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## 'Blood, it's in you to be Governed'

Alex Christison<sup>a</sup>

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### Abstract

The author of this paper investigates how blood has been constructed as a gendered and heteronormative cultural product, explored through the use of critical analysis of historical and contemporary uses of blood. Heteronormativity and the fallacy of discrete sexes are then defined and explored to give context to the argument. It is found that through gendering under the two-sex model of opposing male and female sexes, blood is heteronormative. A case study of Canadian Blood Services was used to show how governance is enacted based upon the limitation of a heteronormative construction. This argument is bolstered in a theoretical discussion of the nation-state and the creation of the archetypical citizen, part of which is a compulsory heterosexuality.

**Keywords:** heteronormativity, blood, critical analysis, governance, Canadian Blood Services, humoral medicine, gender, sexuality, one-sex model, two-sex model

'Blood, it's in you to give' is a popular slogan held by Canadian Blood Services (CBC) used to promote donors to lend their time and bodily fluids to the not-for-profit organization. However, not all blood is created equally, as men who have sex with men (MSM) and their female partners are regularly turned away from donating due to discriminatory policies and practices. This is just one example of how blood is used to govern or regulate the sexuality of citizens. 'Governance' can be viewed as any means that uses authority to steer the actions of others, by means of policy, law, socialization, and ideology. Indeed, individuals unable to meet the demands of a culture divided into discrete genders are regularly punished, as this division is viewed as a main humanizing force within society (Butler 2004:52). That is, our ability to enact our 'maleness' or 'femaleness' is a basic qualification seen as necessary for our humanity. It is not hard to

imagine, then, that those who fail to meet their gender right are met with criticism, hatred, and discrimination. Of course, these effects are on the more malice side of the much more ubiquitous and commonplace phenomenon that is heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is the active assumption that human beings are inherently heterosexual, that this sexuality is the defining factor of our ongoing relations, between discrete genders of male and female who oppose and complement one another and that such a relation is crucial to the present and future stability of our society.

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<sup>a</sup>Mount Royal University

### Corresponding Author:

Alex Christison

[achri764@mtroyal.ca](mailto:achri764@mtroyal.ca)

Blood has been gendered, both historically and currently, and that because of this gendering under the two-sex model of opposing male and female sexes, blood is heteronormative so that polices governing the use of blood operate on a faulty assumption of heterosexuality, based on the illusion of discrete sexes. Therefore, it is contended that through blood, the perpetuation of heteronormativity is used to control us as sexual beings and as citizens.

### **BLOOD AS A CULTURAL ARTIFACT**

Human blood is a cultural artifact that can be critically analyzed for historical and contemporary heteronormativity. While blood may not be typically considered to be 'human made', at least not beyond the sense that the body does in fact 'make' it, blood is human made in the sense that it has been given meanings beyond its basic material functions. For the purposes of this paper, blood is interpreted as a double hermeneutic, or as having a double meaning, as outlined by Anthony Giddens (1987) who is a prominent contemporary sociologist focusing on reconceptualizing modernity, how risk is perceived in society, as well as providing a new lens for viewing the field of sociology in terms of methodology and theory. Following Giddens' (1987:30) approach to social science, a reflexive relationship exists, whereby the concepts and hermeneutics that have been attached to blood interact with those who interpret them and also interact with their biological interpretations, unlike in the natural sciences where the true biological reality of blood would be exclusively sought. Similarly, Reed (2004), a professor of English who focuses on gender within genres, notes that "the gender of blood... is not an essential quality; it is part of a broader system of cultural values..." (para 14). That is, blood itself does not acquire a gendered nature until ideology becomes supplanted onto it through various cultural and social forces.

