# Margaret and Beth's Brookside Snog: The LGBTQ+ Kiss That Shook Britain



On 25 June 2024, Nicola Stephenson reflected on the cultural impact of a pivotal scene from the British soap opera "Brookside," which aired 30 years ago. In 1994, Channel 4 broadcast the first pre-watershed kiss between two women, featuring Stephenson's character, Margaret Clemence, and Anna Friel's character, Beth Jordache. This moment, aired during a time when Section 28, a law prohibiting the promotion of homosexuality in schools, was still in effect, significantly influenced British media and public perception of LGBTQ+ relationships.

The kiss was groundbreaking and represented a dramatic shift towards more positive and relatable portrayals of LGBTQ+ individuals on television. Producers Mal Young and Phil Redmond aimed to handle the storyline with sensitivity, striving to resonate with viewers genuinely.

The scene generated an avalanche of letters from viewers who felt seen and validated. It later gained international recognition when it was featured in the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics. The inclusion symbolized progress and broadcast the message of acceptance to a global audience.

In the years since, LGBTQ+ representation in media has flourished with shows like "Queer As Folk" and "It’s a Sin." Today, representation remains crucial as there are still countries where same-sex relationships are criminalized. Although significant strides have been made, ongoing efforts are necessary to continue this progress globally.