

***HOPE versus PRIDE:***  
***Moderate Homosexual Opposition to Gay Extremism***  
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Introduction

In May, 1997, two Prince George, BC pastors organized a community conference in that city to publicly debate the issues surrounding homosexuality. It was fairly well attended and included a speech by former lesbian Marjorie Hopper, who spoke on the reality of orientation change. As part of the literature for the conference, the organizers included a satirical piece written by gay writer Michael Swift, who was advocating recruiting as many straight young people into the gay lifestyle as possible, by force if necessary.

Here is a sample paragraph:

We shall sodomize your sons, feeble emblems of your masculinity. We shall seduce them in your schools, in your dormitories, in your gymnasiums, in your locker rooms, in your sports arenas, in your seminaries, in your youth groups, in your army bunkhouses, wherever men are with men together. Your sons shall become our minions and do our bidding. They will be recast in our image. (in Bawer, 1996).

The piece was originally published in the *Gay Community News*, but read into the U.S. Congressional Record on March 24, 1993 by Congressman Mel Hancock. It is a public document. The two pastors, Ed Drewlo and Bob Zayonc, were slapped with a Human Rights complaint by a local gay activist, who felt that using Swift's article for the conference "discriminated" against homosexuals. The case was abandoned by the complainant, but is an example of how far the radical left in the homosexual movement will go to intimidate their opposition, and stifle any discussion about their lifestyle (Drewlo, October 26, 1998). It did not seem to occur to him that it was illogical to allege that distributing an article by a homosexual writer constituted "discrimination" against homosexual people. Frankly, the article is arguably a good example of hate speech against heterosexuals.

Just exactly what constitutes "hate speech" is likely to be the subject of considerable litigation now that Canada has amended its hate crimes law (in

May, 2004) to include the category of sexual orientation. There was strenuous opposition from social conservatives and religious groups to the amendment sponsored by openly gay MP Svend Robinson, as they felt that since “sexual orientation” is not defined in the law, there would be legal protection for pedophiles or those who engage in bestiality (both recognized as “orientations” by the psychological profession). Furthermore, although expression of religious belief against homosexuality was explicitly exempted in the law, conservatives felt that was inadequate protection, since Bible passages concerning homosexuality had already been deemed to be “hate speech”, according to a 2001 judgment against a Saskatchewan man, Hugh Owen, who had published a newspaper ad in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* condemning homosexuality using Biblical citations.

It also begs the question why those who cite religious reasons for opposing homosexuality would be immune from prosecution, while those who do so for non-religious moral reasons could be charged. It will be very interesting to see how this plays out in the coming years. In Sweden, where there is similar legislation, but without the religious exemption, Pentecostal pastor Ake Green was recently sentenced to 30 days in jail for preaching a sermon against homosexuality in his church in Kalmar, Sweden (*lifesitenews.com*, July 04, 2004).

### Promoting A Radical Gay Agenda

Some prominent homosexuals now admit that homosexuality is a lifestyle choice. Moreover, since they believe that there is nothing inherently wrong with it, they should be up front about recruiting heterosexuals, including school children. Former *Vancouver Sun* columnist Stan Persky, who is a philosophy instructor at Capilano College in North Vancouver, admitted as much in an essay titled “Recruit, recruit, recruit” in an issue of *Xtra West*, the newspaper of the gay community on the West Coast:

...the Good Grey Gay Establishment stood up, to a man, and solemnly, but hypocritically assured one and all that good homosexuals would never do anything so sneaky and underhanded as to persuade someone to be gay or engage in homosexual acts. The official gay leadership insisted that gays were born gay, and that no one who wasn't gay could be turned into a homo, not even for 10 minutes. Of course, they were lying through their teeth...

And worse of all, they persuade other people—often young people who aren't necessarily gay—to give it a go. And guess what? Some of those who give it a go keep on going...The main battleground of the homo movement is not the wedding aisle of a nice church, but the nasty schoolyard..." (Persky, June 29, 2000).

There are other examples of the increasing radicalism of the gay movement. Gay protesters in Vancouver, upset with a meeting of traditionalist parents opposed to the promotion of the gay agenda in the public school system, drowned speakers out with chants of "Ten percent is not enough. Recruit, recruit, recruit!" (O'Neil, October 9, 2000).

