

# Social Justice Watch 0728

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镜像

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Kyrie Irving is committing \$1.5 million to supplement the income of WNBA players who choose not to play this season, whether it be because of coronavirus concerns or social justice reasons. [source](#)

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**Charlotte Wilder** ✅  
@TheWilderThings



I tweeted about how Europe is handling the pandemic better than America and a bunch of people in my mentions are telling me to go live in Europe and I'm like...I can't because Americans aren't allowed in because of how badly we're handling the pandemic

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# 消息精选

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[telegra.ph/Trans-icon-and-Hey-Qween-host-Lady-Red-Couture-has-passed-away-07-27](https://telegra.ph/Trans-icon-and-Hey-Qween-host-Lady-Red-Couture-has-passed-away-07-27)

Telegraph

Trans icon and Hey Qween host Lady Red Couture has passed away  
Lady Red Couture, an icon of the Los Angeles trans and drag communities and co-host of the YouTube talk show Hey Qween!, has passed away. Lady Red Couture was known best for co-hosting the YouTube talkshow Hey Qween! with Johnny McGovern, and interviewing...

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[telegra.ph/Is-free-speech-under-threat-from-cancel-culture-Four-writers-respond-07-27](https://telegra.ph/Is-free-speech-under-threat-from-cancel-culture-Four-writers-respond-07-27)

Telegraph

Is free speech under threat from 'cancel culture'? Four writers respond  
An open letter has ignited a heated discussion on the limits of political debate

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Use caution when describing barriers.

Being Black is not a barrier for me.  
White supremacy is the barrier.

Being female is not a barrier for me.  
Patriarchy is the barrier.

Name the systems of power.  
These are the barriers. [source](#)

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[telegra.ph/Poland-pulls-out-of-Istanbul-Convention-on-ending-violence-against-women-07-27](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/uk-politics/poland-pulls-out-of-istanbul-convention-on-ending-violence-against-women-07-27/)

Telegraph

Poland pulls out of Istanbul Convention on ending violence against women  
Poland has pulled out of the Istanbul Convention, an international treaty on ending violence against women, after the country's anti-LGBT+ justice minister claims it "justifies gay ideology". The nationalist Law and Justice Party minister, Zbigniew Ziobro...

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[telegra.ph/Cambridge-Rape-Crisis-Centre-will-continue-to-recruit-trans-volunteers-07-27](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cambridge-rape-crisis-centre-will-continue-to-recruit-trans-volunteers-07-27/)

Telegraph

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre will continue to recruit trans volunteers  
Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre has confirmed it will continue to recruit transgender volunteers for its helpline, despite a number of transphobic attacks in recent weeks. In a statement to Varsity, Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) confirmed that "all who..."

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Grimes tells Elon Musk 'turn off your phone' after Tesla CEO's gender pronouns tweet | The Independent

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/grimes-elon-musk-gender-pronoun-tweet-a9637401.html>

The Independent





0:31

Grimes tells Elon Musk ‘turn off your phone’ after Tesla CEO’s gender pronouns tweet

Grimes asked her partner Elon Musk to “stop” and to turn off his phone after he caused a backlash over his tweet that claimed: “Pronouns suck.” Grimes, who has a child with the Tesla CEO, responded

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[telegra.ph/Youve-heard-of-rape-culture-but-have-you-heard-of-pedophile-culture-07-27](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/Youve-heard-of-rape-culture-but-have-you-heard-of-pedophile-culture-07-27)

Telegraph

You’ve heard of rape culture, but have you heard of pedophile culture?

236.2kSHARES Dear Todd Nickerson, Over at Salon a few days ago, you wrote an article provocatively entitled “I’m a pedophile, but not a monster.”

Presumably, a lot of people are now asking questions such as “Is pedophilia natural?” or “Can pedophilia be cured?”...

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[telegra.ph/Core-Issues-Trust-Conversion-therapy-group-to-have-bank-accounts-closed-07-27](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/Core-Issues-Trust-Conversion-therapy-group-to-have-bank-accounts-closed-07-27)

Telegraph

Core Issues Trust: Conversion therapy group to have bank accounts closed

Core Issues Trust, a group that claims to be able to cure “unwanted same-sex attraction”, is to have its bank accounts shuttered. The Northern Ireland-based group, which is the most vocal proponent of conversion therapy in the UK, says it had been served...

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[telegra.ph/Emmerdale-brothers-Max-Parker-and-Kris-Mochrie-are-now-dating-07-27](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/Emmerdale-brothers-Max-Parker-and-Kris-Mochrie-are-now-dating-07-27)

Telegraph

Emmerdale brothers Max Parker and Kris Mochrie are now dating

Two British actors who play brothers in the beloved soap opera Emmerdale are reportedly dating in real life and maybe 23AndMe should launch a dating app. Max Parker and Kris Mochrie, who play siblings Luke and Lee Posner in the ITV show, have allegedly enjoyed...

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[telegra.ph/Joanna-Theng-Christian-TikTok-star-scrubs-social-media-after-anti-gay-video-07-27](#)

Telegraph

Joanna Theng: Christian TikTok star scrubs social media after anti-gay video  
A Christian influencer has quietly withdrawn from social media after featuring in a video which listed reasons why LGBT+ people are satanic. Singapore-based Joanna Theng, 22, had over 47,000 followers on Instagram and nearly 140,000 on TikTok when she appeared...

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In South Korea, radical feminism and lesbian feminism are very much linked, spawning the “4부”/“4B” movement (4부 is roughly pronounced to the Anglophone ear as “4B”). 4B is based on four rules that orientate the radical feminist movement and act as a guide women can adopt to disrupt patriarchy and live safer lives away from men. The principles are, roughly, to not marry men, date men, have sex with men, or become pregnant. Today, the 4B movement has an estimated 50,000 followers. [telegra.ph/The-South-Korean-womens-movement-We-are-not-flowers-we-are-a-fire-07-28](#)

Telegraph

The South Korean women’s movement: ‘We are not flowers, we are a fire’  
Last fall, Jen Izaakson travelled to South Korea to document the rise of the radical feminist movement as part of a Cambridge University working group, after winning a research grant, interviewing over 40 female activists. She co-authored this piece with...

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[telegra.ph/Drag-Race-Shea-Couléé-launches-OnlyFans-after-All-Stars-5-win-07-28](#)

Telegraph

Drag Race: Shea Couléé launches OnlyFans after All Stars 5 win  
Drag Race All Stars 5 winner Shea Couléé can now be found on OnlyFans. Having narrowly missed out on the crown during her season nine run, Shea finally did what she set out to do on RuPaul’s Drag Race by walking away with the All Stars 5 crown. If there’s...

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[telegra.ph/After-losing-city-grant-Vancouver-Rape-Relief-say-they-have-no-plans-to-scale-back-services-or-public-education-07-28](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/city-business/after-losing-city-grant-vancouver-rape-relief-say-they-have-no-plans-to-scale-back-services-or-public-education-07-28)

Telegraph

After losing city grant, Vancouver Rape Relief say they have no plans to scale back services or public education

After losing \$34,312 CAD in annual municipal funding, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter (VRR) say they have no plans to change or scale back their services or public education. The organization will rely on donations to make up for their budget shortfall....

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[telegra.ph/Junia-Joplin-Trans-pastor-fired-after-coming-out-to-ger-congregation-07-28](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/city-business/junia-joplin-trans-pastor-fired-after-coming-out-to-ger-congregation-07-28)

Telegraph

Junia Joplin: Trans pastor fired after coming out to ger congregation

Canadian Baptist pastor Junia Joplin came out to her church as a trans woman in an incredibly moving sermon. Shortly afterwards, they voted to fire her. Joplin, the lead pastor at Lorne Park Baptist Church in Mississauga, Ontario, came out as transgender...

