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Article

Paired Double Consciousness: A Du Boisian Approach to Gender and Transnational Double Consciousness in Thai *Kathoey* Self-Formation

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ABSTRACT

Sociologists have not adequately explored how Du Bois' concept of double consciousness could be used to study the role of cisnormative oppression in self-formation or how it could enrich studies of self-formation beyond the Atlantic world. This article addresses these gaps by merging postcolonial feminist theory and the concept of double consciousness to analyze *kathoey* self-formation. *Kathoey* are gender nonconforming (GNC) individuals in Thailand who are assigned male at birth and live as women. Drawing upon participant observation, in-depth interviews, and content analysis, I propose an extension to double consciousness called "paired double consciousness." This framework explains how cisnormative and neocolonial oppression lead *kathoey* to experience two veils. The first veil divides self-formation between *kathoey* and dominant cisgender worlds within Thai society, which produces "gender double consciousness." The second veil divides self-formation between *kathoey* and dominant transgender worlds within a global community, which creates "transnational double consciousness."

KEYWORDS: Thailand; double consciousness; gender; self-formation; postcolonial feminist theory.

Self-formation has long been an area of sociological inquiry. While concepts of self from Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) inform many studies, Du Bois' ([1903] 1990) concept of double consciousness has been largely omitted from sociological thought (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015; Morris 2015). Du Bois uniquely accounts for the role of oppression in self-formation by positing that racism

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produces an inner struggle between "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings" ([1903] 1990:8) that leads black Americans to experience double consciousness. In recent years, scholars across disciplines have expanded Du Bois' concept to examine the doubling of self which is produced by oppression of sexual identity (Orne 2013), multiracial identity (Bonilla-Silva 2010), and racialized gender identities (Falcón 2008; Welang 2018), or to study self-formation related to oppression in transnational or non-American contexts (Bell 2004; Falcón 2008; Gilroy 1993; Moore 2005). Despite this resurgence of interest, sociologists have not fully explored whether other forms of systemic oppression produce double consciousness or how double consciousness could aid in studying self-formation beyond the Atlantic world.

In this article, I demonstrate the enduring utility of Du Boisian double consciousness and contribute to these underexplored areas of inquiry by analyzing the role that two forms of oppression play in the self-formation of *kathoey*,[1] gender nonconforming (GNC) individuals in Thailand who are assigned male at birth (AMAB) and transition to living as women.[2] In Thai society, cisgender identity, in which binary feminine and masculine genders correlate with sex (West and Zimmerman 1987), is dominant, and GNC identity is marginalized. Despite Thailand's international reputation as a haven for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) tourists, research has found that *kathoey* face oppression in many social contexts (Winter 2011; Winter et al. 2018). *Kathoey* also face oppression in a global community of transgender and GNC people. The hegemonic concept of transgender identity, which originated in the Global North (Valentine 2007), presumes a white subject and does not align with conceptualizations of gender variance "outside of Euro-American definitions of gender" (Aizura 2018:145), including those, like *kathoey*, in which medical transition figures less prominently. As transgender identity has been cemented as universal and modern through colonial hierarchies (Jarrín 2016; Nay 2019), *kathoey* identity is marginalized as a local and traditional GNC identity in the Global South that does not fit this hegemonic notion based on race or culture.[3] *Kathoey* identity thus presents a puzzle for extant conceptualizations of double consciousness: How does oppression of gender in a national context and neocolonial oppression in a global context shape self-formation?

To solve this puzzle, I begin by contextualizing *kathoey* identity and cisnormativity in Thai culture. Next, I describe the postcolonial feminist perspectives informing my analysis. After situating my study within the double consciousness literature, I explain how juxtaposing these approaches opens new avenues for conceptualizing double consciousness. I draw upon 12 interviews, six weeks of concentrated participant observation, and content analysis to argue that *kathoey* experience what I call "paired double consciousness." In line with Du Bois' ([1903] 1990) original concept, I argue that *kathoey* self-formation is intimately tied to oppression that divides the self between two worlds. However, I diverge by demonstrating how *kathoey* face two veils based on different forms of oppression in national and global contexts. To elucidate this concept, I present three major findings. First, *kathoey* experience a veil based on cisnormative oppression, which operates on a national scale and places *kathoey* identity in tension with Thai identity to produce a doubling of self I call "gender double consciousness." Second, cisgender Thais are shaped by their role in maintaining this veil. Third, *kathoey* experience a veil based on neocolonial oppression, which operates on a global scale and leads *kathoey* to experience inner struggle between their Thai GNC identity and hegemonic transgender identity that produces what I term "transnational double consciousness." These two types of double consciousness work in tandem as a paired double consciousness, though discussed separately for clarity.

This article makes two theoretical contributions to double consciousness literature. First, as one of the only studies to posit that GNC individuals experience double consciousness (see Schilt 2010),

1 There are many labels used in this community. I use *kathoey* based on the preferences of many with whom I spoke.

2 I use GNC to emphasize that *kathoey* and transgender are not synonymous terms.

3 "Global South" refers to world regions outside of Europe and North America (referred to as the "Global North") without using colonial terminology like "Non-Western" (Dados and Connell 2012).

and the first to theorize a cisnormative veil, this article presents a framework to study oppression and GNC subjectivity. Second, it contributes to research on double consciousness in transnational or non-American contexts by illustrating how postcolonial feminist theory can enhance our understanding of veils within a global community (Bell 2004; Falcón 2008; Gilroy 1993; Moore 2005). Just as Itzigsohn and Brown contend that "the theory of Double Consciousness is central to the analysis of the self within the context of the modern racialized world" (2015:232), this study demonstrates the centrality of double consciousness in analyzing the self in the modern *gendered* and *transnational* world.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Kathoey Identity and Cisnormativity in Thai Context

The first step to solving the puzzle requires contextualizing the marginalization of *kathoey* in Thai society. Reliable data are scarce, but Winter estimates "six in every thousand individuals assigned male at birth" (2011:253) may be *kathoey*. Many *kathoey* recognize their feminine gender identity in early childhood, but they typically begin socially transitioning to living as women, and using feminizing hormones, as teenagers (Käng 2012; Winter 2011). Theravada Buddhism, the dominant religion, promotes tolerance of *kathoey*, and the popularity of *kathoey* beauty pageants reinforces the perception of acceptance in Thai culture (Enteen 2015; Käng 2012). While *kathoey* are tolerated as entertainers, stereotypes about them as criminals, sexual deviants, and drug addicts abound (Mahavongtrakul 2017). These stereotypes, combined with an absence of legal recognition, spur substantial marginalization (Winter 2011). *Kathoey* cannot legally marry or adopt children, and discrimination in education and employment often drives them to informal economies such as sex work, entertainment, or beauty (Winter et al. 2018). Discrimination exacerbates familial rejection of *kathoey* as it impedes their ability to fulfill cultural expectations regarding financial support of their elders (Enteen 2015; Winter 2011).

