OCTOBER 5, 2013 THESKEPTICARENA.COM

Why a good person can vote against same-sex marriage

by Dennis Prager

*Next week voters in Maine, Maryland and Washington will vote on whether to redefine marriage to include same-sex couples. Given that there are good people on both sides of this issue, how are we to explain their opposing views?*

*The primary explanation is this: Proponents and opponents ask two different questions. Proponents of same-sex marriage ask: Is keeping the definition of marriage as man-woman fair to gays? Opponents of same-sex marriage ask: Is same-sex marriage good for society?*

*Few on either side honestly address the question of the other side.*

Dennis, opponents of same-sex marriage don't address the question because the answer is obvious (no, it isn't fair) so they must find a way to distract everyone's attention away from the fact that they don't care whether or not it is fair to homosexuals. That is why they focus on the other question, of whether or not it is good for society.

Proponents of same-sex marriage have honestly addressed the question of whether or not same-sex marriage is good for society and that answer is yes. Not only is it good for society, it has the added benefit of having no drawbacks; unless pissing off bigots is a drawback.

So only one side is being dishonest Dennis.

*Opponents of same-sex marriage rarely acknowledge how unfair the age-old man-woman definition is to gay couples. And proponents rarely, if ever, acknowledge that this unprecedented redefinition of marriage may not be good for society.*

*That is why proponents have it much easier. All they need to do is to focus the public’s attention on individual gay people, show wonderful gay individuals who love each other, and ask the American public: Is it fair to continue to deprive these people of the right to marry one another?*

*When added to Americans’ aversion to discrimination, to the elevation of compassion to perhaps the highest national value,*

Dennis, you forgot to mention that Jesus also had an aversion to discrimination, and also elevated compassion to one of the highest moral values. Oh I'm sorry, I wasn't supposed to mention that, was I?

*and to the equating of opposition to same-sex marriage with opposition to interracial marriage,*

Dennis, equating those two is what prompted me to include this picture in this show:

*it is no wonder that many Americans have been persuaded that opposition to same-sex marriage is hateful, backward and the moral equivalent of racism.*

Dennis, what is odd is that so many haven't been persuaded. You call those people "good." That's probably because you are one of them Dennis.

*Is there any argument that can compete with the emotionally compelling fairness argument?*

Yes Dennis, arguments based on hate, bigotry, fear, and ... your Bible.

*The answer is that one can – namely, the answer to the second question, Is it good for society?*

*Before answering that question, however, it is necessary to respond to the charge that opposition to same-sex marriage is morally equivalent to opposition to interracial marriage and, therefore, the moral equivalent of racism. There are two responses:*

*First, this charge is predicated on the profoundly false premise that race and sex are analogous. They are not.*

Dennis, very sneaky. You concluded correctly that they are not analogous. But *your* conclusion was based on a false premise. That false premise was that support for same-sex marriage is predicated on race and sex being analogous. But the true premise of their argument is that support of same-sex marriage is predicated on marriage and love being analogous.

So you accused your opponents of committing a false premise fallacy, when in fact, that is exactly ... what you just did.

*While there are no differences between black and white human beings,*

Dennis, you can't be serious?

That is one of the stupidest things I have ever seen written by an adult.

*there are enormous differences between male and female human beings. That is why sports events, clothing, public rest rooms and (often) schools are routinely divided by sex.*

Dennis, public schools are not usually divided by sex. That is yet another relic of religion and its anti-woman bias.

*But black sporting events and white sporting events, black rest rooms and white rest rooms, black schools and white schools, or black clothing stores and white clothing stores would be considered immoral.*

Dennis, remember that picture I just told everyone about; the one showing protestors carrying signs against interracial marriage?

That came from a time, not all that long ago, when all those things you just listed ... were *not* considered immoral.

Now do you see the analogy Dennis?

*Because racial differences are insignificant*

Dennis, that was an unsupported major premise ... another logical fallacy.

*and gender differences are hugely significant, there is no moral equivalence between opposition to interracial marriage and opposition to same-sex marriage.*

Dennis, now you are attempting to distract everyone with a Red Herring fallacy; that is, you ignore the real analogy between love and marriage (which you cannot refute) and attempt to defend your position by constructing a false analogy between race and sex, hoping no one will notice that you avoided confronting the real analogy.

