



Rachel Anne Williams @transphilosophr

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Given the Trump administration's recent rollback of trans rights that are enshrined in terms of "gender identity" this is rich. That they think GI has "no political value" just means they don't care that trans people are being discriminated against in healthcare & public life

Either way, we are all sceptical of the political value of accounts of womanhood that identify it as essentially involving possession of a feminine 'gender identity'. We also all insist that it's politically essential to retain a clear

It's entirely possible to be able to "name and refer" to sex-based oppression while still not denying the womanhood of trans women. This is why we have terms like "cis". Cis females and trans females are both women with different anatomy. See? Easy.

'gender identity'. We also all insist that it's politically essential to retain a clear conceptual differentiation between males and females, in order to continue to be able to name and refer to sex-based patterns of oppression, and harmful sociocultural stereotypes about the 'right' ways for males and females respectively to be.

They dismiss the "political value" of concepts like gender identity, which are used to protect trans people, while denying the relevance of this position to right-wing politics. Maybe they haven't been reading the news lately, but Trump is explicitly attacking the trans community

Equally: the fact that person shares a conclusion with a far right-wing person could never show, on its own, that the conclusion was false. It is likely that every single person on the planet shares several hundred (true) beliefs with any given far right-wing person.

Apparently saying that womanhood is "by definition" equated with features unique to cis females is not "biological essentialism" - despite clearly implying that there is a singular biological "essence" to womanhood that maps onto cis female biology.

All of us reject this view as stated, though at least one of us acknowledges the possibility of more minimally described hard-wired sexed behaviours across a population. But in any case: this view has nothing to do with the view that the category of 'woman' is correctly defined as 'adult human female'. Biological

Although none of these features is "necessary" for being a woman, they insist that all of them together, in some vague "cluster" sense, somehow "by definition" makes a woman. Some definition. And why not include the brain in this "cluster", which would thereby include trans women

Several of us endorse a cluster account of femaleness, according to which possession of some vague number of a certain set of endogenously-produced primary sex characteristics—including vagina, ovaries, womb, fallopian tubes, and XX chromosomes—is sufficient for femaleness, though no particular characteristic is necessary or essential. We don't think even that XX

"We're not essentialists about being female except that the essence of femaleness is enshrined by the cluster of features unique to cis females" - excluding the very possibility of overlapping cluster features with trans females (e.g. our brains, those of us on hormones, etc)

correctly categorized as female. In other words, our view still rules out all or nearly all trans women from counting as female, without committing us to an essentialist account of femaleness.

It's just SO convenient that your vague cluster non-definition of femaleness excludes any possibility of sharing features with trans women. But where did this "non normative" definition emerge from? From normative fictions hell-bent on excluding trans women from womanhood!

At the risk of repeating ourselves, **we don't think there is any normatively right way for females or women to be.** We reject societies' constant attempts to suggest that there is.

On the other hand, we do think there are descriptive facts about what counts as womanhood and femaleness. Generally, then, we deny that to describe or classify something is automatically to express some normative value about that thing. To say that we think there is a definition of femaleness or womanhood is not to say that there is a 'right way' for females or women to be, in any normative sense. To say that there is a definition of a table, which distinguishes tables from chairs, is not to say that all tables have to have a polished top or carved legs.

"We're not transphobic b/c we have several trans friends" - oh wow - congrats on having "several" trans friends. The irony is your views are actively harmful to the rights of people people - Trump is denying trans rights precisely on your view that gender identity has no "value"

motivated by any such attitude, we don't accept that our views are 'transphobic'. Our views are motivated, as most views in political philosophy are, by a belief in the existence of a certain combination of values and facts. The values include the importance we attribute to both female *and* trans rights and interests; the facts include our perception of the likely success, or lack of success, of various proposed means to jointly realise those respective rights and interests. Several trans people with whom we are friends agree with us in our gender-critical or feminist analyses, and we don't accept they could only do so for self-hating reasons.

Whether or not you think you are disgusted by or hate trans people - your gender critical beliefs are ACTIVELY HARMFUL to trans people - Trump is taking away our rights protected via the language of gender identity and you're giving him ammunition by saying it has no value

In other words, "we advocate for the removal of trans rights based on gender identity

(happening NOW with Trump in a very real sense) based on hypothetical predictions about the FUTURE we have flimsy empirical evidence to support" - this is fear-mongering at its finest.

