



Brigid Mill's speech at the "Being Gay" book launch November 07

For me coming out was the hardest decision I have made so far in my life. Not only did the idea of losing friends scare me but so did the idea of my parents not accepting me anymore. Growing up as a practicing Catholic with a very strict Father who pretty much control's my life meant that I wasn't allowed out late at night, especially on school nights; I always had to go to Church on Sundays; I wasn't allowed to have a relationship until high school and God forbid friends who were gay! You can probably understand my hesitation in telling my family that I like girls just as much as I like boys.

There were many times that I considered coming out late in high school. One such occasion being during a Religious Education class when my teacher said that homosexuality was just like a disease; it can kill people (he was referring to AIDS and how it only happens in gay people). Therefore being gay is wrong. I was in tears and nearly walked out of my class – can you imagine my teacher's reaction if I had told him then and there that I am bisexual?! That day I decided, for my own benefit – so that I could get through high school and my TEE – that I would not come out until after I had finished school. So ignoring my feelings for one of my friends I continued through; still going to church but praying that God would help me find the right time to tell the world around me.

That time came this year (2007). I could no longer take lying to myself; feeling like I was dying. I decided to tell my friends. To some it came as a rather huge shock and now they no longer talk to me. Others have been fantastic and stuck by my side. A few of my friends said "we always knew you liked girls way too much"! I feel a lot happier now that I have told my friends because not only can I truly be myself but I have also worked out who my true friends are and I know they will be by my side every step of the way.

I only came out to my parents a couple of months ago. This was hard as I knew it would be. My Fathers till hasn't come to terms with it and we hardly speak any more. My mother on the other hand has been fantastic – she is supportive and I know she always will be. I have great support from my best friend - who is amazing. He knows exactly what I have been through and what I continue to face each day as he has done the same thing.

I work for the Catholic Church so at this stage I haven't come out to any of my colleagues and I don't think I will for a while. It's hard to be a practicing Catholic when you know what people think, "You can't be loved by God if you are gay". Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe you can. God created each of us in his likeness so doesn't that say something! I will always look to him.