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## [Op-Ed Commentaries](#)

June 21, 2009

### **Jeremiah Dys** **Marriage protects society**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- There is an old saying, "We must destroy this village in order to save it."

Those words sum up the mindset of many of our lawmakers and judges who believe that they need to right an "injustice" by fabricating a "right" to same-sex "marriage."

Instead, in their attempts to "save the village" by allowing two men or two women to "marry," they are taking a wrecking ball to the institution of marriage and the future well-being of America's children.

Whether it's called a "civil" marriage or a "religious" marriage, when lawmakers and judges fabricate same-sex "marriage," you can be assured of one thing: it's not marriage. Marriage is marriage regardless of how you try to parse the words. The result is the same regardless of the adjective you may attach: when you add anything to marriage, the result is addition by subtraction, with subtraction being the unique value marriage brings to society and, ultimately, its total destruction, with children suffering the collateral damage.

Lawmakers and judges may not know this, but same-sex "marriage" advocates do. In fact, what these activists really want is to eliminate what they can't duplicate. That's why while demanding marriage in order to "preserve" and "strengthen" families by allowing two men or two women to marry, they're privately talking about destroying both marriage and the family.

William Eskridge of Yale Law School says he hopes same-sex "marriage" will "dethrone the traditional family based on blood relationships in favor of families we choose." Another same-sex "marriage" advocate said, "Legitimizing same-sex unions is just

a warm-up act. Ultimately [same-sex "marriage" proponents] want to eliminate any barriers, any signposts that limit or channel the exercise of human sexuality."

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Finally, Michelangelo Signorile, another same-sex "marriage" advocate wrote: "[We need to] fight for same-sex marriage and its benefits, and then, once granted, redefine the institution of marriage completely ... to debunk a myth and radically alter an archaic institution."

Perhaps marriage is an "archaic" institution to Mr. Signorile, but government didn't create marriage simply because it had been around forever. Government got involved in the marriage license business because it recognized that it needed to encourage a mother and a father to raise their children together.

The government's interest in marriage has always been to ensure the strength of the institution that brings male and female together to care for the next generation, not just to recognize relationships of families adults choose. In a 180-degree turn, government has chosen the latter path and is telling children that they don't need a mom and a dad after all. Just last week, the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia ruled that a married mom and dad are irrelevant to the adoption of children. The court felt that the adoption law was ambiguous and decided to place the emotional desires of two adults above the best interest of the child. Given this reasoning from the court, what would stop them from finding our state's present marriage laws to be "ambiguous" as well?

When marriage is devalued or re-defined, society and, ultimately, our children pay the price. Government spending on social programs is driven in large part by family fragmentation. You name the problem, whether it is crime, poverty, drug abuse, teen pregnancy or school failure. Each societal problem we face today can be traced back to the breakdown of the family, a concept that is seemingly foreign to the justices on the Supreme

### Court of Appeals.

Marriage between one man and one woman is good for society. West Virginians understand that, and that's why they want to join with the voters in 30 other states to protect marriage through a constitutional amendment before judges and lawmakers take it upon themselves to fragment marriage and the family even more, sort of a "stimulus" plan for societal dysfunction.

In this time of economic turmoil, wouldn't it make sense to strengthen marriage in its optimal form, not break it down into nothing more than pandering to the political agenda of less than 1 percent of West Virginia citizens?

Unfortunately, like the economic stimulus bill, our children will eventually be left with the check - an itemized list of broken families, broken lives and broken dreams. As West Virginians, let's take the steps needed now to ensure that our children won't have to pay that price, and tell our legislators we want to vote to protect marriage and our children's future. Let's truly "save" marriage for future generations to come.

Dys is president of the Family Policy Council of West Virginia.



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