

Towards a Theory of Cis-Supremacy: Conceptualising Ongoing Barriers to Trans Equality

Sociology

1–18

© The Author(s) 2024



Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/00380385241296317

journals.sagepub.com/home/soc**Cal Horton** 

Oxford Brookes University, UK

Abstract

Trans scholarship and trans perspectives have historically been marginalised from mainstream academia. There is value in ongoing theoretical exchange between sociology and the evolving post-discipline of applied trans studies. This article introduces three prominent theories within applied trans studies, namely cisnormativity, pathologisation and gender minority stress, considering the strengths and limitations of these theories. The author then highlights the need for a greater theoretical focus on cis power, drawing from scholarship on white supremacy to articulate and introduce a theory of cis-supremacy. Within the UK cis-supremacy manifests in experiences of control and coercion; problematisation; toleration of trans harm; and cis institutional dominance. A theory of cis-supremacy calls attention to the forces and systems that actively oppress trans people, perpetuating systemic and sustained injustices. Recognition of cis-supremacy is important for understanding intersectional inequality, and a vital component of any movement for trans liberation.

Keywords

equality, LGBT, power, social justice, supremacy, theory, trans

Introduction

Johnson (2015) analysed a decade of scholarship in the journal of *Gender and Society* and the book series ‘Advances in Gender Research’, exploring how mainstream sociology and gender studies has engaged with trans lives and trans perspectives. Johnson’s (2015) analysis revealed a field where trans lives and trans perspectives were not

Corresponding author:

Cal Horton, Oxford Brookes University, Headington, Oxford, OX3 0BP, UK.

Email: chorton@brookes.ac.uk

effectively included, identifying entrenched cis centrism, where cisgender identities were centred and normalised as the default, while trans identities were erased, marginalised or othered. The same review concluded that in a majority (11 out of 12) of trans-related articles published prior to 2014, transgender people were used as tools or illustrations from which to theorise or speak of cisgender experiences of gender, rather than centring trans lives and trans perspectives in their own right. In this article I revisit trans inclusion a decade later, considering trans inclusion in sociology, gender studies, queer studies and in applied trans studies (Awkward-Rich, 2017; Namaste, 2009; Shuster, 2020; Stryker and Currah, 2014; Williams, 2016). Applied trans studies encompasses multi-disciplinary and post-disciplinary scholarship that prioritises ‘addressing the material conditions of transgender existence and the issues transgender people face in the world’ (Billard et al., 2022: 1). I summarise and introduce readers to three important theories that are currently prominent in the field of applied trans studies, theories with relevance and applicability across a wide range of disciplines and areas of academic inquiry. I reflect upon my own experiences as a trans advocate, highlighting a need for greater consideration of power and domination in scholarship on trans lives. In this article I call attention to forces of cis power, drawing from existing scholarship on white supremacy in order to articulate and illustrate a theory of cis-supremacy. Recognition of cis-supremacy is important for understanding the forces that shape trans and cis lives, with relevance across diverse disciplines including sociology. Acknowledging and addressing cis-supremacy is an important component of trans resistance, and a critical stepping stone on a path towards equity and social justice.

This article comprises four sections. In the first section I briefly trace a recent history of trans scholarship and trans inclusion in academic literature. In the second section I draw attention to three important theories or concepts that have become prominent in applied trans studies, with relevance across wider associated disciplines. I reflect upon my growing awareness of how these theories might partially, but incompletely help make sense of my own experiences. I present an argument that prominent theories within applied trans studies insufficiently contend with the forces of power and systemic oppression that constrain and limit trans lives. In the third section I look to scholarship on white supremacy, drawing upon a rich body of knowledge on intersectional forces of power and domination, to better understand the forces of power and domination that shape trans lives. In the final section I articulate and illustrate a theory of cis-supremacy.

Cis-supremacy is here introduced to provide an additional tool to enrich understanding of the social forces that control and marginalise trans people. This introduction to a theory of cis-supremacy is grounded in my own context, drawing upon my understanding of how cis-supremacy operates in the UK. I recognise the potential for different manifestations of cis-supremacy in different contexts, especially as experienced by those living at the intersection of forces of trans oppression, patriarchy, ableism and white supremacy. Further exploration and interpretation of this theory would be valuable, including autoethnographic accounts of experiences with cis-supremacy, examination of the operation of cis-supremacy in other countries or contexts, as well as consideration of how cis-supremacy interacts with other forces of oppression, including for people of colour living at the intersection of cis-supremacy and white supremacy. Consideration of cis-supremacy is particularly timely right now.

While trans communities have seen significant progress in recent decades, particularly in terms of visibility and in the capacity of trans people to claim our rights, even in childhood, this progress has also been accompanied by a substantial backlash, with attacks on or regressions in trans rights and trans freedoms. These continued challenges highlight the importance of understanding the forces driving and perpetuating continued trans inequality. While cisnormativity emphasises the inequities that result from a society built without consideration or awareness of trans possibilities, cis-supremacy focuses on the operation of cis power. A theory of cis-supremacy draws attention to axes and forces of cis power that actively dominate and oppress trans people across our lives, producing and perpetuating systemic and sustained injustices.

Trans Inclusion in the Academy

In the past two decades there has been a significant growth in scholarship centring trans lives, with the establishment of trans studies, with trans inclusion into sociology, women's studies, queer studies and wider disciplines, and recent evolutions into a discrete and interdisciplinary field of applied trans studies (Billard et al., 2022). Trans studies as a field developed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, building upon scholarship by authors such as Feinberg (1992, 1997). Prominent early scholarship included a series of trans studies readers (Stryker and Aizura, 2013; Stryker and Whittle, 2006), alongside a dedicated journal, the *Transgender Studies Quarterly* (Stryker and Currah, 2014). Trans studies developed as a challenge to pathologising bio-medical and psychiatric literature on the treatment or prevention of gender identity disorder (Ansara and Hegarty, 2012; Schilt and Lagos, 2017). Trans studies also developed in frustration with trans lives being excluded, misunderstood or attacked in cis-led queer and feminist theory (Benavente and Gill-Peterson, 2019; Stryker, 2004), with queer and feminist scholarship critiqued for co-opting trans experiences without giving space to trans lives or trans perspectives (Keegan, 2020a, 2020b; Namaste, 2009). Trans scholarship from authors such as Namaste (2000), Pearce (2018), Serano (2016) and Spade (2015) have added important contributions to theory and analysis, enriching understanding and insight not only on trans lives, but also into the social operation of gender as a system controlling all of our lives. A body of trans ethnography, biography, memoir and social commentary provides insight into minoritised experiences including the lives of trans people of colour (Alabanza, 2022; Major, 2023; Mock, 2014) and trans children (Roche, 2020; Travers, 2018). Trans-led scholarship has drawn attention to the linkages between trans studies and wider sociological and feminist theory and practice (Pearce et al., 2020). In recent years trans scholars have coalesced around a new field of applied trans studies, with the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* publishing research 'of all theoretical and methodological approaches oriented toward the identification, analysis, and improvement of the material conditions of transgender life' (Billard, 2021: para. 1).

