Annotated Bibliography


“Choice as Strategy: Homosexuality and the Politics of Pity” is an article by Stephanie Fairyington that was published in *Dissent* magazine. This article serves to expose the consequences of using “I was born this way” as an explanation for homosexuality and offers a solution for gay people to maintain their self-worth while gaining support in their fight for equality. Fairyington suggests that viewing homosexuality as a born trait strips homosexuals of their self-worth and status. Fairyington feels that the LGBT community will remain in its current social and political position of “Mother Nature’s mistake” until homosexuality is understood as an acceptable choice. She covers the notion of “born homosexuality” and says that it has proven effective in helping them gain rights to adoption, civil unions, and inclusion in anti-discrimination laws, but Fairyington argues that it is “shortsighted and rife with limitations – and dangers” as the use of biological abnormalities have been historically used to justify grave indiscretions. Fairyington suggests that the LGBT community reframe the conversation on equal rights from a “politics of pity” to a “politics of choice” in order to appeal to the core American value of freedom. Fairyington concludes that this will not only reclaim a spirit of patriotism but will achieve larger results, including the freedom for every American to make choices that do not negatively impact others.

This article is very well-written. Fairyington has a lot of experience with the issue of same-sex marriage and equality and her explanation of how the “born this way” edict is hurtful to homosexuals’ image makes sense. Additionally, her proposed solution to change the rhetoric to a “politics of choice” could ultimately work therefore this article will be a good source for my final project on ending discrimination against same-sex couples.


“A Marriage Proposal: Private It” is an article by Colin P.A. Jones, in which he addresses the problems associated with having one type of government-recognized marriage and the benefits of treating marriage as a business partnership, with several partnership structures to choose from. Jones believes that couples should be given the option to choose what type of partnership they enter into and that a multitude of choices will result in couples thinking about what they want out of marriage to begin with. As a solution, Jones proposes the formation of “Marital Corporations” tailored to specific groups of people who share the same ideas on marriage. “There are, after all,” Jones adds, “As many types of marriages as there are marriages.” Jones believes this would halt efforts to ban same-sex marriage because their marriage would be established through a separate corporation and belief system. Jones concludes that the establishment of “Marital Corporations” is not a perfect solution but is a good compromise and would cease the “endless strife” of trying to control marriage.
This article is not well written in that the author digresses into the intricacies of how his proposed marital corporations could help the economy rather than maintaining focus on equal rights. The author is highly educated however he stereotypes Mormons as polygamists in this article, which makes him appear uneducated. The proposed solutions in this article are good in theory but in practice, would end up causing more legal battles and loopholes for discrimination. This article will not be a good source for my final project.


The “Conclusion” chapter of *Equality for Same-Sex Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States* by author Yuval Merin summarizes the processes that society and government need to go through before granting minorities, and subsequently same-sex couples, equal rights. As Merin explains, there are several factors that play in to the process of legalizing same-sex marriage which include a true separation of church and state, gender equality and a revised understanding of marriage. Merin maintains that current civil unions and domestic partnerships create a “separate but equal” environment and that true equality will not be reached until homosexuals are afforded the right to marry. By drawing a parallel to the fact that Virginia was the first state to abolish slavery in 1777 and was also the first state to recognize same-sex partnerships in 2000, Merin concludes that, “As the abolition of slavery was only the beginning of the fight for African Americans for equality, so the new act regarding same-sex couples is only the beginning for gays.”

This chapter is very well written and the author seems very knowledgeable on the processes that other, more progressive countries have gone through to get to a state of true equality. The author does a good job of outlining the processes that will ultimately lead to marriage rights for same-sex couples while explaining that it will simply take time. This chapter will be a good source for my final project.


“The Conservative Case For Gay Marriage” is an article written by Theodore B. Olson and published in *Newsweek* about how, despite popular opinion, supporting same-sex marriage is in line with conservative ideals. Olson points out that equality is a basic principle that America was founded on and that legalizing same-sex marriage would clear the last hurdle in civil-rights legislation. Olson examines several arguments against same-sex marriage and builds counter arguments that refute those claims that same-sex marriage should be banned because of tradition, procreation or the idea that it threatens the sanctity of heterosexual marriage. Olson concludes that conservatives and liberals need to come together on principles that unite them such as equal protections and dignity. Olson states, “This is not a conservative or liberal issue; it is an American one, and it is time that we as Americans, embraced it.”