The oppression of *kathoey* stems from cisnormativity in Thai society. Cisnormativity is defined as "the seemingly natural and ahistorical assumption of cisgender identities that structures institutions and interactions and results in the erasure of gender-variant experiences and realities" (Collier and Daniel 2019:2). West and Zimmerman famously argued that "gender itself is constituted through interaction" (1987:129). Because Thai society is built around the assumption that sex assigned at birth aligns with gender, cisgender Thais are blind to the social construction of their own gender identities. *Kathoey* occasionally "pass" in interactions with cisgender people, but their identity is often challenged because it "is an expression of self that resists the assumption that gender correlates with sex" (Gagné and Tewksbury 1998:82). Extant research has not examined how systemic cisnormative oppression affects *kathoey* self-formation.

Postcolonial Theory, Postcolonial Feminist Theory, and Hegemonic Transgender Identity

The next piece of the puzzle concerns the marginalization of *kathoey* in the global sphere. Postcolonial theory is crucial to understanding this marginalization, because it supplies tools to study how colonial hierarchies between the Global North, or center, and the Global South, or periphery, (re)produce inequalities and structure social understandings of identities like gender and race (Fanon [1952] 2008; Go 2018; Mohanty 1988; Said 1978; Spivak 1988). I utilize Go's definition of postcolonial theory as "a way of looking at the world that recognizes that social forms, relations, social knowledge, and culture generally are embedded within and shaped by a history and structure of global hierarchy and relations of power" (2018:440). Scholars use a similarly broad definition to analyze the "qualified form of colonialism" (Jackson 2010:41) Thailand experienced, which is often described as neocolonialism or "semicolonialism."

Postcolonial theory that has examined connections among language, culture, and social categories is foundational to this article's focus on identity labels in self-formation. Fanon argues that speaking a

colonizer's language has a powerful effect on the subjectivities of the colonized as they "position themselves in relation to the civilizing language: i.e., the metropolitan culture" ([1952] 2008:2). This process produces conflict, because the dominant language construes non-white peripheral subjects as traditional and particular to establish the colonizer's culture, and its modes of categorization, as modern and universal (Fanon [1952] 2008; Said 1978). Yet, language can also subvert colonial hierarchies (Fanon [1952] 2008; Said 1978).

My approach is also informed by postcolonial feminist theory, or transnational feminist theory,[4] which establishes the need to analyze gender in postcolonial critique. Postcolonial feminist scholars argue that binary logics of modern/traditional and universal/particular imposed through colonial hierarchies limit the representation of subaltern women to essentialist notions of identity (Mohanty 1988; Spivak 1988). Mohanty calls for attention to the specific contexts of oppression and heterogeneities of women's lived experiences in the Global South both to highlight agency and to refute the assumption that gender-based oppression is uniform "regardless of class, ethnic or racial location" (1988:64). One vein of postcolonial feminist work uses the term "transnational" to designate that tension between supposedly local and global identities should be studied from the perspective that these categories are co-constitutive, impermanent, and rooted in (neo)colonial hierarchies (Grewal and Kaplan 2001; Patil 2011; Rajan and Park 2000).

A small group of scholars has employed a postcolonial feminist perspective to critique the diffusion of the U.S.-originated English term "transgender" as a label and category presumed to be "inclusive of all and any gender variance" (Valentine 2007:33). Gramling and Dutta characterize transgender as acquiring "a degree of compulsory usage and an aspirational universal legibility among gender-variant communities transnationally" (2016:341). This universalism is problematic because transgender encompasses particular ideas about gender, sexuality, and embodiment that are distinct from views in the Global South.[5] Scholars argue that this form of neocolonialism produces a hierarchy of GNC subjectivities: white hegemonic transgender identity is positioned as modern and global, whereas racialized GNC subjectivities in the Global South are construed as traditional and local (Aizura et al. 2014; Dutta and Roy 2014; Nay 2019). Research has shown that healthcare systems oriented around hegemonic transgender identity, which tend to center on gender reassignment surgery (GRS), contribute to the illegibility of other GNC embodiments (Aizura 2018; Jarrín 2016).[6]

I build upon this research on GNC subjectivities in the Global South by suggesting a merger of postcolonial feminism and Du Boisian double consciousness. Scholars have argued that Du Bois is a first-wave postcolonial theorist whose work is foundational to later strands of postcolonial thought (Bell 2004; Go 2018; Morris 2015). However, extant research has not fully analyzed how postcolonial feminism could facilitate the extension of double consciousness to study neocolonial oppression and self-formation related to local and global categories in transnational communities. In the following section, I review literature on double consciousness and self-formation, gesture to the progress made in fusing this literature with postcolonial theory, and establish a case for additional engagement to analyze *kathoey* self-formation.

From Double Consciousness to Paired Double Consciousness

The final piece of the puzzle concerns Du Bois' concept of double consciousness and its extensions. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois defined double consciousness as follows:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in

4 Some scholars view transnational feminism as distinct from postcolonial feminism (see Rajan and Park 2000:57), but this distinction fades when adopting Go's (2018) broader interpretation of postcolonial theory.

5 For example, gender and sexuality have historically been understood as inseparable in Thai culture (Enteen 2015).

6 It should be noted that not all transgender individuals desire GRS.

> amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness . . . The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife,—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. ([1903] 1990:8–9)

Among the diverse interpretations of this passage, I concur with scholars who decipher an inner struggle that black Americans experience while striving to unify a divided self that develops in relation to the two worlds of black and white Americans (Bell 2004; Itzigsohn and Brown 2015; Johnson 2018; Moore 2005; Rawls 2000). Racist structures, which Du Bois calls the "color line" or "veil" ([1903] 1990), create a barrier between worlds that causes this twoness. Black American identity is affirmed in the oppressed, yet emancipatory, space behind the veil, and denied in the dominant world of white Americans. The passage also depicts how doubling occurs as black Americans view themselves through the oppressor's eyes. White Americans do not feel this duality, but they are shaped by their defense of the veil (Du Bois [1940] 2007; Lemert 1994).

