



**The Family  
Education Trust**  
*A 50 Year  
Journey*



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## **Contents**

4	Founding
7	Early endeavours
9	Teenage magazines
10	Sex education or indoctrination?
13	International impact
15	Defending marriage
19	Defending parental rights and freedoms
21	Defending biological reality
22	FET's Directors
24	Chronology of FET history and events

## Founding



Dr Stanley Ellison

The Family Education Trust was founded in 1971 by GP Dr Stanley Ellison. Dr Ellison realised that many of the problems suffered by his patients were directly related to family breakdown and the Permissive Society. He realised that freedom from the constraints of traditional morality as advocated by the sexual revolution of the 1960s had not brought happiness but deep suffering to many.

Dr Ellison wrote a letter to *The Times* newspaper calling for the establishment of an organisation that would defend the traditional family and the welfare of young people. The text of the letter is below:

*The Times, 11 October 1969*

*Letters to the Editor*

*Before it is Too Late-Case for Higher Standards*

*From Dr S.E. Ellison*

*Sir - Is it not about time that a group or association was formed to resist the destructive and demoralizing trends in our present community? There is increasing evidence that the stability of the traditional British way of life is threatened. Venereal disease is increasing. Termination of pregnancy is increasing. Drug addiction is increasing. Hooliganism is increasing. Smoking is increasing. Gambling is increasing. All are examples of anti-social behaviour.*

*There are, of course, many reasons for these changes, but not least is the apparent need of the national press, the B.B.C. (both sound and television), and the live theatre, to depict the behaviour of the "sick" members of our community in a way that suggests that they are to be admired. In recent weeks we have had front page photographs of unmarried ladies with their respective babies, pornographic films on television, and nude actors and actresses. I am cynical enough to believe that this pandering to the baser instincts in human beings is carried on purely for financial gain and can in no way be argued to be an educational exercise.*

*The developing child is inevitably naughty in his attempt to challenge the authority of his parents and teachers. With increasing age there is increasing challenge. In previous times this challenge was handled more or less effectively by both parents and teachers. Today however we have reached a situation in which not only children but also young adults desire to rebel and throw down established order. Only the senior citizens are left to join together to resist this destructive gathering force.*

*This tide of immorality, self-deception, and insatiable appetite for all that is worthless, must be resisted by an even stronger group in the community who do not wish to see this country destroyed by a sickness as dangerous and as virulent as the plague.*

*Public opinion, if one believes our newspapers, is still a force to be reckoned with. But can one rely on our newspapers to play fair? Have they not a vested interest in stimulating the appetite of the public for all that is degrading? Make it more spicy and sell more newspapers. People are just not interested in good clean healthy living-or so it seems.*

*I throw out a challenge. Men and women who believe in the decent way of life step forward and say so. Provoke the newspapers and the B.B.C. to show where they stand. Let it be clearly be seen that all that is immoral and 'sick' in our society is not to be tolerated, let our leaders in all walks of life speak out before it is too late.*

*Yours faithfully, S.E. Ellison*

*Central Middlesex Hospital, Park Royal, NW10, 9 Oct. 1969<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Valerie and Denis Riches, *Built on Love: An Autobiography for Two*, Oxford: Family Publications, 2007.

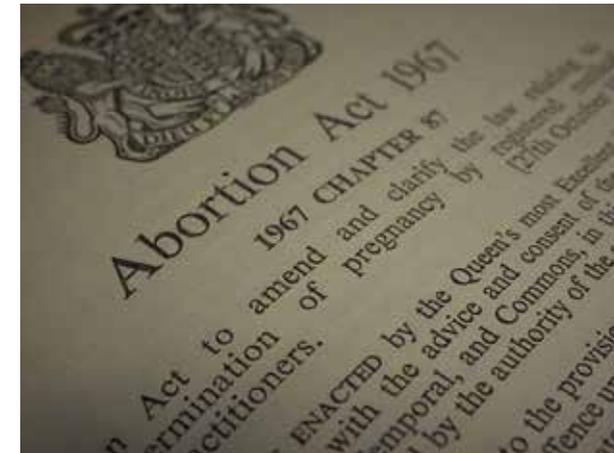
## Early Endeavours

As a result of this letter, Dr Ellison was contacted by like-minded people and two years later the Family Education Trust was born. Its original name was The Responsible Society, but it subsequently became Family and Youth Concern and eventually the Family Education Trust.<sup>2</sup>

