

**Ten  
Persuasive  
Answers  
to the  
Question . . .**

**“Why not  
gay  
marriage?”**

**Glenn T. Stanton**

Focus on the Family defends natural marriage and opposes same-sex marriage whenever and wherever we're invited. And we've met some interesting opponents, especially in debates on college campuses around the nation. Over time, we've learned which arguments have been most persuasive, and we want to share with you what we've learned.

But we don't want the message to stop with you. We want you to teach these debate-tested arguments to other people in your churches and communities.

First, though, we encourage you to make a friend of someone who identifies as a homosexual. Make it a real genuine friendship, one that will force you to argue this issue in love, not just in truth.

Now, here are the 10 questions relevant to this debate. Master these responses and you will be well-suited to defend the family.

*The text of this pamphlet is the script of a presentation that Glenn Stanton, Focus on the Family's same-sex marriage expert, uses to teach communities how to intelligently and persuasively engage the same-sex marriage issue. To request this presentation on DVD call Focus on the Family at (800) A-FAMILY (232-6459) or log on to [family.org](http://family.org).*

In order to appreciate why it is so necessary that you learn how to handle this critical issue, consider this comment from a leader of one of the most powerful same-sex marriage lobbies:

*“We’re not going to win at the ballot box until we start winning at the water cooler and in the church pews.”<sup>1</sup>*

The battle on this issue is at the water cooler and in the church pews. Here are *THE* 10 questions relevant to this debate. Master the responses to these questions and you will be well-suited to defend the family.

## Question 1

“How will my same-sex marriage hurt your marriage?”

We’re asked this question in nearly every public debate. Our opponent usually brings it up while pointing to his or her partner, whom we meet just before the debate.

If this were *only* about *your* marriage, we say, then maybe we could work something out. If we’re only talking about the two of you, then no real harm will be done. But we are not only talking about you two.

Same-sex proponents are asking *everyone* — *all* of society — to dramatically and permanently alter their

definition of family, to say that male and female are not essential for marriage, family and society. They want us to believe male and female are merely optional for the family.

Saying male and female don't really matter is harmful to all of us.

## Question 2

“Is same-sex marriage like interracial marriage?”

Same-sex marriage and interracial marriage are nothing alike. Segregation was an evil social problem. Marriage as an exclusively heterosexual union is profound social good.

Racism was about power and suppression . . . about keeping the races apart, and that is *wrong*.

Marriage is about bringing male and female together, and that is *good*.

Marriage has nothing to do with race. It has everything to do with a husband and wife working together to create and care for the next generation.



Striking down bans on interracial marriage *affirmed* marriage by saying that any woman has a right to marry any man. Same-sex marriage *redefines* marriage — saying men and women are optional for the family.

And what is more, it is a very different thing for a child to say, “I have a black mother and a white father, than to say, “I have two moms and no father.”

There is no research showing interracial parenting is developmentally harmful to children, but literally thousands of studies indicate that children are hindered developmentally when they are denied their mothers or fathers.<sup>2</sup>

What is most troubling about this argument is it implies that people who value the necessary contributions men and women bring to marriage are bigots. This is a vile implication and has no place in civil discourse!

## Question 3

“Where does it stop?”

If we say marriage is not about husband and wife, mother and father, where do we stop in our redefinition? Andrew Sullivan, a homosexual writer, says, “The right to marry whomever you wish is a fundamental civil right.”<sup>3</sup>

Really?

What would he say to Jonathan Yarbrough and Cody Rogahn? They were the *first* couple on May 17, 2004, to get a

same-sex marriage license in Provincetown, Mass. When the media asked Yarbrough about their relationship, he said, “I think it’s possible to love more than one person and have more than one partner. . . . In our case, it is. We have an open marriage.”<sup>4</sup>

What will we tell these men when they want to bring their new love interests into their marriage?

When Cheryl Jacques, former director of the homosexual lobbying group Human Rights Campaign (HRC), was asked why same-sex marriage wouldn’t lead to multiple-party marriages, she said “because I don’t approve of that.”<sup>5</sup>

Wow!

Here’s our question for Cheryl: “How come your disapproval of polygamy is more reasonable than my disapproval of same-sex marriage?”

### Thought Control?

Same-sex marriage is not about tolerance; same-sex homes are tolerated in society. This is about forcing everyone to accept these experimental families.

Here’s another question: If same-sex marriage is legalized, could the statement, “children need a mother and



father” be deemed hate speech? It is becoming exactly that in Massachusetts.