Prominent Theories in Applied Trans Studies

Within applied trans studies, three theories or concepts are prominent, namely cisnormativity, pathologisation and gender minority stress. These theories or concepts are

complementary and mutually compatible, with their pre-eminence and frequent use in applied trans studies marking their value in trans scholarship. Recognition of these theories, their meaning and application, is critical for any scholars interested in learning from applied trans studies. In this section, I will introduce each theory in turn, defining its meaning and history and discussing how each theory is utilised within applied trans studies. I will look to the first three issues of the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* (published in 2022–2023) to briefly illustrate how these theories are currently utilised to help us understand trans lives. At the end of this section I will outline my growing research and life informed perception that these three theories partially, yet incompletely, help make sense of my own experiences with forces of cis power and domination. In the following sections I will proceed into a discussion of what is missing, drawing from wider scholarship to articulate and draw attention to an additional theory – that of cis-supremacy.

Cisnormativity is ‘the assumption that everyone is cisgender or should be’ (Keo-Meier and Ehrensaft, 2018: 11). ‘Cisnormativity’ recognises the disadvantage trans people carry in organisations and environments designed by and for cis people, where trans people are an after-thought, where trans people have to speak up to claim their rights (Berger and Ansara, 2021). Building on scholarship on heteronormativity (Rich, 1980; Warner, 1991), the term cisnormativity evolved from an earlier term, cissexism or cissexual privilege (Serano, 2016), and is used alongside a similar term, ‘cisgenderism’ (Kennedy, 2018). Serano (2011: para. 29) talked about it as a societal double-standard that conveys social and legal legitimacy on cis people’s identities, with cis identities ‘taken for granted and considered valid in a way that trans people’s are not’, providing cis people with an advantage. Bauer et al. (2009: 356) emphasised the ways in which it shapes ‘the policies and practices of individuals and institutions, and the organization of the broader social world’, producing a society where trans people are invisible, where the existence or needs of trans people are not even considered in systems, policies and societal assumptions. Cisnormativity normalises trans invisibility, enabling trans exclusion and erasure (Kennedy, 2018). Miller (2016) describes the impact of systemic and institutionalised cisnormativity as a continued macroaggression, delegitimising trans people and creating spaces that are unsafe for trans lives. Daily, unpredictable, distressing encounters with cisnormativity leave trans people in a ‘constant state of alert’ that ‘manifests as a persistent level of stress unknown to their cis counterpart’ (Newbury, 2013: para. 2). Within literature published in the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* the theory of cisnormativity features in articles on family cisnormativity (Miseo, 2022), on experiences in gender clinics (Horton, 2022), on detransition (MacKinnon et al., 2022), on fertility (Cottrill et al., 2022), on gender euphoria (Jacobsen and Devor, 2022) and on the need for an applied trans studies (Johnson, 2022).

Pathologisation is a term used to describe the manner in which non-standard identities are defined by authorities as being medically disordered (Gill-Peterson, 2018; Inch, 2016). Trans identities have long been pathologised, categorised as inherently disordered, with negative implications for how trans people are treated in healthcare, in legislation and in society (Winters, 2011). Within literature published in the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* pathologisation is applied to discuss experiences in gender clinics (Horton, 2022; White et al., 2023), research ethics (Marshall et al., 2022) and in research on cis parental ‘mourning’ over trans children (Miseo, 2022).

The theory of ‘gender minority stress’ (GMS) posits that trans people face specific stressors that contribute to reduced levels of mental health and well-being. A framework for GMS was developed by Hendricks and Testa (2012), highlighting areas of internal or external stress that can impact on the lives of trans people. The theory of GMS developed into a ‘Gender Minority Stress and Resilience Measure’ (Testa et al., 2015), that outlines nine areas of GMS or resilience including discrimination, rejection, victimisation, non-affirmation, internalised transphobia, negative expectations for the future, nondisclosure, community connectedness and pride. The GMS framework recognises that trans people are not inherently prone to poor mental health, but rather are left vulnerable to unequal outcomes in societies that are often hostile to trans lives. Within literature published in the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies*, GMS features in articles on the need for applied trans studies (Johnson, 2022), on detransitioner experiences (MacKinnon et al., 2022), on the impacts of socio-political events on trans communities (DuBois et al., 2023) and on gender euphoria (Jacobsen and Devor, 2022).

In this article I recognise the value and importance of the theories of pathologisation, cisnormativity and GMS, theories that resonate with my life and my research. In this article I also want to draw attention to their limitations in explaining intractable barriers to trans equality. As a white non-binary person, a researcher, parent of a trans child and an advocate for trans children, there have been many occasions where I have found these theories insufficient for making sense of my own experiences of trans injustices. I can reflect upon many scenarios where the harm (GMS burden) to trans people of cisnormative practice is visible and acknowledged, where individuals and organisations do not ascribe to overt pathologisation or bigotry, yet where systems are not shifting or being re-configured to ensure cis–trans equality. I have come up against harmful institutions, attitudes and practices with an obvious reluctance to reform, where there is a clear and active commitment to upholding status quo hierarchies where trans people, especially trans children, experience subjugation, control, coercion and oppression. This reflection prompted me to go beyond an understanding of the past cisnormative and pathologising forces that have shaped and created current systems that disadvantage trans people, to consideration of the current forces that perpetuate and encourage continued inequality and injustice. This prompted me, in my life and scholarship, to move towards a theory of cis-supremacy, drawing knowledge from existing scholarship on power and domination, and most importantly, drawing from literature on white supremacy.

