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Same-sex marriage : Right or wrong? Past, present, and future

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SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: RIGHT OR WRONG?
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Jessica Hannibal and Summer Snell

Senior Capstone

Division of Humanities and Communication

Spring 2006



“Rainbow” Photo by Jessica Hannibal

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: RIGHT OR WRONG?

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Jessica Hannibal and Summer Snell

Senior Capstone

Practical and Professional Ethics and Pre-Law

David Reichard

Division of Humanities and Communication

Spring 2006

DEDICATIONS

Jessica's Dedications:

To couples everywhere, and two in particular...my parents, Charlene and Andy, and my other half, Nicholas...thank you for giving me the strength to follow my dreams, I love you.

Summer's Dedications:

This is dedicated to my best friend and the love of my life...Baby Doll, thank you for seeing the best in me, especially when I'm at my worst, thank you for pushing me when I was ready to give up, and thank you for making all my dreams come true...

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On a daily basis, same-sex couples face challenges unknown to married opposite-sex couples. For instance, visiting a loved one in the hospital, applying for immigration and residency for partners from another country, and having joint parenting, adoption, foster care, custody, and visitation, etc., are all concerns for many gay and lesbian families. And since many same-sex couples already have families, the inability to enter into a civil marriage can sometimes be very stressful on both parents and children. No domestic partnership or civil union or private agreement can duplicate the legal status of marriage.

The marriage of two adults of the same-sex who seek to make a lifetime commitment to one another takes nothing away from the marriages of anyone else. In societal terms, the movement for the freedom to marry for same-sex couples is actually a recognition of the importance and power of marriage. In personal terms, marriage may be a celebration of commitment. It lets a spouse make decisions about the medical care of a partner who is disabled. It enables the couple to organize their financial affairs as a single unit for economic, tax and insurance purposes. It means others can recognize their family and the commitment the couple has made to one another (Alliance for Same-Sex Marriage).

Within this paper, we examine how the current arguments regarding same-sex marriage affect society and each community. We also look into the history of homosexuality and the rights given to or denied these people, individually and as a whole. This look at history will help in the analysis of current arguments and contribute

to the examination of the effects of the negative portrayal of homosexuals on community. This Capstone provides historical analysis of the history of homosexuality, identifies current events and legislation, and explores the future impact of these events and legislation on society and the community. How have views on homosexuality changed throughout history? How has history influenced current positions on same-sex marriage? Are we moving towards a more equal society, or moving away from one by denying marriage rights to these couples? How has religion played a role in the argument, and how does heterosexism impact the decision process? How have legal cases and new laws effected society?

Perspectives on same-sex marriage have evolved constantly throughout history. Different cultures have had different beliefs regarding these relationships, and many cultures have created several different punishments to try to extinguish these relationships. However, history has been unable to erase the passion these individuals have for their lovers. Numerous scholars have looked to history to understand the evolution of homosexuality and the effect society's view of homosexuals has had on these individuals. Other scholars look to understand heterosexism and homophobia to interpret today's arguments on same-sex marriage. Authors such as A.L. Rowse, Louis Crompton, and George Chauncey have all looked at history for insight into the future, while authors Patricia Beattie Jung, Ralph Smith, and Martin Kantor have examined heterosexism and homophobia to gain knowledge about what is to come within society. Other authors, such as Daniel Maguire and Laurence Thomas examine how heterosexual people view homosexuals, and ways to overcome stereotypes.

Using historical frameworks is useful when looking at the debates regarding same-sex marriage. A.L. Rowse's Homosexuals in History: A Study of Ambivalence in Society, Literature, and the Arts travels through time to explore the lives of those who were homosexual. Many of them were unable to live their lives peacefully, because they were criticized, shunned, threatened, and unappreciated. Rowse wanted to use his book to show how individuals such as Tchaikovsky and Walt Whitman struggled because though they were geniuses, they were denounced for their sexual orientation. Had they been moved to stop creating their work, the artistic forum would be greatly devoid of many incredible artists. Louis Crompton, who wrote Homosexuality & Civilization, focuses more on civilizations rather than individuals. Beginning with ancient Greece 776-480 BCE, he explores different cultural beliefs and how those beliefs changed as time passed. In Why Marriage? The History Shaping Today's Debate over Gay Equality, George Chauncey provides historical insight to understand the debate of same-sex marriage. His research also somewhat focuses on gay rights and civil rights, providing a comparison and contrast between the two forms of rights. His book also provides explanations as to why it is a goal to achieve marriage rights for same-sex couples, and why the fight for marriage equality has created such a controversy throughout the country. He concludes that because of the negative portrayal of homosexuals in America, society has been negatively effected as well.

Equally important is the aspect of heterosexism and homophobia when looking to understand the arguments regarding same-sex marriage and determining what the future brings. Patricia Beattie Jung and Ralph Smith's Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge looks into this condition they termed not as an emotional fear or hatred, but rather a

reasoned system of bias, based on a cognitive pattern of beliefs about human sexuality. Their book differs from other approaches because their research is not merely to look at history but to understand it and understand what the future will bring. Martin Kantor's book Homophobia: Description, Development, and Dynamics of Gay Bashing describes the many different types of homophobes, such as the cognitive and behavioral characteristics most homophobes have in common, and also provides examples of how homophobes have a negative effect on each individual and the gay and lesbian community as a whole.

In his article The Morality of Homosexual Marriage, Daniel Maguire looks at the stereotype of homosexuality being a psychological condition that needs curing. His article provides research to show that homosexuals are just as well, if not more, psychologically adjusted when compared to heterosexuals. These suggest that homosexuals are not experiencing a psychological condition, merely expressing their right to choose. Laurence Thomas and Michael Levin, in their book Sexual Orientation & Human Rights, argue that people are entitled to have their own opinions, but that they do not have the right to abuse or harass others based on those opinions. This kind of understanding will lead to an understanding between people within society so that hate crimes can be a thing of the past. Thomas suggests that having equal rights would discourage harsh behavior and promote respect, which creates a positive effect on society.

In order to understand same-sex marriage, the effects the many arguments have on the community/society, and what lies in store for the future, it is necessary to examine history in order to understand present and future events, to look at heterosexism and

homophobia to interpret how people regard homosexuality, and learn how to overcome stereotypes. A.L. Rowse, Louis Crompton, George Chauncey, Patricia Beattie Jung, Ralph Smith, Martin Kantor, Daniel Maguire, and Laurence Thomas' articles and books all contribute to finding the tools necessary to understand history and overcome phobias and stereotypes to move towards a more prosperous future. This Capstone is important to presenting all arguments regarding the issue of same-sex marriage, and it makes an impact on the decision-making process so people will think twice before they discredit same-sex marriage. The use of historical analysis shows how things have changed over time, for better or for worse.

Those who don't learn history are doomed to replicate it; therefore it is important to use historical analysis in order to examine the current arguments regarding same-sex marriage. Society can learn from past mistakes, and try to correct them by allowing equal rights for all citizens. Throughout history, homosexuality has been considered many things: a sin, a threat, a wrong; but in some cultures, it is considered to be a form of education. Looking back at Greek history and literature, it is evident that there are numerous references to homosexuality. In early Greece, 776-480 BC, it was an everyday event for an *erōmenos* (beloved), a young boy in his teens, to be sought after by an *erastēs* (lover), an older male. The lover courted the beloved, though the lover already had a wife, and after a period of courtship the relationship became sexual. This was an educational relationship. "The older man instilled in the younger – in essence, 'made him pregnant with' – a respect for the requisite masculine virtues of courage and honor" (O'Connor 13).

During this time, women of class spent their time hidden in their homes. They were kept in seclusion from everyone but their immediate families and even kept to certain “female” parts of the house. This led to the viewing of boys and young men as love-objects. The adult male pursued the younger, and these boys often had to be escorted by tutors to keep from being molested on the streets (O’Connor 13). In Plato’s Symposium, written around 385 BC, Phaedrus defends male love:

For I know not any greater blessing to a young man beginning life than a virtuous lover, or to the lover than a beloved youth. For the principle which ought to be the guide of men who would nobly live – that principle, I say, neither kindred, nor honor, nor wealth nor any other motive is able to implant as surely as love. Of what am I speaking? Of the sense of honor and dishonor, without which neither states nor individuals ever do any good or great work. And I say that a lover who is detected in doing any dishonorable act, or submitting through cowardice when any dishonor is done to him by another, will be more pained at being detected by his beloved than at being seen by his father, or his companions, or any one else. And the beloved has the same feeling about his love, when he again is seen on any disgraceful occasion. And if there were only some way of contriving that a state or an army should be made up of lovers and their loves, they would be the very best governors of their own city, abstaining from all dishonor, and emulating one another in honor; and when fighting at one another’s side, although a mere handful, they would overcome all men. For what lover would not choose rather to be seen by all mankind by

his beloved, either when abandoning his post or throwing away his arms? He would be ready to die a thousand deaths rather than endure this. Or who would desert his beloved or fail him in the hour of danger? The veriest coward would become an inspired hero, equal to the bravest, at such a time; Love would inspire him. That courage, as Homer says, the god breathes into the soul of heroes, Love of himself infuses into the lover (Plato 110-111).

However, during this same period of time, the ancient Palestinians incorporated a law into Hebrew scriptures denouncing homosexuality. In the book of Leviticus, 18:24, it is written that the Jews would “defile not ye yourselves with any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the Land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants” (Crompton 33). The Jews believed that abominations such as male homosexuality were common among the Canaanites, who ruled Palestine before the Israelite conquest. If the Jews committed this act, they too would be cast out (Crompton 33).

