Trans Focus

The world from a transgender perspective

July 2025



A New Life in the Sun

All I Want To Be Is Me

We Need Trans Allies

Costa Blanca TGirls

Be yourself
Shine together

Welcome to July

A month of Pride social media posts, often positively received, often punctured by uninvited homophobia and transphobia has passed. We are still here as more and more significant voices are making themselves known as our allies.

In the UK we have Lorraine Kelly, national treasure, with interviews with Paris Lees, of *'what it feels like for a girl'* book and TV fame together with Boy George all sending out positive and defiant messages.

Our own Pride Parade and day of protest and celebration took place on Saturday 28th June and was well attended and received. This despite being the hottest day of the year so far, almost reaching 40 degrees.

Protests are still rippling around the world, especially in the UK and USA, which have become the battleground for trans rights. Initial disappointment that my home city, Liverpool decided to cancel their Pride parade due to funding issues, despite last years event being the largest ever. They have given assurances that next years event will go ahead. It's reassuring that other events across the UK and Europe have gone ahead, especially given the challenges facing our community from

Funniest moment of the month by far was the two day Idaho 'Hetero Awesome Fest' set up for straight people, celebrating 'traditional family values' to have their own pride, went as well as expected with around 50 people turning up. I'm unsure whether this justified the budget of 85,000 dollars.

Headlined by Daniel Hamrick who managed to escape protocol to get his slot. He donned his 'battle jacket', which has an upside down American flag on one arm and a rainbow pride heart on the other, and his tan beret from serving four years as an army ranger. Then played a song in protest about a transgender boy. The performance was streamed by the festival and a local journalist and went viral across social media.

The song 'Boy' about a transgender boy they put in dresses to keep him in line began but nearly three minutes into the song, Hamrick was confronted by security. He had his mic removed and was manhandled off stage. He carried on despite this, finishing his song before being removed.

Hamrick is bisexual but has many trans friends, which was the motivation for his song. The organisers labelled him evil. Supporters have called him a hero, which he's uncomfortable about. The protests continue…

Today I heard of a bookstore in San Francisco announcing it will no longer sell titles by J.K. Rowling due to her anti transgender views and advocacy. In the grand scheme of things this seems a small gesture, but this is growing as more and more celebrities are becoming more vocal in their disdain for the author and her hate. She continues to spread her toxic views, mainly on twitter backed up by her hate filled followers.

Her latest thing is to urge men to protect women apparently by policing women's toilets and urging people to photograph and challenge people who don't fit into what a woman should look like. So, it's not just LGBTQ+ people she's gunning for, it's women as well. But we already knew that.

We've worked hard this month to bring you plenty to keep you informed and entertained, despite this being the hottest Spanish June in history.

I've put together my take on 'three articles' going back to a time when it was illegal to wear three articles of clothing associated with the opposite sex. Interesting to compare it with the hot weather recently, when debated rage as to whether men should be allowed to wear shorts at work, while women can wear skirts and dresses. As one man said recently, "It's hard being a man in the summer". Well wear a skirt then! Right?

Features about Cristina Ortiz, and more about our trans allies as well as an appearance from the legend Scooby Doo plus a review of "What it feels like for a girl" are all here.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and feel free to contribute to future editions.

Love Carla & Penny XX

All I Want, Is to be Me



Inspiration taken from Glory Box, Portishead.

Anyone who knows me, knows I like to write poetry. I have a strange relationship with words. I struggle to learn lyrics from my favourite songs for example, often getting them wrong, sometimes for years before I realise. Yet, I can put a poem together with relative ease. They may not be the best poems in the world but they are my poems inspired by my life events and thoughts.

Recently I had the idea of adapting some of my favourite songs to fit my life. Portishead have made some of the most haunting, atmospheric and introspective music, so I gave it a go.

If you havent heard Glory Box, I suggest you give it a listen. My lyrics wont follow the song lyrics but hopefully you will see the link in them to my life…

All I Want is to be Me

I’m so tired of pretending,
Playing with roles that never fit.
The bow, the arrow — left behind,
This time, I won’t counterfeit.

Let others play their parts as cast,
I’ve worn that mask for far too long.
I’ve danced the edge, I’ve dared, I’ve dreamed —
Now I just want to belong.

Give me a reason to love me,
A reason to stand in the sun.

Let me live as the woman I am —
Not the silence I've become.

Unchained from doubt and fear and shame,
I see myself through different eyes.
The frame has shifted, blooms have opened —
A thousand truths the old world denies.

