



DODGY RESEARCH

by Myles Wearing



Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby co-convenor David Scamell wants equal adoption rights

RELIGIOUS GROUP USES DUBIOUS RESEARCH IN SUBMISSION TO NSW GAY ADOPTION INQUIRY.

The Australian Christian Lobby has quoted research by a discredited psychologist and anti-gay campaigner in its submission to the NSW Adoption Act Review, currently looking at the issue of gay adoption.

The submission references a US study by Dr Paul Cameron which supports the Christian Lobby's position that adoption laws should not be changed to allow same-sex couples to adopt, except in "exceptional circumstances".

However, Cameron has been expelled from the American Psychological Association and the Nebraska Psychological Association and been discredited by the American Sociological Association, according to reports in *The Boston Globe*, *The Advocate* and the website of the University of California's psychology department.

A spokesperson for the Christian Lobby told *Sydney Star Observer* he was unaware of Cameron's history and that the matter would be looked into.

In its submission the Christian Lobby said it was "not suggesting that homosexual couples are somehow less loving or less committed to a child than a heterosexual couple". But children in same-sex parented families "cannot witness the interaction of the sexes or benefit from the approaches to parenting that a mother and father bring ... Research outlined below indicates that the child suffers as a result."

The submission quotes Cameron's findings that children of homosexuals would "be more frequently subjected to parental instability", "have poor peer and adult relationships", "be more apt to become homosexual", "be unstable (have emotional problems and difficulty forming lasting bonds)", and "be sexually precocious and promiscuous".

Cameron is the founder of the Family Research Institute. According to that organisation's website it was formed "in 1982 with one overriding mission: to generate empirical research on issues that threaten the traditional family, particularly homosexuality".

In one of his pamphlets, *Getting The Facts: Same-Sex Marriage*, Cameron says "gay marriage harms everyone it touches – especially children. Not only does it place homosexuals at increased risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, but it also subjects them to an increased threat of domestic violence."

Cameron claims in another article on his website, *Homosexual Rape And Murder Of Children*, that the majority of people who commit rape and murder are gay.

In his article *The Psychology Of Homosexuality*, Cameron says "most homosexuals eventually learn to immerse themselves in faeces", are "about a third more apt to report a traffic ticket or traffic accident", and "three times more likely to admit to having made an obscene phone call".

In July 2005 *The Boston Globe* reported the American Psychological Association expelled Cameron in 1983 after some of its members complained about the methodology he used in his research. Last year a spokesperson for the APA said, "We are concerned about Dr Cameron because we do believe that his methodology is weak."

In 1984 the Nebraska Psychological Association issued a statement saying it “formally dissociates itself from the representations and interpretations of scientific literature offered by Dr Paul Cameron”, the newspaper reported.

The American Sociological Association issued a resolution saying: “Cameron has consistently misinterpreted and misrepresented sociological research on sexuality, homosexuality, and lesbianism.”

In an email to *The Boston Globe* Cameron referred to homosexuals and those who support them as “death marketers” who were attempting to “destroy the US from within”, the newspaper said.

“Those of us at FRI [Family Research Institute] are determined to do our best to oppose these death activists.”

The adoption inquiry is being conducted by the NSW Department of Community Services (DOCS) and is looking at whether to extend some adoption rights to same-sex couples.

At present the law does not allow the non-biological parent in a gay or lesbian relationship to adopt their partner’s biological child, nor does it allow gay men and lesbians to be recognised as step-parents.

Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby co-convenor David Scamell said he believed it was in “the best interests of the child in a same-sex-parented family to assure both parents have legal recognition so their relationship with their children has that degree of certainty and protection”.

Scamell said it was common for conservative Christian groups who put forward arguments about same-sex families to use research by doctors who are “either backed by Christian groups or have been discredited by their professional peer bodies”.

A spokesperson for DOCS said they would be “carefully considering submissions and will examine the validity of any research quoted before providing advice to the [Community Services] minister [Reba Meagher]”.