

Draft
July 14, 2003

PLEASE DO NOT CITE

**Same-sex Relationships and Sexual Orientation in Canada: Data, Concepts, and
Methodological Issues**

Pierre Turcotte, Viviane Renaud and Ron Cunningham
Statistics Canada

Paper Presented at the 2003 PAA Meeting
Minneapolis
May, 2003

Introduction

For the first time in 2001, the Canadian Census collected information on same-sex partnerships. The first census of the XXI Century provided the first ever national estimate of same-sex partners. In the wake of changes to both federal and provincial laws that modified the legal status of same-sex relationships, many census data users expressed a need for the data. As the 2001 Census data were being collected and processed, Statistics Canada was conducting testing on the possible inclusion of question(s) on sexual orientation in one or more of its surveys. Here again, the main motivation for testing such questions came from legislative changes, this time the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

The first part of this paper discusses the concepts relative to same-sex partnerships tested prior to the census, the question in the 2001 Census, data collection and processing, and presents data on same-sex partnerships in Canada. Whenever possible, comparisons will be made between the Canadian data and data from a few other countries collecting information on same-sex relationships in their census of population. The second part of the paper presents work conducted to date by Statistics Canada to explore approaches to the collection of data on sexual orientation.

SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Background

In the past 30 years, major changes to family and household living arrangements in many industrialized countries (often referred to as the *Second Demographic Transition*) have challenged our theories of family living. The increasing complexity of adults' and children's family and conjugal histories (more unions, more separations, more non-marital unions, more lone-parent families, more blended families – in other words, more family events) has created new data needs. There was a fundamental change in the nature and the depth of information needed to follow these trends. Retrospective and longitudinal surveys were built to complement census and administrative data. New concepts had to be measured: non-marital (as well as marital) union formation and dissolution, out-of-wedlock births, step relationships, etc. The profound modifications of the family were accompanied by equally important modifications outside the family (higher education, women's massive entry into the labor force, etc.)

Prior to the 1981 Canadian Census, four questions were used to collect information and to allow for the formation of families, couples, parent-child relationships, and living arrangements. The four questions were: age, sex, marital status and relationship to a reference person. The latter is essential in the ability to form and provide data on families. The census thus provided information about husband-wife families (with or without children), lone parent families, as well as living arrangements in non-family households.

In the early 1980s, the Canadian census started collecting data on non-marital unions¹. The increasing proportion of people who were declaring such a relationship (using the write-in box of the question) even though no category was present on the questionnaire mainly motivated this decision. Statistics Canada had to adjust to a new reality in family living². An estimated 352,000 couples lived in a non-marital union in 1981. At the time, this type of union was not widespread and not socially acceptable to all (Baker et al., 2001; Mitchell, 2001). In most cases, it was seen as a prelude to marriage, i.e. a trial marriage. Twenty years later, in 2001, the census enumerated 1.2 million non-marital couples, an increase of about 240% since 1981. At the national level, they represent 16.4% of all couples. In Quebec, their prevalence (30% of all couples) is now believed to be as high as in Sweden, a country often referred to as the leader in “cohabitation”. Non-marital cohabitations are now perceived as a prelude or an alternative to marriage or remarriage, and an increasing proportion of young couples (mainly in Quebec) raise children in a non-marital family setting. The rise in cohabiting unions has also led to the legal recognition of such unions.

Changes in family behaviors were also instrumental in Statistics Canada collecting more data on emerging family structures such as blended families, lone-parent families, couples “living apart together”, etc. It is in this context of rapidly changing living arrangements and societal and legal recognition of new family arrangements that the need was expressed to collect national data on same-sex partnerships.

The 1996 Census and Same-sex Partnerships

The Relationship to Person 1 (R2P1)³ question on the 1996 Canadian Census was similar to the one used in preceding censuses—it included a list of self-code responses, such as "Husband or wife of Person 1", "Son or daughter of Person 1", or "Room-mate" which respondents could check, plus a write-in box to fill in if none of the self-code boxes were applicable (see Appendix A for the question).

Same-sex partners could identify themselves using a write-in response under "Other--Specify", although the questionnaire contained no explicit instructions for doing this. This information was only available through the Census telephone help line, and through a fact sheet that was distributed to gay and lesbian organizations. Comments received on questionnaires and during the 2001 Census consultation process indicated that many persons in same-sex relationships were not clear on how to respond, or objected to being included in the "Other" category.

¹ In English Canada, these unions are referred to as common-law unions. In Quebec, they are known as “unions libres”.

² A new question on common-law status was added to the census questionnaire in 1986.

³ "Person 1" is also known as the "household reference person" and is the first person listed on the questionnaire.

In both the 1991 and 1996 Censuses, assessment of data during processing showed that some persons in same-sex relationships attempted to report themselves as common-law partners. In 1996, there were approximately 11,000 couples who reported themselves as common-law partners and as of the same sex. Analysis of the 1991 and 1996 data revealed that many *apparent* same-sex relationships were actually cases of opposite-sex common-law partners who mistakenly checked the same response on the gender question. (This could in part be due to the matrix format of the Canadian Census questionnaire, which may encourage some respondents to answer a question for all household members before moving to the next question. That can lead to some confusion as to whom the answer is provided for.) One of the problems with accurately enumerating a small population is that a very small error rate on a base of 30 million individuals may have a major effect on the accuracy of the data if the errors are concentrated in the small population. Clearly, in both the 1991 and 1996 Censuses, estimating the number of same-sex partners using the R2P1 and Sex questions would have been difficult. In this context, relying on the Sex question to distinguish between same-sex and opposite-sex partners would be hazardous.

After an assessment of the data from the 1996 Census, it was determined that information on same-sex partners was not of sufficient quality to permit its dissemination.

The Testing Environment Prior to the 2001 Census

Prior to each census, Statistics Canada conducts an in-depth consultation with its main users to assess the relevance of the current content and to identify new and emerging data needs. The process that preceded the 2001 Census clearly showed the need for data on same-sex partnerships. In light of the numerous changes made to federal and provincial laws, and the growing societal recognition of same-sex partnerships, many users from both the public and private sectors presented arguments in support of the collection of such data. Members of the gay and lesbian community also expressed dissatisfaction with the failure of past censuses to collect or publish data on same-sex couples. On the other hand, a number of them had concerns about the confidentiality of census information.

The inclusion in the census of population of any new concept requires a complete testing strategy. The introduction of definitions and categories on a sensitive issue, such as same-sex partnerships, would be no exception. Prior to the 2001 Census, both qualitative and quantitative tests were conducted to evaluate the concepts that could be used to provide estimates of same-sex relationships. The focus was on respondents' interpretation, reaction and comprehension of the proposed concepts.

Qualitative testing on the same-sex question was conducted in stages over several years. This included during the development of the quantitative test, that is the 1998 National Census Test (NCT), during the NCT itself using the same questionnaires, and as a follow-up exercise to test variations on the NCT questions. Qualitative tests (focus groups and one-on-one interviews) involved gay and lesbian participants, as well as participants selected from the general population (most likely to be heterosexual).

Several options for estimating same-sex partners were tested during qualitative testing. They ranged from options similar to what appeared on the 1996 Census questionnaire (where same-sex partners had to rely on the “write-in” box to provide their relationship), to options with a separate category for same-sex partners in the R2P1 question. Results were promising. Most options tested well with gay and lesbian participants, although some expressed concerns about the confidentiality of their responses, and thus on the reliability of data. The general public was also mainly supportive; most either welcomed the initiative or at least were not opposed to the new concepts (in part because they didn’t apply to them). The recommendations emanating from qualitative testing were then used to develop questions for the quantitative test conducted in 1998.

The 1998 National Census Test

Based on this input, three methods of collecting information on same-sex partnerships were tested in the 1998 NCT. Appendices B.1, B.2 and B.3 present the relevant questions in the three questionnaires used in the NCT⁴. The first method used an expanded definition of common-law partner that included same-sex, as well as opposite-sex, partner (the **indirect** method). The definition of common-law partner on R2P1 was expanded by adding the instruction: *Same-sex partners should report themselves as common-law partners.* This was paralleled by a modified instruction in the common-law status question: **Common-law** refers to two people who live together as a couple but who are not legally married to each other. Persons living in a same-sex relationship should report as common-law partners.⁵ The second method added same-sex partner to the list of examples for write-in responses (the **write-in** method). Finally, the third method added a new self-code for same-sex partner (the **explicit** method). The **indirect** method appeared on the short census form (the 2A), the **write-in** method appeared on the first version of the long form (2B.1), while the second version of the long form (2B.2) was used to test the **explicit** method.

