



SIBYLS LOGO - ROBYN GOLDEN - HANW 28 MAY 2018



Sibyls Newsletter 115

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Editorial

Dear Sibyls

It's very nearly a year since the Supreme Court decided that "sex" in the Equality Act refers to "biological sex" or sex assigned at birth. The EHRC then promptly rushed out guidance (which they had to withdraw) effectively mandating a policy of exclusion of trans people. The government welcomed the ruling as bringing "clarity". As we know, it did anything but, leaving service providers and single sex groups thoroughly confused with some evidently believing the law requires them to exclude trans people; and leaving trans people miserable, scared and in many cases despairing. As I write, the statutory guidance from the EHRC is still awaited. The long delay in issuing it might reflect a realisation by the government that this is not as simple as they thought and in any form highly vulnerable to legal challenge; it might even reflect belated concern about the harm being done to a small and vulnerable group of people; or just be pusillanimous procrastination. We as trans people have been caught up rather helplessly in strongly flowing political tides where populism and expediency are valued more than principle and integrity.

But we are not giving in. I was encouraged to hear from a long-standing but hitherto inactive member of Sibyls saying she could no longer stand by and see what is happening to trans people but wanted to be engaged and committed together with her suffering trans siblings. Lots of trans people, perhaps quietly but with courage, are refusing to be intimidated or driven back into the closet but are getting on with their lives, doing normal things, living authentically. Just being ourselves is an act of resistance. Some of us have particular gifts we can use. Do read Susan Gilchrist's reflection given at St Anne's earlier

in March where she brilliantly suggests that a “Turing Test” be applied to trans identities: surely a far better, kinder test than the exclusionary crudity of “biological sex”.....

May I wish you all much joy of the joyous Easter season. Some may have the blessing of an accepting, affirming Christian community – others may not. Some may be proudly and happily “out”, others may be denied that privilege. Let us remember that Jesus too had a hidden identity, was persistently misunderstood even by friends and family and after his resurrection people failed to recognise him – he both was and was not the same. Wherever we are on our gender journeys, Jesus is there with us.

Pauline xx

Editor

Pauline Fleck

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A BLESSING

The world now is too dangerous
and too beautiful for anything but love.
May your eyes be so blessed you see God in everyone.
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament.
Your lips, so you speak nothing but the truth with love.
May your feet be so blessed you run
to those who need you.
And may your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
your love, changes everything.

Introduction to the Sibyls

We are a Christian spirituality group for gender-variant people.

Sibyls website

The main source of information about the Sibyls is our website: www.sibyls.co.uk. This includes:

- How to join the Sibyls confidential mailing list.
- Planned events, supportive churches and inclusive faith groups.
- Resources, such as books and signposted web links.
- Recent Sibyls newsletters.
- Our listening service, if you need to talk to someone about being a trans Christian.
- How to contact us.

Sibyls Facebook groups

There are two Facebook groups which enable Sibyls and other trans Christians to communicate and exchange views and news. They are:

- Sibyls Members' Group – send a request via Facebook to join this confidential group.
- TranschristianUK – an open group, do join up if you are not already a member.

WhatsApp Group

Sibyls has a WhatsApp group and all are welcome to join. Just click this link and an admin will admit you.

https://chat.whatsapp.com/DIG1NE2eVzaL5BUFW5Q4FR?mode=gi_t

Meetings for personal conversation and sharing

Some of you might appreciate the opportunity for more personal conversation on Zoom, rather than the regular large sessions. We can help arrange meet-ups for e.g. just three Sibyls – this would enable easier direct conversation and sharing (with some ground rules). If you would like this to happen, please email pauline.fleck@btinternet.com and we will see what is possible.

More detailed information about our online activity is available by post if you do not have access to the internet. Please contact Pauline as above.

Services and events in 2026

General

Online

Sibyls Zoom services and fellowship meetings take place online, usually around the 25th day of the month, beginning at 7.00 pm.. We aim to send out invitations about a week in advance.

London group

Sibyls based in or near London are welcome to take part in our quarterly communion service, at 6.00pm, at St Anne's Church, 55 Dean Street, London W1D 6AF, followed by a meal in a nearby restaurant. Provisional dates for 2026 are: Thu 11 June, Fri 11 Sept, Tue Nov.

