



## **Free Speech Alliance Australia – 17 November 2022**

### **Freedom of speech for women is under dire threat in Australia.**

Free Speech Alliance Australia is releasing this poster and list of women in Australia from across the political spectrum who have been sacked, banned, no-platformed, expelled, threatened with violence including rape, attacked and/or vilified for speaking out about their views on women's sex-based rights.

These attacks have been escalating since the 1990s, attacks then mainly targeting lesbian women, and have gained greater momentum since the implementation of gender identity law reforms from around 2018.

Opponents claim women's rights activists are members of a 'hate group' without any evidence of hate other than disagreement being put forward. This is yet another example of allegations of hate speech being used to shut down fair debate. Australian media, particularly the ABC and SBS, have come under fire from journalists within their own ranks for not providing fair and impartial reportage on these public interest issues.

Journalists in Australia who have done stories with women's rights advocates on the gender debate have also been attacked and threatened. Media outlets are only just beginning to give fair and impartial reportage on women's views given the backlash from many in writers' societies, journalists, comedians and others in arts industries. Internationally, Free Speech organisations are supporting women's rights to freedom of speech and have condemned groups that actively campaign to shut down their voices and threaten them with violence.

In recent months and in several states, there have been campaigns threatening owners who have hired their venues to women's groups. Women's groups have had to resort to holding secret meetings with venue details only provided to attendees within hours of meetings commencing. Alarmingly, security firms are being threatened against providing security to women's events.

At a time when many women have been speaking publicly about experiences of sexual abuse and violence, freedom of speech for women is under dire threat in Australia.

### **Sheila Jeffreys**

Sheila Jeffreys has been a lesbian and a radical feminist activist for 50 years. She taught sexual politics at the University of Melbourne from 1991-2015. She is the author of *Gender Hurts: A Feminist Analysis of the Politics of Transgenderism*, 2014 and 10 other books. In 2001 trans activists organised to send letters to the University and equal opportunity institutions trying to get her sacked or disciplined. From then onwards she was regularly no-platformed at conferences and Take Back the Night events. She had to have security at her lectures in 2014 for a semester because queer activists were organising online to attack her.

### **Susan Hawthorne**

Susan Hawthorne is a philosopher, poet, aerialist, Sanskritist, radical feminist and the author/editor of 29 books. In 2000 she protested against a policy which would have allowed the entry of a trans person into the Women's Circus. [More information.](#)

### **Spider Redgold**

Spider Redgold is a life-long lesbian activist in the women's liberation movement.

2004 – Spider was a member of the Sappho's Party Inc (SPI) legal defence team which won the case against a complaint about the SPI taken to the Sex Discrimination Tribunal in Adelaide for refusing to sell a ticket to a male for a lesbian only gathering.

2005 – Adelaide Feast organisers threatened to call South Australia Police if Spider held a women's spirituality workshop for adult women only at Adelaide Feast.

2006 – Spider was refused workshop space at 7 Sisters Gathering, Victoria for a sacred women's business women-only workshop.

2016 - After conflicts with University of Sydney, Spider was allocated 2nd class honours even though she was consistently a distinction student.

2018 – Spider applied to present at an ACON conference workshop but was refused due to her gender-abolitionist position. Spider made a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission on the grounds of freedom of belief and freedom to assemble and received a response stating they had no power to protect her from cancellation by ACON conference organisers. (UN Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Human and Political Rights)

## **Bronwyn Winter**

Emeritus Professor Bronwyn Winter has been a lesbian and feminist activist for some four and a half decades, in Australia, the UK and France. She first experienced attacks on women-only spaces and lesbian spaces by transgender activists in the early 1990s. In recent years she has been complained about and no-platformed by students, knocked back for an EDNA award (awards to women in NSW and the ACT who have 'made a feminist difference', in honour of Edna Ryan: those eligible for the award now include trans-identifying males), received crank calls in relation to her participation in the 2016 IQ debate on transgender, and has seen the formerly pluralist queer caucus of her trade union, a caucus she co-founded in 2000, taken over by transactivists.

## **Isla MacGregor**

Since 1988, Isla MacGregor has been a whistleblower and free speech advocate, researcher. She was spokesperson for Women Speak Tasmania from 2018-2021 and is a member of Free Speech Alliance Australia.

2018 - Isla was threatened with a defamation action over her article "Silencing and Censorship in the Trans Rights Debate" which was published on Tasmanian Times.com. In November Isla's scheduled talk at a Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) forum was cancelled. Former Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Robin Banks wrote an email to WILPF threatening reputational damage to WILPF if they allowed the event to proceed.