Since Greek antiquity, blood has been linked to life, but with the understanding that the body leaks this precious fluid in the form

of nosebleeds and menstruation (Porter 1997:57). The juxtaposition of blood is that it is at once required for our existence and is also a reminder that this existence is finite. Also in sharp contrast are the perceptions of when men and women bleed. Reed (2004) notes that in popular fiction and non-fiction literature men bleed due to their bravery, for death and glory, and in the pursuit of women and honor. Women on the other hand bleed privately, either menstruating or in childbirth. When women do lose blood in public the bleeding is tied to their reproductive systems rather than the acts they are committing. These perceptions are gendered, as the blood itself and the acts that cause them are seen as distinctly different based upon the person's gender. These perceptions also hold up the idea of public versus private in relation to men and women, where men are legitimate and impulsive actors in the public sphere while women are impure and bound to the private sphere. For example, as outlined by Jones (1990:5-6), the dominant ideology of women in the eighteenth century was the paring of femininity, domesticity, and limited mental faculties, which had the latent function of presenting the view of women as predestined to become wives and mothers, and incapable of public participation in universities and politics, which was the domain of men and their assumed superior intelligence.

Western medicine has largely been informed by humoral medicine, which postulates that the balance of four fluids in the body would produce a healthy body. These four fluids are blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile (Porter 1997:9). The four humours also correspond to the four elements –air, fire, earth, and water– and to four primary qualities –hot, dry, cold, and moist– all of which have a fixed placement and alignment to one another in theory and within the body (p. 57). Notable here is that blood is paired with air and with the qualities of 'hot' and 'moist', and is in the opposite position of black bile, which is paired with earth and with the qualities of 'dry' and 'cold'. Thomas W. Laqueur, a prominent historian,

sexologist, and writer, notes that the difference in heat between men and women in the humoral model is comparable to the difference between heaven and earth (1990:55). In other words, while women are cool, men are hot, and thus their connection to various fluids is diametrically different. The Hippocratic account of medicine arose from Greek natural philosophy focused upon skepticism in reaction to less objective 'witch doctors' and 'quacks'. Under this model, blood has different origins and purposes due to gender, and this blood is hierarchically ranked and based in reproductive capacity (Laqueur 1990:42). Men's sperm is generated through blood and then passed through the testicles and penis, while women's blood in the form of menstruation is seen as left over from unused nutrients but also as the source of creating breast milk (Laqueur 1990:35). Under Aristotelian and Galenic medicine, which are the foundation of Western medicine and based in humoral accounts of the body, women did not require bloodletting, as they already had an excess of blood that was shed in the form of menstruation (Reed 2004). Taken from Laqueur (1990:42) is a relevant quote written by Lucretius, a contemporary of the humoral medical worldview, who notes that when young men are struck by cupid's arrow, "blood spurts in the direction of their wound"; this can be taken to mean the wound being their penis and the blood being transformed into semen. Here, the conflation of not only blood and sperm, but the gendered nature of this conflation being man as sexual actor, is seen.

Under the one-sex model a common physiology is held by men and women, with women being the flawed form of a man. Informed by humoral theory, blood and other bodily fluids were used as the justification for women being imperfect. The female was weaker due to menstruation, crying, and lactating, which suggested disorder and imbalance in fluids. Conversely, because the male did not menstruate he was able to use the saved blood to produce the preeminent semen, and thus represent his superiority in coitus (Porter 1997:130). While blood is a

gendered product, it transcends sex under the one-sex model, however, since the one-sex model is heavily informed by humoral medicine it continues to be a gendered product, but under a different understanding (Laqueur, 1990:36). Laqueur (1990:35) points to how in the absence of a true physiological sex difference under the one-sex model, bodily fluids were used as a gendered division, however much in flux. Again, Laqueur (1990) notes, "[l]ike reproductive organs, reproductive fluids turn out to be versions of each other; they are the biological articulation, in the language of a one-sex body, of the politics of two genders and ultimately of engendering" (pp. 38-39). Laqueur (1990) further demonstrates that what ties the one and two-sex models are the gendering and interpretation of bodily fluids, where they are configured in humoral science, and where their perceived origins are. Blood is also gendered under the one-sex system as the determinate of the gendered character of an offspring. If the sperm, which was seen as created through blood of the reproductive partners, is strong, a male will be born, while weak sperm will generate a female (p. 39). Strength of sperm can even affect the degree to which the offspring is masculine or feminine. A hot female is the result of a majority of weak sperm with a minority of strong sperm; she is said to be as bold as men and unable to procreate. Similarly, a majority of strong sperm with a near amount of weak sperm can create an effeminate man, who may be "even womanly in wanting to be penetrated" (p. 52). Both 'abnormalities' were believed to threaten the social order, meaning these people were "deeply flawed, medically and morally" (p. 53). It is clear, then, that ideology within medicine can and is used to justify, discipline, and govern social behaviours, especially those regarding sexuality, sex, and gender expression.

