

Gay Male Pornography: An Issue of Sex Discrimination (Law and Society Series (Vancouver, B.C.))

Christopher Kendall



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The 2000 case of Little Sisters Book and Art Emporium v. Customs Canada provided Canada's highest court with its first opportunity to consider whether the analysis set out in R. v. Butler - in which the Supreme Court identified pornography as an issue of sex discrimination - applies to pornography intended for a lesbian or gay male audience. The Court held that it did, finding that, like heterosexual pornography, same-sex pornography also violates the sex equality interests of all Canadians.

Christopher Kendall supports this finding, arguing that gay male pornography reinforces those social attitudes that create systemic inequality on the basis of sex and sexual orientation - misogyny and homophobia alike - by sexually conditioning gay men to those attitudes and practices.

The author contends that as a result of litigation efforts like those brought by lesbian and gay activists in the Little Sisters case, the notion of empowerment and the rejection of those values that daily result in all that is anti-gay have been replaced with a misguided community ethic and identity politic that encourages inequality. This is best exemplified in the gay male pornography defended in Little Sisters as "liberation" and "central to sexual freedom."

Gay Male Pornography rejects the equality claims of gay male pro-pornography advocates and argues that there is little to be gained from sexualized conformity. To date, no one has taken the position that gay male pornography violates the legal right to sex equality. This book does that and, as such, it will be of value to scholars of law, sociology, and gender studies, as well as to all who have an interest in equality and justice.

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