2019 - The Clerk of the Hobart Quakers prevented Isla and other women from speaking at a Women Speak Tasmania forum on the impacts of gender law reforms booked at the Friends Meeting House. This was after an intense campaign, including by ALP and Green Party staffers, to derail the forum.

In December Independent Tasmanian MP Andrew Wilkie banned Isla from using his community photocopy service in response to allegations against her and Women Speak Tasmania by his ex-wife Kate, now Charlie Burton, and Rodney Croome.

2020-2022 Hobart City Councillor Jax Fox failed attempts to have Isla banned from speaking at any Council meetings. Cr Fox's motion to Council to ban any gender-critical organisation from hiring any Hobart City Council venue also failed.

## **Anna McCormack**

Anna McCormack is a retired housing worker and community development worker, unionist and union delegate throughout her working life, and a lifelong left feminist activist.

2018: Anna and the activist abortion rights group she coordinated, Women's Abortion Rights Campaign (WARC), were excluded from a broad coalition of abortion rights groups that had been working for abortion decriminalisation. The decision to exclude them was driven by Children by Choice, Labor for Choice, Fair Agenda and the Greens and was based on WARC's support for women's sex-based rights.

2019: At the instigation of the Women's Committee of the Qld Council of Unions (QCU) the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) banned the use of their premises by any women's group supporting women's sex-based rights, specifically IWD Brisbane Meanjin, coordinated by Anna.

2020: the Griffith University Social Work Department ended Anna's temporary contract position. No reason needed to be provided, the contracts were simply no longer offered following some verbal questioning about Anna's feminism by one of the SW lecturers. The SW profession has a clear policy opposing women's sex-based rights.

2018 – 2021: Every Brisbane left-wing and international solidarity group, including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and a group of retired unionists taking their cue from Brisbane unions, refused to engage in discussion/dialogue with IWD Brisbane Meanjin about why the defence of women's sex-based rights is important.

## **Nina Vallins**

Nina Vallins is a lawyer, feminist, and former Greens member.

2019: I was a member and/or volunteer of the Greens for 14 years. I was on the State council and the Executive of the Party from 2018–2020. In early 2019, I co-authored an internal paper for State Councillors that challenged another paper asserting that statements such as "there are two sexes" and "Transwomen aren't the same as biological women" are oppressive, trans-exclusionary rhetoric which the party should not tolerate. My paper noted the right of all people to live lives free from violence, asserted the vital

need for open debate in political parties, and quoted transexual Miranda Yardley in support. My paper was leaked and widely disseminated (with hostility) on social media. The Co-Convenors of the Party issued an extraordinary public statement that my paper had “made its way into the public arena” and that the views expressed therein were “inconsistent with Greens values and policies.”

2019 (again): I was the spokesperson for the Victorian Women’s Guild during its campaign for consultation on the proposed bill allowing people to falsify their birth certificates by changing their recorded sex to their gender identity. At no stage did I ever represent myself as a spokesperson for the Greens. This fact was never included in any media about me or the Guild. The general public did not (and never have) associated the name “Nina Vallins” as representing the Greens. Nevertheless, a very small but extremely vocal group of online activists tweeted repeatedly at Greens members of Parliament. Dr Samantha Ratnam, the Victorian Parliamentary Leader, and Senator Janet Rice ambushed me by demanding that I resign from the Executive to appease the online activists. I refused and so they threatened to take a proposal to the Executive meeting that night, demanding that I resign. They did so and the proposal did not pass but the proposal was leaked on social media.

In 2019 (again): I was on the Board of the Flemington-Kensington Community Legal Centre, during the above campaign. One of the centre’s principal solicitors wrote an email on behalf of staff (but characterised it in a misleading fashion as being generally from members and not just staff), saying that they were concerned about a conflict of interest “between the operations of the centre and discriminatory/trans-exclusionary public campaigning by Nina Vallins.” I was concerned that lawyers did not understand what a conflict of interest was. Further the staff alleged that my membership on the board posed a risk to staff *safety*. They said that there was no point in mediation and separately told the Chair that if I did not resign, they would get the Board stacked at the next AGM to prevent my re-election. The Executive Officer of the Centre refused to ask the staff how my participation on the Board presented a risk to staff safety, as, he said, doing so would make the staff unsafe... I resigned in disgust.

## **Eilean Haley**

- 6 March 2019: Banned from any Pagan Collective of Victoria event and the 2019 Australian Wiccan Conference
- December 2019: Banned from Extinction Rebellion

## **Moira Deeming**

Moira Deeming is a teacher, researcher, writer, and local government councillor.

2012- teacher whistleblower, exposing and criticising radical transgender and erotic sexuality in curriculums, loss of parental rights to resist transing children. My schools were targeted by activists and slandered as 'unsafe for children'. I was shadow-banned from working in public schools ever since.