This article is extremely well written. The author is well versed in American history and the core beliefs of the Republican Party. He forms strong counter-arguments to same-sex marriage opponents
and he points out that it will only serve to benefit society, not deteriorate it. This article will be an excellent source for my final project.


In “A Conservative’s Case for Same-Sex Marriage”, an article published in Philadelphia Inquirer, author Michael Smerconish writes that support for the legalization of same-sex marriage is not an opposition to conservative beliefs but rather, quite the opposite. Smerconish agrees with Ted Olson, a famous conservative attorney who has worked on several high-profile cases defending conservative giants such as George W. Bush, that the act of banning same-sex marriage is actually a departure from conservative values and that it would only serve to benefit our society if we stop discriminating against homosexuals. Smerconish points out the hypocrisy of the popular conservative stance against same-sex marriage in the statement, “The same people who decry federal bailouts or single-payer health-care systems…as examples of government excess are only too happy to see government in this instance intervene in the personal lives of millions.” Smerconish concludes by arguing that the “conservative purist” is actually fighting for same-sex couples’ right to marry in an effort to keep the government out of Americans’ private lives.

This article makes good points but is not well written. Smerconish does a good job of revealing the double standard in the conservative argument however he stops short of composing a persuasive call to action for conservatives to get back to their roots. The author also uses several quotes from Ted Olson, all of which are good quotes; however, the article would be stronger if Smerconish incorporated more of his original thoughts. Aside from exposing the double standard in the conservative argument, this article is not a good source for my final project.
In the first article, Stephanie Fairyington, author of “Choice as Strategy: Homosexuality and the Politics of Pity,” believes that the LGBT community should stop using “I was born this way” to explain their homosexuality and replace it with the message that they chose to live that lifestyle. Fairyington explains how “I was born this way” sounds like a plea for pity and the only way to maintain self-respect is to own their sexuality and demand that it be viewed as a valid choice. Fairyington goes on to state, “No matter how bumpy the ride or long the journey, choice as a political strategy is the only ride out of Freaksville.” However, Theodore Olson’s article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-Sex Marriage is an American Value,” undermines this argument by relying on biology to persuade his audience to view homosexuals as equals. Olson states that “science has taught us, even if history has not, that gays and lesbians do not choose to be homosexual any more than the rest of us choose to be heterosexual.”

Fairyington also proposes that in order to gain the right to same-sex marriage, the LGBT community should appeal to the core American value of freedom of choice, not just for homosexuals but for all American citizens. Fairyington argues, “By embedding our discourse in the patriotic language of American history and the loftier goal of securing freedom of choice for all, we might better advance our cause.” Theodore B. Olson agrees with Fairyington in his article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-Sex Marriage is an American Value.” Olson feels strongly that we should get in touch with America’s core values and that denying homosexuals the right to marry goes against the Declaration of Independence, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and the 14th Amendment. “This is not a conservative or liberal issue,” Olson explains, “It is an American one.” Michael Smerconish, author of “A Conservative’s Case for Same-Sex Marriage,” also agrees.

In the second article, “A Marriage Proposal: Privatize It,” Colin P.A. Jones suggests that we treat marriage as a business by forming “Marital Corporations,” (MCs) where different types of
couples can subscribe to different types of marriage. Jones believes that in doing so, individuals who disagree with same-sex marriage can be married under a different MC and will therefore “be less likely to object to same-sex couples joining different MCs. Yuval Merin disagrees with this approach. In his book titled *Equality for Same-Sex Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States*, Merin believes that granting homosexuals anything less than the right to marry creates a “separate but equal” environment where their relationships are regarded as “second class, marriage-like.” Theodore B. Olson also agrees in his article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage” and feels strongly that the rights that have been granted to same-sex couples in some states “nearly universally deny true equality to gays and lesbians who wish to marry.”

