



## Gay Marriage: A Historical Verdict

Giulia Madron (June 28, 2013)



On June 26 2013, the USA Supreme Court ruled on gay marriage. We went for a walk in Manhattan's Little Italy to ask people what do they think about the decision.

A historical verdict. On June 26, 2013, with five votes against four, the [Supreme Court](#) [2] of the United States declared the Defence of Marriage Act (DOMA), the federal law according to which marriage is restricted to men and women denying at the same time homosexuals the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples have, unconstitutional. But in the Californian case, the Supreme Court avoided to pronounce itself in regards to Proposition 8, the referendum with which Californians rejected gay marriages in November of 2008. The Court in fact decided that supporters of Prop 8 have no legal requirement to ask its defense.



This means that gay couples which are legally married can claim the same federal rights as heterosexual couples in regards, for instance, to paying taxes, adopting children or receiving inheritance.

Shouts of joy and happiness came from the people outside the Court after having heard the sentence. "It's a historical step towards equality, " commented President Barack Obama on Twitter.

We interviewed a few Italian- American in New York to learn what is their opinion in regards to this issue.

"In my opinion it should have been done before," claims **Dr. Joseph V. Scelsa, Founder and President of the Italian American Museum**. "Everybody is equal under the law," he says, while receiving us in a place full of historical objects from the Italian - American tradition, "it's about human rights and what the Court decided was very important."

"I agree with the decision of the Court. I think that the rights of the couple have to be protected regardless of their sexual orientation," says **Francesco Cirillo, a young elegant lawyer and broker at Vivaldi Real Estate** who was walking by.

"One of my best friends just got engaged with his partner," affirms **David Alleva, son of the owner of the Alleva Dairy Italian cheese store**, behind a counter full of delicious Italian food products " So I am definitely for it."

However, some others disagree with the Court's verdict.

"I don't agree at all with the decision of the Supreme Court," says **Giovanni Russo, a friendly Italian bartender who works at La Bella Vita Restaurant**. " I think a couple it is only composed by man and woman." And, he quickly continues while seating some guests at a table, "the fact that only men and women together can have children, implies different rights."

"I disagree with this verdict. A family is a sacred and natural institution and marriage should be restricted to heterosexual couples. I am not saying they are different. I am saying it is not how it's supposed to be in the nature of mankind," claims **Rose Palumbo, an Italian-American retired lady from Cleveland** who came to visit some friends and was really exited to be in the city.

Even if the Supreme Court's last decision continues to divide the public opinion, this is for sure a big victory for the gay community in the US.

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[2] <http://www.supremecourt.gov/>