

ARTS 503 RESEARCH PAPER

CHRISTOPHER CUNES

**BEING QUEER: LGBTQ HISTORY, SOCIAL
MOVEMENTS AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION
THROUGHOUT TIME IN NORTH AMERICA**

ABSTRACT

Being Queer: LGBTQ History, Social Movements and Cultural Evolution Throughout Time in North America is a comprehensive paper that draws on the history of LGBTQ movements and social/cultural acceptance throughout time in North America starting with the Stonewall Riots of 1969. This paper examines such topics as the abovementioned Stonewall Riots, to the Canadian decriminalization/recriminalization of 1969, followed by homosexuality within the Canadian Military, religion, and homosexuality to LGBTQ students' lives within the Canadian education system and, finally, pride semiotics. This paper found that while many important steps have been taken forward with the likes of the Stonewall Riots and the elimination of the ban on homosexuals within the Canadian Military, to the ordination of LGBTQ ministers within the United Church of Canada, we see a step taken back when it comes to LGBTQ students and the education system within Canada. Being Queer: LGBTQ History, Social Movements and Cultural Evolution Throughout Time in North America will take you on a historical and social ride throughout the LGBTQ communities relatively short, but strong fight for justice, acceptance, and freedom.

BEING QUEER: LGBTQ HISTORY, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION THROUGHOUT TIME IN NORTH AMERICA

Throughout history, there have been many different movements involving many different groups of people. Some have been big, some not so much. One of the largest movements to have come out of the 20th century was the LGBTQ movement. Back in the late 60's and early 80's when the movement was really ramping up, the term LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) had yet to be coined. Persons were either gay or lesbian. The problem was that society had yet to understand how two men or two women could love each other intimately. To many, this act was a sin. It was unnatural. Especially within the religious community, these acts were strictly forbidden. What spawned out of these acts was nothing short of incredible. Many LGBTQ people of the time were tired of the harassment. They were tired of the threat of arrest and jail just for being who they were. It wasn't until 1969 when, at the famous Stonewall Inn in New York City, massive rioting broke out in protest to the ongoing police raids of gay and lesbian bars and clubs. This was considered the birthplace of subsequent LGBTQ movements throughout the remainder of the 20th and into the 21st centuries.

This paper will examine and analyze crucial LGBTQ movements, topics and cultural views that have been prevalent since the 1960's. This paper will also attempt to answer this important question, "how have historical social movements and policies surrounding the LGBTQ community in North America affected both gay and lesbian people's cultural acceptance and social evolution throughout time?". The focus of this paper will also include topics such as the Stonewall Riots, the recriminalization/decriminalization of homosexuality in 1969, the Canadian Military's decriminalization of homosexuality policy, the United Church's policy on homosexuals being ordained, as well as LGBTQ students and the education system.

To understand sexuality itself, we need to examine the cultural and sociological views of what sexuality means. In author, Dawne Moon's, 2008 article titled, "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?", she writes, "since the 1960's, cultural analysis has been a crucial component of the sociological study of sexuality"¹. Furthermore, as stated, "This is no surprise since a sociological frame of mind disposes one to question the widespread assumption that sex is simply natural"². Sexuality for some people is viewed as natural; for others, it may be viewed as something that is a bond between the two sexes and one that cannot and should not be tampered with. For some people, the thought that two people of the same sex who openly choose to be in a relationship with one another must mean that something is wrong within them. As author, Dawne Moon, writes, "the 'Homosexual Role' (1968), for instance, broke new ground in role theory and the study of sexuality by using a historical and cross-national comparative framework to show that sexual nonconformity was a matter of socially created categories rather than a medical or psychological condition"³. What Moon is trying to convey to us is that sexuality is what you perceive it to be, not what it was written as. The idea that one person or one organization can assume to label your sexuality for you is not appropriate in any way. Moon writes, "studying sexuality, scholars often encounter deeply held assumptions that sexual arrangements, meanings, feelings, and identities are universal, timeless, and natural"⁴. Moon eloquently explains how this idea of sexuality can be misconstrued and pushed onto those who have been questioning their own sexuality and identity.

¹ Dawne Moon, "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?", in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 619, No. 1. 2008. Pg. 183.