In the spring of 2000, a Vancouver group called the Rainbow Coalition blanketed the province with letters to all city councils in the province demanding that each municipality declare a gay pride day (Rainbow Coalition, June 15, 2000). The letter threatened legal action if city councils didn't comply, specifically mentioning the previously targeted mayors of Kelowna and Oliver, BC as examples of what could happen. Most cities complied, but others simply stopped making proclamations altogether to avoid lawsuits. The mayor of London, Ontario was fined \$10,000 in 1998 by the Ontario Human Rights Commission for refusing to proclaim a pride day, which was announced in the middle of her 1997 re-election campaign. In dismay, she stopped campaigning, but was re-elected by an overwhelming majority anyway (Campbell, Spring, 2004).

And on April 17, 2004, a fund-raising meeting for Stephen Boisson, a Calgary youth pastor accused of hate speech by a University of Calgary professor, held in a meeting room rented at the Coast Plaza Hotel, was crashed by masked men and women in military garb, who chanted angry slogans while the clearly frightened participants prayed in tight circles. The entire incident was caught on videotape. They identified themselves as the "Gay Militia", and had to be forcibly evicted by the police when hotel staff were unable to persuade them to leave. Charges have yet to be laid for disrupting a religious gathering (Boisson, April 18, 2004).

### The Growing Moderate Voice

This paper is not primarily about heterosexual or religious opposition to gay extremism. The above examples were cited to give a context for the following discussion. There appears to be growing opposition to gay

extremism from homosexual conservatives and moderates, who are clearly tired of the in-your-face tactics employed by Swift, Persky, the Rainbow Coalition, and the Calgary “gay militia”. It is a movement that has found a voice—articulate, reasonable, and willing to cut through the rhetoric to deal with the substantive issues. They are confronting the gay left’s long unchallenged position as the spokespersons for the entire gay community. This paper is a summary of their views, collected from a variety of sources, primarily opinion pieces in moderate and conservative magazines.

Many of the sources for this paper are American, but there are some courageous public positions being taken by Canadian moderate gays as well. The most prominent is Toronto’s John McKellar, a journalist and national director of a group called Homosexuals Opposed To Pride Extremism (HOPE). McKellar is quite scornful of the gay left:

The activists are noisy caterwaulers, and their organizations have impressive acronyms like EGALE and GALA, but they could hold their monthly meetings in a phone booth. They’re caught up in their shallow, narcissistic sexual self-expression, so they demand the right to make the whole world their closet. But they don’t really speak for most homosexuals (in Woodard, May 11, 1998).

McKellar’s organization rejects the agenda of the radical, militant homosexual fringe, and decries attempts to seek special rights based on sexual orientation as socially subversive. HOPE also holds that marriage remain closed to same sex relationships in order to protect the traditional family unit. Other declarations in their founding charter assert that “gay propaganda not be allowed in schools, that the final authority in sex education be parents, that the age of consent for sex be raised to 16 (18 for anal sex), and that HIV and Hepatitis C carriers be monitored by the government” (in Woodard, May 11, 1998; Campbell, Spring, 2004).

McKellar regards the gay left’s mania for stamping out homophobia as a “contrived slander”. “It doesn’t insult me, as a gay man, to say our society needs to protect and nurture the heterosexual family. Children need mothers and fathers, and anything else is child abuse. The survival of civilization depends on its children. And I’d prefer to see our civilization endure” (in Woodard, May 11, 1998).

Other gays are objecting to the wholesale adoption of the gay left's agenda in education policy by the BC Teachers Federation (BC Teachers Federation, February, 1998). Lesbian Gail Hunt believes parents should have the right to choose how their children are raised, including the moral values they are taught. "Teachers are paid to teach, not propagandize" (in Parker, March 30, 1998). Ms. Hunt believes that the BCTF's one-sided approach could foster a backlash against homosexuals. "By insisting that teachers know better than parents, their arrogance will increase opposition to the homosexual community (in Parker, March 30, 1998).

### A Call for Maturity and Accountability

Washington DC attorney John Berresford, gay himself, wishes gay activists would shut up and grow up. He argues that gays should stop feeling sorry for themselves. Even if gays are victims, no one really cares, and no amount of legislation can force people to care. He also posits that gays should stop seeing AIDS as anybody else's problem. "The sad fact is that every gay man who got AIDS by sex got it from another gay man, and by doing something he chose to do. People with AIDS deserve sympathy, but it is the sympathy one extends to a chain smoker who comes down with lung cancer" (Berresford, June 11, 1995).

