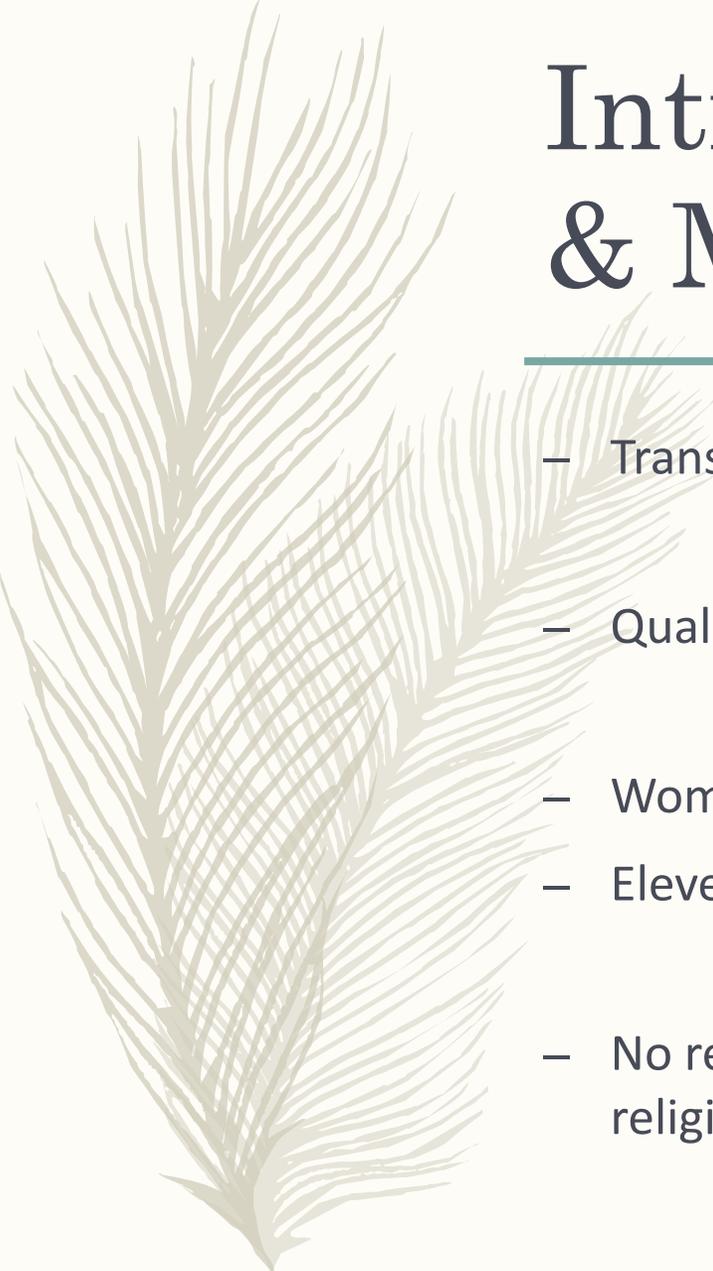




Criticisms &
Recommendations for
the Explicit Policies of
Public Gendered
Spaces for Women
Towards Trans and
Genderqueer Individuals
in the UK & the USA

