

Submission to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights Respecting Bill C-6

December 2, 2020

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Most Canadians would likely agree that forced or coercive conversion therapy of any sort should be prohibited. However, the clumsily worded and deeply flawed Bill C-6 is a far cry from representing the views of the average Canadian. The preamble of the Bill itself contains a highly inaccurate and arguably mendacious presupposition that it is a “*myth that a person’s sexual orientation and gender identity **can** and ought to be changed.*” While some might argue that no one has the right to try to change another person’s sexual orientation or gender identity, to say that it cannot be changed implies that it is predetermined. The scientific evidence has shown that, in fact, the opposite is true, and that sexuality is indeed changeable. “*Research has so far failed to identify major biological or childhood antecedents of women’s sexual orientation. Women’s sexuality and sexual orientation are potentially fluid, **changeable over time**, and variable across social contexts.*”¹

The proclivity for sexual experimentation amongst young people in our modern culture may be the reason that sexual orientation is now regarded as fluid. One study revealed the following shocking results. “*Sexual fluidity in attractions was reported by 64% of women and 52% of men, with 49% of those women and 36% of those men reporting sexual fluidity in sexual identity based on experiencing changes in attractions, with no significant gender differences.*”² These numbers, although they seem admittedly extreme, are not inconsistent with the scientific consensus on the matter in numerous peer-reviewed studies.³ This being the case, the entire premise for this anti-conversion therapy legislation is based on a fundamentally flawed and incorrect presupposition. That alone should be enough in and of itself for Bill C-6 to be rejected.

Secondly, the definition of Conversion Therapy (320.101) is grossly prejudicial and discriminatory. Why would it be forbidden to “*change a person’s sexual orientation **to** heterosexual*”, but not forbidden to change one’s sexual orientation **from** heterosexual? If all sexual orientations are regarded as equal under our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, then it is unconstitutional to single out one sexual re-orientation from another. Also, in terms of a lack of consistency, to legislate that it is prohibited “*to repress or reduce non-heterosexual behavior*”, does not account for the fact that numerous laws already exist that do exactly that - such as age of consent laws, incest laws, public decency laws and solicitation laws. The narrow application of the Bill suggests that the proposed legislation smacks of something designed to disingenuously represent some narrow special interest agenda. Notwithstanding the fact that Conversion therapy, as defined in Bill C-6, is rare, if not non-existent in Canada.

Perhaps even more importantly, there is nothing in the Bill that is truly in the best interests of young Canadians that have been thrust into a culture of sexual and gender confusion that did not even exist a generation ago. Why are legislators not instead leading the way in protecting children that have been caught up in a cultural phenomenon known as “rapid-onset gender

dysphoria”?⁴ Experts are reporting that more youth, without known histories of gender identity issues, are suddenly identifying as transgender. The authors of the study suggest “social and peer contagion”, often fueled on social media, could be behind the “cluster outbreaks” of gender dysphoria among friends. The British high courts have taken this seriously and have ruled that children under the age of 16 are unlikely to be able to give informed consent to receive such treatment as puberty blocking drugs.⁵ Yet in Canada, gender clinics are popping up across the country encouraging young people towards what can only be described as Conversion Therapy.

Then there is the issue of the parental rights of those who would reasonably have a vested interest in *repressing or reducing* an underage child’s sexual activity of any orientation. Although the Justice Department summary says Bill C-6 would not criminalize “*private conversations in which personal views on sexual orientation, sexual feelings or gender identity are expressed ...*”, no such exception is evident in the proposed legislation itself. Bill C-6 does nothing to protect these parental rights.

Lastly, it could potentially greatly restrict religious freedoms if the Bill becomes broadly interpreted to mean that the teachings from sacred texts are an attempt to repress sexual behavior. Bill C-6 is so seriously flawed, embarrassingly narrow and poorly construed that it would be better off to be withdrawn completely than amended.

¹ <https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/0022-4537.00169>

² <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10508-014-0420-1>

³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00918369.2012.724634>

⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30114286/>

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-55144148>