



Transgender Map — by Andrea James

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Kathleen Stock vs. transgender people

Kathleen Stock is a British [philosopher](#) and anti-transgender extremist from the “[gender critical](#)” movement.

Stock is a sex segregationist who presents a polite, academic veneer for the movement’s

anti-transgender aims.

Overview

Stock's writing focuses on philosophical questions about aesthetics, fiction, and imagination in relation to sex, gender, sexual orientation, and sexual objectification.

Stock's "Aunt Sally" argument inaccurately claims there are four main axioms of trans activism:

1. everyone has an inner gender identity;
2. our gender identity might not match our biological sex;
3. gender identity is what makes you a man, a woman or another gender, and
4. the existence of trans people means that everyone is morally obliged to acknowledge and legally protect gender identity instead of biological sex.

This polemic framing reflects the philosophical influences of Stock's family and professional and personal experiences with sex, gender, sexuality, and human reproduction.

Background

Kathleen Mary Linn Stock was born in November 1972 in Aberdeen, Scotland, grew up in neighboring Montrose, and attended Montrose Academy. Stock's father, Guy G. L. Stock, graduated from Universities of Dublin and London. He taught philosophy at the Universities of Aberdeen and Dundee, specializing in metaphysics, theory of knowledge, and the work of F. H. Bradley, a key figure among the British Idealists. Guy Stock served as honorary treasurer of the Mind Association, and both parent and child published on the philosophy of appearance versus reality. Stock's mother Phyllis Jane Stock worked as a proofreader. Stock's younger sister Sarah Jane Elizabeth Stock (born 1974) is an obstetrician whose work focuses on pregnancy complications, preterm birth, and stillbirth. Sarah Jane is a trustee of UK charity Sands (The Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society).

Stock earned a bachelor's degree at Exeter College, Oxford in 1995, followed by a master's degree at St Andrews in 1996. Stock served as an officer of the British Society of Aesthetics from 1999 to 2010. Stock earned a doctorate at University of Leeds in 2001, then taught at the University of Lancaster and the University of East Anglia. Stock held several roles at University of Sussex from 2003 until resigning in 2021, including Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Reader In Philosophy, Head of Department, and Professor.

Stock resigned from the University of Sussex on October 28, 2021, allegedly forced out by student pressure related to Stock's anti-trans views. As with many people who get money and attention by claiming to be martyrs, Stock's standing among other anti-trans extremists significantly increased. Thanks to a larger audience of anti-trans activists, Stock joined the newly-formed University of Austin as a part-time fellow. The unaccredited school promotes itself as "anti-cancel culture" and "anti-woke."

Stock has two sons with artist Gregor Beedie (born 1971) and currently lives with partner Laura Gibbon (born 1973), a psychologist at University College London who has been involved in advocating for the mental health of students and faculty, as well as for people who experience polycystic ovary syndrome. In 2018 Gibbon became Partnership Director at Youth Employment UK.

Stock was awarded an OBE in 2021.

Gender critical views

Beginning around 2018, Stock became increasingly opposed to aspects of the UK's 2004 Gender Recognition Act, which allows transgender self-identification. In 2019, Stock signed the "Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights" by anti-trans group Women's Human Rights Campaign (now named [Women's Declaration International](#)). That group was founded by gender critical activists [Sheila Jeffreys](#) and [Heather Brunskell-Evans](#), both of whom have also written books critical of transgender people.

"Biological sex"

A key tenet of Stock's philosophy is that transgender activism and the concept of gender constitute an "attack on the binary existence of biological sex."

Stock claims to support “the rights of trans people to live their lives free from fear, violence, harassment or any discrimination.” Stock also claims many trans women are “still males with male genitalia, many are sexually attracted to females, and they should not be in places where females undress or sleep in a completely unrestricted way.” In the 2021 book *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism*, Stock states, “In my opinion, immersion in a fiction about sex change is being coercively required of people.”

Disease models of gender identity and expression

Stock subscribes to the idea that trans people can be described within disease models, including the disputed diagnosis “autogynephilia.”

Autogynephilia is clearly a component. There are some trans people who are autogynephilic. I find that beyond question. [Andrea Long Chu](#) talks about in her book (I use preferred pronouns for the purposes of this book, but I also have a big section examining the costs of that), *Females*, and talks about the forced feminization fetish, where the fantasy is that, as a man, you're forced into being feminized and made “[sissy](#).” There are all these jaw-dropping sentences in the book about how this is the essence of femaleness: being sissified or being reduced to “an expectant asshole” and “blank blank eyes.” It's actually really instructive about some aspects of the trans experience.

I do also say that there can be a tendency among radical feminists to overplay autogynephilia and to pathologize it. But I think it obviously has a bearing, and people need to know about it when the discussion is about changing rooms and shared spaces — formerly single-sex spaces where women get undressed. That's an important aspect of the conversation.

There's been huge resistance to talking about autogynephilia. People like [Michael J. Bailey](#) [sic] and [Alice Dreger](#), who have written about it, have faced horrific harassment, because there's just such a shame around it and a desire to suppress any discussion. But I think we need an adult conversation about it, and we need to connect it to objectification. I assume there must be a connection between the development of that psychological profile and the increasing objectification of women.

[Gluck \(2021\)](#)

The most accessible philosophical response to Stock's positions is “[When Tables Speak](#)” by [Talia Mae Bettcher](#).

Media coverage

As is often the case with transphobic bigots, Stock is frequently presented in the media as

a victim of “trans activists,” particularly by the British mainstream press and in conservative organizations including Woman’s Place UK, LBC, RT America, The New Culture Forum, [UnHerd](#), Triggernometry, GB News, [Benjamin Boyce](#), talkRADIO, Spiked, and Rebel Wisdom.

In 2023 Stock and [Deirdre McCloskey](#) had a forgettable “debate” in which they mostly agreed with each other. Stock also is the central figure in the 2023 Channel 4 film *Gender Wars*, which led to protests from participants and viewers.

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Resources by Stock

Kathleen Stock (kathleenstock.com)

Twitter (twitter.com)

- [@Docstock](https://twitter.com/Docstock)

University of Sussex (sussex.ac.uk)

- Kathleen Stock
- <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/profiles/127266> [[archive](#)]
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Medium (medium.com)

- [@kathleenstock](#)

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