There are two better arguments in this area, which rarely get acknowledged or addressed by our critics. The first is about what, we judge, is likely to happen, over a period of time, in a culture where it becomes increasingly widely known that sex-self-ID (with or without a Gender Recognition Certificate), rather than birth sex, is the determiner of entry/ lack of entry for biological males into woman-only spaces where females undress or sleep, and so are particularly vulnerable. We predict that, in such a culture, social norms which currently stop many predatory men, generally, entering these spaces will be eroded. We also predict that, at the same time, women's confidence to challenge men in those spaces will be eroded, since there will no longer be any reliable inference to make from physical appearance, to right-of-entry. We see the current use of posters in some University toilets, telling women to accept the presence of males there, as an inadvertent attempt to bring about such a cultural shift, albeit with good intentions. We take seriously the

And what about the trans-misogynist violence trans women, especially TWOC, experience at the hands of cis men? Do we not care about their safety? No discussion of this. No mention of daily reality of trans women being assaulted and killed by men. Almost like they don't care.

We also sometimes hear: "Women can just call the police if they are assaulted in the bathroom, and then the assailant will be prosecuted." This assumes the assailant will be prosecuted, where in fact prosecutions for sexual assault are unreliable. Just as importantly, this response discounts the physical/emotional harm the victim will have, likely for the rest of their life. We consider prosecution of an offender after the fact to be no substitute for prevention of harm to a victim beforehand, and we see women-only spaces as an admittedly imperfect but still very valuable means of prevention.

This only scratches the surface of our anger. Trump is actively taking away our rights by removing protections for gender identity and you're arguing he is RIGHT to do so because gender identity has no "political value". And it's not just trans women. ALL trans people are affected

We think we already understand why (some, not all) trans women are angry with us. We are arguing against the truth of something which some, but not all, trans women believe, and which society encourages them to consider fundamental to their identity. We are also arguing against practical measures to achieve something—ease of legal gender reassignment, and access to women-only spaces—that some, but not all, trans women think is both morally and personally desirable. It can be infuriating and upsetting to find resistance to one's beliefs and desires in the world; especially when it would be a consequence of our being perceived to be right, that they were perceived to be, not just wrong, but also subject to a large misunderstanding about their own identity, and to what they were morally entitled.

"We think that trans people deserve to be free from discrimination but we're gonna argue in our 'esoteric' writing that gender identity has no political value for organizing society, which happens to be the exact means through which Trump is TAKING AWAY TRANS RIGHTS"

We repeatedly stress that trans people are in deserving possession of full human rights, including freedom from harm, discrimination, and harassment. We doubt that any actual transphobes are led to a path of violence by reading our relatively esoteric pieces. But in any case, given the care with which we articulate our views in our published writing, we don't consider that we are morally responsible for any radical misreading of our work, which might then cause someone to be violent to a trans person, deplorably. Equally, we consider that failing to speak out about these issues might well make violence to women more likely. We recognise two sets of rights and interests, those of trans women and women, and are determined to foster a public conversation which takes both into account.

So apparently trans men who pass as cis males "belong" in female spaces - yeah - that's going to really make cis women comfortable I'm sure. The question IS about our humanity - our identities are relevant to our humanity - our authenticity IS relevant to our humanity.

First, black people were historically subject to segregation because white people denied their full and equal humanity. Trans women do not have their full and equal humanity denied, or at least not by gender-critical feminists. The question is not whether they are human, but whether they are *female*, and on the basis of being female should be able to access spaces designed to protect the comparatively greater vulnerability of female people. Trans men are female, and so belong in these spaces (if they want them); trans women are male and do not, we argue. No one thinks a man is denied his full and

I'd really like them to stand face to face with a trans woman of color and tell her this BS. At the same time Stock et al were publishing this article, three TWOC were murdered. And yet they DARE to insinuate that trans women are in a "dominant group".

that are important in light of their status. At best, trans women are a distinct subordinated group; at worst, trans women are members of the dominant group. At best, exclusion is a lateral move; at worst, it is an 'upwards' move. In neither case is it a 'downwards' move, and so in neither case is it comparable to racial segregation.

