



Gay Marriage: for Better or for Worse?: What We've Learned from the Evidence

William N. Eskridge, Darren R. Spedale

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Opponents of same-sex marriage in the United States claim that allowing gays and lesbians to marry would undermine the institution of marriage, weaken family structures, and cause harm to children. Drawing from 17 years of data and experience with same-sex marriage in Scandinavia (in the form of registered partnerships), *Gay Marriage: For Better or for Worse?* is the first book to present empirical evidence about the effects of same-sex marriage on society. Spedale and Eskridge find that the evidence refutes conservative defense-of-marriage arguments and, in fact, demonstrates that the institution of marriage may indeed benefit from the legalization of gay marriage. If we look at the proof from abroad, the authors show, we must conclude that the sanctioning of gay marriage in the United States would neither undermine marriage as an institution, nor harm the wellbeing of our nation's children.

"A very interesting book that people should read."

--Bill O'Reilly, Host, The O'Reilly Factor

"Whatever your views are now on same-sex marriage, this is the book to read to be informed about why same sex couples want legal recognition and what legal union means to them and to the larger community. Spedale and Eskridge give detailed accounts of the effects of registered partnerships in Scandinavia--and along the way, offer fascinating and engaging pictures of many people's lives."

--Martha Minow,

Jeremiah Smith Jr. Professor, Harvard Law School

"Spedale and Eskridge illuminate with remarkable even-handedness a debate that tends to generate more heat than light. They provide a cogent analysis of conservative arguments that same-sex matrimony threatens conventional marriage, and argue persuasively that enabling same-sex partners to marry may actually strengthen that beleaguered institution."

--John Podesta,

President and CEO, Center for American Progress

"An important and timely contribution. It should be required reading for anyone interested in the future of families in America."

--Martha Albertson Fineman,

Robert W. Woodruff Professor, Emory Law School

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Ira Atwood:

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John Davis:

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