The limits of drawing theoretical insights on experiences of trans oppression from scholarship on white supremacy are noted from the outset. White supremacy operates differently from forces of trans oppression, with significant differences in history, and in the scale of violence, subjugation and structural injustice (Walton, 2020). Yet there are also reasons to learn from scholarship on white supremacy. Scholarship on white supremacy holds a rich body of wisdom on the systematic and societal operation of power (Ture and Hamilton, 1967), alongside recognition of the importance of understanding the intersections of white supremacy with other axes of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991). White supremacy is also a useful starting point for developing a theory of trans oppression because of the connections between trans subjugation and white supremacy, with anti-trans persecution aligned with and rooted in conceptions of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (Gill-Peterson, 2018; hooks, 2000; Stanley, 2018).

White Supremacy, Power and Domination

Scholars from Ture and Hamilton (1967) to bell hooks (1995) have emphasised the role of white supremacy in the ‘exploitation of black people and other people of color’ (hooks, 1995: 184). White supremacy is a ‘multidimensional system of domination’ (Mills, 2003: 42) that enables and sustains ‘the differential distribution of material wealth and opportunities, benefits and burdens, rights and duties’ (Mills, 1997: 3). White supremacy produces and sustains ‘a one-way flow of power, whereby benefits accrue to white people, to the detriment of nonwhite people’ (Walton, 2020: 84). Several scholars emphasise the difference between systemic racial injustice and racialised hatred, with Leonardo (2004) distinguishing between white supremacist groups that propagate racist violence and the wider concept of white supremacy. For hooks (2009) white supremacy describes a system that privileges white people over others, regardless of the presence or the absence of racial hatred. Ansley (1989: 1024) outlines a similar definition of white supremacy:

By ‘white supremacy’ I do not mean to allude only to the self-conscious racism of white supremacist hate groups. I refer instead to a political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.

White supremacy operates through ‘the everyday, mundane actions and policies that shape the world in the interests of white people’ (Gillborn, 2006: 319). Mills (1994: 110) emphasises the importance of centring analysis of institutionalised power, highlighting that a focus on racist attitudes or prejudices ‘deflect(s) attention away from the massive power differentials . . . in the real world between nonwhite individuals with bigoted ideas and institutionalized white power’. bell hooks (2009: 12) also centres an examination of structural and institutionalised power differentials, stating:

Why is it so difficult for many white folks to understand that racism is oppressive not because white folks have prejudicial feelings about blacks (they could have such feelings and leave us alone) but because it is a system that promotes domination and subjugation?

According to Walton (2020: 84), white supremacy ‘captures the reality that racism operates, in part, as a process that is constantly re-established by white agents (consciously and unconsciously), acting within societal frameworks that encourage and facilitate this re-enforcement of an unequal, racist status quo’. hooks outlines the importance of recognising racism as ‘nefarious, global, systemic, and constant’ (Davidson, 2009: 68). For Crenshaw (1988: 1364), efforts to achieve racial equality need to contend with ‘the inevitability of white backlash against any serious attempts to dismantle the machinery of white supremacy’, recognising that any efforts for genuine equality will always constitute a radical change to the status quo.

Scholarship on white supremacy deeply resonated with me as I grappled with my own experiences of trans injustices and sought out theories that more actively engaged with concepts of power and domination. I concluded that my analysis would be strengthened through articulation and application of a theory of cis-supremacy, learning from wider

scholarship on white supremacy. This approach of developing a theory of cis-supremacy through building from wider scholarship on white supremacy has both conceptual and methodological precedents. Methodologically there is a history of mutual enrichment between scholarship on different axes of oppression, recognising the multi-dimensional and intersectional nature of forces of power and domination (Crenshaw, 1991). This intersectional cross-fertilisation can be seen in scholarship on ‘minority stress’, with theory evolving and expanding from a focus on the minority stress experienced by lesbian women (Brooks, 1981), to gay men (Meyer, 1995), trans people (Hendricks and Testa, 2012) and racial or ethnic minorities (Wei et al., 2010). Building a theory of cis-supremacy from concepts of white supremacy also draws directly from scholarship by trans people of colour, who highlight the roots of anti-trans discrimination in colonialism and white supremacy (Gill-Peterson, 2018). Colonialism played a central role in the introduction of rigid gender systems (Jespersen, 2023; Oyěwùmí, 1997). Colonialism relied upon violence, coercion and control to uphold and enforce racialised social and gender norms (Han and O’Mahoney, 2018). Within the ground-breaking text *Histories of the Transgender Child* Gill-Peterson (2018) examined the racialised and colonial roots of cis control and oppression of trans children throughout the 20th century, with trans children of colour subjected to greater institutional violence, psychiatric detention or incarceration.

A range of influential trans scholars have engaged with issues of power and domination over trans communities, although scholarship has not yet coalesced around a prominent theory of cis power. Important scholarship has explored how trans communities are oppressed, abused and controlled including work by Ashley (2022), Faye (2021), Gill-Peterson (2018), Kennedy (2018), Namaste (2000), Serano (2016), Spade (2015) and Westbrook (2021). Work by Pearce (2018) has emphasised the way power is wielded by cis elites in cis dominant institutions, disenfranchising and harming trans people, especially in healthcare. Referencing the institutional power that is held by gender service clinicians, Pearce (2018: 206) emphasises that ‘it does not really matter whether or not practitioners relish the exercise of power . . . Power is exercised regardless.’ Spade (2015: 5) describes how ‘administrative violence’ operates across society, ‘producing security for some populations and vulnerability for others’. Spade (2015) highlights how a rigid gender system is not only maintained by powerful individuals and institutions, but spread throughout our lives, influencing our own self-image and what trans futures we deem possible. Building on work by Connell (2012) on ‘gender orders’, Sharrow (2021: 1) describes how institutions are a ‘site for advancing, enshrining, and normalizing cis-supremacist gender orders’. This is a rare use of the term cis-supremacy in academia, alongside brief references by authors including Lehner (2022), Luchies (2015) and Ritter and Roth (2021), although the term appears earlier in community scholarship (Reed, 2012; Trans Women Occupiers, 2011). For me it is a term that merits further consideration, offering a valuable theoretical lens through which to analyse and understand our world. Just as white supremacy examines the structural forces of power and domination that benefit white people, so a theory of cis-supremacy brings into focus the structural forces of power and domination that benefit cis people.