Scholars have expanded the scope of Du Boisian double consciousness to examine how various kinds of oppression may affect self-formation. Analyses of double consciousness based solely on oppression of gender identity are uncommon. Orne (2013) posits that LGBT individuals experience "queer double consciousness," but the concept focuses on oppression of sexuality, not gender identity. In a study on transmen's employment, Schilt gestures to the possibility for transmen to experience gender double consciousness, but points to the conflict between "female history and male social identity" (2010:52), rather than conflict between GNC identity and dominant society, and offers no discussion of the veil.

More commonly, extensions of the concept analyze experiences of double consciousness for people with multiple oppressed identities. Research on "triple consciousness" views the self-formation of individuals with two marginalized identities as divided into three conflicting worlds. Bonilla-Silva (2010) contends that Afro-Latinx self-formation entails a struggle between black, Latinx, and American identities, and Welang posits that black American women "view themselves through three lenses and not two: America, blackness, and womanhood" (2018:296). Rather than theorizing three conflicting worlds, Falcón proposes "mestiza double consciousness" to characterize how Afro-Peruvian women interpret the "racialized gendered 'eyes of others'" (2008:677), indicating that gender and race are not separable.

Scholars also build upon Du Bois' ([1903] 1990) description of the color line as a global problem to theorize double consciousness outside the United States or in relation to oppression that transcends national borders. This work often focuses on transnational continuities in double consciousness in the African diaspora and overlaps with work on multiple oppressed identities at times (Bell 2004; Falcón 2008; Gilroy 1993; Moore 2005). The use of postcolonial theory in this area varies significantly. Bell (2004) and Moore (2005) contend that Fanon's work on shared experiences of colonization in the African diaspora enriches studies of double consciousness, but Bell rejects postcolonial thought outside an Afrocentric or African Americentric perspective as too ahistorical. Falcón (2008) does not explicitly describe her approach as postcolonial feminist, but her fusion of Anzaldúa (1987) and Du Bois ([1903] 1990) to study national and transnational experiences of "mestiza double consciousness" provides an example for joining the perspectives. Falcón theorizes "the space where First and Third World politics and people collide" (2008:674) as a borderland that influences how activists envision transnational solidarity, but additional engagement with postcolonial feminism is needed to analyze how the primacy of Global North categories as "global" within a transnational community shapes Global South subjectivities.

Returning to the puzzle posed in the introduction, two gaps in the literature lead me to conclude that extant conceptualizations of double consciousness are inadequate to study Thai *kathoey* self-formation and propose the concept "paired double consciousness." First, no version is designed to examine cisnormative structures that divide GNC selves between two worlds. Second, extensions of the concept focused on transnational dimensions do not ask if certain groups face a second veil based on

a form of oppression they experience *within* a transnational community (Bell 2004; Falcón 2008; Gilroy 1993). To address these gaps, I adopt a postcolonial feminist approach to double consciousness in two senses: one, I heed Mohanty's (1988) call for research that attends to oppression, lived experiences, and agency within cultural context; and two, diverging from Falcón (2008), I employ a postcolonial feminist perspective on language, social categories, and essentialized binaries. With this approach, it is clear that although *kathoey* and transgender individuals from the Global North share experiences of cisnormative oppression, *kathoey* are further oppressed through colonial hierarchies that constitute a veil within this community. Therefore, *kathoey* self-formation should be studied in relation to two veils: a veil in Thai society that produces "gender double consciousness" and a veil in the global transgender and GNC community that produces "transnational double consciousness."

DATA AND METHODS

I collected the data for this study with a three-pronged methodological approach consisting of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and qualitative content analysis of print news and media. Observations and interviews took place in Bangkok, Thailand, between June and August 2017. I chose Bangkok as a research site because it is Thailand's largest city and a global city (Sassen 2001). As a key site for global flows of economic activity, cultural production, and political engagement in Thailand, Bangkok is an ideal location to study how the tension between local and global concepts of GNC identity shape *kathoey* self-formation. The Institutional Review Board at Northwestern University and the National Research Council of Thailand approved this project. The names of interview respondents, as well as the non-governmental organization (NGO) and participants observed, are pseudonyms.

The first prong of research, participant observation, took place at *Kathoey* Rights Organization (KRO), a *kathoey*-led NGO engaged in research, activism, and policymaking initiatives.[7] During the six-week period of concentrated observation, I attended in-office events – including workday activities, board meetings, and group dinners – as well as external meetings with government agencies and other NGOs. Jotted notes were transcribed into full fieldnotes at the completion of each day's activities.

The second prong consisted of 12 in-depth interviews with lay *kathoey* (n=10) and KRO cofounders (n=2). Using KRO email lists, I recruited respondents who were at least 18 years old and identified as *kathoey, saaw praphet soong* (second kind of woman), *phuuying kham phet* (woman who crosses sex/gender), or transgender woman, all of which are identity labels for this community (Winter 2011). Contacts on KRO email lists varied significantly in their involvement with the NGO. Table 1 presents demographic information for interview respondents and one key informant from participant observation. Open-ended interviews centered on three themes: social memberships, gender identity, and healthcare decision-making. I conducted six interviews in Thai with an interpreter's assistance and six interviews in English.[8] In excerpts from interviews and fieldnotes, I preserve respondents' identity label choices. I audio recorded and transcribed all interviews. Interviews lasted between 39 and 115 minutes, with an average length of 75 minutes.

Consistent with my postcolonial feminist approach, I foreground data from interviews and observations because they are well suited to illustrating the lived experiences of *kathoey*. To triangulate this data, I analyzed news and media content as a third prong of research. Qualitative content analysis included 124 *Bangkok Post* articles about *kathoey* from 2016 to 2017 and two video advertisements from 2018. I chose the *Bangkok Post* for content analysis because it is a Bangkok-based newspaper

7 I obtained access to KRO through a personal contact in Thailand.

8 In two of the six Thai interviews, respondents spoke English in some portions. I note excerpts translated from Thai.

Table 1. Basic Information about Study Participants

Pseudonym	*Age*	*Occupation*	*Preferred Identity Label*
Chimlin	29	Fashion model	*Kathoey*
Paeng	32	NGO employee (activist)	*Kathoey*
Jit	40	NGO employee (activist)	*Kathoey*
Ana	31	Restaurant owner	*Kathoey*
Sarika[a]	34	Medical clinic administrator	Transgender woman
Phueng	35	Magazine editor	*Kathoey*
Air	30	Event planner	*Kathoey*
Poom[a]	31	Social worker	*Kathoey*
Nuu	29	Business consultant	Transgender woman
Mot	26	Legal consultant	*Kathoey*
Mali	32	NGO employee	*Phuuying kham phet*
Hom	28	Customs officer	*Phuuying kham phet*
Noi[b]	36	NGO employee (activist)	*Kathoey*

[a]KRO co-founder
[b]KRO Executive Director Noi did not participate in a formal interview, but was a key informant in participant observation.

with full-text coverage in LexisNexis.[9] The video advertisements included in analysis circulated widely in Thailand and feature narratives of *kathoey* self-formation produced for a mixed cisgender and *kathoey* audience.