² Moon, "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?", 183, 184.

³ Moon, "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?", 184.

⁴ Moon, "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?", 184.

Sexuality and its meanings are at the root of the LGBTQ idea. People who identify themselves within the LGBTQ community have established their ideas of sexuality within their own ideologies. What happens, though, when others do not believe in this type of ideology? Especially when it involves the government. Let us now look at the famous Stonewall Inn riots.

THE STONEWALL RIOTS

As stated above, the Stonewall Riots were a pivotal moment in the history of the LGBTQ movement that was to follow. In the summer of 1969 in Greenwich Village in New York City, a riot broke out between the patrons of the Stonewall Inn and the police. As stated in his 2019 article titled, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, author, Larry Beck, writes, “laws in New York prohibited dancing with a same-sex partner, among other local ordinances. Mainstream businesses wanted nothing to do with this. Just one LGBT patron could shut down a bar as disorderly. Seeing an opportunity for significant profits, the mafia got into the business”⁵. The Stonewall Inn was one of these clubs. Furthermore, as stated, “LGBT bars were social centers where people felt a sense of kinship with others like them, where they could know that they weren’t alone”⁶. What followed at the Stonewall Inn would start the evolution of the LGBTQ movement. As author Larry Beck states, “in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, the Stonewall Inn was raided”⁷. As stated, “once outside, the crowd didn’t disperse as usual. Although conflicting accounts exist as to what precipitated the resistance, all of a sudden, the crowd, as one, reached a flash point of anger after years of oppression”⁸. The LGBTQ

⁵ Larry Beck, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, in *Legacy* (National Association for Interpretation), Vol. 30, No. 1, 2019, Pg. 36.

⁶ Beck, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, 36.

⁷ Beck, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, 36.

⁸ Beck, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, 36, 37.

community stood up for themselves at that moment and fought back. Rioting went on for hours and continued for almost a whole week. As Beck states, “at this moment in history the LGBT community felt a sense of pride that many had never known before”⁹. This riot had taken many people off guard and had created a new view of the LGBTQ community. The lasting impacts of this riot were felt in the USA for many years to come, however, especially within the American left. Let us now explore those impacts.

The Stonewall Riots forced many within the American government and American culture to re-examine how they viewed the LGBTQ community. While the lasting effects of the Stonewall Riots were being felt within the community, the American left could no longer deny the impact that it had on their country and their views. As stated in author, David Thorstad’s, 1995 article titled, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, “following the Stonewall Riots in New York City in June 1969, the left had to reassess negative appraisals of homosexuality that prevailed among virtually all leftist currents”¹⁰. Furthermore, “pressure for change came from within and from without”¹¹. For a little background review, Thorstad states, “from bourgeois (Neo-Freudian) psychology came the classification of homosexuality as a mental illness”¹². Furthermore, “same sexers were considered ‘security risks’ and barred from both government employment and membership in most leftist groups”¹³. This type of classification and labelling is exactly what the Stonewall Riots meant to change. In August of 1973, a memorandum was written up titled, “Memorandum on the Gay Liberation Movement” which, as Thorstad writes, “the memorandum expressed support for struggles by

⁹ Beck, “The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later”, 37.

¹⁰ David Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, in *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1995. Pg. 319.

¹¹ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 319.

¹² Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 320.

¹³ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 320.

homosexuals ‘for full democratic rights, including full civil and human rights, and against all the forms of discrimination and oppression they suffer under capitalism’”¹⁴. This memorandum went a long way in the understanding of the pressures and strife that LGBTQ people were under during that time.

For many years, the concept of gay people is one that has created both questions and confusion. While the Stonewall Inn Riots went about starting the liberation of LGBTQ people, the idea of what a gay person was, still remained in question. As Thorstad writes, “Over the past century and a half, the gay movement has sought to answer the question: What is the nature of homosexuality?”¹⁵. Furthermore, as stated, “homosexuals are defined as people who love the same sex, and heterosexuals as people who love the opposite sex-two different kinds of people, depending on whom they go to bed with”¹⁶. Thorstad states, “most left-wing groups-and an increasing array of capitalist institutions and corporations-now endorse equal rights for ‘gay people’ and oppose some forms of discrimination”¹⁷. What have we learned since the 1969 Stonewall Riots? We have seen the far leftist groups making changes to now accept queer people as “regular people” adding fewer discriminatory laws that impact their lives. This paper identifies the Stonewall Riots as a pivotal starting point for LGBTQ liberation and rights movements for all LGBTQ people throughout North America.

