



Rainbow Alliance

OPSEU



SEFPO

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

HETEROSEXISM

A form of oppression based on the belief that heterosexual relationships are the norm and therefore, superior to lesbian, gay and bisexual relationships. This belief consistently reinforces itself, in all aspects of society, by the rigid imposition of gender roles. This includes legal and social discrimination against homosexuals and the denial of human rights.

HOMOPHOBIA

The irrational fear and hatred of any sexual expression between people of the same gender, lesbians, gay men and bisexual people, their communities and culture.

LESBIAN

A woman who is attracted to women. A lesbian is a woman who prefers other women on many levels – emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines herself as a lesbian.

GAY MAN

A man who is attracted to men. A gay man prefers other men on many levels - emotionally, intellectually and sexually – and defines himself as gay.

BISEXUAL

A bisexual is a woman or man who forms her/his primary loving and sexual relations with members of both or either gender – someone who has continuing affection, emotional, romantic, and/or erotic preference for people of both sexes.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Indicates who we are erotically attracted to. The ends of the scale are labeled "attracted to women" and "attracted to men".... In the mid range is bisexuality. There are also people who are asexual (attracted to neither men nor women.)

BIOLOGICAL SEX

Refers to our genitals, hormones and physical characteristics.

GENDER IDENTITY

How people think of themselves and identify in terms of sex (man, woman, boy, girl.) Gender identity is a psychological quality. Unlike biological sex, it can't be observed or measured only reported by the individual.

GENDER EXPRESSION

Everything that we do to communicate our sex/gender to others: type of clothing, hair styles, mannerisms, way of speaking, roles we take in interactions, etc.

SAME SEX PARTNER

The Ontario Human Rights Code defines same sex partner as "the person with whom a person of the same sex is living in a conjugal relationship outside marriage."

TRANSGENDERED

Someone who is not comfortable with or who rejects in whole or in part their assigned gender identity.

TRANSSEXUAL

Someone who has a strong and persistent feeling that they are living in the wrong sex. A male transsexual has a need to live as a woman and a female transsexual has a need to live as a man. Some, but not all, transsexuals choose to have sex re-assignment surgery; some use hormone therapy.

INTERSEXED

Someone born with full or partial sexual organs of both genders or with underdeveloped or ambiguous sex organs. About 4% of all births are intersexed to some degree.

CROSS DRESSER/TRANSVESTITE

A person (gay or straight) who dresses in clothing commonly associated with the opposite gender.

DRAG QUEEN

A man, usually a gay man, who dresses in the clothing commonly associated with women (usually for the performing arts.)

OPPRESSION

Unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power on a continual basis. A system of "inter-related barriers which reduce, immobilize and mould people who belong to a certain group, placing them in a subordinate position to others (either as individuals or as a group)." Marilyn Frye

INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

To unconsciously embrace inferior beliefs about one's

self, because of the culture's prejudices and myths attached to certain characteristics such as sex, age, race or sexual orientation.

MYTHS & STEREOTYPES

“All gay men are child molesters.”

The reality is that the majority...85% of child molesters are heterosexual men!

“Gays/Lesbians would be happier as heterosexuals. They have been recruited to their life style, but they can change.”

Sexual orientation, whether heterosexual or homosexual, does not and cannot change significantly. Some people are exclusively heterosexual throughout their lives and others are exclusively gay or lesbian. But many people are attracted to members of both sexes. Scientist Alfred Kinsey put human sexual experience on a “continuum” that put heterosexuals at one end and homosexuals at the other – and several shades of grey in between.

Electric shock, surgery and institutionalization were some of the methods used to try to “cure” gay men and lesbians by turning them into heterosexuals. These traumatic treatments were unsuccessful.

“Homosexuality is caused by a weak or absent father and a domineering mother.”

There is no evidence that male homosexuality is caused by a dominant mother and/or a weak or absent father, or that lesbians result from male role models. If this theory were valid, the increase in single parent families led by women would have caused a huge increase in the gay population.