Jones also addresses one of the problems facing the LGBT community’s fight for equality, which is the procreative reason behind marriage. Jones points out that many individuals believe the overall goal of being a family is to bear and raise children. Jones states that by legalizing same-sex marriage, we eliminate “the presumption of reproduction that underlies traditional marriage.”

Theodore B. Olson doesn’t see the procreation argument as a problem. In his article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage,” he argues that this argument has no basis in reality by stating, “Preventing lesbians and gays from marrying does not cause more heterosexuals to marry and conceive more children.” Olson goes on to point out that the government currently recognizes marriages between couples who cannot or do not want to have children.

Yuval Merin suggests in Chapter 12 of his book *Equality for Same-Sex Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States* that we be patient because we are only at the beginning of this fight. He draws a parallel to the United States’ enslavement of African Americans in his statement, “The abolition of slavery was only the beginning of the fight of African Americans for equality, so the new act regarding same-sex couples is only the beginning for gays.
Stephanie Fairyington, author of “Choice as Strategy: Homosexuality and the Politics of Pity” agrees that it will take time. She states, “Signs already point to a kind of readiness to engage homosexuality as a legitimate decision” in reference to her own conservative family, and continues to say, “That’s one down and a nation to go.”

Merin also informs the reader that certain steps need to be taken before the United States will be in a position to afford equal rights to homosexuals. Such steps include the repeal of sodomy laws (among two consenting adults) as well as the formation of anti-discrimination legislation. However, Theodore B. Olson contends in his article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-Sex Marriage is an American Value,” that some people feel that we have brought this argument to the table too soon but he disagrees. Olson reminds us, “Veterans of past civil-rights battles found that it was the act of insisting on equal rights that ultimately sped acceptance of those rights.”

Theodore B. Olson points out in the fourth article, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-Sex Marriage is an American Value,” that the laws currently in place to grant rights and privileges to gay and lesbian couples are inadequate and don’t grant true equality. Olson explains that “the very idea of marriage is basic to recognition as equals in our society; any status short of that is inferior, unjust, and unconstitutional” and cites The U.S. Supreme Court who has said that marriage is a part of the Constitutions protections of liberty, privacy, freedom of association, and spiritual identification. Yuval Merin agrees with Olson in Chapter 12 of Equality for Same-Sex Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States. Yuval states that, “Other alternatives are poor imitations of the institution; they purport to accord gays and lesbians some degree of recognition and equality but in fact serve to discriminate against gays and lesbians by keeping them segregated” (340). Colin P.A. Jones disagrees however, and states in his article “A Marriage Proposal: Privatize It” that setting up different types of marriages (even for the
diverse range of heterosexual couples) would be a good compromise where individuals with strong feelings against gay marriage would be “less likely to object to same-sex couples” marrying.

Olson believes that our society needs to move forward with understanding and reason in order to solve this problem. He feels that prejudice and hostility come from a belief that if something is different, it is threatening and that we need to break down the barriers with same-sex marriage similar to the way we broke down the barrier of inter-racial marriage and segregated schools. Olson explains that most Americans are proud of these decisions and he argues that, “Americans will be equally proud when we no longer discriminate against gays and lesbians and welcome them into our society.”

Lastly, Michael Smerconish in “A Conservative’s Case for Same-Sex Marriage,” explains that one of the problems facing LGBT equality is that many Americans who oppose same-sex marriage feel that such ceremonies will lessen the value of their own marriage. Smerconish feels that this idea has no basis in fact and uses a quote from high profile, conservative attorney Ted Olson, to explain that “‘Society suffers no benefit’ from outlawing same-sex marriage.” Theodore B. Olson agrees that same-sex marriage will not harm heterosexual marriage. In his article titled “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage,” Olson tells of a recent case to overturn Proposition 8 where the judge asked the opponent to explain the ways in which homosexual marriage threatens heterosexual marriage in which, “to his credit he answered honestly: he could not think of any.”

