

Cuba: Gay kissing sit-in held to celebrate Pride in Havana

Saturday 5 July 2014, by [LO Joe](#) (Date first published: 1 July 2014).

Around 20 people took part in a public same-sex kissing session on Saturday to commemorate the anniversary of the Stonewall Inn riots and help break taboos about gay kissing in Cuba.

Organisers said: "Kissing in public should be everyone's right but many view it as a public scandal, if it happens between other individuals besides heterosexuals."

They continued: "When we as men and women kiss, for love or fraternity, we exercise our equality as citizens and we display the double standards that spark homophobia, sexism, the discriminatory attitudes that mark the root of our culture and which we must change."

The protest also celebrated a new Cuban labour code which protects against discrimination based on sexual orientation, although not gender identity.

A statement from organisers said that they supported the ongoing anti-capitalist revolution in Cuba and that revolution means changing everything that needs to be changed, including homophobia and transphobia.

Homophobia in Cuba seems to be on the retreat.

In May last year hundreds of Cubans, led by Raul Castro's daughter, marched in Havana.

An international LGBT conference was also held in Cuba in May.

This is a far cry from the 1960s and 70s when gay people in Cuba were fired, imprisoned and sent to "re-education camps".

Former Cuban leader Fidel Castro has admitted that he was responsible for Cuba persecuting gay men in the 1960s and 70s, and that after the revolution in 1959, gay and lesbian people were persecuted.

The former president told Mexican newspaper *La Jornada* that there had been moments of "great injustice" against the gay community.

Slow moves towards equal marriage are taking place in South America, as Uruguay last year became the 12th country in the world to legalise same-sex marriage.

Uruguay's neighbour Argentina legalised equal marriage in 2010.

Around half of Brazil's states also now allow gay marriage.

Joe Lo

P.S.

* 1st July 2014, 5:26 PM:

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