



Ms Rebecca K Williams DipHE Health Studies RN(Child)  
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Given to:

*East Sussex Fire Service, Sussex Police, Sussex Ambulance Service, Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, Arun District Council, the University of Brighton, Sussex Partnership, BSUH University Hospitals and West Sussex County Council, on 25th November 2013, in the Audrey Emerton Building, BSUH, Brighton. With Gary Ferrand, chsir of the LGBT Partnership network. In the Audrey Emerton Building, BSUH, Brighton. With Gary Ferrand, chsir of the LGBT Partnership network. Mandy McBain, Stonewall. Matthew Kershaw, Chief Executive. Matthew Kershaw, Chief Executive.*

### **Conference Speech**

"Supporting LGBT Colleagues"

25th November 2013

(10 mins)

Hello everyone.

My name is Rebecca Williams, I'm a queer transfeminist. I work in the children's A+E department across the road. I'm also a photographer, a mum, I write things and bake cakes, I'm a broadcaster and run an internet support group and network with women like me from around the world.

It's funny how many times I've thought about what I'm going to say today, about what I'm going to share with you.

I have a number of things bobbing around my head, I suppose the thing that resounds with me most strongly is this concept:

"If feminism is a radical notion that women are people, then trans feminism is a radical notion that women exist in more than one container."

And it is from this position that I'm talking with you today.

It's interesting, isn't it, how while I'm talking with you, you've been analysing... no scrutinising and judging my body, my voice, my hair. Trying to see perhaps the vestiges of my former appearance. Trying to analyse how I'm somehow deceiving you... that somehow "you can tell".

"Is your hair real" – someone asked me yesterday...

Anything but acceptance.

The culture and language of trans people is both beautiful and complex. I've discovered a whole lexicon of how I, as a binary identified trans woman fit into the infinite variations of male and female – where one's crude and brutal assignation based on external genitalia is forgotten and labels such as man and woman lie practically redundant among the beauty of it all.

And it is there for anyone to see, should they want to.

Should you want to, for one moment, allow yourself to.

I think one of the most heartbreaking things about it is that, once you are aware of the beauty of human diversity it becomes all the more devastating when it is damaged or destroyed, and all the more invigorating when it springs to life.

I'm thinking of course not only of all my friends who make up an active part of the trans community, those who attended Brighton Pride 2013, but trans people worldwide. Recently I was sent a paper by Shuvojit Moulik, president of the civilian welfare foundation in India about public health in India, and what struck me was how little difference between sociocultural integration and trans healthcare there was in India and Britain.

I think what you were expecting of me were a few anecdotal tales of how I've suffered discrimination at work, how I've suffered because of it, and what you can do as employers to make things better for everyone.

Personally I can't think of anything worse.

I just want you to take this message with you.

I'm a person.

I'm a woman.

I came in a different container.

Thank-you.