Among the organization's founders were parents, doctors, teachers and a number of distinguished public figures including Ronald Butt, associate editor of *The Times*, Graham Heath, general secretary of the Youth Hostel Association, Sir John Peel, the Queen's gynaecologist and Lord Shawcross, former Attorney General.<sup>3</sup>

It was decided that the new organisation would conduct research into the causes and consequences of family breakdown as well as study the social, medical and psychological consequences of sexual behaviour. It would defend the traditional family based on marriage and protect children and young people from premature exposure to sexual material. It would promote respect for parents and support their role as the primary educators and natural protectors of their children. It persists in pursuing these goals to the present day.

Dr Ellison would become FET's first Chairman while the day to day work of the charity was conducted by Valerie Riches.<sup>4</sup>



**F**amily Education Trust (then the Responsible Society) held its first Annual General Meeting on 1 July 1972. At this meeting concern was raised about the massive rise in abortions since the 1967 Abortion Act, the increase in sexual activity outside marriage and the values-free sex education being promoted by the Family Planning Association (FPA).<sup>5</sup>

Sex education and the right of parental withdrawal has been a concern of the Trust from the very beginning. Not long after the formation of the charity, a parent, Colin Knapman, faced prosecution for withdrawing his daughters from school in protest at what he considered inappropriate sexual education. The programme was the work of the Exeter Education Committee. In the court case that followed, the court would rule in favour of the Exeter Committee and against Mr Knapman, but the Committee nonetheless agreed to revise the scheme. Mr Knapman was advised not to appeal and would subsequently place his daughters in a private school.

<sup>2</sup> The organization will be referred to throughout this booklet as the Family Education Trust, the Trust, the charity or FET, regardless what name it was using in the period discussed.

<sup>3</sup> Valerie and Denis Riches, *Built on Love*, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> From 1972 until 1990 Valerie would hold the post of Honourable Secretary. From 1990 until her retirement in 2000 she would be Director.

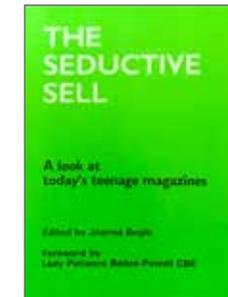
<sup>5</sup> The Responsible Society, Minutes of the first Annual General Meeting, 1 July 1972.

## Teenage Magazines

When a year later no revision of the programme had taken place, FET was part of a delegation that met with Lord Belstead, representing then Secretary of State for Education, Margaret Thatcher. The delegation consisted of two MPs, Trevor Skeet and Ivor Stanbrook, Kenneth Kavanagh, the probation officer who had represented Mr Knapman, headmaster Peter Dawson and Valerie Riches. The meeting bore fruit. The minister shared FET's concerns and, following Mrs Thatcher's personal intervention, the Exeter Committee modified its sex education programme. In the words of Valerie Riches:

*The case was an alarm signal for many parents and led to confirming the right of parents to withdraw their children from sex education lessons...<sup>6</sup>*

The 1970s represented a watershed as far as sex education was concerned. In that decade the subject would increasingly become the preserve of the Family Planning Association (FPA) and the Brook organisation whose agenda would be promoted in schools and the role of parents would be increasingly marginalised. In 1974 the Department of Health and Social Services issued a 'Memorandum of Guidance' on family planning services and specialist advice for under-16s. In the following decade, FET would support the case of mother Victoria Gillick who demanded her right as a parent to be informed if her under-age children were being provided with contraception. FET was part of a delegation to 10 Downing Street in support of Mrs Gillick. The case would eventually go all the way to the House of Lords who would rule that contraception may be given to under-16s if they are deemed to understand the nature of what they are being prescribed. The principle became known as 'Gillick competence'.