Towards a Theory of Cis-Supremacy

Cis-supremacy is understood as a situation where cis people hold power over trans people, in cis dominated institutions, systems and societies. Cis-supremacy operates through the exertion of power over trans people, with trans people subject to control, systemic injustice and coercive violence. In this article I outline four core manifestations of cis-supremacy, identifying how societal and systemic cis-supremacy operates through myriad institutions and domains to harm, restrict and limit trans lives. Under cis-supremacy trans people experience control and coercion, with systemic and societally reinforced barriers to trans freedoms; trans existence is problematised, with trans lives treated as suspect, deviant or problematic. Cis-supremacy legitimises and perpetuates toleration of trans harm, normalising and rendering inconsequential trans trauma. Cis-supremacy also operates through cis institutional dominance, where cis majorities wield institutional power over trans communities. Each of these four categories helps unpack and problematise the operation of cis power over trans communities. In this next section each of these manifestations of cis-supremacy will be introduced and illuminated.

Control and Coercion

Under cis-supremacy, trans people experience systemic and societally reinforced barriers to trans freedoms, with trans lives controlled, coerced or suppressed. Trans people, and particularly trans children can face coercion and control within the family unit, with parental, familial and community-centred barriers to trans children being free to express themselves and enjoy a happy trans childhood (Gill-Peterson, 2018). Trans people are at risk of familial rejection (Simons et al., 2013), with trans children facing conversive practices, coercion and control from trans-hostile family members (Amery, 2023; Riggs and Bartholomaeus, 2018b). School can be a site of control and coercion, with educational policies that deny trans children's identities, or a requirement for school and parental permission before a child can have their name or gender respected (Chudy, 2023). Trans people report experiences of coercion and control in trans healthcare systems, compelled to engage in undignified and intrusive assessments and forced to justify or prove their identity to cis clinicians (Pearce, 2018). Trans freedoms are continually challenged in politics, media discourse and legislative affairs, with efforts to control and curtail trans people's access to spaces, access to healthcare or access to sports (Faye, 2021). The UK's approach to consulting on trans-related policy can itself operate as a form of control and coercion (Pearce, 2021). Open policy consultations on the rights and freedoms of a trans minority can be overwhelmed with anti-trans input, with trans communities feeling compelled to respond simply to defend existing rights. On the topic of coerced consultation healthcare scholar Ruth Pearce (2021: para. 18) emphasises that 'we respond not with hope or optimism, but in fear. This is the power you wield over us.' Experiences of control and coercion push trans people into systemic insecurity, contributing to high levels of fear and stress (Hendricks and Testa, 2012).

Problematization

Trans people continue to be treated as a problem, as suspect or disordered across diverse sectors of life. This problematisation is particularly prominent in discussions, policies

and reactions to trans children. Problematisation of trans children is seen in education, with a trans pupil evoking ‘panic’ in schools accustomed to trans exclusion (Payne and Smith, 2014). Problematisation of trans life at a societal level is present across UK media, exemplified in news headlines like ‘children sacrificed to the trans lobby’ (Baker, 2019). Problematisation can be seen in the UK government calling for an investigation into a rise in the gender service referral rate of trans boys, despite the referral numbers remaining far below expected population prevalence (Ashley, 2019a). Problematisation of childhood transness is seen across trans youth healthcare in the UK with no efforts to put into action the global commitment to depathologisation embedded in the World Health Organisation’s (2021) ICD-11. Problematisation of trans identities is evident in NHS healthcare research priorities, with the NHS ‘Cass Review’ looking for evidence on the ‘aetiology’ or ‘epidemiology’ of transness, eluding the possibility that transness may not be a problem (Horton, 2024). While cis lives are by default regarded as natural, valid and worthy of rights and respect, trans lives are chronically presented as a difficulty or concern, with trans people rendered inherently problematic, needing to defend our basic existence and humanity.

Toleration of Trans Harm

Cis-supremacy can be seen in cultures, systems and policies wherein trans people experiencing abuse and trauma is normalised and accepted as inevitable. Toleration of trans harm is evident in double standards in UK media coverage, for example where one individual regretting the medical interventions they sought out and consented to is deemed a scandal, while ignoring the harms of thousands of trans people denied access to healthcare (Baker, 2019). Toleration of harm is inherent in approaches that encourage parents to delay acceptance of trans children, and in approaches that value the prediction of future identities above the protection of current happiness and self-esteem (Ashley, 2019b). Toleration of harm is seen in education, where trans children experience minority stress and trauma in schools that are unwelcoming or unsafe for trans pupils (Riggs and Bartholomaeus, 2018a). Toleration of harm is seen across a UK society that has normalised and accepted trans pupils disproportionately dropping out of school, losing out on their right to education. Toleration of harm to trans youth is also seen in approaches, as recently endorsed by a UK Minister for Education, that ask schools to out trans children to potentially transphobic or abusive parents, disregarding child rights and child safety (Kelleher, 2022b).

Cis Institutional Dominance

Under cis-supremacy we live under cis institutional dominance, where powerful organisations and institutions, led by and accountable to cis majorities, wield unilateral power over trans lives. Cis power and institutional dominance over trans people at a societal level is visible in the actions of the UK’s Equality and Human Rights Commission, for example in their 2022 guidance on single sex spaces. Rather than promoting equality and inclusion, this guidance was described by LGBT media outlet Pink News as ‘a how-to-guide on excluding trans people’ (Milton, 2022: para. 1). Cis institutional dominance is visible across UK political parties, with transphobia dominating the 2022 UK

Conservative leadership contest (Kelleher, 2022a), and persistent anti-trans rhetoric seen across all UK political parties (The Week UK, 2022). In the judiciary the impact of cis institutional dominance can be seen, with several UK court cases investigating supportive parents of trans children, including a 2016 case when a judge denied the existence of trans children, removing a young child from a supportive parent. Legal outcomes for trans children are dependent on whether a cis dominant judiciary can be persuaded of the legitimacy of trans childhood (Parsons, 2020). Cis dominance is deeply entrenched across UK media, with cis journalists and editors creating a hostile climate for trans people across a majority of mainstream UK newspapers (GATE, 2022; Wells, 2021). The UN expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity highlighted the current 'toxic' climate for trans people in the UK, noting the 'extreme pressure and hostility of a public debate which, today, questions rights that are directly connected with their dignity and, in some case, their very existence' (Madrigal-Borloz, 2023: 18). Overwhelming cis institutional dominance across diverse institutions in the UK places trans people in situations of chronic fear, stress and precarity, exacting a significant emotional toll on trans people (Madrigal-Borloz, 2023).

