

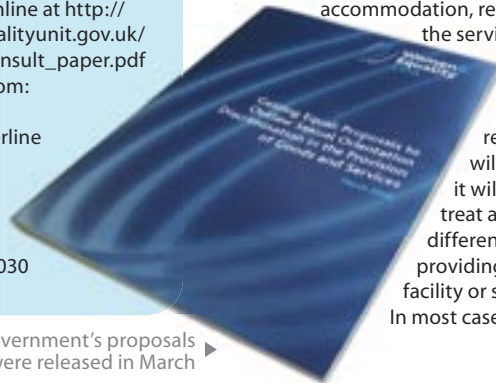
The Government has launched a consultation on new laws to outlaw 'homophobic' discrimination. The sexual orientation regulations will apply to England, Scotland and Wales.

The consultation outlines the broad areas in which the new laws are to be created, but a draft text of the laws has not been published. The Government is expected to put the regulations before Parliament by the end of July. No amendments can be tabled – there will be a straight 'take it or leave it' vote in each House of Parliament.

There is a vital need for exceptions in the regulations to protect religious liberty and schools. But the Government is giving no guarantees. Religious freedom inherited down the centuries is now hanging in the balance.

The deadline for the consultation is 5 June. Copies of the consultation paper are available online at http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/publications/sexo_consult_paper.pdf or can be obtained from:

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The Government's proposals were released in March

New threat to religious freedom

The Government is planning sweeping gay rights laws which threaten to curtail religious liberty. The new sexual orientation regulations will make 'homophobic' discrimination illegal in many aspects of life. They are set to cover: the provision of goods, facilities and services; the selling or letting of premises; education; and public authorities.

The plans will follow the approach taken with new religious discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2006 and existing laws covering race and sex. The term 'goods, facilities and services' is very broad, covering, for example, hotel or guesthouse accommodation, retail sales and the services industry.

The new sexual orientation regulations will mean that it will be illegal to treat a homosexual differently when providing a good, facility or service. In most cases, any

Christian business would want to sell its products regardless of who the purchaser is. A bookshop would be as happy to sell a Bible to a homosexual as to anyone else. But should the law force Christian B&B owners to give homosexuals a double bed? Should it become illegal for a church to refuse to hire out its hall to gay rights activists? This would be as ridiculous as forcing the Labour Party to hire out its HQ to the Conservatives.

Without an exception the regulations would cover the school curriculum. This could force the equal promotion of homosexuality and heterosexuality in schools, a move which threatens to be just as controversial among the public as the repeal of Section 28. Could these laws be used by gay rights groups to stop Christian Unions in schools, as activist students already try to do in universities?

The sexual orientation regulations create civil, not criminal, laws. This means that they are relatively easy to use – activists could launch legal actions against their opponents with little difficulty. And sadly there are people who oppose Christians strongly enough to do so.

Government forcing gay rights on churches

Once there is a legal right to sue for 'sexual orientation' discrimination, there are obvious areas for potential conflict with the rights of religious believers. Without robust and wide-ranging exceptions there is a real danger that gay rights activists will seek to use the new laws to pursue Christians through the courts.

It is very probable that the Government will act to protect church membership. But for areas such as church premises, church residential conferences or Christian old people's homes it is more uncertain.

Should the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement be able to sue a church for refusing to let them hire its church hall for a meeting? Or consider a church weekend away. Should a gay rights activist be able to sue a church which refuses to allocate him and his boyfriend a

double bed? Should a Christian old people's home be forced to accept two men in a civil partnership?

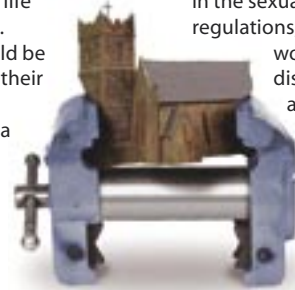
Some may question whether there will be any problem at all. But there are people who would seek to use the new laws against Christians (see page 4). Then consider the broad definition of 'goods, facilities and services' in existing legislation. The courts have ruled that the term catches "a very diverse range of activities".¹ All the things outlined above potentially fall under this definition, including an 'agape meal', where Holy Communion is held in the context of a fellowship meal.