Oh yeah? And what money are you going to use to build millions of "third" spaces? In other words, your "solution" is really to not give a shit and remain complicit in the daily discrimination trans people face on account of not having our gender identity seen as having value

migrants. Some say that trans women's motivation for wanting to use women's spaces is safety from the threat of male violence. But if so, the threat could be resolved with third spaces rather than by giving trans women admission into women-only spaces.

This is the problem with philosophers. They think that questions about "metaphysics" are sensible and have easy answers. The answer about GI is given by science, anthropology, phenomenology, history, and the personal experience of millions of people. I say FUCK metaphysics.

1. What, metaphysically speaking, is gender identity? What ensures that when *Person 1 identifies as X* and *Person 2 identifies as X* they are identifying as the same thing?

If you spent more time talking to trans people beyond your "several friends [who agree with you]" you'd realize gender identity cannot be reduced to mere "feelings". Trans discourse has gone far beyond such simplicities if you bothered to read it.

2. Do you think that 'feminine' and 'masculine' gender stereotypes are bad and should be changed and/or reduced? If so, do you also think we should accept an account of 'woman' that ties womanhood to a feeling that the gender stereotypes typically associated with being female apply to oneself? Do you see a tension there? How does this strategy avoid conservatively reinforcing the association of womanhood with femininity?

Nothing is stopping us from talking about oppression unique to cis females/AFAB people while ALSO acknowledging that trans females are also subject to an overlapping set of oppressions on the basis of their trans womanhood. Intersectional feminism has developed language for this

3. We think that patriarchy is, definitionally, a system which structurally oppresses females, on the basis of their sex. What do you think patriarchy is? If you think patriarchy is not as we've described, do you think there is any system in the world, such as we have just described, whether or not you would call it 'patriarchy'? If yes, do you think the recognition of this system is politically important? If no, on what grounds do you deny the existence of any such system?

Trans females not only have different physiology from cis males they also internalize lessons from society differently from cis males. "Late-transitioning" trans women is not a monolithic category and thus this question is nothing but a loaded question, based on fear-mongering

4. Do you think facts about male physical development and gendered male socialisation have any causal connection to male violence patterns? If so, do you think this connection generally ceases to operate in the case of late-transitioning trans women? If so, what is your explanation for this fact? Is this an empirical question, in your view?

Intersex people, AND trans people, suggest that your simplistic, overly-vague and essentialist "cis female cluster" definition of "female" is far too simple to capture the reality that expression of sexed characteristics is a spectrum that includes the mosaic of brain sex

5. If you think that the existence of people with Differences of Sexual Development (sometimes "disorders of sexual development" or "intersex") shows something about whether trans women are literally women, what is it? Please lay this out clearly, in stages, with no skipping.

The problem with philosophers is they try to reduce complex ethical phenomena to simplistic "either/or" dilemmas. I reject this dichotomy between moral rights vs "practical concerns".

6. Do you consider the question of the organisation of public spaces where people get undressed, sleep, or are otherwise vulnerable to aggression: a) a moral question of desert/ rights; or b) a practical question about how best to avoid violence and harm to members of certain groups?

Because....TRANS WOMEN ARE NOT CIS MEN. Framing this question in terms of YOUR limited definition of "female" begs the question against the possibility of seeing trans women as having the same GENDER as cis women.

7. Do you think all spaces such as bathrooms, dormitories, hostels, showers, and prisons, should be completely mixed-sex? (i.e. that there should be no spaces from which trans women *and* "cis" men can be excluded, in principle?). If not, explain why "cis" men should be kept out of these spaces but not trans women*.

Sheer practical reality. And money. Who's going to build these millions of additional third spaces? At what cost? Who's going to pay for it? The alternative solution is not only cheaper it's already been PROVEN TO WORK FOR DECADES

8. If you prefer to advocate for public policy which allows trans women into women-only spaces, rather than advocate for additional, third spaces—on what grounds do you think the former is a preferable option to the latter? Please try to give some consideration to religious women and women who are survivors of male violence in your answer.

I fucked up the thread lol. This is my response to the recent Stock et al article in [@Medium](#) "Doing better in arguments about sex, gender, and trans rights": a thread

Content warning: discussion of possibly triggering arguments for "gender critical feminism"

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