

Recognition Rising

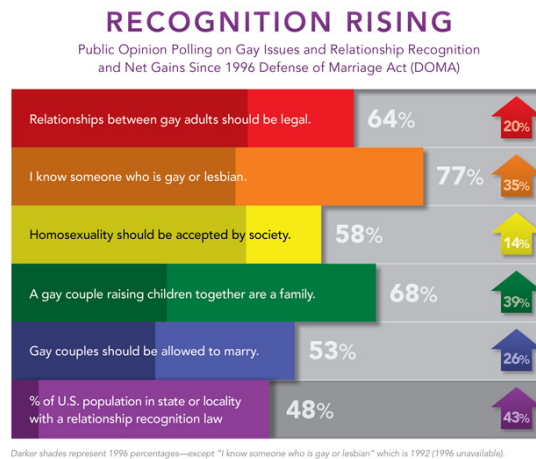


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Fifteen years ago this month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *Defense of Marriage Act* (DOMA). The bill, which defined marriage as a union between one man and one woman under federal law, passed by a vote of 342–67—an outcome that roughly reflected public opinion at the time. But over the past decade and a half, our society has undergone a seismic shift in how it recognizes and accepts the relationships of gay and lesbian couples.

This graphic provides a snapshot of this dramatic transformation and illustrates the crystallizing consensus in favor of legal relationship recognition for gay and lesbian couples, extending all the way to marriage in many parts of the country. In 1996, DOMA was thought to have ended the debate on marriage. But it seems to have been only the beginning of a more profound shift in favor of gay and lesbian couples.



From the Third Way report "Then and Now: How the State of Relationship Recognition has changed since DOMA," available at: <http://www.thirdway.org/publications/420>. Opinion polling data from Gallup; CBS News; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press; The Roper Center; and The Washington Post. Population data from the U.S. Census Bureau (1990; 2010).

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