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[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



Pellissippi State Community College | Homosexuality | Same-sex marriage: A true social problem | | Tabitha K. Robbins | 3/28/2013 | Author Note This paper was prepared for Sociology 1020, Section WW1, taught by Professor Marsha Hupfel. In today's society, Gays/Lesbians are fighting for equality rights. For the past several years' politics, religious groups, and individual society has battled the legalization of same-sex marriages with some success and some setbacks. States currently recognize civil unions but decline the ability for marriage licenses, thus possibly creating an equality injustice and/or violations of the fifth and fourteenth amendment of the constitution, which protects against a person from being deprived of life, liberty, or property from any state or federal. No matter what stand you take in this issue one thing remains, that homosexuality is a social problem, and either you agree in equal right for all human beings or you violate the right for equality. We will look at Homosexuality by discussing: 1. The Social Problem, 2. History of homosexuality, and 3. Society's Social Problem with Homosexuality: Same-Sex Marriage. Homosexuals, gays and lesbians, have dealt with many social problems throughout history and today's society will decide the outcome of another, whether or not to allow same-sex marriages, and give them the same rights as heterosexual marriages. The Social Problem Homosexuals have had wild shifts in support throughout the ages. They either have full acceptance or have lost all acceptance. During the past century, gays and lesbians have made huge strides of success in changing societies view acquiring equal rights in many functions of society. To understand what defines a social problem we will refer to pages 2-3 of Understanding Social Problems, a textbook written by Linda A. Mooney,

David Knox, and Caroline Schacht that states: Social problems are defined by objective and subjective criteria that vary across societies and across historical periods. The objective element of a social problem refers to the existence of a social condition, therefore becoming aware of social conditions through life experiences, media, and education. The subjective element of a social problem refers to the belief that a particular social condition is harmful to society, or to a segment of society, and it should and can be changed. We know that crime, drug addiction, poverty, racism, violence, and pollution exist. These social conditions are not considered social problems unless at least a segment of society believes these conditions diminish the quality of human life. By combining these objective and subjective elements, we further define a social problem as a social condition that a segment of society views as harmful to members of society and is in need of remedy. Several social problems may need to be addressed to resolve a specific social problem, as they manifest from each other. Some Americans view homosexuality as a social problem, while others view prejudice and discrimination against homosexuality as a social problem. Such variations in what is considered a social problem are due to differences in values, beliefs, and life experiences. However, throughout time, homosexuality has changed its classification as being a social problem.

History of Homosexuality Homosexuality dates back to the beginning of human existence. Some periods in history accept this as a normal sexual practice as others ridicule and deem this type of sexual preference as a psychiatric disease. In the fifth century there was little concept as sexual orientations, gender was considered an irrelevant detail, however during the

fourth and fifth centuries the mainstream Christian changed from all sex was forbidden to a view that allowed for procreative sex (Pickett, Spring 2011). This viewpoint permitted procreative sex within a marriage and considered every other expression as sinful. Examples of this change can be found in St. Augustine. Then, Roman society's view became more negative towards sexuality due to the Roman-Catholic Church (Pickett, Spring 2011). The decline of the Roman Empire, and its replacement by various barbarian kingdoms, induced a general tolerance of homosexual acts (Pickett). As one prominent scholar put it, " European secular law contained few measures against homosexuality until the middle of the thirteenth century" (Pickett). By the end of the twelfth century through the fourteenth century, however, saw a strong rise in intolerance regarding homosexuality. While the causes of this are somewhat unclear, it is likely that increased class conflict alongside the Gregorian reform movement in the Catholic Church were two important factors. The first ecumenical council to condemn homosexual sex was Lateran III of 1179 (Pickett, Spring 2011). For the next several centuries in Europe, the regulations and harsh consequences governed homosexuality. In the 18th and 19th centuries, an explicitly theological framework no longer dictated the debate about homosexuality, instead, secular arguments and interpretations became increasingly common (Pickett, Spring 2011). Probably the most important secular domain for discussions of homosexuality was in medicine, including psychology; persons may be expressing a diseased or pathological mental state (Pickett, Spring 2011). This changed on June 28, 1969, when the customers of a gay bar, Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, rebelled after a police raid and consequently gay

and lesbian groups began to coordinate around the country, creating Gay Democratic clubs in every major city, and one fourth of all college campuses had gay and lesbian groups (Chenise, 2013). The American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its formal listing of mental disorders in the 1973, and the gay liberation movement took off from there (Mooney, Knox, & Schacht, 2013, p. 352). The homosexual population has won many rights, enduring decades of punishment, ridicule, stereotyping, and inequality, but has a long way to go for complete equality with the heterosexual population. Societies' Social Problem with Homosexuality: Same-Sex Marriage. Some of the United States population, although no definite data can pinpoint a specific number, engage in a homosexual relationship, carrying out a life just as heterosexual couples do, however only a small percent of them are allowed to sanctify their relationship with a marriage license (Winters, 2010). While there are few visual confirmation as to who is affected by these social problems only those that display their affection can openly be identified, as others choose to conform in public and conceal their affection to the privacy of their homes. Legal scholars have suggested an unpretentious solution: the government could expand civil unions to all couples, straight or gay (Winters, 2010). Those who want their unions sanctified as a marriage could go to their individual church after stopping by City Hall. Two law professors from Pepperdine University have argued, " That this is just the legal adjustment needed to resolve the contradiction created by Proposition 8 in California", which reversed " marriage" for same-sex couples while safeguarding civil unions (Winters, 2010). The civil union people argue that the government should no more be

involved in marriages than it is in baptisms or funerals, pointing out that other religious rituals are not amalgamated to civil services; the state or federal government does not issue baptism licenses, neither does a minister direct a funeral eulogy and then issue a death certificate. (Winters, 2010). Separating religious and civil marriages may provide a solution to the gay-marriage stalemate, thus allowing churches to keep their ability to sanction marriage unions, while the government keeps their ability to grant civil unions to anyone who applies. Adding severance between church and state would strengthen religious independence and allow all couples, whether heterosexual or homosexual, to equally access benefits on state and federal levels. After studying the social problem that is, revolving around the rights sought from the homosexual community regarding same-sex marriage. I have come to understand the history of homosexuality and I, also understand how one social problem is affected by another. I have associated my view of this array of social problems with the conflict perspective, agreeing that these types of social problems are over prestige and respect, seeking equal rights that truly every human being deserves. Works Cited Chenier, Elise. " Gay marriage, 1970s style." The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide 20. 2 (2013): 19+. Gender Studies Collection. Web. 28 Mar. 2013.