

T091

Criminalising underage sex between age-mates

Judge James Prowse (letter, 21 May 2001) says, surely rightly, that sexual interest shown by a boy of thirteen in a girl of his own age is healthy and natural. It is surprising therefore that if two young people of this age-group engage in willing sexual activity with each other, the law will treat them both as criminals. Their mutual consent to the activity, though freely given and real, will be ignored by the law. In the eyes of the law their conduct, even if trivial in nature, will constitute indecent assault of the one upon the other. Grave penalties may be inflicted, which could ruin their lives.

Why should this be?¹

¹ *The Times*, 22 May 2001. See further on this topic Letter 88 above, Letter 92 below, [3.6.3.](#) and [3.6.4.11.](#)

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