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federalism assignment
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The article that read was discussing how the Defense of Marriage act, or DOMA, was recently overturned by the Supreme Court of the United States. DOMA was opposed by same-sex couples who claimed that the act violated their Constitutional rights. The act, passed in 1996, stated that the Federal government did not have to recognize same-sex marriages, even though they were considered legal marriages in certain states, therefore not giving federal benefits to same-sex married couples. The benefits included Social Security and migration rights.

DOMA was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, saying that its policies violated the Fifth Amendment's protection of equal liberty. The case was decided in a 5-4 decision, and while many people were overjoyed by the outcome, many people were not pleased with it. I believe that this article is a good example of federalism and how it works because it illustrates state powers, while also discussing the powers of the national government. States have the reserved power of regulating marriage licenses, so some states will accept gay marriage, while other states will not.

Opposes of DOMA claimed that their Constitutional rights were being infringed upon, so they took the case to court. Cases involving questions of Constitutional rights fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Court System, thus giving a specific power to the national government. This court case involves an issue, marriage, which is left up to the states, and a law that people found unconstitutional regarding marriages, which was taken to the Federal Court System.

The article illustrates how certain powers are left up to the states, while others lie with the national government, thus showing the principles of federalism. I believe that federalism worked out well in this case because even though the Supreme Court used their power of judicial review to overturn DOMA the states were still left with their decisions on how to handle same-sex marriage. Federalism satisfied the requests of some, with the overturn of DOMA, and still satisfied others by leaving the power of issuing marriage licenses with the states.