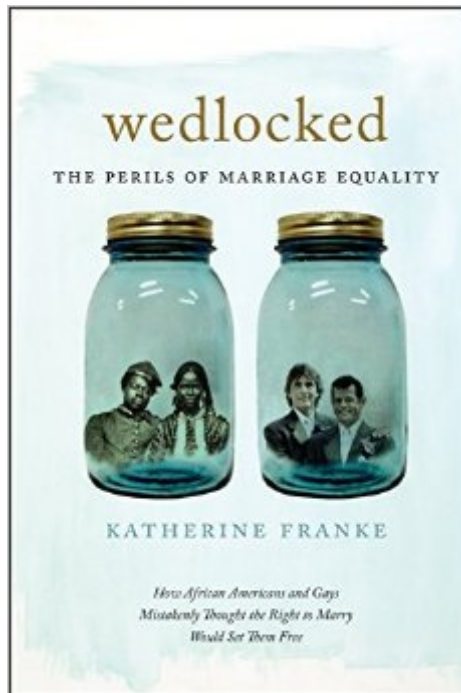


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# Wedlocked: The Perils Of Marriage Equality (Sexual Cultures)



## Synopsis

The staggering string of victories by the gay rights movement's campaign for marriage equality raises questions not only about how gay people have been able to successfully deploy marriage to elevate their social and legal reputation, but also what kind of freedom and equality the ability to marry can mobilize. *Wedlocked* turns to history to compare today's same-sex marriage movement to the experiences of newly emancipated black people in the mid-nineteenth century, when they were able to legally marry for the first time. Maintaining that the transition to greater freedom was both wondrous and perilous for newly emancipated people, Katherine Franke relates stories of former slaves' involvements with marriage and draws lessons that serve as cautionary tales for today's marriage rights movements. While it is a prominent theme, they also teach us how the rights-bearing subject is inevitably shaped by the very rights they bear, often in ways that reinforce racialized gender norms and stereotypes. Franke further illuminates how the racialization of same-sex marriage has redounded to the benefit of the gay rights movement while contributing to the ongoing subordination of people of color and the diminishing reproductive rights of women. Like same-sex couples today, freed African-American men and women experienced a shift in status from outlaws to in-laws, from living outside the law to finding their private lives organized by law and state licensure. Their experiences teach us the potential and the perils of being subject to legal regulation: rights—and specifically the right to marriage—can both burden and set you free.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Brilliant, original thinker.

Professor Franke is a very smart and thoughtful analyst of the same-sex marriage movement, and she is able to view it in a broad historical and political context. This book offers a creative perspective on the history of racial and sexual orientation liberation efforts, with a view on how gaining freedom from one sort of oppression can - in surprising ways - lead communities into a system of legal and social "regulation" that imposes its own set of restrictions. Her book is written in an accessible style, with personal stories and historical insights that open your mind and motivate you to think in new and fresh ways. Even for those who will disagree with some of her points of view, it's an important and enlightening work that deserves a close read.

One of the best books I've read in quite some time. Franke's work is rigorous, thought-provoking, and elegantly written. This is an excellent book: it reaches backward then marches carefully toward issues relating to the contemporary marriage narrative. Should be required reading for African Americanists and scholars of queer lives. A wonderful gift for the holidays. Buy it now!

This book is a must read for any student of gender and sexuality studies. Katherine Franke combines history, law, and current discourses of "gay rights" to challenge our assumptions about how we think about state and cultural institutions. Franke is a compelling and brilliant scholar so this book should be relished and enjoyed.

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