

The sexual intolerance in lithuania essay



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The Sexual Intolerance in Lithuania The gays' procession in Vilnius on the 8th of May was the most discussed event which received many responses not only from the EU institutions, our government, but also from other high rank politicians and the mass media in many countries. The strong will to forbid such unprecedented an action in Lithuania of President Dalia Grybauskaitė and other politicians as well as our compatriots, showed that being a member of the European union, which is based on the fundamental Human rights and freedom, our country still is homophobic in many ways. In this essay, I am going to reveal this phenomenon and try to explain the main reasons, why the reaction of our society is so sharp and aggressive towards the sexual minority's groups, looking from religious, historical and cultural prospects. First of all, before starting to discuss this topic, it is very important to understand such terms as ' a sexual minority ' and ' homophobia ' properly, because they are often misinterpreted.

According to Wikipedia, a sexual minority is a group whose sexual identity, orientation or practices differ from the majority of the surrounding society. It consists of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people (LGBT). While homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual were coined during the latter half of the 19th Century, it was Sigmund Freud who popularized their usage. Freud, now considered the father of modern psychology, believed humans to be naturally bisexual.

Morin and Garfinkle (1978) in the book " Homophobia: Conceptual, Definitional, and Value Issues," characterized the homophobic as an individual who does not value a homosexual lifestyle equally with a heterosexual lifestyle. ' Homophobia' has become popular as a descriptor of

a wide range of negative emotions, attitudes, and behaviors toward homosexual people. ” (Haaga, “ Homophobia”) To begin with in the Bible, Leviticus, Chapter 20, verse 13, we can read: ‘ If a man also lies with mankind, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. ’ (Titus Rivas ”Sexual Intolerance”) This so brief a quotation shows that sexual intolerance is an old phenomenon, having a deep background.

This one is an especially important fact, because a religion has a great influence on people as it shows the truths of life and a perfect model of thinking in managing one’s life. Talking about Lithuania, we have a rather unique situation there. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW) expert Boris O. Dittrich, some groups of the Lithuanian Parliament are under a strong control of church so there are strong Church- State relations in our country.

All these things are obstacles in passing laws that concerns homosexuals marriage’s possibility, the issue of adopting a child in a homosexual family or even in a cultural life – it is forbidden to show the images of people with non-traditional sexual orientation, ‘ because it angles a traditional notion of a family’(cardinal Audrys Juozas Backis). However, this disability to separate political and religious attitudes toward this phenomenon in such a believing country as Spain is not a problem, because these two institutions have a clear boundary line and they do not try to affect each other, but functions as individuals. So this problem in Lithuania is rooted and to solve it our government should find the way to separate itself from the Church. The history of our county is also very talkative trying to find the reasons of sexual intolerance. While being in the USSR our society was strongly affected by the <https://assignbuster.com/the-sexual-intolerance-in-lithuania-essay/>

communists' ideology which still has remained in its subconscious and clear asserts into a statutory scheme. In the USSR, it was against law to have sexual intercourse with a people of the same gender.

These people were considered as deserters and were equated for spies. The punishment for this could end even in death. Later, from the 19th century guys and lesbians were kept into the asylum for criminal lunatics where these people were treated by a conversion therapy and psychotropic drugs. What is really shocking, in our independent country a volunteering sexual intercourse between two men was considered to be illegal and was punished in a similar way till the 3rd of June in 1993. However, the second part of this legislation still functions in our legal system.

It is also very important to stress, that Lithuania was the last from all the Baltic counties who abolished a strict criminal liability for freewill homosexual intercourse. mokslai. It "Homosexuality in Lithuania") So all these facts show that the history of a country also leaves a clear taint in it's notion especially when it comes to religion, race and sexual issues. The statistics of the last few years showed that intolerance is brought up within our cultural life, which is in a rather low level. The negative effect of mass media, educational system and the way of upbringing a child in a family are almost the most important factors, which make our society so homophobic.

According to Dr. Jolanta Reingarde, educational institutions in our country do not change this rooted problem among children, but even fix these ingrained stereotypes. Pupils are tough to accept the dominating cultural and groups' dogmas as righteous, normal and venerable. If something is out of these

acceptable lines, it will be naturally interpreted as dangerous and deviant. What is more, teachers themselves admit that they do not enlighten children enough about this phenomenon, because there are no suitable textbooks and programs to touch this issue. It is also known that many schoolteachers are elderly people, having a very conservative and frequently negative attitude towards homosexuals, so it is a taboo for them to discuss this problem.

There is an especially negative stance talking about the men's homosexuality. According to the survey 'The Crisis of the Male Role in Lithuania' (2002) even 42 percents of men have negative attitude towards gays and only 26 percents are intolerant to lesbians. These results can be caused by our traditions. In a family, a child usually sees a strong and an authorial father, loving the mother and caring about his family. The notion of a gay angles this picture, so the male population in Lithuania characterize as especially rabid homophobes.

It is important to stress that the mass media in our country has a negative effect forming the image of sexual minority groups, which are generally called 'gays'. There are many articles and television shows about these people, but they usually touch only exotic parts of their daily life as the gays' processions of festivals that makes the gap between the sexual minority groups and our society even much deeper. Mika Frankaite "It is still impossible to discuss about homosexuals in Lithuania"). To conclude this essay I would like to stress that in the context of Europe, Lithuania seems to be the most intolerant county, although there are many rights which guarantee freedom for homosexual people to express themselves and to

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have normal and real value life. But these things exist only formally. Gays and lesbians still are not allowed to marry a person of the same sex, they have no right to adopt a child, and there exist strong discrimination from their employers.

These are the main reasons, why many of them decide to emigrate from our country, what, according to the abovementioned Human Rights Watch (HRW) expert Boris O. Dittrich, affects our demographic situation negatively. I highly believe that this soar away interest in homosexuality will help to form fresher attitude towards the sexual minority groups, to degrade discrimination and to make their integration in our society easier.