

Trans Focus

The world from a transgender perspective

OCTOBER 2024

BENIDORM PRIDE

Carla's trip to one of Europe's largest PRIDE Festivals

THE LOVE OF DENIM

Penny reveals her obsession with denim skirts

FOCUS ON SANDRA

Meet Sandra one of the newest additions to the Costa Blanca Trans Community

Trans people are extraordinary,
intelligent, persistent and resilient.
we have to be.

– Grace Dolan-Sandrino



Welcome...



...To October

Where has the year gone? The years go faster as you get older, it's a fact... seriously? Well, at least the perception of them does.

I love this time of year as the scorching sun has relented here somewhat and I look ahead to my winter wardrobe and the delights of the dark evenings. And the return of the emergency cardie.

October brings Halloween and the clocks going back (more of that next month). It also brings this month's look back at Benidorm Pride in September, with photos of the parade and a look back at my weekend there.

Remember Sade, of 1980's pop fame? She's back. In fact, she never really went away and has contributed a song about her trans son to a forthcoming compilation album celebrating transgender people.

There's a massive assumption that all transgender people take hormones. They don't, for a variety of different reasons. I put the reasons for and against to try and raise awareness of the choices available to trans people.

Also covered this month is sexuality, the continuing issue over pronouns and a look at the UK Hate Crime Awareness Week, of which I will be involved. I'm also answering questions that have been put to me either personally or over social media. If you have any questions, you would like me or Penny to answer in future editions, or if you would like to contribute to the magazine, just send an email and we will do our best to include you.

Thank you once again for reading,

Carla x

Your Say!

Last month we put out a call for you to send us your views on the magazine. Thank you to all those who sent in their comments.

One of the issues which was brought up a few times was that the name TG Focus. You felt that it was not obvious at first sight that the magazine was for the transgender community. This month we have changed the name to the Trans Focus. We have also updated the logo to create a brand image across our various platforms.

Trans Focus

This month we will also launch Trans Media, a digital design producer for websites, social media content and short promotional videos and reels. Trans Media will also produce Costa Blanca TGirls TV, a new Youtube channel where we will provide videos to promote The Costa Blanca's Transgender Community.

Trans Media

PRODUCTIONS

Coming soon this month the Trans Focus magazine will also be available to read online as well as being available to download as a pdf. This will enhance the reader's experience if viewed on a Smartphone. We will also be adding a comments section where readers will be able to leave comments on the articles online.

Costa Blanca TGirls.com

Home of Spains Transgender Community

We continue to strive to improve the magazine and love to hear your views, good or bad.

I love your magazine and can relate to many of the articles. Keep up the good work.

**Kate,
Southampton**

I wish I was with you in Spain. I love reading the TGirl Diaries and seeing you beautiful ladies out and about.

**Gill,
Manchester**

You are all amazing and present the Trans Community in such a positive way.

**Anne,
Newcastle**

Keep up the good work girls.

**Sandra,
New York**

I wish I was as brave as you girls, I would love to be able to go out dressed as me. Maybe one day I will pluck up the courage and come out with you.

**Tracey,
Quesada**

Have you thought of doing an organised event? I would love to come up and spend some time with you girls.

**Mandy,
Gibraltar**

Can we have articles on make up, what to wear, posture etc. These are things I struggle with.

**Brandy,
Swindon**

Benidorm Pride Festival 2024

A personal view...

They said...

The 14th Benidorm Pride Festival 2024 was an absolute blast! This year's event was filled with vibrant energy, incredible performances, and a welcoming atmosphere that made everyone feel included. The colourful parades, amazing live music, and fun beach parties created a perfect blend of celebration and community spirit.

I said...

As usual, I made it a Friday to Monday 'long weekend', enabling me to take in a variety of events with the advantage of a quieter Sunday evening to relax.

Friday was the traditional White Party.



This year at the Auditorio Julio Iglesias, enabling a much larger celebration than recent years. The evening filled with live acts and music to dance to. And... everyone (most people) wore white. I wore my own above knee length white dress, together with white heels and matching bag.