Swedish Pastor Ake Green was threatened with prison for preaching from the Bible about homosexuality.

Only months after same-sex marriage became legal in some parts of Canada, legislators there passed a law that carries a maximum two-year jail sentence for saying certain things about homosexuals.

### Heather Has Two Mommies K-12

And what about classroom materials? Imagine that your children’s reading books will show Suzie going to feed the ducks hand-in-hand with her two dads. But the ducks — because we can’t get away from nature — will be in male/female pairs!

Consider a recent National Public Radio story from Boston. An eighth-grade teacher there teaches about gay sex “thoroughly and explicitly.” When asked if parents complained about their children learning such explicit material, this teacher said, “Give me a break. It’s legal now.”<sup>6</sup>

### Religious Freedom

Don’t be surprised, either, when churches are forced to perform same-sex wedding ceremonies.

Does anyone really believe the ACLU will not challenge churches when they refuse to honor their “constitutionally protected” same-sex marriage? In fact, the Catholic church

is being challenged in Canada because a local parish refused to rent out their church reception hall when they learned the reception was for a lesbian couple.<sup>7</sup>

The fact is, once same-sex marriage is legalized, there is no logical stopping point. When you tear marriage away from its moorings, the ship can drift anywhere.

## Question 4

“Can’t we all just get along by having religious marriage and civil marriage?”

Some ask, “Why can’t you just keep your religious idea of marriage, and just give us our own kind of civil marriage?”

Well, marriage is more than a religious institution. It shows up in *all* civilizations, not just Christian or religious ones.

Actually, marriage is a human institution that involves both church and state. Churches are interested in making sure marriages are healthy and strong, and city hall — as well as state and federal governments — is interested in what marriage provides





society. Maggie Gallagher, a columnist who writes often about marriage, explains:

There is scarcely a dollar that state and federal government spends on social programs that is not driven in large part by family fragmentation: crime, poverty, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, school failure, mental and physical health problems.<sup>8</sup>

Every society needs men and women to cooperate in founding homes and raising children, and marriage is the way *all* societies accomplish this.

## Question 5

“What public good does marriage provide?”

Marriage produces and raises the next generation of humanity, which every society needs. If you don't believe this is a need, look at the current depopulation trends in much of Europe. Governments there are realizing that a dearth of childbearing couples raises many serious social and economic issues.

Spin a globe and pick any place on earth and visit that place at any time in human history; you will find that they do marriage one way — *between men and women*. There may be other diversities, such as number of spouses and division of labor, but marriage is *always* heterosexual.

Why do we find this global and historic universality of marriage?

- Is it because Jerry Falwell or Dr. Dobson have gone everywhere, throughout all time, and forced marriage on all cultures?
- Is it a political trick of the Republican Party?
- Did the Catholic Church enforce it on everyone, everywhere?

No.

Nature enforces and imposes marriage upon all human civilizations, and it does so with very little tolerance.

Conversely, there is no public need for the same-sex family. If there were, societies would have created such families to meet the need. But they have not, because same-sex “marriage” meets a personal desire of a few adults, not society as a whole.

Anthropologists tell us marriage, as a heterosexual institution, does four primary jobs. It is the only institution that provides these things, and *every* society needs marriage to do them.

## 1) Marriage socializes men

Anthropologists tell us that a society’s most serious problem is the unattached male. Marriage is the answer. Natural marriage socializes men by channeling male sexuality and aggression in socially productive ways. And it is women who do this through marriage.

Gail Collins, editor of the *New York Times* editorial page, wrote a book titled *America's Women*, which examines the role of women in American culture. In an Oct. 9, 2003, interview on National Public Radio, Collins said, “the most important implicit role women play in society was to make men behave.”<sup>9</sup> Other scholars have recognized the same thing.<sup>10</sup>

But same-sex marriage will not socialize males, because males do not socialize other males. The lack of monogamy and relational durability in gay male relationships is evidence of this.

Same-sex marriage fails in this first purpose of marriage.

## 2) Marriage regulates sexuality

By socializing men, marriage regulates sexuality. Marriage establishes sexual guardrails, which are a requirement for successful societies. We cannot survive with everybody doing whatever they want, sexually. Every society must have rules, mores and standards about sexual behavior, and marriage is how societies manage human sexuality.

Research is very clear: societies that weaken these sexual standards end up with unexpected social problems.<sup>11</sup>

There is no evidence that same-sex marriage would serve society in regulating sexuality, and as such it fails this second public purpose of marriage.