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Between 2015-2016 and 2017-2018, South Korean women spent 53.5 billion Korean won less on beauty products and cosmetic surgeries, investing in cars instead, choosing independence over objectification. Part of this cultural rejection of feminine beauty practices was spurred by the 4B movement, as well as “Take Off the Corset.” Inspired by Sheila Jeffreys’ Beauty and Misogyny (translated in Korean as Corset: Beauty and Misogyny), this movement describes the removal of the modern “corset”: beauty practices like waxing, makeup, high heels, cosmetic surgeries, long hair, restrictive eating regimes, etc. [source](#)

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Daegu, the country’s fourth largest city, exists in stark contrast to its capital,

Seoul. Daegu is arguably the most conservative city in South Korea, and only three out of every seven people are female, due to sex-selective abortion. In Daegu, sons are so desired that if a family has two daughters in a row, the second daughter will often be given a name roughly meaning, “Wishing for a son,” or “Please a boy next.” As men outnumber women four to three, sexual politics follow suit. Women living in Daegu explained to me that, while women in Seoul may call the police to report domestic violence, women in Daegu fear the police will side with the abuser and even perpetrate further violence against her. [source](#)

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[telegra.ph/Nightmare-on-Elm-Street-Freddy-Krueger-actor-wants-a-queer-remake-07-28](#)

Telegraph

Nightmare on Elm Street: Freddy Krueger actor wants a queer remake  
The actor who played the horror movie villain Freddy Krueger in A Nightmare on Elm Street wants a queer remake of the classic film. Robert Englund played Krueger in the 1984 horror classic and went on to reprise the role in a number of sequels. The actor...

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[telegra.ph/Naya-Rivera-Fleetwood-Mac-reflect-on-stunning-Songbird-performance-07-28](#)

Telegraph

Naya Rivera: Fleetwood Mac reflect on stunning 'Songbird' performance  
Fleetwood Mac have reflected on the powerful moment Naya Rivera performed "Songbird" on Glee following her tragic death earlier this month. Rivera, who played Santana Lopez on the hit musical television series, died on July 8 in Lake Piru, Southern California...

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# **After losing city grant, Vancouver Rape Relief say they have no plans to scale back services or public education**

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Thank you everyone who's come down already to support us today. We are grateful for all the support we've received so far. From those who have written in on our behalf to those who will be speaking today. Until We Win.  
#vancitycouncil #womenonlyspace #raperelief #radfem #yvr  
pic.twitter.com/jzh6xtC8Nl

— VancouverRapeRelief (@VanRapeRelief) February 26, 2020

After losing \$34,312 CAD in annual municipal funding, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter (VRR) say they have no plans to change or scale back their services or public education. The organization will rely on donations to make up for their budget shortfall.

On February 26, Vancouver City Council unanimously voted to strip grant funding from VRR. The annual grant from the city only represented a small portion of VRR's budget and was allocated to public education and outreach.

A year ago, the council agreed to maintain funding for 2019, but threatened to rescind the grant should the organization refuse to change its policy (protected by law) and allow males who self-identify as women to access their rape crisis services and shelter. VRR refused to buckle, instead maintaining a commitment to women's safety and liberation via their sex-segregated services. The council claimed that VRR's female-only policy violates their grant eligibility criteria, which protects "gender identities," but not "sex," as characteristics requiring accommodation.

In an email, Karla Gjini, a VRR collective member, said the organization will "work hard" to make up for their new shortfall. "While we're feeling

disappointed by the decision, we're also so, so encouraged and comforted by those who spoke out and wrote letters in support of our work, and in support of women," she told me.

Several members of the public who benefitted from VRR's education programs spoke to Vancouver City Council to plead with the city to reverse their recommendation. The council heard submissions for nearly 12 hours before the vote. Danielle Cormier, a former client and past employee of VRR, spoke about finding the organization after enduring rape and male violence:

"What I experienced at Rape Relief is what truly changed my life. Suddenly I was immersed in a world where women were prioritized. I had never experienced that before. A world where women mattered. Women like me. All struggling to give themselves and each other as much freedom as possible. And for the first time in a very long time I felt better. I came to Rape Relief feeling entitled to nothing — not even my own bodily integrity — but having experienced real moments of freedom, I left rape relief expecting more."

A single councillor, Colleen Hardwick, expressed reluctance to vote in favour of defunding VRR. She said she would vote in favour of the city's recommendation only because of the grant eligibility criteria. However, Hardwick said she would like to see the city add "sex" to the list of characteristics, which could theoretically allow the city to reinstate VRR's grant in the future.

In the meantime, VRR plans to host their annual fundraiser walk-a-thon on June 7. "It's a great community event with live music and a free picnic, and anyone can make a team and ask for pledges. We're hoping for a great, big turnout to help make up some of the money," said Gjini.

Many prominent feminists and allies have publicly offered support for VRR. Julie Bindel, UK journalist and feminist, announced plans for a pop-up restaurant in London to raise funds. Donations to VRR can also be made online.

Vancouver Rape Relief and Shelter will surely (and maddeningly) face continued backlash from trans activists determined to infiltrate or destroy women-only spaces. The women of VRR, however, are clearly up to the task.

*Amy Eileen Hamm is a writer and registered nurse educator in New Westminster, BC. You can find her on Twitter @preta\_6.*



## **Guest Writer**

One of Feminist Current's amazing guest writers.

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# **Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre will continue to recruit trans volunteers**

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Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre has confirmed it will continue to recruit transgender volunteers for its helpline, despite a number of transphobic attacks in recent weeks.

In a statement to Varsity, Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) confirmed that “all who self-define as women, including (if they wish) those with complex gender identities which include ‘woman’” are welcome to volunteer.

The charity said it “seeks a diversity of volunteers who reflect the variety of women that we support, and this includes trans women”, and emphasised that “the safety of women and girls who use our services is paramount”.

The CRCC — which offers support to women and girls who have experienced rape, childhood sexual abuse or any other form of sexual violence — was flooded with transphobic abuse after a July 9 callout for volunteers.

In its Twitter callout, which has now been deleted, the CRCC said it was “looking for self-identifying women to join our amazing helpline and email support volunteer team”.

As well as transphobic Twitter abuse, the statement was criticised by in the media by Tory MP Jackie Doyle-Price, who is opposed to equal marriage and supports the anti-trans LGB Alliance; Tory peer Baroness Nicholson, who escaped investigation after being reported to the House of Lords for “bullying” Munroe Bergdorf in June; and Maya Forstater, the tax researcher who tried, and failed, to convince a judge that her anti-trans “gender critical” views should be legally protected under the Equality Act.

Forstater told the *Daily Mail* her criticism of the centre’s trans-inclusive stance was “not anti-trans, it is about women’s rights”.

### **Trans women suffer ‘disproportionately high levels of sexual violence’, says Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre.**

While the CRCC deleted the tweet due to the influx of abuse, it maintains that trans inclusivity in survivor support services is vital.

“Trans women are subject to the gender inequalities that all women experience on a daily basis, and are subjected to disproportionately high levels of sexual violence,” a spokesperson said.

Sixteen per cent of transgender women have experienced domestic abuse in the last year, alongside 7.5 per cent of cisgender women.

The CRCC spokesperson added that “trans survivors experience significant barriers when trying to seek support for the rape, sexual assault and/or sexual abuse they have been subjected to”.

They also confirmed that the centre’s recruitment process for all of its volunteers is “extremely robust”, including 10 weeks of applications, interviews and training, and an enhanced DBS check.

Transphobic abuse was also levelled this month at two charities, The Eve Appeal and Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust, for standing with the transgender community and reiterating that their services are trans-inclusive.

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# **Core Issues Trust: Conversion therapy group to have bank accounts closed**

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Mike Davidson, CEO of the Core Issues Trust, frequently appears in the media

Core Issues Trust, a group that claims to be able to cure “unwanted same-sex attraction”, is to have its bank accounts shuttered.

The Northern Ireland-based group, which is the most vocal proponent of conversion therapy in the UK, says it had been served notice by Barclays that its bank accounts would be shut down.

An offshoot of Core Issues Trust, the so-called International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice, is also impacted.

## **Core Issues Trust accuses Barclays of ‘mob rule’ for closing account.**

According to founder Mike Davidson, Barclays bank sent letters earlier this month informing him “that their accounts will be closing in two months, mid-September.” No reason was given for the closure, but it comes after pressure from LGBT+ activists.

Davidson said: “A coordinated campaign has resulted in our ministry coming under immense pressure and key service providers cancelling their services, action which we consider to be discriminatory.”



