

## **Are my views (and those of Stonewall) indeed homophobic and misogynistic?**

A copy of my complete communication with Professor Neumayer can be found at [\[link\]](#). But I would like to give you the beginning of my email to him in which I challenged him to justify his accusations. I continued that email by debunking the reasoning one can find on social media, typically in anonymous tweets. The original content can be found at [\[link\]](#), but here I have included a polished version. The arguments are the same though.

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**Sent:** 28 February 2023 16:49

**To:** Neumayer,E <[E.Neumayer@lse.ac.uk](mailto:E.Neumayer@lse.ac.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Personal response by faculty member hurt by decision to leave Stonewall

Dear Eric,

Of course, I appreciate that you have taken the effort to respond. However, I am now more scared.

In my previous email I mentioned how shocked I was that all kinds of claims were made without proper substantiation. You now up the ante by explicitly doing the same with the misogynistic and homophobic claims and telling me that you have found those arguments to be persuasive without making clear what is exactly misogynistic and homophobic about Stonewall.

Since I share Stonewall's views, I am thus viewed to be misogynistic and homophobic by the top brass at the LSE.

I guess it is an interesting one for the archives, but of course sad that in 2023 the LSE administrator who soon will be the new president and vice-chancellor of the LSE basically tells a faculty member who

- i) has endured a terribly repressive religious childhood for being gay,
- ii) stuck his neck out for gay rights from a relatively young age,
- iii) been part of numerous demonstration for gay rights and fighting AIDS (and being outed by having his picture in the newspaper)
- iv) at times (but not too often) risked arrest while being on a student visa,
- v) has lost numerous friends to AIDS,

is apparently homophobic because that faculty member shares Stonewall's views. Is this the improved freedom of speech that Baroness Shafik is keen to see at the LSE?

I know you do not strictly say that you think that I am homophobic, but you do say that your decision to support leaving Stonewall has been based on the idea that Stonewall's views (and thus mine) are homophobic.

**In contrast to those arguing against Stonewall at the LSE, I will give a detailed discussion (for the record).**

In my email, I continued to give an overview of the current discussion related to professor Neumayer's accusations. Here is a polished version of the rest of that email.<sup>1</sup>

Before doing that, I want to stress that it is not my responsibility to justify professor Neumayer's accusations. But I am quite familiar with what is floating around. So I just made professor Neuymayer's job easy by asking whether his reasons for coming up with these terrible accusations are what I understand them to be.

### **Is Stonewall misogynistic and homophobic?**

Misogynistic. The public debate seems pretty straightforward. There is believed to be a tension between women's rights and trans rights. In particular, there are people in today's society who think that the 2010 Equality Act has gone too far in granting trans right. Those who are in favour of upholding the 2010 Equality Act or -- as we have seen in Scotland -- those in favour of just simplifying bureaucratic procedures to get your gender changed on your birth certificate (without any additional new trans rights) are accused of being misogynistic and "*destroyers or women's rights.*"

So the problem that some people have with Stonewall is that Stonewall supports and gives advice according to the 2010 Equality Act. The nasty misogynistic accusation does not come from people who do support the current legislation and find fault with Stonewall's interpretation of this law. It comes from people who do not support the 2010 Equality Act.

Thirty years ago, there was the same tension between religious rights and lesbian/gay rights. And the accusations were similar. Us gays were violating freedom of religion, we spread terrible diseases, we were child abusers, and worse (my own dad once told me that the devil was inside me). Just just as now, there was lots of scaremongering where the behaviour of a few bad apples was extrapolated to the whole gay community.

It makes sense that rights come with limits. For example, the 2010 Equality Act allows for the possibility to have spaces where access is based on biological sex (e.g. prisons). Sensible people can debate about such limits. And it is useful to have a discussion on how women's rights and in particular women's safety is affected by the inclusion of trans women. But it should be a fact-based discussion. On social media, one can see trans women explicitly and implicitly being linked with rapists. And this is done very frequently. And I am sure there are some nasty trans women out there, just as some gay men turned out to be paedophiles as predicted by the bigots. So, is an organization like Stonewall misogynistic because it argues that we can overcome the discomfort that some people have when trans people can enter the bathroom that corresponds to the gender they identify with? That is the LSE SMC view. Or do we have to learn how to accept people around us who are/look perhaps a bit different. In the last couple decades, we have learned that inclusion of lesbians and gays has not led to Armageddon. And don't forget that laws like Section 28 were

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<sup>1</sup> Original can be found at [\[link\]](#).

put in place because that was a widely held prediction. In fact, we flourished when we became a more inclusive society. Shouldn't we be able to do the same with trans, nonbinary, and intersex people?

It is one thing that those on social media scream misogynistic as soon as trans issues are discussed, but one would expect proper arguments at the LSE, not just stating such accusations. The question arises whether the LSE SMC also thinks that Stonewall is misogynistic because the LSE SMC has problems with the 2010 Equality Act. If that is not the case and the LSE SMC does stand for inclusion, then why is membership of Stonewall such a problem?

On my website, I elaborate on this and in particular on how the UK stands out by having such an anti-trans feminist movement which one doesn't find in the rest of the western world. Also, not in the US; the US does have a strong anti-trans movement but that finds its roots in religion.

