

LOVING DAY IS SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2022



U.S. National Loving Day is June 12th, and celebrates the anniversary of a historic court decision for interracial marriage. The “Loving” in Loving Day is actually the last name of Mildred and Richard Loving,” a couple arrested in 1958 for being in an interracial marriage, in the state of Virginia.”¹ On July 11, 1958, newlyweds Richard and Mildred Loving were awoken when police officers entered their home and arrested them. Their marriage was (at that time) a crime punishable by one to five years in prison. In court, the couple was sentenced to one year in prison, but told they could avoid prison if they left Virginia and did not return together for 25 years.¹ They agreed and moved to Washington, DC. “In 1963, as the country was talking about a civil rights bill and a March on Washington, Mildred decided to take action.”¹

Their case, *Loving v. Virginia* (1967), made its way to the Supreme Court nine years after their arrest. “Their lawyers argued that the Lovings were denied equal protection under the law. In a unanimous decision, the court struck down centuries of racist laws against interracial marriage and relationships. The Loving Decision should be remembered as an important moment for civil rights. But it’s also a part of a much longer and broader history of standing up to the structural inequities and racist attitudes that we must continue to dismantle today.”¹

From June 12, 1967, onward, Americans were no longer prohibited from marrying someone they loved solely because they were of different races. At the time of the Supreme Court’s decision, 16 U.S. states still forbid interracial marriage. Attitudes have changed over the years. A Gallop poll in 1958, when the Lovings were arrested, showed only 4% of Americans approved of marriage between Black and White people. In 1968, a year after the Supreme Court decision, 20% approved. In 2021, 94% of Americans approved.²

National Loving Day is a great opportunity to acknowledge the fact that love does not discriminate. It is a reminder to appreciate our current liberties and to ensure our rights are always recognized. While it is not an officially recognized holiday by the U.S. government, despite attempts to make it so, Loving Day is the biggest multiracial celebration in the United States.

INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT CHANGED HISTORY
DID YOU KNOW?

Mildred & Richard Loving
In 1958, 24 states across the US had laws strictly prohibiting marriage between people of different races. The 1967 Supreme Court ruling of *Loving v. Virginia* invalidated laws prohibiting interracial marriages.
1967 Virginia

Leonard Kip Rhinelander & Alice Jones
The marriage and divorce trial of Kip Rhinelander and Alice Jones put a legal spotlight on classifying a person by their race.
1924 New York

Arcadio Huang & Marie-Claude Regnier
Historians have speculated that the marriage of Arcadio Huang and Marie-Claude Regnier was one of the first of its kind.
1715 France

Gonzalo Guerrero & Zazil Ha
The devotion of a Spaniard to a Mayan princess and his family created new allegiances that drew a line between him and Spanish Conquistadores.
1511 Yucatan

Ruth Williams Khama & Sir Seretse Khama
Botswana's first president had an English first lady.
1966 Botswana

Learn more about each relationship and see the entire list at pbs.org/bcc and listverse.com