So move aside — just clear some space.
There's room for more than one way to be.
My femininity's not yours to judge,
It's the soul I've set free.

Give me a reason to love me,
To honour the battles I've won.
I just want to be a woman,
Not a question on anyone's tongue.

And you — don't stop being a man,
Just take a moment, try to see
The strength it takes to walk this path,
To claim myself and simply be.

Sow a little tenderness,
Even if it makes you cry —
Compassion doesn't threaten you,
It lifts us both, it dignifies.

I don't want to play a role.
I want to live out loud and true.
This is the beginning of forever —
Of loving her, and living too.

I'm done with old disguises,
Done with games I never chose.
I offer up my heart now,
To blossom in new clothes.

Give me a reason to love me.
Let that reason be me.

A New Life in the Sun

I've known I was a girl since I was four years old, though it would take me decades to fully understand what that meant. Growing up in London's East End in the 1960s, I existed in a world that had no language for people like me. The term "gender dysphoria" hadn't entered public consciousness, and transgender identities were either mocked or completely ignored by mainstream society. I remember looking at magazines and television, desperately searching for someone who looked or felt like I did, but finding no reflection of myself anywhere. The isolation was crushing.

For years, I wore a mask, performing the role expected of me while my true self withered in the shadows. I became adept at hiding - hiding my feelings, hiding my desires, hiding the very essence of who I was. The fear of discovery was constant, and the shame was even worse. I thought I would spend my entire life pretending, never knowing what it felt like to be truly seen.



Everything changed when I moved to Spain in 2007. It wasn't just a change of scenery - it was a complete transformation of my world. Suddenly, I found myself in a country that not only tolerated difference but celebrated it. Spain's progressive LGBTQ+ laws meant I could finally access a culture of acceptance and joy I found here gave me something priceless: permission to exist.

I'll never forget the first time I walked down the street as my

authentic self. The Spanish sun felt warmer on my skin, the colors of the buildings seemed brighter, even the air smelled sweeter. For the first time in my life, I wasn't carrying the weight of my secret. I could simply be.



In 2014, I met the woman who would become my wife. Our connection was immediate, but I was terrified of revealing my past. When I finally found the courage to share my truth, her reaction changed my life forever. "I love you for who you are," she told me, "not for who anyone thinks you should be." With her support and Spain's welcoming embrace, I began to thrive in ways I'd never imagined possible.



Now I travel the world - visiting the UK, USA, France, Thailand - but always returning to my home in Spain. Each journey is different now because I'm different. I move through the

world with a confidence I never thought I'd possess, no longer hiding or apologising for my existence.

Spain gave me more than a new home - it gave me a rebirth. The country's vibrant LGBTQ+ community showed me that my identity wasn't something to be ashamed of, but something to celebrate. Under its warm sun, I've learned that living authentically isn't just about survival, but about finally allowing yourself to truly live.

My story is proof that happiness is possible. That the child who once felt so alone can grow into an adult surrounded by love. That with the right environment and support, we can all find the courage to become who we were always meant to be.

If you live your life in the shadows but long to break free, you too could find a new life and home here in Spain.



Lorraine Kelly: An Ally Who Makes a Difference

Broadcast on Tuesday 10th June, I was moved—really moved—by a moment on live TV.

Author and activist Paris Lees appeared on *Lorraine* to talk about the upcoming BBC Three drama based on her memoir *What It Feels Like for a Girl*, a powerful story of growing up trans in 2000s Nottingham. But the most emotional moment came not from the series itself, but from something far more human and immediate: a thank you.

Paris looked straight at Lorraine Kelly and said, “There is so much hostility for trans people at the moment and you’ve been consistently an ally. We see you, and we really appreciate it.”

Lorraine’s eyes welled up. “You’re going to make me cry,” she replied.

Paris added, “We’re less than 0.5 percent of the population and we are under attack. You are using your platform for good, and you are a friend. I hereby declare you an honorary diva.”

As a transgender woman, I felt this deeply. In a world where our very existence is debated, denied, or politicised, someone like Lorraine Kelly choosing kindness and understanding—again and again—matters.

This isn’t a one-off. Lorraine has consistently spoken up for the LGBTQ+ community, often when it wasn’t easy. Reflecting on the 1980s AIDS crisis in a recent interview, she said, “I felt it was my duty to stand up and say, ‘No, this isn’t right.’”

And she hasn’t stopped. On trans rights, she’s been clear: “I don’t like when trans people have to try to justify their experience. No one else has to.”

Even in her fiction, she makes space for us. In her debut novel *The Island Swimmer*, one of the main characters, Freya, is trans. But as Lorraine rightly says, that’s “the least interesting thing about her.”