The Christian Legal Centre, an offshoot of anti-LGBT+ lobby group Christian Concern, says it is “supporting Mike Davidson and CIT as they seek to resolve these issues [with Barclays]”.

Andrea Williams, chief executive of Christian Concern, said: “We call on the government to put a halt to this kind of mob rule and to assert the rights of Biblically-faithful Christian organisations to be serviced by businesses without facing such intolerant discrimination.”

A Barclays spokesperson said: “We do not comment on individual cases. Our terms and conditions – like other banks – allow us to end a relationship with any customer, provided we give two months’ notice.”

## **Other services have also booted out gay ‘cure’ advocates.**

Email newsletter provider Mailchimp and payments provider Paypal have also previously banned the group from using their services, Davidson says.

He complained: “This amounts to mob rule. If a social media mob can cause a bank to close the account of a Christian ministry, then there is nowhere for Biblically faithful Christian ministries to go.

“The UK is now becoming an intensely intolerant country. Key service providers have cancelled their services to a Christian charity because of a social media mob.”

Davidson also complained that the group’s email address, which is [email protected], “has, without consent, been signed up to porn sites such as PornHub, UK Lads, Lesbian Videos and a range of fetish sites.”

Frequently described as “Dr Mike Davidson” on the Core Issues Trust website, Davidson has no medical or therapeutic qualification whatsoever and uses the title “Dr” on the basis of a PhD in education.

## **Conversion therapy is still legal in the UK – and a ban may still be some way off.**

Nearly every genuine medical body has disavowed the practice of conversion therapy, the discredited idea that a person can change their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The UK does not currently ban the practice, meaning it remains legal for Core Issues Trust to offer its services “to people who want to explore moving away from unwanted same-sex attraction and gender confusions”.

Despite previous briefings that a ban on conversion therapy would be brought forward imminently, prime minister Boris Johnson indicated last week that more research is needed on the issue before legislating.

He told the media: “On the gay conversion therapy thing, I think that’s absolutely abhorrent and has no place in a civilised society, no place in this country.

“What we’re going to do is a study on where it is actually happening, how prevalent is it, and we will then bring forward plans to ban it.”



Boris Johnson told ITV News that he thought conversion therapy was “abhorrent”. (ITV News)

Repeating his statement in parliament, equalities minister Liz Truss said: “I have been clear that the government are committed to tackling the abhorrent practice of so-called gay-conversion therapy in the UK. As the prime minister reiterated earlier this week, this practice has no place in civilised society.

“Our action will be determined by research looking at how best to define conversion therapy, the scale of the issue, where it is happening and who it is happening to.

“When that research is complete, I will bring forward proposals to ban conversion therapy, making sure that our measures are effective so that no innocent people have to endure such tortuous practices.”

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# Drag Race: Shea Couléé launches OnlyFans after All Stars 5 win

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Shea Couléé has started an OnlyFans. (Adam Ouahmane/Supplied)

*Drag Race All Stars 5* winner Shea Couléé can now be found on OnlyFans.

Having narrowly missed out on the crown during her season nine run, Shea finally did what she set out to do on *RuPaul's Drag Race* by walking away with the *All Stars 5* crown.

If there's one thing we know about Shea Couléé, it's that she doesn't follow the conventional path. So to celebrate her historic win, rather than releasing a single or a make-up palette as has become the norm, the Chicago queen debuted a page on OnlyFans.

"I'm so excited to be joining the OnlyFans community!" she tweeted Sunday (July 26).

The social media platform is infamous for its large cache of adult content, with porn performers and amateurs using the site to connect directly with fans for a monthly fee.

However, Shea Couléé's OnlyFans looks set to be strictly PG-13 – and is free to follow.

The *All Stars* 5 winner is using OnlyFans to share “exclusive behind the scenes content, photo shoots, videos and live makeup tutorials” – plus “a very big surprise” to be announced soon.

### ***Drag Race* crowns Shea Couléé as *All Stars* 5 winner.**

Shea Couléé was announced as the winner of *Drag Race All Stars* 5 on Friday (July 24) after a gravity-defying final challenge and an instantly-iconic final lip sync to Janelle Monae's “Make Me Feel”.

Shortly after the finale, Shea told Entertainment Weekly that winning felt like a “full circle” moment, explaining: “I came across *RuPaul's Drag Race* when I was at a low point in my early twenties, and it brought me out of a place of sadness and inspired me to want to do drag.

“To be here almost 10 years later as the winner shows that representation and programs like this are so important because they help give hope and meaning to people who feel lost.”

Her victory made her the third Black queen to win a title in 2020, following season 12 victor Jaida Essence Hall and Miss Congeniality Heidi N Closet.



Throughout the season Shea used her drag to celebrate Blackness, telling RuPaul that Black women served as constant inspiration.

“In my mind, when I look at Black women, I see God,” she told *EW*.

“They’re so powerful, beautiful, glamorous, vulnerable, strong, and wonderful.

“They’ve contributed to so much of American pop culture that it only makes sense that I humbly dedicate myself to building them up and giving them glory, because it’s what they deserve.”

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# Emmerdale brothers Max Parker and Kris Mochrie are now dating

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Kris Mochrie hiked and then later stripped off in front of Emmerdale castmate Max Parker. (Instagram)

Two British actors who play brothers in the beloved soap opera *Emmerdale* are reportedly dating in real life and maybe 23AndMe should launch a dating app.

Max Parker and Kris Mochrie, who play siblings Luke and Lee Posner in the ITV show, have allegedly enjoyed a string of romantic dates since meeting last year. Ranging from shirtless sunbathing on deck chairs to rain-soaked hikes.

Sources told The Sun that as much as *Emmerdale*'s script meant the pair never filmed any scenes together, off-set a romance bloomed, with them even acknowledging that "casting did a really good job".

***Emmerdale* stars: 'We are literally like annoying brothers now! Casting did good!'**

"They met on Kris' last day filming and just hit it off," the insider told the outlet, referring to how Mochrie's character was killed off after being murdered by Robert Sugden.

"They were cast as brothers and are really alike and have been joking that casting did a great job.

"The boys kept in touch after Kris finished on the show but they've spent a lot of time together over summer.

"It's early days but they're really enjoying themselves and who knows what the future holds."

Rumours first sparked that Parker and Mochrie are dating when they took to Instagram to share videos and snaps of themselves soaking wet.

Hiking in the rain, that is, as the Daily Mail reported. Mochrie even stripped off at a waterfall after they were caught in a summer storm.



At the time, Parker told *The Sun*: “Yeah we met on set.

“Kris was filming his last scene in hospital and I think I was filming a scene in the hospital canteen with Isabel.

“We are literally like annoying brothers now! Casting did good!”

The pair later posted a selfie together last Saturday (25 July), captioning it on Instagram: “London lads lazily lounging, like.”

View this post on Instagram London lads lazily lounging like  
#alliteration #gcseenglish #summer  
A post shared by Kris Mochrie (@krismoc) on Jul 24, 2020 at 8:16am PDT

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# Is free speech under threat from 'cancel culture'? Four writers respond

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An open letter has ignited a heated discussion on the limits of political debate



Author Noam Chomsky. ‘Any letter that carries the signatures of both the former George W Bush speechwriter David Frum – the man who coined the phrase ‘axis of evil’ – and Noam Chomsky is bound to get attention.’

Published on Wed 8 Jul 2020 10.10 EDTA group of 150 academics, writers and activists have signed an open letter in Harper’s magazine expressing concern that “a new set of moral attitudes and political commitments” are “[weakening] norms of open debate and toleration of differences in favor of ideological conformity”. Four writers weigh up the issues

**Nesrine Malik: Don’t confuse being told you’re wrong with the baying of a mob**



The idea of “cancel culture”, the obvious, albeit unnamed, target of this letter, collapses several different phenomena under one pejorative label. It’s puzzling to me that a statement signed by a group of writers, thinkers and journalists, most whom have Ivy League or other prestigious credentials, would fail to at least establish a coherent definition of what it believes cancel culture is before seeming to condemn it.