Emma Davison



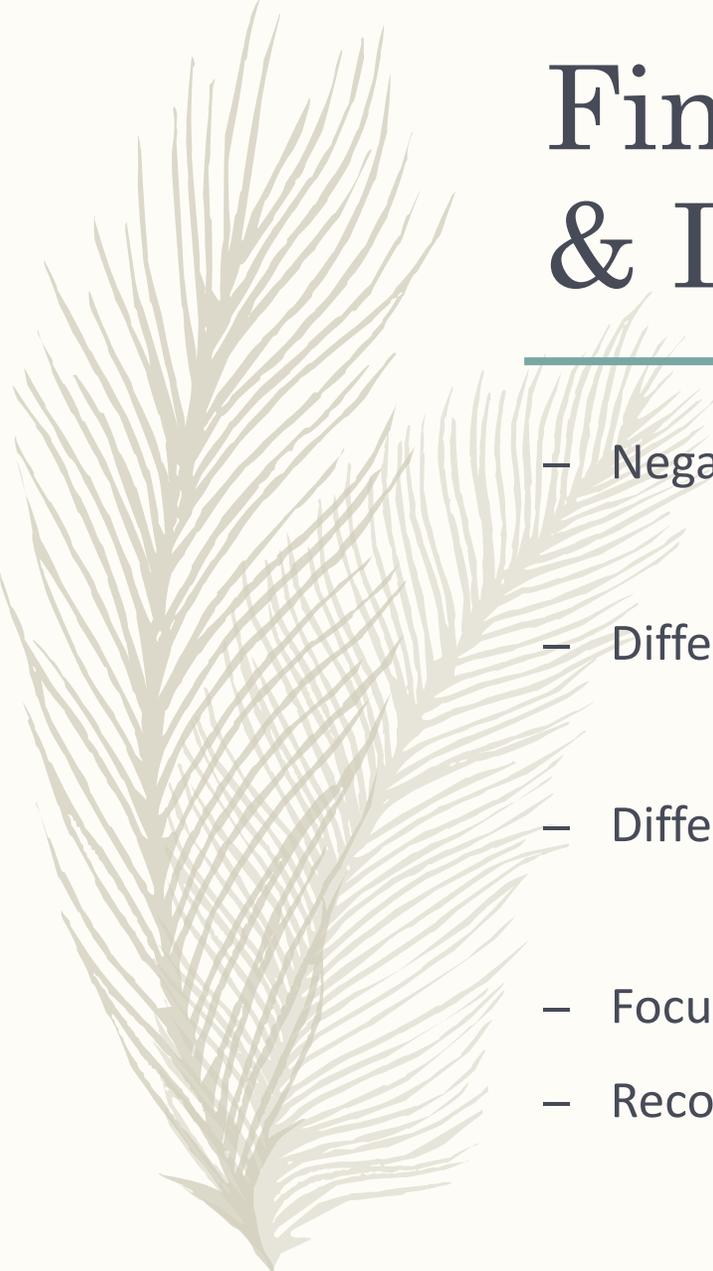
Introduction & Methodology

- Transphobia in women-only spaces in the UK & the USA
 - Historical background of trans & genderqueer presence in women-only spaces
- Qualitative, semi-structured interviewing through snowball sampling
 - Access to trans people's interpretations of women-only space around them
- Women-only spaces and how trans & genderqueer people engage
- Eleven interviewees
 - Seven from the UK, four from the USA
- No restrictions upon age, class, race, occupation, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, religion or capital



Theory: Sociological

- *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman, 1959
 - Our sense of self when compared to our sense of others
- Women-only spaces are in everyday life
 - How do they present themselves?
- **Hypothesis:**
 - Cis individuals have *stage privileges* in how they present themselves
- Trans scholarship used for basis of information:
 - Susan Stryker – CN Lester – Christine Burns – Julia Serano



Findings & Discussions

- Negative and positive experiences of women-only spaces
 - More negative experiences
- Differences between UK & USA responses
 - Community troubles for USA – Political troubles for UK
- Differences between trans & genderqueer responses
 - Binary and non-binary experiences can differ
- Focuses upon current and historical policies towards trans communities
- Recommendations were given for how spaces should and could improve



Recommendations for Policy & Practise

1. Explicitness

- Some WO spaces are not explicit in how they stand on trans involvement
- It cannot be assumed, and it cannot be unexplained
- WO spaces need to have policies that show zero tolerance to transphobia

“We cannot assume women-only spaces are trans inclusive if they are not explicit.
Many a time I have walked into an ‘inclusive’ space and been victimised”

