

Ses purs ongles

2016 – 2018

(I know, this looks like a tombstone)

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26.07.16 — *On paternity leave*

An anon question:

What do you think about the legislative attempts to make fathers care more about their kids by setting a mandatory paternal leave? I'm sort of conflicted - on one hand, mothers shouldn't be expected to throw their own lives away and care for the kid 24/7, on the other hand, the abuse rate and all around shittiness of fathers is just too high...

I think it is another example of these either-or fallacies that men offer women, where they present us with two bad options, both of which work out in men's favour, but one of them is slightly less bad for women, and if women don't support it with all our heart and energy then it must mean we support the much-worse option. Because men don't want anyone to entertain the idea that there might be a third alternative that works out much better for women but is less fun for men.

When you start looking for it you find this false dichotomy everywhere; men really love telling women "your only options are X or Y" then watching women desperately scramble to figure out which one might be slightly less awful for us. I don't even think they do it consciously; I think they are so used to being catered to and taking only their own wants and needs into consideration that they genuinely have a limited view of the world in which third alternatives that make men's lives less fun simply do not cross their minds.

You see it a lot if you try to "debate" prostitution with a man, and he keeps presenting you with scenarios that are awful for women but maintain the status quo for men (huge increase in sex trafficking on one hand, 'sex workers' having to 'go underground' on the other) because the scenario where men could just stop purchasing women and using them as sex objects does not exist for him. You also see it in politics, where our options are apparently right-wing misogyny or left-wing misogyny, and if you criticise the misogyny on "your" side it must mean you align with the other, because wanting all

woman-hating to be eradicated is excessive and ridiculous. That would make the world less fun for men, which is impossible for men to consider.

So, this is also the case here. Option A is women doing 90% of the dirty work of raising a kid, which generally includes sacrificing their careers, and men doing some of it sometimes if they feel like it. Option B is men being given strong societal incentives to take care of their kids, which, since men are more rigid enforcers of gender roles as well as astronomically more violent and sexually depraved than women, would definitely be bad news for the children. You'll notice that both options are bad for women and good for (at least some categories of) men.

The third option, which will never be considered because it's good for women and less good for men, is one where children are raised by women (not necessarily only their mothers or female relatives) while men are kept on the periphery, obligated to contribute financially (some kind of fatherhood tax), and where they stop being artificially given a central role in family life via the (literally) patriarchal concept of fatherhood.

So, the only options are not “the mother does all the work” or “the father gets more involved in the kid's life”. Of course, people will tell you that a world in which children are cared for by a well-organised community of women or a great day care system while men are kept away from children until they stop doing things like raping babies is an impossible feminist utopia (or dystopia, depending), just like a world in which well-implemented laws have eradicated prostitution and men can no longer pay to rape women is an impossible utopia, but it doesn't mean these options flat-out don't exist or are not worth discussing, which is what men would like to pretend.

30.07.16 — On fatherhood

Encouraging fathers to spend more time with their children with laws like mandatory paternity leave is misguided, from a feminist

perspective, because the main effect is to strengthen the social construct of fatherhood which is, quite literally, the backbone of patriarchy.

I know the phrase “social construct” has been bastardised to the point of sounding almost automatically ridiculous now, but fatherhood as a social construct doesn’t mean both sexes aren’t needed to create a baby, it means the male sex is no longer needed after that point; it means the idea that children need a male parent in their lives is a myth, and it means that the central importance of the father in the family is artificial, and, yes, socially constructed.

It means if we weren’t living in a male-centric, male-worshipping, and woman-hating society, fathers simply wouldn’t have anywhere near the importance mothers have (and probably no importance at all), not only because their contribution to making a baby is laughably minuscule compared to the mother’s contribution, but also because:

- fathers are wholly unnecessary to the process of giving birth to the baby, of feeding the baby, of raising the child, and all the roles they have given themselves to pretend they are needed (protectors, providers) are not dependent on a man being the actual father of the baby and could be fulfilled by anyone, including other women;
- in fact, these roles they have invented for themselves are dependent on our world remaining a dangerous place for women and children. Men *need* to keep hating and hurting women in order to retain their artificial, constructed importance in women’s lives — if men didn’t hate and hurt women, who would need them as a protector? If men didn’t keep women economically disadvantaged and exploited, who would need them as a provider?
- fathers can’t even be sure that they are raising their own children or the children of other men without developing technology to check or inventing artificial constructs (like marriage) to control women.

How natural can fatherhood be when everything it rests upon has been constructed by men to serve their own interests?

Some studies and research:

- “[Our] study attempted to determine whether biological father presence made a difference in children’s cognitive ability or behavioral adjustment and sought to find how many of the effects of father presence were explicable by referring to background or indirect effects such as economic provision [...] When maternal characteristics and family resources were controlled for, almost all of the impacts of father presence disappeared [...] *Almost all of the father’s impact on the family is related to economic support.*” Crockett, L. J., Eggebeen, D. J., & Hawkins, A. J. (1993). "Father’s presence and young children’s behavioral and cognitive adjustment." *Journal of Family Issues*, 14 (3), 355-377.
- “An estimated 10.5 per 1,000 children living with only their fathers were harmed by physical abuse in 1993, which is more than two and two-thirds higher than the incidence rate of 3.9 per 1,000 for children living with both their parents. Children in mother-only families were not statistically different from those in both-parent households in their risk of physical abuse under the Harm Standard.” Data from the Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect, put out by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Bos, van Balen, and van den Boom (2005, 2007) reported that *lesbian social mothers (non-biological mothers)* had higher quality parent-child interactions, were more committed as parents, and were *more effective in childrearing when compared to fathers in heterosexual marriages.*
- “To the extent that we operationally define the "meaning of fatherhood" in terms of actual father involvement, *fathers (both present and absent) and mothers are not equal parents.* The question, then is, how large is the discrepancy between what fathers and mothers in American society feel they should both do, and actually do? Furthermore, there appears to be a view that these possibly immutable gender differences should not be extinguished. Therefore, *is it advisable for government programs or policies to encourage a completely egalitarian or identical notion of parenthood?*”

"While it would be a seemingly obvious proposition to most of us, that fathers' consistent and substantial involvement in child care would benefit the child, this appears to have not been well established. The relationship between paternal involvement and children's well-being seems to be mediated by a number of other conditions that involve the father, the mother, and the child. In other words, increased paternal involvement does not automatically result in improved child outcomes. Nor is it clear whether the father's involvement provides unique nurturance that can not be as readily provided by substitute caregivers."

Both from: *The Meaning of Fatherhood*; Koray, Tanfer, Battelle.

- *"A father's most important role, and the one common "father factor" in all research that indicates any correlation between father involvement or presence and positive effect on child well-being is: a father who emotionally cares for, financially supports, respects, is involved with, takes some of the work load off of, and generally makes life easier, happier and less stressful for... his children's mother."*

From the National Fatherhood Initiative Program (see the 'Resource Library' page on fatherhood.org)

The bottom line is, women are naturally central and men are naturally peripheral, of secondary importance; babies do not need their father the way they need their mother; there is no evidence that children are better off with a male presence in their life (if anything, it is often detrimental and correlated with higher rates of abuse); men cannot give birth and be sure that their children are theirs so it makes no sense for societies to be patrilineal; very few men are actually needed to perpetuate the species—and men hate all of this. They have created a lot of myths and social constructs to obscure these facts and make society look otherwise; to make themselves seem central (the father as head of the nuclear family) and make it look like the world needs as many men as women (the sacred complementary heterosexual pairing).

It really highlights how everything about patriarchy is artificial and forced, when you look around and see that men have given themselves central and important roles everywhere when in reality

they have no reason to be anything but peripheral and auxiliary. And the fact that patriarchy is artificial and forced means it requires great continued effort and collaboration to keep it going, and a lot of this effort is provided by het and bi women, most of whom will furiously defend these social constructs (fatherhood, the heterosexual couple) as natural and good, because they artificially elevate them above another group of women, and they'll take what they can get.

Basically, as a lesbian with lesbian mothers i.e. a woman who has zero incentive to believe in men's importance in any area of society, I am suspicious of any efforts to help men strengthen the myths they have created to make themselves seem indispensable, and that includes efforts to give fathers a greater role in children's lives.

A question I received about the fatherhood post, 2 years later:

“Isn't encouraging dads to do more for their children a good thing regardless though? Moms being expected to do the childcare and the housework and also to have full time jobs of their own is ridiculous. I don't see how telling men to help with the things they feel entitled to ignore is enforcing the patriarchy.”

Patriarchy literally means rule of the fathers, so I don't understand people who play dumb and say “but how does reinforcing the institution of fatherhood reinforce patriarchy??” That post I wrote was also accompanied by another one on the importance of a good public childcare system so that the burden of children doesn't fall solely on the mother. This mindset where the only alternatives are father caring for the child or mother caring for the child, with no other sources of help like public childcare or extended families, seems both very American and very heterosexual. Why would you encourage a system where only women who have a man around will get help with their children, rather than all women regardless of the presence of a man in their life? To me it shows that this is not about what is best for the mother (lesbian mums exist), let alone the children*, but about what is best for men and heterosexual couples.

* This fatherhood post stemmed from a discussion I was having with a friend on how the best thing men could do for children is to stay away from them (even beyond the abuse and rape, there are the studies showing that fathers give preferential treatment to their sons over their daughters much more markedly than mothers, and enforce gender roles on their children more than mothers do, which is all very common-sensical) and contribute only financially (but much more than they do now, with some sort of fatherhood tax.)

This talk my friend and I had about fatherhood started because of an article on a paedophilia ring, another one about a male primary school teacher in France who played a fun game with his 6yo female pupils where he told them to close their eyes and then put his dick in their mouths, and another article the same week about a man raping a baby girl to death. Women do not rape newborn babies to death. Depending on which study you look at, men are between 96% and 99% of convicted paedophiles. People generally answer that yes, nearly all paedophiles are men but that doesn't mean all men are paedophiles, so I will just point out that nearly all men watch porn and year after year after year "teen" continues being at the top of the most popular porn searches (just in 2016 this search term got 23 billion hits.) I don't know what else I can say to make people grasp the issue here—the problem is that the person who asked this question, and a lot of people responding to this post, are seeing this in a very libfem way (mothers are already expected to do X so fathers should step up and also do X, for Equality), while we were just thinking of how encouraging the population that loves to spend their free time watching hours and hours of videos of teen girls being raped and contains >96% of the child rapists to spend more time with children is a bad idea.

I also wanted to say that out of all my posts, the fatherhood one is the one that got me the most hateful anons & comments; not the posts critical of queer theory or bisexuals or gay men or trans males or any other population of men. Back when I was still developing my ideas regarding feminism, my litmus test to sort through and assess all the contradictory ideas that were being called feminist was

to look at which ones made men & the women who support men most upset. And there is something about criticising fathers and questioning their importance in the slightest that triggers incredibly angry knee-jerk reactions in everyone, even radfems. Probably because being critical of fatherhood puts on the spot men + the hetero family as the same time, making it doubly unbearable for het-attracted women. Even though it was already obvious to me, these defensive reactions were another big hint that the institution of fatherhood is the essential backbone of patriarchy and reinforcing it doesn't do women any favours.

22.09.16 — On the term 'wlw'

I think that words like wlw, sapphic, etc. are good for bi women and bad for lesbians. I am thinking of all these posts along the lines of "Bi women can call themselves gay, we experience same-sex attraction just like lesbians" or "Lesbophobia and biphobia are both awful, one is not inherently worse than the other"—I feel like the concept of a “wlw community” encourages bi women to assume we are all more or less the same under our cute umbrella term, which means our words (gay, femme, sapphic...) are rightfully theirs too, and our experiences of oppression are comparable and it would be ridiculous to say one is inherently worse than the other, even when they are in a happy straight relationship. Issues that specifically affect lesbians (or that affect lesbians disproportionately more than bi women) become “wlw issues” so that bi women can claim some of our oppression. Especially the ones that have boyfriends, who really love to call themselves wlw as a way to distance themselves from their straight privilege by pretending they have much more in common with lesbians than they actually do (which is why they get so enraged when we call them mlw.)

It allows them to portray lesbophobia and biphobia as equally harmful, “horizontal aggression”, “annoying infighting in the wlw community” rather than “lesbians being fed up with bi women who hurt us from the safety of their privileged, society-approved relationships and use their lesbophobia to bond and ingratiate themselves with men.” (Any men. Their boyfriends of course, but

also gay men — I've seen bi women bond with gay men over their shared contempt for lesbians — and transwomen — it's so great to be bisexual and therefore be able to call yourself a trans-inclusive wlw and be automatically praised by trans activists as one of the Good Ones! What a cool trick if you want to feel superior to & attack lesbians, sorry, trans-exclusionary wlw, with no consequences.)

I feel that so many bi women have this “compulsory wlw” mentality, according to which we all must be okay with shared words, shared communities, shared oppression, because we are all the same, we all experience “same-gender attraction”, we're all wlw. It doesn't hurt them so they only see the positive aspects of it, and perceive lesbians as inexplicably mean and exclusionary for being reluctant to erase the specific lesbian context of our experiences and words.

(It must be hard sometimes being a bi woman and having to walk the very fine line between wanting to be seen as exactly the same as lesbians so you can claim an equal share of our oppression, history and culture—and wanting people to know you have nothing in common with lesbians when it comes to the thing we are hated for (male-exclusionary sexuality). Being a sapphic wlw who loudly hates terfs is the ideal solution.)

27.09.16 — On bi vs. gay vocabulary

Related to the above: a lesbian posted a link to a study saying that "73% of lesbian and bisexual women don't feel comfortable enough to be out at work". A bi woman replied to the post, correcting her: "Anybody gonna say it? It's not “73% of lesbians and bi women.” It's 50% of lesbians and **89%** of bi women."

Leaving aside the fact that this bi woman was linking to an American study when the original 73% statistic came from a UK one, this was a good illustration of two things I have been talking about lately: this bi woman's (and others') reaction to this post made it really clear that bi women perfectly understand the need to

distinguish lesbians from bi women, but only when conflating us could affect bi women negatively and obscure a statistic that makes it look like they have it worse. When conflating us only affects lesbians and disappears lesbian-specific problems, then who cares, we're all sapphic wlw and lesbians are unreasonable and selfish for trying to make this about lesbians.

(And the fact that this is the first time I see it the other way around and lesbians are usually the ones who criticise umbrella terms really shows that, most of the time, these umbrella terms are good for bi women and bad for lesbians.)

Hundreds of bi women in the notes of that post were calling it bi erasure and telling lesbians to “stop piggy backing on our oppression”, with zero self-awareness. All these bi women who don't give a fuck when lesbians try to explain why grouping us together all the time under "queer women" or "wlw" is not ideal, suddenly care deeply because of this one statistic. Be consistent, will you? We're pretty much the same. One big happy community. 73% of wlw don't feel comfortable enough to be out at work.

Moreover, I said above “a statistic that *makes it look* like they have it worse” because it is incredibly disingenuous to pretend that being “out at work” means the same thing for lesbians and bi women, which ties to another point I was making in a recent post—that gay and bi people need a different vocabulary set to discuss our experiences. Bi women are much more likely to be in straight relationships than in lesbian relationships, so they will find it much less necessary to come out when they have a boyfriend/husband, and they'll have a much easier time being closeted than a lesbian would, because they can still talk about their life and S.O. without worrying about outing themselves. I find it incredible that so many bi women are taking these “lesbians are more likely to be out at work” statistics as proof that bi women have it worse. Do they really think that all these out lesbians have an easier time in the workplace than “closeted” bi women with a husband?

As to the ones who are dating women — several bi women in the notes are saying that they are not “out” at work because they have

a girlfriend, so people assume they are a lesbian, and they find it “easier not to correct them”. So if they were to answer a survey like this one, their lesbian girlfriend would say she’s “out at work” while the bi girlfriend would say she’s “closeted” even though their daily experience in the workplace is pretty much identical. I find it extremely disrespectful to appropriate language coined to describe gay experiences (out / closeted) and apply it to heterosexual attraction. Claiming that you are keeping your *heterosexual attraction* “in the closet” by not correcting people who assume you are gay is ridiculous and an insult to actually closeted gay people. Accidentally “outing yourself” as a woman who likes men would have no negative consequences on your professional life.

In both scenarios, at any rate, the “closeted” bi woman is still able to talk freely about her life and relationship, which really isn't what being in the closet means for gay people in a relationship. We need some gay-specific and gay-exclusive words because when gay and bi people talk about homophobia, erasure, being out / closeted, we are using the same words but are not talking about the same experiences at all.

10.10.16 — On the two sides of homophobia

Regarding the idea that homophobia is a compound oppression—that gay people are hated both for being attracted to the same sex and for not being attracted to the opposite sex—I also think gay men and lesbians experience this compound oppression differently. Gay men are mainly hated for their attraction to men, while lesbians are mainly hated for their lack of attraction to men.

(And I think the idea that lesbians are more hated for their attraction to women than for not wanting men stems from the facts that a) male homosexuality is the paradigm and all understandings of homophobia revolve around gay men’s experience of it, and b) bi women like to reinforce this idea as it means we are the same as them and have no reason to try to keep our spaces and words to ourselves, other than cruel gatekeeping.)

Don't get me wrong, of course we are hated for both components—parents of gay sons will go on about the fact that their son won't marry a woman and give them grandchildren in the normal straight way and so on—but on a societal scale, gay men are not punished for not loving women the way lesbians are punished for not loving men. They are not accused of being inherently “woman-hating”.

Heterosexuality is the default sexuality and men are the default human, so lesbian sexuality is demonised for being male-exclusionary while gay men's sexuality is demonised for being male-inclusionary. I find it telling that in my country, the main slur against gay men is a slang word for paedophile (it's about their attraction to men, trying to make it sound inherently perverted) while the main slur against lesbians is a slang word for whore (it's about our lack of attraction to men, as historically a whore was any woman not made respectable by her marriage ties to a man.)

14.10.16 — On liberal lesbophobia

An anon message:

“It's so validating and reassuring to read your blog... I'm a lesbian living in LA and there are a lot of queer spaces and events and I have lovely friends who accepted me when I finally came out 4 years ago, but I've been feeling increasingly alone knowing I can't really express that im wholly unattracted to men / "dmab" people without being ostracized...”

When I'm feeling optimistic I wonder if this is Step 1 to gay people being accepted by society — as in, being attracted to the same sex *and* not being attracted to the opposite sex used to be both completely unthinkable and harshly punished; now same-sex attraction is accepted (by liberals, in some countries) while lack of opposite-sex attraction is still unthinkable and harshly punished. Maybe this is a gradual process and the next step is getting to the point where both are accepted...?

Or maybe this is the most acceptance we're ever going to get, I don't know. It's difficult to keep fighting for more acceptance since most people feel like the fight is over and has been won, because this level of acceptance (presence of same-sex attraction is okay, absence of opposite-sex attraction is not) means bisexuals are 100% accepted (again, in some places, by liberals), so they no longer feel the need to share a movement with us and show some solidarity towards us, which they are making very clear by being increasingly open about their contempt for us in 'LGBT' spaces.

In other words, the fight for acceptance of same-sex attraction was lesbians + gay men + bisexuals against straight people, which is why we needed to form a community. The fight for acceptance of lack of opposite-sex attraction is pretty much just lesbians against the world, which is why said community is now completely useless to us and even openly hostile towards us. We used to fight the same fight, but now they got what they wanted and we're on our own.

(I am not including gay men as our allies in that second fight because they are also much better off than lesbians, and have less incentive than us to keep fighting, since, as I suggested in the previous post, their oppression has much more to do with their attraction to men than with their lack of attraction to women, while the opposite is true for us.)

So that only leaves lesbians, who are stuck in a very distressing, uncomfortable place where we initially feel the relief of having found a community that accepts us, since we are free to talk about our attraction to women, only to realise very quickly that we are not free to talk about our lack of attraction to men, that if we did we would be as hated here as we are everywhere else, which means we are only being granted some shaky, conditional tolerance as long as we lie about who we are.

It isn't even that we are "half-accepted", because not being attracted to men isn't just some minor part of who we are that we can easily suppress when it's convenient to do so (which is [tw: mean lesbian opinion] how a lot of bi women seem to experience their same-sex attraction); it is a pretty big and significant part of our lived

experience of oppression and social alienation. I think we all wish we could experience our lack of attraction to men as a small insignificant part of our lives because that is what it should be, but males and mlw just never let us forget what a huge deal it apparently is and what disgusting bigots we are because of it.

I almost started the above paragraph with “So that only leaves lesbians, but who cares?” Sometimes being pessimistic about “this seems to be the most acceptance we’re ever going to get” feels justified, because we all know how problems that mainly affect lesbians are treated by the LGBT community (and by the world at large).

01.11.16 — 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman'

I am so beyond tired of English speakers misinterpreting this quote and making it mean the exact opposite of what Beauvoir meant by it. Here is the explanation that immediately follows it in *The Second Sex*:

“One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society: it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine.”

I don't know how much clearer she can be: she defines “woman” as “the figure that the *human female* presents in society” and goes on to criticise the fact that society has made this figure into something “intermediate between male and eunuch” and called it feminine. To Beauvoir, “woman” is a harmful social construct forced on females, so this word doubly doesn't apply to transwomen, who a) are not female and b) are not forced into womanhood.

When people use “one is not born, but becomes a woman” to mean “anyone can become a woman”, they:

- are conveniently forgetting the part where the political construct of “woman” is inextricably linked to the condition of being born a human female (I mean, the first chapter of the *Second Sex* is called The Data of Biology...) and the part where Beauvoir is *criticising* this man-made concept of “woman” as well as the, in her words, “hierarchy of sexes” (now known as ~spectrum of genders~) it helps create; and

- are essentially saying that transwomen are feminine eunuchs. That is what “woman” is in this book, a restrictive patriarchal construct that could best be described as an inferior, castrated male with feminine clothing and behaviour, and that female humans are not born as (as patriarchy would like us to believe) but are forced to grow into, which is the main component of their oppression.

(Please keep in mind that this was written in the 1940s when the belief that women were naturally inferior and born to serve men wasn't publicly challenged at all. When everyone defines “woman” as “naturally inferior”, saying “the human female is not born a woman, she is made one” is revolutionary.)

The point of “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” was not that male humans can also become women despite being born male, it was that female humans should not be forced to become a “woman” as defined by our patriarchal world. But trust our modern-day “feminists” to take a quote about female oppression and make it about male fantasies instead.

01.11.16 — On Simone de Beauvoir in translation

I also wanted to add that English speakers have a long history of misconstruing Simone de Beauvoir's words because they don't like or don't understand what she was actually trying to say.

As explained in Margaret Simons' 1983 paper "The Silencing of Simone de Beauvoir", the publisher and the translator of the first American edition of *The Second Sex* (which was the only English translation of it from 1953 to 2009) deleted 145 pages (nearly 15%)

of the original text, and were very misogynistic in choosing *which* parts to cut.

Parshley [the translator] obviously found women's history boring, but he apparently found some sections more irritating than others. He didn't care to have discussions of women's oppression belabored, although he was quite content to allow Beauvoir to go on at length about the superior advantages of man's situation and achievements, as the pattern of deletions in the first history chapter shows.

In the chapter on "The Married Woman," Parshley threw out entire pages from Beauvoir's description of the tedious work comprising a housewife's day. He eliminated most of Beauvoir's quotations from the journals of Sophie Tolstoy, which provide her primary source of illustration for the "annihilation" of woman in marriage. But Parshley chose to include the entire quotation from an Edith Wharton novel about a young *man's* misgivings on the eve of marriage, one of the few quotations he found sufficiently interesting to retain in its entirety. [...]

Parshley apparently found evidence of women's oppression, and genuine struggle between the sexes irritating; he systematically deleted misogynist diatribes and feminist arguments [as well as] Beauvoir's analysis of the class division within feminism, [which was] particularly devastating since Beauvoir lay the foundation for her own socialist-feminist theory in those passages.

He also misrepresented Beauvoir's ideas and mistranslated them so that some of the English terms he chose meant the exact opposite of the original French terms. For example, he translated the philosophical term "alienation" as "identification" (the opposite meaning!); or the term "pour-soi" ("for-itself", which in existentialist thought is opposed to "in-itself") as "woman's true nature in itself"; again, the opposite. Which makes it sound like Beauvoir believed in some essential "woman's nature", a belief that would be at complete odds with existentialist thought. The reason for these mistranslations is misogyny, as the American translator

deemed unnecessary to read up on Beauvoir's philosophy and try to understand it before translating her book, because “Mademoiselle de Beauvoir's book is, after all, on women, not on philosophy” (as he wrote in the preface). In other words, it would be ridiculous to expect a man to educate himself before translating some silly book about women, written by a prominent female philosopher.

The only other English translation is the new (2009) one and it has many flaws as well, for example using the present tense in English when the original French text is in conditional tense, which makes it sound like Beauvoir was asserting ideas when in reality she was being speculative or even sceptical about them. Or translating the French word “viol” as “violation of law” when in reality it means “rape”. Or translating the French “féminin” as “feminine” even though the French word just means female. “Un corps féminin” means “a female body”, and when you translate it in English as “a feminine body” it carries connotations that the original text did not have, which is particularly unfortunate when you are translating a book that’s a 900-page-long critique of femininity.

At one point Beauvoir argues that for a woman, “renouncing her womanhood means renouncing a part of her humanity.” She is saying that women shouldn’t have to denounce or distance themselves from their female sex in order to be seen as worthy. (And she contrasts this with men, who have the privilege of not perceiving their maleness as being at odds with their aspirations as a human being.) Because there is no word for womanhood in French other than “féminité”, American translators have translated this as “Renouncing her femininity means renouncing a part of her humanity” which makes it sound like Beauvoir is encouraging women to embrace their femininity rather than their femaleness — again, making her say the exact opposite of what she was actually trying to say.

I know the people who use this one context-less Beauvoir quote to support their arguments have probably never bothered to read any of her actual writing, but I do wish anglo feminists who like to quote *The Second Sex* would keep in mind that they have only read very imprecise and unreliable translations of it and that “Beauvoir was

so upset by the changes that she wanted the [original] edition to carry a statement dissociating herself from them.”

28.11.16 — *On straight privilege, for women*

A anon message:

“I’ve noticed that a lot of het/bi radfems do not believe that women can have straight privilege (they say that because men are awful, it cannot be a privilege to be partnered with them). I disagree with this, but sometimes their arguments wear me down a little & guilt trip me into at least being quiet about my opinion. What do you think about this argument that women cannot have straight privilege?”

There are definitely a lot of mlw in denial about their het privilege, and their rationale seems to boil down to a) Men are awful, b) so het privilege can’t be a thing (for women).

When you ask them why they keep dating men if men are that awful, they tend to backtrack on a) or b). Either they backtrack on a) by talking about needing love and companionship and how dare you tell het women to die alone (so men can't be that awful, then, if you still want their companionship) or they backtrack on b) by insisting that yes, men *are* that awful, but they have to keep dating them because of the social and material benefits it brings them.

I mean, there is a logical problem here. If men *are* that horrible then why do you choose to date them, other than to take advantage of the incentive system that makes the benefits of dating them outweigh the costs? (also known as straight privilege) If men *aren't* that horrible, then why do you keep using “men are horrible” as a reason why straight privilege can't exist? (which amounts to telling lesbians that dating men is as hard for you as being oppressed as homosexuals is for us.)

The first time I noticed how intensely het and bi radfems deny their

straight privilege was that time some of them said that lesbianism was a luxury—that being able to be in a lesbian relationship is *in itself* an indication of privilege, because a *really* oppressed woman would be forced to be with a man for survival. A lesbian existing in any state other than in a coerced relationship with a man is living a luxurious life of privilege compared to het-partnered mlw. That really was something. It's weird how het and bi radfems disagree with trans activists on every point except their shared opinion that lesbians are the only group for whom existing while not being raped is a luxury. A privilege bestowed upon us, that can be taken away if we aren't meek and grateful enough, rather than something we, as human beings, could reasonably expect to be our default state.

Mlw pay lip service to the idea that lesbians are oppressed and that homophobia is a thing, but only insofar as we don't try to discuss how het & bi women directly benefit from our oppression. They also like to use the hypothesis that homophobia was born out of misogyny as an excuse to deny their straight privilege. How can they oppress us if our oppression is just a byproduct of their oppression? I don't really have any deep analysis of this other than my very simple conviction that the less a woman gives to men, the more hated and unsafe she is, the more her existence is considered pointless and expendable.

And this isn't only a quantitative difference (some women give more/less to men) but also a qualitative one (some women, *by their very nature*, give less to men). Mlw are very aware of this and of where they stand in that hierarchy in comparison to lesbians. Their superior position in the hierarchy does not depend on their relationship status, it is automatically granted to them because of their nature as women attracted to men — and they do take it for granted, which is why they are so puzzled when you tell them that they actively benefit from homophobia. Lesbians give less to men than mlw (be they het-partnered or not) because of our nature as lesbians, and mlw often use it to their advantage (making sure to remind men of this qualitative difference between us to secure their place in the Valuable Women category).

But then they'll turn around and tell us (in feminist spaces, away from men) that really men are awful to all women so we need sisterhood because we all have it equally bad, as if we can't see the way they constantly curry favour with men using a variety of "look how Not A Lesbian I am" reminders. Why waste all that energy distancing themselves from us if they have no privilege compared to us, if their status in patriarchy really is just as bad as ours?

And if we give in and agree that they have it as bad as us, it won't be long before we move on to level 2 where technically, it could even be argued that they have it *worse*, couldn't it, since dating men involves so much potential violence and danger, and we have the privilege of not experiencing that?

(This reminds me of a sentence I read on a radfem Wordpress blog: "Privileged women somehow try to claim that their refusal to make the right choice is the same thing as the lack of choice more oppressed women experience.")

I still find it incredible that het and bi radfems can write long analyses of how women are in potential lethal danger whenever they say no to men (remember that girl who was stabbed in the throat recently because she told a guy she didn't want to go to prom with him?), but apparently can't figure out that lesbians live in a permanent unchosen state of "no" to men and have to live with this danger every day. They only care about the danger *they* face for being with men, and refuse to acknowledge a) that the reason they put up with that danger might just have something to do with all the perks of het privilege and b) that never giving men what they want is actually a more dangerous option.

To a lesser extent, you can also see this mentality in the gold star discourse, where lesbians who have been with men argue that it was so traumatic it completely cancels out any safety and social benefits you receive for being perceived as straight, so the obvious conclusion is that their experience was objectively the hardest and gold stars had it easier in comparison.

