

Why should same-sex marriages be allowed essay

[Sociology](#), [Social Issues](#)



Human rights have been under the spotlight of public attention for a number of reasons over time. In recent years, debates about gay marriages and whether couples of the same sex should be provided with the freedom to create a family with marriage are more intense and have caused public disputes. Societies seems divided, not to knowing what is actually just and right in regards gay marriages and rights. Despite the seemingly complexity of the issue that troubles governors and societies alike, the answer is quite simple: all people are entitled to live a life without been discriminated for their likes in regards their sexual orientation, just like everybody is allowed to believe in the God that best represents their beliefs, and been treated fairly and equally, no matter if their skin's color is black or white.

Background

Ever since the 1970s, gay people have been fighting for their rights. Indicatively, Jack Baker and James McConnell, both gay activists in the state of Minnesota, USA, were the first gay couples in the United States that applied for a marriage licence, in 1976 (The Boston Globe). Of course, their lawsuit was turned down and their case reached the US Supreme Court, only to be rejected again. After that, as series of gay-marriages prohibitions took place, and states, one by one, started banning same-sex marriages, beginning with Maryland in 1973, and followed by Virginia in 1975, Florida, California and Wyoming in 1977, and Indiana, in 1986 (The Boston Globe). The case Bowers v. Hardwick, in 1986 has shaken the world for a variety of reasons. It was a case when Hardwick was arrested in his own house in Atlanta having intimate moments with another man (Greenhouse). The case fuelled gay right advocates to detest for the right of privacy that appealed to

everybody else but gay people. Some say it was the last time when the Supreme Court was given the right to break the right of privacy to homosexual relations between consenting adults (Greenhouse). The, retired now, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr., who initially casted his vote favouring the right to privacy for gay people and changed it into not applying the right of privacy to homosexual relations, admits having made a mistake back then (Greenhouse).

In 1992, though, the District of Columbia allowed couples of the same sex to register as domestic partners; yet, not to marry (The Boston Globe). It was not until May, 1993, when the Supreme Court of Hawaii rules that prohibiting same-sex marriages is discriminating and against the Constitution when things started to take a different course (The Boston Globe).

Former President Bill Clinton allowed the states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages, in 1996 (The Boston Globe). After that, in 1996, Pennsylvania defines marriage as only between opposite sex couples, followed by Louisiana voters, and a total of eighteen states prohibited same-sex couples' marriages, by 2006 (The Boston Globe). Connecticut, New Jersey and New Hampshire legalized civil unions for same-sex couples, in 2005, 2007 and 2008 respectively, Washington and Oregon protected domestic partnerships by February, 2008 (The Boston Globe).

Today, fifteen countries all around the globe and 16 US states perform same-sex marriages, 29 states have constitutional bans on them, and another five have voted for domestic partnerships, yet, against same-sex marriage (The Boston Globe).

Discussing Gay Marriages

Leaving aside all the rising concern about whether treating gay people equally as everybody else and allowing them to marry or not, things are not as complex as one might think. It is the social background and what is perceived as “right” that people carry; what they have been taught by former generations, their religion and culture that define their decision, and sometimes create an inner battle. Looking at the issue from the humanistic point of view, all people should be given the same rights, despite their color, religion, or sexual orientation. Generally speaking, that is what equality is all about: not choosing which parts of the human nature fall under the human rights and which are not.

One of the main arguments presented by people against same-sex marriages is that they are meant to be between a man and a woman and anything other than that is not natural, because it violates the natural order of things, as perceived by them and passed on to them by their culture and social background. In fact, marriage is the epitome of love and companionship and has been created by humans, rather than the natural world (Lipp). As social justice activist, Murray Lipp (2013) writes in The Huffpost, “Nature-themed arguments [] reveal a lot about the homophobia and heterosexism of those who present such arguments [] [and] it's more about discomfort with homosexuality”.

Also, the prevailing viewpoint is that marriage is for procreation, which is why God made Adam and Eve in the first place. Judging from the facts as released by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, that argument is rather far from the truth. As of now, about 6.7 million women aged from 15

to 44 have impaired fecundity, meaning they have an impaired ability to get pregnant or deliver a baby, and about 1.5 million of married women of the same pre-mentioned age group are infertile, in the US alone (cdc.gov). Still those couples continue to be perceived as married, even if they do not have children. So, while procreation is indeed the reason why many heterosexual couples get married, the capacity to produce children does not determine the legal validity of marriage.

Religious beliefs play an important role on how people see gay marriages. Christianity-based arguments concentrate on the Bible's references, according to which homosexuality is sinful "also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error" (Rom. 1: 27 as cited in Slick). But, marriage is actually the confirmation of two people loving each other, and since God is love, why should homosexual people be judged over their love for another human being of the same sex? Civil laws should not blend with religion, and nowadays, people can get legally married without a religious ceremony. If religious beliefs interfere with socio-legal issues, then it would be like restricting the freedoms of those that do not share the same religious beliefs. The sanctity of marriage is not undervalued when homosexual couples marry, as long as those marriages are pure to their essence. It is all about love and the need to spend the rest of one's life with another human being, for better and for worse, until death tears them apart.

Many fear is that allowing gay people to marry would open the doors to legalizing other issues, like marriage among siblings and other groups of

people, bringing social discord. However, every effort to legalize marriages of same-sex couples only asks for equal access to marriage laws, and not change the fundamental definition of marriage, which is to allow two non-biologically connected adults to marry (Lipp). Taking the facts from the 12 US states and the fifteen countries that have legalized same-gender marriage into consideration, there have been no attempts to legalize anything other than same-sex marriages (Lipp).

Facts coming from a new Gallup poll put another parameter to same-sex marriages. According to the poll, married Americans spend as much as \$35 more on a daily basis, compared to their single counterparts (Strachan). Statistics show that married couples pool resources and spend more; the 2011 social and demographic trends as they have been portrayed after an analysis of the US Census data by Pew Research Center show, though, that less than half of adult Americans are getting married (Cohn, Passel, Wang and Livingston). With that in mind, it would be a pity to have people willing and looking forward to marry and not been given the legal right to do so. It becomes obvious that economies can also benefit from legalizing marriages among people of the same sex.

Conclusion

Over time, societies are called to make decisions on various matters concerning human rights, like whether same-sex couples should be allowed to legally marry to one another, or not. People are definitely affected by the way they have been raised and their cultural background, as well their religious beliefs. However, looking into the true meaning of marriage, one can find that there are no real differences among people, neither in regards

their race and color of skin, nor sexual orientation and preferences. If marriage is an act of bonding one's life with another's out of pure love and in order to face the world together, gender is not important. Perhaps that is the reason why 16 states in the US and another 15 countries worldwide have allowed same-sex couples to marry, not to mention those that have started providing gay people with hospital visit rights and civil union partnership. Truth is gay rights' activists have gone a long way since the 1970s, when the first law case reached the US Supreme Court asking for two homosexuals to be allowed to get married. It seems that the world is slowly trying to come to terms with the concept that we are all humans and allowing two people in love to be bonded with the sacred bonds of marriage does not threaten societies, in any way. No fact as of now from countries and states that have legalized gay marriages show any worrying sign that implies a possible break in the rules set by the Constitution. On the contrary, we all believe in equal human rights and for those rights people have fought in time. If the world truly supports equality and non-discrimination, then banning a human right demonstrates the exact opposite. If marriage is not defined only as a union of a man and a woman, but represents love and the deep need to spend one's life with the other half, in bad and in good times, then same-sex marriages should be nothing but legalized.

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