Laqueur's (1990) argument further helps show how blood has also been gendered historically through the justification of patrilineal blood inheritance. Since the father's semen or 'seed' is produced through the blood, and to have a son would

mean that a stronger sperm was present in reproduction, then this seed should be passed down to the son. The blood of the father is distinct from that of the mother, who seems to be uninvolved in the lineage process post-birth, as she is seen as housing the child but not supplying any valuable attributes. However, if an illegitimate child is born, the lineage is by default matrilineal, with the child being seen as from the seed of the mother. Laqueur (1990) argues that blood in the one-sex model is primarily interested in preserving the father through patrilineal inheritance, and thus “the very existence for civilization itself” (58), as if through patrilineal inheritance a person becomes meaningful, tying them to a history, including class, status, and perhaps prestige. It would be naïve to think that our current medical system and two-sex model are not informed and built upon the legacy of the humoral medical and one-sex models.

Contemporarily, blood is gendered through menstruation, kinship, and medical regulations surrounding blood. Menstruation is viewed as the beginning of being a woman (Frost 2005:75), and is characterized by silence, shame, and medicalization (Oinas 1998:54). Menstruation, and menstrual blood, is seen as the mark of difference between the sexes, a difference which actively contributes to the subjugation of women by “reinforcing the notion of ‘woman’ as lack, as absence or as other to man” (Burrows and Johnson 2005:236).

Hird (2004), a social scientist and professor focusing on the sexuality and technology as they relate to sexual difference, argues that kinship is still largely determined by the presence of a blood relation, which privileges sexual reproduction as the primary familial relation in heteronormative western society (p. 80). Non-blood relations in ‘chosen families’, such as between lesbian mothers, are debased as being something other, stereotyped as being erotic but not grounded in biology, and thus inferior (Hayden 1995:43). Such an understanding prefaces heterosexual reproduction, based in the gendering of blood as male or female, and as

informed by patrilineal family patterns in the pursuit of empire building, as to build an empire you need a constant production of able bodied offspring conceived through heterosexual intercourse (Feo Rodrigues 2005:224).

Through colonialism the humoral medical model lives on, as seen in Northern Brazil, as traditional practices informed by humoral medicine, such as bloodletting, are combined with the formalized western medical practices of blood donation. Bloodletting is the primary motivation for blood donations resulting in donation scarcity among women due to the belief that because they menstruate they do not need to donate (Sanabria 2009:123). Scientific inquiries into blood difference often conflate sex and gender, such as the study on hypertension by Reckelhoff (2001) which makes no distinction on lifestyle based on gender and a biological sex difference in blood. Blood is especially gendered in relation to medical surveillance of reproduction. Reed (2009) finds gender differences in the perceived responsibility of parents in prenatal blood tests. Female parents are routinely tested under a regimented system of blood tests, while male parents are rarely tested and only upon request. The responsibility for the purity of blood, and the safety of the fetus, rests on the female partner alone (p. 356). This demonstrates how blood is viewed as carrying various weights and responsibilities, based on gender, and in the context of reproduction.

### **HETERONORMATIVITY AND THE FALLACY OF DISCRETE SEXES**

There is a connection between the normalizing process of heteronormativity and the fallacy of discrete sexes, whereby anything that is gendered in binary opposition is itself heteronormative. Based in a Butlerian framework, it can be contended that through the gendering of blood, ideological understandings privilege particular interests. Blood as a gendered cultural artifact is utilized to reinforce

reproduction and heterosexuality, and by extension acts as a tool of governance. Heteronormativity is “the normalizing process which supports heterosexuality as the elemental form of human association” (Warner 1993:xxi). This is created through “the hegemonic, or dominant ideology nearly impossible to resist, discursive and non-discursive normative idealization of heterosexuality” (Hird 2004:27), reproducing notions of sex complementarity and justified though appeals to the perpetuation of society. That is, heteronormativity is a powerful discursive and normalizing process whereby particular notions are created and reinforced that make heterosexuality irresistible, applied to all relations between supposedly discrete sexes, and that these heterosexual interaction are necessary to the present and future stability of our society. This irresistibility is outlined by Rich (1996:130) and her concept of ‘compulsory heterosexuality’, whereby desires and actions outside of heterosexuality are viewed as illegitimate and denied

