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Jan. 14. 3



As a combat vet, I fought Nazis of WWII. Today I [#takeaknee](#), once more, in solidarity w/my brothers&sisters still fighting 4 equality&justice [source](#)



maisha
@rahmaanly



Telling your sexual assault/abuse story is not a trend, it never was. Girls aren't joining in because it's trending. Girls are joining in because after years of being ashamed and afraid to speak up, they found the courage to talk about their experience because someone else did.

1:14 PM · 6/5/20 · Twitter for Android

24.6K Retweets **61.2K** Likes

The governor of Colorado signed four pro-LGBTQ bills into law yesterday, including one that will make Colorado the 11th state to ban the gay and transgender panic defenses.



men kill women

How many ~~women are killed by men~~
every year?

men rape women

How many ~~women are raped by men~~
every year?

men assault women

How many ~~women are assaulted by~~
~~men~~ every year?

Stop making the conversation
about violence against women
passive.



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Allowing the privileged few to flee Hong Kong isn't liberation | The Guardian
The national security law imposed by Beijing over Hong Kong went into effect on 30 June. By writing this piece, I may be in violation of it. On the evening the law came into effect, I lay wide awake at my apartment in Chicago, my eyes glued to the screen...

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Telegraph

Video of Arrest of Indigenous Leader Shocks Canada

The dash cam video shows a police officer beating Allan Adam, chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in northern Alberta. TORONTO — The police dash cam video shows the Indigenous chief being held by one police officer and tackled to the ground by another...

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A mom threw a belated gender reveal party for her transgender son 17 years after she 'got it wrong'

Love and Brandon Gwaltney's gender reveal party started out like any other. The couple from Akron, Ohio, wore matching outfits of pink and blue. There was a cake decorated with pink and blue sprinkles and a big question mark on top. And then, of course, there...

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Telegraph

Lloyd Russell-Moyle resigns from Labour frontbench amid JK Rowling row
Lloyd Russell-Moyle, a gay British MP, has resigned from the Labour Party frontbench as shadow environment minister after a row over JK Rowling's anti-trans comments reached boiling point. The Brighton Kemptown representative explained in a Twitter statement...

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Feminisms in Action

Wednesday, April 12, 2017 As the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Intern at the Center for Women's Studies, I actively strive to bring an intersectional lens into all of the work that I do, particularly given my own positionality. In many ways, I have often...

[telegra.ph/JK-Rowling-book-sales-are-dwindling-behind-an-industry-wide-surge-07-18](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/jk-rowling-book-sales-are-dwindling-behind-an-industry-wide-surge-07-18/)

Telegraph

JK Rowling book sales are dwindling behind an industry-wide surge
While publishing amid the coronavirus pandemic has seen sales rocket, JK Rowling books have vastly slumped in the US. Coincidentally, Rowling, 54, has also been increasingly vocal on her, LGBT+ activists say, barbed and toxic views on trans people. The author...

[telegra.ph/This-is-why-feminism-must-always-always-make-room-for-trans-women-07-19](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/pinknews/this-is-why-feminism-must-always-always-make-room-for-trans-women-07-19/)

Telegraph

This is why feminism must always, always make room for trans women
Political journalist and acclaimed author Marie Le Conte explains for PinkNews why feminism and trans rights should always, always go hand-in-hand. It is hard

to put forward persuasive arguments about something you have never really thought about. Why do...

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Telegraph

Tim Farron says it's the job of liberals to defend JK Rowling

Former Lib Dem leader Tim Farron has argued that liberals should be fighting for JK Rowling's right to express anti-trans views. Writing in a blog on Medium, Farron argued for the need to "reclaim a genuine liberalism in our debate" and allow people to voice...

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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has a PSA for those bemoaning cancel culture

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has an important public service announcement for those trying to cancel "cancel culture". This week, JK Rowling and 150 other prominent public figures signed an open letter bemoaning the "restriction of debate" in modern culture....

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Drag Race: RuPaul 'doesn't see with empathy' says The Vixen

Drag Race icon The Vixen has opened up about her exit from season 10, her relationship with RuPaul and the racist treatment she has received. The Vixen won a special place in the hearts of fans after walking off the season 10 reunion in protest at what she...

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Telegraph

Twitch slammed over Pride video saying the G in LGBT stands for gamer
Twitch is facing backlash on social media after saying that the G in LGBT+ stands for “gamer”. The live streaming gaming platform put out a video on Twitter this week celebrating LGBT+ content creators and encourage users to “stream with Pride”, but one element...

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Telegraph

Drag Race: RuPaul 'never made eye contact' says Yvie Oddly
Drag Race legend Yvie Oddly joked that RuPaul never made eye contact with her while on the show “unless she smelled an Emmy moment”. Yvie, who recently returned to the main stage as a lip-sync assassin on All Stars 5, was playfully ribbing her season 11 sister...

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Telegraph

High School Musical: Lucas Grabeel probably wouldn't take Ryan role now
High School Musical star Lucas Grabeel has said that if the films were made now, he would want his fan favourite character Ryan Evans to be played by a gay actor. Last week, High School Musical creator Kenny Ortega confirmed long-standing rumours that Grabeel's...

telegra.ph/JK-Rowling-signs-Harpers-Magazine-letter-decrying-cancel-culture-07-19

Telegraph

JK Rowling signs Harper's Magazine letter decrying cancel culture
JK Rowling and Margaret Atwood are among 152 public figures to sign an open letter in Harper's Magazine bemoaning the “restriction of debate” in modern culture. “A Letter on Justice and Open Debate” is signed by a broad range of writers, academics and activists...

[telegra.ph/Was-Hamilton-gay-The-romance-that-didnt-make-it-into-the-musical-07-19](#)

Telegraph

Was Hamilton gay? The 'romance' that didn't make it into the musical Hamilton arriving on Disney Plus has delighted fans worldwide, but there's a lot more to the historical figure than many people realise. Lin-Manuel Miranda's award-winning musical arrived on the Disney Plus streaming service on Friday (July 3), introducing...

[telegra.ph/Gillian-Philip-Author-dropped-after-throwing-her-support-behind-JK-Rowling-07-19](#)

Telegraph

Gillian Philip: Author dropped after throwing her support behind JK Rowling Bestselling Scottish author Gillian Philip has been let go by her publisher after putting "I stand with JK Rowling" in her Twitter handle. Philip, from Glasgow, backed Harry Potter author JK Rowling – who's been labelled "transphobic" and "condescending"...

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A mom threw a belated gender reveal party for her transgender son 17 years after she 'got it wrong'

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Grey Schoolcraft, 17, at his belated gender reveal party.

Love and Brandon Gwaltney's gender reveal party started out like any other.

