

Dykes



Forum

Ever thought of getting involved in politics? “No, can’t be bothered” comes the reply. Ever thought that your whole life is based on politics, whether you opt out, play the game or pay no attention at all? When women say they’ve no interest in politics, they’re leaving it in the hands of others.

Politics start at home, sisters, on the scene where economics affect visibility, in the workplace where we can or can’t be ourselves, where harassment and discrimination affect the quality of our lives. The Irish Women’s Suffrage League fought hard to get us the vote: so how come at election time women are sitting at home, saying, “I’m not getting involved” or “All Governments are the same”?

So, the governments of the world tend to be male-run, male-orientated and male-dominated – does that mean we should sit back and forget about them?

Maybe the two lesbians executed recently in Saudi Arabia for daring to live together, one masquerading as a man, thought they could escape detection: should the laws that killed them be considered ‘too boring’ or ‘not our affair?’

Politics really does start at home: holding your girlfriend’s hand in public is a political (and pleasurable) act. What attitudes you show you or your neighbours’ children, whether you accept the postman flirting with you or tell him he’s out of order, they’re all actions that change the world, piece by piece. Don’t expect the political world to change overnight – a world for women won’t be built in a day.

So when groups like the Lesbian Avengers come along, and I hear women saying “Don’t rock the boat” or “It’s best to go through the standard political system” (which many wouldn’t touch with a women-only barge pole) then I wonder whether we really do want change. Territorialism (‘Don’t come here and tell us what to do’) and patriotism (‘The Irish system is the best in Europe’) are man-made as well, but women seem to be subscribing to them happily. Are we more brainwashed than we thought?

I hope to see women activating: from the doorstep to the Vatican, from the cradle to the universe. It’s our world, let’s make it work.

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