



Media kit

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MEDIA RELEASE

For or Against? Gay Marriage is the debate covered in the first of two titles launching the *Why vs Why*[™] series from new Australian publisher Pantera Press on 3 May 2010.

The first of two publications launching Pantera Press's *Why vs Why*[™] series presents an **eye-opening discussion on hot topic Gay Marriage** (the other title being nuclear power). The unique design of these great small books ensures the reader decides which of the two challenging experts opens the debate.

Bill Muehlenberg, author of *In Defence of the Family*, **maintains his anti-gay marriage position** and delivers seven strongly argued reasons why we should not allow for same-sex marriage along with a rebuttal to the arguments and rebuttal by **gay human rights campaigner Rodney Croome AM**.

Croome uses the forum to emphasise **the lack of equality, legal disadvantages and human injustice** that the gay community endures in his view, due to the current restrictions around same sex marriage.

"The *Why vs Why*[™] series aims simply to foster debate and informed discussion by equipping the public with all the key issues and answers thrashed out by opposing expert advocates, but presented by us as publisher in an impartial way," says John Green, co-founder, *Pantera Press*.

"We saw a need for an easy-to-read, pocket-size presentation of everything the public needs to know about big issues, and anticipate the *Why vs Why*[™] series will be a useful social tool to inform a wide audience. It will also allow the public to vote on our website as an extra opportunity to press for change or keep the status quo.

"We've chosen subject matters with no easy answers that are top of mind for today's questioning public," says Alison Green, co-founder, *Pantera Press*.

"The subject of gay marriage sits squarely at the intersection of religion, law and society, making discussion around same-sex couples' inclusion into the institution of marriage one of the most complex and hotly contested topics of our time."

Rising to prominence as a gay human rights advocate and leading a successful campaign to decriminalise homosexuality in Tasmania, **Rodney Croome** states that **"the restrictions on same-sex equality are embarrassing for a nation that claims to value a fair go for all."** Throughout the book the reader is presented with strong arguments to support his views regarding human rights, religion, freedom and equality.

He says "at a time of growing social isolation, exclusion and alienation, when many people yearn to find a genuine connection with others, it seems perverse that we continue to exclude same-sex couples and their families from such a universal and fundamental institution of social connection as marriage."

Rodney Croome remains a spokesperson for the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group, and is a Board Member of Australian Marriage Equality and the International Gay and Lesbian Law Association.

.../over

Bill Muehlenberg, Secretary of the Family Council of Victoria, feels strongly that **gay marriage negates what marriage actually is**. He argues that placing same sex marriage on the legal agenda is **a ploy by activists to divert the public's attention from homosexual behavior, and that the 'lack of civil rights' argument is a false one**.

He says that in 2008, "84 pieces of Commonwealth legislation were changed so that homosexual couples could be treated identically to heterosexual married couples. Except for the title 'marriage', homosexual couples now have basically every single right that heterosexual married couples have."

Now living in Melbourne, Bill Muehlenberg was born in America and is a part-time lecturer in philosophy, theology and ethics at several theological colleges.

In all good book stores from 3 May, Pantera Press's unique series of debate-books *Why vs Why*™ sees each book debating one contentious issue written by two rival expert advocates, and with no editorial or other publisher bias.

This series presents all the information on a complex topic in an easy-to-read, 2-books-in-1 format and in one place. It is part of *Pantera Press's* wish to **foster debate** in this rapidly changing and confusing world, covering environmental, community, social, political and other issues. Topics which have no easy answers and leave the general public debating.

The two positions are presented in an easy to read **2-books-in-1 format**. Both authors discuss the **seven key reasons why we should say yes/no to Gay Marriage in Australia** and further investigate the evidence behind each of these reasons through their seven chapters. Importantly, **this book leaves no issue hanging**. On top of their seven key arguments, each author gives a punchy rebuttal to their opponent's specific arguments.

