

Missouri marriage laws are changing



Sarah Muir

Kansas City Circuit Judge J. Dale Youngs made a move toward equality Friday when he ruled in favor of recognizing the marriages of 10 same-sex couples. Same-sex marriage can't legally be performed in Missouri, but now the state must recognize same-sex marriages from other states.

This is an important step for LGBT rights in Missouri. If this trend continues, it could prove to the rest of the U.S. that Missouri isn't on the wrong side of history.

The judge who struck down the same-sex marriage ban said it singled out couples for no logical reason, according to an Oct. 4 USA Today article. Now same-sex couples in Missouri can be eligible for all the financial benefits marriage offers. These benefits include tax breaks, health insurance, veteran benefits for spouses and families, and more.

This is the first ruling in favor of gay marriage by a Missouri judge. Of course, there's a chance the decision could be challenged or appealed.

This ruling is a huge step for Missouri, a typically conservative state that has a constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage. For starters, it addresses the lack of benefits given to same-sex couples, a significant problem for these couples. Additionally, it opens the door for more legislation in favor of same-sex marriage in the

state. It also shows the rest of the U.S. that Missouri can fight for equality.

What's interesting to look at is the judge's wording in his ruling. Judge J. Dale Youngs argued there was no legal reason for these rights to be denied, according to an Oct. 3 St. Louis Post-Dispatch article.

The language of his ruling tellingly addresses legal consistency instead of religious beliefs. It promotes the idea that same-sex marriage is a strictly legal issue. This isn't unique to Missouri either. According to a May 16 The Atlantic article, judges are the ones leading the way on same-sex marriage.

Framing the debate in this light makes it easier to get people to support same-sex marriage legally, even if they disagree with it religiously. There are people who support same-sex marriage even when they believe it is immoral, according to a March 3 The Atlantic article. This is key to the success of the LGBT rights movement, because while it will be extremely difficult to change people's religious beliefs, convincing people religion shouldn't affect law is easier. After all, separation of church and state is something religious and non-religious people alike think is important.

There are two other cases currently pending in Missouri regarding same-sex marriage. There is a federal court case in Kansas City and a county court case in St. Louis that are challenging Missouri's ban on same-sex marriages, according to an Oct. 3 Kansas City Public Media article.

It will be interesting to see where these cases lead and whether or not Youngs' decision will be appealed. Regardless, it is clear same-sex marriage advocates in Missouri are gaining ground in the debate and give no indication of slowing down.

Sarah Muir is a sophomore political science major from Lee's Summit, Mo.

Learn interesting facts about paper



Adam Rollins

Paper is a wonderful, magical invention, and probably the most important creation in the history of mankind. Why? Because pizza delivery boxes are made out of paper, that's why.

Just kidding, it's because having something to write on is the only way to accumulate and pass on the entire sum of human knowledge — including how to use layers of stiff paper sheets as a convenient container to store and transport mankind's greatest culinary achievement.

Yes, cardboard is made out of paper. So is electrical insulation, toilet paper, tissues, coffee filters, disposable diapers, accordions, masking tape, bandages and apparently the inner lining of some coffins, although for that morbid fact I'm just taking the word of experts. I also hear that certain types of airplanes are made of paper. The U.S. dollar is made of a blend of cotton and linen, which in my mind makes it more of a weird cloth than a kind of paper, but technically it still fits the definition.

The history of paper and how it's made is fairly well-known, but here's the abridged version for anyone who missed that day of science class. Before it was an offbeat typeface, papyrus was a sheet of material made out of plants that grew in wet areas of northern Africa. It was used throughout ancient Egypt and other areas around the Mediterranean, and the modern word "paper" originates from "papyrus."

In areas where papyrus was uncommon, ancient cultures used parchment or vellum, which are made from animal skins. Unfortunately, this also is what leather is made from, meaning the supply of writing material was diminished by the pesky need for things like shoes. As many know, the precursor to modern paper — made of plant pulp — originated in China and became a big hit with Western people who saw the downside of competing with the shoemaker, the saddle maker and the blacksmith for material.

