

Same-Sex Essay

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PHI 208: Ethics and Moral Reasoning

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Same-Sex Essay

Part 1: Ethical Question

The ethical question that ~~has been~~¹ considered for this particular essay is: Is it morally right for legal marriage to be available for same-sex couples?

Part 2: Introduction

By same-sex marriage, it denotes the joining together of a couple of the same sex as husband and wife. In most parts of the world today, the same-sex marriage issue is a topic of extreme controversy and a subject in most of the religions across the globe. As such, the legal status of this topic is subject to discussion but has gained an enormous significance of the last few years, especially in the United States. Specifically, the current treatment and trends of same-sex couples differ across different regions in the world. However, there are two competing views regarding this topic and its legal applicability. One view opposes this kind of marriages, arguing that by allowing such marriages would be contravening the constitution and the nature of the institution of marriage. Moreover, proponents of this view argue that same-sex marriage is not recognized in the constitution, and would, therefore, contribute to social evils in the society if allowed. The other view favors same-sex marriage, arguing that freedom of choice must be the basic and fundamental human right and that each individual is free to make choices about his or her life.

According to Riggle et al (2017), under the 14th Amendment, the constitution provides that no one should be denied his or her rights, properties, and life by the state. Furthermore, it means that the constitution offers individuals expressive rights to make the choices they deem appropriate in their lives, including marrying whoever they choose. Over the years, it is apparent that different cultures have dealt with the subject of same-sex differently. Nevertheless, there are

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several cultures that accept same-sex marriages whereas others consider them inappropriate based on diverse reasons. As such, in most of the cases, factors such as secular and religion play a significant part in determining the applicability and acceptance of these marriages. Religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, as well as Judaism in addition to Hinduism, oppose same-sex marriages, considering them as social ills that work to erode the strong fabrics that most societies have been built upon. Therefore, countries that have these religions in dominance are most likely to oppose same-sex unions.

Part 3: Explanation of the Ethical Theory

There is an enormous body of growing literature and scientific proof that intact and opposite-sex marriages are the best for children. Specifically, Rothblum and Solomon (2003) argue that one of the major threats to same-sex marriages is that such unions weaken the norm of sexual conformity in marriage. These writers also state that such unions also work to isolate the institution of marriage from its procreative function. However, there also exist several ethical considerations that may be used to offer solutions to the above-presented completing arguments on the same-sex union subject. One of such ethical theories is utilitarianism. When evaluated critically, this theory's views on same-sex unions offer the tools that may be used to defend or oppose such marriages on the moral precepts (Levin, 2011).

In a sense, this views on the objection of same-sex marriage and the oddness of such marriages is that they do not stand up to any scrutiny as they do not limit the tenacity of sex for procreation (Singer, 2006). The ultimate generalization of this theory is that the ends rationalize the means. In particular, the utilitarianism¹ theory holds that an action is considered right if it contributes to the greater good for all or if it leads to good consequences. In this manner, the goodness of an action is a measurable element, which can either be good or bad.

1. utilitarianism

I would have liked an entire section on utilitarianism instead of the other information. The other information is some good support, but in this section there should have been more of a history and summary of utilitarianism alone. [Angela Camaille]

Something is also good when it leads to the attainment of pleasure, happiness, as well as wellbeing and avoids harm to others. Thus, as for the utilitarian position, to determine the line between what is right or wrong, a simple equation is applied to establish the consequences of a particular action. As such, when there is more bad of action than its good, then such an action is wrong, and vice versa. Marriage equality, thus, presents individuals with numerous factors to consider.

Part 4: Application of the Ethical Theory

The ethical question under consideration here is whether it is morally right for legal marriage to be available for same-sex couples. Same-sex marriage has been defined as the union between two people of the same sex or gender. It is a controversial subject because it raises several arguments from different quarters across the world. There exist two central arguments regarding this topic: views from those that oppose and favor it. Each of these arguments presents a diversity of reasons for opposing and supporting same-sex marriages. But, to find a solution to this divide, the utilitarianism theory can be applied to provide ethical consideration when deciding either to accept or reject such marriages. According to this theory, the ends would usually justify the means (Bower, 2014). It argues that an action can be regarded as immoral if it leads to harm and greater evil and vice versa.

When¹ applied to the above question, this theory provides the necessary apparatuses that solve the arguments, which have been raised from the two views already provided in the above discussion. From the utilitarian argument, several people would directly gain from the approval of same-sex marriages. Fundamentally, this theory approves this kind of marriages based on their greater good for different members of the community (Bower, 2014). Here, utilitarian ethics argue that these marriages have to be legalized because they benefit everyone. Hence, the greater

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good would be achieved, and therefore, causing the least harm to others while fostering the best possible communities where each person is equally guarded under the law.

References

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