

Social Justice Watch 0720

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McDonald's and Visa partnered to show fast-food restaurant workers can live on \$8.25 an hour if they budget. Unfortunately that budget includes working a second job and not having heat. -----> <http://ow.ly/n1Noh>

Sample Monthly Budget	
Monthly Net Income	
Income (1st job)	\$ 1,105
Income (2nd job)	\$ 955
Other Income.....	\$ 0
Monthly Net Income Total.....	\$ 2,060
Monthly Expenses	
Savings	\$ 100
Mortgage/Rent	\$ 600
Car Payment.....	\$ 150
Car/Home Insurance.....	\$ 100
Health Insurance.....	\$ 20
Heating	\$ 0
Cable/Phone	\$ 100
Electric	\$ 90
Other	\$ 100
Monthly Expenses Total.....	\$ 1,260
Monthly Spending Money.....	\$ 800
<i>(Monthly Net Income Total minus Monthly Expenses Total)</i>	
Daily Spending Money Goal.....	\$ 27
<i>(Monthly Spending Money divided by 30)*</i>	

this is proof that rich people are so incredibly out of touch with reality [source](#)



Remember when Sailor Mars caught a cold and out of courtesy for others she wore a mask even while fighting for her life? Be like Sailor Mars. [source](#)

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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. telegra.ph/Alexandria-Ocasio-Cortez-has-a-PSA-for-those-bemoaning-cancel-culture-07-19

Telegraph

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....

telegra.ph/Austria-issues-its-first-ever-intersex-birth-certificate-after-four-year-battle-07-19

Telegraph

Austria issues its first ever intersex birth certificate after four year battle
Austria has issued its first ever intersex birth certificate, joining a growing list of countries to offer identity documents with options other than male or female.
The legal change came after a four year battle by Alex Jürgen, a 42-year-old intersex man...

Ask a man what a good woman is and watch him describe a slave

[source](#)

telegra.ph/Conflict-Brings-Us-Together-07-19

Telegraph

Conflict Brings Us Together

For a long time, political talk at the “moderate middle” has focused on a common theme that goes something like this:

telegra.ph/Non-Binary-Peoples-Day-Public-debate-wont-stop-me-living-my-truth-07-19

Telegraph

Non-Binary People's Day: Public debate won't stop me living my truth

Dear reader: A real-life, living, breathing non-binary person here. Happy International Non-Binary People’s Day... today, I was spat at in Tesco. Finally, my day to shine! I am not wasting space re-re-re-explaining “non-binary” to you because one, Google was...

telegra.ph/A-feminist-glossary-because-we-didnt-all-major-in-gender-studies-07-19

Telegraph

A feminist glossary because we didn't all major in gender studies

Alia E. DastagirUSA TODAY Corrections and clarifications: A previous version of this story included a definition of "women of color" that has since been updated. Like any "ism," feminism is rich with jargon, which can lead deeply personal conversations to...

telegra.ph/HIV-cure-First-person-ever-cured-of-HIV-using-medication-alone-07-19

Telegraph

HIV cure: First person ever 'cured' of HIV using medication alone

In a major leap forward in the search for a HIV/AIDS cure, a person has been “cured” of HIV using a cocktail of medicines in what activists have dubbed a breakthrough as “exciting” as it was “unexpected”. HIV, known as human immunodeficiency virus, hobbles...

telegra.ph/The-Hidden-Cost-of-Your-New-Wardrobe-07-19-2

Telegraph

The Hidden Cost of Your New Wardrobe

More than ever, people desire to buy more clothes. Pushed by advertising, we look for novelty and variety, amassing personal wardrobes unimaginable in times past. With the advent of fast fashion, brands like H&M and ZARA are able to provide low prices by...

telegra.ph/Racism--Hate-Crimes-in-a-Pandemic-07-19

Telegraph

Racism & Hate Crimes in a Pandemic

Despite calls to physically distance, we are still seeing reports of racially motivated hate crimes in the media. Across the United States, anti-Asian discrimination is rearing its ugly head as people point fingers to blame the global pandemic on a distinct...

telegra.ph/Courtney-Act-Drag-Race-icon-on-confronting-her-own-prejudices-07-19

Telegraph

Courtney Act: Drag Race icon on confronting her own prejudices

Courtney Act has been guilty of transphobia. Racism too. And she isn't ashamed to admit it. "It's a slow unpacking, understanding that we do have those unconscious biases, understanding that if you let go of them that you might get laid more often," she tells...

telegra.ph/Whats-Trending-The-Happiness-Drop-07-19

Telegraph

What's Trending? The Happiness Drop

One important lesson from political science and sociology is that public opinion often holds steady. This is because it is difficult to get individual people to change their minds. Instead, people tend to keep consistent views as "settled dispositions" over...

telegra.ph/Peppermint-Drag-Race-star-on-how-we-can-do-more-for-Black-trans-lives-07-19

Telegraph

Peppermint: Drag Race star on how we can do more for Black trans lives
Since the first season of RuPaul's Drag Race aired more than a decade ago, 153 queens have shantayed, sashayed and sissied that walk. And only the tiniest of percentage of those 153 queens are openly trans. There have been Drag Race alumna who've come out...

telegra.ph/Trans-people-twice-as-likely-to-be-crime-victims-in-England-and-Wales-07-20

Telegraph

Trans people twice as likely to be crime victims in England and Wales
Trans people in England and Wales are twice as likely to experience crime as cisgender people, according to the first official data on trans crime victims.
Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed that more than a quarter (28 percent)...