Problems at the bar

Big events here in Spain operate a ticket system where you buy drinks tickets before queueing to swap them for drinks. The only problem was managing to get a drink served. Queues 5 deep and a 45 minute wait at the bar was typical at least up to midnight. You could buy drinks tickets in advance but most people didn't, so queueing twice was required.



Prices were reasonable for such an event. Eight euros for a spirit and mixer (Large as per the traditional Spanish way) and four euros for wine. I saw many people 'doubling up' but I also saw many people giving up. Maybe next year they will have a decent sized bar and enough staff to serve.



Saturday

Enough of the complaining. I danced all night and adopted a massive blister on the little toe of my right foot, which meant I struggled on the way home. Women with bare feet at 2am was a common sight. It's not the first time I've suffered such issues whilst wearing heels. "A rite of passage" I was told yet again by the cis women I was walking with. Painful, but dare I say... affirming.

A relaxed day of shopping (what else?) set us up ready for one of the highlights, the main parade to take place at 5pm. Emma arrived for the late afternoon and evening and we made our way to the parade.



It was a dazzling display of creativity and love. The costumes, floats, and performances were stunning, and it was clear that a lot of effort went into making this event truly special. The parade was bigger and better than recent years and finished at the Auditorio Julio Iglesias, where the main party took place later that evening.



We met more friends, fresh off one of the coaches that delivered people from the Orihuela Costa area. Delivered just in time at about 5.15pm. Sadly for them and I'm not quite sure why, the coach was set to return at 10pm. There are many coach tours that serve Benidorm and other areas for evenings out that return around midnight or even later in some cases. The early return disappointed many and also put people off booking. That said, coaches were full so there is definitely a draw to the event.



Given the issues with drinks the night previously, that the evening was free (the white party was 10 euro entrance fee) we decided to give the party a miss as it would be so much more busier. People were already posting pictures of a quite full auditorium at 8pm, so we believed we made the right decision.



My outfit

I had been looking forward to wearing this dress ever since I took delivery. It was ordered by my wife but it didn't fit hr, so I stepped in. You know when you get one of those moments when the dress you wear, takes your breath away? Yes, that happened weeks before when I tried it on for the first time. I went as high as I possibly get with my heeled sandals which meant I found it a bit more painful to walk, but it looked good to me, so I braved it.



As it happened, we were invited to a private party in the shadow of the arena, so we could hear the music and acts, from pretty much next door. My heels combined with the blister made walking a problem despite plasters (why do we do it?) so a confined party seemed a relief. It actually rained for a short spell but thankfully didn't last. We ended the night in a cocktail lounge before a taxi took us back to our hotel at around 2am.



What makes Benidorm Pride truly stand out is how inclusive and friendly it is. Whether you're part of the LGBTQ+ community or an ally, you'll feel right at home. The whole town comes alive during the festival, and the sunny weather and beautiful beachfront only add to the experience. The old town venues that were open were still quite full into the early hours.

Sunday

A chilled start to the day and a day spent relaxing. I chose a red dress set off with a red belt, black sandals and bag. I chose platinum hair for the evening, which I don't often do, but when I have I get complimented on it. Sometimes you just have to take a chance and go with your feeling at the time. I felt good, so I went with it. A meal and a few drinks including a cocktail or two in the evening followed and it was a relatively early finish, not long after midnight.



I always value my Benidorm Pride weekends with the LGBTQ+ community and this was no different. There are so many people who aren't LGBTQ+ who either go or who are there during the celebrations. Recently I have seen a number of Pride events posted on social media and they have attracted negative comments by the usual bigots. I always say that the status of trans people at the moment is akin to that of LGB people in the 80s. Trans people weren't out like we are now, so were no threat to the narrow minded. That shows that Pride events are still very much needed and the positivity that I have seen this weekend shows that good people are with us.

Here's to next year and another successful event.