A MAJOR CONCERN of FET during the 1970s and 80s was the content of teenage magazines, especially those aimed at girls. A number of reports on these magazines were issued. Perhaps the most significant was *The Seductive Sell*, edited by Joanna Bogle, published in 1986. This study examined six of the leading magazines for teenage girls, as well as a number of pop music magazines. The study was carried out by members of women's groups who studied different issues of the magazines over a five-month period.

It was found that all the magazines in question promoted value-free approaches to sexual activity and could not be considered appropriate reading for young people. The study concluded with the following plea:

*Young readers are worth so much better than this. Instead of being part of the propaganda which has helped push up Britain's abortion and suicide figures, foster family break-up and point the way to the tragedies of rising juvenile crime, could not magazines aimed at teenagers seek a different path? We have now had more than a decade of the contraception/abortion/anti-marriage/light pornography approach to juvenile publishing. There is no evidence to show that youngsters would, if they had the chance, turn away from magazines offering a more attractive and hopeful set of values and aspirations. Surely...it is worth a try?<sup>7</sup>*

8 Valerie and Denis Riches, *Built on Love: An Autobiography for Two*, Oxford: Family Publications, 2007.

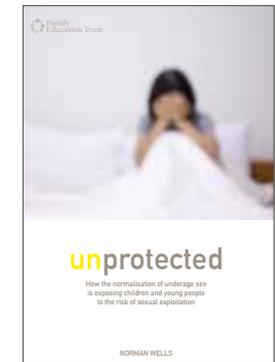
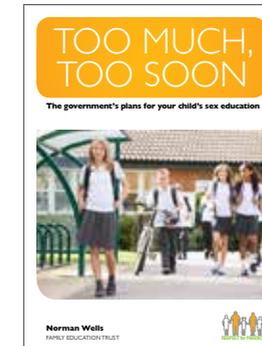
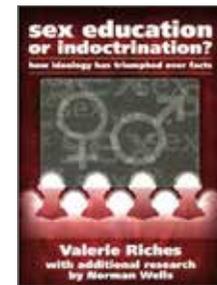
7 *The Seductive Sell: A look at today's teenage magazines*, Edited by Joanna Bogle, The Responsible Society Research and Education Trust, 1986.

## Sex Education or Indoctrination?

SEX EDUCATION has been a cornerstone issue for the Family Education Trust from its earliest days. It was clear from the 1970s onwards that sex education would be increasingly dominated by groups hostile to the traditional family. Sex was to be frequently discussed with no reference to marriage or child-rearing. A ‘harm reduction’ approach was taken to underage sex, whereby the best way of preventing teenage pregnancy was to ensure that teenagers had access to contraception.

The role of the FPA and Brook in promoting these ideas has already been mentioned, but Valerie Riches could see a much larger network of organisations working together to inculcate children with the values of the sexual revolution. FET came to see that sex education was not so much about education as about indoctrination. The indoctrinators included not just groups like Brook and the FPA, but government departments, medical bodies, groups supporting abortion and homosexual rights, groups concerned about population, even children’s charities. Valerie Riches would dub this vast network ‘The Web’.

In 1986 FET would publish the first edition of Valerie’s magnum opus on sex education. Initially titled *Sex and Social Engineering* the book would trace the history of modern sex education as a form of social engineering by groups eager to promote birth control for eugenic and population control purposes. The book has proved consistently popular and has gone through five reprints. In 2004 an updated and greatly expanded version of the book was published, with additional research by Norman Wells, under the title *Sex education or indoctrination? How ideology has triumphed over facts*. The book has been translated into a dozen languages including Afrikaans, Swahili and a number of Indian dialects.



