

ABSTRACT

This study examines the primary factors that play a part in helping the Marriage Equality Act of New York come into effect, as well as its national and statewide implications. By employing content analysis, in combination with legal approaches, namely, statutory and common law analysis, the researcher analyzed the judicial actions that led to the discussion of the measure. In addition, the legislative and religious arguments surrounding the main events, the involvement of advocacy groups and the shifts in public support were also investigated. The end results suggest that successful passage of the Marriage Equality Act can be attributed to a mix of factors: the Governor's strategic leadership, the combined efforts of prominent gay civil rights advocacy groups, the extensive religious amendment attached to the main Act, and the active participation of the general public to lobby the legislators. On a statewide level, the enactment of the Marriage Equality Act confers on same-sex couples the same sphere of protections and duties as heterosexual couples. On a national scale, it creates a new chapter in the history of advancement of civil rights by eradicating the second-class citizenship of lesbians and gay men. It also injects vigor back into ongoing discussion about the core values of American society: fairness and equality for all.