For the National Census Test, a sample of 75,000 households was selected from thirteen different sites⁶. To ensure that enough same-sex responses would be obtained, two areas known to have a significant gay and lesbian population were chosen as two of the sites⁷.

Results from the 1998 NCT suggested that while the three methods of counting same-sex partners were likely to give similar estimates, there were differences in terms of validity, reaction from same-sex partners, and consistency with the corresponding common-law

⁴ One version of the short census form (2A) and two versions of the long census form (2B) were tested in the 1998 NCT.

⁵ The instruction in 1996 consisted of the first of these two sentences, containing the phrase "as husband and wife" rather than "as a couple".

⁶ A site corresponded roughly to a Federal Electoral District.

⁷ One site was in Toronto, the other in Montréal.

status question. Demographic characteristics of same-sex partners were analyzed⁸ to come up with response validity rates for the three options (Table 1). Evaluation showed that rates were high in all cases, with the indirect yielding somewhat lower rates. The validity rate (i.e. the percentage of potential same-sex couples that, after evaluation, were believed to be valid) was, as expected, lower on the short form (2A), since same-sex partners were intended to report as common-law and this necessitates reliance on sex to identify potential same-sex couples. Nonetheless, the validity rate was still over 80% for the 2A, which is far superior to the previously described results of the 1991 and 1996 Censuses. Note, however, that the rate for the NCT could be inflated due to the fact that it was a voluntary survey and therefore some of the total non-response on the NCT would translate into inaccurate response in the census. Also, validity varied from site to site, with the sites selected for their expected higher proportions of same-sex couples having the highest validity rates. Since the NCT did not use a nationally representative sample (the primary goal of the NCT was to assess new collection procedures), no national estimates of same-sex partnerships could be derived.

When the actual NCT questionnaires were tested in one-on-one interviews, gay and lesbian participants preferred the indirect and the explicit approaches in roughly equal numbers: some liked the directness of the explicit method, while others felt that it made them feel "singled out". In the NCT, written comments by respondents were mainly supportive of the **explicit** or **indirect** methods.

The Changing Legal Context

The years between the 1996 and 2001 Censuses witnessed important legislative changes at both the national and provincial levels regarding homosexual persons, particularly those living in same-sex relationships. These changes served to increase the visibility of the homosexual population and issues regarding same-sex relationships. More than ever, it was necessary to obtain information on the prevalence and characteristics of same-sex unions across Canada.

The increasing legal recognition of same-sex partnerships not only emphasized the need for data but it also provided a legal framework when developing concepts to be used in the data collection and dissemination processes. Of utmost importance was the passing of the *Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act* in 2000, a Federal omnibus bill resulting in the amendment of 68 federal laws and statutes to extend the same benefits and obligations to same-sex couples as common-law opposite-sex couples. The bill led to the modification of legislation such as the *Citizenship Act*, the *Employment Insurance Act*, the *Pension Act*, and the *Income Tax Application Rules*. Several changes to provincial laws, in areas such as child and family services, pension plan, taxation, health care, were also instrumental in raising the need for data.

⁸ The process included looking at the names of respondents from the questionnaires. Although names are not entered on the database, they can be accessed by Statistics Canada's officials, all of whom are sworn to secrecy.

The *Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act* was adopted after the NCT but prior to the 2001 Census. It made clear that same-sex couples now had to be considered by the federal government agencies and departments as “common-law” couples. Following a series of discussions with major users from federal agencies, it became obvious that the distinction made in the 1998 NCT between (opposite-sex) common-law partners and same-sex partners (in the **explicit** method) would not be appropriate. Another series of qualitative testing was conducted to test variations of the “**explicit**” method. Appendix C provides the relevant questions that appeared on the 2001 Census. There were two distinct categories for common-law partners in R2P1, one for opposite-sex partners and one for same-sex partners, and the definition of common-law couples in the common-law status question refers specifically to the inclusion of same-sex partners in the common-law definition.

It is within this changing legal and societal context that the 2001 Canadian Census was conducted. In the wake of the new federal legislation, same-sex partners were considered common-law partners (albeit with a clear distinction between opposite-sex and same-sex partners). This decision would have a major impact on data processing and dissemination.

The Canadian Experience in Comparison to Other Countries

The collection approach taken in the 2001 Canadian Census differs somewhat from the one used in the United States and in New Zealand, two of the few countries that disseminate information on same-sex partners in their census of population. One main distinction is that, in the United States and New Zealand, the categories used in the Relationship to the household reference person question don’t allow for the distinction between opposite-sex and same-sex cohabiting partners. The United States uses the term “unmarried partners” whereas New Zealand has the category “My wife/husband/partner/de facto” to identify all spouses and partners. Thus, one has to rely on the sex question to make the distinction between heterosexual and homosexual couples. This is similar to the “**indirect**” method used in the 1998 Canadian NCT. Since the results from the 1991 and 1996 Canadian Censuses suggested that relying on the sex variable would yield non-trivial classification errors, and that the “**direct**” method was well received during the 1998 NCT, the latter was preferred in the 2001 Census. However, an in-depth analysis of the 1990 US Census counts revealed very few relationship or sex classification errors (Black et al. 2000).

Another conceptual difference between Canada and the United States comes from the family status of same-sex partners. The 2001 Canadian Census questionnaire complied with the federal legislation in considering same-sex partners as common-law partners. Since the latter have always been considered as part of a couple, and thus a (census) family, by definition, same-sex partners were also considered as part of a couple and a family. In other words, same-sex partners form a couple and a (census or economic) family in the 2001 Canadian Census. They are included in the counts of all families, as well as in the counts of non-marital families. Also, as for other couples, the distinctions

between couples with and without children are made for same-sex couples. A similar approach was followed in New Zealand in their 1996 Census. In the United States, unmarried partners are considered as non-family persons in some tables, although the concepts offer enough flexibility to allow for “family” analysis.

Processing the 2001 Canadian Data on Same-sex Partnerships

In Canada, the inclusion of same-sex partnerships in the counts of families in the 2001 Census implied that they would be submitted to the same edit rules as heterosexual couples. This meant that edit rules that had been used for several censuses had to be changed in 2001. For example, previously people had to be of the opposite sex to form a couple. Other edit rules that in the past were applied to opposite-sex common-law partners were extended to same-sex partners: First, all had to answer “yes” to the common-law status question. Second, all “common-law” partners could be of any marital status except “legally married (and not separated)”⁹. The latter answer coming from a non-marital partner would provoke an edit violation, and the record would be sent to imputation and be subject to donor imputation. The “least change” principle was the main rule followed in that process. The system was geared towards the selection of demographic characteristics in a donor that would change as few as possible of the initial answers provided in the “failed-edit” record.

Edit rules also had to be changed to allow same-sex couples to have children living with them in the household. Thus, the rules traditionally applied for the formation of (heterosexual) families with children and lone-parent families were extended to include same-sex couples. In 2001, in order to be considered as children in their parents’ family, sons and daughters could be of any age or marital status¹⁰ but they could not be a spouse or parent themselves (i.e. have a spouse or a child living in the same household).

Conflicts Between Sex and Relationship for Same-sex Partners

Before data processing started, preliminary counts of records indicating a potential same-sex partnership revealed apparent conflicts between the R2P1 and Sex questions. Analysis of all persons who checked the box “Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1” in the R2P1 question revealed an unexpectedly high proportion of cases (26%) where the two potential partners had opposite responses to the Sex question. Table 2 gives the counts of “potential” same-sex couples before data processing, classified according to the values of the relationship and sex variables for the potential partners. Case types 3 through 6 could be considered problem cases due to a conflict between the responses.

⁹ The Canadian censuses have been collecting information on legal marital status (and not the *de facto* status). Common-law partners are asked to report single, separated, divorced or widowed according to their situation.

¹⁰ Following a recommendation from the United Nations, that rule was actually changed in 2001: in previous censuses, sons and daughters had to be never married in order to be considered children.

Because of the potential impact on the final count of same-sex couples, a sample of questionnaires for case types 3 through 6 were examined to determine how many of the couples were in fact same-sex or opposite-sex. Questionnaires were examined for given names as well as comments or capture errors that might provide insight into the situation. It was found that the vast majority of cases were valid common-law couples although a few cases were noticed where the potential partners were not in fact an unmarried couple, but rather errors in response or capture. Of the cases where there was a valid common-law couple, a substantial proportion could not be identified as clearly opposite-sex or same-sex due to unfamiliar or ambiguous names. Of the remainder, the majority turned out to be opposite-sex, although the proportion varied by problem type (Table 3).