Berresford also argues for greater accountability in moral behaviour:

As long as our primary image is one of gleeful promiscuity—an image promoted not only by our enemies but also by our own magazines and our own bars—we will be ostracized. Until we start imposing honesty, fidelity, and emotion on our lives—in other words, until we are willing to talk about moral standards—we will make little real progress in social acceptance. (Berresford, June 11, 1995).

Berresford hits the nail on the head here. One of the most objectionable stances of the gay left is the demand for social acceptance and moral equivalence of their relationships, when there is little evidence of a willingness to be accountable for their promiscuous sexual behaviours, or accept any limitation of their sexual "freedoms". A cursory glance at the personal ad section of any gay periodical is ample evidence.

Frankly, the personal ads in *Xtra West* I have perused are much too pornographic to quote verbatim. Incredibly, this newspaper was recommended to the author at a Ministry of Education conference on at-risk youth, as a suitable classroom resource for BC public schools. Here is what I found listed: advertising for casual sex partners outnumber ads for long term relationships by four to one; individuals graphically describe their genitalia; requests for sado-masochism, sex involving urine and feces, and bestiality are represented; pornographic cartoons; and mostly nude ads for bathhouses, notorious as venues for orgies, abound throughout (*Xtra West*, October 16, 1997). It's refreshing to know that someone with Berresford's stature in the gay community recognizes that those who wish to be respected are obliged to behave with restraint and self respect first.

### Force Attitude Change is Counter-Productive

Phoenix, Arizona writer Jonathan Rauch argues that gays should abandon legislated attempts to change attitudes. Firstly, he correctly argues that forced re-education in principle rarely works and is an anathema in a democratic society. Secondly, he believes that prejudice and homophobia are simply not the most pressing social issues. Fat people and short people endure more frequent abuse than gays. He asserts that it is violence in society that is the real problem:

Personally, being both Jewish and gay, I do not expect everybody to like me. I expect some people to hate me. I fully intend to hate those people back. I will criticize and excoriate them. But I will not hurt them, and I insist that they not hurt me. I want unequivocal, no-buts protection from violence and vandalism. But that's enough. I do not want policemen and judges inspecting opinions.  
(Rauch, October 7, 1991)

Rauch also believes that life is not that terrible for most gays and is becoming less so every year. Moreover, the "gays as oppressed victims" position has lost its utility given the substantial recent successes in human rights and clear evidence of success in many aspects of social life. He writes, "The standard political model sees homosexuals as an oppressed minority who must fight for their liberation through political action. But that model's usefulness is coming to a close. It is ceasing to serve the interests of ordinary gay people (Rauch, May 10, 1993).

Certainly, “oppressed” gays do not appear to be taking advantage of taxpayer funded avenues of redress made available after strenuous lobbying from the gay left. A widely advertised gay complaint hotline in Alberta (often typified as a hotbed of homophobia) received 31 calls in three months, of which only two were deemed worthy of investigation. And in Toronto, a “hate crimes” unit of the Toronto police department set up to alleviate supposedly widespread gay bashing received only 16 complaints in an entire year (1993), three of which were judged worthy of investigation. Ironically, two of the three complaints turned out to be assaults *between* homosexuals (Woodard, April 20, 1998). Nevertheless, gay radicals continue to allege pervasive and endemic homophobia, and lobby for more dollars and programs to combat this persistent “social injustice” (BC Teachers Federation, February, 1998).

The rejection of social norms by the gay left is more a statement about radicalism than about homosexuality. Rauch asserts, “the religious right is not wrong about everything. The values of stability and family, hard work and education and thrift and honesty, are bedrock values for society” and should be supported by the gay movement (in Lochhead, August/September, 1993).

### Economic and Social Success for Gays Undeniable

Homosexuals as a group are doing quite well in economic, cultural and educational venues. Pro-gay themes are proliferating in the popular media (e.g. *Philadelphia*, *In and Out*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *Ellen*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, and an entire channel (*Pride TV*) devoted to gay entertainment). Network TV had a record 29 openly gay characters in the 1998 season (Leland & Miller, August 17, 1998).

