

VLUS WEEKLY

Stories by and About the Vassal Lane Upper School's Scholars

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VLUS Weekly:**

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The Art and Technology of Photography

By Rania Rahmoun



Image from <http://www.woodandbrass.co.uk/>

History

Photography is the art or practice of taking photos. It began during the mid 1800s. Before more advanced technology, photos were mainly taken by antique film cameras made of wood and brass. Old cameras work using a special thin strip of film. When sunlight strikes

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the film, it causes a chemical change. The more light that hits it, the more exposed the film will become. Too much light can ruin the whole photo. The lens controls the amount of light that focuses on the film. It uses a field of focus to determine the size of the photo on the film as well as how clear the photo will turn out. Although the lens focuses the light, the shutters are what actually controls the light. The iris works by reducing the exposure of light to the film. Without this part of the camera, parts of the photo would remain blurry. There are many problems associated with exposing the film in old cameras. Fortunately, advanced technology has been able to make digital cameras where no film is involved, making it easier to take pictures. Instead of film, digital cameras use electronic equipment that captures the incoming light rays and turns them into electronic signals for easier use.

Art and Technology

The relationship between photography, art, and technology is one that has very much changed the photos that people create. Technology influences art which can then impact the way photography is viewed. Back when photography was first invented, film cameras were a common form of technology used to take photos. As technology has increased in its complexity, it has changed photography. In the mid 1900s, people didn't have color in their photos. They didn't have effects to enhance their photography. For them, it was just a simple black and white unedited photo. Now, people all over the world have access to photography, just by using their phones. We even have editing apps to use that can completely change how photos look. This all comes to show that technology influences the art of photography. Personally, I think photography involving technology makes it more artistic because it gives us the ability to enhance what we make. If technology hadn't advanced, photography would be boring. People would think of it as a dull subject because of the fact that we wouldn't be able to take photos in color or edit them.

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Photography is a very cool subject so I think its a good thing that many people have access to it. Technology advances have changed photography by making it more convenient and accessible. When photography was first invented, it required an expert in the field in handling the equipment and taking photos. Today, phones have given more people access to take photos in seconds and already have them saved. This makes it more convenient.

Same-Sex Marriage

Editorial written by Parker Hayes for Ms. Kolleen Burbank's 8th grade English Language Arts class

Close your eyes and imagine a world where you're judged based on who you love. After decades of fighting for our civil and constitutional rights, discrimination is still an issue. Imagine a world that doesn't allow you to marry the person you love because your relationship doesn't fit the traditional or religious beliefs of others. A world where you are not free to express your feelings to your partner unless they are of the opposite sex. Now, open your eyes because that is the world we live in.

The US Supreme Court ruled in 1974's *Cleveland Board of Education v. LaFleur* that "Freedom of personal choice in matters of marriage and family life is one of the liberties protected by the Due Process Clause." US District Judge Vaughn Walker wrote on Aug. 4, 2010 that Prop. 8 in California banning gay marriage was "unconstitutional under both the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses." Not allowing same-sex couples to get married is a **violation of their constitutional rights**. "The 1st amendment of the Constitution states that a person's religious beliefs or a lack thereof must be protected. Legislatures cannot discriminate against marriages of the minority party which, homosexual people fall into that category." says procon.com on the pros of gay marriage. Same-sex marriage is a civil

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right. The 1967 Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia* has verified that marriage is "one of the basic civil rights of man," same-sex marriages should not be excluded from the same ruling that allowed interracial marriages the same protections. The NAACP has even announced on May 19, 2012 that same-sex marriage is "one of the key civil rights struggles of our time." Gay marriage bans are an unmerited and uncivilized form of prejudice. We, as US citizens, have many rights which are both civil and constitutional. One of our liberties as stated in the Constitution is the pursuit of happiness. So are gay people not worthy of Constitutional rights? Do they not qualify as Americans? According to professorshouse.com, "In Alaska, Nevada, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Nebraska, Missouri, Michigan, North Dakota, Ohio, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Kansas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, and Alabama, not only is gay marriage banned, but so are civil partnerships." By saying they cannot marry we are saying they do not have the right to be happy. If this is what we have come to with not excepting homosexual people we might as well say that they don't have the right to even be American citizens.