Smerconish also feels that religious organizations and their followers are also a large part of the problem. Several Christian churches have taken a public stance against gay marriage and the Church of Latter Day Saints has even devoted time and money to legally define marriage as a union between one man and one woman. One can only suppose the reasons behind this are due to fear of being forced to perform such ceremonies that defy their doctrine however, as Smerconish points out with a quote by Ted Olson, the case for gay marriage does not “compel Christianity – or any other
religion with conflicting tenets – to recognize gay marriage.” Theodore B. Olson agrees in his article titled “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage” and writes that even those whose religious beliefs have persuaded them to disagree with the homosexual lifestyle “should recognize that disapproval should not warrant stigmatization and unequal treatment.” Colin P.A. Jones also agrees in his article “A Marriage Proposal: Privatize It” where he points out that people who believe marriage holds great “religious significance” are reluctant to share it with people who live “unfavorable” lifestyles.
Analysis of Sources

In the article, “Choice as Strategy: Homosexuality and the Politics of Pity,” author Stephanie Fairyington argues that similar to choosing one’s religion, homosexuality is a choice. She discusses her own same-sex attraction and explains that she did not choose to be attracted to women, however she chose to act on the attraction. This is a reasonable explanation of how homosexuality could be considered a choice. Just as some heterosexuals choose to remain celibate, a person with same-sex attraction could choose the same in order to avoid a homosexual relationship. She writes, “I have plenty of desires, like throwing my fists in the faces of conservative Republicans, which for one reason or another, I don’t act on; my desire for women is not one of them.” Fairyington demonstrates ethos by identifying herself as a lesbian, lending credibility to her claim that homosexuality is a choice. She also uses pathos effectively to appeal to readers’ beliefs that every person can create their own path in life and that we are not merely at the mercy of our impulses.

Fairyington also claims in “Choice as Strategy” that relying on biology to explain homosexuality is detrimental to the LGBT community’s fight for equality. Fairyington uses a quote by lesbian activist, Joan Nestle, who reminds us that “biological afflictions” were used to justify several of history’s grave indiscretions such as slavery, the Holocaust, and women’s oppression. By using biology to explain homosexuality, Fairyington states, “We’re put on par with other undesirable deviations from nature’s norm, taunting eugenics with the keys to our elimination.” This argument appeals to logos by addressing the fact that attempts have been made to rid the world of undesirable qualities in the human race. This argument also applies to pathos through the reader’s beliefs that slavery and the Holocaust were shameful events in world history and that women should be treated equally to men.

In a second article by Colin P.A. Jones, entitled “A Marriage Proposal: Private It,” he explains that one major problem with marriage is that there is only one type. Jones states, “As a
personal relationship…the institution is one of unique, personal importance to those who partake of it; to some, it even has deeply felt religious significance.” In this comment, Jones uses logos to explain that marriage means different things to different couples and our current, one-size-fits-all system, doesn’t do justice to all of the shapes and sizes of existing marriages. This argument also uses pathos to appeal to each reader’s belief that his or her relationship is special.

Jones also argues in “A Marriage Proposal” that privatizing marriage by setting up “Marriage Corporations” (MCs) would put an end to the same-sex marriage polemic. Under his proposed “MC regime,” couples could subscribe to any type of MC they agree with, thus eliminating the possibility of having to share their title with couples whose lifestyles they find disagreeable. “Those who believe for religious or other reasons that only ‘their’ version of marriage is the real thing,” Jones explains, “Will be free to conduct their affairs accordingly without insisting that their views be forcibly imposed on others.” This quote is effective in terms of pathos, tapping in to a sense of pluralism and the majority of people’s need to have their beliefs and lifestyles respected, if not validated. Jones’ comes across as a neutral third party who genuinely cares about both sides of the debate, which demonstrates ethos by validating the concerns of both parties and showing that he isn’t bias.