Parallels with White Supremacy

Cis-supremacy is both built upon and a specific manifestation of wider forces of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (hooks, 2000). For the above manifestations of cis-supremacy, potential parallels in white supremacy can be identified. The problematisation of trans lives has similarities with the problematisation of other groups deemed 'other' under white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. Over a century ago scholar and Black civil rights activist Du Bois (2018: 8) wrote on 'being a problem'. Other scholars have explicitly built on Du Bois to explore, for example, the experiences of Arab Americans, identifying the hypervisibility, surveillance, violence and discrimination that occurs when a racialised group is deemed an inherent problem (Bayoumi, 2009; Zahrawi, 2020). Examination of the ways in which trans lives are devalued and trans harms rendered inconsequential can find parallels in the systemic devaluation of Black lives, from Black maternal mortality, to police violence, to mass incarceration (Buckley, 2014). Trans experiences of familial control and coercion (with structural barriers to trans people being or being recognised as parents, and frequent occurrences of trans children experiencing control and coercion by cis parents) may have parallels in other groups facing racist control of families and children, including settler colonial policies of child removal, and institutionalised control over reproduction experienced by Indigenous peoples (McKenzie et al., 2022; Marchetti and Ransley, 2005). In terms of cis institutional dominance there are parallels in white supremacy, particularly in the ways in which white and cis dominant institutions weaponise state power, policy and law to control and render insecure Black and trans communities. There are similarities in the spatial manifestation of cis-supremacy and white supremacy, including in policies and laws that exclude, segregate and isolate those with less institutional power, overtly or covertly creating white or cis only spaces. Such manifestations merit further analysis noting important differences, for example trans segregation is commonly veiled behind a framing that denies the validity of cis as a category, combining segregation with erasure. The

numerous parallels between cis-supremacy and white supremacy call attention to the ways in which different forces of oppression are intertwined in the systemic operation of power over minoritised groups. This is most strongly noted by those living at the intersection of different axes of oppression, those who hold multiple identities deemed 'a problem', those devalued across different axes of their identity, those facing multiple and intersecting dimensions of societal control and institutionalised subjugation.

Developing a Theory of Cis-Supremacy

A theory of cis-supremacy, as here elaborated, provides a concept to help understand and analyse hard-to-shift barriers to trans equality, drawing attention to the role of cis power in trans oppression. Cis-supremacy is defined as the operation of cis power over trans individuals and trans communities, perpetuating and reinforcing trans subjugation. Echoing concepts of white supremacy (Mills, 2003), cis-supremacy works across societies, institutions and systems, benefiting cis people, and holding trans people in situations of oppression, inequality and injustice. Recognition of cis-supremacy enables us to recognise the harms that trans people experience not only as ill-informed acts of omission, but also as intentional acts of commission, symptoms of active and systemic domination of trans people. Cis-supremacy draws focus to a reality that trans people face inequality and injustice not only through anti-trans hate, not only through ignorance, but through attitudes, institutions and policies that seek to perpetuate systems of cis dominance. Cis-supremacy relies less on widespread feelings of hate or fear of trans people, but on widespread or establishment attachment to or toleration of an unequal status quo, reinforced by structures of systemic cis power.

Cis-supremacy provides a concept and theory to help us articulate and unpack trans experiences of injustice. Cis-supremacy provides new areas of focus to enrich understanding of facets of oppression that are particularly experienced, or experienced in a different manner by trans communities. It also provides a complementary theory (alongside concepts of white supremacy, patriarchy and ableism) to bring trans-specific experiences of oppression into wider intersectional discourse and analysis on power, justice and inequality.

Towards Trans Liberation

hooks (1993) talks about collective struggle towards 'radical equality'. With reference to race, class and gender inequality, she calls for 'passionate commitment to a vision of social transformation that (is) rooted in a radically democratic idea of freedom and justice for all' (hooks, 1993: 6). This vision of freedom and justice for everyone cannot be reached without action to address cis-supremacy. Cis-supremacy has a significant impact across different spheres of trans people's lives, limiting and constraining our life chances. Cis-supremacy is successful, all-encompassing and life-constraining not because a minority of cis people hate or want to eradicate trans people. Cis-supremacy is oppressive and life-constraining because it is a system of power and domination over trans people that has become normalised, that is accepted and reinforced by a majority of our society, including those who otherwise wish happiness and well-being for trans folk.

Powerful and often invisible forces of cis-supremacy hold back trans rights and perpetuate and reinforce a status quo of cis dominance. In the UK cis-supremacy manifests as continued control and coercion, problematisation, toleration of trans harm and cis institutional dominance with devastating impacts on trans people.

UK philosopher Abigail has written about the societal and systemic power that cis people wield over trans people:

Trans people demand the same freedoms that cis people take for granted like the right to healthcare, the right to get married and start a family without having to ask the government permission first, the right to go where we please free of harassment, the right to participate in recreational activities like sport in the correct gender, and in some cases even the freedom to live free from violence – freedoms that we do not currently have secure access to because cis people structured this country in a way that we are systematically denied them.