As the 21st century got under way the sex education lobby became ever more aggressive, demanding that the subject become mandatory in all schools with no parental right of withdrawal. British governments became increasingly more susceptible to this idea.

In 2009 FET director Norman Wells wrote *Too Much, Too Soon: The government's plans for your child's sex education*. The book informed parents of their rights under the law and, using statements from the FPA, Brook and others, outlined the sex educators’ agenda as the following: encouraging sexual experimentation, advancing relativism, breaking down traditional moral standards, promoting homosexuality as normal and natural, and redefining the family.<sup>8</sup>

In 2014 FET gave evidence before the House of Commons Education Committee highlighting that what children and young people were being taught in lessons on sex and relationships often transgressed the law. FET drew particular attention to Brook’s Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool which gave a green light to sexual activity for those as young as 13.

By the 2010s it became abundantly clear that the laissez-faire attitude towards sex that had been promoted since the 1960s was not working. Nowhere was this more evident than in a series of case reviews which revealed how the complacency shown by various local authorities to under-age sexual activity had allowed the widespread

## International Impact

sexual abuse of young girls to take place unnoticed. The Trust's 2017 report *Unprotected*, written by Norman Wells, was perhaps one of the charity's most chilling exposés. It revealed how such sexual abuse had been perpetuated by an attitude that regarded under-age sexual activity as a normal part of growing up, combined with the confidential provision of contraception to under-16s, often disregarding parental concerns. The report was sent to politicians, police chiefs, heads of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and heads of local safeguarding boards.

One of the key recommendations of *Unprotected* was that Sex and Relationships Education should not be made statutory and that parents should retain the right to withdraw their children.<sup>9</sup> Sadly, this recommendation fell on deaf ears and as of summer 2021 primary schools will receive compulsory Relationships Education from which there is no right of withdrawal. Secondary schools will receive Relationships and Sex Education from which parental right of withdrawal is retained but with exceptions.

Nonetheless, as the 21st century enters its third decade, the Family Education Trust continues to defend the rights of parents over their children's education and to counter the new curriculum by suggesting healthier and sounder resources that respect marriage and the family.



Warsaw March for Life and Family

**D**URING THE 1980s, FET's Valerie Riches became a popular speaker on the international circuit. In 1983 she gave a series of lectures in New Zealand organised by the New Zealand Community Standards Association. As already mentioned, her 1986 book *Sex and Social Engineering* (later *Sex Education or Indoctrination?*) was translated into multiple languages. In the following years, Valerie would speak at conferences in the USA, Canada, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Africa, India, Australia, South America and the Caribbean.<sup>10</sup>

A lecture that Valerie gave in Mexico City at the conference of Human Life International in 1984 coincided with the UN's Second International Conference on Population which was taking place in that city. During this conference, Valerie was able to challenge the British delegation suggesting that they should not be supporting policies that undermine the family.<sup>11</sup> FET became very involved with the population control issue in the 1980s and in 1986 produced a video titled *The Great Population Hoax*, part of which was filmed on location in Nairobi, Kenya where Valerie was addressing a conference.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Norman Wells, *Unprotected: How the normalisation of underage sex is exposing children and young people to the risk of sexual exploitation*, Family Education Trust, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Valerie and Denis Riches, *Built on Love: An Autobiography for Two*, Oxford: Family Publications, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 115-116.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 121.

## Defending Marriage

Following the fall of communism, Valerie did a lecture tour of Eastern Europe which encompassed Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Russia.<sup>13</sup> Since that time Eastern Europe has been a particularly fertile ground for pro-family activity and the services of FET continue to be valued there. In 2019 FET director, Norman Wells, was invited to speak on sex education at a conference of the Centre for Life and Family in Poland and to take part in the Warsaw March for Life and Family. Though Mr Wells was unable to attend these events he prepared a detailed paper summarizing the current position of sex and relationship education in the UK which was presented to delegates at the conference.<sup>14</sup>

For many years FET had a very active Irish branch which published a newsletter, *Response*. FET continues to have many supporters internationally and its quarterly bulletin is mailed to supporters on five continents.



