of their rights. Can you say "sanctimonious scumbags", kids? I thought you could ...

And, while we're at it, what's all this "traditional" marriage shit? Whose tradition, and from when? Traditions change all the time, just like the definitions of marriage (60 years ago, it was between a man and woman of the same colour; 150 years before that it was between a man and a woman's family, with whom there was a financial arrangement). There was a time in some cultures when incest was a tradition, you don't see them rallying around to protect that, do you? It's not as if the foundations of society will be irrevocably altered and we won't be able to adapt to such earth-shattering changes, I mean we're coping pretty well with women voters, modern medicine, space travel, and free education, aren't we? And, speaking of education, it's not as if children will be forced by their teachers to learn all the gruesome details about gay sex any more than they're required to be taught about every last intimate aspect of the exact same acts being performed by straight people (really, how many kids are instructed in the finer points of man-on-woman rim jobs, anal sex, and bukkake parties?)

When President Obama made his announcement a few weeks ago, the right-wing went into absolute meltdown. In an instant, every TV screen, radio station, newspaper, and website was full-to-bursting with rampant bigots engaged in futile attempts to justify their disgustingly intolerant positions. Bloviating, drug-addicted, gut bucket and professional douchebag Rush Limbaugh began spewing the usual anti-gay "war on marriage" rhetoric while skating gleefully over the fact that he'd not long ago

persuaded the famously un-straight Elton John to perform at the radio host's *fourth* wedding. The foaming mouths of Fox News pundits, and other conservative and/or christian shit shovellers predicted that the black community would drop Obama in a heartbeat, and his failure to secure re-election in November was all but guaranteed. It must have come as a shock to them when a Washington Post / ABC News poll found that [more than half of Americans supported same-sex marriage](#), including 59% of blacks (the subsequent [announcement by the NAACP of their support](#) proved another significant nail in the coffin of their argument).

If the patently absurd claims of the right (particularly the seething cauldron of self-righteous bigotry that is the National Organisation for Marriage), that they were all about protecting the institution of marriage, they would be campaigning with every breath for the illegalisation of divorce before they even *thought* about tackling the issue of same-sex marriage. If it was about ensuring children had a mother *and* a father then they would be instead lobbying to have the children of the recently widowed and the single put in to the care of the state. The truth, sadly, is that these people don't care about marriage, let alone children; their only real interest lies in enshrining their bigotry into law, and further cementing their positions of undeserved privilege by asserting what little influence they still possess in forcing everyone else to live life by *their* rules (this is especially true of the church). Marriage is a **right**, and people don't vote for rights ... that's why they're rights.

Marriage is an agreement between two people to confer and delegate certain rights and protections upon one another that are recognised and supported under the law ... **that's it**. Anything else that a marriage might be is down to the individuals concerned, and we have no right to force our criteria for getting married upon *anyone*. So long as no-one comes to harm in the process, it's none of our fucking business why people get married, or what they do with (or to) each other once they have. If people want to marry for convenience, sex, citizenship, money, power, fame, privilege, companionship, or simply out of a dread fear of dying alone, who the fuck are we to tell them they can't? Why should love be the only valid reason? Love takes a near-infinite variety of forms ... so should marriage ... just because two people's idea of love is not yours does not give you the right to stop them from having that recognised.

And before you dismiss this as yet another example of a liberal trying to promote the "gay agenda", I should point out that there's *no such thing* ... unless, that is, that you count going to work, eating crisps, watching "Horrible Histories", feeding the pets, and hoping one day to be treated *equally*.