This is what we mean when we say racism is a SYSTEMIC ISSUE not just about your grandma using slurs [link source](#)

telegra.ph/Glenn-Williams-Politician-who-says-women-kissing-is-porn-is-let-off-07-20

Telegraph

Glenn Williams: Politician who says women kissing is porn is let off
A politician who publicly declared that he considered two women kissing “pornography” and linked homosexuality to promiscuity did not break any rules, a report has decided. Glenn Williams, a pro-Trump, pro-Brexit, anti-abortion, “xenophobic”, religious independent...

[telegra.ph/Deliveroo-Homophobic-rider-suspended-accusing-gay-couple-of-witchcraft-07-20](#)

Telegraph

Deliveroo: Homophobic rider suspended accusing gay couple of ‘witchcraft’
A London Deliveroo rider has been suspended after shouting homophobic abuse at a gay couple and accusing them of “witchcraft”. According to MyLondon News, couple Scott and Adam were walking down Waddon New Road in Croydon when a Deliveroo rider on a bicycle...

[telegra.ph/Indya-Moore-backs-campaign-to-end-genital-surgeries-on-intersex-children-07-20](#)

Telegraph

Indya Moore backs campaign to end genital surgeries on intersex children
Indya Moore, Angelica Ross and Gabrielle Union have lent their voices to a petition calling for an end to intersex surgeries at a Chicago children’s hospital. Intersex activists and allies have been protesting against so-called ‘corrective’ or ‘normalising’...

[telegra.ph/Florida-school-official-claims-being-LGBT-is-a-personal-choice-07-20](#)

Telegraph

Florida school official claims being LGBT is a 'personal choice'
A Florida school superintendent thinks being LGBT+ is a “personal choice” and cited God as the source for his claim. Bay County School Superintendent Bill Husfelt doubled down on his views at a school board meeting on Tuesday (July 14). Husfelt had previously...

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A feminist glossary because we didn't all major in gender studies

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Alia E. DastagirUSA TODAY



Corrections and clarifications: A previous version of this story included a definition of "women of color" that has since been updated.

Like any "ism," feminism is rich with jargon, which can lead deeply personal conversations to turn unnecessarily dense. While some terms are entrenched, others are contemporary additions to an evolving lexicon. To help you break through, here are definitions for everything from "feminism" and "misogyny" to "bropropriated" and "feminazi."

The basics

Feminism: Belief in and desire for equality between the sexes. As Merriam-Webster noted last month: "the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities." It encompasses social, political and economic equality. Of course, a lot of people tweak the definition to make it their own. Feminist activist bell hooks calls it "a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression."

Patriarchy: A hierarchical-structured society in which men hold more power.

Sexism: The idea that women are inferior to men.

Misogyny: Hatred of women.

Misandry: Hatred of men.

A little deeper

Hostile sexism: The one most people think about. Openly insulting, objectifying and degrading women.

Benevolent sexism: Less obvious. Kind of seems like a compliment, even though it's rooted in men's feelings of superiority. It's when men say women are worthy of their protection (off the sinking boat first) or that they're more nurturing than men (therefore should raise children). It's restrictive.

Internalized sexism: When the belief in women's inferiority becomes part of one's own worldview and self-concept.

Misogynoir: Misogyny directed toward black women.

LGBTQ: The acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer." Some people also use the Q to stand for "questioning," meaning people who are figuring out their sexual or gender identity. You may also see LGBTQIA. I stands for intersex and A for asexual/aromantic/agender.

Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Transgender: A person whose gender identity differs from the cultural expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transphobia: Prejudice toward trans people.

Transmisogyny: A blend of transphobia and misogyny, which manifests as discrimination against "trans women and trans and gender non-conforming people on the feminine end of the gender spectrum."

TERF: The acronym for "trans exclusionary radical feminists," referring to feminists who are transphobic.

SWERF: Stands for "sex worker exclusionary radical feminists," referring to feminists who say prostitution oppresses women.

Gender fluidity: Not identifying with a single, fixed gender.

Non-binary: An umbrella term for people who don't identify as female/male or woman/man.

Women of color: A political term to unite women from marginalized communities of color who have experienced oppression. It could include women of African, Asian, Latin or Native American descent.

Title IX: Protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Victim-blaming: When the victim of a crime or harmful act is held fully or partially responsible for it. If you hear someone questioning what a victim could have done to prevent a crime, that's victim-blaming, and it makes it harder for people to come forward and report abuse. Groups working to eradicate abuse and sexual assault are clear: No woman is guilty for violence committed by a man.

Trigger: Something that forces you to relive a trauma.

Trigger warning: A statement that someone is about to experience challenging material that could potentially be disturbing (graphic, racially-insensitive, sexually explicit, etc.). The practice is controversial on college campuses.

Yes means yes: A paradigm shift in the way we look at rape, moving beyond "no means no" toward the idea that consent must be explicit.

Male gaze: A way of looking at the world through a masculine lens that views women as sexual objects.

Privilege: The idea that some people in society are advantaged over others.

Sex positive: An attitude that views sexual expression and sexual pleasure, if it's healthy and consensual, as a good thing.

On the Internet

Bropriropriating: Stealing an idea from a woman and putting it into the world as your own.

Mansplain (verb) mansplainy (adjective): When a man explains something to a woman in a condescending way when he either 1) doesn't know anything about it or 2) knows far less than the woman he is talking to. Sorry, if you already knew that.

