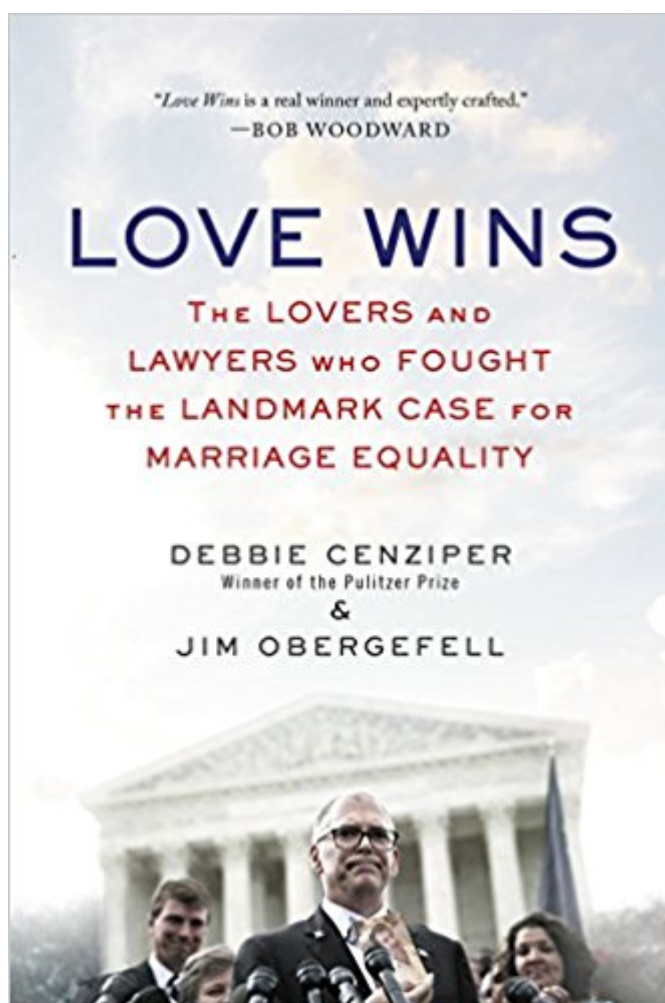


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# Love Wins: The Lovers And Lawyers Who Fought The Landmark Case For Marriage Equality



## Synopsis

The fascinating and very moving story of the lovers, lawyers, judges and activists behind the groundbreaking Supreme Court case that led to one of the most important, national civil rights victories in decades—the legalization of same-sex marriage. In June 2015, the Supreme Court made same-sex marriage the law in all fifty states in a decision as groundbreaking as *Roe v Wade* and *Brown v Board of Education*. Through insider accounts and access to key players, this definitive account reveals the dramatic and previously unreported events behind *Obergefell v Hodges* and the lives at its center. This is a story of law and love—and a promise made to a dying man who wanted to know how he would be remembered. Twenty years ago, Jim Obergefell and John Arthur fell in love in Cincinnati, Ohio, a place where gays were routinely picked up by police and fired from their jobs. In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government had to provide married gay couples all the benefits offered to straight couples. Jim and John—who was dying from ALS—flew to Maryland, where same-sex marriage was legal. But back home, Ohio refused to recognize their union, or even list Jim’s name on John’s death certificate. Then they met Al Gerhardstein, a courageous attorney who had spent nearly three decades advocating for civil rights and who now saw an opening for the cause that few others had before him. This forceful and deeply affecting narrative—Part Erin Brockovich, part *Milk*, part *Still Alice*—chronicles how this grieving man and his lawyer, against overwhelming odds, introduced the most important gay rights case in U.S. history. It is an urgent and unforgettable account that will inspire readers for many years to come.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“[An] affecting, eloquent account” The authors ably create the suspense of anticipation and winnow the legal issues for lay readers. Uplifting, well-written story of personal courage and political empowerment. (Kirkus Reviews) “Told with a novel’s narrative drive. Taut, tense, and highly readable.... A remarkably rich portrait of America. An excellent choice for book groups looking for exciting nonfiction. (Booklist (starred review)) “A fascinating look at the fight for gay marriage. (Library Journal) “Th[is] gripping narrative conveys how the fatal illness of one man and the question for justice of another led to the important decision that said the right to marry applies to all Americans. (Los Angeles Times) “It’s quite rare that LGBTQ history gets told right the first time. . . . To the benefit of every LGBTQ reader and history buff who will enjoy this book, we won’t be left questioning its authenticity or intent. (Philadelphia Magazine) “Human details make the book a fascinating read. Its best passages are about the people whose stories launched a movement that changed the law. (Cincinnati Enquirer) “An engaging, full account of how an almost all-Cincinnati cast of characters helped topple Ohio’s ban and legalize same-sex marriage across the country. (Cincinnati.com) “Love Wins is a real winner and expertly crafted. You can tell it’s going to make a great movie. (Bob Woodward) “A tender story, inspiring, and ultimately a huge celebration. . . . You will never forget Jim Obergefell and his lawyer Al Gerhardstein, two men who fought with every ounce of will they could muster. This book will become a classic. (Erin Brockovich) “Love Wins is an affecting testament to love and commitment in the face of discrimination. . . . I am recommending Love Wins to everyone I know. Rarely does a book of such uncommon beauty come around, one that digs beneath the headlines to its human heart. (John Grogan, author of Marley & Me and The Longest Trip Home) “Beautifully told and carefully researched, Love Wins is a deeply moving insider’s account of the ordinary families who took the fight for marriage equality to the Supreme Court and won. . . . Though love may not always win, America really does stand for liberty and justice for all. (Kathleen Parker, syndicated Washington Post columnist) “This gripping portrayal of the pivotal moment in the fight for marriage equality in Ohio includes childhood memories and romance as well as tense moments in court. . . . Readers will feel they’ve been completely guided into seeing the people behind the cases. (Publishers Weekly) “Deeply reported, vividly detailed, utterly humane. Grabs the reader and never lets go. Written with a novelist’s attention to scene description and