The ancient Chinese even used it as an alternate material for armor. You might laugh, but Mythbusters tested this one and found that a 1/2 inch paper plate was lighter and just as resistant against swords and arrows as a 1/32 inch steel plate. Suddenly, LARPer and cosplayers wearing paper armor don't seem quite as silly anymore, do they?

My final amusing tidbit is if you Google "10 fun facts about paper," the first page of results will contain almost no facts I would describe as "fun" — unless you're really interested in recycling. You really should recycle, though.

Adam Rollins is a senior communication major from St. Charles, Mo.

Decide whether to live on or off campus



Andrea Trierweiler

I remember the exact moment I decided to move off campus. I was sitting at a bench on The Quad, complaining to my dad over the phone about roommate troubles, like I had every week since my sophomore year at Truman State began. Although it was only September, I already was debating my housing options for the next academic year.

College life is full of decisions, and choosing among housing options is one of them. At some

point, Truman students have to decide whether to stay on campus or move off. After living on campus for two years and in an off-campus apartment for one, I've discovered the pros and cons of both sides.

On-campus living had many perks, including the required meal plan. Despite getting tired of the same old Sodexo, I saved a lot of time by being able to swipe my student ID for access to all-you-can-eat meals. Now that I live off campus without a meal plan, I have to set aside time to cook for myself, adding to my already busy schedule.

In addition, my to-do list was much shorter when I lived in the residence halls, giving me time to focus on tasks like homework. Because the housekeepers cleaned the residence hall lounges and community bathrooms, all I had to keep organized was the small half of my bedroom.

Having an apartment brings new responsibilities like paying rent and bills on time, doing dishes, vacuuming, cleaning and dusting to name a few. Top these tasks off with homework, class, work, laundry and everything else college life entails, and it can be overwhelming.

Another benefit to living on campus was the short distance from the residence hall to other campus buildings. I liked being able to make the walk from my room in Missouri Hall to my first class in Baldwin Hall in just five minutes. Moving off campus meant I had to plan for commute time, however short it might be.

Living in the residence halls was also better for my study habits — I was much more motivated to go to the library when I could walk instead of drive to campus. Although curling up in my cozy apartment to study might sound appealing, I am

much more prone to getting distracted now when "I'll just study when I get home tonight" turns into "I wish I'd stayed on campus and gone to the library because the Internet and TV are distracting me at home."

But despite the pros of campus housing, for my junior year I decided to move off campus. My main motivator was I no longer wanted to live with people, deciding I would rather swap my human roommate for a feline one. At the time Truman did not offer single rooms, so the only way I could get my own space — and one that allowed cats — was to seek a place off campus.

Other Truman students have told me moving off campus was a good decision because even though they shared an apartment with roommates, they could have their own bedroom. Having a personal space that you

don't have to share prevents a number of roommate issues from arising. One struggle I had in the residence halls was wanting to sleep while my roommate wanted to stay up or vice-versa, leading to conflicts about when to turn the light off. If sharing a space is the issue, consider moving off campus so you can have your own bedroom. Although Truman does offer single rooms, the number is limited.

College living is a challenge regardless, whether living on or off campus. In spite of the difficulties, off-campus life has suited me better, but I can only speak for myself. Consider the pros and cons of your options, from residence halls to on- and off-campus apartments, and decide what works best for you.

Andrea Trierweiler is a senior Romance language major from Columbia, Mo.

AROUND THE QUAD

What's your favorite part of living...

on-campus?

It's quick to go to class and the people are nice.

Raquel Pitty-Diaz
Freshman



I get to meet a lot of great people.

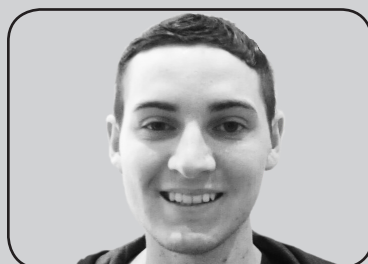
Emily Crozier
Freshman



off-campus?

I have a little bit more personal space.

Titus Fansler
Junior



Not having people around all the time is nice.

Leah Dobby
Junior

