

Why 'Gaying Up' Straight Marriages Would Make Them Worse, Not Better

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Professor Stephanie Coontz, a boutique scholar who's never met an alternative family form she didn't love nor a traditional form she praised, was recently [published in The New York Times](#) informing us that if the straights would make our marriages "gayer" we would be all the better for it. Her reason is found in her subtitle: "Same-sex spouses feel more satisfied with their partners than heterosexual ones."

It's a bold and dramatic claim, to be sure. Gays, by the very nature of being gay, are the ones finally able to show the 99 percent a better way of doing something that humans have been doing quite happily for untold millennia: have a loving, satisfying marriage. Without even reading the article, anyone familiar with the ins-and-outs of the feminist and alternative-family hermeneutic of gender power differentials will have little trouble guessing Coontz's rationale.

Gays Are Great Because...They Have No Husbands

She explains there are "powerful reasons heterosexual marriages are subject to more tension, miscommunication and resentment than same-sex relationships." Those powerful reasons? It's that same-sex relationships are free of the cancer of a man's absolute control over a woman's life.

"Right up to the 1970s, when an American woman married," Coontz asks us to believe, "her husband took charge of her sexuality and most of her finances, property and behavior." How many of you older women remember those dark days? Day after the wedding, you signed over your body, worldly possessions, and free will to the man who now directs your every step.

Coontz never really explains what triggered this stark shift in the 1970s married woman from slave to citizen and her husband from master to partner. But she says it happened.

Yet it is quite evident from the rest of her article that she doesn't believe much has actually changed. Women married to men remain on a pretty tight leash because, as she explains, for "most heterosexuals, marriage continues to increase the gender stereotyping of duties." Women are forced to do the housework. Husbands merely watch them and enjoy the benefits of cheap domestic servitude and sexual favors on demand. It's what men do.

Same-sex relationships are not stained with this injustice and stereotyping. Coontz tells us that these couples share everything equitably and all is peace, love, and understanding on their side of the street. She calls us all to be thankful for their example and learn from their insights.

3 Big Reasons This Is Ridiculous

But there are at least three major problems with this conclusion, besides the fact that this means everyone until now has gotten marriage precisely wrong and gays, in the last millisecond of human history, have discovered its secret.

First, if this is really the case, shouldn't hetero men clearly be the happiest of all, given they are the unquestioned king of their domain, having their every whim dutifully catered to by their woman and children? Well, the data Coontz presents shows they are quite happy in their relationships, but no more so than those in gay relationships. If hetero men benefit from supposed "traditional gender roles" and the imbalance of the relational power differential allows them to dominate their women, why are the supposedly more equitable and sacrificial same-sex-partnered men no more or less happy?

Second, it is well established and widely admitted that same-sex relationships (legally married or not) break-up at startlingly higher rates than opposite-sex ones do. Coontz even admits as much. Just one study presenting long-term [data](#) on lesbian "marriages" in the deeply affirming nations of Scandinavia show that these ladies break up at a stunning 77 percent greater than same-sex male unions.

When controlling for possible confounding factors, the "risk of divorce for female partnerships actually is more than twice that for male unions." The males themselves break up, as these scholars found, at "considerably higher" rates than heterosexual marriages. About twice the rate.

The reason lesbian and mainstream scholars give for this sky-high break-up rate is that women, as Coontz puts it, tend to “consume a lot of energy” toward “maintaining and deepening intimacy than most men do...” This is because they “have much more extensive expectations of empathy and emotional support.”

Simply put, women are more relationally intense and idealistic. When you double-dose these into one relationship, few can endure. Scholars have not wrestled as much to explain the high break-up rate of men.

So, we are stuck with radically conflicting conclusions: *Either these relationships are not all that happy and fulfilling, or gays and lesbians just choose to leave relationships that are qualitatively superior.*

Sex-less Marriages Are...Awesome?

Another problem inherent in lesbian relationships cuts into Coontz’s thesis. Lesbians also experience far greater waning sexual intimacy than any other relational form. It often becomes nearly non-existent. This fact is so common it has a name that any lesbian knows all too well: [lesbian bed death](#). Not to be confused with [the band](#). So again, another confounding clash of supposed facts: lesbian relationships are supposedly happier and more satisfying while physical intimacy dies.

What about the guys? Well, beyond a break-up rate double that of heterosexual marriages, [research](#) shows that nonmonogamy, or “[extra-dyadic sex](#)” as the academic literature has it, is quite common in long-term gay relationships. In fact, ask such couples if they are monogamous, you will likely get this question in return, “Do you mean monogamous or faithful?”

A nonsense question? Not if you understand the gay sexual economy. For them, monogamy is when a couple only has sex with each other. Fidelity is different. It’s when both parties honor the sexual agreements of the relationship.

These ground rules could be such things as not bringing boyfriends back to the house, no condom-less sex, or no getting emotionally attached to hook-up partners. If all is happy, good, and equal at home, why the need to go shopping elsewhere? No, gay male unions are not “just like” hetero marriages. Even those controlling, patriarchal men know not to ask their wives for free passes.

The 'Research' Is Mostly Horse-Hockey

Third is a problem with the research Coontz cites. It is endemic to most research on same-sex couples. Data on these relationships, among the adults themselves and same-sex parenting, are nearly all self-reported with little to no objective checks by a disinterested third party. Much of the research on relational happiness is collected this way.

Why would this be a problem in collecting good data on same-sex relationships? It's obvious if you think on it, and it's backed by evidence. Same-sex couples and parents well understand the important public, policy, and legal implications of the findings on the quality of their relationships. Knowing what kind of study they are participating in, they have a conscious or subconscious motivator for putting the best face on their relationships. Heterosexuals feel no such motivation.

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Therefore, it is not surprising when these subjective self-reports about marriage and parenting in same-sex homes regularly show outcomes, not just equal to, but usually *superior* to natural ones. In fact, [one major and widely reported study](#) found that children living in broken lesbian homes show *no* negative consequences at all.

Think about that. These kids do better and show no harm when their homes break up. If this is actually true, all kids should be raised by two moms! But we know better. When inarguably objective measures like relational break-ups are examined, it is revealed that these relationships are less well-off.

The body of research on same-sex adult and parenting relationships is largely a mess from which very few reliable conclusions can be drawn. It is usually conducted by scholars who are gay-friendly activists, many accepting notable awards from LGBT groups for doing work that has been very helpful to the cause. Most use extremely poor and infamously non-representative samples, as does the data Coontz cites. Their methodologies are often so poor that a second-year sociology major would have little trouble poking damning holes in them.

Then There's Political Correctness

Finally, no (and I mean *no*) research that shows positive outcomes for gay relationships is ever criticized by any mainstream scholars. That's not because they think it's all great, solid research. They know it's shot through with substantial problems that call into question their conclusions.

Mainstream scholars with no dog in the fight know that to even question such studies would bring great vengeance and furious anger down upon their personal and professional reputations. They would be destroyed. They've seen it done to others, and they're no fools. This particular line of academic inquiry is a getting a wholesale free pass from the scientific method.

Consider this. If a scholar published a study with ridiculous positive claims that she simply made up, no mainstream scholar or journalist would question her in public. Silly things such as people in long-term gay relationships get fewer cavities, have more satisfying lunch hours at work, give out better candy to the neighborhood trick-or-treaters, or have fewer highway break downs with their cars. They know all is fair, true, and right in the service of gay politics, and you better not deny these people what they're after, regardless of their "facts" or methods.

Others should refuse to play along.

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