In Chapter 12 from the book Equality for Same-Sex Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States by Yuval Merin, he notes that the United States, from a legal aspect, is not prepared to allow same-sex marriage. Merin points out that our government has yet to find a way to regulate cohabitation, let alone pass any federally-mandated, anti-discrimination laws that would pave the way toward the recognition of same-sex relationships. Merin notes that “homosexual acts” are still illegal in some states; and in our federal government, “There is even overt legal discrimination, e.g. the defense of marriage acts.” This example is a good use of logos, proving to the reader that our government is still acknowledging and enacting discriminatory
measures. The author describes the defense of marriage acts, which serve to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, as discriminatory, which appeals to pathos through the value of equality. This statement implies that the only purpose of defining marriage is to exclude others from legal recognition.

Another argument Merin makes in *Equality for Same Sex Couples* is that the institution of marriage needs to change from a “procreative, child-oriented, patriarchal institution into a unitive institution that serves to regulate the relationship between two people who love each other on equal terms.” In other words, society needs to view spouses as equals, and children as one of many rewards for the loving relationship rather than a traditional, dominant-submissive relationship where reproduction is a primary expectation. This is an effective use of logos, as there are many loving, married couples that cannot (or do not want to) have children as well as the emerging role reversal of husbands and wives (e.g. working mothers and stay-at-home dads) that is slowly putting spouses on equal footing. This argument is also effective in terms of pathos, accessing the value of self-worth and the belief that husbands and wives equally contribute more to their marriage than bacon and babies.

In a fourth article on this topic entitled, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage,” Theodore B. Olson discusses how tradition is the reasoning most often cited in the argument against same-sex marriage; however, Olson asserts that, “Simply because something has always been done a certain way does not mean that it must always remain that way. Otherwise we would still have segregated schools and debtors’ prisons.” Olson appeals to logos by pointing out that some states have established domestic partnerships which afford homosexual couples the right to live together in legally-recognized relationships (something that has not traditionally been the case), so to cite tradition as reason for denying equality is not a valid argument. This argument also effectively
incorporates pathos in the sense that it appeals to society’s need to embrace change in order to grow and progress.

In “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage,” Olson also uses California and its recent measure to overturn the legalization of gay marriage (Proposition 8) as an example of an unreasonable system where marriage is recognized “between men and women, including persons on death row, child abusers, and wife beaters,” while at the same time prohibiting “marriage by loving, caring, stable partners of the same sex” except for the “18,000 same-sex marriages that took place in the months between the state Supreme Court’s ruling that upheld gay-marriage rights and the decision of California’s citizens to withdraw those rights.” This example effectively incorporates logos by exposing the absurdity of legally recognizing some gay marriages but not others, of which the verdict depends entirely on what day you were married. This argument also effectively appeals to pathos through the desire for consistency and fairness in our legal system, which offers a sense of stability and security to American citizens.

In my last article entitled “A Conservative’s Case for Same-Sex Marriage,” by Michael Smerconish, he maintains that Republicans are being hypocritical by supporting legislation that seeks to define marriage. Smerconish uses the Republican party’s attacks on the federal bailout and the Obama Administration’s proposed socialized healthcare as examples of the government overreach that Republicans are fundamentally against and points out that these same people are the ones pushing the government’s involvement in Americans’ personal relationships. Smerconish points out that, “It’s the same type of inconsistency that encouraged scores of elected interlopers to use as many branches of state and federal government as necessary to affect Terri Schiavo’s end-of-life decision.” Drawing a parallel to Terri Schiavo applies to pathos by appealing to the value that most people place on quality of life. It is also a good use of logos, because it is a true-life of example
of politicians overstepping their boundaries to affect action that emotionally impacts the lives of others.

Smerconish also makes the point in “A Conservative’s Case for Gay Marriage” that legalizing same-sex marriage is simply a matter of being a decent human being. Smerconish quotes Ted Olson who said, “Conservatives should think about the values that are at the core of our principles, and that those principles stand for equality and dignity and decency and treating Americans without discrimination.” This quote effectively uses pathos by calling out the values of equality and decency that is held by most people and implying that the move to outlaw gay marriage not only denies homosexuals true equality but strips them of their dignity as well. The conservative author’s reasoning behind his support for same-sex marriage is an effective use of ethos, showing that he is a compassionate, caring person who upholds the ideals of his political affiliation regardless of popular opinion.
For my final project, I chose to write on the topic of gay marriage. The debate about gay marriage has increasingly heated up over the last few years and with this year being an election year the issue has attracted widespread media attention and is commonplace in the current political debates. The question over whether or not to grant homosexuals the right to marry elicits a passionate response from anyone with an opinion on the matter. Granting homosexuals the right to marry seems like common sense to me and the act of denying this right seems like blatant discrimination. I have a hard time understanding why this has become such an issue and how anybody can deny its discriminatory nature.

