

# Queer Archival Activism

Cork LGBT Archive

ORLA EGAN

<http://corklgbtarchive.com/>

---

**ARCHIVES  
ARE NOT  
NEUTRAL**

---



- Preserving Heritage / History
- Neutral / Impartial Keepers of ‘Truth’
- Closely guarded field – ‘professional archivists’ only
- Inclusion / Exclusion
- What / Who is included / preserved?
- What / Who is excluded, hidden, obscured?
- Political – what and who is valued



# Querying Traditional Archives

---

“The Heritage inevitably reflects the governing assumptions of its time and context. It is always inflected by the power and authority of those who have colonised the past, whose versions of history matter.”

**Stuart Hall (2005)**

---





**"THE MASTER'S TOOLS WILL NEVER  
DISMANTLE THE MASTER'S HOUSE"**

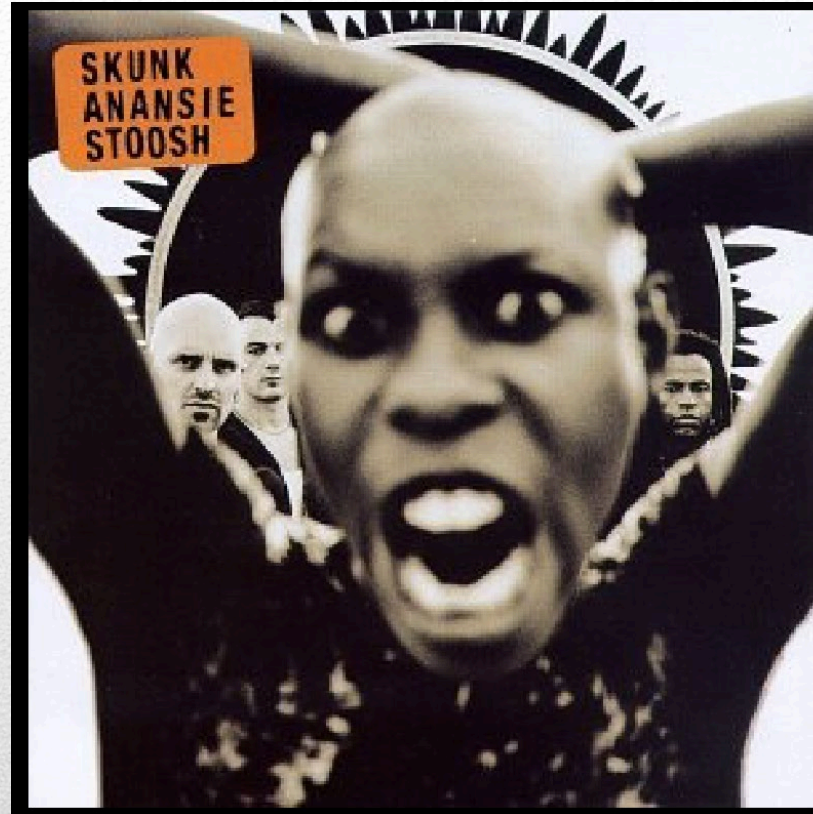
AUDRE LORDE

“We are entrenched within power. We are trained and prepared within our graduate programmes to see no other options. The purpose of the archival profession is to *curate* the past, not *confront* it; to *entrench* inequality, not *eradicate* it; to *erase* black lives, not *ennoble* them. Tigers cannot change their stripes.”

**Jarrett Drake** South Africa

---





**Yes It's F\*\*king Political!**

---

- To become more inclusive
- Reflect on and change archival practices



# CHALLENGES TO ARCHIVES

---



- Focus on communities and histories that have been excluded or repressed or rewritten in archives
- Challenge
  - Practices of archiving
  - What is an Archive
  - Who is an Archivist



# COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

---

## • Gleaned Archives

- Community archives are “gleaned archives”:
- “the process whereby something considered worthless by one ‘regime of value’ is retrieved and re-envisioned by another.”
- “In the process of gathering things that are valued, an archive comes into being.”

# Tim Cresswell

---



The dominance and exclusions of the archive have long been challenged by “many different groups demanding that their histories be told, their voices be heard and that the archives reflect their lives and experiences.”

