

3/23/2004

Re: Get Government Out of Marriage

Dear Editor,

If, as the Religious Right seems to assure us, marriage is indeed a sacred rite between a man and a woman, ordained by God, then why is the state involved in granting licenses for such a proclaimed religious ceremony at all? Here's a simple idea that might not thrill everyone, but might satisfy most people: Limit the state to only granting licenses for civil unions (to any two consenting adults). These civil unions would confer all the legal rights and responsibilities that the state can grant by law, and if the happy couple chooses to further solemnize the union separately, with a religious (or not) marriage ceremony, then they are free to do so.

This solution would remove the state from the contentious issue of gay marriage completely, and leave churches, mosques, synagogues, justices of the peace, ship's captains and drive-thru wedding chapels (among other non-civil entities) in the sole position of performing marriages for couples that have been granted a legal union by the state.

John Donovan
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