To give you some background on the issue, opponents of gay marriage have consistently argued that sharing the sacred bond of marriage with homosexual couples threatens to invalidate or de-sanctify heterosexual marriage. Some also believe that homosexuality is a sin and doesn’t have a place in the sanctity of marriage because of their religious teachings. As a heterosexual, married woman, I don’t feel that gay marriage threatens the validity of my marriage in the slightest and to those who feel the need to enforce “God’s word” by denying “sinners” the rights that the majority of the population (comprised of heterosexual saints and sinners alike) get to enjoy, all I have to say is: “Thou Shalt Not Judge.” I realize these four words do not form a compelling enough argument to people who have already chosen to ignore these words so for my final project, I tried to find articles that explain the religious rights’ position as well as form persuasive arguments for gay marriage.

One of the first articles I came across was entitled “Choice as Strategy: Homosexuality and the Politics of Pity.” In this article, author Stephanie Fairyington believes that homosexuals have only been able to make headway in securing the freedoms they do have by playing on the pity of others with the argument that they were born that way. Fairyington explains that by acting on same-sex attraction, the homosexual has chosen to live that lifestyle and that the use of “biological claims”
strip homosexuals of their self-worth. She argues that, “Until homosexuality is cast and understood as a valid choice, rather than a biological affliction, we will never rise above our current status.” I agree with Fairyington’s argument that the “I was born this way” explanation makes it sound as though there is something wrong with homosexuals. In her article, Fairyington also points out that this argument is also a dangerous one as biological features have been used in the past to justify slavery and the mass murder of Jewish people. I would like to think the world has come a long way since then, but the fact that this argument is even being had challenges my faith in our society as a whole. This doubt leads to me to believe that the second the words “choice” are uttered by the homosexual community, the religious right is going to jump all over it like a pack of dogs barking, “I told you so!” and condemning their lifestyle even more.

In my search for explanations on why the religious right is so adamantly against gay marriage, I came across an article by Colin P.A. Jones titled, “A Marriage Proposal: Private It.” In this article, Jones explains that one of the factors that make gay marriage such a hot-button issue is that there is only one form of government-recognized marriage. This marriage “monopoly” creates a moral dilemma for people who believe homosexuality is a sin and do not want to affiliate with any institution that allows homosexuals to join the ranks. Jones believes that, gay marriage aside, the current institution of marriage is an imperfect system that does not do justice to the “unique, personal importance” of marriage and he argues, “There is no good reason to limit marriage to a single government-sponsored version. There are, after all, as many types of marriages as there are marriages.” In this article, Jones proposes that marriage be treated like a business partnership where people could subscribe to different types of marriage. He calls these “marriage corporations.” I agree with Jones in that having only one form of marriage is a contributing factor to the problem however I don’t believe his proposed solution would provide the freedoms and equality that homosexuals couples seek through the ability to marry and here’s why: Jones proposes that, just as
couples are free to subscribe to whatever marriage corporation they desire, companies and the
government could freely choose which marriages to recognize for benefits purposes. Jones seems to
get too caught up in the business potential behind marriage corporations and fails to see how this
“freedom of choice” creates a loophole for corporations and the government that threatens to put us
in the same position we are in now.

