

**Becoming persons: a sociological
investigation into institutional
formations of transgender and
intersex in the Christian Church.**

Submitted by

Duncan James Dormor

Student ID No: 1941892

The thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Kingston for a PhD by Prior Publication.

May 2021

Abstract

This research makes a distinctive contribution to our understanding of how religious and secular institutions respond to the growing awareness of trans and intersex persons at a time when the prevailing matrix of conditioning moral norms is being challenged and the rigid gender binary, which has characterised modern Western society, is breaking down. It takes the form of a sociological investigation into the framing of personhood, in particular, the hegemonic constructions, within which transgender and intersex persons, whose embodiment is defined, interpreted and contested by others, seek to live a fulfilled life within Western societies. Its concern with the flourishing of individuals is broad, encompassing the experience of good health and well-being, agency and freedom, but also the social conditions that allow or inhibit people from being treated justly, equitably and free from harm.

The research findings are published primarily in two substantial chapters: Dormor (2015) provides the first survey of how churches have responded to trans people. It identifies theological anthropology as the determining framework within Christian discourse and provides a threefold interpretative typology based on the congruence between theological anthropology and institutional practice: conservative, radical and moderate. Dormor (2018) provides a trans-historical analysis, drawing a contrast between how intersex persons have been treated within traditional Christianity and modern society. It argues, first, that conceptions of gender underpinned by scientific ideas created the conditions in the mid-twentieth century for clear harms, of social aetiology, to intersex persons - harms not routinely experienced within pre-modern Christianity. Second, that the creation with modernity of two distinct institutional domains, medical and human rights advocacy, an example of functional differentiation, generates conflicting and limited discourses within which, or against which, individual intersex persons seek to make sense of themselves, their identity and agency. The thesis also contains four shorter supplementary published texts.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their support, encouragement and guidance, which have in various ways led to the submission of this thesis, the work that underpins it, and the personal journey of understanding (inevitably incomplete), that accompanies the thinking and writing involved in such a body of research: My supervisors, Professor Sylvia Collins-Mayo and Dr Joanna Jamel for their diligence, wise advice and friendliness; Professor Jens Scherpe, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge for his encouragement and belief that I might have something useful to contribute to the conversations amongst academic lawyers concerned with the protection and promotion of the rights of transgender and intersex persons; the Revd Dr Eric Chong for the invitation to be the Martin lecturer at St John's College, University of Hong Kong 2010 – 2014; colleagues and friends from my many years at St John's College, Cambridge; a wide range of LGBTQIA+ individuals, activists and others, especially of the transgender community within Hong Kong from whom I learnt a great deal and who were so encouraging of my engagement; and, finally my family, especially my deeply supportive and ever patient wife, Catherine.

Declaration

No portion of the work in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

I confirm that this Thesis is entirely my own work.

Submitted Publications

Key texts:

Dormor, D. (2015). Transsexuality and the Christian Church: An Overview. In: J. Sherpe, ed. *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 27-76.

Dormor, D. (2018). Intersex in the Christian Tradition: Personhood and Embodiment. In: J. Sherpe, A. Dutta and T. Helms, eds. *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*, Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 103-164.

Supplementary Texts:

Dormor, D. (2002). The Second Demographic Transition in Europe - A Review. In: A. Thatcher, ed. *Celebrating Christian Marriage, 2002*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, pp. 21-38.

Dormor, D. (2007). Friends, Companions and Bedfellows: sexuality and social change. In: D. Dormor and J. Morris, eds. *An Acceptable Sacrifice*, London: SPCK, pp. 74-88.

Dormor, D. (2013). Rebellious bodies and disordered desires: The challenge of transsexuality to some influential Christian theologies of creation. In: S. Scriver and N. Reilly, eds. *Religion, Gender and the Public Sphere*, London: Routledge, pp. 120-130.

Dormor, D. (2014). Beyond the Secular-Religious divide, again, *Modern Believing*, 55(4), pp. 355-357.

CONTENTS

PART 1: INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	Opening remarks	1
1.2	Locating the research: Personal engagement	2
1.3	Outline of research field	4
1.3.1	<i>Sociology of Religion: Max Weber and David Martin</i>	4
1.3.2	<i>LGBTQIA+ studies: Foucault and Butler</i>	6
1.4	A summary of the publications submitted for consideration	7
1.4.1	<i>Interim summary of the two key texts</i>	8
1.4.2	<i>Supplementary texts</i>	9
2.	Methodology	12
2.1	Approaching the question	12
2.2	Refining the approach	13
2.3	Emerging interpretation	14
2.4	Determining a useful typology	16
2.5	Exploring options	17
2.6	Three case studies	19
2.7	Intersex: The methodological challenge	21
2.8	Historical Review: A speculative hypothesis	22
2.8.1	<i>Making trans-historical comparisons: the tools</i>	22
2.8.2	<i>Making trans-historical comparisons: the ethical framework</i>	23
2.8.3	<i>Exploring functional differentiation and dissensus</i>	24
3.	Critical analysis and theoretical reflection	26
3.1	Aims and context	26
3.1.1	<i>Western context: The hegemonic power of the gender binary</i>	27
3.1.2	<i>Human rights and legal gender</i>	28
3.1.3	<i>Categories and terminology</i>	29
3.2	Research findings	30
3.2.1	<i>Persons and institutions</i>	30
3.2.2	<i>Typologies</i>	31
3.2.3	<i>Anthropology and ethics in trans-historical comparison</i>	33
3.2.4	<i>Functional differentiation and partial anthropologies</i>	35
3.3	Contemporary reflections: Affirmation and conflict	35
3.3.1	<i>The Church of England: Affirmation of the journey</i>	36
3.3.2	<i>Identity politics and diagnostic dilemmas</i>	37
4.	Conclusion	39
5.	Submitted texts	43
6.	General bibliography	44

PART 2: KEY PUBLICATIONS

1. **Transgenderism and the Christian Church: An Overview**
A chapter (22,045 words) from *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, J. Sherpe, ed., Intersentia, 2015, pp. 27-76.
2. **Intersex in the Christian Tradition: Personhood and Embodiment**
A chapter (27,158 words) from *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*, J. Sherpe, A. Dutta and T. Helms, eds., Intersentia, 2018, pp. 103-164.

PART 3: SUPPLEMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

1. **Rebellious bodies and disordered desires: The challenge of transsexuality to some influential Christian theologies of creation**
A chapter (4,175 words) from *Religion, Gender and the Public Sphere*, S. Scriver and N. Reilly, eds., Routledge, 2013, pp. 120-130
2. **The Second Demographic Transition in Europe - A Review**
A chapter (5,760 words) in *Celebrating Christian Marriage*, 2002, A. Thatcher, ed., T & T Clark/Continuum, pp. 21-38.
3. **Beyond the Secular-Religious divide, again**
An article (1,132 words) from *Modern Believing*, 2014 55.4: 355-357.
4. **Friends, Companions and Bedfellows: sexuality and social change**
A chapter (5,180) from *An Acceptable Sacrifice*, D. Dormor and J. Morris, eds., SPCK, London, 2007, pp. 74-88.

Part 1: Introductory Essay

1. Introduction

1.1 Opening remarks

The primary focus of this research is to explore how the attitudes and practices of institutions and communities create or limit the possibilities for people to flourish. It takes the form of a sociological investigation which explores the framing of personhood, in particular, the hegemonic constructions, both religious and secular, within which transgender and intersex persons, whose embodiment is defined, interpreted and contested by others, seek to live a fulfilled life within Western societies. Its concern with the flourishing of individuals is broad, encompassing the experience of good health and well-being, agency and freedom, but also the social conditions that allow or inhibit people from being 'treated justly, equitably and not be subjected to harm by others' (Dormor 2018, p. 106).

Terminology has shifted profoundly, especially in the last decade. Throughout this document, I will employ the terms trans and intersex, except where I am referencing language directly employed in papers given or specific publications.

For different reasons, the embodiment of trans and intersex persons present challenges to inherited understandings of gender and therefore personhood in countries shaped by Western Christendom. In the case of trans persons, this is understood to be a fresh, 'emergent' challenge, as is evident by the widespread recent and anticipated changes in the legal provision for such persons. For example, across the three years of 2015, 2016 and 2017, twelve countries including Poland, Vietnam, Bolivia, France and India instituted significant legislative change with gender identity or gender recognition laws. In the case of intersex, historic knowledge and broad acceptance of intersex persons in the pre-modern period, including as a 'third gender', gave way in the modern period to

ignorance, erasure and grievous embodied harms not socially legitimated in earlier periods (Herdt 1996).

I believe this research makes a distinctive contribution to our understanding of how religious and secular institutions shape the experience of trans and intersex persons. Dormor (2015) provides the first survey of how churches have responded to trans people, identifying theological anthropology as the determining framework. Dormor (2018) provides a trans-historical analysis, advancing the bold argument that conceptions of gender underpinned by scientific ideas created the conditions in the mid-twentieth century for clear harms to intersex persons not routinely experienced within pre-modern Christianity. A second argument draws attention to a negative consequence of the sociological process identified as functional differentiation, namely the creation of competing and incompatible frames of reference within which, or against which, individuals are seeking to make sense of themselves, their identity and agency.

In this introductory statement, I intend to undertake three things: (i) to sketch out the research context; (ii) to discuss the research methodology; and, (iii) to engage in critical analysis and theoretical reflection in relation to the body of research, primarily two lengthy chapters (Dormor 2015, 2018), but also four supplementary publications (Dormor 2002, 2007, 2013, 2014).

