

Assignment 2:

This study shall demonstrate and critically assess the current discourse on sexuality in relation to assimilation and liberation. This study will cover issues from Human Rights, activism and the right to love. The assignment will also identify whether LGBT individuals should be a part of the 'normal' community or whether they should challenge the 'norms' of society to become different from others. Assimilationists and liberationists will highlight and differentiate the two factors between gay and lesbian individuals. Additionally, the assignment will also highlight historical and contemporary illustrations that have influenced the argument put forward.

Human rights are fundamental to all human beings regardless of their sexual orientation, religion, legal jurisdiction and colour. All individuals are entitled to human rights however, according to Marks (2006) many LGBT individuals are denied their human rights due to having certain sexual orientation therefore, it puts LGBT individuals at risk of discrimination, abuse and death. Over the years, it has been crucial to identify the issues many individuals face in regard to their human rights however, Hilary Clinton has been empowering many with her inspirational words in regard to LGBT individuals. The declaration of Human Rights was first adopted in 1948 with 48 nations calling in favour for individuals to have equal opportunities to live in a world free of discrimination (Clinton, Quoted by Xtra, 2012). Additionally, according to Risse, Ropp and Sikkink (2002), the declaration of Human Rights comprises 30 detailed articles which refers to the basic human rights of life. The Universal declaration of Human Rights covers issues from the right to work to the right to love therefore, the government are obliged to protect the rights of individuals (Clinton, Quoted by Xtra, 2012). In addition to the 1948 declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has propagated and declared over 80 Human Rights instruments including genocide, rights of the child, refugee protection and many more (United Nations, No Date). These instruments are fundamental rights inherent to all human beings.

According to Hillary Clinton (Quoted by Xtra, 2012), the LGBT society is considered as an invisible minority and on many occasions, their human rights have been challenged. The global reaction of human rights against the LGBT community has seen a profound impact on the emotional, physical and mental wellbeing of individuals (Marks, 2006). Conversely, the specialized LGBT groups have been campaigning against human rights of individuals to

address the violations and discrimination lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people must face (Marks, 2006). Similarly, Bob (2009) states that organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have fought against the decriminalisation of human rights that rightly belong to LGBT individuals. Until 2003, it was still considered a crime to be in the same sex relationship therefore, the subject of being ‘gay or trans’ can be a controversial subject for some individuals due to traditional values, beliefs and cultural norms (Clinton, Quoted by Xtra, 2012). Additionally, specialised human rights organisations have existed for the past 16 years to help those discriminated against their sexuality (Marks, 2006) therefore, we must reach a global consensus where all human rights are met, including the rights of LGBT individuals (Clinton, Quoted by Xtra, 2012). It has been identified in many countries that the rights of LGBT individuals are still not being recognised as a Human Right. In countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, discrimination against LGBT individuals still remains a reality for the reason that Marks (2006) states, individuals can be executed for experiencing same-sex relationships. Similarly, Beyrer (2014) has identified that the Nigerian Law has allegedly banned same-sex relationships, marriages, restrictions to free speech and the general human right to love one and another therefore, it’s a violation against their human rights. For those who will advocate the rights of LGBT individuals will receive a prison sentence and will be punished for “aggravated homosexuality”. By 2006, it has been reported that South Africa was the first country to allow same-sex relationships and marriages therefore, their rights will be protected from discrimination (Marks, 2006). Following on from this, it was identified in the 1980’s that many gay men died of AIDS because they were having too much sex and they weren’t provided with the healthcare they required (Nair, No date). Gay men then realised the importance of monogamous and balanced relationship where they fought for the right to marry. Additionally, marriage rights were available in all fifty states.

The Human Rights Act 1998 states that all individuals have the right to fundamental freedom of choice, expression and belief (Human Rights Act, 1998) and from a lesbian-activist point of view, it was crucial to make individuals aware of the importance to provide equal opportunities for all individuals including LGBT people. FannyAnn Eddy was a lesbian activist who felt strongly about equal human rights for all. In 2004, FannyAnn Eddy was brutally murdered on the streets of Sierra Leone. As she presented the passionate speech to the United Nations Commissions regarding Human Rights, she spoke about the existing facts that are closely related to decriminalisation of LGBT rights such as the traditional views, culture and religion that many individuals believe in (Marks, 2006). It was also made aware that LGBT individuals

would be arrested simply down to their preferred sexual orientation therefore, homophobic assault would also go un-punished by local authorities leaving the individual with profound impact on their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing therefore, this can lead to suicide (Marks, 2006). Regardless of culture and norm of society, Human Rights are still considered as fundamental rights to all human beings to provide equal opportunities.