That’s the kind of allyship we need—compassionate, consistent, and real. It doesn’t require a grand gesture. Sometimes, it’s just showing up, listening, and using your platform, however big or small, to say: “I see you. You matter.”

Thank you, Lorraine. For seeing us. For standing with us. And for reminding us that being human is always more than just a label.



What It Feels Like for a Girl



Did you get to see it? If you didn't, you missed something pretty special.

Review: *What It Feels Like for a Girl* (BBC Three)

For 4 weeks in June I watched as Paris Lee's drama unfolded in eight explosive episodes.

Pride month, which this month has taken on more protest than recent years gave us the best queer drama since "it's a Sin".

Byron's raw ride through early 2000s trans life is unmissable, messy, and magnificent.

Set against the concrete backdrop of early millennium Nottingham, *What It Feels Like for a Girl* is a wild, emotional, and unapologetically gritty 8-part BBC Three drama that hits like a shot of vodka to the heart. At its centre is Byron, a teenager on the cusp of discovering her trans identity, navigating a world full of dead ends, dirty toilets, and devastating moments of clarity.



What unfolds is no sanitised coming-of-age tale. This is full-pelt storytelling, steeped in sex work, drugs, cottaging, violence, and escape. You feel every bruise and every laugh like you're living it alongside her. It's raw, it's instinctive, and it doesn't care for respectability politics. In a media landscape still scared to show trans lives in full colour, this series flings open the door and drags you into the real world, warts, wigs, and all.

Ellis Howard is extraordinary in the lead role. Their portrayal of Byron is electric, full of contradictions and charisma. Byron can be selfish, sharp, and sly, but also tender, joyful, and heartbreakingly human. Howard nails the nuances, balancing every flirty smirk with a fragile glance that speaks volumes. It's a tour de force performance

that commands your attention and never lets go.



But Byron doesn't shine alone. Enter the fallen divas: Lady Die, Sticky Nikki, Dirty Damian, and the unforgettable Sasha, a scouse firecracker of a queen who clashes and clicks with Byron in equal measure. These aren't cartoon cut-outs of queer nightlife. These are real, beautifully broken people with pasts, pride, and pills in their purses. The club scenes are sweaty, charged, and entirely believable, right down to the messy toilets and whispered deals.



Amidst the chaos, there's beauty too. Byron's relationship with her gran, played with aching warmth by Hannah Walters, delivers some of the show's most quietly powerful moments. These scenes are a necessary reminder that age doesn't excuse cruelty, or prevent compassion.

Not everything in *What It Feels Like for a Girl* is perfect. Some episodes sag, a few storylines stretch credibility, and the style occasionally overshadows the substance. But that's kind of the point. Like Byron herself, the show is messy, impulsive, and always reaching for something better. You root for it, even when it stumbles.

In a time when trans people in the UK face relentless attacks from politicians and press, this show feels revolutionary. To see not just trans pain but **trans joy, trans love, and trans community** on the BBC, *the BBC* is no small thing. It matters. It saves lives.

If *It's a Sin* broke your heart, *What It Feels Like for a Girl* might just help you rebuild it. Fiercer. Queerer. And louder.



The Convenience of Online Shopping for Trans Women Just Coming Out

Coming out as a trans woman is a deeply personal and often challenging journey. Along with emotional and social adjustments, many trans women face the practical challenge of building a wardrobe that aligns with their gender identity. For those just starting their transition, online shopping can be an invaluable resource offering privacy, accessibility, and a vast selection of affirming clothing, makeup, and accessories.

SHEIN

One of the biggest hurdles for trans women early in their transition is the fear of judgment or discomfort while shopping in person. Many may feel anxious about browsing the women's section in stores or interacting with sales assistants.

TEMU

Online shopping eliminates this stress by allowing trans women to explore styles, sizes, and products from the comfort and safety of their own homes.

Finding clothes that fit well can be a challenge, especially for trans women who may have broader shoulders, taller frames, or different body proportions than cisgender women. Many online retailers specialise in inclusive sizing, and some even cater

specifically to trans women, offering items like:
Shapewear and breast forms (e.g., padded bras, hip enhancers)
Fashionable yet functional clothing (e.g., dresses with adjustable fits, tucking underwear)



Online shopping allows trans women to experiment with different styles without the pressure of public fitting rooms or onlookers. Many retailers offer generous return policies, making it easier to order multiple sizes or styles and return what doesn't work.