1.2 Locating the research: personal engagement

My engagement with this research began in December 2010 when I accepted an invitation to give a paper at a conference in the University of Hong Kong (UHK) on the theological, legal and medical aspects of intersex and trans persons with contributions from activists, academics and members of the Equal Opportunities Commission of Hong Kong (EOCHK). As someone with a longstanding interest in issues relating to gender and sexuality and a deep conviction in the importance of interdisciplinarity, I believed that I was well-positioned to make a

useful contribution. In addition, having been involved in advancing progressive views on issues of sexuality within the Church of England (Dormor 2004, 2007) I was delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the request for a 'liberal' Christian view. In my paper, primarily an exercise in moral theology, I provided an exemplar of conservative, essentialist argumentation, which condemned transsexuality - the experience of living or desiring to live in the role of a gender not the one designated at birth and seeking gender reassignment [affirmation] surgery or treatment - as 'against nature', and argued that it was anchored in unexamined and inherited cultural assumptions, involved a highly selective reading of the New Testament, and ultimately constituted a 'failure in [Christian] charity' (Dormor, 2010).

In delivering this paper, I was highly conscious that as a clergyman in the Church of England and a Fellow of Cambridge College I was engaged in an act of legitimation, providing a positive Christian affirmation of trans and intersex people.

This was followed by the invitation to participate in an international research project, initially by giving a keynote paper at *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, (Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, UHK, 6-7 September 2013). Approached to provide a background theological account to assist academic lawyers to understand the cultural axioms and arguments embedded within legislatures influenced by Western Christendom, I delivered a paper more sociological in character mapping and interpreting the diversity of Christian theological argumentation about transgenderism.

The subsequent chapter was published in *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, (Scherpe, 2015). The majority of this pioneering volume in international law was concerned with profiles of the legal situation in nineteen predominantly 'Western' countries, supplemented by four East Asian contributions.

The origins of the second chapter lie with a paper, given at a workshop on 'The Legal Status of Intersex Persons', at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 21-22 July 2016. That led to a substantial chapter for a companion volume, *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*, (Scherpe, Dutta and Helms, 2018). More diverse in subject matter than its predecessor, it contained a greater number of contributions on medicine, psychology and legal history, accompanied by nine individual country profiles.

These two substantial chapters (Dormor, 2015, 2018) constitute the heart of my research output and therefore, my submission.

1.3 Outline of research field

This research lies at the intersection of two academic areas, first, that of the sociology of religion and second, the inter-disciplinary area of LGBTQIA+ studies, that is the study of issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and variations in sex development focussing primarily on lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and questioning, intersex and asexual persons and cultures. Within these fields, the research is indebted to two distinct intellectual approaches, both broadly hermeneutical-historicist stressing, in their different ways, the inevitable power of institutions to shape the lives, life experience and consciousness of individuals.

1.3.1 Sociology of Religion: Max Weber and David Martin

The research is firmly located within the discipline of sociology of religion, within which it is especially indebted to the sociological tradition of thinking established by Max Weber (1864 - 1920). This approach, often described as interpretative or hermeneutical, emphasises the importance of long-established historical patterns; takes the worldviews, agency and psychology of individuals and social groups seriously against more positivistic or determinative sociological readings; and has a clear and consistent understanding that power relations and the distribution of resources are key factors in social change.

The view that all religious effects are mediated by institutional arrangements - that 'the Catholic or Lutheran or Anglican view on X or Y' is shaped and mediated by questions of power and legitimation, by the church's institutional structures, and its orientation towards religious pluralism, democratic institutions or the rights of the individual – is, for example, foundational to Dormor (2015). The comparative analysis of different manifestations of Christianity that dominates this chapter draws on the extensive sociological literature on the organizational characteristics of religion.

Within my research, I am especially indebted to the thinking of David Martin (1929 - 2019), most especially his rigorous engagement with the Secularization Thesis and the relationship between the political and religious spheres, as well as his reflections on the relationship between the disciplines of sociology and theology (Martin, 1969, 1978, 1997, 2005, 2011, 2014, 2016). His stress on the awkward realities of historical persistence and cultural plurality, and his mapping of the complex relationships between religion, nationality and culture within Christianity (Martin, 1978, 2005) are important to Dormor (2015). Similarly, his unmasking of how sociology has embedded certain philosophical and moral positions including 'secular-liberal triumphalism' and his portrayal of teleological accounts of modern history as secularised versions of Christian eschatology, (Martin 2016, pp. 77-80) influences my historic analysis of intersex persons (Dormor, 2018).

In line with both Weber and Martin, I believe that theological ideas have had a profound influence on Western society and that secularity is a product of historic Christianity. Theological ideas are therefore both the subject of sociological scrutiny, (especially in Dormor 2015) and the source of challenge and critique of dominant Western cultural ideas, in particular of human nature (Dormor 2018). Ultimately my intellectual presuppositions are shaped broadly by a theological anthropology,

which is deeply relational and grounded in the understanding that all human persons are made in the image of God.

1.3.2 LGBTQIA+ studies: Foucault and Butler

LGBTQIA+ studies are an extremely heterogeneous field of academic enquiry, more easily defined by subject matter than theoretical approach. Inevitably, background reading for both key chapters was extensive, ranging across the humanities including the social anthropology literature on categorization, but also, aspects of biomedical science. However, within the various discussions of gender, embodiment and personhood across Dormor (2015) and (2018), the highly influential texts on sexuality and gender respectively of Michel Foucault (Foucault, 1978, 1985) and Judith Butler, (Butler, 1990, 2004) are central. Whilst not easily circumscribed, both these thinkers are concerned with epistemological systems and representational practices and share the post-structuralist premise that the significance of knowledge as a discursive field lies with the fact that it is embedded within systems of power.

Foucault's work is axiomatic to the work of historians in two different areas which are highly significant to my discussion: First, those who have focused on the development of ideas about the body at the interface of science, medicine and culture (e.g. Laqueur, 1990; Dreger, 1998; Morland, 2015); and, second, on a wide range of historians writing about aspects of sexuality and gender during the patristic or medieval periods of Christianity. This influence has been mediated through Peter Brown (1988), who has been hugely influential in alerting historians to the 'strangeness' (even queerness) of early Christian attitudes to the body and sexuality. Foucault's influence, direct or mediated, can thus be detected in a wide range of historians writing about aspects of gender variance (Dormor, 2007; Dormor, 2018, pp. 121-132). In addition, Foucault as 'the father of queer theology' (Stuart, 2015, p. 29) has had a profound influence on a generation of theologians (Loughlin, 2008; Thatcher, 2015).

Finally this corpus of writing has an explicitly and unavoidable ethical orientation: I am concerned with the well-being and flourishing of persons: cross-culturally and trans-historically. Whilst moral evaluations pervade sociological narratives, they tend to be submerged or closeted. By contrast, Christian theologians seek to be explicit, anchoring ideas of the good in an understanding that the human condition has a transcendent grounding, made in the image of God, who is Love. In seeking to reflect on what that means for trans and intersex persons within both secular and sacred institutions, I have drawn particularly on the writings of two philosophers – Paul Ricoeur and Judith Butler – both of whom attend carefully to the ways in which personhood is socially constituted.

Alongside this research, I maintained an active engagement with these issues in Hong Kong between 2010-2015, speaking at a public consultation, 'Working Together for an Inclusive Society: LGBTI Rights in Comparative Perspective' on 28-29 August 2014 hosted by EOCHK, giving a seminar on intersex issues at the EOCHK in October 2014 and contributing to the EOCHK's drive to enact anti-discrimination legislation based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the final report of which drew on my contributions (IWGGR 2017, p. 59).

1.4 A summary of the publications submitted for consideration

The research is published in the form of two lengthy and complimentary essays of hermeneutical sociology written for volumes with a particular concern for and *commitment to* the legal rights and the flourishing of individuals within (largely) democratic societies shaped by the legacies of Western Christendom (Scherpe, 2015; Scherpe, Dutta and Helms, 2018). These chapters are supplemented by four shorter, earlier pieces of writing conveying some of the development of my views and arguments. Four of the six pieces have their origins in international conference papers.

1.4.1 Interim summary of the two key texts

1. 'Transgenderism and the Christian Church: An Overview' in *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, J. Sherpe, ed., Intersentia, 2015, pp. 27-76. (22,045 words)

This extended book chapter commissioned for the international project on the legal rights of transgender and transsexual people focuses on Christian churches. It seeks to map the diversity of Christian views on transgenderism and considers the affinity between the articulation of theological anthropology and the organizational structure of particular churches, as well as the relationship between churches and the most pertinent secular polities, (i.e. nation-states, the European Union). The chapter explores the character and sources of the different accounts of theological anthropology and provides a sociological interpretation of the accompanying institutional responses using a broad three-fold typology of conservative, radical and moderate, illustrated by three detailed case studies, of the Roman Catholic Church, the Metropolitan Community Church and the Church of England.

2. 'Intersex in the Christian Tradition: Personhood and Embodiment' in *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*, J. Sherpe, A. Dutta and T. Helms, eds., Intersentia, 2018, pp. 103-164. (27,158 words)

The extended book chapter was commissioned as a contribution to a second complementary volume on the legal rights of intersex people and provides a historical account of the ways in which individuals with variations of sexual development (intersex) have been understood and treated within Christian history. In so doing it considers a number of socially recognised categories, both historic (hermaphrodite, eunuch), and those of the modern period when scientific modes of understanding reclassified individuals, first as intersexuals and subsequently as persons with 'disorders of sexual development'. The chapter considers the harms experienced by intersex persons in the modern period (surgery, shame and secrecy) in the context of a rigid gender binary underpinned by a 'scientific' understanding. It subsequently looks at the ways in which distinct, contemporary, secular

spheres (medical and human rights advocacy) generate conflicting and limited discourses around personhood, presenting challenges to individuals seeking a coherent self-narrative. The restricted understandings of personhood implicit within these conflicting discourses is contrasted with traditional Christian theological anthropology anchored in the more holistic idea of *Imago Dei*.

1.4.2 Supplementary texts

In addition to these two central pieces of research I have submitted a further four pieces, the first two of these relate to the chapter on the legal status of transgender and transsexual people, the latter two to that on intersex.