Same-sex relationships is about much more than sex, it's about the freedom of expression and sustainable values of human rights. According to Ayoub and Paternotte (2014), LGBT rights activists have campaigned against the discrimination of same-sex relationships within the European Law. Additionally, within the pioneering state such as, Denmark, the activities have used the prohibition to create same-sex relationships a norm and to also recognise this as a human right, despite the reluctance of the European Institution to intrude on human rights of family policy and to create equal opportunities for all. In 1994, the case regarding legalising homosexuality in India was passed back and forth because it appeared the law was reluctant to come to a final decision on the issue however, the ban was then overturned by the supreme court because they did not agree with the decision (Safi, 2018). Additionally, it was identified that over 52 reports were made against the discrimination and harassment of LGBT people because they were unable to report the incidents due to the ban on homosexuality.

Acceptance, right to love and freedom of choice are a few examples LGBT individuals crave in life however, according to Diamond (2003) a research was conducted on individuals who preferred a passionate relationship with the same-sex. This research was conducted in the Western culture involving many individuals with traditional views and beliefs. Out of the research conducted, one individual described his relationship with his girlfriend as "satisfying physically, but not emotionally" (Diamond, 2003). As a result, Hildebrandt (2010) states that one activist has identified there is a higher percentage of gay men in China however, due to family traditions and pressure of society to look "normal", men are obliged to marry straight women to avoid the pressure of family values and views. In 1965, the first gay protest was held in America to protest against the rights of LGBT individuals (Jensen, 2017). It was important for them to have the choice of loving the same-sex individual however, the 60s was a controversial era to come out as 'gay'. It has been highlighted that women tend to be more fluid than men however it is harder for women to become fluid because they aren't taken as serious to be a lesbian. In contrary, it is easier for women to form the same-sex relationship because of their sensitivity to context (Diamond, Quoted by Cornell University, 2013).

The social movement for the LGBT community is often made up of an array of organisations who deal with wider issues of society (Rimmerman, 2007). In the early 1970s, the LGBT movement was formed by individuals who had already been politicized by other radical gay movement protests. The aim of the protest was to transform western society, and this then led to the 1969 protest at the Stonewall inn in New York (Altman and Symons, 2016) where it was the birthplace of the gay liberation movement. The liberationist perspective aims for social change to rise formal structure of power within the wider community (Rimmerman, 2007). On the other hand, the assimilationist approach aims for a rights-based approach with a slow-moving process to change laws on social structures. Rimmerman (2007) argues that the social movement is primarily 'gay movement' because of the link between social interaction of organisations, groups and protests. Nevertheless, in 1990, the first gay pride protest was held in New York (Steen, 2013) and this was considered a social movement and was also based on capitalism to be recognised. The aim of the protest was to change the way society perpetrated LGBT individuals with also an intent of liberation and to also recognise the rights of gay and lesbian individuals. This saw the LGBT community flourish in a way that made gay and lesbian individuals feel included in society.

Nevertheless, In June 2010, an American philosopher, Judith Butler, was once again named for speaking her mind. Butler was awarded the Civil Courage Award on the Christopher Street Parade however, she declined the award. Butler argued that the festival has become to commercialised and individuals were ignoring the issues of racism and discrimination homosexual and transsexual individuals were facing (Montag, 2010). Additionally, Ellis (2018) states that the protest in Philadelphia were rooting for gay and lesbian individuals to act 'normal' as possible, this means that men should wear suits and women should wear skirts. The ever-growing homosexual activism has led to bars, gay nightclubs and gay/lesbian resorts to make LGBT individuals feel safe while enjoying everyday activities (Altman and Symons, 2016). While this may be true in some cases, Merritt (2018) argues that we are still living in a world where there's no equality for LGBT individuals which means they are still struggling with lack of employment opportunities, not being able to get married in certain countries and the support from friends and families because of their preferred sexuality. LGBT individuals want to feel included and free from abuse for being who they truly are.