The common denominator here is that a lot of women are

convinced that being with men is so inherently harmful and dangerous that lesbians (gold star lesbians even moreso) are lucky to have “escaped” that and shouldn’t complain too much. Sure, they never benefited from “straight privilege”, but is it really that good a compensation, does it really bring enough material advantages, social status and safety to make up for being with men?

The answer is yes, because if straight privilege didn’t more than make up for the drawbacks of partnering with men, a lot of women would stop partnering with men. But they don’t, because they know the alternative is worse.

In a world where women are expected to exist for men, the women who don’t have to fight every day to justify their right to exist. We live in a society where women are expected to cater to men at all times, and the less we do that, the more hated we are and the less social support we get. I wish they would acknowledge that.

30.11.16 — On solidarity with gay men

An anon:

“Do you personally feel much solidarity with gay men? It seems like that's a topic that comes up sometimes, whether you as a lesbian feel more solidarity with gay men vs. straight women, and I was just curious about what you think/feel. I mean obviously as lesbians we feel solidarity most with fellow lesbians, but I don't really relate to picking a 'side' here between gay men vs. straight women as a whole”

I don’t feel any solidarity with anyone who thinks lesbians should date men or doesn’t care when others tell lesbians we should date men, so that doesn’t leave a lot of people (it even eliminates some lesbians who are somehow out there advocating for transwomen’s right to rape lesbians.)

I know there are some fights we need to fight with gay men and others that we need to fight with straight women and I’m willing to do so because there is strength in numbers and all that, but I don’t trust either group to have my back and I won’t go out of my way to

support or defend them; I'd rather save my energy for lesbians.

And yes, it seems to be a thing on in the lesbian community to guilt-trip other lesbians for not feeling any particular kinship with gay men. It's baffling. They are still men. In general I find gay men to be very entitled to lesbians' help and support in all circumstances, but it never occurs to them to return the favour. And it's always a bit frustrating to see lesbians devote so much time and energy to coddling and defending gay men with next to zero reciprocation. I don't know how many times I have seen lesbians defend drag queens when het radfems were calling drag misogynistic — when was the last time you saw a gay man passionately defend an aspect of lesbian culture, say, go after a libfem for saying butch / femme is heteronormative?

The surrogacy issue is a good example of gay men's willingness to throw lesbians under the bus to serve their own interests: two different lesbian associations in France and Italy were recently ostracised by their respective LGBT communities (thus losing the associated resources) for being critical of surrogacy; gay men, far from defending them, were the ones leading the attacks and calling their anti-surrogacy stance “homophobic” (and “TERFy” — gay men are just as happy to use this new anti-lesbian slur against us as the straight males who came up with it, or straight women, or bi women.) Gay men fighting for their “right” to exploit surrogate mothers evinces a lack of concern for women that is unsurprising and typically male, but their readiness to cast lesbians out of LGBT groups for their own benefit might come as something of a shock to some lesbians, and should be noted and remembered by the lesbian community.

Ultimately gay men do not care about lesbians' problems and neither do het women. The cotton ceiling has been a big eye opener for me — gay men literally do not care about it except in the very, very rare cases where trans rape rhetoric directly targets them. As long as it only targets lesbians, they're fine with it. Same for het women — when you ask radfems about their “peak trans” stories, the vast majority of lesbians will say that finding out about the

cotton ceiling was the last straw, whereas many bi and het former libfems were somehow able to overlook the fact that advocating for the corrective rape of lesbians is a core issue of trans activism, and only reached peak trans over issues that directly affected them, like being called “people with vaginas”.

I read a post by a straight woman earlier today, calling a lesbian a bigot for not wanting dick, and then being baffled and disgusted when told that, by that same logic, she was a bigot if she didn't like vaginas. It reminded me of that time a gay man on Twitter was spouting nonsense about TERFs, comparing lesbians' reaction to the cotton ceiling to straight men's “gay panic”, and arguing that transwomen are “biological females” — and, when lesbians asked him if, by his own logic, he would be willing to perform cunnilingus on a 'biologically male' trans man, he was incredibly offended and threw a fit about how homophobic that question was. It's almost funny how gay men and het women just have no idea how to deal with being treated like a lesbian even for 5 minutes. They are so shocked and upset whenever it happens.

(And it reminds me of the incredibly othering and dehumanising attitude libfems and male feminists have towards “sex workers”. They are more than happy to advocate for other women's “choice to do sex work” but they get weirdly offended when you ask them if they would like to prostitute themselves or for their mother or daughter to be a prostitute. Expecting another group of people to be happy to do a thing that you are not willing to do yourself because you would personally find it degrading and unthinkable usually indicates that you see that other group of people as less human than you, less deserving of dignity, respect, boundaries.)

Neither that gay man on Twitter nor the straight woman from this morning were attacked by trans activists for very clearly stating that they are not interested in female genitals, of course.

This is just one example but it happens all the time, and not only when it comes to trans stuff — straight women know they can deflect some of the hatred they get from misogynists by letting

lesbians be the main targets instead, and gay men know they can deflect some of the hatred they get from homophobes by letting lesbians be the main targets instead, and both groups are more than happy to protect themselves this way, by making sure hateful people remain focused on lesbians. So I don't see much difference between the two in their attitudes towards us and I don't feel much solidarity with either group.

03.12.16 — On calling out transphobia for male approval

I feel like a lot of radfems and rad-leaning lesbians are really desperate to find a couple of examples of “real transphobia” that they can call out in their community, to prove that they are actually good people with moderate, well-balanced views and not the rabidly transphobic TERF bogeyman that everyone else says they are.

You can almost feel their relief at times when they tell another radfem “That’s actually an example of real transphobia,” like “I found one! an example of real transphobia! see, I’m one of the good radfems who does believe transphobia exists and won’t hesitate to call it out!” It’s incredible how deep female socialisation runs and how quickly it makes you jump on the opportunity to remind people that there does exist a group of Bad Women but you are not one of them since you are willing to point the finger at them and distance yourself from them. There is a really strong tendency in radfem communities to cling to at least 1 “example of actual transphobia” that you can turn into your own line in the sand and periodically call out—whether these callouts are needed or not—to prove that you are still a Good Woman. (I have seen 10x more posts mentioning “actually transphobic radfems who use the T slur” than posts containing the T slur, for example. Which makes these callouts come across less as addressing bigotry, than as signalling something to someone.)

Female socialisation ensures that it feels really uncomfortable to keep opposing men on everything and not be accommodating on at least one point, and it feels really, really good to scold other women for things that men would want you to scold them for. (The

examples of “real transphobia” that some radfems cling to and that I am talking about here are ones that transwomen would want you to call out, of course. I am talking about calling out transphobia for male approval—like saying that a woman’s reason for refusing to date transwomen *can* be bigoted, or saying it is cruel to use male pronouns for the nice transwomen “who just want to live their life”.) It is also the reason why even the radfems who are otherwise very wary of male feminists and male allies tend to flock to gender-critical transwomen.

It’s a form of virtue-signalling, and, well, it’s very understandable when you belong to a group as universally vilified as TERFs (terfy lesbians even moreso). Of course you want to prove you are not the horrible evil person who wants trans people dead that everyone keeps saying you are. It’s just not a good idea to prove it by constantly demanding empathy for males or by throwing other women under the bus.

At the end of the day, please ask yourself whether you are calling a woman out because of your deeply-held personal values, or calling her out because it feels good every once in a while to distance yourself from some male-defined group of Bad Women.

04.12.16 — On recognising the need for male approval

Anon message:

“I agree with the point you made in your post and for a number of reasons I’m not yet certain how to fight against that for myself. Do you have any recommendations / exercises to do when feeling as though you’re giving into male approval? Thank you.”

I’m not sure if I have any tips, because every time I have been a spineless idiot I only realised it in retrospect and too late to do anything about it apart from resolving to be less cowardly in the future. Like that time I tried to be a Good Lesbian by saying that I,

personally, wouldn't want to date a transwoman, but other lesbians do and both choices are okay! I still cringe thinking about it.

So I suppose that's one thing you can do, look back on previous times where you threw other women under the bus for male approval and try to figure out how you might have handled it differently and if the pat on the back you received (if you even got one) was really worth it.

As I said in yesterday's post, going along with your female socialisation feels *really* nice while fighting against it feels really uncomfortable and shameful, but it is worth looking into these feelings. Are you feeling good about yourself because you said a good thing or because you said 'The Right Thing'? (as defined by current community standards and not by your own personal principles.) And when you feel ashamed or guilty about your words or behaviour, is it because they might actually hurt someone? Because, to stay on the current topic, a woman might feel very guilty and wrong for being assertive about her sexual boundaries and excluding entire groups of people in the process, but who is she concretely hurting? You will never, ever hurt anyone by not having sex with them.

Also, saying the Right Thing for male approval is something that happens even in women-only spaces (and even in radfem spaces, god knows). Women police each other's words and behaviour according to male values *a lot*, and this female peer pressure is a way of giving (or taking away) male approval by proxy. Male approval isn't something you only receive in the presence of men.

And it is always worth wondering what assumptions underlie (or are being perpetuated by) your words and actions and, more importantly, who dictated them? For instance, a lot of these posts where radfems lecture other radfems for not catering more to the "nice transwomen" by using their preferred pronouns operate under the false, male-edicted premise that "misgendering is violence".

So the "tips" I can think of would be:

1. Think back on previous instances of doing something for male approval and ask yourself, was it worth it? Would you do it differently if you could?
2. When you feel guilty — why? Who are you hurting, really? And if you have to pick between hurting someone's feelings and hurting someone else in a much more concrete way, isn't it best to pick the first one? (The guiltier you feel about it, the more likely it is that this person whose feelings you hurt belongs to a group whose feelings are overly coddled anyway.)
3. If you aren't sure whether you are saying something you personally believe in or something that will make men pat you on the back — ask yourself, if you have a female friend or relative who is generally kind and open-minded and understanding, what you would say to her if you were discussing this issue with her alone. Would you express the same view, or be more nuanced or reticent about it, or say something else entirely? If you don't pick the first option then you are probably feeling pressured to say the thing that will make men (or a community that doesn't allow for much dissent) treat you as one of the Good Ones.
4. Speaking of — when you are feeling good about having said or done the Right Thing and received positive reinforcement for it, always ask yourself who are the people who are doing or saying the Wrong Thing. Are they mostly women? Marginalised women? Do they deserve to be in the Bad Women category? What reasons could have caused them to adopt these views? Do their views hurt people, or only people's feelings? Should these people's feelings be automatically given more weight than women's values and opinions? Why?
5. And again, it is always worth wondering — who dictated the ideas and values you are promoting? Yourself? A group of people whose moral judgement you trust? Or a group of people who have the social power to make moral values coincide with their own best interests?

Whenever I see a woman being told to “respect pronouns” or else, I’m reminded of that text post that went “Sometimes people use respect to mean ‘treating someone like a human being’ and sometimes they use respect to mean ‘treating someone like an authority’. And sometimes people who are used to being treated like an authority say ‘If you won’t respect me I won’t respect you’ but what they mean is ‘If you won’t treat me like an authority I won’t treat you like a human being.’”

Men who demand that women “respect” their female pronouns are used to being treated like an authority and so they use that double standard in their definition of respect — “Terfs don’t respect pronouns so they don’t deserve respect” means “Women won’t treat me as an authority on womanhood so I won’t treat them like human beings.”

14.12.16 — *On Andrea Dworkin*

Reading Andrea Dworkin's *Letters From A War-Zone*, I find it incredible that she can go on and on comparing the mean, rabid lesbian separatists to Nazis (the poor innocent men being the Jews in that scenario):

“New York City, Lesbian Pride Week 1977. A self-proclaimed lesbian separatist had spoken. Amidst the generally accurate description of male crimes against women came this ideological rot, articulated of late with increasing frequency in feminist circles: women and men are distinct species or races (the words are used interchangeably); men are biologically inferior to women; male violence is a biological inevitability; to eliminate it, one must eliminate the species/race itself (means stated on this particular evening: developing parthenogenesis as a viable reproductive reality)”

(note that the Lesbian Nazis' “final solution” to male violence was... developing parthenogenesis, reproduction without men to produce only female children — possibly the most non-violent

possible way to phase out men)

“The audience applauded the passages on female superiority/male inferiority enthusiastically. This doctrine seemed to be music to their ears. Was there dissent, silent, buried in the applause? Was some of the response the spontaneous pleasure that we all know when, at last, the tables are turned, even for a minute, even in imagination? Or has powerlessness driven us mad, so that we dream secret dreams of a final solution perfect in its simplicity, absolute in its efficacy? And will a leader someday strike that secret chord, harness those dreams, our own nightmare turned upside down? Is there no haunting, restraining memory of the blood spilled, the bodies burned, the ovens filled, the peoples enslaved, by those who have assented throughout history to the very same demagogic logic?

In the audience, I saw women I like or love, women not strangers to me, women who are good not because of biology but because they care about being good, swept along in a sea of affirmation. I spoke out because those women had applauded. I spoke out too because I am a Jew who has studied Nazi Germany, and I know that many Germans who followed Hitler also cared about being good, but found it easier to be good by biological definition than by act.”

— and then, in another essay, Dworkin cries about how hurtful it is when her opponents compare her to a Nazi because mere words and ideas, even if they sound outrageous and hurt men’s feelings, cannot be compared to actual accomplished genocide:

“Writers viciously distorted what I had actually said. Letters from men who had not been present were published; one of them compared my speech to Hitler's Final Solution. I had used the word “limp” and “penis” one after the other: limp penis. Such usage outraged; it offended so deeply that it warranted a comparison with an accomplished genocide.”

Het and bi women are always so shocked and upset when they are treated the way they treat lesbians. And I find it ironic that Andrea Dworkin, often portrayed as the Crazy Man-Hating Feminist par excellence, was still so anxious to let people know that she wasn't one of those crazy man-hating lesbians. The comfortable thing about being a male-attracted feminist is that no matter how much hatred your "extreme" opinions attract, you can always choose to punch down at lesbians, considered even worse extremists simply for existing while not wanting men, and make yourself look more reasonable and moderate in the process.

30.12.16 — On patriarchal self-defence laws

This article [link removed] in which a law professor argues that battered women are morally entitled to kill their abusers has an interesting quote:

“Men can kill women with their bare hands, and they do. Women almost never kill men that way. They can't. [...] While very few women kill abusive men who are asleep or passed out, it's "unfair" to charge them with first degree murder, Sheehy argues. "It's not fair to characterize it as the most heinous form of murder, because it may be their own route to survival.”

There have probably been feminist analyses of this already, but it's worth discussing how the concept of self-defence, especially in domestic violence cases, was designed by men to benefit men. In my country at least, your attack is only considered "legitimate self-defence" if it is a) necessary, b) immediate, c) proportionate.

A concept of self-defence that only applies if you hurt or kill someone while they are attacking you, and if you hurt or kill them using the same weapons as them (your bare hands, if that's what they are using) only benefits people who are likely to be attacked by people of similar size and physical strength, and is utterly useless to women.

When a bigger, stronger male beats up his much smaller wife, it is almost impossible for her to kill him in self-defence (immediately and proportionately, i.e. with nothing but her fists), and yet it is the scenario through which she can hope to be acquitted or get a light sentence. That's not a coincidence. The other two scenarios (and she will be despised if she picks either) are for her to:

1) kill him later (when he can't use his physical advantage, e.g. when he is asleep or has his back turned on her), but it won't be self-defence because it won't be immediate. (In the Jacqueline Sauvage case, one of the main arguments against her was that she shot her husband in the back at a time when he wasn't actively beating her up)

2) use a weapon, but it won't be self-defence because it won't be proportionate. Obviously this condition also benefits men, because when a woman gets punched by her husband and she punches him back, it is seen as a proportionate response but it shouldn't be, because her punch (typically) won't do nearly as much damage as his. Anything else she does (like use a weapon) to try to hurt him as much as he hurt her will be considered a disproportionate response and will mean it wasn't self-defence.

The idea that killing your abuser in a honest face-to-face fight with your bare hands is honourable and forgivable, but killing your abuser in any other way is shameful and wrong, utterly benefits men and protects men. This is also why poison was historically reviled as a 'female weapon' and as the most cowardly way to kill someone. Poison has been described as "a great equalizer" — no wonder men hated it. Men have always hated, and will keep hating, shaming, and outlawing, any form of attack through which women can compensate our disadvantage in strength and size, and they will keep praising as the only valid method of self-defence, the method that presents the smallest risk of being effectively used by women against them.

Some conservative Christian conversion therapists are now abandoning the term “conversion therapy” (because, as they explain, the term “has been demonized”) and rebranding it as “**sexual fluidity exploration in therapy**”.

It is worth reading the document written by these conversion therapists to explain the change in terminology [link removed, to the paper “Sexual Attraction Fluidity Exploration in Therapy (SAFE-T)” authored by Christopher Rosik], and noticing all the arguments that sound absolutely identical to what trans & bi women tell lesbians on a daily basis.

I’ll get you started:

“The [term “sexual fluidity exploration”] accurately conveys that the therapist is not being *coercive* but merely assisting individuals in a client-centered *examination* of their sexual attractions.”

(“Nobody’s *forcing* you to date transwomen, we’re just asking you to *examine* your problematic penis repulsion...”)

What they have to say about category change is also interesting: talking about “sexual fluidity exploration” rather than “conversion therapy” is better because it “does not imply that categorical change is the goal [...] nor does it imply that change which is less than categorical in nature cannot be meaningful and satisfying to clients”. I was discussing last week a bi woman who wrote a YA book in which a lesbian falls in love with a guy, and this is exactly the way her book was defended by other bi women—the lesbian character “remains a wlw”, doesn't become straight (doesn't “undergo a category change” in the new jargon), therefore it isn't conversion therapy.

These Christian therapists' rebranding efforts are really successful! Although mostly with lesbophobes who already supported their views in the first place.

And of course when the conversion therapists say “Scientifically, the fluidity of sexual orientation (and, for our purposes, especially same-sex attractions) for many women and men is now beyond

question”, they quote Lisa Diamond to support their claim. Diamond, whose study shows that lesbian sexuality is not fluid at all:

“It became clear that the sample could be divided into two groups: (1) lesbians who had been exclusively attracted to and involved with women throughout the study, and who were least likely to change their identities; and (2) everyone else. The other participants reported consistently nonexclusive attractions, increasing other-sex behavior, and were most likely to change their identities. **Clearly, the women who were changing identities were not undergoing changes in their orientations. They had been attracted to both women and men all along.**”

In fact the main thing the Lisa Diamond study shows is that bi women love to call themselves lesbians:

“Other women with nonexclusive attractions would routinely change their identity labels in accordance with their current romantic partner or social network. If they were seriously involved with a woman, they identified as lesbian. If they were seriously involved with a man, they identified as bisexual or heterosexual, all the while acknowledging that they remained attracted to both sexes.”

—and that this is incredibly harmful to actual lesbians because bi women’s lies about their orientation will then be happily quoted by conversion therapists to convince their lesbian patients that they too can and should learn to love dick.

Conclusion: bisexuals, stop pretending sexuality is fluid, it hurts lesbians. Stop calling yourselves gay/lesbian, it hurts lesbians. But you know that, don’t you?

04.02.17 — On the evolution of homophobia

It’s crazy how quickly the social environment for gay people is changing now. My growing-up experience as a mid-20s lesbian is

obviously completely different from that of my mums who were born in the 1950s, but *their* growing-up experience is not that different from that of lesbians who were born 5 years before or after them — or even 10 or 15 years. They can easily relate to one another and share similar stories and assume they grew up in similar social contexts. Young gay people can't do that, because the difference in social context between you and another gay person who went to high school 5 years before or after you is substantial. Things seemed to be improving fast, and then they went bad again even faster. It makes it hard to share stories and relate to one another and build cohesive communities when everyone starts out with different experiences and assumptions, and things that seem self-evident and true to you are no longer true for the people who come right after you.

You could make interesting observations just with the rate of change on social media. In just a few years, tumblr went from more or less ignoring gay people, to “supporting” us to an almost creepy, fetishistic degree (the “tumblr loves gays more than gays love gays” phase), to openly hating us again, but this time with progressive lingo. And in a matter of months bi people went from the “evil oppressive monosexuals” discourse, lumping us in with heteros whether we wanted it or not, to the “loving close-knit wlw community” discourse, lumping us in with them whether we wanted it or not (with some confusing overlap). It's hard to keep up. Of course things change more slowly irl, but given the current state of irl gay spaces (and how hard it is to make new, “exclusionary” ones) gay people end up trying to build communities online, where the speed at which things change makes it harder for us to relate to and bond with one another, since it makes us hesitant to assume we have shared experiences with people just a little bit older or younger than us. (And I think this affects the lesbian community the most, because when a new homophobic discourse emerges, we are often the guinea pigs; it gets “tested” on us first and then it affects gay men—if it ever does—with some delay, making the changes slower for them.)

But on a wider societal scale, I think things used to be less crazy

because old-school homophobes have hated us in the same way and for the same well-established reasons for centuries, which means that a few decades ago you could safely assume upon meeting another gay person that they'd had to deal with the same kind of homophobia as you, and you could bond over that. There weren't 5463 ways to be homophobic. Nowadays there are, because queer theory isn't based on anything solid and immutable (unlike religious homophobia), it is pretty much just malleable word salad, so people keep finding new, inventive ways to be homophobic; new vocabulary, new reasons why homosexuality is problematic, new identities that gay people allegedly exclude... they change and adapt incredibly fast, and it leads to late-teens, mid-20s and late-20s lesbians wishing there were studies about the experiences of their respective 'generations' to help us better understand one another, which is baffling when you think about it. Lesbians growing up 40 or 50 years ago didn't need studies to understand the social context that 5-year-younger or -older lesbians were dealing with...

I was recently reading an interesting article written by an American woman who used to run a PFLAG chapter [Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays], and what she says corroborates I was saying on how "things seemed to be improving fast, and then they went bad again even faster":

"[O]ur chapter attracted upwards of a dozen people to each meeting, even 20 or more when we featured an author, academic or other person of note. As a PFLAG representative, I spoke at symposiums, conferences, youth meetings, schools, churches and more. Every year we fielded a large contingent at the local gay pride march. [...] And then... the bottom fell out. By the early 2010's, the enthusiasm and interest were just – gone. [...] Parents no longer grieved, no longer felt condemned to live in secrecy and fear. Gay became normal, fine even. [...] At our monthly regional conference calls, everybody had the same sad story: attendance was down, commitment was non-existent. The yearly national conference went to bi-annual, staff was cut at National, the end was near.

And then, about four years ago, things changed again. The chapter hot-line, formerly covered with cobwebs, began ringing off the hook. This time, it was parents of “gender-non-conforming” children, desperate for help and advice. Again, I had no expertise, no real understanding of transgender issues, but simply assumed that the “strong affirmation” model that worked fine for lesbian and gay people, would go double for trans. Today I am ashamed to say that I unthinkingly referred over 50 individuals and families to our local “gender-affirmative” therapist, and at least as many more to trans-activist and other trans-supportive groups (such as “free binder” sites).”

Obviously this is all very situational, but it really seems that there was a tiny window of time where things seemed to be getting better for gay people, support groups like PFLAG were no longer needed because parents were no longer distressed upon finding out they had a gay child, and then the trans movement took over and everything was bleak again for gay kids, with organisations created to support them now promoting conversion therapy. It is reminiscent of how the advances in women’s rights during the 2nd wave were immediately followed by the explosion of porn, beauty and makeup culture, and the anti-feminist 3rd wave.

08.02.17 — On bi women silencing lesbians

I would be nice to see bi women acknowledge this recurring and disturbing pattern in their community: using bisexual rape victims and domestic violence victims as a trump card against lesbians. Shutting up lesbians when we try to discuss a specific instance of bi women’s lesbophobia by throwing completely unrelated male violence statistics at us.

Do they think male violence against bi women is something lesbians are responsible for? If not, why would they think that “but men stalk and rape bi women more often than lesbians, checkmate” is a pertinent and appropriate answer to “here are some ways bi women hurt lesbians”?

(This is not even touching the fact that some of those statistics are pretty questionable, like that previously-discussed study about how lesbians are much more likely to be out at work than bi women, which bi women interpret as “bi women have it harder in the workplace, biphobia is worse than lesbophobia”.)

That said, bi women do experience higher rates of domestic violence than lesbians. But I have also seen studies where het women have a higher rate of domestic violence than bi women – would it be appropriate for a straight woman to use these statistics to shut up bi women when they try to talk about straight women’s homophobia? If not, why is it okay when you do it to us?

I once made a post talking about specific issues in the “wlw community”, commenting on a post by a bi woman telling her boyfriend “I’m so gay” and then adding, when told 'bisexuals aren't gay': “I am attracted to men & women and will proudly call myself the gayest gay to have ever gayed” among other homophobic things. A bi woman replied to my post with statistics about bi women being raped and stalked by men.

In another post I made, I was talking, again, about bi women appropriating the word “gay” and making it inclusive of hetero attraction and how homophobic that is.

A bi woman replied with three different sets of statistics about male violence against bi women, and other issues like bi women living in poverty.

This exact pattern happened again in yet another post: a bi woman said she liked pretending to be a lesbian when she wants to hang out with a gay man (?) or when she’s too lazy to explain what bisexuality is, I told her not to do that, she gave me a whole bunch of statistics about how men rape bi women a lot.

What does this have to do with the initial discussion of bi women’s appropriation of lesbian terms? How is this anything but a cheap silencing tactic, and can we please acknowledge that this tactic is *constantly* used against lesbians by the bi community, and is also used by pretty much all privileged groups whenever a conversation makes them uncomfortable? Marginalised people say “You hurt us in X and Y ways”, privileged people end the discussion with, “Are

you saying we're never hurt in any way? Look at all those bad (unrelated) things that happen to us!"

How is posting an unrelated set of statistics when a lesbian is talking about a specific example of bi women's lesbophobia, and commenting "look how good we have it, guys" and "'you bisexuals are so privileged' explain this then", any different than men shutting up feminists who try to discuss female oppression with statistics about male rates of suicide or workplace accidents and saying "If men have privilege then explain this"?

I have seen bi women bring up these statistics about poverty and male violence as a weapon against lesbians more often than I've seen bi women bring them up because they genuinely cared and worried about the vulnerable members of their community. How is that any different from American transwomen brandishing statistics about the dangers faced by Brazilian transwomen of colour in order to shut up TERFs?

I'm just tired of seeing the same statistics again and again. Yes, they're awful. They're also not lesbians' fault. They have nothing to do with us, or the matter at hand. Stop using them to silence us or guilt-trip us. Try replying to the actual things we say instead.

09.02.17 — On comparing lesbians to Nazis

The ubiquitous comparisons between "TERFs" and the alt-right (like all the reactions I saw here and on Twitter to the video of that Nazi guy getting punched, that went "Yesss! Punch every Nazi and every TERF!") are making trans activists grow increasingly comfortable with violence against women, and especially against lesbians, in defence of their views. I know "feminazi" has been a thing for decades, but it has never been taken *literally* (by sane, moderate people) — whereas a lot of sane, moderate people are uncritically accepting this equating of TERFs with "literal Nazis".

And I don't think it is a coincidence that at a time when Nazis are back on everyone's radar, when we are holding public conversations

about how violence against Nazis is justified and right so that they feel afraid of even showing their face in public, trans allies are suddenly comparing lesbians to Nazis more repeatedly and *literally* than ever, over and over again (think of all the “unfollow if you’re a Nazi or a TERF” posts circulating, one of which has 100K+ notes and is written by someone who defined TERFs as “vagina fetishists”, aka lesbians).

Even in TV shows — in the show *Transparent*, the transwoman’s “grand exit from Idyllwild [=Michfest] is juxtaposed with flashbacks of her [sic] mother and her [sic] transsexual aunt at Magnus Hirschfeld’s Institute for Sexual Science in Weimar-era Berlin, as Nazis destroy decades worth of records on groundbreaking gender-reassignment surgery.” Quoting the *Guardian*’s recap of the episode, “The scene switches between the fear and devastation at the Institute and [the trans character]’s torment as she [sic] gathers her [sic] belongings. In [Weimar-era] Berlin, Gittel is dragged away by Nazis whilst [the modern-day transwoman at 'Idyllwild'] begins to flee the “feminist fuckhole”. [...] In Gittel and Maura, you have two people – both transgender women – cast out of a society by virtue of extremist doctrine. Can oppressed people be fascists?” (The “extremist doctrines” being, respectively, Nazism and lesbianism.)

Another recap article called this “easily the season’s boldest metaphor yet for the power of fear and hatred.” The fact that this “bold metaphor” establishing a parallel between lesbians attending Michfest and Nazis aired less than a year before a transwoman (Dana Rivers) who used to picket Michfest murdered two lesbian mothers who used to attend Michfest has never and will never be discussed by the progressives who wrote these articles or by anyone, although it sure could teach them something about the power of fear and hatred.

Trans activists lately have been working really hard to put TERFs / lesbians and Nazis / the alt-right on the same level in people’s minds, and the result is that even moderate libfems and "LGBT

allies" are starting to casually equate the two and to feel less and less bothered by trans males' over-the-top hateful rhetoric and threats of violence (or actual violence) against lesbians.

19.02.17 — On why "LGBT" harms L and G

I have seen several posts about how T shouldn't be tacked on to LGB because gender identity is not at all the same as sexual orientation, but their arguments tend to revolve too much around what these groups have or don't have in common, and not enough around which group is hurting which and why/how.

So these posts kind of skirt around the real issue, which is not that gender identity and sexuality are, for some reason, grouped under the same umbrella, but that *the first concept is systematically used to invalidate the second one.*

The real issue with "LGBT" is:

- that refusing to "respect" someone's gender is a crime and an act of violence while refusing to respect someone's sexual orientation is not
- (and, in fact, disregarding someone's gender identity *because* of your sexuality is wrong; while disregarding someone's sexuality because of your gender identity is right); and
- that this benefits both the B and the T at the expense of LG.

As long as this harmful "gender trumps sexuality" idea remains the accepted dogma in progressive circles, LG should want to drop both B and T, not because every single member of these groups hates us and not because we have nothing in common with either (a lot of T are also LG, and of course we have same-sex attraction and part of our oppression in common with B) but because this dogma enables them to control us (because of the moral superiority it grants them over us, cis-privileged bigoted genital fetishists), to disparage us and to hurt us.

As long as gender identity is considered sacrosanct while sexual orientation is not, the T will continue trampling over LG with the

eager help of the B. If someone's chosen gender can and should override someone else's unchosen sexual orientation, this automatically empowers the BT to hurt the LG, because our exclusionary sexuality makes us morally wrong and inferior to the righteous, open-minded B, and makes us privileged overlords of the poor oppressed T who can thus advocate for our rape in the name of social justice.

