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**Dr. Jane Clare Jones**

@janeclarejones

Writer. Philosopher. Feminist. Princeologist.
Daughter of the witches they forgot to burn.
#NotYourSupportHuman

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Okay guys, read-a-long annotated tweet thread time.

So, as a result of the criticism of our letter to the Daily Nous, we've been pointed towards this piece as an explanation of why we don't need a sex-based account of women's oppression....

medium.com/@alysonescalan...

Spoiler alert: I'm not convinced. At all.

But I think it's a useful example of why this argument is not convincing... and if I can just fight through my irritation, I'll try to explain why...

[@HJJoyceEcon](#) [@aytchellesse](#)

(This is all going to be on the fly, so bear with me)

To set the scene: The author has been accused by radical feminists of not being able to give an account of the reason for women's oppression i.e. biology, so she sets out to explain why women are not oppressed because of their biology....

So this is her basic rehearsal of the 'sex-based oppression' position. The first thing to note, crucially, is there is no mention of the appropriation of woman as a reproductive resource. Which would, in fact, be the core of our theory's account of patriarchal motivation.

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FROM THESE TWO STATEMENTS WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT C
other radical feminists who have echo'd her critique
womanhood and the reasons that women are subj
something like this: To be a woman is to have fema
sex caste who are united by their shared sexual an
women is a result of a hatred for women sexual an
Woman or Female as concepts are not produced by
because patriarchy has to have a non arbitrary rea
people for oppression and exploitation. Therefore,
because of their anatomy.

The oppression of women is not *caused* by men's hatred of women's anatomy.
That's a symptom. And it's a symptom partly created by envy, and partly by
masculine issues with dependence, and partly because masculinity is constructed in
such a way that woman becomes a threat.

Okay, so this question in green is basically the core move in the argument. And the
reason this argument is bunk is because this is an absolutely false opposition.

These objections are not new, and they reflect a broader debate
feminist circles. They raise the question: **Are women oppressed
are women, or are women made into women by their oppressio**
question is of significant political import. Not only does it affect
regarding trans inclusion, intersex inclusion, and non-binary in
feminism, but it affects the strategic directions feminist praxis n
biology and anatomy are the root of female oppression, and bio
anatomy cannot be changed (as many radical feminists argue) t
left with a fairly nihilistic view of the hope for women's liberatio
other hand, women's oppression results not from women's biolo
dialectical contradiction and resultant class struggle between m
women, then there is an obvious path forward: class war agains
class.

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because they are this kind, *or* the category of woman is produced through cultural mechanisms, of through their oppression.

So, *either* it's natural, *or* it's cultural.

The answer to almost every single question framed as an opposition of nature and culture is, it's BOTH doofus.

How these people think they owe a debt to post structuralism when they keep making this rudimentary error about the relation of nature and culture is quite beyond me.

Okay, then there is a long section of why woman is not any kind of natural kind which I'm going to spare you. You've heard it all before. Once more with feeling: Individual deviations from general characteristics of a class are not evidence of the non-existence of the class.

Not all women can have babies, but all the people who can have babies are women. Stop appropriating intersex people. Clown fish have got precisely nothing to do with anything. This could be applied to every concept in the world. You're a bunch of Platonists etc. etc. etc.

You BELIEVE you have demonstrated why is absolutely impossible that 99% of the time we can distinguish a male person from a female person within milliseconds.

The Political Baggage of the Biological Ex

I believe that I have demonstrated that the idea
idea that the notion of female as a discrete biolo
patriarchy and explains the source of patriarchy
far have been related to the extent to which sex
nonsensical category once we try to find a cohe
embodiment. In this next section, I hope to argu
coherent presocial female embodiment, appeal
explanation for patriarchy carries political bagg

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archaeological and ethnographic evidence that male and female people are still distinguishable in societies that were not or are not patriarchal.

Okay, now we get to: 'Further Notes on the Incessant Massacring of Beauvoir'

Despite her careful attention to these experiences, Beauvoir concludes that biology cannot explain women's oppression.

The enslavement of the female to the species and the limitations of her powers are extremely important facts; the body of woman is one of the elements in her situation in the world. But that body is not woman; there is no true living reality except as manifested in the individual through activities and in the bosom of a society. To give an answer to the question that is before us: why is woman oppressed? the task is to discover how the nature of woman has been affected by the course of history; we are concerned to find out what human nature is in the human female.

Look, this is really simple.

Saying that biology is not a *sufficient* explanation of women's oppression (which it isn't because culture) is *not* the same as saying that biology has *no* role in women's oppression.

WHY IS THIS SO HARD????

Women's biology is a *necessary* condition of (explaining) women's oppression.

It is not a *sufficient* condition of (explaining) women's oppression.

Between the necessary and the sufficient is the entire project of the liberation of women.

Beauvoir says it, explicitly. It is *not enough.* Not that it is irrelevant.

Look, here it is again, *not merely*...