For more information contact Susan Gilchrist at:

susan@crestcons.net

Events in North Wales / West Cheshire

Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE is the Chair of the UNIQUE Transgender Network.

See <https://www.uniquetg.org.uk/>

(there's a lot of interesting information, not just for those lucky enough to live in North Wales):

Jenny-Anne hosts an online service every Sunday at 4.00pm for LGBTQ+ people. Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88502951623>

Residential Weekend 2026

Holy Rood House in Thirsk has been booked for 23-25 October. Those present at the previous weekend we had there will remember what an oasis of peace it is and how well we were looked after. There will be further information about the weekend and a booking form in the next newsletter. This will also be sent direct to members nearer the time.

A Fairytale?

Once upon a time a woman author put pen to paper. She wrote a series of books about witches and witches. These turned out to be highly popular and made her very, very rich.

The central theme of all her books were the tensions that came to a boil within the wizarding community.

You see, there were some witches and wizards who thought of themselves as “Truebloods”. They considered themselves very special. They looked down their noses at what they called “Muggles”, i.e., people that lacked their special powers.

The trouble arose because a few Muggles did have some of their powers. Some of the Truebloods were incensed and started calling them “Mudbloods”. They wanted Mudbloods to be banned from all their Trueblood places and activities.

But, not all Truebloods thought that way and many of them made friends with Mudbloods..

Eventually, full-scale war broke out. The Trueblood armies mounted a huge attack. They were defeated by a combined army of Truebloods sympathetic to the Mudblood’s cause and, of course, the Mudbloods themselves.

The books were so popular that they were turned into movies. A child actress was chosen to be the leading lady. She played the part of a Mudblood. After many years of playing this part in several movies, the child actress grew into a young woman.

The perceptive young actress clearly saw strong parallels between her Mudblood role, the abuse she encountered within the role, and the current plight of trans women. So she backed their cause and spoke up for them.

The woman author was furious. She hated trans women and demanded an immediate apology from the young actress, but she didn’t get one. Failing to see the irony, the woman author spent lots of her fortune in funding groups who, like her, hated trans women.

We don’t yet know how this fairytale ends. Let’s just hope the books were somehow prophetic, and the Mudbloods and their allies once again triumph against the forces of hatred and intolerance.

Do you want to know who this woman author is?

Let’s just call her, “She who must not be named”.

By “A Sibyl”.

LIFTED

A Cloud of confusion has lifted.
A tight treble knot has loosened.

All stress now suddenly dissolved.
All tension at long last vanished.

In honesty, there is liberation.
In integrity, freedom

I found strength in self-acceptance.
I gained power through self-honesty

What a fantastic wonder has occurred
What a marvellous thing has happened

My heart dances with joy.
My soul is now at peace.

Thank you, my dear friends
For making this possible!

Monday, 17 February 2020 – following a pleasant lunchtime discussion with two transwomen.
Sapio R

Whitened Sepulchres?

In the 1980's I got a job with a very large organisation. In my first few weeks I was delighted to find that they had a Christian Fellowship group that met up over lunch to discuss Bible passages and say a few prayers.

Of course I often went along.

Until the day when the chap leading the meetings, an officer in the Salvation Army, boldly stated that it was his belief that God had sent along HIV/AIDS in order to punish the homosexual community. I was appalled and, to my horror, everyone else in the meeting agreed. To my eternal shame, I said nothing. I didn't even stand up and walk out.

This was the 1980's. If you contracted HIV there were no real treatments available. It would inevitably lead to AIDS and you would die a horrible death.

Since then, I've often thought of the things that I should have said in that meeting.

I should have asked how he could possibly square his statement with "love thy neighbour".

I should have asked why his God of Love didn't seem to care about the collateral damage the disease brought about. The innocent women and children who died the same horrible death because they had received blood from well-meaning donors who had not realised they were HIV positive.

I should have asked him to explain why this God, who went around zapping people, couldn't even be bothered to come up with a few simple heart attacks for the likes of Adolf Hitler and his henchmen.

That's all on my conscience. May the Lord forgive me.

But similar things are still happening today. There have been several employment tribunals brought about by people whose Christian "conscience" won't allow them to address trans women by anything other than male pronouns.