The fact is that decisions made by corporate HR departments, failings in editing processes at media organisations such as the New York Times, and the demands of movements for social justice to be accorded recognition and respect do not constitute one clear trend. The new climate of “censoriousness”, if there is one, cannot be diagnosed and dispatched this easily.

In my view, the failure to make these distinctions clear is probably less an oversight and more of a convenient fudge. Because outrage about cancel culture can’t be credibly sustained when you start breaking down what it actually consists of. Companies hastily sacking people who have been mobbed online is about the bottom line and fear of bad PR. It raises interesting questions, but these are more about employment rights and the encroachment by bosses into areas of private opinion and conduct. Being piled on online is nasty, but it is broadly a function of how social media in particular and the internet in general has enabled bullying for the hell of it. Sometimes human beings are unpleasant, and certain platforms are designed to bring out the worst in them. That is separate to the demands for change emerging from many marginalised groups.

In not parsing these different patterns clearly, the Harper’s letter commits the

same offence it accuses others of doing: indulging in “the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty”.

To those unaccustomed to being questioned, this all feels personal. They have confused a lack of reverence from people who are able to air their views for the very first time with an attack on their right to free speech. They have mistaken the new ways they can be told they are wrong or irrelevant as the baying of a mob, rather than exposure to an audience that has only recently found its voice. The world is changing. It’s not “cancel culture” to point out that, in many respects, it’s not changing quickly enough.

- Nesrine Malik is a Guardian columnist

**Jonathan Freedland: The reaction to the letter has shown the need for it**



Any letter that carries the signatures of both the former George W Bush speechwriter David Frum – the man who coined the phrase “axis of evil” – and Noam Chomsky is bound to get attention. It takes some doing to get, say, New

York Times columnist Bari Weiss and Bernie Sanders advocate Zephyr Teachout to join forces, and there are dozens of similarly unlikely ideological match-ups to be found among those who signed the letter published by Harper's Magazine.

Endorsed by a bulging list of esteemed writers, artists and public intellectuals, this letter might well come to be seen as an inflection point in an argument that has been rumbling away, much of it on social media, for months if not years. And yet, the text hardly reads like some ground-breaking, revolutionary document. Luther's 95 Theses, it ain't.

Instead, as one signatory, Anne Applebaum, conceded on BBC Radio 4's Today programme this morning, it consists of a series of statements that are, in themselves, quite "anodyne". It's not disparaging to say that the document, like many open letters, represents a lowest common denominator, a bare minimum that would be acceptable – indeed, obvious – to the likes of both Frum and Chomsky. The letter declares, for example, that: "The way to defeat bad ideas is by exposure, argument, and persuasion, not by trying to silence or wish them away." Are there many who would disagree with those words, who would want to make out loud the case for wishing away what they don't like?

And yet the statement has not been received as a boilerplate recitation of the case for free expression, but has become controversial. That's partly because of the text itself – which some have read as brimming with thin-skinned privilege, seeing it as a coded attack on marginalised minorities for having the gall to criticise people with power and platforms – but also, as happens often with open letters, because of the names at the bottom. One name in particular has provoked fury: that of JK Rowling, because of her writings on trans rights and gender. At least two signatories have distanced themselves from the letter since its publication.

It's clear that a number of people believe Rowling should not be included in such statements, that her views have placed her outside the bounds of acceptable discourse. As it happens, the letter speaks of this phenomenon when it describes "a vogue for public shaming and ostracism." It seems the Harper's letter might be a rare example of the reaction to a text making the text's case rather better than the text itself.

- Jonathan Freedland is a Guardian columnist

## Zoe Williams: There is no such thing as pure freedom of expression



“We need to preserve the possibility of good-faith disagreement without dire professional consequences,” the Harper’s letter concludes. I was about to say I broadly agreed. But wait: broadly? I wholeheartedly agree. How can intellectual inquiry flourish if people can’t express themselves in good faith? Should professional consequences ever be dire for taking what is later considered to be the wrong position in a debate? Then again, this is quite an abstract proposition. Get into the weeds – what counts as good faith, and who decides – and I might find myself on the other side. If David Starkey complained about “so many damn blacks” in good faith, then I’m definitely on the other side. Professional consequences *start off* dire for the people who are cancelled en masse by structural racism. At least old white dudes get the respect of being cancelled on a case-by-case basis.

This reminds me a lot of the arguments we used to have about religious tolerance in the 90s. Toleration was a good and necessary thing; but what if it meant you had to tolerate people who themselves wouldn’t tolerate you? That would be

fine, we'd shrug: how live an issue was that, really? "Very live!" Melanie Philips and others might exclaim. "Look, here's a preacher who wants you to burn in hell. Eat that, logisticians." It was part of the remorseless generation of hatred and suspicion towards Muslims, yes: but separate to that, it was a move towards the territory of absolutes. People who are suspicious of, or simply bored by, consensus love to pin liberals down with these paradoxes. It is so droll to watch them flapping about, either side of the wedge.

What we do know is that there is no such thing as total tolerance: it cannot logically tolerate intolerance. And there is no such things as pure freedom of expression either: the expression of some views necessarily encroaches on the dignity and freedom of others. This is partly a failure of speech itself, which has the facility to raise impossible propositions – Eagleton's unstoppable force meeting an immovable object – but not to resolve them. Mainly it's a failure of humans. We should think carefully before lining up behind an abstract, on either side – absolutes have a tendency to dissolve on contact with reality. And it's in reality, of course, with its compromises and discomforts and competing demands, that we actually live.

- Zoe Williams is a Guardian columnist

### **Samuel Moyn: Abuse of the power to cancel is why I signed the letter**



I am not a free speech absolutist. Language is part of how our world is constituted. It does not operate free from the dangers and hierarchies of real life; it makes them possible. Calls for open debate routinely conceal the endurance of

hierarchies. Distinguishing between necessarily helpful speech and potentially harmful acts, as John Stuart Mill did and as free speech absolutists do, will not work. And without necessarily incurring the risk of slippery slopes, we can ban – or even empower the state to do so. We can cancel too.

But these are powers that do risk abuse and overuse. And that is why I signed the letter, and would do so again.

If it is true that hierarchies are in part maintained – not just undone – by speech, and that speech can harm and not just help, it doesn't follow that more free speech for more people isn't generally a good cause. It is.

Recent events have, in my opinion, proved that a successful movement – one with which I sympathise – can err and undermine its further inroads into opinion. Mill was wrong about a lot. But he was right that “the wellbeing of mankind may almost be measured by the number and gravity of the truths which have reached the point of being uncontested”. Recent abuse and overuse of our power to ban and cancel, put simply, have sometimes hurt the continuing normalisation of truths we care about.

I don't have the standing to talk down to or tutor those angry about the letter. But it is also correct that some of the chief victims of excessive policing of speech in history have been those with progressive politics like mine. I didn't know who else would sign it when I did, but I reserve the right to criticise many of them, not just for their own hypocritical patrolling of speech in the past but also for their regularly disastrous ideas. Supporting economic and geopolitical catastrophe is far worse than participating in evanescent Twitter mobs or even more harmful censorship. And we will have missed an opportunity provided by those now honourably calling for free speech if we do not continue to indict the world their speech has made.

- Samuel Moyn is a professor of law and history at Yale

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# Joanna Theng: Christian TikTok star scrubs social media after anti-gay video

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Joanna Theng issued a tepid half-apology.

A Christian influencer has quietly withdrawn from social media after featuring in a video which listed reasons why LGBT+ people are satanic.

Singapore-based Joanna Theng, 22, had over 47,000 followers on Instagram and nearly 140,000 on TikTok when she appeared in a video alongside the group City Revival, which describes itself as a “inter-generational” and “inter-denominational” Christian community.

In the 14-minute video posted to Instagram on Wednesday (July 22), Theng and the group’s founder Jaime Wong explained that the gay “movement” was a manifestation of the devil’s plan to insult God.

“Have you ever wondered why the ‘gay Pride’ celebrates pride?” Wong asks.

“Because Satan knows that God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. So Satan wants mankind to celebrate the very thing that God opposes: pride.”