Let us now shift our focus to Canada and examine the 1969 decriminalization or possible recriminalization, depending on who you talk to, of homosexuality in Canada.

¹⁴ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 329.

¹⁵ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 337.

¹⁶ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 338.

¹⁷ Thorstad, “Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall”, 340.

DECRIMINALIZATION/RECRIMINALIZATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY

In the year 1969, Canada officially decriminalized homosexuality. This meant that for those who identified as queer, they no longer had to live in fear of being persecuted for their sexuality. Although we view Canada as a very accepting nation for all different types of people, this pivotal moment in 1969 would change the lives of many queer identifying people. What we haven't thought of though is, was 1969 really the year when homosexuality was decriminalized in Canada, or is it still being viewed as criminal? It was perceived as criminal in the sense of a sin and not in the sense of law breaking as it was prior to 1969. As author, Tom Hooper, writes in his 2019 article titled, "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada", "the problem is that homosexuality was not decriminalized in 1969. This is a myth. The reform added an exception clause to the crimes of buggery and gross indecency that allowed queer sex in private between only two adults"¹⁸. Furthermore, as stated, "this merely recognized the obvious; the state could not access the bedrooms of the nation using these provisions"¹⁹. Following the November 2017 public apology by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for the crimes and enforcement committed towards queer people in Canada's past, many started to realize that there really was no decriminalization as was originally thought of in 1969. Author, Tom Hooper states, "Clause 7 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act (the ominous bill) dealt with the Criminal Code provisions concerning buggery, bestiality, and gross indecency"²⁰. Furthermore, "up until 1988, a 20-year-old gay man who had sex with another man could still be convicted of a crime"²¹. To think that even in the year 1988 when the queer community was in full swing and many years

¹⁸ Tom Hooper, "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada", in *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 2, 2019. Pg. 257.

¹⁹ Hooper, "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada", 257.

²⁰ Hooper, "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada", 258.

²¹ Hooper, "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada", 258.

after the liberating Stonewall Inn riots, could a queer man, or for that, a queer woman, still be convicted of a crime is hard to fathom. Hooper states, “recriminalization is not simply found in rejection of the myth of reform in 1969. It also refers to the mass mobilization in the policing of queer sexualities in the decades following the passage of the ominous bill”²². Furthermore, as stated, “the fatal flaw of the decriminalization myth is that arrests for acts of consensual queer sex actually increased in the period after the passage of the ominous bill”²³. The simple fact remains that no matter what side of the fence you are on for this topic, there are arguments to be made for both the decriminalization and recriminalization of homosexuality in Canada. This paper argues that while the decriminalization of homosexuality appeared on paper in 1969, the idea that homosexuality was completely decriminalized is ultimately a myth.

Another important topic to look at not is the viewpoint of the Canadian Military and their stance on homosexuals who serve within the forces.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CANADIAN MILITARY

Up until the 1992 decision by the Canadian Military to abolish restrictions on gay and lesbian soldiers, queer members of the Canadian Military were not allowed to serve their country in the ways for which they had signed up. Again, it is hard to fathom that it took until 1992 to lift a ban on homosexuality within the military. The discrimination faced by gay and lesbian soldiers who just wanted to serve their country seems incredulous and unjustified. As authors, Aaron Belkin and Jason McNichol, write in their 2000 article titled, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in

²² Hooper, “Queering ’69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada”, 259.

