



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 16, 2012

## No, Mr. President, Same-sex Couples Cannot Marry

In case you're wondering, I'm using the word "cannot" properly in the above title. No, I don't mean "same-sex couples should not marry" — rather, they aren't *capable* of doing so. What am I talking about?

Barack Obama's [coming out party](#) notwithstanding, the question in this debate should never be one of rights. It should be one of *definitions*. If we accept that marriage is, by definition, the union between a man and woman and nothing else, the faux-marriage-rights argument is moot.



For you cannot have a right to that which doesn't exist.

This isn't just semantics. If social engineers insist on pushing faux marriage, we must demand that they first attempt to redefine the institution.

"Have you gone off your rocker, Duke?! This is precisely what we're fighting!" some will now say.

Actually, no, it isn't.

This is because there is no widely accepted and professed alternative definition to fight. For the Left has not sought to redefine marriage.

They are "*undefining*" it.

After all, what is the Left's argument? They don't focus on definitions any more than the Right does; they don't say, consistently and boldly, "Marriage is the union between any two adults; therefore, there is no reason to exclude same-sex couples." They won't tread there.

There are a couple of reasons why. First, leftists are confused: They never have a clear vision of what they want to create, only what they want to destroy (i.e., the status quo). Second, redefining marriage would be a tactical disaster for them, as they'd relinquish a huge hammer they pummel the opposition with: the accusation that traditionalists are being "exclusive" and "discriminatory" and are denying people rights. For if you establish boundaries — *anywhere* — you're excluding and discriminating against whoever lies beyond them.

So leftists won't offer any alternative definition; instead, they simply imply that the right definition is wrong. And this is where they lose the debate. For if you cannot say what marriage is, how can you be so sure about what it isn't?

This failure to redefine marriage also puts the lie to the Left's claim that their actions won't lead to the recognition of other conceptions of "marriage," from polygamy to inter-species unions (yes, this does [happen](#)). This isn't as silly as it sounds. Remember that an *undefinition* excludes *nothing*. If you refuse to establish boundaries, then the sky — or Hades — is the limit.

Thus, while the Left's focus on rights helps them win the immediate marriage battle, it also ensures the loss of civilization. After all, once you undefine something, you have destroyed it — at least in people's



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minds. For if something exists, if it is real, it is a certain thing and thus can be defined. “Bird” refers to a specific creature, but if “bird” could mean fish, insect, chair or pepperoni pizza — if it could mean *anything* — the term would lose meaning. Likewise, if marriage can mean anything, it will ultimately mean nothing. It will simply be a “something” and be destroyed as a meaningful institution.

To understand the implications of this, realize that marriage exists not as a “right” that brings self-fulfillment but to stabilize the family. It encourages men and women to fulfill their obligations to each other and their children. Thus, an attack upon marriage is an attack upon the family. And, since the family is the central building block of civilization, if you destroy it, you have destroyed civilization.

Except perhaps for a few Machiavellian types, the Left doesn’t understand this; like all emotion-driven people — like children — they know only what they want at the moment. But wiser heads should refuse to discuss the issue as what it isn’t: a matter of rights. Instead, be steadfast in the understanding that faux marriage simply doesn’t exist. Oh, people can still pretend to marry; heck, we did that in first grade (only boys and girls back then). But dismiss this as child’s play — and a rather twisted variety of it at that.

This is why I seek to control the language and use the term “faux marriage.” For the side that defines the vocabulary of a debate, wins the debate. Thus, using the Lexicon of the Left — in this case, the oxymoronic euphemism “gay marriage” — is disastrous; it’s likewise a mistake using “traditional marriage,” for what is the other side of that coin? Both terms either state or imply that a mythical institution called “gay marriage” exists.

What will happen once citizens accept this idea? Well, homosexuals are people, too, and if their conception of “marriage” exists, many will conclude that it’s wrong to deny recognition of it. Hey, how can you not recognize — in the sense of perceiving — something that exists? And once personal recognition becomes widespread, legal recognition is nigh.

This is why states err when proposing laws and constitutional amendments limiting marriage to a man and woman. Instead, their measures should state, “Marriage is *defined* as the union between a man and a woman.” Again, this isn’t just semantics. When these measures go to court and judges are left to rule on the constitutionality of *limiting* who may marry, they can easily rationalize that such laws violate the equal-protection clause. But if the law is framed as I suggest, this argument becomes illogical, as no one is being denied anything. After all, a homosexual certainly can — and may — marry just as anyone else may; he may form a union with a member of the opposite sex. As for heterosexuals, they cannot form a legally sanctioned union with a member of their own sex any more than anyone else can. Thus, controlling the definition would help control the courts.

Of course, our “creative” judges can spin anything, so there are no guarantees. But we ought to ask: If they would rule that same-sex couples have a right to “marriage,” with what definition are they working? After all, the only consistent definition out there is the one the West has operated by for millennia. There is nothing else except an effort that amounts to an “*undefinition*,” an unraveling of part of civilization’s bedrock. And you cannot have a right to what doesn’t exist.



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