Wong goes on to claim that the six-coloured rainbow flag is further evidence linking LGBT+ people with Satan, since the Biblical rainbow has seven colours and the number 666 is the “mark of the beast”.

Theng continues: “Is it a coincidence that the gay Pride celebrates taking pride in distorting the true symbol of the love and peace of God with the six-coloured rainbow flag?”

“We believe this movement is one of the ways that Satan the spiritual force has influenced the physical realm to manifest in ways that insult and show contempt for God.”



When the pair were met with a torrent of criticism, Theng defended herself on Instagram by claiming that she has many LGBT+ friends.

“I have never hated and never will hate on anyone in the LGBTQ+ community in my midst,” she wrote. “Disagreeing with an act does not mean I do not love a person.”

**Joanna Theng scrubs social media amid backlash.**

With the backlash continuing, on July 25 all of Theng's social media accounts appear to have been scrubbed or made private.

Her last Instagram post told followers: "Before I go, I would like to publicly say that all I've said in City Revival's video was never out of the intention of my heart to hurt anyone, but I understand how some of the parts had played out and were received.

"I am sorry that the way it was shared caused so much hurt. I sincerely apologise for that."

Wong also posted a video in a video revealing that she identified with the LGBT+ community "the most" because she was "one of you" — until she was told that homosexuality is a sin.

In relation to all that's happened

A post shared by City Revival SG (@cityrevival.sg) on Jul 24, 2020 at 12:19pm PDT

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# Junia Joplin: Trans pastor fired after coming out to her congregation

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Canadian Baptist pastor Junia Joplin came out to her church as a trans woman in an incredibly moving sermon. Shortly afterwards, they voted to fire her.

Joplin, the lead pastor at Lorne Park Baptist Church in Mississauga, Ontario, came out as transgender to her congregation in a beautiful sermon on truth-telling delivered via Zoom last month.

Sharing her own truth, she said: “I want you to hear me when I tell you I’m not just supposed to be just a pastor. I’m supposed to be a woman.”

“Hi, friends. Hi, family. My name is Junia Joplin. You can call me June.

“I am a transgender woman and my pronouns are she and her. That’s the treasure, folks. That’s the truth that I can’t help but speak.”

She added: “I realise, of course, that I might be taking an enormous risk here...

It's scary, but I read some place that 'love casts out fear'."

Sadly, on Tuesday, July 21, Joplin revealed that love had not been enough to cast out transphobia among her congregation.

She wrote on Twitter: "Hi friends. Yesterday the members of Lorne Park Baptist Church voted to fire me. The vote went 58-53 in favour of termination."

Hi friends,

Yesterday the members of @lorneparkbc voted to fire me. The vote went 58-53 in favour of termination...

— Junia R. Joplin (@jrjoplin) July 21, 2020

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# Naya Rivera: Fleetwood Mac reflect on stunning 'Songbird' performance

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Fleetwood Mac have reflected on the powerful moment Naya Rivera performed “Songbird” on *Glee* following her tragic death earlier this month.

Rivera, who played Santana Lopez on the hit musical television series, died on July 8 in Lake Piru, Southern California, when she went swimming with her son. She was 33 years old.

Many have been reflecting on Rivera’s star-making six-season run on *Glee*, and legendary band Fleetwood Mac are the latest to weigh in on her incredible talent.

The band shared Rivera’s *Glee* performance of their hit “Songbird” on Facebook and delivered a heartfelt tribute to the actor.

**Fleetwood Mac said they were ‘so saddened’ by Naya Rivera’s death.**

“We were so saddened to hear about the death of Naya Rivera,” the band wrote.

“She was such a talent, and her character on *Glee* gave a voice to so many.”

**She was such a talent, and her character on *Glee* gave a voice to so many.**

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# Nightmare on Elm Street: Freddy Krueger actor wants a queer remake

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The actor who played the horror movie villain Freddy Krueger in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* wants a queer remake of the classic film.

Robert Englund played Krueger in the 1984 horror classic and went on to reprise the role in a number of sequels.

The actor told *TooFab* that the secret to the success of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* was that it was all about “the loss of innocence” – and said any remakes would have to capture that essence, while also adapting for a changed world.

He also referenced the first sequel to the classic horror film – *A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge* – which has a huge fan following among queer audiences for its homoerotic subtext.

Englund said a remake can only work if it deals with “middle American kids” who are “co-opted by evil”.

**Freddy Krueger actor says a queer remake would work due to ‘openness’ around gender and sexuality today.**

“But because our society now is more damaged because of the opioid crisis, because of incredible diverse, because of the openness now with gender and sexuality, those kids now have to be different than the kids from the original *Nightmare* and someone has to write a different batch of kids and Freddy needs to be a different kind of evil,” he said.

“His evil needs to be, he needs to toy with what they like in the culture.”

**I think it would be really fun to have Freddy play with one kid who’s gay.**

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# Poland pulls out of Istanbul Convention on ending violence against women

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Activists gathered on Friday afternoon at Krakow's Main Market Square to voice their opposition to the government's plan to withdraw Poland from the 2011 Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on combating domestic violence. (Artur Widak/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

Poland has pulled out of the Istanbul Convention, an international treaty on ending violence against women, after the country's anti-LGBT+ justice minister claims it “justifies gay ideology”.

The nationalist Law and Justice Party minister, Zbigniew Ziobro, vowed to

begin the process of withdrawing from the European treaty, ratified in 2015 under the previous government, which sets comprehensive standards to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

### **Poland's justice minister claims domestic violence treaty 'justifies gay ideology'.**

Ziobro, who just last week was making up claims that an EU budget deal would lead to the imposition of same-sex marriage in Poland to inflame opposition, is again fabricating a link between the international treaty and LGBT+ rights.

The minister, who has previously described the treaty as “an invention, a feminist creation aimed at justifying gay ideology”, said Poland would start the process of withdrawal on Monday, claiming it violates the rights of parents and “contains elements of an ideological nature”.

The treaty makes no mention of LGBT+ rights at all, apart from making clear that domestic violence survivors should be provided with support free from discrimination based on personal factors including sexual orientation.

According to the BBC, Ziobro cited “harmful” provisions in the treaty that require schools to teach about gender.

The Istanbul Convention says that schools should teach about “equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, gender-based violence against women and the right to personal integrity”.

Protests were held against the proposed withdrawal in Warsaw and Krakow on Friday and Saturday.



The treaty is a frequent target of homophobic ideologues – with Polish government minister Marcin Romanowski branding it “neo-Marxist propaganda that turns our value system upside down” and claiming “the way to fight violence is not to teach young boys that they can wear dresses and play with dolls”.

### **No, the Istanbul Convention does not promote ‘LGBT+ ideology’.**

The treaty has previously encountered similar attacks in Slovakia, where nationalist politicians claimed the document is “extreme liberalism” that promotes LGBT+ rights.

The frequent fabrications have led the European Commission to produce a fact-checking booklet that challenges the claims about the treaty.

The European Commission document makes clear: “There is no threat to the concept of family. The convention does not regulate family life or structures and states do not have to change the traditional understanding of families.

“Traditions and values are not under threat. The convention only states that traditions, culture or religion cannot be used as a justification for acts of violence against women.

“The word ‘gender’ does not replace the terms ‘women’ and ‘men’, nor does the convention promote any ‘gender ideology’. The word ‘gender’ is used in the convention to emphasise that women are more likely to experience violence because they are women.

“Recognition of same-sex marriages is not in the convention. The convention does not affect national civil law rules on marriage in any way.

“A ‘third gender’ is not introduced by the convention, nor is there an obligation to recognise it. States are only required to protect victims’ rights without discrimination on any grounds, including sex, race, religion, language, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.”

Justice minister Zbigniew Ziobro is an extremist when it comes to LGBT+ issues, previously ordering a probe after IKEA fired an employee for saying gay people should be put to death.

His views are not alone in the Polish government, with president Andrzej Duda winning re-election earlier this month after a vicious campaign hinged largely on his opposition to LGBT+ rights.

Homophobia has become a national issue, with more than 100 local regions – comprising nearly a third of Poland – declaring themselves LGBT+ free zones.