There's not much point in getting into ecclesiastical debate with such people. You're only inviting them to play their favourite party piece of quoting verses from scripture. Rattling off verse after verse like a machine gun, but conveniently forgetting to mention any verses that might actually contradict their views.

I think it's a better tack to ask them if their job description gives them the right to be deliberately and persistently impolite to you by addressing you in terms that they knowingly will give you distress. Keep it secular, that way you're on a much more level playing field.

Within my lifetime I've witnessed people using the "N" word when a black person was around. Once again, I didn't speak up. The Lord knows he's got a sinful one in me.

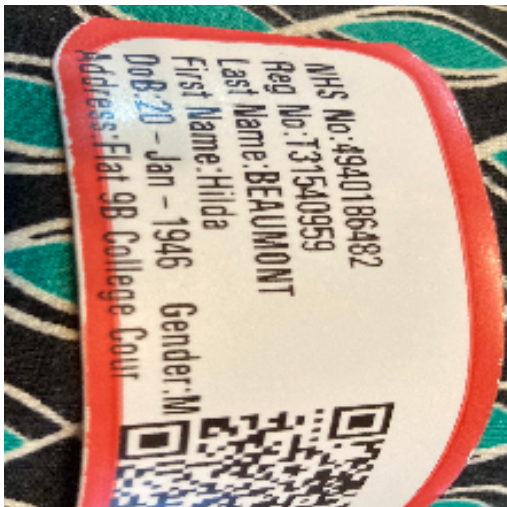
But such racist behaviour nowadays would almost certainly guarantee their dismissal, and quite rightly so. In time, the same considerations will apply to us trans people. But don't hold your breath waiting for it to happen.

Nowadays I'm deeply suspicious of anyone who presents themselves as overly pious. From reading this I think you can understand why. I believe we've all got some darkness within us. Far better to acknowledge it, otherwise it will find ways of coming out. Like within my aforementioned Christian Fellowship group.

I thank the Lord that I'm trans. It's opened my eyes to so much.

Written by "*The Silly Old Moo*".

On Wednesday Hilda had a hip replacement operation which was very successful, and she was discharged on Friday morning. When she went up to her room the nurse their asked for my preferred pronouns and she told her - she, her and hers. This puzzled her a bit and when she looked at her wrist band this is what she saw(also attached):



Hilda didn't make any comment at the time but as she was being discharged she pointed out to her that the information on the band was incorrect and said," I understand that in law my sex is male (M) but my preferred gender is definitely female (F) and really the information on the band should reflect this as read as follows

Last Name: BEAUMONT

First Name: Hilda

DoB: 20 - Jan - 1946 Sex in Law M Gender F

Address: Flat 9B College Court

She agreed that the way the band had been laid out was faulty and would be changed in the future.

Hilda is not convinced this will happen, so she'll bring it up when she has her final meeting with the consultant.

Hilda



Silenced by shame

In the Christian context, the toxicity of silent bystanders creates and feeds countless acts of violence: the sexual abuse in many church settings and its continuation through empty apologies; Christianity's lack of reckoning with its history of colonization; denominations' refusal to honor and elevate the leadership and dignity of women, people of color, refugees, people with disabilities, and people from other marginalized communities; churches filling with Christian nationalism and white supremacy culture; the countless times the silent acceptance of bad theology has caused an LGBTQIA+ person to hate or harm themselves; and more. This is the silence of harm, violence, shame, and toxicity....

Cassidy Hall, Centre for Action and Contemplation

Susan Gilchrist's reflection at the Sibyls service at St Anne's on 16 March on the story in St John's Gospel about the man born blind. Susan suggests applying the Turing Test to decide who is a "woman":