Heteronormativity is a crucial element of the two-sex system, and a product of the analytic and discursive separation of sex, gender, (Hird 2004:24) and sexuality (Chauncey 1982:116, 141). The two-sex system is prefaced on a particular understanding of the ‘natural’ differences between male and females, and specifically based upon the supposed biological facts of sexual reproduction (Hird 2004:73). The essence of sexual differences is embodied in gonads, hormones, skeletal makeup, (p. 49), chromosomes (p. 44), and most importantly, genitalia (p. 125). These differences are said to be objective, when the subjective reality is that “[s]cientists did far more than offer neutral data to ideologies; they lent their prestige to the whole enterprise; they discovered or bore witness to aspects of sexual difference that had been ignored” (Laqueur 1990:153). Laqueur’s argument reveals how scientific authority and ideology are used to justify or legitimize particular agendas, in this case sex differences rather than sex similarities. The binary of discrete sexes, that is the foundation of the two-sex

system, has the axiom that nature uniformly creates males and females as completely separate, when in fact nature has much more variance with overlapping characteristics (Hird 2004:123). Sexual difference and the two-sex system can be said to be a modern ideology supplanted onto nature (Hird 2000:348). Meanings are thus inscribed onto the body, both through historical tradition and contemporary conditioning (Butler 1988:521). Under the two-sex model, gender, sexuality, and sex are presumed to align. That is, a person is born ‘biologically’ male; they perform masculinity, and are attracted to only women, their alleged antithesis. This conflation is as damaging as the separation of sex, gender, and sexuality.

To illuminate the discursive separation of sex, gender, and sexuality, the frameworks of prominent theorists George Chauncey, a historian of gender and sexuality, and Judith Butler, a major philosopher, theorist in gender, sex, political and social thought, as well as a theoretical initiator of ‘third wave’ feminism, will be used. Chauncey (1982) and Butler (1988) demonstrate how, due to historical discursive shifts and the pedagogical aims of feminist theory, a discursive and analytic separation of sex, gender, and sexuality occurred. Chauncey (1982) demonstrates how “a major reconceptualization of the nature of human sexuality, its relation to gender, and its role in one’s social definition” took place in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (p. 116). This was due to a constellation of factors including a reconceptualization of medical theories (p. 129), the women’s movement challenging the sex/gender system and their associations (p. 141), men challenging masculinity (p. 142), and the resexualisation of women (p. 143). Butler (1988) takes issue with essentialist notions of what it means to be a ‘real woman’, such as those notions held by Simone de Beauvoir (p. 522), that view gender as the foundation of feminist aims, which inherently reinforces the two-sex system and separates sex, gender, and sexuality. Hird (2000:348) utilizes Butler’s argument when noting that much of the feminist project has been based

in false notions of sex as the base from which gender emanates. Instead, Butler (1988) sees gender as “the cultural significance the sexed body assumes” which is “codetermined through various acts and their cultural perception” (p. 524). Gender should not be viewed as the result of a particular sex, but rather “as a corporeal style, an ‘act’, as it were, which is both intentional and preformative...” (p. 521), as due to their dual origins within culture, “it is not possible to know sex as distinct from gender” (p. 524). It is problematic to separate sex, gender, and sexuality as they are all inexplicably interwoven and cannot make sense without the relation to one another.

The gendered body is made sedimentary through acts and performances, informed by historical tradition. These acts have produced what is viewed as a ‘natural’ sex, reified into two corporeal styles existing in binary and discrete relation –those of men and women (Butler 1988:523). Butler (1988) contends that heteronormativity is reproduced through the “cultivation of bodies into discrete sexes with ‘natural’ appearances and ‘natural’ heterosexual dispositions” (p. 524). By gendering blood into two discrete categories of ‘male blood’ and ‘female blood’, informed by the two-sex model that is divided along a reproductive axis, blood is heteronormative and reproduces compulsory heterosexuality.