For those who aren't fully out or live in unsupportive environments, discreet shipping is crucial. Most online retailers use plain packaging without revealing labels, ensuring privacy.

Online platforms like Reddit (r/transfashionadvice), Instagram, and TikTok have thriving trans communities where women share shopping tips, review products, and recommend affirming brands. This peer support can be incredibly validating and helpful for those just starting to explore their style.

Online shopping removes many of the barriers trans women face when first exploring their identity through fashion and beauty. It provides a safe, private, and empowering way to discover personal style without fear of judgment. Whether it's finding the perfect dress,



experimenting with makeup, or connecting with a supportive community, the digital world offers invaluable resources for trans women stepping into their true selves.

For those just beginning their journey: Take your time, explore what feels right, and remember you deserve to feel beautiful and confident.
💖

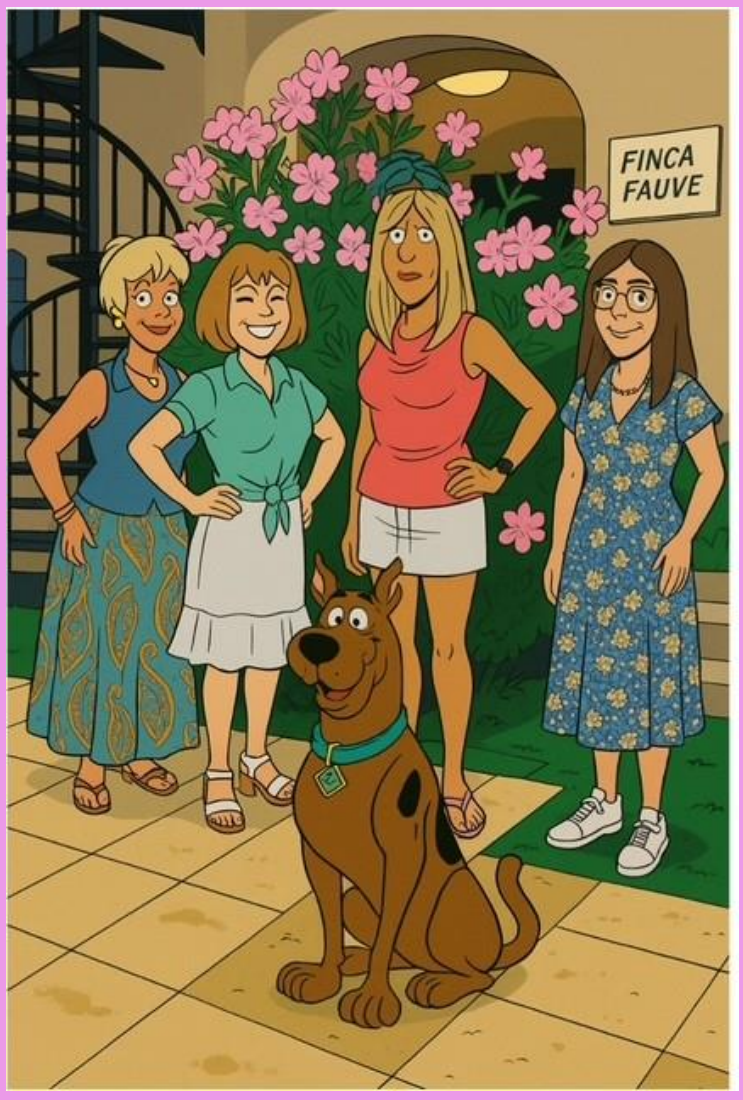
Scooby Doo and a Side of AI

A few weeks ago, we had a relaxed BBQ at Penny's house, something we try to do when the weather (and life) allows. As usual, we snapped loads of photos. Lately, there's a trend going around where people transform photos into AI cartoons. Carla gave it a go herself recently, turning one of her selfies into a doll-like version of her. Honestly? She wasn't thrilled. I don't think these filters are designed to be flattering — more stylised and quirky — but something about it just didn't sit right with her.



Before…

That evening at Penny's, though, was different. We converted a few group shots into cartoon versions, and one in particular with the Tgirls really stood out. It had this vintage vibe that immediately reminded Carla of *Scooby Doo*. So, naturally, being inquisitive, She asked the AI to take it one step further and add Scooby himself to the image. And it did! The result was brilliant — fun, nostalgic, and unexpectedly charming. The only thing missing was the Mystery Machine parked in the background.



After!

Costa Blanca Tgirl nights arent always just about catching up and putting the world to rights. It's about having fun and giving way to embracing joy, silliness, and spontaneity.