Maninterrupting: When a man interrupts a woman, especially excessively. Examples: During the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards when Kanye West grabbed the mic from Taylor Swift, who had just won an award and was trying her best to accept it, to let everyone know "Imma let you finish, but Beyoncé had one of the best videos of all time." Or, during September's presidential debate when Donald Trump interrupted Hillary Clinton 22 times in the first 26 minutes. Or when Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell interrupted Elizabeth Warren's recitation of Coretta Scott King's 1986 letter against Jeff Sessions, but allowed Bernie Sanders to read it the next day.

Manspreading: When men take up excess space by sitting with their legs far apart. This is such an actual thing that in 2014 New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority launched a campaign to get guys to close their legs to make more room on the subway.

Woke: Rooted in black activist culture, it means you're educated and aware, especially about injustice. Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Ca., has told young people to "stay woke." If you're thinking about it in the context of women's rights, look at the #SayHerName campaign, which works to raise awareness for black women who are victims of police brutality.

Woke misogynist: Nona Willis Aronowitz paints an all-too-familiar picture of the guy who acts like he's all about gender equality, but then turns around and demeans, degrades and harasses women. His misogyny may not always be overt, but it's there. He's a feminist poser.

Emosogynist: Zach Braff in *Garden State*, according to Jezebel. He's emotional, full of angst and seems like a feminist, but what he really wants is a real-life manic pixie dream girl to manipulate and eventually discard after he finds himself.

Whimpster: Lloyd Dobler in *Say Anything...* A white, wimpy, emo guy who uses his male insecurity to prey on women who want to nurture.

Feminazi: A derogatory term for a radical feminist.

Types of feminism

Intersectional feminism: If feminism is advocating for women's rights and equality between the sexes, intersectional feminism is the understanding of how women's overlapping identities — including race, class, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and disability status — impact the way they experience oppression and discrimination.

Transfeminism: Defined as "a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be intrinsically linked to the liberation of all women and beyond." It's a form of feminism that includes all self-identified women, regardless of assigned sex, and challenges cisgender privilege. A central tenet is that individuals have the right to define who they are.

Women of color feminism: A form of feminism that seeks to clarify and combat the unique struggles women of color face. It's a feminism that struggles against intersecting forms of oppression.

Womanism: A social and ecological change perspective that emerged out of Africana women's culture and women of color around the world.

Empowerment feminism: Beyoncé's *Formation* comes on at the club, and you and your friends hit the dance floor hard. Empowerment feminism puts the emphasis on "feeling," though some feminists would argue feeling amazing is

not a great gauge of how society is actually supporting your self-expression and flourishing. Sheryl Sandberg's perpetually controversial *Lean In*, which focuses on how women can make changes to achieve greater success in the workplace, is another example of empowerment feminism.

Commodity feminism: A variety of feminism that co-opts the movement's ideals for profit. Ivanka Trump has been accused of peddling this brand of feminism, using her #WomenWhoWork campaign to sell her eponymous lifestyle brand.

Equity feminism (conservative feminism): Christina Hoff Sommers, a resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, is a champion of what she calls "equity feminism." In her view, "equity feminism" is focused on legal equality between men and women, while "gender feminism" focuses on disempowering women by portraying them as perpetual victims of the patriarchy. In the words of President Trump's advisor Kellyanne Conway: "I look at myself as a product of my choices, not a victim of my circumstances, and that's really to me what conservative feminism, if you will, is all about."

Waves of feminism

*Some feminist scholars are moving away from "waves" since it can give the appearance that feminists aren't always actively fighting inequality. But if you see them, here's generally what they're referring to:

First wave feminism: Kicked off with the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention to discuss the "social, civil, and religious condition of woman" and continued into the early twentieth century. It culminated in 1920 with the passage of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote, though some states made it difficult for women of color to exercise this right until well into the 1960s.

Second wave feminism: Began in the 1960s and bloomed in the 1970s with a push for greater equality. Think Gloria Steinem, Dorothy Pitman Hughes, Betty Friedan. It was marked by huge gains for women in legal and structural equality.

Third-wave feminism: Beginning in the 1990s, it looked to make feminism more inclusive, intersectional and to allow women to define what being a feminist means to them personally. Also, Buffy.

Feeling "woke" and "empowered"? Find more at women.usatoday.com

Alia Dastagir covers media and culture. Find her on Twitter @alia_e

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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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Austria issues its first ever intersex birth certificate after four year battle

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Austria has issued its first ever intersex birth certificate, joining a growing list of countries to offer identity documents with options other than male or female.

The legal change came after a four year battle by Alex Jürgen, a 42-year-old intersex man who also led the charge for non-binary IDs in his country.

In 2018 he won the right to have a passport with an “X” as the gender marker. He is now waiting to receive his new birth certificate with the sex listed as “inter” – the word for intersex in German.

“I am very happy that the law and the government have finally recognised this,” Juergen, 43, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. “Many people don’t accept

that there can be something else.”

Jürgen began fighting for a new birth certificate in 2016, leading to a constitutional court ruling in 2018 that citizens have a right to have their gender identity accurately reflected in official documents.

More from PinkNews

The court declared the terms “inter”, “open” and “divers” to be acceptable for the birth certificate, but the Austrian Minister of Interior decided that civil registries should only use the term “divers” – meaning “other” – to identify a third gender option.

This could only be recognised when the individual presented a certificate from a panel of doctors attesting to their intersexuality.

Jürgen returned to the courts to enforce his right to have the word “inter” on his birth certificate, and has now succeeded.

The decision is likely to have ramifications for the 1.7 per cent of the population estimated to be born with sex characteristics and hormone receptor responses that differ from social expectations of ‘female’ or ‘male’.

This figure makes intersex people around as common as twins or people with red hair.

Jürgen said that the requirement that an intersex person needs a medical assessment of their sex characteristics to qualify for legal recognition as neither male nor female should now be scrapped.