22.02.17 — On lesbian socialisation

We all know how female socialisation works, but I don't think I've ever seen anyone discuss the concept of lesbian socialisation, how it affects us, with what consequences — and how it is like female socialisation, squared.

To put it in a nutshell — female socialisation teaches you that you are inherently worth less than men and you must always defer to them and prioritise them and their feelings over yourself and other women. Lesbian socialisation teaches you that you are inherently worth less than male-attracted women and you must always defer to them and prioritise them and their feelings over yourself and other lesbians.

Lesbians are of course affected by both, although being gay can help us fight some aspects of female socialisation—e.g., the need to prioritise men or win male approval. Not that it doesn't affect us at all, but the message that “you are worth less than men” does impact you differently when men are worth less than women to you in your love life, and “you must behave in X and Y ways and treat other women like rivals for male interest” sounds like irritating white noise when getting male interest isn't a desired outcome.

On the other hand, we have nothing to help us resist the impact of lesbian socialisation, because we love women. We are fully behind the idea of prioritising women. Add to this a healthy dose of internalised lesbophobia, and we are now fully behind the idea that mlw are worth more than lesbians and we should prioritise these women in particular, always.

Not to mention the factor of our social isolation and quasi-total lack of outside support — how every other group and political faction hates us in a different (but, deep down, the same) way, how desperate we are for allies.

I wrote a post last week about lesbophobia and double standards in the radfem community, and one part of it was directed every bit as much at lesbians than at mlw: “Het/bi women are really seen as inherently more important and worthy of respect than lesbians, aren’t they? Can’t waste your shock and anger on people who hate lesbians because you must save it for when a lesbian calls a manloving woman a manlover.”

I wrote that post because there were lesbians who were much more shocked and outraged at other lesbians for hurting a bi woman’s feelings by calling her a lesbophobe and a “manlover”, than at said bi woman for being a lesbophobe who defended the idea that lesbians can be manlovers. (She was defending a book I mentioned previously, written by a bi woman, in which a lesbian falls in love with a guy.) There were also lesbians who hurried to write posts urging other lesbians to calm down and be nice when we started reacting to the lesbophobia, but felt no need to write posts telling mlw who were being lesbophobic to calm down and be nice. And there were lesbians who felt the need to write posts reassuring “our bi sisters” that we still love them and we know most of them aren’t like that and NotAllBis and wlw solidarity, but didn’t feel the need to respond to this surge of lesbophobia with comforting posts of solidarity to fellow lesbians. That’s what I call lesbian socialisation. Put manloving women first, always. Suck it up, be nice, placate, placate. Can’t risk alienating the very few “allies” we have.

Female socialisation teaches you “it’s in your best immediate interests to care more about men’s feelings than about women’s oppression.”

Lesbian socialisation teaches you “it’s in your best immediate interests to care more about manloving women’s feelings than about lesbian oppression.”

And that’s exactly why the queer/bi/trans community has been able to dismantle the lesbian community so easily and walk all over us.

Because all lesbians have been taught to never dare prioritise ourselves and our own wants and needs, to always put every other group's feelings and wishes before ours, especially other women and other marginalised groups who need our help and compassion*. Gay men don't have this problem and so they still have "exclusionary" spaces.

* And these groups know it. They might not know it consciously, but they know it, and they exploit it. Every time a het radfem reminds a lesbian of how dangerous and painful partnering with men is, every time a bi woman throws those bi suicide and rape statistics at us, every time a "trans lesbian" talks about how much it hurts his feelings to be rejected by mean lesbians who won't date him, they are counting on lesbian socialisation to kick in, waiting for lesbians to feel terrible and forget about our own best interests and duly start prioritising theirs.

Het radfems do this deliberately, to get us to admit that het privilege isn't really a thing and, back in the day, to convince lesbians to accept their political lesbianism rubbish ("Why won't you welcome us in your community as your lesbian sisters? Do you really want us to go back to our hurtful hetero relationships?"). Bi women do this deliberately, to guilt-trip us into "including" them everywhere and shut us up when we talk about their lesbophobia. "Trans lesbians" do this deliberately, to get us to fuck them. (Men don't have complicated motivations).

They all know the stereotypes (they create them) that are an integral part of lesbian socialisation, teaching us our worthlessness. The mean lesbian, the angry lesbian, the manhating lesbian, the ugly hairy rabid hysterical cruel insensitive heartless biphobic transphobic gatekeeping selfish exclusionary oppressive genital-fetishising lesbian.

Lesbian socialisation is the incredibly useful and necessary extension of female socialisation. It functions to keep the women most detached from patriarchal institutions, the women who least need men, who have the most reasons to rebel, quiet and well-behaved. Growing up as a lesbian, you receive female socialisation, hear that as a woman you are subhuman and born to love men,

serve men, worship men, and you feel angry. But you also receive lesbian socialisation, hear that you are not merely subhuman but *subwoman*, lower than low, if you turn into one of those crazy rabid angry lesbians, and you back down.

And other groups know how to use all these hateful messages and stereotypes against us, either throwing them at us outright, or subtly reminding us of them, then watching us desperately scramble trying to prove that they aren't true, or at least not true of *me*. They know.

So, it would be good if lesbians knew, too. Be aware that lesbian socialisation exists, that it affects you, and that other groups use it against you. Notice patterns. Notice in what contexts the calls for “empathy”, “solidarity”, “sisterhood”, politeness and niceness start flowing. Notice in what contexts other groups give you tragic statistics about their own oppression. Notice when you start feeling bad and guilty and ask yourself why. Who are you prioritising? (Usually, yourself and/or your fellow lesbians.) Whose feelings are you ignoring? Who are you concretely hurting? (Usually, no one. Prioritising lesbians does not actively hurt other groups, no matter how badly they want us to believe that—using the aforementioned tragic statistics as well as words like “denying us” to make us feel like our bodies, affection, time, solidarity and emotional labour are as necessary to them as oxygen.)

And remind yourself that it's okay to prioritise lesbians, and that you *do not have to care* about people and groups who have shown time and again that they do not care about you. When a group has a long history of disregard or blatant hatred of lesbians and shows zero willingness to change, *it's okay not to care* anymore. It's okay to answer questions like “Do you support X group?” (trans people, radfems, gay men, bi women...) with “No. I support lesbians.” Because you are not required by law to support groups who do not support you back, let alone groups who are actively promoting an ideology that hurts you and your community. It's nice to be nice and polite and supportive, but when the niceness and politeness and support always flow in the same direction, at some point, it's time

to stop. Allow yourself to stop. (At the very least, allow *other lesbians* to stop and don't lecture them for not being sufficiently nice and polite to the groups that you, personally, still have some faith in. She probably has good reasons for losing her faith in them.)

If you do stop, you'll probably feel very guilty at first (they'll make sure you do), but it will get easier. You might even start feeling better about yourself now that you stopped caring about some groups who never cared about you.

And finally, please keep in mind that if you don't prioritise yourself and other lesbians, no one else will. No other group will care. Not even marginalised groups who share some aspect of their oppression with us. Not het women, not trans people, not gay men, not bi women. No other group will defend us, support us and prioritise our hurt feelings over their oppression — what they constantly demand of us. No matter how nice, accommodating, polite, helpful we are to them. It's never going to be our turn.

25.02.17 — On trans ideology benefiting feminists

It used to be more of a headache to be a lesbophobic feminist back when blatantly coddling men's feelings at the expense of women made you feel like a bad feminist sometimes, or was met with disapproval from other women. You had to waste *so much time* justifying yourself, and write so many op-eds explaining why your male worship was a feminist statement. Not to mention that supporting gay rights was briefly in and you could lose some of your feminist credentials if you said that lesbians need to critically assess why they don't like dick.

But now libfems get to feel saintly and righteous when they coddle men who call themselves trans, *and* they don't need to censor their lesbophobia anymore. The trans movement allows libfems to indulge in their worship of men and their contempt for lesbians simultaneously, because a) prioritising males is recast as vital feminist work, as long as these males adopt the right identity (and many of them have clued in) and b) the more vocal and rabid they

are about their contempt for lesbians, the more intersectional their feminism! From their point of view, the trans movement is the best thing that has ever happened to libfems, really.

It is also very nice for het and bi radfems because they too don't need to censor their lesbophobia anymore — they get to pretend to care about lesbians in their arguments against trans activists, and then derail criticism of lesbophobia in the radfem community by pointing to all these examples of their support of us. Pointing at the trans and queer community also allows them blatantly to imply "See how much worse it is for lesbians out there? Be grateful for us and shut up."

28.02.17 — On homophobia predating misogyny

It isn't "insane" (as a het radfem has put it) to hypothesise that homosexuals might have been hated before women were. Gender serves both to separate the sexes into a "natural" complementary dichotomy (by magnifying the biological differences between them and creating artificial ones), and to enshrine and justify male supremacy. Gender has both a "male / female = yin / yang" side and a "male / female = dominant / submissive" side.

Gay men are oppressed by the first one (because the natural complementary yin / yang aspect posits homosexuality as inferior, less natural, less fitting, making less sense) and privileged by the second one, which posits their sex as superior. Bi/het women are oppressed by the second one (the dominant / submissive side) and privileged by the first one, which posits their sexuality as superior. Lesbians are oppressed by both.

Radfems believe that the two have always been intrinsically linked, that the only purpose of that first aspect of gender is to justify and solidify the second aspect (i.e. the more separate and different the two sexes are, the easier it is to claim that one is superior to the other), or that the first aspect exists only *because* of the second one (i.e. the artificial differences between the two sexes exist because men avoid doing "women things" because they hate women). In

other words, they downplay the aspect that privileges them by defining it as a mere auxiliary to the one that oppresses them. By that logic, anything that reinforces that first aspect ultimately reinforces their oppression, not their privilege. This is particularly useful logic when *they* do or say things that reinforce it (and het-attracted women reinforce gender roles a *lot*).

But although it's difficult today to separate the two as they have become so entangled and synergistic — it *is* possible that they weren't originally linked, that the complementary yin / yang aspect of gender was conceived first (in the context of the early hetero creation myths, for example) and that the dominant / submissive aspect was added to it later. It's possible that the concept of the male / female pairing as natural & superior, vs. male / male or female / female = unnatural & inferior, existed before “male = superior vs. female = inferior”.

After all, you don't need to believe that men are superior to women in order to believe that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality. Homophobic radfems keep proving it. Deep down, a lot of bihet radfems believe that homosexuality is less natural than heterosexuality. You see this mentality on tumblr constantly (“how dare you suggest bi/het women stop dating men” vs. “being in a lesbian relationship is a luxury” = how can you expect me to resist the overpowering urges of my deep-rooted natural hetero attraction vs. homosexuality is a shallow bourgeois indulgence) but also in those “feminist utopia” books written by 2nd-wavers in which lesbianism no longer has any reason to exist once women are liberated from male domination.

Bi and het radfems are very reluctant to admit that gender has a heterosexist side at all — to them, gender is 100% about sexism. But there are many ways in which gender is used to hurt and erase gay people specifically — “third genders” in certain societies that mark gay people as Other and therefore solidify the naturalness and supremacy of the hetero pairing; homosexuals as “inverts” which logically led to transsexuality then transgenderism (and the “trans kids” phenomenon, tailor-made to target and erase gay children); all those conservative parenting books that pretty much explain that

you need to enforce strict gender roles in your home to make sure you don't "turn your kid gay" (e.g. by letting your son do ballet); fluctuating gender norms being used to erase all traces of homosexuality in history ("it was normal back then for men to be very affectionate with each other"), etc. etc.

That's the heterosexist side of gender. It isn't misdirected misogyny. It doesn't hurt gay people accidentally, with hurting women as its primary goal. The primary goal of the heterosexist, male / female complementary aspect of gender is to erase homosexuality and elevate heterosexuality, including women's heterosexuality. Think of all the het women who use it to protect their precious heterosexuality, e.g. by wearing lesbian fashion but rebranding it "boyfriend clothes". In this case (and others) gender non-conformity is abnormal and bad when gay, but normal and non-threatening when seen through the lens of heterosexuality. How do you explain this logic, if gender is nothing but misogyny?

(Incidentally, this provides a trivial explanation as to why gay people are much more likely to be gender non-conforming. The same gnc behaviour is often judged much more leniently when displayed by straight people than by gay people. So perhaps the answer isn't to be found in gay people's brains or genes, but in the concept of gender itself. If heterosexuality is the ultimate gender conformity, if the norms of gender were (and keep being) created, at least in part, to posit heterosexuality as natural and normal and homosexuality as Other and outside the norm, then it's almost tautological to say that gay people have more trouble fitting into gender norms. It's because they aren't made for us, they are made against us.)

Basically: one aspect of gender (/sex roles) artificially elevates men over women, and justifies and protects male supremacy. Another artificially elevates heterosexuality over homosexuality, and justifies and protects hetero supremacy. The second one can exist without the first one. We don't know which one appeared first. Radical feminists claim that the second one is only auxiliary to the first one (i.e. the only purpose of protecting hetero supremacy is to protect male supremacy). But that's just a theory.

The idea that the heterosexist aspect of gender (male / female > male / male & female / female) existed before the sexist aspect (male > female) is also just a theory. But it's a theory that makes bi and het women very uneasy because they have grown so comfortable with their own theory that defines heterosexism as an offshoot of sexism, hetero supremacy as a tool of male supremacy, which conveniently means that they can't be privileged by the former. So comfortable, in fact, that they don't even see it as a theory anymore, but as a proven, self-evident fact, and call lesbians insane for merely mentioning the other theory. For bi/het radfems, giving serious thought to the other theory would mean giving serious thought to their deep-rooted belief that homosexuality is less natural than heterosexuality (they deny believing this, and yet they constantly express this belief in various ways) as well as to their belief that they do not benefit from the oppression of homosexuals; that they are only oppressed, never privileged, by gender and by their heterosexual attraction.

10.03.17 — On the bi community

In response to a bi woman who was complaining that “there aren't any bi spaces” and everything is “gay gay gay, gay community, lesbian culture, there isn't anything specifically for bis”:

The idea that “bis don't have a community” is a lie. The LGBT community is the bi community. The queer community is the bi community. Wlw spaces are bi spaces. The fact that these spaces aren't specifically referred to as “bi spaces / the bi community” is irrelevant compared to the fact that bis completely dominate them and can choose to exclude others (mainly lesbians) from them as they see fit. When you have spaces where your sexuality is the default one (and the *only* acceptable one) and you are catered to and you still aren't happy because, what, there isn't “bi” in the name?, it comes across as just whining for the sake of whining.

As we all know, one cool thing about being privileged is being the default, an extremely comfortable and validating position, but

which can lead some particularly self-centred people to feeling jealous of the oppressed for creating spaces in which their existence and issues are highlighted. These spaces are called “[minority name] spaces” and there are no spaces specifically called “[privileged group] space”! That’s unfair! Where is the thing for men? Why is there no White History Month or International Men’s Day? Where is the “bi community”? Duh, white month / men’s day is every unspecified month / day of the year, and bi spaces are every LGBT / queer / non-straight / wlw and other vague, unspecified spaces. That’s how it works.

The second thing is, gay men and lesbians *had* to create a culture and community of our own because we were ostracised and treated as pariahs by mainstream hetero culture and because we can’t relate to it at all. Bisexuals hardly ever felt the need to create their own specific culture and community because most of them are het-partnered and fit seamlessly into mainstream hetero culture, can easily relate to it and aren’t rejected by it. It’s not our fault that many bisexuals treat their same-sex attraction as a minor part of themselves that they’d rather ignore to focus on the part of their attraction that brings them social status and material privilege, but unfortunately they punish us for it by invading our communities and appropriating our culture when they feel like focusing on the other part for a little while and feeling all ~queer and rebellious. Then, since what they know is straight privilege and mainstream spaces in which society tells them that their het attraction makes them superior, they recreate the same hierarchy in **our** spaces, walk all over us and treat us as inferior to them for our lack of het attraction so they can prop themselves up to the same heights they are used to.

The reason bisexuals aren’t building their own community is because 1) they don’t need to, see paragraph 1; 2) it’s far easier and more enjoyable for them to take over ours and use their het entitlement to put us down and become top dogs; and 3) they know straight privilege is too great a perk for a large enough number of them to stay away from het relationships & mainstream het culture

long enough to make creating their own separate institutions and culture worth it.

Then they have the gall to pretend that not having a “bi community” of their own is proof that they are more oppressed than us, and that gay people having gay spaces and a culture (because we, unlike them, don’t have the luxury of being accepted by mainstream culture) is a privilege gay people have over them.

13.03.17 — On trans children

There was a documentary on British TV a few months ago about the London-based Tavistock and Portman “gender identity clinic”, which revealed some horrifying statistics:

- Parents are bringing children as young as *three* to this gender clinic (“Three children aged three were referred to the clinic in the past year.”)

- “Ten years ago, the Tavistock received 40 referrals a year; now it is 1,400. Boys were once the majority – now around 1,000 of its patients are girls.”

First, the number of children with gender dysphoria referred to the clinic in 2015 was *more than double the 2014 number*. That is a 100% increase.

Second, in Britain, in **one year — 1,400 children. 400 boys, 1,000 girls**. I wonder why girl children are more scared or repelled by the idea of becoming women, than boy children are by the idea of becoming men?

[An update, added 6 months later: the more recent numbers provided by the Tavistock clinic in an interview on BBC London Today are 1,400 girls, 616 boys. Girls remain over 2/3rds of the children presenting a “gender identity disorder”.]

- Still according to the documentary, 50% of the children referred to the Tavistock gender clinic — 70% of whom are girls — are on the autism spectrum. Meanwhile, the latest prevalence studies of

autism indicate that 1.1% of the population in the UK may have autism, with girls being a minority in this 1%.

I don't understand people who don't find the concept of "trans children" horrifying on every possible level.

— Replying to someone who commented on the previous post:

“While there are definitely children who are confused, pressured, delusional, etc. how the fuck can you discredit all of the trans people who started transitioning at pretty young ages who are absolutely happy and satisfied with their choice many years later? How can you discredit the experiences of adult trans people who knew DAMN well all or well close to all of their lives what was right for them?”

You can be wary about children transitioning with rationality and compassion without saying the concept of any child being trans is “horrifying on every possible level.”

“While there are definitely children who are confused, pressured, delusional, etc.”
Why are you so casually accepting the sterilisation (and other dangerous side effects of transition) of all these confused or pressured children for the sake of a few “real” trans people who will be happy with their choice? Why are you treating these confused and pressured children (most of whom are likely to be disabled and/or gay) as acceptable casualties? Why do you care so little about them? And where do you draw the line? How many disabled kids or gay kids are you okay with sterilising due to a wrong trans diagnosis?

“discredit all of the trans people who started transitioning at pretty young ages who are absolutely happy and satisfied with their choice many years later”

We do not actually have this kind of data. The transition of children is an extremely recent phenomenon. All the trans people who started being transitioned at very young age... are still very young. We have no cohort of trans people in their 40s or 50s who were

transitioned as children and can tell us how it has impacted their life. Trans children are a completely new phenomenon, there are no long-term studies of the effects of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones on kids, so doctors are pretty much just hoping for the best.

In fact, the chair of the committee who drafted the guidelines of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (who endorses the use of puberty blockers for children) had to say about puberty blockers: “We still don’t know the subtle or potential long-term effects on brain function or bone development. Many people recognize it’s not a benign treatment.”

“How can you discredit the experiences of adult trans people who knew DAMN well all or well close to all of their lives what was right for them.”

Well, funnily enough, a lot of trans people who started transitioning as adults have children. The majority of transwomen we hear about who started transition in their 40s or 50s have fathered several children. There are also a lot of news stories about adult trans men birthing children. So why are all these adult trans people who chose to have children so comfortable with the idea of sterilising trans kids and robbing them of the opportunity to make the same choice later in life? Don’t they see their hypocrisy when they say they wish they too could have transitioned as children, even though they all chose to have bio kids and therefore clearly wouldn’t have wanted lifelong infertility?

I find these people revolting, because they are clearly using trans children as a way to gain legitimacy for themselves (if you can even find trans toddlers, how can you say transgenderism is anything but pure and good and natural?) even though their own life choices prove that they would rather not have been transitioned (and sterilised) as children themselves.

“You can be wary about children transitioning with rationality and compassion without saying the concept of any child being trans is 'horrifying on every possible level'”

I don’t think any child is “truly trans”, but even if you disagree, again, where do you draw the line? Where is your compassion for gay children, autistic children, all the children who might have

grown up to be perfectly happy with their natal sex had they been supported in their gender non-conformity without being turned into lifelong medical patients? I don't know how many stories I have read about children who were not allowed to be gender non-conforming until they were "diagnosed as trans", and only then did their parents start allowing them to play with their preferred toys or wear their preferred clothing, which of course resulted in the child happily embracing and clinging to their transgender identity. I have also lost count of how many gay people I've heard say that they would have definitely identified as trans (or been pressured to transition by their parents) if they had grown up in today's climate. There was a survey of 200 detransitioned women going around tumblr recently, who regretted having had to face the decision to transition at such a young age. Is 200 still within the range of acceptable casualties? Do you need more? How many?

And again — 50% of the children referred to that gender identity clinic are autistic. And there are several peer-reviewed studies showing that 95-100% of girls who persist in their transition (i.e. go from puberty blockers to cross-sex hormones which results in sterilisation) are same-sex attracted. *

With everything that we know about lesbian girls and autistic girls and their struggle with gender norms — why are these numbers not horrifying to you?

How many disabled children and gay children is it okay to write off as acceptable losses, and sterilise with zero certainty that they won't come to regret it later, before we are allowed to name the very idea of transitioning children as unethical and wrong?

* On this topic: the DSM-IV and the new DSM-V give "*the conviction that [the adolescent] has the typical feelings and reactions of the other sex*" as a diagnosis criterion for Gender Identity Disorder. As we all know, this criterion is just How To Spot A Gay Teen. Most lesbians start off understanding their same-sex attraction from a male perspective (as in "The way I feel about my friend is the way *boys* feel about girls") and I assume it is the same for a lot of gay boys, because the world offers us nothing but the hetero model to make sense of these feelings. No wonder 95-100% of teen girls who persist in gender

dysphoria are lesbians and *believe that their exclusive same-sex attraction is proof that they are male.* [link removed to 2 peer-reviewed studies, the 2011 and 2013 Steensma *et al*]

A quote from these studies:

"The third factor that seemed to be associated with the persistence or desistence of childhood gender dysphoria was the experience of falling in love and sexual attraction. **The persisters, all attracted to same (natal)-sex partners,** indicated that the awareness of their sexual attraction functioned as a confirmation of their cross-gender identification as **they viewed this as typically heterosexual.**"

Isn't it strange that the girls who fall in love with boys, which society says is normal, desist in their dysphoria, while the girls who fall in love with girls, which society says is abnormal and wrong, persist in thinking they have a disorder?

Parallel this fact with the DSM-IV's criterion quoted above (which is still in the DSM-V), "the conviction that he or she has the typical feelings and reactions of the other sex" — it means that **gay kids' tentative, incomplete understanding of their homosexuality is a diagnosis criterion for a disorder that requires medication.** It means homosexuality is still in the DSM as a medical problem to be treated, just with a more ambiguous and acceptable phrasing.

Tell me how transition of "trans kids" is anything but preemptive gay conversion therapy marketed to liberals.

19.03.17 — On the gay experience of gender dysphoria

An anon:

"I love how you mentioned that many young gay teens think they might be born in the wrong body when they're trying to first understand their homosexuality! When I was 9 (so not a

teen, just a very young lesbian) I had recurring dreams in which I was a boy a dating girls / wanting girls to kiss me (on the cheek though lmao), things like that. I think at that point I realized I liked girls, but my subconscious was trying to make sense of it by portraying /me/ as a boy in my dreams. Bc it's normal for a boy to want to kiss girls, right? So the only way it was ok for me to like girls, was if I was a boy. Years later I had a much better understanding of homosexuality and had accepted myself as a lesbian, and then I came across trans activists on tumblr talking about experiences like mine and that set me off on months of thinking I might be a boy, instead of just a gay girl whose young mind couldn't make sense of that in our heteronormative society. ”

This is a very, very common experience. And I hate how the trans movement has hijacked it and managed to convince everyone, even gay people, that this is a trans growing up experience rather than the typical gay experience it is.

I was talking with a friend recently about how trans people think they “own” dysphoria and no “cis” person could possibly understand how it feels, which ends up being very confusing for gay people who read descriptions of what gender dysphoria feels like and can relate completely. How are we supposed not to feel like we might be trans instead of gay? When the answer is really that gender dysphoria is not a discrete, unique “trans experience” at all; it's something that I think most homosexuals worldwide can relate to at some point of their lives, to varying degrees. (And of course the reason this gay experience has been rebranded as a trans experience so seamlessly is because the original purpose of transsexuality was to “fix” homosexuality, something no trans activist will ever acknowledge.)

And how could girls especially not feel like the only way to like other girls is by being a boy? Men have more books and films where they can see themselves bonding with other men over various situations and adventures, while women are in media to talk about men and compete over men, not to go on adventures with other women. The “Chloe liked Olivia” situation that Virginia Woolf was talking about

in 1929 hasn't changed much; most films still don't pass the Bechdel test. Of course we grow up thinking there is no possible way for us to be interested in women, as a woman.

I remember reading some kind of anthology once in which older lesbians talked about their youth, and pretty much all of them mentioned having wondered at some point if they were really boys / should have been born in a boy's body / had a male soul, or picturing themselves as boys, etc. It is a typical growing up experience for gay people, and it's really sad that we now hesitate to talk about it from a gay, not trans, perspective, for fear of trans activists telling us that we are evil cisgays appropriating their experiences or that we are transmen/women in denial — both of which with the intent and effect of shutting us up and protecting their precious, untouchable narrative.

20.03.17 — On sexual orientation and gender conformity

For the record, this study [link removed, to the study “Childhood Gender-Typed Behavior and Adolescent Sexual Orientation: A Longitudinal Population-Based Study” published on ResearchGate in February 2017] has a sample size of 4000+ subjects and shows that gender non-conformity in childhood (around age 3-5) “significantly and consistently” predicts teenagers’ sexual orientation (age 15). (And it might even predict it more than the results show, seeing as lesbians typically have their first same-sex experiences and discover their sexuality in their late teens.)

It is the first big study of its kind, assessing kids’ gender conformity in childhood then following them in teenagehood rather than asking gay / bi / straight adults how gnc they remember being when they were kids.

It also says that levels of gnc-ness in early childhood are linearly correlated to the “exclusivity” of sexual attraction (i.e. straight kids are more gender conforming than bi kids, who are more gender conforming than gay kids.)

Straight kids who start out gnc also become gender conforming more quickly than bi kids, while gay kids either start conforming at an even slower rate, or become more gnc.

So this makes the “consistent, insistent, persistent” mantra that trans activists use to recognise “REAL” trans kids even more chilling and homophobic, because this study shows that the more “persistent” you are in your childhood gnc-ness, the more likely you are to be exclusively attracted to the same sex. I wasn’t kidding when I said the transition of kids is tailor-made to target and erase gay children specifically.

—Responding to someone who reblogged the above and asked:

“This is interesting but does someone have an explanation for why gay kids tend to be more gnc than the others? If we agree that gender roles are not innate and sexuality is, how do the two connect from such a young age, before the kids know about sexuality?”

Just because kids don’t experience *sexual attraction* yet, doesn’t mean their *sexual orientation* isn’t already a part of them. As you say, sexuality is innate. Gay kids are already gay, straight kids are already straight, bi kids are already bi. Most people are very, very resistant to the idea of “gay children”, even though our entire society accepts (and enforces) the idea of straight children (by constantly teasing little kids about their het crushes, making male babies wear “lock up your daughter” onesies, I’m sure you can come up with a million examples). And the result is that we can’t talk about how being gay shapes your childhood experience, how gay children are probably already affected and alienated and hurt by heteronormativity in a way non-gay children aren’t. People who can’t even entertain the idea of “gay children” won’t be able to explain why gay adults often had different childhood experiences (for example, were more likely to show gender non-conforming traits) than non-gay ones. To find an explanation, they would first need to accept that homosexuality

already exists in children and shapes our growing-up experience from the start.

From the study:

“From ages 2.50 to 4.75 years, girls and boys on average increasingly conformed to the behavioral norm of their own gender.” (i.e. gender is indeed not innate and kids gradually learn which gender norms to follow.) But *“Starting at age 3.50 years in girls and 2.50 years in boys, pre-lesbian / gay children exhibited significantly higher levels of gender nonconforming behavior than same-sex pre-heterosexual peers.”*

At 3 years-old, kids are already inundated with gender norms. In children’s books, fairy tales, toy catalogues, Disney movies, morning cartoons, their religion if they are taught one, their family and pretty much every adult couple around them... These gender norms are so tightly linked to heterosexuality that it would be hard for an adult to disentangle the two, let alone a toddler. More often than not, liking girly stuff means liking hetero stuff. Identifying with Disney princesses mean identifying with having a male love interest by the end of your story. A lot of girl toys involve being groomed to become a good housekeeper (to take care of your husband) with cooking utensils, toy brooms, etc; making yourself pretty (to attract a husband) with toy makeup and hair stuff; learning how to take care of a baby doll (for when you have your husband’s children), etc. And even at a very young age, there are already lesbian little girls who know that they don’t want a husband. (Even if the feeling only manifests itself as inarticulate discomfort, vaguely dreading your future married life, feeling different / lonely / rejected by all this hetero/girly stuff for some reason you can’t explain, which will probably make you want to reject it right back...)

Of course heterosexuality isn’t innately linked to liking dresses and long hair and the colour pink and glitter, so you might think there is no connection between a girl child rejecting pink dresses & long hair & glitter and this child being gay, but when all this “girl stuff” is so intertwined with constant heteronormative grooming, then it makes perfect sense that most of the girls who reject it at age 3-4 are girls who will later realise they are lesbians.

Basically the connection between kids' different reactions to gender roles and their sexual orientation is the fact that gender is inherently heteronormative (= one of the main purposes of gender is to define heterosexuality as the norm) which means people who aren't hetero will rightly come to understand (as we can see, from a very young age) that they are inherently excluded from gender norms, and people who don't experience any hetero attraction at all will feel this the most. Which is what the study shows: straight kids are more gender conforming than bi kids who are more conforming than gay kids.

But, again, to accept this conclusion we first need to accept that gay kids are already gay and that this helps shape their childhood experience.