The couple from Akron, Ohio, wore matching outfits of pink and blue. There was a cake decorated with pink and blue sprinkles and a big question mark on top. And then, of course, there was the big box that typically contains the pink or blue balloons that serve to reveal the gender of their baby. But as they counted down to one, what popped out were balloons of yellow, white, purple and black -- the colors of the nonbinary flag -- followed by their 17-year-old child, coming out to the world with his new pronouns of he, him and his. "We wanted to announce that we got it wrong 17 years ago when we told the world we were having a little girl, and named that child McKenzie," Love Gwaltney, the mom, wrote in a Facebook post on Saturday. "So we'd like to introduce you to our

SON: Grey."



Schoolcraft enjoying his cake that was layered with the colors of the transgender pride flag.

Grey Schoolcraft, a rising high school senior, helped organize the party. He chose the colors of the balloons to represent his nonbinary gender identity and the colors of the cake to be pink, white and blue to represent the colors of the transgender pride flag. "I wanted the transgender flag in there because I still feel that going from whatever you are originally to nonbinary is also a transition and it doesn't just have to be straight female to male," Schoolcraft told CNN. He said it's been a long journey for him to discover his new identity as nonbinary. When he came out to his mom and stepdad a couple months ago, they supported him, but he was nervous other relatives wouldn't feel the same. Turns out, he had nothing to worry about as the rest of his extended family also took it well and are doing their best to use his correct pronouns, according to Gwaltney. To have that burden lifted off his shoulders felt "refreshing," the teen said. "You've been going by one name all your life and to suddenly go by a new name, especially when your parents call you by it, it's weird and has to register in your brain. But it's definitely 100% worth it and I'm glad we had (the reveal party)."



The teen's happiness was captured in heartwarming pictures taken by Sarah Bride Photography, which Gwaltney shared to her Facebook page. After forgetting to make the post private, it blew up, being shared more than 50,000 times and garnering thousands of comments. "What a world this would be if all parents reacted this way, to their LGBTQ+ Children," one person commented. Gwaltney said she's been receiving lots of direct messages from people who are sharing their own stories of coming out to their family."A lot of people have been reaching out to me through messenger telling me their own stories of coming out to their family," Gwaltney told CNN. "I've even had people ask me for advice, saying 'I think my child might be nonbinary or transgender. How did you know?' Those kinds of questions." Her best piece of advice for these parents would be to "have an open mind.""Don't try to put them in a box. Regardless of what stage your kids are in, always support them," said Gwaltney, who is now pregnant with her fourth child. As for Schoolcraft's advice for others who might be questioning their gender identity or are too scared to come out, he said they should remember that only "you get to make life what you want it to be." "So no matter what happens, even if someone doesn't accept you, that's not your fault, because you're loved and you're going to find people who will love and support you," Schoolcraft said.

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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has a PSA for those bemoaning cancel culture

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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has an important public service announcement for those trying to cancel “cancel culture”.

This week, JK Rowling and 150 other prominent public figures signed an open letter bemoaning the “restriction of debate” in modern culture.

The letter, which was published on July 8 in *Harper’s Magazine*, was signed by many leading anti-trans voices and argued that “an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism” is stifling freedom of speech.

This came soon after Rowling received global criticism for her tweets comparing healthcare for transgender people to “a new kind of conversion therapy”.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, an outspoken feminist and trans ally, offered a thinly-

veiled criticism of the letter by skewering the discourse around it.

“People who are actually ‘cancelled’ don’t get their thoughts published and amplified in major outlets,” she tweeted Friday (July 10). “This has been a public service announcement.”

She continued: “The term ‘cancel culture’ comes from entitlement — as though the person complaining has the right to a large, captive audience, and one is a victim if people choose to tune them out.

“Odds are you’re not actually cancelled, you’re just being challenged, held accountable, or unliked.”

The term “cancel culture” comes from entitlement – as though the person complaining has the right to a large, captive audience,& one is a victim if people choose to tune them out.

Odds are you’re not actually cancelled, you’re just being challenged, held accountable, or unliked.

— Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (@AOC) July 10, 2020

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Allowing the privileged few to flee Hong Kong isn't liberation | The Guardian

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The national security law imposed by Beijing over Hong Kong went into effect on 30 June. By writing this piece, I may be in violation of it.

On the evening the law came into effect, I lay wide awake at my apartment in Chicago, my eyes glued to the screen for the latest developments. The bill had been swiftly drafted, passed and signed by the central government before its content was revealed, the process foreshadowing its draconian measures. The legislation marks an end to Hong Kong's judicial independence and the beginning of a new police state. It also assumes extraterritorial powers for the Chinese government that may subject a person from anywhere in the world to punishment for breaches of speech against its national security.

I stayed up as late as I could, hoping to bear secondhand witness to a fleeting freedom the city and its people had fought so hard to preserve. I fell asleep with my phone in hand, my heart racing, pumping blood and oxygen to a fervent dream, where millions of Hong Kong residents would once again flood the streets, as they did a summer ago, nullifying the law with united disobedience.

I woke up to a shattering reality. Hundreds of protesters had been arrested, some under the new legislation. Prominent activists stepped down from leadership

positions. Pro-democracy posters disappeared from public spaces. Once-active social media accounts went silent. I felt ashamed for the fantasy I had clung to the night before. In my relative security from an ocean away, I had selfishly projected an impossible burden on a people.

Eleven years ago when I left mainland China for graduate school in the US, I proudly declared that I was going to live in a free country. “Freedom cannot be eaten like rice,” my mother said, quick to puncture my naivety. I argued that liberty and prosperity are not mutually exclusive. I was not wrong. Neither was my mother. But only one of us had endured starvation as a child. Only one of us had to feed a family under authoritarian rule.

“Do you think the Chinese people will one day rise up?” I have often encountered this question from well-meaning Americans, who read my writings critical of the Chinese government and loudly wonder if my country has more people who are “courageous” like me. To them, political oppression exists only in the abstract, afflicting an alien people on a distant land. Similarly vague is their notion of “rising up”, as if martyrdom is the only valid response, and whoever fails to do so must deserve servitude. They regard themselves as freedom-loving without contemplating its meaning. They cheer rebels from faraway places without shouldering the cost. An honest reflection would complicate this worldview.

I am not free, despite living in an ostensible liberal democracy. A free person must be able to return to her birthplace at any time without risking persecution; I cannot. A free person must be able to exist with nothing to prove and live without fear; I cannot. I am neither brave nor exceptional. I am fortunate to have options afforded by the luxury of my degrees. I made a calculation and traded one set of freedoms for another, knowing that both are incomplete and I will forever be grieving for what I have lost.