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# **The South Korean women's movement: 'We are not flowers, we are a fire'**

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Image:

<https://twitter.com/XYfreeWorld/status/1010870088633741312?s=19>

*Last fall, Jen Izaakson travelled to South Korea to document the rise of the radical feminist movement as part of a Cambridge University working group, after winning a research grant, interviewing over 40 female activists. She co-authored this piece with Tae Kyung Kim, a Korean radical feminist from Seoul, currently living and studying in Berlin.*

*News of the growing feminist movement in South Korea has reached Western media, but the roots of this radical uprising are undercovered. Mainstream media reporting in the West often covers the aspects of South Korean feminism that mirror our own achievements back to us, leaving the particular achievements of Korean women and the most radical aspects of the movement less visible. In September, over 40 women from the South Korean radical feminist movement were interviewed as part of academic research. The results of those findings are summarized in this article. Due to the brevity of this piece, lots of information cannot be covered, but we have tried to include the material that will best demonstrate how the movement emerged; its historical context; and what tactics, strategies, and political formations constitute radical feminism in South Korea.*

## **Male violence politicizes and radicalizes**

In 2016, the infamous “Gangnam murder” instigated outcry among women. A 34-year-old man named Kim Sung-min stabbed a 23-year-old woman (whose name remains under a publication ban) to death inside a gender-neutral washroom at a karaoke bar. Kim Sung-min waited inside the washroom, allowing several men to enter and exit before a woman came in. In court, he explained, “I did it because women have always ignored me.” This is a similar explanation to those offered by other “incels” (involuntary celibates) who have perpetrated violent murders, but in South Korea, government authorities explicitly denied the misogynistic motive, despite Kim Sung-min’s own testimony.

In response to the murder, women flooded the streets outside Gangnam Station and the surrounding area of Seocho-dong in protest. Many of these women did not consider themselves feminists at the time, but the nature of the murder and misogynist motivation politicized them.

By 2018, “molka” (the secret filming of women in washrooms and change rooms, or up their skirts in public) had become a widespread problem in Korea. Interviewees told me this is in part because Korean men lack the confidence to directly sexually harass women in the street, so their attempts to access women sexually take place in more “sneaky” ways. Though there are laws against this form of voyeurism in South Korea, the police rarely enforce them. The situation reached a tipping point when a young female student was charged for photographing a nude male model at her art school. According to the women I interviewed, the man would routinely leave the classroom naked, so students were forced to see his genitals. Finally one female student took a photo of the man in class, posting it online to decry his behaviour. She was arrested, put on trial, imprisoned, and forced to apologize to the man, who said the images of him exposing his genitals publicly had caused him “psychological damage.” The woman was initially fined the equivalent of 18,000 euros, but the flasher insisted to the court that the woman be sent to prison, and she was jailed for 10 months.

Considering men use spy cameras with almost total impunity, this incident sparked a wave of molka protests. Hundreds of thousands of mainly young women came together, incensed that the laws around voyeurism would be used against women, not men. To date, 360,000 women have participated in protests against spy cams. These demonstrations consist of highly structured processions,

political chants typed up on flyers and distributed among the crowds, and enlivening stage speeches that often begin the chants, which the protestors join in on, reaching crescendos that sound like battle cries. At some rallies, women go on stage to have their hair publicly cut short; other times makeup collections are ceremoniously thrown in garbage bags.

### **A need for woman-only organizing**

The real world events of the Gangnam Station murder and molka protests took shape against a pivotal web-based backdrop. Beginning in 2015, a war of words had developed between men and women online. A major dispute had erupted when MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) reached South Korea. On DC Inside Gallery, a popular internet forum with millions of users across the country, male users began threads naming a Korean woman as Patient Zero, claiming she visited the Middle East as a prostitute, then returned home infected. Other men joined in, writing comments like, “Korean women should be dead,” “Korean women spend money vainly,” and “Korean woman are stupid and have spread this virus.” In response, women started their own threads on the forum, discussing this overt misogyny. Eventually, it was discovered MERS had in fact been brought into the country by a man, and women filled the men’s message boards, vindicated. But the misogyny was not forgotten.

In response, women created Megalia, similar to Reddit, but free from misogyny. Megalia became an online space for building camaraderie among women, with friendship and tongue-in-cheek humour at its heart. It became common for women to call each other “vulvas” on the site, saying things like, “Well done — you are the strongest vulva,” or “Brilliant idea! You’re a great vulva.” However, Megalia had male users, and many of the site’s administrators were gay men. These men ostensibly were sympathetic to women’s experience of misogyny at first, but once conversation threads began to discuss the misogyny of gay men and gay male culture (like drag), women’s comments began to be removed.

The heavy moderation of women’s speech is of no surprise to many feminists on Facebook, Mumsnet, and Twitter. Women realized in order to have free and fair discussions about the realities of their lives and the misogyny they observed, they would need a space moderated by themselves, without male administrators. This experience demonstrated the need for women-only organizing. Women began to leave Megalia in droves, and by January 2016, thousands had signed up to an online forum called Womad, described by my interviewees as a “radical

lesbian feminist” space.

The astonishing prevalence of lesbianism in the South Korean movement is one of its most striking and significant aspects. All the feminist activists I spoke to for the 40+ interviews conducted identified as lesbians.

In South Korea, radical feminism and lesbian feminism are very much linked, spawning the “4부”/“4B” movement (4부 is roughly pronounced to the Anglophone ear as “4B”). 4B is based on four rules that orientate the radical feminist movement and act as a guide women can adopt to disrupt patriarchy and live safer lives away from men. The principles are, roughly, to not marry men, date men, have sex with men, or become pregnant. Today, the 4B movement has an estimated 50,000 followers.

A 2016 study revealed that 50 per cent of the female population in South Korea do not see marriage as necessary — women, in particular, have realized marriage is a raw deal, leading the government to take action. In response to concerns about a rising average population age and declining birth rate, the South Korean government commissioned a number of soap operas promoting an idyllic view of romantic heterosexual love. A number of reality TV shows — *Heart Signal*; *We Got Married*; *Same Bed, Different Dreams*; and *The Return of Superman* — were commissioned to encourage marriage and reproduction. These series tend to follow a progressing narrative wherein heterosexual couples first express wanting a baby, then to conception, gestation, and birth, each step documented and presented in a positive light.

### **Take Off the Corset**

Between 2015-2016 and 2017-2018, South Korean women spent 53.5 billion Korean won less on beauty products and cosmetic surgeries, investing in cars instead, choosing independence over objectification. Part of this cultural rejection of feminine beauty practices was spurred by the 4B movement, as well as “Take Off the Corset.” Inspired by Sheila Jeffreys’ *Beauty and Misogyny* (translated in Korean as *Corset: Beauty and Misogyny*), this movement describes the removal of the modern “corset”: beauty practices like waxing, makeup, high heels, cosmetic surgeries, long hair, restrictive eating regimes, etc. South Korea has a massive cosmetic surgery industry, the most popular cosmetic intervention for women being the “double eyelid” procedure — an operation that alters the eyelids so that they appear more “Western.” Similar to skin bleaching, this

profit-driven practice is informed by racism, and can lead to post-operative infections, loss of eyelids, impairments to sight, and even blindness.

Many interviewees reference the movement as a starting point in their journey to radical feminism, saying, “I took off my corset last January,” or, “I have been without corset for two years now.” For South Korean women, the term “backlash” is connected to Take Off the Corset — it does not reference a backlash from outside, against feminism (as in the West), but a personal backlash, wherein a woman backsides towards femininity. One woman told me, “My best friend and I took off our corsets in 2017, but she has since had a backlash, and began wearing makeup again because of family pressure.”

Other slogans prevalent across the movement tend to revolve around women’s power and determination. A group of interviewees signed a card for me with some of these, writing, “We will meet at the top,” “Be ambitious,” and, “We are one another’s courage.” I recognized these slogans right away because they often appear on the social media profiles of activists. One prominent reoccurring call to action is, “If not me, who? And if not now, when?” This slogan is paraphrased, borrowed from Hillel the Elder (Pirkei Avot 1:14), a famous Babylonian figure in Jewish history.

