

The Supreme Court Decision: United States v. Windsor (Decided June 26, 2013)



The Supreme Court Decision US v. Windsor - DOMA Case - Decided June 26, 2013

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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On June 26, 2013, the Supreme Court of the United States issued a landmark decision in the case of United States v. Windsor. The case challenged the constitutionality of Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defined marriage as a union between one man and one woman for the purposes of federal law.

The Supreme Court ruled 5-4 in favor of the plaintiffs, striking down Section 3 of DOMA as unconstitutional. The Court found that the law violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment by discriminating against same-sex couples.

The decision was a major victory for LGBTQ rights and paved the way for same-sex marriage recognition at the federal level. It also had a significant impact on other areas of law, such as immigration and tax law.

Background

DOMA was enacted in 1996 and signed into law by President Bill Clinton. The law was intended to prevent same-sex couples from accessing federal benefits, such as Social Security and Medicare, that were available to heterosexual couples.

In 2010, Edith Windsor, a lesbian woman whose spouse, Thea Spyer, had died in 2009, filed a lawsuit challenging DOMA. Windsor claimed that she was illegally denied the federal estate tax exemption that would have been available to her if she had been married to a man.

The case made its way to the Supreme Court, which heard oral arguments in March 2013.

The Court's Decision

In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 3 of DOMA was unconstitutional. The Court held that the law violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment by discriminating against same-sex couples.

The Court found that the government had failed to show that there was a legitimate purpose for the law. The Court also found that the law was not narrowly tailored to achieve that purpose.

Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote the majority opinion. He was joined by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan.

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote a dissenting opinion. He was joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, and John Roberts.

Impact of the Decision

The Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Windsor* had a profound impact on LGBTQ rights in the United States.

The decision struck down DOMA at the federal level, paving the way for same-sex marriage recognition in all 50 states. The decision also had a significant impact on other areas of law, such as immigration and tax law.

The decision was a major victory for LGBTQ rights and a significant step forward towards equality for all Americans.

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References

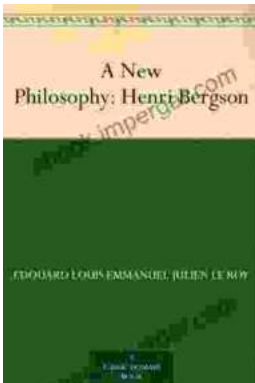
- *United States v. Windsor*, 570 U.S. 744 (2013)
- Supreme Court Strikes Down Part of Defense of Marriage Act
- Supreme Court Strikes Down DOMA in Major Victory for Gay Rights



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