**Andrew Flinn**

---

- democratisation of archives and of knowledge production
- “radical or counter-hegemonic public history-making activities”
- “social movement archival activism”

Andrew Flinn



# Querying/ Queering Archives

---



Jamie Ann Lee (2015)

“I deploy the term queer as a practice and a politics. I use ‘to queer’ as a verb working on and within the archives as an act of intervention, an upsetting of the normative archival structures that continue to uphold and reproduce the hegemonic power dynamics at work to exclude.”

# **QUEERING THE ARCHIVE**

---

- Rukus! – Black Queer Community UK



**rukus !**

rukus! Federation: Making difference work

- Skeivt Arkiv – Norwegian National LGBT Archive
- Arizona Queer Archive
- London Metropolitan Museum – LGBT History Project

# QUEER ARCHIVES

---





# LGBTQ+ Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections

• "Without borders" conference June 22nd-24th 2016

QUEERING MEMORY  
ALMS CONFERENCE BERLIN 2019

**ALMS LGBTQ**  
**London June 2016 / Berlin 2019**

---

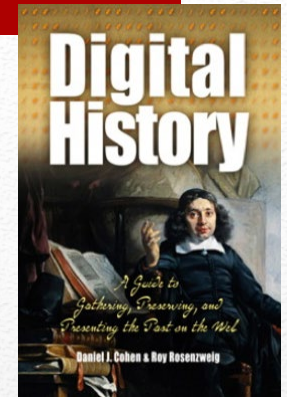
- Huge variety
  - Location
  - Focus
  - Organisation
  - Funding
  - Staff / Volunteers



# QUEER ARCHIVES

---





- Cohen and Rosenzweig  
Digital History (2006)

“new media and new technologies have challenged historians to rethink the ways that they research, write, present, and teach about the past.”

# DIGITAL HISTORY

---

- the potential for greater democratisation of archives
- upsurge in community digital archives

Archives 2.0.

# DIGITAL ARCHIVES

---



- **QUEER ARCHIVAL ACTIVISM**

**Cork LGBT Archive**

---

- Long history of LGBT Activism in Cork
- Hidden history
- Cork LGBT Archive – preserve and share this history
- Giving voice to unheard voices
- Moving beyond Dublin-centric history

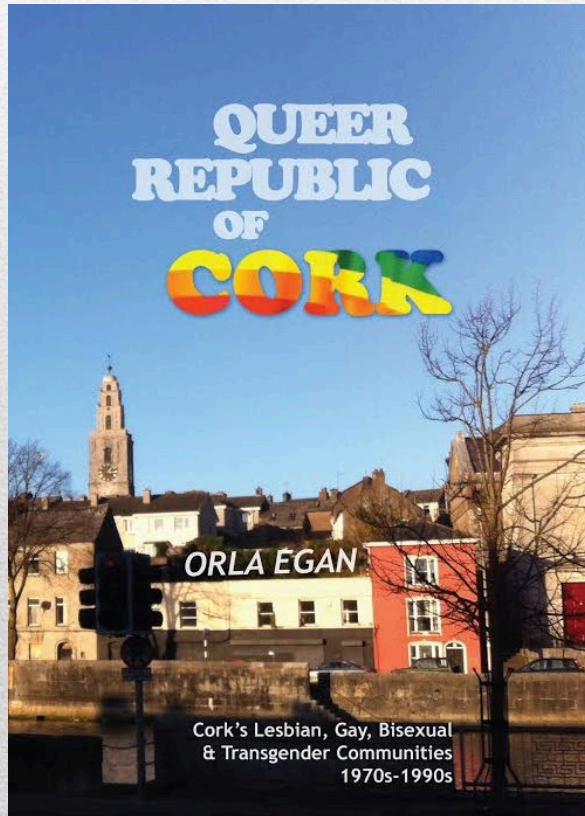


# Cork LGBT Archive

---



<http://corklgbtarchive.com/>



## CORK LGBT ARCHIVE

[Browse Items](#)[Browse Collections](#)[Browse Exhibits](#)[About](#)[Blog](#)[Queer Republic of Cork BOOK](#)

### Featured Item

#### The Other Place

The Other Place LGBT Resource Centre was opened in 1991 and closed in 2015, with some of the activities being transferred to the new Cork Gay Project...



