“The first right of the child is to ‘be born in a real family’, a right that has not always been respected”

Rebuilding a Marriage Culture in the United States
by William B. May

Catholics for the Common Good Institute
Catholic Daughters of America

Marriage Redefined: 19 states + DC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Court</th>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<td>Connectic (court)</td>
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<td>New Hampshire (leg)</td>
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<td>Vermont (leg)</td>
<td>New Jersey (court)</td>
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<td>Hawaii (leg)</td>
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<td>Minnesota (leg)</td>
<td>Maryland (ref-vote)</td>
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<td>New York (leg)</td>
<td>Washington (ref-vote)</td>
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<td>District of Columbia (leg)</td>
<td>Maine (vote)</td>
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More States in Jeopardy

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<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Rulings on appeal</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Redefined states 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Rulings on appeal 8</td>
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<td>Virginia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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2013 Supreme Court ruling:
Defending Marriage is an act of bigotry

“As the title [DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT] and dynamics of the bill indicate, its purpose is to discourage enactment of state same-sex marriage laws and to restrict the freedom and choice of couples married under those laws if they are enacted.”

“… the principal purpose and the necessary effect of this law [DOMA] are to demean those persons who are in a lawful same-sex marriage.”

Justice Anthony Kennedy
Majority Opinion, US v Windsor
Supreme Court of the United States
June 26, 2013

The Wrong Issue

The term obscures the hidden agenda

NO “Same-Sex Marriage”

The Right Issue

“Do we need a civil institution that unites children with their moms and dads?”
“Yes or No?”
“If no, then why not?”
Marriage is Really Being Redefined

1. Only marriage between a man and a woman is recognized
   Redefined to:
   2. Marriage between two persons is recognized.

   **Definition 1** creates an institution that unites children with their mothers and fathers. **Definition 2 eliminates it.**

Reality of Marriage as revealed to the child

Marriage (by free choice) unites a man and a woman with each other and *any* children born from their union.
- That’s what it is; That’s what it does. A fact!
- Can be verified by common human experience as God’s plan for creation, but not dependent on belief in God.
- This reality can only be recognized and never changed.

Marriage A Communion of Persons

Marriage unites a man and a woman with each other and *any* children born from their union.

It expresses:
- Procreation
- Complementarity
- Motherhood
- Fatherhood
- Irreplaceability

*Plus the potential for infertility*

Marriage The Foundation of the Family

- A man and a woman first choose to make themselves irreplaceable to each other in marriage.
- This prepares them to receive life as a gift because
  - The child is irreplaceable to the mother and father
  - The mother and father are irreplaceable to the child
- Marriage starts the circle of irreplaceability that we call the family

Opposing “Same-Sex Marriage” Misleads

- Implies simply opposing gays marrying
- Implies issue is merely about gay participation in marriage
- Implies two kinds of marriage side by side

*Obscures the fact:* the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads will no longer exist.

The Hidden Agenda

Redefining marriage “involves the reconfiguration of the family, deemphasizing blood, gender, and kinship ties.”

*Professor William Eskridge*
*Yale School of Law*

“A campaign now seeks to ... abolish the legal and social preferences for the natural family in favor of ‘families we choose.’”

*Professor George W. Dent, Jr*
*Case Western Reserve Law School*

“The government does not contend that there are legitimate government interests in ‘creating a legal structure that promotes the raising of children by both of their biological parents’.”

*U.S. Justice Dept*
*Smelts v U.S. Doc. 42 at 8-9*
The Obscured Hidden Agenda

“Fighting for ‘gay marriage’ generally involves lying about what we are going to do with marriage...

“Many including gays, lesbians, some feminists, libertarians: “All insist that biological parenthood be pronounced no better than any other arrangement for the raising of children.” Masha Gessen

Amnesty International reveals real agenda in “My Body, My Rights Initiative” Right #5 of 6: The right to “Decide what type of family to create.”

The Liberating Grace of saying “Marriage Redefined”

• No longer need to focus on whether same-sex couples should marry.
• Best to presume marriage is already redefined everywhere because in reality it already has been redefined as merely an adult centric institution in the minds of people, especially the young.
• Question changes: Do we need an institution geared to unite kids with mom and dad? YES or NO?

