

Queering Ontario¹

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Ontario has been the setting for remarkably sustained advocacy by sexual minorities and their allies over more than forty years, and across a wide range of issues. That activist work, at the local and provincial level, has produced pioneering court victories and policy changes in some issue areas, often in the face of political caution, concerted opposition from religious conservatives, and public anxiety.

The waves of advocacy in this province, as well as their successes and limitations, display a central contradiction in the story of Canadian LGBT politics. On the one hand, this is a profoundly local and regional story. The modern movement began with local groups, and today the majority of work that is done to address inequity and marginalization is effected at the local level. Canada is also a highly “regionalized” country, with significant jurisdictional decentralization in areas of most concern to equity advocates, and a strong sense of regional distinctiveness in regions like British Columbia, Alberta, parts of Atlantic Canada, and of course Quebec. On the other hand, there are strong similarities in the LGBT political narrative across the country, more so, certainly, than in the United States, and in some ways more so than in countries like Brazil, Spain, and Australia.² There are variations, to be sure. For example, governments across Canada have responded rhetorically in very different ways to issues related to sexual diversity, but they have not acted as distinctly as they have postured. All three of Canada’s largest cities – Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver – are regularly featured in lists of the world’s most LGBT-friendly places.

Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of LGBT activism in Ontario is challenging not only because it is difficult to disentangle from the cross-country narrative, but also because of the province’s large population and the number of its urban centres with their own activist histories. The province’s thirteen million residents include not only the Greater Toronto Area, which is itself huge and ethno-culturally diverse, but also four other cities that count among the eleven largest urban centres in Canada (Ottawa, Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, and London). No account, here or elsewhere, can do justice to the variety of movement groups across the province, and the varied challenges they have faced in effecting change.

This analysis attempts to gauge the strengths, weaknesses, and impacts of LGBT activists in Ontario in four policy areas crucial for advocates of change everywhere in Canada. One is policing, and in particular the challenges to prejudicial and oppressive policing practices once so commonplace across Canada. Another is the establishment of basic legal and policy protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. A third is the public recognition of LGBT family rights, including both relational and parenting rights. The fourth is schooling – the extent to which sexual diversity is recognized by state-regulated schools. What we will find is great variation in success across these fields – a finding much in line with what we would find across the country.

The Growth of Queer Activism

After World War II, Toronto, and to some extent Ottawa, saw the expansion of bars and public spaces where gay men, and to a more limited extent lesbians, could gather.³ Rights advocacy developed more slowly in Ontario than in major American cities, Britain, and the Netherlands. Individual activists like Jim Egan were writing letters to the press and other media

commentaries from the late 1940s onward, but there was no equivalent to the early formation of Mattachine Societies and Daughters of Bilitis in U.S. cities, or the Centre for Culture and Leisure (Cultuur en Ontspannings-Centrum - COC) in Amsterdam.⁴ Cautious restiveness was evident, however, in the 1964 appearance in Toronto of the magazine *Gay*, which was soon distributing 30,000 copies across North America.⁵

Early Political Organizing

In late 1969, the University of Toronto Homophile Association (UTHA) was established, representing (despite its name) the first Canadian manifestation of the radical liberationism that was surfacing in the U.S. and elsewhere. This was soon after homosexual activity was partially decriminalized through federal government amendments to the criminal code. The change in law had almost no discernable impact on overwhelmingly negative public attitudes, sordid media portrayals, or police harassment, but it did expand activist ranks, including many motivated by transformative goals and ready to deploy confrontational tactics.

Soon after the birth of UTHA, in 1970, the Community Homophile Association of Toronto (CHAT) was established, and Glad Day Bookshop (the first in Canada specializing in gay and/or lesbian material) was opened – also in Toronto. A “gay picnic” was held on the Toronto islands one year later, eventually growing into Toronto’s massive Pride celebration. In late 1971, *The Body Politic* was created – a gay magazine that would help define liberationist politics across North America for more than a decade. In 1972, the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE) was constituted by those firmly committed to liberationist politics. By the end of 1973, political groups had appeared in London, Waterloo, Guelph, Windsor, Hamilton, Kingston, and Sudbury – most based on university campuses. Gays of Ottawa, formed in 1971, was as large and long lasting as any of these groups.

In this period, feminist groups such as Toronto Women’s Liberation Movement were creating space for and recognition of lesbian issues, at a time when gay activism was overwhelmingly male. Stand-alone lesbian groups were more challenging to organize, though a few emerged in the years to follow, including the Lesbian Organization of Toronto (LOOT), established in 1976.⁶ Also at this time, advocacy groups were being created among people of faith, with Toronto Unitarian Universalist Gays formed in 1971, the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) established in both Toronto and Ottawa two years after that, and other groups forming within the United Church, Anglican, and Catholic communities.

Based in part on this foundation, the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (later the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario - CLGRO) was established in 1975.⁷ It was very much shaped by liberationist ideas, though its focus on provincial politics inevitably meant that it was focusing most of its energies on legislative outcomes – most notably the inclusion of sexual orientation in provincial human rights statutes. It regularly suffered the fate of many coalitional groups, in bringing together volunteer activists whose primary obligations were to other (in this case local) groups, so for significant periods it lingered with only a low profile. But it maintained a provincial presence continuously until its end in 2009.

Mobilizational Expansion in the 1980s

Police raids on institutions with significant gay and lesbian clientele continued

throughout the 1970s, provoking activist surges from the late '70s on. The largest and most provocative of these raids were those conducted in February 1981 on several Toronto bathhouses. The arrest of 300 men led to large scale mobilization, led by the Right to Privacy Committee, which combined the confrontational demonstrations characteristic of liberationist politics with the skilful coordination of lawyers and the management of a legal defense fund more easily associated with mainstream politics. Also in this period, *The Body Politic* and Glad Day Bookshop were facing repeated charges of obscenity and mobilized community response. Taken together, these attacks produced the largest and most sustained gay mobilization to that point in Canada.⁸

As in other parts of Canada and the western world, the onset of AIDS in the early 1980s introduced dramatic new challenges. The second half of that decade saw the LGBT movement as a whole focus much of its energy on defending their communities against discrimination and stigma, creating educational campaigns to stop the spread of HIV, provide services for those who were infected or ill, and press for change in government policy and health care institutions. AIDS community groups such as the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) also attracted women with experience in health care advocacy, partially bridging the activist gender divide. In its formative period, ACT also drew key leaders from the ranks of activist groups like *The Body Politic*. Within a few years there were also AIDS groups in ethno-racial minority communities where sexual diversity activism had been difficult to mobilize or to connect to “mainstream” LGBT advocacy. Group formation was aided in part by access to state funding.