The ancient cultures of Greece and Palestine have most influenced Western civilization, and it is an irony of history that these two cultures would have opposite views on homosexuality. If Judaism had remained the religion of a tiny tribe in Eastern Europe, it is likely that the Greek view of homosexuality would be the one we view today. But instead, the Jewish religion became the foundation for Christianity, which as we know, is a widely practiced religion, and though Christianity did not adopt some of the Jewish rules such as diet and grooming or wearing garments of mixed fabrics, it did retain the rules about sexuality, though they evolved over time (Crompton 33-34).

As time went on, the influence of Christianity was more powerful than the ancient Greek beliefs on homosexuality. Most researchers believe this is due to the ancient Jews struggle to survive. Because of the desperate search for a country to call their own, the Jews were a very cautious group. This need helps to explain the difference between the ancient Jews and the Greeks. The Greeks were routinely triumphant, while the Jews were often conquered in battle. Greek religion, compared to Judaism, seems lacking in heart, soul, and compassion for the unfortunate. Judaism compared to the Greeks seems to be based on hysterical fears (Crompton 35).

As a relatively small group in Europe, compared to such countries as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, the Jews strove to increase their numbers, hoping this would increase their military security. The most common theory for the Jewish anti-homosexual legislation is the desire for procreation. Another explanation relates to Jewish anxiety toward wasted seed. Two males having intercourse would lead to a waste of seed, and so the Jews would frown upon the act (Crompton 35).

In medieval times, the need for procreation was evident in many primitive societies. With dirt, disease, and death all around, it was necessary to reproduce as quickly as possible in order for the society to survive. Any habits, such as homosexual relationships, that impaired procreation were disapproved of (Rowse 1).

Leonardo Da Vinci, Michaelangelo, and Erasmus emerged during the Renaissance era. Erasmus, the greatest scholar of his age, became the schoolmaster of all Europe, and all European education has followed his teaching in the centuries since, though he is hardly recognized. Erasmus was a moderate, sensible man, fond of reform and progress but not of disorder and destruction. Erasmus sought to understand why

human societies never put through necessary reforms without breaking up the framework, letting loose cruelty and destruction, killing hundreds of thousands, laying waste far and wide, destroying the works of the elect, men of genius in art and architecture, science and letters. However, not being a regular at church, Erasmus, more appealing to those with reason and common sense, was eventually defeated by those with references to God and religion (Rowse 6-7).

Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare spent their time in rivalry, Shakespeare trying to become the superior to Marlowe. The two often acknowledged each other's works in their own writing, though Marlowe was notably more interested in same-sex love than the heterosexual Shakespeare (though there are rumors Shakespeare was also gay). He was not ashamed to say he did not believe in religion, or to write about homosexuality. Marlowe was much more descriptive of male beauty in his writing, which is shown in his last poem Hero and Leander, a competitive response to Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, in which he writes a character description similar to that of Shakespeare's:

Some swore he was a maid in man's attire,
For in his looks were all that men desire...
His dangling tresses that were never shown,
Had they been cut, and unto Colchos borne,
Would have allured the venturous youth of Greece
To hazard more than for the Golden Fleece.
However, Marlowe's description went much further:
His body was as straight as Circe's wand;

Jove might have supped out nectar from his hand.
Even as delicious meat is to the taste,
So was his neck in touching, and surpassed
The white of Pelop's shoulder –
(no Greek, Southampton's complexion was very fair)
- I could tell ye
How smooth his breast was, and how white his belly,
And whose immortal fingers did imprint
That heavenly path with many a curious dint
That was along his back... (Rowse 29).

Marlowe's work continued to describe same-sex love, while Shakespeare's did not touch on the subject. Shakespeare finally gained superiority when Marlowe was killed in a brawl at the age of 29 in 1593. Marlowe's work continually lost credibility over time, though his work may be one of the greatest losses in literature (Rowse 27).

Tchaikovsky, musician and composer, spent his life in turmoil over his own homosexuality. He longed for normality, though he was happiest with his love, Vladimir Shilovsky. Tchaikovsky wrote Swan Lake and The Tempest with ease while living in the country with Vladimir, and attempted suicide several times after Vladimir's death from consumption. Tchaikovsky eventually married in an effort to stop rumors and to cure himself. However, his wife was a nymphomaniac, which again drove Tchaikovsky to suicide, though he was unsuccessful. Tchaikovsky spent his life unappreciated and misunderstood, and it was not until after his death that his reputation soared and his music became truly loved (Rowse 136-140).

Walt Whitman, because it was discovered that he was homosexual, faced many struggles when attempting to publish his writing. He received harassing letters, and publishers were threatened with prosecution and forced to abandon publishing his work. Whitman's work has somehow survived to become some of the most popular poems in English classes, showing us that although it may be tough to overcome the abuse against gay and lesbian individuals, it is possible to succeed (Rowse 288).

Herman Melville, author of Moby Dick, was greatly infatuated with Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of The Scarlett Letter. Little is known as to the actual relationship between the two, but Melville's book is dedicated to Hawthorne, and several poems have been written about Melville's love of him after his death. Hawthorne, married and overwhelmingly Puritan, gained much more popularity than Melville, and moved out of the area when Mrs. Hawthorne became suspicious of Melville. If there was ever a relationship, the two were never able to express it publicly, though Melville's writing suggests an attempt to do so (Rowse 296).

Throughout much of history, many of those who are homosexual have been misunderstood, under-appreciated, and compelled to live lives they hate. As time has gone on, it is encouraging to see the emergence of more and more homosexual individuals who are not criticized for their "way of life". However, heterosexism in society has limited their opportunities to live full civil lives, including having the right to marry.

Much of the harassment and inequalities faced by homosexuals is in large part due to homophobia and heterosexism. According to Patricia Beattie Jung and Ralph Smith in their book Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge, "heterosexism is a reasoned

system of bias regarding sexual orientation. It denotes prejudice in favor of heterosexual people and connotes prejudice against bisexual, and especially, homosexual people” (13). They continue to explain their reasons for using the phrase “reasoned system”. It is not about rational defense; heterosexism is not derived from emotional fears, hatred, or other responses to homosexuality. “Instead, it is rooted in a largely cognitive constellation of beliefs about human sexuality” (13).

Jung and Smith also argue that though heterosexism and homophobia are often viewed as similar characteristics, there is no logical or necessary connection between the two. People who are heterosexist may not necessarily be homophobic, and vice versa. Heterosexism is comparable to racism and sexism, while homophobia is more relevant to racial bigotry and misogyny. People may identify as homophobic if they associate male same-sex relations with male vulnerability, and female same-sex relations with female power, and are uncomfortable or unacceptable of this shift in dynamics (14).

The following passage helps delve into the blindness of heterosexist actions. Many people in our society believe they are not heterosexist, while they subconsciously make harmful comments towards those who identify as gay or lesbian, etc.:

As far as I knew I had never met a homosexual person. I had heard about them, read and talked about them, but had never actually been in the presence of one. So I thought. Naïve or not, the situation changed when I left my hometown in Pennsylvania to work for a summer in Sacramento, California.

My wife and I drove to San Francisco one Saturday to see the sights. We decided to walk wherever our inclinations led us after a brief visit in

Chinatown. At one point we found ourselves in the midst of a gay neighborhood. How did I know? Because all my stereotypes suddenly became flesh and blood: men dressed as women; women and men in leather and chains; effeminate action, lisps, public fondling by men with men, women with women; the words *queer*, *fag*, *dyke*, *straight* bandied about by people in doorways. I never felt that we were in any particular danger, but as we walked on through and out of the area I shook my head in dismay.

A few days later I was back in Sacramento meeting with colleagues. I told them of my San Francisco experience. "You should have seen these people!" I exclaimed. "It was incredible." After I finished with the details of the appearances and actions of "these people," one of the men present looked me in the eye. With a mixture of anger and sadness he said, "I had planned to bring some important associates to this meeting who happen to be good friends. I'm sure glad I didn't. They're gay, and it's obvious they wouldn't be welcome here."

I was stunned. I'm not prejudiced! I was simply poking fun at the outrageous scene I had stumbled on to. What was wrong with that?

No one had ever confronted me so directly, so honestly, and so painfully regarding my words and actions, and my unexamined prejudices. "This is just the way things are," I thought to myself, "why is this guy giving me a hard time?" The fact that he called them friends is what stung the most. He felt he could not subject his friends to such treatment at my hands. For

the first time I began to see the depth of a prejudice I did not even understand (Jung and Smith 31-32).

While many people consider themselves to be allies of the gay and lesbian communities, many of them are like the narrator in the passage above: unaware of the ways they make themselves out to be superior to those who identify as gay. Another problem within society is the tendency to blame the victim instead of the perpetrator. Often times we say someone was beaten up because they were gay. However, homosexuals are beaten up because of heterosexism and homophobia. This sense of “blaming the victim” causes much more damage to the victim than has already been done, and often times leads them to blame themselves for the incident, preventing them from recovering and moving on. This produces a negative effect on society, and on gay and lesbian people.

