

## Relationships and Sex Education: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives

4-5 June 2021  
Virtual Conference

### Call for Papers

In September 2020, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) became a compulsory subject in English schools. The new Statutory Guidance on RSE specifies what pupils should know by the end of their schooling about families, friendships, online relationships, intimate and sexual relationships, and issues of consent, coercion, safety and abuse. Teaching on these topics is to be underpinned by ‘the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes’.

The Guidance also stipulates that all pupils must be taught LGBT content: ‘sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner’. This requirement has proved to be controversial, with well-publicised protests outside a number of Birmingham primary schools in 2019 over their positive representations of same-sex relationships. The ongoing controversy has led to criticism of the Guidance for being too vague about the timing and content of LGBT teaching.

To mark the arrival of statutory RSE in England, the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) and the History of Education Society UK (HES UK) are hosting an international virtual conference on relationships and sex education. The conference will be a unique opportunity for philosophers and historians to reflect together on the pressing questions of policy and practice raised by this vital area of educational provision.

### Keynote speakers



**David Archard**

author of *Sex Education* (Wiley, 2000) and *Sexual Consent* (Westview, 1998)



**Lauren Bialystok & Lisa Andersen**

co-authors of *Touchy Subject: The History and Philosophy of Sex Education* (University of Chicago Press, 2021)



**Cris Mayo**

author of *Gay Straight Alliances and Associations Among Youth in Schools* (Palgrave, 2017)



**Jonathan Zimmerman**

author of *Too Hot to Handle: A Global History of Sex Education* (Princeton, 2016)

Philosophical and historical papers on any aspect of relationships and sex education are invited. Submitted papers will be heard in parallel sessions. Because this is an interdisciplinary conference, papers should not assume familiarity with any particular literature. Papers by postgraduate researchers are warmly welcomed.

Submissions should take the form of a **title and an abstract of up to 300 words**, along with the author’s name, position, institutional affiliation and email address, and should be sent to [m.hand@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.hand@bham.ac.uk). The deadline for submissions is **Friday 2 April**. Abstracts will be reviewed and notifications of acceptance will be issued by Friday 16 April. Conference registration will open in March.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the conference convenors:

- Professor Michael Hand (Chair of PESGB, University of Birmingham, [m.hand@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.hand@bham.ac.uk))
- Professor Stephen Parker (President of HES UK, University of Worcester, [s.parker@worc.ac.uk](mailto:s.parker@worc.ac.uk))