Political openings were also widened by shifts in popular beliefs, and the 1982 entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.⁹ These changes, combined with the recognition by some state officials that they needed community expertise to slow the spread of HIV, created opportunities for equity advocates to develop connections with local governments, provincial ministries, professional associations in the legal and health care sectors, legal networks, and progressive politicians. Anger at the insufficiencies in state response to AIDS continued into the early 1990s, reviving activist radicalism – most notably in the Toronto-based AIDS Action Now, but also in the ephemeral though important Queer Nation.

Mainstreaming in the 1990s

Despite this radical surge early in the decade, the 1990s were characterized more by reformist activism, or by activist tactics oriented to the political opportunities for change created within left and centre-left political parties, government bureaucracies, unions, and courts. At the same time, this was a period, in Toronto particularly, marked by the proliferation of advocacy and support groups across ethno-racial, religious, and occupational lines.

There was also a time when same-sex relationship recognition and parenting acquired growing political profile. This was not entirely new, since lesbian parenting had been a political issue from the earliest years of the current activist wave, but family-related issues were now more widely embraced as politically important. Labour activists and other workplace groups also saw the extension of workplace benefit programs to include same-sex partners an obvious campaigning focus.¹⁰

The first large-scale mobilization around family rights in Ontario was in 1994, focused on the provincial NDP's legislative proposal to extend recognition to same-sex couples. The

Campaign for Equal Families mounted an impressive campaign, but not enough to prevent the defeat of the legislation. This was only a temporary set-back, since in the meantime activists elsewhere (including unions) were launching legal challenges to the exclusion of lesbians and gays from benefit programs and family law.

At the same time as family-related claims were being pressed, activism on schooling issues was increasing, particularly in Toronto.¹¹ There had been isolated instances of protest about the discriminatory treatment of teachers prior to the 1980s, and a wave of outrage following the 1985 murder of a Toronto school librarian – Kenn Zeller. More sustained advocacy, however, surfaced in the late 1980s, most visibly within the jurisdiction of the Toronto public school board. Toronto educators formed a lesbian and gay caucus in 1989, and students across the city formed Teens Educating About and Challenging Homophobia (TEACH) in 1993. By the end of the '90s, the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) was becoming a leader in LGBT advocacy, joining major unions in the public sector (such as the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union) in supporting LGBT initiatives.

The mid-1990s also saw a major increase in the profile of trans activism in Toronto, similar to the surges in Vancouver and Montreal. The extreme marginalization of the various constituencies under the trans umbrella made the sustenance of advocacy very challenging, so no single group has emerged with a lasting or substantial foundation, but the enhanced political visibility has remained.

Important victories over rights sought by lesbian and gay couples in the 1990s ended up preparing the way for advocacy on marriage, led primarily by the national group Egale. It is not clear that this struggle caught fire among Ontario activists, but major courtroom challenges were launched in Toronto early in the new decade, at about the same time as legal actions were undertaken in other parts of the country.

Ontario's LGBT Movement Today

The strength of contemporary LGBT advocacy in Ontario lies in the proliferation of its forms and locations, and the range of constituencies that it speaks to. It is found in labour unions, professional organizations, academic centres, lawyer networks, workplace committees, campus student groups, social service agencies, community centres, “pride” organizations, queer cultural institutions, LGBT media outlets, HIV-AIDS groups, immigrant advisory networks, faith communities, government-focused policy communities. Less activist energy is now devoted to multi-purpose all-embracing groups such as CLGRO and Queer Ontario than in the past – however important their work has been and remains – but that does not suggest a weaker movement overall.

In a list of LGBT resources relevant for high schools in Ontario, Egale listed 139 local and provincial groups, networks, and programs.¹² This includes groups and institutions as diverse as the 519 Church Street Community Centre in Toronto, Two-Spirited People of the First Nations, the Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Youth Line, the LGBT Parenting Network, the Metropolitan Community Church, the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention, Pride Toronto, Capital Pride, Rainbow Health Ontario, Salaam (Queer Muslim Community), Supporting Our Youth, the Toronto Women's Bookstore, Glad Day Bookstore, a large number of university

student groups, and several local chapters of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. This huge list did not include national groups effectively based in Toronto and with Ontario-based activists disproportionately represented. Nor did it include the many queer caucuses and committees based in labour unions, workplaces, scholarly associations, and professional organizations.

There are weaknesses here. The most politically active provincial and local groups have usually had to do their work with only small numbers of volunteers, and apart from groups focused on social service delivery (including AIDS-related services), with few paid staff – usually none. For most of its life, this was true for CLGRO, the only multi-issue group operating at the provincial level, and it is even more so of the group that took over its mandate after 2009, Queer Ontario. The important gains in law and policy secured during the 1990s and 2000s also produced a degree of complacency, and the organizational burnout that can so easily arise from volunteer groups, reducing the capacity of political groups to mobilize. There are also persistent inequalities and contrasts in public visibility along lines of gender, race, social class, and gender identity in the movement as a whole, and sometimes a degree of (perhaps inevitable) isolation between groups representing distinct constituencies or population sectors.

All this makes it harder than ever to characterize LGBT advocacy in the province as a whole. What can be said is that transformational radicalism and confrontational tactics have receded from their prominence in the movement during the 1970s, the early '80s, and again during the very early '90s. It is too easy and oversimplifying to characterize this as assimilationism, and by implication imagine an earlier movement as more inclusive, but these shifts do reflect a mainstreaming of political advocacy across a wide range of groups.

The Impact of LGBT Activism

Four policy areas have had particular relevance for advocates of change in Ontario, and other jurisdictions across and beyond Canada: human rights provisions on discrimination, family rights, policing, and schooling. These are areas that vary significantly in the jurisdictional role of various levels of government, in the timing of their prioritization by the LGBT movement, and in the impact of that movement. In fact, any attempt to generalize about the immovability or deep embeddedness of state regulatory regimes is limited by such wide variation in impact and outcome.

Policing

Up to the 1980s, police raids against institutions frequented by gay men, lesbians, and trans people were commonplace in major Ontario cities, as they were in several other Canadian cities. Between 1975 and 1984, several large scale and high profile raids were undertaken against such institutions in Toronto and Ottawa, and until the early 1980s, police attackers could rely on public support, media acquiescence, and guilty pleas from the majority of those arrested.¹³

The massive Toronto raids of February 1981 broke all records in the size of the operation and the numbers arrested (300). In a community where activist networks had been slowly building, large numbers rallied to the Right to Privacy Committee, which then developed a

systematic legal strategy and raised a defense fund to back up those who were willing to fight the charges. The vast majority did so, and won in court. At the same time, blunt criticism of the police action was coming from a majority of Toronto's city council, civil libertarians, a wide range of other social movement allies, and much of the mass media – all provoked by the scale and ferocity of the police action targeting an increasingly visible and well organized gay and lesbian community.