Whether we are hosting quizzes, which we did in June, posing with AI Scooby Doo, or

just being ourselves among friends, it all matters. It all adds up to a life we never imagined we would get to live. If you get the chance to come over to Spain, consider the south of Costa Blanca. There you will find us, ready to embrace you and show you the sights.

We can't guarantee that Scooby Doo will turn up, but we will.

Hints and Tips



There are times in your life that you can benefit from the wisdom of other people's experiences. I managed to find some of the more unusual ones from the internet and I'm sharing them in the hope you get something positive from the geniuses that provided them…

Want to improve your posture?

Pretend you are shooting lasers out of your nipples and trying to shoot people in the head.

Ever wanted to get into a place you're not normally allowed?

Apparently a larger than average number of people are able to access such places by donning a hard hat and a hi vis vest.

My grandad lived to 95. I asked him what the secret was to a long and happy life.

He told me to mind my own business.

When you get writers' block

Find a way to incorporate the word "moist" into your piece. It's an unpleasant and unusable word but trying to get it in there will get your brain working and produce more writing.

Don't skimp on anything that's between you and the ground

Shoes, tyres, beds, chairs, even parachutes.

Assholes (We call them arseholes where I come from)

If you encounter an asshole during the day, then they are an asshole. If everyone you encounter during the day is an asshole, then YOU are the asshole.

You're welcome

Carla X

Three Articles, No Rights: When Gender Expression Was a Crime

I've been writing about my expereinces ever since I came out five years ago. Although it was only five years, it seems like I've been like this all my life. Of course I have been like this all my life, it's just that I kept most of it hidden away.

Imagine though, having a bottle of cola and shaking it every day, with the lid slightly loose. Some of it leaks out so you tighten the lid a bit. The presure builds until it explodes. I'm not sure whether that's the right analogy to use, but I use my writing as a release.

This is an extract from something I wrote a few years ago about how we were viewed in the past. I hope you enjoy…

Historically

For decades in the UK, **trans people were invisible—unless we were the punchline.**
Growing up in the 1970s, transgender women and cross-dressers were nowhere to be found in serious public discourse. But we were always there. We've *always* been there. What the public saw instead were drag acts, panto dames, and men in wigs used for cheap laughs and ridicule.

Mainstream entertainment didn't show gender variance—it mocked it. Dick Emery, Benny Hill, and the Monty Python crew made cross-dressing a staple of British comedy, reducing femininity to a joke when performed by men. Even now, shows like *Mrs Brown's Boys* still recycle the same tired trope: a man in a dress equals hilarity. We had Dame Edna Everage and Lily Savage, not as representations of queer identity, but as caricatures crafted for crowd-pleasing gags.



Benny Hill

“Men in dresses were for laughs. Women in trousers were ‘progressive.’ We got the punchlines—they got the praise.”

While drag queens were allowed to sparkle under the stage lights, **the everyday cross-dresser or trans woman was framed as something deviant or strange**. And rarely, if ever, did we see a woman dressing as a man—when we did, she was poised, elegant, suave. Meanwhile, the male cross-dresser? Crude, loud, grotesque.

“Pantomime dames were national treasures. But real trans people? Criminals.”



Dick Emery

The message was clear: men pretending to be women are ridiculous, and women pretending to be men are just pretending to be better.

"They called it comedy. For us, it was erasure."

Across the Atlantic, the situation was worse—and more violent.
In the U.S., **"masquerade laws" and the so-called "Three-Article Rule"** gave police legal cover to harass, humiliate, and arrest anyone not dressed according to their assigned sex. If you weren't wearing at least three pieces of clothing deemed appropriate for your gender, you could be thrown in jail. These laws were used to police queer lives right up to the Stonewall riots in 1969.

One haunting case in 1913 saw a trans man arrested simply for drinking and smoking in a bar. Although he was acquitted, he was immediately re-arrested for "associating with vile and idle persons" and sentenced to three years in a reformatory.



The Three-Article rule criminalised a community

The judge said:

"No girl would dress in men's clothing unless she is twisted in her moral viewpoints."

Behind such rulings was a far darker truth: these laws opened the door to **public strip-searches, "gender checks," and the routine sexual assault of trans and gender nonconforming people.**

“Visibility didn’t protect us. It made us easier to ridicule, police, and punish.”

Let’s not kid ourselves—**the history of gender variance hasn’t been quirky or amusing. It’s been painful, humiliating, and violent.** And when people today say “it’s always been like this”—they’re right. But **they forget to mention who’s been made to suffer for it**.