The two problem types of highest concern due to their frequency were cases 3 and 5. The case 3s occur when the potential partner has checked "Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1" but the two partners have provided opposite responses to Sex; almost all of these cases (99%) were found to be opposite-sex couples, that is, the response to R2P1 was in error. Case 5 occurs where the potential partner has checked "Common-law partner (opposite-sex) of Person 1" but the two partners have provided the same response to Sex. Again a majority of the cases (89%) were found to be opposite-sex couples, as the response to, or capture of, the Sex question was incorrect.

When there was a conflict between the R2P1 and Sex variables, the 2001 Census imputation system for family and demographic variables resolved such conflict cases via donor imputation. Thus, a donor household with similar characteristics was used to assign the required values. This means that in most cases, based on donor availability, the situation would have been resolved as an opposite-sex couple. On the other hand, in parts of Canada where there is a concentration of same-sex couples (certain large urban centres), a substantial proportion of cases would have been imputed to same-sex, due to the greater availability of potential donors that are same-sex households. Although further research is needed, it seems that the imputation system handled these problematic cases in a suitable manner.

The First National Estimate of Same-sex Partnerships

A total of 34,200 same-sex common-law couples were counted in Canada in 2001, representing 0.5% of all couples (Table 4). This first ever national estimate of same-sex partnerships (from a nationally representative sample) needs to be put into perspective. Just like any social phenomena measured for the first time (especially those that are seen as sensitive), this number is influenced by the willingness of people to report such relationships. Qualitative testing conducted prior to the 2001 Census showed that, although most people were open to the idea, some people may be reluctant to provide such information to a government agency. Thus, the data reflect the number of people who identified themselves as living in a same-sex common-law relationship.

Comparisons with previous censuses are, of course, impossible. However, a family history survey conducted the same year (the 2001 General Social Survey) and using the same concepts as the census provided a similar estimate of same-sex partnerships for Canada.

A few other countries disseminate information on same-sex partnerships in their census of population (Table 5). The data show that the Canadian proportion of 0.5% in 2001 compares well with the proportions found in the United States and New Zealand the first time the information was collected (0.3% in the United States in 1990 and 0.4% in New Zealand in 1996). Trends in these two countries show important increases in the proportion of same-sex partnerships. In the United States, the proportion tripled from 0.3% in 1990 to 1% in 2000. Apart from the “real” increase in the number of same-sex couples, it would appear that a greater propensity to declare these relationships, especially in rural and sparsely populated states, might explain part of these increases. Changes made to the edit rules used in data processing may also have been a factor (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002).

Like censuses in other countries, it should be noted that the 2001 Canadian Census did not ask about sexual orientation. Therefore, the data on same-sex partnerships should not be interpreted as an estimation of the number of gays and lesbians in Canada. Although sexual orientation of those living in couples can be derived using some general assumptions, it cannot be inferred for those living alone or with parents or friends.

The 2001 Canadian Census enumerated more male same-sex couples than female same-sex couples. The census counted about 19,000 male same-sex couples, 55% of the total. In the United States, 51% of all same-sex couples were composed of two men in 2000, while the same proportion was 44% in New Zealand in 1996.

Male couples were more likely than female couples to live in large Canadian metropolitan areas; 85% live in the larger urban areas of Canada, compared with 76% of female couples. The same phenomenon has been noticed in the United States. It has been suggested that since male couples have a higher income, they are more likely to be able to afford living in metropolitan areas (Black et al. 2000).

Female same-sex couples are more likely to have children living with them than male same-sex couples. About 15% of the 15,200 female same-sex couples had children present in the household, compared to only 3% of male same-sex couples. Less than 10% of male and female same-sex couples lived with other household members (other than children). The majority of same-sex couples (88% of male couples and 77% of female couples) had no other people living in their household.

As for the provincial/territorial distribution of same-sex partnerships, Quebec and British Columbia had the highest provincial proportions, with same-sex common-law couples accounting for 0.6% of all couples (Table 4). Ontario had the largest number of same-sex couples (12,505), representing 0.5% of all couples. The metropolitan areas of Ottawa-Gatineau and Vancouver had the highest proportions of same-sex common-law couples

(about 0.9% of all couples). In general, the proportion of same-sex couples was three times as high in Canada's 27 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA) than in the country's non-CMA areas (0.6% versus 0.2%).

Education and Labour Force Participation

Table 7 provides a breakdown of Canadian spouses and partners (distinguishing between opposite-sex and same-sex common-law partners) by level of education and labour force participation. It gives some indication as to how same-sex partners' human capital characteristics compare with those of heterosexual partners (married or not).

The first panel of the table shows that those who identified themselves as same-sex common-law partners in the 2001 Canadian Census are more educated than their heterosexual counterparts. Overall, about one in three same-sex partners had a university degree in 2001, compared to about one in six opposite-sex common-law partners or husbands and wives. A much higher proportion of same-sex partners had post-secondary education (with or without a degree). A recent study also showed that gays and lesbians appear to be more educated in the United States (Black et al. 2000).

Canadian same-sex partners are more educated in all age cohorts. (The age distributions of same-sex partners and married people are notably different, same-sex partners being on average younger than married people.) About 36% of female same-sex partners aged 25-44 had a university degree in 2001, compared to 23% of husbands and wives (and 19% of opposite-sex partners). The differences are larger for people aged 45 and over, with female same-sex partners being three times as likely to be university graduates.

Of course, apart from the "real" differences in human capital, another explanation for the differences could be a reporting bias in that more educated people may be more willing to declare a same-sex relationship than the less educated. Using several data sources, a United States study did not provide empirical evidence for that selection bias, but suggested that "gay men accumulate more education than other men" (Black et al. 2000).

Female same-sex partners are more likely to be in the labour force than females in heterosexual couples (second panel of Table 7). In 2001, over 84% of all female same-sex partners were employed in the labour force, compared to 58% of all wives and 73% of all female opposite-sex common-law partners.

In the younger working-age cohorts (25-44), about 88% of females in same-sex relationships were working, in comparison with 74% of wives. The propensity of young females to be employed in the labour force is still higher for same-sex partners after controlling for the presence of children. About 81% of female same-sex partners with children at home were employed, compared to 72% of married mothers. The proportion of female spouses or partners with no children who were employed is generally higher and varied from 83% for wives to 89% for same-sex partners. In the older working age cohorts (45-64), the proportion of female same-sex partners employed in the labour force

was almost as high as for the 25-44 age group, while the proportions for opposite-sex partners or wives were lower than for their younger counterparts. The proportion was still over 80% for same-sex partners but down to about 60% for wives and 69% for opposite-sex partners.

A high proportion of male spouses or partners were employed, with little differences between opposite-sex and same-sex husbands or partners. For the younger cohorts (25-44), the proportions employed were respectively 87% for opposite-sex common-law partners, 88% for same-sex partners and 90% for husbands. The proportions are somewhat lower for older working-age cohorts but again with little differences between spouses and partners.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

As the 2001 Census data were being collected and processed, Statistics Canada was conducting qualitative and quantitative testing on the possible inclusion of question(s) on sexual orientation in one or more of its survey(s). Changes to human rights legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation incited Statistics Canada to explore approaches to the collection of reliable data on sexual orientation. The next part of this paper will discuss concepts, methods and results from qualitative and quantitative tests of potential questions on sexual orientation.

Background

Canada has had federal legislation for several decades prohibiting discrimination on the basis of factors such as race, ethnic origin, age, sex, religion and disability. In 1996, sexual orientation was added to this list of motives proscribing discrimination in Canada. The presence of federal legislation is an important contributing factor to data collection activities by Statistics Canada since part of its mandate is to collect and analyze statistical information on social and economic conditions for policy and program purposes. In addition, although data for most of the other factors have been available for a number of years, there are no national data on sexual orientation.

In 1993, Statistics Canada conducted qualitative testing to evaluate the possibility of asking a question on sexual orientation in the National Population Health Survey. Participants, from the general population and gay and lesbian groups, were provided with different options for questions on sexual behaviour and sexual identity. They were also asked what they thought about the inclusion of sexual orientation questions in a health survey or the census, and how the information should be gathered.

Among the general population groups, reaction to asking a question on sexual orientation was mixed although most participants were able to see the connection with health matters. Explanations as to why the questions were being asked and the way in which the questionnaire would be administered (mail-back versus telephone or face-to-face

interview) were important factors in willingness to respond to questions on sexual orientation or sexual behaviour.

Gay and lesbian participants were much more likely than the general population to say that they would not answer a question on sexual orientation, even within the context of a health survey. They feared that the information could be used against them, and they did not like the implication of a connection between homosexuality and health issues. Confidentiality was a major concern expressed by both the general population and gay and lesbian groups; however, the concern was stronger among the latter.