1. 'Rebellious bodies and disordered desires: The challenge of transsexuality to some influential Christian theologies of creation' in *Religion, Gender and the Public Sphere*, S. Scriver and N. Reilly, eds., Routledge, 2013, pp. 120-130. (4,175 words)

This book chapter undertakes a broad review of the literature at the intersection of Christian theology and transsexuality. It argues that this literature originates with three different groups: Christian people reflecting on their own experience; liberal Protestant theologians, with a high view of science and human experience; and, finally conservative Christian writers - the main focus of this chapter. Here it is argued that the characteristic 'Order of Creation' theological anthropology is shaped by the 'scientific' categorization of gender originating with the Enlightenment. Following Laqueur (1990), I identify the role played by an emergent *scientia sexualis* in the nineteenth century as central to the development of the modern categorizations of gender as oppositional and binary. In addition, that a convergence in argumentation between Catholic and Protestant versions is partly a response to the emancipatory movements of the 1960s. This chapter represents significant preparatory work for Dormor (2015), not least in identifying theological anthropology as the key theological category for analysing Christian attitudes to trans persons.

2. 'The Second Demographic Transition in Europe - A Review' in *Celebrating Christian Marriage*, 2002, A. Thatcher, ed., T & T Clark/Continuum, pp. 21-38 . (5,760 words)

This chapter provides an empirically based regional typology of the radical and rapid demographic changes that have occurred between 1960 and 2000 in marital and reproductive behaviour across Europe. Drawing on the model of the Second Demographic Transition (Van de Kaa 1987) it reviews the pattern of changes in marital, sexual and procreative behaviour, setting this in a sociological narrative. It argues that despite the existence of a logical sequence of change, there remain significant and persistent regional variations within Europe. Three basic regional patterns reflecting 'older historical and confessional cleavages' were identified as influential. This study and approach underpins the development of the typology at the heart of Dormor (2015)

Since this publication, further changes across Europe including the legalisation of same-sex marriage, and changing attitudes towards trans people can be located within this broad sequence of change. A sequence that, in loosening the connections between sexuality, marriage and procreation, have made the challenging of the gender binary, first 'thinkable', and subsequently, inevitable, creating possibilities for the recognition and affirmation of both trans and intersex persons. Equally, Dormor (2002) emphasises the role of persistent regional differences, Dormor (2015) extends this through an exposition of the enduring influence of particular religious ideas and institutions.

3. 'Beyond the Secular-Religious divide, again', *Modern Believing*, 2014 55.4: 355-357. (1,132 words)

This short piece was commissioned as one of a series of articles on the future of liberal theology. It provides a reflection on the categories of religion and secularity, highlights the recent provenance of 'religion' as a concept (Asad 2003, Nongbri 2013), and argues that conceptually the two are mutually implicated - 'a co-constituted historical formulation'

(Bender and Taves, 2012, p 3). I argue, therefore, that theologians should attend more closely to the critical engagement and empirical orientation of the social sciences, as well as the 'strangeness of history on its own terms'. That religious and secular ideas and institutional forms influence one another is foundational to the thinking behind Dormor (2015) and (2018), explicitly so in the latter (pp. 120-121).

4. 'Friends, Companions and Bedfellows: sexuality and social change', chapter in *An Acceptable Sacrifice*, D. Dormor and J. Morris, eds., SPCK, London, 2007, pp. 74-88 (5,180 words)

This collection, co-edited by the author, sought to influence the same-sex relationship debate within the Church of England by resourcing the discussion with essays focussed on the traditional sources of authority within Anglicanism - scripture, tradition and reason. This chapter historicizes intimate relationships arguing that the meaning and significance of sexual acts must be seen 'in the wider context of ideas about personal identity, relationships and broader moral and social obligations' (p 75).

This chapter explores the changing character of friendship, the nature and threats to social order, and the impact of family limitation since the early modern period. It is indebted to the work of historian Alan Bray, who revolutionised the history of homosexuality (Bray 2002) by filling in some of the silences, absences and exclusions of history to which Foucault drew attention. Bray's approach to the historical contextualisation of sexuality influences my approach to understanding personhood trans-historically (Dormor, 2018).

In this section, I have set the context for the research and identified the key publications. In the next I turn to consider the important methodological questions that arose during the research and how I sought to tackle them and thus how the research was undertaken.

2. Methodology

2.1 Approaching the question

Within the context of volumes focussed on the legal rights of individuals, my overarching concern was with a more holistic understanding of personhood, in relation to the social and institutional norms within which individuals sought to establish a sense of self and to flourish. In Dormor (2015) the initial research questions were essentially descriptive in character: What are the policies of Christian churches towards persons who identify as trans? What are the challenges such individuals face? and, how is that articulated theologically? Answering these question involved surveying the official positions of the churches, effectively the Catholic Church and the main Protestant denominations within the Euro-American world; describing and analysing their policies and providing an exposition of them in relation to their respective theology; and, then placing them within a framework for comparative analysis. The task envisaged a straightforward piece of documentary research developed through careful hermeneusis. The primary value of this research lying in the fact that no such systematic survey or comparative analysis existed at the time, or to my knowledge, since.

Starting with the largest denominations in the UK and the USA, I searched the official websites of the main Protestant churches and the Catholic Church. In addition, drawing on pre-existing networks, I contacted the Mission and Public Affairs department within the Church of England and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of English and Wales (CBCEW). Extensive searches revealed that whilst a number of LGBT religious groups and associations had produced manifestos for change, the number of official statements has been limited, predominantly to a number of Protestant denominations in the USA (United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America). In 2014, the overwhelming majority of churches simply did not have an 'official position' on trans people. Most striking of all was

the absence of such a document within the Catholic Church, aside from a short *sub secretum* document, originally published in Italian, circulated amongst bishops (Navarete, 1997).

2.2 Refining the approach

Given the relative lack of church policies concerning trans persons prior to 2014, I decided to refine my research question and construct an account of the characteristic attitudes, practices and general orientation of churches towards trans people, supplemented, where possible, by official church statements. Rooted in the Weberian tradition, this worldview (*Weltanschauung*) approach clearly required synthesising a much broader range of material: newspaper coverage, historical accounts, the writings and institutional networks of key theologians, LGBT groups within denominations and para-church organizations, (e.g. in the UK, the Evangelical Alliance), as well as church reports and synodical proceedings in related subjects initially, and primarily, within the Anglo-American context.

In terms of data collection, the approach remained primarily a documentary one, simply more wide-ranging and inductive in its methodology. This began with a wider internet search using a range of terms (*transsexual, transsexual, transexuality, transgender, transvestite, trans*) in combination with words focussed on Christian engagement (*church, denomination, Christian, faith, religion, religious*). In addition, I undertook searches within the University of Cambridge library for book and journal articles back to the year 2000. From these sources, I sought to identify key writers on the subject, predominantly theologians or influential individuals or groups seeking to shape the thinking or policies of their respective churches.

This revised approach required a more explicitly sociological frame of reference seeking not just to describe but also to interpret or explain the orientation of a particular church towards people identifying as

trans. This involved a deeper engagement with theory and a refinement of the research agenda to explore the following questions:

What are the factors shaping the evolving and emergent responses of the churches to trans people?

Are there distinct patterns across the spectrum of Christian churches and how are these best described and accounted for?

What is (are) the key theological category (ies)?

2.3 Emerging interpretation

This broad search of the literature and the iterative process of search and review, led me to identify some provisional hypotheses and three key areas which became the focus of my subsequent enquiries:

First, that the key theological category was theological anthropology, that is the Christian understanding of the human person and the human condition and its relation to God, most particularly the theological and ethical significance of sexed difference (Dormor 2013). At the outset, other theological categories were considered, some of which (e.g. medical ethics) seemed equally plausible as intellectual frameworks. Whilst there was some evidence suggestive of a theological framing more oriented to the medical sphere and to ethics, theological anthropology was clearly the dominant prism for understanding. The initial literature search back to 2000 led to the identification of one particular set of highly influential theological arguments, articulated by the eminent Evangelical scholar, Oliver O'Donovan, and reproduced in several publications (O'Donovan, 1982, 1983, 1984, 2007). O'Donovan set the transgender debate firmly in the theological sphere by arguing that the development was Gnostic in character. The power of this lies with the fact that one of the defining characteristics of the second century Christian heresy was a dualism that elevated the spiritual and relegated the importance of the material world, including the body, a

position strongly opposed by Catholic Christianity with its emphasis on the Incarnation and the sacraments. The implication being that the experience of trans persons is explained by false beliefs about the self and the sexed nature of humanity. This trope proved especially influential and was cited and reproduced extensively (Evangelical Alliance Policy Commission, 2010; The Archbishops' Council, 2003; Brock, 2010, pp. 331-335).

More broadly, pre-existing attitudes to gender and sexuality, exemplified by positions adopted by churches to the ordination of women (gender) and the acceptability, or otherwise, of same sex relationships (sexuality), were strongly predictive of the orientation of the church to persons identifying as trans (Dormor, 2015, pp. 34).

Second, the literature review revealed a consistent focus on two particular concerns, the possibility of marriage for trans persons and of ordination - authorized Christian ministry with pastoral oversight and the authority to teach. These two issues emerged as clear 'litmus tests' in discerning a church's approach. This is unsurprising as both marriage and ordination confer sacred legitimacy, within the self-understanding of the churches themselves, (the two being Christian sacraments within the Western Christian tradition), but also in the Durkheimian sense. Attitudes to simple congregational membership were less indicative, remarkable or useful in discriminating, with examples of acceptance or tolerance reflecting the dynamics of local congregations or the views of individual pastors or priests.

Third, it became very clear that to understand the emergent attitudes of churches towards trans people, it was important to engage with sociological wisdom and insight firmly anchored in the trajectory of thinking about the nature of religious institutions, and by Weber's wider analysis of the nature of domination and authority. Here, I identified two related factors: i) How power and authority is exercised within the respective organizations, i.e. how centralised or dispersed

the power and decision-making, and how much control rests with one social group (e.g. an all-male clerical group), and, ii) The orientation of the church towards the world, whether it embraced or rejected contemporary developments. One key dimension here was a church's attitude to the dominant political and legal structures, most obviously to the nation-state, but also to bodies like the United Nations and the European Union. Here, it was anticipated, naturally, that the approach of 'state churches' would be more pragmatic and accommodating and reflect more closely the views of their respective general populations.

