

Love and Joy Come to You

Letter to the Editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 12.22.22

Some folks prefer classic Christmas movies like “It’s a Wonderful Life” or “Miracle on 34th St.” Others think Christmas isn’t complete without “Die Hard.” Still others enjoy 2003’s “Love Actually.” It begins with Hugh Grant observing that the last messages sent by the 9/11 victims were not messages of hate, but of love.

Set during Christmas, the film features characters interconnected by family, friendship or work. It portrays puppy love, platonic love, parental love, unrequited love and romantic love through the stories of nearly a dozen couples. Only same-sex couples are unrepresented, which shows how much has changed since 2003.

Four days after the film’s release, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that the state’s ban on same-sex marriage violated Massachusetts’ Constitution. Other states followed suit. Then, in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court said of same-sex couples: “Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization’s oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right.”

This June a radically different Supreme Court overruled 50 years of precedent, overturned *Roe v. Wade*, revoked a woman’s right to choose, and declared that there is no right to privacy in the Constitution. Justice Thomas suggested reconsidering other cases based on the right to privacy. That could threaten contraception, same-sex marriage, even interracial marriage, which was illegal in many states, including North Carolina, until the Supreme Court’s 1967 decision in the aptly-named *Loving v. Virginia*.

In response, the House and Senate approved and President Biden signed the Respect for Marriage Act, prohibiting states from denying the validity of out-of-state marriages based on sex, race or ethnicity. It passed with large bipartisan majorities because 71% of Americans now agree that same-sex families deserve equal dignity under law.

This Christmas, Grant’s observation is truer than ever: “Love actually IS all around.”
Merry Christmas!

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