

Introduction again, it  
shows how deeply  
rooted



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## **Introduction**

Homosexuality or the gay culture has been a controversial topic of discussion in virtually every community in the world.

Different people subscribe to various traditions rooted in religion or community customs that have varied views on gaysim. Religion condemns and does not all accommodate people who have sexual relation with people of the same gender (Wardle, 2003, p106). Islam, Christianity and even the traditional religions in Africa or elsewhere in the world have perennially had consensus on homosexual relations. Though some Christian denominations in the UK have relaxed a bit and consecrated gay bishops as church leaders, conservatism still remains in the church as far as gaysim is concerned. Even contemporary communities like that of the US where people have embraced liberal tendencies and freedom of people to do what they like is prevalent, homosexuality and same sex unions are frowned upon (Pinello, 2006, p 69). Religion plays an important role in such popular views but again, it shows how deeply rooted the notion that only heterosexual relationships are normal is.

According to the Lesbian and Gay Movement, Same sex marriages have become political pet subjects alongside other ethical issues like abortion (1989, p. 35). In Europe and the United States, it is one of the campaign perspectives that voters carefully consider before voting for a candidate to elective office. Same sex marriages or unions elicit strong emotions and the perspectives through which it can be looked at are numerous (Staver, 2004, p 278). Personal opinion which shapes popular opinion is one of them.

Homosexuality and the constitution is another one as is the rights of individuals to choose what suits them so long as no one is directly affected. Religion too forms one of the major platforms on which same sex marriages can be discussed. Throughout history, attempts have been made to make it legal for same sex couples to be recognized by the law and live a normal life like that of heterosexual couples (David & Caroline, 2009, p.

96). The campaigns have gained momentum in the 21st century and a number of countries have succumbed to the pressure to legalize or are seriously considering relaxing the stringent laws that bar same sex unions.

## **Perspectives on same sex marriages**

### **Popular opinion on same sex marriage**

Views about same sex marriages are closely linked to the question of if homosexuality is a choice or innate driven feeling (Wilcox & Rimmerman, 2007, p. 11).

A majority of populations in virtually all countries of the world have an unfavorable view about same sex marriages. However many people are warming up to the idea that two people of the same gender can be married and can raise a family together. According to Wilcox & Rimmerman, views about same sex marriages have thawed same way the inferiority attitude towards black people changed over time. In the case of racism, it is a matter of choice for a white person to discriminate a black person for example (Alderson & Lahey, 2002, p.

55). There was absolutely no biological evidence supporting that. However, there is biological evidence nowadays supporting homosexual behavior in

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human beings; because of that, the public has started to accommodate the idea of same sex marriages.

### **Same sex marriages and the constitution**

The constitution recognizes people's universal and fundamental right to marry (Gerstmann, 2004 p. 3). Same sex marriage is a constitutional issue whose debate has not reached any logical conclusion. There is debate if same sex coupled should also enjoy the right to adopt children as heterosexual couples.

Whether they should be treated as minority groups same as those based on race, gender, ethnicity or national origin (Fuchs & Boele, 2003). Questions are also abounding if the gay activists are asking too much and if they are asking the government to endorse homosexuality (Bardes & Shelley, 2008, p 28). Netherlands was the first country to legalize same sex marriages in April 2001. Many other countries have so far allowed quasi-marital same sex, like South Africa, Norway, Sweden and Iceland (Nocotera, 1993, p 75). In the United States, the constitutionality of same sex marriages as said earlier has created a confusion that has provided little direction. The issue is characterized by court rulings which partially advocate for same sex marriages while technically there is no law enacted to that effect (Brewer, 2008, p. 87). For instance, in 1993, the Supreme Court of Hawaii ruled that the ban on same sex marriages violated the equality that the same constitution sought to protect.

Similarly, the Supreme Court of Vermont rule that same sex coupled were entitled to all the constitutional rights that heterosexual couples enjoyed if

not marriage itself (Gerstmann, 2004, p. 5). Such court decisions add to the complexity and unclear direction surrounding the issue of same sex marriages.

### **Religion and same sex marriages**

Christians, Muslims and all other religious people like any other people in the constitution have their own individual views about what the society should be. Many religious Americans believe that there is only one side of the debate about same sex marriage (Saucier & Cawman, 2004 as quoted in Wilcox & Rimmerman, 2007, p.

106). For Christians who avidly follow bible teachings, it is immoral beyond words to condone gaysim leave alone same sex marriages. According to Wilcox and Rimmerman, the bible has not always been definitive on a numerous issues in the society. However when it comes to gaysim the book minces no words. The Bibles is absolutely clear about the immorality posed by allowing same sex marriages. Both practicing and believing Christians can never accommodate the view that marriage between two people of the same gender is sanctioned by traditional beliefs (Wilcox & Rimmerman, 2007, p.

105). Gay activists have always countered that the right to be gay is a civil right as well as a religious right (Andryszewski, p. 10).

### **Conclusion**

There are many more numerous views about same sex marriages in the United States and world over (Pinello, 2006, p 86). Homosexuals have a point when they argue that they have rights as individuals and couples under the constitution to do whatever they feel is right for them.

At the same time, constitution that protects these individuals is rooted in strong religious traditions that it will be hard to go against (Cahill, 2004, p. 209). Lack of political will has also derailed any progress that gay people could have made due to fear of political backlash. Gay people have however managed to piece together different sections of legislations and court rulings in many countries and the US that help them live a near normal life.

They can jointly own property, adopt children and live together without fear of attack (Stockland, 2007, p 47). For the time being, they have to contend with the reality that most people are against their instance that they be recognized under the law.

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