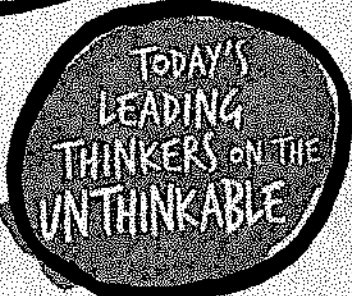


WHAT
IS YOUR
DANGEROUS
IDEA?

EDITED BY

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EDITOR OF
WHAT WE BELIEVE BUT CANNOT PROVE



TODAY'S
LEADING
THINKERS ON THE
UNTHINKABLE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
STEVEN PINKER
AND AN AFTERWORD BY
RICHARD DAWKINS



A Marriage Option for All

David G. Myers

DAVID G. MYERS is a social psychologist at Hope College. He is the coauthor (with Letha Scanzoni) of *What God Has Joined Together?: A Christian Case for Gay Marriage*.

Much as most scientists have felt compelled by evidence to believe in human evolution or the warming of the planet, I feel compelled by evidence to believe (1) that sexual orientation is a natural, enduring disposition, and (2) that the world would be a happier and healthier place if, for all people, romantic love, sex, and marriage were a package.

In my Midwestern social and religious culture, the words "for all people" transform a conservative platitude into a dangerous idea, over which we are fighting a culture war. On one side are traditionalists, who feel passionately about the need to support and renew traditional marriage. On the other side are progressives, who assume that our sexual orientation is something we did not choose and cannot change, and that we all deserve the option of life within a covenant partnership.

I foresee a bridge across this divide, as folks on both the left and the right engage the growing evidence of our panhuman longing for belonging, of the benefits of marriage, and of the

biology and persistence of sexual orientation. We now have lots of data showing that marriage is conducive to healthy adults, thriving children, and flourishing communities. We also have a dozen discoveries of gay-straight differences, in everything from brain physiology to skill at mentally rotating geometric figures. And we have an emerging professional consensus that sexual-orientation therapies seldom work.

More and more young adults—tomorrow's likely majority, given generational succession—are coming to understand this evidence and to support what in the future will not seem so dangerous: a marriage option for all.