More detailed consideration of this third point lead me to the view that the response of the various churches to the radical cultural changes of the 1960s was highly significant, even determinative, especially those emancipatory developments that led to the advancement of legal rights for women and lesbian and gay individuals. This cultural 'disruption' was a significant factor in two ways – first by stimulating the mobilization of certain movements, both secular and religious and progressive and reactionary, including the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) (see below); and second by prompting something of a realignment within Christianity from a division along denominational lines to one based on a conservative-liberal axis. In my assessment, the theological anthropologies advanced in response to trans people are profoundly shaped by these reactions to the threat or promise of these emancipatory changes of the 1960s. (Dormor, 2002, p. 23; McLeod 2007)

2.4 Determining a useful typology

Having focused initially on the Catholic Church and Protestant denominations within the Anglo-American sphere, I widened my review to consider other European Protestant denominations and Eastern Orthodoxy. In the case of the latter, I was unable to locate a significant literature beyond that emerging from small diasporan pro-LGBTQIA+ groups within the USA. One significant constraint here was linguistic and my inability to read texts in Greek, Russian, Serbian and

other relevant languages. However, given the geographical focus of the wider project, a major consideration of these churches was not required. From my initial explorations, I was satisfied that characterising these autocephalous churches as largely traditional and conservative in their approach was sufficient. I also looked at developments within the Protestant churches of Europe, most notably the Lutheran churches of Scandinavia and Germany. Whilst, linguistic limitations precluded an extensive investigation, a short summary account was included in Dormor (2015) primarily in relation to the discussion around the importance of the Church-State relationship as a key factor in evolving attitudes towards trans people.

Reflecting on my inductive and iterative investigations, I decided that a typological approach would be the most helpful in conveying my interpretation and analysis of the situation. In determining the criteria for the typology, I considered a number of factors. One obvious approach was to group churches by denomination, another to consider the conservative – liberal axis.

2.5 Exploring options

I explored various options including a hybrid approach, which, in effect created a six-fold typology with three ‘conservative’, two ‘moderate’ and one ‘radical’ type:

A. Conservative: Here, I drew a distinction between:

i) The Traditional (Eastern Orthodoxy and, in some countries, Catholicism) where churches were aligned with wider society in their general intolerance of trans persons, and their rejection of the possibility that they might marry or exercise religious leadership, e.g. Russia and Serbia.

ii) Two ‘Neo-conservative’ options, that is those churches, where the broader culture (USA, Western Europe) was moving towards

widespread acceptance of LGBTIQIA+. With this category a further distinction can be drawn between:

- a) The Catholic Church, and
- b) Conservative Protestant denominations in the USA.

B. Moderate: I distinguished two 'moderate' types:

i) European Protestant state churches (the Lutheran churches of Scandinavia and the Church of England), and,

ii) The mainstream Protestant denominations of the USA.

C. Radical:

The radical type sought to identify small LGBTIQIA+ advocacy groups and small churches with a tradition of radical commitment to social justice issues and a strong affirmation of LGBTIQIA+ identities.

This six-fold typology has two advantages: First, it retains a greater sense of the importance of major historic divisions within Christianity, whilst acknowledging that the nature of the relationship between a church and the State is critical to its emergent response to trans people, Here, there is clearly a very important distinction to be drawn between the USA and the 'old world' of Europe. Second, it gives greater weight to the reality that the largest number of Christians belong to 'conservative' churches. In comparison, those holding the 'radical' position are in a very small minority. Although it should be noted that large numbers of lay people within conservative churches dissent from the 'official' line, especially on issues relating to gender and sexuality.

However, the evidence did not support this approach in two regards. First, a number of larger Protestant denominations in the USA were themselves divided on issues of gender and sexuality, creating 'liberal' and 'conservative' churches interpreting a common theological heritage to different ends. Second, there was significant convergence between churches with different, indeed antagonistic histories, for example the

Catholic Church and the Southern Baptist Convention. I therefore took the decision to work with a threefold typology primarily on empirically grounds, namely that the broad theological and institutional responses of the three conservative and two moderate types respectively were very similar. Introducing a more complex typology or sub-types did not notably increase explanatory power and thus serve the readership well. So in light of the significance of the conservative/liberal split in attitudes across the Christian churches, I identified a broad threefold typology of conservative, radical and moderate as the most effective framework within which to identify and discuss the main factors shaping attitudes to trans people.

Within this framework, I sought to explicate the importance of a) the authority structures from the most centralised and authoritarian to the most congregational and democratic, b) the relationship between the church and its nation state, and c) to elaborate accounts of the respective theological anthropologies set in their wider political and cultural contexts. A wide variety of documents were then used to construct the respective worldviews.

2.6 Three case studies

Within this broad three-fold typology, I sought to explore the character and sources of the different accounts of theological anthropology that produced variant evaluations of sexed difference and gender identity, and their accompanying institutional responses. To deepen the interpretative power, I decided to illustrate the typology by recourse to three case studies based on more detailed documentary research. The choice of case studies was challenging: To serve the intended readership effectively, I wished to make some reference to both the context in the USA and in Europe. In addition, given the singular importance of the Catholic Church as the largest Christian body, it was important for that to serve as the case study for the 'conservative' type, although that presented a number of challenges. Finally, my investigations within the UK context had led me to consider a very

particular approach, namely to look at the orientation of different churches to trans people through the prism of their response to the proposed Gender Recognition Act (GRA) (2004). Despite its elegance, the main drawback of this last approach lay in its restriction to the UK context.

To illustrate the conservative type, I therefore looked at the Catholic Church: The clearest evidence for its theological position was established through the brief response of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales to the proposed GRA (2004) (CBCEW, 2004). Whilst moderate in tone, its message was clear and entirely consistent with the broader teaching of the magisterium, the centralised teaching authority of the Catholic Church. I then sought to map out the way in which the legitimacy of transgender personhood was denied through a reading of the theological anthropology of papal writings, and a consideration of the institutional concerns of the Vatican as well as the sources that informed CBCEW's response (Ashley and O'Rourke, 1997).

For the 'radical case', the pioneering character of the Metropolitan Community Church made it an obvious choice. Here, I provided a shorter historical sketch of its origins, the key developments in its history and its influence on other Christian groups and churches. (e.g. Wilcox, 2001).

My approach to the third case study was more specific. Focussing on the Church of England's response, to the introduction of the GRA (2004), I analysed the debate of the Bill in the House of Lords (Dormor, 2015, pp. 67-73; Dormor 2017). This revealed the pragmatic view taken by Bishops within the Established Church as they resisted calls from Evangelical and conservative Christians to adopt a more hard line. The subsequent analysis presents a more insightful account of the orientation of that church towards the issues raised by transgender seen through the prism of responding to national legislation.

Between edits of Dormor (2015), the Southern Baptist Convention produced an extensive statement on transgender identity. Had a significant re-write been possible I would have developed this as a second case study of the 'conservative' type. Whilst the SBC statement in 2014 was not, as in the UK, a response to national legislation, it was, in part, prompted by a number of rapid cultural changes in the US, and in particular, pro-trans initiatives within public educational institutions. This began to change in 2014 when one of the most significant statements was produced by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC, 2014; Dormor, 2015, pp. 37-39).

2.7 Intersex: The methodological challenge

The purpose of Dormor (2015) was to provide an understanding of the characteristic attitudes and practices of contemporary churches towards trans people. On completion, my research trajectory shifted in response to an invitation to contribute to a companion volume on intersex persons (Dormor, 2018). It was already clear from my earlier research that there would be a lack of relevant church policies, with one major exception (SBC, 2014). However, there were deeper concerns that a wider lack of data would jeopardise both the viability of the research methodology and the theoretical focus adopted in Dormor (2015). From a literature review at the intersection between intersex and Christianity, initially back to 2000, but then extended to 1980, it became very apparent that not only was there an absence of contemporary policies or official positions on intersex across the churches, but with the notable exception of Susannah Cornwall (e.g. Cornwall 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2014), there was very little contemporary writing. Indeed, prior to these, the most widely cited publication was a chapter in a book I had edited (Hare, 2007). Further searches using the internet and search terms (*intersex*, *intersexual*, *disorders of sexual development (DSD)*, *variations in sex development (VSD)*, *hermaphrodite*, *eunuch*) produced very little additional material.

This lack of literature was consistent with a very limited contemporary awareness of intersex, outside limited scientific and medical spheres.

The challenging situation necessitated a radical rethink of the research methodology.

2.8 Historical review: A speculative hypothesis

Given the poor contemporary awareness, I decided to engage in a more in-depth historical review of how intersex persons have been understood and treated. This revealed three key points: i) that, the normative social categories by which intersex persons are identified varies radically over time; ii) that, cultural awareness of gender variant individuals in the West was much greater in pre-modern Christian Europe than in the Twentieth century; and iii) that intersex persons, were treated in a more humane fashion in this earlier period than in the modern period, especially the second half of the Twentieth century.

In light of these three findings, I decided that the research needed to proceed through two related investigations: The first was to identify and establish analytical tools to help make trans-historical comparisons. The second to establish a plausible way of identifying what might constitute the 'good' for an individual person, that was sufficiently robust and universal to be used to make evaluations in such a trans-historical analysis.

2.8.1 Making trans-historical comparisons: the tools

Having embarked upon this exercise in hermeneutic historicist sociology, I engaged in a scrutiny of the epistemological systems, representational practices and rhetoric in operation, in light of the theoretical and methodological insights of Foucault (1978, 1984) and Butler (1990, 2004). Specifically, this involved a review of two different literatures:

First that of early and medieval Christian understandings of gender, which revealed the possibility of a 'third' gender, the idea of the 'prevailing sex' and an appreciation of the agency of individuals and the importance of context in establishing a person's gender (Rolker, 2014; Wijffels, 2018).