This constituted a major set-back for traditional policing responses to lesbian and gay visibility. There had been shifts toward more reformist approaches to policing in a number of American cities, but in the early 1980s this was barely evident in Canada.¹⁴ In large Ontario cities, Ottawa was the first to see major advances toward community-linked policing that was respectful of sexual minorities, with the choice of Brian Ford as chief in 1993.¹⁵ In Toronto, the 1995 selection of David Boothby as chief signaled a degree of movement toward reformism, but that was largely undone while Julian Fantino was chief from 2000 to 2005. Chiefs since then, particularly William Blair, have pursued a more inclusive approach to policing, and there is now at the very least a rhetorical commitment to LGBT inclusivity. In Toronto as in other cities, even if there are still important irritants in the relationship between sexual minorities and police, large-scale concerted attacks on LGBT institutions that were once so commonplace are also much less likely.

Activists have sought more than just an end to police harassment. They have also wanted violence directed at sexual minorities taken more seriously. Police forces across Ontario, like their counterparts elsewhere, had a long record of almost entirely ignoring homophobic and transphobic violence, and LGBT calls for change intensified in the early 1990s. Doug Janoff reports that since then much has changed in responsiveness to such demands in major police forces across the country, with Toronto and Ottawa each taking creditable steps.¹⁶ However, he is quick to point out inadequacies or unevenness in police response – a point reinforced by the readiness of police officers in downtown Toronto to harass lesbian and gay institutions in the early 2000s.

It is still true that the majority of Ontario (and Canadian) police officers maintain an organizational culture that is traditionally masculinist and reluctant to embrace sexual diversity, which results in only a tiny minority of officers willing to be fully out as gay or lesbian. Within major segments of Ontario's police forces, there remains a willingness to target those activities or groups considered not part of the "respectable" lesbian and gay community – sex workers or trans people for example – or to underplay threats to their safety. There is still a tendency for erotic material that pushes the boundaries of queer sexuality to be more heavily policed (for e.g. by customs officers) than other material. There can be no serious doubt that the decades of work on policing issues have had significant impact, but the changes have been uneven. The fact that Toronto voters in 2010 chose as mayor a politician (Rob Ford) fully prepared to be disdainful of the LGBT community by opting for a family bar-b-q over attendance at Toronto's 2011 Pride march is another illustration of the unevenness of recognition in a city widely recognized as LGBT-friendly.

Human Rights

Even at the height of liberationist condemnation of existing social and political institutions, lesbian and gay activists were pressing human rights claims. After sustained campaigning led by the Gay Alliance Toward Equality, Toronto in 1973 became the first municipality in Canada, and one of the first in North America, to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.¹⁷ In 1976, Ottawa became the second Canadian city to do so, and one year after that Windsor became the third.¹⁸ As we have already seen, such change in formal policy did not stop police raids directed at institutions with gay and lesbian clientele, though it provided a legal platform to press for further change, and it gave gays and lesbians a foothold in local mainstream politics.

At the provincial level, the 1975 establishment of the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario focussed attention on the inclusion of sexual orientation in Ontario's Human Rights Code. Every time that changes to the code on other fronts were open for debate in the provincial legislature, CGRO and then CLGRO presented the case for including sexual orientation, first in its 1976 brief *The Homosexual Minority in Ontario*. The first serious opportunity for change, however, occurred only in the mid-1980s, with the electoral defeat of the Ontario Conservatives, and the coming into force of Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In 1985, a minority Liberal government took office, dependent on NDP support, at a time when lesbian and gay activism had expanded and deepened its foundations. A government bill to bring various provincial statutes into line with Section 15 of the Canadian Charter, introduced by the provincial government in late 1985, then provided a potential vehicle for an amendment to the Human Rights Code on sexual orientation. Already, many judicial experts were coming to the view that courts would soon come to recognize sexual orientation as an equity ground analogous to those that were explicitly named in Section 15, thereby prohibiting discrimination constitutionally.

This time, the Right to Privacy Committee, which had led the response to bath house raids in Toronto, joined CLGRO, adding its considerable experience in grass roots mobilization and the use of mainstream media.¹⁹ The previous work of both groups helped secure the support of labour unions, women's movement groups, progressive religious leaders (Christian and Jewish), and many politicians. The fact that the very high profile Ian Scott, then Justice Minister, was eventually convinced of the worthiness of such an amendment added significantly to the leverage available for change. Bill 7, containing the provision adding sexual orientation to the OHRC, was passed at the end of 1986, making Ontario the second province (after Quebec) to do so.

Transgender rights had been barely mentioned by activists or legislative reformers up to and including this time. The heightened visibility and activist mobilization around trans issues in the mid-1990s increased pressure for change. So did growing evidence of the prejudice and hardship facing trans people, born of persistent and profound unease with the kind of gender ambiguity or gender crossing that they are seen to embody.²⁰ In 2000, the Ontario Human Rights Commission approved a policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment based on gender identity, interpreting this as covered under the category of "sex."²¹ Trans advocates have long

argued for explicit reference to gender identity, rather than coverage under other terms, but the Commission's interpretive strategy added legitimacy to the cause and opened the door to formal complaints. Attempts have been made to introduce amendments adding gender identity to the OHRC, and by 2011 such efforts had the backing of LGBT advocacy groups, several important labour unions, and politicians from all parties in the provincial legislature. They also had the support of Barbara Hall, chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.²²

Family Rights

The late 1980s and early '90s intensification of activist pressure to publicly recognize same-sex couples soon had an impact in law, public policy, and the institutional practice of employers. What was at stake were hundreds of provincial statutes covering family law, medical decision-making, inheritance, taxation, and access to social supports. There were also workplace benefits being sought for employee partners in both the public and private sectors, and access to religious blessings or full marriage within faith communities.

Parenting rights became more prominent in this agenda at this time. These were not new issues, since lesbian mothers and gay fathers had long been threatened with loss of custody of children born of earlier heterosexual relationships. From the mid-80s on, however, there were opportunities for lesbian couples in particular to access anonymously-donated sperm, often through American providers, widening the population of same-sex couples having children. This baby boom led to more couples going to court to secure adoption rights for the non-biological parent, and regularly confronting judges with de facto functioning families.