It is from this personal experience that I am troubled by much of the language from politicians and governments around the world promoting resettlement policies for Hong Kong residents. Boris Johnson announced that Hong Kongers with a British national overseas passport would be able to live and work in the UK. The Australian government is extending skilled visas to attract “the best and the brightest” from the city as well as its businesses. The US Congress introduced a bipartisan bill to grant refugee status to Hong Kong protesters.

Migration is a human right. Every state has an ethical and moral obligation to open its doors to people in search of safety or better opportunities. However, the dominant rhetoric from western countries goes beyond the humanitarian principle to emphasise economic self-interest. Relocating the concept of Asia's World City to its isles has occupied a corner of the British imagination for decades, the idea revitalised in light of the new national security law. Hong Kong citizens are described as "enterprising" and "highly educated", who would "enrich" their new host nation and boost its "competitiveness".

The glistening phrases are not compliments. They are dehumanising. They paint a caricature of a population where Hong Kong's poor and disenfranchised are never part of the picture, where a life's worth is defined by its productivity. For those of us who have faced the menace of a border, the price of crossing means turning a part of ourselves into currency: our savings, our diplomas, our labour, our despair as well as our pain. Unconditional gratitude is demanded of us in exchange for a probationary dwelling. Our resilience becomes justification for continued exploitation.

A person may go through multiple countries of residence, but can only have one true homeland, where no matter how much time has passed, the itinerant may touch the ground with her feet and in that instance become whole. Those who do not know the open wound of exile can callously suggest uprooting a people and congratulate themselves for being generous and clever. The thoughtless self-righteousness stems from an age-old superiority complex, a colonial mindset that insists people from "lesser" parts of the world must prefer life in the "civilised" west, if given the chance.

In a recent survey of Hong Kong citizens, Taiwan topped the chart as their first choice for relocation, while Britain and the US ranked below mainland China. The result is not surprising, as most people favour geographical, cultural and linguistic proximity to their place of origin. What the residents of Hong Kong want is of little concern to the politicians and pundits who appropriate their plight. By portraying Hong Kongers as the "right" kind of immigrant, distinct from migrants at the US-Mexico border or refugees across the Mediterranean, western lawmakers see the Asian city as their own political theatre. They claim the mantle of human rights defenders by feigning solidarity, while espousing racist and xenophobic policies at home.

The heartbreaking reality of Hong Kong is a continuation of its fate as a chess

piece in great power politics. Sandwiched between empires, the financial hub derives its status from its usefulness to global capital; the interest of its people has always been secondary. With the new law, Beijing has called the world’s bluff, exposing both the Communist party’s ruthlessness and the west’s hypocrisy.

I do not know what shape or how long the path to liberation might take for Hong Kong and the rest of China. What I do know is that it must start by focusing on the most marginalised, the people whose work is considered “low-skill”, whose bodies are deemed sacrificial. The edge of our struggle is not its limit but a new beginning. The road that will lead me home can only be forged through radical imagination and collective effort. The kind of freedom that is upheld by national borders is always fragmented and fragile. Emancipation cannot be achieved through flight for the privileged few. No one is free until everyone is free.

- Yangyang Cheng is a particle physicist and a postdoctoral research associate at Cornell University

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Drag Race: RuPaul 'doesn't see with empathy' says The Vixen

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Drag Race icon The Vixen has opened up about her exit from season 10, her relationship with RuPaul and the racist treatment she has received.

The Vixen won a special place in the hearts of fans after walking off the season 10 reunion in protest at what she has often described as racial bias.

As a Black queen, The Vixen was painted as a confrontational force in the *Drag Race* werk room, particularly when she rubbed up against Eureka.

Famously, she told RuPaul: “Everybody’s telling me how I should react but nobody’s telling her how to act,” before exiting the stage.

In the years since The Vixen has continued to be an advocate for Black queens – with her BlackGirlMagic project winning praise from the Obama Foundation,

and has become an outspoken critic of the franchise.

In a new interview with the Back From Reality podcast, the Chicago queen revisited her time on the show, detailing poor working conditions, alleged threats from producers and a frosty relationship with RuPaul.

The Vixen had ‘no off-camera relationship’ with RuPaul.

“We have no off-camera relationship,” she said of the *Drag Race* host.

“I ran into her once at an elevator. It was a nod and she kept on moving.”

The Vixen detailed some of the racist abuse she’s received from the fandom since being on the show, including threats from so-called fans who warned they would throw acid over her at DragCon.

She said the makers of the show could “absolutely” do more to protect its Black queens, in part by not presenting queens within an “angry Black girl” narrative, and by ending the framing of Black queens in the context of white Eurocentric beauty.

More from PinkNews

Of the now-infamous reunion episode, The Vixen said that although producers were furious with her exit, they had goaded her into “drama”.

“On camera they were telling me I shouldn’t do these things, but the days leading up to it they were saying they wanted drama, they wanted good TV, but their idea of good TV was cornering me.”

After she walked off set, The Vixen claimed that producers “insinuated” they would kick her out of her hotel room unless she cooperated.

Of RuPaul’s comments on the reunion that “comes from the same goddam she comes from”, The Vixen said that the host was complicit in her treatment.

“Ru creates this platform, but when you look at the 40 white producers that accept an award with her, those are the people that she’s really answering to.

“It doesn’t matter that she’s looking at a queen that looks just like her. She doesn’t see with empathy, because she’s looking through the eyes of 40 white men.”

When asked whether she would consider returning to *Drag Race*, The Vixen replied: “Absolutely not. You can’t expect the person that hurt you to heal you.”

PinkNews approached representatives for World of Wonder for comment.

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Drag Race: RuPaul 'never made eye contact' says Yvie Oddly

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Drag Race legend Yvie Oddly joked that RuPaul never made eye contact with her while on the show “unless she smelled an Emmy moment”.

Yvie, who recently returned to the main stage as a lip-sync assassin on *All Stars 5*, was playfully ribbing her season 11 sister Brooke Lynn Hytes when she made the not-exactly-shocking comment.

Congratulating the cast of Canada’s *Drag Race* for an “amazing premiere”, she added: “Except for [Brooke Lynn Hytes]... she was waaaaay too relatable and sweet and stunning for my approval.”

When pressed, Yvie jibed: “Maybe I’m just biased because our host never made eye contact unless she smelled an Emmy moment.”