²³ Hooper, “Queering ’69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada”, 263.

the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, “before 1988, gays and lesbians were prohibited from serving in the Canadian Forces”²⁴. Furthermore, “the military did not allow openly gay recruits to enlist, dismissed soldiers who were discovered to be homosexual, and required service members who suspected another soldier of being gay to inform their commanding officer”²⁵. There were increasing calls for this ban to be lifted because it was deemed unjust and a violation of the soldier’s human rights and freedoms. As Belkin and McNichol write, “a Department of Justice review of federal regulations in 1985 determined that the Canadian Forces were in potential violation of the equal rights provisions of the charter in a number of areas, including discrimination against gays and lesbians”²⁶. As the authors state in the final report of the DND Charter Task Force “recommended retaining the exclusionary policy towards homosexuals based on the argument that the military’s unique purpose necessitated the restriction of gays and lesbians”²⁷. Furthermore, “it added that ‘the effect of the presence of homosexuals would (lead to) a serious decrease in operational effectiveness’”²⁸. This report was very disheartening to those members of the Canadian Military who identified as queer. This paper argues that this type of discrimination would be potentially harmful to the Canadian Military by restricting operational talent just because of sexual orientation. After the 1992 ban was lifted, one would assume that all members of the Canadian Military would be now accepting of their fellow soldiers, correct? Would there still be prejudice within the forces?

²⁴ Aaron Belkin & Jason McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, in *International Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1. Toronto. 2000. Pg. 74.

²⁵ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 74.

²⁶ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 75.

²⁷ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 75.

²⁸ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 75.

Belkin and McNichol write, “after the ban was lifted, the Canadian Forces did not institute a separate programme to handle same-sex sexual harassment or personal harassment based on sexual orientation”²⁹. However, “in 1996, DND implemented the Standards for Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP) programme to increase general awareness about abuse, including harassment based on sexual orientation”³⁰. Furthermore, as stated, “on 15 June 1996, a federal human rights tribunal ordered the federal government and federally regulated companies to provide the same medical, dental, and other benefits to gay and lesbian couples as to heterosexual common-law couples”³¹. After reviewing the above material, while the Canadian Forces made strides in lifting their ban on queer members serving within the forces, this paper believes that their initial ban in the first place hurt the Forces by denying able bodied members to serve their country.

Moving on, let us now look at how religion played a role in the history of LGBTQ people.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH

Religion and homosexuality has always been a contentious topic. There are many within the religious community who feel strongly that being gay is a heavy sin. There are also many open-minded people within the religious community who accept queer people within their congregations with open arms. What about those members of the LGBTQ community who are

²⁹ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 77.

³⁰ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 77, 78.

³¹ Belkin & McNichol, “Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay ban Undermine Military Performance?”, 78.

also religious who want to be ordained as ministers? As author, Anne M. Squire writes, in her 1991 article titled, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, “the question of whether or not gays and lesbians should be ordained into the ministry of the United Church of Canada has plagued the church for the past 10 years”³². Furthermore, as Squire writes, “for some members, the question was answered definitively by the General Council in 1960, when the court stated that homosexuality was a sin against the self”³³. As is in most cases, homosexuality is viewed as a point that should not be discussed and, if discussed, it should be quick and to the point. Squire points out that, “many members discovered, as did I, that neutrality was extremely difficult, if not impossible”³⁴. Squire writes, however, “after 10 years of struggling with the issue, the response of the 33rd General Council, convened in London in August 1990, was the United Church solution of compromise. For the gays and lesbians, who had hoped for unconditional acceptance, it was a partial victory”³⁵. As author, Anne M. Squire recounts about United Church of Canada’s report of the Division of Mission in Canada, *In God’s Image: Male and Female*, “suggested that “in principle” there was no reason why mature, self-accepting homosexuals should not be accepted for ministry, and at the same time the Hamilton Conference was deciding that “self-admitted, practicing homosexuals” would not be ordained by that Conference, the church found itself in the midst of a dilemma”³⁶. After lengthy debates and many General Council meetings and reports, as stated by Squire, “human nature and culture were put under the searchlight of psychological and sociological theories”³⁷. Furthermore, as stated, “the recommendations of the report included a statement that all persons who profess Jesus Christ and

³² Anne M. Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, in *Queen’s Quarterly*, Vol. 98, No. 1, 1991. Pg. 338.

³³ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 338.

³⁴ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 339.

³⁵ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 339.

³⁶ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 342.