Incomes for gays are dramatically above the rest of the general population. The Simmons Market Research Bureau of Chicago found in a 1991 survey that homosexual households in the U.S. average an income of \$55,430, 42% higher than the national average household income of \$32,144. And given their general lack of dependent expenses, gays have three times the disposable income per capita compared with heterosexual families, according to University of Maryland lesbian sociologist Deborah Blodgett (Woodard, April 20, 1998).

Gays' higher incomes can partly be explained by their higher overall education levels—15.7 years versus 12.7 for the population as a whole (Rauch, May 10, 1993). Real oppression means systematic denial of opportunities to succeed. Clearly that is not the case for gays in North America.

### Oppression Within The Ranks

Oppression and prejudice between members of the gay community appear to be altogether too common. Gay white males are routinely derided by the feminist factions in the lesbian community as being part of the “oppressor patriarchy”. Rigid racial and gender quotas, often with weighted voting towards women, are common in the radical gay and lesbian organizations (Miller, November/December, 1994).

Even surgically altered men are vilified. At the 1993 Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, primarily a lesbian event, four post-operative male to female transsexuals were ejected from the festival for violating the “womyn born-womyn only” policy (Miller, November/December, 1994). Thus, even those who had sacrificed their genitals to become women were discriminated against because of their offensive Y-chromosome laden cells! And black writer Eric Booth asserts that the bigotry of the upper middle class white gay community is no better than its straight counterparts (Miller, November/December, 1994). Clearly, hypocrisy is a factor in all orientations.

### Radicalism as Social Subversion

Andrew Sullivan, the erudite editor of *New Republic* magazine, believes that the “queer fundamentalists” defeat themselves with their radical in-your-face guerrilla tactics such as throwing condoms at priests and parishioners during communion, or simulating fellatio in Pride parades. Political action for them is “essentially an exercise in theatre and rhetoric, in which dialogue with one's opponent is an admission of defeat” (Sullivan, May 10, 1993). In other words, the goal of gay radicals is performance, not persuasion, a kind of self-expressive therapy with no real strategy beyond shock and six o'clock news soundbites. Writes Sullivan: “...the notion of sexuality as cultural subversion distances it from the vast majority of gay people who not only accept the natural origin of their sexual orientation, but wish to be integrated into society as it is. For most gay people, a “queer” identity is precisely what they want to avoid” (Sullivan, May 10, 1993).



Like Rauch, Sullivan dislikes the politics of victimhood, and feels that designating gays as a disadvantaged group is self-defeating and fallacious. Race is always visible, but sexuality can be disguised by choice. “For lesbians and gay men, the option of self-concealment has always existed and still exists, an option that means that, in a profound way, discrimination against them is linked to their own involvement, their own acquiescence” (Sullivan, May 10, 1993).

Unlike blacks or native Indians, who have suffered systematic communal economic deprivations, openly gay individuals already operate at the highest levels of society and enjoy the economic and political benefits of that influence. Elton John, Rosie O’Donnell, Ellen Degeneres, Scott Brison, Bill Graham (both federal cabinet ministers) and Svend Robinson are all testament to the widespread acceptance enjoyed in modern society by gays and lesbians.

Lawyer John Berresford writes, “After I come out to them, I find that most conservatives are perfectly tolerant (and not as cloyingly condescending as my liberal straight friends) (Berresford, June 11, 1995). Toronto moderate John McKellar appears to concur: “...the only people that irritate me more than gay activists are all the gay positive heterosexuals” (in Woodard, May 11, 1998).

*Advocate* columnist and best-selling author (*A Place at the Table*) Bruce Bawer believes that the gay rights movement needs to move toward maturity in activism, and eliminate the ideology that rejects and ridicules everything the average heterosexual citizen believes in. He also considers the activist tendency to treat as heresy any attempt to breach the left wing party line as counter-productive and divisive (Bawer, January 24, 1995).

Political satirist Daniel Mendelsohn wonders what will happen after gays win all the rights they are clamouring for. He believes gay identity politics is limited and ultimately cannot solve the problem of gay happiness. In his mind, part of the problem is gays’ reliance on their bars as social institutions. Those who are tired of being identified by their sexuality still find themselves congregating in places where being gay is all that identifies them. “Our bars are just the flip side of our closets—crowded and badly lit, but cozy in a way...the real test will be to see whether they will leave the

former as willingly as they do the latter. You can't pursue happiness in the dark" (Mendelsohn, 1996).

