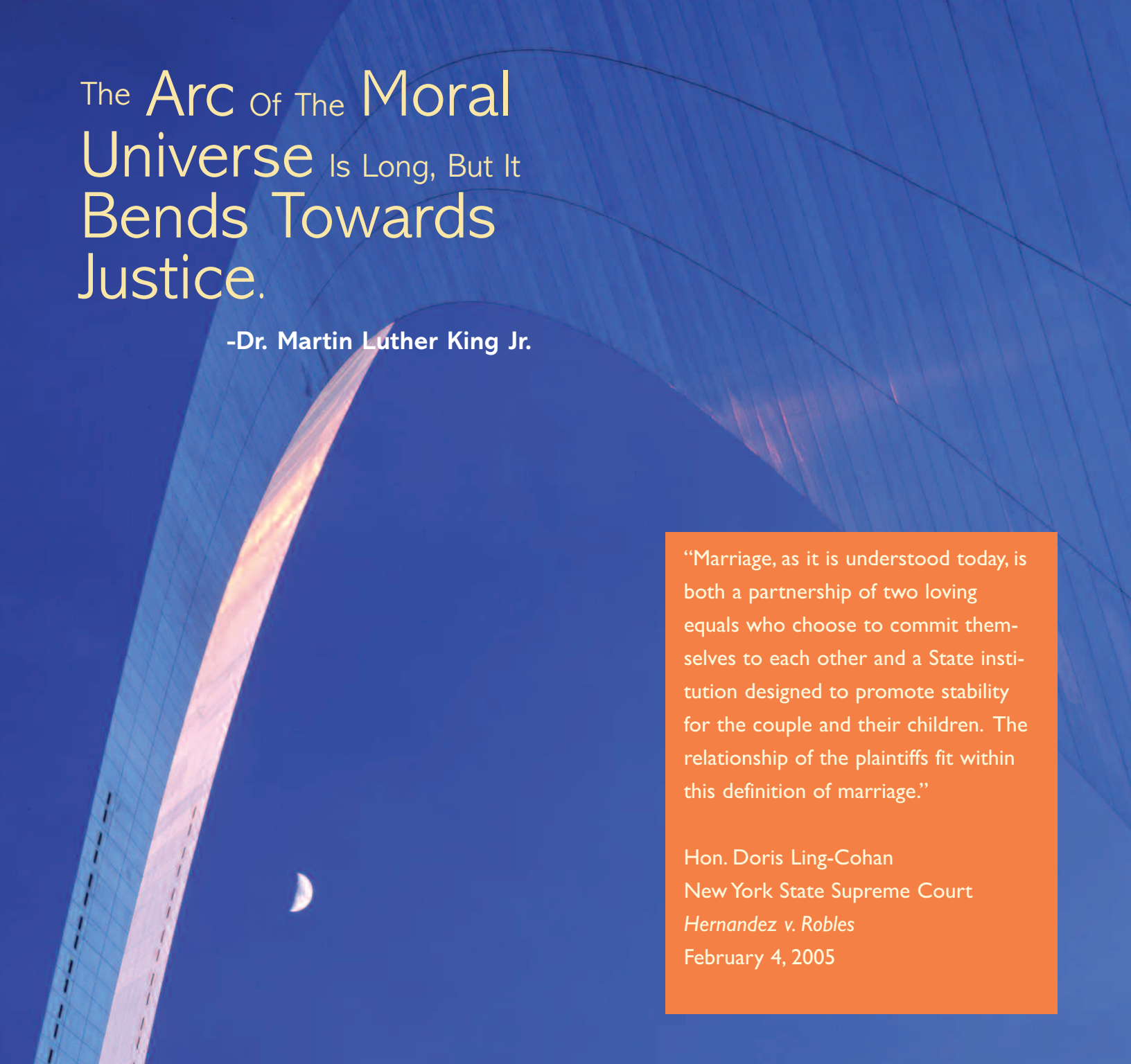


116 West 23rd Street, Suite 500
New York, New York 10011
Tel: 212-851-8418 Fax: 646-375-2069
info@freedomtomarry.org
www.freedomtomarry.org



WHY MARRIAGE





The Arc Of The Moral
Universe Is Long, But It
Bends Towards
Justice.