In his book Homophobia, Martin Kantor examines some other negative effects on gay and lesbian people, as well as providing examples of the cognitive and behavioral characteristics many homophobes have in common. He begins by writing that most homophobes tend to be dereistic, meaning they live in a world all their own, in which reality is based on myths and stereotypes. They associate the myth that gay men act feminine and lesbians act manly with all those who identify as gay or lesbian, causing them to have a distorted perspective (3).

Grandiose and narcissistic homophobes are those who are know-it-alls; always right, even when experts disagree. Many of these individuals believe homosexuality is an illness, even though very few experts believe this. Most experts view homosexuality as “a lifestyle variant, a personal preference, an alternative biological predisposition, or even

part of a sociopolitical movement” (Kantor 5). Another type of homophobe is the unoriginal/derivative type. This type of homophobe believes they are incredibly intelligent, and that their ideas have never been heard before, so they should be printed, aired, etc. for all to hear (Kantor 5).

Other characteristics of homophobes are that they are prone to reason implicitly. This type of homophobe has likely met a homosexual individual, but never taken the time to really get to know them as a person. The ideas held by these individuals rarely come from actual experience with gay or lesbian individuals, but rather from the media and other secondary sources. Homophobes often tend to be simplistic/stereotypical, taking a complex subject and oversimplifying it. Histrionic/prone to excessiveness is another trait, in which homophobes make the “homosexual problem” appear to be a large problem and lose all perspective about the topic. Homophobes are often generally bigoted, and self-referential. They will rarely accept homosexuality, but will express their own thoughts about themselves when speaking of homosexuals, for example, when referring to homosexuals as sinners, they are often expressing their own inner fear of being a sinner (Kantor 6-7).

Many homophobes seem to follow the “where will it end” belief that if gays and lesbians have equal rights, then they will be allowed to marry, and if they are allowed to marry, then you will have to allow polygamy and marriages between adults and children. Another belief they tend to hold is the idea that same-sex marriage “will weaken the moral fabric of society, and lead to social chaos and disorganization” (Kantor 5).

Jung and Smith suggest several ways to help dismantle heterosexism. One of the first steps is to redevelop the religious perspective on homosexuality. Heterosexism

within the church has a large impact on the faith of its believers, and finding ways to remove some of the heterosexism will greatly affect believers' opinions. Reformation within the Christian understanding of human sexuality will use history, liturgy, spirituality, doctrinal theology, and ethics so homosexual individuals will not be torn between their personal beliefs and religious beliefs (140). One of the problems with religious perspectives such as the Roman Catholic perspective on same-sex marriage is the idea that the marriage is only a "real" marriage if the couple is procreative. Those couples that cannot or do not procreate can be classified as having marriages that never really constituted. Some will argue that a male-female couple will at least have the chance of procreating, but a homosexual couple will never be able to procreate, and therefore can never be married by the church. Convincing the Church to change this perspective will help to overcome heterosexism and gain marriage rights for same-sex couples (Jung and Smith 146).

According to Kantor, there are many negative effects of homophobia on the gay and lesbian communities. "As children, many gays and lesbians lived with homophobic parents. Now as adults, they all live in a homophobic society. They live with homophobic individuals on the job, where they suffer professionally, and at home, where they suffer personally" (67). Homophobes often instinctively know how to make gays and lesbians feel anxious and afraid. People are most afraid when the enemy is unseen, when the attack is unpredictable, and when the attacker is elusive and difficult to apprehend or attack back. Homophobes hide in the shadows and attack their prey when it is least expected. They run too fast to be caught and wait enough time between attacks to

create a false sense of security for their victim. The sense of security is immediately shattered with each new attack (67-68).

Homophobes also know how to frustrate gays and lesbians, and how to depress them. They take away their comfort and self-esteem levels, and withhold any kind of affirmation, support, or love. Gay and lesbian workers are criticized and reprimanded when they make mistakes, and never receive praise when they do good work. They are also demoralized, made to feel ashamed of who they are. Homophobes prevent homosexuals from marching as an identified group in pride parades, not just because of moral and religious reasons, but because it is hard to have pride in something that is not recognized (Kantor 68).

Another aspect of being homophobic involves having an escape route. When a gay or lesbian files a complaint, a homophobe knows exactly how to counter it.

When gays and lesbians complain that they are being treated prejudicially, homophobes counter that they are paranoid; and when gays and lesbians complain that they are being discriminated against, homophobes counter that the negative response to them is not a discriminatory but an appropriate one. Some even provoke gays and lesbians, in a carefully orchestrated manner, just so that they can justify bashing them, as they intended to do all along. For example, in the army, straights ostracize gays and lesbians. Some gays and lesbians then get depressed to the point that they can no longer function properly, when the homophobes can justifiably say that they do not make effective workers (Kantor 68).

Many times, gays and lesbians do not even realize they are being abused. The insults and critical behaviors that others have towards them are integrated into their daily lives. For these individuals, denial is also a part of their daily lives, and the abuse they face fades into the background, becoming unrecognizable. Those in denial avoid the depression that oftentimes occurs; however, they do not avoid the limitations imposed on them (Kantor 70).

Those who do recognize the abuse they receive are oftentimes depressed as a result. They are treated as lower class citizens, both at home and in the workplace, and are never really allowed to fit in. Psychotherapy and antidepressants, among other things, are used to battle depression, but too often the depression wins out. Abused gays and lesbians lack self-confidence and self-esteem, and they tend to blame themselves instead of their oppressors (Kantor 70).

Many gays and lesbians handle homophobes badly, usually in a counterproductive way. They either try to fix what is not broken while what is actually broken remains broken, or they try solutions that aggravate the situation rather than help. These counterproductive measures make it easier for homophobia to exist (Kantor 71). Kantor, Jung, and Smith can all agree that heterosexism and homophobia greatly contribute to the reason same-sex marriage is not allowed in most states in America.

Heterosexism and the history of homophobia have permeated the legal system as well. A closer look at the legal issues surrounding homosexual people suggests why same-sex marriage debates persist in the United States. The blatant disregard of legal acknowledgement of same-sex relationships has been described as unconstitutional in several ways. First, some have argued the absence of legal recognition does not respect

the privacy right of gays and lesbians, therefore unconstitutionally abridging the 14th Amendment. Secondly, the basis for this is rooted and stems from a prejudice that dehumanizes the homosexual community.

An example of this dehumanization can be seen at the federal level with the Defense of Marriage Act, 1996, and the proposed 2005 Federal Marriage Protection Amendment. The Defense of Marriage Act has two parts;

First,

No State, territory, or possession of the United States, or Indian tribe, shall be required to give effect to any public act, record, or judicial proceeding of any other State, territory, possession, or tribe respecting a relationship between persons of the same sex that is treated as a marriage under the laws of such other State, territory, possession, or tribe, or a right or claim arising from such relationship (DOMA).

Second,

In determining the meaning of any Act of Congress, or of any ruling, regulation, or interpretation of the various administrative bureaus and agencies of the United States, the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife (DOMA).

In January of 2005, Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) proposed the Federal Marriage Amendment, which states,

Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman (Marriage Amendment).

Despite overwhelming pressure from the White House and the Republican lobbying organizations, the amendment failed, contrary to what the Bush Administration claimed, in both the House and Senate last year, by a 227-186 margin in the House in September and a 48-50 vote in the Senate in July (Relationship Recognition).

The right to marriage is as fundamental as free speech, which extends to racists or sexist speech and pornography, therefore logic of marriage as a basic right should be similar.

The insistence on opposite sexes, as the legitimate measure of the right to marry indulges constitutionally illegitimate gender stereotypes. The prohibition of racial intermarriage was to the cultural construction of racism what the prohibition of same-sex marriage is to sexism and homophobia (Richards 137).

Marriage is an issue that has been left up to the legislatures of each state to decide. There are nineteen states which have marriage defined within their constitution as being solely between a man and a woman (Legal Marriage). The bans on same-sex marriage began in the above mentioned states as propositions and were then voted on by the populace of those states. Some propositions include Proposition 22 in California which states “only marriage between a man and a woman is valid in California,” (Limit

on Marriage) and Proposition 2 in Texas which states “marriage in this state shall consist only of the union of one man and one woman...This state or political subdivision of this state may not create or recognize any legal status identical or similar to marriage,” (Selby).

Propositions are not the only example of how states have dealt with same-sex marriage. Over the last forty years, there have been several court cases which have led to important, law changing decisions. The first case was Baker v. Nelson (Minnesota, 1971) in which a gay male couple claimed that the ambiguity and lack of sex specific language in the marriage statute was proof that the intent of the legislature was to permit same-sex marriages. The couple argued that by not allowing their marriage, they were being denied their due process of law right and their equal protection right under the Fourteenth Amendment. The court held that their claim had no support due to lack of precedent in any United States Supreme Court decision (Baker v. Nelson 191. N.W. 2d 185).

The second case for same-sex marriage came two years later. In Jones v. Hallahan (Kentucky, 1973) “a lesbian couple claimed that denying them a marriage license stripped them of three basic constitutional rights - the right to marry, the right to associate and the right to freely exercise their religion. The court refused to address the constitutional issues holding that ‘the relationship proposed does not authorize the issuance of a marriage license, because what they propose is not a marriage’,” (Jones v. Hallahan 501 S.W. 2d 588).

In Singer v. Hara (Washington, 1974) a gay male couple argued that disallowing them their right to marry violated the state’s Equal Rights Amendment. The court did not

agree. In holding, the court decided that the statute was designed to overcome discriminatory legal treatment between men and women based on sex and not sexual preference (Singer v. Hara 522 P. 2d 1187).