Second, that of the history of science and medicine which has led to an understanding of two key points: (i) That a fundamental epistemological shift from a theological to a medico-scientific paradigm took place during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Laqueur 1990, Dreger 1998), and (ii) that this had a profound impact on societal understandings and attitudes, privileging biological knowledge and the somatic. This legitimated and sacralised a rigid gender binary with the consequence that both intersex and trans persons have been medicalised and pathologised. The developments in the scientific understanding of a range of intersex conditions from the 1950s onwards were thus appropriated within an epistemological regime with a powerful commitment to a rigid gender binary. This has resulted in great pressure for 'normalising' surgery to be performed on infants, a so-called 'optimal gender policy' (Morland, 2015).

2.8.2 Making trans-historical comparisons: the ethical framework

The entrenched and unquestioned nature of the gender binary and the idea of a 'true sex' was associated with three clearly identified harms to individuals – radical surgery, (including cosmetic) shame and secrecy located within one institutional domain of society, that governed by medical expertise, authority and procedures.

These harms reflect the reality that social norms and recognition by others are fundamental to an individual's sense of identity and well-being. My concern was to locate an ethicist to 'think with' in approaching this challenge. After an initial consideration of a number of explicitly Christian ethicists (e.g. Hauerwas, O'Donovan, Song), I decided on a phenomenologically grounded approach, which could

bridge the gap between the 'secular' and the 'religious', and articulate an understanding of personhood that conveyed the significance of both the 'institutional' and the communal dimensions of the social. In Paul Ricoeur's work, I found a useful and insightful formulation to help frame my approach. (Ricoeur, 1999, 2000, 2007)

2.8.3 Exploring functional differentiation and dissensus

The discovery that intersex persons were treated more benignly in the pre-modern period than in the late Twentieth century, led me to explore further the implications of the association between the shift in the epistemological framing of intersex and macro-level societal change, namely secularization. Given the clear role of medical knowledge and authority, I decided to investigate whether a key dimension of the secularization process - functional differentiation - might play an important role generating the challenges faced by intersex persons. In short, whether, the replacement of a holistic sense of personhood rooted in community by more limited, secular and implicit anthropologies generated by different institutional structures, could have negative consequences for intersex persons.

To investigate this further, I focussed my review of the contemporary literature in two institutional domains within society – medicine and rights-advocacy. Here, I identified strong terminological disagreements between a growing medical consensus wishing to consign 'to antiquity the term, *intersex*' and many activists for whom **exactly** such language was essential in order to generate a community of interest to lobby for 'intersex rights'.

Earlier background research had highlighted the central role of medical diagnoses as a site of particular contestation and dispute. I therefore decided to illustrate this dissensus through a brief analysis of the discussion generated by two key texts in this emerging battleground, namely the 'Consensus statement on Management of intersex Disorders' (Lee, Houk, Ahmed and Hughes, 2006) and, the Council of

Europe's Human Rights and Intersex People (Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 2015). This conflict was used to explore contemporary issues of recognition and representation of intersex people.

Finally, to illustrate the potentiality of the Christian tradition in the postmodern context, with its holistic account of personhood to resource a deeper understanding and individuals seeking to create a coherent self-narrative more effectively I drew on the work of the contemporary theologian Susannah Cornwall

Having provided an account of how I approached the research and tackled the inevitable challenges that arose within the two complementary areas of investigation, I now turn to consider the key findings of the research, the original contribution they make and consider some of the critical issues raised by this body of work.

3. Critical analysis and theoretical reflection

In this final section I will outline some of the broader conceptual concerns about the location of my work; set the key research findings in a critical context; and, finally point forward to some critical developments that have occurred since the publication of my work.

3.1 Aims and context

This research makes a distinctive contribution, both to our understanding of how religious and secular institutions shape the formation of trans and intersex persons, and how those institutions respond when the prevailing matrix of conditioning moral norms are challenged (Dormor, 2015, 2018).

Concerned with the broader flourishing of individuals, rather than simply for example their legal rights, the focus is on anthropology and ethics, critically on the relationship between the individual person and the social - on wider society and its norms and institutions. Whilst it draws on insights from philosophy, theology and history, these are marshalled within a historicist hermeneutical approach best located within the discipline of sociology of religion.

That perspective is rooted in the classic Weberian emphasis on power and legitimation: The point here is that in providing a sociological interpretation of any group's actions or attitudes, whether that be to music or war, sexuality or gender, the inherent logic of social reality dictates that attitudes are mediated by the structures of authority, power and violence, including 'sedimented violence', that is violence embedded and inherent within normal social processes, including normative categories and everyday language (Martin, 2016, p. 27). Religious or secular, no social institution is exempt from the exercise of such hegemonic power. The research draws together this tradition of sociological thinking, especially through the work of David Martin with that of post-structuralist philosophers, highly attentive to the power of the social, namely Foucault's writings on the formation of the historical

subject in the context of 'regimes of truth', and Butler on both the performativity of gender and the possibilities for self-narration within conditioning moral norms. Despite obvious differences between these thinkers, they share a focus on the experience and agency of the individual, the importance of self-esteem and its dependence on social relations, as well as on a hermeneutical and historicist outlook.

Given this post-structuralist perspective, it is critical to reflect on how power and knowledge cohere to produce macro-level hegemonic assumptions that frame the larger projects to which Dormor (2015) and Dormor (2018) contribute. There are three related critical issues here: The western focus; the human rights orientation and the recent and rapid change in the cultural understanding of categories and terminology.

3.1.1 Western context: The hegemonic power of the gender binary

This research is concerned primarily with European and North American cultures and legal jurisdictions, shaped by European colonialism. As such, they are marked by the values which dominate the cultural and intellectual worldview of 'Western' culture, including those of individualism, human rights and secular liberalism, recently mapped and identified as characteristic of 'WEIRD' societies (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic) (Henrich, 2020). One dimension of this worldview has been a rigid gender binary deeply shaped by 'scientific' thinking framed by the Enlightenment (Laqueur 1990). A second, that it is underpinned by a strong secular narrative or 'myth' of progress brought about by rational endeavour, education and legislative change. Martin (2014) and others (e.g. Gray, 2007) have argued that this is in effect a secularised version of Christian eschatology and providence re-purposed to promote the 'god' of Progress. Martin's critique of 'secular-liberal triumphalism', and his insistence that the social logic of human solidarity *always* involves a mutual entanglement of peace and violence is an integral part of my thinking. In particular, that violence is evident in the treatment of

intersex infants in the second half of the Twentieth century. (Dormor, 2018).

3.1.2 Human rights and legal gender

Allied to this, is the assumption that the flourishing of individuals comes primarily through greater individual autonomy and freedom *from* others, and is advanced by ‘universal’ human rights. By contrast, religious and communalistic understandings and identities are perceived to be traditional and regressive.

Both academic projects (Scherpe 2015; Scherpe, Dutta and Helms, 2018) can be firmly located within a human rights framework. In discussion of the various jurisdictions, Scherpe (2015) writes of ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ countries and throughout there is a strong trajectory in which transgender individuals *qua* citizens progress ‘away from medicalization and pathologisation towards self-determination’ facilitated by important catalysts of change and liberation, like the ECHR (Scherpe, 2015, pp. 1, 3).

There is, however, a long-established set of arguments which is highly critical of the human rights discourse (Langford, 2018). Of these, the charge that human rights are not universal, but particularistic, grounded in western values, especially the cultural milieu of liberal Protestant Christianity is perhaps most pertinent (e.g. Asad 2003); more brutality, that ‘human rights are inherently a political construction’, which sidestep issues of economic or cultural justice in favour of liberalism’s neo-colonial ‘civilising mission’. (Langford, 2018 p 75, 73). The Kenyan-American lawyer, Makua wa Mutua, argues that the ‘unrelenting focus on individualism’ marginalises cultures where group and community rights are deeply embedded (Mutua, 2008, p. 1029).

This tension is deepened by the endpoint implicit in Scherpe 2015, 2018, (and personal communication) that ‘legal gender’, the making of a

distinction in law between female and male, might, in time, rendered completely redundant.

3.1.3 Categories and terminology

For both the groups under consideration, but especially trans people, there has been rapid evolution in understanding and terminology in recent decades, with social categories contested and the associated possibilities for living, uncertain and evolving (Dormor, 2015, p. 28, Dormor, 2018, pp. 107-112, 121-133). From the 2000s, transsexual has been progressively replaced by transgender, trans and trans*, a terminological shift reflecting an underlying 'conceptual and perceptual transition' (Stryker and Aizura, 2013, p. 2). Language in this field has continue to evolve very rapidly. Even within the anthology, *Transgender Reader 2*, 'sex reassignment surgery' (gender confirmation surgery) was employed as standard terminology, as recently as 2013 (Stryker and Aizura, 2013, p. 678).

Whilst not a central theoretical focus of Dormor (2015), terminological issues are deeply implicated: In his introduction, Scherpe (2015 p. 2), cited the distinction drawn by the highly influential trans legal scholar, Whittle (2002) between (i) transgender persons - who wish to live or desire to live in the role of a gender, which is not the one designated to that person at birth, and (ii) transsexual persons - referring to those transgender persons who desire or have undergone gender reassignment [affirmation] surgery. In 2014/2015, Scherpe (2015) judged that 'transsexual and transgender persons' was the appropriate frame of reference for a volume with an international readership, however, as the final proofs edged closer, re-issued editorial guidelines encouraged contributors to use *transgender*, *transgenderism* and *gender confirmation surgery*. This met strong objections, with one contributor, who describes herself as living 'with transsexualism', arguing that transgender and allied terms were 'conflating and generalising' (Wallbank, 2015, p. 460). Notwithstanding the fact that transgender is widely understood to be an umbrella term (Jamel, 2018), a number of

those who identify as transsexuals like philosopher (and transman) Maxim Februari, argue that this contemporary usage excludes those who identify as transsexuals (Februari 2013, p 27). These concerns illustrate the power of discourses to erase or exclude, and the issues inherent in questions of representation (Butler, 2004; Valentine 2007; Dormor, 2018, pp. 134-152).