I coded all data with ATLAS.ti software using a grounded theory approach to develop codes inductively (Glaser and Strauss 1967). While data collection was still in process, I began generating descriptive codes. Over time, I constructed concepts through "focused coding" (Charmaz 2006:57) that encapsulated self-formation as a process affected by marginalization in Thai society and the global transgender and GNC sphere. As focused coding continued, I detected three core patterns whereby oppression in Thai society shaped *kathoey* self-presentation, identity labels, and education and career aspirations. I also discerned two major patterns regarding how marginalization in the global sphere shaped identity labels and embodiment.

No claims to generalizability can be made from the data. One strength of this study, as compared to research that includes only *kathoey* sex workers, is the diversity of respondents' occupations. Two potential limitations of this study relate to my positionality. First, respondents may have been guarded because I am a non-Thai cisgender woman. However, respondents often provided lengthy definitions for Thai terms and cultural norms after I indicated familiarity, which leads me to believe they explained their experiences in greater detail than they would to an insider (Orne 2013). The second limitation concerns the possibility that an interpreter's presence affected interlocutors' responses. However, excluding non-English speakers would have presented a more limited view of *kathoey* experience.

RESULTS

Gender Double Consciousness

I begin my analysis with gender double consciousness, which occurs as the self is affirmed in the world of *kathoey* behind the veil and negated in the world of dominant Thai society on the other side. Cisnormative structures that exclude and marginalize *kathoey* create this barrier between worlds.

9 I used the following inclusion criteria: one, the text must contain at least one relevant keyword such as *kathoey*, ladyboy, *saaw prapheet soong*, *phuuying kham phet*, or transgender; and two, the article must discuss *kathoey* in a substantive fashion, even if they are not the main subject.

Kathoey view their GNC identity through a cisgender Thai lens and struggle "to merge [a] double self into a better and truer self" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:9). Attending to the meaning of practices and interactions within the Thai cultural context (Mohanty 1988), I find that cisnormativity leads *kathoey* to experience inner conflict in three areas of self-formation that produce gender double consciousness: one, self-presentation of feminine gender identity; two, choice of gender identity label; and three, education and career aspirations.

Respondents felt inner struggle between their *kathoey* and Thai identity related to self-presentation beginning in childhood. Poom, a KRO co-founder and social worker, recalled a sense of twoness in preschool: "I'm feeling that I am like [cisgender girls]. . . . But that's one thing, I saw the difference of them because of my uniform. Because it's a boy uniform, it's not a girl uniform" (Interview). Poom's inchoate sense of a veil separating her from cisgender girls echoes Du Bois' early memory of the veil: "Then it dawned upon me with a certain suddenness that I was different from the others; or like, mayhap, in heart and life and longing, but shut out from their world by a vast veil" ([1903] 1990:8). Air, an event planner, also felt tension between *kathoey* and Thai identity as a child: "I got punished by my family all the time. When my mom saw me walk like a girl, she hit me and told me not to do it" (Interview, Thai). Such childhood incidents initiated the divergence of self-formation between *kathoey* and Thai worlds as Poom and Air realized that cisgender Thais, including family, would deny their feminine gender identity.

A 2018 video advertisement featuring the life story of Rock Kwanlada, the 2017 Miss Tiffany's Beauty Pageant runner-up, portrayed similar narratives of gender double consciousness in childhood (Sunsilk Thailand 2018). As the advertisement begins, boys bully a young Rock for behaving femininely. Shortly thereafter, Rock's father expresses his disappointment and teaches her to fight like a man. Later, Rock's friends encourage her to wear a wig after school and sign up for a local pageant for *kathoey*. Rock narrates, "So you begin to split your world in two. One world is very you, but the other world is how your dad wants it to be" (Sunsilk Thailand 2018). From a Du Boisian perspective, a veil of cisnormativity splits Rock's self-formation in two: the *kathoey* community affirms her GNC identity, while dominant Thai society negates it.

Like Rock, my respondents presented feminine hairstyles (wigs) and apparel in *kathoey* social groups first. Mot, a legal consultant, recounted how she and her friends affirmed their GNC identity in high school: "We dressed like women and went to the mall . . . and took pictures and said, 'Oh, I'm so cute in this picture'" (Interview). Yet, interactions with cisgender people led to denial of her identity. One day, Mot's parents confronted her after noticing her makeup:

> They caught me with [my] wig and high heels. . . . They said, "What is going on?" and I said that I want to be this way, and they said, "How do you know? You are so young. How do you know you want to be this way?" (Interview)

As Mot endeavored to show her parents the validity of her GNC identity from behind the cisnormative veil, they "hear but dimly, and even what they hear, they do not understand" (Du Bois [1940] 2007:66). Mot cannot sacrifice her GNC identity or her Thai identity, which in this case is tied to family, so she struggles to unify her two selves.

In adulthood, *kathoey* often pass as cisgender women, but they continue to experience gender double consciousness as their feminine gender identity is denied within cisnormative society.[10] All respondents except for one described being outed when presenting their national identification cards, which cannot be changed to designate their chosen name and female gender marker. Thais use these cards in quotidian interactions such as registering a mobile phone, checking in at a clinic, or applying for employment. Mali, an NGO employee, characterized outing as a routine occurrence at medical appointments: "Every time I see the doctor, the doctor has to make sure with the nurse – in front of

10 Here, I focus on interactions where passing is socially beneficial to *kathoey*.

me – if this is the right person" (Interview). After Mali informs the staff she is *kathoey*, they often ask her personal questions based on stereotypes. Mali's story points to identification cards as material objects that perpetuate cisnormativity and feelings of twoness as they structure interactions in dominant society that invalidate *kathoey* humanity (Mohanty 1988). Similar to Du Bois' observation, "I could not act, I could not live, without taking into careful daily account the reaction of my white environing world" ([1940] 2007:69), *kathoey* must anticipate the reactions of cisgender people to manage the inner struggle between GNC and Thai identity as they are outed in everyday life. Yet, the dynamics of outing and gendered passing for *kathoey* also suggest a need to expand theorization of double consciousness to delineate the impacts that corporeal dimensions of gender or race versus other identity markers, such as identification cards, have on the experience of the veil and twoness.