In addition, your conclusion, that there is no moral equivalence, fails because it contains an unsupported major premise.

Dennis, that means your argument fails. It contains a fatal logical flaw.

*Second, if opposition to same-sex marriage is as immoral as racism, why did no great moral thinker, in all of history, ever advocate male-male or female-female marriage?*

Dennis, maybe those great moral thinkers weren't as great as you would like to believe?

*Opposition to racism was advocated by every great moral thinker.*

Dennis, you mean like Jefferson Davis? Or maybe you're referring to Jesus who was fine with slavery ... as long as you didn't kill'em.

Dennis, what about the Founding Fathers who owned slaves? Were any of them great moral thinkers? Do you know of any who freed their slaves?

*Moses, for example, married a black woman,*

Dennis, you are cherry picking. Why don't you tell your audience about what happened to another guy who brought a black woman home to dinner in Numbers 25:6-8?

Okay then, I will. One of Moses' thugs introduced the two of them to his new javelin. God was so pleased with how this interracial dating embarrassment was handled that He lifted the plague from the Jews.

Dennis you're a Jew right? How come you didn't know about that one?

*the very definition of Catholic is “universal”*

Dennis, that is so accurate: for 2,000 years Catholics have been a source of universal death and destruction. Finally, someone got the name right.

*and therefore diverse and has always included every race, and the equality of human beings of every race was a central tenet of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and other world religions.*

Dennis, how do you get equality out of slavery? How do you get equality from books like the Bible and the Koran which both value a woman at about half that of a man? How is being sentenced to death for nonbelief or homosexuality, equality?

Dennis, you're coming off like a dishonest moron. Thanks for showing everyone what religion does to the brain.

*But no one – not Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Muhammad, Aquinas, Gandhi, not the Bible or the Quran or any other sacred text, nor even a single anti-religious secular thinker of the Enlightenment, ever advocated redefining marriage to include members of the same sex.*

Dennis, you should have left the Bible off that list. Nowhere does your Bible define marriage the way *you* want it to. In fact, your Bible supports polygamy in dozens of verses. Verses which you are doing everything in your power to hide from your audience.

*To argue that opposition to same-sex marriage is immoral is to argue that every moral thinker and every religion and social movement in the history of mankind prior to the last 20 years in America and Europe was immoral.*

Dennis, discrimination that results in the denial of rights which are granted to others, is immoral, whether based on ancient holy books or some other source of bigotry.

That does not mean, as you are claiming, that moral thinkers were immoral simply because they did not advocate for gay marriage. They would have only been immoral if they had advocated against gay marriage. The same is true of religions and social movements.

So you committed the logical fallacy of false equivalence.

What you did was to give the false impression that the two arguments were equivalent when they were not. To be equivalent,

moral thinkers would have had to have advocated against gay marriage ... and they did not.

Dennis, when your argument is riddled with fallacies, as in this essay, the only ones you can hope to persuade to share your bigotry are those who already agree with you. Fortunately, America is progressing, and in 2012 for the first time, the majority of Americans rejected homosexual hatred and discrimination. Your ship is sinking Dennis. You're not the captain ... there's still time to abandon ship and swim to the raft of reason and moral integrity.

But it's something you must do yourself Dennis. No one can swim it for you.

*Every moral advance has been rooted in prior moral thinking. The anti-slavery movement was based on the Bible.*

Dennis, now you're just embarrassing yourself. Everyone knows where the Bible stands on slavery. You are reaching a depth of dishonesty that few, fortunately, ever sink to.

*Martin Luther King, Jr. was first and foremost the “Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.,” and he regularly appealed to the moral authority of the Scriptures when making his appeals on behalf of racial equality.*

Dennis, it wasn't the scriptures that set his people free - it was a progressive American public. They are the ones who passed laws to level the playing field. If we had relied on your Bible, they would still be picking cotton.

*Same-sex marriage is the only social movement to break entirely with the past, to create a moral ideal never before conceived.*

Dennis, you mean never before allowed. What makes you think gay people didn't want that right in the past?

*It might be right, but it might also be an example of the moral hubris of the present generation, the generation that created the self-esteem movement:*

Dennis, I can think of no group to which the term "moral hubris" applies more, than to you Ghost Worshippers who believe that your delusions grant you a moral superiority over your fellow man.