Carla

Follow Carla on Social Media

My Instagram Page
[HTTPS://www.instagram.com/carlasweetlippst2/](https://www.instagram.com/carlasweetlippst2/)

My blog:
<https://pinkfogtransinspain.wordpress.com/>

Listen to my podcast on
<https://spotify.link/FhWLMteyFJb>

TikTok
[@carlamoss80](#)



Benidorm

IM THE SCARY
TRANSGENDER
PERSON
THE MEDIA WARNED
YOU ABOUT

Pride

The Parade

2024



**In Benidorm,
the colours shine..
with love and joy
in every line...**





**Pride unites, hearts
bold and free...
A celebration of equality!**



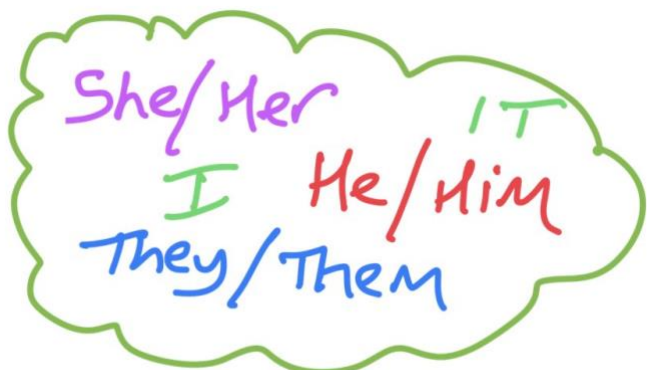
Pronouns

We may have spoken about pronouns before but the subject is never far away when talking about trans people. It's often the first point of transphobia in people. Whenever there's a trans person in the news or even someone whose gender is questioned in the media, deliberate misgendering often occurs.

Accidental misgendering also occurs but it's generally done by people who come from the right place when they speak. I've included this guide, together with a short piece on how deliberate misgendering is transphobic for information and reaffirmation of how important language is in communicating with people on the gender spectrum.

Carla X

How the use of pronouns helps everyone



What are pronouns?

Pronouns are words used to refer to people in place of their names, like "he," "she," or "they." They help indicate someone's gender in conversation and ensure respectful, accurate communication.

Pronouns and transgender people

Pronouns specifically help transgender people by ensuring their gender identity is respected and acknowledged. For trans individuals, using the correct pronouns affirms their identity and prevents misgendering, which can be harmful and distressing. Sharing pronouns also normalizes discussions around gender, reducing the pressure on trans people to explain or defend their identity. It fosters an inclusive environment where everyone's gender expression is respected.

All people use pronouns

The use of pronouns helps everyone, not just transgender people, by creating a clearer and more respectful way to communicate. Here's how:

1. **Avoids Assumptions:** When people share their pronouns, it prevents others from making assumptions based on appearance or names. This can help cisgender people, too, as their gender identity may not always match what others assume. It avoids awkward or uncomfortable moments for anyone.
2. **Normalises Pronoun Sharing:** By making it a habit for everyone to share pronouns, it becomes part of everyday conversation. This takes the pressure off transgender people from having to explain or clarify their pronouns and creates a more inclusive environment.
3. **Reduces Misgendering:** Misgendering (calling someone by the wrong pronoun) can happen to anyone. Regularly sharing pronouns helps ensure that everyone's identity is respected and that communication stays respectful and accurate.
4. **Improves Inclusivity:** When everyone uses and shares pronouns, it sends a message

that all gender identities are valid and respected. This promotes a culture of respect, equality, and understanding, benefiting all people in social and professional spaces.

In short, using pronouns helps make communication smoother, reduces misunderstandings, and supports a culture of inclusivity for everyone, regardless of gender identity.

Useful Tips when dealing with someone new who may be trans.

When deciding which pronouns to use with someone on the transgender spectrum, it's important to:

1. **Ask Politely:** If unsure, kindly ask what pronouns they use.
2. **Listen and Respect:** Use the pronouns they share consistently.
3. **Avoid Assumptions:** Don't assume pronouns based on appearance or name.
4. **Apologize if Mistaken:** If you use the wrong pronouns, briefly apologize and correct yourself.
5. **Use Gender-Neutral Pronouns:** If you're unsure and can't ask, default to gender-neutral pronouns like "they."