### Recently Added Items

#### Irish Quilt Tour 1991 Poster

Poster for the Irish Quilt Tour. The AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed in a number of venues in Ireland in 1991, including in the Cork City Hall in...



### Featured Collection

#### Cork Gay Collective COLLECTION

#### Friends of Eon Membership Card

Membership card for the



# EXHIBITION

<https://www.facebook.com/CorkLGBTArchive/>

@CorkLGBThistory

Starting points for Community Digital Archives

# **Challenge**

---





# The beginning

---





# Arthur Leahy Collection

---





# Chaotic Treasure Trove

---





# Damp Damage

---





# Sorting

---





**A bit more organised**

---



- From Chaos to Cataloguing



# CORK LGBT ARCHIVE

---



- DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE
- Creating a Digital Archive
  - Preservation and Access

# **Cork LGBT Archive**

---



- Low-cost, low-tech model
  - Omeka
  - Reclaim Hosting
  - Amazon S3 Storage
  - Scans, Photographs, Audio/Video

**[www.corklgbtarchive.com](http://www.corklgbtarchive.com)**

---

Browse Items

Browse Collections

Browse Exhibits

About

Donate

Queer Republic of Cork BOOK

## Featured Item

### The Other Place

The Other Place LGBT Resource Centre was opened in 1991 and closed in 2015, with some of the activities being transferred to the new Cork Gay Project...



## Recently Added Items

### Irish Quilt Tour 1991 Poster

Poster for the Irish Quilt Tour. The AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed in a number of venues in Ireland in 1991, including in the Cork City Hall in...

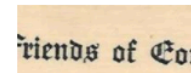


## Featured Collection

### Cork Gay Collective COLLECTION

### Friends of Eon Membership Card

Membership card for the Friends of Eon, an Irish...



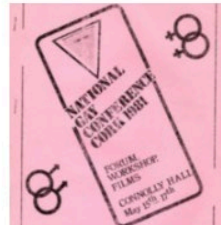
<http://corklgbtarchive.com/>



## 1981 NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE CORK



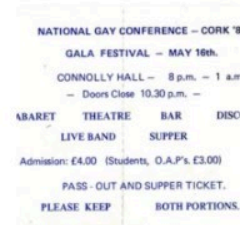
1981 National Gay Conference Cork Poster



