

FOX NEWS

UK comedy writer Graham Linehan arrested over social media posts criticizing trans activists

'Harry Potter' creator J.K. Rowling and MPs condemn Linehan's arrest as free speech attack

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The co-creator of the U.K. sitcom "Father Ted" was arrested at London [Heathrow Airport](#) on Monday allegedly over several social media posts criticizing transgender activists.

Graham Linehan recounted the ordeal [on his Substack](#), saying there were signs of something strange happening before he landed in London.

According to the former comedy writer, a gate agent in the U.S. said he did not have a seat on his flight back home and needed to be issued a new ticket – something he didn't think much of at the time. However, since the arrest, Linehan wrote on Substack that he believes he was flagged because "someone, somewhere, probably wearing unconvincing make-up" made a call.

When he got off the plane [at Heathrow](#), Linehan was met by five armed officers, who told him he was being arrested over three posts on X.

"In a country where pedophiles escape sentencing, where knife crime is out of control, where women are assaulted and harassed every time they gather to

speak, the state had mobilized five armed officers to arrest a comedy writer for this tweet (and no, I promise you, I am not making this up)," Linehan wrote.

In one of the posts, Linehan wrote that "if a trans-identified male is in a female-only space, he is committing a violent, abusive act." He then said those encountering such a scenario should make a scene, call police or even "punch" the offender.

He said officers questioned him about the post, and he explained it was a serious point expressed with humor.

[London's Metropolitan Police](#) would not confirm the identity of the suspect involved in the incident. However, in response to a Fox News Digital inquiry about Linehan, a police spokesperson said that a man in his 50s was arrested on suspicion of inciting violence "in relation to posts on X." Other reports on the arrest have connected this statement to the incident involving Linehan. Linehan said the only restriction on his bail was that he was banned from using X.

"I looked at the single bail condition: I am not to go on Twitter. That's it. No threats, no speeches about the seriousness of my crimes – just a legal gag order designed to shut me up while I'm in [the U.K.](#), and a demand I face a further interview in October," he wrote.

The former comedy writer added that the ordeal confirmed to him that "the U.K. has become a country that is hostile to freedom of speech, hostile to women, and far too accommodating to the demands of violent, entitled, abusive men who have turned the police into their personal goon squad."

"Harry Potter" creator [J.K. Rowling](#), who has also been an outspoken critic of trans activism, slammed the arrest, writing "What the f--- has the U.K. become? This is totalitarianism. Utterly deplorable."

Reform UK MP [Rupert Lowe](#) said, "Linehan today, you tomorrow. Make your objections known now."

"Britain is now a total laughingstock – a country where we arrest the authors of light comedies and interrogate them about their tweets. It would be laughable if it wasn't so serious," Conservative Party MP [Neil O'Brien](#) wrote on X after the arrest.

Additionally, conservative activist [Robby Starbuck](#) slammed the U.K., saying the country has "no free speech" and that "the feelings of transgenders [and] migrants come before the rights of everyone else."

[The Free Speech Union](#), an organization dedicated to the defense of freedom of expression, also condemned the arrest and vowed to support Linehan.

"We do not believe Graham's arrest or the bail conditions imposed were lawful. We will be backing him all the way in his fight against these preposterous allegations and the disproportionate response from the police," the organization wrote on X.

Lord Toby Young of Acton confirmed to Fox News Digital that the Free Speech Union would be paying for Linehan's legal team.

"The over-zealous policing of social media posts by the British police is turning the country into an international laughingstock," Young told Fox News Digital.

"It's particularly egregious, given that the police only respond to one in five shoplifting offenses and 75% of burglaries went unsolved last year. They are policing our tweets at the expense of policing our streets."