*After all, you need a lot of self-esteem to hold yourself morally superior to all those who preceded you.*

Dennis, we are morally superior to those who came before us who supported slavery, subjugation of women, genital mutilation, and genocide. We are morally superior to ancient goat herders whose concept of morality was brutal and barbaric as evidenced by the Bible. The moral superiority that we have developed has come at great expense as we have had to fight every inch of the way against religious bigots who constantly wage war against humanity in an effort to keep us locked in the Dark Ages and under their control.

*We now return to our two primary questions. Is the man-woman definition of marriage fair to gays who wish to marry? No, it isn’t. And those of us opposed to same-sex marriage need to be honest about this, to confront the human price paid by some people through no fault of their own and figure out ways to offer gay couples basic rights associated with marriage.*

Dennis, that was excellent. Did someone force you to write that?

*But whether a policy is fair to every individual can never be the only question society asks in establishing social policy. Eyesight standards for pilots are unfair to some terrifically capable individuals. Orchestra standards are unfair to many talented musicians. A mandatory retirement age is unfair to many people. Wherever there are standards, there will be unfairness to individuals.*

*So, the question is whether redefining in the most radical way ever conceived – indeed completely changing its intended meaning – is good for society. It isn’t.*

Dennis, that wasn't so excellent. Please explain ... why it isn't.

*The major reason is this: Gender increasingly no longer matters. There is a fierce battle taking place to render meaningless the man-woman distinction, the most important distinction regarding human beings’ personal identity. Nothing would accomplish this as much as same-sex marriage.*

Dennis, when a woman falls in love with a woman, that renders her no less a woman. And that simple fact ... destroys your argument.

*The whole premise of same-sex marriage is that gender is insignificant: It doesn’t matter whether you marry a man or a woman.*

Dennis, your head just sparked again from another faulty logic connection. To a lesbian it *does* matter whether she marries a man or a woman; just as much as it matters to you which one you marry. That proves that your claim, that it makes gender insignificant ... is false.

*Some examples of this war on gender:*

Dennis, I deleted them because they were just a bunch of stories designed to instill fear in those who are afraid of change. That would be people like you Dennis.

*And all this is happening before same-sex marriage is allowed. Imagine what will happen should same-sex marriage become the law of the land.*

Dennis, look up the "slippery slope" logical fallacy. It should look familiar to you.

*It will hasten the end of the male-female distinction and of any significance to mothers or fathers as distinctive entities. It will mean that those who, for religious or other reasons, wish to retain the man-woman definition of marriage will be legally and morally as isolated as racists are today.*

Dennis, how quick you are to invoke the race comparison; something you complained about earlier. So I guess it's okay ... when you do it.

*And it will mean that teachers and other adults who ask little boys and girls who they would like to marry, will, in order to be in sync with the morality of our times, have to make it clear that it might be someone of the same sex. “Will you marry a boy or a girl?” will be the only non-bigoted way to ask a young person about their marital plans.*

Dennis, here's an idea: quit asking children stupid questions that they couldn't possibly know about yet. Little children shouldn't have marital plans.

Dennis, your arguments get more and more desperate by the paragraph. I sure hope this ends soon ... for your sake.

*The history of left-wing policies has largely consisted of doing what feels good and compassionate without asking what the long-term consequences will be;*

Dennis, nice assertion.

*what professor Thomas Sowell calls “Stage One Thinking.”*

Dennis, that was an Appeal to Authority.

I've noticed that you heavily criticize professors in many of your essays, yet here you are, quite willing to use one as an authority when it serves your purpose. That's an example of hypocrisy, Dennis.

*That explains, for example, the entitlement state.*

Dennis, but I notice you don't have a problem with farming entitlements, or oil company entitlements, tax breaks, and other incentives. You just don't seem all that hot about entitlements for those in need. Jesus would be so proud. But as a Jew, why would you care? To you, He's nothing more than just a dead rabbi, right?

*It sounds noble and seems noble.*

Dennis, if it quacks like a duck ....

*But the long-term consequences are terrible: economic ruin,*

Dennis, you must have missed the last decade: we have been in the biggest economic ruin since the Great Depression ... and it was 8 years of conservative leadership that put us there.

Dennis, aren't we getting a little off topic here?