Maybe I'm just biased because our host never made eye contact unless she
smelled an Emmy moment ♀
— Yvie Oddly (@OddlyYvie) July 3, 2020

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Feminisms in Action

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Wednesday, April 12, 2017

As the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Intern at the Center for Women's Studies, I actively strive to bring an intersectional lens into all of the work that I do, particularly given my own positionality. In many ways, I have often failed. One way in which I, and many of us involved in this conversation at Colgate, have significantly failed, is in speaking about disability. I believe that it is

everyone's responsibility to create programming and initiatives that address the issues survivors of color and LGBTQ survivors face, including my own. Similarly, it is up to me to acknowledge the ways in which disability impacts the experiences of survivors, even if I myself do not possess a disabled identity. Though it is impossible for me to delve into the intricacies of the relationship between sexual violence and disability in the confines of a blog post that you all will actually read, I hope this will be the beginning of an ongoing learning experience for all of us.

Sexual violence affects

everyone differently. There is no monolithic experience to surviving trauma. Specifically, aspects of identity, such as race, class, ability, gender identity, and citizenship status, can have a profound impact on the experiences of survivors. Beyond simply acknowledging this, we have to ensure that our conversations and support systems truly delve deeply into how survivors' identities influence their experiences. Just as no two survivors have the same experience, no two disabled individuals are the same. Disabled people can experience sexual violence in vastly different ways, but it is important that we are all aware of how we can strive to support survivors with a range of physical, sensory, psychosocial, and intellectual disabilities. For example, when we fight against street harassment with campaigns such as #YesAllWomen, it is crucial to remember who might be excluded from this narrative. As Kayla Whaley explains in her article

Nobody Catcalls the Woman in the Wheelchair “People register “disabled” before they register “woman” and the former always overrides the latter, because in our ableist society, a disabled body is necessarily a desexualized one

” (Whaley, 2016). When we talk about #BodyPositivity, we need to include

all bodies, including those who use wheelchairs or are missing limbs. Just as Whaley says, “Harassment, after all, isn’t actually about sex, but about power” (Whaley, 2016). Exerting power to desexualize disabled women is harassment. Campaigns against harassment must acknowledge that.

In addition to including disabled women in the conversation about street harassment, we must acknowledge how disability plays a role in complicating the notion of consent. Individuals with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities alike may rely on a caregiver to assist them in gaining and providing consent with a partner. Furthermore, many people view disability as a sign of vulnerability and weakness, which is one reason for the disproportionately higher number of disabled survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Oftentimes, structural power relations and dehumanization within care facilities, such as group homes, facilitate cultures of violence (Gill, 2010). That being said, it is crucial to “question how the predominance of sexual abuse for women with intellectual disabilities can be addressed without making the victims symbols of humiliation” (Gill, 2010). Oftentimes, non-disabled people understand disabled people, particularly disabled women, solely through the lens of victimhood, whereas in reality, disabled people are complex, dynamic individuals with interlocking identities- not victims to be pitied. There is a tendency to deny disabled people agency, both in the context of consent and sexual violence, and beyond. We must resist that tendency. In order to do so, many disability theorists and activists advocate for an understanding of sexual violence that considers power, rather than consent. As Gill states, “The shift to define sexual abuse from a matter of consent to a relation of power and exploitation highlights that those who experience sexual abuse do so not because of a ‘lack’ of intelligence but rather because of unequal power dynamics that might favor professionals, family members, and staff” (Gill, 2010, p. 202). Just as we acknowledge the complicated role of race, gender identity, and sexual orientation in the discourse surrounding sexual violence, we need to consider the disproportionate ways in which disabled people are affected by sexual assault and relationship violence.

While the statistics about the disproportionate impact of sexual violence on disabled individuals are jarring and important, I purposely did not focus on them

in order to address the structural issues that create these discrepancies. Highlighting the prevalence of violence against disabled women and disabled gender nonconforming people runs the risk of perpetuating the stereotype of disabled women as helpless, when this is far from the case. In writing this blog, I seek to raise awareness about the impact of sexual violence on disabled people and to push myself and others to continue to think critically about how our anti-violence work and advocacy is failing disabled survivors. Intersectionality is more than just a theory. It is a critical consciousness that we should put into practice each and every day. -Rachel Drucker '17, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Intern

References Gill, M. (2010). Rethinking sexual abuse, questions of consent, and intellectual disability.

Sexuality Research and Social Policy,

7(3), 201-213. Whaley, K. (2016, January 26). Nobody catcalls the woman in the wheelchair.

4 comments:

1.



KimApril 12, 2017 at 1:04 PM

Thank you for this, Rachel.

Kim

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2.

hannahApril 14, 2017 at 4:51 PM

Thank you for your work on this! Appreciate you!

[Reply](#)[Delete](#)

3.



UnknownApril 21, 2017 at 6:32 PM

<3

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4.

Liv CastroApril 2, 2018 at 9:13 AM

I think this is something that is incredibly important to acknowledge, and something that our intro to women's studies course has talked about. One student mentioned how disabled individuals that are victims of assault sometimes don't understand that what is happening is sexual assault. Society sees disabled individuals and non sexual beings, they are desexualized essentially as you mentioned. This logic is wrong and needs to be addressed, and this type of dialogue moves the conversation in the right direction-- thank you!

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Gillian Philip: Author dropped after throwing her support behind JK Rowling

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Bestselling Scottish author Gillian Philip has been let go by her publisher after putting “I stand with JK Rowling” in her Twitter handle.

Philip, from Glasgow, backed *Harry Potter* author JK Rowling – who’s been labelled “transphobic” and “condescending” for her repeated tirades about transgender people – online, in discussions about Rowling’s controversial views.

This sparked emails to her employer, Working Partners, a fiction packaging firm that comes up with ideas for book series and commissions authors to write them.

Philip is one of several authors who works on animal-fantasy series *Warrior Cats* under the name Erin Hunter, as well as *Survivors* and *Bravelands*.

But Working Partners confirmed that it has terminated her contract after her

public support for JK Rowling.

A spokesperson from Working Partners said: “Erin Hunter is not a single person but a diverse team of creatives and writers.

“We recently became aware that Gillian Philip had associated the Erin Hunter pen-name with her personal views on Twitter, thus associating them with the whole collective.

“In light of this situation, the decision was taken to no longer work with Gillian Philip.

“The decision taken was not in direct response to the nature of Gillian’s personally expressed views.”

#iStandWithJKRowling <https://t.co/61K8ont6oJ>
— Gillian Philip #IStandWithJKRowling (@Gillian_Philip) June 7, 2020

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High School Musical: Lucas Grabeel probably wouldn't take Ryan role now

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High School Musical star Lucas Grabeel (Paul Archuleta/Getty Images)

High School Musical star Lucas Grabeel has said that if the films were made now, he would want his fan favourite character Ryan Evans to be played by a gay actor.

Last week, *High School Musical* creator Kenny Ortega confirmed long-standing rumours that Grabeel's character in the franchise was intended to be gay — but ended up wedged firmly in the closet over fears of a backlash from Disney.

