

# Gay rights and homophobiaphobia

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It was June 23, 1969 at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village that the "out-of-the-closet" gay movement started when throngs of gay men rioted in response to a police raid upon the bar. It has been 20 years since the incident and very little has changed in the realm of public opinion. The hatred and repulsion that the gay community suffers from is the result of three powerfully negative forces.

First, hostility towards them—unlike hostility toward, say blacks—originates in large part from sincerely held moral beliefs.

Second, the evolution of the AIDS crisis in the gay and intravenous drug communities has resurrected the anti-gay sentiment, sometimes bordering on militant hatred.

Thirdly, the ongoing push from the gay community for progressive gay-rights legislation is exposing hidden ulterior motives. Here lies the interesting situation concerning gay rights.

There is a note of absurdity to any legislation that is supposed to protect gays from discrimination. A black man, for instance, is obviously, visibly, a black man. But unless a gay individual openly divulges his homosexuality or acts in such a way as to declare his gayness, one need never know. Sexual preference is rarely, if ever, a mandatory item of interest on any "application," barring the military or clergy.

To most gay-rights activists, however, job discrimination is just a cover for a more serious intention. In reality, the gay community wants government to enact legislation that would change society's ATTITUDE towards

homosexuals. \*The gay community is looking for government, by way of the congressional stamp of approval on a piece of legislation, to add credibility to their sexual preference. Government does not exist to protect minorities or majorities from deeply felt convictions of other factions. Government exists to keep those deeply felt convictions from trampling on other people's liberties.

Also, a bit of comical shame has now crept into the gay community. At Stanford, organized gay groups started a program under which the university distributed "safe sex" packets to gay and lesbian clubs that included condoms...in assorted flavors, peppermint, orange and tutti-frutti (no pun). And at the 20 year anniversary in Greenwich Village, a white robed episcopal priest, introduced as "Doctor Dick," led a large crowd in a collective prayer. When one man helped him reposition the microphone, he remarked, "There's one of my angels," and winked. "I'll see him in the bar later."

Lastly, what is Homophobiaphobia? It is the fear of being labeled a homophobiac (a person with an irrational fear of homosexuals), for not supporting prospective gay-rights legislation. Although I find the act of homosexuality repulsive, I do not find homosexuals repulsive. I do not support gay-rights legislation because it lacks an honest attempt to achieve what gays feel is constitutional restitution for "past wrongs." Although many gay leaders attempt to make a correlation, the black civil rights movement and the gay-rights movement are as different as night and day. For all my conservative brothers and sisters out there, relax, it's not a contradiction to respect gays but not support today's version of "gay rights." Neither is it a contradiction to love homosexuals, but be nauseated by the physical act of homosexuality.