Butler (2004) argues that the separation of gender and sexuality is to ignore the reality of homophobic oppression, as instrumented by heteronormativity (p. 93). Along the same lines, Butler (2004) asserts that separation of sexuality from sex is a feared alternative for instrumental political powers, as to do so would expose the notion of sex for non-procreative means (p. 92); this exposure does not serve the purposes of the nation-state whose primary interests lie in the perpetuation of the nation through heterosexual reproduction. Taken together, it can be seen that the conflation, with assumed alignment, and separation of sex, gender, and sexuality serve particular interests at particular points in time.

### **TYPE AB [HIV] POSITIVE: GOVERNANCE THROUGH FEAR OF INFECTION**

Governance is exercised over the citizen through a heteronormative construction of blood manifested in the forms of menstruation, kinship restrictions, national identity and the creation of the archetypal, or ideal heteronormative reproductive citizen who is seen as universal, standard, and representative, as well as AIDS policies on the national level, and policies enforced by Canadian Blood Services (CBS) regarding sexual activity and orientation. This section will demonstrate how governance is enacted over the citizen and what happens when penalties are enforced on those who resist this governance.

The everyday form of governance enacted on the citizen is in the form of constructions of menstruation. Young women are refused control over their own bodies through medicalization that holds doctors as the authority over how their bodies should be informed. Young women are pressured to feel that they are less than whole and are always in need of some form of guidance over their own bodies (Frost 2001:75). Muscio (2004), a feminist and anti-racist writer focusing on body politics, argues that it is commonly seen as shameful to be bleeding or to be associated with blood absorbing paraphernalia (p. 254). Pharmaceutical corporations employ ideas of ‘hygiene’ and ‘sanitary’ to sell their products, the implicit message being that menstruation is unclean (p. 257). Supposed “experts” tell women how they should respond to their own bodies, as if they themselves are not the primary authority on the subject (p. 256). Menstruation is pathologized by the medical discourses that make associations to emotional instability and illness (Burrows and Johnson 2005:236), and the resulting social sanctions for transgressing what is considered a ‘normal’ and gender appropriate response (Oinas 1998:54). Foucault’s (1978) discussion of silence in relation to knowledge sheds light on the governance of menstruation. What one is unable to talk about functions parallel with

what one may talk about (p. 27), thus the discourses surrounding menstruation limit what can be known, through perpetual silences, and thus limit what women can know about their own bodies. This governance is accepted, as:

nothing can exist as an element of knowledge if, on the one hand, it... does not conform to a set of rules and constraints characteristic, for example, of a given type of scientific discourse in a given period, and if, on the other hand, it does not possess the effects of coercion or simply the incentives peculiar to what is scientifically validated or simply rational or simply generally accepted, etc. (Foucault 1997:52)

In the case of menstruation the governance and the repercussions for transgressing seems to be the same. In the case of protest, women may be labeled as 'radical' or accused of being a lesbian or perhaps even pathologized. However, this pathologization is already present under the current governance.

Hayden (1995) demonstrates how blood is used to govern individuals through kinship and inheritance policies. Lesbians and gay men have long been excluded from having 'legitimate' familial and kinship relations due to normative ideologies (p. 41) based on the contraction of straight blood-based kinship (p. 45). When same sex partners do attempt to have a family they are met with legal structures embedded in historical allegiance to the heterosexual, blood-based family structure. In the case of lesbian mothers, asymmetry is created through one mother being the 'birth mother' whose relationship to the child is seen as valid, while the non-birth mother has little legal claims, rights, or supposed responsibilities to the child (p. 49). Legal policies that privilege blood-based kinship, and ignore the realities of non-heterosexual partnerships, enact governance over

individuals through funneling them into a desired ideal lifestyle, that of the heterosexual reproductive couple. When same sex partners attempt to transgress this governance they are met with the uncompromising legal system and process, no doubt drawn out, and are embedded in the very structures they are resisting.