In 1986, Hamilton became the first big city in Canada to extend workplace benefits for its own employees to same-sex partners. Two years later, an Ontario Court ruling denied a provincial health insurance benefit claim by Karen Andrews (*Andrews v. Ontario*). However, within a very short time, the momentum behind the campaign for workplace recognition picked up speed. By decade's end, Toronto Public Libraries and Ryerson University extended their own benefit programs to cover same-sex couples. In 1990, Toronto became the second big city in the country to change its employee benefits, followed very quickly by Vancouver and Montreal. Within three years, Windsor, Ottawa, and Kitchener followed suit.²³

In 1991, Ontario and Manitoba became the second and third senior government jurisdictions in Canada (after the Yukon Territory, in 1988) to extend their employees' benefit plans, something that public sector unions had been pressing for. In 1992, an Ontario appeal court ruled in a relationship case (*Haig and Birch v. Canada*) that the Canadian Human Rights Act ought to be read as if it included sexual orientation. One year later, the Supreme Court of Canada turned down Brian Mossop's claim for a partner benefit, but the ruling implied that an argument based on sexual orientation (as distinct from marital status) might have won the day. This sent a strong signal to courts and tribunals across the country, and the success rate of workplace grievances claiming benefits for same-sex partners suddenly increased.²⁴

What seemed to be a period of "take-off" in wins for lesbian and gay couples was set back in 1994, with the defeat of legislation recognizing same-sex relationships introduced by the provincial NDP government.²⁵ Impressive LGBT activist mobilization in support of the measure

was outgunned by the religious right, and undermined by divisions inside the NDP. The opposition Liberal Party ended up almost entirely opposed to the bill, and the Conservatives remained implacably opposed from start to finish. The defeat of the legislation seemed likely to push family claims to the margins for some years.

That is not what happened. Claims for relationship and parenting claims escalated, and won with greater and greater frequency. In 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled against a same-sex benefit claim in the *Egan* case, but in so doing made it clear that sexual orientation discrimination was covered by Section 15 of the Charter. In that same year, an Ontario court recognized the rights and obligations of non-biological parents in a case brought by four lesbian couples (*re K. and B.*) – a ruling that was soon interpreted as allowing simultaneous or joint parental adoption by same-sex couples. This was the same year as BC was pioneering legislative steps to recognize lesbian and gay parenting rights – significantly in advance of similar moves by other provincial governments. Taken together, these were among the most significant early steps toward the official recognition of lesbian and gay parenting rights in the world.²⁶

In 1999, the Supreme Court of Canada's delivered a monumentally important ruling in *M. v. H.*, striking down the exclusion of lesbian and gay couples in Ontario family law. This removed any doubts that de facto same-sex couples would be given the same treatment as heterosexual common law couples – this in a province (like most others) in which such couples had acquired much of the legal recognition accorded married couples.²⁷ Within a short time of that decision, Ontario's Conservative government introduced, grudgingly, a bill comprehensively recognizing same-sex relationships, securing agreement with other parties in the legislature to ensure rapid passage.

There were still family issues to resolve, including the right to register two parents of the same sex on a child's birth certificate, an issue ruled on favourably in 2006 by an Ontario court (*M.D.R. v. Ontario*). New federal legislation on reproductive technologies formally prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation, but posed challenges for lesbians and gay men seeking assisted reproduction because of prohibitions on paying for reproductive material.

When marriage became a priority for at least some important parts of the LGBT movement, after so many gains secured through claiming equivalence to heterosexual common law relationships, victory came quickly. Two of the carefully prepared constitutional challenges on marriage emerged in Ontario, one of them (begun in 2000) launched in Toronto on behalf of eight same-sex couples (*Halpern, et al.*). It was this case that resulted in a 2003 victory at the Ontario Court of Appeal, with a ruling that opened up the right to marriage immediately.²⁸ This effectively brought same-sex marriage to Canada, since there was no residency requirement. The decision by the federal government to not appeal that ruling made clear that there was widespread judicial consensus on the constitutional impossibility of excluding lesbian and gay couples from marriage. In 2005, the same year that the federal Parliament approved a formal change in the definition of marriage, the Ontario legislature passed a bill altering 170 provincial statutes to bring them into line with the changed definition of marriage.

While all this was playing out in courts and legislatures, unions and employee groups were pressing for inclusive benefit plans, and other LGBT-related initiatives, and were given

important leverage by court rulings in Ontario at the Supreme Court from the early 1990s on. Before 1992, not a single large Canadian corporation had extended benefits to same-sex couples. By 1998, though, more than half of the country's twenty-five largest firms (most of them headquartered in Toronto) had done so, and at decade's end almost all the rest had done so. The adoption of proactive strategies to ensure LGBT inclusivity would routinely take much longer than this, but by the mid-2000s, even the otherwise laggardly banks were adopting assertive campaigns to convince their employees and customers of their progressiveness on this front.²⁹

As political and legal debate over the recognition of LGBT family rights was intensifying, pressure to support such recognition was mounting in many Christian and Jewish faith communities. In Ontario as well as elsewhere in Canada, engagement with this advocacy resulted in the development of blessings for same-sex couples by the early 2000s, for example in the Metropolitan Community Church and the United Church of Canada. Toronto's MCC congregation and its leadership were also at the forefront of the legal challenge to exclusionary marriage.

Schooling

There may well be no policy area in which significant change has been harder to effect than in schooling.³⁰ Activist groups at the school board and provincial levels in Ontario have been pressing for greater LGBT inclusiveness for as long as anywhere in Canada, and they have made significant policy gains in several of the province's largest school boards. But indications at the school level are that inclusive policies have had only uneven effect even in Toronto, whose public school board has for so long taken the lead. At the provincial level, Ontario's education ministry has taken important steps but only in recent years and in the face of considerable resistance. On this front no province or territory can claim to have leapt ahead of others in developing effective policies for challenging heterosexist school climates, and none has come even close to creating comprehensive policies to create equitable school practices.³¹

Early activist attacks on discrimination against teachers, in the 1970s, produced no discernable change. The mid-1980s, though, saw increased and sustained activist attention to schools, especially in Toronto. The urgent need for public education in the early years of the AIDS epidemic provided some leverage for calls to enhance sex education in schools, and to recognize sexual diversity. This led to the provincial government requiring AIDS education in schools, though in retrospect it did not lead to the widespread change in approach to sex education that advocates had hoped for.³² From the mid-1980s on, there was also increased advocacy and public policy interest in harassment and violence in schools.