Testing since 2001

Shortly after the 2001 Census, Statistics Canada began to explore the idea of conducting further qualitative tests on gathering data on sexual orientation. This involved considering a number of issues: the reaction among gays and lesbians and the general population to collecting data on sexual orientation, the most appropriate question to ask, and the surveys that would be most successful in obtaining data. As discussed previously, legislative changes regarding same-sex partnerships, as well as the inclusion of sexual orientation in human rights legislation, demonstrated the importance of reconsidering the issue of asking questions on sexual orientation in Statistics Canada's surveys.

Issues

Sensitivity of the Subject Matter

Asking respondents about their sexuality is a very personal and sensitive topic. Sexuality is a very private matter. In Canada, this was institutionalized by Pierre Trudeau when he was Justice Minister in the 1960's and he declared "The State has no place in the bedrooms of the nation". This statement is firmly entrenched in the thoughts of Canadians as participants reminded us on several occasions during testing.

Concepts: Sexual Orientation, Sexual Identity and Sexual Behaviour

Measuring the incidence of homosexuality is not an easy task and there is no consensus on the best measure of homosexuality. Among the various factors that could be considered are attraction/desire, behaviour and identity. Behaviour can also be examined in many different ways. These can include a person's experiences throughout their lifetime or since attaining a specific age such as 18 or during a specific time period such as the past 5 years or past year. Still another dimension of behaviour is the extent to which gays and lesbians have had sexual relations exclusively or predominately with persons of the same sex. Studies have shown that these measures produce very different results regarding the incidence of homosexuality. For example, in the National Health and Social Life Survey conducted in the United States in 1992, Laumann et al. (1994) found that although 7.7% of men and 7.5% of women acknowledge homosexual desire, just 2.8% of men identify as gay, and 1.4% of women identify as lesbian. As for sexual behaviour, 4.7% of men and 3.5% of women reported having had at least one same-sex experience since the age of 18. However, only 2.5% of men and 1.4% of women had

sexual relations exclusively with same-sex partners over the past year, similar to the proportion of the population who identify as lesbian or gay.

The prevalence of same-sex behaviour is similar in other countries. In France, Spira, Bajos et al. (1993) found that 4.1% of men and 2.6% of women reported having had sexual relations with at least one same-sex partner during their lifetime. Only 1.1% of men and 0.3% of women declared a same-sex relationship during the past year.

Same-sex behaviour during a person's lifetime is not necessarily closely related to more recent behaviour, especially among women (Black et al. 2000). Just 28% of women who reported at least one same-sex experience since the age of 18, reported exclusive same-sex partners over the last year. Among men, the corresponding figure was 42%.

It is clear from a review of the literature that there is no consensus on the best measure of sexual orientation. Since the 1990s, surveys in Europe and the United States have focused on sexual behaviour because of the concerns about HIV and AIDS. Hubert (1998) identified 16 national surveys in Europe that focused on sexual behaviour during this time period. A few of these surveys also asked questions about sexual attraction or preference of the respondent.

In Canada, human rights legislation refers to sexual orientation but does not define the meaning of this term. Does sexual orientation refer to sexual behaviour or to self-identification? Some persons may identify as heterosexual while having same-sex sexual relations. Others may identify as gay or lesbian but not have any sexual relations. In the absence of a precise definition, it was up to Statistics Canada to determine which concepts to test and how to measure these. The decision was to examine sexual behaviour and sexual identity but not sexual attraction.

Statistics Canada undertook two series of qualitative tests. The first phase of testing aimed to determine the feasibility of asking a question or questions on sexual orientation, the receptivity of respondents to provide this information and their awareness of the terminology to measure sexual orientation. In addition, the objective was to identify the best question to measure sexual orientation, as well as the survey(s) in which the question could be asked.

Focus groups took place in four cities across Canada. Two focus groups were held in each city, one with participants from the general population, the second with gays and lesbians. Participants from the general population were not asked about their sexual orientation during recruitment, nor were they given any information about the topic of the focus group. Although some may have been gay or lesbian, none of the participants from the general population groups acknowledged this during the focus groups. Gay and lesbian participants were recruited from cultural, social and sports organizations. Lobby groups or those focusing on policy issues were not contacted to avoid recruiting persons who might have preconceived or biased views.

Each of the cities chosen to conduct the focus groups offered a unique opportunity for testing questions. Three of the cities were large cosmopolitan centres with culturally diverse populations and a substantial homosexual population. One of these cities also provided the opportunity of conducting focus groups in French. The fourth testing centre was chosen because it was located in a geographic area that is considered more conservative than the rest of Canada. Although it was not possible to conduct focus groups in smaller towns or rural areas because of the lack of adequate focus group facilities, participants in this group were recruited from among persons born in the province but outside the urban centres.

Participants completed a series of questions from three questionnaires including the 2001 Census, the Canadian Community Health Survey and a human rights and discrimination survey. Although Statistics Canada does not have a survey on this topic, it does conduct a survey dealing with victimization within the context of the General Social Survey. This survey includes about 25,000 respondents across the ten provinces in Canada. For testing purposes a few questions on discrimination and sexual orientation were added to a series of questions from the General Social Survey. The Canadian Community Health Survey is a large survey covering a wide range of health-related topics conducted every two years with approximately 130,000 respondents. The survey includes a number of questions on sexual behaviour but none that identify same-sex practices or sexual identity. Although questions on sexual orientation and sexual behaviour do not appear on the national census of any country, the decision was made to test these questions in the census to ensure full examination of all possible survey options. The questions included in Phase 1 testing can be found in Table 8.

Results showed that participants from both the general population and the gay and lesbian focus groups were open to answering questions on sexual orientation. This was quite different from the previous testing done in 1993, when they were reluctant to do so. However, participants were more willing to answer questions on sexual orientation and identity than on sexual behaviour. This question was considered too intrusive. Several participants referred to Pierre Trudeau's statement about the State having no place in the bedrooms of the nation. They were, however, willing to report if they were heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.

The context of the survey was critical to the willingness of participants to answer questions on sexual orientation. There was support for asking questions on sexual orientation as long as the survey context was relevant to the question. Participants were able to see the relevance of asking questions about sexual orientation on surveys dealing with discrimination or health.

Participants from the general population focus groups did not support posing questions on sexual identity or sexual behaviour on the census. On one hand, people were not able to see a valid reason for asking these questions on the census. In addition, unlike surveys that are voluntary, the census is mandatory. By law, people must respond to the census. This was problematic for some gays and lesbians who were not comfortable providing the information and wanted the option of not answering the question(s). In addition,

participants in both the general population and gay and lesbian focus groups raised concerns about proxy reporting. One person per household generally completes the census form. Parents were concerned about not knowing the sexual orientation of their children, especially young children. Moreover, they did not want to raise this issue with their children at least not within the context of the census. Gays and lesbians, who were not out with their family, were concerned that their parents would provide incorrect information on their behalf. Participants also did not want to discuss their sexual orientation with non-family members of the household such as room-mates.

Concerns were also raised by focus group participants about the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality. The issue of undercounting the incidence of homosexuality because persons provided socially acceptable answers was also raised. However, despite these concerns, unlike the general population participants who did not favour the inclusion of a question on sexual orientation on the census, most gay and lesbian participants were open to answering questions about sexual orientation on all questionnaires. Participants stated that Statistics Canada had to start somewhere, and eventually, as people became more comfortable with the presence of questions on sexual orientation, the quality of the data would improve.

Because reaction to questions on sexual orientation was quite positive, Statistics Canada proceeded with a second round of qualitative testing. The objective of this testing was to obtain more specific information about which survey or surveys could include a question on sexual orientation and to develop the wording of such a question. This series of tests were conducted in Montreal and two new urban centres.

Participants in the second series of qualitative tests were asked to answer questions from three questionnaires. They included two questionnaires from the General Social Survey, one dealing with Safety and Victimization and the other on Time Use. The third questionnaire was from the Canadian Community Health Survey which had been well received in the first round of testing. The General Social Survey is a telephone survey conducted on an annual basis on a number of core topics that are repeated about every five years. These topics include use of information technology, social support, education, victimization and time use. In addition to the core topic, the survey contains a number of demographic questions that are repeated annually.

Although there does not appear to be any connection between time use and sexual orientation, time use was selected because it was the core topic of the General Social Survey in 2003. It also provided an opportunity to test the feasibility of asking a question on sexual orientation on a survey dealing with an unrelated topic. Victimization was the core topic of the 2004 General Social Survey. Testing in Phase I indicated that participants were quite positive about asking a question on sexual orientation within the context of discrimination. Although the previous survey on victimization in 1999 had not included questions on discrimination, it did contain a question on hate crime. A number of respondents to that survey had experienced hate crimes resulting from their sexual orientation. In addition, data users had expressed an interest in obtaining data on victimization and sexual orientation.

