



LGBT Network News

February 2016

History Month – Religion, Belief and Philosophy

We were pleased that the open meeting for LGBT History Month attracted a reasonable audience and the event was opened by Ian Stephenson, the event was the second event in DCC's **Take a Stand** campaign celebrating diversity, following the lighting of a candle in County Hall Reception for the duration of Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January, look out for more events in the following months, the next is International Women's Day on 8th March.

We were joined by Professor Rusi Jaspal from De Montfort University who spoke about the issues surrounding faith and sexuality – particularly among gay Pakistani Muslim men. His research had its origins in sexual health research, it became apparent to him that little investigation had happened into the impact on individuals of having dual identities around sexuality and faith and that where people see identities as conflicting this is destructive to their sense of self. Having interviewed people of different backgrounds and faiths, the presentation dwelt on this particular demographic as he discovered that this community widely regard their faith as very important so conflict for an individual is potentially greater. He identified the various ways people manage the conflict between their sexual and religious identities, for example, by denial, by self-isolation, by identifying with one element to the exclusion of the other, which resonates with many people irrespective of faith, or indeed no faith. Professor Jaspal was clear that there is a need for more research in this field, and acknowledged that his data is drawn from a very specific cohort, he concluded with aspirations for society to acknowledge the tensions between identities and for us to support one another, he also identified the need to engage with faith communities and create safe spaces both within faith and LGBT communities for individuals to negotiate the conflicting emotions they may be experiencing.

We were also pleased to welcome Father Brian Smith who gave an insight to experiences in the Church of England. Now retired and living in Derbyshire he previously worked in three London parishes and has always been an activist working to change the Church's attitude to sexuality and gender. He spoke of experiences ranging from congregations reacting positively to same sex couples through to members of the Church hierarchy suggesting he move to Australia! He is currently treasurer of the European Forum of LGBT Christian Groups, more information about this organisation can be found here:

www.euroforumlgbtchristians.eu/index.php/en/european-forum

Brian has also provided us with a reading list of books that he mentioned and thought may be useful to people with an interest in this subject:

- John Boswell - Christianity, Homosexuality and Social Tolerance
- Gilles Herrida - The Missing Myth: A New Vision of Same-Sex Love
- Scott Siraj al-Haqq Kugle - Homosexuality in Islam
- K Renato Lings - Love Lost in Translation: Homosexuality in the Bible

Events of Interest

11 May 2016

Sexuality and Gender: People of faith respond to new perceptions of what it means to be human

Dialogue Society Leicester Branch, 2 Swan Street, Leicester LE3 5AW

See [link](#) for more info

Check out Derbyshire LGBT+ (formerly Derbyshire Friend) website for a daily inspirational biography of LGBT individuals for History Month
<http://www.derbyshirelgbt.org.uk/>

Chesterfield Pride 2016



Following the success of Chesterfield Pride last year, another event is being organised for this year on Sunday 24th July. The organisers are keen for people to get involved.

You can contact them on:

chesterfieldpride@hotmail.com

For more information visit:

www.facebook.com/chesterfieldpride

Keep in touch on...?

Yammer doesn't really seem to be working for people, but those who attended said how important it was we continue to keep in touch via email and the various messages that are sent out.

One suggestion was whether we should investigate the potential of Twitter.

The group is divided among the internet savvy and the self-confessed technophobes – so as a way of explanation and example please look at the Gay Police Association Twitter account:

<https://twitter.com/DerbyPoliceLGBT>

As you will see you do not have to be on Twitter to read the tweets – but you do need to join if you wanted to respond.

Could this be a way forward for the group?

Obviously Twitter is in the public domain so people need to be aware of any comments they might make and to consider the fact if you are on Twitter people may be able to find your profile if you follow a particular account.

DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS

All at County Hall – if anyone has a burning desire to host a meeting at their place of work, let me know, all 2.00-4.00pm although the room is booked for an hour beforehand if anybody is travelling and needs somewhere to eat.

- Tuesday 19th April 2016 Committee Room 1
- Monday 18th July 2016 Committee Room 1
- Wednesday 21st September 2016 Committee Room 2
- Thursday 15th December 2016 Committee Room 1
- Wednesday 15th February 2017 Committee Room 1