24.04.17 — On compulsory heterosexuality

I often feel quite alienated by the vast majority of lesbian discourse on tumblr because so much of it is about “unlearning your attraction to men”, “you can find men attractive but not want to have sex with them”, “shoutout to lesbians who had trouble figuring out if their feelings for men were genuine or caused by compulsory heterosexuality”, etc., etc., which is... unrelatable. Personally, my feelings about men growing up were a mix of awareness that I felt nothing no matter how long I tried to stare at a designated hot guy hoping to develop a crush on him, depressed resignation to the fact that I would *have* to date one someday, immense anxiety at the thought of having sex with a guy, trying to convince myself that this anxiety (and *any* feeling I had for a guy no matter how negative) was normal nervousness due to a crush, and desperately wishing I could force myself to go through with it because then maybe I'd find out it's not that bad, etc. I wish “compulsory heterosexuality” referred to these kinds of experiences, rather than “I can't quite figure out if my attraction to / crush on this guy is real or was somehow instilled in me by patriarchy.” But of course it isn't surprising that the latter is the one that can be freely discussed everywhere while the experiences of

women who never felt any sort of attraction to men are relegated to the margins at best and silenced at worst.

It bears noting that “compulsory heterosexuality” was developed by and for political lesbians. The Adrienne Rich essay that introduced the term was about women choosing to be lesbians and suggested that we “expand” lesbianism into a “lesbian continuum”, “to embrace many more forms of primary intensity between and among women, including the sharing of a rich inner life, the bonding against male tyranny, the giving and receiving of practical and political support”. (And iirc, the “many more forms of primary intensity between women” that could fit within the “lesbian continuum” included nursing your infant daughter.)

The term compulsory heterosexuality has some merits; I think it could have been a useful term for actual lesbians to describe the many ways in which everyone (including the “LGBT”) tries to force us to experience or admit to at least some mandatory minimum level of heterosexuality, but originally it wasn’t a term meant to help us make sense of our own struggles at all, so it isn't surprising that the majority of people who seem to find this phrase helpful are non-lesbians.

A lot of non-lesbian women find the term compulsory heterosexuality very convenient and use it to demand that their attraction to men (past or present) be recognised as a valid lesbian experience. There is a lot of guilt-tripping involved—it’s harder to say “no, these feelings you experience(d) actually mean you don’t fit the definition of lesbian” when said feelings are framed in terms of “my traumatic struggle against compulsory heterosexuality”.

It’s sad to say but the phrase “compulsory heterosexuality” (or worse, the casual “comphet”) has become something of a nonlesbian dogwhistle, just like wlw or sapphic which now mean bi. Just about any word or concept that could be useful to lesbians to find community or articulate our experiences (the Bechdel test is another example) eventually becomes appropriated, misused and distorted by non-lesbians beyond recognition.

20.05.17 — *On the interpretation of lesbophobia as biphobia*

I keep seeing people — even lesbians — take time out of their discussion of a specific instance of lesbophobia to point out that it's also biphobia, if you think about it... it's so annoying. I just read a French article about how all lesbians on TV end up sleeping with men—and it included a paragraph about how this trope is also biphobic because why can't they just label the character bisexual? Another example is when someone replies to one of your typical trans activist rants about how lesbians need to date trans males and unlearn their bigoted penis repulsion, saying that on top of the lesbophobia, it's also biphobia because they never seem to consider bi women as potential partners.

When lesbians do it, it just makes me sad because it comes across as them not believing that lesbophobia is important enough to deserve its own conversation, so wait, bear with me while I care about lesbians and in a short while I'll address how it also hurts people who aren't lesbians!

When nonlesbians do it, it honestly feels just as narcissistic and tone-deaf a reaction as trans males who see examples of misogyny and make it about transphobia. Making a lesbian character sleep with a man is bi erasure! “Grab her by the pussy” erases women with dicks!

Lesbians on TV don't sleep with men because the writers are afraid of the label bisexual or want to erase bi women, it's because they hate lesbians. No, they don't want to make the character bi from the start, but that's not because they hate the idea of having a bi character, it's because they love the idea of “correcting” a lesbian character. And trans males are not targeting lesbians with their rape activism because they biphobically erase the existence of bi women, it's because they hate lesbians. I'm sorry you feel left out when people focus their hatred on lesbians, but please stop pretending it's bi erasure rather than, you know, lesbian hatred.

23.05.17 — *On gay male privilege*

An anon:

“I'm a lesbian and am relatively happy being one (though of course we all have our moments when it's difficult in one way or another) but sometimes I find myself feeling sort of... envious of gay men and like I almost wish I were a gay man. I don't at all mean to downplay the homophobia they face because they definitely do face a lot of homophobia. I guess I just feel jealous of how they're allowed to have a community, how they're allowed to have gay male events and don't face anywhere near the amount of pressure to be ~inclusive~ of anyone and everyone under the sun”

I think a lot of lesbians would relate to feeling envious of gay men and the exclusionary spaces and events they are still allowed to have. To me it doesn't translate to wishing we were gay men but rather wishing we had male privilege helping with some aspects of homophobia rather than female oppression exacerbating it. Barely anyone even believes in female homosexuality to begin with, and that includes bi women, het radfems, gay men, trans people and every other group in the ~queer community. Male homosexuality, even when hated, is usually believed to *exist* in a rigid and easy-to-define way while the definition of lesbian is constantly, constantly under attack in so many different ways from every single faction of nonlesbians. It's exhausting. It makes me feel tired just reading posts by lesbians that contain some version of the phrase “lesbians (females exclusively attracted to other females)” — the fact that we have to draw these boundaries around our label all over again, *every single time we use it...* it feels like furiously clinging with our nails to a thing that everyone else is trying to tear away from us (except when they use it to refer to a porn category, in which case it's all ours).

Gay men don't waste this huge amount of energy and time explaining and defending the most basic definition of their sexuality, and I am envious of that, because a big part of the depressing loneliness lesbians feel comes from a) not being able to find each other because other people have decided that the word

lesbian must include everyone and can mean anything and b) not being able to have our own spaces if we do find each other because that would be exclusionary and therefore evil. Gay men do have it easier on both counts.

I get not knowing how to phrase this sentiment correctly, because the mot d'ordre in the queer community right now is that gay men are everyone's privileged overlords and they don't have anything to whine about anymore now that AIDS is over (sic), which is obviously bullshit — but lesbians who talk about feeling envious of the advantages gay men have compared to us aren't at all coming from the same place. Homophobic queers are denying the severity (or the reality...) of homophobic oppression, while we are saying it exists and it's awful and we wish we had male privilege to offset some parts of it. Gay men at least aren't dealing with their homosexuality in a world in which the default for their sex is not being allowed to exist outside of the domination and sexual control of the opposite sex. It is easier for them to create and gatekeep their own exclusionary spaces because they aren't struggling under the additional weight of millennia of systematic destruction and demonisation of male-only spaces. Being born and socialised male means you start off firmly believing in your right to bodily autonomy and you can afford to be so much more confident and assertive about your (sexual or not) boundaries.

I always think back on Owen Jones's comments on twitter — he was promoting the cotton ceiling and tweeting that transwomen are women and lesbians who reject them as sexual partners are terfs, and when lesbians asked him if by his own logic he would want to perform cunnilingus on a trans man, he was astonished and couldn't believe someone would ask him such a homophobic question. There are both gay and lesbian celebrities or academics who have to toe the line and parrot trans / queer nonsense so as not to get witchhunted, but even then it clearly doesn't affect gay men in the same way as us, since the ones who support this shit apparently don't internalise it or feel personally targeted by it at all.

And why should they? Even the trans/queers who talk a big game about how much they hate ~cisgays end up being much more

respectful towards gay men, in practice, than towards lesbians. I am reminded of the way Dana Beyer (a trans male with a personal vendetta against Michfest and its creator Lisa Vogel) described his meeting with a gay male activist who, like Lisa, believed in separatism and said transwomen were gay men who can't accept their homosexuality:

“As is often the case, my in-person experience of the man was nothing like the caricature that had been built up in my mind over the years by rumor and innuendo. I wasn't interested in refighting old battles or determining the truth of what was said or wasn't said. ... We listened to each other and I came away with an understanding of his concerns as a feminine gay man. ... Where we differ is on the spectrum of gender expression. We agreed on the need for mutual respect from both sides.”

Have you *ever* seen a trans activist talk about a lesbian “TERF” this way? Saying she was nothing like the caricature built up in their mind and they listened to her and came away with an understanding of & need to respect her concerns as a lesbian?

I also talked before about the starkly different attitudes ‘gay trans men’ have towards gay men vs. ‘trans lesbians’ towards lesbians — even beyond the absence of a “cotton ceiling” for gay men due to women’s lack of entitlement to sex from men. Both groups are homophobic heteros with a gay fetish, but this fetish has a much more destructive impact on the lesbian community than on the gay male community because ‘gay trans men’ tend to worship gay men, while ‘trans lesbians’ hate lesbians’ guts. ‘Gay trans men’ idolise gay male celebrities or historical figures while ‘trans lesbians’ tear down lesbian celebrities as transphobic bigots and erase lesbian historical figures by retroactively transing them. ‘Gay trans men’ really never display the same rage and profound contempt towards gay men, that ‘trans lesbians’ have towards lesbians.

I suppose most of this just comes down to male vs female socialisation — when women want something and can't have it,

they tend to idealise it from afar and put it on a pedestal. When men want something and can't have it, they tend to destroy it.

27.06.17 — *On "born this way"*

An interesting quote from Bonnie Morris's book *The Disappearing L* — the author is describing how 2nd wave feminists dismissed or criticised “old school” lesbians from the butch-femme bar culture:

“Judy Grahn recalls, “In our 1970 GWL movement, those of us who had come out in earlier times or who felt we were ‘born that way’ were called ‘bar dykes’ or ‘old world dykes’ by younger women who had another perspective, who thought that becoming a lesbian was a personal, political choice. The choice, they said, was to be free from male domination.”

Add to this the fact that homosexual figures from the late-19th and early-20th century tended to describe their sexuality (or “sexual inversion” or however they referred to it) as a natural part of them and something they were born with (some of them described it as being born with a male soul in a female body or conversely, and other phrasings that posited it as an innate trait) —

2nd wavers, and women who still support political lesbianism today, always frame “born this way” as a modern, 1990s invention, a misguided, apologetic PR move by the gay rights’ movement — when clearly the misguided newfangled invention was their ‘radical’ theory of lesbianism (= a political choice for all enlightened women to make) that came to disrupt and confuse real homosexuals’ understanding of themselves as born this way.

29.06.17 — *On political lesbianism*

Political lesbianism is antithetical to everything radical feminists claim to stand for — they are all about class analysis, how privileged people cannot identify their way into an oppressed group, and prioritising people’s actual material realities over their chosen identity, except when it comes to privileged het and bi women who

claim they can choose to identify as an oppressed minority for their own benefit with no regard for how this affects said minority, which is a valid and justifiable practice because...?

Radfems keep reminding trans females that identifying as men will not liberate them from patriarchy, but bihet women identifying as lesbians will? Trans males “living as women” does not make them women but bihet women “living as lesbians” makes them lesbians? Do they not realise that political lesbianism is, and has always been, completely incoherent with the rest of radfem ideology?

[Quoting a pro-political lesbianism post written by a radfem]

“Heterosexuality (as it exists in patriarchy) is fundamentally oppressive to women and I believe women deserve better than to be domestic, emotional, and/or sexual slaves for men”

No one has ever explained to me coherently why bihet women are unable to choose not to date men without calling themselves lesbians. A het woman who used to date men before deciding she’ll be happier celibate or with a female roommate is not a lesbian. A bi woman who used to have boyfriends before deciding she’ll be happier only dating women for the rest of her life is not a lesbian. There is no reason why they would need to use the word lesbian to describe their existence as female-prioritising bi/het women beyond sheer entitlement and contempt for lesbians.

“I’m anti identity politics so I see sexual orientation defined not by who you are inside or who you identify as, but what you do. If a woman has been happily heterosexual and then becomes a political lesbian and lives her entire life exclusively and happily dating/being intimate with women, that woman is a lesbian.”

So where does that leave women who are unable to be “happily heterosexual” at any point of their lives? Are we allowed to keep a single word to describe ourselves and find each other? Do we even exist?

Also — “I’m anti identity politics so I think heterosexual and bisexual women can identify as homosexual women.” ...?

Let me translate this to you as a genderist argument: “I’m anti identity politics so I see sex defined not by who you are inside or who you identify as, but what you do. If a man has been happily

living as man and then becomes a transwoman and lives his entire life happily living as a woman, this man is a woman.”

I’ve already talked before about how radfems who support political lesbianism act and sound identical to trans activists, so this is another example.

“Political lesbianism is hugely misunderstood by my generation of radical feminists and I think a lot of the hostility towards the idea comes from a lack of awareness of radical feminist history.”

There were already lesbians who hated the concept back then but their objections aren’t part of radical feminist history because radfems didn’t care about them then and don’t care about them now.

“All your fave lesbian radical feminists are political lesbians”
Yet another example of radfems sounding just like genderists—
“All your fave historical women are trans! All your fave historical lesbians are bi!” You all sound like arseholes who are happy to rub it in our faces that we’re an oppressed group with little to no history of our own.

Do you not get that this is why we are so hostile to the idea? That any theory that makes the word lesbian inclusive to nonlesbians makes it exponentially harder for us to find each other, both in our lives and in history? That it is beyond depressing and isolating to look back on your history and find a lot of lesbians, only to realise that none of them were actually like you, and wonder if there were any homosexual women and if we actually fucking exist?

“Radical feminists don’t believe lesbians can or should choose to become heterosexual, because they have no reason to”

Lesbians have no reason to choose to become heterosexual...?
Lesbophobia doesn’t exist then? And how do you explain that the quasi-totality of girl children with gender dysphoria who go on to become straight trans boys are lesbians? Plus, even if every single lesbian had no wish to become heterosexual and were perfectly happy as a lesbian, the rest of the world would still harass us every day trying to convince us we can examine and choose to change our

sexuality, using the same rhetoric radfems promote with their lesbophobic “analysis”. They don’t give a damn that radfems hold the completely illogical and groundless belief that women can choose their sexuality in one direction but not in the other — they are still going to use your reasoning against lesbians eagerly and gratefully.

Do you care? Or are you going to keep supporting this rhetoric and deluding yourself into denying that your special and enlightened radfem ideas are eerily similar to homophobic queers’ view of sexuality? Or that “a woman secretly attracted to men who chooses not to act on it because feminism” is a definition of lesbian that propolizez radfems share with MRAs?

Political lesbianism is insane, harmful, nonsensical bullshit that is utterly indistinguishable from modern identity politics/queer theory and directly contributes to the predatory lesbian stereotype (“Creepy lesbian radfems harass innocent straight women in their attempts to recruit more lesbians!!”) and to lesbianism (specifically, way more than other sexualities) being perceived as a political construct that can be bigoted, outdated, overthrown by a queer revolution (to quote a recent article), rather than a natural, neutral, immutable state of being. It also leads to bihet women invading lesbian spaces and being seen as better lesbians than actual lesbians because they have better politics.

Political lesbianism hurts lesbians. Anything that seeks to dilute the definition of lesbian as “homosexual women”, “women attracted to women *and* who feel 0 attraction to men”, hurts lesbians. People who support it are lesbophobes who don’t have any concern or respect for lesbians.

01.07.17 — On liberal resignation (1)

“Everyone has their own truth” is so intellectually lazy, it’s what Kajsa Ekis Ekman calls “liberal resignation” — you see it in a lot of contexts, like debates about “sex work”, some women like it and some don’t and both are valid! some children are really trans and some are gay kids with homophobic parents and that’s *fine!* Just let

it be, don't worry, let people figure it out for themselves, everyone has their own truth, which conveniently frees you from having to think deeper about the implications and consequences of the things you support, you can pretend to support everyone in every way and feel good about yourself without having to form a personal opinion or make any personal moral choices because that sounds scary.

Some more examples I added to this post later on:

A bi woman saying *“trans lesbians ARE lesbians but they cannot expect every woman to just want to have sex with them. Some lesbians would not mind, but some would. And that's okay.”* Honestly at times I'm less irritated by people who have a shitty opinion than by people who try to play it safe by saying they have no opinion, or all the opinions, and that's okay.

A radfem commenting on political lesbianism discourse by saying: *“Some women are born lesbians and some women choose to become lesbians. Why can't both be true? Why can't all women's experiences be genuine?”* Radfems use the exact same trans activist logic they spend so much time refuting, when it is convenient for them. “Some women are born women and some women are born men and choose to be women. Why can't both be true? Why can't all women's experiences be genuine?” Everyone's experience is valid! Everyone has their own truth!

04.06.17 — On liberal resignation (2)

I can't keep updating my liberal resignation post every time I see an example of this mentality, but it is honestly everywhere. Like in all the pointless handwringing in this recent *Courant* article [link removed] about a male high school athlete who started “living as a girl” (but hasn't transitioned at all beyond she/her pronouns) and magically started winning all races.

The boy's father said, “In terms of the fairness aspect, I don't think about that as a father. I only think about, is my daughter happy, healthy and able to participate in what she wants to do? I don't care if she wins or loses.”

The boy who won: “My goal was to get first in my events, which I did” and “I’m really happy to win both titles. I’ve always gotten first, so I expected it to some extent.”

The girls who placed second & third: “It’s frustrating. But that’s just the way it is now.” and “I can’t really say what I want to say, but there’s not much I can do about it.”

The journalist clearly knows this is wrong. He says, “Was it fair? On a biologically competitive basis, it was not. Should [this male athlete] be allowed to participate with the girls? Yes.”

... ?? I am not skipping anything, these are consecutive sentences. It reminds me of the total abdication of logic and coherency of “Is anyone saying lesbians have to sleep with transwomen? No. Are lesbians bigots for stating they don’t want to sleep with transwomen? Yes.”

One of the commenters on this article similarly struggles with logic: “Yearwood ran a sparkling 11.9 in the 100. That time would have placed Yearwood 41st among his biological peers in Class M. Let’s not candy coat this issue. Yearwood should, absolutely, be able to compete with his identified sex. The results, however, should be voided.” Making high school athletes run a race only to void the results in order to placate one entitled boy is the most logical solution when you live in a world where the option of not placating males simply does not exist.

The journalist also says, “What do we tell these girls? A transgender girl’s journey is more important than your journey?” (Yes! That’s what you are telling them! Being fair to girls is less important than catering to boys’ feelings! Your article literally spells it out — “Was it fair? [...] It was not. But [trans athletes’] feelings must be honored.”)

And “If this is argued to its conclusion, of course, the question becomes why differentiate between boys and girls sports at all? Why differentiate weight divisions in various sports?”

He completely understands why this is wrong and unfair, yet liberal resignation strikes again, making it impossible to form a definite

opinion on this matter because it's both right and wrong at the same time and everything is so *complex* so the only thing to do is to give up on thinking and just support everyone in a completely abstract, noncommittal way. All the handwringing quotes below are from the same article!

“All of this is to be applauded. [Why?] None of this, in my mind, answers the question that could not be ignored.”

“The question that could not be ignored has no easy, painless answer.”

“The question of what is fair competitively is nuanced and difficult.”

“This is a complex genetic landscape”

“I do not pretend to have the answer. Humanity counts. So does biology.”

“This isn't easy and those who say it is are lying.”

It's actually really easy to figure out that it is unfair to allow boys to compete with girls in most athletic events; it's just scary to say it when said boys are trans because of the political clout the trans community has managed to amass with astonishing speed in recent years.

I just really hate this attitude where as long as you acknowledge that a matter is “complex” and everyone has different perspectives and you've listened to and support all of them (somehow), then you've done your part and nothing more can be asked of you (like... a personal stance).

11.07.17 — On historical lesbian erasure

Looking up on Google Books the name of a lesbian from the 1700s who disguised herself as a man in order to fight in wars and marry a woman now gets you results such as the anthology “Transgender and Transsexual People,” or Aaron Devor's “FTM: Female-to-Male Transsexuals in Society” or Bambi L. Lobdell's “A Strange Sort of Being: The Transgender Life of Lucy Ann / Joseph Lobdell”.

And googling Amelia Robles, lesbian colonel who fought in the Mexican Revolution, will result in finding her Wikipedia page in which she is called “Amelio Robles”, and the second sentence states “He was born a woman with the name of Amelia Robles...” You will also find a book about her life containing the following paragraph:

“Amelio Robles's transgender performance was not limited to his political and military activities. In intimate circles, Robles also behaved like a man and enacted a masculinity consistent with twentieth-century Mexican society. He sustained romantic relationships with several women; with Ángela Torres he even adopted a daughter [...].”

He also behaved like a man in intimate circles! Proof: he sustained romantic relationships with several women!

Okay but what happens when you search “Amelia Robles” + “lesbian”, with quotations marks, to make sure you only find the stuff you’re looking for? You will find Mary Kay Vaughan's book *Sex in Revolution* in which she states “*Amelia Robles could very well be characterized as a butch lesbian who later became a transgendered male person.*” (She later states that “*Transgender identities vary in degree and endurance*” but that Robles stood at the very trans end of the spectrum).

There is also Lillian Faderman's *Great Events from History*, containing the sentences “*Some women who might in the past be thought of as lesbians might today be thought of as transgender, like the notable Amelia Robles [...]. Some lesbians might argue that she was a woman who identified as a man so that she might do the things that men could do, including courting a girl. [...].*”

So now, searching for “historical lesbian’s name” + “LESBIAN” will give you the results: “She used to be a lesbian, but then she became a male person” and “Some lesbians might argue that she was a lesbian, but today we call this transgender.”

3 things:

1. Some of these books were published in 2004 or 2006. That’s very early, transgender politics-wise. Academics positively jumped on

the opportunity to turn all historical lesbians into straight men in a progressive way.

Also, anyone who's ever read a book about lesbian history knows academics are always SO insufferably timid and prudent and apologetic when they call a historical lesbian a lesbian. There is so much handwringing over the complicated, fluid meaning of the label "lesbian", and reassurances that we can never know for sure how she would have identified. Meanwhile everyone is so unapologetic and confident when it comes to claiming that a historical lesbian would have identified as trans had she lived today.

2. Even if these women had spent their entire lives telling everyone they met "I'm really a man inside" and punching in the face anyone who used a 'she' pronoun — how would that be proof of the reality of their "identity" as trans men rather than proof that they were perfectly aware of what would happen to a lesbian in 1700s Germany or early-1900s Mexico? Even if we had rock solid proof of how they 'identified', how would their aggressive clinging to a male identity be anything but an aggressive claim to their right to have relationships with women and wear male clothing?

3. Of course it is very convenient to turn a huge, hard-to-solve, ongoing worldwide problem of female/lesbian hatred into an easy-to-solve individual problem where a handful of people are "born in the wrong body". Liberal homophobes are delighted to have found a non-problematic reason for lesbians to reject their femaleness and homosexuality as being "born wrong", where the solution only involves politely switching the pronouns of lesbians living in this century and those of long-dead lesbians, rather than reflect on the reality of lesbophobia and how little it has changed since the 1700s.

The reality of these women's lives is that they were female and homosexual. They were lesbians. Referring to them as men and insisting that this "identity" was genuine, internal, *innate*, and must be respected, implies that there was no conceivable external reason for a lesbian in history to cling to a male identity. It means erasing lesbophobia from the historical record, and giving more legitimacy to the male identities of 21st-century lesbians—also born of

lesbophobia. It means people are more comfortable arguing that most lesbians, today and throughout history, are born hating themselves, than acknowledging that everyone else hates lesbians.

14.07.17 — On what "TERF" means for lesbians

A lot of people on tumblr who “defend” lesbians by saying “Stop implying that terf = lesbian! It's not normal that lesbians on tumblr feel compelled to write disclaimers in their bio stating that they are not a TERF” are doing so in a spirit of “Stop harassing lesbians because not all lesbians are TERFs, and lots of TERFs aren't lesbians”—rather than understand that their acceptance of “TERF” as a legitimate concept is exactly what hurts lesbians.

They don't seem to realise that this relentless harassment of lesbians is a feature, not a bug, of the concept of “TERF”. As long as people keep buying into “terf”, lesbians will keep being the group most targeted and hurt by it, since all lesbians exclude all males from their dating pool, and we have been told again and again that of all the possible kinds of exclusion the E in TERF can refer to, this is the most outrageous, violent and unforgivable one (a trans male on Twitter recently said that the best way lesbians can support transwomen is through “lots of sex” and “lots of terf crushing” but “mostly sex”.)

A lot of people seem to believe they can support transwomen and strengthen the concept of TERF by virtue-signalling with a “no TERFs allowed” every now and then, while also supporting lesbians. This “everyone is valid” liberal resignation nonsense doesn't work because for “trans lesbians” (you know, straight men's) identities to be valid, “cis lesbians” (you know, females only attracted to females) have to be bigoted exclusionary TERFs. Every time you ~validate trans males' right to call themselves lesbians, you invalidate lesbians' right to have a sexuality that naturally exclude them.

It's literally a zero-sum game, as another trans male on Twitter

helpfully pointed out: “If we are to be seen as women we must also be seen as lesbians, which means [destroying the] concept of lesbian” and preventing “TERFs” from “weaponizing their vaginas” into a “tool of violent gatekeeping and rejection.” (I am quoting verbatim.)

You cannot support lesbians while agreeing that “terfs” exist, because that means supporting men who rightly see “terf” as the best tool they’ve ever come up with to dismantle lesbians’ boundaries, as well as homophobic het and bi women who use it to posit themselves as morally superior to lesbians because they like dick. These wannabe rapists and their cheerleaders rely on your belief in “terfs” and the more power you give this word, the easier you make it for them to bully, shame and pressure lesbians.

14.09.17 — On bi women calling themselves 'sapphic'

I used not to mind the idea of using the word “sapphic” to refer to women who love women in general — before I realised that bi women with husbands call themselves sapphic, bi women who hate lesbians call themselves sapphic while denying lesbians this word (a million “sapphic wlw no gross terfs allowed” blogs), bi women talk about sucking “girl dick” and tag it #sapphic, bi women make “sapphic sex ed” blogs in which they sympathise with trans-identifying straight men who want to rape lesbians, bi women claim Sappho was bisexual, etc etc — in other words bi women like to introduce heterosexuality into sapphic / Sappho and other parts of lesbian culture every opportunity they get, and deliberately alienate lesbians from our own culture and words, and they don’t even see where the problem is (as evidenced by their indignation whenever a lesbian expresses the opinion that “sapphic” should be a lesbian-only word). So I am now firmly on the “leave sapphic to lesbians, you’ve sullied this word enough already” side.

It could have been a nice word of unity but bi women hate lesbians so much they took the name of the most famous lesbian icon in history and turned it into a synonym for lesbophobe. Can we take a moment to reflect on how sad that is? “Sapphic” is now a

lesbophobic dogwhistle thanks to “anti-terf” bi women, and it’s depressing that we have to feel wary whenever we see someone with sapphic in their bio. Same for wlw. And I still remember when they tried to make #difemina a thing before they came up with “wlw”, and the tag turned into a lesbian-hating shitfest within a week. (I just checked this beautiful tag of unity again and in the first 2 pages there is a post about bi erasure, a post about how gays “mistakenly believe straight privilege to be a thing”, a post saying trans-identifying straight men can be lesbians, and a post saying two thirds of lesbians are “periodically attracted to and even sexually active with men.” All written by bi women.)

The same thing happens every time a new umbrella term pops up to group together bi women and lesbians—bi women take over, make it about their love of dick and how lesbians are inferior unless we learn to love it too (even Sappho loved dick so why can’t you!), push lesbians out, take all positive associations away from lesbian terms by turning them into terms that lesbians learn to dread and avoid—and then cry biphobia and play the victim when lesbians start feeling increasingly territorial over our words and less inclined to share any part of our culture and community with bi women.

20.09.17 — On trans ideology and post-truth politics

I remember several articles using the metaphor of “pigeon chess” to describe the 2016 US election—to describe what happens when one side of the debate argues with facts and follows the rules of normal logical reasoning, while the other side does whatever it wants. The disconcerted frustration and hopelessness radfems feel with regards to trans activists’ tactics remind me of people’s reactions to Trump’s behaviour during the election.

An article from the early days of the campaign also described how Trump’s constant stream of bullshit and lies led to some sort of fact-checking fatigue (or bullshit-detection fatigue), the easy way out of which is simply to decide that everything and everyone is bullshit, which ends up hurting all of Trump’s political opponents and being good for him.

After the incident at Speaker's Corner last week [where a trans male hit a 60-year-old woman who came to attend a debate on the new gender ID law], trans activists were simultaneously claiming that the whole thing was completely made up by TERFs and never happened; that trans activists attacked the woman first but she provoked them; that the woman attacked transwomen first for no reason—sometimes several contradictory claims in the same post or twitter thread. The fact that radfems stuck to their one and only version (that the woman was attacked as she was just taking pictures) makes no difference to an 'outside' person who sees all these different contradictory claims and ends up deciding that everyone is full of shit, or that the truth is probably “somewhere in the middle” and therefore violence “from all sides” should be condemned.

Even beyond the pigeon chess tactic (and the correlated Gish gallop tactic), or the lying in order to further demonise “terfs”, there is a lot of lying happening for the sake of lying — this is a movement spearheaded by narcissistic men, and they must get the same power rush for saying the woman attacked first when there is a video proving she didn't, as they do for being accepted as lesbians when they are straight men. I remember an article in which a Russian journalist said that Trump and Putin don't lie because they don't want to tell the truth, **they lie to assert their power over reality**. They lie like bullies, in order to rub it in your face that they have the power to say whatever they want and you can't do anything about it.

A lot of the think pieces that were written analysing Trump during his campaign can easily be applied to the situation with trans activists. Trump is the President that personifies the post-truth era and transgenderism is the social movement that makes the best use of it.

The Guardian defined the post-truth era as “circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” and cited as possible causes “the democratising effect of the internet, the resultant decline in deference to experts, rising scorn for the political establishment, the

tendency of social media to lock us in our echo chambers where our ill-founded opinions are confirmed rather than challenged, and the blurring of fact and fiction online”.

When it comes to trans politics, I’m not sure what could be done about it, because the problem isn’t necessarily that radfem arguments aren’t being heard (and definitely not that they aren’t arguing their points well enough), it is simply that objective facts and rational arguments carry no weight whatsoever with people who have already accepted you as evil quasi-Nazis, as it means groupthink and confirmation bias will be much more significant factors when it comes to deciding what is real and what is not.

That’s one of the reasons why I roll my eyes at radfems who waste their time insisting that TERF isn’t a slur — even beyond the fact that from a lesbian’s perspective it is indistinguishable from other lesbophobic slurs in its use, purpose, and impact, there is the fact that the incredibly negative connotations of the word play a crucial role in preventing women from shaping public opinion on sex / gender. Trans males have built this perfect tool to justify violence against women and ensure that their allies unquestioningly block out the arguments made by dissenting women. Some radfems wrote to media outlets to protest the uncritical use of “TERF” in their coverage of the Speaker's Corner incident — I think the energy spent on arguing that it isn’t a slur would be much better spent on this kind of activism, on explaining to clueless people what “TERF” actually is and how it works.