Respecting pronouns creates a supportive and inclusive environment.

Is being against the use of pronouns transphobic?

A view...

Being against displaying pronouns is transphobic. It's not about rejecting pronouns in general, like in writing or speech. It's about rejecting them because you don't accept the existence or equal treatment of trans people. This isn't a debate about grammar—it's rooted in discrimination.

Supporting the removal of pronouns to make others feel more comfortable is also transphobic. When you do this, you're saying it's okay for people to be transphobic and that their views should be accommodated.

Using pronouns when introducing ourselves benefits everyone, both transgender and cisgender people. It prevents trans people from having to explain their identity in a way that can be emotionally draining or risky, and it helps everyone avoid misgendering.

Misgendering can happen to anyone, whether they're trans or cis, based on how they look or sound. Just like accessible streets benefit everyone, regularly sharing pronouns helps create a more inclusive and respectful environment for all.

Finally, I asked Ai...

Misgendering a transgender person is transphobic because it denies their gender identity, invalidates their existence, and reinforces harmful stereotypes, contributing to their marginalization and emotional distress. Respecting pronouns is essential for inclusion.



Meet Sandra one of the newest members of Costa Blanca's Tgirl community.

She has a grace, elegance and style attained from a career in the fashion industry.

We first met Sandra in her beautiful home in Murcia.

Sandra had just given Nina a makeover and with her obvious skill with a brush, Sandra is sure to become the go to girl for advice on makeup and beauty on the Costa.



Costa Blanca TGirls.com
Home of Spains Transgender Community





Costa Blanca TGirls.com
Home of Spain's Transgender Community



The Hormone Question

Exploring Both Sides for Trans Women

I get asked this regularly. “Are you taking hormones?” It’s a very personal question and not one you would normally ask someone as a matter of course. Asking someone, especially a transgender person this can be fraught with danger. My social media presence on many transgender groups means that I will always be asked these questions. I put myself out there to answer questions to help anyone who is on the gender/transgender spectrum. The following are things that trans people may find uncomfortable sharing, unless its with a person that’s close to them.

- Their birth name (never call it their “real” name!) or photographs from before they transitioned
- What hormones they are (or aren’t) taking
- What surgeries they have (or have not) had
- Questions related to sexual relationships

I have put together this short guide to the choice of taking hormones/not taking hormones. The reasons either way will be very personal and individual.

For many trans women, the decision to take hormones (HRT) is a significant step in aligning our physical appearance with our gender identity. However, this choice isn’t universal, and some trans women choose not to pursue hormone therapy. Both paths can be empowering, depending on individual needs and goals. Here, we explore the positives of both taking hormones and choosing not to.

The Positives of Taking Hormones

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) offers a wide range of benefits for trans women. For many, the most immediate and significant advantage is the physical feminisation that HRT can promote. This includes the development of softer skin, breast growth, redistribution of body fat to more traditionally feminine areas, and reduced body hair. These changes can greatly enhance body confidence and comfort in one's gender presentation.

HRT also has emotional benefits. Many trans women report feeling a profound sense of relief and emotional well-being as their body begins to align with their true identity. Estrogen therapy can help alleviate gender dysphoria, reducing anxiety and depression by bringing the body closer to the individual’s inner sense of self. For those seeking a more feminine appearance and deeper emotional harmony, hormones can be a powerful tool.

The Positives of Not Taking Hormones

However, not all trans women feel the need to take hormones to affirm their gender identity. Choosing not to pursue HRT can offer its own set of positives, particularly for those who prefer to maintain certain physical traits or who are concerned about the potential side effects of hormone therapy.

One of the biggest advantages of not taking hormones is maintaining control over one’s body without undergoing medical interventions. Some trans women are comfortable in their physical form and do not feel the need to change it to express their gender. For these individuals, self-expression through clothing, hair, makeup, and behavior can be just as affirming as physical changes.

