Critical thinking Essay: Gay Marriage

In the 21st century, gay marriage has become a highly controversial debate in which its opponents are seen terming the practice, wrong, immoral or illogical. As a result, there is a certain stigma attached to homosexuality which naturally leads to controversy. In the U.S. the issue of Gay Marriage saw increased focus when the U.S. Supreme Court recognizes it as a right protected by the Constitution. My personal position on the issue is that Gay Marriage, or any homosexual union, is contrary to nature and should remain illegal. However, our minds often have pre-existing beliefs or hypothesis about a particular issue, which can lead us to experience different forms of bias that leads us to believe in favor of our pre-determined beliefs and ideas. I would, therefore, examine my biases in this paper, as a test case, in light of the Believing game.

Some of the key arguments which support my position firstly include the premise that homosexuality is unnatural and immoral. It is considered so, in the traditions, beliefs, cultures, and sacred texts of an overwhelming majority of cultures historically. Moreover, the one who engages in it intuitively realizes its self-destructive, immoral and unnatural characteristics that can be observed from the way homosexuality is defended. Natural laws are universal values that are shared by humanity that have conventionally held sexual union to be between a man and a woman (ProCon, 3). Another argument that supports my position is that children have psychologically and socially disposed to needing a father and a mother to grow up healthily. Studies suggest that girls, for instance, have a higher tendency to engage in unsafe sexual behavior if they are raised away from their fathers, while those who live without their mother are deprived of the unique bond, advice, love, and security that only a mother can provide (ProCon, 3). That is why many children raised by same-sex couples experience greater difficulties in the normal functions of life than other children. Furthermore, gay marriages defy the very purpose and function of marriage, which is to procreate. Defining marriage’s purpose to be something other than procreation would limit its meaning only to adult gratification. This further defines the importance of sexual relations and its social value. Childbirth from the sexual union creates families in which children can be raised up by their father and mother, something same-sex couples can never achieve. Infertile couples are the exception rather than the norm, and medical advancements, have significantly reduced the likelihood of never being able to procreate.

Nevertheless, the three premises that oppose my positioninclude: denying the right to same-sex marriage is discriminatory, benefits that arise from heterosexual marriage should extend to homosexual couples, and that Gay marriage is a civil right. These premises will be evaluated in light of the questions raised by the ‘Believing Game.' One of the interesting or helpful aspects about the premise that denying the right to same-sex marriage is discriminatory is the analogy between racial discrimination and denial of marriage rights to homosexual people since nearly everyone believes racism to be a vice. The view is trying to create empathy for homosexual people among those that disagree with their lifestyle. However, if I were to hold this view, I would become more considerate for people with certain defining characteristics than I was before in terms of the treatment they receive or deserve to receive, which may be true in the condition or sense that no one should be discriminated against in having fundamental rights such as the right to life, property, privacy, etc. (Elbow, 1, p.16).

Analyzing the second premise that benefits which arise from heterosexual marriage should extend to homosexual couples, the premise is helpful to in the sense that it seeks to extend the same protections, liabilities and financial benefits to same-sex couples that married couples have. If I held this view, I would notice that it would change my idea of a normal happy family that holds rights and responsibilities over one another. It could be true in the condition that these benefits be extended to people without the need of engaging in a same-sex marriage and hence be given outside of the institution of marriage. Furthermore, in the premise that gay marriage is an issue of civil rights, it is indeed helpful that it seeks to create sensitivity among people regarding the civil rights of many groups, communities and minorities have in the U.S., and if I were to have this view, it would definitely would strengthen my sensitivity with regards to other civil rights issues such as equal pay, equal employment, etc. However, this view can only be true on an individual basis independent of whether one engaged in a same-sex or heterosexual union, within marriage.

All human beings experience bias in one way or another. It basically refers to prejudice or inclination in favor or against one view, person, or group, which individuals may hold unconsciously towards one another. In turn, these influence our judgment of particular groups and people. Analyzing the opposing premises to my position, I did notice a hint of confirmation bias, which subconsciously led me to search for specific evidence that would support my pre-existing judgments against homosexual people (Lubin, 2). Another bias I experienced was the empathy gap, in which I would easily dismiss arguments that had to do with understanding the state of mind of homosexual groups and their advocates (Lubin & Lebowitz, 2). If I found the practice disgusting, I assume that others, and even homosexual people, would at some moment find the practice to be revolting and engaged in it only to seek thrill out of sexual deviance. In addition, socialization with the dominating culture, and conformity with in-group attitudes also perpetuate bias. My group identification as a conservative Republican also created a conformity bias in me, which produced in me a certain tendency to conform with the dominating beliefs of people belonging to my own political group (Turner, 4, p. 252).

To conclude, the exercise of evaluating opposing premises to my position on gay marriage helped me recognize that there are certain pre-existing notions I held, along with a tendency towards confirmation-bias and empathy bias. However, I still find the premises used to support the idea of Gay marriages to be weak in supporting the overall opposing argument. Nevertheless, the exercise profoundly instilled in me a desire and aspiration to hold highly informed opinions and to only disagree with a certain issue once I have carefully deliberated upon its evidence and counter-opinions.

# Source List

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3. ProCon. 2018. Should Gay Marriage Be Legal?. https://gaymarriage.procon.org/

4. Rhiannon Turner. 2010. Explaining the relationship between ingroup identification and intergroup bias following recategorization: A self-regulation theory analysis. P. 251-261. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1368430209351702