(Although as I said, the problem isn’t really that people are clueless or that these things aren’t being explained enough, it’s mainly that all of this is very convenient. The trans movement is extremely convenient to a lot of different people for a lot of different reasons. So is the word TERF.)

30.09.17 — On respecting pronouns (2)

In response to this post:

“The queer community conditions trans identified people to expect to be treated far better than is normal for basic human interaction. That has to create an unhealthy psyche for them. Imagine going into a queer space, and being told that every problem you have is the most important problem there is, that you are the most valuable, most heroic type of human, that you have the unalienable privilege to speak before anyone else, the right to instantly silence anyone who disagrees with you. And then imagine leaving that vacuum and entering the real world, where at best you’re treated like everyone else (which is not great, especially if you’re a female) and at worst, like something inhuman.”

That’s something I think about when I see radfem posts about how you should “respect pronouns” irl because dysphoria is a real mental illness. It sounds nice but overlooks the fact that people with other real mental illnesses are not catered to like this. Being mindful of my words and conversation topics because of someone’s mental illness is something I would do for my friends, or relatives, but not any random stranger or vague acquaintance because that’s just not workable. If you have arachnophobia, it’s reasonable to expect your friends to remember not to mention spiders around you, but not to demand that everyone you meet keep it in mind and censor themselves for your benefit.

This isn’t how people are normally treated; in basic human interactions you get a basic level of concern. But people used to queer spaces come to expect the same level of concern and carefulness from everyone they meet as from people who know them and care about them (or people from their community who suffer from the same problems), and that’s just never going to happen. And even if it could (there’s already starting to be “pronoun laws” to that effect), it isn’t fair to only enforce it when it comes to trans people while everyone else is expected to just deal with their mental illness / OCD / phobias / individual difficulties and figure out how to live with it without dumping the mental weight on others.

An anon:

“So often I'll start, say, reading a non-fiction book about lesbians (and it doesn't even have to be terribly political or anything) and I'll get like 5 pages in and realize it's a book written by a bisexual masquerading as a lesbian. I also feel like I get so much disappointment from so many supposedly important pieces of (academic, political, feminist) writing about lesbians because inevitably so many of them turn out to be written by political lesbians, about lesbianism as a ~feminist choice~, etc. and they carry such disdain for us simple, stupid “born this way” lesbians. Even less serious things like watching a lesbian movie or reading a lesbian fiction novel often ends up disappointing because half of the content is focused on men or some character's long past (or even present, despite being marketed or framed as a lesbian character) with men. It's so frustrating. You seek out lesbian writing or media and so often it has non-lesbians at the helm.”

There is really nothing for lesbians out there, and for goldstar lesbians even less so. We are anathema to this culture, and constantly reminded of it by the deafening silence about our experiences.

“so many supposedly important pieces of (academic, political, feminist) writing about lesbians inevitably turn out to be written by political lesbians, & they carry such disdain for us simple, stupid “born this way” lesbians.”

I talked about this a lot with a friend a few months ago when we were reading Tamsin Wilton's *Lesbian Studies*. Although Wilton makes a lot of interesting points, we felt that some parts sounded iffy or not like something a lesbian would say, and chaulked it up to the fact that you can't be a lesbian in academia and get anything published unless you are willing to toe the line and queerify your speech. But then there was a chapter where Wilton quoted a homophobic academic who said “Lesbians who protest that their relationship is better than any possible intimacy with a man do not

know what they are really missing”, and her rebuttal was something along the lines of “This man is so ignorant that he seems unaware of the substantial amount of women who choose lesbianism after years of heterosexuality!”

Even if you carefully filter your reading material so that all of it is (purportedly) written by lesbians, it’s always this guessing game, “Is the author a real lesbian making a few lesbophobic remarks here and there to pay lip service to bihets to get them off her back, or is she a lesbophobic mlw calling herself a lesbian?” and it usually ends up being the latter. It’s exhausting.

“Even less serious things like reading a lesbian fiction novel often ends up disappointing because half of the content is focused on men” So true, and it’s hard to imagine how we could get more lesbian characters with no history with men when we are already vilified just for wanting lesbian fiction to have *lesbian* rather than bisexual characters — I discovered recently that a “lesbian” publishing house (Ylva Publishing) published a disgusting article on their website titled “Bitching about Bisexuality”, in which they essentially called lesbians evil for asking to have separate categories for “lesbian fiction” and “bisexual fiction” — so that they would stop stumbling upon hetero sex scenes in books marketed as “lesbian fiction”. Sounds evil, right? Of course the author called this biphobic and said *“Whaaat? Books written by bisexuals shouldn’t be counted as lesbian fiction. Books with bisexuals as main characters shouldn’t be counted as lesbian fiction.”* Lesbians said these things. Lesbians put these things in writing.”

Evil, evil lesbians. This bi woman, endorsed by the “lesbian” publishing house, not only characterised this reasonable request as oppression, saying *“a marginalized community still can’t help but marginalize others”* but also compared it to racial segregation and lesbians to racist whites defending Jim Crow laws.

The last sentences of her article are “We’re all queer. Get the fuck used to it.” (See my post from last year on bi women's “compulsory wlw” attitude.)

That’s not even the worst part — a lesbian wrote a post on her tumblr (not tagging the publishing house or anything) saying she

was looking for books written by lesbians, with a lesbian main character—and this publishing house that claims to be a lesbian company publishing lesbian fiction replied to her post telling her to check out their books since they are “by and for queer ladies.” When the lesbian said she was specifically looking for *lesbian*, not queer books, Ylva Publishing replied that they “used the term queer because not everyone looking for ‘lesbian books’ is determined to exclude all other queer women from the narrative.”

When a lesbian writing a post on her own personal blog about how hard it is to find *any* book that reflects her experiences is immediately shut down by a lesbian publishing house who writes “lesbian books” in scare quotes and scolds her for being “determined to exclude all other” groups, I think we can say we’ve hit rock bottom.

As you say, all of this “has non-lesbians at the helm.” That’s exactly the point Julia Robertson was making in that article [link removed] last month — “*Publications that are lesbian in name, make it seem like we’re okay with redefining ourselves, erasing ourselves... We’re not. Someone needs to fight and give lesbians a voice. Because lesbians don’t currently have a voice. We have the illusion of a voice. And the silencing of lesbian voices within the alphabet is unparalleled. It’s 2017 and we’ve been so heavily censored, that we’ve gone underground.*”

21.10.17 — *On lesbian literature (2)*

This last post reminded me of an interesting discussion I had with a friend recently about the current state of lesbian literature, both the fact that it is genuinely hard to find good books by and about lesbians, and the widespread (and unfair) idea that all lesbian lit of poor quality, trying to figure out what’s behind it. We came up with a few possible factors:

1. A big part of this negative stereotype of lesbian lit is plain prejudice - **the idea** is always **that lesbians don’t have the rich, mature, exciting life experience manloving women do**. Mlw are seen to have a huge wealth of experience to draw

on, and everyone finds their accounts of intimate cohabitation with sociopathic males endlessly fascinating, while a male-less narrative must be boring and not worth anyone's time (or inherently trashy, with the "homosexuality is all about sex" prejudice). Consider the fact that a lot of actually published books by bihets (and I mean the celebrated Literary stuff, not 50 Shades) is of crappy quality but heterosexual content automatically elevates it and makes it Meaningful.

2. Let's also consider that **for a long time, the only "lesbian literature" that could get published were lesbian pulp novels**, of genuinely crappy quality, often written by men with female pen names to titillate other men and warn women off lesbianism with scary predatory lesbians and happy hetero ending or death. Some people (maybe not this generation) might associate "lesbian lit" with this.
3. And the fact that this was followed by a big wave of lesbian memoirs / anthologies, often poorly written, but **the point of them wasn't literary quality but a desperate need to share their experiences and stories**. (Many memoirs and anthologies started with an intro like "first, let me explain what a lesbian is and what a lesbian *isn't* ", which says a lot about the motivations behind their publication.) Het-attracted women who already see their experiences reflected all around them can afford to worry about sharing their own in an original or better-written way, rather than feel this urgent need to get something, anything, out there, to prove that they exist. For a marginalised group like lesbians who aren't allowed any cultural presence, whose oppression is non-generational, and who have until very recently been talked about and defined exclusively by non-lesbians who propagated homophobic disinformation about us, it's understandable that literary style will be at first a secondary concern, when getting these stories out at all, in our own voice, was a first step that already had to be (and is still being) bitterly fought for. It's like a Maslow hierarchy of needs applied to literature; working on better, more elegant ways of expressing yourself feels like a luxury you'll worry about when you are no longer

struggling on the lower level of not being allowed to express yourself at all.

4. But of course there are also lots of very talented lesbian writers, the problem being then that **no one acknowledges them as lesbians**, because lesbophobia — or *they* don't want to be recognised as “lesbian writers” as it might kill their career. The “lesbian lit is crap” belief doesn't hold when we know that many gifted artists and writers in history were lesbians, but 1) you can't point it out because all nonlesbians would start obsessively dissecting their lives to prove het attraction, and 2) of course they couldn't apply their gift to writing *about* lesbians (or themselves) because then they would never have become literary figures; only bihet people are allowed to write about their experience. This might have created in some cases a kind of catch-22 where the talented lesbian writers who knew they had a chance of making it big didn't write about lesbian stuff because that might have killed their chances, while the less-gifted writers who knew they weren't likely to become great literary figures were the ones who wrote lesbian stuff since they weren't afraid of having something bigger to lose.
5. Now, if you are a talented writer who *does* want to write about lesbian stuff and be recognised as a *lesbian* writer, there's still the problem of **lesbians being deliberately kept out of literary networks of power**, because of your lack of straight privilege. I remember an article about how much of female writers' success depends on the male connections they have (the author was talking about her husband who was an academic and got her foot in the door.) Not having access to this world, nor to the men who access it much more easily and climb higher, is a huge loss in terms of networking. It is already next to impossible for a lesbian to get a mere article published (in academia, but not only) unless she sells out and parrots anti-lesbian liberal dogma, let alone a book. So, another point to consider
6. ... is that a lot of **women writers are in academia to support their writing**, and lesbians can't do that (unless,

again, they are willing to completely sell out) because liberal arts **academia loathes lesbians**. Other than that, there's also the simple fact that **mlw writers who are financially supported by their male partner** can use their leisure time to write. (The recent Salon article "Sponsored by my husband: Why it's a problem that writers never talk about where their money comes from" pretty much makes this point: "my husband's hefty salary makes my life as a writer easy" and "It's about connections. Straight up.")

7. Finally, and this is tied to #1, a popular genre (or ghetto) for female writers is to write in the confessional mode — which means **commodifying their personal lives**, whether real, fabricated, or collaged. Writing about having degrading sex with random males makes for very glamorous, tragic or Empowered literary authenticity. **The trauma of bihet women makes for good literature because it satisfies the male lust for narratives of female pain. The trauma of lesbian writers is troubling because the narrative arc is often a fight to be free of men** in their personal lives, and the 'moral' of the story is that they don't need men, that women can be happy and fulfilled without men.

It's like lesbian characters being utterly disposable on TV because you can't make them accessories to a male story; their non-male-related story arc is of 0 interest to men (and, often, to het/bi women) so you have to make them bi or kill them. Lesbian writers telling their non-male-related stories who don't have the courtesy of turning themselves (/their characters) bi or killing them in the narrative are of no interest to men or mlw. Which is why a lot of published "lesbian" literature is written by bihet women with male-focused narratives and/or "lesbian" characters fucking men. Not only is their male-inclusive content much more welcome and palatable, but **mlw can securely write and publish lesbian content** (though it's often unrelatable and alienating to actual lesbians), **knowing they aren't condemned by the material reality of actually being lesbians**. You can observe the same dynamic on tumblr on a smaller scale — posts by lesbians about lesbian stuff get 100-400 notes, half

of them tearing the OP apart, while posts by nonlesbians who call themselves lesbians, about male/dick-centric “lesbian” stuff, get 20K notes with no controversy.

... Just so many cumulative factors contributing to the apparent dearth of quality writing by, for, and about lesbians.

24.10.17 — On gold stars

It's very puzzling when other lesbians make it sound like the dominant voices in our community are the ones of this mythical contingent of mean goldstars who are seen as better lesbians and treat others as inferior. I saw a post the other day saying “gold star lesbians are like the mean popular girls of the wlw community”.

If we lived in this parallel universe where goldstars are the “mean popular girls”, where our experiences are the lauded standard of the lesbian community and non-goldstars are marginalised, the accepted narrative would be that non-goldstars had it easy because dating a man temporarily shields you from societal and familial homophobia, and they are lucky to have been able to go through with having sex with a man as it gives you a certain status and legitimacy as a woman that goldstars never get.

Nongoldstars would be called privileged and lucky for having never felt defective and aberrant and ostracised, and being able instead to feel normal and relate to / bond with other women over having had sex with men.

They would be browbeaten when they try to express any pride in themselves because by doing so they are reinforcing patriarchal narratives of the inevitability of sex with men, which btw is not seen as shameful so why the need for pride? (The way goldstars are told that talking about not having had sex with men reinforces patriarchal narratives of “purity” which is not seen as shameful so stfu about goldstar pride.)

They would be told that when they chose to have sex with a man they obviously performed a cost-benefit analysis and decided that forcing themselves to do it, as awful as it is, would be less hard than never doing it, and therefore the women who never did it obviously had it harder.

They would be constantly reminded of how much easier they had it by that logic, and be silenced and scolded and called mean and insensitive whenever they try to challenge these misconceptions or talk about their actual experiences, as their only reason for doing so is obviously to rub it in the face of the women who weren't able to engage in socially-rewarded sexual relationships.

That's not anywhere close to any dynamic we see, because in the lesbian community as in the rest of the world, the women who tried to have the least contact with men can never be the norm or standard, let alone a paragon of anything; they must be made to feel aberrant, guilty and apologetic, and their voices will never be allowed to be the dominant ones.

06.11.17 — *On men writing women vs. women writing men*

Some thoughts on horribly misogynistic tropes in literature (especially scifi) and how male authors use media to tell women exactly what they think of us and what they want us to be:

The fact that scifi and fantasy are known to be particularly sexist genres is very revealing; the place and role of women in futuristic or fantasy societies imagined by men leaves zero ambiguity as to men's ultimate hopes and dreams as regards women, not to mention all the "male hero gets his Dream Woman as a reward" tropes, and what this "perfect woman" is like. Women react to these very honest revelations in male-created media by simultaneously:

a) outwardly, refusing to believe them ("it's just fiction, my favourite author is not telling us he *literally* fantasises about women being submissive childlike pornbots");

b) deep down, realising that this is what men want women to be and modelling themselves on various male-created female character tropes;

c) and trying to tell men, in turn, what women want men to be, i.e. using our still-limited ability to work in media and literary fields to create new, improved ideals of male human-ness; there are lots of female-written decent and likeable male characters who respect women out there.

The thing is, men, even the “good” ones, *don't* want to model themselves on these male characters who teach them What Women Want, the way women desperately try to contort themselves into sexist, 2-dimensional female stereotypes, correctly interpreting them as what men want women to be. Where are all the good men actively looking for (and rec'ing each other) female-authored media with caring, respectful, feminist male characters? (*Women* are the ones looking for this, not only for themselves but so they can give it to their boyfriend / son hoping he'll learn from it.) Meanwhile men are more likely to denigrate as gay any guy who goes anywhere near media portraying female fantasies of a decent man, like romance novels.

Men categorically reject all mlw-created fantasy feminist male characters — though many do take notes on how to talk the talk, mimic them enough to get into women's pants. Compare the amount of time, energy, money women spend trying to adhere to the male fantasies of the perfect woman that are ubiquitous in popular media, to men's total and utter lack of interest in getting themselves any closer to what women would like men to be. If men were, deep down, well-meaning and redeemable, only *taught* wrong by society, wouldn't we see more of them — the woke, feminist ones, who allegedly want women to let them know how to do better — trying to teach themselves differently, by displaying an analogous fixation on female-written fantasies of perfect male fictional characters and trying to emulate them? Rather than taking what they need (the ‘respect women’ veneer and vocabulary) and rejecting, deriding or ignoring what doesn't serve them (the actual respectful treatment of women)?

Interestingly, there are also lots of *shitty* female-written fantasy male characters (e.g. Twilight), who have the ‘respect women’ veneer but not the actual respectful treatment of women; which is basically bi & het women being aware (or being taught, but that’s men wanting them to become aware) that this is the most they can ever expect of men and downgrading their Perfect Man fantasies accordingly.

19.11.17 — *On the cause of inequality between the sexes*

I think having made a big logical leap from difference to inequality is what leads some people to try to argue the concept of sex out of existence, and I think it is easy to see why. I was re-reading some texts by Françoise Héritier this week after learning about her death, and in *La Différence des Sexes*, she wrote “We need to understand that being different doesn’t mean being unequal. The opposite of different is alike, same. The opposite of unequal is equal, not alike. By seeing difference as inequality, we are taking a linguistic step aside without even noticing it. We have shifted gears, philosophically speaking, because difference doesn’t imply inequality.”

I think this is true even when the difference in question is one sex being bigger and physically stronger and having genitals they can use as a weapon. A lot of feminists tend to argue (more or less overtly) that this fatefully leads to inequality between the sexes, as if these characteristics in and of themselves were the cause of patriarchy. But you can only apply moral values to human choices and actions, not to natural traits. Difference isn’t morally wrong, while inequality is (hence Héritier saying we have “shifted gears, philosophically”). The crucial link between the two is this element of human choice, and it’s the link most people would rather sidestep, to avoid acknowledging who is making this choice, and why.

There are two morally evil choices men make to turn difference into inequality: first the choice to be violent, then the choice to make violence a mark of superiority and not inferiority. Bigger vs. smaller

are value-neutral natural traits if the bigger person doesn't choose to use them to his advantage with violence, and in turn violent vs. nonviolent doesn't mean superior vs. inferior unless you choose to culturally create this meaning. Difference in size and strength doesn't in itself create inequality; men's choice to construct societies in which hateful displays of strength (beating, killing) are a mark of superiority creates inequality. Difference in shape of genitals and reproductive burden doesn't create inequality; men's choice to use rape and forced impregnation as a way to exploit, punish and control women creates inequality.

A lot of people make this logical leap from difference to inequality: queer theorists who try to argue the concept of sex out of existence as revolutionary praxis (no more biological sex = no more difference = no more inequality), feminists who try to downplay the differences between the sexes, such as claiming that almost all of it is socialised and in a perfect equal society there would be much less difference between the sexes (no more inequality = no more difference), anti-feminists who stress the differences between the sexes to justify inequality as inevitable (natural differences = natural inequality)...

What they all have in common is the reason why they make this logical leap: to disappear men's choices, because they reveal something about men's moral nature. Not making this leap would mean having to acknowledge that the real cause of inequality is not physical, but moral, not to be found in men's strength or genital shape, but in their evilness; not in the difference between the sexes, but in men's choice to exploit it to subjugate women, since the dawn of time, in every society on earth. People would rather argue that biological sex literally isn't real than call too much attention to this immemorial, ongoing, *universal* male choice, as it says something about men that even most radfems prefer not to think about.

20.11.17 — *On the alliance of B and T*

A non-exhaustive list of ways bi women and trans males are absolutely identical from a lesbian's perspective:

- in their determination to erase every last lesbian historical figure—bi women by claiming she was attracted to men, trans males by claiming she was a man (let's note that a lot of the trans activists supporting the latter claim are also bi women);
- in their relentless whining that lesbians not dating them is oppression (transphobia or biphobia) and their incel rhetoric to guilt trip lesbians into dating them (and, more generally, their massive victim complex and pathological need to feel oppressed by us evil monosexual cisgays);
- in their dick worship and outrage at the idea that any woman can exist without wanting dick, making them natural allies and making bi women the most rabid advocates of trans males' corrective rape activism (the most recent example of this was the way bi women and trans males bonded over their dicklover pride at the Chicago Dyke March, telling lesbians on Twitter that we aren't welcome at our own event now that they took over, then marching together holding a WE LOVE DICK sign. Again, at a Dyke March);
- in their entitlement to every last thing lesbians have and their outrage at the idea that we could want any kind of space from which they are excluded, and subsequent invasion and destruction of lesbian spaces (see above; see also every single "lesbian" dating app, the European Lesbian Conference which has been taken over by bi women and trans males, and so on);
- in their shared hatred of goldstars and amazing ability to make a label that has nothing to do with them all about them;
- in their love of shutting us up when we discuss their lesbophobia by throwing male violence statistics at us as if we were responsible for it (trans woc's murder rate & bi women's rape/abuse statistics)
- in their appropriation en masse of the lesbian label, which has incredibly harmful consequences for lesbians even beyond the mere fact that it leaves us without a single word to name ourselves—trans males' violence becomes "lesbian" abuse and "lesbian" spousal rape in statistics of intimate partner violence; bi women's love of dick and "fluidity" become "lesbian" sexual fluidity in statistics and studies such as the Lisa Diamond one

which are then used against lesbians by conversion therapists;

- in their rampant narcissism and tendency to make anything women (for the T) / lesbians (for the B) go through about them (recently, a trans male actor lamented on Twitter that he wouldn't get to voice a cartoon character because the project fell through after the director was accused of sexual assault by female employees; which reminded me of a bi woman who lamented the legalisation of gay marriage on Twitter because she married a straight man and felt excluded by the celebrations.) (She also wrote an article about this harrowing struggle, in which she said the gold star label was biphobic, and claimed that lesbians are sexually fluid and can learn to love dick, citing the Lisa Diamond study. Bi women are so determined to erase lesbians that they start with calling themselves lesbians and then circulate studies that use their own mislabelling and lies as “proof” that lesbians can end up with men, like some kind of nightmarish lesbophobic ouroboros.)

Bisexuals are now saying that it's unfair to group them in with trans people when saying “drop the BT”. But bisexuals are the ones who grouped themselves with trans people first. For awhile now, the B has chosen the T at the expense of LG. It is bisexual and trans people together helping spread homophobic rape rhetoric and pro-conversion therapy bullshit. Trans males' homophobia directly benefits bi women, which is why they don't fight against it and in fact are its most vocal supporters—brandishing their willingness to date transwomen as proof of their inherent superiority over us disgusting bigoted genital fetishist TERFs.

Our “exclusionary” sexuality makes us oppressors of the T and morally inferior to the inclusive B—this interpretation of homosexuality is being actively promoted by the bi community and they will cling to it till their dying breath because they understand all the ways that it benefits them. Just to give one example, when lesbians are no-platformed and pushed out of organisations, publications, etc, because being lesbians makes them bigots, and bi women take their place because being bisexual makes them better

lesbians, this brings actual material benefits to bi women at the expense of lesbians.

02.12.17 — *On socialisation vs. essentialism*

I was trying to sort out my thoughts on the socialisation vs. essentialism debate—from what I’ve read on tumblr, there are three principal opinions: “men are socialised to be this way,” “men are naturally this way,” and “it’s a bit of both.”

The third opinion bothered me the most and I just figured out why—I do think socialisation plays an important role, but I don’t think what I mean when I say that is the same thing other women mean when they say “it’s both”, and it’s frustrating when someone voices the same opinion as you but means something different.

I think what some radfems do when they say “it’s both” is avoid placing the blame fully on men, try to excuse at least some part of men's behaviour and find something else, anything, to blame it on. It is a way of keeping some hope and faith in men—sure, some of their behaviour is probably innate, but socialisation makes it so much worse, so who knows how men could be if we abolished patriarchy and socialised them another way? They would *have* to be better.

I don’t believe that. To me saying socialisation plays a part in how men are still places the blame fully on men, because well, who is creating, perpetuating, enforcing this socialisation? And it doesn’t imply men would be significantly ‘better’—nonviolent and not rapists—if socialised a different way. They might have less opportunities and permission to be violent, they might be violent in less diverse and creative ways (because socialisation allows men to give other men lots of ideas to torture women in fun new ways, just look at the fluctuating trends in porn), they might think twice before raping if they know they will get a bullet to the head for it, but their basic desire to rape and hurt women would still be there. I don’t think that’s caused by socialisation, I don’t think its taught.

So when I say “it’s both”, I mean men’s love of rape and violence and domination, their lack of empathy, pathological competitiveness, necrophilia and parasitism, are innate, not taught; I think there’s something about men that makes them this way (because how else to explain the chilling uniformity and *universality* of their behaviour?) but socialisation plays a part in shaping men’s behaviour, in the sense that it:

1. Structures this violence and domination—men’s violence is incredibly organised, in a way that makes it much easier for them to express it; it’s basically the difference between having to roam the woods to pick a bunch of berries for dinner and having a supermarket with a kilo of berries in a basket ready to be eaten;
2. Gives them more ideas, as I already said; I think without patriarchy men would still be raping and killing women but in much more ‘boring’ ways, and our current world is giving them an astonishing and exciting range of diversity and creativity in torture methods, basically the difference between your hunter-gatherer with their handful of plain berries and a modern person who knows society has provided them with a million different berry-based items and recipes;
3. Reins in any misplaced violence, a very important role of socialisation. Men are naturally violent, okay, but once you organise this violence into a structure of domination, you need to teach them where to direct it, who is fair game and who isn’t, or else it can’t be maintained. I think that’s the main purpose of male socialisation—not to teach innately good men to become violent, but to teach innately violent men how and when and towards whom they can be violent, when to express it and when to repress it, to keep patriarchy strong.

So that’s what I mean when I say socialisation plays a part in shaping men’s behaviour, and I don’t think that’s what most radfems mean when they say that.

This 3rd role of socialisation also takes care of any unicorn man genuinely horrified by male violence and rape, to the point of wanting to do something about it (I don’t mean just saying “rape is bad”, obviously—I mean devoting a significant amount of his time,

energy, money, social clout, to actual women's rights activism)—he will simply be placed in the “fair game” category. But really this specimen is much, much, much rarer than women would like to believe (how many men do you know of whose feminist activism has made them fair game for general contempt to a similar degree as, say, Andrea Dworkin?), and that’s why I don’t think men are socialised to be this way. Women are socialised too, you know? Very violently. Women are brainwashed and terrorised and beaten and raped into submission from infancy on, and still reject this socialisation—it’s hard to find a society or period of history where women didn’t fight against the current diktats of proper feminine behaviour and try to organise themselves for change. Meanwhile, men organising themselves in this regard gives us the MRA movement. I have a hard time imagining an independent male organisation fighting against the fundamental tenets of male socialisation attracting 1/1000th of the men the MRA movement, which supports and strengthens male socialisation, attracts. You get the feeling that while women hate female socialisation, men love male socialisation. Almost as if it suited their nature.

That’s why when I say socialisation plays a role, I don’t mean it’s part of the problem and men’s innate tendencies are another part—men’s innate tendencies are the entire problem, and male socialisation is their result, not their cause. When radfems talk about socialisation you get the feeling that a bunch of evil men invented it centuries or millennia ago and then these evil men mysteriously died out and today’s men are born good and innocent and are merely the victims of this unstoppable vicious circle of socialisation. But if it conflicted so much with their good and pure nature, they would do something about it. If men hated male socialisation, they would change it or end it. They never cared to and they still don’t. Please draw conclusions.

Libfems say that men are good and all the evil things men do (porn, BDSM, using prostitutes...) are good and should be supported by consenting to it, while radfems say that men are good and the evil things men do are evil and should be fought against—and they use socialisation to maintain this cognitive dissonance and separate men

(good!) from what they do (evil!) So when you stop deluding yourself that the evil things men do are good, you go from libfem to radfem, and when you stop deluding yourself that men are good while loving to do evil things and not showing any interest in ever stopping, you go from radfem to—separatist? Or at any rate, to a much freer woman who has more time and emotional energy to give women now that she no longer pours it down the bottomless pit of trying to fix the men she knows or find a unicorn man or wondering how to save men from themselves.

14.12.17 — On men's public hatred of women

I was reading Emil Cioran's notebooks, and at one point he talks about another male writer he admires, and tries to figure out what it is about this writer that appeals to him. He starts, very earnestly, with "Obviously I love his hatred of women."

You find this kind of sentiment all over male literature of course, but it never ceases to amaze me, how men feel free to admit it. Can you imagine a famous female author writing about, say, Valerie Solanas, "Obviously I love her hatred of men"? I can't imagine this happening in a way that isn't insufferably tongue-in-cheek. I've even seen radfems "defend" Dworkin by saying she didn't actually hate men at all, so we are a really long way from women feeling free to say that what they admire most about another woman is that she hates men. Meanwhile men are happy to say that their favourite thing about another famous male is his hatred of women.

Of course you could say he wrote this in his notebooks which he didn't think would be published, but that only seems to corroborate what I was saying recently about how men are naturally violent and the main role of male socialisation is to teach them when & against whom it is appropriate to direct this violence, in order to maintain a civilised façade and keep society stable. It's like that Game of Thrones actor who slipped up and said his favourite thing about the show was getting to rape beautiful women. Back then my first thought was also to try and imagine a female actor saying something equivalent and I couldn't—she would be labelled a dangerous

psycho for the rest of her career. This “double standard” and different reactions to men vs. women expressing hatred of the other sex really makes me feel like regardless of what they say about how men are only “socialised” into being hateful, everyone suspects on some level that male socialisation only serves to organise and shape their natural penchant for violence—because people’s outraged reactions to the “I love that I get to rape beautiful women” comment came across less as “what the fuck, this is something a dangerous psycho would say?!!!” and more “ugh, why can’t men do a better job of *filtering* themselves, god.”

21.01.18 — On Bad Men's vs. Bad Women's opinions

On a post about the child actors on *Stranger Things*, I saw people nitpicking the points made against the sexualisation of children just because they were made by “terfs”. In contrast, a porn blog commented on the same post saying “this is bad” and some people went “even this gross fetish porn blog agrees that sexualising kids is bad!!!”

Have you ever noticed that when a piece of shit like a white supremacist or MRA makes a relevant comment for once, like saying misogyny is bad in one specific instance, people tend to react like “see, EVEN this awful guy thinks it’s bad!! you know you fucked up when even [awful person] says you fucked up!”
... whereas when a “terf” makes a relevant point, you never see “see? even TERFs agree with me!! you know you fucked up when even TERFs say you fucked up!”