Additionally, avoiding hormones can mean fewer health risks. Hormone therapy can come with side effects such as blood clots or cardiovascular issues, particularly for older trans women or those with pre-existing health conditions. By not taking hormones, some trans women feel more at ease knowing they’re minimizing medical risks while still living authentically.

Finding What’s Right for You

In the end, the decision to take or not take hormones is deeply personal. I've seen both positive and negative effects of taking hormones in other people so the decision is a massive one. Whether one pursues HRT or embraces their identity without medical intervention, the most important factor is finding the path that makes each individual feel empowered, comfortable, and true to themselves. There's no right or wrong way to be a trans woman—it's all about living authentically in the way that's best for you.



ASK CARLA

I came out as transgender later in life. Why do I get so excited when I buy a new dress?

As a trans woman who has come out later in life, your excitement about new clothes or a new dress can be deeply connected to several emotional and personal factors.

For many trans women, especially those who have lived for years presenting as a gender that didn't align with their true identity, clothing takes on a powerful symbolic meaning. It's not just about fashion—it's about finally being able to express your authentic self. For much of your life, clothing may have felt restrictive, a way to blend in or conform to societal expectations. Now, each new outfit represents freedom and the joy of embracing who you truly are.

The excitement can also stem from the newfound ability to explore and celebrate your femininity. For a long time, wearing the clothes that truly reflect your gender identity may have been something you had to keep hidden or couldn't fully explore. Now, each new dress or outfit is a moment of validation, a way to celebrate your journey and the expression of your womanhood.

Additionally, fashion is a form of self-care and empowerment. Feeling good in your clothes can boost your confidence, help you connect with your body in a positive way, and reflect your personal style—all of which are especially meaningful after years of feeling disconnected from your true self.

Carla

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Confidential emotional support
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Available 10am-10pm
ALL English speakers
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"A girl can never have to many denim skirts", These were the words my wife said as she handed over a skirt she had just bought me.



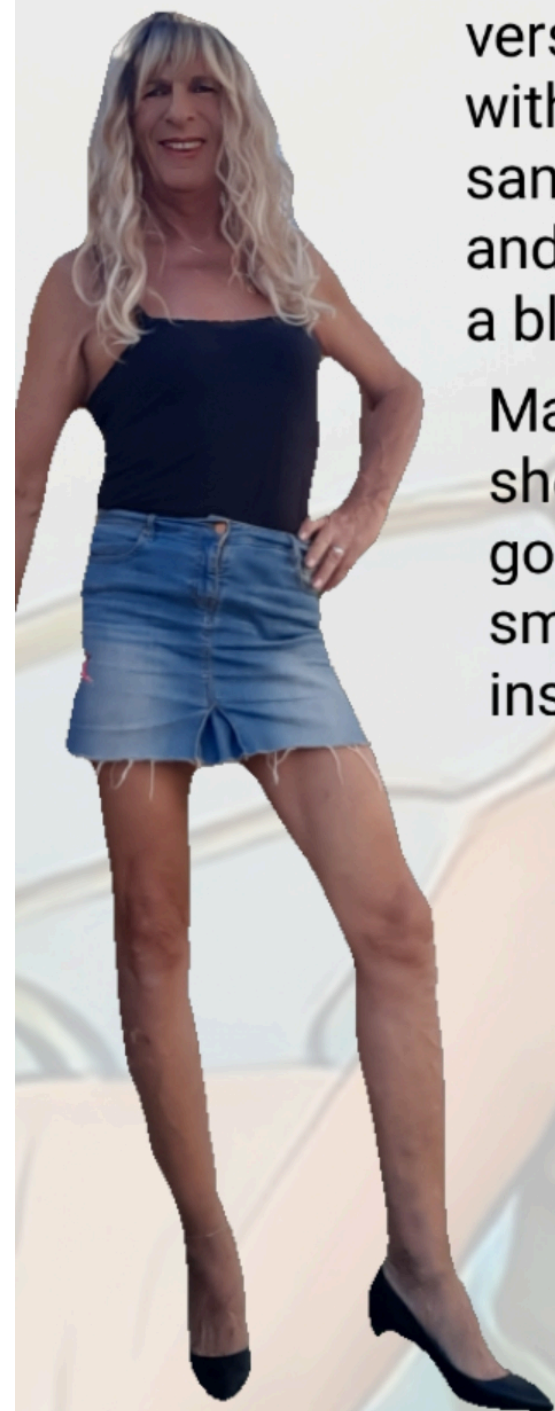
She may have lived to regret those words as I took her literally and now have over 20 in my closet.

