

Opinion: Gay marriage's moment has come

By Frank Bruni, New York Times

Remember the AIDS crisis? If you lived in a big American city during its spread, you were witness to constant sorrow and countless examples of gay people treated as second-class citizens.

One was almost certainly this: the steadfast, heartbroken man being shut out of his beloved's final weeks – not allowed in the hospital room, not welcomed at the grave – because some family members disapproved and no law trumped their bigotry.

This was a recurring story, an infuriating leitmotif, and many gays and our allies remarked and railed that it wouldn't be happening if committed same-sex relationships got the legal recognition that heterosexual ones did.

Sometimes we even used the word “marriage.”

That was 30 years ago.

Now we stand nervously and hopefully on the brink of a milestone. Before the end of June, a month associated with wedding bells and wedding cake, the Supreme Court will issue a major decision about the right of two men or two women to exchange vows in a manner honored by the government. It may well extend same-sex marriage to all 50 states, making it the law of the land.

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