# Stephen Fry lays into Stonewall over trans rights policies



Stephen Fry has publicly expressed his criticism of the LGBT charity Stonewall, describing its current policies as "nonsensical" and lamenting that the organisation has become "stuck in a terrible, terrible quagmire" concerning trans issues. This statement marks Fry's first explicit dissent regarding his longstanding support for Stonewall, which has been a prominent advocate for LGBTQ+ rights since its establishment in 1989.

In a recent appearance on the Triggernometry podcast, Fry was questioned by host Konstantin Kisin about his continuing support for the charity in light of its controversial positions on trans rights. The discussion was sparked by a question from Levi Pay, a former Stonewall employee who is openly gay, highlighting concerns over the charity's direction. Fry's response indicated a shift in his stance, saying, "Do I? I am not sure I do support them? I have no interest in supporting this current wave of nonsensical [policies], I agree completely with Levi Pay. I think it's shameful and sad...it's got stuck in a terrible, terrible quagmire, so he is right." These remarks, reported by The Telegraph, suggest a distancing from the charity that he had previously championed.

Stonewall has been central to various controversies over the past decade, particularly surrounding claims about the awareness and identity of transgender children. Critics have pointed to assertions that children as young as two can be considered transgender as part of the contentious public discourse. One of Stonewall's original founders, Simon Fanshawe, has also publicly challenged the charity’s approach, particularly its stance on self-identification, which allows individuals to declare their gender identity without needing supporting evidence.

The organisation's influence in policy-making has come under scrutiny, notably when Kemi Badenoch, the then-business secretary and minister for women and equalities, advised quangos to sever ties with Stonewall due to concerns about its potential impact on public policy. In the wake of this, several high-profile organisations, including Sport England, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the BBC, and Channel 4, have distanced themselves from the charity.

Additionally, Stonewall has faced backlash for its financial models, which reportedly charge companies and public bodies for consulting on inclusivity initiatives. The charity’s 'Workplace Equality Index', which ranks employers based on their procedures for lesbian, gay, bi, and trans inclusion, has also faced criticism. For instance, the Bank of England recently submitted a comprehensive application to be listed among Stonewall's top 100 employers, highlighting its use of inclusive terminology like 'birthing parent'.

In April, the charity provoked further outrage by disputing the findings of the independent Cass review, led by paediatrician Dr Hilary Cass, which scrutinised the treatment pathways for transgender youth. The Cass review revealed that children were "caught in the middle" of significant disputes regarding suitable care and noted that the evidence supporting the use of puberty blockers and hormone treatments was based on "shaky foundations".

Public reactions to Fry's remarks have been mixed. While some have welcomed his newfound criticism of the charity, others have taken issue with the timing, suggesting that Fry's statements come only now that it may be perceived as safe to express such views. Journalist Suzanne Moore remarked on social media that individuals who change their position on trans rights might be labelled as "doing 'a Stephen Fry'," pointing to a trend of figures attempting to appear reasonable after previously aligning with more contentious stances.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/19/stephen-fry-criticises-stonewall-stance-trans-nonsensical/> - Corroborates Stephen Fry's criticism of Stonewall's stance on trans issues, his appearance on the Triggernometry podcast, and his shift in support for the charity.
* <https://www.mumsnet.com/talk/womens_rights/5233570-stephen-fry-stonewall-nonsensical> - Supports the details of Stephen Fry's comments on Stonewall during the Triggernometry podcast and the public reaction to his statements.
* <https://www.andrewgoldheretics.com/p/stephen-frys-woke-rebuke-better-late> - Provides additional context on Stephen Fry's criticism of Stonewall and the mixed public reactions to his comments, including criticisms about the timing of his statements.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/19/stephen-fry-criticises-stonewall-stance-trans-nonsensical/> - Details the controversies surrounding Stonewall, including its stance on self-identification and the criticism from one of its original founders, Simon Fanshawe.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/19/stephen-fry-criticises-stonewall-stance-trans-nonsensical/> - Mentions the influence of Stonewall in policy-making and the advice from Kemi Badenoch for quangos to sever ties with the charity.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/19/stephen-fry-criticises-stonewall-stance-trans-nonsensical/> - Discusses the financial models of Stonewall and the criticism it has faced for its 'Workplace Equality Index' and other inclusivity initiatives.
* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/19/stephen-fry-criticises-stonewall-stance-trans-nonsensical/> - Describes the backlash against Stonewall for disputing the findings of the independent Cass review on the treatment pathways for transgender youth.
* <https://www.mumsnet.com/talk/womens_rights/5233570-stephen-fry-stonewall-nonsensical> - Highlights public reactions to Fry's remarks, including criticisms about the timing and the label 'doing a Stephen Fry' for those changing their stance on trans rights.
* <https://www.andrewgoldheretics.com/p/stephen-frys-woke-rebuke-better-late> - Expands on the public discourse and the broader context of celebrities and public figures speaking out against gender ideology, including Stephen Fry's historical stance.