Launched in 2010, *Pantera Press* is a **family business**, teaming **passion and love for literature** and debate with **solid business expertise, the backing of major distributor *Simon & Schuster*** and support from a growing **stable of some of Australia's finest publishing industry talents**.

With its mantra of ***good books doing good things*™** *Pantera Press* has developed innovative financial and philanthropic models. These mean **authors have more support than ever for their writing**, and philanthropic programs, such as ***The Smith Family's Lets Read*** initiative, will receive **a financial boost to help combat illiteracy at the earliest stages**. Since 2008, ***Pantera Press*** has also sponsored the coveted ***Walkley Awards*** for excellence in newspaper feature writing.

Why vs Why Gay Marriage by Rodney Croome and Bill Muehlenberg
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whyvswhy.com site live on 3 May

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Pantera Press?

In partnership with its major book distributor *Simon & Schuster Australia*, *Pantera Press* is a new independent Australian publishing force.

Pantera Press is focused on discovering and nurturing new writing talent... writers who create well-written, riveting reads, in quality popular nonfiction and fiction. *Pantera Press's* first list is being released in 2010, launching with four new titles, two fiction and two non-fiction in May/June 2010 and more to come later in the year.

Pantera Press aims to publish *books that readers will rave about*. Their initial focus is on discovering and nurturing new writing talent... writers who create well-written, riveting reads with broad appeal. Their core goal is to become "**a great home for the next generation of Australia's best-loved authors**".

As well as launching new authors, with its symbiotic mix of business and philanthropic objectives called **good books doing good things™**, *Pantera Press* will use some of its profits to promote the joys of writing and reading, foster debate of important ideas and issues, and help close the literacy gap.

Pantera Press already sponsors the prestigious **Walkley Awards** and is developing a partnership with **Let's Read**, a literacy program for pre-school children and their families being implemented around Australia, including indigenous communities, by The Smith Family.

Pantera Press's readers will not only get great stories and insights but they'll feel good about it. *Pantera Press's* fresh approach has already won early positive media profile and support with articles and interviews in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, ABC Radio 702, and trade magazine *Bookseller + Publisher*.

Who is behind Pantera Press?

Pantera Press is **a family business, founded by the Sydney-based Green family**. Their *kitchen table is their board room*. What they passionately debate around that table is an unusual mix of... **business**, the **arts** and **philanthropy**... things that have driven their family for years.

Alison Green, with a background in **Psychology, Business Strategy & Marketing**, has been working full-time running *Pantera Press* for the last two years. It was Alison's **creative vision** that spotted how the Green family's **trio of passions, business, the arts & philanthropy**, could be brought together so uniquely and it was Alison who **excited the whole family** into starting *Pantera Press*.

John Green (Alison's father) has **35 years** in **business**, with some of Australia's biggest companies as a **company director, investment banker** and **lawyer**. (For many years, John was also on the board of **publisher, UNSW Press**. In fact, in the 1970s, he helped save the Press from being closed down.) John is also a well-known **business writer**, with his pieces having appeared in publications such as *Business Spectator*, *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review* and *Company Director*.



Why same-sex couples SHOULD be allowed to marry by Rodney Croome

INTRODUCTION

For many supporters of same-sex marriage their case is obvious. The words "fairness", "equity", "respect" and, above all, "love", occur frequently in the everyday conversations, talk-back radio calls, and letters-to-the-editor, explaining the need for reform.

But marriage equality is about more than these heart-felt values, as important as they are. Allowing same-sex couples the right to marry is crucial to removing legal and social discrimination against gay and lesbian people. It is also crucial to recognising their equal citizenship and humanity, as it was for Aborigines when laws controlling interracial marriages were removed.

Marriage brings with it many practical legal and social benefits for same-sex couples and their families, including a greater sense of security and belonging. Far from being a threat to religion or children, marriage equality will enhance religious freedoms and allow the children of same-sex couples the benefits of married parents. Marriage equality will also strengthen the institution of marriage by allowing it to embrace those same-sex couples who want to uphold its values, and by making it more relevant to contemporary society.