Cis-supremacy provides a framework to help us grapple with the forces that keep trans people in a position of subjugation and harm. Cis-supremacy puts at the centre of our analysis the mechanisms of power that exist to perpetuate cis dominance over trans people. Such a power analysis can help us articulate and identify mechanisms to claim trans power. The American slavery abolitionist Frederick Douglass (1999: 367) said in 1857 ‘power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and it never will.’ Trans power need not only be claimed on an individual basis, but on a systematic and societal basis. We need to raise our ambitions (and our demands) of what equality looks like for trans people. We need trans allies to recognise and dismantle features of cis-supremacy that have been embedded and normalised into our societal status quo. We need to individually and collectively raise our expectations for what trans justice looks like for our trans children, illuminating paths of trans resistance, and helping us imagine futures of social justice. We need to build communities of trans power, of trans solidarity and trans liberation, enabling a shift from cis-supremacy to a world of equality, safety and justice. Recognition of cis-supremacy and its impacts on trans lives is an essential piece of any movement for trans liberation.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Cal Horton  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1944-4122>

References

- Alabanza T (2022) *None of the Above: Reflections on Life Beyond the Binary*. Edinburgh: Canongate. Available at: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/59788339-none-of-the-above> (accessed 3 August 2023).
- Amery F (2023) Protecting children in ‘gender critical’ rhetoric and strategy: Regulating childhood for cisgender outcomes. *DiGeSt – Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 10(2): 99–114.

- Ansara YG and Hegarty P (2012) Cisgenderism in psychology: Pathologising and misgendering children from 1999 to 2008. *Psychology & Sexuality* 3(2): 137–160.
- Ansley F (1989) Stirring the ashes: Race class and the future of civil rights scholarship. *Cornell Law Review* 74(6): 993–1077.
- Ashley F (2019a) Shifts in assigned sex ratios at gender identity clinics likely reflect changes in referral patterns. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 16(6): 948–949.
- Ashley F (2019b) Thinking an ethics of gender exploration: Against delaying transition for transgender and gender creative youth. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 24(2): 223–236.
- Ashley F (2022) Interrogating gender-exploratory therapy. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 18(2): 472–481.
- Awkward-Rich C (2017) Trans, feminism: Or, reading like a depressed transsexual. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42(4): 819–841.
- Baker P (2019) *Comparison of the coverage of stories about trans people in 2012 and 2018-19*. Lancaster: Lancaster University. Available at: <https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/news/exclusive-mermaids-research-into-newspaper-coverage-on-trans-issues/> (accessed 18 October 2022).
- Bauer GR, Hammond R, Travers R, et al. (2009) ‘I don’t think this is theoretical; this is our lives’: How erasure impacts health care for transgender people. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care* 20(5): 348–361.
- Bayoumi M (2009) *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem? Being Young and Arab in America*, 1st edn. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Benavente G and Gill-Peterson J (2019) The promise of trans critique: Susan Stryker’s queer theory. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 25(1): 23–28.
- Berger I and Ansara YG (2021) Cisnormativity. In: Goldberg A and Beemyn G (eds) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Trans Studies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 121–125.
- Billard TJ (2021) About the journal, *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies*. Available at: <https://bulletin.appliedtransstudies.org/about/> (accessed 3 August 2023).
- Billard TJ, Everhart AR and Zhang E (2022) Whither trans studies? On fields, post-disciplines, and the need for an applied transgender studies. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(1–2): 1–18.
- Brooks V (1981) *Minority Stress and Lesbian Women*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books. Available at: <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/19802> (accessed 13 July 2020).
- Buckley PM (2014) To be or not to be. In: Fasching-Varner KJ, Reynolds RE, Albert KA, et al. (eds) *Trayvon Martin, Race, and American Justice: Writing Wrong*. Rotterdam: SensePublishers, 61–65.
- Chudy E (2023) LGBTQ+ groups condemn ‘chilling’ Tory guidance for trans schoolchildren. *PinkNews*. Latest lesbian, gay, bi and trans news. LGBTQ+ news. Available at: <https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/12/19/uk-lgbtq-charities-respond-government-guidance-trans-schoolchildren/> (accessed 13 February 2024).
- Connell R (2012) Gender, health and theory: Conceptualizing the issue, in local and world perspective. *Social Science & Medicine* 74(11): 1675–1683.
- Cottrill AA, Janiak E, Gordon A, et al. (2022) ‘I have to decide how attached to that future I feel’: Fertility intentions and desires among transmasculine young adults. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(1–2): 97–118.
- Crenshaw K (1988) Race, reform, and retrenchment: Transformation and legitimation in antidiscrimination law. *Harvard Law Review* 101(7): 1331–1387.
- Crenshaw K (1991) Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241.

- Davidson T (2009) Bell hooks, white supremacy, and the academy. In: Davidson J and Yancy G (eds) *Critical Perspectives on bell hooks*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis, 68–89.
- Douglass F (1999) West India emancipation, speech delivered at Canandaigua, New York, August 3, 1857. In: Foner PS (ed.) *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 358–368.
- DuBois LZ, Puckett JA, Price SF, et al. (2023) The impact of sociopolitical events on transgender people in the US. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 2(1–2): 1–26.
- Du Bois WEB (2018) *The Souls of Black Folk*. Gorham ME: Myers Education Press.
- Faye S (2021) *The Transgender Issue*. London: Penguin Books.
- Feinberg L (1992) Transgender liberation: A movement whose time has come. Available at: <http://archive.org/details/transgender-liberation-a-movem-leslie-feinberg> (accessed 24 July 2023).
- Feinberg L (1997) *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to Marsha P. Johnson and Beyond*. Boston, MA, USA: Beacon Press.
- GATE (2022) *Mapping Anti Gender Movements in the UK*. New York, NY: GATE. Available at: <https://gate.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Mapping-AG-Movements-in-the-UK-Report-1.pdf>(accessed 30 September 2022).
- Gillborn D (2006) Rethinking white supremacy: Who counts in ‘whiteworld’. *Ethnicities* 6(3): 318–340.
- Gill-Peterson J (2018) *Histories of the Transgender Child*. Chicago, IL: University of Minnesota Press.
- Han E and O’Mahoney J (2018) *British Colonialism and the Criminalization of Homosexuality: Queens, Crime and Empire*. London: Routledge.
- Hendricks ML and Testa RJ (2012) A conceptual framework for clinical work with transgender and gender nonconforming clients: An adaptation of the Minority Stress Model. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 43(5): 460–467.
- hooks b (1993) A revolution of values: The promise of multi-cultural change. *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 26(1): 6–32.
- hooks b (1995) *Killing Rage: Ending Racism*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.
- hooks b (2000) *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. London: Pluto Press.
- hooks b (2009) *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. UK: Turnaround Publisher Services Limited.
- Horton C (2022) ‘Of course, I’m intimidated by them. They could take my human rights away’: Trans children’s experiences with UK gender clinics. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(1–2): 47–70.
- Horton C (2024) The Cass Review: Cis-supremacy in the UK’s approach to healthcare for trans children. *International Journal of Transgender Health*: 1–25. DOI: 10.1080/26895269.2024.2328249.
- Inch E (2016) Changing minds: The psycho-pathologization of trans people. *International Journal of Mental Health* 45(3): 193–204.
- Jacobsen K and Devor A (2022) Moving from gender dysphoria to gender Euphoria: Trans experiences of positive gender related emotions. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(1–2): 119–143.
- Jespersion J (2023) Trans misogyny in the colonial archive: Re-membling trans feminine life and death in New Spain, 1604–1821. *Gender & History* 36(1): 91–111.
- Johnson AH (2015) Beyond inclusion: Thinking toward a transfeminist methodology. In: Demos V and Segal MT (eds) *At the Center: Feminism, Social Science and Knowledge*. Advances in Gender Research. Leeds: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 21–41.
- Johnson AH (2022) Tipping points and shifting expectations: The promise of applied trans studies for building structural competency. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(1–2): 163–177.

