



## [Transgressions in sex and relationships](#)

Monday 7th March 2016, 6:45pm start

[Chrissie Daz](#) , [Rosie Garland](#) and [Luke Gittos](#) explored our interest in transgressing sex and relationships, chaired by [Pauline Hadaway](#)

There's currently something reminiscent of the heyday of the promiscuous and 'let it all hang out' 1960's, whilst paradoxically transgressions of this new 'openness' are being given short shrift by a shrill intolerance towards yesterday's norms. From same sex marriage being enacted with muted opposition, to Christian bakers facing prosecution for refusing to make pro *gay*-marriage cake, is intolerance is proving the hallmark of this 'liberal' era?

Hard to imagine these days, that it was just over 20 years ago that Channel 4 made a dramatic splash with the lesbian kiss on Brookside. Pushing the boundaries of what society regards as acceptable today seems to require increasingly niche or marginal behaviours to be drawn into the foreground, so that outrage can be expressed and acceptance demanded. Clearly, the prudishness of the Mary Whitehouse has been replaced by a more open sensibility, but where are the boundaries to be drawn now, and who should be defining them?

Does the series of high profile historic sex abuse investigations, widespread criticism of how the Police have not checked victim's allegations properly and that the CPS have downplayed their judgemental role in prosecuting weak cases, show how much is changing, especially in core institutions? It is often said today that sexism and misogyny have created a culture in which rape is pervasive, under-reported and often ignored by an uncaring public, but is this really true or the misanthropic campaigning hullabaloo by a few? Do the expanded laws around rape and drive to prosecute more and more people give the state a far greater say in the most intimate areas of our lives, damaging our legal rights and basic freedoms and our ability to live intimately with one another?

Bruce Jenner, Lana Wachowski and Chelsea Manning all made the news recently by coming

out as trans. This wave of high-profile cases prompted feminist campaigner Julie Bindel to condemn the prescription of hormone blockers to prospective trans kids as 'child abuse'. She was widely censured as a result. But is Bindel right? Is indulging a child's gender confusion problematic? Is the realm of fiction free from such emotionally charged discussions and perhaps an arena whereby the norms and constraints are best explored today, away from the prescriptive and censorious climate elsewhere, including comedy?

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## Some background readings

[Rape culture and the crisis of intimacy](#) , Ann Furedi, spiked review of books August 2015

[Is Rape Culture a Myth?](#) Joanne Conaghan and Luke Gittos discuss on Woman's Hour, Radio 4, 7 Sep 2015

[Rape Culture: menace or myth?](#) Battle of Ideas 18 October 2015

[Teach about sex abuse from start of primary school, says shadow minister](#) , by Rowena Mason, Guardian 19 January 2016

[Man ordered to tell police if he plans to have sex](#) , BBC News 22 January 2016

[Are you gender fluid, demi-girl, or intersex?](#) Steve Doughty, Daily Mail 28 January 2016

[How the Fight Over Transgender Kids Got a Leading Sex Researcher Fired](#) , by Jesse Singal, Science of US / NY Magazine 7 February 2016

[The intolerant student Left has even turned on me](#) , by Peter Tatchell, The Telegraph 15 Feb 2016

[Christian student expelled for opposing gay marriage](#) , by John Bingham, The Telegraph 27 Feb 2016

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**Venue and Time**



In the discussion area of [Blackwell University Bookshop](#) , The Precinct, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9RN. Please arrive around 6:30pm for drinks and nibbles, ready for a prompt 6:45pm start - will finish before 8:30pm.

**Tickets are £5** (£4 concessions) bookable in advance through this [Trangresssions in sex and relationships](#) link, and includes a complimentary drink on arrival.

**This discussion, including audience comments, will be filmed and made available online as a reference resource.**

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