### 3) Marriage protects women from exploitive males.

When we do not have a social norm of monogamy, women become commodities — things to be collected, used and then discarded. Marriage helps protect women by regulating sex.

When women socialize men through marriage and parenthood, men are more likely to care for and respect their wives and other women. When fewer men are married to women, fewer men care for and respect women.

A wealth of research shows that abuse of women by their partners or strangers is lowest in married homes and highest in cohabiting and dating situations.<sup>12</sup>

Same-sex marriage fails the third purpose of marriage in its inability to protect women.


### 4) Marriage provides mothers and fathers for children

Healthy children define a growing society. And marriage is the way we ensure the next generation grows up with the irreplaceable benefit of their mother and father.

A loving and compassionate society comes to the aid of motherless and fatherless children, but no compassionate society *intentionally* subjects children to motherless or fatherless families. *But this is what every same-sex home does — and for no other reason but to satisfy adult desire.*

So, same-sex marriage fails in fulfilling the fourth public purpose of marriage.

No society anywhere has been able to sustain itself with a buffet-like mentality of family, where you simply go through the line, pick and choose what suits you and one choice is just as good as another.



Every society must encourage marriage

- makes men productive
- regulates sexuality
- protects women
- gives children a mom and dad

## Question 6

“Is it healthy to subject children to experimental families?”

Not all married couples have children, but most do. And not all same-sex married couples will want children, but many of them will. So the argument for same-sex marriage *is* the argument for the same-sex family.

No society at any time — primitive or developed, ancient or modern — has ever raised a generation of children in same-sex homes.

Same-sex marriage will subject a generation of children to the status of lab rats in a vast, untested, social experiment.

In *The Lesbian Parenting Book*, the authors admit that in founding lesbian homes, “our children are not the only ones who may find themselves in uncharted territory.”<sup>13</sup>

Notice the words “uncharted territory.” That sounds like another word for “experiment.”

They continue: “Many of our visions are still new, even for us. It can be exhilarating—and sometimes scary—to be painting a new and different lesbian family tree.”<sup>14</sup>

Again, note their adjectives: “scary” and “exhilarating.” These words seem appropriate for bungee jumping or a roller-coaster ride, but not childrearing.

And here’s what they say about what it would mean to raise boys in lesbian homes:

It will be interesting to see over time whether lesbians’ sons have an easier or harder time developing their gender identity than do boys with live-in fathers.<sup>15</sup>

The key phrase: “it will be interesting to see.”

We live in a warning label society — warning labels everywhere tell us no animals were harmed in the testing of this or that particular product. But the warning label on the same-sex family is “it will be interesting to see.”

Do you think it will be “interesting” to subject millions of children to these experimental families?

## Question 7

“But haven’t medical and psychological groups said same-sex parenting is fine?”

We often hear it said that the American Academy of Pediatrics supports same-sex parenting. And so does the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association.

“Who are you to say they are wrong?” we’re asked.

Well, the AAP and APA and AMA *are* wrong. Let’s examine why.

Here’s the American Academy of Pediatrics’ statement:

“[T]here is a considerable body of professional literature that suggests that children with parents who are homosexual have the same advantages and the same expectations for health, adjustment and development as children whose parents are heterosexual.”<sup>16</sup>

Now how did the AAP — all the pediatricians — come to this decision? Did they gather all the best pediatricians together and carefully study the literature, or did they do it another way?

They did it another way.

They made this decision with a select committee of nine people. And once they made this statement, the reaction of the larger membership of the Academy was phenomenal!

Consider this e-mail, written by the lead author of the AAP's study, and what it says about the larger membership's response:

The AAP has received more messages—almost all of them CRITICAL—from members about the recent Policy Statement on [same-sex adoption] than it has EVER received on any other topic. This is a serious problem, as it means that it will become harder to continue the work that we have been doing to use the AAP as a vehicle for positive change.<sup>17</sup> (emphasis in original)

Consider that last statement: “. . . use the AAP as a vehicle for positive change.” *Is this careful science or blatant activism?*

The AAP and these other professional medical organizations cannot make statements about how same-sex families serve child-well being.

Why?

Because we have not performed the experiment yet!