The second area of self-formation in which *kathoey* experience gender double consciousness is gender identity labels. In interviews, I asked detailed questions about preferences for labels like *kathoey*, *saaw praphet soong* (second type of woman), *phuuying kham phet* (woman who crosses sex/gender), and transgender woman. Rather than attempting to determine an essential identity (Falcón 2008; Spivak 1988), I analyze how respondents situated GNC identity vis-à-vis the *kathoey* community and dominant Thai society through language (Fanon [1952] 2008). Overall, the perceived embeddedness of cisnormativity in terms influenced respondents' preferences. For example, many respondents articulated strong negative feelings toward *saaw praphet soong* because it implied inferiority to cisgender women. Ana, a restaurant owner, preferred *kathoey* and disliked *saaw praphet soong* because, as she told me, "Why do females need to be separated in types? Ladies are ladies" (Interview, Thai). Paeng, an activist at an NGO, interpreted *saaw praphet soong* as marking a hierarchical ranking of femininity:

> If you have *saaw praphet soong* [second type of women], who are *saaw praphet neung* [first type of women]? Then it would have third, fourth, and fifth types. This is why I'm okay with *kathoey*, but for people who know me, I would like them to call my name instead. Because when you see a woman or a man, you call their names, not their genders. (Interview, Thai)

Ana and Paeng resist *saaw praphet soong* because they see it as a product of the cisnormative veil between worlds. Behind the veil all expressions of femininity are equally valid, but society regards cisgender women's femininity as most authentic. As Paeng notes, cisgender Thais do not experience double consciousness because their gender identity is implicitly affirmed.

Respondents who preferred *kathoey* liked that the label did not define their identity in relation to cisgender women and associated it with affirmation among *kathoey*. However, these respondents knew that cisgender Thais occasionally use *kathoey* derogatorily. Chimlin, a fashion model, preferred *kathoey*, but explained, "Sometimes it is used as a humiliation . . . . I try to show that this word doesn't have to be offensive, but to do that is not easy" (Interview). As Chimlin encounters demeaning uses of the word *kathoey*, which she associates with belonging in the GNC community, she experiences discord between GNC and Thai identity. Overall, seeing "through the eyes of others" who view *kathoey* with "amused contempt and pity" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:8) produced a doubling of self with identity labels. Yet, respondents also demonstrated agency by rejecting labels they interpreted as cisnormative and reclaiming positive meanings for the label *kathoey* (Fanon [1952] 2008; Mohanty 1988).

Education and career aspirations constitute a third area of gender double consciousness. Many respondents described how discrimination in education or employment created conflict between *kathoey* and Thai identity by impeding their ability to financially support their parents, which jeopardized their identity as good Thai daughters. For some, the internalization of stigma and anticipation of discrimination instilled a need to prove themselves exceptional. Air stated:

> I had to prove myself by excelling in school. I had to be good at sports and academics. I had to get into a good university. I had to get a master's degree. I had to get a good job with a good salary. This is my mindset. (Interview, Thai)

Air's drive to excel exemplifies her "dogged strength" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:9), which she used to merge two selves by proving that her *kathoey* identity does not inhibit her ability to have a successful career and support her parents. Phueng, a magazine editor, similarly explained, "I want to do a good job, [have] the good position, the good money and everything, for my family. To prove that I'm okay" (Interview). Air and Phueng drew connections between the financial support they provided and familial acceptance of their gender identity. The imbrication of work and family in Thai identity drives *kathoey* to strive for exceptionality not only to secure work, but also to protect the self in the family context (Enteen 2015; Mohanty 1988).

Despite this resolve, the veil still obscures the humanity of *kathoey* from cisgender Thais. After experiencing discrimination, several respondents developed "second sight" that led them to discover their vocation as activists.[11] Noi, KRO Executive Director, had been an activist for 12 years. Asked why she chose her career, Noi described an incident of discrimination in her job search after university as a turning point. Noi and her cisgender friends applied at a call center, and Noi alone was declined. She recalled, "The owner suggested that I needed psychological testing because I was transgender. I actually went for the testing, but the owner still didn't hire me" (Fieldnotes). Initially, Noi tried to resolve conflict between *kathoey* and Thai identity by undergoing testing to prove she was not mentally ill. However, the owner's continued refusal triggered second sight as she realized that "Thai society lacks an understanding of *kathoey*, and we need to reconstruct knowledge of the community" (Fieldnotes). As Noi began questioning the cisnormative veil and envisioning how to resist it, she recognized her vocation as an activist.

Paeng quit her job in publishing after her boss abruptly demanded she dress like a man. She described an awakening of second sight as she faced more discrimination in her job search:

> I chose to work in this field [activism] because I was discriminated against before. There was a time when I sent more than two dozen photos for job applications to different places. There are companies that didn't accept my application and some did, but they wanted me to dress like a man . . . . I want the younger generation to not be discriminated [against] like I was. (Interview, Thai)

As the veil blinded employers, Paeng felt a division between *kathoey* and Thai worlds. While struggling with the dissonance, she realized that gender double consciousness will continue affecting younger *kathoey* if the veil is not dismantled. In developing second sight, Paeng saw herself as someone capable of creating social change for her community and became an activist.

Second sight motivates some *kathoey* to become role models for the community in their current careers rather than activists. Hom glimpsed a "possibility for something different" (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015:242) while fighting against stereotypes to embark upon a career in government as a customs officer. Hom said, "In Thailand, most people just thought that transgender are funny people and they can make fools of us. Well, I'm funny, but I have brain, too. I can be an icon or an idol for other trans [women]" (Interview). Hom's encounters with the veil led her to discern cisnormativity as the cause of internalized stigma. She now views herself as a role model who can inspire *kathoey* to resist the veil and pursue their dream careers. In a *Bangkok Post* interview, Yoshi, an actress and winner of Miss Tiffany's Beauty Pageant, tells *kathoey*, "Keep on doing good things for society. We can show them that, just as we are, we can be great" (Mahavongtrakul 2017). Yoshi realized cisnormative

11 Akin to Itzigsohn and Brown, I interpret Du Bois' ([1903] 1990) description of "second sight" as connoting the ability to "suspend the optics of the veil and see other possibilities for organizing the world" (2015:240).

society must change, not *kathoey*, to reduce conflict between selves, and she strives to share this message as a role model.