Having considered the critical issues relating to the framing of the research, I now turn to the research findings.

3.2 Research findings

3.2.1 Persons and institutions

Ideas of the human and the conditions for human flourishing lie at the heart of Dormor (2015) and (2018). For both trans and intersex persons, that flourishing is tied to two particular institutional domains within society – the legal and the medical. Legislative change can protect and establish certain legal rights, but an individual is much more than a legal subject. Similarly, individuals cannot be defined in relation to the somatic, or comprehended simply through a medical diagnosis. These two chapters are therefore underpinned by a holistic account of the human condition that considers bodies, self-consciousness and the relationship to others synoptically; this is developed explicitly in Dormor (2018).

In the context of international volumes focussed on these two institutional domains, my contributions focussed on Christianity, and therefore on ideas of theological anthropology and faith communities. This took two forms:

- i) An account, primarily in Dormor (2015) of the churches as institutions and their diverse responses to the emergent issue of trans people; and,

- ii) The role of Christianity and its ideas, images and practices as the ‘cornerstone of Western culture and thought, specifically of its morality’ (Dormor, 2018, p. 106).

The first set of research findings relate to the development of a typology of characteristic Christian responses to trans people, and an investigation of the factors determining these.

The second provided a trans-historical analysis of how intersex persons have been treated within traditional Christianity and modern society. In particular it is argued that the implicit and partial anthropologies of modern (secular) society have restricted the ability of the individual to self-narrate leading to harms of a social aetiology, not experienced within pre-modern Christianity. This is a bold thesis. It also provides a clear illustration of one consequence of functional differentiation, a process often identified as the ‘viable’ or ‘paradigmatic core’ of the secularization thesis (Koenig, 2018, p. 33). Whilst implicit in the essay, this argument was not explicitly drawn out in Dormor (2018).

3.2.2 Typologies

As the research behind Dormor 2015 took shape as a review of the different theological anthropologies and attitudes towards trans people, two related questions emerged:

1. Are there distinct patterns in the attitudes towards trans people across the spectrum of Christian churches and denominations?
and,
2. How are these best described and accounted for?

In seeking to map and interpret these patterns I used the well-established idea of the worldview (*Weltanschauung*) to articulate a typology of institutional responses each with a characteristic theological anthropology and orientation, which shaped their response to trans people. This broadly Weberian approach was informed by the arc of thinking about the nature of religious institutions, developed in

relation to membership, legitimacy, understanding of authority, and its orientation towards wider society including ethical dispositions. It is also shaped by recent developments in the literature foregrounding Church-State relations and stressing the connections between the religious and political spheres (Davie, 2000; Martin, 2011, 2014, 2016).

In providing the first comparative review of different churches' emergent attitudes towards transgender persons, Dormor (2015), identified three distinct broad patterns of response based on theological anthropology and evolving institutional practices: conservative, radical (or prophetic) and moderate (or pragmatic). Unsurprisingly, this resultant typology bears a strong resemblance to established distinctions within the sociology of religion, e.g. world rejecting/affirming/accommodating, or between Church, Sect and Denomination. In terms of the formulation of this typology I identified three key factors: i) attitudes to women's leadership and same sex relationships; ii) the internal authority structures of respective churches – from highly centralised to congregational; and, iii) churches' responses to developments within wider society, especially proposed legislation enshrining the rights of trans people.

The primary contribution of Dormor 2015 lies in synthesising these perspectives and providing the first survey of Christian attitudes towards trans people. In its interpretation, the study also draws attention to three important emphases: (i) A church's attitude to the dominant political and, especially legal, structures, most obviously the nation-state, but also bodies like the United Nations and the European Union. This is clearly most influential for the 'moderate' type, whose orientation is pragmatic and accommodating, but it is also worth noting that opposition to bodies like the UN and the EU can galvanise and strengthen conservative churches (e.g. Case 2012); (ii) The importance of the cultural shifts of the 1960s: Both the profound implications in terms of patterns of marital and sexual behaviour (Dormor, 2001, 2004), but also McLeod 's (2007) thesis that post-1960s, the

conservative/liberal split supersedes denominational difference within Christendom; and, iii) The importance of individual actors like trans pioneers, the Revd. Troy Perry and the Revd. Erin Swenson (Dormor, 2015, pp. 58-64); ‘minor’ prophets witnessing to a ‘new age’, clearly echoing the Weberian emphasis on the prophetic individual.

3.2.3 Anthropology and ethics in trans-historical comparison

In Dormor (2018), I provide a theological vision of the human person, and therefore of the ‘good life’. This entails a description of the foundational attributes of theological anthropology, as holistic, relational, teleological and particular as well as being ec-static, being grounded in the community of persons, that is God (Dormor, 2018, pp. 158-162). I argue that this understanding is seeded deeply within Western civilization, secular and sacred, and underlies more specific construals of the body and gender (Dormor, 2014).

Given that the formation of personhood is ‘historically contingent and culturally located’ (Dormor, 2007, 2018, p. 108), I identify two philosophers, whom I believe develop core elements of this deeper vision critically, Paul Ricouer and Judith Butler. The former’s formulation of the ethical life as being constituted by ‘the desire for an accomplished life – with and for others – in just institutions’ (Ricouer, 1999, p 45) becomes my yardstick for making trans-historical comparisons. It is especially important in three key regards:

1. In the priority it gives to *self esteem* and its outworking - namely agency in the world, and to narrative identity; what he defines as ‘the cohesion of a person within the sequence of human life’ (Ricouer, 1999, p. 53)
2. In the emphasis placed on the need for the self to be *recognised* by others.
3. In his view that living in *just institutions* is of a piece with, and as fundamental to, the flourishing of the person as the

desire for personal fulfilment and the reciprocity of friendship.

Like Ricoeur, Butler's is a deeply relational anthropology. She places particular emphasis on recognition and the capacity of the individual to self-narrate: 'narrative capacity constitutes a precondition for giving an account of oneself' (Butler, 2005, p. 12). If society precludes the possibility of such narration for some individuals, their life can become untenable; unintelligible; undone. (Butler, 2004). This perspective lies behind my argument concerning intersex persons in the second half of the Twentieth century: For, two major complex harms suffered by intersex persons – secrecy and shame – are of social rather than somatic aetiology. They are largely 'invisible' to contemporary medical practice, focused as it is on the somatic and constrained by its profound commitment to the gender binary. Yet these profound harms militated against the possibilities of a truly sustainable human life. Such 'social' harms, inflicted and suffered, were substantial – and, largely absent in the pre-modern period.

As the hegemonic structures associated with the gender binary have loosened and intersex persons have become less hidden, the challenge to self-narration for intersex persons took another twist, namely a clash between two contemporary institutional discourses: One seeking to mobilise 'intersex' as an identity to advocate more effectively for legal and other rights; the other, looking to abandon 'intersex' on two grounds: First, because it is a misleading and archaic term, suggesting that individuals with variations in sexual development lie in an area between female and male; and second in order to de-pathologise individuals as persons, who it is argued are better understood as suffering from a particular biological 'disorder' or 'variation' rather than constituting an identity category. A point reinforced by the heterogeneity of the embodied experience of such persons.

3.2.4 Functional differentiation and partial anthropologies

These two discourses create partial, truncated accounts of personhood, as respectively, patient and citizen. So, for example, in the former case, the 'proper' functioning of the body is central; the language of 'disorder' routine; and, the somatic dimension of human experience is privileged at the expense of other aspects - like social relations. Similar constraints hold for the person as citizen.

The existence of these two discourses is a direct consequence of the functional differentiation societies have undergone during modernization. As such, this dissensus draws attention to an overlooked negative consequence of this societal process.

In the weight given to the importance of self-esteem and self-narration, both Butler and Ricoeur provide a compelling, critical corrective to such partial accounts of personhood. In light of which, I argue that the more holistic understanding characteristic of traditional communities, bound together by shared religious beliefs and practices within pre-modern Christianity, provides a more secure basis for individual flourishing. Furthermore, it is argued, that this perspective is best recovered within postmodernity by those theologians working within a Queer perspective (e.g. Cornwall, 2009b, 2014)

This research has been concerned with the well-being of trans and intersex persons within a rapidly changing context, that has evolved significantly since my last publication in 2018. Before concluding I would like to consider two recent developments that illustrate some of the themes identified in my research.

3.3 Contemporary reflections: Affirmation and conflict

In subject matter both of these relate to the chapter on the trans person (2015), however, the theoretical issues draw on Dormor (2018). The first provides an update on the Church of England; the second to medical diagnoses as highly contested sites.

3.3.1 *The Church of England: Affirmation of the journey*

In July 2017 a motion was passed by the Church of England's General Synod: 'recognising the need for transgender people to be welcomed and affirmed in their parish church', and asking the House of Bishops (HoB) to consider recommending liturgy to 'mark a person's gender transition' (Church of England, 2018a, p. 1). The following year, the HoB commended the use of the 'Affirmation of Baptismal Faith', issued with pastoral guidance specifically for use with trans people. That guidance stressed the fundamental moral equality of all persons, made in the image of God noting that 'Everyone's journey through life is unique', and suggesting that the opportunity to celebrate a person's gender transition in worship could be especially affirming (Church of England, 2018b, p. 1).

Two points are particularly emphasised: That the candidate should have an opportunity:

to share testimony. This could provide both the candidate and congregation with an opportunity both to understand the person's Christian journey and to affirm them in their identity.
(Church of England, 2018b, p. 4)

Second, there is a stress on the ritual power of naming; that being addressed 'by their chosen name may be a powerful moment in the service' (Church of England, 2018b, p. 4). In addition, the practice of choosing a new name for the occasion (and thereby identity) was firmly anchored in the long established Christian tradition associating baptism with being called by God into a renewed life.