What change has this provoked at the provincial level? The appropriate measure for this is not necessarily just the inclusion of sexual orientation or gender identity into generic policies addressing school bullying or discrimination, unless they are backed with substantial policy backup recognizing the distinctiveness of these particular dimensions of marginalization. (The same could and should be said for other equity dimensions such as race, religion, Aboriginal status, gender, and dis/ability.) For example, the Ontario governments did include sexual orientation in its 1994 "violence-free schools policy," and again in the 2001 Safe Schools Act,

but there is no evidence from the policy discussions leading up to them, or in the administrative follow-up, of concerted action on sexual diversity.

The first real indication of serious provincial attention was in the late 2000s.³³ In 2008, Ontario's education minister, Kathleen Wynne, asked a school safety task force to follow up its earlier work by looking specifically at harassment and violence based on sexuality and gender. What came of that was *Shaping a Culture of Respect*, a report that recommended a comprehensive strategy that included curricular change as well as other measures explicitly addressing the prevention of bullying based on sex and gender. In 2009, the provincial legislature approved the *Keep Our Kids Safe at School Act*, which stiffened the requirements for reporting harassment, including "racist/sexist or homophobic remarks." The ministry followed this up with an official directive to school boards requiring that their policies on bullying and harassment had to attend to sexual orientation and gender identity.³⁴ In the same year, the ministry issued another memorandum (# 119) requiring boards to develop equity policies that included the full range of equity dimensions – sexual orientation among them.³⁵ In all these developments, in contrast to early legislative and administrative moves that referenced sexual diversity, these issues were now front and centre in policy discussions.

At the end of 2011, the Premier and his education minister introduced the *Accepting Schools Act*, which toughened penalties for bullying and hate-motivated acts, required boards to develop equity policies, obliged them to support students who want to create groups or activities (including gay-straight alliances) aimed at inclusivity, and designated a week in November as Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week.

However, in the midst of this policy expansion, a major controversy emerged over sex education that reminded LGBT activists and policy makers that no sea change was yet in prospect.³⁶ In 2008 and 2009, a new elementary school curriculum on Health and Physical Education was being prepared, one that included sex education (as it had before). Following sustained pressure from educational reformers over many years, the new curriculum aimed to increase classroom recognition of the sexual diversity of students, their parents, and the wider population. It also sought to keep up with the kind of sexual knowledge that students were acquiring at ever-younger ages. The new curriculum was released, apparently without controversy, in early 2010, but then became the focus of attack by religious conservatives – enough to lead Premier Dalton McGuinty to withdraw the sex education components for further consultation. This was the first time that any of the education ministry's initiatives on sexuality had come under fire. The provincial Conservatives immediately adopted a posture of outrage on the curricular changes, contributing to distortions promoted by the most extreme of evangelical protesters.³⁷

Starting in 2010, there was also some push back from the Roman Catholic school system, not only on the new curriculum but also on other equity initiatives from the provincial government. Catholic educators had been involved in policy discussions leading up to all these developments, including the new curriculum, but the dissent was now coming mostly from bishops and elected school trustees. In 2010 they insisted on their right to interpret any new sex education curriculum in light of official church doctrine. In 2011, some school boards were

publicly resisting pressure from their own students and the provincial government to support the creation of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs).³⁸ The GSA name itself became a symbolic focal point, many Catholic trustees seeing it as legitimizing homosexual activity. The provincial government eventually compromised in requiring that groups promoting understanding of sexual diversity need not use the GSA name, though holding to the requirement that schools ensure the establishment of student-led groups to address the issues at stake.

It is true that a generally-cautious Liberal government had taken among the first significant steps of any Canadian provincial government in recognizing the particular dimensions of schooling issues related to sexual diversity. These were small steps, however, with no assurance that implementation would be seriously monitored or that significant resources would be attached to board initiatives. The provincial Conservatives having already signaled their willingness to campaign against other parties on the basis of issues like sex education, the likelihood of continuing political caution is high.

What about school boards? Some years before serious provincial policy response to LGBT advocacy, the first major steps taken in response to this pressure had been at the school board level – in Toronto especially. In fact, that city’s public school board was the first in Canada to adopt policies specifically addressing sexual diversity, though it could hardly claim to have moved early or rapidly. In 1987, trustees approved a policy allowing lesbian/gay speakers in schools, though with a policy still in place that prohibited “proselytizing” homosexuality (instituted only a few years earlier). After prolonged debate, the board also created a staff training and student counseling program in human sexuality.

Between 1990 and 1992, led by openly gay trustee John Campey, reformist advocates succeeded in getting board approval for an instructional unit on sexual diversity in health education for senior high school students, the inclusion of sexual orientation in harassment and anti-discrimination policies, and the expansion of a new equity office’s mandate to include sexual orientation. In 1995, the board launched the Triangle Program – a form of LGBT-positive alternative school for students who were in difficulty over these issues in their regular schools.

Municipal amalgamation in 1998 presented new challenges with the board’s expansion to include areas of Metropolitan Toronto that had barely addressed sexual diversity. After much struggle, an equity policy was approved that included provisions on LGBT inclusivity as comprehensive as any major school board in North American (the only rival being San Francisco). Its stipulations on anti-homophobia practices in schools and classrooms included insistence that the curriculum reflect this alongside other forms of diversity.

Since then, other Ontario boards have adopted LGBT-positive policies. These include Thames Valley (centred on London), Ottawa-Carleton, and a couple of boards in the Greater Toronto Area. In some cases, there is an excessively narrow focus on harassment and bullying, though the urgency associated with this issue has at times provide leverage for a broader agenda.

Implementation is another matter, as Tim McCaskell has so forcibly argued in respect to the Toronto board, and as my own informal inquiries have confirmed.³⁹ The systematic application of any equity policy is challenging enough, but more so if teachers and

administrators fear that some topics are especially controversial. This remains the case for sexuality generally, and for sexual diversity more particularly.⁴⁰

Changing school practices and climates is a formidable task. The attitudes and behaviours of students, and the expectations of so many of their parents, leads to deeply-embedded reinforcements of traditional gender roles, and a form of policing at the boundaries of gender norms. This affects what is expected of all students, but has a particularly harsh impact on young people who feel or behave at variance from such gender constructs, or who have friends and family who do not conform. Advocacy for LGBT inclusivity directed to schools, boards, and the provincial education ministry has born fruit in the policies of several school boards, in the creation of many GSAs, and in the belated development of provincial equity and harassment policies. These are the first steps in a long and difficult process, one that has produced some schools that are immensely better equipped to deal with sexual diversity than they were a generation ago, but many others that have barely opened the windows to reformist air.

