

Facebook Slammed for Pro-Gay Marriage Bias

Facebook has come under fire for endorsing same-sex marriage in Australia, as the country approaches an important vote on the issue.

From the start of March, all Facebook users were given the option of adding a pro same-sex marriage slogan to the bottom of their profile picture.

However, no such function is available for users who oppose the redefinition of marriage.

One-sided

Lyle Shelton, Managing Director of the Australian Christian Lobby, said that as a shareholder owned company, Facebook is entitled to support whatever cause it chooses.

But he stressed that it should consider its many users “who will always believe marriage is between one man and one woman”.

He added: “Many people will feel pressure not to express their views in support of marriage because of Facebook’s enabling of just one side of the debate.”

Partnership

Facebook allowed its users to edit their profile picture and add a “frame feature” reading “I [heart] Marriage Equality”, in partnership with pro same-sex marriage group Australian Marriage Equality (AME).

The feature has never previously been used for a political cause in Australia.

AME commented that the move is an “extremely powerful way” of furthering support for same-sex marriage.

Plebiscite

The Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, has committed to holding a plebiscite on same-sex marriage after the next election.

However, a significant number of members of Parliament in the coalition government are against the plan.

During a TV debate in August last year, a prominent opponent of same-sex marriage told Australians that redefining marriage affects society at large.

‘Intolerant’

Brendan O’Neill, Editor of online magazine *Spiked*, argued that homosexual marriage presents itself as a liberal civil-rights issue, but that in reality, “it has this really ugly, intolerant streak to it”.

O’Neill said: “Anyone who opposes gay marriage is demonised, harassed. We’ve seen people thrown out of their jobs because they criticise gay marriage.”

He continued: “There are equality cases, shops have closed down, it’s like a 21st century form of religious persecution – it’s horrendous.”