³⁷ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 345.

obedience to him are eligible to be full members, and that sexual orientation in and of itself is not a barrier to participation in all aspects of life and ministry of the church, including the order of ministry”³⁸. What can be said is that when religion and ideology are mixed, along with personal and political views, there becomes an intersection that needs to be crossed. The United Church of Canada came to that intersection and realized that to cross it, they had to be accepting of all members and all sexual orientations. While their plan is not perfect, it has made large strides in the acceptance of those who are queer and want to be ordained within the United Church of Canada. This paper takes into account the fact that religion plays a large role within the LGBTQ community and how it is viewed however, with the apparent findings above and the rather progressive decisions to allow some queer men and women to become ordained within the United Church, it is of the opinion that this is a fairly large step forward for the LGBTQ community in North America, especially Canada.

Let us now explore how school plays a role in the lives of LGBTQ students.

LGBTQ STUDENTS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

School, for many students, can be a place of peace and love or it can be a contentious place. This rings none truer than for those students who identify as part of the LGBTQ circle. Many queer students felt isolated and rejected from the very institutions that they attended every day. Whether that student attended a public or Catholic school, both contributed equally to profiling and harassment.

³⁸ Squire, “Homosexuality, ordination, and the United Church of Canada”, 345.

It wasn't until 2012 that the Province of Ontario passed a Bill titled, "Bill 13", which was amended by the Education Act of Ontario. This stated, as written in authors, Lee Iskander and Abigail Shabtay's, 2018 article titled, "Who runs the schools? LGBTQ youth activism and Ontario's Bill 13", "passed in 2012 includes the directive that all publicly funded schools, whether secular or Catholic, support students who wish to establish, name, and run gay-straight alliances (GSAs)"³⁹. Bill 13 was born out of LGBTQ youth activism. It was a fight to establish LGBTQ rights and ultimately, it was a win. The GSA's provided LGBTQ youth a safe haven within their school settings where they knew they would be safe and free from personal attacks.

Schools across the country of Canada are still not always considered a safe place for LGBTQ students who wish to be open and public with their sexuality. Unlike Bill 13 in Ontario, many Canadian provinces have yet to adopt any kind of Bill to protect their queer identifying students. As stated in authors, Catherine Taylor and Tracey Peter's, 2011 article titled, "We Are Not Aliens, We're People, and We Have Rights. Canadian Human Rights Discourse and High School Climate for LGBTQ Students", "Canadian law protects people from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, but our public schools do not fulfill their ethical and legal obligations where sexual and gender minority youth are concerned"⁴⁰. Furthermore, as stated, "we found that schools were neither safe nor respectful for sexual gender minority students, and we argue that ongoing exposure to this situation undermines students' respect for the Charter of Rights and their faith in adults"⁴¹. While we have seen major steps taken in moving forward with the protection of the rights of students' sexuality as seen in Ontario's Bill 13, we still see that

³⁹ Lee Iskander & Abigail Shabtay, "Who runs the schools? LGBTQ youth activism and Ontario's Bill 13", in *Journal of LGBT Youth*, Vol. 15, No. 4. 2018. Pg. 339.

⁴⁰ Catherine Taylor & Tracey Peter, "'We Are Not Aliens, We're People, and We Have Rights.' Canadian Human Rights Discourse and High School Climate for LGBTQ Students", in *The Canadian Review of Sociology*, Vol. 48, No. 3. 2011. Pg. 275.

⁴¹ Taylor & Peter, "'We Are Not Aliens, We're People, and We have Rights.' Canadian Human Rights Discourse and High School Climate for LGBTQ Students", 275.

other provinces have a long way to go in helping to establish a safer environment for their LGBTQ students. It is the position of this paper that until there are major supporters of LGBTQ students' rights from within the governments of each province, there will always be a continued threat to their safety and well-being while attending school.

PRIDE SEMIOTICS

For some of us, when we see the sight of a pride flag flying on a flagpole, it triggers us to remember what it means and for what it stands. For others, however, this triggers anger and confusion, which can come from ignorance and from a lack of understanding. However, what does it represent to those who are part of the LGBTQ community?