Given the negative reaction to questions on sexual behaviour in the first round of testing and the reluctance of respondents to provide this information, no further testing on this topic was conducted. The second round of testing focused on sexual identity to measure sexual orientation. Testing dealt with variations on the wording of the questions and response categories, as well as exploring different methodologies such as telephone and face-to-face interviews. For the survey on victimization, the sexual orientation question followed a number of questions on discrimination. One of these questions introduced the concept of sexual orientation, along with other motives prohibiting discrimination such as age, sex, ethnicity and religion. Participants were then asked about their sexual orientation. For the Canadian Community Health Survey, the placement of the sexual orientation question was also a consideration. The objective was to determine if it was possible to include this question with other basic demographic questions such as place of birth, ethnicity and language.

Because the General Social Survey is a telephone survey, test questions from this survey were asked by telephone. Since responses from the Canadian Community Health Survey can be collected either by telephone or by personal interview, testing was conducted face-to-face.

Two different versions of the sexual orientation question were tested: “*What is your sexual orientation?*” and “*Do you consider yourself to be...*”. The response categories were read to the participants after each question. Note that the first question includes a reference to sexual orientation whereas the second one does not.

In cities where tests were conducted in English, there was a slight preference for “*Do you consider yourself to be*” because it did not include the term “sexual orientation” in the wording of the question. Some respondents considered this term too complicated or intimidating. In Montreal, where interviews were held in French, both questions were considered satisfactory.

One of the objectives of these interviews was to find the best response categories. Should “*lesbian and gay*”, “*gay and lesbian*” or “*homosexual*” be used? Should definitions be included, and if so, which ones? In the first phase of qualitative testing, there was no consensus among participants on the most appropriate terminology to be used for the response categories. A few respondents were not familiar with the term “heterosexual” and “bisexual”. While definitions for the response categories were not read, they were available if respondents asked for additional information. Also, the definitions were intended to provide very basic information as opposed to a complex scientific definition. As for the best response category for gays and lesbians, the preference was to keep *homosexual*. Although this term is not widely used among gays and lesbians, it is a term that is familiar to the general population, and it is the corresponding term for *heterosexual*. In fact, testing had demonstrated that while some persons had not heard the term *heterosexual*, everyone was familiar with the term *homosexual*. To avoid offending gays and lesbians some of whom were opposed to the use of the term, the phrase “*that is, lesbian or gay*” was added after “*homosexual*”.

Results of these qualitative tests confirmed that participants are willing to provide information on their sexual orientation as long as they are able to see the relevance of the question to the overall context of the survey. Questions on discrimination in the victimization survey were considered particularly relevant and may have incited respondents to answer the question on sexual orientation. Participants were also able to understand why the question could be important within the context of a health survey. However, they did not favour the inclusion of a question on sexual orientation in the time use survey because it was not deemed to be relevant. In terms of placement, respondents were willing to provide information on sexual orientation along with other demographic characteristics; however, they were more reluctant to do so if the context of the survey did not relate to sexual orientation.

The third phase of testing thus involved examining the feasibility of asking a sexual orientation question on the Canadian Community Health Survey in 2003, a survey of about 130,000 respondents conducted every two years.

Quantitative testing was done with face-to-face and telephone interviews with over 300 persons. Definitions were added for each of the response categories to provide information for persons asking the meaning of the terms. Non-response was low and a decision was taken to include a question on the Canadian Community Health Survey. This survey has been in the field since January 2003 and will continue throughout the year. An evaluation of the data will be conducted in the spring of 2004.

In addition to having included a question on sexual orientation on the Canadian Community Health Survey, the possibility of asking this question on the proposed General Social Survey on Victimization is currently being investigated. A series of focus groups and individual interviews were held recently. The objective of this round of testing was to consider new content for the General Social Survey on Victimization, including questions on sexual orientation and discrimination. In order to provide comparability with data from the Canadian Community Health Survey, the same question (*“Do you consider yourself to be...”*) on sexual orientation was tested on the General Social Survey. The objective of this test was to determine the reaction of the participants to the question as well as two questions on discrimination. Participants were also asked about the necessity of including an introduction to the question on sexual orientation, the placement of the questions on discrimination and sexual orientation in relationship to the overall questionnaire, and in relationship to each other. A number of other elements regarding the questions on discrimination were also examined including different wording options and time frame, that is more recent discrimination versus lifetime discrimination.

One of the main concerns about including a question on sexual orientation is the reliability of the data, because some persons who are gay or lesbian may refuse to answer the question or may not be willing to provide correct information. One of the objectives was to determine if the presence of a question on discrimination preceding the question

on sexual orientation could help to encourage gays and lesbians who were reluctant to self-identify to respond to the question.

Results of testing questions on discrimination and sexual orientation were similar to the results in the health survey. The question on sexual orientation was well received on the survey dealing with victimization, even in geographic areas that are considered more conservative than other parts of Canada. This indicates the greater social acceptance of homosexuality over the course of the past ten years. In addition, it is hoped that the presence of a question on discrimination will encourage some persons who are reluctant to provide information about their homosexuality. This hypothesis is difficult to test because it involves finding persons who are not openly gay or lesbian to participate in testing. However, one participant in an individual interview did in fact affirm that the reference to sexual orientation in the question on discrimination made him feel that the information being gathered could serve an important cause in recognizing the existence of discrimination against gays and lesbians. He stated that he was willing to answer the question on sexual orientation correctly because he did not feel it would be used against him.

Quantitative testing will take place shortly, and a decision about the inclusion of a question on sexual orientation will be made once the results of the testing are evaluated. The survey would be in the field during 2004, and data would be evaluated the following year.

Conclusion

The 2001 Canadian Census provided the first estimates of same-sex partnerships. The release of these estimates has attracted considerable media attention, mostly factual and favorable to the initiative. The results have been widely discussed and the data are likely to be used extensively by policy makers and researchers in the upcoming years. The current planning assumption is to continue to collect information on same-sex couples in the 2006 Census.

Statistics Canada is currently examining some of the issues that arose with the collection, processing and dissemination of the 2001 Census data. For example, it seems that some respondents did not make the distinction between the opposite-sex and same-sex categories for common-law partners in the Relationship to the Reference Person question. Although the imputation system seems to have handled these cases in a satisfactory manner, it would be preferable to try to minimize these occurrences in the future.

The dissemination of data on same-sex couples is a step in the right direction. Given the recent legal and societal recognition of these couples, it has filled a huge gap in Canada's statistical system. In this era of rapidly changing living arrangements and quickly evolving laws, Canada's statistical agency will no doubt be faced with other challenges in the next few years. Many people are already looking forward to the results of the next census (2006) so that trend analysis can be contemplated.

The legal recognition of same-sex marriages would also lead to a re-evaluation of concepts, definitions, edit rules and data of future surveys. Recent court decisions must be considered in the preparation of the next census. Of particular interest is the recent decision from an Ontario court stating that part of the legal definition of a marriage (the fact that it can only occur between two people of the opposite sex) is unconstitutional. According to that decision, the Federal government (which is responsible for that legal definition) has two years to modify the law. A House of Common committee was created to look at the issue and to provide recommendations. The Ontario court decision can be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. Other recent provincial court decisions have also led to increasing legal recognition of same-sex partnerships. Nova Scotia has introduced the concept of “registered unions” and Quebec, that of “*unions civiles*”. to provide a different legal recognition of same-sex partnerships. However, these recent decisions will provide greater challenges for Statistics Canada for the next census. For example, homosexual couples in Quebec who decide to live in a “*union civile*” can no longer be considered “common-law” couples.

Statistics Canada is currently collecting its first data on sexual orientation. Extensive testing conducted over a two year period showed that both the general population and gays and lesbians were receptive to the presence of questions on sexual orientation on Statistics Canada’s surveys. This is a major change from testing conducted in the 1990s when gays and lesbians were opposed to the collection of data on sexual orientation.

Recent testing included focus groups and individual interviews with persons recruited from the general public as well as persons from gay and lesbian organizations. A number of variables were considered during testing including the measurement of different concepts (sexual orientation, sexual behaviour, and sexual identity), the wording of the question and response categories, the placement of the questions within the questionnaire, and different survey contexts (health, discrimination/victimization, time use, census).