When we consider the purpose of marriage in today's society we can see that same-sex partners can fulfil that purpose. When we consider the alternatives put forward for same-sex marriage it is obvious there are no substitutes for the right to participate in such a universal and valued institution.

Finally, the growing support for marriage equality within Australia and across the world shows decision-makers who oppose it are increasingly out of step.

The reasons why same-sex couples SHOULD be allowed to marry are:

- 1. Because, without the right to marry, same-sex partners are not free and equal citizens**
- 2. Because being unable to marry creates legal disadvantages**
- 3. Because marriage has practical social and cultural benefits for same-sex couples and their families**
- 4. Because same-sex marriage is good for marriage**
- 5. Because religion and children are arguments for marriage equality, not against it**
- 6. Because the alternatives don't offer full equality or recognition**
- 7. Because of strong and growing support for equality**

RODNEY CROOME

Rodney Croome rose to prominence as a gay human rights advocate, leading the successful campaign to decriminalise homosexuality in Tasmania. He remains a spokesperson for the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group, and is a Board Member of Australian Marriage Equality and the International Gay and Lesbian Law Association. In acknowledgment of his work in this field he received a Centenary Medal in 2001 and was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2003. Rodney suggest readers who want more information on marriage equality visit the AME website at www.australianmarriageequality.com.

Rodney has his own blog at www.rodneycroome.id.au



Why same-sex couples SHOULD NOT be allowed to marry by Bill Muehlenberg

INTRODUCTION

There are no compelling reasons to radically redefine the institution of marriage in order to appease homosexual activists. Indeed, there are at least seven reasons why we should not do so.

First, the legalisation of same-sex marriage negates what marriage is, and what it is for. It completely overturns the historic nature and function of marriage, effectively destroying it.

Second, there is little actual demand for it. Why should the institution of marriage be gutted to satisfy a tiny number of activists? Third, there is another agenda at work here. This is part of a larger demolition job on the natural family. Marriage and family have stood the test of time, and should not be so readily dismantled.

Fourth, not all relationships are alike, and it is foolish to equate married heterosexual relationships with homosexual coupling. Fifth, claims of discrimination and denial of equal rights are spurious. No rights are being denied to homosexuals, nor to anyone else who do not qualify for marriage.

Sixth, this is the thin edge of the wedge. Legalise same-sex marriage, and all manner of other sexual relationships will also have to be legalised. Seventh, marriage is intimately connecting with the rearing of children. Children have a fundamental right to their own biological mother and father. Children should not be treated as guinea pigs in adult social experiments.

For these reasons, we would be unwise and reckless to engage in such radical social engineering. Heterosexual marriage is far too important to be undone in this fashion.

The reasons why same-sex couples SHOULD NOT be allowed to marry are:

- 1. Because it negates what marriage is, and what it is for**
- 2. Because there is little actual demand for it**
- 3. Because there is another agenda at work here**
- 4. Because not all relationships are alike**
- 5. Because claims of discrimination and denial of equal rights are spurious**
- 6. Because this is the thin edge of the wedge**
- 7. Because it is not good for children**

BILL MUEHLENBERG

Bill Muehlenberg is author of *In Defence of the Family* and hundreds of articles and book reviews. He is Secretary of the Family Council of Victoria, and part-time lecturer in philosophy, theology, and ethics at several theological colleges. He is a frequent media commentator, with articles and comment in many of Australia's leading newspapers and journals, and has appeared on most major television and radio current affairs shows and news programs. Previously, he was National Vice President of the Australian Family Association, and National Research Coordinator at Focus on the Family. He has a BA with honours in philosophy (Wheaton College, Chicago), an MA with highest honours in theology (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston). He is currently completing a PhD in theology. Originally from America, he now lives in Melbourne, Australia. Bill is married, with three sons. Bill also directs *CultureWatch*, a website providing critical commentary on current issues: www.billmuehlenberg.com