In this section, I have argued that *kathoey* experience gender double consciousness in self-formation. I offer a novel extension of Du Boisian double consciousness that demonstrates how it is uniquely positioned to understand the role of cisnormative oppression that divides *kathoey* self-formation between two worlds and produces inner conflict as *kathoey* strive for a unified self. By adopting a postcolonial feminist approach to double consciousness, I highlight the specificities of cisnormativity in Thai society and the agency *kathoey* exhibit in navigating two worlds. My analysis has emphasized parallels with Du Bois' analysis of racial double consciousness, but the contours of gender double consciousness also differ in several ways. The conflict respondents felt between *kathoey* and Thai identity prior to social transition suggests that double consciousness can be experienced before disclosure for identities that entail a coming out process. *Kathoey* experiences of passing and being outed in adult life impress a need to scrutinize the oppressive power the veil wields in self-formation even when an individual may not be visibly or corporeally recognized as member of a marginalized group by the dominant group. Finally, my respondents' experiences demonstrate how familial interactions contribute to gender double consciousness. For some identities, the veil can pervade the family and make it a site for feelings of misrecognition and twoness, rather than affirmation, in self-formation.

Gender Double Consciousness and Cisgender Thais

Just as Du Bois ([1940] 2007) theorized that white Americans are impacted by their role in maintaining the veil, I contend that cisgender Thais are shaped by the veil. During fieldwork, strangers who inquired about my research typically followed up their questions with statements like, "I have a [friend, coworker, relative] who is *kathoey*" to convey their acceptance of *kathoey* identity. Yet, my data suggest that the veil acts "as a one-way mirror" (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015:235) that inhibits cisgender Thais' perceptions of the social world and reflects their view of cisgender identity as inherently superior. Cisgender Thais are blind to the oppression *kathoey* face and their own roles as oppressors who, either actively or passively, defend the cisnormative veil (Lemert 1994). West and Zimmerman note, "While it is individuals who do gender, the enterprise is fundamentally interactional and institutional in character" (1987:136–37). Accordingly, I focus on interactions and institutions in which *kathoey* challenge the assumption that gender identity aligns with sex assigned at birth and on instances when cisgender Thais deny, rather than affirm, their humanity.

Cisgender Thais fail to recognize their role as oppressors who impede or question the social transition of *kathoey*. Chimlin, Sarika (KRO co-founder and medical clinic administrator), and Ana each remembered incidents where school officials contacted their parents about expressions of femininity at school to force them to present as male. Chimlin told her parents about her *kathoey* identity after officials at her all-boys boarding school found women's clothes in her closet. Chimlin recalled, "We still didn't understand each other. They were like, 'Oh, you are boy, you have to grow up as a guy'" (Interview). In forcing Chimlin to dress as a boy, her parents and the school officials were blind to "their role in denying the humanity of the other" (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015:243). After an incident at her school, Sarika recounted, "My mom asked me, 'Can you change? Can you be normal?' Or is there any way that she can support me to be back, to be a boy" (Interview). Sarika highlights how the veil misleads cisgender Thais into believing their own gender identity is superior. The denigration of *kathoey* identity causes serious psychic harm. Ana explained, "I still wanted to think that I was male. Until I suffered so much and became depressed, and it was like a choice between suicide and coming out" (Interview, Thai). Yet, cisgender Thais characterize mental health issues as a weakness of *kathoey* identity rather than acknowledging the deleterious effects of cisnormativity (Likhitpreechakul 2016).

The veil blinds cisgender Thais to the dehumanizing effects that the absence of legal recognition on an institutional level has on *kathoey*. Since 2007, KRO and other NGOs have led multiple attempts to pass legislation allowing *kathoey* to change their birth name, gender marker, and title on national identification cards (Fieldnotes). Despite KRO's attempts to publicize the harm *kathoey* experience from being outed in interactions where they must present male identification cards, cisgender Thais have opposed each draft bill. Summarizing opposition to a recent bill, a *Bangkok Post* reporter wrote, "Some [opponents] fear transgender women will take this opportunity to fool men into marrying them" (Mahavongtrakul 2019). This concern betrays a willful ignorance of the routine demoralization *kathoey* experience without accurate identification. Seeing only their dominant position reflected in the veil, cisgender Thais view *kathoey* as impersonators of cisgender women who threaten the institution of marriage.

Without legal recognition, *kathoey* remain vulnerable to demoralizing interactions caused by cisgender Thais' blindness. For example, Thai hospitals are divided into men's and women's wards, and cisgender medical providers commonly admit *kathoey* to the men's ward because they are AMAB, despite their protests. Jit, an activist at an NGO, avoided hospitals because she feared negation of her gender identity: "Unless it's an emergency case, I'm not going to go to the hospital. I'm afraid that [they] will take me to go recover in the men's ward" (Interview, Thai). A story Sarika heard from a patient about a prior hospitalization further illuminates the denial of *kathoey* humanity: "She was put in the center of the building because the healthcare provider did not know where to put her, on female or male wards, patient wards. So, she was put in front of the elevator because the nurse had no idea where to put her. It was humiliating" (Interview). This story parallels Du Bois' remark that the "surrounding group . . . was settled and determined upon the fact that I was and must be a thing apart" ([1940] 2007:69). Unable to see past the veil, providers do not recognize themselves as oppressors who treat *kathoey* as less than human.

Cisgender Thais do not experience double consciousness, but the veil affects them. Their blindness prevents them from comprehending the dehumanization *kathoey* experience in a cisnormative society and their own role as oppressors. Extending Du Bois' conclusion that the veil prevents white Americans from understanding "the truth about them, us, and the world" ([1940] 2007:76), I argue that the veil inhibits cisgender Thais' understanding of the social world.

