

The Australian Family Association National Conference May 2011 Report

July 2011

The Australian Family Association



The
Australian
Family
Association

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Acknowledgement of Conference Guests

George Christensen Liberal federal Member for seat of Dawson, Qld
Senator John Hogg (President of the Senate) ALP Qld
Major General Peter Phillips
Senator George Brandis Lib Qld
Senator Ron Boswell Lib Qld Senator
Greg Pike (Director of the Southern Cross Bioethics Institute)
Dr Alan Hawkins
Dr Patrick Fagan
David Perrin the National President of the Australian Family Association)
Peter Westmore (National President of the National Civic Council)
Wendy Francis (Qld Director of the Australian Christian Lobby)
Tony Zegenhagen (Federal Secretary of the Democratic Labor Party)
Sally Vincent (Qld Director? Family First Party)
Rev Fr Gregory Jordan
Teresa Martin (Director of Cherish Life, Queensland)
Dr David van Gend (Queensland secretary for the World Federation of Doctors who Respect Human Life)

Acknowledgement of Sponsors

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Southern Cross Bioethics Institute
Campion College
A Country Garden – Montessori based education
RISE (Restoring Integrity and Sexual Ethics)
Australian National Council on Drugs
News Weekly – magazine (discount offer is \$50 for your first year)

Acknowledgement of Supporters

The Democratic Labor Party
The Family First Party
Freedom - Campus Ministry



1. Introduction

This document is the proceedings from The Australian Family Association (AFA) National Conference 2011 held on the 21 May 2011 at the Mercure Hotel, Brisbane.

The title for the conference was '*Marriage and the Culture War*'.

The program for the conference included a morning session with three key note speakers, an afternoon session involving six workshops and a conference dinner. A copy of the program is included as Appendix A.

The conference was opened by Queensland Senator John Hogg. The chairman for the conference was Queensland AFA President, Michael Ord.

This report is structured on the program as follows:

- AFA national conference background and opening
- Key note speeches
 - ▶ Speaker 1 Dr Patrick Fagan - Monogamy vs. Poly-Sexuality
 - ▶ Speaker 2 Dr Greg Pike - Responding to the Pro-Euthanasia Movement
 - ▶ Speaker 3 Dr Alan Hawkins - Revitalising Marriage and Avoiding Unnecessary Divorce
- Workshops
 - ▶ Workshop one - Which marriage policies does Australia need? Dr Alan Hawkins
 - ▶ Workshop two - How will we keep Australia euthanasia free? Dr Gregory Pike
 - ▶ Workshop three - Reproductive technologies: New life, what price? Dr Luke McLindon
 - ▶ Workshop four - Will paid parental schemes harm motherhood? Tempe Harvey
 - ▶ Workshop five - Building healthy families: programs for your community? Ray Campbell
 - ▶ Workshop six - Ministry to the newly married – why are the first five years of marriage so important? Maurie and Bernice Boland
- Conference dinner

The conference was videoed and DVDs on the three keynote speakers and dinner speech are available for purchase.



2. AFA national conference background and opening

2.1 Conference background

The AFA holds a national conference every two to three years to consider topics that are important to natural families.

Currently the natural family is subject to many challenges and threats that are undermining the survival and support for natural families in our society. Examples include movements to change the definition of marriage, high divorce rates, euthanasia legislation, IVF, parental schemes etc.

The purpose of this conference is to seek an understanding of the 'family cultures' in our society and therefore the title of our conference "Marriage and the Culture War".

A key objective of the conference is also to consider and review policies and programs that can support families in times of stress and transition through the stage of life.

2.2 Conference opening

The conference was opened by Queensland Senator John Hogg.

2.2.1 Senator John Hogg bio

John Hogg has represented Queensland in the Senate since 1996.

He is the President of the Senate.

He holds a Bachelor of Science, and has taught in both primary and secondary schools.

Before entering the Senate, John was branch secretary and member of the national Executive of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association.

He has been an active member of the ALP since 1976.

He is married to Sue and they have three children.

