Twitter Thread by Femme Loves■■■



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I'm reading Radcliffe Hall.

She has many feelings that modern transmen, female detransitioners, and butch lesbians would recognise.

But to call her a "transman" makes no sense, historically.

I'm reaching for something here, you might be able to help me clarify it.

The existence of the category "transman" depends on the possibility of medical transition.

You can't be a tramsman without it.

You might have all the same feelings, but not have access to drugs and surgeries, and it wouldn't make sense to say you ARE trans.

I want to go back to my Foucauldian academic roots and start talking about the way in which institutions create and forbid desires, identities, enable ways of being. But also, f*ck Foucault, child rape apologist, "bucolic pleasures," no thanks.

How do i say it in words i can believe? Am i back to "trans is not a thing you are, it's a thing you do and it's a very recent, modern solution?"

Ok,i think i have it. Is the desire to say about historical figures "they ARE trans" actually a move to solidify trans as a category?

To say that trans as a category has always existed and that it can exist outside of drugs and surgeries? To give it "depth and weight"?

If you say "x historical figure is trans" you are saying "trans is what you are, not what you do."

There's a difference between the statement "I'm a fisherman" and "I'm a man."

One describes material reality, one describes identity.

When you say that historical figures, you move trans from the fisherman category, to the man category.

People caught fish 500 years ago.

But that doesn't mean that they WERE fishermen, in the sense that fishermen are today - tackle and bait shops, getting out the house on a Saturday, never catching anything, the one that got away... There's a whole identity attached.

Likewise, Radcliffe might have had Miss Ogilvy say "I wish i were born a man," but the context of that wish matters as to the meaning of it.

I'm not sure where I'm going with this, I'm thinking out loud, i feel like there's something important that I'm not quite getting at.

I'm fairly sure somebody is already going to have said it, and better than i could of i thought for a hundred years, so if you can point me in the right direction, lovely tweeps, i would be very grateful.