There are so many parallels here to transgender conditions and the current United Kingdom disputes. The Pharisees are like those of certain but not all gender-critical feminist ideologies and traditional religious groups who try to enforce a false diagnosis on transgender conditions, which alleges that "transgender people believe they can choose, change or deny biological sex". When we too know that such a change in physicality would be impossible: And also, because we know that our search is for a coherence of identity: That gender identity is determined by relationships with others, it is the search for coherence of identity, belonging and fulfilment of life: Which is not dictated by biology: and it is not determined by the drives of sex. But the Pharisees, gender-critical groups, religious and other groups continue to act with the spiritual blindness and the certainty that they are right. Some way to resolve these confusions is needed. And sometimes it might be right to draw on

artificial intelligence for our answers when incorrect diagnoses are applied. For this I suggest that an approach akin to the Turing test for artificial intelligence should be used. Thus, if any transgender person interacts with society in the same way as all other women, and if any transgender person supports the demand for women's safety and rights in the same way as all other women, and if any transgender person is subject to the same discrimination, prejudices and threats to safety as all other women, then anyone who satisfies all these

requirements should be able to define themselves as women, be considered as women in any social interaction and in any legislative act". The 2004 Gender Recognition Act introduced the term "Legal Sex" to deal with these matters; and it uses the word "woman" to refer both to gender and sex: The term "legal sex" in the Act refers to the "performance of gender:" which separates it from "the physiology of sex". So, each is applied in the context that is correct. The decision of the Supreme Court to exclusively confine the definition of

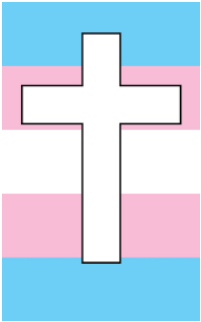
the word "woman" to "the biology of sex", is a return to the spiritual and social blindness which presumes that unless some sexually motivated perversion or disruption occurs: gender identity must always be congruent with biological sex: And to the enforcement of a false "gender ideology"; which claims that transgender people believe they can "change biological sex". It also returns us to an approach that, for centuries has condemned; not just transgender people, but all gender and sexually variant people for behaviour which, without exception has been described as "acts of grave depravity," "intrinsically disordered, contrary to natural law; because they choose the sexual act to the gift of life, lack true gender complementarity and are always in pursuit of illicit sex". Although the Supreme Court does not go as far as this: By adopting an ideology which ignores, and is blind to pre-cognitive development during the first three years of life: it changes an approach which by default had maximised the inclusion of transgender people in everyday life, into one which by default excludes them: So that, in place of the scientific consensus today adopted on a universal basis by the World Authorities and Professional Medical Institutions, who consider all transgender, gender, and sexual identities to "naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life": Which search for a coherence of identity and belonging; with no harm to others; and fulfilment of life. Its blindness decides; with groups including "Sex matters", that transgender conditions are driven by motives of sex. There is no support for any blindness in the Gospel Message. And Julian of Norwich; in "Revelations of Divine Love", might help to set us on the correct path. For Julian (1342–1416) profoundly envisioned Jesus as our "True Mother," embodying natural love, wisdom, and tender care. In "Revelations of Divine Love," she teaches that Christ "mothers" us through his incarnation, nourishing us with his body through the sacraments and enduring the suffering of the cross, akin to labour pains, to bring us to eternal life. For Julian sees God as our "tender Mother": She emphasizes that God's love is intimately nurturing. She describes God as a "kindly, loving Mother" who understands the needs of her child and keeps them "fully and tenderly," In suffering and nurturing: She states that while biological mothers bear children to pain and death, Jesus, our true Mother,

bears us to joy and endless life. His suffering on the cross is interpreted as a mother's labour pains to bring children into the world (of grace). In enduring love and comfort: Julian believes our mothering Jesus never changes his love, regardless of our age or sins. She argues that when we fall, God doesn't blame us but looks upon us with the pity of a loving mother. For nourishment and mercy: Julian writes that Jesus sustains us within himself, and "feeds us with himself most generously and tenderly through the holy sacraments".

Her

writings emphasize that this "Motherhood of God" serves as a comforting, healing image, highlighting that we are held and nurtured in divine love, reassuring that "All shall be Well". In 1 Samuel 16:7, God tells the prophet Samuel, "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart". And if all of us try to remove the spiritual blindness from our eyes: and in each other's eyes then, "All shall be Well". And "All shall be Well" for us as well.