“A lot of people are traumatised and you cannot demand for them to do that,” he said.

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Conflict Brings Us Together

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For a long time, political talk at the “moderate middle” has focused on a common theme that goes something like this:

There is too much political polarization and conflict. It’s tearing us apart. People aren’t treating each other with compassion. We need to come together, set aside our differences, and really listen to each other.

I have heard countless versions of this argument in my personal life and in public forums. It is hard to disagree with them at first. Who can be against seeking common ground?

But as a political sociologist, I am also skeptical of this argument because we have good research showing how it keeps people and organizations from working through important disagreements. When we try to avoid conflict above all, we often end up avoiding politics altogether. It is easy to confuse common ground with occupied territory — social spaces where legitimate problems and grievances are ignored in the name of some kind of pleasant consensus.

A really powerful sociological image popped up in my Twitter feed that makes the point beautifully. We actually did find some common ground this week through a trend that united the country across red states and blue states:

It is tempting to focus on protests as a story about conflict alone, and conflict certainly is there. But it is also important to realize that this week’s protests represent a historic level of social consensus. The science of cooperation and social movements reminds us that getting collective action started is *hard*. And yet, across the country, we see people not only stepping up, but self-organizing groups to handle everything from communication to community safety and cleanup. In this way, the protests also represent a remarkable amount of

agreement that the current state of policing in this country is simply neither just nor tenable.

I was struck by this image because I don't think nationwide protests are the kind of thing people have in mind when they call for everyone to come together, but right now protesting itself seems like one of the most unifying trends we've got. That's the funny thing about social cohesion and cultural consensus. It is very easy to call for setting aside our differences and working together when you assume everyone will be rallying around your particular way of life. But social cohesion is a group process, one that emerges out of many different interactions, and so none of us ever have that much control over when and where it actually happens.

Evan Stewart is an assistant professor of sociology at University of Massachusetts Boston. You can follow him on Twitter.



Courtney Act: Drag Race icon on confronting her own prejudices

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Courtney Act identifies as genderfluid. (Joseph Sinclair)

Courtney Act has been guilty of transphobia. Racism too. And she isn't ashamed to admit it.

"It's a slow unpacking, understanding that we do have those unconscious biases, understanding that if you let go of them that you might get laid more often," she tells *PinkNews*.

She's not being flippant, rather lightening the mood as we discuss the deep-seated prejudices many of us in the queer community carry: in the people we choose to sleep with, interact with, and accept as part of our own.

It's the Courtney Act way – approaching the big topics with wit and charm, educating with empathy rather than scorn. It's what she did on *Celebrity Big Brother*, when she won the nation's heart by schooling notoriously anti-LGBT+ politician Ann Widdecombe on queer rights. It's what she's been doing for the past few years, opening up to the public about her pansexuality and gender fluidity. And it's what she'll do again, fate permitting, when she tours her new cabaret show *Fluid*, which is all embracing who she is and confronting her own biases head on, as she tells us one hot, humid summer afternoon.

PinkNews: Where are you right now?

Courtney Act: I'm at home in London. There's a construction site next door so I've had the window closed all day. I'm sat in my underwear, I've got a wig on though.

So am I – minus the wig. Anyway, you've just announced a new tour, *Fluid*.

Yes, and I'm super excited. It's a full cabaret tour of live original music with a band, which is something I've never done before. It's about gender, sexuality and how this concept of fluidity really is a part of everybody's everyday life, but we maybe don't always recognise that.

We've become so good at polarising the binary – young/old, black/white, fat/thin, gay/straight — even trans/cis, weirdly, have become polarised.

Although this is about some really big personal stories about my own struggles with my gender identity, when we did the show in Sydney, at Mardis Gras, even cis straight people would come up and say how universal it felt, how they didn't realise that all of those impositions and impacts of gender were things that affected them too. I'm all about breaking down the binary!

You talk so confidently on topics of gender and sexuality. How did you get to this place?

It's been a long journey. I'm 38 now, and I was confused for most of my teens and my 20s which, interestingly, I kind of think is how you're supposed to be.

I think some of the biggest struggles comes from people thinking that they're *not meant* to struggle. I think that if you see it as a struggle then it kind of becomes self-fulfilling. But if you just see your journey unfolding as life, then you get to see it for what it is and not be so attached to some ideal about being resolved or

being perfect or being happy. You just get to be whoever you are and you start to realise that some of the confusion can also be some of the beauty.



A lot of the confusion for me came from growing up in a world that didn't really have many options when it came to sexuality or gender. And it's just been the last sort of five years, since Laverne Cox was on the cover of *Time Magazine*

really, that I think the conversation has opened up so much.

As someone who always questioned where they fell on the gender spectrum, that conversation gave me space. Having people like Laverne and Janet Mock and Chaz Bono in the public eye gave me these amazing examples of trans people, who were giving such brilliant conversation, that meant I was able to put aside my internalised transphobia about my own identity and link to it, and explore what that actually meant.

I think a lot of queer people, cis and trans, have dealt with that sense of internalised transphobia. How did you go about confronting that?

I also think the way that you unpack and confront your own biases, whether that be race, which is obviously a very relevant one, or whether that be queerness or trans identity is by hearing lots of different stories, is by listening to the stories of different people and fostering empathy. I don't think a lot of people actually understand what that means, but empathy is listening to somebody else's story, and not having to try to understand it through your own experience.

For me my gender identity was entangled in my life. Even though I did drag and performed in a very feminine visage, it was something that I always polarised as being a job. I was too transphobic to ever consider if I was trans or not.

