



Catherine Mayer

AUTHOR · JOURNALIST

Most large organisations have spent a decade on inclusion policy and still have the same pattern of power at the top. Diversity targets, employee networks and training budgets produce motion without structural change, and senior leaders know it. The harder question is why the institutions themselves, the way authority, promotion and voice are distributed, keep reproducing the result they say they want to change.

Catherine Mayer is a journalist, author and co-founder of the UK Women's Equality Party who helps senior leaders see why their institutions keep producing the same inequalities, and what it takes to redesign them.

Catherine Mayer's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Catherine Mayer

- She has reported on power at the most senior editorial level, as Europe Editor and Editor at Large of TIME, and then tried to rebuild it, by founding a national political party. Few speakers on inclusion have done both.
- Her book Attack of the Fifty Foot Women reframes gender equality as an economic and institutional argument, not a values statement, which makes it usable in a boardroom conversation about strategy and risk.
- She can talk about royal institutions, political parties and global newsrooms from the inside, which gives senior audiences a sharper read on how hierarchical organisations actually work.
- Her writing on ageing (Amortality) and grief (Good Grief) gives her authority on two subjects most workplaces handle badly: longer working lives and bereavement in the workforce.
- She is a working journalist by training, which shows in the room. Arguments are specific, sourced and willing to be challenged.

Biography highlights

- Senior editor at TIME magazine from 2004 to 2015, serving as London Bureau Chief, Europe Editor and Editor at Large.
- Co-founder, with Sandi Toksvig, of the UK Women's Equality Party in March 2015, and its President.
- Author of Attack of the Fifty Foot Women, Amortality, Charles: The Heart of a King and Good Grief.
- Winner of the Foreign Press Association "Story of the Year" award, 2010, and shortlisted for the Orwell Prize, 2011.
- Co-founder of the Primadonna Festival of ideas, writing and music, and advisory board member of NOON.
- Former President of the Foreign Press Association in London, 2003 to

AVAILABLE FOR

- Speaking

CATHERINE'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Culture Transformation
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Employee Wellbeing
- Inclusive Leadership
- Multigenerational Workplace
- Storytelling & Business Communication

LANGUAGES: English

2005; began her career at The Economist.

Biography

Gender equality inside large institutions has become a paradox. Reports, networks and policies have multiplied, yet the shape of senior power has moved far less than the paperwork suggests. Catherine Mayer has spent her career watching this pattern from two very different sides.

For more than a decade at TIME magazine, she reported on presidents, prime ministers and royal courts as Europe Editor and Editor at Large, with her 2010 cover story on David Cameron's first US visit winning the Foreign Press Association "Story of the Year" and her writing shortlisted for the Orwell Prize in 2011. Her biography Charles: The Heart of a King drew on years of access to the British royal household and generated international headlines for what it revealed about how closed institutions actually operate.

In March 2015, with Sandi Toksvig, she co-founded the Women's Equality Party and served as its President until the party was dissolved in 2024. Attack of the Fifty Foot Women grew out of that work and argues, in hard economic and political terms, that closing the gender gap is the single largest lever available to most societies. Amortality examines the other structural story reshaping workplaces: longer lives and the collapse of age-based expectations about careers.

Good Grief, written with her mother Anne Mayer Bird after they were widowed within 41 days of each other at the start of the pandemic, has made her one of the more candid public voices on bereavement at work. She co-founded the Primadonna Festival in Suffolk in 2019 and sits on the advisory board of NOON. Senior teams book her when they want an argument about institutional change that has been tested against real media, real politics and real loss.

Key speaking topics

- Gender equality as institutional and economic strategy
- Power, hierarchy and how closed institutions operate
- Media, journalism and political accountability
- Ageing, longevity and the multigenerational workforce
- Grief and bereavement in the workplace
- Founding and running a new political organisation
- Culture change inside legacy organisations

Ideal for

- Executive teams and boards reviewing gender, inclusion and cultural change strategy
- CHROs and Chief People Officers looking beyond policy to institutional redesign
- Leadership conferences on media, politics and public trust
- Employee network summits and international women's events with a senior audience

Audience outcomes

- A sharper account of why most inclusion programmes stall, drawn from politics, media and royal institutions, not consultancy theory
- An economic and institutional case for gender equality that a CFO or

board member can use

- A clearer view of how longer lives and multigenerational workforces change talent strategy
- Usable language for how organisations should talk to staff about grief and bereavement
- A journalist's scepticism about the difference between corporate announcement and actual structural change

Catherine Mayer's 2026 talks & topics

The Future of Media in the Digital Age

A senior journalist's read on how information, trust and political power are being reshaped, and what that means for organisations exposed to public scrutiny.