The Government's "starting point" is that religious exceptions "...should be limited to activities closely linked to religious observance or practices that arise from the basic doctrines of a faith."² This

is worryingly narrow and fails to appreciate that faith applies to the whole of life (Matthew 5:16). Christians should be able to live out their beliefs outside the confines of a church service. Freedom of religion is not just the freedom to believe things in your head, but to abide by them in your life.

The Equality Act 2006 creates separate laws outlawing discrimination on the grounds of religion. It provides reasonable exceptions to protect most of the major activities of religious groups. Without these protections, key activities of every church would effectively have

been outlawed. Unless parallel exceptions are included in the sexual orientation regulations, the Government would be indirectly discriminating against religious believers since, proportionately, they are far more likely to believe that homosexual practice is wrong.



¹ *Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services*, Women & Equality Unit, DTI, March 2006, page 10

² *Ibid*, page 19



Warning: Gay rights materials for schools (page 3) are highly unsuitable for children

Gay rights versus religious rights

Creating legal rights based on 'sexual orientation' has a unique capacity to clash with the rights of religious groups. There is an obvious disagreement between people who believe homosexual practice is acceptable and people who believe it is morally wrong.

All the six major world religions are opposed to homosexual practice. The Bible is clear that it is morally wrong (e.g. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Yet it makes no criticism of the person who faces homosexual temptation but resists it. Such a person is in entirely the same predicament as every other person; it is simply the form of temptation which differs. But once a person engages in

homosexual activity, or affirms the right to do so, he rejects part of the basic ethical teaching of the Bible.

It is often said that homosexuals need civil rights because they are 'born gay and can't change'. But this claim simply cannot be backed up by the evidence – homosexuality is not a fixed trait like race or sex. For example, a 2003 study by a leading psychiatrist who supports gay rights found that homosexuals could become 'predominantly' heterosexual through psychotherapy. 84% of the homosexuals and lesbians in the study became heterosexual by the end of the study.¹ No amount of psychotherapy can ever change a person's race.

The Bible clearly teaches that Christians are to serve others in every aspect of their lives. Christians are to love their neighbour and do good even to those who disagree with them and oppose them (e.g. Luke 6:27). But no-one has shown that there is a real problem which demands legislative intervention. Why then are the regulations being proposed? The aim is to promote homosexuality. The regulations are actually privileging immorality.

And the new laws will benefit only a very few people. The 2001 census found that fewer than 0.2% of all households in England and Wales are headed by a same-sex couple.²

Why are sweeping new laws

being created for such a small number of people? It's another device for destroying the special place of marriage in society. Promoting and celebrating homosexual lifestyles sends out the message that, when it comes to sexual relationships, there is no 'right' or 'wrong' anymore.

¹ Spitzer, R.L., 'Can Some Gay Men and Lesbians Change Their Sexual Orientation? 200 Participants Reporting a Change from Homosexual to Heterosexual Orientation', *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 32(5), 2003, page 411

² *Census 2001: National Report for England and Wales Part 2*, ONS, 2004, Table UV93, page 70

Public authorities

Many Christian organisations already feel that public bodies are unsympathetic towards them. The newspapers frequently cover stories of politically correct councils who ban Christmas displays or refuse to fund Christian work on politically correct grounds.

Obtaining any kind of public sector support for Christian projects could become even more difficult under the sexual orientation regulations. The regulations will impose a duty on all public authorities not to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. This will affect the whole of the public sector.