Produced in consultation with transgender clergy, this guidance sought to incorporate trans peoples' experience into the heart of the Christian tradition. Use of Christian initiation liturgy demonstrates the critical importance of institutional recognition, and the centrality of self-narration (through testimony) and naming in the affirmation of persons (Ricoeur, 1999; Butler, 2005). Equally, it is important to note that the service is an *affirmation* of baptism, rather than baptism (which can

only take place once). This distinction affirms the fundamentally universal nature of humanity and the continuity of personhood, if not gender identity, making the point that no one is completely identified with their gender, a clear affirmation of a holistic understanding of personhood.

3.3.2 Identity politics and diagnostic dilemmas

In recent years, issues relating to trans people have become firmly enmeshed in the identitarian 'culture wars' of the West. One dimension of this has seen the labelling of some women in the public domain, like J. K. Rowling as a TERF (Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist) (Ferber 2020). Another is the increased politicisation of medical diagnoses. As argued above, diagnoses are not immune to cultural bias, yet as an evidence-based discipline, medicine seeks to elucidate characteristic patterns to aid accurate diagnosis and treatment. In recent years, some medical diagnoses and typologies have become intense sites of contestation. This has been the case for that of autogynephilic transsexualism (Bailey, 2003; Dreger, 2008), despite the existence of individuals who strongly identify with the diagnostic description (Lawrence, 2013). It is also true of Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria (ROGD), which we shall now turn to consider.

Over the last decade, there has been a very significant increase in the number of adolescents presenting at clinics with gender dysphoria. More significantly, around 60-90% are female, in stark contrast to a decade ago when, around 75% of adolescents presenting were male (Aitkin *et al*, 2015; Sumia, Lindberg, Työljärvi and Kaltiala-Heino, 2017; de Graaf, Giovanardi, Zitz and Carmichael, 2018; Levitan, Barkmann, Richter-Appelt, Schulte-Markwort and Becker-Hebly, 2019). This has led to a new description and provisional diagnosis, Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria (ROGD). One of the key findings in a study of parental reports of young adults was that over 95% of participants reported that the adolescents presenting with gender dysphoria exhibited two or fewer of the eight key indicators (a formal diagnosis

requires six out of eight). The article (Littman 2018) provoked a great deal of concern within the trans community. In response, the journal took the unprecedented step of convening an expert panel to conduct a 'post-publication reassessment'. A 'Correction' was subsequently issued. Whilst the results of the study remained unchanged, the issues at stake were presented more carefully (Littman, 2019; Zucker, 2019). The identitarian conflicts will, without doubt, become even more highly controversial as it enters the public domain with the publication of *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters* (Shrier, 2021).

4. Conclusion

This research makes a distinctive contribution to our understanding of how religious and secular institutions shape the experience of trans and intersex persons and respond to the growing awareness of such groups at a time when the prevailing matrix of conditioning moral norms are being challenged and the rigid gender binary, which has characterised modern Western society, is breaking down (Dormor, 2015, 2018).

Dormor (2015) provides the first survey of how churches have responded to trans people. Critically it identifies theological anthropology as the determining framework within Christian discourse and relates this to the organizational character of the churches. It identifies three distinct broad patterns of response based on the congruence between theological anthropology and institutional practice: conservative, radical (or prophetic) and moderate (or pragmatic). In delineating this typology, the study highlights the critical nature of the relationship between a church's worldview and its orientation towards religious pluralism, democratic institutions and the rights of the individual; the importance of the cultural shifts of the 1960s (Dormor, 2001, 2004), including the emergence of a conservative/liberal fault-line within Christianity; and, the critical role of key pioneering individuals.

Dormor (2018) provides a trans-historical analysis, drawing a contrast between how intersex persons have been treated within traditional Christianity and modern society. It also focuses on anthropology, but here a bold argument is advanced, namely that conceptions of gender underpinned by scientific ideas created the conditions in the mid-twentieth century for clear harms, of social aetiology, to intersex persons; harms not routinely experienced within pre-modern Christianity. The idea that historic individuals inhabiting the socially-recognised yet scientifically misconceived category of the hermaphrodite might have had greater opportunity to flourish as individuals than intersex persons correctly diagnosed and thus 'known'

to science, offends modern sensibilities cutting against the grain of the progressivist understanding of modernity.

A second argument is advanced in Dormor (2018), that the development of two distinct institutional domains within modern society (medical and human rights advocacy) generate conflicting and limited discourses for the formation of intersex persons: One focussed on the 'proper' functioning of the body, the other on an individual's political agency as part of a community advancing 'their rights'. As such, this conflict draws attention to a negative consequence of the sociological process identified as functional differentiation, namely the creation of competing and incompatible frames of reference within which, or against which, individuals are seeking to make sense of themselves, their identity and agency.

The research generates a number of avenues for potential exploration:

Dormor (2015) raises the issue of how an emergent concern comes to be understood within one particular theological frame, like theological anthropology, rather than another, like medical ethics. Is this development inevitable? Is it shaped primarily by authoritative voices within the tradition, like Oliver O'Donovan (O'Donovan, 1982, 1983, 1984) or by broader social developments? Furthermore, can one confidently identify or predict whether a particular issue will come to be seen as incompatible with Christian belief, practice and belonging within and between denominations? A comparative study at the interface of theology and sociology, which sought to explain the key factors leading to these divergent paths would be a natural development of my research trajectory. Further research could also consider the development of a church's theology or stance on a particular issue in light of prospective or actual legislation, and the degree to which legislative change stimulates the development of theology and practice – and how this dynamic varies between churches and polities.

Dormor (2018) raises the exceptionally difficult question of the limits or possibilities for transhistoric comparisons: Whether it is meaningful, legitimate and plausible to draw the sort of broad comparative conclusion that I have made without romanticising the past. Within a post-colonial framing, I believe the answer has to be yes, because of the necessity for a 'retelling' that challenges the hegemonic historical accounts that gloss or erase the brutal impact of European colonialism, especially upon the identities and subjectivities of colonised persons. Further research could explore examples of other groups whose experience of life may have been more humane in pre-modern Europe. Related to this area are some more specific lines of research that consider the implications of functional or sectoral differentiation for the formation of personhood. This could be pursued in conversation with the body of literature about cross-cultural psychological differences and the emergent ideas about WEIRD psychology itself highly influenced by the work of Max Weber on Protestantism (Henrich 2020).

Throughout Dormor 2018 in particular, I argue that the formation of the self is *always* vulnerable to coercive social norms and that the powerful dynamics of social solidarity, which simultaneously generate both a sense of belonging and of exclusion, continue to exert considerable pressure even in societies that understand themselves to be highly individualistic. This research provides a number of reflections on the shape-shifting nature of the relationship between the individual and society. Inevitably that draws us to the powerful dynamic of contemporary identity politics and the fact that trans identity has become deeply implicated in the culture wars of Western society. Despite the quest for greater freedom and autonomy, there is every danger that in becoming a 'lightning rod' for Western societies' internal political and cultural divisions, the lived possibilities for flourishing of some transgender and other persons will become impaired. Against this polarising background, the thoughtful re-purposing of the ancient and traditional symbolism of Christian

baptism by the Established Church in England provides a ritual context for self-narration by the trans person in the company of others. Whilst this may seem a quirky postmodern 'candle in the wind', for those who can appropriate it, it could prove balm for the soul.

Word Count: 11,650

5. Submitted texts:

Key Texts:

Dormor, D. (2015). Transsexuality and the Christian Church: An Overview. In: J. Sherpe, ed. *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*, Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 27-76.

Dormor, D. (2018). Intersex in the Christian Tradition: Personhood and Embodiment. In: J. Sherpe, A. Dutta and T. Helms, eds. *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*, Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 103-164.

Supplementary Texts:

Dormor, D. (2002). The Second Demographic Transition in Europe - A Review. In: A. Thatcher, ed. *Celebrating Christian Marriage, 2002*, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, pp. 21-38.

Dormor, D. (2007). Friends, Companions and Bedfellows: sexuality and social change. In: D. Dormor and J. Morris, eds. *An Acceptable Sacrifice*, London: SPCK, pp. 74-88.

Dormor, D. (2013). Rebellious bodies and disordered desires: The challenge of transsexuality to some influential Christian theologies of creation. In: S. Scriver and N. Reilly, eds. *Religion, Gender and the Public Sphere*, London: Routledge, pp. 120-130.

Dormor, D. (2014). Beyond the Secular-Religious divide, again, *Modern Believing*, 55(4), pp. 355-357.

Further texts by the author:

Dormor, D. (2004). *Just Cohabiting: The Church, Sex and Getting Married*. London: DLT.

Dormor, D. (2010). *Religious perspectives on intersexual and transgender identity and relationships*. Academia.edu, viewed 30 January 2021, <https://www.academia.edu/4561356/Religious_perspectives_on_intersexual_and_transgender_identity_and_relationships>.

Dormor, D. (2017) "Like Gender, Organised Religion is a Complex Matter": The Growing Acceptance of Transgender People in Protestant Christianity. *Modern Believing*, 58(4), pp. 373-391.

