



# HISTORICAL SOCIETY *of the* NEW YORK COURTS

## LGBT: THE ROAD TO EQUALITY Essay Prompts

The New York Courts and State Legislature have frequently been at the center of the debate concerning the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons. Judges and legislators have considered these issues as they impact the family, employment and criminal law.

These questions ask you to explore how the courts and legislature have addressed LGBT rights, and the impact of their actions.

**Selecting from one of the three topics below and discuss the role and impact of significant cases and legislation on the LGBT community. Your analysis should draw on events leading to these cases & laws, who (activists, attorneys and judges) was involved, and how the issues were addressed.**

**You may discuss current and historical events.**

1. **Family Law:** How has the law addressed LGBT families? Your essay may cover issues including, but not limited to: civil unions & marriage, adoption, spousal benefits and inheritance.
2. **Employment Law:** What types of discrimination have LGBT individuals faced in the workplace and how have rights in this sphere evolved?
3. **Criminal Law:** Examine events of your choice in the evolution of New York's criminal law that impacted LGBT individuals from the Stonewall Rebellion (1969) to the present. This may include the development of hate crimes legislation.