Weird, isn’t it, how not all subhuman evil bigots are created equal. You see people almost boasting when a man with objectively evil views supports one of their opinions, as it is proof that said opinion is universal because evil men represent the Universal Human, but they never celebrate the occasional alignment with radfems / Bad Lesbians because to them we clearly represent the universal subhuman; instead they either rethink their own views or erase the fact that we originated these “good takes” by stealing and re-posting “terfs’ ” posts.

People give men's hyper-basic decent views *even more value* if said men are otherwise horrible people (“even this Bad Guy agrees with me, that means I’m incontestably right”) whereas they give women’s decent views *negative value* if said women are (deemed) horrible people (“a Bad Woman agrees with you, that means you are wrong and suspect and probably a terf / terrible person too.”)

12.02.18 — *On weaponised femininity*

I wish women were more aware and critical of how anti-feminist their feminine behaviour can be (rather than focus is on feminine clothing, makeup etc). For example, I wish the term “weaponised femininity” had been coined to describe the way women will ‘perform femininity’ as a weapon against other women who are not behaving femininely enough—e.g. not nice and meek enough... I have often seen it in feminist spaces because criticising males isn’t proper feminine behaviour, and some women overcompensate to soothe their gender anxiety by positing themselves as nicer than at least 1 group of designated mean women.

There have been studies on how gender anxiety manifests in men (they seek to compensate with an exaggerated display of manliness, e.g. wanting to punch something, after performing a task that felt threatening to their masculinity, like being asked to braid hair). I can’t think of any studies on how gender anxiety manifests in women, but I have often seen it in action—women who feel like their femininity was threatened by performing an unfeminine task, such as taking part in a feminist discussion that’s a bit too mean or too critical of men, will often react with an exaggerated display of femininity, such as performing Niceness and Empathy at other women. “I understand that your past experiences have caused you to become so aggressive, I have so much empathy towards you, I choose to take the high road because I’m a better person but I hope you find it in you to become kinder <3”. This is the equivalent of men wanting to punch something after feeling like their masculinity was threatened by being called gay or whatever—men tend to become violent to reassert themselves as Real Men, women tend to

become passive-aggressively more empathetic than thou to reassert themselves as Proper Women.

It is a problem because they often target other women who are acting ‘unfeminine’ in the hope to trigger their own gender anxiety and make them ‘behave’ (soften their views, use nicer terms, etc). And I think it’s important to be aware of why women do this, and to notice *which* women do it, and to whom (unsurprisingly, it’s often bi and het women towards lesbians), and in response to what.

03.03.18 — *On transhumanism*

An anon responding to a critical comment I made about transhumanism:

“What makes you hate transhumanism as a movement? I'm curious to know, because I have always felt iffy about it but I can't articulate why and I've been made to feel stupid and anti-science because of it.”

Mary Midgley actually commented on your “I've been made to feel stupid and anti-science because of it” sentiment in that book of hers I quoted earlier, *Science as Salvation*, in which she criticised transhumanism as a male wish-fulfillment fantasy (though she called it “future mechanised bodies” rather than transhumanism, as it is from 1992):

“There is also a curious moral slant, which tends to condemn all opposition to the wilder technological dreams automatically as narrow and philistine. **The response felt to be ‘scientific’ is not the shrewdly sceptical one which at one time was seen as typical of science. It is a receptive, credulous, romantic one.** The fancies themselves are venerated as being, not just wish-fulfilment, but embodiments of a serious ideal. They could, of course, in principle be so. But if they are, then the nature of that ideal needs to be spelt out soberly and literally. It cannot be taken on trust in a flood of rhetoric.”

I suppose that, as all movements, transhumanism has many versions and sub-movements, but all the transhumanist rhetoric I have come across has massively creeped me out. When I first learnt that its core principle was “enhancing human capabilities through technology” I thought “okay, so, neo-eugenics”, and discovering that the most prominent transhumanists are rich white able-bodied American (/ Silicon Valley) males wasn’t reassuring on that point. As Francis Fukuyama said, “Transhumanists are just about the last group I’d like to see live forever.”

I haven’t really thought about it deeply enough to have a coherent critique, but some of the elements that creep me out are:

a) the eugenics slippery slope (which kind of human will have the privilege to become posthuman? do we really want to live in a world where rich white male elites are overwhelmingly the demographics that live forever?)—the comparison with Hitler’s biologically superior Aryan *Übermensch* rhetoric can feel dramatic but if you read transhumanist manifestos written by these white able-bodied Silicon Valley men, the similarities can be chilling (especially with regards to disabilities / mental illness, a “degenerescence” of the human race to be eliminated);

b) the Cartesian dualism slippery slope—we can see right now with sex worker rhetoric and transgender politics how dangerous it is to go further and further in the direction of “I am only my mind, my body is something I have and not something I am (thus it’s no big deal to mutilate it, sell it, etc)”. Transhumanist rhetoric is an extreme version of that; the idea that humans can someday get rid of our subpar bodies and upload our consciousness into machines amounts to reducing our personhood to nothing but our mind/intellect. An idea which, historically, has been pushed by the worst kind of people / movements (like excluding women, people of colour and mentally ill people from human personhood, as they do not possess the right kind of intellect / rationality, or not enough of it);

c) the extremely male contempt for boundaries or limits of any kind. Men have such a problem with the notion of limits due to their

entitlement, arrogance and fantasies of omnipotence / god complex. I was thinking the other day about how often you see the word “reductionist” used as an insult on this website, even in a scientific context. Science is reductionist by nature! Would they call physicists evil reductionists for reducing a person to their elementary particles by demonstrating that’s what all matter consists of? Successful scientific theories isolate a common element underlying many disparate phenomena and *reduce* complexity to simplicity. It was really baffling to me how reductionism has become a bad word, until I realised that the other two components of this evil trifecta are *exclusionary* and *gatekeeping*, so at the core of it must be nothing but men thinking of themselves as gods and feeling wronged by the existence of categories and definitions that exclude them, which they perceive as intolerable threats to their divine omnipresence.

Transhumanism is, again, the extreme version of this. Max More (who founded the Extropy Institute) said “*We seek to void all limits to life, intelligence, freedom, knowledge, and happiness.*” This kind of “We will push back all human limitations (including death) until there are no more!” rhetoric is the very core of trans/posthumanism. I find this hubristic mentality not only male but also very (white) American, who got used for a time to thinking of the “frontier” not as the geographical limit of their country, but as something to be repeatedly and triumphantly pushed back; not as a boundary but as the symbol of their thrilling freedom to expand. This is also why I have never been a fan of the idea of space exploration as our backup solution for when the Earth is ruined. It can be fun to read about (as is transhumanism—I like cyborgs in scifi) but as a real-life ambition it is just another symptom of men’s parasitic mindset of unlimited growth and overexploitation of natural resources, which are seen as worthless and disposable rather than to be valued and protected—in prostitution, women’s bodies are to be consumed and thrown away after use; in transhumanism people’s bodies are to be left behind once we can find a “better”, more durable way to store our consciousness; in space exploration the Earth is to be depleted of all resources and left a barren wasteland without a second thought once we find another suitable planet to exploit.

I hate this arrogant, solipsistic mentality of “no limits, no restraint, everything is ours to consume then dispose of once we get something better” and as I said, it is everywhere in transhumanism.

08.03.18 — On patriarchy fatigue (1)

These days when I like feminist posts on tumblr to finish reading & reblog later, I often end up never reblogging them because scrolling through my likes and seeing story after story of male sociopathy and cruelty and women suffering endlessly makes me want to cry.

The recent ones are the article about the North Korean cheerleaders living in sexual slavery, the English male professor who writes academic articles defending sex work and “migrants working in the industry” (also known as trafficked women) and was spotted having fun in a brothel in Thailand, the wave of femicides in Latin America, the woman who said that almost every single man she’s met in recent years has been into rough sex / bdsm / wanted to choke her and the hundreds of women in the notes concurring, including one who said that described every single man she’d had sex with and “the number of times I was choked or hit or any number of things was unreal”, and a ‘sex worker’ saying she’s had “young men putting their hands around my throat without any prior warning SO many times”—can you imagine hanging out with your boyfriend and having him suddenly wrap his hands around your throat without warning? Or even casually ask your permission to strangle you? It’s not any less sociopathic when done in a sexual context. Then there are the lesbians in Ecuador being tortured through sleep deprivation, force-feeding (chlorine and toilet water), beatings and corrective rape in conversion therapy centres. The Russian lesbians who fled to Ukraine, heard their neighbour screaming because her husband was attacking her children, and had said husband threaten to have them deported back to Russia if they tried to help his wife and kids. And the Russian virginity dealers who sell 17-year-old virgins (“every manager sells up to 10 virgins a month”) for rich men to rape. And the 21 men in Sweden who raped and punched a woman for several hours while laughing and filming her with their phones. And the ex-porn actress who says she’s shot scenes where

she had to pretend to be dead and let a man rape her dead body, because that's what men want to get off to, women being murdered and raped. Like the 19-yo American guy who raped a teenage girl while she was dying from an overdose and took pictures to send to his male friends to brag. Or this other 19yo guy who strangled and stabbed his ex-girlfriend then raped her as she lay dying and boasted about it. That was in Russia, where 38 women are killed every single day by their boyfriend or husband. There's also this 28-yo man who raped his 8-month old baby cousin, and other men called a woman transphobic for calling the baby 'female'. There are also at least four different trans males who have been exposed as paedophiles in the past few weeks (like this one [link removed] who poses naked in his daughter's bed with sex toys when she's not here and steals her underwear to wear, and has a blog where he writes short stories about kidnapping and brutally murdering the women in his life).

As you can imagine I could go on and on and on, and keep in mind that this is all very recent; the next few weeks will bring just as many new stories of male terrorism. I know it can be hard to wrap your head around how many evil acts men commit every day all around us, but I find it harder to understand how women can choose to keep dating them, loving them, nurturing them, birthing them—and become viscerally defensive whenever their choice is questioned or commented in any way. I know every woman thinks her boyfriend or male friend or little brother is Different but how can a woman familiar with radical feminism genuinely believe that? Do you really believe that if you could search through his computer files, browser history and bookmarks, you wouldn't find at least 10 reasons to be disgusted with him and never talk to him again?

It's depressing to me. It isn't a “following mostly radfems on tumblr exposes me to all these cherry-picked stories of men doing bad things” issue, as some male apologists might suggest, because obviously male evilness is everywhere. I was watching the news a few days ago and it started with a kindly old grandpa from the North of France who pleaded guilty to having raped more than 50 school girls in the past 30 years. I watched an episode of Black Mirror with a paedophile character and read a review of it and saw dozens of

men in the comments arguing that it's not "really" paedophilia if a 19-year-old guy wanks off to pictures of little girls.

Etc etc, obviously I could write just as long a list of examples of men's total absence of humanity that I stumble upon in my daily life without looking for them. And just as many examples of women twisting themselves into shapes trying to keep ignoring the obvious. "North Korean cheerleaders are sex slaves"—"God, *North Korea* is evil." "Paedophilia rings in Hollywood"—"God I hate *Hollywood*." And always "this is making me lose my faith in *humanity*", as if women did this too. Go find me all your examples of 20 women gang-raping a male child while filming with their phones and laughing, of women murdering their ex-boyfriend and raping his corpse and boasting about it to their female friends, of men saying "every single one of my ex-girlfriends could only get off while choking me", of women raping babies to death, of international organised rings of female paedophiles. Women don't do this. Men do. And not even radical feminists react to this knowledge and this constant deluge of hatred by making the obvious choice to separate from men.

17.03.18 — On robot therapists

In a book I am reading on the history of artificial intelligence, I learnt about ELIZA, the first "robot therapist", programmed by computer scientist Joseph Weizenbaum; and the ELIZA-like therapy computer programme "Overcoming depression" later created by a psychiatrist named Kenneth Colby. Weizenbaum wrote in his 1976 book *Computer Power and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation* that he was startled by the "powerful delusional thinking in quite normal people" inducing them to "attribute human-like feelings to the programme" and "forget that they were conversing with a computer", a phenomenon he observed in his own secretary, who tested the programme. Colby in his turn said that these programmes could be better than human therapists because "The computer doesn't look down on you or try to have sex with you."

(This isn't trivial—at the time, sexual relations with female patients were being unashamedly recommended as “therapeutic” by male therapists; psychiatrist Martin Shepherd for example wrote in his 1971 book *The Love Treatment: Sexual Intimacy between Patients and Psychotherapists* that “A sexual involvement can indeed be a useful part of the psychotherapeutic process.”)

I find interesting that these therapy bots were some of the first chat bots capable, to an extent, of passing the Turing test—people, such as Weizenbaum's female secretary, were so likely to attribute human-like feelings to the programme, even when they knew they were talking to a computer, that this anthropomorphisation later became known as the “Eliza effect”. And I find it interesting that, as the Colby quote indicates, the element of comparison was male therapists—unlike male therapists, the programme didn't look down on you or sexually harass you.

The implication is easy to miss, but it's there, and it's an ironic one. Despite men's timeless efforts to make “man” synonymous with “human”, it seems that, in practice, lack of male behaviour feels like humanity.

21.03.18 — On female outcasts

I would love to write a book someday about female outcasts in history. In French, people who are considered a bit crazy, non-conformist or bizarre are said to “have a seed” (*avoir un grain*). A seed of what? would be the main question of this book... I think the answer is particularly interesting as regards women. I have a lot of affection for some of the women whose lives I've researched; odd women often led incredibly lonely, miserable lives and they are on my list of “If you could have dinner with 10 persons from history...” just because I'd like to give them a warm hug.

I am also interested in exploring the way male nonconformity / eccentricity / deviance is presented to us, in retrospect, as a bold and inspiring challenge to the narrow and objectionable social norms of their time, while stories of female deviance serve to

reinforce said norms (“Don’t be like this weird woman, who had a miserable life because she was crazy to go against the very good rules of her society”). This is very obvious with regards to Charlotte Charke, an 18th-century lesbian who travelled with women dressed up as a man, and went from actress to valet to sausage maker to playwright to pastry chef to farmer to tavern owner and ended as a writer and memoirist. She often lived in poverty, among prostitutes at times (who were kind to her and helped her financially), which is what her biographers emphasised:

“Charke’s text is like the body of those prostitutes among whom she lived. Forced by fate and the waywardness of her own character to sell her text to make a living, she becomes to her culture the sign of misguided, fallen woman. Her “life” becomes one of those “exempla” her culture uses to secure the ideologies of gender on which it rests, to make sure that women do not aspire to empowering life scripts.

To the extent that it dramatizes the fate of misguided womanhood, it confirms the patriarchal stories of her culture by dramatically showing the price woman pays for transgressing cultural conventions and patriarchal authority: the rootlessness, destitution, and eccentricity that attend the female outcast, especially the female outcast who “admitted and realized her desire to act forcefully.”

The power of the sign is reflected in the words of the person who writes an introduction to the 1827 edition of her autobiography: *“The fate of this victim to an innate taste for eccentricity and vagabondism may excite surprise, but scarcely sympathy. The misfortunes of this extraordinary woman are altogether of her own creating.”*

As the author of the above quote (Philip Baruth) comments, *“Instead of challenging convention, Charke’s story ends up supporting it.”* Because society, rules, degrees of freedom, may change a lot for men from one century to another, but they change much less for women, and therefore it would be dangerous to publicise and admire female outcasts the way we do with males, rather than

suppress their historical existence or highlight the drawbacks of their rebellious lives. A male outcast who struggled against an oppressive society that we now view as quaint and barbaric can be an inspirational story; a female outcast whose struggle against her oppressive society rings strangely similar to contemporary stories must be a cautionary tale.

Another thing I find interesting about this research is that I'm not particularly looking for feminists or lesbians, but I stumble upon them again and again while looking for female outcasts / 'crazy women' / pariahs. Obviously, you might say. The three main categories I have demarcated thus far are a) women who genuinely had some sort of mental illness which was left untreated or was the source of abuse and mistreatment until they lost it and fled society; b) women who sought extreme solitude or an otherwise unconventional / unacceptable way of life for religious / spiritual reasons (many more women in history had mystical visions than men, interestingly), and were persecuted or viewed as crazy because of it; c) feminist-minded women who felt absolute despair about their (and other women's) lack of freedom until they felt utterly disconnected from society. Sometimes they overlap, of course, or apply all at once.

For example in category a) (mostly) there's "the woman of the haystack", whose life was described in a 1785 French pamphlet titled *The Stranger, a true history*. She was a sort of modern Diogenes, except she lived in a haystack instead of a barrel. Iirc she refused two marriage proposals and then ran away when a priest tried to place her in a convent. A lot of people wanted to 'save' her but she was content with her haystack and just wanted to be left alone. She once told a woman who was trying to convince her to come live in a house that "trouble and misery dwell in houses, and there is no happiness but in liberty and fresh air." She was once asked if she could read and she cried "No, reading is study and study makes me mad." She was placed in an insane asylum for a while, but eventually released as harmless, and happily went back to her haystack.

In category b) there is Alexandra David-Néel, who didn't eschew marriage but left her husband behind in France to spend her whole

life travelling alone in India and Nepal, learning Buddhism, spending months on end completely isolated in the mountains, meditating. She ended her life happily alone in a big house with all of her books and travel souvenirs and her maid / friend for company.

There are also the Béguines, this fascinating order of women who in the 12th-to-16th century rejected both a conventional woman's life with male domination through marriage, and a conventional religious life with male domination through the Church (the only two options for women.) They didn't take vows nor renounce their property, didn't retire from the world to live in convents; they bought homes close to one another and formed little communities in towns (there was one in Paris, in what is now the gay neighbourhood), with their own rules and supporting themselves either with charity money (the religious way) or with their own labour (the scandalous way—weaving, pottery, *book copying*...) They weren't total outsiders in the sense that they had one another, but they were often viewed with suspicion and hostility by outside society—and of course these women's freedom was an aberration and they ended up persecuted under the Inquisition; some were burnt. But if you read French women's private correspondence in the 18th and 19th century, you find other “deviant women” (hidden behind conventional lives) who felt heartened and inspired from finding out about the Béguines.

And in category c) you have women like Olympe de Gouges, who during the French Revolution defiantly published a “Declaration of the Rights of Women and Female Citizens” as the Declaration of the Rights of Men & Citizens was being drafted. Her conclusion was “*Oh women, women, when will you stop being blind? What have you gained with this Revolution? Nothing but a more obvious contempt, a more freely-expressed disdain.*” (Two hundred years later Dworkin wrote the same thing about porn and the “sexual revolution”...) She was an indefatigable writer of plays and energetic pamphlets demanding freedom for women and Black slaves; a lot of people mocked her and called her crazy (including male historians of the next century); a doctor diagnosed her as insane, paranoid and hysterical. As a result of her attempts to create women's discussion clubs, female-only meetings became forbidden by law, as well as any gathering of more

than 5 women, even in the street. She ended up beheaded by male revolutionaries, a fate shared by other feminists during the Revolution (like Mme Roland), while the luckier ones were merely publicly spanked then sent to lunatic asylums (like Théroigne de Méricourt). A few years before, Olympe had written "*Women have the right to walk to the guillotine; we should have the right to walk to Parliament as well...*"

Twenty years later comes Flora Tristan, a feminist from the Napoleonic era (under Napoleon, French women lost even the modicum of social progress they had gained with the Revolution, e.g. divorce was made illegal again) who is among those women I want to have dinner with and hug. The entire world was against her and she was always so brave and sad. Her last writings were gathered posthumously in the book "The Will of a Pariah", at the beginning of which she wrote "*I used to be a woman, I used to be a mother, but society crushed my heart. Now I am no longer a woman, or a mother, I am a pariah.*" She means this very literally, because she was married, age 17, to the owner of the Parisian workshop where she worked as a porcelain painter, and four years later, pregnant with her third child, she left him (without being able to divorce), thus condemning herself to a life of complete social ostracism. She worked as a maid and learnt a lot about the life of poor women; she lived in the slums of London and started agitating for the abolition of prostitution, "*this ghastly profession.*" Then she travelled to Peru, alone (she was Peruvian on her father's side) and learnt about the life of women there and wrote a book about it (which was condemned by Peruvian authorities and publicly burnt in Lima). Peruvian women consider her one of the pioneers of Latin American feminism, and there is a women's centre in Peru named after her.

She came back to France and wrote a pamphlet titled "*Of the necessity to welcome female foreigners.*" She wrote a lot about the oppression of working-class people but always highlighting women's even worse position in the workplace and the family, "*The oppressed man oppresses his wife; she is the slave of slaves.*" Another book she published led to her husband trying to murder her; she survived his bullet in the chest and continued fighting. She tried to speak at the National Assembly but male politicians were so hostile she had to back down.

She was called an insane and megalomaniac woman who wanted female supremacy; men said she had delusions of grandeur and believed herself to be a Messiah. She reminds me of Valerie Solanas a bit; a man wrote in an article published soon after her death, in 1967, “*People considered her with horror; she wasn’t content with defending herself; she dared to attack.*” She was very lonely. In high spirits she wrote “*I will be crazy, if I have to! Crazy people will save the world!*” In low spirits she wrote “*I deserved to be more respected, I deserved a happier life.*”

She was called a hypocrite for ranting about women’s lack of freedom when she had managed to escape her marriage and live a “free” life, travel, and write books (translation: “shut up and consider yourself lucky, there are women in the third world more oppressed than you”) and she answered: “*What! Because I have no status in this world, no consideration from normal people, because I become more crumpled and broken with every step I take, because I scream without being heard, because I swallow my tears, because I arm myself with legitimate pride against the cowards who want to crush me, I should be the one woman who doesn’t get to complain?*”

She wrote that women are “*pariahs by birth, miserable by duty, and forced to choose between hypocrisy or wilting.*” She even ranted against God, because she had nothing left to fear I suppose, with everyone already against her. “*Who is God, for us pariahs? If he is a Father, where is his love? We pariahs live surrounded by hatred, or by a contempt more crushing even than hatred, or by a disregard more crushing than contempt. If he is our father, where is our share of his wealth? Women are not property, women are not born to be slaves. My sisters, be slaves no longer, whose flesh is sold and whose heart is smothered. Follow my example, protest and die rather than prostitute yourselves for their sordid interest, rather than be the servants of men’s brutality.*”

The first chapter of her last book opens with “*Pauvres femmes, pauvres parias, cœurs affamés de liberté et d’amour...*” I don’t know what to title a book about female outsiders, but I think this would be a good introductory quote. “*Poor women, poor pariahs, with your hearts starved for freedom and for love...*”

Anon message:

“I have a question: So you don't believe transsexuality is real at all? I mean, I get the problem with trans kids, but what about people who transition later in life?”

It depends on how you define the terms (and it doesn't help that the trans community refuses to do so) — if you define transsexualism as “being born in the wrong body” then no, it isn't real, no one is born in the wrong body, it doesn't make any sense, your body is you. If you define trans individuals as people who wish they were (or are convinced they are, but I think those are the minority*) the other sex then it is real, but going through hazardous cosmetic surgeries and hormone treatments in an attempt to make others believe they are the sex they wish they were isn't the solution. Not only does it do more harm than good in most cases (and there are no long-term studies that prove that transition does alleviate their suffering—some studies prove the opposite) but going against reality and spending your whole life trying to maintain, and force upon others, a false image of yourself that you have in your head, is not a course of action we would consider a good solution for any other disorder.

* re: “wish they were, or are convinced they are, the other sex”: The thing is, being trans is either a mental illness (body dysmorphia) or a belief. If it is the former it's healthier not to “respect” it (play along with it, what our whole society is doing right now...), the same way that “respecting” a schizophrenic person's delusions doesn't help them at all, and the same way “respecting” someone's anorexic delusions of their body shape would harm them immensely. If it is the latter (a belief that you “really” are or should have been born the opposite sex) then we also don't have to “respect” it any more than we have to respect any other belief not based on anything real or tangible, like Christians' belief in God. In either case, the enactment of laws forcing people to play along with it or the creation of school programmes indoctrinating children into it is unprecedented and unjustifiable.

And with regards to your “I get the problem with trans kids, but what about people who transition later in life?”, you should read this post [link removed] by a detransitioned woman:

“If “most radical feminists” support transition for sex dysphoria, then I am deeply disappointed in radical feminism. There is nothing radical in differentiating between the “bad” transition and the “good” kind. Your “neutral” position is born of selective listening. Have you been in the FTM tag on Tumblr lately? [...] If you don’t want to listen to detransitioners, why don’t you listen to the FtMs talking about how their dysphoria got worse or just shifted after HRT or surgery? Why don’t you listen to the FtMs talking about how they have cramps when they shouldn’t, bleeding when they shouldn’t, yeast infections and UTIs after starting testosterone? Are you listening to the FtMs who injure themselves binding, who restrict their breathing on a daily basis for years, who have permanent rib, spinal, or back damage? Are you listening to the FtMs with botched mastectomies, or metoidioplasties, or phalloplasties with “complications” or fistulas? Are you listening to the trans men who are suicidal post-transition? [...] I’m sure you have that friend who’s a trans man and tells you that transition worked for him. In what world? Our fucked-up, patriarchal society? Where’s the control group? We’re not even lab rats.”

I focus on trans kids and teens when I talk about it because I consider transition to be profoundly unethical / child abuse in these cases, but I don’t approve of it as a treatment for adults either, any more than I ‘approve’ of other medical fads and harmful treatments / cosmetic surgeries that aim to ‘fix’ a physically healthy individual whose ailment was manufactured by society. I wish the medical profession & therapists would focus much more on developing alternative ways to treat dysphoria that don’t involve condoning the horrible idea that people who hate themselves were indeed “born wrong” and should change their whole being and lie about themselves their whole life, but alternatives aren’t anywhere near as lucrative, and transition conveniently changes the kind of people

that, according to society, probably ought to change anyway.

I don't get the radfems who say things like "transitioning kids is bad but of course I fully support trans adults who need to transition to alleviate their dysphoria!" Is it really a need? Who or what created it? Why the uncritical support? Of course adults will do whatever they want with their bodies but that doesn't mean you can't be critical of who is manufacturing this "need", why, how, and point out the various harmful consequences of adults transitioning (like new laws being passed saying you can retroactively change the sex on your birth certificate, and the consequences on official statistics, or even just in terms of who is paying for these treatments that are more cosmetic than life-saving, and at whose expense — in prisons for example.)

Unlike other 'contagious' social fads which can be quite benign, transition by its very nature negatively affects not only the individual who chooses to undergo it but also the entire society around them—women's rights being the obvious first casualty when boundaries between the sexes are blurred. So I find it perplexing when radical feminists accept it as a "necessity" and start their posts critical of transition with a perfunctory "Of course it's the right choice for some people with Actual Sex Dysphoria and I support adults doing whatever they want with their bodies..." Do you? If all radfems felt the same way there would have been no feminist criticism of extreme dieting, of harmful femininity practices, of BDSM as a "recovery method" for rape survivors, among other things that adults choose to do with their bodies and claim to need.

16.04.18 — On men's vs. women's reported ability

Something very obvious that I only noticed recently is that when women say "I can't cook" they usually mean "I can cook myself a decent omelet or pasta dish or fix a salad dressing, that's such basic stuff I don't even bother mentioning it, I can feed myself decently and healthily, I just can't make any 'real' dishes" but when men say "I can't cook" they literally mean they can't keep themselves alive, to an almost cartoonish level.

I have a friend (who “can’t cook” but is still the one who cooks for both of them) who finds it really cute and funny that her boyfriend (who “can’t cook”, guy version) apparently has no idea what to do with an uncooked steak and a pan, doesn’t know you are supposed to put oil in there so it doesn’t burn, I mean stuff that makes me want to smash his head with the pan, how do you live 27 years without at some point discovering what cooking oil is for. (I know, it’s self-serving rather than actual incompetence.)

But I only just realised that this applies to a lot of other situations, where men only admit “I can’t X” when they mean “I literally can’t X at all” but women say “I can’t X” to mean “I *can* X, but I can’t reach [arbitrary standard imposed on my sex] so it doesn’t count” and both often mistakenly assume the other sex is using “I can’t” in the same way.

30.04.18 — On men as consumers

A fundamental thing about men is that they are consumers. The tedious nature vs. nurture dilemma is irrelevant to the fact that currently, as we speak, that is their self, their mentality and their relation to the world in every aspect of their existence.

Everything they write about capitalism and consumerist culture—the trend towards commodifying everything, consuming more than one needs, valuing material goods over intangible goods such as human relations, seeing everything as disposable—can easily be repurposed as a critique of men and the male psyche.

When your primary self is that of a consumer, you are always dependent on somebody else, outside of you, a producer. (Of course these are women, in various ways, from the material and emotional to the biological.) There is no security of self to be found when you depend on another organism. Women feel this insecurity with regards to their social self and status, their man-made dependency; men feel this insecurity with regards to their biological self and status, much more deeply and humiliatingly, which is exteriorised as hatred. Women's lack of self-security and solidity is

artificial, social, man-made, and we can feel it, hence why women fight in a positive way, trying to create social change. Men's is biological, deep-rooted, immutable, and they can feel it, hence why they fight in a negative way, by destroying themselves, other men, women, the world.

Men of course wish they were the producers, godlike, generators of life, hence all of their transparently covetous myths and male deities. But paradoxically, their nature as consumers devalues anything that produces and isn't a fellow parasite—this is shown in the contempt with which they call women fields to be ploughed, or their lack of concern for land and the Earth which are always coded as female (as Sherry Ortner said, “female is to male as nature is to culture”). Almost every story they produce proves that their masculine ideal is not actually the Creator, but the Raider (summum of manliness: viking, pirate, conquistador, military). Yet in a strange reverse euhemerism most of the male gods they create and worship are creators, not raiders. It makes little sense.

The only way I can begin to make sense of it is, they want to be both. I don't think men actually long to create—they have shown no interest in creating and nurturing life for its own sake; they want sons for narcissistic reasons; trans males want wombs as identity validation; transhumanists want artificial wombs and technological creation powers to make a 'better' kind of life, “the post-human”, etc. They either want to use life (creation) for their own derisory purposes, or deform it; not create it. But they want to appropriate the surface symbolism of the creator, presumably for ego-stroking reasons, while of course remaining consumers, in control, able to bleed resources dry with none of the nagging awareness a creator has of how precious they are.

They want the pride and security of self of the creator, and the material benefits of the consumer who mindlessly uses, exploits, enslaves. Of course they will never have both, but I think they succeeded in creating a culture that makes it appear like they do, deluding themselves in the process.

17.05.18 — *On het and bi radical feminists*

I'm glad I stopped interacting with the radfem community on tumblr as it's just a festering pit of lesbophobia, but I still find really inane critiques of my old posts from rad/rad-leaning women at times and it's just so tedious—because when you've read enough of the same arguments and patterns, you start seeing them in a big-picture way, not as arguing over a particular issue but as revealing a deep-rooted, unrelenting investment in males and heterosexuality.