It was the first time that I learnt to accept trans identity through someone else's experience and not my own life.

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Florida school official claims being LGBT is a 'personal choice'

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A Florida school superintendent thinks being LGBT+ is a “personal choice” and cited God as the source for his claim.

Bay County School Superintendent Bill Husfelt doubled down on his views at a school board meeting on Tuesday (July 14).

Husfelt had previously been asked at a Republican roundtable dinner if he thought being LGBT+ was a choice.

LGBTQ Centre of Bay County president Cindy Wilker posed the same question to Husfelt at a school board meeting on Tuesday.

“Do you believe that being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender is a personal

choice?” she asked.

“You did ask me that. I said yes.”

“What evidence do you use to support that determination? What book do you use to support that determination?” Wilker asked, before listing various psychiatric, psychological and educational bodies that dispute his views.

“I’d like to know on the other hand, who are you relying on?” she asked.

He replied: “God.”

Florida school superintendent Bill Husfelt claims the question was ‘politically motivated’.

Now, instead of taking any responsibility for his views, the Florida superintendent is claiming that he was “set up”.

“She asked me ‘Do you believe a gay person...’ I can’t remember all the language, ‘Do you believe it’s a choice or are they born with it?’ I said that it’s a personal choice,” Husfelt told WMBB-TV about the question.

He said Wilker’s question was “politically motivated” and claimed it was “set up as a political pawn to try to get me to say something or do something that would cause some controversy”.

Wilker told *Newsweek* that it was “not a set-up”.

“He could have said ‘no comment.’ He could have said many things. He chose to invoke God as his source and authority about the nature of gender and sexuality.”

Husfelt later posted a video on Facebook to “clarify” his views.

“At yesterday’s school board meeting I was subjected to what I consider to be a politically motivated personal question and I’d like to take just a moment to clarify. I want to be as upfront and candid with you as I always am.”

More from PinkNews

He could have said many things. He chose to invoke God as his source and authority about the nature of gender and sexuality.

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Glenn Williams: Politician who says women kissing is porn is let off

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A politician who publicly declared that he considered two women kissing “pornography” and linked homosexuality to promiscuity did not break any rules, a report has decided.

Glenn Williams, a pro-Trump, pro-Brexit, anti-abortion, “xenophobic”, religious independent Coventry councillor, spoke out against LGBT-inclusive relationships and sex education (RSE) in schools in a council meeting on January 15.

He said a friend’s 13-year-old son had come home from school “horrified” after

his teacher had discussed the topic of coming out in class.

Williams continued: “[She] had shown a video of two women kissing. This sort of video, which I regard as pornography, should not be shown in Coventry schools.

“What we should have is a policy that promotes traditional family values. Not how to be promiscuous, but how to respect traditional family values.”

But now, a report by the Coventry City Council ethics committee has found that Williams did not break any rules.

According to the report, the councillor’s comments “resulted in widespread criticism and resulted in six separate complaints being submitted alleging that councillor Williams had breached the Code of Conduct for elected members”.

Coventry City Council’s code of conduct for elected members requires that they “always treat people with respect, including the organisations and public [they] engage with and those [they] work alongside”.

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But the report found that although the Williams’s comments were “ignorant, prejudiced and offensive”, independent investigator Matt Lewin “did not find that it amounted to a failure to show respect”.

Lewin said: “There is a very high threshold to be crossed before political speech – even intolerant and offensive political speech – can be found to have breached the Code.”

Glenn Williams apologised for his ‘unfortunate use of words’.

The investigator added that councillor Glenn Williams had already been publicly held to account, and had offered an apology.

On January 22, a meeting was called with other councillors and LGBT+ campaigners, intended to provide Williams with a much-needed education on LGBT+ issues.

Afterwards he said: “I just need to tell you, to members of the LGBT+ community and others, I owe you such a big apology and that is meant very sincerely, very sincerely indeed.

“The unfortunate use of words – not intended to cause offence and I had no idea about how far that would go – and actually I’m really grateful to Coventry Pride for what they have done tonight and what I hope we can do in the future.”

The findings in the report will be discussed at an ethics committee meeting next Thursday.

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HIV cure: First person ever 'cured' of HIV using medication alone

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Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or known simply by “PrEP”, is a common antiviral drug. (Getty)

In a major leap forward in the search for a HIV/AIDS cure, a person has been “cured” of HIV using a cocktail of medicines in what activists have dubbed a breakthrough as “exciting” as it was “unexpected”.

HIV, known as human immunodeficiency virus, hobbles people’s immune systems leaving them more vulnerable to once everyday diseases.

In a new study, presented Tuesday (July 7) at the International AIDS conference 2020, a patient on a relatively simple antiretroviral drug regimen was given a medicine commonly used to treat skin cancer.

Previous milestones of individuals' HIV appearing to go into long-term remission resulted from bone-marrow transplants given to infected patients. Similarly, the transplants were intended to treat cancer in the patients, not HIV.

But bone-marrow transplants – on top of being costly – are unlikely to be realistic or reliable treatment options and are, at times, riddled with risk. Yet, this case involved no invasive medical procedures.

As a result, experts told *PinkNews*, while they are warily calling it a “cure” for the virus, it is difficult how to define the word when instances of the virus’ demise are so few.

Moreover, they said, caution must be exercised in pivoting the case as a success, as scientists must assess whether the outcome can be replicated.

And while the HIV epidemic continues, advocates have warned that the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic – its continually sweeping infection rates and how it is vacuuming the attention of scientists and healthcare officials – will no doubt knock back success made in recent years.

