

Anti-Brexit economist strips off in Radio 4 studio - then challenges Jacob Rees-Mogg to have naked

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NAKED Brexit protestor Dr Victoria Bateman, who is also a Professor at Cambridge University, invited Jacob Rees-Mogg to a "naked debate" while giving a nude interview on Radio 4's Today Programme.

Cambridge economist Dr Victoria Bateman appeared on BBC Radio 4's Today programme this morning while naked to debate Brexit with host John Humphrys

John Humphrys was given the shock of his life as he interviewed a Cambridge University economist who suddenly stripped naked in the Radio 4 studio.

Dr Victoria Bateman, a fellow in economics at Gonville and Caius College, who regularly delivers lectures in the nude, surprised the veteran host when she disrobed and then challenged Jacob Rees-Mogg to a Brexit debate without any clothes on.

Humphrys, who said, startled, 'oh, I see you're naked', told listeners that Dr Bateman had the words 'Brexit Leaves Britain Naked' painted across her body.

It is not known whether the BBC was aware that Dr Bateman had intended to strip during the interview which saw her arrive wearing a coat and then disrobe in front of an unsuspecting Humphrys.

Listeners claimed the veteran interviewer struggled while talking with the naked academic, concentrating on her lack of clothes rather than her anti-Brexit message

Listeners claimed he clearly struggled on air while interviewing the married Dr Bateman - who described Brexit as Britain's 'Emperor's New Clothes' moment.

During the terse five-minute interview, Humphrys accused the academic of undermining her argument by not wearing clothes as well as offending the sensibilities of the vast majority of the British public.

Dr Bateman was interviewed following an exchange on Twitter yesterday with Piers Morgan when she uploaded a video discussing women's freedom and rights across the world while standing in the nude.

Morgan retweeted her video calling her 'ridiculous', and urged her to 'put some clothes on before you catch a cold.'

A source at the BBC said her appearance came following her response to negative comments telling her to cover up, and because her lecture on Brexit in January has caused such a stir.

The interview comes amid a wave of criticism of the flagship current affairs programme which has been accused of dumbing down since Sarah Sands became editor in 2017.

Interviews with the Spice Girls, Judi Dench and John Le Carré provoked ire from audiences who claimed the show was becoming too 'lightweight' and devoting too much time to the arts.

During the interview with Humphrys, Dr Bateman explained the slogan across her body. She said: 'It carries three important messages, and the first is that Brexit leaves Britain's economy exposed.

'The second is that Brexit has served to reveal some anti-immigrant sentiments of a kind that we should be very much worried about as a society, and finally, Brexit exposes past government failures. Government failures that left many people feeling they have nothing to lose from Brexit because they have nothing at all.'

Dr Bateman, pictured, said Brexit was Britain's 'Emperor's New Clothes' moment

Humphrys said those arguments have been made repeatedly by people wearing clothes and why Dr Bateman felt the need to remove hers.

She replied: 'I have myself written thousands of words looking at why Brexit is bad for Britain.

'But I thought it would be useful to reduce all of those words down, condense all of those words down to one powerful message.

'Brexit is the Emperor's New Clothes. Britain has sold itself a project that cannot possibly deliver what it promises.

'Everytime we open our mouths to speak we are inviting people to listen to our views to listen to our opinions. I am completely comfortable with my own body. I view women's bodies as one of the big battlegrounds we face today, and by engaging with society about women's bodies, one of the things that shows is the way in which people are quick to judge women solely based on their bodies.'

Humphrys replied: 'Do you think in 2019 that women are judged on their bodies?'

She said: 'I do. All you have to do is look at the online response to a two-minute section of my naked lecture that I posted online in the last couple of days and you will see people firing back with comments of the kind 'this woman is trashy because she has got her body on show' or 'this woman is stupid'.

Dr Bateman, pictured, said that 21st century women are still judged on their bodies

Dr Bateman posted a photograph of her clothes ahead of this morning's interview

Humphrys suggested that society acted with a 'degree of modesty'.

Dr Bateman told Humphrys: 'If we did respect that we'd still be living in days when women were covered from head-to-toe. Look at the suffragettes, they made some of the first moves to reveal their ankles and reveal their knees. So if we can dress who we want – and that includes in a state of undress that I am in today – why not?'

Dr Bateman asked whether society viewed women's bodies as shameful.

She continued: 'For thousands of years, men have controlled what women can do with their bodies. Women's bodies have been seen purely as things for sex and babies.

'What is wrong with a modern day woman taking control of her body and using it to give voice to what is the most pressing political subject in Britain right now?'

'I am doing this for the words written on my body. Brexit leaves Britain naked.'

At the end of the testy interview, Dr Bateman challenged a senior member of the European Research Group to discuss Britain's EU exit with her.Â

She added: 'I invite Jacob Rees Mogg to do a naked debate with me and we will get to the roots of this issue. The issue that Britain faces many, many problems right now from housing to the NHS and the European Union is not the cause of those problems.'

Dr Victoria Bateman

Today Programme host John Humphrys asked: 'Shouldn't the other Brexiteers themselves do the same? What about Jacob Rees-Mogg? Jacob Rees-Mogg sitting in your chair naked - what do you think?' Dr Bateman then challenged the Brexiteer MP: 'Well I would invite them to. I would be quite happy to do a naked debate.

Dr Victoria Bateman

Dr Victoria Bateman stands next to a nude portrait of herself which was painted by artist Anthony Connolly. The painting went on display as part of a Royal Society of Portrait Painters's exhibition last year

- BBC, DM