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Same Sex Marriage  
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There is a national controversy over same sex marriage that is edging closer to the boiling point. Advocates consider this to be an issue of equal rights and an invasion of privacy.

In my opinion, legalizing same sex marriage will not hurt anyone, just as giving African Americans their equal rights did not hurt anyone. Everyone deserves to be happy no matter their sexual preference. As stated in the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Same sex marriage is an example of a citizen’s pursuit of happiness, one of our natural rights.

The government should not prevent homosexuals from being married when people who are otherwise equal are allowed to marry. After all, inter-racial marriage was illegal in several states until the late 1960s. If homosexuals were allowed to marry legally, it would increase the number of people who take on real commitments. Homosexuals have an enormous urge to make a larger commitment to their partner, as evident in the great response to marriage ceremonies performed in San Francisco and New Paltz. The weakening of marriage and the subsequent damage to society has been heterosexuals’ doing, not gays’, based on the rates of adultery and infidelity, divorce rates and resulting single-parent families.

Every committed, joined or married couple should have the experience of

establishing a family. A family is created of mutual love and caring, not one in which a child has parents who are heterosexuals or of the opposite sex. Two men or two women can raise a child just as well as a heterosexual couple can. Any type of person, no matter their race, gender, or sexual preference can have – or not have - the skills necessary for raising a child. Same sex couples yearn to have children. There are many orphaned children who need loving homes, and as long as the home is stable, these children should be adopted and raised within a family, regardless of orientation. Some states, such as Florida, do not allow homosexual couples to adopt. It is cruel to keep unfortunate children from a loving home just because the couple is of the same sex.

The issue of equal and civil rights has been through many courts, and I believe the right to marry is the civil rights issue of the twenty-first century. Gays want to marry precisely because they see marriage as an important symbol of the commitment and love that a couple shares, and a way to legally acknowledge a couple's social, medical and economic status.

Legalizing same sex marriage may be a drastic change, but one that is welcome and overdue. Homosexuals have the same feelings about their partners as heterosexual couples. They love and care for their partners and would like a legally recognized symbol of their commitment.