While focus groups have often been used to determine the acceptability of asking questions in various surveys, this research demonstrated the importance of considering the survey context when deciding whether to include personal and sensitive questions for the first time. Respondents were receptive to answering questions on sexual orientation as long as they were able to see the relevance of the question to the overall survey context. Thus they were more willing to answer questions on sexual orientation in a survey dealing with victimization and discrimination than on a survey on time use. In addition, conceptual differences need to be carefully considered when testing personal questions. Whereas respondents were willing to answer questions on their sexual orientation, they were less willing to report information about their sexual behaviour. Rising public acceptance of homosexuality, and legislation prohibiting discrimination and recognizing same-sex partnerships, may have led to increasing willingness among gays and lesbians to provide information about their sexual orientation.

The availability of data on sexual orientation will fill an important data gap by providing much needed policy-relevant information in areas such as health, discrimination and

living arrangements. While Statistics Canada is aware that there may be some misreporting of sexual orientation, it is thought that with time, gathering such information will become more acceptable, which should in turn lead to better data quality.

References

Baker, Maureen. 2001. *Families – Changing Trends in Canada*. Toronto. McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Black, Dan, Gary Gates, Seth Sanders, and Lowell Taylor. 2000. Demographics of the gay and lesbian population in the United States: Evidence from available systematic data sources. *Demography*. Vol. 37-2.

Hubert, Michel, Nathalie Bajos and Theo Sandfort. 1998. *Sexual Behaviour and HIV/AIDS in Europe: Comparisons of National Surveys*. London: UCL Press.

Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. 1994. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lhomond, Brigitte. 1997. Le sens de la mesure: Le nombre d'homosexuel/les dans les enquêtes sur les comportements sexuels et le statut de groupe minoritaire. *Sociologie et sociétés*. Vol. 29, no. 1, p. 61-67.

Mitchell, Barbara A. 2001. Ethnocultural reproduction and attitudes towards cohabiting relationships. *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. Vol. 38, no. 4, p. 391-413.

Spira, Alfred, Bajos, Nathalie et le groupe ACSF. 1993. *Les comportements sexuels en France*, Paris, La Documentation française.

Statistics Canada. 2002. *Profile of Canadian families and households: Diversification continues*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue 96F0030XIE2001003.

Statistics New Zealand. 1998. *Families and Households*. Statistics Te Tari Tatau. Catalogue no. 01.086.0098.

United States Census Bureau. 2002. *Technical Note on Same-Sex Unmarried Partner Data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses*. Population Division, Fertility and Family Statistics Branch.

Table 1

Proportion of declared same-sex partnerships that were considered valid, by questionnaire type, 1998 Canadian NCT

	Questionnaire type		
	2A	2B.1	2B.2
% valid	84%	93%	95%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1998 National Census Test.

Table 2

Canadian households showing a possible same-sex relationship, by type of reported relationship, 2001 Census

Case #	Potential partner's reported Relationship to Person 1	Reported sexes of Potential partners	Frequency
1	Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1	both male	16,370
2	Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1	both female	13,645
3	Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1	one male, one female	11,060
4	Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1	one or both blank or invalid	800
5	Common-law partner (opposite-sex) of Person 1	both male or both female	6,225
6	Common-law partner (opposite-sex) of Person 1 and Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1	--	530

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 3

Estimated % of same-sex couples by type of problematic cases, Canada, 2001 Census

Case #	% of couples that were determined to be same-sex couples
3	1%
4	40%
5	11%
6	11%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 4

Same-sex common-law couples, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001

	Number of same- sex couples	As a percentage of all couples
Canada	34,200	0.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	180	0.1
Prince Edward Island	55	0.2
Nova Scotia	855	0.4
New Brunswick	505	0.3
Quebec	10,360	0.6
Ontario	12,505	0.5
Manitoba	865	0.3
Saskatchewan	475	0.2
Alberta	2,525	0.4
British Columbia	5,790	0.6
Yukon Territory	35	0.6
Northwest Territories	30	0.4
Nunavut	15	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 5

Same-sex partnerships as a percentage of all couples, selected countries

Census year	Country		
	United States	New Zealand	Canada
1990	0.3		
1996		0.4	
2000	1.0		
2001		0.6	0.5

Sources: United States Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Censuses; Statistics New Zealand, 1996 and 2001 Censuses; Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.

Table 6

Same-sex common-law couples, by census metropolitan area (CMA), Canada, 2001

Census Metropolitan Area	Number of same-sex couples	As a percentage of all couples
St. John's	140	0.3
Halifax	510	0.6
Saint John	85	0.3
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	125	0.3
Québec	1,140	0.7
Sherbrooke	205	0.6
Trois-Rivières	75	0.2
Montréal	6,455	0.8
Ottawa-Gatineau	2,170	0.9
Kingston	145	0.4
Oshawa	215	0.3
Toronto	6,685	0.6
Hamilton	535	0.3
St. Catharines-Niagara	240	0.3
Kitchener	365	0.4
London	490	0.5
Windsor	260	0.4
Greater Sudbury	85	0.2
Thunder Bay	130	0.5
Winnipeg	705	0.5
Regina	110	0.3
Saskatoon	240	0.5
Calgary	1,285	0.6
Edmonton	815	0.4
Abbotsford	85	0.2
Vancouver	3,965	0.9
Victoria	585	0.8
Total CMA Canada	27,845	0.6
Total Non CMA Canada	6,355	0.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 7

Highest level of schooling and labour force participation of spouses and partners, by sex and age group, Canada, 2001

Sex	Age	Highest level of schooling	Opposite-sex	Same-sex	Husbands	Total	
			common-law partners	common-law partners	and wives		
FEMALE	Total	Less than high school	22.3	11.1	27.1	26.3	
		High school diploma	15.8	10.2	16.9	16.7	
		Some college/university	14.2	14.4	12.1	12.5	
		College diploma	31.7	29.6	27.3	28.0	
		University with degree	16.0	34.8	16.5	16.5	
	25-44	Less than high school	18.2	8.0	15.0	15.7	
		High school diploma	14.4	9.3	15.8	15.5	
		Some college/university	13.5	14.7	13.5	13.5	
		College diploma	34.5	31.4	32.7	33.1	
		University with degree	19.3	36.6	22.9	22.2	
	45+	Less than high school	31.8	15.0	36.6	36.2	
		High school diploma	19.0	11.7	17.6	17.7	
		Some college/university	12.0	10.6	10.9	10.9	
		College diploma	24.9	27.0	23.1	23.3	
		University with degree	12.3	35.8	11.8	11.9	
MALE	Total	Less than high school	26.7	10.9	27.9	27.6	
		High school diploma	14.4	10.0	12.2	12.6	
		Some college/university	12.3	16.3	10.2	10.5	
		College diploma	32.7	29.3	30.1	30.5	
		University with degree	13.9	33.4	19.5	18.7	
	25-44	Less than high school	23.3	8.2	16.7	18.2	
		High school diploma	14.2	8.5	13.2	13.4	
		Some college/university	12.4	16.6	12.0	12.1	
		College diploma	35.4	32.5	35.1	35.2	
		University with degree	14.7	34.1	23.1	21.2	
	45+	Less than high school	33.0	13.9	34.6	34.4	
		High school diploma	14.0	11.7	11.6	11.8	
		Some college/university	10.3	13.5	9.0	9.1	
		College diploma	28.1	24.4	27.2	27.3	
		University with degree	14.5	36.6	17.6	17.4	
Sex	Age	Labour force participation	Opposite-sex	Same-sex	Husbands	Total	
			common-law partners	common-law partners	and wives		
FEMALE	Total	Employed	73.0	84.1	58.2	60.6	
		Unemployed	6.0	3.7	3.3	3.7	
		Not in labour force	21.1	12.1	38.6	35.7	
	25-44	Employed	77.7	87.7	74.2	75.0	
		With children	71.9	81.2	72.4	72.3	
		Without children	85.9	89.1	82.8	84.2	
	45-64	Unemployed	5.9	4.3	4.5	4.8	
		Not in labour force	16.3	8.0	21.3	20.1	
		Employed	68.7	82.6	60.1	60.9	
	MALE	Total	Unemployed	4.3	2.1	2.8	3.0
			Not in labour force	27.0	15.3	37.1	36.1
			Employed	81.0	81.7	70.0	71.8
	25-44	Unemployed	6.7	4.1	3.3	3.9	
		Not in labour force	12.3	14.2	26.7	24.3	
		Employed	86.7	88.1	90.6	89.6	
45-64	Unemployed	7.0	4.3	4.1	4.8		
	Not in labour force	6.4	7.6	5.3	5.6		
	Employed	77.3	79.4	77.8	77.8		
		Unemployed	5.7	2.7	3.8	4.0	
		Not in labour force	17.0	17.9	18.3	18.2	
		Employed					

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada.

