

## Islamic Bigotry: The Slaughter of 4,000 Gays

By Robert Spencer

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At Columbia University on Monday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared: “We don’t have homosexuals like in your country. We don’t have that in our country. We don’t have this phenomenon; I don’t know who’s told you we have it.”

If there were any truth to this – and there is none – it would be because because the Islamic regime in Iran had killed them, since homosexuality can be a capital crime in that country. One notorious case occurred on July 19, 2005, when two teenage boys, Mahmoud Asgari, 14, and Ayaz Marhoni, 16, were hanged in a particularly brutal manner in Iran for the crime of homosexual activity. **Although Iranian officials insisted** that the death sentence was for the rape of a third boy, **the National Council of Resistance of Iran**, has said otherwise. But Asgari and Marhoni were not alone. According to the Iranian gay and lesbian rights group Homan, **the Iranian government has put to death** an estimated 4,000 homosexuals since 1980. **According to Scott Long**, director of the Human Rights Watch Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights Program, Iranians who are suspected of being gay commonly face torture. Hossein Alizadeh of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission said Iran gays live with “constant fear of execution and persecution and also social stigma associated with homosexuality.”

This is true not only in Iran, but in all too many areas of the Islamic world. The Qur’an characterizes those who “practice your lusts on men in preference to women” as “transgressing beyond bounds” (7:81). **A hadith** pronounces “the curse of Allah” upon those who engage in homosexual activity. A contemporary Muslim writer, **Shaykh Abdul-Azeez Al-Fawzaan**, called homosexuality “one of the most sinful acts known to humankind” and said that it was “evidence of perverted instincts, total collapse of shame and honor, and extreme filthiness of character and soul.”

**Legal views on punishment vary.** Among the Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*madhahib*), the Hanafi school mandates a severe beating for the first offense, and the death penalty for a repeat offender. The Shafi’i school calls for 100 lashes for an unmarried homosexual, death by stoning for a married one. The Hanbali school requires stoning across the board. Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, directed his followers to “kill the one who sodomizes and the one who lets it be done to him” (*Umdat al-Salik*, p17.3).

In many areas these injunctions are still followed. The Islamic Penal Law Against Homosexuals in Iran calls for the death penalty for sodomy and one hundred lashes for lesbianism for the first three offenses, with death for the fourth offense. **Homosexuality is a capital offense** not only in Iran, but also in Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Yemen and Mauritania. In

Malaysia, it can draw a twenty-year prison sentence, and **is illegal also** in Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates, and Uzbekistan, among others.

Of course, Afghanistan under the Taliban regime drew international attention for killing gays by toppling walls onto them. Pakistani law mandates two years in prison for homosexual activity, but the traditional Islamic penalties of lashing and stoning are still widely popular. **When authorities in the United Arab Emirates arrested** twenty-six men whom they accused of participating in a mass gay wedding – with twelve dressed as grooms and twelve as brides, plus a disc jockey and a man who was to perform the wedding ceremony – in November 2005, they announced plans to subject the men not only to lashings and jail time, but also to hormone treatments.

In light of all this, the silence of campus gay rights groups and the so-called “progressive” Left generally about the global efforts by Islamic jihadists to impose Islamic Sharia law is appallingly short-sighted. While they attack Christians, who are not calling for gays to be imprisoned or killed under any circumstances, they say nothing about a genuine threat to their survival. While they attack Israel, a gay-friendly country, they are silent about the murder of gays in Islamic Iran.

The late columnist Cathy Seipp **recounted a telling incident** in March 2006, when a friend of hers went into San Francisco’s City Lights bookstore and asked for a copy of the late and much-missed Oriana Fallaci’s *The Force of Reason*. “We don’t carry books by fascists,” sniffed the clerk, prompting Seipp to muse: “Strangest of all is the scenario of such a person disliking an author for defending Western civilization against radical Islam -- when one of the first things those poor, persecuted Islamists would do, if they ever (Allah forbid) came to power in the U.S., is crush suspected homosexuals like him beneath walls.”

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