

We Were All Created Equal!

Mistreating anyone because of their sexual orientation is harmful and should not be allowed under any circumstances. Many states debate on whether or not to legalize same-sex marriage. Currently gay marriage is legal in: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Iowa, and Vermont and will become legal in New Hampshire, beginning January 1, 2010.

Homosexuals from all around the United States have aggressively fought for all the rights they barely own now, but all they really want is to be counted equal in society. Same-sex marriage was once legal in California which began on June 16, 2008, until Proposition 8 was counted in the elections on November 5, 2008, banning same-sex marriage once again. Proposition 8 was a prop voting to ban same-sex marriage in California. According to David Binder Research, 47.7% of Californians voted No on Prop 8 and 52.3% voted Yes on Prop 8 banning gay marriage. San Diego county results mirrored the overall California votes by 46% of citizens in San Diego County voting No and 54% voting Yes.

“All men are created equal” is stated clearly in the Declaration of Independence. This statement should apply to every situation, even the debate of same-sex marriage.

Homosexuals are ordinary people who deserve the same rights as heterosexual citizens. For society to look beyond their physical appearance and discriminate against them because of who they prefer to marry or fall in love with, is not following the Declaration of Independence or the Bible.

The fight for gay marriage is equivalent to the fight for African-American equal rights, in the 1960's. The relationship between such national issues gives America the phrase “gay being the new black” stated on *The Tyra Banks Show*. One of the psychologists on the show was angered by people comparing blacks being discriminated against back in the past to today's issue of homosexuals being discriminated against. She believes that African-American's can't stop being black, but gays can stop being gay.

Such belief is not true and should be frowned upon because you are going to love the person you feel an intimate connection to.

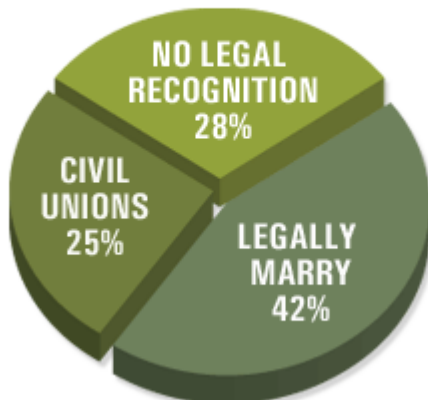
On January 1, 2002, a bill became effective to give members of registered same-sex and opposite-sex couples the right to adopt a partner's child. A reason why the Vermont same-sex union battle received so much national press is because legislators were responding to a court order, while some ended up losing their jobs to same-sex unions. Religious, government, and social groups have debated this issue and it is taking a long time for it to be resolved. Same-sex marriage has some very distinct facts and values important to one's religion, morals, or even what his or her family thinks of the gay lifestyle. Citizens believe same-sex marriage should stay banned because it doesn't follow God's word. Constructing laws to ban same-sex marriage because of religion is wrong. America's government is not based upon religion. If the government created laws upon religion then abortion would be illegal. David Binder researched that 94% of voters who voted yes on prop 8 were mostly influenced by religion and the Bible.

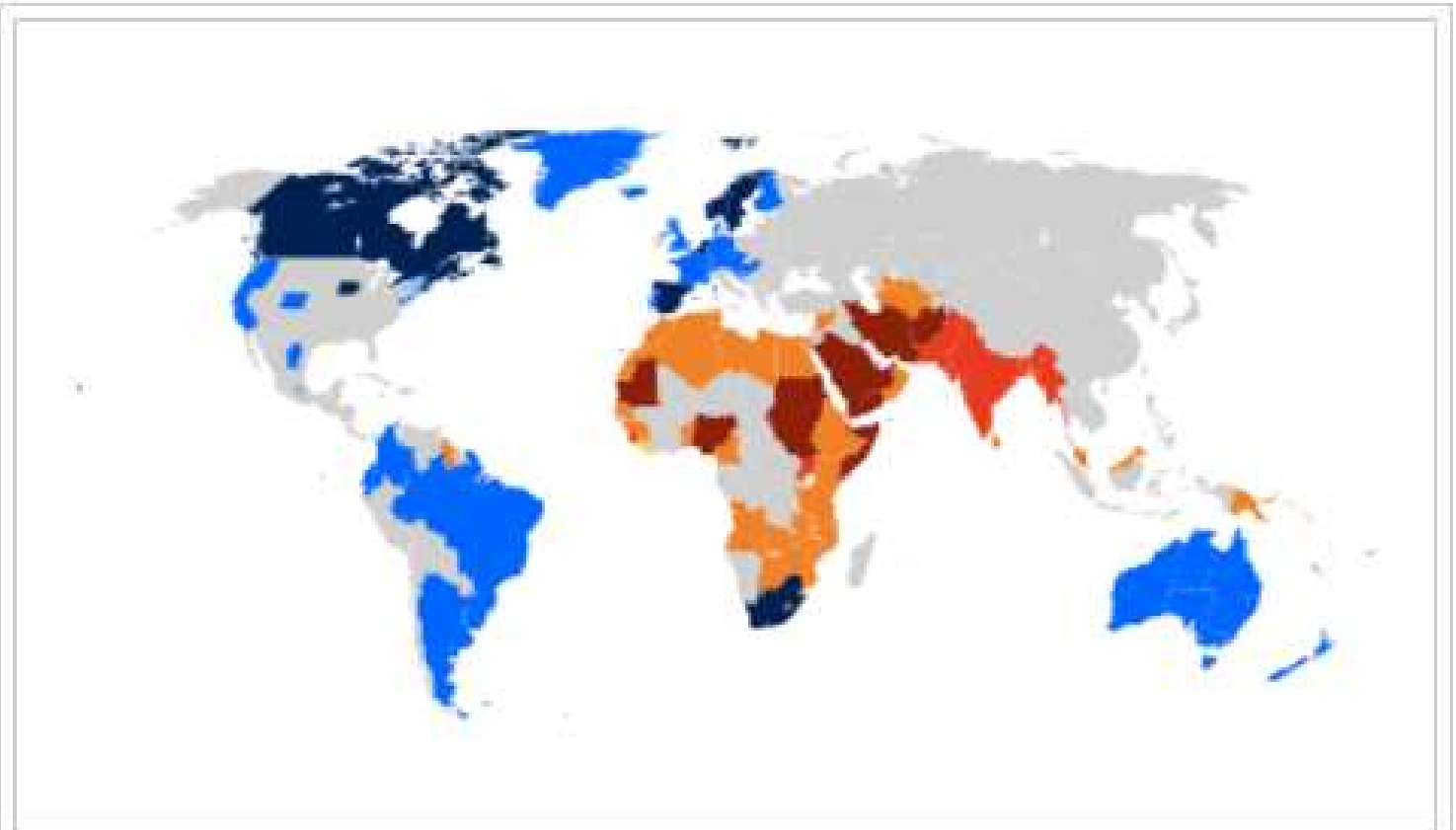
This issue is not only a national issue, but also a global issue. Around the world there are many different beliefs on why or why not same-sex marriage should be legal or illegal. In some parts of Africa, Europe, South America, and Asia there are penalties for homosexuality. Some penalties are minor resulting in some jail time and some are dreadful with results of life in prison or even death (<http://www.aaronendre.com>). Ask yourselves, why should you be killed because of who you are?