John's first speech in the Senate was on the 11 September 1996. I highlight three points he referred to in his speech – the importance of family, his commitment to the pursuit of social justice and the fundamental right of every person to be treated with dignity

2.2.2 Conference opening speech by Senator John Hogg

In opening the conference Senator John Hogg highlighted that:

- The challenges that are taking place in our society today are not new but they do need to be met with determination and vigour or much will be lost for future generations.
- Our western democracies have been built and flourished on the Judeo-Christian ethos. This ethos has been under challenge over centuries but never as much as in the last century



- The difference today is that the technocrats of the non religious or anti religious secularist persuasion are seeking to or have taken hold of the foundation blocks of our society and used those foundation blocks to entrench their views and not unexpectedly outlaw the views long held by people like myself
- The cultural war has been fought in a number of areas, the courts, tribunals, parliaments and political parties, tertiary institutions and bureaucracies to just name a few
- The challenge to existing values has generally come about by someone claiming to have a right that is being denied or being discriminated against in some way
- The building blocks have played a significant role in changing those values. The building blocks have been either vacated by those who have a commitment to Judeo-Christian values or given the unrelenting forces at work in support of this cultural revolution, many well intentioned people in organizations have become passive
- The moves for marriage definitional change do create a substantial cultural battle ground. It would alter the basic way of our society and the way it behaves. If definitional change is effected, then our culture will be changed forever. This would not be for the betterment of our society as it would push our society further away from the underlying values that have been embraced from the Judeo-Christian values
- You are faced with a challenge. I am faced with a challenge. I wish you all the best with your deliberations and I have pleasure in officially declaring open your conference.



3. Conference key note speeches

The morning session involved the following three key note speeches.

3.1 Speaker one, Dr Patrick Fagan - Monogamy vs. Poly-Sexuality

3.1.1 Dr Patrick Fagan bio

A native of Ireland, Dr Fagan earned his Bachelor of Social Science degree in Sociology and Social Administration at University College, Dublin, where he went on to complete a Professional Graduate Degree in Psychology. After relocating to the United States, he received a doctoral degree at American University in 1976, and more recently defended a PhD dissertation in Public Policy in 2006.

He is a former William H.G. FitzGerald Senior Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues at The Heritage Foundation, where his research examined the relationship between family, marriage, religion, community, and the social issues facing America in contemporary society.

Dr. Fagan served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Family and Community Policy at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under President George H.W. Bush, and frequently works with senior government officials, both in the US and abroad, helping governments to develop sound, sensible policies on issues relating to the family.

Since October 2007, Dr. Fagan has been a Senior Fellow at the Family Research Council in Washington DC. In his work, Dr Fagan has sought to utilise scientific research to inform public policy on issues such as crime, abuse, welfare, adoption, education, income and child well-being.

Dr Fagan and his wife have eight (grown up) children.

3.1.2 Monogamy vs. Polyandry paper

The paper for the speech 'Monogamy vs. Polyandry' by Dr Patrick Fagan is included as Appendix B. This paper was presented by Dr Fagan to the World Congress of Families in Amsterdam on August 12, 2009. A key summary of this paper is as follows:

The "monogamous" and the "polyamorous" cultures have totally different approaches to life, with religious worship and monogamous marriage being the defining differences in their different approaches to the sexual act

How can these two cultures live together in the same political order?

This question defines our day. Two main differences for political consequences:

1. In population monogamy is fertile and expanding while polyandry is below replacement and contracting,
2. Monogamy is inexpensive, while polyandry is very expensive.

Polyandry has figured out its way to survive and even thrive by controlling three areas of public policy which yields in converts from monogamy to theirs – childhood education,



sex education and the control of adolescent health programs. By controlling these three areas the culture of polyandry diminishes the influence and dismantles the authority and influence of parents of the culture of monogamy, particularly to form children of their own culture

How can the monogamous family survive and thrive in this postmodernist (polyandry) social welfare state era?

Men of courage and energy are required to get serious about being men, protecting their own families and having control over the three big programs of childhood education, sex education and adolescent health programs.

3.2 Speaker two, Dr Greg Pike - Responding to the Pro-Euthanasia Movement

3.2.1 Dr Greg Pike bio

Dr Greg Pike is the Director of the Southern Cross Bioethics Institute in Adelaide, South Australia where he focuses primarily on the influence of bioethics on public policy development.

Greg trained as a physiologist with a PhD in nerve and muscle physiology, then worked as a Hospital Research Scientist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in the Department of Surgery.

Greg is the Chairman of the Board of the Australian Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Program and a member of the Institute on Global Drug Policy, has served as a Deputy Member on the SA Council on Reproductive Technology and was a member of the Australian Health Ethics Committee for the 2006-09 triennium.