John McKellar is scathing in his criticism of the radical gay left:

"As a homosexual male, my dignity and worth is constantly demeaned by the infantile whining, the undemocratic tactics, the belligerent arrogance, the politics of victimology and persecution, the toilet stall behaviour and the compulsive promiscuity of a microscopic minority, who purport to represent me. With relentless monomaniacal determination, the homosexual lobbies marginalize, mock and subvert Canada's longstanding traditions, institutions, principles, statutes and values in their never ending quest to normalize and institutionalize all manner of lifestyle and conduct.

(McKellar, July 15, 1998)

McKellar was responding to a Human Rights complaint filed against him and Evangelist Rev. Ken Campbell, for an allegedly discriminatory ad in the Toronto *Globe & Mail* on April 18, 1998. The complaint was dismissed, as was a similar one for the same ad filed with the BC Human Rights Commission (Campbell, Spring, 2004).

### The Tyranny of Outing

One of the biggest bones of contention between gay radicals and moderates is over the issue of "outing" or publicly revealing someone else's sexual orientation when they do not wish it. Radicals believe that if one is a gay person in a position of prominence, they have a duty to be "out" in the name of political conformity. Andrew Sullivan writes cogently of what outing really is:

They have attacked the central protection of gay people themselves. They have assailed the ability to choose who one is and how one is presented, to control the moment of self-disclosure and its content. They have declared that the bonds of common sympathy must be sacrificed to ideology, that the complexities of love and loyalty and disclosure can be resolved by the uniformity that is the classical objective of terror. The gleam in the eyes of the outers, I have come reluctantly to understand, is not the excess of youth or the passion

of the radical. It is the gleam of the authoritarian.  
(Sullivan, September 9, 1991)

### Moderate Gay Goals

So what is it that gay moderates want? In a word: marriage. They want full societal recognition and blessing for their relationships. In fact, 85% of gays consider the right to legally marry “somewhat important or very important” (Leland & Miller, August 17, 1998). Registered domestic partnerships, already a fact in Denmark, Sweden, and a handful of American cities, are not adequate, at least according to John Berresford:

It creates a special class of rights for a small class of people. The real beneficiaries would be the lawyers who would litigate the differences and similarities between domestic partnerships and marriage... domestic partners legislation makes us an officially sanctioned class of oddities and freaks. By seeking marriage, we demonstrate our wish to be part of the great American middle-class way of life.  
(Berresford, June 11, 1995)

As of this writing, the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, and Yukon Territory in Canada have granted gays and lesbians the legal right to marry. The same has occurred in Massachusetts, and “civil unions” are permitted in Vermont. Holland, and Belgium grant the right to marry to its citizens and the matter is being seriously considered in Germany, Norway, Spain and Slovakia. The U.S., however, is proposing a constitutional amendment to forbid the option. Hawaii has already ruled that “marriage is a basic civil right for same sex couples (Pinkerton, June 3, 1993). Pinkerton, a former policy advisor to former President Bush, quotes Andrew Sullivan to bolster his argument for gay marriage: “It would foster social cohesion, emotional security and economic prudence.”

Jonathan Rauch echoes this view in an essay in the *Wall Street Journal*. He argued that “family values” advocates and moderate gays are actually reading from the same song sheet:

We openly welcome homosexuals who play by the rules of monogamy, fidelity, and responsibility. And we frown on heterosexuals and homosexuals who do not play by those rules.

We believe that marriage and fidelity are crucial social institutions that channel lust into love and caprice into commitment...And we support extended these norms to all American, gay and straight.  
(Rauch, November 29, 1994)

John McKellar of HOPE appears to be the dissenter among the group in not pressing for the right to marry. For Bruce Bawer, a practicing Episcopalian, marriage, and particularly church-blessed marriage, however, is the ultimate goal. He laments the church's unwillingness to recognize gay unions:

For me, my happiness at the weddings of straight friends is always mixed with a constant awareness of the difference between the church's view of my relationship and its view of theirs. From the moment that couple walks back up the aisle together, they're viewed as a couple by the church and the state. Their relationship is official. From that moment on, they take for granted a universal acceptance of their membership in each other that to a gay person in a loving relationship seems beyond one's wildest hopes. Yes, there are gay people who have wedding ceremonies, and some Episcopal priests are even willing to perform them. But it's not the same: the church and state don't recognize it, and neither do most Episcopalians.  
(Bawer, September 18, 1994)