Visibility and Shifts in Public Attitudes

One significant indicator of social movement impact is the extraordinary increase in LGBT visibility in Ontario. Toronto's Pride march, attracting about 1 million people, is one of the world's largest, and most other major Ontario cities have either large pride celebrations of their own or other forms of visible representation of sexual diversity. There has also been an important increase in the visible representation of sexual minorities in Ontario politics, though not as dramatic as in the increase in overall "social" visibility. George Hislop's 1981 candidacies for Toronto city council and for provincial legislative election were among the country's first, though unsuccessful. Kyle Rae was elected to Toronto council in 1991, bringing with him a strong history of lesbian and gay advocacy. Alex Munter did the same when he came out while a city councilor in Ottawa in 1993. The provincial legislature saw its first openly-LGBT member only in 1999, with the election of George Smitherman as a Liberal. NDP candidate Paul Ferreira joined that small club in 2007, as did former Winnipeg mayor Glen Murray in 2010. By then Liberal member Kathleen Wynne was clearly out as lesbian. All three of the Liberals have been members of the provincial cabinet. Within their party, and even more obviously in the NDP, activists had made significant gains in securing approval of LGBT policies, though as we will see the preparedness of the provincial Conservatives to deploy anti-gay rhetoric is capable of reinforcing the long-standing caution of the Liberal Party's legislative leadership on these issues.

The visibility of gays, lesbians, and to a lesser extent bisexuals and trans people, along with the activist success in legitimizing political claims, has radically shifted public opinion on several LGBT-related issue fronts in Canada.⁴¹ The typical response of Ontarians tracks close to the Canadian average. A 2006 Environics poll illustrates this, showing 56 percent of Ontarians supportive of same-sex marriage, lower than the 64 percent in Atlantic Canada, 65 percent in BC, and 67 percent in Quebec, but higher than Alberta and the other prairie provinces.⁴² In all regions, this represents a major change from the beginning of the decade, when the marriage

issue increased its political priority. On issues that have a longer history of visibility, for example the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation, the increase in support from the 1970s to the late 2000s is immense. There is much less public “comfort” with issues related to children. Well over three-quarters of Ontarians (and Canadians) support barring discrimination based on sexual orientation; barely half support equal rights on adoption.⁴³ Although polling evidence on transgenderism is essentially unavailable in Canada, we know from American studies that public attitudes have travelled much less towards acceptance than for gay and lesbian issues. Even there, however, attitude shifts toward more inclusive stances have unquestionably been substantial over the last three decades.

There has been visible opposition to lesbian/gay rights in Ontario, with evangelical Protestants and conservative Catholics typically in the lead. A “religiosity” index compiled by Warren Clark and Grant Schellenburg, using 2002 data, showed 33 percent of Ontarians scoring “high,” compared to 29 percent Canada-wide.⁴⁴ Forty-seven percent of Ontarians said that religion was important in their lives, slightly higher than the Canadian average of 44 percent. According to Kurt Bowen, in the late 1990s, 17 percent of “religiously committed” Ontarians were conservative protestant, about the Canadian average, in contrast to only 6 percent of Quebeckers at one end of the spectrum, and 38 percent of Albertans at the other.⁴⁵ In recent years, most political organizing by Ontario-based religious conservatives has focused on federal politics, so there is little in the way of sustained religious right institutionalization at the provincial or local level. The controversy over sex education revealed that such institutional development is not a prerequisite to the creation of disconcerting public opposition on LGBT issues, though it reduces the capacity for “routine” mobilization.

Conclusion

In Ontario, as elsewhere in Canada, there remains a sizeable minority of the population profoundly uneasy about the public recognition of sexual diversity. There are also areas of state policy in which change has been slow, and uneven in application. That said, the larger story remains one of significant accomplishment of an array of Ontario’s LGBT advocacy groups. Across the province, including Toronto, the expansion of a politicized movement during the 1960s and ‘70s was slower than in large U.S. cities. But when activist networks expanded in the 1980s, they faced a smaller and less well organized religious right than their American counterparts, and benefited from a more favourable legal and constitutional context. With far fewer resources than U.S. groups were able to muster, they accomplished much more in changing state policy, particularly during the 1980s and ‘90s. Areas in which the most notable advances have been made have been in formal non-discrimination policies and in the official recognition of lesbian and gay family rights. This change has been easier during NDP and Liberal governments (1985-95 and from 2003 on) than when Conservatives were in power (up to 1985 and from 1995-2003), though pressure imposed by the Charter, and by courts interpreting it, have led to some changes in official policy under governments entirely unfriendly to sexual

minorities.⁴⁶ At the local level, major changes have also been easier during times when city councils have had reformist majorities.

In Ontario as in other parts of Canada and the western world, sustained advocacy and enhanced visibility in most of the province's major cities, and several smaller centres, has contributed to a steady and significant shift of public attitudes toward greater acceptance of lesbians and gays. It is especially notable that beliefs have swung so dramatically toward acceptance of sexual diversity in a province that has witnessed huge waves of migration from parts of the world in which public sentiments are much less accepting.

There is no doubt, however, that there are limits to this change. The barriers to real inclusivity are particularly striking in schooling, but are also recurrently evident in the behaviour of police officers. The official recognition of family rights for same-sex couples has been translated into equitable practices in some social agencies providing relevant services, for example in adoption and fostering, but not all. Faith-based organizations are often, though not always, particularly reluctant to recognize the legitimacy of LGBT families. Across the issue spectrum, the willingness to fully accept transgenderism or bisexuality is significantly more limited than the preparedness to respond favorably to "straight-forward" homosexuality. And across all issue areas, there is no question that invidious distinctions are created between those lesbians and gays who appear "respectable," or who have other middle class credentials, and others whose demeanor or social background deviates more from what is thought normal or safe.

We also know from the controversy over sex education that the caution of state officials and the general public is substantially heightened when LGBT advocacy affects young people. Sexual desire among children and adolescents is widely viewed as fraught with danger, and talk of sexual diversity in such populations all too easily provokes deep anxieties. People who are otherwise supportive of the equitable treatment of sexual minorities often have hesitations over questions like adoption, even more about what is taught in schools.

In all these respects, the dramatic victories, the long struggles, the strengths of the activist movement and its weaknesses, and the timing of change in state policy, Ontario's story is part of a cross-country narrative that has more striking commonalities than differences. The priorities of LGBT advocates have not differed markedly from one region to another, or not for long, and the areas in which they have made the most gains have strong elements of similarity, particularly in the country's largest provinces. There are, to be sure, regions where activist visibility has been harder to establish or sustain, and where the forces of resistance have been more daunting, but even there we find enormous changes in public attitudes and public policy. In Ontario's cities as in urban areas across much of the country, the activists who launched the modern LGBT movement decades ago could scarcely have imagined what impact their work would have.