Same-sex marriage bans go beyond legal rights. **It's a matter of equality for homosexual people. This issue affects them emotionally.** There should be no difference between homosexual couples and heterosexual couples and our society should recognize that. Same-sex couples should be allowed to publicly celebrate their commitment in the same way as heterosexual couples. If two people are in love there is no reason why they cannot express that, no matter what gender they are. "Love by definition is an intense feeling of deep affection. Love is the feeling humans can have that allows us to make the truest of connections to another human being. Being truly in love with another person is already rare enough why try to diminish other people's love for their significant others just because of their sexual orientation?" reads a Huffington Post article on why gay marriage and love should be justly accepted. The Human Rights Campaign Foundation states that

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many same-sex couples "want the right to legally marry [and] honor their relationship in the greatest way our society has to offer..." There is no doubt that gay people do not have the same equalities as straight people but the real question is why do people who are not affected by gay marriage have the right to vote against it? Our system grants people the authority to actively choose to take away someone else's happiness and continues to let gay people be treated unfairly. Marriage is a private matter, couples should not have to worry about being judged because of their sexuality. Heterosexual people's opinions shouldn't interfere with Homosexual people's relationships.

If same-sex marriage is illegal then gay people cannot enjoy the **benefits of marriage** that straight couples who can be legally married are able to receive. Married couples are able to have joint bank accounts and can live in the same house and pay bills together. These are liberties that in most states homosexual couples are not entitled to. Homosexuals also cannot add each other when filing for health insurance through work. With straight married couples a loved one such as spouse or child can make important life decision in situations like hospitals if needed. There are many benefits that only apply to married couples such as taxation and inheritance rights and family health coverage. If gay marriage is illegal then the spouse would not be recognized as their next in line for care and they do not have hospital visitation rights. Gay and lesbian couples are put at a disadvantage financially and this could impact them long-term. An Oct. 2, 2009 analysis by the *New York Times* estimates that a same-sex couple denied marriage benefits will incur an additional \$41,196 to \$467,562 in expenses over their lifetime compared to a married heterosexual couple.

Homosexual couples **should not be excluded from being able to have children**. The sexual orientation of someone is irrelevant when determining whether or not they are fit

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to raise a child. Researchers at the University of Melbourne in Australia have proven that “Children from same-sex families scored about 6 percent higher on general health and family cohesion, even when controlling for socio-demographic factors such as parents’ education and household income,” as stated in a recent Washington Post article. They also added that “On most health measures, including emotional behavior and physical functioning, there was no difference compared with children from the general population.” Adoption agencies will most likely give a child to a married couple rather than a single person or an unwedded couple. So how are gay people supposed to qualify as good candidates for adoption when they cannot marry? If children of same-sex couples are just as healthy and are functioning the same as children of heterosexual couples then there should not be so much controversy over same-sex couples starting families.

The biggest injustice being done today is to the Gay and Lesbian community. We need to earn back our equality. It’s time to stop judging each other. It’s time for us to eliminate same-sex marriage bans and end the discrimination. It’s time for us as Americans to get back the rights that we fought for.

The VLUS Weekly is Back!

Have you heard the news? The *VLUS Weekly* is back, and we are currently seeking contributions from Vassal Lane students and teachers. Check us out at http://vassallane.cpsd.us/school_news/school_newspaper/, and be sure to share your stories by and about Vassal Lane students with Kathleen Moore and Nora Clooney via Google Docs. Please also feel free to send your story ideas to Kathleen and Nora at kamoore@cpsd.us and nclooney@cpsd.us.