HIV did not ‘rebound’ in patient even after being taken off of life-saving antiretroviral drugs.

Dr Andrea Savarino, of the Instituto Superiore di Sanitá in Rome, Italy, explained to HIV advocacy group aidsmap during a video call seen by *PinkNews* that the patient, one of five, was given an experimental drug commonly used as a skin cancer preventative called Nicotinamide as part of the study.

The medicine boosts the immune system, and some academics have demonstrated how Nicotinamide inhibits advanced stages of HIV infection in cell culture and works on “multiple mechanisms” to reel back HIV, Savarino said.

By the end of the study, Savarino said, a common indicator of the virus’ presence – viral DNA – was “undetectable” in the patient. Savarino admitted this was not an “optimal marker”, “but it may give an indication of the size of the viral reservoir.”



Researchers have long struggled to find a way to destroy HIV reservoirs – clusters of infected immune cells that are not producing new HIV – but this strategy, Savarino explained, may provide a possible blueprint.

Even after the patient was taken off of his antiretrovirals treatments, “the virus did not rebound, the viral DNA was maintained negative”, he said. “The antibody response decreased over time, if the antibody decreases, it is possible that the virus has stopped its repetition.”

The other four patients did rebound, the researcher said.

He stressed that the antibodies made to fight HIV have not disappeared altogether, but did decrease – “he’s still being monitored in order to understand whether the antibodies might disappear as in the case of Mr Timothy Brown,” Savarino added.

Brown, often referred to as the “Berlin patient”, beat HIV with a combination of stem cell transplants and radiotherapy following a diagnosis of leukaemia.

During the trial, only “mild side-effects” were observed from the cocktail of medicines: No real side-effects were observed from Nicotinamide, which was in-

line with previous trials of the medicine's impact on cancer.

However, the HIV expert stressed that those living with HIV should not take Nicotinamide in a non-medical setting, being that it is a potent and still experimental medicine.

"I really hope that [the study] boosts further research into a HIV cure because it is the first time such a condition is seen, to my knowledge, in a patient under chronic HIV infection, and without having been subjected to a life-threatening medical procedure such as bone marrow transplant," he said.

"However, this is our very first experiment, and I wouldn't foresee beyond that."

HIV experts stress 'caution' over 'cure': 'Further trials are necessary to find out whether it works for others'.

"This was an unexpected result – it's proof of a concept that we weren't really looking out for," Matthew Hodson, executive director of aidsmap, told *PinkNews*.

"We have had effective treatment for HIV for 34 years but 690,000 people died of AIDS last year.

"We anticipate that due to COVID's disruption of health services there will be an even greater number of AIDS-related deaths this year. People around the world are desperately in need of a cure and this case does give us renewed hope.

"Although the news is exciting, at this point we have to proceed with caution. We know that a very small number of people can achieve what appears to be remission with antiretroviral drugs alone and it remains possible that this is the case here.

"We need to know whether this finding will be replicated in other people, especially as it was not replicated in four other people on the trial.

More from PinkNews

"This particular treatment is relatively inexpensive and, unlike the bone marrow transplant that resulted in previous 'cure' cases, is not especially dangerous to

the patient.

This gives me hope that it could be rolled out widely if we found it to work in other people.

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Indya Moore backs campaign to end genital surgeries on intersex children

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Indya Moore, Angelica Ross and Gabrielle Union have lent their voices to a petition calling for an end to intersex surgeries at a Chicago children's hospital.

Intersex activists and allies have been protesting against so-called 'corrective' or 'normalising' genital surgeries at the Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago for the past three years. Yet its doctors continue to perform the unnecessary procedures to make children conform to gendered social norms.

On Sunday (July 12) Indya Moore took the hospital to task for using the images of queer performers, including *Euphoria*'s Hunter Schafer, *Legendary*'s Jameela Jamil, and *Pose*'s Angelica Ross, to promote its solidarity with the LGBT+ community.

“Hey loves,” they tweeted, “@lurieadolescentmed on Instagram is using your images to express solidarity with LGBTQIA people [while] also mutilating intersex babies and silencing calls for them to stop.

“Tell them you cannot stand WITH trans people and step ON intersex people!”

Hey loves @hunters, @jameelajamil, @MjRodriguez7, @angelicaross
@lurieadolescentmed, on ig is using ur images to express solidarity w
lgbtq(i)a ppl also mutilating intersex babies & silencing calls for them to
stop. Tell them You cannot stand W/ trans ppl & step ON intersex ppl!
pic.twitter.com/NwajBOnvve
— . (@IndyaMoore) July 12, 2020

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Non-Binary People's Day: Public debate won't stop me living my truth

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Dear reader: A real-life, living, breathing non-binary person here. Happy International Non-Binary People's Day... today, I was spat at in Tesco. Finally, my day to shine!

I am not wasting space re-re-re-explaining “non-binary” to you because one, Google was invented in 1998, and two, I don’t want you assuming my non-binary is everyone’s non-binary. Can you explain what your gender means in 50 words or less?

Today is bittersweet for me. On the sweet side, International Non-Binary People's Day gives me a chance to talk about my favourite obsession (myself), celebrate my binary-defying family, and raise awareness of the issues – still! – facing us. On the bitter side, I am aware that being seen isn’t the problem. It’s

being seen *as human*.

Being seen isn't the problem. It's being seen *as human*.