Notes

¹ This paper has benefited from comments by Manon Tremblay (University of Ottawa), and Jerry Sabin (University of Toronto), to whom I am very grateful.

2. In this claim, I am respectfully differing from Peter Knegt, in his brief and artful overview of LGBT politics in *About Canada: Queer Rights* (Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood, 2011), chap 2. I am also taking a position different at least in degree from many writers who set the Quebec case as categorically different from the rest of Canada, including the very incisive Barry Adam, for e.g. in his “Moral Regulation and the Disintegrating Canadian State,” pp. 12-29 in *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, ed. Barry Adam, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and André Krouwel (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), and Karl Stychin, *A Nation by Rights*: (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

3. On this and other aspects of early LGBT Canadian history, see Barry Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, rev. ed. (Boston: Twayne, 1995); Don McLeod, *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1964-1975* (Toronto: ECW Press/Homewood Books, 1996), Tom Warner, *Never Going Back: A History of Queer Activism in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexualities*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Black Rose Books, 1996); Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); Becki Ross, *The House that Jill Built: A Lesbian Nation in Formation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Ed Jackson and Stan Persky, *Flaunting It! A Decade of Gay Journalism from The Body Politic* (Vancouver and Toronto: New Star Books and Pink Triangle Press, 1982); and Peter Knegt, *About Canada: Queer Rights*. On Ottawa, see Patrizia Gentile, “Capital Queers: Social Memory and Queer Place(s) in Cold War Ottawa,” in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, ed. James Opp and John Walsh (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).

4. On Egan’s remarkable story, see Jim Egan, *Challenging the Conspiracy of Silence: My Life as a Canadian Gay Activist*, compiled and edited by Donald McLeod (Toronto: Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives and Homewood Books, 1998).

⁵ See Donald W. McLeod, *A Brief History of Gay: Canada’s First Gay Tabloid, 1964-1966* (Toronto: Homewood Books, 2003).

6. See also Catherine Jean Nash, “Contesting Identity: Politics of Gays and Lesbians in Toronto in the 1970s,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 12, 1 (2008): 113-35.

7. Tom Warner, a leading figure in CLGRO since its founding, has two books chronicling the rise of LGBT activism (and its opposition) in Canada, *Never Going Back*, and *Losing Control: Canada’s Social Conservatives in the Age of Rights* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010)

⁸ Until this time, the 1977 police raid on the Truxx bar in Montreal had provoked the largest mass response in Canada, bringing 2000 people to a street demonstration. The 1981 Toronto raids brought 3,000 people into the streets one night later, and even more came out to a second demonstration two weeks later (see Gerald Hannon, “Raids, Rage and Bowdyhouses,” pp. 273-94 in *Flaunting It!*, ed. Jackson and Persky. Just as imposing was the sustained organizational response to legal charges levied against so many people, and fundraising for a \$300,000 legal defense fund for those arrested in the bathhouse raids, and over \$200,000 for *The Body Politic* legal costs.

⁹ Miriam Smith’s work on LGBT politics in Canada highlights the importance of institutions generally, and the Charter in particular. See *Lesbian and Gay Rights in Canada: Social Movements and Equality Seeking, 1971-1995* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); and *Political Institutions and Lesbian and Gay Rights in the United States and Canada* (New York:

Routledge, 2008).

10. On the crucial role of unions in LGBT advocacy, see Gerald Hunt, ed., *Laboring for Rights: Unions and Sexual Diversity Across Nations* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); and Gerald Hunt and David Rayside, ed., *Equity and Diversity in Canadian Labour* (Toronto: University of Toronto Library, 2007).

11. On this, see Tim McCaskell, *Race to Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2005); and my own, *Queer Inclusions, Continental Divisions: Public Recognition of Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), chaps. 3 and 8.

¹² The list is of LGBT and LGBT-friendly organizations, programs, and resources. See *My GSA: Equity and Inclusive Education Resource Kit for Ontario High Schools* (Toronto: Egale Canada, 2011).

13. See Warner, *Never Gong Back*, chap. 4, and Gerald Hannon, “Raids, Rage and Bawdyhouses.”

14. In 1984, Clifford Shearing, a University of Toronto criminologist familiar with Canadian policing issues could name only one reformist chief of a big city police force in Canada – and that was in Calgary (in personal conversation during the preparations for a conference on policing in Canada held later that year at the University of Toronto).

15. A liaison committee for the LGBT community had been meeting since 1991 – one of the first such groups formed in Canada – though Ford’s appointment led to this and other initiatives having more substance.

16. Douglas Janoff, *Pink Blood: Homophobic Violence in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), chap. 6.

17. San Francisco took this step one year earlier, as did two university towns in Michigan.

18. I had this information compiled for *Queer Inclusions*, p 96.

19. I have written about this in “Gay Rights and Family Values: The Passage of Bill 7 in Ontario,” *Studies in Political Economy*, no 26 (1988): 109-47. See also Didi Herman, *Rights of Passage: Struggles for Lesbian and Gay Legal Equality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); and Warner, *Never Going Back*, chap. 4.

20. Hard data or systematic evidence on popular attitudes toward gender ambiguity in general, and transgenderism in particular, are scarce. One of the most important studies of discrimination is American – Jamie Grant, et al., *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011). There is not a shred of even the most informal evidence that the situation of Canadian trans people is any better.

21. OHRC, *Policy on Discrimination and Harrassment Because of Gender Identity*, 2000 (<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent/pdf>).

22. In 2008, the provincial government “re-listed” reassignment surgery, technically opening the door to the coverage of costs through medicare. On the other hand, those seeking gender reassignment face huge administrative and screening hurdles that make such coverage exceedingly difficult to obtain. See Nikki Stratigacos, “Sex for Sale: Prostitution, Government, and Regulation,” paper presented to *Sex for Sale*, a conference organized by the Sexual Diversity Studies Student Union, University of Toronto, March 2009.

23. These are data collected in preparation for *Queer Inclusions*, chap. 4.

24. See Cynthia Petersen, “Fighting it Out in Canadian Courts,” pp. 37-57 in *Laboring for Rights*, ed. Hunt.

²⁵ See my *On the Fringe: Gays and Lesbians in Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), chap. 5.