3.2.2 Responding to the Pro-Euthanasia Movement presentation

The presentation for the speech 'Responding to the Pro-Euthanasia Movement' by Dr Greg Pike is included as Appendix C.

This topic was also considered in a workshop and the outcomes of this workshop are addressed in section 4.2.

3.3 Speaker three, Dr Alan Hawkins - Revitalising Marriage and Avoiding Unnecessary Divorce

3.3.1 Dr Alan Hawkins bio

Alan J. Hawkins is a professor of family life at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, USA, where he has taught and done research for the past 20 years.

Alan received his doctorate in Human Development & Family Studies at The Pennsylvania State University in 1990. In 2000, he was a visiting scholar with the National Fatherhood Initiative. Then in 2003 he was a visiting scholar with the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation with the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. federal government. He worked there helping the federal government plan and implement its healthy marriage initiative.



Alan is the past chair of the Utah Healthy Marriage Initiative. He serves on the advisory boards for the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative and the Texas Healthy Marriage Initiative, as well as the National Center for Families and Marriage Research. He has published extensively on the topic of government efforts to help couples form and sustain healthy marriages.

3.3.2 Revitalising marriage and preventing divorce paper and presentation

The paper and presentation for the speech 'Revitalising marriage and preventing divorce' by Dr Alan Hawkins are included as Appendix D and E respectively.

Dr Hawkins paper and presentation identifies a feasible social policy agenda to increase the proportion of youth and adults who achieve their aspirations of a healthy and stable marriage. This agenda puts much faith in the power of education and promotes the delivery of voluntary educational services using existing educational infrastructures.

Dr Hawkins asserts that:

The accumulation of modest educational effects at each time point in the early life course may provide significant help for young people. Repeated, timely exposure to research-based, helpful information and relationship skills may be able to guide many more youth from adolescent romances to quality relationships, healthy marriages, and stable family life in adulthood.

This topic was also considered in a workshop and the outcomes of this workshop are addressed in section 4.1.

3.3.3 Meeting with politicians in Canberra

A summary report on the meetings with politicians in Canberra to discuss policies for revitalising marriage and preventing unnecessary divorce is included as Appendix F.

Follow up letters including details on the marriage policies and details on the conference have been forwarded to the politicians.



4. Conference workshops

The afternoon session involved the following six workshops. The workshops were held over a period of two hours. Workshops one and two involved detailed consideration of two topics from the key note speeches. Workshops four to six included a presentation and group review of the topic. Each workshop group determined conclusions and reported back to the whole conference group in the plenary session. These conclusions were subsequently endorsed the AFA National Executive.

The workshops presentations, conclusions and recommendations are addressed in the following sections.

4.1 Workshop one - Which marriage policies does Australia need? Dr Alan Hawkins

Workshop one recommended that the AFA promotes policies to support:

- The natural family;
- Family relationship centres to encourage natural marriage and family;
- Shared parenting;
- Sex education programmes that promote chastity and faithful marriage;
- Positive support for the important role of fathers;
- Relationship education for young adults;
- Marriage between one man and one woman to be encouraged by celebrants;
- Programmes to support the newly married;
- Encourage social science research to demonstrate that the healthy family is an important factor in winding back welfare dependence.

The post conference strategy on marriage policies for Australia will involve:

1. The meetings with politicians in Canberra held immediately after the conference. Details on these meetings are addressed in section 3.3.3. As a follow up to these meetings a letter and supporting information on the AFA's key messages on marriage policies for Australia has been sent to each politician invited to the meetings.
2. AFA research officers Terri Kelleher and Tim Cannon will review the proposed policies by Dr Hawkins and determine how the AFA would best promote these policies:
 - a. Monitoring the response and feedback from the communications with the politicians and supporting any opportunities that arise to implement the policies.
 - b. Determine the opportunities where our policies:
 - i. might best achieve the positive outcomes sought,



- ii. comply with main recommendations noted above,
- iii. meet the least resistance and
- iv. use existing educational infrastructures

In other words identify the opportunities which are the best short term focus.

- c. Review the different stages of the policies to assess how the AFA might promote the policies in the medium and longer term. A suggested output of this review is a matrix identifying the policies, current programs relevant to the policies (i.e. using Alan Hawkins terms – background, what is it?, is it effective?, delivery infrastructure?) gaps in the programs and delivery infrastructure, barriers etc.