The Daily Mail has a long history of anti LGBTQ+ bias. Many Daily Mail headlines on transgender issues are misleading, exaggerated, or based on cherry-picked facts, often fueling moral panic rather than informed debate. Below, I'll debunk some of their most common narratives with evidence and context.


Daily Mail

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'UNSAFE' NHS CHILD GENDER CLINIC TO BE SHUT

By Martin Beckford

THE NHS is shutting its gender identity unit for children after a damning review.

Struggling youngsters will now be sent to new regional centres and given better mental health support.

And in a dramatic change of policy, teenagers given drugs to delay puberty will be enrolled on research trials amid concerns over the medication.

The gender identity development service at the Tavistock and Portman trust in London has seen more than 19,000 children since it started in 1989.

The clinic's closure was triggered by a review that found patients were suffering because they were forced to wait for treatment. The move was hailed by senior politicians. Former health minister Jackie Doyle-Price said: 'At last. The safety of care at the Tavistock has been compromised by ideology.'

'Gender dysphoria treatment

Turn to Page 6

Daily Mail COMMENT

IN YEARS to come, we will surely look back and wonder how this was ever allowed to happen at all.

But if there is one lesson to be learned let it be this: We must NEVER let the rantings of a fringe minority silence free speech, reason and medical evidence.

SEE PAGE 16

Careful! Prince Charles steps through a metal detector at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham yesterday

Will one's signet ring set this thingy off? PAGES 10&11

"NHS to close Tavistock child gender clinic after damning review"

Claim: The closure "proves" youth gender care is harmful and rushed.

Reality: The Tavistock clinic was shut down due to long wait times and poor service structure, not because gender-affirming care was deemed dangerous.

The NHS is replacing it with regional hubs to provide more holistic care, not ending treatment.

The Cass Review (2024) called for better research and mental health support, not a ban on puberty blockers (which are still available in clinical trials).

Conclusion: The headline implies a wholesale rejection of youth gender care, when in fact the system is being reformed for better oversight.

"Transgender woman who raped two women before transition is sent to female prison"

Claim: Trans women in women's prisons endanger inmates.

Reality: The case (Isla Bryson) was exceptional and widely condemned, including by trans advocates.

UK prison policy already assesses trans inmates case-by-case for risk. Most trans women in women's prisons are non-violent; a 2023 Ministry of Justice report found no rise in sexual assaults linked to trans inmates.

Conclusion: The Mail frames an outlier as a common threat, ignoring actual data showing trans prisoners are more likely to be victims of violence.


Daily Mail

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Rishi Sunak backs author's right to free speech after she throws down challenge with series of posts labelling trans women as men

ARREST ME! Defiance of JK Rowling as she dares police over new Scottish hate crime law

RISHI Sunak last night backed JK Rowling after she dared police to arrest her under controversial new hate crime laws.

"JK Rowling dares police to arrest her over trans comments"

Claim: Trans activists are "silencing free speech."

Reality: Rowling has never been arrested or prosecuted for her views.

The UK's hate speech laws do not criminalise gender-critical opinions, only incitement to violence or harassment.

Many feminists and trans activists debate openly; the

Mail exaggerates a "censorship" narrative.

Conclusion: This is a false persecution narrative Rowling remains one of the UK's most high-profile voices on the issue.

"Children as young as THREE taught about gender fluidity in schools"

Claim: Schools are "indoctrinating" kids into being trans.

Reality: Teaching kids that some people are transgender does not equal encouraging transition.

Most programs simply explain diversity (e.g., "some boys wear dresses"), which reduces bullying.

No evidence shows that learning about trans people makes kids more likely to identify as trans.

Conclusion: The Mail frames basic inclusivity as "brainwashing," ignoring that most Western education systems teach about different families (e.g., same-sex parents).

"Trans women with male genitals allowed in women's spa"

Claim: Trans women are invading female spaces and traumatising women.

Reality: The case (at Wi Spa in the US) was misrepresented no proof the person was trans, and some witnesses later admitted it was a hoax.

Most businesses with trans-inclusive policies have no issues the Mail amplifies rare incidents.
- **Actual threats in women's spaces (e.g., male predators) are far more common than threats from trans women.

Conclusion: This is a classic fearmongering tactic, presenting an isolated incident as a systemic danger.

"Puberty blockers cause irreversible damage"

Claim: They're "experimental" and harm kids.

Reality: Puberty blockers have been used for decades for precocious puberty and are fully reversible when stopped.

The NHS still allows them in research settings they weren't banned for safety reasons but due to lack of long-term data.