*a demoralized population, increasing selfishness as people look to the state to take care of their fellow citizens, and more.*

Dennis, since the State will take care of their fellow citizens with the taxes they contributed, it would seem to represent the opposite of selfishness.

Didn't really think that one out first, didja?

*By redefining marriage to include same sex couples we are playing with sexual and societal fire.*

Dennis, how does allowing homosexual marriage ... play with sexual fire? And what does that even mean?

Dennis, this essay began very weak, got even weaker, and now I realize ... those were the strong parts.

*Just as the entitlement state passes on the cost of our good intentions to our children and grandchildren – unsustainable dependency and debt – so, too, same-sex marriage will pass along the consequences of our good intentions to our children and grandchildren – gender confusion and the loss of motherhood and fatherhood as values, just to cite two obvious consequences.*

Dennis, as I pointed out, you have no problem with an entitlement state; as long as the entitlements go to big business and the military.

What makes you think there is gender confusion? Gays are not confused. They seem quite capable of choosing whom they want. Lesbians don't get confused and marry gay men ... they marry gay women. Gay men don't get confused and marry straight men. Who are you claiming is confused? The only one I see confused here ... is you.

When children pass puberty they will choose their path and that will end any confusion they may have had. Or, they may change their minds again later. In any case, it's really none of your business.

*It is not enough to mean well in life. One must also do well. And the two are frequently not the same thing. There are reasons no moral thinker in history ever advocated same-sex marriage.*

Dennis, unfortunately you ignore the most obvious reason: simply because homosexuals were forced into the closet by an ignorant, bigoted majority who saw them as deviants. So there was no marriage issue for your moral thinkers to discuss. Homosexuals didn't dare demand marriage equality. They were thrilled just to be left alive.

Summary

Dennis, this essay was nothing more than an exercise in rationalizing your biblically-inspired hatred of gay people. You know that using the Old Testament as the basis for your argument no longer passes among those with education. So you tried to justify your religious hatred with specious, convoluted machinations.

If you want an analogy, don't look to the blacks, look to the topic of circumcision. That is another ancient, barbaric practice inspired by your holy book. For thousands of years it was done for one reason ... and it wasn't done for any medical reason. But as people became more educated, the biblical basis for circumcision no longer held water, so believers tried to maintain this ancient, barbaric, religious ritual by claiming there were medical benefits. Unfortunately, the facts didn't come down on your side of the debate. Polls now show that genital mutilation is slowly beginning to subside in advanced nations. In Scandinavia, numerous countries are in the process of banning the practice.

And Dennis, as the polls are also proving, people are leaving your gay hatred in the Dark Ages ... where it belongs.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

Researchers manage to reactivate head regeneration

in a regeneration-deficient species of planarians

Regeneration. The rabbit can’t do it, neither can a frog, but zebrafish and axolotls can, and flatworms are true masters of the craft. Why some animals can re-grow lost body parts or organs while others cannot remains a big mystery. And even more intriguing to us regeneration-challenged humans is the question, whether one might be able to activate regenerative abilities in species that don’t usually regenerate. Researchers discovered a crucial molecular switch in the flatworm that decides whether a lost head can be regenerated or not. And what is even more spectacular: the scientists manipulated the genetic circuitry of the worm in such a way as to fully restore its regeneration potential.

The flatworm species Schmidtea mediterranea is known for its excellent regenerative abilities and thus a popular model species in regeneration research. The worm can be cut into 200 pieces, and 200 new worms will regenerate from each and every piece. Now, for a change researchers switched to the flatworm Dendrocoelum lacteum. Even though a close cousin of the regeneration master Schmidtea mediterranea, this species had been reported to be incapable of regenerating heads from its posterior body half.

Rebuilding a head complete with brain, eyes and all the wiring in between is complicated business. Scientists searched for an answer among the genes of the two species, focusing on the so-called Wnt-signaling pathway. Like a cable link between two computers, signaling pathways transmit information between cells. Researchers inhibited the signal transducer of the Wnt pathway with RNAi and thus made the cells of the worm believe that the signaling pathway had been switched off. Consequently, Dendrocoelum lacteum were able to grow a fully functional head everywhere, even when cut at the very tail.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

ANONYMOUS

"Two hands working can do more

than a thousand clasped in prayer."