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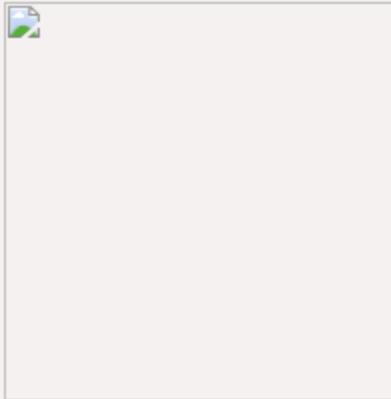
**To:** <jeevacation@gmail.com>

**Subject:** David Lammy goes head-to-head with Lionel Shriver in our identity politics debate

**Date:** Mon, 11 Mar 2019 13:43:35 +0000

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## **Identity Politics Is Tearing Society Apart**



## Identity Politics Is Tearing Society Apart

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**WEDNESDAY 22 MAY, 7PM**

**EMMANUEL CENTRE**

Featuring Trevor Phillips, Lionel Shriver, David Lammy, Laurie Penny, and Kamal Ahmed

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Forget the old battles between the left and the right. Welcome to the era of 'identity politics,' where loyalties are owed not to class or political party, but to groups defined by gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

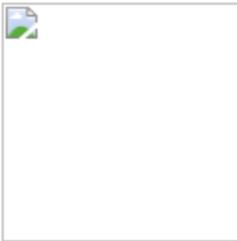
To some people, this is a dangerous trend. True, many minorities have suffered discrimination and exclusion and they deserve to enjoy the rights that the

straight, white majority take for granted. But critics claim that the fight for equality has spilled over into hostility towards the majority, with identity group activists telling white people to check their privilege or labelling them white supremacists. Such sentiments have stoked anger among white people who feel very far from privileged or in control, fuelling the rise of populism and bringing alt-right figures such as Steve Bannon to the fore. The identity politics movement tells people that their experience as a member of a particular group is what ultimately defines them and gives their lives meaning. This message is destroying society's broad sense of the common good, increasing antagonism and fragmentation in our society.

That's the critique made by opponents of identity politics. But many people who champion the rights of minorities reject this characterisation. They claim that, far from sowing division, they are raising their voices in order to combat the inequality which exists in our world today. Take the #MeToo movement, which has revealed the extent to which women face sexual violence and harassment. Statistics show that black people face shocking discrimination in the criminal justice system. And transgender people are so stigmatised that 84% contemplate suicide during their lifetime. With leaders like Donald Trump fanning racism and sexism, we cannot simply tell ourselves that identity doesn't matter. Oppressed groups need to build solidarity among themselves, assert their rights, and fight for their inclusion in a just and diverse society. And let's face it, identity politics is nothing new. Workers and gay people have won their respective rights by coming together as a group. The latest wave of identity politics is no different: it simply asks that all minorities enjoy the respect and dignity which is too often reserved for the straight, white, majority.

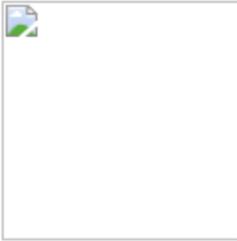
Is identity politics tearing society apart or is it a call for social justice for everyone? [Join us on May 22nd](#), hear the arguments and decide for yourself.

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## **Trevor Phillips**

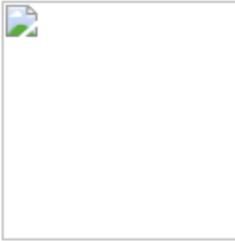
Founding chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. He has been a vocal critic of multiculturalism, claiming it legitimises separateness between communities. He is the co-founder of the diversity analytics consultancy Webber Phillips, and Chairman of Green Park Interim and Executive Search. He is the Chairman of Index on Censorship, a director of the Barbican Arts Centre, and a Vice-President of the Royal Television Society.



## Lionel Shriver

Author of twelve novels, including the bestsellers *The Mandibles: A Family, 2029-2047* and the Orange-Prize winner *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (also a 2011 feature film). She won the 2014 BBC National Short Story Award, and her novella and story collection *Property* was published in spring 2018. She is a prolific journalist whose writing has appeared in the Guardian, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal, amongst other publications.





## David Lammy

Labour MP for Tottenham and one of Parliament's most prominent campaigners for social justice. He led the campaign for the Windrush generation to be granted British citizenship, has fought for justice for the Grenfell Tower families, and has run a high-profile campaign calling on Oxbridge to improve access for students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds.



## Laurie Penny

Author and commentator, who has been described as 'one of the most accomplished and acerbic of the new, young journalists emerging from the protest movements of the 2010s'. She is a contributing editor to *The New Statesman* and has also written for *The Guardian*, *Time* magazine, *Buzzfeed*, *The New York Times* and *Vice*. She has written five books including *Bitch Doctrine: Essays for Dissenting Adults* and *Unspeakable Things: Sex, Lies and Revolution*.



## Chair



### **Kamal Ahmed**

BBC editorial director, former economics editor, and author of *The Life and Times of a Very British Man*, a book about race and identity in Britain.



## This week's podcast



## **On The Brink Of A No-Deal Brexit: The Town Hall Debate**

Britain is now facing one of the biggest constitutional crises in its history, As Brexit looms, Intelligence Squared staged a special town hall meeting with some of the country's most prominent political leaders.

We were joined on stage by former Conservative MP and UKIP MP Douglas Carswell; Conservative MP Kenneth Clarke; Director of UK in a Changing Europe Anand Menon; MP for North Antrim for the DUP Ian Paisley Jr; and Labour MP for Birmingham Yardley Jess Phillips. The debate was chaired by the Guardian's Jonathan Freedland.

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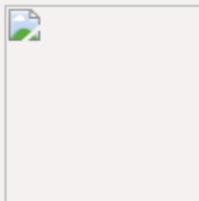
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