Table 8

Test Questions on Sexual Orientation, Sexual Identity and Sexual Behaviour

Test	Methodology	Concept	Survey	Question
Phase I				
Qualitative Test	Focus groups	Sexual relations/ sexual behaviour	CCHS ¹	<p>Female Respondent: Have your sexual relations been only with men only with women mostly with men mostly with women equally with men and women</p> <p>Male Respondent: Have your sexual relations been only with women only with men mostly with women mostly with men equally with women and men</p>
		Sexual orientation	Human rights/ Discrimination	<p>What is your sexual orientation? Heterosexual (sexual relations only with people of the opposite sex) Homosexual (sexual relations only with people of your own sex) Bisexual (sexual relations with people of both sexes)</p>
		Sexual identity	Census	<p>What is this person's sexual identity? Heterosexual Gay or lesbian Bisexual</p>
Phase II				
Qualitative Test	Individual interview	Sexual orientation	CCHS	<p>What is your sexual orientation? Heterosexual Homosexual (Lesbian or Gay) Bisexual</p>
		Sexual orientation/ sexual identity	GSS ² Time Use	<p>Do you consider yourself to be Heterosexual Homosexual (Lesbian or Gay) Bisexual</p>
		Sexual orientation	GSS Victimization	<p>What is your sexual orientation? <i>(INTERVIEWER : Do not read information in parenthesis unless it is needed.)</i> Heterosexual (sexual relations with people of the opposite sex) Homosexual (sexual relations with people of your own sex) Bisexual (sexual relations with people of both sexes)</p>
Phase III				
Qualitative Test	Individual interview	Sexual orientation/ sexual identity	CCHS	<p>Do you consider yourself to be Heterosexual Homosexual, that is lesbian or gay Bisexual</p>
Quantitative Test	Individual interview	Sexual orientation/ sexual identity	CCHS	<p>Do you consider yourself to be Heterosexual (sexual relations with people of the opposite sex) Homosexual, that is lesbian or gay (sexual relations with people of your own sex) Bisexual (sexual relations with people of both sexes)</p>
Phase IV				
Qualitative Test	Focus groups/ interview	Sexual orientation/ sexual identity	GSS Victimization	<p>Do you consider yourself to be Heterosexual (sexual relations with people of the opposite sex) Homosexual, that is lesbian or gay (sexual relations with people of your own sex) Bisexual (sexual relations with people of both sexes)</p>

¹ Canadian Community Health Survey² General Social Survey

Note: Information in parentheses is not read unless respondent asks what is meant by term.

Appendix A: Demographic questions, 1996 Census of Canada

1. NAME	PERSON 1	PERSON 2
<p>In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step 2.</p> <p>Then answer the following questions for each person.</p> <p>2. RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON 1</p> <p>For each person usually living here, describe his/her relationship to Person 1.</p> <p><i>Mark one circle only.</i></p> <p><i>Stepchildren, adopted children and children of a common-law partner should be considered sons and daughters.</i></p> <p><i>If you mark the circle "Other", use the box provided to indicate this person's relationship to Person 1.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of "Other" relationships to Person 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cousin niece or nephew son's common-law partner (common-law daughter-in-law) lodger's husband, wife or common-law partner lodger's son or daughter room-mate's daughter or son employee 	<p>Family name</p> <p>Given name Initial</p> <p>01.</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> PERSON 1</p>	<p>Family name</p> <p>Given name Initial</p> <p>02.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Husband or wife of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Common-law partner of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Son or daughter of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Grandchild of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Father or mother of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Grandparent of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Brother or sister of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Brother-in-law or sister-in-law of Person 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Lodger or boarder</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Room-mate</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other — Specify</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>
<p>3. DATE OF BIRTH</p> <p>Enter day, month and year.</p> <p><i>Example: If this person was born on the 23rd of February 1954, enter</i></p> <p>Day Month Year</p> <p><input type="text"/>23<input type="text"/>02<input type="text"/>1954</p> <p><i>If exact date is not known, enter best estimate.</i></p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year</p> <p>15 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>1<input type="text"/></p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year</p> <p>15 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>1<input type="text"/></p>
<p>4. SEX</p>	<p>16 <input type="radio"/> Male 17 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>	<p>16 <input type="radio"/> Male 17 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>
<p>5. MARITAL STATUS</p> <p><i>Mark one circle only.</i></p>	<p>18 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated)</p> <p>19 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married</p> <p>20 <input type="radio"/> Divorced</p> <p>21 <input type="radio"/> Widowed</p> <p>22 <input type="radio"/> Never married (single)</p>	<p>18 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated)</p> <p>19 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married</p> <p>20 <input type="radio"/> Divorced</p> <p>21 <input type="radio"/> Widowed</p> <p>22 <input type="radio"/> Never married (single)</p>
<p>6. Is this person living with a common-law partner?</p> <p><i>Common-law refers to two people who live together as husband and wife but who are not legally married to each other.</i></p>	<p>23 <input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p>24 <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>23 <input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p>24 <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>LANGUAGE FIRST LEARNED AT HOME IN CHILDHOOD</p> <p>7. What is the language that this person first learned at home in childhood and still understands?</p> <p><i>If this person no longer understands the first language learned, indicate the second language learned.</i></p>	<p>25 <input type="radio"/> English</p> <p>26 <input type="radio"/> French</p> <p>27 <input type="radio"/> Other — Specify</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>	<p>25 <input type="radio"/> English</p> <p>26 <input type="radio"/> French</p> <p>27 <input type="radio"/> Other — Specify</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>

Appendix B.1: 2A questionnaire, page 4, 1998 National Census Test

(The “indirect” method)

<p>1 NAME In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step B. → Then answer the following questions for each person.</p>	<p>PERSON 1</p>	<p>PERSON 2</p>
	<p>Family name _____ Given name _____ Initial _____</p>	<p>Family name _____ Given name _____ Initial _____</p>
<p>2 SEX</p>	<p>01 <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>	<p>01 <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>
<p>3 DATE OF BIRTH</p> <p>Day Month Year Example: <input type="text" value="23"/> <input type="text" value="02"/> <input type="text" value="1954"/></p> <p>If exact date is not known, enter best estimate.</p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year 03 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year 03 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>4 MARITAL STATUS</p> <p>Mark one circle only.</p>	<p>04 <input type="radio"/> Never legally married (single) 05 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 06 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 07 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 08 <input type="radio"/> Widowed</p>	<p>04 <input type="radio"/> Never legally married (single) 05 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 06 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 07 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 08 <input type="radio"/> Widowed</p>
<p>5 IS THIS PERSON LIVING WITH A COMMON-LAW PARTNER?</p> <p><i>Common-law refers to two people who live together as a couple but who are not legally married to each other. Persons living in a same-sex relationship should report as common-law partners.</i></p>	<p>09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>6 RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON 1</p> <p>Describe each person's relationship to Person 1.</p> <p>Mark one circle only.</p> <p><i>Stepchildren, adopted children or children of a common-law partner should be considered sons and daughters.</i></p> <p><i>Same-sex partners should report themselves as common-law partners.</i></p> <p><i>If none of the choices apply, use the "Other" box to indicate this person's relationship to Person 1.</i></p> <p>Examples of "Other" relationships to Person 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cousin • niece or nephew • son's common-law partner (common-law daughter-in-law) • lodger's husband, wife or common-law partner • lodger's son or daughter • room-mate's daughter or son • employee 	<p>11 <input checked="" type="radio"/> PERSON 1</p>	<p>12 <input type="radio"/> Husband or wife of Person 1 13 <input type="radio"/> Common-law partner of Person 1 14 <input type="radio"/> Son or daughter of Person 1 15 <input type="radio"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1 16 <input type="radio"/> Grandchild of Person 1 17 <input type="radio"/> Father or mother of Person 1 18 <input type="radio"/> Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1 19 <input type="radio"/> Grandparent of Person 1 20 <input type="radio"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 21 <input type="radio"/> Brother-in-law or sister-in-law of Person 1 22 <input type="radio"/> Lodger or boarder 23 <input type="radio"/> Room-mate 24 <input type="radio"/> Other — Specify <input type="text"/></p>
<p>7 WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE FIRST LEARNED AT HOME IN CHILDHOOD AND STILL UNDERSTOOD?</p> <p>If this person no longer understands the first language learned, indicate the second language learned.</p>	<p>25 <input type="radio"/> English 26 <input type="radio"/> French 27 <input type="radio"/> Other — Specify <input type="text"/></p>	<p>25 <input type="radio"/> English 26 <input type="radio"/> French 27 <input type="radio"/> Other — Specify <input type="text"/></p>

Appendix B.2: 2B.1 questionnaire, page 4, 1998 Canadian National Census Test

(The “write-in” method)