1981 Conference Pack



1981 Conference Leaflet



Original Ticket for Gala Ball at 1981 Conference



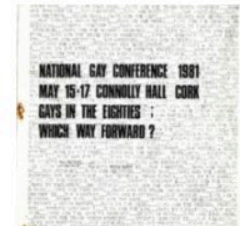
Press Information 1981 Conference



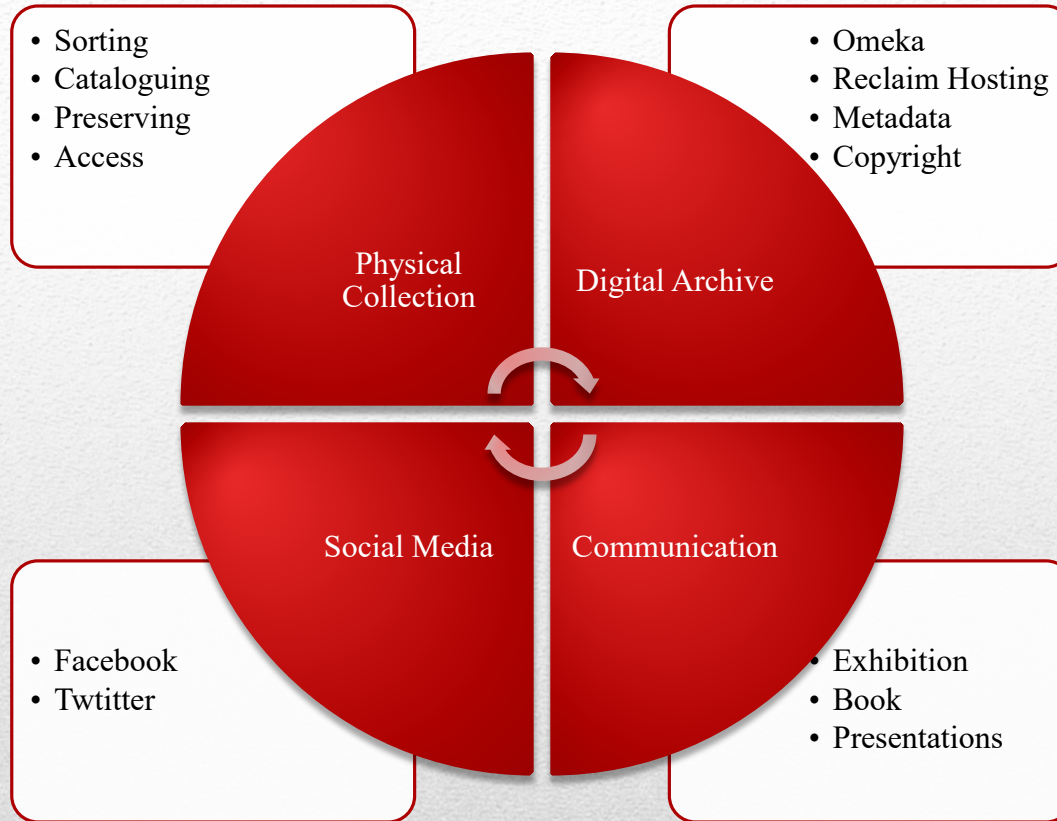
Background to 1981 Conference



1981 National Gay Conference Cork Photo



25 page report on the conference



# Cork LGBT Archive

---



- In from the margins
- Into the archives / Irish heritage
- Community Archives
- Queer Archives
- Digital History

# **Cork LGBT Archive**

---

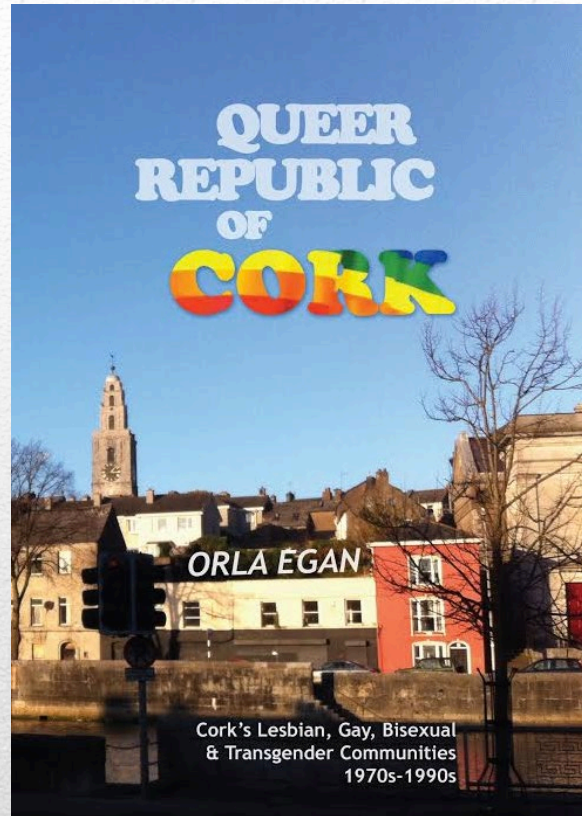


- Heritage Council
- Cork City Council Heritage Grants
- Hidden History Award

# Heritage Funding

---





# Book

---



# Exhibition





- Collection donated to Cork Public Museum
- Sorting and cataloguing
- Public Access
- Development of permanent Cork LGBT Exhibition



# Cork Public Museum

---

- DRI – Digital Repository of Ireland
- Plan to include collection in DRI
- Long-term digital preservation and greater access

# Digital Preservation

---



## Cork LGBT Archive winners of DRI Community Archives Scheme

Submitted on 5 February 2019

DRI are delighted to announce that **Cork LGBT Archive** are the winners of the first DRI Community Archives Scheme!