The actor opened up about the issue in an interview with *TMZ*, explaining how he and Ortega originally settled on a version of the character that included subtle background references to his sexuality.

Grabeel said: “I came up to Kenny one day, and was like: ‘Can we talk about the character for a second? Ryan’s gay, right?’

“He was like: ‘Well, it’s a touchy subject sometimes with children’s programming and I’m not sure if Disney is ready right now for that kind of thing, but I absolutely agree that he is, and I think we have an opportunity to showcase a real person and something that a lot of kids go through and don’t often see portrayed on television.’

“At that time, it was either extremely flamboyant or very closeted and kind of shut off.”



Grabeel added: “We need to start educating everyone at the youngest age possible and that’s why it will fall to people like Disney who create so much great programming for the developing minds of our future country.

“We in the film industry have a responsibility to educate as well as entertain.”

More from PinkNews

On whether he would play the role today, the actor continued: “There’s so many amazingly talented gay actors who could do it as well, and so if *High School Musical* was made today I don’t know if I would play Ryan. I would love to, but I just don’t know.

“The last thing that I want to do is take an opportunity away from other people, and as a straight, white man I know that even without trying I’ve taken opportunities away from people.”

***High School Musical* creator Kenny Ortega says Ryan would have come out in college.**

In his interview with Variety last week, Kenny Ortega said he believed the character was “probably going to come out in college”. He continued: “It was less about coming out and just more about letting his true colours come forward.”

Ortega added: “I have to be honest with you. I didn’t think at the time – and Disney is the most progressive group of people I’ve ever worked with... I was concerned because it was family and kids, that Disney might not be ready to cross that line and move into that territory yet.

“So, I just took it upon myself to make choices that I felt that those who were watching would grab. They would see it, they would feel it, they would know it and they would identify with it. And that is what happened.”

The gay filmmaker continued: “I put a lot of who I am into my work. I mean, really all the way back from the earliest work that I’ve done, even as a choreographer in film and television.

“I think, yeah, that it’s just there, and whether it’s screaming at you, or whether it’s just sort of quietly there, it’s there.”

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JK Rowling book sales are dwindling behind an industry-wide surge

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While publishing amid the coronavirus pandemic has seen sales rocket, JK Rowling books have vastly slumped in the US.

Coincidentally, Rowling, 54, has also been increasingly vocal on her, LGBT+ activists say, barbed and toxic views on trans people.

The author behind one of the world's most successful fiction series, *Harry Potter*, was the exception to the industry-wide growth that American publishing has seen, Variety reported.

Analysts said that Rowling's sales were, for the rest of the year, at an upswing but suddenly slowed in the month of June – just as she launched into an anti-trans Twitter tirade.

JK Rowling's book sales 'underperforming', analyst says, amid transphobia

row.

Publishing monitor NPD BookScan found that Rowling has lagged behind other authors in terms of sales. Last month, fiction print books sales rose by 31.4 per cent compared to May.

Fiction titles in adult, young adult and juvenile sectors are all seeing similar double-digit growth. Yet Rowling's books – often marketed towards younger audiences – rose by a tepid 10.9 per cent.

Harry Potter titles rose even less. With just a 7.7 per cent increase which even includes licensed titles not authored by Rowling.

As much as NPD BookScan's data does not include other points of sale, such as eBooks, they, nevertheless, show a pointed and abrupt drop in Rowling's sales in June.

"Looking at [Rowling's] performance against the rest of the market, especially as benchmarked against her performance in 2019 – which was very consistent with the rest of the market – I think she's down," Kristen McLean, analyst and executive director of business development at the NPD Group said.

"She's certainly underperforming the rest of the market, comparatively, by two thirds."

McLean suggested that parents and guardians scrambling to buy books to keep children occupied during lockdown could explain the increase in the first half of 2020 compared to 2019 of Rowling's work. She declined to speculate on why sales have stalled in June, however.

More from PinkNews

JK Rowling has increasingly spoken out on trans rights. Her fans aren't sure how to handle it.

It's all come after the month of June – and increasingly July – proved a flashpoint for the author's reputation.

For years, fans of the beloved British author have sought to give JK Rowling the

benefit of the doubt. The odd liked tweets. The following dubiously anti-trans accounts. All “middle-aged moments”, her representatives soothingly said.

Rowling has steadily risen from her stoop-sitting approach to trans rights – occasional comments and vague gestures – to full-on commentator on trans healthcare and rights.

She had outlined her views on trans people extensively across various Twitter threads and blog posts, plunging her LGBT+ fans into unease as the writer of a book series people have loved for the last 23 years unleashes anti-trans tirades.

Her comments have prompted the holy trinity of the series’ film adaptations – Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint – to come out swinging for trans rights.

And as more Harry Potter fans begin to denounce Rowling and the 54-year-old’s own publishing house begins to distance itself from her, it seems fans have responded to Rowling by vandalising the Royal Mile handprints along Edinburgh’s 253 High Street.

It comes after Rowling, who has no formal education or training in healthcare, compared the denounced practice of conversion therapy to the steadily eroded access trans youth have to healthcare, which became a lightning rod for criticism.

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JK Rowling signs Harper's Magazine letter decrying cancel culture

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JK Rowling and Margaret Atwood are among 152 public figures to sign an open letter in *Harper's Magazine* bemoaning the “restriction of debate” in modern culture.

“A Letter on Justice and Open Debate” is signed by a broad range of writers, academics and activists from across the political spectrum, including Salman Rushdie, Noam Chomsky, Gloria Steinem, Garry Kasparov and Jeffrey Eugenides.

They applaud the “needed reckoning” on systemic racism, but argue that it has “intensified a new set of moral attitudes and political commitments” which they claim are stifling free speech in favour of ideological conformity.

“The free exchange of information and ideas, the lifeblood of a liberal society, is daily becoming more constricted,” the *Harper's Magazine* letter reads.

“While we have come to expect this on the radical right, censoriousness is also spreading more widely in our culture: an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty.”

The signatories claim they value robust counter-speech but reject the “swift and severe retribution” that comes when public figures are forced to be held accountable for their offensive opinions.

“As writers we need a culture that leaves us room for experimentation, risk taking, and even mistakes. We need to preserve the possibility of good-faith disagreement without dire professional consequences.”<https://t.co/4zPjuPNXBu>
— Harper’s Magazine (@Harpers) July 8, 2020

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Lloyd Russell-Moyle resigns from Labour frontbench amid JK Rowling row

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Lloyd Russell-Moyle, a gay British MP, has resigned from the Labour Party frontbench as shadow environment minister after a row over JK Rowling's anti-trans comments reached boiling point.

The Brighton Kemptown representative explained in a Twitter statement Thursday evening that a barbed "campaign by the right-wing media" pressured for him to resign.