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Marriage, as it is understood today, is both a partnership of two loving equals who choose to commit themselves to each other and a State institution designed to promote stability for the couple and their children. The relationship of the plaintiffs fit within this definition of marriage.”

Hon. Doris Ling-Cohan
New York State Supreme Court
Hernandez v. Robles
February 4, 2005

Why is marriage important to same-sex couples?

Marriage is many things in our society. It is an important choice that belongs to couples in love. It is also a legal gateway to a vast array of protections, responsibilities, and benefits - most of which cannot be replicated in any other way. These include access to health care and medical decision-making for your partner and your children; parenting and immigration rights; inheritance, taxation, Social Security, and other government benefits; rules for ending a relationship while protecting both parties; and the simple ability to pool resources to buy or transfer property without adverse tax treatment.




Marriage is ... an important choice that belongs to couples in love.

Why can't same-sex couples be satisfied with civil unions?

Civil unions are a tremendous step forward, but they are not good enough. They do not provide equal benefits and they leave couples and those who deal with them exposed to legal uncertainty.


Simply put, civil unions are not the same as marriage. They are separate from, and unequal to, marriage. There are 1,138 federal rights that are denied couples joined by civil union or domestic partnership.

And let's not forget that civil unions exist in just two states, Vermont and Connecticut. No couple should have to worry that their family's legal status will sputter in and out, like cell phone service, when they cross state lines.



"If civil unions were to encompass all of the legal rights that marriage does, then I would say, call it a civil union, call it marriage, you can call it strawberries for all I care ... Unfortunately, civil union does not carry with it the same rights as marriage does."

-Former U.S. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun

A dark blue vintage car is decorated with several white balloons and a white sign that reads "190 JUST MARRIED". The car is parked on a dirt road in a vineyard. A black shoe and a metal can are on the ground in the foreground.

Marriage is ... the most powerful expression we have for the affirmation of love and commitment.

Marriage: Why won't another word suffice?

One of the main protections that comes with marriage is the word marriage itself. Marriage is a statement of commitment between life partners. It is the most powerful expression we have for the affirmation of love and commitment, a source of social recognition, and the numerous rights and responsibilities that hold two people together through life's ups and downs. What we want is not some sort of separate and unequal "gay marriage," but marriage itself, the full range of choice and protections available to our non-gay sisters and brothers: same rules, same responsibilities, same respect.

*We live in a country where all people
have the right to be both different and
equal under the law.*



ENTRY OF MARRIAGE
Marriage Act 1949

Why not amend the Constitution
to exclude lesbians and gays
from marriage?

