

LGBT Organizing in Washington, D.C.

- Case study: enacting civil marriage equality
- Clarifying goal: reform, not revolution
 - Equal access to existing rights and responsibilities
 - Frame mission positively for purpose of persuasion, not provocation
- Legal research
- Advocacy and education
 - Canvassing
 - Meetings
 - Flyers
 - Online resources
 - New media (blogs, Facebook, Twitter)
- Relationships with policy makers and opinion leaders
 - Building trust and respect takes years
- Strategic and contingency planning
- Coalition building
 - Racial diversity
 - Religious diversity
 - Economic diversity
 - Diversity of viewpoint: can you find common ground?
 - A lot more LGBT people support marriage equality now than in 1994
- Opposition research
 - Opponents included carpetbaggers, closet cases, right-wing tools
 - We didn't try to "out" anyone, but understanding their fanaticism helped us
- Voter research
 - Differences in views by race not as stark as opponents claimed
 - Don't lead on a sore point for your audience
 - Example: comparison to *Loving v. Virginia* offended many African Americans
 - Equal rights, not civil rights

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance – May 13, 2015

- Popular resentment of congressional and other outside interference
- Messaging
 - Equal protection
 - Religious freedom
 - Some in faith community support gay marriage
 - Rhetorical high ground
 - Faith
 - Flag
 - Family
 - Refute misconceptions (marriage as eternally unchanging)
 - Recent history: no-fault divorce, adultery no longer a felony, women's equality
 - Homosexuality not a mental illness, a crime, nor a sin
- Assemble necessary skills
 - Legal
 - City had to fight against push for ballot measure in court
 - Legislative drafting
 - Publicity and media strategy
 - Graphic design
 - Convey professionalism
 - Writing, public speaking, interviewing
 - Get people's receptive attention and use it effectively
 - Recruiting and training couples and testifiers
- Intra-movement discipline and cooperation
 - Eyes on the prize
 - Restraining divas, score settling, working at cross purposes
- Thank those who help, and reciprocate (support their causes)
 - Sending notes, giving public credit, including in candidate ratings
- Part of a wider civil rights cause
- Lessons for others: Maryland benefitted by DC's example
 - We helped lay the ground that President Obama and NAACP walked on