- Keegan CM (2020a) Against queer theory. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 7(3): 349–353.
- Keegan CM (2020b) Getting disciplined: What's trans* about queer studies now? *Journal of Homosexuality* 67(3): 384–397.
- Kelleher P (2022a) 7 reasons Liz Truss as prime minister is terrifying for LGBTQ+ people. *PinkNews. Latest lesbian, gay, bi and trans news. LGBTQ+ news*, 5 September. Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/09/05/liz-truss-prime-minister-lgbtq-rights/> (accessed 17 October 2022).
- Kelleher P (2022b) Tory minister Nadhim Zahawi suggests teachers should out trans kids to parents. *PinkNews. Latest lesbian, gay, bi and trans news. LGBTQ+ news*, 21 April. Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/21/nadhim-zahawi-education-minister-trans-students-parents/> (accessed 17 October 2022).
- Kennedy N (2018) Prisoners of Lexicon: Cultural cisgenderism and transgender children. In Schneider E and Balthes-Löhr C (eds) *Normed Children: Effects of Gender and Sex Related Normativity on Childhood and Adolescence*. Bielefeld, Germany: transcript Verlag, 297–312. Available at: <https://www.transcript-verlag.de/978-3-8376-3020-6/normed-children/> (accessed 24 May 2020).
- Keo-Meier C and Ehrensaft D (2018) *The Gender Affirmative Model: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Supporting Transgender and Gender Expansive Children*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Lehner A (2022) The transgender flipping point: How trans Instagrammers flip the script on identity. *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change* 7(2): 18.
- Leonardo Z (2004) The color of supremacy: Beyond the discourse of 'white privilege. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 36(2): 137–152.
- Luchies T (2015) Towards an insurrectionary power/knowledge: Movement-relevance, anti-oppression, prefiguration. *Social Movement Studies* 14(5): 523–538. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14742837.2014.998643> (accessed 18 February 2024).
- McKenzie HA, Varcoe C, Nason D, et al. (2022) Indigenous women's resistance of colonial policies, practices, and reproductive coercion. *Qualitative Health Research* 32(7): 1031–1054.
- MacKinnon KR, Gould WA, Ashley F, et al. (2022) '(De)Transphobia: Examining the socio-politically driven gender minority stressors experienced by people who detransitioned. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(3–4): 235–259.
- Madrigal-Borloz V (2023) *End of Mission Statement*. Geneva: UN, 1–18. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/sexualorientation/statements/eom-statement-UK-IE-SOGI-2023-05-10.pdf> (accessed 6 June 2023).
- Major GG (2023) *Miss Major Speaks: Conversations with a Black trans revolutionary*. Edited by M. Toshio. Verso. Available at: <https://missmajorspeaks.net/> (accessed 3 August 2023).
- Marchetti E and Ransley J (2005) Unconscious racism: Scrutinizing judicial reasoning in 'stolen generation' cases. *Social & Legal Studies* 14(4): 533–552.
- Marshall Z, Kaposy C, Brunger F, et al. (2022) Trans research ethics: Challenges and recommendations for change. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(3–4): 187–210.
- Meyer IH (1995) Minority stress and mental health in gay men. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 36(1): 38–56.
- Miller, sj (ed.) (2016) *Teaching, Affirming, and Recognizing Trans and Gender Creative Youth: A Queer Literacy Framework*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56766-6>.
- Mills CW (1994) Revisionist ontologies: Theorizing white supremacy. *Social and Economic Studies* 43(3): 105–134.
- Mills CW (1997) *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Mills CW (2003) White supremacy as sociopolitical system: A philosophical perspective. In: Doane AW and Bonilla-Silva E (eds) *White Out: The Continuing Significance of Racism*. New York, NY: Routledge, 35–48.
- Milton J (2022) Equalities watchdog publishes ‘appalling’ guidance on excluding trans people from single-sex spaces. *Pink News*, 4 April. Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/04/ehrc-guidance-single-sex-trans/> (accessed 13 October 2022).
- Miseo MC (2022) Grieving the transgender (assumed-cisgender) child: What gendered mourning among midwestern parents tells us about familial cisnormativity and creating livable trans futures. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 1(3–4): 211–233.
- Mock J (2014) *Redefining Realness*. Atria Books. Available at: <https://janetmock.com/redefining-realness/> (accessed 3 August 2023).
- Namaste V (2000) *Invisible Lives*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Available at: <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/I/bo3683192.html> (accessed 13 July 2020).
- Namaste V (2009) Undoing theory: The ‘transgender question’ and the epistemic violence of Anglo-American feminist theory. *Hypatia* 24(3): 11–32.
- Newbury P (2013) Disrupting the politics of etiquette. Available at: <https://cisnormativity.wordpress.com/2013/08/17/disrupting-the-politics-of-etiquette/> (accessed 30 August 2019).
- Oyèwùmí O (1997) *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, NED-New edition. University of Minnesota Press. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttt0vh> (accessed 18 February 2024).
- Parsons V (2020) Mum sells house to cover legal fees after losing custody of child for supporting their transition. *PinkNews*, 13 November. Available at: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/11/13/transgender-children-parents-crowdfund-legal-battle-fees-family-court-fox-fisher/> (accessed 13 October 2022).
- Payne E and Smith M (2014) The big freak out: Educator fear in response to the presence of transgender elementary school students. *Journal of Homosexuality* 61(3): 399–418.
- Pearce R (2018) *Understanding Trans Health: Discourse, Power and Possibility*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Pearce R (2021) Open letter to Nuffield Council on Bioethics. *Dr Ruth Pearce*, 10 April. Available at: <https://ruthpearce.net/2021/04/10/open-letter-to-nuffield-council-on-bioethics/> (accessed 17 October 2022).