I love Denim Skirts for their versatility, they can be worn with almost anything. Heels, sandals, flats, boots, pumps and even trainers. A t-shirt to a blouse or jumper.

Matched with the right shoes and top, you can go from lounging to smart casual in an instant.

There is a wide range of colours and styles to choose from. They are hard wearing and do not crease easily.

I think my wife was right. What do you think?



Sade's First New Song in 6 years Is a tribute to Her Trans Son.

In a deeply personal and heartfelt move, iconic British-Nigerian singer Sade has written a new song about her transgender son for her upcoming album. Known for her soulful voice and timeless hits like *Smooth Operator* and *By Your Side*, Sade is no stranger to exploring themes of love, heartbreak, and resilience. But this new track delves into something even more intimate—the journey of her son, Izaak Theo Adu, as he came out as transgender and transitioned.



Izaak publicly shared his story a few years ago, documenting the challenges and triumphs of his transition, and Sade has been an unwavering source of support. The song is said to be a beautiful reflection of a mother's love, acceptance, and pride for her child. Through poignant lyrics and Sade's signature emotional depth, the song explores the complexities of identity and the unconditional bond between parent and child.

Fans are eagerly awaiting the new album, knowing that this track "Young Lion" will carry a special weight, not just for the LGBTQ+ community, but for anyone who has experienced the transformative power of acceptance. Sade's ability to tap into raw human emotion promises that this song will be yet another masterpiece in her legendary career.



ASK CARLA

What is the difference between Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming people?

While the terms "transgender" and "gender non-conforming" are often used in conversations about gender identity, they refer to different experiences. Understanding the distinction is key to fostering inclusivity and respect.

Transgender refers to individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, someone assigned male at birth may identify and live as a woman, or vice versa. Transgender people may choose to transition socially, medically, or both, to align their gender presentation with their true identity. Being transgender is about a person's internal sense of who they are—man, woman, or something else entirely.

Gender non-conforming (GNC) refers to individuals who don't adhere to traditional gender expectations in their appearance, behavior, or identity. A person may identify as male or female but express themselves in ways that don't fit typical gender norms. For example, a man who wears makeup or a woman who prefers traditionally masculine clothing could be considered gender non-conforming. Unlike transgender people, GNC individuals may not feel the need to change their gender identity but simply choose to reject rigid gender norms.

In short, transgender is arguably about identity, while gender non-conforming is about expression. Both groups challenge societal norms, but in different ways.

Navigating Sexuality as a Newly Out Transgender Person: The Kinsey Scale Dilemma

One of the personal questions I and other transgender people are asked is about our sexuality. “Do you still fancy women?”, “Are you now into men?”, “Isn’t it all confusing for you?”.