This exciting news was also announced on GCN: <https://gcn.ie/cork-lgbt-archive-digitally-preserved-following-funding-win/>

The Digital Repository of Ireland launched a paid membership model in February 2018. In that time several organisations have joined as Full or Associate members. As a largely public-funded repository we believe it is important to make long-term preservation of digital materials open to a wide range of organisations, including those operating on a non-funded, voluntary basis. To the end, we launched a Community Archives Membership Scheme. As the winner of the first Scheme, Cork LGBT



- Inaugural Community Archives Scheme

# Digital Repository of Ireland

---

- Cork LGBT Archive now on DRI.ie
- Long-term digital preservation
- Wider access
- Greater visibility
- Symbolic – inclusion of marginalised communities in national heritage repositories



# Cork LGBT Archive on DRI

---



“We are thrilled to see the Cork LGBT Archive preserved and now published in the Repository. The significant work that Orla put into building this collection is only equalled by the ongoing value it provides in broadening out the social, cultural, and political history of Ireland. DRI is committed to supporting Ireland’s cultural heritage through preservation and access to digital materials, and is developing a diversity and inclusion policy for release in 2020. The publication of the Cork LGBT Archives marks one step in this direction.”

**Natalie Harrower**  
**Director of DRI**

---



- Queer Archival Activism
- LGBT History / Heritage recognised as part of Irish History/ Heritage
- Digital Repository of Ireland
  - Greater Visibility
  - Long-term digital preservation

# Cork LGBT Archive

---





# Irish Examiner Dec 2016







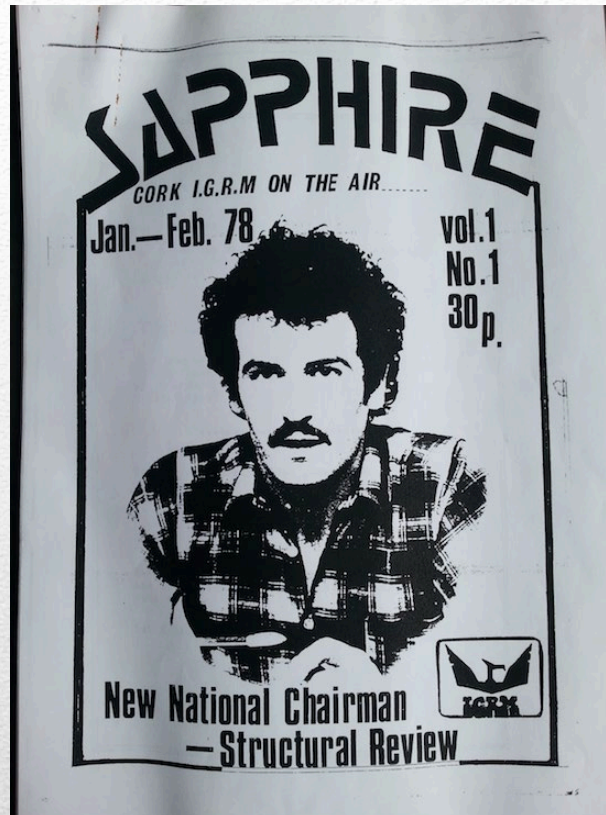
- Human Resources
  - Voluntary
- Financial Resources
- Long- term sustainability



# Challenges

---







# NATIONAL GAY CONFERENCE CORK 1981

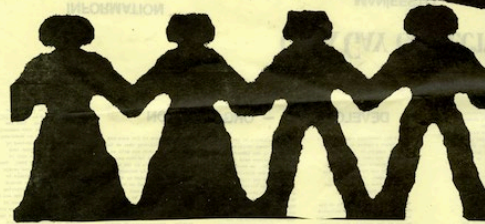
BY A STEWART PARK  
d by NOEL GREG  
signed by  
OWEN

FORUM-WORKSHOPS-FILMS ETC.  
CONNOLLY HALL MAY 15-17<sup>th</sup>

FOR INFORMATION WRITE TO  
ORGANISING COMMITTEE P.O. BOX 39  
CORK CITY



GAY RIGHTS NOW!



AR AGHAIH LEIS AN AGÓID



Cork Gay Collective  
P.O. Box 39,  
Cork.