- Pearce R, Erikainen S and Vincent B (2020) TERF wars: An introduction. *The Sociological Review* 68(4): 677–698.
- Reed N (2012) The ‘ethical imperative’ of disclosure, or: How to believe your victim owes you an opportunity for abuse. *Sincerely, Natalie Reed*. Available at: <https://freethoughtblogs.com/nataliereed/2012/03/20/the-ethical-imperative-of-disclosure-or-how-to-believe-your-victim-owes-you-an-opportunity-for-abuse/> (accessed 18 February 2024).
- Rich A (1980) Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5(4): 631–660.
- Riggs DW and Bartholomaeus C (2018a) Cisgenderism and certitude parents of transgender children negotiating educational contexts. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 5(1): 67–82.
- Riggs DW and Bartholomaeus C (2018b) Gaslighting in the context of clinical interactions with parents of transgender children. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 33(4): 382–394.
- Ritter ZS and Roth KR (2021) Defecting from whiteness: Coalescing toward liberation. In: Hayes CM, Carter I and Elderson K (eds) *Unhooking from Whiteness*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 143–161.
- Roche J (2020) *Gender Explorers: Our Stories of Growing Up Trans and Changing the World*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- Schilt K and Lagos D (2017) The development of transgender studies in sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology* 43(1): 425–443.
- Serano J (2011) Whipping girl FAQ on cissexual. Available at: <http://juliaserano.blogspot.com/2011/08/whipping-girl-faq-on-cissexual.html> accessed 30/08/2019 (accessed 30 August 2019).
- Serano J (2016) *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*, 2nd edn. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.
- Sharrow EA (2021) Sports, transgender rights and the bodily politics of cisgender supremacy. *Laws* 10(3): 63.
- Shuster SM (2020) Carving out a niche or finding a place at the table? The sociology of transgender studies. *Contemporary Sociology* 49(1): 2–9.
- Simons L, Schrager SM, Clark LF, et al. (2013) Parental support and mental health among transgender adolescents. *The Journal of Adolescent Health: Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine* 53(6): 791–793.
- Spade D (2015) *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. New York, NY: Duke University Press. Available at: <https://www.dukeupress.edu/normal-life-revised> (accessed 25 May 2022).
- Stanley J (2018) *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Stryker S (2004) Transgender studies: Queer theory's evil twin. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10(2): 212–215.
- Stryker S and Aizura A (2013) *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Stryker S and Currah P (2014) Introduction. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1(1–2): 1–18.
- Stryker S and Whittle S (2006) *The Transgender Studies Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Testa R, Habarth J, Peta J, et al. (2015) Development of the gender minority stress and resilience measure. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity* 2: 65–77.
- The Week UK (2022) Where the UK parties stand on trans rights. *The Week UK*, 15 March. Available at: <https://www.theweek.co.uk/news/politics/956087/where-do-the-political-parties-stand-on-trans-rights> (accessed 17 October 2022).
- Trans Women Occupiers (2011) OWS must resist cis-supremacy and trans-misogyny. In *Front and Center*. Available at: <https://infrontandcenter.wordpress.com/2011/11/11/ows-must-resist-cis-supremacy-and-trans-misogyny/> (accessed 18 February 2024).
- Travers A (2018) *The Trans Generation*. New York, NY: NYU Press. Available at: <https://nyu-press.org/9781479885794/the-trans-generation> (accessed 6 January 2022).
- Ture K and Hamilton CV (1967) *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Walton S (2020) Why the critical race theory concept of 'White supremacy' should not be dismissed by neo-Marxists: Lessons from contemporary Black radicalism. *Power and Education* 12(1): 78–94.
- Warner M (1991) Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet. *Social Text* 29: 3–17.
- Wei M, Liao KY-H, Chao RC-L, et al. (2010) Minority stress, perceived bicultural competence, and depressive symptoms among ethnic minority college students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 57: 411–422.
- Wells VS (2021) TERF wars: Why British media is increasingly transphobic. *Xtra Magazine*, 20 January. Available at: <https://xtramagazine.com/power/transphobia-britain-terf-uk-media-193828> (accessed 17 October 2022).
- Westbrook L (2021) *Unlivable Lives: Violence and Identity in Transgender Activism*, 1st edn. University of California Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv17hm9zb>. (accessed 25 October 2022)

- White L, Holland D, Pantelic M, et al. (2023) I carry so much anger, and that is not good for my health: the mental health impact of current gender affirming healthcare pathways in England. *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* 2(1–2): 47–65.
- Williams C (2016) Radical inclusion: Recounting the trans inclusive history of radical feminism. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3(1–2): 254–258.
- Winters K (2011) *Gender Madness in American Psychiatry: Essays from the Struggle for Dignity*. US: GID Reform Advocates.
- World Health Organisation (2021) *International Classification of Diseases for Mortality and Morbidity Statistics (11th Revision)*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organisation. Available at: <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en> (accessed 29 October 2020).
- Zahrawi S (2020) The Arab-American experience: Identity negotiation in how does it feel to be a problem? *South Central Review* 37(1): 121–137.

Cal Horton is Research Fellow at the Centre for Diversity Research Policy and Practice, at Oxford Brookes University in the UK. They are a mixed methods researcher specialising in applied trans studies, with a focus on the rights and well-being of trans children and young people within health-care, families and education.

Date submitted September 2023

Date accepted October 2024