**M**ARRIAGE, the union of one man and one woman for life, is at the core of a stable society but no institution has come under such relentless attack in our time.

From its very beginnings FET has sought to defend marriage as central to family stability and the welfare of children. The initial concern was the increasing separation of sex from the marital union and the tragic consequences which included an epidemic of sexually transmitted disease and abortion. Over the years, FET has produced numerous resources highlighting the benefits of saving sex for marriage. One of the earliest was written by Venetia Riches, Valerie's daughter, and called *But Where is Love?* This booklet highlighted the tragic consequences of the Permissive Society at a time when it was still young. It was translated into several languages and for some time was listed by the Health Education Council as a recommended resource.

In more recent times, FET has produced leaflets such as *Why Save Sex?* and *What is Love?* These attractively presented leaflets have proved popular with schools, churches and youth groups. They present saving sex for marriage as a positive and liberating choice and exalt values such as commitment, faithfulness, perseverance and patience.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 119

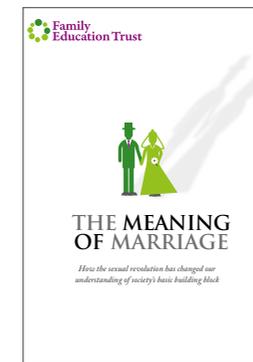
<sup>14</sup> Family Education Trust, *Annual Review 2019/20*.

Their message can be summed in the following passage from *Why Save Sex?*:

*Love, marriage and sex belong together – and in that order. To separate sex from marriage is to separate it from love and that cuts across the longing we all have for stability and permanence.<sup>15</sup>*

The Trust has never compromised in its defence of marriage, in spite of financial incentives to do so. During the 1980s the charity produced a video on the benefits of marriage called *Let's Talk About Love*. FET applied to the Health Education Council (HEC) for a grant to help cover the cost of the video. The HEC agreed but asked to view the script. The film included a white wedding scene in a village church and an interview with the Minister of Health, Dr Gerard Vaughan in which he criticised the widespread provision of the birth control Pill to underage girls. The HEC objected to these scenes and said they would need to be edited if the charity was to receive a grant. The charity decided that it could not compromise its principles for the sake of government money and the making of the film went ahead with the scenes intact and without HEC funding. From that point on the FET made a resolution not to pursue government funding in the future due to the heavy strings attached to such funding.<sup>16</sup> The charity has always been entirely reliant on the donations of its supporters.

FET's work on the importance of marriage has been influential on an international level. Its 1994 monograph *Broken Homes and Battered Children: A study of the relationship between child abuse and family type* by Robert Whelan (subsequently FET director) argued that the traditional family based on marriage is the safest environment in which children can grow up, and based on the cases of hundreds of abused children, established that child abuse was disproportionately concentrated in the households of single parents or cohabiting couples. The findings of this report would lead the United States National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect to start measuring child abuse by family structure which it had not done previously.<sup>17</sup>



The importance of marriage has not only been undermined in our time by widespread out of wedlock births and cohabitation but by the attempt to redefine what marriage is by creating so-called same-sex 'marriage'. In the second decade of the 21st century the drive for this new form of marriage reached fever pitch and legislation was introduced into parliament for its creation. In response, FET and several like-minded organisations formed the Coalition for Marriage (C4M) to defend the true nature of marriage as the exclusive union of one man and one woman for life. The Coalition was launched with the support of leading MPs and church figures. At the centrepiece of its campaign was a petition drive against the new legislation. This petition was eventually signed by more than 500,000 people and FET director Norman Wells was among those who helped deliver the petition to the Home Office.<sup>18</sup>

Throughout 2012 and 2013 FET highlighted the importance of the marriage issue in its bulletin and emphasised the undemocratic nature by which the government was seeking to pass the legislation. A consultation on the issue did not ask the public whether or not they favoured same-sex marriage but rather asked how the government might best implement it. No attention was paid to the C4M petition and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill received the Royal Assent in July 2013. To coincide with the passing of this legislation, the Trust published *The Meaning of Marriage: How the sexual revolution has changed our understanding of society's basic building block* by Sharon

<sup>15</sup> Family Education Trust, *Why Save Sex?*, 2007.