State legislators should overlook bans against same-sex marriage because it is harmful to many families. Same-sex couples should not be discriminated against because of who they prefer to fall in love with. Life is short so why not live it to the fullest? The greatest thing to do is to come home and lay in bed with your husband or wife. The true meaning of marriage is a relationship in which two people have pledged themselves to each other.



SAME SEX COUPLES SHOULD BE ALLOWED...





Laws regarding same-sex sexual activity and relationships

■ No information

Homosexuality legal

■ Same-sex marriage recognized

■ Other type of partnership recognized (including unregistered cohabitation)

■ No recognition of same-sex couples

■ Foreign same-sex marriages recognized

Homosexuality illegal

■ Minimal penalty

■ Large penalty

■ Life in prison

■ Death penalty

A civil union is a legally recognized union similar to marriage. Beginning with Denmark in 1989, civil unions under one name or another have been established by law in many developed countries in order to provide same-sex couples with rights, benefits, and responsibilities similar (in some countries, identical) to opposite-sex civil marriage. In some jurisdictions, such as Quebec, New Zealand, and Uruguay, civil unions are also open to opposite-sex couples.

Most civil-union countries recognize foreign unions if those are essentially equivalent to their own; for example, the United Kingdom lists equivalent unions in Civil Partnership Act Schedule 20.

Supporters of civil unions such as U.S. President Barack Obama,¹ contend that civil unions grant same-sex couples equal rights to married couples.² Some commentators, such as Ian Ayres, are critical of civil unions because they say they represent separate status unequal to marriage ("marriage apartheid").³ Others, such as Sean Kosofsky, are critical because they say civil unions endow the same rights and privileges of heterosexual marriages — because they allow same-sex marriage by using a different name.

For some years, same-sex marriage (SSM) has been near or at the top of any list of leading religious/secular/political controversies in North America. It is complex, divisive, and not readily amenable to compromise. After all, U.S. states either allow SSM or ban it.

Any change or threat of change, to the culture is distressing to many people. But a change to the structure of the fundamental building block of society -- the family -- can be particularly upsetting. Also, a change related to human sexuality can be profoundly disorienting.

SSM has split the U.S. by:

Age: Youth and young adults are generally for SSM; the elderly are against.

Political affiliation: Democrats in are favor, Independents less so, Republicans opposed.

Religion: Conservatives opposed; religious liberals/progressives and secularists for.

Geography: The northeast is for; the west coast is about evenly split; the rest is against.

Most American adults currently oppose SSM, but the trend is towards increasing acceptance. If current trends continue, most American adults who have an opinion on the topic will be supportive of SSM sometime in the 2010's.

LivingVote.org has followed the debate over Proposition 8 in California, which terminated SSM in that state. *LivingVote's* visitors have posted three arguments for and three against SSM which seem to reflect Americans' main concerns:

Arguments for SSM
Dignity & respect: "The institution of marriage conveys dignity and respect towards a couple that make a lifetime commitment to support each other. "Same-sex couples deserve this dignity and respect."
Equal rights: Denying marriage to same-sex couples removes from one group a fundamental, important human right -- the right to marry the person that one loves and to whom one has made a commitment. That is unfair and unjust in a democracy.
Financial & security: Denying one group the right to marry has many adverse emotional and financial consequences. Examples are Social Security, Medicare, medical leave, and other benefits; property inheritance; the right to visit their spouse in hospital, and make medical decisions if they are incapacitated; security of the couple and of their children.

