

Topic of controversies has risen in Russia right before the Sochi Olympics, causing Americans to backlash the country's decision. The dilemma began when Russian President Vladimir Putin, mandated a law that prohibited advocacy of homosexuality. United States President Obama criticized Russia for slurring gay identity when America is doing similar practices in some states.

Russia legislation states "propaganda of homosexualism among minors is punishable by an administrative fine." Putin has told the International Olympic Committee that "the law is symbolic," but Americans take it personal like actor and play writer, Harvey Fierstein. Fiersten has called the United States to boycott the Sochi games because Russia prohibits "propaganda of homosexuality."

However, according to the article; "*The U.S. hypocrisy over Russia's anti-gay laws,*" eight U.S states and several cities and counties, have some version of the "no promo homo" provisions. Utah legislation prohibited instruction in the advocacy of homosexuality. Arizona states that there should be no promoting of homosexual life-style, no portrays of homosexuality as a positive alternative life-style, and suggesting methods of safe sex for homosexual sex is not allowed. Moreover, Alabama and Texas states that homosexuality is not a lifestyle acceptable to the general public.

America fully supports gay rights and equality of the people but the anti-gay law serves to protect the children, which is what Russia aim to do as well. Just like Putin explained, "the statute seeks to protect children from factors that negatively affect their physical, intellectual,

mental, spiritual, and moral development.” I think society shouldn’t promote gay rights to heavily because that will influence children to follow that trend.

This article was written by Ian Ares and William Eskridge, who are both law professors at Yale University. At times while reading this article, I felt that they were on Russia side, keeping “promo homo” away from kids. They further explained that Russian President Putin and the U.S. law both warn gay people and sympathizers to “leave kids alone, please.” I think the authors of this article, Ares and Eskridge really wanted the reader to understand that kids shouldn’t be influenced at such a young age. They even challenge the underlying message of the statutes, “everybody should be heterosexual and homosexuality is per se bad.” The article even stated how requiring state laws to stop homosexuality is not an effective choice. The authors weren’t afraid at all to openly express their thoughts towards the law and how it is compared between the two countries, Russia and U.S.

I think the audience was towards Americans, political leaders, and anybody else who wants to challenge or criticize Russia anti-gay laws. The authors of the article often compared Russia and America gay-rights throughout the two countries. They compared how the law in Russia is for symbolic reasoning whereas in the U.S. anti-gay prejudice has contributed to classroom bullying and to high level of suicides among gay teens. Americans believe in the right of the people since it is a democracy so having anti-gay rights helps protect the gay citizens.

The voice of a gay activist was not included or even an opinion of a gay activist would have been good to see. The authors included LGBT activist, actor, and play writer Harvey Fierstein. He has called the U.S. to boycott the Sochi Games but his opinion on the matter wasn’t heard at all. However, the authors twisted his idea when they said, “the U.S. has sent Olympic

athletes to Utah that prohibits the “advocacy of homosexuality.” It was ironic how they said Olympic delegates Billie Jean King and Brian Boitano should go to Alabama and Texas to speak. These are two figures who have pressed the issue of gay rights in Russia so I think they should go to these states to speak about this issue.

The sources it seems the authors used were from Russia and the U.S. legislation. These sources are credible and identified. Although they stated some of Russia legislation, I think they could have explained the law more fully. Such as, there weren’t any polls or surveys but I think adding that would have given the story a different perspective. It would have given the reader a more personal insight to how America versus Russia feels about the issue.

The authors framed the issue from the beginning of the story; controversy in Russia, and unfolded by stating how President Obama criticized their legislation. The article gave details into why America shouldn’t be judging other countries because they are basically doing the same exact thing in some of its states. The authors Ayres and Eskridge said, “Putin’s inability to justify this law puts a spotlight on the inability of Utah, Texas, Arizona and other states to justify their gay-stigmatizing statutes. They should be repealed or challenged in court. Just as judges led the way against compulsory sterilization and racial-segregation laws, so they should subject anti-gay laws to critical scrutiny.” From this quote, I think the authors believe there is a chance for homosexual rights and they gave supporting examples of rights that were accomplished over time. I think the authors feel that over time, judges will stand up for the cause of gay rights.

In conclusion, this article about the “promo homo” topic in Russia and how the U.S. is a bit hypocritical towards the anti- gay laws. The authors ended the article by saying they could imagine Putin telling the U.S. “You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye.” In other

words, America needs to stop pointing fingers when they are doing the exact same thing in their country.

Citation

Ayres, Ian, and William Eskridge. "The U.S. hypocrisy over Russia's anti-gay laws." *Washington Post* 31 Jan 2014, n. pag. Web. 9 Feb. 2014.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-hypocrisy-over-russias-anti-gay-laws/2014/01/31/3df0baf0-8548-11e3-9dd4-e7278db80d86_print.html>.