4.2 Workshop two - How will we keep Australia euthanasia free? Dr Gregory Pike

Workshop two determined the following outcomes:

Conclusions and recommendations:

- This conference endorses that a key role of the State is to protect the vulnerable;
- This conference endorses, ensuring the availability of palliative care
- This conference calls for promotion of an accurate definition of euthanasia;
- This conference calls for the promotion of an accurate definition of palliative care and its proper role;

Post –conference strategy

- Queensland branch will further develop the recommendations and action plan from the euthanasia workshop

Post the conference the activities to further develop the recommendations and action plan have been discussed and delegated to AFA research officer Terri Kelleher and Dr Greg Pike. The final recommendations and actions will be addressed and issued separate to this report.

4.3 Workshop three - Reproductive technologies: New life, what price? Dr Luke McLindon

The presentation for the reproductive technologies workshop three by Dr Luke McLindon is included as Appendix G.

Workshop three determined the following outcomes:

4.3.1 Key conclusions

1. The truth about IVF is largely unknown:
 - a. No evidence that IVF is any better at 'overcoming' infertility than natural alternatives



- b. IVF comes at a huge physical, psychological and financial cost to couples (especially women)
 - c. IVF comes at a huge cost to taxpayers: \$450 million in Medicare funding alone
 - d. The success rate for IVF is very low: 17% (i.e. 83% failure rate)
2. Despite its high cost and lack of success, the IVF industry is driven by its high profitability
 3. IVF practice treats children as a commodity, and disregards the rights and interest of the child

4.3.2 Key recommendations

1. Produce information resources with the full facts, specifically targeted to:
 - a. General public (e.g. via a general interest book)
 - b. Medical and allied health professionals
 - c. Politicians
2. Marketing strategy (through commercial and other media)
 - a. Enlist marketing professionals to communicate the message in a targeted manner
3. Establish support units attached to hospitals, medical/health training facilities, clinics to provide information and education about alternatives to IVF
 - a. This may be the work of Church organizations?
4. Establish alternative policy for spending \$450 million taxpayer money
 - a. This funding is currently spent on one fifth of 1% of Australians who use IVF. By contrast only \$900,000 is spent on natural family planning, and this funding is currently being taken away.
5. Regulate provision of IVF according to the following measures:
 - a. Mandatory provision of full information to persons requesting IVF, including, information about consequences, costs, success rate, alternatives;
 - b. Minimum period of infertility before treatment
 - c. Clinical infertility caused by a prescribed disease should be a prerequisite for Medicare funding (i.e. 'social infertility' of lesbian couples and single women should not qualify for Medicare funding)
6. Best interests of the child: AFA must keep pressure on LNP to stick to their policy of overturning recent surrogacy legislation in QLD.



7. Secure more funding for research, from both private and public sources;
8. Queensland AFA branch will make contact with the State bio-ethics centre and circulate other AFA branches.
9. Queensland AFA branch will make contact with Dr Luke McLindon to work towards a paper on educating people on the IVF industry;
10. Promote methods for natural family planning and natural conception.

Angela Duff, Qld AFA Vice President has been delegated responsibility to address the post conference activities for the conclusions and recommendations noted above.

4.4 Workshop four - Will paid parental schemes harm motherhood? Tempe Harvey

The presentation for the paid parental schemes workshop four by Tempe Harvey is included as Appendix H.

The Australian Family Association –

- (1) opposes childcare funding discrimination including –
 - ▶ government-funded paid parental leave including under the Paid Parental Leave Act 2010;
 - ▶ any legislation compelling employers to fund paid parental leave;
 - ▶ tied childcare funding whose use is specified by the government and not by parents.
- (2) supports family payments being blind (i.e. neutral) to parental workforce status (waged or unwaged) and childcare choice (including parental, informal or outsourced childcare);
- (3) supports equal government childcare funding for the care of every child in the same age-group, subject to any means-test.
- (4) supports income splitting or some form of family unit taxation;
- (5) supports recognition of the equal value of unwaged family work and the replacement of the terms "working mothers" and "stay-at-home mothers" with terms such as "family workers" and "paid workers". We need to develop this terminology further.
- (6) supports research on and formulation of a family wage policy, with a view to a long-term national strategy to implement the family wage policy.
- (7) AFA will take advice and direction from Patrick Byrne and Tempe Harvey on how these policies and recommendations can be clearly articulated.