In Adams v. Howerton (Colorado, 1975) the couple, a male Australian citizen and a male American citizen, sued the Board of Immigration Appeals Committee due to the refusal of recognition of their marriage for the purpose of the Australian obtaining U.S. residency as the spouse of an American (The couple participated in a marriage ceremony with a Colorado minister and had been given a marriage license by the clerk in their county). “The court ruled that the word ‘spouse’ ordinarily means someone not of the same sex. Then it noted the 1965 amendments to the Immigration Act, which expressly barred persons "afflicted with sexual deviations" (homosexuals) from entry into this country. The court concluded that it was unlikely that Congress intended to permit homosexual marriages for purposes of qualifying as a spouse of a citizen, when the Immigration Act explicitly bars homosexuals from entering into the United States,” (Developments in the Law).

In Thorton v. Timmers (Ohio, 1975), a lesbian couple applied for a marriage license. In refusing the couple’s request for the court to order the county clerk to issue the couple a license, the court decided that "it is the express legislative intent that those persons who may be joined in marriage must be of different sexes,"(Developments in the Law).

In De Santo v. Barnsley (Pennsylvania, 1984) the couple decided to disband their relationship and De Santo sued Barnsley for divorce. De Santo claimed that the couple had a common-law marriage. Only a few states still recognized common-law marriages –

in 1984, Pennsylvania was one which still did. The case was thrown out on the grounds that, if the Pennsylvania common-law statute was to include same-sex couples, the legislature would have to make that change and not the court (De Santo v. Barnsley 35 P.A.D. C. 3d 7).

In the Matter of Estate of Cooper (New York, 1990), Mr. Cooper died, leaving the bulk of his property to his ex-paramour. His current partner sued under New York's inheritance laws as a surviving spouse. The court held that only a lawfully recognized husband or wife qualifies as a surviving spouse and that "persons of the same sex have no constitutional rights to enter into a marriage with each other," (Matter of Estate of Cooper 187 A.D. 2d. 128).

In Dean v. District of Columbia (Washington, DC, 1995), two men sued the District of Columbia for the right to marry. The case went to the state appellate court where it was held that under the then current District of Columbia laws, the district has the right to refuse a same-sex marriage license (Developments in the Law). People say the only thing we have to fear is fear itself; the above mentioned cases are proof of how fear can force the government to turn on its people and systematically discriminate against the populace.

As time passed, attitudes toward same-sex marriage began to change. In Baker v. State of Vermont (Vermont, 1999), same-sex couples sued the state and the City of Burlington on the grounds that the refusal to issue them marriage licenses violated the Vermont Constitution and the state marriage laws. The Vermont Supreme Court, in reversing a lower courts ruling, declared that the State Constitution required the state to extend to same-sex couples the same benefits and protections provided to heterosexual

couples. In response, the state legislature passed the Vermont Civil Union Law, which went into effect in July 2000 (Baker v. State of Vermont 170 VT. 194; 744 A.2d 864).

The Vermont Law states as follows:

parties to a civil union shall have all the same benefits, protections and responsibilities under Vermont Law, whether they derive from statute, policy, administrative or court rule, common-law or any other source of civil law as are granted to spouses in a marriage (Developments in the Law).

Since the enactment of this law, Vermont has joined eligible couples in civil union. In the first five years of this law's passage, 1,142 Vermont couples have been joined in civil unions and 6,424 couples from various parts of the world and within America have been granted civil unions in Vermont (Developments in the Law).

In Baehr v. Miike (Hawaii, 1999), the plaintiff argued that Hawaii's marriage license rules were discriminatory. The case began a national debate over same-sex marriage rights and prompted an attack of state and federal legislation. Efforts were intended to force other states to recognize same-sex marriages from Hawaii. The case was finally dismissed because the legislature had passed a prohibition on same-sex marriages before the Hawaii Supreme Court could render a favorable opinion (Baehr v Miike 92 Haw. 634; 994 P.2d 566).

In Goodridge v. Department of Public Health (Massachusetts, 2003), the Massachusetts Supreme Court concluded that the state law banning same-sex marriage was unconstitutional under the Massachusetts Constitution and ordered that the legislature reach a solution and end the discrimination within six months. In February

2004, the court held that granting civil unions instead of civil marriages would not meet the requirements set forth in this case. Massachusetts is now the only state which has legalized same-sex marriage (Goodridge v. Department of Public Health SJC08860. 440 Mass. 309; 798 N.E. 2d 941).

During the 2004 election, eleven states - Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Utah- included initiatives on their ballots to either amend their state constitutions to ban same-sex marriage, or add a clause within their constitution to make it illegal for same-sex couples to marry. This was done in the wake of the Massachusetts litigation. All eleven states except Oregon and Michigan passed their measures with over 60 percent approval rates (Anti-Gay Initiatives).

The anti-gay laws being created today are comparable only to the anti-miscegenation laws of the 1950s and 1960s.

Just as miscegenation was threatening because it called into question the distinctive and superior status of being white, homosexuality is threatening because it calls into question the distinctive and superior status of being male (Richards 138).

This sense of intimidation has led to the branding of the homosexual community as fallen women who need their homophobic government to protect them from their “evil,” non-procreative, immoral way of life. Attitudes such as the one of our government only perpetuate homophobia, consequently continuing the unjustifiable and unconstitutional treatment of the homosexual community.

“Same-sex marriage is not a threat to marriage but recognition of the deeper moral values in marriage and the principle elaboration of those values to all persons,” (Richards 140). President Bush is famous for speaking of the need to “protect the sanctity of marriage,” but does not give an example nor explain from what he is protecting marriage. There is not a single person in favor of same-sex marriage who wants to ban traditional marriage nor do they want to burden those who want to marry with endless taxes and delays. All that is wanted is equality, the equality granted to them by being citizens of the United States.

The culturally marked difference between homosexuality and heterosexuality can be defined as follows:

The product of a culture of moral slavery constructed, in part, by the unthinkability of extending the right to marriage (as an aspect of the basic human right to intimate life) to homosexuals (because they are assumed to be subhuman and animalistic in their intimate lives),” (Richards 140).

The thought of same-sex marriage as a menace to the institution of marriage can scarcely be credited as an argument, when an ethical wrong, such as adultery goes ignored in pro-marriage dialogue. “The difference, adultery is a heterosexual vice,” (Richards 141). Rather, same-sex marriage is said to be:

demonized as a threat to marriage from within an embattled sectarian perspective on gender orthodoxy that still has a hold on uncritical public opinion. Arguments for same-sex marriage which in fact depend on respect for the dignity of marriage, are thus irresponsibly but conveniently inverted into an attack on marriage (Richards 141).

Some say this view of marriage equality being an attack on marriage is caused by homophobia. The lack of understanding by the government, both state and federal alike, of why they are abridging the rights of the homosexual people, creates a systemic pattern of perpetuated homophobia which not only affects the homosexual community but effects how the community is seen by the public. It is easier for the government to create laws which stop what they do not understand rather than try and incorporate what is not the norm.

Looking more closely at the states of California, New York, Massachusetts, and Hawaii, one can see the opinion of the population of the United States is beginning to change. California has passed three important pieces of legislation which allow same-sex couples to register as domestic partners. In 1999, Assembly Bill 26 passed, which established a statewide domestic partner registry and granted some of the same rights as married couples, such as hospital visitation and the right of state and local employers to make available health care coverage to the partners of their employees. In 2001, Assembly Bill 25 passed, which further extended the rights of domestic partners. Domestic partner rights were then made to include the right to make medical decisions, the right to inherit if a partner were to die without a will, the right to use state step-parent adoption procedures, the right to use sick leave to care for a partner, and the right to be appointed as the administrator of an estate. In 2003, Assembly Bill 205 was passed, which now extends all of the state-level rights and responsibilities of marriage to registered domestic partners. These rights went into effect on January 1, 2005 (Relationship Recognition).

In March 2004, Eliot Spitzer, New York's Attorney General, issued an opinion in which he stated that same-sex couples who legally wed in San Francisco, Portland, Canada, or elsewhere where same-sex marriage is legal, are also married under New York Law, and therefore must be granted all of the rights and protections of marriage that are enjoyed by heterosexual couples. However, Spitzer suggested that state officials only honor the licenses given to out-of-state couples because New York state law does not allow for the issuance of marriage licenses to couples of the same sex. The Bar Association of the City of New York, however, has argued that New York law does not forbid the issuance of licenses to same-sex couples (Relationship Recognition).

In Massachusetts, Republican Governor Mitt Romney ordered all local town and city hall clerks to deny any marriage license sought by out-of-state same-sex couples. His order is based on a 1913 state law which was intended to restrict interracial marriages. The law itself has not been imposed in decades. Legislators of the state have since added a question about where the couple plans to reside. On April 24, 2005 Romney instructed all clerks to require documentation of Massachusetts residency from couples applying for marriage licenses. Dozens of local officials protested and on May 4, 2005 Romney loosened the order stating clerks did not have to require physical documentation of Massachusetts residency. Rather, couples applying would be required to swear that they were planning to live in Massachusetts. In response to the governor's order, officials in Provincetown, Somerville, Springfield, and Worcester announced that they plan to continue the issuance of licenses to out-of-state couples (Relationship Recognition).