In 1998, Anglicans from around the world completed their decennial Lambeth conference in Canterbury, England, where the issue of blessing same sex marriages was debated. It followed a 179 to 170 vote by church leaders in the New Westminster diocese to bless same sex unions (*Vancouver Sun*, August 8, 1998). Delegates to the Lambeth conference did not endorse the concept (actually it was overwhelmingly defeated) and still hold that homosexual practice is not biblical. That position did not stop Bishop Ingham of New Westminster from holding another vote on the matter and deciding to approve the blessings. And this year, the annual meeting of Canadian Anglicans in St. Catherines voted to call same sex relationships "sanctified" or holy. The sister church in the US recently endorsed an openly gay Bishop in New Hampshire as well. These actions have been considered schismatic by the larger Anglican community, and have led to widespread condemnation, withholding of dues, refusal of donations from North American churches by African Anglicans, the rejection of bishops by individual congregations, such as Rev. Ed Hird's in Deep Cove, BC (a suburb of Vancouver) who wish to remain orthodox and

replacement by “flying” orthodox bishops from Africa, and eviction notices to some congregations by those “snubbed” bishops (Hird, June 24, 2004).

Clearly, the widespread acquiescence by senior members of the Western clergy of homosexuality has led to a very disruptive situation in certain Christian denominations.

### Summary

It seems that gay moderates are not interested in “special rights” per se, just the same rights as heterosexuals. They do not wish the forcible re-education of heterosexual children, nor do they wish to gyrate down main street on a gaudy float in their jockstraps and feather boas. They acknowledge that such radical antics do nothing for their standing in society and provide considerable fuel for those already inclined towards bigotry. They realize that in order to be perceived as respectable members of society, they will have to seriously address their moral behaviours.

Moderate gays do appear to cling to the belief that orientation is an inherent, immutable condition, with only 11% believing they can change their orientation through therapy, willpower or religious conversion (in Leland & Miller, August 17, 1998). Recent secular research, however, shows that treatment for orientation reversal is quite successful and permanent (Schwartz & Masters, 1984; Spitzer, October, 2003). Moreover, replication studies fail to support the genetic argument for inherency of orientation. Dr. Alan Sanders, a colleague of Dean Hamer who claimed to have found chromosomal similarities between gay brothers in 1993, was unable to replicate his results. “Although the original study found evidence for genetic linkage, ours does not” (in Byfield & Byfield, June 15, 1998).

They also ignore the considerable weight of evidence on the correlations between child sexual abuse and dysfunctional socialization on subsequent orientation development (Van Wyk & Geist, 1984; Doll *et al*, 1992; Abel *et al*, 1987) [delineated at length in the author’s previous research paper, Kempling, Autumn, 2003]).

Gay moderates appear to believe that evangelical and Catholic opposition to homosexuality is based on biased interpretation of certain Bible passages. Writes Bawer, “Few things have been more widely taken out of their

historical and textual context and more dishonestly and maliciously misused that those passages (Bawer, September 18, 1994).

But frankly, this is the type of moral relativism and self-serving revisionism that was predicted by several New Testament writers. In his second letter to his protégé Timothy, the apostle Paul writes, “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear (in Shelley, 1994).

The Apostle Peter’s second letter to the Christian church warns against false teachers and those who would pervert the truth of God’s word. The quote is from Eugene Peterson’s earthy modern translation:

God decreed destruction for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. A mound of ashes was all that was left—grim warning to anyone bent on an ungodly life. But that good man Lot, driven nearly out of his mind by the sexual filth and perversity, was rescued. Surrounded by moral rot day after day after day, that righteous man was in constant torment...God is especially incensed against these “teachers” who live by lust, addicted to a filthy existence. They despise interference from true authority, preferring to indulge in self-rule.  
(Peterson, 1995).

There is simply no escaping the spiritual truth that the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition regards homosexuality as sinful behaviour. No evangelical or Catholic true believer is likely to compromise on that tenet of the faith, nor should they. As Spitzer (October, 2003) found, many former homosexuals from faith communities chose to change their orientation to return to congruency with their beliefs rather than remain unorthodox to justify behaviour condemned as sinful by Scripture.

