

Religion and Homosexuality

There are few things quite as riveting - and pathetic - as the spectacle of a revved up politician pursuing a false idea in the name of equality.

Canada's various Justice Ministers are especially interesting because they seem to pursue a lot of false ideas simultaneously.

When it comes to gay rights, they seem to be saying: "By God" (sorry - strike the last word) "I'm going to ram this gay thing down the people's throats. All shall be treated the same as long as I'm Minister of Justice!"

Somebody should explain that unless we maintain our historical legal distinction between individual rights, and social rights, there will be no society for the ramming.

Every citizen of Canada has the same individual rights (freedom of speech, right to trial, etc). But not everyone has, nor ought to have, the same social rights.

The difference between them, it seems to me, is that you have to qualify for a social right, and all normal societies reserve the prerogative of stipulating exactly how. They also reserve the historical right rigorously to exclude from such rights, those who do not qualify. To reserve the right to discriminate for the good of society.

For example, you cannot have a pension from Canada until you reach a certain age (unless you are an M.P. - then age doesn't matter!). Just try it, you'll see. Nor can you have Social Assistance unless you meet certain straitened economic conditions. Nor can you qualify as a veteran unless you have fought, or died, for Canada in a war. And regardless of how hard a teenager might protest, a teenager is legally a minor until a certain age. AND...the time-honoured exclusion that is rubbing liberals the wrong way, says you can't have the legal or tax benefits of a spouse unless you marry someone of the opposite sex.

But most egalitarians can't figure this out. They seem to believe that as long as you are an individual, and have a copy of the Charter, you can have any of these things when you damn well please. Really - what hope is there for society when such ostensibly bright people in positions of immense authority don't understand such plain distinctions?

Meanwhile, my phone has been ringing with calls from Ottawa, from distraught Members of Parliament who say there is a new and powerful argument on the hill. Anti-homosexual rights folks have maintained that the Charter should only protect from discrimination the immutable characteristics of people, such as colour, ethnicity, gender, and so on. It should not protect behaviour.

But the counter-argument says, How about religion? Religion is protected, and that's behaviour! Unfair!

So here goes another round of debate that ought to be unnecessary. Let us considered some of the reasons why it's alright to protect religion, but not homosexuality.

Religion underpins Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which specifically states: "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God..." (Preamble to Part 1). This alone is a good reason to include religion, and ought to end disputes over its admissability as a protected ground.

Homosexuality is not mentioned as a "principle" upon which Canada is founded. Surely a nation's Charter ought to protect from discrimination those who believe in the principle - religious belief - on which the nation itself is founded.

Religion is universal. It infuses all societies, affects billions of people, and is the basis of a collective identity from which societies either explicitly or implicitly draw their moral boundaries.

Homosexuality is the opposite. It is not a universal experience. It is a widely spurned behaviour (not a faith), practiced by 1.5 to 2 per cent of the population in most Western nations (you can get up to 3 or 4 per cent by including occasional bi-sexuals).

Religions promote moral behaviour. Though fallible themselves, they are generally protected because they promote worship of God, the highest Good.

Homosexuality is the opposite. If not outlawed by most countries, it is deemed morally wrong, or sinful, by overwhelming majorities of normal people - even by many of those who defend the legal right to practice it privately. Charters and human rights codes are normally used to protect from discrimination neutral attributes of human beings, and those things deemed desirable, or good. They are not normally used to protect behaviours universally deemed bad.

All religions promote procreation. They are thus supportive of society, the traditional family, and the continuation of both. Homosexuality is the opposite. Two homosexuals cannot procreate with each other. The most radical among them repudiate the procreational ideal itself.

Charter rulings ought to promote and protect procreation, and the nurturing of children, and either discourage or pass over in silence other choices made by free individuals.

Religion is healthy. Societies that stress sincere religious beliefs tend to be the lowest in sociopathology, alcohol and drug abuse, and crime. To promote and protect religion is to protect society.

Homosexuality is the opposite. It is bad for individual and social health. Homosexuals die younger, and have vastly more social, psychological, sexual, alcohol, and drug problems than any other group. In 1990, according to AIDS scientists working

for government in Ottawa, almost 85% of all those then dying from AIDS related diseases in Canada were male homosexuals. That figure by 2005 was around 77%.

Religion is culturally inherited. The vast majority of the world's children are inducted into their religion before adulthood, and never change. In this sense, religion is in theory mutable, but in practice is only quasi-mutable.

Homosexuality is the opposite. No one, no parent, no community leader, no one except another (usually older) homosexual, would ever voluntarily induct a child into homosexuality. About half of all homosexuals themselves even say they would "become upset" if a child of theirs became homosexual (Bell and Weinberg). And in no sense is homosexual behaviour immutable, as is skin colour, or ethnicity. Respected sexologists Masters and Johnson have repeatedly shown recovery rates of 70 per cent for homosexuals.

Religion is based on spiritual belief, not behaviour. To protect religious belief is to protect the highest and most important form of free speech and collective conscience. One may have religious beliefs and indulge in no religious behaviour at all. In fact, normally we cannot identify the religious belief of a person until it is communicated, in word or symbol.

But homosexuality is the opposite. No beliefs are required. But what is required to identify and define homosexuality, is an act. In other words, without homosexual behaviour, there is no homosexuality.

The fact that behaviour defines homosexuality is sufficient grounds to exclude it as a protected ground, and the Charters of the people should not protect or promote the mere appetites or behaviours of any individual or group.