It has often been asked why individuals identify ‘as’ rather than ‘with’? Politics of identification and Identity politics is often referred to individuals who identify themselves with or as. In the late 1960’s, the term ‘coming out’ was considered as revolutionary. This would classify certain individuals according to their appearance, for example, white-gay middle-class individual (Chenier, 2014). It has often been asked whether gay rights have been sold out to capitalism, for instant, pink-washing. Pink-washing has been publicised to develop gay movement rights for Israel’s individuals and has also been identified as a PR strategy designed to disguise the truth behind the uncomfortable truth of sexuality from certain religion, gender and belief (Faye, 2016). After many years of protests and sacrifice, LGBT individuals have been protected from discrimination and relationship recognition which signifies that they are able to love the same-sex individual (Schulman, 2011). According to Aeyal Gross, a law professor at Tel Aviv University states, “gay rights have essentially become a public-relations tool” (Quoted by Schulman, 2011) however, it has also been stated that some politicians are still against gay and lesbian individuals. Nevertheless, pragmatism also demands powerful institutions to promote the voices of individuals to be heard and to also aid the vulnerable in the LGBT community to receive equal rights (Faye, 2016).

According to Schulman (2011), it has been made aware that Pinkwashing ignores the existence of gay rights of Palestinian organizations. Since the 1950s, homosexuality has been decriminalised therefore, organizations such as Palestinian Queers for Boycott, have been fighting for the rights of gay and lesbian individuals ensuring they have access to equal rights. While many held protests on streets, many individuals identified with violent resistance to radical transformation. It appears that liberationists aligned themselves and not all came with an easy outlook to the protests. According to Chenier (2014), many liberationist individuals embraced the stereotype of other individuals and turned it on its head. They would often publicise their sexuality by displaying sex in society, as this would show individuals that the myths of gay and lesbian people were wrong. By 1973, it was highlighted that not all individuals wanted revolution, they were voting for equality with legislative protection for their rights. Additionally, the UN secretary Ban Ki-Moon has also made the need of sexual rights to be recognised as a human right (Altman and Symons, 2016). Altman and Symons (2016) have also stated that gay rights are always being promoted in exceptional ways where it is being embraced as historic global power structures.

Following on from above, many LGBT organizations have held protests and rallies in the streets of New York, London and Bristol, all who have promoted the rights of gay and lesbian movements. BAE systems have an ever-growing presence in the pride protests where they promote the credentials as an LGBT friendly company and from this, Faye (2016) identifies that BAE systems have sold to at least 13 foreign divisions of power where they have been committing homophobic behaviour against the human rights of LGBT individuals. Additionally, Rapcewicz (2016) states that LGBT individuals are still considered as “outsiders” and it must change in order to have equality for all. As implied by Rapcewicz (2016), change must be physical and lucid in order for gay and lesbian individuals to feel safe and feel change in their own communities. The fight against liberal discourse of gay rights must include equality, including the right to marry the same-sex. In 1978, it was identified that the coalition used various political strategies such as, ‘gay leftists. Gay leftists used the opportunity to empower their voice by defending sexual freedom while other campaign consultants empowered the proposal of Ronald Reagan (Duggan and Hunter, 2006).

To conclude, Ellis (2018) mentioned that pride protests believed that ‘homosexuals should be judged as individuals’ however, stonewall was a turning point for LGBT individuals who wanted to promote the rights of gay and lesbian people. Nevertheless, some individuals think that pride protests are a party but it’s a lot more than that. Pride is where LGBT individuals can come and celebrate the freedom of being gay, bisexual or trans without being judged by one and another. Sheffield protests states that pride is a celebration and not a protest therefore placards will only have specific words and phrases shown on the cards to show support. The resources gathered to conclude this assignment highlights the importance to challenge the rights of LGBT individuals. Liberationist believe that LGBT individuals are different from other individuals and who also believe in challenging the ‘norms’ of the community. Additionally, Chenier (2014) argues that liberationist will challenge the stereotype of gays and embrace the opportunity to challenge the rights rightly belonging to LGBT individuals. This assignment has highlighted that liberationists will try their very best to stand out from the crowd to empower others therefore, they will have a continuing effect on society and the future.

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