He said this had "unleashed a torrent of online hate" and daily abusive calls to his staff, adding he would need a "few weeks" to recover from the drubbing and

support his workers.

This afternoon I spoke to Keir and asked to step back from the front bench duties as Minister for Air Quality and the Natural Environment but remain a Labour and Co-operative MP for Brighton Kemptown and Peacehaven.

See my statement below. pic.twitter.com/g1I8T7QLVg
— Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP (@lloyd_rm) July 16, 2020

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This is why feminism must always, always make room for trans women

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Political journalist and acclaimed author Marie Le Conte explains for *PinkNews* why feminism and trans rights should always, always go hand-in-hand.

It is hard to put forward persuasive arguments about something you have never really thought about. Why do I support trans rights? It just happened, I suppose.

I was around 19 when a close friend told me she was a woman. I remember repeating her pronouns in my head before going to meet her in those first few weeks, because it was all very new, and a bit bewildering.

Some parts of her transition were sweet; I would watch her experiment with clothes and make up, like a teenage sister who just happened to be older than

me.

Some parts weren't; we would go to the cinema together and I would go to the bathroom with her, because she felt scared going alone.

Little by little, our social group gained a handful of other trans people – birds of a feather, and all that – and I did not think much of it.

The next event to shape my views was learning of a trans man, a vague acquaintance, who was not able to have surgery because of some pre-existing medical issues.

Before then, I had assumed that physical changes were the ultimate purpose of transitioning, but his story stopped me in my tracks. Would I really not think of him as a man because of a bout of tragic bad luck? How cruel that would be.

Since this is now a debate, I have had to learn to articulate my views. In a way, it has been an interesting exercise: why do we believe in the things we believe in?

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Tim Farron says it's the job of liberals to defend JK Rowling

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Former Lib Dem leader Tim Farron has argued that liberals should be fighting for JK Rowling's right to express anti-trans views.

Writing in a blog on Medium, Farron argued for the need to “reclaim a genuine liberalism in our debate” and allow people to voice offensive views, even if those views “strike at the heart of [your] identity”.

“Simply fighting for your own rights is never enough,” he claimed, suggesting that true liberals would fight for the freedoms of extremists rather than ‘cancelling’ them.

“Take the recent Twitter storm surrounding JK Rowling,” he said. “The first people to defend her should be the liberals.

“Not because they agree with her — they may think she is utterly wrong — but because liberalism fights for the rights of those with different views to be heard.

“It takes time to listen, seeks to understand other perspectives and only then — if both sides maintain their positions — agree to disagree respectfully.”

The MP for Westmorland and Lonsdale has frequently been forced to defend his own “offensive” views, which often appear to contradict those of his liberal party.

His two-year stint as Lib Dem leader was marred by accusations of homophobia as he refused to answer whether he believed homosexual sex to be a sin.

He came under fire earlier this week after it was revealed that he accepted £75,000 in donations from an organisation whose Christian director tweeted in support of conversion therapy.

Farron’s register of interests show he received a donation from Faith in Public which provided him with a policy adviser two days a week, worth an estimated maximum value of £9,100.

According to the Independent, the organisation also donated the services of two policy advisers the previous two years at a total value of £50,319, as well as the services of a public relations company to the value of £15,000.

It is currently Lib Dem party policy to ban the vile practice of conversion therapy.

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Twitch slammed over Pride video saying the G in LGBT stands for gamer

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Twitch is facing backlash on social media after saying that the G in LGBT+ stands for “gamer”.

The live streaming gaming platform put out a video on Twitter this week celebrating LGBT+ content creators and encourage users to “stream with Pride”, but one element of the video did not go down so well.

Twitch content creator and ambassador Spofie responded to the video: “I don’t in any way shape or form want to take away from the amazing humans in this video, the clips are wonderful. But can we remove this part?”

She posted a screenshot of the video which read: “When the G in LGBTQIA+ also stands for gamer.”

I don't in any way shape or form want to take away from the amazing humans in this video, the clips are wonderful.

But can we remove this part? pic.twitter.com/NVDVxeatcM
— Spofie (@spofiee) July 5, 2020

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Video of Arrest of Indigenous Leader Shocks Canada

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A police dash cam video captured officers tackling and punching Allan Adam, chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, in northern Alberta, Canada. Credit

The dash cam video shows a police officer beating Allan Adam, chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in northern Alberta.

TORONTO — The police dash cam video shows the Indigenous chief being held by one police officer and tackled to the ground by another, punched in the head and put in a chokehold.

His face is bleeding as he is led in handcuffs to the police cruiser.

The video, submitted to the courts on Thursday and broadcast by many news channels, horrified many Canadians, and added fuel to the already raging debate over systemic racism in police forces across Canada.

While allegations of police abuse against black and Indigenous Canadians have been made for decades, the gruesome death of George Floyd in the United States has caused what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has called “an awakening” and spurred large anti-racism marches across the country.

Allan Adam, chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in northern Alberta, was stopped by the police in Fort McMurray in March about an expired license plate. After a sometimes heated 12-minute exchange, he was charged with assaulting a police officer and resisting arrest. But many believe the police video shows he was the real victim.

“It is unacceptable,” Mr. Trudeau said on Friday, calling the video “shocking.”

“Everyone who has seen that video has serious questions,” Mr. Trudeau added, referring to the use of force by police. He called for an independent and transparent investigation into the episode.

Initially, the Alberta police said superiors reviewing the dash cam video had deemed the officers’ actions “reasonable” and did not warrant an external investigation.

But after Mr. Adam held a news conference last Saturday, during which he released two bystander videos taken during the arrest, the independent Alberta agency that investigates police episodes involving death or potential misconduct announced it was looking into the case.

Canadian Indigenous leaders have long advocated reform of the national police force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which also provides local policing in many provinces.

While most of the recent marches in Canada have focused on police brutality against black Canadians, they have also included complaints about systemic criminalization of the country’s Indigenous people who make up 5 percent of the population, and more than 30 percent of the prison inmates.



The police video involving Mr. Adam was taken early one morning in March, after he, his wife and a niece left a casino in Fort McMurry in Alberta. The police vehicle pulled up behind the truck driven by Mr. Adam's wife.

Mr. Adam is captured on the video approaching the police car and demanding to know why the officer was watching them.

"I'm tired of being harassed by the R.C.M.P.," he says angrily. He is told to get back in his vehicle, but remains outside, staring at the police car.

The situation escalates when a police officer moves to handcuff his wife, against the side of their truck. Mr. Adam shouts, "Leave my wife alone" and "you have no right."