**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**

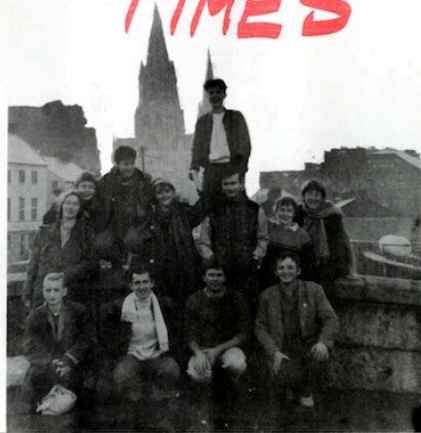
**WE DEMAND SOCIAL AND  
LEGAL EQUALITY NOW!**

**GAY RIGHTS NOW!**



SPRING '84

# QUARE TIMES



LESBIAN/GAY MAGAZINE

50p (35p unw)



# Womens Place

24, Sullivan's Quay.

Information  
on :-  
Social Welfare  
Health, etc.



Only Women's  
Library in the  
Republic.

ALL Women WELCOME.

TEL. NO: 317660

ASK FOR Wendy or Marian.



# MUNSTER GCN

MUNSTER'S LESBIAN & GAY NEWSPAPER

FREE

APRIL 1992

## Historic Victory!

On Patrick's Day '92 we made history....and we did it in style. Our float was a blaze of colour with balloons, banners, streamers and dancing lesbian, bi and gay people blowing bubbles at the 80,000 people lining the streets of Cork.

**How did it all happen?**  
Well...a couple of us were toying with the idea for a few months. Just imagine - Paddy's day - thousands of people on the streets - a perfect opportunity to visibly celebrate our culture in Cork.

A week before the parade we sat in the pub thinking it would never come off...no-one would be willing to participate. But as word spread enthusiasm grew and by the end of the evening we were all buzzing so we applied for entry to the Cork Parade! It was surprisingly easy, especially considering the hassle in New York.

After a hectic week of preparation the big day finally dawned.

Many of us awoke early worrying about what was in store for us - were we crazy? - but butterflies aside we made it in! That morning we set to work, transforming a boring blue pick-up truck into a bright colourful fun float. A loud cheer broke out as three brave women from Limerick arrived to join us.

Float done, coffee drunk, we transformed ourselves with face paint, costumes and masks.

The costumes were partly for disguise - many of us couldn't risk being recognised - but it was also because we wanted to give Cork the message that we are happy and that it can be fun to be lesbian, gay or bisexual and so we set off, en route dancing and singing.

The overall reaction was amazingly positive. Many people stared with stony faces trying to ignore us and hoping we would go away. An occasional finger or fist was raised at us. Someone was hit with a plastic bottle. Curiosity and disbelief were common reactions - "Are you really?" "Where's your girlfriend?" Most of the hassle came from young boys in groups - but we felt really powerful shouting "YEAH!" with pride when they accused us of being lezzies and faggots.

Despite this, all along the route there were people shouting, clapping and waving in support. Sometimes, in the middle of a silent crowd, one person would start cheering - others would then join in. Then sometimes whole groups of people were hollering in support. On St. Patrick's Bridge three women at the back of the crowd were



Photo: Maurice Akers

jumping up and down frantically trying to attract our attention to encourage us. On the South Mall a 70-year-old woman waved enthusiastically and called out "you're gorgeous!"

We passed lesbians and gay men who had decided not to join in the parade but who watched with pride as their float sailed by.

We sang "Sing if you're glad to be Gay" over and over until our throats hurt. At the reviewing stand lesbian and gay

literature (including GCN) was presented to the dignitaries. The support we received and our own energy and pride overwhelmed and belittled any negative reaction.

Later in Louisa's relaxing with our pints, exhausted, we watched ourselves on the six o'clock news. Then suddenly Arthur, Catherine and Gae burst into the Pub bearing a plaque. Hoots ensued as they announced that we'd won "best new entrant".

Many of us even managed to go dancing in the Other Place that night, celebrating with Champagne showers.

And we had reason to celebrate! We brought the words LESBIAN, GAY and BISEXUAL into people's vocabulary and consciousness and we had made ourselves visible in a proud, happy, and positive way.