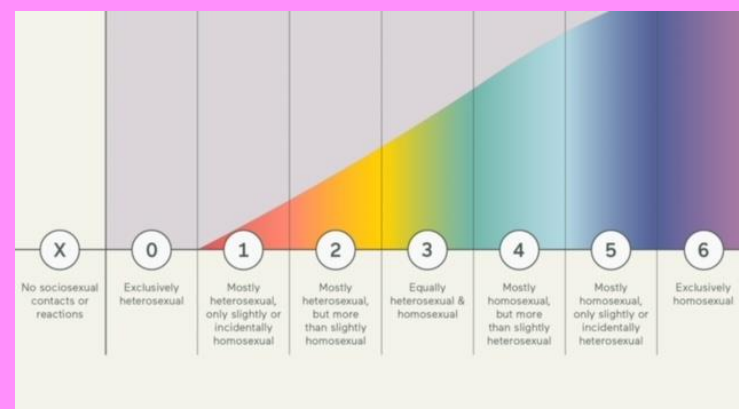
People often confuse gender and sexuality and I would often say to people, if you woke up tomorrow with all the private parts of the opposite sex/gender, would you still fancy the same person/people? A bit simplistic but didn’t really get to the point. Sexuality I would also describe as “who you want to do it with”. Does it change or stay the same when you come out as trans?

I looked at the Kinsey scale of sexuality, which was developed by Alfred Kinsey in the 1940’s. **Things have moved on since then**, especially regarding an individual’s sexual identity, but it gives a basic understanding and I think, still worth noting.

Coming out as transgender is often a profound journey of self-discovery, not only in terms of gender identity but also in relation to sexual orientation. Many transgender individuals find that their sense of attraction evolves as they transition or come to terms with their gender identity. The Kinsey Scale, developed in the 1940s, can provide a useful framework for understanding this complexity, yet it also highlights the unique dilemmas many newly out transgender people face when exploring their sexuality.

The **Kinsey Scale** measures sexual orientation on a spectrum from 0 to 6, where 0 represents exclusive heterosexual attraction and 6 represents

exclusive homosexual attraction, with various degrees of bisexuality in between. While the scale was revolutionary in its acknowledgment of sexual fluidity, it primarily assumes a binary understanding of gender, which can complicate things for transgender people whose experiences don’t always align with such clear distinctions.



For a newly out transgender person, questions about sexual orientation can feel disorienting. A trans woman, for example, may have identified as a straight man before coming out, being attracted to women. However, after transitioning, she may question whether her attraction to women now makes her a lesbian. Alternatively, some find that their attraction shifts—perhaps becoming attracted to men or developing a broader sense of attraction across genders. This can cause feelings of confusion as they navigate how to label their sexuality and where they fit on the Kinsey Scale.

Another challenge lies in the reactions of others. For many transgender people, societal perceptions of their sexuality may change post-transition, often clashing with their own experiences of attraction. A trans man dating a woman might still be seen as a lesbian by others, despite identifying as a straight man. Such misperceptions can lead to frustration and even internal conflict about where they belong in the broader spectrum of sexual orientation.

So much more has been added to the scale to be taken into consideration and include:

- Practice (having sex with the same gender even though their sexual orientation is straight for example),
- Gender Expression (masculine/feminine, butch/femme),
- Initiative (top or bottom for example)
- Self confidence (are you desirable or attractive in a sexual sense)
- Gender Identity (man, women or beyond the boundary)

The Kinsey Scale provides a valuable reminder that sexuality is fluid and not always easily categorized. However, its binary approach to gender can fall short in addressing the lived realities of transgender people. The important thing for newly out transgender individuals is to give themselves the space to explore their attractions without feeling confined to any specific label or number on a scale. Sexuality, like gender, is a deeply personal and evolving journey.

Alfred Kinsey

Alfred Kinsey was an American biologist and sexologist known for pioneering research on human sexuality. His groundbreaking studies, *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female* (1953), challenged conventional views on sexual behaviour, sparking conversations about sexual diversity and influencing modern sex research.



Alfred Kinsey. (Photo by Arthur Siegel/The LIFE Images Collection via Getty Images/Getty Images)

Glad To Be Alive

The journey from he to she...

*When we're together,
 It's hard to find the words
 My heart is drawn towards you,
 So much so it hurts
 I see you there beside me,
 Joined, we'll never part
 When you hold my hand,
 You take hold of my heart
 She lives deep inside me,
 She took some time to rise
 But she rose from the dark recess,
 With those beautiful wide eyes
 Alert to a world of hope,
 She made her way outside
 A glowing risen butterfly,
 Glad to be alive.*

Carla x