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Racism & Hate Crimes in a Pandemic

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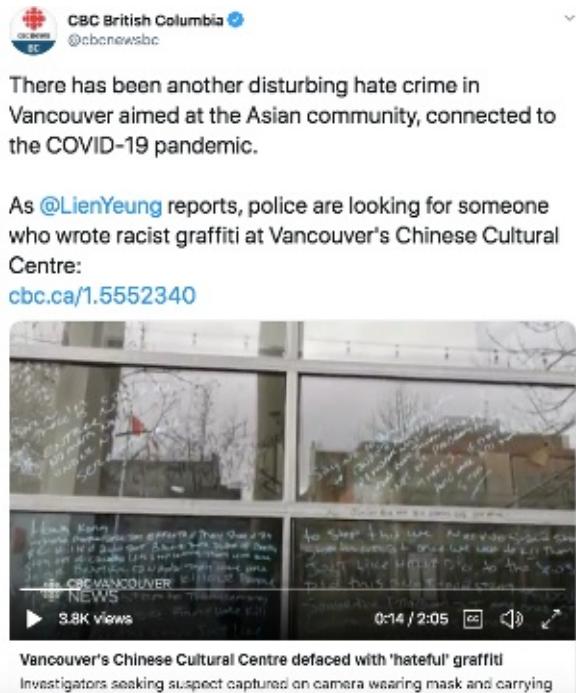
Despite calls to physically distance, we are still seeing reports of racially motivated hate crimes in the media. Across the United States, anti-Asian discrimination is rearing its ugly head as people point fingers to blame the global pandemic on a distinct group rather than come to terms with underfunded healthcare systems and poorly-prepared governments.

Governments play a role in creating this rhetoric. Blaming racialized others for major societal problems is a feature of populist governments. One example is Donald Trump's use of the phrase "Chinese virus" to describe COVID-19. Stirring up racialized resentment is a political tactic used to divert responsibility from the state by blaming racialized members of the community for a global virus. Anti-hate groups are increasingly concerned that the deliberate dehumanization of Asian populations by the President may also fuel hate as extremist groups take this opportunity to create social division.



Unfortunately, this is not new and it is not limited to the United States. During the SARS outbreak there were similar instances of institutional racism inherent in Canadian political and social structures as Chinese, Southeast and East Asian

Canadians felt isolated at work, in hospitals, and even on public transportation. As of late May in Vancouver British Columbia Canada, there have been 29 cases of anti-Asian hate crimes.



In this crisis, it is easier for governments to use racialized people as scapegoats than to admit decisions to defund and underfund vital social and healthcare resources. By stoking racist sentiments already entrenched in the Global North, the Trump administration shifts the focus from the harm their policies will inevitably cause, such their willingness to cut funding for the CDC and NIH.

Sociological research shows how these tactics become more widespread as politicians use social media to communicate directly with citizens, creating instantaneous polarizing content. Research has also shown an association between hate crimes in the United States and anti-Muslim rhetoric expressed by Trump as early as 2015. Racist sentiments expressed by politicians have a major impact on the attitudes of the general population, because they excuse and even promote blame toward racialized people, while absolving blame from governments that have failed to act on social issues.

Kayla Preston is an incoming PhD student in the department of sociology at the University of Toronto. Her research centers on right-wing extremism and deradicalization.

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The Hidden Cost of Your New Wardrobe

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More than ever, people desire to buy more clothes. Pushed by advertising, we look for novelty and variety, amassing personal wardrobes unimaginable in times past. With the advent of fast fashion, brands like H&M and ZARA are able to provide low prices by cutting costs where consumers can't see—textile workers are maltreated, and our environment suffers.



In this film, I wanted to play with the idea of fast fashion advertising and turn it on its head. I edited two different H&M look books to show what really goes into the garments they advertise and the fast fashion industry as a whole. I made this film for my Introduction to Sociology class after being inspired by a reading we did earlier in the semester.

Robert Reich's (2007) book, *Supercapitalism*, discusses how we have “two minds,” one as a consumer/investor and another as a citizen. He explains that as a consumer, we want to spend as little money as possible while finding the best deals—shopping at stores like H&M. On the other hand, our “citizen mind” wants workers to be treated fairly and our environment to be protected. This film highlights fast fashion as an example of Reich’s premise of the conflict between our two minds—a conflict that is all too prevalent in our modern world with

giant brands like Walmart and Amazon taking over consumer markets. I hope that by thinking about the fast fashion industry with a sociological mindset, we can see past the bargain prices and address what really goes on behind the scenes.

Graham Nielsen is a Swedish student studying an interdisciplinary concentration titled “*Theory and Practice: Digital Media and Society*” at Hamilton college. He’s interested in advertising, marketing, video editing, fashion, as well as film and television culture and video editing.

Read More:

Links to the original look books: Men Women

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Annamma J., J. F. Sherry Jr, A. Venkatesh, J. Wang & R. Chan (2012) “Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and the Ethical Appeal of Luxury Brands.” *Fashion Theory*, 16:3, 273-295, DOI: 10.2752/175174112X13340749707123

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Trans people twice as likely to be crime victims in England and Wales

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Trans people in England and Wales are twice as likely to experience crime as cisgender people, according to the first official data on trans crime victims.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed that more than a quarter (28 percent) of trans people had been victims of crime in England and Wales in the last year. In comparison, 14 percent of cisgender people had experienced crime in the year ending in March 2020.

This is the first time that the ONS has published crime data that records the gender identity of victims.

The office said it had removed fraud from the data as it was “often less

targeted”, and added: “The data excluding fraud therefore present a more accurate picture of the differing likelihood of experiencing crime by demographic characteristics.”

Having a non-straight sexual orientation also made people more likely to experience crime, according to the ONS.

While 14 percent of heterosexual people were victims of crime in the past year, this figure rose to 21 percent for those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Data obtained by the BBC last year showed that the number of hate crimes against transgender people recorded by police in England, Scotland, and Wales in 2018/19 had surged by 81 percent within a year.