“One of the great social tragedies”

The understanding of marriage has changed:
• Institutional Model - integrate sex [procreation], parenthood, economic cooperation, and emotional intimacy in a permanent union.
• “Soul mate” model - couple-centered vehicle for personal growth, emotional intimacy, and shared consumption that depends for its survival on the happiness of both spouses.

State of Our Union Report 2010
University of Virginia

Reality of Marriage Obscured

• No-Fault Divorce redefined marriage as adult-centric, based on the happiness of both spouses
• Sex has been separated from procreation and separated from marriage
• Parenting now seen as a social role/ lifestyle choice separated from biology and marriage
• Children deprived of knowing and being care for by both their mothers and fathers accepted as normal. Biological relationship is insignificant.

Percent Intact 1st Marriages By Race, Education, and Decade

Children Have Rights

“The child has the right to be ... brought up within marriage: it is through the secure and recognized relationship to his own parents that the child can discover his own identity and achieve his own proper human development.”

Donum Vitae
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
Children Born to Unmarried Mothers

[Graph showing the percentage of births to unmarried women from 1960 to 2009, with a peak in 2000.

% Births to Never-Married Woman By Race, Education, and Decade

[Graph showing the percentage of births to never-married women by race and decade.

Root Cause of Poverty

[Graph showing the percentage decrease in child poverty by marriage.

In Fatherless Homes

- Children are 2X more likely to:
  - Arrested for juvenile crime
  - Treated for emotional and behavioral problems
  - Suspended or expelled from school
- 33% more likely to drop out of school
- 3x more likely to end up in jail by age 30
- 50% more likely to suffer poverty as adults
- 50% more likely for girls to end up pregnant

Liberal and Conservative Sociologists Agree

- "Direct efforts to change the culture through a social marketing campaign... [encourage] young... to follow a path that until recently was the norm in American society. This path includes... having children only after you marry." - Ron Haskins and Isabel Sawhill. Creating an Opportunity Society. Brookings Institution. 2009.
- "Just as government discourages youth from dropping out of school, it should and provide information that will help people to form and maintain healthy marriages and delay childbearing until they are married and economically stable." - Robert Rector. "Marriage: America's Greatest Weapon Against Child Poverty." Heritage Foundation. 2010.

Considerations for Rebuilding a Marriage Culture

- Where do our young people learn what marriage is?
- How do they develop attitudes about love, marriage, and family?
- How does school curriculum contribute or detract?
Attitudes Toward Marriage and Children

High school seniors:
• OK to be unmarried and have children 56% Agree.*
18 – 39 year olds
• “Marriage is very important when a couple has children together.” 30% agree.**

* State of our Unions 2009, data from University of Michigan
** The Gallup Poll, May 2006

Growing Variety of Family Types “A Good Thing”

Common to Every Alternative Family

A child deprived of his or her mother, father, or both.

Deprived of the human right to live in a united family”
(Centesimus Annus – Blessed John Paul II)

Frequent social consequences
Frequent human consequences

The Marriage Gap: High School Senior’s Desires vs. Reality

Reality When Marriage is Redefined

“Marriage as it is—the union of a woman and a man for the purpose of having children—will continue to exist but without a word. It won’t exist in language and it won’t exist in law.”

The Most Rev. Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento, California, USA

Pope Francis: Principles for Evangelization of Culture

1. Time is greater than space: [A common fault] in sociopolitical activity is that space and power are preferred to time and processes.
2. Unity prevails over conflict: In conflict we lose our sense of the profound unity of reality. [Some avoid conflict and others become prisoners of i.t]
3. Realities are greater than ideas: Realities simply are, whereas ideas are worked out.

Pope Francis
Evangelii Gaudium, (#222 – 243)
1. Reality – What do I seek?
2. Reason – Reasonableness

*Reflections of Msgr. Luigi Giusanni*
“Risk of Faith” by Fr. Dwight Longenecker

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1. Shouldn’t everyone have the right to marry the person they love?

**Hint 1:**
Two separate questions: Right to love and public policy on marriage.

**Hint 2:**
What is the conflicting understanding of marriage implied in this question?

**Hint 3:**
Avoid getting off on tangents about homosexuality – stay focused on marriage.

**THINK:** What does this have to do with only institution that unites kids with their mums and dads?

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1.B Shouldn’t everyone have the right to marry the person they love?