Gay rights groups say any disagreement with homosexual practice is 'discrimination'. Local authorities could refuse grants towards any projects run by Evangelical churches. They could claim that funding an organisation that believes homosexuality is wrong would leave them open to legal action for sexual orientation discrimination. Booking council-owned venues such as community centres could also fall foul of the new laws. To try to prevent this, Christian organisations would have to turn to their legal rights, including new religious discrimination rights under the Equality Act.



Government to close down Christian B&Bs?



The Government wants to ban B&Bs from refusing to give homosexuals a double bed.¹ Christian B&B owners would be liable to court action for refusing to allow sexual immorality to take place under their own roof.

The Government previously declared war on B&Bs over the issue of religion. Provisions against religious discrimination in the 2006 Equality Act require owners to allow Satanists and cultists to sleep under their roof, regardless of how intimidating they may find it. During the passage of the Act many B&B owners wrote to the Government seeking an exception to protect their freedom of association. The Government refused.²

Now the approach is being extended to sexual orientation, with serious consequences for family-run B&Bs. A similar law in Canada recently saw a Christian couple ordered to pay \$1,000 in damages to a homosexual couple for refusing to rent them a room in their home. Dagmar and Arnost Cepica believed they would be violating their faith if they did so. The Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission told them they could not operate without an undertaking not to make such a refusal

in the future. The couple refused and closed down their business instead.³

It seems legislators and gay rights activists are happy to ride rough-shod over the consciences of those who disagree with them. Christians believe that renting a double-bed to a homosexual couple – or, for that matter, an unmarried heterosexual couple – would be sharing in the sins of another and an act of impurity (1 Timothy 5:22).

Gay rights campaigners have made this a big issue but the head of Stonewall, Ben Summerskill, gave the lie to this recently. He effectively admitted that this is not a real problem, saying, "If you went to a B&B where the owner didn't like gays or lesbians, then there's another B&B down the road".⁴

¹ *Getting Equal: Proposals to Outlaw Sexual Orientation Discrimination in the Provision of Goods and Services*, Women & Equality Unit, DTI, March 2006, page 37

² House of Commons, Hansard, 17 January 2006, cols 1270-1271

³ <http://www.gov.pe.ca/humanrights/releases/may22-01.php3> as at 6 April 2006 and <http://www.cwfa.org/printerfriendly.asp?id=29&department=cfi&categoryid=cfreport> as at 6 April 2006; *Calgary Herald*, 26 June 2005

⁴ *Third Sector*, 16 November 2005

Gay rights in the classroom

If the new laws on sexual orientation discrimination are applied to the curriculum they will give a great boost to those who want schools to promote gay rights. There is already considerable pressure to incorporate the promotion of homosexuality into lessons. In North America gay rights groups have used litigation (or the threat of it) to try to force such material into the classroom, overriding the wishes of parents and teachers alike.¹ The materials on this page have already been produced or advocated for classroom use in the UK. The sexual orientation regulations could be used to try to force them into regular usage. Parents, in turn, will have to fight for their own legal right under the European Convention to have their children educated in accordance with their beliefs.

¹ For example, *Chamberlain v. Surrey Schools District No. 36*, [2002] 4 S.C.R.; *Vancouver Sun*, 6 January 2003 and <http://www.family.org/cforum/citizenmag/coverstory/a0023411.cfm> as at 6 April 2006

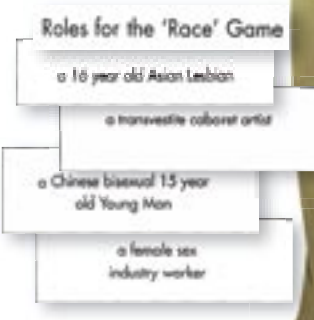
3 "Try experimenting with other boys and girls"

'Beyond A Phase' is a highly controversial teachers' pack that came to prominence during the repeal of Section 28. David Blunkett, then Education Secretary, called it "inappropriate for schools."¹ Yet it continues to be recommended.² It includes a video for pupils aged 13 inviting them to "try experimenting with other boys and girls and see who you feel most comfortable with". It suggests teachers require pupils to role-play as homosexuals, bisexuals, transvestites, prostitutes and sado-masochists. One lesson plan makes pupils question their own sexual preferences with questions like "In what ways have we been taught to be heterosexual?"; "Do you feel you have chosen your sexuality?" and "Is sexuality fixed?"³

¹ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/2915213.stm as at 10 April 2006

² <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/teachingpack/videos.htm> as at 6 April 2006. Local authorities such as Brighton & Hove and Gloucestershire have also recommended it.