After the situation is calmed again, with both Mr. Adam and his wife back in their vehicle, sirens announce the arrival of more police. Mr. Adam steps back out of his truck, when the officer tries to handcuff him.

Then, another officer bursts onto the scene and tackles him. He is captured punching Mr. Adam in the head while screaming "don't resist."

Mr. Adam yells, “I’m not resisting” and “Look, I’m bleeding.” He tells the officers again that he is a chief.

Photos taken at the police station and submitted to court on Thursday show his face swollen and bloody, and his lips cut. Four of his teeth were pushed back and need replacement, and because the police officer knelt on his neck, Mr. Adam has continued neck pain, his lawyer, Brian A. Beresh, said.

Mr. Adam’s wife, Freda Courtoreille, was arrested after her husband, once seven officers surrounded their car. But she was never charged and released on the scene, Mr. Beresh said. “You can’t arrest someone for having an expired sticker on their license,” he said.

Mr. Beresh is calling for the suspension of Constable Simon Seguin, the officer who, according to police notes filed in court, was the officer who tackled Mr. Adam.

“He came in like a member of the Saskatchewan Roughriders tackle unit,” said Mr. Beresh, referring to the Regina football team.

“He doesn’t ask the other officer what’s going on,” he said. “He comes in and trashes him. Then to start punching him without asking any questions.”

“Enough is enough,” said Mr. Adam, at his news conference last Saturday.

He has been chief of the first nation in northern Alberta for more than a dozen years and is a survivor of one of Canada’s residential schools, notorious for abusing Indigenous children, and found by the country’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission to be part of a practice of “cultural genocide.”

Mr. Adam said at the news conference that he wanted to be a voice for all those who had experienced violence at the hands of the police because of their race. He added that the long history of wrongful arrests and harassment by the authorities of Indigenous Canadians and other minorities “ends today.”

Mr. Trudeau, who took a knee at last week’s anti-racism protest in Ottawa, said this week that “systemic racism is an issue right across the country, in all of our institutions, including in all of our police forces.”

On Friday, the police commissioner, Brenda Lucki, acknowledged that systemic

racism is a problem in the R.C.M.P. “Throughout our history and today, we have not always treated racialized and Indigenous people fairly,” Ms. Lucki said in a statement.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada called the video showing police officers arresting Chief Allan Adam of Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation “shocking.” Credit

Ms. Lucki said this week that the force will roll out the use of body cameras, which Mr. Trudeau supports.

She has also vowed to review the force’s use of the neckhold restraint used by police officers, even as she cautioned that the use of force by police was sometimes necessary.

In recent weeks, two other episodes between Indigenous people and the police have horrified Canadians. One was a bystander’s video of a police officer striking an intoxicated young man in Cape Dorset, Nunavut, with his car door before arresting him.

In another case, Chantel Moore, 26, from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation in British Columbia, was shot by the police in New Brunswick in early June after they responded to a call asking that they check on her well being.

The police in Edmundston, where the killing took place, said that Ms. Moore left her apartment with a knife and that the officer shot her after she threatened the officer.

But family members have challenged that account, and Canada's Indigenous services minister, Marc Miller, said he was outraged and demanded a "full accounting."

The video involving Mr. Adam provoked reaction across the political spectrum in Canada.

Jagmeet Singh, the leader of the opposition New Democratic Party, wrote on Twitter: "This is what police brutality looks like. This is what conflict escalation looks like. This is what systemic racism toward Indigenous people looks like. And it needs to end."

Andrew Scheer, the Conservative party leader, wrote on Twitter that he was "deeply disturbed by the video of Chief Adam." He added: "This case is rightly being investigated. Excessive use of force by police is always wrong."

Alberta's premier, Jason Kenney, wrote on Twitter that in the province there would be "a focus on measures to combat racism & ensure equal protection of all before the law."

Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, which represents 634 reserves in Canada, said, "Excessive use of force is shocking and horrifying and I see that police in Canada tend to approach our people and black people with fear and malice and it is deeply seated and systemic."

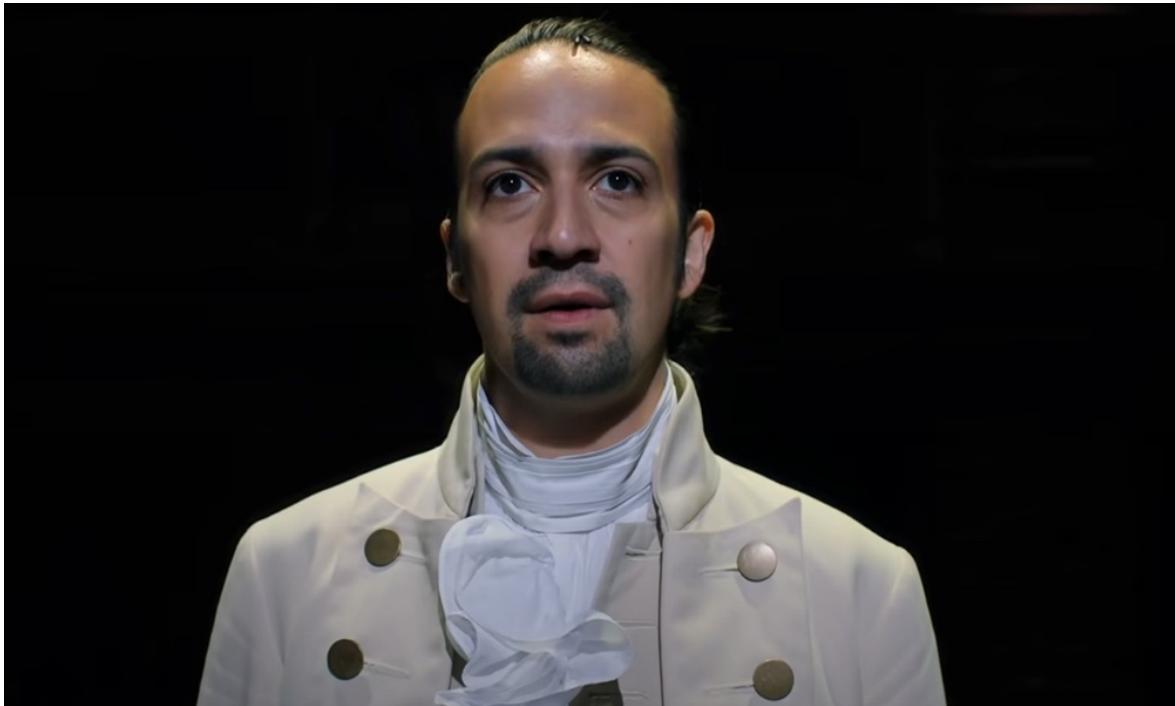
He called for the police to hire and promote more Indigenous people on the police force and for a more widespread use of police body cameras.