Key takeaways:

- How the economics of attention have changed the behaviour of politicians, institutions and newsrooms
- Where organisational reputation is genuinely at risk, and where the noise is overstated
- What internal communications teams get wrong when they think like marketers rather than editors

How to Have Conversations in a Polarised World

A practical session on disagreement inside organisations, drawn from running a political party and editing international news.

Key takeaways:

- Why most "difficult conversations" training fails at the level of actual political disagreement
- How to hold a line without shutting down dissent inside a team
- What leaders owe people they disagree with, and what they do not

Difference Works: Why true diversity and inclusion is about much more than ticking boxes

The argument from Attack of the Fifty Foot Women applied to corporate inclusion strategy.

Key takeaways:

- Why target-led inclusion produces motion without structural change
 - The economic case for gender equality, stated in terms a board will accept
 - What it takes to redesign promotion, authority and voice, not just representation
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Wonder Women: How unlocking female potential benefits us all

A keynote on gender equality as a growth and resilience strategy, not a values statement.

Key takeaways:

- What the data actually shows about mixed leadership and organisational performance
 - How to read your own pipeline for the blockers that policy will not fix
 - Where male leaders make the biggest difference, and where they should step back
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Good Grief: navigating personal and public loss in the workplace

Based on the memoir written with her mother after both were widowed at the start of the pandemic.

Key takeaways:

- Why most workplace bereavement policies make the experience worse
 - Practical language and structure for managers dealing with a grieving colleague
 - What organisations learned, and forgot, from the pandemic about loss at scale
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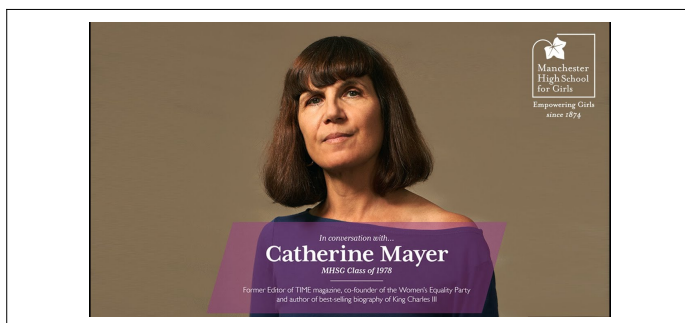
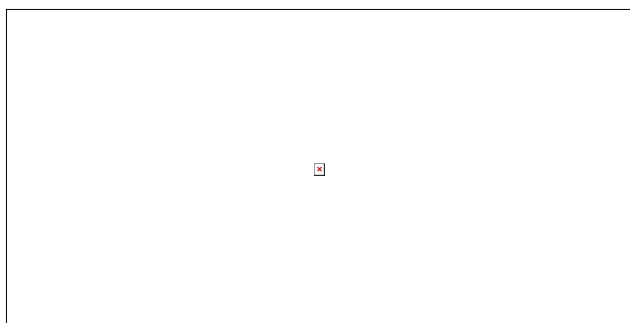
Inside the Royal Family

A reporter's account of the British royal institution, drawn from Charles: The Heart of a King.

Key takeaways:

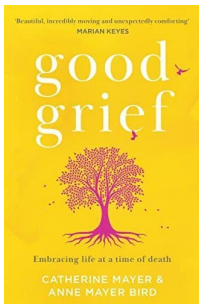
- How a closed institution manages succession, scrutiny and reform
- What the royal household teaches about leadership transitions in any legacy organisation
- The limits of personal charisma when the structure around a leader is unchanged

Catherine Mayer's Videos

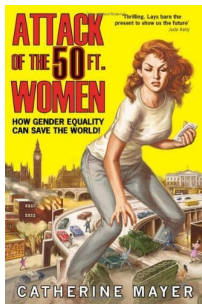




CATHERINE'S LATEST BOOKS



Good Grief



**Attack of the 50 Ft. Women:
How Gender Equality Can Save
The World!**



Charles: The Heart of a King

Catherine Mayer's 2026 speaking fees

Specific fees fall within the ranges shown. These are presented as a guide only and are subject to change without notice.

	EUR	GBP	USD
Home Country	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Asia Pacific	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
Europe	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
Middle East & Africa	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
South America	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
United Kingdom	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000
US East Coast	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000

US West Coast	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
Virtual	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000