<sup>16</sup> *Built on Love*, p. 87-88.

<sup>17</sup> *Family Education Trust Bulletin*, Issue 142, Winter 2010/2011.

<sup>18</sup> *Family Education Trust Bulletin*, Issue 148, August 2012.

## Defending Parental Rights and Freedoms

James which defended the true nature of marriage and set the redefinition of marriage within the broader historical context of the sexual revolution.

While defending marriage as the union of one man and one woman, FET has also consistently offered a robust defence of marriage as a permanent union for life in an age of widespread divorce. The Trust has consistently opposed attempts to legislate for no-fault divorce and highlighted the destructive effects of divorce on our society.

In 1991 FET published *The Decay of Marriage – as seen by a divorce lawyer* by George Brown. This booklet examined the rise in divorce, the factors lying behind this and the consequences for the individual and society. In 1996 FET opposed the Family Law Bill which sought to move British divorce law towards a no-fault position. Although the Bill was passed, the no-fault provisions were never implemented.

In 2020 however, the government would finally legislate for divorce without any need to give a reason. From the moment this legislation was proposed in 2018, FET was active in opposing it, responding to consultations, and highlighting the problematic nature of the legislation through articles in its quarterly bulletin. No-fault divorce was the subject of an address by Colin Hart of the Coalition for Marriage at FET's 2019 conference. Sadly, the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act was passed in June 2020 and is due to come into force in April 2022. In anticipation of this, FET, in cooperation with C4M, has published *Marriage and Divorce in the liberal imagination* by Colin Hart. Based on Mr Hart's conference address, this booklet draws on the best evidence available to illustrate the damage done by permissive divorce laws.



**T**HE FAMILY EDUCATION TRUST has always promoted the view that parents are the principle educators of their children and have the right to educate their children according to their principles and values, whether this is in a school setting or in the home.

The right of parents to educate their children at home has come under attack in the last few decades and FET has been at the forefront of defending parental rights in this area. In 2009, the Badman Review of elective home education recommended mandatory visits by local authority personnel to the homes of home educating families and the right of these personnel to speak to children without their parents being present. Writing in FET's bulletin, Norman Wells stated that:

*...if the government's groundless suspicion of home educating families were applied more widely, it could lead to full-time mothers being subject to statutory home visits if they did not place their children in state-regulated childcare, and parents of children in school being more closely monitored if they withdrew their children from sex education lessons. Any parent who failed to conform to the ideals of the government of the day could place himself at risk of additional surveillance measures.<sup>19</sup>*

Thankfully, the Badman recommendations on home education were scrapped and a subsequent attempt in 2018 at monitoring

home education was rejected by the government. FET continues to closely monitor developments in this area, frequently responding to consultations on the issue and highlighting it in the bulletin.

Perhaps one of the most sinister attempts at undermining parents was the Scottish government's Named Person Scheme. In 2013 the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill proposed that every child and young person in Scotland should be given a 'named person' from birth till the age of 18. Though it was claimed that the purpose was safeguarding, the named person was to be a government bureaucrat and could not be a parent of the child.

To oppose this scheme, FET became part of the No to Named Person (NO2NP) campaign and brought a case to the UK Supreme Court. In 2016 the court ruled unanimously that the scheme was '*incompatible with the rights of children, young persons and parents*'.<sup>20</sup> Though the Scottish government remained committed to the scheme for a few years, it was eventually abandoned in 2019.

