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STATISTICALLY DIMINISHED: THE HOMOSEXUAL COMMUNITY IS SMALLER THAN WE THOUGHT

An official report has revealed that there are far fewer homosexuals in Britain than the government has been assuming for years.

The report, prepared by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), shows that just 1% of the population is homosexual, and 0.5% bi-sexual. This contrasts with the 5% assumption included in the consultation document on the proposed Civil Partnership Act, published in June 2003 – an assumption which at the time drove the government’s patronage of ‘homosexual rights’ and the equality and diversity agenda.

Moreover, in December 2005, the month in which the Civil Partnership Act took effect, the Department of Trade and Industry published the results of an actuarial calculation, based on a number of earlier studies, showing the homosexual proportion of the national population as 6%. This high figure was useful to the government in order to justify the introduction of a new legal status as significant as civil partnership. Based on a national population of 60 million, 6% would represent a homosexual population of 3.6 million, whereas 1% limits the figure to a mere 600,000.

The latest figures call into serious question the nature of sexual orientation, and the recognition and promotion by the government of the gay or lesbian lifestyle as a valid diversity feature on a par with race, age and disability.

The ONS report, *Measuring Sexual Identity: An Evaluation Report*, published in September 2010, is based on data collected in the period April 2009 to March 2010. It is hugely authoritative, in that it involved personal or telephone interviews with 238,206 people. The response represented 96.8% of the sample. Aside from the 1.5% who were gay, lesbian or bi-sexual, the survey revealed that 94.8% were heterosexual, and 0.5% were in a category described as ‘other.’

London has in recent years always been thought to have a higher-than-average gay and lesbian population. The Gay London guide, for instance, without substantiating the claim with any figures, describes London as ‘home to Europe’s largest gay and lesbian population.’

However, the regional breakdown of the figures in the recent survey shows that the number of gays, lesbians and bi-sexuals in London totals only 2.2%, against the national figure of 1.5%.

According to these latest statistics, two-thirds of the bi-sexuals are women, and there are twice as many gays as lesbians.

This new report did not include in its remit the exclusiveness of the sexual experience of its respondents. An earlier 1994 survey, sponsored by the Wellcome Trust, showed that of the men, 90.1% had only ever had sexual experience with women, and of the women, 92.7% had only had sexual experience with men. In contrast, of the men who had at some time in their life had a male sexual partner, 90.3% had also had a female sexual partner. The percentage for women was even higher, 95.8% of those who had had a female sexual partner having also had a male partner.

These statistics convincingly demonstrated a striking difference between the two sexualities. Heterosexual disposition was generally exclusive, whereas the same-sex drive seems to be less permanent and to have very little exclusiveness – characteristics which strongly support the contention that a homosexual tendency is driven by social and environmental, rather than genetic, factors.

Just as the 1994 report, on the basis of this lack of exclusiveness, undermined the notion that homosexuality should be recognised as a normal or natural sexuality, so the small total number of homosexuals revealed by the 2010 survey damages the credibility of homosexuality as a formal 'orientation' deserving of a status equivalent to marriage.

The 1994 report was largely ignored by the powers that be, and it is more than likely that the recent ONS data will suffer the same fate.

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