26. The mid-1990s saw important gains on adoption in the U.S. states of Vermont, New Jersey, California, and New York. Prior to this, as in Canada, there had been scattered court rulings that were favourable to lesbians and gay men on custody and visitation rights, and on fostering, though it took some time for a judicial consensus to arise on such issues (and there are some indications that such consensus still does not exist in the U.S.) European states that were comparatively advanced on other LGBT fronts were not on parenting rights, to the extent that in Belgium and the Netherlands, the extension of marriage rights in the 2000s included significant limitations on parental rights. See my *Queer Inclusions*, chaps 7 and 10, and on the Dutch case, Gert Hekma and Jan Willem Duyvendak, “The Netherlands: Depoliticization of Homosexuality and Homosexualization of Politics,” pp. 103-18 in *The Lesbian and Gay Movement and the State*, ed. Manon Tremblay, David Paternotte, and Carol Johnson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011)

²⁷ Quebec is an important exception, since that province’s Civil Code provided significantly fewer such rights than was available in the “common law” provinces.

²⁸ Favourable court rulings on marriage had come from other jurisdictions shortly before, but with delayed application pending appeal. The Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that its favourable decision would take effect immediately.

29. The TD Bank was a leader in this, evidenced in part by its lead sponsorship of Toronto Pride and its support for a wide range of other LGBT-related community initiatives.

³⁰ On schooling in Canada, see Catherine Taylor and Tracey Peter, *Every Class in Every School: Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools* (Toronto: Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2011); Tim McCaskell, *Race to Equity*, Tom Warner, *Never Going Back*, 2002, James McNinch and Mary Cronin, eds., *I Could Not Speak My Heart: Education and Social Justice for Gay and Lesbian Youth* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2004); Elizabeth J. Meyer and David Stader, “Queer Youth and the Culture Wars: From Classroom to Courtroom in Australia, Canada, and the United States,” *Journal of LGBT Youth* 6, 2 (April 2009): 135-54; and my own *Queer Inclusions*, chap. 8. For an important Ontario government report on school climate, see Safe Schools Action Team, Ontario Ministry of Education, *Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships: Safe Schools Action Team Report on Gender-based Violence, Homophobia, Sexual Harassment, and Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour in Schools* (Toronto: Government of Ontario, 2008).

³¹ The Quebec government launched an anti-homophobia campaign in 2009, and two years later indicated that school policies should include attention to homophobia, but the education ministry there has remained remarkably unspecific in its attention to sexual diversity, and has kept the focus narrowly on the question of bullying. On the Quebec case, see Gabrielle Richard, *L’Éducation “aux orientations sexuelles” : Représentations de l’homosexualité dans les curricula formel et informel de l’école secondaire Québécoise*, M.A. thesis Université du Québec à Montréal, 2010); and Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Homophobia: Let’s Work on It Together: Action Plan to Prevent and Deal with Violence in the Schools, 2008-2011, Reference Tool*.

32. See Rayside, *Queer Inclusions*, pp. 222-23; McCaskell, *The Race to Equity*, chap. 9; and David Rayside and Evert Lindquist, "AIDS Activism and the State in Canada," *Studies in Political Economy*, no. 39 (Autumn, 1992): 37-76.

³³ This is several years after several U.S. states had developed assertive LGBT-specific policies, starting with Massachusetts in 1993. See Arthur Lipkin, *Understanding Homosexuality, Changing Schools* (Boulder: Westview, 2001); Dan Woog, *School's Out: The Impact of Gay and Lesbian Issues on America's Schools* (Boston: Alyson, 1995); and for my own overview of such developments, see *Queer Inclusions*, chap. 9.

³⁴ Memorandum # 144: "Bullying Prevention and Intervention" (2009). On p. 7 it indicates that "training strategies must include ways of responding to gender-based and homophobic bullying that are consistent with equity training on cultural sensitivity, on respect for diversity, and on special education needs."

³⁵ In the same year, the ministry issues a strategy document – *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 2009). Gender identity is not explicitly included in this document or in the strategy released prior to the memorandum.

36. More detail about this controversy can be found in my "Sex Ed in Ontario: Religious Mobilization and Socio-Cultural Anxiety," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Montreal, June 2010.

³⁷ Charles McVety, an evangelical Christian with a long record of opposing LGBT rights, headed the Canadian Family Action Coalition, and had led the charge against the new curriculum starting in April 2010.

³⁸ See, for example, Sheila Dabu Nonato, "Ontario, Catholic Schools Face Off Over Gay-Straight Alliances," *National Post*, 2 February 2012.

39. McCaskell, *Race to Equity*, chap. 17.

40. Margaret Schneider and Anne Dimito surveyed 132 Ontario teachers in 2003, focussing on views about raising LGBT issues in school, and found considerable uncertainties about broaching these questions in class: "Educators' Beliefs about Raising Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender issues in the Schools: The Experience in Ontario, Canada," *Journal of LGBT Youth* 5, 4 (2008): 49-71.

⁴¹ See Amy Langstaff, "A Twenty-Year Survey of Canadian Attitudes towards Homosexuality and Gay Rights," pp. 49-66 in *Faith, Politics, and Sexual Diversity in Canada and the United States*, ed. David Rayside and Clyde Wilcox (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011); and for earlier polling results, David Rayside and Scott Bowler, "Public Opinion and Gay Rights," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 25 (November 1988): 649-60..

42. See my *Queer Inclusions*, pp. 50-52.

43. This is shown in mid-2000s polling by Gallup and Environics, reported in my *Queer Inclusions*, pp. 47-52.

44. The index included responses to question about the importance of religion in one's life and attendance at religious services, "Who's Religious?," Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada, 2006 (www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2006001/9181-eng.htm). "High" religiosity scorers in other regions were 24 percent in Quebec, 25 percent in BC, 31 percent on the prairies, and 36 percent in the Atlantic region.

45. *Christians in a Secular World: The Canadian Experience* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2004), pp. 54-55.

46. For analyses of provincial party politics in Ontario, see Robert Williams, "Ontario Party Politics in the 1990s: Comfort Meets Conviction," *Government and Politics of Ontario*, 5th ed., ed. Graham White, pp. 216-235 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Randall White, *Ontario Since 1985* (Toronto: Eastendbooks, 1998); John Ibbitson, *Promised Land: Inside the Mike Harris Revolution* (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1997); Peter Woolstencroft, "More than a Guard Change: Politics in the New Ontario," *Revolution at Queen's Park*, ed. Sid Noel, 38-54 (Toronto: Lorimer, 1997). Moral traditionalism has not been central to the priorities of the provincial PCs, nor to its typical electioneering, but there is no doubt that most of its legislators have been opposed to every significant LGBT rights claim.