6. General bibliography

- Aitken, M. et al. (2015). Evidence for an altered sex ratio in clinic-referred adolescents with gender dysphoria. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 12, pp. 756-763.
- The Archbishops' Council. (2003). *Some Issues in Human Sexuality: a guide to the debate*. London: Church House Publishing.
- Asad, T. (2003). *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ashley, B. and O'Rourke, K. (1997). *Healthcare ethics: A Theological Analysis*. 4th ed. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Bailey, J. (2003). *The Man Who Would Be Queen: The Science of Gender-Bending and Transsexualism*. Washington D.C.: Joseph Henry Press.
- Bender, C. and Taves, A. (2012). *What Matters? Ethnographies of Values in a Not So Secular Age*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bray, A. (2002). *The Friend*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brock, B. (2010). *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age*. Cambridge, Michigan: Eerdmans.
- Brown, P. (1988). *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing Gender*, New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2005). *Giving an Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Case, M. (2012). After Gender: The Destruction of Man? The Vatican's Nightmare Vision of the "Gender Agenda" for Law. *Pace Law Review*, 31(3), pp. 802-817.
- Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. (2004). *CBCEW Briefing note on the Gender Recognition Bill from a Catholic perspective. 8 January 2004*. Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, viewed 23 November 2013, <<http://catholic-ew.org.uk/Catholic-News-Media-Library/Archive-Media-Assets/Files/Department-of-Christian-Responsibility-and-Citizenship-files/Briefing-Papers/Gender-Recognition-Bill-Bishops-Conference-briefing-note>>.
- Church of England. (2018a). *An update on 'Welcoming Transgender People'*. GS Misc 1178, Church of England, viewed 30 January 2021,

<<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/GS%20Misc%201178%20-%20An%20update%20on%20Welcoming%20Transgender%20People%20%28003%29.pdf>>

Church of England. (2018b). *Pastoral guidance for us in conjunction with the Affirmation of Baptismal Faith in the context of gender transition*.

Church of England, viewed 30 January 2021,

<<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/Pastoral%20Guidance-Affirmation-Baptismal-Faith.pdf>>.

Cornwall, S. (2009a). "State of Mind" versus "Concrete Set of Facts": The Contrasting of Transgender and Intersex in Church Documents on Sexuality. *Theology and Sexuality*, 15(1), pp. 7-28.

Cornwall, S. (2009b). Theologies of Resistance: Intersex/DSD, Disability and Queering the Real World. In: M. Holmes, ed. *Critical Intersex*, Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 215-243.

Cornwall, S. (2010). *Sex and Uncertainty in the Body of Christ: Intersex Conditions and Christian Theology*. London: Equinox.

Cornwall, S. (2014). Intersex, Christology, and the Maleness of Jesus. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 30(2), pp. 23-39.

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, (2015). *Human Rights and Intersex People*. Council of Europe, viewed 30 January 2021, <<https://book.coe.int/en/commissioner-for-human-rights/6683-pdf-human-rights-and-intersex-people.html>>.

Davie, G. (2000). *Religion in Modern Europe: A Memory Mutates*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

de Graaf, N., Giovanardi, G., Zitz, C. and Carmichael, P. (2018). Sex Ratio in Children and Adolescents Referred to the Gender Identity Development Service in the UK (2009–2016). *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 47(5), pp. 1301–1304.

Dreger, A. (1998). *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Dreger A. (2008). The controversy surrounding "The man who would be queen": a case history of the politics of science, identity, and sex in the Internet age. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. 37(3), pp. 366–421.

Evangelical Alliance Policy Commission. (2010). *Transsexuality*. London: Evangelical Alliance.

Februari, M. (2013). *The Making of a Man: Notes on Transsexuality*. (A. Brown, Trans.) London: Reaktion Books.

Ferber, A. (2020). Judith Butler on the culture wars, JK Rowling and living in “anti-intellectual times”. *New Statesman*, 22 September, viewed 30 January 2021, <<https://www.newstatesman.com/international/2020/09/judith-butler-culture-wars-jk-rowling-and-living-anti-intellectual-times>>.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality volume 1*. (R. Hurley, Trans.) London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1985). *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality volume 2*. (R. Hurley, Trans.) London: Penguin.

Gray, J. (2007). *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*. London: Allen Lane.

Hare, J. (2007). “Neither male nor female”: the case of intersexuality. In: D. Dormor and Morris, J. eds. *An Acceptable Sacrifice? Homosexuality and the Church*. London: SPCK. pp. 98-111.

Henrich, J. (2020). *The Wierdest People in the World: How the West became psychologically peculiar and particularly prosperous*. London: Allen Lane.

Herdt, G. (1996). *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Dimorphism in Culture and History*. New York: Zone Books.

Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition. (2017). *Consultation Paper 1 Gender Recognition*. Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition, Hong Kong, viewed 30 January 2021, <<https://www.iwggr.gov.hk/eng/index.html>>.

Jamel, J. (2018). *Transphobic Hate Crime*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Koenig, M. (2018). Revising secularization theory’s paradigmatic core – David Martin on general processes, basic patterns and causal mechanisms of differentiation between religion and politics. In: H. Joas, ed. *David Martin and the Sociology of Religion*. New York: Routledge, pp. 32-49.

Lawrence, A. (2013). *Men trapped in Men’s bodies*. New York: Springer.

Laqueur, T. (1990). *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Langford, M. (2018). Critiques of Human Rights. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*. 14, pp. 69-89.

Lee, P., Houk, C., Ahmed, S., and Hughes, I. (2006). Consensus Statement on Management of Intersex Disorders. *Journal of Pediatric Urology*, 2(3), pp. 148-162.

Levitan, N., Barkmann, C., Richter-Appelt, H., Schulte-Markwork, M. and Becker-Hebly, I. (2019). Risk Factors for psychological functioning in German adolescents with gender dysphoria: Poor peer relations and general family functioning. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 28(11), pp. 1487-1498.

Littman, L., (2018) Parent reports of adolescents and young adults perceived to show signs of a rapid onset of gender dysphoria, *PLOS ONE* 13(8): e0202330.

Littman, L. (2019). Correction: Parent reports of adolescents and young adults perceived to show signs of a rapid onset of gender dysphoria, *PLOS ONE* 14(3): e0214157.

Loughlin G. ed. (2007). *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Martin, D. (1969). *The Religious and the Secular: Studies in Secularization*. London: Routledge.

Martin, D. (1978). *A General Theory of Secularization*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Martin, D. (1997). *Reflections on Sociology and Theology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Martin, D. (2005). *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Martin, D. (2011). *The Future of Christianity: Reflections on Violence and Democracy, Religion and Secularization*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Martin, D. (2014). *Religion and Power: No Logos without Mythos*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Martin, D. (2016). *Ruin and Restoration: On Violence, Liturgy and Reconciliation*. Abingdon: Routledge.

McLeod, H. (2007) *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Morland, I. (2015). Gender, Genitals and the Meaning of Being Human. In: L. Downing, I. Morland and Sullivan, N., *Fuckology: Critical Essays on John Money's Diagnostic Concepts*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, pp. 69-100.

Mutua, M. (2008). Human Rights and Powerlessness: pathologies of choice and substance. *Buffalo Law Review*, 56, pp. 1027-1034.

Navarrete, U. (1997). *Transsexuality and the Canonical Order* (Anonymous, Trans.) [s.n.], viewed 30 January 2021,

<<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B5MCZqcy5eWjVDYwME11N2M0V2M/edit>>.

Nongbri, B. (2013). *Before Religion: The History of a Modern Concept*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

O'Donovan, O. (1982). *Transsexualism and Christian Marriage*. Bramcote: Grove Booklets Ltd.

O'Donovan, O. (1983). Transsexualism and Christian Marriage. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*. 11(1), pp. 135-162.

O'Donovan, O. (1984). *Begotten or Made?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 15-30.

O'Donovan, O. (2007). *Transsexualism: Issues and Argument*. Cambridge: Grove Booklets Ltd.

Ricouer, P. (1999). Approaching the Human Person. *Ethical Perspectives*. 1, pp. 45-54.

Ricouer, P. (2000). *The Just*. (D. Pellauer, Trans,) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ricouer, P. (2007). *Reflections on the Just*. (D. Pellauer, Trans,) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rolker, C. (2014). The two laws and the three sexes: ambiguous bodies in canon law and Roman law. *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Kanonistische Abteilung*, 100, pp. 178-222.

Scherpe, J. ed. (2015). *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*. Cambridge: Intersentia.

Scherpe, J., Dutta, A. and Helms, T. eds. (2018). *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*. Cambridge: Intersentia.

Shrier, A. (2021). *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*. London: Swift Press.

Southern Baptist Convention. (2014). *On Transgender Identity Baltimore MD – 2014*. Southern Baptist Convention, viewed 30 January 2021, <<https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-transgender-identity/>>.

Stryker, S. and Aizura, A. eds. (2013). *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*. London: Routledge.

Stuart, E. (2015). The Theological Study of Sexuality. In A. Thatcher, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Theology, Sexuality and Gender*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 18-31.

- Sumia, M., Lindberg, N., Työläjäarvi, M., and Kaltiala-Heino, R. (2017). Current and recalled childhood gender identity in community youth in comparison to referred adolescents seeking sex reassignment. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56, pp. 34–39.
- Thatcher, A. ed. (2015). *The Oxford Handbook of Theology, Sexuality and Gender*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Transgender Europe (TGEU). (2016) *Glossary*, viewed 21 February 2021, <<https://tgeu.org/glossary/>>
- Valentine, D. (2007). *Imagining Transgender: An ethnography of a category*. London: Duke University Press.
- Van de Kaa, D. (1987) Europe's Second Demographic Transition. *Population Bulletin*, 42(1).
- Wallbank, R. (2015). *Australia*. In: J. Scherpe, ed. *The Legal Status of Transsexual and Transgender Persons*. Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 457-526.
- Whittle, S. (2002), *Respect and Equality: Transsexual and Transgender Rights*. New York: Routledge.
- Wijffels, A. (2018). Intersex: Some (Legal-)Historical Background. In J. Scherpe, Dutta A. and Helms, T. eds. *The Legal Status of Intersex Persons*. Cambridge: Intersentia, pp. 181-200.
- Wilcox M.W. (2001) Of Markets and Missions: The Early history of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, 11(1), pp. 83-108.
- Zucker, K. (2019). Adolescents with Gender Dysphoria: Reflections on Some Contemporary Clinical and Research Issues. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, 48(7), pp. 1983-1992.