character-revealing action. An exemplary account that anyone, no matter his or her ideological orientation, might read with both pleasure and insight. (The Charlotte Observer) “Bring the tissues for this powerful tale of the triumph of marriage equality. . . . A downright joy to read. It’s a rare and special feeling to be alive for moments of world-changing history. (Washington Post)

The inspiring true story of the lovers and lawyers behind one of the most important national civil rights victories in decades—the legalization of same-sex marriage in all fifty states. More than twenty years ago, Jim Obergefell and John Arthur fell in love in Cincinnati, Ohio, a place where gay men lived in fear of being arrested or fired from their jobs. When the Supreme Court ruled in 2013 that the federal government had to provide married gay couples all the benefits offered to straight couples, Jim and John—who was dying from ALS—flew to Maryland, where same-sex marriage was legal, and exchanged vows on an airport tarmac. But back home, Ohio refused to recognize their union, and they learned that John’s death certificate would describe him as single. When John passed away, Jim would not only mourn a devoted partner, but would be denied acknowledgment of the life they had shared. Al Gerhardstein, the son of a chicken farmer and a graduate of New York University law school, had spent decades advocating for civil rights by the time he met Jim and John. He saw in Jim a devastated man whose pain was compounded by the state’s refusal to recognize the most important relationship in his life, and just as crucially, a legal opening that had never been fully explored in an American courtroom. Together, Al and Jim began a grueling journey, battling the state leaders, lawyers, and community groups that opposed their cause, and at times even marriage equality supporters who feared the potential setback if a case was brought forward too soon and lost. As they moved from courtroom to courtroom, they partnered with more than fifty lawyers and plaintiffs in three other states and ultimately celebrated together in June 2015 when the Supreme Court ruled in their favor, making same-sex marriage the law of the land in a decision as groundbreaking as *Roe v. Wade*. This is a remarkable, triumphant story of love and law. Through intimate interviews and insider perspectives, this definitive account reveals the dramatic and previously unreported events behind *Obergefell v. Hodges* and the lives at its center. This forceful and deeply emotional narrative—part Erin Brockovich, part Philadelphia—chronicles how a grieving man and his lawyer, against overwhelming odds, fulfilled a promise to a dying husband and helped bring about the most important gay rights case in U.S. history. Urgent and unforgettable, it will inspire readers for generations to come.

"Love Wins" presents a very clear, thorough and compassionate telling of the story leading to one of the most important rulings in the history of the Supreme Court. One not only understands what went into the whole fight for marriage equality, but also feels the passion of both the plaintiff and his lawyer for the cause. Well worth reading and studying. This was a fight not only for gays and their partners, but for everyone. When anyone is denied equal treatment we all lose.

The book provides a history of the fight for equal rights for same-sex couples, the fight which went all the way to the Supreme Court. The individual stories profiled in the book give it a human dimension and remove any possibility that this would be a dry research tome. The reader will learn a lot and appreciate the struggles that same-sex couples have gone through for many years in order to obtain equal rights in US society, particularly as regards marriage equality and children. Well written and interesting throughout.

I thoroughly enjoyed following all the links and lines and thoroughfares leading to the final Supreme Court decision on the Obergefell v. Hodges. The lives, stories, and crossed paths of all involved.

Very nice account of the people involved in the case that brought us marriage equality. You get a touching look at the families and lawyers involved in the lawsuit. Highly recommended!

This is a book I have been wanting to read so I could better understand the history of the equality to marry movement for the gay community. Not only did it tell the history, but did so in a way that brought real people with real stories to the forefront. This is a must read.

The back of this book was torn. Very disappointed.

I found this book enlightening and deeply moving. By telling the stories of the individual families in the case I gained a greater understanding of all that was at stake. The book is an easy read, despite some of the complex legal issues that are clearly explained. And I cried, more than once.

Well written, it gets the reader involved in the story of this historic ruling.

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