### **A historical foundation for woman-centred culture**

Part of the reason feminism has developed as it has in South Korea is historical and cultural. The women I spoke to explained that, historically, there has not been the same culture of male “chivalry” (male politeness and social protection of women) as in the West, meaning there is far less pretense about male domination. During the early 1950s, soldiers fighting in the Korean war made women walk over landmines before them to check for safe paths and to clear exploding bombs with their bodies. There is no historical shame around this practice. I asked if, had the Titanic been Korean, would there have been a “women and children first” policy determining who got into lifeboats? This was met with raucous laughter and strong denials. One interviewee viewed the absence of chivalry as translating to less kindness from men, in terms of how patriarchy plays out. At the same time, women are less likely to be susceptible to marriage because men are much more clear, even before the wedding, about how unequal things will be. It is not that Korean men behave more oppressively towards women than male populations in the West, it is just more overt and unapologetic. Given men’s domination is less concealed, some interviewees

argued this allowed women to detect the pitfalls marriage and domestication more easily. What it means to choose to marry is much more clear.

Another interviewee explained that, historically, women were expected to labour in fields, often working more than men, so men were less seen as providers of material wealth than they might be elsewhere. Women did the work in the home as well as out. The economic benefit of a husband, even one with a job, was far less than in other societies where women have traditionally not been allowed to work, or have had limited access to the job market. Historically, in Korea, there was a very strict class system, and women did not have opportunities to marry outside their class, thereby accessing greater material wealth, as women in other countries might. With that advantage missing, there was one less reason for women to view marriage in aspirational terms. These historical conditions combine to produce a particular set of sexual politics in South Korea that means it is common for women to reject marriage, as there is a clearer benefit versus cost calculation.

Another reason there has been room for a radical women's movement to thrive is because there is literal space for it. Women's universities were set up across the country throughout the last century, and most cities are home to several women-only institutions (some have male lecturers, and sometimes male students from other universities can take a course for a term on the campus, but there are evening curfews when all men must leave). In the student union buildings, male professors and male family members of students are not allowed to enter. They are a 24-hour women-only zone.

Some women's universities have been protested by men's rights activists (MRAs) holding placards saying things like, "Women, give up your luxury handbags!" Apparently feminism has developed so far away from men in South Korea that some men are not quite sure what feminists are demanding, with MRAs ironically calling for women to stop wasting money on expensive feminine items. Meanwhile, the radical feminist movement is calling for boycotts of any business that uses sexist advertising, and is encouraging women to only eat at women-owned restaurants, drink in women-owned bars, and shop at women-owned stores, so women's money goes into the pockets of other women.

While women's universities emerged out of a Christian sentiment that considered it improper for unmarried women to mix with men, they provided

fertile ground for feminism to flourish. Many of these campuses are surrounded by streets only women frequent, with shops and cafes almost exclusively full of women. As a result of this cultural norm, most cities have at least one or several women-only bars. (South Korea has not yet been captured by gender identity politics, so that means genuinely female-only.)

## Marginalization inspires political organizing

The 4B movement and radical feminist ideas have spread far across South Korea during the last half-decade, taking hold in different towns and cities, despite differences in culture and politics.

Daegu, the country's fourth largest city, exists in stark contrast to its capital, Seoul. Daegu is arguably the most conservative city in South Korea, and only three out of every seven people are female, due to sex-selective abortion. In Daegu, sons are so desired that if a family has two daughters in a row, the second daughter will often be given a name roughly meaning, "Wishing for a son," or "Please a boy next." As men outnumber women four to three, sexual politics follow suit. Women living in Daegu explained to me that, while women in Seoul may call the police to report domestic violence, women in Daegu fear the police will side with the abuser and even perpetrate further violence against her.

Despite this, women in Daegu are steadfast. They spoke of refusing to wear makeup, despite the fact this almost certainly results in a lack of employment. The city is poorer than its neighbour Busan, and Seoul to the north, yet the way Daegu's feminists approach the problem of unemployment due to refusing femininity is by organizing. They formed women's "cartels," pooling resources, living together in cheap housing, and collectively campaigning on the streets to reach new women. These "cartels" were described to me as organized groups, but with flexible, open structures and focused on outreach. This contrasts with what we see in the West, where radical feminism tends to flourish through small groups of friends/lovers operating together as a private network, rather than organizing primarily around political alliances and engaging in public recruitment and campaigning.

South Korea has the highest gender pay gap of all the OECD countries (the top wealthiest 37 countries) globally (according to GDP), with women earning on average a third less than men. While feminists in the West who have jobs,

property, and supportive families, and who do not face direct discrimination for refusing feminine practices, will say that they cannot be openly radical feminist due to financial precariousness and fear of reprisal, women in Daegu — whose income is precarious, who live in a far more male-dominated culture, persist. The experience of meeting feminists in Daegu emphasized that social and economic insecurity need not hamper our willingness to speak out on feminist issues. Possibly, the higher economic status of “radical feminists” in the West — who have more to lose (professional careers, respectability, status, money) — drives their anonymity online and silence in public life.

In South Korea, current law allows a woman to get an abortion only if she has consent from a male relative or her boyfriend/husband/partner. If a woman manages to obtain an abortion without a man’s permission (by having the abortion abroad or having a male friend pose as the boyfriend, for example), she faces a trial and either imprisonment or a fine of close to \$2000. Feminists have fought hard to change this law and, in April, South Korea’s Constitutional Court ruled the law making abortion a crime unconstitutional. The court gave Parliament until the end of 2020 to implement the new law, an obvious victory for the movement.

In February, the Women’s Party formed, gaining 8,000 members by March — a number which has now grown to 10,000. The party aims to represent the interest of all generations, so has five leaders, each from a different decade: a teenager, then a woman in her 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s. Though the party secured over 200,000 votes, they were not able to win any seats. Nonetheless the Women’s Party has a great deal of support from young women in particular, who, unlike in the West, are the biggest proponents of radical feminism. Theoretically, an estimated 60,000 girls could have voted for the Women’s Party, were they not under 18.

## **Changing language changes culture**

In response to recent feminist gains, South Korean men’s rights activists who oppose the new feminist movement have changed tactics, and have begun to claim they simply want “equality,” rather than the “violent” exclusion and prejudice they say radical feminism calls for. This adoption of liberal rhetoric is remarkably similar to that of trans activists in the West who oppose the prioritization of women in feminism. The men in South Korea are relatively organized and sometimes take action. Jae-gi, a man who started an MRA

website, jumped off a bridge to demonstrate the plight of men due to feminism, accidentally impaling himself through the anus on a spike under the water and dying. Jae-gi has since become a verb meaning male suicide, and feminists will say to MRAs, “go Jae-gi yourself,” meaning basically, “fuck off and die.”

That may seem harsh, but it is an example of “mirroring,” a tactic wherein women employ language reversals and word play unique to the Korean language. The creation of verbs like “Jae-gi” is a direct response to the verbal and physical abuse women suffer online and in real life at the hands of men.

With over one million words, the Korean vocabulary is more than twice as big as English. Korean grammatical rules allow for the easy creation of new words and expose how language is used to suppress women. The word “parents” in Korean is ‘부모님’(bu-mo-nim) — “bu” means father and “mo” means mother, placing the father first because the man is considered more important. Korean feminists have started to use the term ‘모부님’(mo-bu-nim) instead, changing the order, so “mother” comes first. The word “baby stroller” in Korean is ‘유모차’(yu-mo-cha) — “yu” means child, and “mo” means mother, and “cha” means wheelchair, which communicates that taking care of children is reserved for mothers. Feminists changed the word to “유아차” (yu-ah-cha) — “yu-ah” means little child, so the word “mother” is removed, and the word now means, “child’s wheelchair” (roughly similar to the British term “pram”). Adjustments like this are possible for many words, allowing meanings to be upended.

The term “6.9” (literally the numbers 6.9) is another example of women mirroring and responding to a culture that values women according to the size of their bodies. “6.9” refers to the average penis length (in cm) of a Korean man. Using the term on social media profiles or when responding to arguments with males is a way to shame men as women are shamed when men discuss the size of their breasts or other body parts, and to belittle the power they believe they have due to the penis.