FET has consistently defended the right of parents to use physical discipline within the home, believing that a light and loving smack does no harm to children. The charity has strongly opposed attempts to outlaw parents from smacking their children. In 2004 an amendment to the Children Bill attempted to outlaw smacking by removing the defence of 'reasonable chastisement' that exists in British law. FET responded by publishing a fact sheet titled *A Reasonable Approach to Discipline: Issues to be considered in the context of the debate on parental smacking* which marshalled the best research evidence to show that smacking had consistently beneficial outcomes when it was non-abusive and used to back up milder disciplinary tactics and that studies purporting to show the negative effects of smacking invariably failed to distinguish between harsh and abusive treatment and mild physical correction.<sup>21</sup>

The smacking issue has remained a regular focus of attention for FET with frequent bulletin articles on the subject, most recently in opposition to smacking bans passed in Wales and Scotland.

<sup>20</sup> The Christian Institute and others (Appellants) v The Lord Advocate (Respondent) (Scotland) judgment, 28 July 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Family Education Trust, *A Reasonable Approach to Discipline: Issues to be considered in the context of the debate on parental smacking*, October 2004.

## Defending Biological Reality

IN THE SECOND DECADE of the 21st century a massive assault began on the very existence of the distinctions of male and female. Previously a very marginal phenomenon, by 2018 the UK reported a 4,400% increase in gender treatments among teenage girls alone. Gender clinics such as that at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust were happy to administer puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to teenagers. Attacks and smears were directed against anyone who dared speak out against the rapid advance of 'transgenderism'.

However, the Family Education Trust has never been afraid of attacks and smears. The transgender issue was the subject of a major address at the Trust's 2017 Annual Conference when Dr Peter Saunders spoke on 'The transgender agenda – critiquing its origins, ideology, message and goals'. Dr Saunders's talk which was posted to FET's YouTube channel immediately became the most watched of all the charity's videos. By 2019 it had received 167,758 views but in October of that year the video was removed by YouTube who claimed that it violated 'community guidelines' and YouTube's 'policy on hate speech'. FET has appealed against this decision without success.<sup>22</sup>

Since 2017 FET has responded to every consultation on the transgender issue and has kept our supporters updated on the major developments in this area through thoughtful commentary in our bulletin. In December 2020 FET welcomed the ruling of the High Court in the case of 23-year old Keira Bell who as a teenager had been given puberty blockers and testosterone which had done permanent damage to her body. The court ruled that it was unlikely that a child under 16 could consent to such treatment. We hope this signals a more cautious approach to gender issues in the future.



<sup>22</sup> Family Education Trust, *Annual Review 2019/20*.

## FET's Directors



**Valerie Riches**

Valerie Riches was FET's first director serving from 1990 until 2000. Prior to that she had carried out the day to day work of the charity as honourable secretary, beginning in 1972. Valerie made FET an influential organisation in politics, the media and internationally. She made connections with leading figures in politics including government ministers for education and health, Dr Rhodes Boyson and Sir Gerard Vaughan. She was interviewed for prominent programmes such as Radio 4's **The Moral Maze**. Her book **Sex Education or Indoctrination?** was translated into a dozen languages and she spoke to pro-family groups on five continents. Following her retirement in 2000, Valerie continued to hold the post of Founder President until her death in 2018.



**Robert Whelan**

Robert served as FET's director from 2000-2004. He had begun work with FET in 1984 and had produced several videos for the Trust including **The Great Population Hoax** and **The 3Rs of Family Life**. The latter was made to supplement **The Other 3Rs**, a series of educational modules that Robert had developed emphasising the importance of Relationships, Respect and Responsibility in human behaviour. Robert authored FET's influential 1994 report **Broken Homes and Battered Children** which greatly impacted the study of child abuse and family structure.