Kit from London, UK



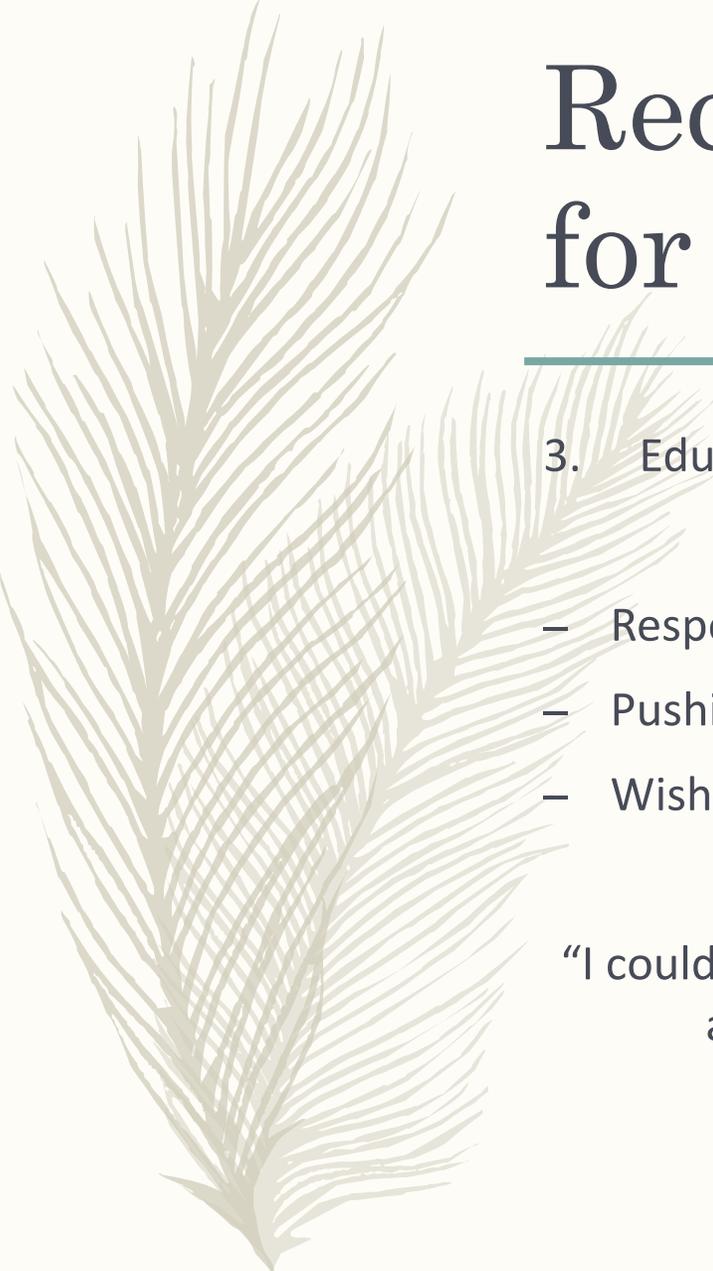
Recommendations for Policy & Practise

2. Representation

- Changing names of spaces to be trans and nonbinary inclusive
- Showing trans solidarity by using phrases such as “sisters not cisters”
- Encouraging trans leadership in women-only spaces that do not make them tokens

“Women-only spaces are valuable for cis women to feel safe, but the name excludes people who end up feeling less safe for who they are, being trans women”

Alex from Denver, USA



Recommendations for Policy & Practise

3. Educated spaces

- Respondents showed a sense of empathy towards lack of education in cis people
- Pushing for cis allyship to show support for their voices in WO spaces
- Wished to be elevated to teach cis people about trans inclusion

“I could walk in, but I was not talked to. I was invited in, but they did not make me feel at home. I was at a table alone so was not included how I wanted to be”

Fay from Philadelphia, USA



Concluding Statements

- Transmisogyny in WO only spaces is historical and continues
- Negative trans experiences are a common theme
- Trans people wish to be represented
- WO spaces need to be explicit in their policies upon the trans community
- Spreading awareness and education is how to develop empathy

Empathy exists on the side of the trans community. It is time this empathy and acceptability is returned by those who do not see themselves as trans.