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CW NEVIUS

Everyday life best argument for gay marriage

C.W. Nevius

Thursday, March 6, 2008



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When defenders of the "sacred union of marriage" held a news conference last Tuesday after oral arguments on same-sex marriage at the state Supreme Court, they weren't facing a friendly crowd.

A small group of activists tried to drown out the comments with songs, chants and heckling. I'm sure they thought they were carrying the banner of freedom, standing up for principle and advancing the cause.

They're wrong.

At the end of the day, when the change comes to allow same-sex marriage - and it's coming, don't kid yourself - it won't be because of protests. It will be because people in this state, and across the country, are talking to gay and lesbian co-workers and neighbors, meeting same-sex couples and their kids at Little League games, and working at companies with domestic-partner health plans.

"It is the normal interaction in everyday life," said City Attorney Dennis Herrera, who is leading San Francisco's legal effort along with attorneys for 23 same-sex couples. "It is the guy at the water cooler at work, seeing them with their kids - that's what drives it home for people."

It is that familiarity driving the change in perception. Polls tell us that those born before 1940 are probably a lost cause. But those in their 40s, for example, have seen a dramatic uptick in support for same-sex marriage. And the real sea change is among the teens and twentysomethings who seem to wonder what the fuss is all about.



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