To explore the role of the nation-state in the process of governing citizens through blood, it would be useful to use a framework developed by scholars such as Alexander (1994) and Mackie (2001). Alexander (1994) argues that the nation-state has only the perpetuation of the nation as a primary goal. Thus, those sexualities that are heterosexual and reproductive serve the nation-states' interests and are highly valued, as future generations present patrilineal and economic hope. Conversely, non-reproductive sexualities, those in pursuits of sex for pleasure, have no economic value, and are thus not valued or required for the nation-states' survival. Alexander (1994:6) notes that the arguments for the perpetuation of the nation, as well as the arguments against non-reproductive sexualities, are heteronormative as they hold reproduction as the pinnacle of, and as necessary for, the continuation of society. Not only are these sexualities not valued, but they are also seen as a tool that the ideal heterosexual reproductive family can be constructed against, as non-heteronormative families are largely associated with negative perceptions. Mackie (2001) adds to this discussion by naming this ideal configuration as the archetypal citizen, who is "the middle-class, heterosexual male" (p. 190). The nation-state does not just value the ideal configuration but sees "participation in the heterosexual nuclear family system [as] one of the expectations of the citizen" (p. 189). Alexander (1994) discusses how conjugal heterosexuality is enforced through placing 'gay' and 'lesbian' people in the same category as 'promiscuous' and 'unnatural'; thus, "the 'pervert', the 'unnatural' are all indispensable to the formulation of the 'natural', the conjugal, the heterosexual" (p.

9). This dichotomy must be made visible “for there is no absolute set of commonly understood or accepted principles called the ‘natural’ which can be invoked by definition except as they relate to what is labeled ‘unnatural’” (p. 9). Through promoting reproductive heterosexuality, the nation-state produces idealized versions of the past free of disease and AIDS, and dystopian myths about the ruin of the civilization due to rampant illnesses, no doubt caused by gay sex. It is suggested that following down the wrong path could “unravel the nation” while the opposite is seen as its creator (p. 10). The nation-state enacts governance over its citizens by limiting the rights and available protections to those who do not suite its interests, and in this way the nation-state “legislates its [own] existence” (p. 20).

Pratt (1998) takes these concepts and applies them to AIDS, a disease passed primarily through blood, and its related polices in France. In the process of the preservation of a national image, much of the AIDS epidemic has been mishandled in France (p. 265). Political parties present AIDS as a moral threat to the nation (p. 267), doing so in a manner that justifies their own existence as a saving force, protecting French youth from ‘the exotic other’, or same sex attraction. For example, Pratt (1998) writes about the perceptions of same-sex attraction, saying that “The sexual energy of young French men...is a precious social reserve to be safeguarded from the possibility of contamination” (p. 268) namely, gay sex. This is reminiscent of Lucretius’ quote “blood spurts in the direction of their wound” in reference to young men and lust. The ‘resource’ of male sexual energy has been over-valued and over-emphasized by the state in an attempt to promote heterosexuality. Reproductive sexuality is viewed as an act of patriotism, as “giving birth, child-raising and familiarization as the provision and socialization of future members of the national collectivity” (p. 268). This identity is constructed in opposition to the homosexual, who is put up with as long as

one does not question or disrupt the dominant social order (p. 270).

Canadian Blood Services (CBS) governs the citizen through conflating sexual orientation and sexual activity with non-monogamy or ‘promiscuous’ sexual behaviours, which they view as risky. This violates the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* under the section that protects citizens from discrimination due to sexual orientation, an assertion that is shared and supported by Lake (2010:136). Though CBS is categorized as a ‘not-for-profit’ they are funded through the “provincial and territorial Ministries of Health”, with Health Canada regulating the blood (CBS 2012, para. 8) and should be considered part of the nation-state and their collected interests. One of the questions asked of donors is “have you had sex with a man, even once, since 1977” (Ontario Supreme Court of Justice 2006:3). This policy is outdated and ideological for several reasons. First, blood is routinely checked for pathogens and if pathogens are present then the blood is destroyed and the donor is informed (End the Ban 2010, section 3, para. 3). Due to increases in technology in the area of testing, specifically Nucleic Acid Test (NAT), tests can determine, within twelve days of infection, if a donor has AIDS or other pathogens (ETB 2010, section 4, para. 4). The NAT testing was available in 2001 and CBS was aware of the ability to reduce the ‘window period’ for men who have sex with men, yet CBS chose not to implement it (CBS 2013, para. 8). The question, then, should not be ‘have you had sex with a man, even once, since 1977’ but instead ‘have you had sex with a man, even once, since two weeks ago’. The policy is not meant as a means of safety, since adequate technology is in place to remove infected blood, but as a means of control over citizens, to promote reproductive heterosexuality and restrict the lives of those who do not match the interests of the nation-state. Women are asked ‘have you had sex with a man, who has had sex with a man, even once, since 1977’, thus promoting their choosing of a strictly heterosexual man and encouraging