4.5 **Workshop five - Building healthy families: programs for your community? Ray Campbell**

Key recommendations:

1. The AFA facilitate networking between groups offering programs and services that are supportive of the family (cross-promotion etc).
 - ▶ links to these programs could appear on the state pages of the AFA website (e.g. "bringing baby home program for young fathers").
2. Education: the AFA sponsor nationally and locally speakers, events, experts, studies, to educate people on family issues - (e.g. the AFA could publish a list of recommended speakers).
3. AFA sponsor nationally and locally gatherings of families (inc. businesses) to hold family-days where the AFA can connect families with other pro-family services.
4. The AFA should consider how to support the arts, in the area of recapturing a sense of the beautiful through fine arts etc.
5. AFA website to put more links to other like-minded groups, international and selected pro-life, family and natural family groups and papers.

Qld AFA committee member Luke McCormack has been delegated responsibility to address the actions noted above.

4.6 **Workshop six - Ministry to the newly married, Maurie and Bernice Boland**

The presentation for the ministry to newly married workshop six by Maurie and Bernice Boland is included as Appendix G. Key conclusions and recommendations:

- Ministry for newly married, new in Brisbane, 5 year program covering practical topics and has proved highly beneficial for newly married couples;
- AFA is called upon to support and promote the program across its networks to connect newly married couples to the availability of the program – Article to be written for publication;
- Some opportunities are being presented to promote program to the wider Christian communities;
- To remain a strictly lay initiative;
- May benefit from DVD production of the program to permit wider circulation.
- Each AFA branch to support the dissemination of this program within their local communities.

Angela Duff Qld AFA Vice President has been delegated responsibility to address the post conference activities for the conclusions and recommendations noted above.



5. Conference dinner

The conference dinner was chaired by radio personality Joe Hayes.

The AFA Patron Major-General Peter Phillips welcomed dinner guests and introduced the keynote dinner speaker Dr Patrick Fagan.

The title of Dr Fagan's speech was titled 'Rebuilders'. A copy of this speech is included as Appendix J.

A key summary from this speech follows:

The West is dying, because of gender dysfunction; the inability of men and women to work together in raising the children they have brought into existence. The need to rebuild Western civilization is obvious and those who will do the rebuilding, if it is to be begun in your lifetime, are the young. It is your youth who will give you a strong Australia twenty years from now. And your work today is to create and ensure the inspiration, the creativity, and the enthusiasm for a form of love that will work together, so that your youth become experts of love, rather than practitioners of rejection. This is our challenge!



6. Conference conclusions and recommendations

A summary of the conference conclusions and recommendations including a brief action plan is presented in the table below.

A graphical presentation summary of the conference is presented in an A3 sheet on the following page.

Conference conclusions and recommendations summary

Description	Conclusion and recommendation	Action	Who
Pat Fagan culture war paper	Be aware of the fundamental culture differences monogamous vs. poly-sexuality.	The AFA must consider how we respond to Dr Pat Fagan's key conclusion – the control of childhood education, sex education and adolescent health programs (note: action identified post conference)	To be determined
Marriage policies for Australia	Effective marriage policies can make a difference to quality relationships, healthy marriages and stable family life in adulthood.	Follow up with politicians. Address opportunities for implementation of proposed policies.	Terri Kelleher Terri Kelleher and Tim Cannon
Keeping Australia Euthanasia free	The State has responsibility to protect the vulnerable. Availability of palliative care must be ensured. Proper definitions of euthanasia and palliative care required.	Develop definitions and follow up actions.	Terri Kelleher and Dr Greg Pike
Reproductive technologies	The truth about IVF is largely unknown. The IVF industry is driven by profit. IVF practice treats children as a commodity.	The Qld AFA Branch to action the identified recommendations.	Angela Duff
Paid parental schemes	The AFA opposes childcare funding discrimination and supports payments being neutral to parental workforce status.	Policies and recommendations to be articulated.	Patrick Byrne and Tempe Harvey
Building healthy families programs	Awareness of programs to build healthy families needed.	AFA to facilitate awareness of the programs.	Luke McCormack
Ministry to the newly married	The program has proved highly beneficial for newly married couples. Support and material required for the program.	Provide support and produce the support material.	Angela Duff