

An Argument for Same-Sex Marriage: Religious Freedom, Sexual Freedom, and Public Expressions of Civic Equality (Religion and Politics)

Emily Gill



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The relationship between religious belief and sexuality as personal attributes exhibits some provocative comparisons. Despite the nonestablishment of religion in the United States and the constitutional guarantee of free exercise, Christianity functions as the religious and moral standard in America. Ethical views that do not fit within this consensus often go unrecognized as moral values. Similarly, in the realm of sexual orientation, heterosexuality is seen as the yardstick by which sexual practices are measured. The notion that "alternative" sexual practices like homosexuality could possess ethical significance is often overlooked or ignored.

In her new book, *An Argument for Same-Sex Marriage*, political scientist Emily Gill draws an extended comparison between religious belief and sexuality, both central components of one's personal identity. Using the religion clause of the First Amendment as a foundation, Gill contends that, just as US law and policy ensure that citizens may express religious beliefs as they see fit, it should also ensure that citizens may marry as they see fit. Civil marriage, according to Gill, is a public institution, and the exclusion of some couples from a state institution is a public expression of civic inequality.

An Argument for Same-Sex Marriage is a passionate and timely treatment of the various arguments for and against same-sex marriage and how those arguments reflect our collective sense of morality and civic equality. It will appeal to readers who have an interest in gay and lesbian studies, political theory, constitutional law, and the role of religion in the contemporary United States.

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