“Children with gay or lesbian parents will turn out to be homosexuals.”

Children with gay or lesbian parents are no more likely to be gay or lesbian than children with heterosexual parents.

“Homosexuality is an illness.”

Homosexuality is not an abnormality, illness or disorder. No one knows what “causes” homosexuality. No one knows what “causes” heterosexuality either. At this point, scientists probably have a clearer idea of what does not determine sexual orientation.

“You can spot them a mile away.”

There are several stereotypes about how men and women should dress and behave. What mannerisms they should have and not have are used to define who is male and who is female. One in ten people in society and the union is gay or lesbian. Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals are everywhere. They exist in all races, religions, and classes. Contrary to popular opinion, they are not always visible.

BARGAINING & BENEFITS ISSUES

Many collective agreements have language which provides for leaves, medical, dental, insurance and pension benefits. However, very often the language does not take into account the needs of members who are gay/lesbian, bisexual and transgendered. Because these members are often not visible, their issues are not included when bargaining demands are set and therefore, never make it to the bargaining table.

Below are some of the issues that merit inclusion in our collective agreements. This list is by no means intended to be an exhaustive one but is designed to provide some suggestions:

- Definition of spouse to include same sex partner.
- Bereavement and compassionate leaves to reflect same sex relationships.
- Pregnancy, parental, child care, family, adoption leave to include same sex partners.
- Time off for marriage (this will benefit heterosexuals also).
- Life insurance coverage and pension benefits to include same sex partners as beneficiaries.
- Anti discrimination and harassment clauses to specifically include sexual orientation and gender identity as a prohibited ground.
- Provision of appropriate washroom facilities for transgendered members.
- Benefit coverage for medical treatment(s) for gender re-assignment for transgendered members.

- Accommodation language which includes adequate time off for medical appointments and leave.
- Relocation expenses which includes relocation of same sex spouses/families.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered members in your local if made to feel welcome and included will no doubt bring a wealth of other issues to the bargaining process.

OUR STORY

- 1600** In London, England, police routinely raided “Molly Houses” – clubs frequented by feminine, cross-dressed males who were presumed to be gay. During one raid in London in 1725, the crowd – many of them in drag – fought pitched battles with the police.
- 1933** When Hitler took power, he launched a campaign to persecute gays and lesbians. Thousands were sent to Nazi concentration camps where they were identified by a pink (gay men) or black (lesbians) triangle. Today the triangle has become a symbol of pride for gays and lesbians.
- 1950** Throughout the 1950s and 60s, the RCMP carried out a campaign to identify gays and lesbians in the military and the Public Service. The Security Panel spied on, interrogated, and blackmailed gay men and lesbians, destroying many people’s careers and lives.
- 1964** MacLean’s magazine ran an article titled: “The Homosexual next door” by Sidney Katz. This article was acknowledged by many gay and lesbian activists to be the first reasonable depiction of gays and lesbians to appear in the Canadian mass media.
- 1969** The Criminal Code of Canada was amended to decriminalize homosexual acts between

consenting adults. (Previously consenting adults could be charged with “acts of gross indecency” and sentenced for up to 5 years in prison. Up to this point, it was common for gays and lesbians to be denied employment, accommodation, access to restaurants, hotels and other public institutions.)

New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn. This time, gays, lesbians, and transgendered patrons took on the police harassment and brutality they had endured for so long. African American and Latina drag queens were on the front lines of the four nights running uprising against the brutality. The Stonewall riots mark the beginning of the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States.

- 1970** The first ever demonstration for gays and lesbians took place on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.
- 1976** Homosexuals are no longer barred as immigrants to Canada under the Immigration Act.
- 1977** Quebec becomes the first jurisdiction in Canada to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.
- 1981** Toronto Police raided four gay bath houses and, in the largest mass arrest since the War Measures Act, charged more than 300 men. The next night, about 3000 angry protestors marched in downtown Toronto. Some now consider this Canada’s Stonewall.

