

“I’m a liberal Democrat. And I do not favor same-sex marriage.” These are the opening lines of an article in the Sept. 19 Los Angeles Times with this title: Protecting Marriage To Protect Children. It was written by the noted author and activist David Blankenhorn. David saw himself caught between two “goods”—the desire to reduce homophobia and the desire to protect children. He came down on the side of “society’s most vulnerable and voiceless”—the children and concluded he must protect them by protecting traditional marriage. Marriage, he noted, is the only institution uniquely created for the lifetime care and protection of children. Marriage is society’s gift to the next generation. This opening statement is a perfect summary of why we need ‘The Preservation of the Traditional Family.’ However, a further exploration of this subject can be broken down into categories such as; Why traditional marriage should be treasured over other forms of marriage, namely same sex marriage; Why children fair better under a biological father and mother in a family setting; and How does same sex marriage in Europe affect the moral, cultural and social health of those countries?

What is marriage? Many people may not have given much thought before now to the definition of marriage. The institution of marriage, between a man and a woman has been part of our society since the formation of our county and for millennia before that. In fact, nearly every major faith traces itself to Adam, and the mandate that a “man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

Earlier this year four activist judges in San Francisco overturned Proposition 22 which stated, “Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in

California.” 61% of the voters passed this measure in 2000. Proposition 8 is now on the ballot as a constitutional amendment to restore the definition of marriage as between a man and a woman. This is necessary to overturn an outrageous California Supreme Court decision that wiped out the votes of over 4 million people in favor of Proposition 22.

Divorce and out-of-wedlock birth rates have climbed lately and have resulted in an exceptionally large number of single parents in our society. Many of these single parents have raised well rounded children; nevertheless, extensive studies have shown that a husband and wife united in a loving marriage provide the optimal environment for children to be raised. This is not only because of the substantial personal resources that two parents can bring to bear on raising a child, but because of the differing strengths that a father and a mother, by virtue of their gender, bring to the table. As the prominent sociologist David Popenoe has said: “The burden of social science evidence supports the idea that gender differentiated parenting is important for human development and that the contribution of fathers to childrearing is unique and irreplaceable.” I have seen this in my life as my father has been by my side in helping me with my sports, scouting and always encouraging me to do my best in school.

Popenoe further explained that: “The complementarity of male and female parenting styles is striking and of enormous importance to a child’s overall development. It is sometimes said that fathers express more concern for the child’s longer-term development, while mothers focus on the child’s immediate well-being (which, of course, in its own way has everything to do with a child’s long-term well-being). What is clear is that children have dual needs that must be met: one for independence and the other for relatedness, one for challenge and the other for support.” While my father has been by

my side as a coach my mother has put this concept into action by making sure I had the proper items such as clean clothes, food, sewn patches on my uniform and provided the paper, pencils and tutoring for my school needs.

With the legalization of same sex marriage in Europe; they are seeing that the majority of children in Sweden and Norway are born out of wedlock. These countries have had something close to full gay marriage for almost 15 years. Same sex marriage is now spreading across Europe which will undermine families and the complete development of children who do not have a mother and father to raise them.

Stanley Kurtz who is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution asks the question, "Will same-sex marriage undermine the institution of marriage? It already has." In fact, gay marriage in Europe has increased the separation of marriage from parenthood. This situation has shouted the message that marriage is outdated and that any family form is completely acceptable.

The assault on marriage continues as studies that have been done throughout Scandinavia show that cohabiting couples with children break up at two to three times the rate of married parents. However, the most important trend, now that gay marriages are legal, is that the tendency to marry continues to drop after couples have their second child. As this trend continues, these countries will go down the path to a complete disappearance of marriage. Many Scandinavian social scientists see marriage as the barrier between equality of the sexes. Many of them would like to see marriage replaced completely by unmarried cohabitation. Gay marriage continues to try and validate the belief that a person's individual choice is more important than the family unit, which is the building block of society. Children without both a mother and father to guide them will be deprived of the natural nurturing process and understanding of relationships between

a husband and wife which are needed to properly raise a child. This in turn translates into an array of serious social problems in society.

Listed below are a few examples that have happened throughout the United States to organizations that do not buy into the gay agenda or same sex marriage but have the belief in traditional marriage and its values. The second example touches close to home for me as I have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boys Scouts of America.

The adoption services division of the Catholic Charities in Massachusetts refused to place children with same-sex couples as required by Massachusetts law saying that it was their belief that a child should not be denied both a mother and a father. After a legal struggle which ended with the adoption of the gay rights laws, Catholic Charities stopped doing adoptions completely in 2006 leaving an enormous gap in adoption services in Massachusetts.

The city of Berkeley, California, requested that the Sea Scouts (affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America) formally agree to not discriminate against gay men in exchange for free use of berths in the city's marina. The Sea Scouts sued, claiming this violated their beliefs and First Amendment right to the freedom to associate with other like-minded people. In 2006, the California Supreme Court ruled against the youth group. In San Diego, the Boy Scouts lost access to the city-owned aquatic center for the same reason.

I live in Laguna Beach, California which has been known as a very tolerant and gay friendly community. On a few Saturday mornings in September, I went door to door telling people in my neighborhood about how I felt regarding marriage and that it should only be between a man and a woman. I also asked them to vote Yes on Proposition 8 in

the upcoming election. This was by far one of the hardest things I have ever done. Even though I was with one of my friend's moms and also with one of my parents the other time, I found this experience very nerve racking. However, I'm glad I had the opportunity to express my feelings even if I thought that the adults I was speaking to could see me sweating. I found out first hand what freedom of speech means and I look forward to voting when I turn 18.

I find it interesting that many of my peers favor gay marriage even though they come from married households. For the twenty something group, that are just a few years older than me, less than half of them consider it wrong to bear children outside of marriage. The trends that we have seen in Europe are now moving to the United States. This is very frightening to me because I believe that by the time we see the adverse effects of same sex marriage in the United States it will be too late to do anything about it. We need to look at the facts of the constant assault on the traditional family unit, the increasing divorce rate and out of wedlock births to see that the foundation of society is starting to crumble.

The preservation of the traditional family unit must be reestablished on a firm foundation and become the bedrock of our society. If not, society and families will continue to wash away just as a sand castle succumbs to the rising tide.