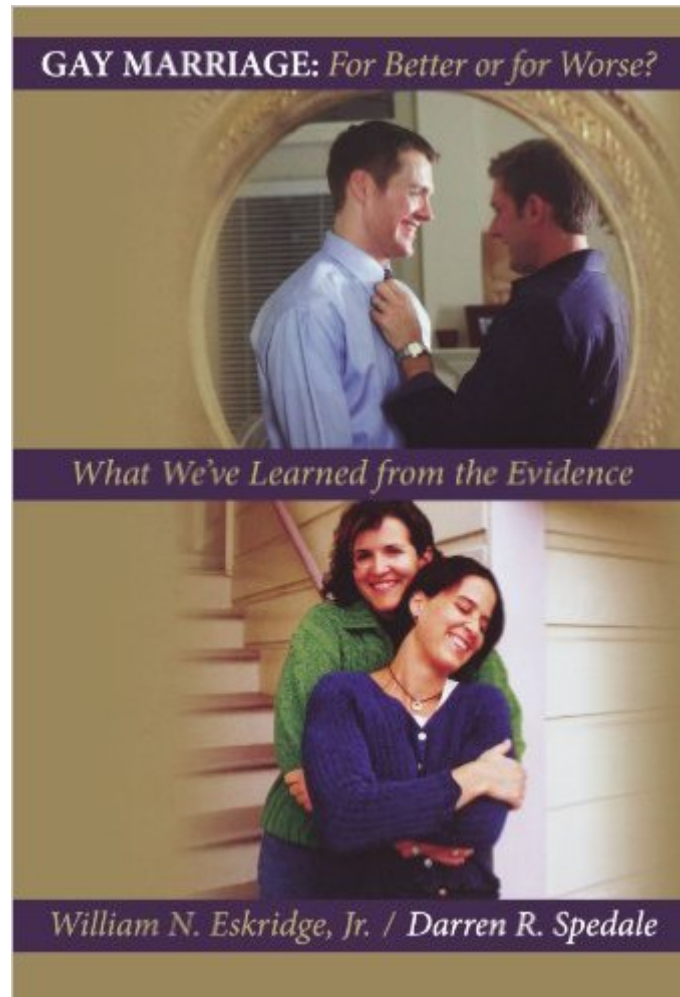


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# Gay Marriage: For Better Or For Worse?: What We've Learned From The Evidence



## Synopsis

Opponents of same-sex marriage in the United States claim that allowing gays and lesbians to marry would undermine the institution of marriage, weaken family structures, and cause harm to children. Drawing from 17 years of data and experience with same-sex marriage in Scandinavia (in the form of registered partnerships), *Gay Marriage: For Better or for Worse?* is the first book to present empirical evidence about the effects of same-sex marriage on society. Spedale and Eskridge find that the evidence refutes conservative defense-of-marriage arguments and, in fact, demonstrates that the institution of marriage may indeed benefit from the legalization of gay marriage. If we look at the proof from abroad, the authors show, we must conclude that the sanctioning of gay marriage in the United States would neither undermine marriage as an institution, nor harm the wellbeing of our nation's children. "A very interesting book that people should read."--Bill O'Reilly, Host, *The O'Reilly Factor* "Whatever your views are now on same-sex marriage, this is the book to read to be informed about why same sex couples want legal recognition and what legal union means to them and to the larger community. Spedale and Eskridge give detailed accounts of the effects of registered partnerships in Scandinavia--and along the way, offer fascinating and engaging pictures of many people's lives."--Martha Minow, Jeremiah Smith Jr. Professor, Harvard Law School "Spedale and Eskridge illuminate with remarkable even-handedness a debate that tends to generate more heat than light. They provide a cogent analysis of conservative arguments that same-sex matrimony threatens conventional marriage, and argue persuasively that enabling same-sex partners to marry may actually strengthen that beleaguered institution."--John Podesta, President and CEO, Center for American Progress "An important and timely contribution. It should be required reading for anyone interested in the future of families in America."--Martha Albertson Fineman, Robert W. Woodruff Professor, Emory Law School

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

We keep hearing about how we need to "protect" marriage or "defend" marriage from same-sex couples. But as the authors point out, it's never exactly made clear what the institution of marriage needs to be protected from. We keep hearing about a parade of possible horrible things that "would" happen if gay marriage were legalized (less marriages, more divorces, polygamy, marrying relatives, livestock, etc). But behind all the rhetoric, where are the facts about what really would happen if gay marriage were legalized here in the United States? These two authors, Spedale and Eskridge, finally answer that question in this book. They have done some excellent research on gay marriage in practice. They show that (1) there is no "slippery slope" - 17 years of de facto gay marriage in Scandinavia has NOT led to any calls for polygamy, group marriage or the like; (2) allowing same-sex couples to marry does NOT harm the institution of marriage - in fact, more heterosexual couples are getting married now, and less are getting divorced, than before there was gay marriage; and (3) there are plenty of social benefits associated with allowing gays and lesbians to marry (too many for me to discuss in this review, but that they discuss in the book). They also relate their findings in Scandinavia back to what's going on here now in the United States, and conclude that the trends would be the same in the U.S., if same-sex marriage is legalized here. The book also includes lots of other interesting material, such as the demographics of gays and lesbians who are getting married (i.e., what types of people decide to use the gay marriage laws), gays and church weddings, gays raising children in a traditional family structure, etc.

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