WELL DONE TO ALL INVOLVED.  
Orla Egan









RESOURCE CENTRE

VEGETARIAN CAFE  
MON-SAT 10.00-8.00.  
(SUN 12-5)

RADICAL COMMUNITY BOOKSHOP  
MON-SAT 11.00-6.00.

FOOD CO-OP  
SAT 10.30-4.30  
THUR 7.00-9.00

WOMEN'S PLACE

**QUAY CO-OP**

24 SULLIVAN'S QUAY  
PHONE-967660





# GAA - GAYS AGAINST THE AMENDMENT

## G.A.A. - GAYS AGAINST THE AMENDMENT

We are asking you to vote "NO" in the forthcoming referendum. Almost all the gay organisations\* in Ireland have affiliated to the National Anti-Amendment Campaign, and the G.A.A. (with members from all these groups) is working to ensure that this commitment is translated into votes.

Constitutions deal in Absolutes. No exceptions are allowed, either by the Dail or by the Courts. If the proposed Amendment is passed then:-

- : no help whatever could be given to rape victims to prevent an intolerable burden after an already dreadful crime.
- : the very limited civil rights to contraception will be drastically reduced. The I.P.D., and many essential types of contraceptive pill will be banned outright.
- : the capacity for any citizen to interfere with the private lives of others (via a legal injunction) will be increased appallingly.

It is a standard joke, and a stupid one, that all this is a problem of no concern to gays. But it is:- all of us know married gays, there are many gay fathers and lesbian mothers, and lesbians are no more immune to rape than any other women in Ireland. Less, possibly, given the aggression with which they have to deal. Gays are affected, and gays should vote "NO".

The Amendment is opposed by people from all sides of Irish society. By Trade Unionists, and by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions itself; by the Irish Council of Civil Liberties; by Protestant Churches; and by all people concerned with basic civil rights. Some of these people regard the present stringent laws against abortion as necessary; some do not; but all are united in seeing the Amendment as utterly unnecessary as an attempt to introduce into our law an unchangeable element of narrow sectarian legislation.

In the words of one of the opposing groups:- "We believe that the Amendment could be the basis, through litigation or other legal action, for a degree of State interference with personal and sexual privacy and medical ethics unparalleled in any country in the Western world". (a statement, remarkably, by the Methodist Church Council).

It seems to us inconceivable that gays could be anything but horrified at such a prospect. It should also be unnecessary to point out that proponents of the Amendment are also those who most vehemently oppose gay rights. Everyone in G.A.A. is against the Amendment. Many of us also support, or belong to, the Women's Right To Choose Campaign, which proposes simply that it is the right of the individual woman, and of nobody else, to have control over her own body and of her own fertility. We see this as an identical stance to our own declaration as gay people that we alone have rights over our own bodies, and what we shall do with them: we deny the right of anybody else to tell us what we may not do.

Whether or not you agree with this Right To Choose, the importance of voting "NO" is overwhelming. The other questions involved are the concerns of the normal processes of democracy. They must not be pre-empted by a dogmatic insertion in the Constitution. *MS.F. C.T.L. Dublin Gay Centre*

GAYS AGAINST THE AMENDMENT P.O. BOX 1076 DUBLIN 1 *East Dublin Gay Centre, New York Gay Community*

The Anti - Amendment Campaign needs money, and it needs it now. Make a contribution by coming to:- G.A.A. Party, Anti-Amendment fund-raiser, Birsfield Centre, 10 FOWLER ST., DUBLIN - TUESDAY 22nd FEBRUARY, 10 - 3 a.m. 12.00 (11.00, unaged) FOOD, WINE, WHISKY ETC.



# **LESBIAN LINE**

Thursday 8-10pm

# **271087**

# **GAY INFORMATION CORK**

Wednesday 7-9pm

Saturday 3-5pm

Completely confidential



# AIDS

GAY HEALTH ACTION

INFORMATION

LEAFLET 1

MAY 1985









- <http://corklgbtarchive.com/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/CorkLGBTArchive/>
- Queer Republic of Cork Book & Exhibition
- Twitter: @corklgbthistory
- [http://www.onstream.ie/books/queer\\_republic.htm](http://www.onstream.ie/books/queer_republic.htm)

# Cork LGBT Archive

---