-Major medical organisations (AMA, APA, WHO) support their careful use for gender dysphoria.

Conclusion: The Mail ignores medical consensus to push a "scandal" narrative.

Why Does the Daily Mail Do This?

Clicks & outrage sell fear-driven headlines and get more engagement.
Ideological bias: the paper has a history of anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-"woke" campaigns.

Misrepresenting studies (e.g., citing outlier cases as the norm).

Key Fact: Trans people are 0.5% of the UK population yet the Mail writes about them disproportionately, framing them as a major societal threat.

While some concerns about gender policies deserve debate, the Daily Mail consistently:
✔️ Exaggerates risks (e.g., prisons, sports)
✔️ Ignores data (e.g., low rates of regret for transition)
✔️ Frames trans people as predators or groomers (a classic moral panic tactic)

Cristina "La Veneno" Ortiz:

Spain’s Transgender Icon Who Changed Everything



FERNANDO ROI-HEARST

In the colourful, chaotic swirl of 1990s Spanish television, one woman exploded onto the screen with a voice like thunder, a body like fire, and a heart as wild as the night: **Cristina Ortiz Rodríguez**, better known to the world as **La Veneno** (The Poison). For the LGBTQ+ community in Spain and beyond, she was far more than a late-night novelty or tabloid scandal — she became a fearless symbol of visibility, rebellion, and truth in a society still grappling with its understanding of gender and identity.

From Adra to the Airwaves

Cristina was born in 1964 in Adra, Almería, to a conservative and deeply religious family. Assigned male at birth and named Joselito, she endured a childhood marked by violence, rejection, and confusion. From an early age, Cristina knew she was different. That difference would one day become her superpower — but not without immense personal struggle.

She left home at a young age and eventually found herself in Madrid, where she began her transition and started sex work to survive. It was during these years on the streets that Cristina’s charisma, beauty, and boldness caught the eye of journalist **Faela Sainz**, who interviewed her for the late-night television show *Esta noche cruzamos el Mississippi*. Overnight, Cristina became a sensation.

A Star Is Born — And Unapologetically So

Television had never seen anything like her. Unfiltered, outrageously funny, and dripping in glamour, La Veneno captured Spain’s attention with her tales of celebrity clients, street life, and survival. She didn’t play the victim. She was the *anti-heroine* of post-Franco Spain — daring the public to look away as she blurred gender lines and scorched stereotypes. She later starred in her own show, *La Veneno en Tu Sofá*, and became a tabloid mainstay.

For many trans people watching from the shadows, Cristina was the first person they ever saw on television living — loudly and proudly — as a trans woman. She showed them they weren’t alone.

A Life of Extremes

Cristina's fame brought riches, glamour, and celebrity friendships, but it also attracted chaos, addiction, and eventually prison. In 2003, she was sentenced to three years in a men's prison for arson and insurance fraud — a devastating blow that, once again, highlighted the systemic failures in treating trans people with dignity.

After prison, she faded somewhat from the spotlight, though never from memory. In 2016, she released her explosive memoir *¡Digo! Ni puta ni santa* (*I Say! Not a Whore or a Saint*), co-written with journalist Valeria Vegas. The book pulled no punches — recounting abuse, assault, media manipulation, and betrayal — and reignited public interest in her life.



Picture from Facebook

A Mysterious End

Just months after her memoir's release, Cristina was found badly injured in her home. She died in hospital days later. Though officially ruled accidental, many questioned the circumstances — especially given the book's naming of high-profile individuals and institutions. Her death became as enigmatic and controversial as her life.

Legacy and Cultural Impact

In 2020, Cristina's story reached a global audience through the acclaimed HBO Max series *Veneno*, created by Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi. Based on her memoir and told through the eyes of journalist Valeria Vegas, the series honoured Cristina's legacy with dignity, depth, and power. It reintroduced La Veneno to a new generation — one that saw in her the roots of a trans revolution in Spain.

Today, Cristina is celebrated not just as a television personality, but as an **icon of trans resistance**. Streets and murals bear her name and likeness. LGBTQ+ activists invoke her spirit as one of fearless self-expression and survival against all odds. Her story continues to inspire trans women around the world to live boldly, speak truthfully, and never apologise for who they are.

Cristina Said It Best:

"Ni puta ni santa, soy La Veneno."

And truly, she was one of a kind.