**Norman Wells**

Norman became director of FET in 2004 having worked for FET since 2000. Norman was instrumental in raising FET's profile in the media and society. He frequently defended marriage and the family in the media and wrote articles for numerous publications including **The Times**, **The Guardian**, **The Conservative Woman**, the **Evangelical Times**, the **Catholic Herald**, and others. Under Norman's leadership, FET was at the cutting edge of opposing destructive sex education programmes, the redefinition of marriage, defending the rights of parents over their children's education and keeping the public informed about the latest threats to marriage, family and children. Norman was the author of the FET publications **Waking up to the Morning-After Pill**, **Too Much Too Soon**, **Unhealthy Confusion** and **Unprotected**. Norman's achievements in family studies would lead to his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Norman's premature death from Covid-19 in 2020 was a tragic loss to the Trust but FET continues to build on his legacy and move forward into the future.

## Chronology of FET History and Events

**1969**

Dr Stanley Ellison letter published in The Times calling for establishment of an organization to 'resist the destructive and demoralizing trends in our present community'.

**1971**

Founding of The Responsible Society  
Colin Knapman sex education court case

**1972**

Responsible Society holds first Annual General Meeting

**Pornography and Hate** published

**1973**

**But Where is Love?** published

**1974**

DHSS Memorandum of Guidance on family planning services for under-16s

**1976**

**Sex Education-Its Uses and Abuses** published

**1980**

Victoria Gillick begins campaign against contraception for under-16s

**1984**

Responsible Society becomes Family and Youth Concern

**No Entry for Parents: The history and consequences of birth control for children** published

1985 House Lords ruling in Gillick case establishes 'Gillick competence'

**1986**

**The Seductive Sell** published

**Sex and Social Engineering** published

Release of **The Great Population Hoax**

**1988**

Section 28 of the Local Government Act forbids promotion of homosexuality 'as a pretended family relationship'

Release of **The Truth About AIDS**

**1989**

UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child

**1990**

Release of **The Three Rs of Family Life**

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act allows abortion up to birth in certain cases

**1991**

New name for the charity 'Family Education Trust' registered with charity commission

**The Decay of Marriage - as seen by a Divorce Lawyer** published

**1994**

**Broken Homes and Battered Children** published

**1995**

**Tried But Untested: The Aims and Outcomes of Sex Education in Schools** published

**1996**

Family Law Act creates no-fault divorce (but this is never implemented)

**The Necessary Family and How to Support It** published

**1997**

Death of FET chairman Dr Stanley Ellison. Dr John Guly becomes interim chairman

**1998**

**Fight for the Family** published

**1999**

Government launches Teenage Pregnancy Strategy

**2000**

**Sex under Sixteen?** published

Valerie Riches retires. Robert Whelan becomes FET director.

Arthur Cornell becomes Chairman

**2003**

**Every Child Matters** green paper

Repeal of Section 28

**2004**

Children Act establishes Children's Commissioner

Civil Partnership Act

Gender Recognition Act

Norman Wells becomes FET director

**A Reasonable Approach to Discipline** published

**2007**

Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations

**Waking Up to the Morning-After Pill** published

**2008**

Norman Wells elected Fellow  
of the Royal Society of Arts

**2009**

Badman Review on home education  
*Too Much, Too Soon* published

**2011**

FET helps form Sex and  
Relationships Education Council  
*Unhealthy Confusion* published

**2012**

FET helps form Coalition for Marriage

**2013**

Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act  
creates same-sex 'marriage'  
*The Meaning of Marriage* published

**2014**

Rochdale and Rotherham  
reports on sexual abuse  
FET gives evidence before House of  
Commons Education Committee on  
sex and relationships education

**2016**

Supreme Court strikes down  
Named Person scheme

**2017**

*Unprotected* published  
Children and Social Work Act  
creates mandatory Relationships  
Education for primary schools and  
mandatory Relationships and Sex  
Education for Secondary Schools

**2018**

Death of Valerie Riches

**2019**

Scottish Parliament votes to  
ban parental smacking  
Opposite-sex civil  
partnerships established

**2020**

Welsh Assembly votes to  
ban parental smacking  
Death of FET director Norman Wells  
Divorce, Dissolution and Separation  
Act creates no-fault divorce  
*Marriage and Divorce in the  
liberal imagination* published  
Keira Bell ruling on puberty blockers

50  
Years

