

Gays and jobs

Discussion

Discuss these questions with a partner:

1. Are there any well-known gay people in your country in the following areas:

politics

TV

the military

the church

sport

the law

2. Are there more gay people in some professions than in others? Which ones? Why do you think that is?

Reading

Read the articles below and answer these questions:

1. Which article is about someone starting a job? What's the problem?
2. Which one is about someone leaving a job? Why is the person leaving?

SECOND OFFICER RESIGNS

Another senior naval officer resigned last night as a result of the Government's decision to allow homosexuals to join the armed forces.

Commander James MacDonald, 43, who fought in the war in Bosnia, said of the Government's decision: "There are many good military reasons why homosexuals should not be allowed into the armed forces. The Government, however, has chosen to make a decision for political and legal reasons."

Commander MacDonald's resignation came a day after Brigadier Howard Jones, 47, asked to retire early for similar reasons. Brigadier Jones said: "I have no personal problem with homosexuals, but I do believe strongly from both a moral and a military point of view that there is no place for them in the army. The Government has reached its decision for no good military reason."

ANGER OVER LESBIAN MAYOR

Janis Hewitt will be ready for some strong opposition when she becomes mayor of the small Welsh town of Llanford next week. She announced yesterday that her lesbian partner will be mayoress.

Ms Hewitt points out that she has never made any secret of her relationship and she sees no reason to start doing so now. "We have been together for 20 years," she said, "and we have never hidden the fact. It really shouldn't be a problem. There are more important issues, like getting a better life for people." Gareth James, chairman of the local Conservatives, disagrees strongly. "This has come as quite a shock," he said angrily. "It degrades the position of mayor. It is not the sort of thing we associate with this town. Things like this don't happen here."

True or false?

Read the articles again and decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F):

1. Both officers feel there are military reasons why gays should not be allowed in the armed forces.
2. Brigadier Jones has a personal dislike of homosexuals.
3. Janis Hewitt's lesbian relationship has been a secret for 20 years.
4. Gareth James is unhappy with the idea of Janis Hewitt's partner being the mayoress.

Discussion

Discuss these questions in small groups:

1. Do you think it is OK to have gay people in the armed forces? Why? Why not? What's the situation in your own country?
2. Should Janis Hewitt be allowed to choose her lesbian partner as mayoress? Would it be a problem in any way? Could this happen in your country?