Trans faith



LLF ends with creation of two working groups:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/news-and-press-releases/synod-approves-motion-confirming-llf-programme-conclude-and-new-working-group-be-established>

Beng trans as a matter of faith, like faith in God:

[transfaith](https://www.transfaith.org/)

What does the Bible say about trans people? Useful resource from HRC Foundation:

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-transgender-people>

American trans Catholic hopes for a church that welcomes everyone is scary environment for trans people in US:

<https://www.newwaysministry.org/2026/01/19/transgender-catholic-envisions-a-church-for-everyone/>

Trans Theology conference at Jesuit Centre:

<https://londonjesuitcentre.churchsuite.com/events/wevpt6zu>

Please pray for Ven. Dr Rachel Mann:

<https://www.manchester.anglican.org/archdeacon-rachel-writes-to-the-diocese/>

Heart-felt bog from Chrissie Chevasutt, the “totally failed Christian” (one of the most Christian people I know):

<https://chrissiechevasutt.wordpress.com/>

Nicolete Burbach writes for New Ways Ministry on how Christ can free trans people from our bondage:

<https://www.newwaysministry.org/2026/02/25/the-freedom-to-be-trans/>

Transgender Day of Visibility: a reflection and prayer from Alex Clare-Young:

<https://www.beyondbinaries.uk/recent-articles/tdov-2026>

Trans law and politics



Latest tribunal ruling shows utter confusion around single sex spaces and how NHS is a battle ground:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7v0l25mr2ro>

HofC select committee question Dr Mary-Anne Stepenson before her appointment as Chair of EHRC: Alex Sobel MP Is a member of the committee and a trans ally:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/16229/pdf/>

High Court judge throws our Sex Matters challenge to use of Hampstead ponds by trans women:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/29/judge-blocks-charitys-challenge-over-trans-peoples-use-of-hampstead-ponds-single-sex-facilities>

Council of Europe votes to ban conversion therapy inclusive of trans people, despite opposition of Sex Matters:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/01/30/conversion-therapy-council-of-europe/>

Court to rule on treatment of trans prisoners in Scotland (could have important implications for all trans people):

<https://www.scottishtrans.org/for-women-scotland-vs-scottish-ministers-what-is-this-weeks-court-of-session-case-all-about>

Guidance to schools on gender-questioning schools out for consultation:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2026/feb/12/new-gender-guidance-for-uk-primary-school-children-permits-use-of-different-pronouns>

High Court rejects Good Law Project challenge to EHRC interim guidance but the judge affirms that those who provide facilities should comply with the law but also be "guided by common sense and benevolence rather than allow themselves to be blinkered by unyielding ideologies".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2lrd0ey074o>

Melanie Field, a former civil servant who played a key role in drafting the Equality Act, said: “Sadly this judgment has not provided the clarity many were hoping for in this atmosphere where there are hardline positions on both sides and employers and service providers remain uncertain of their duties. Its reliance on the provision of universal and ‘third spaces’ to meet the needs of trans people raises practical challenges and could impact on the overall availability of single-sex facilities and the ability of trans and disabled people to live in equal dignity with others.

“It is positive in that it seems to reduce the risk that a women’s service that chooses to include trans women will face a successful discrimination case from a man. But overall the judgment highlights the difficulties caused by having a new interpretation of the legislation which conflicts with the original policy and drafting intention. Hopefully the government will now take steps to set out clearly its policy on the treatment of trans people in our society and ensure the law reflects that.” (Guardian 13 February)

Good Law Project says judgment means service providers can make women’s loos inclusive of trans women without making them open to men but that workplace providers may exclude trans people:

<https://goodlawproject.org/update/high-court-rules-on-lawfulness-of-the-ehrcs-interim-guidance/>

Good Law Project letter to Bridget Phillipson:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10166597164012802&set=pcb.26771713795748630>

UK Constitutional Law Association – Rob Mullins subjects recent legal rulings to detailed analysis and concludes:

Employers and service providers who have accommodated trans-people in their acquired sex have done no more than adopt the liberal, common-sense attitude that Lord Reed once celebrated. If the proposal to treat trans-inclusive services as unlawful and intrinsically wrongful is followed, it would represent a radical departure from the laissez-faire approach that has prevailed in the United Kingdom for several decades. It would be an unprecedented regression for the UK, which would infringe the Article 8 rights of trans people. Fortunately, even following *FWS*, there is nothing in the UK’s domestic legal arrangements that should require such a regression.