In 1997, the Hawaiian legislature voted and passed a law which permits same-sex couples to enter a reciprocal beneficiary relationship. This relationship grants couples the following rights:

inheritance without a will, ability to sue for the wrongful death of their partner, hospital visitation and health care decisions, consent to postmortem exams, loan eligibility, property rights (including joint tenancy), tort liability and protection under Hawaii domestic violence laws (Relationship Recognition).

As more and more laws are created, both for and against same-sex marriage, it is important to look at the positive and negative effects on the community caused by these debates. In his book Why Marriage?, George Chauncey uses the history of antigay discrimination to show how society has been negatively effected throughout America. Fifty years ago, Hollywood films were prohibited from producing anything related to homosexuality, theaters were shut down after staging plays having anything to do with homosexuality, and homosexual individuals who were employed by the federal government or any companies with government contracts were fired or forced to resign from their positions. Other state and municipal employees, such as teachers and hospital workers, were also sought out and fired. Gay businesses were illegal, and at one point, it was even illegal to serve homosexual individuals. Those who tried to create gay organizations were thrown in jail, newsstands that sold gay organizations' newsletters were closed, and press conferences for organizations disrupted.

The history of the treatment of homosexuals in America reveals a great deal of harassment and censorship (Chauncey 5-10). "Homosexuals were not just ridiculed and

scorned. They were systematically denied their civil rights: their right to free assembly, to patronize public accommodations, to free speech, to free press, to a form of intimacy of their own choosing,” (Chauncey 11). This harassment had numerous negative effects on the homosexual community, such as the denial of civil rights, and the amount of pain and torment that was inflicted on every homosexual person who could not truly be themselves within society.

As unimaginable as this kind of harassment seems today, gay and lesbian people confronted it, and in a way, overcame it. Things began to improve as the years went on. During the gay rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s, gay activists who worked with doctors and scientists were finally able to convince major institutions such as the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders, to which the American Psychological Association and the American Medical Association followed suit. Also during the 1970s, the Lutheran Church in America, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Disciples of Christ, and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. all issued statements in support of gay rights. The movement also helped put an end to employment discrimination, and Time magazine featured the first gay man on the cover in 1975. Leonard Matlovich, a decorated Vietnam veteran, was dishonorably discharged for homosexuality. He fought the discharge, but lost his case, however, Time used his story to show how his discharge was a form of discrimination (Chauncey 37-38).

However, in 1977, Baptist singer and Florida citrus growers’ spokeswoman Anita Bryant led her own campaign entitled “Save Our Children”. Bryant successfully

persuaded Florida voters that all homosexuals were child molesters. Her campaign ideas spread across the country, and stole some of what gay activists had fought for. Churches changed their views on homosexuality, and openly gay activists were assassinated. Another factor in the spread of homophobia was the AIDS virus outbreak during the 1980s. Because Americans had little information on the virus, and they already felt fearful of homosexuals, the virus was categorized as something that only homosexuals were capable of catching. Americans slowed their advocacy for gay rights for fear they too would catch the virus (Chauncey 38-41).

Though fears were mounting, gay and lesbian activists continued to fight for their rights. Unprecedented numbers of people came out to their heterosexual friends, family members, and co-workers during the late 1980s to combat the fear of homosexuals. The acceptance rates increased after that, and even the media and Hollywood were able to lend support. Movies such as Philadelphia starring Tom Hanks and Denzel Washington and The Birdcage starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane portrayed gay characters in a positive light, and led to other television shows including gay characters in their programs. Ellen Degeneres' "coming out" and the sitcom Will & Grace helped make gay and lesbian characters a regular part of television (Chauncey 47-54).

Within society, there are many organizations either advocating or preventing same-sex marriage. According to the American Family Association (AFA), there are ten main reasons why same-sex marriage would effect people negatively. The AFA believes same-sex marriage will lead to the demise of family, which leads to unhealthy environments for children who will become disrespectful and rebellious. Same-sex marriage will also lead to polygamy because allowing same-sex couples to marry will

end the standard of one man and one woman for marriage. Same-sex unions will also lead to an end of state involvement in marriage matters. Public schools will have to teach that same-sex couples are equal to man/woman relationships, and the courts will not be able to favor a traditional man/woman couple over a same-sex couple in adoption cases. Social security claims will increase with the increased number of dependents. Global laws regarding same-sex marriage will change due to America's large influence over other countries (though there are already countries who support and allow same-sex marriage). The AFA says, most importantly, the Gospel of Jesus Christ will have to fight to survive. People's lack of action is leading to the demise of religious culture, which will only further lead to the demise of civilization as we know it (AFA).

In contrast to the American Family Association, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) explains why there is a need for same-sex couples to marry. These couples are denied the ability to oversee their partner's medical needs, collect insurance, tax, and benefits associated with married partners. The HRC also explains how those who believe God meant for marriage to be between a man and a woman can support same-sex marriage by identifying the separation of church and state. People don't have to agree to a religious ceremonial marriage because the rules of the law and the rules of religion differ, so they may support same-sex marriage through law, even though their religious beliefs prevent them from agreeing to a religious marriage. Researchers have done studies and shown that a strong family life is all that is necessary for children to be prosperous. The quality of family is more important than the structure. History has repeatedly proven that institutions that don't evolve with the changing needs of its people will grow weak and fall apart (HRC).

Arguably, preventing same-sex marriage will also have a negative impact on children. Children will grow up believing same-sex marriage, and homosexuality, is wrong, and that heterosexuals and homosexuals are different and should be treated as such. These beliefs will continue the homophobic and heterosexist views that have denied certain rights to a large portion of America's citizens.

Andrew Sullivan examines the arguments regarding same-sex marriage through the works presented in his book Same-Sex Marriage: Pro & Con. Sullivan begins his book by volunteering some statistical information regarding points of view towards same-sex marriage and homosexual individuals:

In 1996, according to a Newsweek poll, some 84 percent of Americans favored protecting homosexuals from discrimination in employment, and 80 percent supported such protection in housing. A large majority supports inheritance rights for gay spouses – 61 to 29 percent – and a narrow majority even supports Social Security benefits for gay spouses – 48 to 43 percent. And yet a clear majority – around 60 percent in most polls – still opposes legalizing same-sex marriage. Why? Perhaps because Americans rightly intuit...that granting homosexuals entrance into this institution is tantamount to complete acceptance of homosexuality by American society. No other measure would signal approval in such a stark and unambiguous way. And many heterosexual Americans are not yet ready to go quite that far. They are prepared to tolerate, yes, even, in some ways, approve. But they are not yet ready to say that their heterosexual relationships are equivalent to homosexual

ones; that their loves and gay loves are worth the same respect (Sullivan xxv-xxvi).

However, Sullivan points out that these statistics do not prove that America will not legalize same-sex marriage. Americans are becoming more and more tolerant towards homosexuality. Since 1985, when a Newsweek poll found that 22 percent of Americans had a homosexual friend or acquaintance, the statistic has tripled, meaning that 66 percent of Americans are at least acquainted, if not more compassionately attached, with a homosexual person. The increasing levels of tolerance and approval of same-sex couples is critical to paving the road for same-sex marriage (Sullivan xxvi – xxvii).

In his article The Morality of Homosexual Marriage, Daniel Maguire says that there are two immediate objections to same-sex marriage: gay people do not display psychological stability nor the strength necessary for lifelong commitment in marriage, and data shows that gay people prefer promiscuity to monogamous relationships. Maguire continues on to say these objections are myths, created by the fear people have of those who are different. While there are polls showing that gay men enjoy promiscuity, other polls can show that heterosexual men enjoy an equal amount of it. He also describes the findings of Professors Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg in their study Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity among Men and Women. The study provides strong evidence that “relatively few homosexual men and women conform to the hideous stereotype most people have of them” (Maguire 64). The study also showed that homosexual men and women were mostly identical to heterosexuals as far as being psychologically adjusted. There were even times when the homosexuals studied were

even more psychologically adjusted than the heterosexuals were. Considering the amount of stress placed on homosexual men and women by abuse and discrimination, it is striking that they would be even more adjusted and capable of having a relationship than a heterosexual would (64-65).

Stereotypes have many negative effects on society. They create untrue images that apply to entire groups of people, who will never all be identical, no matter what group they can be classified in. Stereotypes are damaging because they lead people to believe that they understand what another group is like based on the assumption that all people within that group will fit into the stereotype. This leads to miscommunication and insults. Homosexual people suffer from stereotypes because they are often seen as wimps, butches, or child molesters. These incorrect assumptions lead people to frown upon or become fearful of homosexuals. This creates a negative impact on society because people are afraid to communicate and understand one another.

According to Laurence Thomas in his collaborative book Sexual Orientation & Human Rights, just because something is disliked does not make it morally objectionable. Thomas argues that people are entitled to have their own opinions about anything: race, color, sexual orientation, however, those same people need to realize that the people standing next to them in the grocery store or driving in the car behind them may be someone who they do not approve of. That in no way allows them the right to harass the other person. For example, a heterosexist has the right to feel that heterosexuals are superior to homosexuals, but that does not give him the right to harass homosexuals. Homosexuals, in turn, have the ability to choose their sexual orientation, but need to realize that there will be others who disapprove of their choice (Thomas 23-28).

Having this kind of understanding within society, instead of the hurtful stares and abusive remarks that sometimes occur between those on opposing sides, would have a positive impact on society. It would benefit all surrounding individuals if dangerous confrontation was avoided. It would be much easier for all community members to live together in a more peaceful environment if heterosexuals were more accepting of homosexuals' lifestyle. Having equal rights would discourage some of the harsh behavior that occurs because some people are allowed more rights than others have based on sexual orientation. Thomas believes "the idea behind social equality is not that everyone should like or love one another, but that everyone should respect one another," (159). In this way, society would hold a more positive image for present and future generations.