2021-Elected. Asked all 79 Local Government Councils in my state whether their policies provided single sex toilets and changerooms, and if not why not. Almost every Council replied by filming and uploading speeches labelling me a transphobe and stating that 'people like me' weren't welcome in their towns.

2021-2022- As Councillor, I pursued the same line of questioning with Commissioners for Gender Equity, LGBTQI+ and for Human Rights. I was told that 'gender identity' trumps biological sex in policy, but that women had lost no rights, and that government should encourage religious residents to change their beliefs to align with trans ID laws. I was refused further meetings.

2022- As a Councillor, I officially requested that the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office clarify whether sex protections in anti-discrimination laws allow Council to provide single-sex toilets and changerooms. They are avoiding answering my question.

## **Sall Grover**

2020 - Sall and her mum, Anne-Maree, came up with an idea for an app for women, to connect women around the world for conversation, finding roommates, freelance work, lesbian dating & more. Giggle, the female app, was launched. Within weeks of it being on the App Store & Google Play, and known to only a handful of women for testing, Trans Rights Activists on Reddit and Twitter discovered it and began accusations of transphobia. Media, including Vox and The Verge, wrote articles calling Giggle transphobic. No publication spoke to Sall.

2021 - After Giggle was attacked once again by males attempting to access the app, reviews claiming it is “racist” began to appear in the App Store and Google Play. Business Insider picked up the story and interviewed Sall but did not print her explanation or evidence to the contrary. They continued the “transphobia” and “racist” narrative.

2022 - Giggle and Sall received an Australian Human Rights Complaint from a trans-identified male who wants access to Giggle, the female app, for all trans-identified males to have access to the female app and for both Sall & the company to be educated on sex and gender. The complainant has the AHRC support to take the claim further to the Federal Court.

2022 - Sall launched “The Giggle Podcast” to give cancelled women in Australia and abroad a voice in the media. Sall partnered with Australian women to launch the *Respect My Sex* campaign in the lead-up to the federal election. Only conservative media such as The Australian and Sky News responded to the media release.

### **Feminist Legal Clinic**

Feminist Legal Clinic Incorporated (FLC), established in 2017, had its tenancy terminated by the City of Sydney Council in 2021 as a result of its work in defending women’s sex-based rights, including posting news reports on the negative impacts of extreme trans ideology. Many of our management, volunteers, membership and clients have been threatened with litigation or loss of their livelihood, have been professionally disciplined, censored or just ostracised as a result of speaking out on this issue. FLC is the only community legal service providing advice and representation to women whose human rights have been infringed in this manner.

### **Jasmine Sussex**

In July 2021 Jasmine was sacked as a volunteer counsellor with the Australian Breastfeeding Association for saying only mothers breastfeed.

### **Jessica Hoyle**

Jessica Hoyle is Coordinator of LGB Tasmania and is a lesbian activist.

In 2021, Jessica applied to Equal Opportunity Tasmania for an exemption to the Anti Discrimination Act in Tasmania to enable her to run a lesbian-only event. Her application was rejected on the grounds that the event would discriminate against bodies. She put in an appeal to the Anti Discrimination Tribunal which is yet to be determined. Her case will be taken to the High Court as a test case under Section 109. In December, when wearing an LGB T-Shirt in a Target store, she was harassed by a staff member and subsequently ejected from the premises. This matter will also be taken to Equal Opportunity Tasmania in July this year. She has received threats of violence, rape and death.

### **Holly Lawford-Smith**

In February/March 2021, Holly launched the website [www.noconflicttheysaid.org](http://www.noconflicttheysaid.org) to raise awareness about women's experiences of women-only spaces being disrupted as a result of gender identity ideology. Two of Holly's colleagues incited a Twitter mob ([here](#) and [here](#)), and an [Open Letter](#) was created asking for "swift and decisive" (albeit unspecified) action to be taken against her by the university. In [this article](#), one of her colleagues says the university should 'force' her to take down the website and remove her from having contact with students. A counter-letter is [here](#). In March there was a '[snap rally against transphobia](#)' which targeted the tutors (lectures are not compulsory but tutorials are).

In March 2021, there is a [second protest](#) against Holly on the University of Melbourne campus. The issues are 'high-profile TERFs teaching "Feminism" courses' and vague accusations of 'hate speech', and a demand that the university condemn [noconflicttheysaid.org](http://www.noconflicttheysaid.org). The Melbourne University Branch of the NTEU used their mailing list to encourage members to attend the protest. Greens Senator Janet Rice was one of the speakers at the rally. The protest was covered by Sky News, clip [here](#). Full details of the media coverage of the backlash against the website are [here](#).