So, this entire conclusion that BV can be used to dispute the existence of women as anything other than something produced by culture is based entirely on an utterly willful stupidity about the relation of nature and culture.

"Wood is not meaningful in and of itself. Tables do not emerge directly out of wood, rather, wood has to be turned into tables. This contests the idea that there is first wood and that tables emerge from people making tables out of wood, and that wood exists at all."

If it **is** biology then there is **no** culture (no there is)

If there is **no** culture then we cannot change anything (but we can)

And so if we want to change anything, we have to deny there is biology (no we don't)

So, having allegedly explained why sex does not exist and allegedly explained why if women's oppression is sex based then patriarchy is inevitable we get to the alternative 'explanation.'

So, this is going to be materialist explanation that has nothing to do with the material exploitation of women's bodies as a reproductive resource.

So, this should be good.

I'm ready to be blown away here...

So, before I explain why women are oppressed I'm just going to fess up and say that my explanation of why they are oppressed is that it's totally arbitrary and could have easily just been the other way around but that in no way diminishes the explanatory power of my analysis.

GOOD START.

Okay, so now we get a recitation of Wittig, who, as many of you will know, was a significant influence on Butler's thinking in Gender Trouble.

I don't know a ton about Wittig because everything I've ever heard has made me think, no thanks...

Because culture is obviously involved in how we experience embodiment, there is no pre-discursive body...

Rather, the body is entirely produced *by* culture.

That's a materialist explanation apparently.

As I laid out in my critique of Butler, this is a failure to understand the interpenetration of nature (body) and culture.

And notably, it's a failure I think is absolutely characteristic of 'masculinist' ontological thinking. 'Either/or' rather than 'both/and.'

janeclarejones.com/2018/07/18/par...

So here we have a quote from Wittig.

It's a pretty good example of the collapsing of nature and culture which is mistakenly attributed to Beauvoir.

If we 'naturalize' sexual difference, then we must also 'naturalize' the cultural system build on top of that difference.

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with people who have no sex/gender, or nature/culture, distinction.

So, now we're getting close to the basic thought that underpins trans activism.

If bodies/sexual difference exists is inevitably leads to oppression.

Luckily it doesn't exist because it is actually produced by culture/oppression.

Therefore....

Here beginnith the allegedly material explanation.

I will start by describing the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy in the wrong historical sequence.

(Man, those socialist feminists must be really dumb).

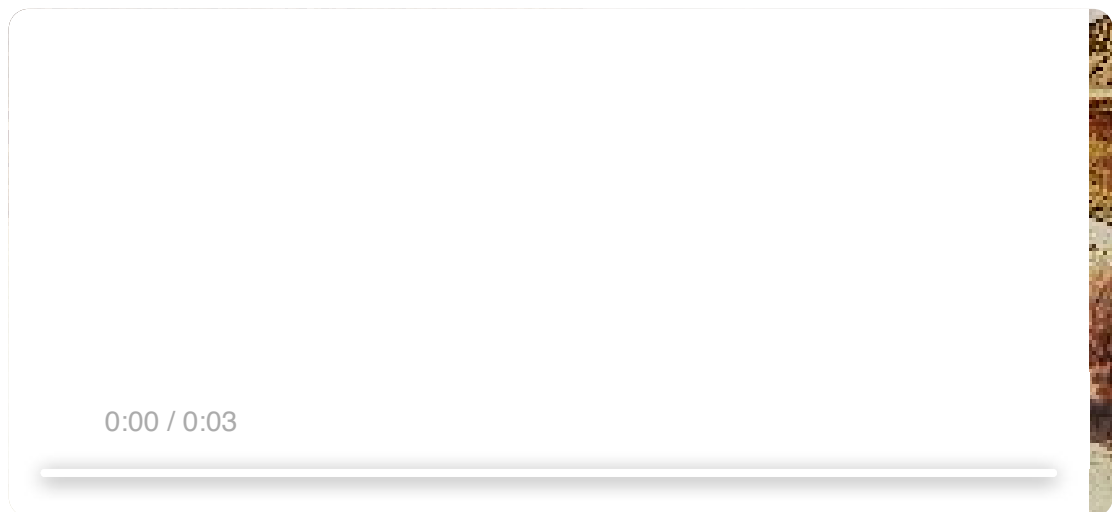
The ideological structure is produced to justify the material exploitation of the subordinate class (women) by the dominant class (men).

JUST. FOLLOW. THAT. THOUGHT.

Okay good.

So men materially exploit women.

WHAT IS IT THAT MEN MATERIALLY EXPLOIT IN WOMEN?



That's it.

The thought literally stops there.

Men materially exploit women for some unidentified material reason, and by materially exploiting women for an unidentifiable reason woman are arbitrarily produced by their unmotivated unidentified material exploitation.

I've said it before and I'll say it again. These jokers have NO THEORY OF PATRIARCHY.

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explanatory power, and relies on an utterly stupid conception of the relationship between nature and culture.

That'll be a no.

<Ends>

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