



# Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans History Month

February 2005

## So whose idea is this?

The idea was suggested by "School's Out," the organisation working for LGBT, (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans), equality in education.

This was supported by **Jacqui Smith MP** who is the Government Minister with responsibility for equality.

She said: "I am delighted to support this idea.

I hope that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans groups and their supporters across the country will take the opportunity to participate in the month and organise LGBT events in their areas."

## Why bother with a history month for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) People?

This month will be a first step towards highlighting the history and the issues of social and economic life and give us a huge opportunity to explore the rich and varied lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people.

In 1967 The Sexual Offences Act came into force in England and Wales, and decriminalised homosexual acts between two men over 21 years of age and in private. However this did not prevent discrimination, harassment and bullying towards LGBT people.

Finally, after much campaigning from the community and trades unions the Government brought in protective legislation at work. It also removed the insidious Section 28 of the local Government Act 1988, which outlawed the "promotion of homosexuality" in local authorities.

The invisibility of members of these communities has been compounded as they have been forced to remain silent about our sexual orientation/gender identity and we are ignored and we are rendered invisible. Consequently stereotypes have developed that breed the appalling homophobia/transphobia that is endemic in British society, This in turn damages and distorts our lives.

## Our Own History

Amicus is made up of sister unions who all have a history of campaigning and support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people. We are all very proud of what we have achieved over the years. First of all to gain recognition and then to be included in the formal structure.

In the early days we took very tentative, and brave steps, to raise our profile at Union annual conferences and at regional level. We spent our own time staffing stalls at Pride events around the country, initially these were only held in London. Now we have our own banner and national committee.

Outside of Amicus we have been influential within the TUC. Our long campaign, for which we still bear the scars, for inclusion of Bisexual and Trans people was won. Today they are included in the title of the TUC Committee, the annual Conference and most importantly within the remit of work. However, we have also been instrumental in the campaign for rights at work. We welcome the Employment (Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003) and the Gender Recognition Regulations (2004) but we continue to fight for full rights.

So come and join us. The more of us that stand up to be counted, the sooner we will gain the rights that are justly ours. In a trade union you never stand alone.

For more information:

Confidential Helpline **08457 413092** (calls charged at local rate)

amicus-lgbt website: <http://www.amicus-lgbt.uklinux.net/>

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