The pride flag represents many different things within the LGBTQ community. It stands for unity, pride, acceptance and awareness. It has flown on the flag poles of schools, government buildings and city halls. It has been painted on windows and cross walks alike. As stated in their 2017 article titled, "Chasing the Rainbow: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth and pride semiotics", authors, Jennifer M. Wolowic, Laura V. Heston, Elizabeth M. Saewyc, Carolyn Porta and, Marla E. Eisenberg, write, "studies that examine the pride rainbow in a youth context tend to focus on its role in visibility management strategies, that is, the choice to make

visible an invisible personal identity”⁴². Furthermore, as stated, “however, research into healthy lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth development does so with few or no mentions of the rainbow as a signifier that participates in the production of what healthy development can look like”⁴³. The authors found that, “symbols like the rainbow flag inform individual encounters and participate in creating emotional attachment and a sense of community among peer and large populations”⁴⁴. It is the opinion of this paper that the pride flag is not only a symbol of acceptance, but a symbol that helps to bring positive visibility to a semi-invisible community. Ultimately, this visibility helps to strengthen the LGBTQ community now and for the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, this paper’s intent was to examine the question, “how have historical social movements and policies surrounding the LGBTQ community in North America affected both gay and lesbian people’s cultural acceptance and social evolution throughout time?” With examples stated, starting with the Stonewall Inn Riots of New York City in 1969 to the decriminalization/recriminalization of homosexuality within Canada in 1969, the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1992 within the Canadian Military, the decision by the United Church of Canada to allow Homosexuals to be ordained as ministers, LGBTQ students and the education system followed by pride semiotics, we have seen how the LGBTQ community has gained, but also lost, some of its strength to be positively recognized within North American communities and institutions. The Stonewall Riots were a pivotal moment in the

⁴² Jennifer M. Wolowic, Laura V. Heston, Elizabeth M. Saewyc, Carolyn Porta, & Marla E. Eisenberg, “Chasing the rainbow: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth pride semiotics”, in *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, Vol. 19, No. 5, 2017. Pg. 559.

⁴³ Wolowic, Heston, Saewyc, Porta, & Eisenberg, “Chasing the rainbow: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth pride semiotics”, 559.

⁴⁴ Wolowic, Heston, Saewyc, Porta, & Eisenberg, “Chasing the rainbow: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth pride semiotics”, 562.

start of LGBTQ community rights and visibility, but we still have a long way to go. While it is the position of this paper that many great strides have been taken in the many years since the Stonewall Riots and many great things have both historically and socially come out of these movements, visibility and acceptance will ultimately be the only way that LGBTQ people will ever see their fighting and activism come full circle.

References

- Beck, Larry. "The Stonewall Riots: Then and 50 Years Later." *Legacy* (National Association for Interpretation) 30, no.1 (2019): 36-40.
- Belkin, Aaron, and Jason McNichol. "Homosexual Personnel Policy in the Canadian Forces: Did Lifting the Gay Ban Undermine Military Performance?" *International Journal* (Toronto) 56, no.1 (2000): 73-88.
- Hooper, Tom. "Queering '69: The Recriminalization of Homosexuality in Canada." *The Canadian Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (2019): 257-273.
- Iskander, Lee, and Abigail Shabtay. "Who Runs the Schools?: LGBTQ Youth Activism and Ontario's Bill 13." *Journal of LGBT Youth* 15, no.4 (2018): 339-352.
- Moon, Dawne. "Culture and the Sociology of Sexuality: It's Only Natural?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 619, no.1 (2008): 183-205.
- Squire, Anne M. "Homosexuality, Ordination, and the United Church of Canada." *Queen's Quarterly* 98, no.2 (1991): 338-352.
- Taylor, Catherine, and Tracey Peter. "'We Are Not Aliens, We're People, and We Have Rights.' Canadian Human Rights Discourse and High School Climate for LGBTQ Students." *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 48, no.3 (2011): 275-312.
- Thorstad, David. "Homosexuality and the American Left: The Impact of Stonewall." *Journal Of Homosexuality* 29, no.4 (1995): 319-350.
- Wolowic, Jennifer M., Laura V. Heston, Elizabeth M. Saewyc, Carolyn Porta, and Marla E. Eisenberg. "Chasing the Rainbow: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth And Pride Semiotics." *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 19, no.5 (2017): 557-571.