**Question 1 regarding love:**
Everyone is made for love ... but not everyone is made for marriage.

**Question 2 regarding marriage policy:**
Clarify conflict between two understandings of marriage – public recognition of a committed relationship vs. only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads.

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2. Redefining marriage is a matter of civil rights and equal treatment

**Hint:**
What is the conflicting understanding of marriage presumed here?

**THINK:** What does this have to do with only institution that unites kids with their mums and dads?

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2.B Redefining marriage is a matter of civil rights and equal treatment

**Response:**
• Understand sincere desire of same-sex couples.
• The conflict is really based on two different understandings of what marriage is.
• Is marriage merely the public recognition of a committed relationship, or is it the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads?
• Focus on the consequences of marriage breakdown.

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3. Not all traditional marriages have children

**Hint:**
Marriage unites a man and a woman and ANY children born from their union.

**THINK:** What does this have to do with only institution that unites kids with their mums and dads?
3.B Not all traditional marriages have children

Not all married men and women have children, but every child has a mother and father.

Marriage is the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads.
Do we need such an institution? Yes or no?

4.A Don’t children of same-sex couples have a right to married parents?

Hint: Bait and switch.

THINK: What does this have to do with only institution that unites kids with their mums and dads?

4.B Not all traditional marriages have children

Marriage is the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads. Children with same-sex parents have already lost their biological mom or dad or both. This situation is more like children who have been adopted.
Do we need such an institution? Yes or no?

Additional Questions

What do these have to do with the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads?
4. Gays/lesbians can have own children -IVF or surrogacy. (Hint: Similar to 1, but consider rights of child)
5. Letting same-sex couples marry does not change marriage, it expands it. (Hint: How does changing the words in the law redefine marriage?)
6. Redefining marriage does not prevent men and woman from marrying. (Hint: What would be the consequences for advocating the unique value of men and women marrying before having children?)

Additional Questions (Continued)

What do these have to do with the only institution that unites kids with their moms and dads?
6. Courts have decided restricting marriage is discriminatory. (Hint: Consider judges’ assumption about marriage to arrive at those conclusions.)
7. Preventing same-sex couples from marrying is like a ban on interracial marriage (Hint: What were such laws trying to ban during a time when people only had children within marriage?)

Marriage in Context

What is the context of the reality of marriage?
• The experience of the child/consciousness of the rights of the child.
• The family of common ancestry

What is the context for the need to promote marriage?
Solution to poverty and consequences of fatherlessness. (Note: the definition is implied.)
Repeating Lies vs Truths

“If you repeat a lie often enough, it will be believed.”
Joseph Goebbels (misattributed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lie</th>
<th>Truth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We know children do just as well with two moms or two dads.</td>
<td>We know Children have a right to know and as far as possible be cared for by their mom and dad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone has the right to marry the person they love.</td>
<td>We know marriage unites kids with their own moms and dads (exception is adoption).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children of gays have a right to married parents.</td>
<td>We know child has a right to born into marriage. (Also too many fatherless children)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ideas vs. Reality

Examples of Traps to Avoid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective/Debatable Ideas</th>
<th>Assertion of Rights; Duties; Verifiable Truths-Reality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is ideal to have a married mother and father.</td>
<td>Children have a right to be born into a family with their mom and dad united in marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children need or deserve a mother and father.</td>
<td>It is good for children to have a mom and dad (two parents in a low conflict family).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is through their relationship with mom and dad that children can discover their own identity and achieve their proper human development.</td>
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</tbody>
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Reality of the Human Person Precedes Revelation

The Church has all of the answers

It’s not true because it’s in the Bible

It’s in the Bible because it’s true.

It’s not true because the Church teaches it.

Church teaching gives deeper understanding of REALITY.

Faith is Knowledge (Indirect)

“Believing” is knowing from a trusted source

• Who do you trust?

“Believing in” is trusting

I believe in the Father; I believe in the Son; I believe in the Holy Spirit; I believe in the Church

What Do You Know or Mean?

• “Believe” can also express:
  • Only true for believer
  • An opinion, only true for the speaker
  • A statement of uncertainty (I “think” something is so.)

• What do we “KNOW” in FACT? Realities!
  • Marriage unites a man and a woman and any children born from their union. (does not require grace to know)
  • Life begins at conception (does not require grace to know)
  • Christ is physically present in the Eucharist. (requires grace to know)

Revealing the Meaning and Purpose of Marriage

1. What happens when marriage goes away?

Educate about the crisis due to the breakdown of marriage. Every child is at risk.

