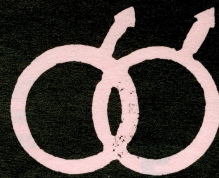


GAY PRIDE WEEK
20:28 JUNE 81



GAY RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

**5 to 10% OF THE IRISH POPULATION
IS GAY**

OVER 6,000 IN CORK ALONE

**IRELAND IS THE ONLY EUROPEAN
COUNTRY WHICH STILL LEGISLATES
AGAINST GAYS**

**WE DEMAND SOCIAL AND
LEGAL EQUALITY NOW!**

GAY RIGHTS NOW!

g
a
y

r
i
g
h
t
s

n
o
w
!

THE RIGHTS OF LESBIAN WOMEN AND GAY MEN

The homosexual minority in Ireland has long been a repressed and oppressed minority. It is also a large minority, if the conservative figures are accepted this minority is larger than all of the religious minorities put together. The gay minority has long lived in fear, isolation and loneliness, frightened to live their lifestyle in a country with a barbarous official attitude towards it. Gay men and lesbian women are now organising and demand the rights they deserve in dignity as human beings and Irish citizens.

THE RIGHT TO FORM LOVING RELATIONSHIPS WITHOUT BEING LABELLED CRIMINALS

Ireland is the only remaining sovereign state in Western Europe which criminalises male homosexuality. The laws are uncivilised. The smallest show of affection amounts to 'gross indecency' - for greater offences the penalties range from 10 years to life imprisonment with hard labour. These uncivilised laws date from the middle of the last century. Lesbian women, although not criminals in law, suffer from the general label of criminality given by these laws to homosexuality. Every year half a dozen to a dozen men have their lives ruined by being charged under these laws. We demand an end to this official barbarism.

THE RIGHT TO LIVE AS CITIZENS EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW WITH OTHERS

We ask for not only cosmetic change in the statutes but real changes which will protect the rights of lesbian women and gay men before the law. In the sexual and emotional sphere we want equality with heterosexual citizens. This means that we demand the same rights with regard to the age of consent, the right to be publicly affectionate without being criminals, the right to work and lead useful lives without the threat of sanctions, such as sacking, on the grounds of homosexuality. We also demand the right for those of us who have children, particularly lesbian women, to have the rights of custody of those children and access to those children on an equal footing with heterosexual parents.

WE DEMAND AN EDUCATION WHICH SUITS OUR NEEDS

Irish education in general ignores the area of human loving relationships. To the extent that our educational system deals with human relationships it paints a narrow unrealistic view of the scope of these relationships. It puts women and men into stereotypical roles - the only possible relationship being a one-to-one match between man and woman. This situation leads to great unhappiness and fear among school-going adolescents of a homosexual orientation. Along with the usual pressures of adolescent life many young Irish women and men face an isolation which scars them for many years after. An educational system which perpetrates myths and ignorance about the complexity of human relationships is out of touch with a world in which all of us must deal with these complexities. It ensures that the parents, relatives, friends, teachers and doctors of the lesbian women and gay men are often unable to cope with this diversity but react with fear, ignorance and sometimes hostility. We share the desire of the women's movement and many other sections of our society for change in the educational system.

We intend to continue our struggle until our demands are met. We intend to begin sensible debate in Irish society on the question of homosexuality. There are many myths to be dispelled, much ignorance to be informed and in the coming months and years we will be active in this process. More and more gay men and lesbian women in Ireland are proud to be gay. We will continue to live honest, open life styles and more will join us. We will not go away. Perhaps its time you thought about your attitudes. Are you ready for the day when you discover that someone close to you is a member of our not so small minority?

gay rights
are
human rights

g
a
y

r
i
g
h
t
s

n
o
w
!

IRISH GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT:

CORK : 4 McCurtain Street, Tel 505394.

Gay Switchboard: Tel. 505394.

Postal enquiries: P.O. Box 1, Cork.

WATERFORD: P.O. Box 36, Waterford

CORK GAY COLLECTIVE: P.O. Box 39, Cork

U.C.C. GAYSOC: c/o Students Union Office, U.C.C.