Further Reading & Watching:

- *¡Digo! Ni puta ni santa* by Valeria Vegas
- *Veneno* (HBO Max, 2020)
- Interviews and appearances on *Esta noche cruzamos el Mississippi* and *Moros y Cristianos*

Now More Than Ever: Why We Need Visible Trans Allies

In April, the UK Supreme Court ruled that—for the purposes of the Equality Act—a person's legal sex is based on their **"biological sex"**. This decision was followed quickly by new guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which many believe marks a **significant step backward for trans rights in the UK**.

Across the world—in the US, Hungary, Russia, and beyond—trans rights have come under attack. Now the UK seems to be following the same worrying path.

But how did we get here? And more importantly—**how do we fight back**?



A Long History of Misrepresentation

Over a decade ago, in 2011, Trans Media Watch told **the Leveson Inquiry** that tabloid papers like the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* were consistently misrepresenting and mocking trans people. Despite small legal wins, the UK press continued to publish stories that dehumanised trans individuals. Some trans journalists pushed back—writing blogs, sharing personal journeys, and trying to create space for better conversations.

But the backlash came fast and hard.

After the death of trans teacher Lucy Meadows, who was cruelly targeted by the *Daily Mail*, there was hope that the media might change. Instead, trans voices were drowned out again. Journalists who supported trans rights were sidelined, while those who spread misinformation were given more space.

The Politics of Exclusion

When the government considered reforming the Gender Recognition Act in 2017 to allow trans people to self-identify more easily, it sparked a backlash from newly formed anti-trans groups. These groups, supported by high-profile media figures and politicians, **claimed that trans rights threatened women's safety—an idea based not on fact, but on fear.**

Over time, the media and political climate became even more hostile. Major outlets—from the *Guardian* to the *Spectator*—gave space to anti-trans voices, presenting their views as "reasonable debate" while silencing trans people themselves. **The government eventually abandoned reform plans,** keeping a system that still

makes it incredibly difficult for trans people to gain legal recognition.

The Supreme Court Ruling – and the Fallout



This year's Supreme Court decision—backed by a group called For Women Scotland and celebrated by anti-trans campaigners—effectively redefines legal rights. Trans people may now be **excluded from single-sex spaces**, like bathrooms, hospital wards, or support groups. The EHRC followed with late-night guidance reinforcing this message, making it harder for protests to form in response.

But protests did happen. And not just in big cities—people marched in Orkney, Cardiff, and dozens of other places. Trans people, and our allies, **refused to be silent**.

The Role of the Media—and the Danger of Silence

For years, major newspapers and politicians helped spread the idea that standing up for trans rights is dangerous. **The media made trans people out to be a threat,** while also mocking us as too "fragile" to handle criticism. It's a double standard—and a cruel one.

Trans voices were pushed out of public conversations. Even allies became afraid to speak out.

This silence has allowed a small but loud anti-trans movement to grow. **It's a movement linked to the same far-right networks that deny climate change, attack migrants, and undermine democracy.**

But there's good news: **we're still here**. And we're not going anywhere.

Why We Need Allies—Loud Ones



If you're cisgender and believe in fairness, **we need you now**. Trans people cannot fight this battle alone.

We need allies to:

- Speak up in the media.
- Challenge misinformation.
- Stand with us at protests.
- Support trans people at work, in schools, and in communities.

- Refuse to let politicians use trans lives as a distraction or wedge issue.

Your voice matters. Your visibility matters. Silence is what allows injustice to grow.

The Fight Ahead

This moment is frightening—but it's also a chance to build something better. Across the country, people are organising, campaigning, and refusing to give up.

Trans people have always existed, and we've always resisted. We've survived worse—and we'll survive this. But **real change requires real solidarity**.

Trans rights are human rights. And defending them isn't just about fairness—it's about the kind of society we all want to live in.

So What Can You Do?

- **Show up**: Join protests, sign petitions, write to your MP.
- **Speak out**: Share accurate information, challenge transphobia when you see it.
- **Support trans voices**: Read our writing, amplify our stories, listen to our experiences.
- **Be visible**: Say "I support trans rights." Say it clearly and often.

This moment matters. And how we respond will shape the future—not just for trans people, but for **everyone** who cares about freedom, equality, and dignity.

Because **when trans rights are under attack, everyone's rights are at risk**.

Let's stand together. Loudly. Proudly. Unapologetically.





Pride Month Allies

Avon – With a message

Inclusion isn’t just something we celebrate; it’s something we live. 🌈 This Pride Month, we reflect, celebrate and continue to support. We’re proud to stand with the LGBTQIA+ community and recognise the strength in every story 🏳️. Learn how we’re continuing to grow as a beauty democracy in our bio.







Costa Property Rentals