Throughout history, many different viewpoints have been held on homosexuality. In ancient Greece, homosexuality was out in the open, while in ancient Palestine, it was being denounced. Even in America, churches once approved of homosexuality, even though views changed, thanks to a campaign designed to make all homosexuals appear as child molesters. History has influenced current positions on same-sex marriage by creating a tradition with heterosexual marriage. It has also consistently tormented homosexuals, such as Walt Whitman and Tchaikovsky, who struggled to overcome others' fears towards homosexuality and efforts to keep their work obscured. These positions have made their way through the years and are still present in modern society. Many people still believe same-sex marriage and homosexuality is wrong, and continue to try to remove it from society. New laws being created such as many of the ballot

initiatives to ban same-sex marriage in 2004 continue to enforce the idea that homosexuality is wrong, causing an extended struggle to achieve same-sex marriage.

Religion also has a large impact on the argument regarding same-sex marriage because many people, including homosexual people, value religious tradition and beliefs. As shown by George Chauncey's research, churches in America were in favor of homosexual rights at one point in time, however, once their view changed, a large portion of the rest of the nation changed their opinion as well. Religions are, however, constantly evolving to suit the needs of their believers, with viewpoints on homosexuality becoming more and more tolerant over time. As shown by Jung, Smith, and Kantor, heterosexism and homophobia effect the decision-making process by keeping homosexuals down. Heterosexists believe they are superior to homosexuals, and homophobes fear them, which causes a great amount of distrust in the homosexual population. The decision-making process is effected by the beliefs that homosexuals are not as good of people as heterosexuals and that they will eventually overpopulate heterosexuals and alter the way of life.

As more state legislatures become aware of the ever-changing opinions of their people, the laws will eventually reflect that change. Until that time comes, it is up to those who still believe that as citizens of the United States we should all be granted the same rights, no matter what those rights are; as equals we stand but divided we shall forever fall.

According to Andrew Sullivan, people are continuously becoming more and more tolerant of homosexuals and the idea of same-sex marriage. With enough time, it is a safe assumption that some form of same-sex marriage or civil union will be allowed in

the future. In this way, we will be moving towards a more equal society by allowing everyone the right to choose their partner and express their love through a ceremonial union.

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Primary:

“Defense of Marriage Act 1996”. Public law 104-199. Defense of Marriage Act 5/96

H.R. 3396 Summary/Analysis. ‘Lectric Law Library. 08 Apr. 2006.

<<http://www.lectlaw.com/files/leg23.htm>>.

The Defense of Marriage Act is one of the most pertinent pieces of litigation for our Capstone. It is the corner stone for federal litigation and is the first sign of the federal government trying to regulate marriage, which has been, since the inception of our Constitution, left up to state legislatures to decide. This is a primary source, which we found using Google searching for the “Defense of Marriage Act.”

“Federal Marriage Amendment.” U.S. Government Info-Resources. The New York Times. About Inc. 2006. 04 Apr. 2006.

<<http://www.usgovinfo.about.com/cs/unconst/a/marriage.html>>.

The Federal Marriage Amendment is the second piece of federal legislation that was designed to regulate marriage. It is perhaps the most important because it will, if passed, amend the Constitution. It was believed to have the backing to pass, however, it fell short of votes, contrary to what the Bush Administration had predicted. It currently rests on the Congressional floor. This is a primary source and was found using Google searching for “Federal Marriage Amendment.”

"Gay Marriage: Why Would It Effect Me? Ten Arguments against Same-Sex Marriage." No Gay Marriage. American Family Association. 27 Apr. 2005

<<http://www.nogaymarriage.com/tenarguments.asp>>.

The American Family Association provides ten central arguments against same-sex marriage. Their arguments outline reasons such as the effect of same-sex marriage on children growing up in homes without the traditional mother and father figure, the government's responsibility to stay out of marital business, and the effects on religious teachings. This site also sells and distributes bumper stickers reading "Marriage: One Man, One Woman" and petitions which you can print and circulate in support of the Marriage Amendment. We need to include information from this site within our Capstone to present an unbiased opinion of both sides of the argument for same-sex marriage. This is a primary source found by doing a search on Yahoo! for "gay marriage".

Hawaii. Supreme Court of Hawaii. Baerh v. Miike. 92 HAW 634; 994 P.2d 566; 1999 HAW. Lexis 445. 1999.

This case is what started the pandemonium for marriage equality within the last ten years. It is important because Hawaii would have been the first state to approve of same-sex marriage, unfortunately, the state legislature passed a law prohibiting same-sex marriage prior to the final decision in the case. This is a primary source, which was found during a search of the Hawaiian State Supreme Court website.

Kentucky. Supreme Court of Kentucky. Jones v. Hallahan. 501 S.W. 2d. 588. 1973.

The couple in this case felt that they were being denied their right to marry, the right to associate, and their freedom of religion. The court felt differently and went on to state what the couple had proposed was most assuredly not a marriage. This is important because it was the first time a court had begun to define marriage. This is a primary source found through searching the State of Kentucky Supreme Court Website.

Marriage Relationship Recognition. 2004. HRC Marriage. Human Rights Campaign. 04 Apr. 2006.

<<http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Center&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=63&ContentID=29906>>.

This provided us with a list of legislation per state. We were able to look at individual states which aided us in narrowing our focus and allowed us to get specific instead of looking at the United States as a whole. It was a good source for current legislation. This is a primary source found using Google searching for “same-sex marriage legislation.”

Massachusetts. Supreme Court of Massachusetts. Goodridge v. Department of Public Health. 2003. SJC 08860. 440 MASS. 309; 798 N.E. 2d 941 2003 MASS. Lexis 814.

This is the most important case in same-sex marriage legislation because this case made same-sex marriage legal in Massachusetts. The court ordered that the

legislature reach a solution and end the discrimination. In February 2004, the court held that civil unions would not meet the requirements set forth in this case. This is a primary source and was found doing a search on the Massachusetts Supreme Court website.

Minnesota. Supreme Court of Minnesota. Baker v. Nelson. 1971. 191 N.W. 2d. 185. 291 MINN. 310; 1971 MINN. Lexis 1032.

This was the first case where a same-sex couple sued for marriage. They claimed that there was ambiguity in a state statute and this was proof that the state legislature intended to permit same-sex marriages. The court held there was a lack of precedent in any United States Supreme Court decision. This is a primary source we found doing a search on the Minnesota Supreme Court website.

New York. Supreme Court of New York. Matter of Estate of Cooper. 187. A.D. 2d. 128, 592 N.Y. S. 2d. 797. 1990.

Upon the death of Mr. Cooper, his partner sued under New York's inheritance laws as a surviving spouse. The court held that only a lawfully recognized husband or wife could sue as a surviving spouse. This is a primary source we found doing a search on the New York Supreme Court website.

Pennsylvania. Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. De Santo v. Barnsley. 35 P.A.d & C.3d; 1982 P.A. D&C. Lexis 463.

The couple had decided to end their relationship and De Santo sued Barnsley for divorce. The case was thrown out, due to the fact that same-sex common-law marriages were not recognized in Pennsylvania. The court held that if the common-law statute was meant to include same-sex couples, the legislature was to make that change. This is a primary source we found doing a search on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Website.

Plato. On Homosexuality: Lysis, Phaedrus, and Symposium. New York: Prometheus Books, 1991.

Plato is considered to be one of the most influential philosophers in history. Without Plato, we would know nothing of Socrates, and Aristotle would have been short a mentor. On Homosexuality: Lysis, Phaedrus, and Symposium are a set of dialogues demonstrating Plato's thoughts on homosexuality. The characters portrayed in the dialogues constantly embrace same-sex relationships, which leads us to believe that during the ancient philosopher's time, same-sex relationships were not as frowned upon as they are in modern times. We found this book by scanning the shelves of the CSUMB library's "homosexuality" section.

Proposition 22. Limit on Marriages. California State Government. 2000 League of Women Voters of California Ed Fund. 08 Apr. 2006.

<<http://www.smartvoter.org/2000/03/07/ca/state/prop/22/>>.

This provided us with the wording of Proposition 22 and arguments for and against the proposition. This is a primary source which we found doing a search for “Proposition 22 in California” on Google.

"Rights and Protections Denied Same-Sex Partners." Human Rights Campaign-Working for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equal Rights. Human Rights Campaign. 27 Apr. 2005.

<<http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Center&CONTENTID=14698&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm>>.

The Human Rights Campaign provides detailed information about same-sex marriage legislation and current events. The website provides answers to common questions, such as “why aren’t civil unions enough?”, and also provides a state-by-state guide to this history and current work regarding same-sex marriage. This website provides information on “Advances in Marriage Equality”, “Opposition to Marriage Equality, and “Understanding the Issue”. We feel this website can give an overall sense of the issue at hand, while other websites merely provide their own point of view. The Human Rights Campaign website also provides links to other sites with valuable information, and includes a “Share Your Story” section. This is a primary source found by conducting a search on Yahoo! for “human rights campaign”.

Selby, W. Gardner. Voters Add Gay Marriage Ban to Constitution. Austin

American Statesman. 09 Nov. 2005. 2001-2006 Cox Newspaper.