³ *'Beyond a Phase': A Practical Guide to Challenging Homophobia in Schools*, Health Promotion Service Avon, 1999, pages 22, 27-31

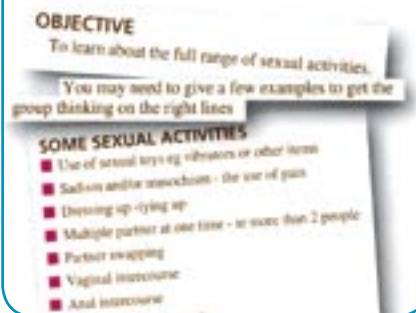


1 'Taking Sex Seriously'

In 2000 the Scottish Executive published a list of recommended sex education materials for ages 5-14. The list included the publication 'Taking Sex Seriously', which encouraged children to role-play someone who "thinks he is gay but has not told anyone else before."¹ Another exercise encouraged children to discuss sexual activities including anal intercourse and "Fingering in the anus."² There was an outcry which made national headlines and some councils banned the publication from their schools.

¹ *Taking Sex Seriously; Practical Sex Education Activities for Young People*, Cohen J and Wilson P; Ed. Kay J, Healthwise, 1994, pages 90-91

² *Ibid*, page 31



4 Gay lessons for 5 year-olds

A Government quango thinks children as young as five should be taught about gay lifestyles. Non-statutory guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, issued in November 2005, tells teachers to "Discuss with the children what 'family' means. ...stressing that there are many different kinds of family...." It urges teachers to "ensure that all types of family are talked about and valued. This could include... children with same-sex parents."¹ This approach is taken in "The Primary School Sex and Relationships Education Pack" recommended in 2000 by the Scottish Executive. In this pack children as young as seven are shown a picture of a lesbian couple with children and invited to write a story about them.²

¹ <http://www.qca.org.uk/downloads/qca-05-1695-pshe-unit1.pdf> as at 10 April 2006

² Cohen, J, *The Primary School Sex and Relationships Education Pack*, Healthwise, 1999, pages 49 and 51



2 Gay history month

Schoolchildren as young as seven should be taught that Sir Isaac Newton and Florence Nightingale were homosexual, according to a Government-funded gay rights history project. Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) History Month spuriously lists these well-known Britons as "famous LGBT" people even though there is little evidence to back up the claims. Organisers say, "We include them here because we believe they had an experience of or interest in same-sex love".¹ The project is backed by Government departments including the Department for Education (which has contributed £16,000) and the Department of Health.² It was also given a ministerial reception by the Scottish Executive.³

¹ http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/history/images_famousLGBTpeople.htm as at 10 April 2006

² <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4194247.stm> as at 10 April 2006 and http://www.dh.gov.uk/NewsHome/NewsArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4130683&chkl=Lx6yC5 as at 10 April 2006

³ LGBT Youth Scotland, *LGBT History Month 2006 Media Information Pack*



5 'Colours of the Rainbow'

A teachers' manual published by Camden & Islington Health Promotion Service shows how to teach gay rights across the curriculum. Recommended by some local councils, 'Colours of the Rainbow' details how homosexuality can be promoted in English, Art, History and Music, as well as at every key stage level through Health education.¹ The pack provides numerous lesson plans. It openly advocates promoting its agenda through national curriculum subjects – because parents only have a right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons, not national curriculum areas.²