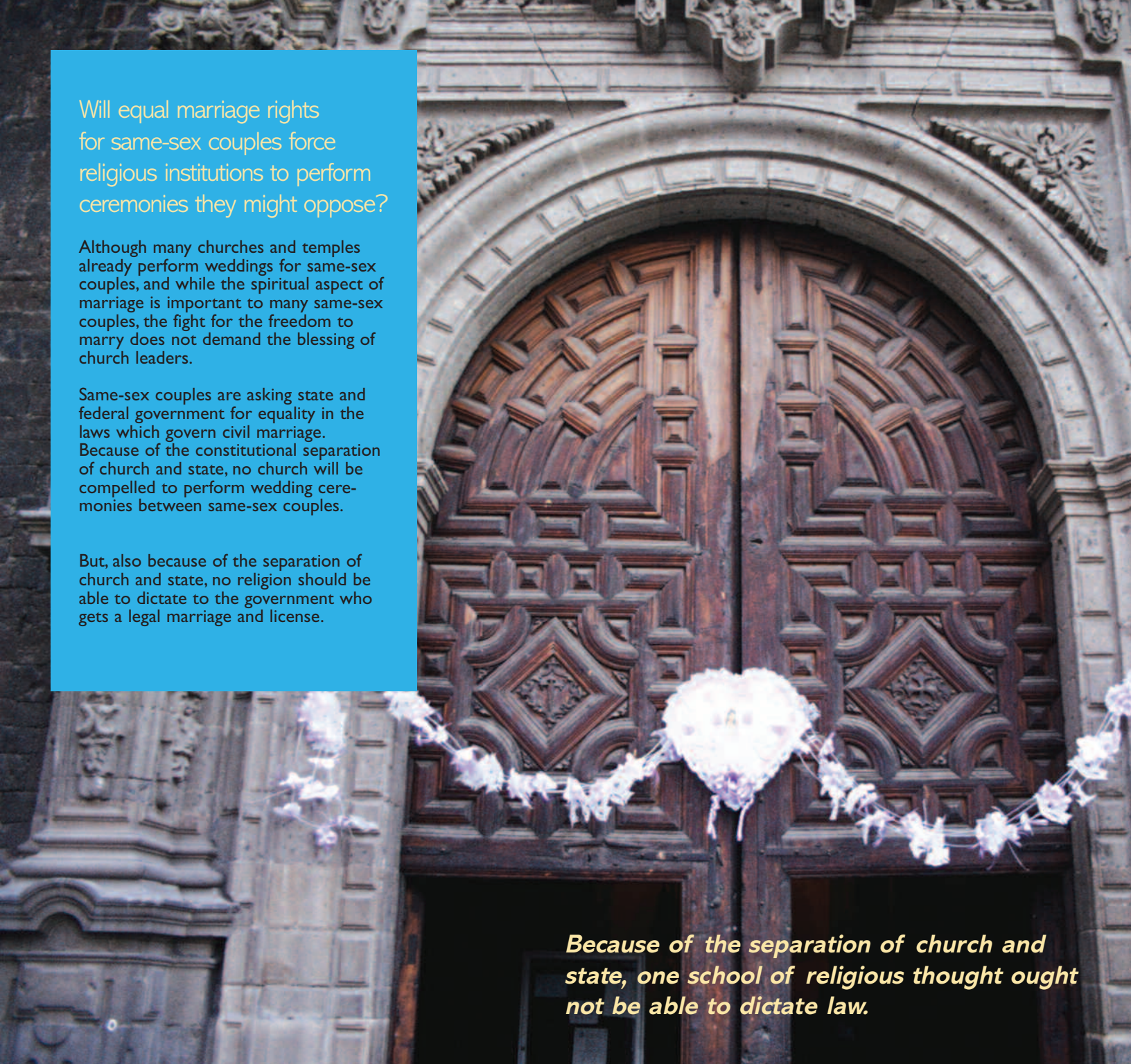
Canada, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and other nations have shown that families and communities are strengthened and no one is hurt when marriage discrimination ends. Thousands of committed same-sex couples are now legally married, in the U.S. and around the world. We have not run out of marriage licenses, and the sky has not fallen. The U.S. should be a country where all people have the right to be both different and equal under the law.

Will equal marriage rights for same-sex couples force religious institutions to perform ceremonies they might oppose?

Although many churches and temples already perform weddings for same-sex couples, and while the spiritual aspect of marriage is important to many same-sex couples, the fight for the freedom to marry does not demand the blessing of church leaders.

Same-sex couples are asking state and federal government for equality in the laws which govern civil marriage. Because of the constitutional separation of church and state, no church will be compelled to perform wedding ceremonies between same-sex couples.

But, also because of the separation of church and state, no religion should be able to dictate to the government who gets a legal marriage and license.



Because of the separation of church and state, one school of religious thought ought not be able to dictate law.

We are so close to realizing the dream of equal recognition for all American families. Don't you want to help ensure the freedom to marry for all loving, committed couples?

Here's what you can do:
GET ENGAGED!

This is everyone's fight - including yours. Log onto our website for more information on how you can end discrimination in marriage today!

www.freedomtomarry.org