This provided us with a look into the issue of same-sex marriage in Texas. It gave good background on the proposition and the public opinion of Proposition 2. This is a primary source which we found doing a search on LexisNexis, through the CSUMB library.

Sullivan, Andrew, ed. Same-Sex Marriage: Pro & Con, A Reader. New York:

Random House, Inc., 2004.

This book is a collection of pieces from various authors all providing information on the argument of same-sex marriage. Included within this book are arguments made within the Bible, as well as Plato's "Speech of Aristophanes", in which the concept of sexual orientation developing from the search for our other half is explored. There are also sections outlining the debate on the left side and the debate on the right side of the political spectrum. The history of same-sex marriage and homosexuality is also presented in one of the sections. We feel this book is valuable in gathering information for both sides of the argument of same-sex marriage. This is a primary source found in CSUMB's library.

Vermont. Supreme Court of Vermont. Baker v. State of Vermont. 170 VT. 194; 744

A.2d 864; 1999 VT. Lexis 406.

Same-sex couples sued the City of Burlington on the grounds that the refusal to issue them a marriage license was in direct violation of the state marriage laws and the

State Constitution. This case prompted the current Vermont Civil Union Law. This is a primary source which we found doing a search on the Vermont Supreme Court website.

"Why Marriage Matters." Alliance for Same-Sex Marriage. 2003. 9 Apr. 2006

<<http://allianceforsamesexmarriage.org/whymatters.htm>>.

This website gave us the information we needed for our introduction. The information contained in the section "Why Marriage Matters" gave us an outline of the limitations same-sex couples face because they are denied the right to marry. This helped us to demonstrate why our Capstone is important, and instantly sets up the issues we outlined within our research.

Secondary:

"Anti-Gay Initiatives. Facts on File. World News Digest." 2006. 8 Apr. 2006.Reed

Elsevier Inc.

<http://library.csUMB.edu:2068/universe/document?_m=018c02ef0ffdb0f257dda ca4b59f6ff2&_docnum=3&wchp=dGLbVtz-zSkVA&_md5=385c0f01682d5c6cedc34cfe0fc57864>.

LexisNexis provided a list of statistics to show the opinions of the public during the 2004 presidential election. It proved useful to show how the people of the United States felt in the beginning of the recent pandemonium for same-sex marriage equality. This is a secondary source which we found searching through CSUMB library's website.

Chauncey, George. Why Marriage? The History Shaping Today's Debate over Gay Equality. New York: Basic Books, 2004.

George Chauncey, a historian, provides a lot of great background information that we used in our paper. He begins his book with the legacy of anti-gay discrimination, and then moves into a description of gay rights and civil rights. He then examines how the concept of marriage has changed, which will be especially helpful as we research the concept of same-sex marriage. He continues on to explain why marriage rights have become a goal for same-sex couples, and why the fight for marriage equality has produced such an uproar throughout the country. This book is a secondary source found in the CSUMB library.

Crompton, Louis. Homosexuality & Civilization. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003.

Louis Crompton attempted to create a course on homosexuality at Harvard University, where he is a professor. However, the course failed, so Crompton used the material to publish this book. His book begins with early Greece (776 – 480 BCE) and continues to the Enlightenment period from 1730 – 1810. His research helped us to uncover ancient beliefs on homosexuality, such as those of the ancient Greeks and ancient Palestinians. However, his book did not cover the ancient Egyptians, and we are curious to discover what their thoughts on homosexuality were because there were such a powerful and influential aspect of world history and development. This book is a secondary source found by searching through the shelves at the CSUMB library.

Jung, Patricia Beattie and Ralph F. Smith. Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge.

Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.

The categories defined within this book are the definition of heterosexism, an evaluation of it, the relation between heterosexism and the Bible, the various costs involved with heterosexism, confronting and dismantling heterosexism, and moving beyond it. Because we feel it is very important for people to know that people are not killed or harmed because they are gay, but because those who hurt them are heterosexists, we want to include a section on this topic within our Capstone paper. We want people to know they shouldn't "blame the victim", but rather the offender(s) within any given situation. This book provided information on this very important aspect of the argument of same-sex marriage. This is a secondary source found in CSUMB's library.

Kantor, Martin. Homophobia: Description, Development, and Dynamics of Gay

Bashing. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998.

Martin Kantor, Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, wrote this book to describe the many aspects of homophobia. His research helped us to understand homophobia, and to understand the negative effects this condition has on gay and lesbian individuals. We think understanding homophobia is key to determining why same-sex marriage is not allowed, which is why we choose to include a section on this condition within our Capstone paper. This is a secondary source found in the CSUMB library.

Legal Marriage Court Cases. Partners Task Force. 2006. Partners Task Force-Legal Marriage Court Cases: A Timeline. 2006. 8 Apr. 2006.

<<http://www.buddybuddy.com/t-line-1.html>>.

This provided us with a list of cases and a brief history from 1971 to the present of same-sex marriage in the United States and Europe. It was a starting point in our research and proved very useful. This is a secondary source found using Google searching for “same-sex marriage in the United States.”

Levin, Michael E. and Laurence M. Thomas. Sexual Orientation & Human Rights.

Cumnor Hill: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999.

This book is an argument between Laurence Thomas, professor of political science and philosophy at Syracuse University, and Michael Levin, professor of philosophy at City College and the City University of New York. Each wrote an article, and then responded to the other. This book helped us understand the argument of each side regarding our topic. We feel that it will be easier for us to become more involved with the differing opinions when the authors are actually responding to each other. We can follow their thoughts, ideas, values, and beliefs throughout the course of the book. This a secondary source found in CSUMB’s library.

Maguire, Daniel. “The Morality of Homosexual Marriage.” Same-Sex Marriage: The Moral and Legal Debate. Ed. Robert M. Baird and Stuart E. Rosenbaum. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1997. 57-71.

Daniel Maguire’s article explores different stereotypes people hold towards homosexuals. Maguire writes of the stereotype that homosexuality is a medical condition, “a malady in need of a remedy”. He also writes of biology, and the male-female coital fit. His presentation of the findings of research professors Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg also help to discourage the psychologically impaired stereotype towards homosexuals. The research shows that most homosexual people are just as psychologically adjusted to society as heterosexual people, some even more so. Maguire’s research helps to dissolve the stereotypes mentioned. This is a secondary source, part of an anthology, found on the shelves in CSUMB’s library.

O’Connor, Eugene. Introduction. On Homosexuality: Lysis, Phaedrus, and Symposium. By Plato. New York: Prometheus Books, 1991. 11-14.

Eugene O’Connor’s introduction to Plato’s writings on homosexuality helped us to understand and translate Plato’s work. The introduction provided enough information so that we could use O’Connor’s writing within our Capstone paper as well as Plato’s. O’Connor provided an overall view of Plato’s life, and discussed the controversy of homosexuality, and pointed them out within Plato’s work. He also provided clues to certain excerpts that were especially important regarding the topic, which allowed us to locate the lines for use within our paper. We found this book by searching the shelves of the CSUMB library in the “homosexuality” section.

Rowse, A.L. Homosexuals in History: A Study of Ambivalence in Society, Literature and the Arts. U.S.A.: Dorset Press, 1977.

A.L. Rowse's Homosexuals in History provides extensive insight into just how many homosexuals there were throughout history. The book begins during medieval times, and travels through time to explore each individual's life through homosexuality. People such as Tchaikovsky and Christopher Marlowe led their lives dealing with heterosexual rivals, and we felt it was important to use Rowse's research within our own paper to show how people struggled and were viewed as different, even though they were geniuses. This book is a secondary source found in the CSUMB library.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERDISCIPLINARY REFLECTION ESSAY – Jessica Hannibal

In the major of Human Communication, there are certain requirements that each student must meet in order to receive their degree. Eight Major Learning Outcomes and three Concentration courses are the tools to majoring in HCOM. Before beginning my transition into HCOM, I participated in Proseminar, which was not very helpful for me because I was working as the Graduation Assistant in the Records office and was already very familiar with ILP's and MLO's. Upon entering the course, I had already completed my ILP, though there would be changes later on, of course. Because I had already done my ILP, I knew I would need to take a course during winter break (and two during summer) to complete my degree within my goal of four years.

I took HCOM 352: History According to the Movies to meet the requirements for MLO 7, and for some reason it was incredibly difficult for me to meet the instructor's requirements. It was the first time that I was unsure if I would pass a course. Given that the course was only two and a half weeks long, it was difficult to get to know the instructor's teaching style and understand what she was looking for when she graded assignments. Though I put forth my best effort and the instructor gave me several tips, I still received low marks, though I was able to pull off a C+ for the course, which was passing, but much lower than I am used to receiving.

Though it was frustrating, I continued on my path through HCOM, participating in HCOM 312: Cooperative Argumentation for MLO 1, HCOM 330: Intro to Creative Writing for MLO 8, and HCOM 304: Relational Ethics which was originally going to be used for an MLO, but was changed to a concentration course after I changed my concentration from Creative Writing to Practical and Professional Ethics. This change occurred after I attempted to get in to a senior seminar course that would teach students

how to get their work published. This course would have been used for my concentration in Creative Writing, but it had a pre-requisite of HCOM 330, which I would have been taking concurrently. Ever since I first started at CSUMB in 2002, I have been told I was a great writer, and in my Freshman Proseminar course, my classmates even voted me the best. I wrote a narrative story that several instructors told me I should get published, but no one was able to offer me any information or assistance with this, so when I found out about the course, I was incredibly excited about it. I met with one of the Creative Writing instructors, and she told me to submit something I had written, and she would review it and make a decision about letting me take the course concurrently. I submitted my narrative, thinking she would love it and let me into the course. However, to my horror, she told me it was not good enough.