- 1988** The United Church of Canada, Canada's largest Protestant denomination, decided to permit the ordination of gays and lesbians.
- 1989** The Federal Court of Canada accepted sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in a decision to grant a gay prison inmate the right to conjugal visits with his same sex partner.
- 1990** Toronto became the first municipality in Canada to extend same sex benefits. Vancouver soon followed suit.
- 1992** Michelle Douglas wins her law suit against the Canadian Armed Forces, which changes its policy of not hiring and promoting gays and lesbians.
- 1993** Bill 167 was defeated on the second reading in Ontario. This bill was to extend same sex benefits to all workers in Ontario. Premier Bob Rae, declaring that this was a moral issue of conscience, permitted an open vote on the matter and did not bind his party to the traditional solidarity normally practised in the Legislature. When the Bill was defeated, thousands of gays and lesbians, along with their supporters stormed through the legislature. Police responded, wearing latex gloves, and carrying billy clubs, and began to push the demonstrators down the stairs at Queen's park.

- 1994** Immigration policy allows, in certain circumstances lesbians and gays to sponsor same sex partners.
- 1995** Canadian Parliament amends the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination.
- 1996** Canadian Labour Congress holds its first Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual conference in Ottawa.
- 1999** 750,000 gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people and their allies turn out for the world's, second largest Pride Parade in Toronto. Though still small in number, trade unionist marched at the front of the Parade, carrying their union flags and banners.
- The Ontario Federation of Labour holds its first GLB conference.
- The Supreme Court of Canada decision of M vs. H made it possible for same sex spousal support.
- 2000** Bill C5 a Federal jurisdiction omnibus bill changed a number of statutes by removing their discriminatory impact on same sex partners.
- 2001** The first publicly conducted gay and lesbian marriage ceremonies took place in Ontario.

RESOURCE INFORMATION

OPSEU Rainbow Alliance

OPSEU Provincial Human Rights Committee

OPSEU Provincial Women's Committee

Ontario Federation of Labour Solidarity & Pride Committee

Canadian Labour Congress Solidarity & Pride Committee

Coalition of Lesbian and Gay Rights of Ontario*

Equality of Gays and Lesbians Everywhere*

International Lesbian & Gay Alliance

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays*

Gay & Lesbian Youth Hotline*

CASE DECISIONS

M v. H, Supreme Court decision May 20, 1999

Rosenberg v. Canada, Income Tax Pension Plans – 1998

Vriend v. Alberta, Alberta Individual's Rights Protection Act – 1998

Buist v. Greaves, Lesbian Co-Parent Child Support – 1997

Insurance Act – 1997

Kane v. Ontario (Attorney-General)

Kane v. Axa Insurance and Attorney-General (Ontario)

Kane v. Browning-Ferris Industries et al.

Vogel v. Manitoba, Manitoba Human Right Act – 1995

K, Lesbian Adoption – 1995

Egan v. Canada Old Age Security Pensions – 1995

Clinton v. Ontario Blue Cross, Human Rights Case Appealed to Court 1994

Layland v. Ontario, Marriage License – 1993

Canadian Broadcasting Corp and Canadian Media Guild, 1995

Metro Toronto Reference Library and CUPE Local 1582, 1995

Bell Canada and CTEA, 1994

University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge Faculty Association,
1994

Treasury Board (Environment Canada) and Lorenzon, 1993

Canada Post Corporation and PSCA (Goevremont), 1990

Chrysler and CAW, various dates

Hudler v. London (City), Refusing to Proclaim Pride – 1997

Dube et Commission des droits de la personne, Refusal to
Rent for Religious Grounds – 1997

Dwyer and Sims, Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto
Employees – 1996

FOR COPIES OF THE CASE DECISIONS LISTED ABOVE, CONTACT THE
EQUITY UNIT AT OPSEU HEAD OFFICE
416-443-8888 OR 1-800-268-7376 OR
<mailto:amccormack@opseu.org>