Moderate gays like Bawer, though, are right about one thing. Gay rights in general are not the biggest threat to heterosexual families. It is divorce, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, family violence, adultery, selfish consumerism, and the tolerance of the morally bankrupt values promoted in the popular media that are the greatest threats to our society. Heterosexuals have a great deal of work to do to clean up our own house. We need to take the “log out of our own eye” before we can self-righteously point our fingers at the moral failings of the gay community.

Nevertheless, there is an implacable gulf between homosexuals who wish to be portrayed as normal and those who practice orthodox Christianity (and other mainstream religions as well). They want complete acceptance and blessing of their relationships, but orthodox Christians will never accept or affirm sexual relationships clearly designated as sinful by the revealed Word of God.

Gays who are so inclined can find a spiritual home with the “ear-scratching” churches, such as the Metropolitan Church, or the United Church of Canada, which began ordaining openly gay ministers in 1988. Or they can gain solace from the public positions of spiritual renegades like New Westminster Anglican Bishop Michael Ingham, or Episcopalian Bishop Spong of New Jersey, who has ordained openly gay priests in defiance of the position of worldwide Anglicanism (Parker, July 27, 1998). And they may be able to convince all the jurists and legislators in the land to grant them full social rights, including marriage. But that does not make their behaviour acceptable in God’s eyes, even if they embrace “monogamy, fidelity, and responsibility” (Rauch, November 29, 1994).

### Conclusion

So what should be the Christian community’s response to moderate gays? Frankly, it is quite easy to derail the radical, outrageous positions of the gay left, with their shallow and unsubstantiated arguments. The moderates, however, are much more thoughtful, reasonable and convincing, particularly to Canadians who are prone to slightly left of center liberalism in social policy.

In 1995, the general synod of the Anglican Church of Canada condemned “bigotry, violence and hatred directed toward anyone due to their sexual orientation (*Vancouver Sun*, August 8, 1998). I agree. There is no place in a Christian community which extols compassionate love as a paramount virtue, for this type of un-Christian thinking or behaviour. We will simply have to agree to disagree about the moral acceptability of homosexuality, with compassion, and without rancour, and acknowledge that the vast majority of homosexual people simply want to live happy, fulfilled lives without harassment like the rest of us.

We do need to remain vigilant, though, to protect our school system and our churches from the insidious moral relativism advocated by radical homosexuals and their politically correct heterosexual supporters. In a pluralistic society like Canada, no one has the right to impose their view of morality against the wishes of parents, particularly in the public school system. And given the BC School Act's declaration (Section 95, 2) that "the highest morality shall be inculcated", there is no room whatsoever for allowing the "gleeful promiscuity" practiced by many gays, and shamelessly advertised in their newspapers, to be portrayed as acceptable moral behaviour in public school classrooms.

The BC Court of Appeal, in overturning Supreme Court Justice May Saunders' decision to oblige the Surrey School Board to allow gay kindergarten teacher James Chamberlain to use pro-gay materials in his classroom, ruled that "the exclusion of people of faith [in this case school board members] from the public square was not only unjust but unconstitutional" (O'Neil, October 23, 2000). The unanimous ruling declared that parental views about sexual orientation should be respected, and that while specific religions may not be inculcated, moral views based on religion should not be excluded.

Justice Kenneth Mackenzie rhetorically asked:

Are only those with a non-religiously informed conscience to be permitted to participate in decisions involving moral instruction of children in the public school? Must those whose moral positions arise from a conscience influenced by religion be required to leave those convictions behind or otherwise be excluded from participation while those who espouse similar positions emanating from a conscience not informed by religious considerations are free to participate without restriction? A religiously informed conscience should not be accorded any privilege, but neither should it be placed under a disability.

(in O'Neil, October 25, 2000)

Nevertheless, both religious and social leaders have an obligation to ensure that the homosexual minority is treated with decency, and to restrain or confront those who would promote intolerance or hatred.



Christianity requires compassion, not condescension or condemnation towards those whose behaviours we disagree with. It is not only our challenge, but the challenge of gays, both moderate and radical, in their attitudes toward people whose sincerely held religious beliefs will not allow them to accept homosexual behaviour as morally honourable. For gays, above all, know how distressing intolerance, stereotyping, and narrow-minded prejudice can be. When it comes right down to it, the only true barrier to a just society is the hardness of our own hearts.

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