Of the 36 police forces that provided data, 34 recorded an increase in anti-trans hate crime reports, while West Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Police saw reports of anti-trans hate crimes treble over three years.

Representatives of LGBT+ charity Stonewall suggested the rise could be linked to a surge in anti-trans rhetoric in the media and public discourse.

Stonewall campaigns director Laura Russell told the BBC: “These statistics are the real life consequences of a society where transphobia is everywhere – from the front pages of newspapers, to social media, and on our streets.

“We need people to realise how severe the situation is for trans people, and to be active in standing up as a visible ally to trans people, in whatever way they can.”

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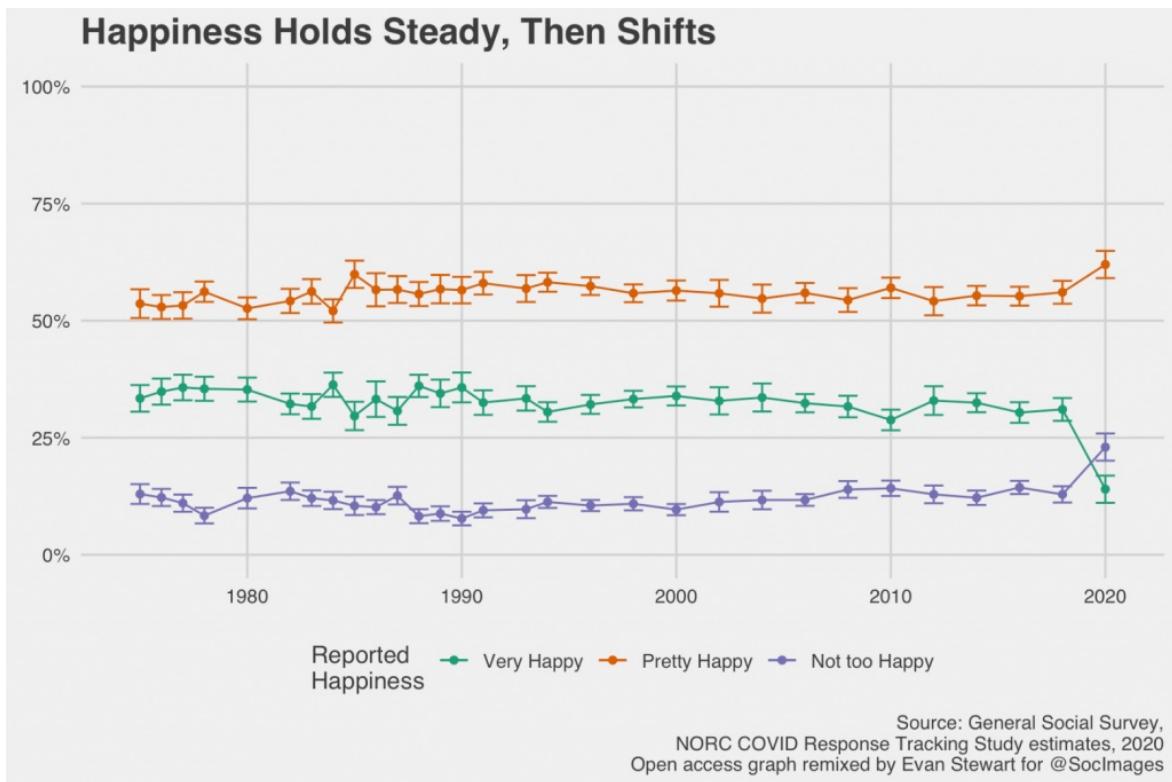
What's Trending? The Happiness Drop

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One important lesson from political science and sociology is that public opinion often holds steady. This is because it is difficult to get individual people to change their minds. Instead, people tend to keep consistent views as “settled dispositions” over time, and mass opinion changes slowly as new people age into taking surveys and older people age out.

Sometimes public opinion does change quickly, though, and these rapid changes are worth our attention precisely because they are rare. For example, one of the most notable recent changes is the swing toward majority support for same-sex marriage in the United States in just the last decade.

That’s why a new finding is so interesting and so troubling: NORC is reporting a pretty big swing in self-reported happiness since the pandemic broke out using a new 2020 survey conducted in late May. Compared to earlier trends from the General Social Survey, fewer people are reporting they are “very happy,” optimism about the future is down, and feelings of isolation and loneliness are up. The Associated Press has dynamic charts here, and I made an open-access, creative commons version of one visualization using GSS data and NORC’s estimates:



As with any survey trend, we will need more data to get the true shape of the change and see whether it will persist over time. Despite this, one important point here is the consistency before the new 2020 data. Think about all the times aggregated happiness reports didn't really change: we don't see major shifts around September 11th, 2001, and there are only small changes around the Gulf War in 1990 or the 2008 financial crisis.

There is something reassuring about such a dramatic drop now, given this past resilience. If you're feeling bad, you're not alone. We have to remember that emotions are *social*. People have a remarkable ability to persist through all kinds of trying times, but that is often because they can connect with others for support. The unprecedented isolation of physical distancing and quarantine has a unique impact on our social relationships and, in turn, it could have a dramatic impact on our collective wellbeing. The first step to fixing this problem is facing it honestly.

Inspired by demographic facts you should know cold, “What’s Trending?” is a post series at Sociological Images featuring quick looks at what’s up, what’s down, and what sociologists have to say about it.

Evan Stewart is an assistant professor of sociology at University of

Massachusetts Boston. You can follow him on Twitter.

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