Transnational Double Consciousness

The oppression of transgender and GNC identities on a global scale suggests a possibility for *kathoey* to find affirmation within a global community. However, I contend that *kathoey* experience a second type of double consciousness within this community as racialized people in the Global South whose identities are marginalized in relation to hegemonic transgender identity. A neocolonial veil between *kathoey* and white transgender people from the Global North produces this double consciousness. I term this "transnational double consciousness" because it occurs as *kathoey* experience an inner struggle between essentialized local and global concepts of GNC identity. This name aligns with postcolonial feminists who invoke "transnational" to indicate that local and global categories are socially constructed and to challenge the notion that global identities offer liberation (Grewal and Kaplan 2001; Patil 2011; Rajan and Park 2000). Unlike gender double consciousness, transnational double consciousness is rarely experienced through direct interactions with the dominant group. Rather, *kathoey* identity is marginalized as transgender, and as a label and category, colonizes other modes of GNC experience (Jarrín 2016; Nay 2019). *Kathoey* feel tension between the subjugated *kathoey* and dominant transgender sphere as they contend with essentialized binaries such as global/local and modern/traditional. This tension leads to transnational double consciousness in two areas of self-formation: first, choice of English and Thai identity labels; and second, embodiment of gender identity in relation to GRS.

The tension between *kathoey* and hegemonic transgender identity became evident in respondents' discussions of the English (or English-originated) labels transgender and *phuuying kham phet*,[12] a newly introduced indigenization, which illustrated how they represented their identity relative to the dominant language and conceptualization of GNC identity (Fanon [1952] 2008). Eight interview respondents preferred the term *kathoey*, but used transgender or *phuuying kham phet* in formal settings because they connoted worldliness. After describing her preference for using *kathoey* with friends, Chimlin added, "When I'm talking about the third-person, mostly I use the word 'transgender' because it's internationally accepted, and I think it's more proper and more polite" (Interview). Similarly, Mot reflected, "For people who are close to me, we know each other enough, it's *kathoey* . . . . For the formal people, I say to them I'm a trans woman" (Interview). Chimlin's and Mot's situational use of English and Thai labels demonstrates how transnational double consciousness occurs as representation is divided between the Thai and global sphere. This bifurcation is not benign; rather, it is driven by colonial hierarchies that establish Global North understandings of gender variance as dominant, modern, and universal, while othering Thai *kathoey* identity (Mohanty 1988; Nay 2019). *Kathoey* feel tension between "double thoughts" that "give rise to double words and double ideals" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:146) as their Thai label and perception of GNC identity is affirmed behind the veil, but denied in a transnational community that privileges hegemonic transgender identity.

Several respondents strove to mitigate the inner struggle imposed by the local/global divide by exclusively using English labels. This strategy represents "an attempt to adjust all thought and action to the will of the greater group" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:39–40) and echoes other double consciousness research (Johnson 2018; Moore 2005). Mali favored *phuuying kham phet* because, as she stated, "This word derives from [an] English term, it's a new term. And since it's a new term, there's less stigmatization in that context" (Interview). Nuu, a business consultant, explained, "Normally, on the media, when we use the word *kathoey* or ladyboy or *saaw praphet soong*, [it's] always negative . . . so the most appropriate word that I prefer is 'transgender woman'" (Interview). Mali and Nuu suggest that hegemonic labels facilitate global belonging and offer relief from cisnormative oppression in Thai society. However, the notion of global identities as liberating stems from their privileged position in colonial hierarchies and breaks down when examining how the meanings of local and global change as the global is localized (Grewal and Kaplan 2001; Patil 2011). For example, 12 of the 18 *Bangkok Post* articles from 2016 to 2017 that depicted *kathoey* as criminals exclusively called them transgender, which suggests the label may be stigmatized as it is localized in Thai society. This subset of articles cannot provide a full picture of how cisgender Thais use "transgender." Yet, recalling Du Bois' point that "The worlds within and without the Veil of Color are changing, and changing rapidly, but not at the same rate, not in the same way" ([1903] 1990:146), the derogatory use of transgender shows that the struggle *kathoey* face in integrating Thai and hegemonic conceptions of GNC identity occurs amid shifting meanings in the worlds on either side of the veil.

KRO co-founders and staff also experience transnational double consciousness as they contend with representational quandaries over *kathoey* and transgender identity. According to Poom, the co-founders extensively debated identity labels before registering as an NGO:

> We were critical of what the names represent . . . [Some terms] have the cultural base like *kathoey*, but they have the international term with "transgender" and *khon kham phet*. . . . We discussed a lot on this, what word we would choose . . . and at last we select the *kathoey* word (Interview).

Despite KRO's initial decision to use *kathoey*, the mixed use of labels in practice shows how representation remains divided between the Thai sphere, where the category *kathoey* is affirmed, and

12 I classify the labels *phuuying kham phet* and *khon kham phet* (person who crosses sex/gender) as English-originated because my respondents framed them as adaptations of English terms, not Thai inventions (Winter 2011).

transnational sphere, where it is denied. Because KRO receives significant funding from the Global North, its work must fit "a constrained rubric of representation for gaining funds and recognition" (Dutta and Roy 2014:323) in which the category transgender is dominant. Noi told me that KRO "encouraged the use of trans woman over *kathoey* because it is easily recognized internationally" (Fieldnotes), suggesting that *kathoey* identity is distorted behind the veil in a transnational sphere "that grasps gender variance within predominantly white, Euro- and US-centric frames of reference" (Nay 2019:67). Yet, Noi still embraced the *kathoey* label, especially in work in rural areas outside Bangkok: "If I say to someone I am a transgender woman, they do not understand. But if I say *kathoey*, they understand" (Fieldnotes). KRO subverts the dominant frame when possible, but the tension between essentialized local and global categories persists (Spivak 1988). KRO is one of few NGOs advocating for *kathoey*, and lay community members witness its struggle to reconcile two worlds. In discussing labels, Nuu observed, "I think it's very tough work for [KRO] to reclaim *kathoey*" (Interview). KRO grapples with transnational double consciousness at an organizational level, but its work has consequences for *kathoey* subjectivity.

Kathoey also experience transnational double consciousness regarding GRS and embodiment. Previous research has concluded that *kathoey* ascribe little importance to GRS compared to transgender women in the Global North (Aizura 2018; Chokrungvaranont et al. 2014). Still, respondents described how the lesser emphasis on GRS in Thai culture conflicted with global discourse about GRS as integral to hegemonic transgender identity. Nuu explained, "Sometimes [*kathoey*] choose the wrong way by going through the sex reassignment surgery.[13] Because they think that it's kind of the development for every transgender person" (Interview). Here, Nuu problematizes the conception of GRS as universal to GNC identity, which conflicts with *kathoey* identity. She notes some *kathoey* may be unduly influenced to pursue GRS because their embodiments are negated as they are cast as "illegitimate and undesirable in comparison to transsexual identity" (Jarrín 2016:368). In deciding which embodiment suits their gender identity, *kathoey* make "a determined effort at self-realization and self-development despite environing opinion" (Du Bois [1903] 1990:40), but competing notions of traditional and modern embodiment perpetuate the internal struggle between Thai GNC and transnational identity.