• Where do young people learn about love, friendship, and the importance of marriage as the foundation of their own family?
• What influences the choices they make about marriage and family?
• What does marriage look like from the child’s perspective?
The Unifying Criteria

Evaluate
Every law
Every curriculum
Every institution
By how it supports and encourages men and women marrying before having children.

Revealing
The Meaning and Purpose of Marriage

2. Does a child have a right to know and, as far as possible, be cared for and love by his or her own mother and father?
   - Children have a right to be born into a family with mom and dad united in marriage
     “discover his own identity and achieve his own proper human development.” (Donum Vitae)
   - Avoid unclear shorthand – “Marriage is about the children.” It is about the rights of children and behavior of adults.
     The free choice of a man and woman to qualify themselves to receive new life as a gift by making themselves irreplaceable in marriage.

Revealing
The Meaning and Purpose of Marriage

3. Does anyone have the right to create children with the intention of depriving them of knowing and being cared for by their mom or dad or both?
   - If this is an accepted practice, how can a case be made for marriage as a privileged institution?
   - Will opposing this help to reveal the rights of the child?

Revealing
The Meaning and Purpose of Marriage

4. Do we need a civil institution that is specifically geared to unite children with their moms and dads?

The Hidden Agenda

Redefining marriage is not about expanding participation but about the obliteration of the human rights of children.
   - Equality in relationships
   - Equality in parenting
   - Equality in family structure – “families we choose” for individual fulfillment

Effort to Rebuild
a Marriage Culture Starts with

- Public education that reveals the reality of marriage confirmed by common experience.
- Focus on the crisis of the breakdown of marriage and the rights of the children to know and be cared for by their moms and dads.
- Key questions:
  - Do we need a civil institution that unites kids with their moms and dads?
  - Does anyone have a right to intentionally deprive a child of the fundamental right of knowing and being cared for by mom, dad or both?
**Vision for a New Movement**

Evangelization of Culture for Marriage

- Must be True Expression of the New Evangelization
- Built Through Collaborating Partnerships
- Based on Social Doctrine and Christian Personalism
- Formed Grounded in Reality, Not Ideas
- Support Founding of New Local Organizations for Action

**Formation for the Journey**

- Faith and Action Circles
- The Family Dinner Table
- Parish activities
- Diocesan emphasis
- State Catholic Conferences
- Networks for Action
- Speakers Bureaus
- Public Organizing
- Advocacy

After this the Lord ... sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few”  

**Network for Action Process**

- Educate:
  - Speakers
  - Bureau
  - Book
  - Tracts & Pamphlets
  - PR
  - Videos, YouTube, etc.
- Motivate:
  - Action Projects: Calls to Action, Rallies, Leg. Briefings, etc.
- Organize:
  - Recruit and Train Leaders, Build Coalitions
  - Endorsers add credibility to message or coalition
- Form & Train:
  - Faith and Action Circles, Workshops
  - Website Action & Partnerships, Events & Conferences, etc.
- Coalition members, organizations with common interests, participate in action

**Tools for Marriage Evangelism**

- Distribute Educational Materials
- Encourage Use of Study Materials in Faith Sharing Groups
- Study Video Companion
  - For Families and Small Groups (6 sessions)
- Educational Pamphlets
  - For Distribution and Study
- Study Booklets: Formation Guide for Effective Dialogue

ccgaction.org/formarriage

**Easy, No Conflict Activities for Catholic Daughters**

- Distribute pamphlets, booklets and videos in parishes and local Catholic organizations
- Organize Study Groups using these materials
- Organize local Networks for Action
- More advanced
  - Organize speakers bureau
  - Brief public officials and community leaders on the crisis of the breakdown of marriage
  - Hold local organizing workshops
  - Partner in training webinars with Catholics for Common Good

**Sending Forth: Prayer of the Evangelization of Culture**

O Holy Spirit, our Advocate and guide, help us open doors to Christ’s saving power, which alone is the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society. Fill us with courage to respond boldly to the call of Blessed John Paul to evangelize the culture. Enable us by Your grace to live our faith in the public square, so that we may promote a civilization of love and a culture of life, and may secure justice for every human person at every stage and condition of life. We ask this through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Blessed John Paul. Amen.