<p>1 NAME In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step B. → Then answer the following questions for each person.</p>	<p>PERSON 1</p> <p>Family name _____</p> <p>Given name _____ Initial _____</p>	<p>PERSON 2</p> <p>Family name _____</p> <p>Given name _____ Initial _____</p>
<p>2 SEX</p>	<p>01.</p> <p>01 <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>	<p>02.</p> <p>01 <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female</p>
<p>3 DATE OF BIRTH</p> <p>Example: Day Month Year 23 02 1954</p> <p>If exact date is not known, enter best estimate.</p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year</p> <p>03 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>Date of birth</p> <p>Day Month Year</p> <p>03 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>4 MARITAL STATUS</p> <p>Mark one circle only.</p>	<p>04 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 05 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 06 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 07 <input type="radio"/> Widowed 08 <input type="radio"/> Never married (single)</p>	<p>04 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 05 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 06 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 07 <input type="radio"/> Widowed 08 <input type="radio"/> Never married (single)</p>
<p>5 IS THIS PERSON LIVING WITH A COMMON-LAW PARTNER?</p> <p><i>Common-law refers to two people who live together as husband and wife but who are not legally married to each other.</i></p>	<p>09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>6 RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON 1</p> <p>Describe each person's relationship to Person 1.</p> <p>Mark one circle only.</p> <p><i>Stepchildren, adopted children or children of a common-law partner should be considered sons and daughters.</i></p> <p><i>If none of the choices apply, use the "Other" box to indicate this person's relationship to Person 1.</i></p> <p>Examples of "Other" relationships to Person 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cousin • niece or nephew • son's common-law partner (common-law daughter-in-law) • lodger's husband, wife or common-law partner • lodger's son or daughter • room-mate's daughter or son • employee • same-sex partner 	<p>11 <input checked="" type="radio"/> PERSON 1</p>	<p>12 <input type="radio"/> Husband or wife of Person 1 13 <input type="radio"/> Common-law partner of Person 1 14 <input type="radio"/> Son or daughter of Person 1 15 <input type="radio"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1 16 <input type="radio"/> Grandchild of Person 1 17 <input type="radio"/> Father or mother of Person 1 18 <input type="radio"/> Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1 19 <input type="radio"/> Grandparent of Person 1 20 <input type="radio"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 21 <input type="radio"/> Brother-in-law or sister-in-law of Person 1 22 <input type="radio"/> Lodger or boarder 23 <input type="radio"/> Room-mate Other — Specify _____ 24 <input type="text"/></p>

Appendix B.3: 2B.2 questionnaire, page 4, 1998 Canadian National Census Test

(The “explicit” method)

<p>1 NAME In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step B. → Then answer the following questions for each person.</p>	<p>PERSON 1</p> <p>Family name _____ Given name _____ Initial _____</p>	<p>PERSON 2</p> <p>Family name _____ Given name _____ Initial _____</p>
<p>2 RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON 1 For each person usually living here, describe his/her relationship to Person 1. Mark “<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>” or specify one response only. <i>Stepchildren, adopted children and children of a common-law partner should be considered sons and daughters.</i> If none of the choices apply, use the “Other” box to indicate this person’s relationship to Person 1. Examples of “Other” relationships to Person 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cousin • niece or nephew • son’s common-law partner (common-law daughter-in-law) • lodger’s husband, wife or common-law partner • lodger’s son or daughter • room-mate’s daughter or son • employee 	<p>01. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PERSON 1</p>	<p>02. <input type="checkbox"/> Husband or wife of Person 1 03. <input type="checkbox"/> Common-law partner of Person 1 04. <input type="checkbox"/> Same-sex partner of Person 1 05. <input type="checkbox"/> Son or daughter of Person 1 06. <input type="checkbox"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1 07. <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild of Person 1 08. <input type="checkbox"/> Father or mother of Person 1 09. <input type="checkbox"/> Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent of Person 1 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Brother-in-law or sister-in-law of Person 1 13. <input type="checkbox"/> Room-mate Other — Specify _____ 14. _____</p>
<p>3 SEX</p>	<p>15. <input type="checkbox"/> Male 16. <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p>	<p>15. <input type="checkbox"/> Male 16. <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p>
<p>4 DATE OF BIRTH Day Month Year Example: <input type="text" value="23"/> <input type="text" value="02"/> <input type="text" value="1954"/> If exact date is not known, enter best estimate.</p>	<p>Date of birth Day Month Year 17. <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>Date of birth Day Month Year 17. <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>5 MARITAL STATUS Mark “<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>” one circle only.</p>	<p>18. <input type="checkbox"/> Never legally married (single) 19. <input type="checkbox"/> Legally married (and not separated) 20. <input type="checkbox"/> Separated, but still legally married 21. <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced 22. <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed</p>	<p>18. <input type="checkbox"/> Never legally married (single) 19. <input type="checkbox"/> Legally married (and not separated) 20. <input type="checkbox"/> Separated, but still legally married 21. <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced 22. <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed</p>
<p>6 IS THIS PERSON LIVING WITH A COMMON-LAW PARTNER? <i>Common-law refers to two people who live together as husband and wife but who are not legally married to each other.</i></p>	<p>23. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 24. <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>23. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 24. <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

Appendix C: Demographic questions, 2001 Census of Canada

1 NAME In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step B . Then answer the following questions for each person.	PERSON 1 Family name Given name Initial	PERSON 2 Family name Given name Initial																		
2 SEX	01. <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female	02. <input type="radio"/> Male 02 <input type="radio"/> Female																		
3 DATE OF BIRTH Example: <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"><tr><td style="text-align: center;">Day</td><td style="text-align: center;">Month</td><td style="text-align: center;">Year</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">23</td><td style="text-align: center;">02</td><td style="text-align: center;">1954</td></tr></table> If exact date is not known, enter best estimate.	Day	Month	Year	23	02	1954	Date of birth <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"><tr><td style="text-align: center;">Day</td><td style="text-align: center;">Month</td><td style="text-align: center;">Year</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">03</td><td style="text-align: center;">[] []</td><td style="text-align: center;">[] [] [] []</td></tr></table>	Day	Month	Year	03	[] []	[] [] [] []	Date of birth <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"><tr><td style="text-align: center;">Day</td><td style="text-align: center;">Month</td><td style="text-align: center;">Year</td></tr><tr><td style="text-align: center;">03</td><td style="text-align: center;">[] []</td><td style="text-align: center;">[] [] [] []</td></tr></table>	Day	Month	Year	03	[] []	[] [] [] []
Day	Month	Year																		
23	02	1954																		
Day	Month	Year																		
03	[] []	[] [] [] []																		
Day	Month	Year																		
03	[] []	[] [] [] []																		
4 MARITAL STATUS Mark "⊗" one circle only.	04 <input type="radio"/> Never legally married (single) 05 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 06 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 07 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 08 <input type="radio"/> Widowed	04 <input type="radio"/> Never legally married (single) 05 <input type="radio"/> Legally married (and not separated) 06 <input type="radio"/> Separated, but still legally married 07 <input type="radio"/> Divorced 08 <input type="radio"/> Widowed																		
5 IS THIS PERSON LIVING WITH A COMMON-LAW PARTNER? <i>Common-law refers to two people of the opposite sex or of the same sex who live together as a couple but who are not legally married to each other.</i>	09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No	09 <input type="radio"/> Yes 10 <input type="radio"/> No																		
6 RELATIONSHIP TO PERSON 1 For each person usually living here, describe his/her relationship to Person 1. Mark "⊗" or specify one response only. Stepchildren, adopted children and children of a common-law partner should be considered sons and daughters. If none of the choices apply, use the "Other" box to indicate this person's relationship to Person 1. Examples of "Other" relationships to Person 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grandparent • cousin • niece or nephew • lodger's husband or wife • room-mate's daughter or son • employee 	11 <input checked="" type="radio"/> PERSON 1	12 <input type="radio"/> Husband or wife of Person 1 13 <input type="radio"/> Common-law partner (opposite-sex) of Person 1 14 <input type="radio"/> Common-law partner (same-sex) of Person 1 15 <input type="radio"/> Son or daughter of Person 1 16 <input type="radio"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of Person 1 17 <input type="radio"/> Grandchild of Person 1 18 <input type="radio"/> Father or mother of Person 1 19 <input type="radio"/> Father-in-law or mother-in-law of Person 1 20 <input type="radio"/> Brother or sister of Person 1 21 <input type="radio"/> Brother-in-law or sister-in-law of Person 1 22 <input type="radio"/> Lodger or boarder 23 <input type="radio"/> Room-mate Other — Specify 24 <input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/>																		