The AAP admits there are no large populations of children raised in same-sex homes to study:

The small and non-representational samples studied and the relatively young age of most of the children suggest some reserve. . . . Research exploring the diversity of parental relationships among gay and lesbian parents is just beginning.<sup>18</sup>

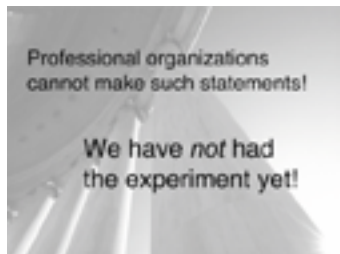


Yet within sentences of these recognized cautions, the Academy claims:

[T]he weight of evidence gathered during several decades using diverse samples and methodologies is persuasive in demonstrating that there is no systematic difference between gay and nongay parents in emotional health, parenting skills, and attitudes toward parenting.<sup>19</sup>

It's also worth noting that while the AAP states the kids who grow up in same-sex homes look pretty much like children who grow up in heterosexual homes, they are both right and wrong. The fine print of the Academy's study tells the full story. They report that children who grew up in same-sex homes had outcomes similar to children who grew up in heterosexual *divorced* and *step-family* homes.<sup>20</sup> That is another way of saying kids who grew up in same-sex homes *didn't* look like kids who grow up with their own mother and father!

How did a small group of pediatricians with too little data and conflicting analyses come to such a definitive conclusion



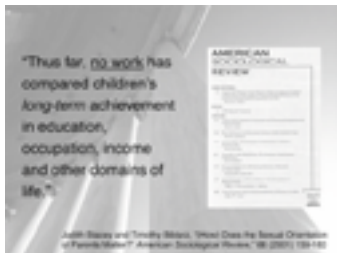
about the benefits of same-sex marriage? Isn't this the definition of prejudice, to draw a conclusion before all the facts are gathered?

But consider what another major study on same-sex marriage says.

The Stacey/Biblarz study is used widely by same-sex marriage proponents to show that such families are not harmful to children. And this is indeed the conclusion the authors offer. But regarding research done on children raised in same-sex homes, they admit,

“Thus far, *no work* has compared children’s long-term achievements in education, occupation, income, and other domains of life”<sup>21</sup> (emphasis added).

*How can we draw a conclusion on the long-term impact of same-sex parenting if no long-term research has been done?*



## Question 8

“How do we know what kind of families children need?”

All of the family experimentation over the past 30 years — no-fault divorce, the sexual revolution, cohabitation and widespread fatherlessness — have been documented failures, harming adults and children in far deeper ways, for longer periods of time, than even the most conservative among us ever imagined.

Why do we think this radical new experiment will somehow bring good things?

No pediatrician or child development theorist would look at a child, see the problems that child has and say, “I know exactly what that child needs, I’m going to write a prescription for a same-sex home.”

Every child-development theory tells us kids do best when they are raised by their own mothers and fathers. And it’s interesting that even more liberal organizations are starting to understand this.

Child Trends, in a recent research brief, explains:

An extensive body of research tells us that children do best when they grow up with both biological parents. . . . Thus, it is not simply the presence of two parents, as some have assumed, but the presence of *two biological parents*

that seems to support children's development.<sup>22</sup>

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), also finds:

Most researchers now agree that together these studies support the notion that, on average, children do best when raised by their two married, biological parents.<sup>23</sup>



By definition, no child living in a two-parent same-sex home is living with both biological parents. As a result, every child living in such a home is living in a home that is less than best.

## Question 9

“Is the same-sex family about the needs of children or the wants of adults?”

We can learn a lot from the world's most famous lesbian mom: Rosie O'Donnell.

In an interview on ABC's "Primetime Live" a few years ago, Diane Sawyer asked, "Would it break your heart if he [Rosie's 6-year-old son Parker] said, 'I want a mommy and a daddy?'"

Rosie said, "No. And he has said that."

Diane said, "He has?"

Rosie answered, "Of course he has. But as I said to my son, Parker, 'If you were to have a daddy, you wouldn't have me as a mommy because I'm the kind of mommy who wants another mommy.'"<sup>24</sup>

Can anyone say that is a good parenting ethic? The child *needs* a daddy, but he is told "no" because the parent has *wants*, and those wants come before the child's needs.

Many people say marriage is about legal benefits and privileges — Social Security benefits and hospital visitation rights, and children should be given these benefits and protections. But little Parker has never asked, "Mama, why can't we have all the rights and benefits and protections of marriage?" Parker asks, "Mama, why can't I have a daddy?" And again, the answer is you can't have what you *need* because I *want* what I want.

Why does Parker want a daddy?