I was shocked. After this and other disappointing adventures in creative writing, I was ready to switch my concentration. I started researching the other options, and came across Practical and Professional Ethics. I was enrolled in Relational Ethics, and the class really interested me. The instructor split the course into three sections: lying, compassion, and forgiveness. I will never forget reading Simon Wiesenthal's The Sunflower, in which the author tells the story of his stay in the Nazi-run concentration camps of the 1940s, and the request of a dying Nazi to be forgiven by Simon as a representative for all the Jews the young Nazi had murdered. The lasting question, "what would you have done?" continued as we read the numerous entries from other authors, and after watching films about Holocaust survivors, I was surprised that my opinions could change so much. This course was one of the most memorable ones for me throughout my time in HCOM.

Another important lesson that has stuck with me is something I learned in HCOM 403: Ethics in the Professions. During a segment in which we studied harassment and discrimination policies, the concept of equality was brought up. If you intentionally point out diversity, you are creating segregation by proving that everyone is different. For example, I worked as an intern for the Human Resources division of the City of Gilroy. Whenever we needed to find raters for interview panels (there were usually four raters), the director requested to have some combination of men, women, and people of ethnic descent. On one occasion, it was noticed that one of our upcoming panels consisted of four women, all of Caucasian descent. The director instructed us to try to find someone with a different background to replace one of the raters. By intentionally choosing people based on their sex or race, she was pointing out that everyone really IS different, that we are different people with different rights, and that it is ok to choose or exclude people based on their anatomy or last name. This lesson really opened my eyes and will probably stick with me throughout my life.

During the following fall semester, it surprised me how much my Restorative Justice course and Multicultural Conflict Resolution course seemed interdependent. What I learned in one was also useful in the other, such as being able to find some sort of truce or ending of harm to restore peace and justice. During this semester, I became very interested in making a difference in society. I asked my boyfriend to stop using the word “gay” in a negative way, hoping that if I couldn’t change the entire world, I could at least make it a little bit better. Now, in my final semester, I am writing my Capstone on same-sex marriage and equal rights, still hoping to make a difference.

Now that my time in HCOM is almost over, I feel I am a different person than when I started. I try to think of all possible outcomes to my actions, and I try to do the most ethically correct thing I know to do in any situation. I think my concentration in Practical and Professional Ethics will be valuable time and time again as I journey through life. As more and more issues arise, things unforeseen in the past, I think it will be important to have ethical analysis skills to assist in making correct judgements.

As Capstone, and my final semester, nears completion, I feel I was well prepared for my project. I think it would have been more helpful for me if the literature review was completed in Pre-Capstone because it would have forced me to look more at my sources. However, I was able to write about ten pages of my paper over winter break, which helped me greatly in meeting deadlines. Because I had already discussed Capstone requirements with previous graduates, my expectations for the course were accurate.

One of the most challenging aspects of this project was finding a way to incorporate many of the outcomes learned throughout HCOM. I wanted to use historical analysis, conflict resolution, relational communication, philosophical analysis, cultural analysis, and creative writing/social action to aid my research, writing, and presentation skills. I feel I was able to attend to each outcome, however briefly, even though some aspects, such as historical analysis, are present far more than others are.

I think I was successful in my attempt to present information from different perspectives regarding the topic of homosexuality and same-sex marriage. I obtained information from the Human Rights Campaign, American Family Association, and numerous scholars arguing their views on the topic. I think it is very helpful to complete in-depth research from different areas to find discrepancies and also new ideas that were

unseen before completing research. Working on Capstone is excellent preparation for Master's program work and the Master's Thesis for any students who wish to go on to graduate school, such as myself. It teaches effective research, structural, and time management skills.

I hope that my work on Capstone will be of help to the numerous individuals fighting for the right to marry. I believe everyone should have equal rights, no matter who their partner is. I hope my project will influence others to agree.

APPENDIX B: INTERDISCIPLINARY REFLECTION ESSAY – Summer Snell

When I first stepped foot onto this campus I was unsure of what to expect. I was a naïve 18 year old, who was in the closet and afraid to show anyone who I really was. All I knew was there had to be something more than Tulare, and I was here to find it. What I found was not for what I was looking, but I am glad I am here and am looking back on my experience, more as a life lesson and a turning point of personal growth and learning than an education.

In my opinion, all HCOM classes, except the concentration classes, are the same. In every single HCOM class I have had in my five years here, students were force fed almost the same information, then told to form our own opinions, after which, we would discuss in class those opinions. The concept I just described is great, but the execution of that concept is not. Some professors say they enjoy hearing students' opinions and truly mean it, but what I have noticed is that some of the core professors I have had the pleasure of being taught by, like students to write the way the professor feels instead of forming truthful opinions. Unfortunately for me, I do not like being told what to think and how to think, if I wanted to live my life that way, I would have stayed in Tulare. My only question is how is that learning? If we are presented information, it would make sense that we should interpret that information based on our experiences, therefore harboring diverse learning, just as the mission statement says.

I am reminded of a class I took my second year here. I absolutely hated this class, because in every class, the professor made each and every white student feel bad for being white. No disrespect intended, but why should I feel bad and feel as though we cannot speak in class based on something that we cannot control. I understand that there is an amount of privilege that comes with being white, do not misunderstand me,

however I do not understand how forcing students to only see color is learning. I was even told by a few African American and Latino students that they felt sorry for me for having to sit through a class that pointed every white person out as the bad guy, when really all that does is more damage to society by making color such a strong issue. Having this class was the worst experience I have had here.

The best experience I have had was in my concentration classes. I was able to dig deep and learn a lot. I wish all of my classes could have been pre-law classes. I enjoyed learning about what pertained to my future career, everything else was just fluff, in my opinion. I have always wondered why we could not just take classes that pertained to our careers instead of repeating high school (i.e. having to take endless amounts of Math, English, Science, and Language classes). As a matter of fact, some of my high school classes were harder, which is probably why I do not put forth the effort to do well.

My experience here has not been all bad. I have enjoyed some of the classes I have taken, and had the pleasure of being taught by a few very good professors. This allowed me to better my writing and point me in a direction which would be best for my future. Having these professors made me somewhat prepared for Capstone.

Using the skills I learned in those courses enabled me to not only understand and comprehend what research I was doing for capstone, but they also made it easier to interpret the information so that I could make my capstone interesting and not seem like an overwhelming amount of knowledge, where the average person would not care to read it.

They say college is an experience that cannot compare to anything else. It's where you learn about yourself and discover who you may become. I definitely agree. I

may not have liked some of the experiences I have had here, but I do not regret anything that has happened in the last five years. I have uncovered all the things I dislike about myself and am trying to change them, which means not only having grown as a person, but instead of blaming things on the outside world I am trying to solve them from within. I honestly don't think I would have been able to do that without all of the self-reflection work I have done in some of my classes. I guess I learned to look at the glass as half-full instead of half-empty, because half-empty people do not live life.

APPENDIX C: E-POSTER

HCOM Senior Capstone Digital Poster Spring 2006

ABSTRACT

An exploration of different perspectives on homosexuality throughout history, starting from ancient Greek and Palestinian beliefs, continuing to modern day society. Causes of current beliefs on same-sex marriage are traced to homophobia and heterosexism and several court cases and laws are documented. The last segment of the paper suggests that current arguments regarding same-sex marriage negatively affect society by portraying homosexuals as different, and therefore unequal.

CONTEXT & CONTRIBUTIONS

By traveling through history and examining certain traits such as heterosexism and homophobia, it is evident that homosexuals have routinely been denied certain rights, rights that make them equal to other human beings. Many scholars suggest there is a negative view of homosexuals held in society that prevents us from allowing same-sex couples the right to marry by creating laws to prevent it. Our research paper uses history to analyze current arguments, and outlines these arguments to show the negative effects on the community.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What effect do current arguments regarding same-sex marriage have on the community?

How have legal cases had an effect on society?

Are we moving towards a more equal society, or away from one by denying marriage rights to same-sex couples?

Names: Jessica Hannibal and Summer Snell

Project Title: Same-Sex Marriage: Right or Wrong? Past, Present, and Future

Concentrations: Practical and Professional Ethics and Pre-Law



Photo by Jessica Hannibal

FORMAT

The final project has the form of an in-depth research paper.

KEY FINDINGS

Heterosexism and homophobia are significant causes of the current beliefs that same-sex couples should not be allowed the right to marry. History has created a tradition with heterosexual marriage, and religious beliefs and new laws have helped support this view. Though there are many people who still support marriage as one man-one woman, some scholars believe that people are becoming more and more tolerant of homosexuals and the idea of same-sex marriage. If same-sex marriage and/or civil unions are allowed in the future, it will create a society with more equality for its citizens.

RELEVANT LINKS

<http://www.hrc.org>

<http://www.nogaymarriage.com>

EVIDENCE

This research paper has derivatives from the fields of history, ethics, and cultural awareness and uses relational communication, philosophical analysis, cultural analysis, and historical analysis. Our conclusions were drawn after researching Pro and Anti Same-Sex Marriage organizations' websites, anthology works, and many scholarly books.

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