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Was Hamilton gay? The 'romance' that didn't make it into the musical

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Alexander Hamilton (Creative Commons/Marion Doss)

Hamilton arriving on Disney Plus has delighted fans worldwide, but there's a lot more to the historical figure than many people realise.

Lin-Manuel Miranda's award-winning musical arrived on the Disney Plus streaming service on Friday (July 3), introducing many first-time viewers to the story of founding father Alexander Hamilton.

He is remembered as a revolutionary war hero and statesman who helped form the United States as we know it today. And according to some historians, he could also be one of the most influential queer men in American history.

Was Hamilton gay? Letters reveal he had a passionate relationship with John Laurens.

Hamilton is known to have shared an extremely close relationship with his fellow statesman John Laurens, a lieutenant colonel and member of George Washington's staff.

They met as soldiers during the revolutionary war and remained friends in the years that followed, sharing letters filled with professions of love and passion.

In one letter to Laurens, dated April 1779, Hamilton wrote: "Cold in my professions, warm in my friendships, I wish, my Dear Laurens, it might be in my power, by action rather than words to convince you that I love you..."

"You should not have taken advantage of my sensibility to steal into my affections without my consent."



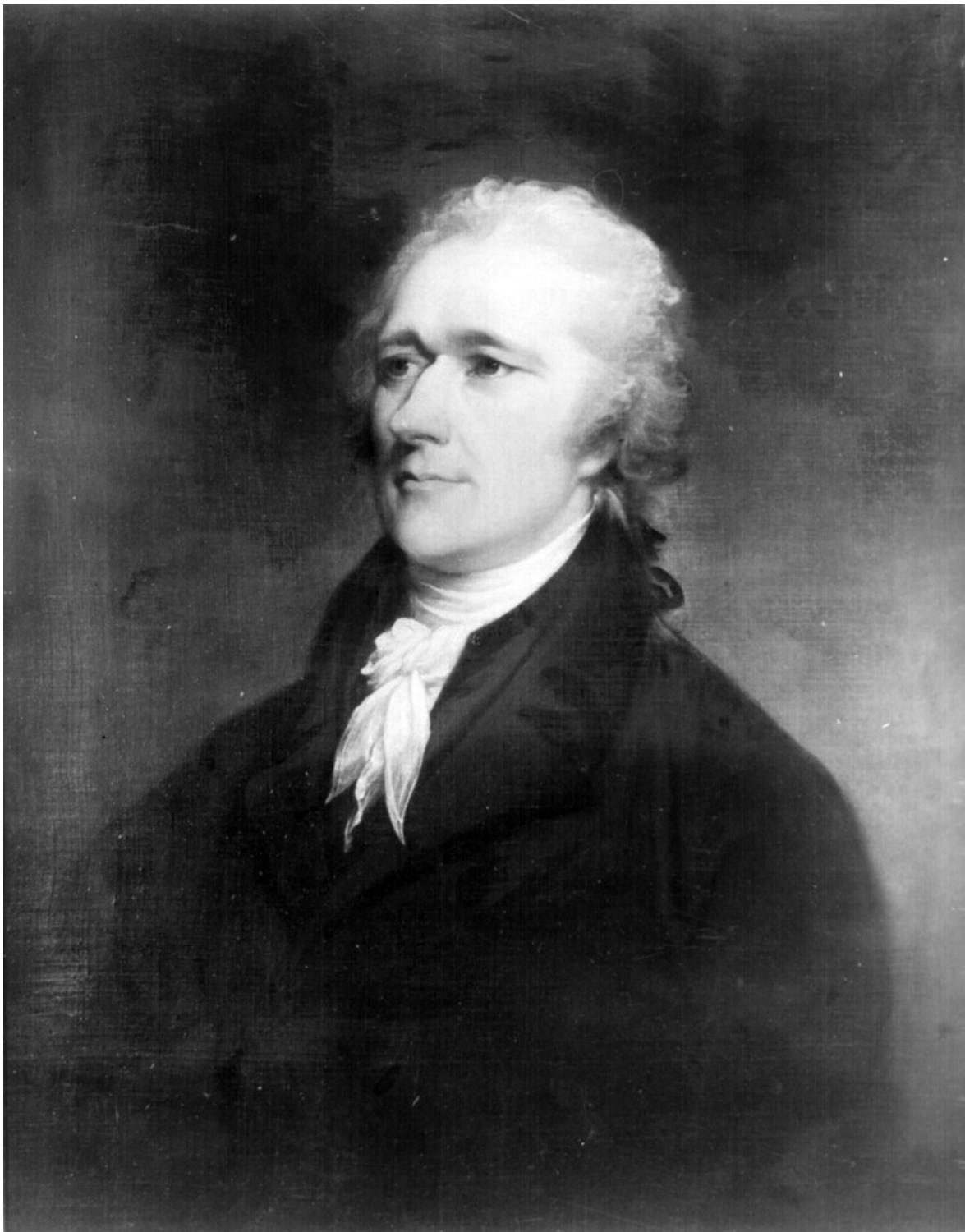
In another letter to Laurens dated September 1779 – after Hamilton became engaged to his wife Elizabeth Schuyler – he wrote: "Like a jealous lover, when I thought you slighted my caresses, my affection was alarmed and my vanity piqued.

"I had almost resolved to lavish no more of them upon you and to reject you as an inconstant and an ungrateful.

"I give up my liberty to Miss Schuyler. She is a good hearted girl who I am sure will never play the termagant; though not a genius she has good sense enough to be agreeable, and though not a beauty, she has fine black eyes."

And writing a year later, Hamilton seemed to imply that his marriage to Schuyler was just a fabrication.

More from PinkNews



"In spite of Schuyler's black eyes, I have still a part for the public and another for you," he wrote. "So your impatience to have me married is misplaced; a strange cure by the way, as if after matrimony I was to be less devoted than I am now."

Their letters reveal many such examples of their affection for each other, and the exact nature of Hamilton and Laurens' relationship is a question historians have sought to answer for decades.

It's even possible that Hamilton and Laurens could have had a sexual relationship with a third man, the Marquis de Lafayette. Hamilton's grandson actually referred to the men as "the gay trio."

Does this mean Hamilton was gay? While their writings certainly suggest to modern eyes that they were in a romantic relationship, such effusive declarations of love were common between men of the time, and they may not have had a sexual intent.

But others have pointed out in Hamilton's time sodomy was still a crime in all the colonies; they certainly wouldn't be the first to conceal their love, or to restrict their passion for each other to the pages of their letters.

Sadly we'll never know the truth, as some of Hamilton's progeny reportedly attempted to conceal certain portions of the letters, and the rest is lost to time.

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