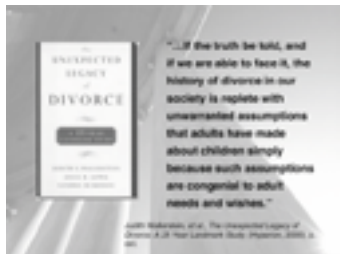
Not because Rosie enrolled him in a fundamentalist day school where they indoctrinated him with that idea.

He's reminded of the lack of his father all over the place. He sees it in the fact that he's different from all the rest of the

adults in his house. When he looks in the mirror, he wonders if he looks like his dad. When he bathes, physically and psychologically he's reminded that he's not like the women in his house.

*Where is this adult male  
who is like me, whom  
I can emulate, whom I can  
follow after?*

Today's experiment in same-sex marriage is similar to our nation's experiment with divorce 40 years ago. Dr. Judith Wallerstein, one of the world's leading researchers on how divorce impacts children, observes:



We made radical changes in the family without realizing how it would change the experience of growing up. We embarked on a gigantic social experiment without any idea about how the next generation would be affected. If the truth be told, and if we are able to face it, the history of divorce in our society is replete with unwarranted assumptions that adults have made about children simply because such assumptions are congenial to adult needs and wishes.<sup>25</sup>

Today, we are making unwarranted assumptions about children simply because such assumptions arise from adult wishes. We must realize how this new gigantic social experiment will change the experience of growing up.

## Question 10

“Does gender really matter?”

This is the question this whole issue comes down to. If same-sex families and male-female families are interchangeable — like vanilla or chocolate ice cream, mere preference — and that is exactly what our opponents want us to believe, then . . .

- male or female,
- mother and father,
- husband and wife,

. . . do not really matter for the family or society. We are told, “you can have a man and women in your family if you want, but neither is necessary.”

The same-sex marriage proponents take what I call a “Mr. Potato Head” theory of humanity: There is no real difference between Mr. and Mrs. Potato Head. They have the same central core, but merely external interchangeable parts. There’s no real difference.

That’s exactly what many believe. But no.

But humanity is demonstrated in our complementary beings as male and female.

And male and female *really* mean something.

Our maleness and femaleness go right to the very core of our being. Every person matters as a male or female. Each has what the other needs but lacks.

Love will not be enough to help two dads guide a scared, young girl through her first period or help her pick out her first bra. These men will have very little to say because they've never experienced these things. Likewise, what kind of message would two lesbian moms teach a little girl about loving a man or a little boy about growing into a man?

The same-sex family celebrates sameness.

Any family that intentionally rejects either male or female — saying either is not necessary — cannot be viewed as good and virtuous in a society that esteems the unique value of both male and female.

The idea that male and female are replaceable is really an anti-human message.

## Recap

These ten questions and answers are summarized in the following points:

- Marriage serves a necessary public purpose and it does so as a heterosexual institution, serving both religious and civic needs.



- If we redefine marriage for this experiment, where do we stop?
- Same-sex marriage is nothing like interracial marriage.
- It is cruel to subject children to experimental families.
- The professional medical organizations that have supported same-sex parenting don't have enough research data to do so.
- Thousands of studies show that children do best with married mothers and fathers.
- Any family that says male and female are optional is not a good human family, no matter how loving it might be.
- Society needs natural marriage. It has no need for experimental families. This is because both male and female are essential for the family and society.

Finally, here's a quote that captures this issue:

Let times change, let the weather change, but do not invent an adulterated family and drink from it as if it were the real nourishing thing.<sup>26</sup>

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Verbatim, *Time*, December 20, 2004, p. 21.

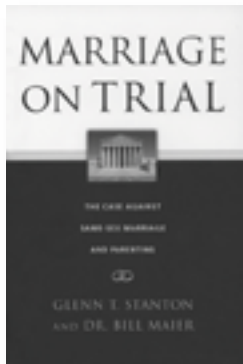
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- <sup>3</sup> Andrew Sullivan, “Shelby Steele, Separatist: A Fisking,” *AndrewSullivan.com online*, April 3, 2004, (June 23, 2004).
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- <sup>5</sup> CNN Crossfire (February 24, 2004), Transcript #022401CN.V20.
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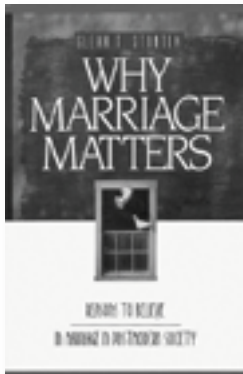
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