



Same-Sex Marriage and Children: A Tale of History, Social Science, and Law

Carlos A. Ball

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Same-Sex Marriage and Children is the first book to bring together historical, social science, and legal considerations to comprehensively respond to the objections to same-sex marriage that are based on the need to promote so-called "responsible procreation" and child welfare. Carlos A. Ball places the current marriage debates within a broader historical context by exploring how the procreative and child welfare claims used to try to deny same-sex couples the opportunity to marry are similar to earlier arguments used to defend interracial marriage bans, laws prohibiting disabled individuals from marrying, and the differential treatment of children born out of wedlock. Ball also draws a link between welfare reform and same-sex marriage bans by explaining how conservative proponents have defended both based on the need for the government to promote responsible procreation among heterosexuals.

In addition, Ball examines the social science studies relied on by opponents of same-sex marriage and explains in a highly engaging and accessible way why they do not support the contention that biological status and parental gender matter when it comes to parenting. He also explores the relevance of the social science studies on the children of lesbians and gay men to the question of whether same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. In doing so, the book looks closely at the gay marriage cases that recently reached the Supreme Court and explains why the constitutionality of same-sex marriage bans cannot be defended on the basis that maintaining marriage as an exclusively heterosexual institution helps to promote the best interests of children. *Same-Sex Marriage and Children* will help lawyers, law professors, judges, legislators, social and political scientists, historians, and child welfare officials—as well as general readers interested in matters related to marriage and families—understand the empirical and legal issues behind the intersection of same-sex marriage and children's welfare.

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