That's really all there is to it—whatever they might say, the vast majority of bihet radfems are deeply attached to men & the hetero social foundation, and the privileges they gain from it. They will never stand for too strong a criticism of it, they will never want to jeopardise it, even if it means tacitly endorsing the continuation of men's global wide-scale terrorism of women.

These seem like very grandiloquent words to discuss tedious tumblr discourse but of course small issues can reveal people's deeper convictions and worldview. To give examples, I'm thinking of these two posts [links removed] among others. The former is a mlw crying about lesbians using words like “bihet” or “handmaiden” and she literally just accuses lesbians of heterophobia over and over again—“Punishing any woman for her sexuality is gross”, “women do not get to choose their sexual orientation”, “let's cease putting down women because of who they sleep with”, “Isn't the point of rad feminism to lift each other up? So why are bisexual and straight women the exception?” Even ignoring her conviction that radical feminism should be about lesbians lifting up their oppressor group—it really is mind-boggling to me how bihet women are dead-convinced that lesbians are not only being “lifted up” by radfems but are the *only group* within radical feminism being supported, while bi and het women are not. Heterophobia is rampant within feminism! She also accuses lesbians of biphobia which, again, means accusing us of heterophobia, since it amounts to believing homosexuals can oppress het-attracted people. Trans activists would be proud of all these bold reversals of reality.

(It's funny to me that mlw radfems will claim that words "critical" of their heterosexuality—like bihet—are misogyny, but will also appropriate instances of obvious lesbophobia and claim it is really misogyny and hurts all women. When they can use lesbophobia to make themselves seem attacked they do; when they have to use heterophobia to make themselves seem attacked they do; what they want isn't logical consistency but to make sure feminist discussions remain centred on bihet women at all times in a way that absolves them of everything and doesn't make them feel uncomfortable.)

The second post is just vagueblogging about my post critical of fatherhood that completely misses the point. It starts with "The argument that fathers are useless or that men are not capable of raising children is a deeply anti-feminist statement." Again this is a baffling reversal, and very revealing of who she thinks feminism is for. She explains it with "saying that only women or, worse, only mothers, are needed / qualified to do the overwhelmingly lonely and repetitive work of raising small children just reinforces unfair gendered expectations." What I was saying is that only the people who do not belong to the group that has >96% of all child rapists (that's men, just in case) should be considered "qualified" to be around children. All the feminist criticism of my post has been about mothers' rights and mothers' freedoms while I wrote it with children in mind, after hearing about a baby raped to death by a male relative. I may be simple-minded but it's really baffling when what you say is "Women caregivers do not rape children to death" and what people reply is "It's problematic and bad feminist praxis to expect men not to care for children". I don't care honestly, I just want little girls not to be raped to death. Some feminists* seem to completely forget that girl children are also part of the group "female people" that feminism claims to fight for.

(* Not to be even more controversial but I have found that these feminists are more likely to be het-attracted women, while lesbians in general seem to care and worry more about girl children as a group. If I had to find an explanation I would say it is out of instinctive sympathy towards a fellow group of female people who should not have to deal with male sexuality under any circumstances and yet are surrounded by it every day and keep being harmed by it.

Lesbians are able to empathise more viscerally with how fucked up that is. One thing tumblr taught me is that wanting to engage with male sexuality dramatically hinders your empathy towards the women who don't.)

These women's mindset also strikes me as, why focus on girls rather than grown women, I survived girlhood after all and am never going to be a little girl again so what's in it for me? And it's easier to focus on women and argue that they need a co-parent (a male one, for unexplained reasons) so they can have a life or go back to work, than to focus on children and somehow find a feminist way to make the argument that a male presence in the home is safe and beneficial to little girls. I am talking about girl children being hurt by men (physically or psychologically) and they ignore it to remain dead focused on mothers' freedoms and rights (to have a male around), which means dead focused on bihet women.

—basically, everything radical feminism produces is for and about bihet women and their right to live the life they want, i.e. a life that includes males and safeguards heterosexual privileges. To sum it up, feminism (radical or not) is just het couple therapy. The one thing that would actually have the biggest impact—pushing men out of as many aspects of their life as they can—is the one thing they will never consider doing. Their feminism is nothing but a gimmick built around this core of loyalty to men to make themselves feel better. I suspect that one thing they love about radical feminism is the male socialisation theory, which absolves men of being categorically flawed. The main difference between them and libfems is that libfems say that men are not awful, only a small minority of them are, so there's no need to ponder uncomfortable thoughts like whether we are right to continue loving and fucking them, while radfems say most men are awful but it's not their fault, they were only taught wrong and can be taught better, so there's no need to ponder uncomfortable thoughts like whether we are right to continue loving and fucking them.

When you really look at what these women are saying, what people or what small issues receive most of their scorn and criticism (the sheer amount of posts critical of mean lesbians using mean words

vs. posts critical of men...) you realise that they see themselves as radical due to criticising some patriarchal institutions that libfems won't touch, but that they will never accept to question their selfish attachment to the few harmful patriarchal institutions (fatherhood, hetero relationships, etc) that happen to coincide with what they personally want out of life. (Of course they often just so happen to coincide with their main source of privilege.) For all their lip service about supporting lesbians and lifting up girls, they give absolutely no fucks about these two parts of the female population who stand to gain nothing (and continue being hurt) from their support of their Pet Patriarchal Institutions. To the point where some even call us insane (verbatim) for calling fatherhood or the hetero pairing "institutions" and seeing them as the crucial patriarchal pillars they are. (I'm sure it's just a coincidence that fathers' rights and the right to be provided with a girlfriend are the two issues MRAs are most passionate about and most want to enshrine into law.)

Listen to what bihet radfems say in response to these kind of points—do you just expect women (do you just expect *me*) to stop dating men and be lonely and sad?? None of it is actually about other women and rational feminist analysis and what courses of action have the best chances of liberating women as a whole from male oppression—it's about them and their feelings and what they personally want out of life. There is nothing radical or feminist about it.

28.05.18 — On male writers' plagiarism

I found out recently that at a time of his life when Tolstoy was in a slump and had stopped writing and earning money, his wife Sophia borrowed money from her mother to start her own publishing office and publish editions of his works—and in order to figure out how publishing worked, she travelled to St Petersburg to ask Anna Dostoyevsky for advice, as Anna had also spent the past 14 years planning the editions of her husband's work, correcting proofs, placing ads in papers, battling official censors, etc.

In previous years Sophia, while giving birth to Tolstoy's 13 children

and raising them and managing his large estate (he was a count) pretty much on her own, also wrote the clean copies of all of his manuscripts out of his nearly illegible drafts—the final draft of *War and Peace* was 3,000 pages and she copied it seven times, correcting spelling and grammar and offering key suggestions and critiques of the plot; for example explaining to him that people would be more interested in the social or romantic plots, the human aspects, than in the minutiae of the battles and war strategy plots. A few months before his death, Tolstoy named a male friend the executor of his literary estate rather than his wife, who had been doing this thankless job since she was 19, and gave to the public domain all the copyrights to his works that Sophia had previously owned (for her publishing company). She wrote in her diary “*Now I am cast aside as of no further use, although I am, nevertheless, expected to do impossible things.*” (Like care for 13 children after her husband decided to deprive her of her source of income?)

Also I shouldn't be surprised (but I am) at just how many “great male writers” read their wife's (or female relatives') diaries and drew a lot of inspiration from them, stealing ideas or even sometimes entire sentences / paragraphs / poems out of them. This is *such* a recurrent pattern. There is Tolstoy (who read Sophia's diaries and also asked her, when she was 17, to show him a short story she'd written, gave it back to her the next day saying he'd barely glanced at it, when he actually wrote in his diary “What force of truth and simplicity!” and used the story as the embryo for the Rostov family in *War and Peace*), but also William Wordsworth who read his sister Dorothy's journal and drew a lot from it, and F. Scott Fitzgerald of course. When Zelda was still young a magazine editor offered to publish parts of her journals, and her husband (of 5 months!) said he couldn't allow it because he drew a lot of inspiration from them and planned on using parts of them in his future novels and short stories. There is also French novelist Raymond Radiguet who stole his female lover's diary to write his novel *The Devil in the Flesh*, and was lauded by fellow male writers & critics for his brilliant insights into a woman's mind. Which had been copy/pasted from this woman's diary.

(Also, while he didn't read it until after her death, Henry James's

sister Alice mentions in her diary that he “embedded in his pages many pearls fallen from my lips, which he steals in the most unblushing way, saying, simply, that he knew they had been said by the family, so it did not matter.”)

I really love reading women’s journals, and when they were married to a famous writer, you wouldn’t believe how often the person who edited them mentions in the introduction “if some passages sound familiar it’s because her husband was reading her diary and ~getting inspired” i.e. plagiarising, although the term technically doesn’t apply because every word his wife wrote and idea she had was legally his property (just like she was).

It makes me feel so bitter to contrast what women do—decades of unpaid, unacknowledged work to proofread, copy, publish, preserve from censorship, improve, develop and promote their husband’s writing—with what men do—openly steal ideas and whole sentences from their wife’s writing while forcing her to give birth to 13 children that she didn’t want and he doesn’t help raise.

15.06.18 — On "doing something about it"

An interesting turn of phrase that I found in E.P. Thompson’s *Time, Work Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism*:

“In the first stage, we find simple resistance. But in the next stage, as the new time-discipline is imposed, the workers begin to fight, not against it, but about it. ”

In the context of his book, “fighting about, not against” means, for example, workers trying to negotiate a 10-hour work day, which involves a tacit acceptance of the notion that their time is, by default, owned and controlled by capital. It means accepting to work within the parameters set by capitalism—sometimes reluctantly, but sometimes without even noticing it, as said parameters become naturalised, that is to say, internalised by all and perceived as common sense.

When it comes to feminism, it is equally difficult not to work within the parameters set by patriarchy. If the tacit assumption underlying capitalism is that time is money, and is therefore owned by capital rather than by human beings, who must bargain to save enough of it to live on – the “work-life” balance – I think the main assumption underlying patriarchy is that men’s position in society is untouchable. It is reminiscent of the divine right of kings. Women are granted the right to fight for “equality”, as if men’s superior position were an ideal to strive towards rather than an injustice to dismantle. Attempts to bring women higher are grudgingly tolerated, while attempts to bring men lower are ridiculed or decried as extreme.

A man rapes a woman in a city park at night: women are allowed to react by “pushing women up”, that is, urging other women to learn self-defence or carry a pepper spray. Men often seize the opportunity to push women down, that is, urging women to dress more modestly, avoid certain unsafe areas of the city (their favourite metonymy: declaring a street or activity unsafe or dangerous to eclipse the fact that *they* are the danger) or avoid going out at night altogether. Reacting by pushing men down is forbidden. Any suggestions to set up a curfew for men are, at best, formulated as satire.

Male freedom is sacrosanct. But just as workers are poor *because* CEOs are rich, women are constrained *because* men are free. Fighting *about* it means taking measures to protect women, or help women protect themselves; fighting *against* it would be taking measures to restrict men. But we are working within the parameters set by patriarchy, and have tacitly accepted that male freedom trumps female safety.

In fact male freedom trumps any other concerns to such an extent that men don’t merely refuse to be restricted in any way, they also refuse to be *inconvenienced* in any way. When it was revealed that British Airways had a policy of not seating adult male passengers next to unaccompanied children, to try to curb the dangers of male paedophiles, the airline attracted worldwide criticism from civil

liberties organisations, various protests and, finally, a lawsuit from a businessman who was successful in winning financial compensation for “sex discrimination”. Former London Mayor Boris Johnson criticised British Airways for giving in to “loony hysteria”, and the company ended its policy in 2010.

Men’s point-blank refusal to be inconvenienced even in the most inconsequential ways sends, loud and clear, the message that their position in society is untouchable. This position is one of unquestionable freedom – of speech, of movement, of action – that often approaches total impunity, and they won’t tolerate being brought any lower – or two seats left-er on a plane – for the sake of women’s or children’s safety. Feminists often accept, consciously or not, this limitation, as if it were a god-given law, an unassailable wall, and try to solve problems created by men while taking care not to bother men. This is understandable, as feminist activism that carefully avoids naming men as the problem is much better received and more likely to draw support — for example, setting up programmes to encourage women to study science, rather than punitive measures to discourage men from making science classrooms and labs a hostile place for women.

This “pushing women up” rather than “pushing men down” approach is also perceived as more positive, less aggressive, more adequately feminine. Women prefer working in constructive rather than destructive ways. But a problem can only be solved constructively if both parties agree that there is a problem, and men do not see their superior position in society as a problem; why should they? Even those who agree that women’s inferior position is a problem, and therefore tolerate or tepidly support some “pushing women up” schemes, pretend not to understand that this inferiority is a direct consequence of their superiority, and express great horror at any suggestion to restrict men’s freedoms. This is the boundary they have drawn and women’s constructive measures will always come crashing against it. The only way forward is to destroy this boundary; and, before that, to remind oneself that the creator of a problem does not get to set the parameters of its solution.

This Lierre Keith quote illustrates really well the horror with which proponents of the constructive approach receive any propositions to restrict men's freedoms:

“One time at an activist conference I brought up some basic statistics on rape and male violence. And immediately another woman stood up and said—in that tone that's in the border area between earnest and self-righteous—“We need to educate.”

I replied, “I don't want to educate men, I want to stop them.” This was, of course, met with horrified silence—what exactly was I suggesting? But there is no therapy, no rehab program, that works to change perpetrators. By now, everything has been tried. Nothing works. They don't ever learn to see women as human beings.”

The Nordic model is an aspect of feminist activism that has successfully adopted the “stopping men” approach. The problem here is male violence against prostituted women: trying to establish prostitution as “a job like any other” to make it easier for prostituted women to fight for labour rights and safer working conditions is doing something *about* it, while criminalising the pimps and clients to make it harder for men to exploit and harm women in this way is doing something *against* it. The latter is a measure that limits men's freedom, and is only made possible by refusing to work within the parameters they have set – the tacit assumption that all men deserve guaranteed sexual access to women's bodies. “Empowering sex workers” sounds much more positive than “criminalising johns and pimps”, but when we work within parameters set by men, the positive approach is mostly positive for men.

When trying to solve any problem, it is worth asking oneself: am I working within the parameters set by the creators of the problem? Am I doing something about it or am I doing something against it?

This whole football thing that's going on [the World Cup. I'm not a sports person] got me thinking about a sentence from an article on porn I once read—"The porn industry makes more money than Major League Baseball, the NFL and the NBA combined." If men watched porn as a 'live' spectacle, in physical spaces rather than online, it would make the biggest sports events seem tiny.

I had a frustrating talk with a friend a while ago about the fact that her male best friend watches porn and she doesn't really approve of it but just accepts it as some sort of tolerable character flaw. Now I am wondering if some women's attitude to men & their porn habits would be different if the monstrous growth of pornography over the past decades had happened out in the open rather than 'virtually'. If instead of colonising every online space to the point where people commonly joke ('cause it's funny!) that "the internet is for porn", it had colonised physical spaces to the same extent. I mean beyond 'Porn Lite' in adverts and the media, I mean if instead of building massive porn websites requiring as much bandwidth as fucking Google (Mind Geek is in the Top 3 bandwidth-consuming companies in the world, with Google and Netflix), men had built gigantic porn arenas in every city, where millions of men (just Pornhub gets 64 million hits a day) including your brothers and fathers and best friends and boyfriends, regularly buy tickets & queue up in the streets to go watch, not on a screen but being inflicted on women before their eyes, the scenes of rape and abject female submission and degradation and undiluted woman-hatred they currently enjoy online.

Remember that study saying that 90% of scenes in bestselling porn contain physical aggression? What if men just dropped all pretences and held gigantic public shows, with women and young girls being brutalised in front of tens of thousands of men orgasming over it, rather than doing it "privately" (but openly, really, just online)? There's not much difference in suffering for the women involved, the main difference is that doing it "virtually" rather than in a public physical space means people can somehow not see men as evil for creating and consuming this daily avalanche of pornography, and women can choose to turn a blind eye and be shockingly apathetic

about their knowledge that their male friends / boyfriends probably fuel the demand for filmed rape.

I don't know, I feel numb with horror when I read statistics about the rape industry worldwide. A friend told me last month about the 8-year-old girl who was gang raped in India and how the video of her rape was immediately ranked No1 trending search on Indian porn sites. Men already like to gather together to rape or watch rape but try to translate this *order of magnitude* into an offline situation for a second—imagine tens of thousands of men gathering together in a giant stadium to eagerly watch a little girl get raped. That article I mentioned said that the porn industry's net worth is ~\$97 billion. Every year, Hollywood releases ~600 movies and makes \$10 billion in profit, while the porn industry makes 13,000 films and close to \$15 billion in profit because men find porn to be much better entertainment. They just spend so much fucking money to watch women and girls be raped and degraded. There are women who claim to hate it and yet don't seem to be as viscerally horrified by it, the *magnitude* of it, as they should be. I mean not enough to do Drastic things like cut out of their life the men they suspect of watching porn. The thought of porn-watching happening as some kind of weekly Superbowl event in their city would probably feel much more horrifying to them, but why?

I am not interested in being friends with men, or with women who watch porn of course, but I'm also developing such repulsion towards women who know that the men they care about watch porn, and don't seem to think it's that big a deal, definitely not something they would end a friendship / relationship over.

30.08.18 — On lesbian selfhood

I am always shocked by the extent to which lesbians are not allowed to have a self. People react with stupefaction and extreme hostility to lesbians having normal human reactions and human feelings instead of displaying inhuman selflessness at all times. I saw a post recently about the creation of a transgender-only shelter, to which a lesbian responded: "I honestly can't celebrate this because if

lesbians tried to do this we would face violent consequences from these same trans people.”

She was promptly put in her place by multiple people, one of whom said:

“How petty do you have to be to derail a really pleasant and positive safe space which trans folk finally made for themselves and make it about this stupid ass internet bullshit. Not every single trans person in the world is a fucking radiqueer on tumblr and even if they are, this sort of thing is exactly what most of us who aren't active sociopaths want for them. Fuck this comment. I swear half of y'all are in denial that trans people actually face discrimination out in reality, away from this stupid game on tumblr where gender crits and trans activists try and see who can shout the loudest.”

I saw radfems reblogging this comment approvingly (never miss an opportunity to prove you are Not Transphobic at the expense of lesbians!), which really irritated me.

Let's get two things out of the way first—“*stupid ass internet bullshit*”; “*not every trans person is a radikweer on tumblr*”; “*away from this stupid ass game on tumblr*” — Always this constant gaslighting and efforts to convince lesbians that it's all in our heads, sorry, on the internet, with zero impact on our real lives. And notice the harshness of the words aimed at lesbians (“active sociopaths”) vs. unbelievably minimising the harm perpetrated by the trans community (“stupid ass game”, just people shouting at each other on tumblr). People keep saying in so many words that unlike transphobia which KILLS and requires urgent real-life action, lesbophobia is just a stupid online thing, virtual, non-real. And a game. A joke, in other words.

Also, the shelter was set up with funds from a trans charity, and it is well-known at this point that trans charities are siphoning money away from formerly gay & lesbian organisations, taking over lesbian orgs and diverting their funds (like the National Centre for Lesbian Rights, now all about trans), on top of trans people already getting a ridiculously disproportionate percentage of LGBT funding (4

million for lesbians in 2016 vs. 22 million for the T). A lot of this funding is spent on “trans kids” i.e. gay conversion therapy. (See the excellent and thoroughly-researched article "[Inauthentic Selves](#)"). It is *normal* for lesbians to feel resentful that the trans community is able to set up trans-only spaces with their funding, some of which they directly stole from our community while the rest is spent pushing a gay-hating agenda. Would you also berate hungry people for not feeling happy to see those who stole their food gorging themselves?

“But *these specific* trans people using the safe house aren’t your enemies!” Always expecting lesbians to carefully consider the people whose community harms us on a case-by-case basis and see them as individuals, with warmth and compassion, when these same people constantly call every lesbian that has ever existed a TERF and generally portray lesbians as a homogeneous mass of pure evil. Think I’m exaggerating? A documentary about the AIDS crisis aired on TV recently, one that pointed out the role played by lesbians, many of whom quit their jobs to take care of gay men (we are only worth a mention when displaying inhuman levels of selflessness, again), and some people on Twitter called it propaganda because “you are trying to use the AIDS crisis to portray transphobes as noble activists helping others which is really disgusting and shocking”. This is the level of open lesbian hatred that the trans movement has brought about. “Transphobe” and “terf” are synonymous with lesbian. Meanwhile you mean to tell me that a few innocent trans people are unfairly being affiliated with their movement? Aw no. How monstrous. How will they cope? I don’t give a shit. No one else does when it happens to lesbians.

It isn’t “sociopathic” if some lesbians feel resentful when hearing that the community that has been deliberately destroying ours for years is able to do *the very thing they won’t let us do*—create safe spaces, draw boundaries. It is a completely normal and understandable reaction. I’m going to use a comparison that applies to all women since nobody can spontaneously feel any empathy toward lesbians at all—you could argue that incels aren’t all dangerous psychos à la Elliot Rodger, some of them might be very lonely, maybe mentally

ill young men, and individually harmless, but if a bunch of incels created a space where they can talk among themselves and find community, a lot of women would feel wary or have a negative gut reaction, which would be reasonable considering incels' history of hating and harming women. But lesbians are not allowed to feel this way about the trans community. The trans community who has spent the past decade systematically attacking and shutting down every lesbian-only space they could find (down to the tiniest lesbian blogs on the internet) and whose flourishing has *directly led* to lesbians being unable to find community.

Remember when trans people created Camp Trans to try and shut down a lesbian space, and one of the organisers of Camp Trans later murdered a lesbian family?

But we are “sociopathic” for not mustering up any positive feelings about the trans community’s ability to create safe spaces. Again this is just egregious considering that this ability is the very thing trans people have robbed lesbians of. They don’t consider lesbians human enough to deserve our own community or even our own *name* but we should be positively delighted that they are granted this humanity. Fuck that. I can’t fathom the level of self-erasure it would take to be *happy* that a group of people who hate you are granted more humanity than you. This extreme, unattainable level of selflessness and doormatism is considered the absolute bare minimum to be a “good lesbian” and not an “active sociopath”. We are expected to be the ultimate altruists, in the strictest sense of the word—so altruistic that others’ feelings and situation are the only things we are allowed to base our feelings on. People’s shock and outrage when a lesbian deviates from this indicates that they hardly even believe we have a self to be selfish about. A good indication that people see you as less than human is when they expect you to feel endless compassion and goodwill towards a group who dehumanises you. What next? Shaming lesbians for not feeling sad when people who punch us hurt their fists?

We are not allowed to feel angry and resentful towards anyone except maybe someone who is currently murdering us, and even

that is under discussion. Occasionally betraying the fact that we have a self—that we are not self-less to the point of celebrating the good fortune of a community hell-bent on destroying ours—is met with general disapproval and indignation. The ultimate proof that lesbian existence is antithetical to our society is that it is considered sociopathic for lesbians to have a self.

10.09.18 — On patriarchy fatigue (2)

Sometimes my brain fixates on one small distinct aspect of patriarchy and this one element already feels enormous and demented enough to justify lifelong separatism. Earlier I was thinking about how men have taken to throwing acid in women's faces as revenge for turning down sexual advances with such regularity that if you mention it to someone they'll nod their head sombrelly like "Oh yes, the acid thing." Imagine if it were a widespread practice and almost a cultural tradition for women to avenge themselves by throwing acid in men's faces. I don't know. How do you deal with the fact of men's hatred of women on this level, and with the fact that this is only one very small aspect of all the suffering men inflict on women?

18.09.18 — On technology and pornography

I find it so depressing to know that as soon as men invent or gain access to a new communication technology, they immediately use it to increase tenfold their production and consumption of porn. In the book I am currently reading about feminism and technology, the author, Judy Wajcman, spends a while explaining how revolutionary the telephone has been for women, allowing them to escape the isolation and confinement of their nuclear households and increasing their access to the outside world and to other women (friends, relatives) in a way that was harder for men to supervise (which is of course why the industry men who developed it spent decades loudly condemning women's use of the telephone for "trivial gossip").

But then she has to concede that this new technology, like most others, also affected women negatively because men immediately started using it for porn (and to harm women, since that is the main purpose of porn). “*The diffusion of the telephone facilitated the intrusion of pornography into the home, not only through intrusive and abusive telephone calls made by men to women, but also through the development of sexual services over the phone.*” The same thing happened with the internet of course, but before the internet there was also the French Minitel service, which was a kind of small TV screen linked to your telephone that allowed for proto-emailing and instant messaging—and a study by the French government later found that the Minitel “vastly contributed to the propagation of hardcore pornography”, notably the sale and purchase of paedophilic content.

I saw a post once where a feminist said she almost wished the Internet had never been invented, because of the explosion in porn it facilitated, and I understand the sentiment, but it isn't limited to the internet; it is a recurring and pretty much inevitable phenomenon, since pornography seems to be men's primordial interest. It happened with the printing press, with the daguerreotype, the invention of movies of course, now virtual reality... Dworkin once called pornography the propaganda tool of woman-hatred, so of course it makes sense that every new information & communication technology men develop always translates to them as better access to ever-increasing amounts of porn.

21.09.18 — On male vs. female pain

From an article about the Kavanaugh accusation:

“Many of us have been trained from birth to believe that men (unlike women) are long-suffering and stoic. That means that their pain, when they *do* express it, strikes us as almost holy. It took me decades to realize that something like the opposite is true: It's not that men's pain isn't real; it's that our culture vastly overestimates it.”

A woman on Twitter commenting on the same said: “It's cute how cruel men believe they deserve redemption and eventual exaltation simply because they've suffered. Imagine if women believed that. Imagine if a woman's suffering were even a passing concern.”

I was discussing this with a friend recently, with regards to Valerie Solanas. She is usually talked about either with derision or extreme contempt, as a complete psycho; the total lack of compassion for her lifetime of suffering is mind-blowing. Men have put her through pretty much every horrifying experience a woman can go through. She was raped by her father age 5/6, then raped by her stepfather as a teen so that she had a first child when she was 14, then a second one the next year, whom she had to give up for adoption. She was homeless for decades and had to prostitute herself to survive, with everything that entails. She also spent years in detention centres and mental hospitals in horrific living conditions (cockroaches in her food and the like), where she was raped again, by prison doctors this time. When she got out she went back to being homeless (and said that was worse than living in lunatic asylums), and since she was now infamous as the Warhol shooter she had people spitting on her in the street and generally lived a life of extreme isolation and poverty. In the last years of her life several people who knew her reported having seen her begging in the streets, covered in sores and wearing nothing but a blanket.

None of this is ever brought up at all to take even an iota of responsibility off of her for shooting Warhol, or to justify or excuse her ‘insane’ opinions. Most people probably don’t even know about it. But a man can rape (or murder) multiple women and girls and his backstory that “led” him to this is always taken into account. Even the people who don’t see his suffering as a mitigating factor at least *know* about it because it’s talked about, asked about; it *matters*. Male suffering is grotesquely over-valued, over-acknowledged and pandered to—by men and women alike—while female suffering isn’t worth mentioning, let alone caring about. Which is why male serial killers have fangirls on tumblr, who probably despise Valerie Solanas if they’ve heard of her... One of the most feminist acts a woman can do is to stop wasting any of her

empathy on men and redirect it towards other women, because the worldwide imbalance in compassion is completely off the charts.

22.09.18 — On the SCUM Manifesto

Someone reblogged my Valerie Solanas post with the comment: “No need to add quotation marks to “insane opinions”. They were insane. SCUM Manifesto? Pure shit and bitterness. Not one ounce of truth.”

The reason I added quotation marks around “insane opinions” in my original post is, of course, because the SCUM Manifesto, which turned 50 years-old in 2017, is full of very sane, very relevant feminist truths:

« Reducing the female to an animal, to Mama, is necessary for psychological as well as practical reasons: the male is a mere member of the species, interchangeable with every other male. He has no deep-seated individuality, which stems from what intrigues you, what outside yourself absorbs you, what you're in relation to. Completely self-absorbed, capable of being in relation only to their bodies and physical sensations, males differ from each other only to the degree and in the ways they attempt to defend against their passivity and against their desire to be female.

The female's individuality, which he is acutely aware of, but which he doesn't comprehend and isn't capable of relating to or grasping emotionally, frightens and upsets him and fills him with envy. So he denies it in her and proceeds to define everyone in terms of his or her function or use, assigning to himself, of course, the most important functions—doctor, president, scientist—therefore providing himself with an identity, if not individuality, and tries to convince himself and women (he's succeeded best at convincing women) that the female function is to bear and raise children and to relax, comfort

and boost the ego of the male; that her function is such as to make her **interchangeable with every other female.** »

« Our society is not a community, but merely a collection of isolated family units. Desperately insecure, fearing his woman will leave him if she is exposed to other men or to anything remotely resembling life, the male seeks to isolate her from other men and from what little civilization there is, so he moves her out to the suburbs, a collection of self-absorbed couples and their kids. **Isolation enables him to try to maintain his pretense of being an individual by becoming a ‘rugged individualist’, a loner, equating non-cooperation and solitariness with individuality.**

The ‘hippy’, whose desire to be a ‘Man’, a ‘rugged individualist’, isn’t quite as strong as the average man’s, and who, in addition, is excited by the thought of having lots of women accessible to him, rebels against the harshness of a Breadwinner’s life and the monotony of one woman. In the name of sharing and cooperation, he forms a commune or tribe, which, for all its togetherness and partly because of it **(the commune, being an extended family, is an extended violation of the female’s rights, privacy and sanity)** is no more a community than normal ‘society’.

A true community consists of individuals—not mere species members, not couples—respecting each other’s individuality and privacy, at the same time interacting with each other mentally and emotionally—free spirits in free relation to each other—and cooperating with each other to achieve common ends. [...] Men cannot co-operate to achieve a common end, because each man’s end is all the pussy for himself. The commune, therefore, is doomed to failure; each ‘hippy’ will, in panic, grab the first simpleton who digs him and whisk her off to the suburbs as fast as he can. The male cannot progress socially, but merely swings back and forth from isolation to gangbanging. »

« Although he wants to be an individual, the male is scared of anything in himself that is the slightest bit different from other men, it causes him to suspect that he's not really a 'Man', a highly upsetting suspicion. If other men are "A Man" and he's not, he must not be a man; he must be a fag. So he tries to affirm his 'Manhood' by being like all the other men. Differentness in other men, as well as himself, threatens him; it means they're fags whom he must at all costs avoid, so he tries to make sure that all other men conform.