¹ Mole, S, *Colours of the Rainbow*, Camden & Islington Health Promotion Service, 1995, pages 8-11

² *Ibid*, page 9

Gay attacks on religious people

Bishop of Chester

Bishop Peter Forster was investigated by Cheshire Constabulary after an interview in which he mentioned research showing that some homosexuals 're-orientate' through therapy. A gay rights activist had made a complaint and the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement supported it. The police eventually concluded no crime had been committed. The Chief Constable made an astonishing public attack on the Bishop, even suggesting his remarks could lead to violence.

The Chester Chronicle, 7 November 2003; *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 and 11 November 2003; *The Independent*, 10 November 2003; *The Times*, 11 November 2003; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/merseyside/3257623.stm> as at 6 April 2006

Ake Green

A Swedish pastor was charged with inciting hatred against homosexuals after a sermon urging Christians to show homosexuals "deep respect" and offer them the "grace of Jesus Christ". He called sexual immorality, including homosexuality, a "cancerous growth" in society. He was convicted and sentenced to one month in jail. The Swedish Supreme Court acquitted him on appeal.

<http://www.cbn.com/CBNNews/News/040907aa.asp> as at 6 April 2006; http://www.sweden.se/templates/cs/NewsML_12744.aspx?newsid=1163 as at 6 April 2006; *Office of the Prosecutor - General v. Green*, Case No. B 1050-05, Supreme Court of Sweden, 29 November 2005



Violence at Parliament

In 1998 when the Lords voted against reducing the homosexual age of consent, gay rights activists outside Parliament became violent. Protesters scuffled with police and jumped barricades in a bid to get inside and confront Peers. Some, including former Archbishop Donald Coggan, were insulted, jostled and threatened. Christian campaigner, Baroness Young, had to be protected by police.

Outrage!, Press release, *House of Lords Besieged by Gay Rights Protesters*, 26 July 1998 and *Daily Mail*, 23 July 1998

Lynette Burrows

Mrs Burrows, author and family values campaigner, took part in a radio phone-in where she disagreed with placing children for adoption with homosexuals. An offended gay rights activist complained to the police. The following day a police officer telephoned Mrs Burrows to take issue with her 'homophobic' views.

The Daily Telegraph, 10 December 2005; *The Sunday Times*, 18 December 2005; *Daily Mail*, 12 December 2006

Western Isles Council

Christian registrars in the Western Isles of Scotland refused to carry out marriage-style ceremonies alongside the registration of homosexual 'civil partnerships'. The Council backed their decision and, as a result, received hate-mail from around the world, including a call for councillors to be "hanged from the nearest tree".

The Scotsman, 20 and 21 December 2005; *The Daily Telegraph* (Scottish edition), 21 December 2005

Desecration of a church

Gay rights group Stonewall held a meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne at which an audience-member called for volunteers to take action against Jesmond Parish Church. A few nights later the 19th Century church was daubed with gay rights slogans, obscenities, pornographic drawings and personal attacks on the vicar.

The Journal, 23 October 1999; *Evening Chronicle*, 23 October 1999; *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 October 1999



Joe & Helen Roberts

A retired Christian couple were subjected to an 80-minute interrogation by police after they complained to their local council about its gay rights policies. No criminal offence was committed and yet the police and the council refuse to apologise for their actions. The Roberts are taking legal action.

Daily Mail, 23 December 2005



Harry Hammond

An elderly street preacher was assaulted by gay rights activists and then arrested for holding a placard saying, "Stop Immorality. Stop homosexuality. Jesus is Lord". At his trial he was convicted and fined £300 plus £395 costs. He died shortly afterwards. A posthumous appeal was unsuccessful.

The Mail on Sunday, 28 April 2002; *The Mail on Sunday*, 5 May 2002; *Hammond v DPP* [2004] EWHC 69 (Admin)