The marginalization of *kathoey* within the GRS industry in Thailand complicates these conflicting notions of embodiment. Ninety percent of all GRS patients are foreign transgender women visiting as medical tourists (Chokrungvaranont et al. 2014). The industry has become stratified according to colonial and racial hierarchies, and prominent surgeons cater to an ideal patient who "is non-Thai, non-*kathoey*, and non-Asian" (Aizura 2018:193). Consequently, the veil obscures *kathoey* who do desire GRS as prices rise and the industry marginalizes, delays, or excludes racialized Thai bodies. The four respondents who had obtained GRS waited until they could afford surgeons serving mostly foreign patients. They worked multiple jobs, saved wages for years, or borrowed money to secure visibility in the stratified industry. Jit could afford GRS after working at a cabaret for three years. Waiting in medical gender transition has "subjectifying and somatic effects on individuals" (Pitts-Taylor 2020:659) as they reckon with a loss of agency. Jit explained, "After surgery, I felt good, I felt better, more confident. . . . Before, I felt like my soul was blocked in a guy's body. I'm more free to be myself" (Interview, Thai). Jit illustrates how the process of waiting, exacerbated by the neocolonial veil, affects the gendered embodiment and subjectivity of *kathoey*.

Two other respondents, Nuu and Sarika, had not yet decided whether GRS was appropriate for them and were contemplating, among other factors, the quality of care they could access as Thais. Sarika knew many *kathoey* who had complications with surgeons serving Thai patients. She told me if she did pursue GRS, "I would go for the best [surgeon]. . . . [I]f you go to this doctor, you pay a lot, equally as non-Thai patients, but you're gonna get it perfectly" (Interview). Sarika underscores how the marginalization of *kathoey* within the GRS industry compounds the tension between Thai and

13 The term "sex reassignment surgery" (SRS) is used interchangeably with GRS in Thailand.

hegemonic conceptualizations of GNC identity in transnational double consciousness. Exclusion affects self-formation as *kathoey* contemplate their ideal embodiment alongside the knowledge that the best care is typically reserved for white transgender women.

In this section, I advance a new approach to studying the marginalization of Global South GNC identities in the global community by arguing that a neocolonial veil produces an inner struggle between Thai and hegemonic transgender identity that leads to transnational double consciousness (Aizura et al. 2014; Dutta and Roy 2014; Jarrín 2016; Nay 2019). Studying this second veil requires joining a Du Boisian approach to self-formation with a postcolonial feminist perspective on the connections between colonial hierarchies, language, universalizing categories, and essentialized binaries. Unlike Falcón's (2008) analysis of double consciousness in a transnational sphere, which emphasizes the effects of power inequalities between the Global North and Global South on solidarity, I find that oppression within this sphere shapes self-formation at the level of identity labels and embodiment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

I have argued that Du Boisian double consciousness is integral to studying *kathoey* self-formation, which develops in relation to two veils that create a paired double consciousness. The first veil divides self-formation between the worlds of *kathoey* and dominant Thais to produce gender double consciousness in feminine self-presentation, identity label choice, and career and education aspirations. The cisnormative veil also blinds cisgender Thais. The second veil divides self-formation between the *kathoey* community and the global transgender and GNC community to produce transnational double consciousness in identity label choice and embodiment.[14]

I discuss gender double consciousness and transnational double consciousness separately over the course of this article to clarify the two worlds on either side of each veil that divides kathoey subjectivity. However, I conclude that the veils collectively create a "paired double consciousness," because they shape *kathoey* self-formation in equally important ways. By using the word "paired," I intend to convey that studying one without the other would yield an incomplete understanding of self-formation. In particular, viewing label choice as a matter of gender double consciousness alone fails to explain why some *kathoey* choose English terms, some choose Thai terms, and some choose to use terms situationally to represent their identity. Pairing gender and transnational double consciousness produces a more comprehensive picture of *kathoey* self-formation by attending to the twoness they experience as they strive to reconcile GNC and dominant Thai identity, as well as local and global identity.

This article contributes to postcolonial feminist theory and double consciousness theory by showing how the two bodies of thought, both of which are underutilized in sociology, can be joined to enrich self-formation analyses. I intervene in longstanding debates in postcolonial feminist theory by demonstrating how a Du Boisian approach aids in studying local and global identities without reifying Global North knowledge (Grewal and Kaplan 2001; Mohanty 1988; Patil 2011; Spivak 1988). Drawing on postcolonial feminist theory, I theorize the presence of a second veil based on oppression *within* a transnationally oppressed group, an issue that has not been adequately examined in double consciousness research (Falcón 2008; Gilroy 1993).

The findings suggest several directions for future research. First, while the results are not generalizable, this article offers a framework for scholars of gender and sexuality to explore how cisnormative veils affect GNC self-formation beyond this sample. Cisnormativity is a feature of many societies, but the inner struggle it causes likely differs because systems of oppression are not uniform across cultures (Grewal and Kaplan 2001; Mohanty 1988). Further research should examine how experiences of gender double consciousness vary based on location in the Global North or Global South, level of violence or stigma toward GNC people in a society, and racial or ethnic diversity within a nation.

14 The impact of the neocolonial veil on white transgender people is beyond the scope of this study. For a discussion of GRS medical tourists' perceptions of Thai culture, see Aizura (2018).

Second, sociologists studying transnational communities that span the Global North and Global South should consider how the concept of a neocolonial veil may assist in studying subjectivity in relation to universalized categories and dominant language.

Finally, future research could build upon the framework of paired double consciousness offered here to explore its conceptual boundaries. There are clear extensions of the concept to studies of GNC self-formation in the Global South and to research situated at the intersection of gender and sexuality studies and postcolonial feminist theory more broadly. However, scholars should also analyze how paired double consciousness may help explain self-formation for other groups experiencing two different forms of oppression in national versus global contexts. By studying different configurations of paired double consciousness based on form and scale of oppression, sociologists can develop richer theories of self-formation.

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