Having no sense of right and wrong, no conscience, which can only stem from having an ability to empathize with others... having no faith in his non-existent self, being unnecessarily competitive, and by nature, unable to co-operate, the male feels a need for external guidance and control. So he created authorities—priests, experts, bosses, leaders, etc—and government. Wanting the female (Mama) to guide him, but unable to accept this fact (he is, after all, a MAN), wanting to play Woman, to usurp her function as Guider and Protector, he sees to it that all authorities are male. »

« Having an obsessive desire to be admired by women, but no intrinsic worth, the male constructs a highly artificial society enabling him to appropriate the appearance of worth through money, prestige, 'high' social class, degrees, professional position and knowledge and, by pushing as many other men as possible down professionally, socially, economically, and educationally.

The purpose of 'higher' education is not to educate but to exclude as many as possible from the various professions. [T]he male has a vested interest in ignorance; it gives the few knowledgeable men a decided edge on the unknowledgeable ones, and besides, the male knows that an enlightened, aware female population will mean the end of him. [...] No genuine social revolution can be accomplished by the male, as the male on top

wants the status quo, and all the male on the bottom wants is to be the male on top. The male ‘rebel’ is a farce; this is the male’s ‘society’, made by *him* to satisfy *his* needs. [...] If all women simply left men, refused to have anything to do with any of them—ever, all men, the government, and the national economy would collapse completely. [...] The male changes only when forced to do so by technology, when he has no choice, when ‘society’ reaches the stage where he must change or die. We’re at that stage now; if women don’t get their asses in gear fast, we may very well all die. »

09.11.18 — *On murder by childbirth (1)*

I periodically feel so fucking sad for women in history. I feel like birth control in countries where it is widely used has made women forget an aspect of male cruelty and sociopathy that is now less apparent (giving the illusion that men have improved when only women’s defences against men have)—the fact that for most of history men could live with a woman for decades and not care that they were slowly killing her with endless back-to-back pregnancies which not only resulted in early death more often than not, but also in a total smothering of the woman’s spirit and talents. I saw a quote by Anne Boyer the other day that called straight relationships for women “not only deadly, but deadening”—as I was reading Jill Lepore’s *Book of Ages*, a biography of Benjamin Franklin’s sister Jane, who was bright and loved reading and wrote some poetry, but had little time to make anything of her life in between her 12 pregnancies. Benjamin Franklin’s mother had 10 sons and 7 daughters. What could they possibly accomplish when their husbands kept impregnating them year after year after year throughout their entire adult life?

Charlotte Brontë eschewed marriage longer than most (writing to Ellen Nussey that she wished they could just set up a little cottage and live together) but she finally married at 38, became pregnant, and died before her 39th birthday. If she had married younger would *Jane Eyre* exist? I was reading that biography of Charity &

Sylvia last month and comparing their life together in their little cottage to the life of their married female relatives, which was honestly hell on earth. One of Charity's sisters had 18 children. Charity's mother had 10 living ones, and probably some additional stillbirths. She gave birth to her first child age 19, in 1758, then to a pair of twins in 1760, then another child in 1761, another in 1763, another in 1765, another in 1767, another in 1769, another in 1771, another in 1774, another in 1777. Charity was the last child and her mother had been sick with tuberculosis for months when she became pregnant with her, and she died soon after giving birth.

I wish people would call this murder—this woman was murdered by her husband, like countless other women who do not 'count' as victims of male violence because straight sex is natural, pregnancy is natural, childbirth is natural. But when after 20 years of nonstop pregnancies this woman had tuberculosis and suffered from severe respiratory distress, severe weight loss, fever and exhaustion, and her husband impregnated her again, her death was expected. He must have known; he just didn't care. This woman's sister—Charity's aunt—remained a spinster and outlived all of her married sisters by several decades, living well into her eighties. (Ironically, male doctors in her century asserted that sex with men was necessary for women's health. The biographer quoted from a popular home health guide which said that old maids incurred grievous physical harm from a lack of sex with men.) And this aunt had the time and liberty to develop her skill for embroidery to such an extent that two museums still preserve her embroidered bed drapes. She accomplished something, she nurtured her talent and self. Her name was also Charity, and I find it interesting that Charity's mother named her last daughter, whose pregnancy and birth killed her, after her childless, unmarried sister.

When I see women reblog my post about Sophia Tolstoy's misery with her 13 children, adding comments like "thank god marriage is no longer synonymous with this", I wonder if they realise that men have not magically become any kinder or more concerned about their female partner's health and fulfillment, it's just that women now have access to better ways of protecting themselves from their

male partner's indifference to their health and fulfillment.

11.11.18 — On murder by childbirth (2)

There are women on my post about men breeding women to death saying men have changed for the better—I suppose this is why we see so many men doing activism for male birth control, to shoulder their share of the contraceptive burden? The pill has notoriously shitty side effects, but women still take it because the alternative is the litany of life-threatening childbirths and abortions and miscarriages that happened for centuries, yet most men prefer having their female partner on the pill than wearing condoms or having non-PIV sex, so really we see how much they have changed and are nowadays more concerned about their female partner's health than their own sexual pleasure.

And it is very puzzling as a lesbian to see some women read that post and especially the last sentence “Men have not magically become any kinder or more concerned about their female partner's health and fulfillment, it's just that women now have access to better ways of protecting themselves from their male partner's indifference to their health and fulfillment”—and react with “This is why birth control is so important and good! I'm so glad it exists now so I can safely date someone who is indifferent to my health!” Very puzzling.

I mean, there is a woman who replied saying that this is why “birth control allows for the existence of actual love between heterosexual people.” I said at the beginning of my post that birth control has made women forget about an aspect of male cruelty and sociopathy that is now less evident, so I guess she is right in a way; women's denial about what men are capable of is what allows for the existence of heterosexual “love”.

15.11.18 — On patriarchal compartmentalising

Another puzzling reply on my childbirth post:

“I've been with the same guy for 4 years. I am on implant birth control. He has two confirmed children from previous partners — one was 17 when she got pregnant, the other got pregnant on their first night. He's been accused of having at least 2 more children. He still doesn't use a condom. Not wanting to get pregnant from a man who doesn't care if I get pregnant doesn't mean I respect myself less, it's quite the opposite.”

“This guy refuses to care about me or any of his previous girlfriends and prioritises having sex in the exact way he prefers over our health and life plans and worries about pregnancy, I will reward him with a relationship and orgasms.”

A friend I discussed this with pointed out that this woman's reasoning (“he's awful in X way but wonderful in Y way and I want to focus on the latter”) is a type of compartmentalised thinking that het-partnered women very often choose to adopt, and is eerily reminiscent of the line of reasoning that trans activists try to force on lesbians—“Transwomen are male but they can be wonderful people in X and Y ways, there's more to them than their genitals”. Men seem to have convinced straight (and bi) women that compartmentalised thinking is good and healthy and the only way to make a relationship last, and they are now trying to make lesbians adopt it as well. Men are adept at compartmentalising (see last paragraph below) and want all women to become better at it, because it benefits them. (See also: Polanski / Woody Allen is a paedophile but he's a good director, separate the artist from the man, etc.)

I could immediately think of several other examples I had seen in feminist spaces recently, like this woman saying that her male friend likes to go to strip clubs but is a cool dude “outside of that”. He's a nice person outside of the fact that he enjoys paying to make poor women strip for him! When someone asked her “How can he be a cool dude when he disregards the dignity and humanity of half the population?” she replied “I said OUTSIDE OF THAT, can you read?” She became very defensive when someone pointed out her compartmentalised thinking and tried to get her to think of her

friend as a whole person, whose behaviour in one area of his life informs his values in all others.

Another woman commented on my childbirth post: “I’m the second of 4 kids. My mom often says that I was the only one who was planned, and my dad will say something like “Well I planned all of you, I just didn't tell your mother about it” which is yikes. I love my dad, but that's pretty fucked up.”

“I love him, but that's pretty fucked up” is something a lot of women end up thinking about their male relatives / friends / partners. It’s compartmentalising.

Men really want you to compartmentalise your thinking so you won’t slide down the dangerous slippery slope of thinking that their behaviour in one area reveals their values in all others; so you won’t give them any consequences for that one bad facet of their character or their continued bad behaviour on one particular matter. Just put the bad stuff in a little box and focus on the good. They even like to turn it around and pretend it is holistic thinking—“Don’t focus on the bad, see the person as a whole” (or in the case of transwomen, “Don’t focus on the genitals, you vagina fetishist, see the person as a whole”)—but ignoring and pushing aside what you don’t like to focus only on the good is the opposite of seeing someone as a whole. Choosing to see a person from a carefully selected angle that doesn’t conflict with your values and doesn’t force you to reconsider your opinion of them is the exact opposite of seeing this person as a whole. Men don’t want you to see them as a whole because that involves being constantly aware of the bad parts and what they reveal about the whole; it means not being able to comfortably ignore the dealbreakers, which might lead to consequences that they would rather avoid.

I am reminded of a post about this:

“What frightens me about the men I know is that I know men are so good at compartmentalizing and creating public and private selves. I don’t think there’s a single man I know, including gay men, including men I love, including men in my

own family, who I don't fear might secretly be doing some horrific shit on the internet. I've just read too many stories about women who were happily married for years before they found out their husbands' abusive online habits.

I've often joked with my friends about how me using the internet in front of other people (like in a class) is "taking a walk on the wild side" because they might see my search history, but I just want to clarify: when I say that my search history is private and might be embarrassing, I meant, "I look up geeky, uncool things like fanfiction and I spend too much time reading celebrity gossip blogs and looking at Pinterest shit," not embarrassing as in the male sense of "My search history would reveal that I send violent, abusive threats to women online and watch rape porn." My private self is maybe less cool than my public self, but it isn't so dramatically different that my ethics would be called into question if my search history were to be made public. "

Compartmentalising is men's favourite strategy and they would really prefer for women to adopt it as well. Holistic thinking is discouraged in our society and this is why we should actively try to learn it and nurture it. Think of the psyche in the same way you would think of the body; if someone kicks you, his foot didn't move on its own without the rest of his body going along with it. If someone expresses reprehensible values in one aspect, it is not somehow disconnected from the whole of who this person is. When you see someone as a whole, there are no uncomfortable truths inside little boxes, so there can be no "outside" of that. There is no "apart from that" when you don't cut up a person into parts. Be really suspicious when a man is trying to force compartmentalised thinking onto you, and remember that you are not seeing a person as a whole if you are ignoring the parts that would make them unacceptable to you.

I read an article the other day about the chess strategy known as 'overprotection', "in which a crucial square should be defended by more pieces than seemingly necessary, making it useless for the opponent to attack that square, and giving the pieces defending it a certain freedom of movement, since one or more of them is free to take on other duties without critically weakening the square."

It's interesting to think about it in the context of lesbian representation in media. Every time I read Goodreads reviews for a book that isn't advertised as lesbian lit yet contains some lesbian scenes or even undertones, no matter how discreet and subtext-y and irrelevant to the overall plot, there are people, usually straight women, ranking it 1 star and expressing outrage and distress at the presence of anything remotely lesbian.

Some examples taken from the Goodreads review sections of various books:

"Wow, what a story! I must admit that when I realized I was going to be reading about the lives of two lesbians I almost gave up on the book. I'm so glad I didn't! Thankfully, this story wasn't a lesbian romance. "

"It was a little hard to get the lesbian undertones out. They were not overwhelming so as to distract from the story as a whole, but were often referenced. But maybe that was the point?"

"While I began to mildly enjoy the book, along came the lesbian stuff. Which is why I give the book 1 star. I am so tired of homosexuality completely RUINING a book which would have been good otherwise."

"The main reason I gave this 3 / 5 stars is because reading the summary, I thought it would be a sweet book about a SISTERLY relationship, not a lesbian relationship (of which there are a few)."

"I would have given it a higher rating were it not for the inexplicable appearance of three lesbian relationships at the very end, which seemed so contrived that they cast doubt on

the veracity of the entire content. The first was a happy denouement in the life of the main character, but the other two felt gratuitous; perhaps driven by the author's personal agenda, perhaps not, but definitely a disappointing finish to an otherwise satisfying book.”

This last comment refers to a book in which the main character ends up in a lesbian relationship which had been hinted at throughout the book, and then meets another lesbian couple and befriends them (it took up all of 1 page). Finding friends like her after a life of isolation was part of her happy ending, but to straight women it's gratuitous. A woman being a lesbian is on thin ice; a woman being a lesbian *and* in a lesbian relationship is already too much and vigorously protested by some people; but being a lesbian, having a girlfriend *and* a couple of lesbian friends is way too far-fetched and gratuitous and an unacceptable lesbian invasion that must be “driven by” some “personal agenda”.

Recently also, the comment sections of articles about the new Batwoman TV series featured many instances of “Is every new female character a lesbian?? ” It is tough to have the confidence to be visible in real life when these are heterosexual people's reactions to a small lesbian part on a small TV show. How can you even begin to argue with hetero people about anything when one lesbian is one lesbian too many? When you find yourself arguing for your existence to be visible, you have already lost. Heteros are not satisfied with having 99% of anything—TV characters, literary genres—they must have all of it, or else there is a nefarious gay agenda in place.

Heteros react with so much fear and hatred to lesbian visibility, which ties to the chess strategy of overprotection. I once saw a tumblr post using this metaphor to explain the concept of “privileged distress”:

“The response of privileged people to a challenge to their dominance should be seen as an instrumental response which achieves certain goals. [...] It's overprotection because, strictly speaking, it seems unnecessary. Dominance is, well,

dominant. It won't be shaken by a few women refusing to cook dinner [*or by the odd lesbian plot line in a book or film*]. There's no need to respond so strongly to small acts of resistance. But doing so marks those sites of potential resistance as too painful/dangerous to fight for, while freeing individuals not to have to bother to act to keep up the system at every moment — enough other overzealous defenders will do that for them.”

We know men start feeling threatened when female representation reaches the 33% mark, at which point they feel like women are the majority, but the presence of a *single* lesbian in a piece of media already seems too threatening. That's because we have to deal with the accumulated privileged distress of men, with their reaction towards female characters (squared for those who are not here for men)—but also the privileged distress of both types of het-attracted women: first het women's disgust towards female characters who display any same-sex attraction, then bi women's resistance to allowing any female characters to have same-sex attraction *and* no opposite-sex attraction (just look at their attempts to “claim” Sappho as bisexual, 2500 years later...)

The accumulation of the three leads to a single lesbian character being, as I said, one lesbian too many.

15.12.18 — On progressive men

A post about urban farming led me to read more articles from the website cited as a source, lowtechmagazine.com, including one on how humanpower is underused in green tech developments—for example, we ought to find more ways to store and use the energy produced by people using stationary bikes and other workout devices in gyms. They do point out that human power has historically been the product of slavery, but “thankfully there are better options”: “We can try and motivate people by making human energy production more fun, social, and exciting.”

How are we going to make human-power production more fun, social and exciting? By making a bunch of naked ~~women~~ girls shower together in the middle of the human-power gym.

They write: “For extra motivation, all exercise machines in our prototype human power plant are facing a jacuzzi & shower where girls are invited to encourage the boys to flex their muscles and generate more power. Of course, the gender roles could be reversed, but during the first experiments we discovered that this is less energy-efficient. Girls don't seem to get motivated by guys in jacuzzis, at least not to the extent that guys get motivated by girls in jacuzzis.”

This is illustrated by a photo of three fully-dressed men in a gym, standing next to a naked life-sized female doll.

Someone in the comments said “I’m the only one who thinks that the idea of having the women “motivating” men in a jacuzzi is a really sexist idea?” and the authors replied:

“We are well aware of the fact that inviting girls to motivate guys to produce power is controversial. Apparently, it's OK to use the female body to sell cars and other consumer products we don't need, but it's not OK when it's used to promote renewable power or a sustainable way of living. More importantly, in a human powered world, power relations between men and women may shift. On average, men produce more power than women. There's little use in denying that, and for us it's impossible to ignore the issue. For one thing, we need to decide which types of people to show on the images.”

At the risk of repeating myself, the “people” shown on the images are fully-clothed real human men and a life-sized naked female doll. This is the kind of images men’s brains produce when they try to imagine an utopian future society powered by green technology.

“Apparently it’s OK to use the female body to sell cars and other consumer products we don’t need, but it’s not OK when it’s used to promote renewable

power or a sustainable way of living” means “Treating women as sex objects to create a crap society is fine but not optimal, it would be even better to treat women as sex objects to create a better society (for men)”

As to “*In a human powered world, power relations between men and women may shift*”, it sounds like a sinister threat and is really reminiscent of Lydia Cacho saying that when she infiltrated brothels and asked men why they bought sex slaves instead of having sex with consenting women, they answered “*We like this. We miss the way women were.*” It is not the first time I see this kind of barefaced woman-hatred in neo-agriculture / green tech websites, and these are often written by Scandinavian / Northern European men (the article quoted here is by Dutch men). I want to point this out for the women who think “reforming” men by raising them to see women as equals is possible. The truth is, the more ‘equal’ a society is, the more opportunities and little scraps of freedom women manage to grab for themselves—in terms of bodily autonomy, civil liberties, and access to resources, assets and political power—the more enraged men become. They feel wronged, ripped off. It’s not fair. It didn’t use to be like this! Other countries still have those better, poorer, more subjugated women! (Hence European & North American men’s love of sex tourism).

I think it is pointless and a huge waste of our time to try to improve or ‘educate’ men, and it is completely delusional to hope that the more equal and feminist our society becomes, the more men will respect and love women, because we can already see that the men raised in the most liberal societies, where women have secured some social freedom and political power, where it is politically correct to talk of women as equals, are not developing more empathy towards women but rather more and more bitter nostalgia for an ideal society where women are their sex slaves.

29.12.18 — *On separatism*

Separatism is almost always mentioned negatively and ridiculed as an insane, extremist, unrealistic idea (erasing the fact that it is

already practised by many women around the world...), so I think it's important to counter all this misrepresentation, to bring it up in positive ways, to remind women that it's good to think about it—I mean allow themselves to entertain the idea—and highlight the fact that it is a process, which starts with asking yourself honestly how it could benefit you *and* other women around you (because a lot of women like to pretend that their choice to live with men affects no one but themselves and that's frankly stupid), and which aspects of your life it could apply to.

Women's spaces and institutions are currently under attack in so many ways, and it feels very odd to me to see feminists fight to defend them one day, only to disparage the idea of separatism the next day. They make it sound either ridiculous or sinister (like it's going to be forced on unwilling women), when it is actually a very straightforward concept: liberating an oppressed group hinges upon enabling all members of this group to live their life independently from their oppressors. Aiming for this goal would mean creating all sorts of female-only structures, and developing a separatist ethos behind them—at least *valuing* separatism as a very basic first step.

A lot of lesbians, unlike het and bi women, tend to value separatism almost instinctively. Having already been separated since birth, in a way, from society, from one another, from any chance to relate to the people and culture around us, through no choice of our own, taking some steps towards separatism feels more like finally de-separating. Through creating female-only structures, spaces, culture, lesbians (and various other unfitting women) are really only separating from the people or cultures that have been isolating us and separating us from one another (from women and perspectives we can actually relate to) so that it is an act of reuniting and healing from a lesbian perspective.

I am reminded of a quote by Louise Bernikow, written in the introduction of her anthology of female poetry *The World Split Open*:

“Most biographers [of female writers] go on to pronounce a value judgment upon those lives. A pattern emerges in many

of the biographical details, a pattern so strongly insisted on and so clearly an example of patriarchal thinking: “withdrawal from the world”. Emily Dickinson, Emily Bronte, Christina Rossetti, Amy Lowell women who did not marry—are all described in terms of their “withdrawal.” The serious scholarship about them belongs to the *cherchez l'homme* school of inquiry, in which men reveal that they find it hard to understand and downright pathological that women would choose to live without them. [...] The question arises as to whether it is possible not to live in the world of men and still to live in the world. The answer arises nearly as quickly that this can happen only if men are not thought of as “the world.”

[...T]he patriarchal critic, scholar or biographer [also] puzzles over the problem of love. It seems to him that women who loved women had no love in their lives. Such men not only see themselves as “the world,” they also see themselves as “love.” [...]

Busily, the biographers go to work on [these women's] life story. For courage, they read defeat. The affirmation of life, which the practice of art always is, becomes denial. Richness of mind and heart are mysteriously seen as sterility. Never does it occur to the biographer to consider what the woman experienced in the social order, that *ronde* of discouragement, pressure toward domesticity, and state of constant conflict so blithely called “the world.” Never is the possibility raised that the much-touted “world” was for this woman no more than a prison, and the decision to live in it as little as possible a glorious bid for freedom.”

Male biographers are not the only ones who see men as “the world” and heterosexual romance as “love”, who therefore interpret separatism as “withdrawal from the world”, “living without love”, a defeat, giving up, cowardly. Many feminists, including radical ones, echo these male-focused interpretations of women's life choices. But separatism is only perceived as negative, subtractive, separating, from the perspective of patriarchy. The women who love men to

the point of feeling baffled or threatened by other women's suggestions to find ways to detach from our male-worshipping, hetero-saturated culture, will not understand separatism. Feeling so comfortable living among your oppressors that you deride those who want to escape them is compelling evidence of privilege sheltering you. So it will be difficult for women who have never felt the depth of alienation that lesbians feel every day, to understand female separatism as a positive action and a sigh of relief.

Moreover, as I said, trying to understand the point of separatism means asking yourself how it might benefit you *and* other women around you. A lot of het and bi women struggle with the latter even more than with the former. I recently read a post critical of separatism that went: "I understand none of the discourse and why lesbians think it's their RIGHT to demand celibacy from straight women???"

A reply from a lesbian: "Lesbians aren't demanding celibacy. Lesbians are pointing out that you're putting yourself and the women around you in danger by bringing men into your house and into your life—literally "sleeping with the enemy". You're pissed off because you know it's true."

I agree with this response, but what I get from the initial post and all the similar ones—"how *dare* lesbians demand *anything* of mlw when it comes to their *personal* choice to date men"—is that manloving women are utterly and hopelessly clueless about the reality of homophobia as an oppression, where it comes from, how their personal choices feed it and strengthen it, which therefore makes their personal choices our business. They are inside their protective forcefield of heterosexuality and hetero coupledness, breathing easy, having siphoned all the oxygen from the outside to make sure that anyone outside of it suffocates to death—and they tell us to shut up and mind our own business because we are outside and therefore the existence of these forcefields doesn't concern us and doesn't affect us.

It is always delicate to have to use awkward metaphors to explain things that should be obvious, but I don't know how else to express

that het and bi women *who claim to be radical feminists and to care about women's liberation* should try to stop feeding the whole system that strengthens these forcefields and continues sucking all the air inside them, they could make the conscious choice to stay on the outside in order to experience what kind of problems that creates, what solutions might be needed, how to build alternative systems and spaces to give some breathing room to the women who cannot choose to go take a breathe in their forcefields. Instead, they tell us they would rather wait to find their own happy little forcefield of love where things will be cosy and comfortable for them and they won't have to worry about what it's like on the outside, and to add insult to injury, they tell us this personal choice of theirs doesn't affect us at all and we have no right to be critical of it. This shows not only a lack of the kind of solidarity and female class consciousness needed for female liberation, but also a total lack of understanding of how our oppression and their privilege operate and are linked by cause and effect.

Finally, I wish they would stop crying that separatist “discourse” on the internet is somehow coercive and proof that lesbians are forcing them to abandon their men. We don't have the power to force them to do anything. *They* have power and privilege over us and we have a right to express our frustration with their uncritical acceptance of it as their god-given right.

30.12.18 — On radical feminism

I was thinking about an article I saw yesterday: a centenarian man said that the key to living a long life is to have a woman around. A centenarian woman said that the key to living a long life is to have no man around. And a post making the rounds about how studies consistently show that girls do better at school when there are no boys around, while boys do worse when there are no girls around. This is a pattern that holds true in other contexts; women tend to be happier, healthier, less stressed, without men; while the opposite is true for men. This of course suggests that men have a parasitic relationship to women.

It boggles the mind that with this kind of information out in the open, *known*, with obvious conclusions screaming in our faces, feminists today still ridicule and devalue the concept of separatism. It can take so many forms too—supporting female-owned businesses so that more women can earn a living without having a male employer; female-owned housing options because so many women are preyed upon by their male landlord; female-only vacation venues so that more women can have a male-free holiday every once in a while; supporting female creators so that women have more choices if they decide to only read female authors or listen to female musicians, and then of course the more ‘drastic’ fight for larger female-only institutions in society.

But while some of these struggles (usually the low-stakes, non-threatening ones) are sometimes given perfunctory support in the name of Girl Power, the larger topic of separatism is hardly ever given coherent thought, support or space to grow; the fact that the best thing feminism can do for women is giving more women in all strata of society the possibility to exclude men from various aspects of their life, is still pretty much taboo and rarely given serious consideration outside of small feminist niches (often disparaged as extremist or utopian). Instead, feminists devote most of their energy and resources to activism that still involves men at some level, or on supporting women who choose men and will ultimately siphon all that support and energy and time and money back to men.

I didn’t expect to get 40K notes on my childbirth post and won’t have time to answer all the comments I got about it, but someone asked what inspired me to write it—it was reading about the lives of the women I mentioned in that post. I read a lot about women’s lives, be it biographies or diaries or letters, so patterns become obvious, and all other factors balanced, if you value physical safety, intellectual growth and self-realisation, you have to come to the conclusion that not having a man in your home was and is a blessing. And really you could extend this to having any man in your life at all—father, brother, son, male employer...

Among the memoirs I read this year there was one by a woman who was exploited and raped by her boss, and then Lydia Cacho’s

writings about her fight to help little girls victims of sex trafficking and to keep her shelter for battered women open. I don't exactly seek out this kind of stories—after the Cacho book I picked up the memoirs of a Hollywood actress, expecting it to be a fun mindless read, and there ended up being a long section about how she was molested by her older brother as a kid and ended up as an anti-CSA activist as an adult. I discovered that most American male politicians who outwardly portrayed themselves as good family men fought tooth and nail behind the scenes to try and prevent anti-child rape laws from being adopted.

When you read (or hear) enough women's life stories you really have to wonder what feminism is good for if it doesn't focus on helping women to keep men out of as many aspects of their life as they want, and fighting for female-only spaces and institutions (like Cacho's shelter, but not only—the litmus test for useful feminist activism should be **“Will this contribute to denying men access to women in some way, thus empowering the women who would like to keep men out of this aspect of their life?”**) The women who *don't* want to keep men out will always be able to make that choice because our entire society is structured around supporting it. Feminism should support the other choice, make it possible and safe for more women.

Criminalising pimps & johns while helping women exit prostitution contributes to that second choice. So do anti-child rape laws. And women's bars or cafés. And women's studies programmes (“gender studies” don't). And anti-porn activism. And fighting for women's right to father-free parenthood (e.g. the right to use anonymous sperm donors, rather than wanting fathers to be more involved with their children. And generally fighting for the opposite of fathers' rights, which are coincidentally a major concern of the MRA movement.) And fighting for legal family / social units where women can share property and healthcare and pass on inheritance. Etc, etc.)

The women who scoff at this or rush in with “not all men” are typically very self-centered (“I sure don't want to separate from men, so why should I think of the women who do?”), and refuse to

look any further than their own Good Dad or nice boyfriend (and it's worth mentioning that Lydia Cacho said that all the men she talked to in brothels, including the brothels offering child prostitutes, were 'normal' married men, probably described by their wives as good husbands and fathers.) Your average mainstream feminist will tell you that "feminism is about choice" but **feminism should not concern itself with helping women choose men, as patriarchy already has this covered.** Meanwhile, women's choice to distance themselves from men is not currently supported by feminism at all, when it should be the beating heart of feminism. More often than not, it is derided and disparaged. Marilyn Frye explained why in her excellent essay "A Reflexion on Separatism and Power":

"[...] When those who control access have made you totally accessible, your first act of taking control must be denying access. Access is one of the faces of Power. Female denial of male access to females substantially cuts off a flow of benefits, but it has also the form and full portent of assumption of power. [And] if there is one thing women are queasy about it is actually taking power. As long as one stops just short of that, the patriarchs will for the most part take an indulgent attitude. We are afraid of what will happen to us when we really frighten them. This is not an irrational fear. It is our experience generally that the defensiveness, nastiness, violence, hostility and irrationality of the reaction to feminism tend to correlate with the blatancy of the element of separation in the strategy or project. [...]"

By comparing Charity and Sylvia's life to the lives of their contemporary women who had 18 children, what I meant was "being able to choose to live free from men is a blessing", but a lot of women have interpreted that post to mean "birth control is a blessing". But the makeshift, imperfect shield that protects you from someone who might hurt you and doesn't care if he does is a very minor blessing compared to the power to live your life free from this person and the associated worries. Has birth control empowered women to deny men sexual access if they choose to?

(Some women have argued it has done the opposite.) Feminism has become a very hollow word but nowadays I measure the sincerity of a woman's commitment to feminism by the support, help and sympathy she extends to the women who want to keep men out of their lives / sex lives / children's lives / bars / feminist groups / etc.

Before anyone interprets this as “lesbian extremists want me to become a lesbian, leave my man and live in the woods with them” because many het and bi women feel threatened by separatism and lash out defensively when the topic is brought up—this is about being able to choose to keep men out of some aspects of your life, or your entire life. How this choice should be facilitated and how the women who make it deserve to be supported and respected much more than they currently are by feminism (I won't even touch the obvious lesbophobia behind the rampant ridicule and contempt towards separatism). How **feminism becomes just another patriarchal institution if it values & supports choices that include men more than choices that exclude men.**

And although the creation of female-only options in society would benefit even the women who do not want to distance themselves from men (because then they would be able to make a real, informed choice between life with men and life without men, *having experienced both*), the fact that many women would not choose separatism is irrelevant. The feminists who fought for the right to divorce didn't sabotage themselves with “What about the women who WANT to stay with their husband??” They fought to give a choice to all the women who don't. They understood that some situations are beyond fixing and you have to be able to divorce. Feminism that fights to improve and reform men or to help women who choose men be happier and more comfortable with that choice is the equivalent of fighting for het couple therapy. Feminism that fights for separatist options and female-only spaces and institutions is the equivalent of fighting for the right to divorce. If you understand why divorce is important, you should understand why separatism is important. It's actual female liberation—it's not forcing any woman to swear off all men forever, it's giving women

as a class the possibility to choose to 'divorce' men as a class. Giving safe and good options to any woman who isn't interested in 'fixing' men or her relationships with them but just wants out. A feminism that doesn't fight for this has completely lost its vision.