Marriage Equality: A Social Movement Success

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Ancient History (pre-2004)
- State-by-state legal challenges
  - Earliest in 1972 (Baker v. Nelson)
- Protest actions
  - 1987: The Wedding
- Alternative forms of recognition
  - E.g. civil unions, domestic partnerships
- Private commitment ceremonies

Social Movement Hesitation
- Strategic concerns
  - Strong, organized opposition from Religious Right
  - Prioritizing other issues
- Ideological concerns
  - Is marriage assimilationist?

From Grievance to Claim
- Marriage on the LGBT movement agenda
  - Religious Right
  - Grassroots interest in marriage

From Claim to Mobilization
- Organizations
  - Collective Identity
  - Grassroots interest
- Mobilization
- Grassroots interest in marriage
Tactical Innovation

Novel Tactic: getting married
Love & Commitment Frame
Foundation Funding
Favorable Legal Opportunities

Framing

Novel Tactic
Love & Commitment Frame
Foundation Funding
Emergent Organizations
Favorable Legal Opportunities

New Funding

Novel Tactic
Love & Commitment Frame
Foundation Funding
Favorable Legal Opportunities

- Civil Marriage Collaborative, a collaboration of 8 private foundations, contributed $20M between 2003 and 2014 for research, public education campaigns, and other activities
- Overall increase in annual funding for marriage equality:
  - $2M in 2002 → $12M in 2012

New Funding & Opportunities

Novel Tactic
Love & Commitment Frame
Foundation Funding
Favorable Legal Opportunities

Political Opportunities

- Late emergence of favorable political climate

Learning from defeat

- Love and commitment frame emergence in 1990s
Opposing Movements

Thank you.

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What’s next?

#LoveWins or #morethanmarriage

Thank you.