Merin Yuval adds to the discussion in Chapter 12 of his book, *Equality for Same Sex
Couples: The Legal Recognition of Gay Partnerships in Europe and the United States*. In *Equality
for Same Sex Couples*, Yuval points out that many legal processes must happen first before our
government will be ready to accept same-sex marriage. These legal processes, which include the
eradication of sodomy laws (among consenting adults) and the federal enactment of anti-
discrimination laws, will simply take time. He also uses the state of Virginia as an example, drawing
a parallel between the abolition of slavery and the current fight for same-sex marriage. He informs
us that Virginia was the first state to outlaw slavery and was also the first state to create domestic
partnerships. Yuval states, “As the abolition of slavery was only the beginning of the fight for
African Americans for equality, so the new act regarding same-sex couples is only the beginning for
gays.” Yuval also made another good point in this article, which is that society needs to change its
view on the purpose of marriage. Currently, many people view marriage as a vehicle for procreation,
thus being useless to same-sex couples; however, in reality it is much more than that. Yuval believes
that marriage should change from “a procreative, child-oriented, patriarchal institution into a unitive
institution that serves to regulate the relationship between two people who love each other on equal
terms.” I completely agree with both of Yuval’s points. I wholeheartedly believe that homosexuals
will have their day in the sun but unfortunately it will take an older generation to literally die off
before any progressive measures are taken to ensure their equal freedoms. That being said, I believe
they should keep pushing their agenda until that happens. I also like his view on marriage simply
because I would like to believe that my husband and I equally contribute more to our marriage than bacon and babies.

The strongest article I came across was written by Theodore B. Olson and titled, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage.” In his article, Olson relies heavily on the ideals that form the building blocks of conservative values to make a case for gay marriage. Of these ideals, he cites equal protection and equal dignity and says that by denying homosexuals the right to marry, we “label those relationships as less worthy, less sanctioned, or less legitimate.” Olson also examines the reasons that many oppose same-sex marriage, such as tradition, the threat on traditional marriage, and procreation. He points out that none of these are valid arguments as our laws have changed over time to accept untraditional scenarios such as interracial marriages, that nobody has been able to explain how same-sex marriage threatens traditional marriage, and that “preventing lesbian and gays from marrying does not cause more heterosexuals to marry and conceive more children” (Jones 4). I was happy to have found this article in my research as it explains many of the views held by same-sex opponents and builds strong counter-claims to each one of them. I also feel that his proposed solution, although simple, has the best outcome: understanding and reason.

I found a similarly titled article, “A Conservative’s Case for Gay Marriage,” wherein author Michael Smerconish talks about the hypocrisy of mainstream conservatives in their argument against same-sex marriage. Smerconish points out that traditionally, the conservative party fights for small government and that their current attempts to legally define marriage in a way that excludes gay couples is actually a departure from one of their core principles. Another point that Smerconish makes is that the current discourse does not require (or even ask) religions to recognize gay marriage but simply asks for a secular, civic marriage. Although I wish the author’s voice was more prevalent in his article, I kept this article because I felt it was important to expose the hypocritical nature of the
conservative’s position as well as clarify what the homosexual community is asking for and from whom.

Having researched the issue of same-sex marriage for several weeks now, I have been exposed to many ideas behind the problems contributing to the issue as well as possible solutions. Although I still hold a firm stance for gay marriage, I have learned a lot about where the opposing party is coming from. I can see how religious conservatives are reluctant to share their version of marriage with people whose lifestyles they deem sinful and just as the secular society does not appreciate religious ideals being imposed upon them, the religious right does not appreciate the secular invasion of what they deem to be sacred. While I do believe that homosexuals are entitled to the same rights as heterosexuals, both parties must respect the beliefs and the lifestyles of the other. That being said, I feel that the best solution to the problem would be a combination of Theodore B. Olson’s proposal of “understanding and reason” as well as a modified form of Colin P.A. Jones proposal of marriage corporations. While I do not believe marriage should be treated as a business partnership or that companies and/or the government should be allowed to pick and choose who receives benefits, I feel that there should be more than one form of marriage that better serves the personal nature of each relationship. In this scenario, heterosexual couples who oppose gay marriage would not have to worry about sharing their sacred relationship and thereby condoning something they disagree with. At the same time, gay couples would be able to enjoy the rights and benefits of marriage while receiving the recognition they deserve as legitimate, equal couples. Coupled with the aforementioned understanding and reason, I think our society could move forward with a mutual respect for one another and a “live and let live” attitude.
Works Cited


