You May Now Kiss

September 29, 2008 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

I attended two (straight) weddings earlier this month. It had been a few years since I'd attended any weddings. The newlywed brides are long-time friends of my boyfriend.

The first wedding was in the Adirondacks in upstate New York. It was a casual affair. We camped (yes, sleeping tent and all) afterwards out in the woods. The second wedding was in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Although it was a bit more formal (we stayed at a nice bed & breakfast, no camping), fun was most definitely had by all.

Weddings always make me reflect on the magic of relationships. I?ve been blessed with a few long-term relationships, including the one I'm currently in. They've all made my life happier?and therefore healthier.

Later this year my parents will celebrate their 48th wedding anniversary. Despite my obvious bias, that?s amazing. It's unfortunate that such long-lasting marriages are the exception and not the rule.

Approximately half of (straight) marriages end in divorce. Marriage for same-sex couples eventually may share that statistic, but I expect better results. I believe that LGBT folks will go to the altar with much more forethought, which should result in longer-lasting marriages.

Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi got married last month in California, only the second state where marriage for same-sex couples is legal (Massachusetts was the first). Their wedding was covered extensively in People?they were even on the cover. I don't recall much negative chatter in the media about the fact that two lesbians got married to each other. That's a good thing for Ellen and Portia, but it's a great thing for the rest of us LGBTs. Perhaps marriage for same-sex couples in all 50 states isn't so crazy an idea after all.

?I pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.? My heart swells whenever I hear those words. If I choose to marry someday, however, I won?t be hearing those exact words at my wedding. Instead, I'll probably hear: ?I pronounce you married. You may now kiss.? I suppose it?ll do.

Watch a recap of Ellen's wedding from "The Ellen DeGeneres Show":

Click here to read ?Wedding Crashers? by Lucile Scott from the September 2008 issue of POZ. The article explores an interesting twist in the debate over same-sex marriage?whether it would reduce HIV infections.

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