reproduction through denying desires outside this system to be met, reminiscent of Rich (1996:130) concept of 'compulsory heterosexuality'. This matter is controlled through a great amount of silence there is no mention of sexual activity under the 'Who can donate?' section of the CBS website, and there is no mention of men who have sex with men (MSM) or AIDS in their annual reports (CBS 2009). Again, Foucault (1978:27) is useful here in discussion of governance. Silence on the topic of MSM and AIDS demonstrates how the topics are the boundaries of the discourse, informing what is said and what is left silent.

The case of Freeman versus CBS is a prime example of the attempts made to prevent governance over one's own blood. Freeman had donated blood several times between 1990 and 2002 (CBC news 2010, para. 5) and falsely answered question 18 regarding having sex with a man since 1977. CBS sought "damages in the amount of \$100,000 for neglect misrepresentation" (Ontario Supreme Court of Justice 2006:3). The courts ruled in the favour of CBS and upheld the current regulations on banning men who have had sex with a man since 1977 from donating blood (CBC news 2010:para. 4). In discussing the motivation of the decision the judge stated, "It is based on health and safety considerations; namely, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne, sexually transmitted pathogens in the [men who have sex with men] populations, and the corresponding risk this creates for the safety of the blood supply system," (CBC news 2010, para. 9). This statement reinforces the idea that what is at stake is the nation's blood supply, which has been tied to the interest of the nation-state, namely the preservation of the ideal archetypal citizen. The MSM population is constructed as 'other' than heterosexual, whereby heterosexual is conflated with 'healthy' and capable of reproduction, and men who have sex with men are unhealthy, abnormal, and deviant. As seen in Alexander (2004), the construction of a natural heterosexuality, supposedly required for the survival of the nation, needs to be constructed as opposite to an unnatural

category, in this case the inherently tainted and dangerous blood of the MSM population. Freeman was "held liable to the blood bank for \$10,000 in damages" (CBC news 2010, para. 12).

Interestingly, a major protest against the ban is by an organization called 'End the Ban' (ETB). In ETB's attempt to allow men who have sex with men, they appeal to the very fear of the CBS and the nation-state, namely that the conflation of MSM and promiscuity is not only valid but is also a real threat to the nation. In discussing the discriminatory policy ETB states, "As a result, monogamous homosexual couples in stable long-term relationships, which have little risk of recent HIV infection, are barred from donating blood" (ETB 2010, section 6, para. 5). This effectively argues that MSM are not that different from the archetypal citizen, who is in a long-term heterosexual relationship, with reproduction in mind. This argument echoes those of privileged LGBTQ people, mainly middle-upper class, white gay men, who at the cost of their more marginalized queer contemporaries, make appeals of 'we're not all that different' and 'we're just like you'. Such arguments are usually made in relation to marriage between same-sex people, or those in pursuit of adoption or starting a family. The problem with such an argument is that it does little to challenge the larger structural inequalities and discursive marginalization of those who do not fit into the ideal archetypal citizenship role.

## **SUMMARY**

It has been demonstrated that blood is a gendered cultural artifact and that this gendering has taken place over centuries and remains a contemporary issue. Because blood has been gendered under the two-sex system, which allows only two possible configurations based in reproduction, blood is heteronormative. Tying arguments about the nation-state and governance to blood has exposes the vested interests of the nation-state and CBS in the promotion and maintenance of heteronormativity and

compulsory heterosexuality through governance. As seen in Freeman versus CBS, these interests demonstrate what results when citizens question this governance.

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