Homophobic. The misogynistic argument that one can find in the public domain against those in favour of trans rights is pretty clear. And except that there is obvious scaremongering, I can understand people's anxiety (but not attacking Stonewall for sticking to the 2010 Equalities Act). For the homophobic argument against Stonewall, you really have to search hard and go to a very small contingent of today's society.

#### Argument #1.

The argument is as follows. Trans people are supposedly not trans, but lesbian or gay and these confused individuals think that by changing their gender they can be in a relationship with their preferred gender so avoid being seen as a homosexual. Thus, by allowing trans people to change their gender, this "crazy trans trend" prevents these people from being lesbian or gay which is what they really are, not trans. Consequently, trans ideology is homophobic. This argument is not completely ridiculous in countries like Iran where you risk the death penalty by being gay, but being a trans woman in a relationship with a man is less risky. But it is not supported by facts in countries like the UK. Moreover, it is also quite illogical. In countries like the UK, it is so much more difficult to be trans than to be lesbian or gay. It is true that being lesbian or gay still provides some difficulties. But does anybody truly believe that because being lesbian or gay is so terrible that people are willing (i) to go through the hardship associated with changing their gender and (ii) being subject to massive anti-trans abuse which is so much more bearable than what lesbians and gays endure.

This lack of respect for the views expressed by transgenders themselves is of course extremely similar to the view that being gay is a choice. When I started educating myself a bit on trans issues a couple years ago, I was shocked by the realization that many trans people already know they are trans when they are toddlers (praying to God that they will wake up in the other gender the next morning). So just as once lesbians and gays were told that they were either confused or sick, trans people are now told the same. I'll never forget how the professor I worked for as an MSc student in the Netherlands lectured me on statistics regarding gays becoming straight. Nor the tv programs and publications with a similar message. And this was in the

Netherlands! We now see the exact same thing. I would recommend the reader to first talk to several trans people before forming an opinion about this.

Argument #2. The other argument is the following: Trans people are really problematic for lesbians and gays because they are infiltrating websites to find (sex) partners. I have heard gender critics make this argument in interviews, but I also have a gay Dutch friend (slightly older than me) who has told me that he is “*disgusted*” having to look at profiles of these “*weirdos*.” I asked him whether he was ever contacted by a trans women or trans men. The answer was no. I think this makes it perfectly clear what is going on. The problem is just that trans people have a profile and so the list on the website that one can choose partners from is no longer “pure.” The problem for these gender criticals is that trans people exist. And just in case you do not know much about such sites. You can block anybody (even if they haven’t contacted you) so that you become invisible to them and they to you.

**These views are NOT representative at all of the LGBTQIA+ community.**

Professor Neumayer states that these terrible views about Stonewall are held “*by important members of the [LSE] LGBTQ community.*” There are indeed a few lesbians and gays in the world who have problems with trans rights; having been subject to discrimination yourself does not mean you respect and support the inclusion of an even more marginalized minority. Specifically, there is a so-called “LGB without the T” contingent. But it is crystal clear that there are very few within the LGBTQIA+ community with these views and virtually none among the young. Let’s take a look.

- The decision to leave Stonewall was condemned by Spectrum.
- The petition speaking out against the SMC decision to leave Stonewall was signed by 800 members of the LSE community.
- A recent YouGov poll asked sexual and gender identities which acronym they preferred to use and only 3% chose an acronym “without a T.” [\[link\]](#) Of course, not everybody in this 3% is gender critical.<sup>2</sup> For some it is just old familiarity. But it is in this small unrepresentative “LGB without the T” group that one can find the gender-critical views that trans rights are misogynistic and homophobic.
- The overwhelming support for trans rights in the LGBTQIA+ community was also made clear by the tens of thousands who were part of Pride 2023 in London which was in explicit support of trans rights this year. Some cis-straight people may not understand the massive importance of such events/protests for the self-acceptance of being different and understand how crucial such events are for letting you feel that you too belong. But I am glad that people in London understand the importance and are willing to accept the disruption just like they are willing to do so for the London Marathon.
- What apparently matters to professor Neumayer are the views of the “*important members of the LGBTQ community,*” not the views of the overwhelming majority within the LGBTQIA+ community and strangely enough not LGBTQIA+ students.
- This brings me to my final point. Fans of the “LGB without the T” doctrine are not only mainly found among the baby boomers. They are also highly

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<sup>2</sup> In case you are curious, the Dutch friend I mentioned in section 2.B does belong to the “LGB without the T” church.

concentrated in those circles that have built a successful career. And they are often well connected with those in power. That is, we are talking about lesbians and gays who fit well in today's society, now that same-sex relationships are not that much of an issue anymore. My hunch is that they have a strong need to be seen as "normal" and do not want to be lumped together with the "freaks" (i.e., trans, nonbinary, and intersex people). Stonewall's motto is "stand for ALL" and that is apparently controversial for some.

- For more info on why I think the T should be part of the LGBTQIA+ family take a look at <https://www.wouterdenhaan.com/itmustbeLGBTQplus.htm>.