

This morning in NPR's Morning Edition, Renee Montagne spoke with Peter Sprigg, director of the Center for Marriage and Family Studies at the Family Research Council. What he said I found deeply offensive. You can find their discussion here:

<http://www.npr.org/rundowns/segment.php?wfld=1791280>

My letter to NPR follows.

Cheers,

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Dear NPR,

In the words of Walt Kelly's Pogo, "We have met the enemy and he is us!" That is the message I take away from Peter Sprigg's (of the Family Research Council, Center for Marriage and Family Studies) comments on Morning Edition (March 25, 2004) regarding the current controversy over marriage rights.

In his comments, Mr Sprigg tells us that same-sex marriage would be just the latest affront in a continuing assault on marriage "over the last fifty years" as we depart from marriage's traditional role of promoting and protecting procreation. He claims that the trend of single parent households, childless couples and now same-sex marriages are eroding "natural marriage."

By the time my wife and I got married we had each decided not to have children. We chose to get married for many reasons, but we never thought of ourselves as eroding a cherished institution by doing so. Apparently, though, we are part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Not too long ago a man and woman living together without the benefit of the bonds of marriage were "living in sin." Now, by the logic of Mr Sprigg, our decision to get married threatens to destroy the very institution that we have chosen to celebrate. What is a childless couple to do? We are damned if we do and damned if we don't.

Mr Sprigg would have us believe that the institution of marriage is something which survived, unchanged, from some long ago time up 'til fifty years ago, when it came under sudden attack by an immoral society. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Unless he would have us revert to the not so distant past of arranged marriages which predated the evolution of marriage as an expression of romantic love, a development only two hundred and fifty years old, he should accept that the institution is not immutable. Like any other aspect of human existence it changes!

I recently sent a series of calls to action to friends and relatives regarding a state constitutional amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage, civil union and domestic partnership. I used a time worn rhetorical tool — rather than accepting the title its proponents had chosen, "The Affirmation of Marriage Act," I referred to it as the "Anti-marriage Act."

When I did this I felt that it truly was an anti-marriage proposal, now Mr. Sprigg reveals just how accurate I was.

Now that the anti-marriage forces have placed my wife in their sights, and not just my gay and lesbian friends, I am even more committed to fighting to see that all citizens are afforded this most essential of rights.