[Constitutional Law](#)

Trans health



Surge in trans suicides following withdrawal of trans-affirming healthcare for young trans:
<https://goodlawproject.org/new-data-shows-surge-in-trans-kids-suicides-following-healthcare-rollback/>

Hilary Cass says trans children misled by social media:
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2026/feb/15/social-media-misleading-young-people-gender-transitioning-hilary-cass>

Helen Webberley refers Cass to the GMC:
<https://www.helenwebberley.com/p/i-have-referred-dr-hilary-cass-to>

Puberty blockers trial paused:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjd9z0p27k5o>

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2026/feb/20/uk-clinical-trial-into-puberty-blockers-paused-after-medicines-regulator-raises-concerns>

MHRA official recused from involvement in puberty blockers trial over gender-critical views:
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2026/mar/01/professor-reportedly-paused-uk-puberty-blockers-trial-recused-bias>

Updated TransActual guide to medical transition:
<https://transactual.org.uk/medical-transition/>

Consultation on proposed ban on hormone therapy for under 18s: reply by 7 June:
<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/consultation/prescribing-masculinising-and-feminising-hormones/>

I have responded. As far as I can see this proposal ignores the standards of care for young trans people set out by WPATH – following of course the example of the Cass Review. We are systematically and callously removing care from a highly vulnerable part of our society.

Trans life



Why people, despite the evidence, believe that trans women are a threat to other women:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/01/28/trans-women-are-no-threat-to-cis-women-so-why-is-the-public-ready-to-believe-they-are/>

New research shows trans women have no advantage in sport after HRT compared to cis women:
<https://www.scenemag.co.uk/new-research-shows-trans-women-have-no-athletic-advantage-over-cisgender-women>

...but that hasn't stopped the IOC banning us from the Olympics:
<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2026/mar/26/why-olympics-u-turned-gender-rules-sex-testing>

Largest ever survey of trans people in US shows that when people detransition it's overwhelmingly because of transphobia:

<https://www.them.us/story/trans-americans-transition-survey-transphobia>

Depressing new report from TransActual:

<https://transactual.org.uk/blog/2026/03/03/new-trans-lives-report-released-today-by-transactual/>

Trans world



Trans Holocaust in Nazi Germany:

<https://elierlick.com/transholocaust>

Trans EU:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/03/13/eu-countries-trans-rights/>
CJEU rules that trans rights are fundamental to freedom of movement.
Trans Ireland- yes!



Trans USA – no!

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/19/i-was-afraid-for-my-life-the-transgender-refugees-fleeing-trumps-america>

Supreme Court rules on party lines to overturn Californian laws protecting privacy of trans children:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/mar/02/us-supreme-court-california-trans-students-privacy-law>

Trans South Korea: good news:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/03/05/south-korea-trans-foundation/>

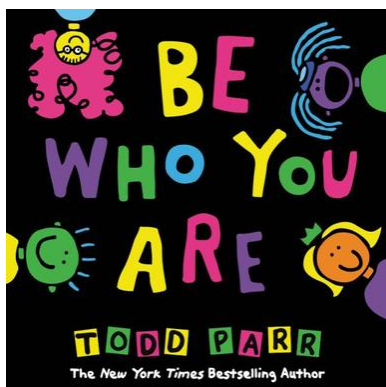
Trans India – anti-trans measure reflects global transphobic trends :

<https://gaysifamily.com/lifestyle/indias-new-transgender-bill-amendment-and-the-global-rise-of-gender-authoritarianism/>

Trans Nepal – yes !

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/03/17/nepals-lgbtq-community-celebrates-as-country-gets-first-trans-lawmaker/>

Trans books and media



Transphobic Times:

<https://medium.com/@mimmymum/how-anti-trans-propaganda-works-baroness-spielman-the-times-and-the-politics-of-safeguarding-70ea72c26b87>

More JKR controversy, over HBO TV series:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2026/feb/02/john-lithgow-says-he-finds-jk-rowlings-stance-on-trans-rights-ironic-and-inexplicable>

The Bookish Type, the wonderful trans-run indie bookshop in Leeds, is taking a stand against JKR:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2026/03/26/harry-potter-book-trans-fundraiser/>