In April 2022, students at the University of Reading attempted to have Holly's talk at the School of Law (where she is a [Visiting Research Fellow](#)) cancelled by the university. The attempt failed and a protest was held outside the talk venue (see [here](#)).

### **Caz 'Patch' Buckingham - Not on my Patch**

2012–2020: Caz joined Roller Derby in Sydney and then in Brisbane in 2017. Jan 2021: Caz commented on a Facebook post on Lad Bible about Callum 'Hannah' Mounsey, a 6-foot 3-inch, 110kg man with long hair and breasts, who was suing Women's NFL for not allowing him to play in the women's league, as he now calls himself a woman.

Caz agreed with WNFL and congratulated them on their decision, only to be attacked and threatened by a former Roller Derby teammate. Three days later Caz was sent an email excluding her from Sun State Roller Derby League on the grounds of transphobic views and going against their constitution.

Feb 2021: Sun State posted on their page that a former team member had been excluded due to transphobic beliefs. It was met with much celebration. Caz decided to comment "A fellow team member who knows about safety and unfairness of men in women's sports, should be silenced and punished, where did all the feminists go?"

The attacks and abuse were relentless for days and from all around the world's derby community. One school friend and her husband defended her; they were also attacked. The post was removed after she complained to Sun State about the abuse she was getting. After an official complaint of her treatment, Sun State offered a statement of regret for what she'd suffered on their page.

### **Karyn Lisignoli**

Karyn has a 20+year career in the charitable/civic sector, including 12 as a CEO and several years as a Leadership Mentor, Trainer and Speaker focusing on building self-awareness, growth mindset and communication skills in leaders and their teams.

In December 2021 Karyn decided to return to the civic sector and secured the role of CEO for Girl Guides WA. Despite being bought on as a change agent she was cancelled just 10 days into her role for questioning their definition of woman and girls as those who self-identify as such rather than biological females.

Karyn had approached Katherine Deves, lawyer, and co-founder of Save Women's Sports Australasia to develop a pro bono partnership to examine the legality of changing this definition. A small 'queer' online magazine, 'Out in Perth', discovered this and approached the state and national Chairpersons and Commissioners of Girl Guides. As a result, Karyn was stood down within hours and terminated the next day, despite

assuring them that this would pass over without incident and that it was a crucial human rights matter for girls and women.

Karyn then decided to take this to the national media as she was aware that these changes had been made without consulting the Girl Guide membership and believed that the general community would be extremely concerned that a leading girls development institution had also capitulated to gender identity ideology.

### **Katherine Deves**

Katherine Deves is a lawyer and mother of three daughters. Katherine became concerned at the erasure of sex in policy and legislation in favour of gender identity, and what this would mean for the rights of women and girls.

In October 2020, Katherine joined forces with women in NZ to co found Save Women's Sport Australasia when she realised no one in Australia was speaking up for the little girls, teenagers and women whose rights to fair play and safety were impacted by inclusion policies for biological males to be able to compete in the female sports category. Appearances in the Australian and international media as the spokeswoman for SWSA raised awareness of this issue and gave Katherine a public platform.

Katherine's lifelong interest in politics was realised when she was selected as the Liberal candidate for Warringah in the 2022 Australian federal election. During the campaign she was subjected to relentless and vicious attacks by the Australian media and members of her own party when tweets she had made criticising aspects of gender identity ideology were decontextualised and sensationalised. The vile abuse and threats that ensued forced her family to leave their home and Katherine to have 24-7 security. Katherine was not successful in her bid for Warringah, but the abuse on social media, and malicious smearing of her reputation by the Australian media, continues.

### **Sue Clarke**

Sue was a federal public servant for 32 years and after retirement became a member of the Animal Justice Party in 2016. In 2021 Sue Clarke stood as a candidate for the Animal Justice Party in the Queensland state election and then in the Australian Federal election in 2022.

2022 - Not representing the AJP as a candidate, Sue posted a 'like' to a mainstream media Facebook post on a women's sports issue. Sue was publicly labelled transphobic and a bigot by the AJP. The AJP released a statement apologising for the harm she had caused to the LGBTIQ+ community and their families. The AJP came out with a position on gender ideology after Sue was selected as a candidate, a month prior to the election. After the AJP publicly denounced Sue and instructed her to undergo re-education in gender ideology, Sue refused to advocate for gender ideology and resigned as a candidate three weeks out from the election.

### **Linda McCarthy**

Linda McCarthy is an animal rights activist, previous Animal Justice Party candidate and ex-member of the party.

2022 - After posting on her personal Facebook page articles supporting women's sex-based rights, Linda was called before the Queensland AJP committee. Linda was accused of transphobia and asked to publicly apologise and undertake gender training. Linda refused to undertake this training and resigned as a candidate and from the AJP.