Unfortunately, there are also new, misogynistic additions to language, thanks to male online communities like ILBE, where men share nude photos of female family members to gain social cache and “likes.” Users came up with expressions like “Women should get hit every three days like dried fish to make them more delicious” and, “Put a light bulb inside the vagina and break it,” which has since entered the popular vernacular.

These kinds of expressions are considered banal in South Korea, so young Korean feminists developed new language in response, redefining previously sexist terms.

Radical feminists strategically redeployed the term “feminine” to signify strong, powerful, ambitious, women. They also redefined “masculine” to imply jealousy, thinness, youthfulness, and a desire to decorate oneself. Mirroring reminds people how many sexist terms they use daily, without even noticing, but also engenders a strong negative perception of sadistic expressions toward women and reverses them through humour. With “femininity” redefined, Korean women strive toward characteristics like strength and excellence, concentrating on self-development to achieve their own ambitions. Mirroring is a way women use language to take control away from men.

## **A model for the West**

The South Korean feminist movement developed out of particularly misogynist conditions, compared to the West, combined with better opportunities for political organizing, creating a situation where radical action was both necessary and viable. These unique contradictory circumstances produced social conditions wherein women’s radical action was both possible and urgent.

There is not total agreement within the South Korean feminist movement, but what distinguishes it from the West is that differences are discussed — not just online, but in real life — direct debate is not considered a destructive force to be avoided at all costs, but is accepted as a necessary part of politics. Because of the presence of that real thriving movement there exists greater sharing and cooperation.

Women in the West could learn much from our Korean sisters: their ability to organize collectively; their crucial focus on politics, inventiveness, and ingenuity; and, perhaps most significantly, their practice of taking politics to the streets.

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## **Guest Writer**

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# Trans icon and Hey Qween host Lady Red Couture has passed away

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Lady Red Couture, an icon of the Los Angeles trans and drag communities and co-host of the YouTube talk show *Hey Qween!*, has passed away.

Lady Red Couture was known best for co-hosting the YouTube talkshow Hey Qween! with Johnny McGovern, and interviewing some of the drag and LGBT+ scenes' biggest names.

She described herself as “a trans woman that lives as the largest drag queen in captivity — not just another drag queen”.

McGovern posted the news that she had passed away on Instagram on Saturday, July 25, saying that “the unthinkable has happened”.

He wrote: “My best friend and sister Lady Red Couture has passed. I am shocked and devastated.

“I never believed we would lose her like this. Please know this is real and it hurts so bad. RIP @mothercouture I love you baby.”

It doesn't feel real but the beautiful light that was Lady Red is gone.

#RIPLadyRed I love you baby. I will miss you everyday.

[pic.twitter.com/IXBT2hhITR](https://pic.twitter.com/IXBT2hhITR)

— Jonny McGovern (@GayPimp) July 25, 2020

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# You've heard of rape culture, but have you heard of pedophile culture?

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236.2kSHARES

The screenshot shows the SALON website header with categories: NEWS, POLITICS, ENTERTAINMENT, LIFE, TECH, BUSINESS, SUSTAINABILITY, and more. The date MONDAY, SEP 21, 2015 10:35 AM PDT is displayed. The main title of the article is "I'm a pedophile, but not a monster". Below the title is a subtitle: "I'm attracted to children but unwilling to act on it. Before judging me harshly, would you be willing to listen?". The author's name is TODD NICKERSON. Below the author's name are social sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Tumblr, along with a plus sign for additional sharing options.

Dear Todd Nickerson,

Over at *Salon* a few days ago, you wrote an article provocatively entitled “I’m a pedophile, but not a monster.” Presumably, a lot of people are now asking questions such as “Is pedophilia natural?” or “Can pedophilia be cured?” But I’m not going to attempt to answer those particular questions. Rather, I’d like to further this discourse by filling in some major holes in your article.

Let’s start with this missing piece: the vast majority of pedophiles are men. And the majority of children victimized by those pedophiles who *do* choose to act on their sexual desires are girls. This is a rather major detail to withhold from your audience, wouldn’t you say? Unfortunately, as pervasive and overt as patriarchy is, it is usually the last detail mentioned in conversations of this nature — if it is mentioned at all.

That said, pedophilia may seem taboo and despised by the masses, but an honest appraisal of our culture at large reveals otherwise. I propose that pedophilia is

actually rewarded and celebrated, and that our entire culture and understanding of sexuality is constructed around what seem to be pedophilic desires. I call this “pedophile culture.”

In pedophile culture, women are expected to maintain a near-impossible level of thinness, prepubescent in their almost-androgynous lack of curvature and body fat. Due to this pressure, eating disorders abound in young girls, and women in particular are targeted throughout their lives by a multi-billion dollar weight loss industry.

In pedophile culture, the top Pornhub category is “Teen.” “Barely legal” “girls” in schoolgirl outfits play out everything from “virgin manipulations,” daddy-daughter incest fantasies, teacher-student make believe... you name it, there’s porn for it, and it’s been whacked-off to millions and millions and millions of times. It’s fair to wonder whether the only thing keeping some of these viewers from watching straight-up child porn is age of consent laws.

Influenced by the porn industry, labiaplasty, a surgery that carves the labia minora down to porn-sized slivers, is rapidly gaining popularity. So are other procedures, like hymenoplasty, which restores virgin-like tightness to women’s vaginas.

In pedophile culture, women are outright pressured to regularly shave or wax their nether regions and underarms. The cosmetics industry — again, targeted at women — peddles “anti-aging” creams and lotions that will make our skin “baby soft!”

In pedophile culture, we casually refer to grown women as “girls.” We have a word specifically for attractive female teenagers: *jailbait*. Women are sexualized as *chicks*, *kittens*, and *babes*.

In pedophile culture, I often catch men in public checking me out with eyes full of lust, until they see the hair on my legs — at which point, they resort to a theatrical display of disgust. I’ve eavesdropped on groups of college-age guys talking about how they won’t perform oral sex on a woman if her labia are too prominent. One man who had been pursuing sex with me for three years, suddenly changed his mind when I revealed that I do not, and will not, shave off my pubic hair. In other words, many men *stop being attracted to me* when reminded that I am a woman, and not a young girl.

Surely all of these men, who have a “preference” for the aforementioned qualities in women, aren’t pedophiles by the strict definition of the word. But it seems that a high number of men, likely as a result of deep cultural conditioning, find many of the same things attractive in a woman that a pedophile would find attractive in a girlchild. Small labia, tight vaginas, intact hymens, baby-soft skin, hairless limbs and vulvas, eternal youthfulness, tiny frail bodies... As tumblr user redressalert wrote, “how do we not recognize that this is essentially a description of a baby or a toddler?”

Back to my original point:

I need you, and your sympathetic readers, to understand this grave truth: pedophilia is not nearly as taboo, or shameful, or repulsive to society, as you claim it is. I wish it was. Much to the detriment of females the world over, your desires are reflected back to you infinitely, mass-produced on a global scale to meet an ever-growing demand. This male-supremacist world welcomes you with open arms, and your every wish is its command. I dare say you are safer to be yourself, than girls are.

You say “I’m a pedophile, but not a monster,” and I wholeheartedly agree with you. You’re not a monster — you’re a man. A rather common man. A microcosmic representation of patriarchy’s most prevalent perversions. You are not special, you are not anomalous, and you are not alone. Not even close. Your “sexual orientation” is just another manifestation of the collective desire of males to subjugate females in a crusade to uphold male supremacy at all costs.

So if being “understanding and supportive” of your pedophilia entails grooming males to eroticize childlike features in women, and teaching women to maintain eternal youth as not to aggravate male insecurities, then you are not asking for our support — you are asking for our submission. And just as you say “there is no ethical way we can fully actualize our sexual longings,” there is no ethical way to request cooperation from those of us actively trying to dismantle the patriarchal system that your “orientation” represents.



*Alicen Grey is an award winning writer and author of *Wolves and Other Nightmares*. A passionate artist and activist, she strives to inspire her audience toward change and healing. More of Alicen's work can be found at her blog, [www.alicengrey.com](http://www.alicengrey.com)*

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