

# WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS?

The primary purpose of Bill C-38 is to enshrine same sex marriage into law, thus validating the claim by homosexuals that they have a right to marry and consequently correct what they see as discrimination. Before adopting such a law, we must reflect upon the unique consequences for children born into and/or raised in such unions and all other children who could potentially be affected by the change. Up to now, the discussion has centered on the rights of homosexual adults. But what about the rights of children?

## **1- Do children have the right to know and be raised by their biological parents?**

**Yes.** Article 7 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child states the child "shall have... as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents".

For example, when two women decide to have a biological child through artificial insemination, the child is automatically and irrevocably deprived of the other biological parent. In most cases, the child will never even know the other parent. This is very different from losing a parent through death or divorce. The child born to a same-sex couple is born with a 50% biological parent handicap compared to a child born from a traditional marriage. "I want to have a daddy!" says a six year old boy to his lesbian mother. A law that equates same-sex unions to traditional marriage is a law that says the right to a father does not exist.

## **2- Are the child's best interests receiving primary consideration ?**

**Unfortunately, not.** A 27 year old woman, raised by two lesbians, laments: Gay parenting "is not something that a seal of approval should be stamped on: We shouldn't say it is a great and wonderful thing, and then have these kids who later in life will turn around and realize they've been cheated... Adults choose to have that lifestyle... and they are not taking into account how that's going to feel to the child." Bronagh Cassidy in "Adult children speak out about Same-Sex Parents", Townhall.com, July 7, 2004

Yet, according to Article 3 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child: "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration." The law of the land must protect children and place their vital needs first.

## **3- Does same sex marriage meet the best interests of the child ?**

**No.** "More than 10,000 studies have concluded that children's best interests are met when they are raised by loving and committed mothers and fathers, the biological parents, those who brought them into existence and into this world." (MP Maurice Vellacott.)

Such parents would be more likely to "identify with the child and be willing to sacrifice for that child." (McLanahan and Sandefur, "Growing Up with a Single Parent: What are the Costs?") While most family structures start with a mother and a father, same-sex marriage purposefully does not, actually excluding the other gender parent.

## **4- Do we have a responsibility of prudence towards children ?**

**Yes, of course.** Yet, "The [same sex marriage] bill seeks to change fundamentally the meaning of an institution that has existed in every civilization through all of recorded history, an institution that predates the state itself. In so doing, the government undertakes a radical social experiment, whose consequences on children, social stability, religious freedom and civil society are both unseen and unknowable." MP Jason Kenney

"Given the current body of research, the American College of Pediatricians believes it is inappropriate, potentially hazardous to children, and dangerously irresponsible to change the age-old prohibition on homosexual parenting, whether by adoption, foster care, or by reproductive manipulation." January 22, 2004.

## **5- Are other children at risk?**

**Yes.** Children "need both parents... to care for them and to be role models for them ... [yet] With the legalization of homosexual marriage it is my deep concern that every public school in the nation will be required to teach that homosexual coupling is the moral equivalent of traditional marriage between a man and a woman." (MP Maurice Vellacott) Thus, respect for the rights of future children will evaporate!