

University of Western Ontario
Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research

**WS 2274G: Introduction to Trans Studies
Winter 2019**

Course time and location: Thursdays 9:30 – 12:30, WIRB-1160

Instructor: Jennifer C. Ingrey

Office: Lawson Hall, 3249

Office hours: TBA, or by appointment

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Extended Course Description

This course will introduce students to the emerging and rapidly developing field of transgender studies through various conceptual and topical frameworks to think about what it means to be trans* given political, social and economic contexts that are constantly shifting and reshaping notions of identity. With a focus on media discourses that illustrate particular ways of being gendered and/or trans*, we will unpack dominant and counter-narratives to consider the implications for identity and the real lived experiences of trans* people including transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, gender fluid, non-binary, and so forth. The course will also explore the ontological and epistemological debates between trans and queer, trans and feminist and the intersections between race, class, ability and so forth via trans* through disability studies, trans of colour studies, and decolonizing trans* critiques. With a look back upon a contested and painful history through the power of activism, we will also consider how to disrupt pathologizing and/or deficit framework narratives of trans* to imagine and work towards a trans positive future.

3 lecture hours, 0.5 course.

Course Objectives:

1. To develop a critical awareness and capacity for thinking about the systemic, institutional and historical influences of oppression and erasure that shape trans* identities and lives today;
2. To imagine and identify points of resistance to oppressive norms for securing trans* livability;
3. To identify particular contentions between trans studies and feminist theory and queer theory, etc.
4. To consider the intersections of class, race, ability, sexuality with trans* alongside an acknowledgement of oppression, power and privilege;
5. To build upon one's application of transgender studies in considerations of one's own gendered positionality.

Antirequisite(s): Women's Studies 4460F/G if taught in Winter 2013; Women's Studies 3343F/G if taught in Fall 2015.

Prerequisite(s): Women's Studies 1020E or 1.0 from Women's Studies 1021F/G, 1022F/G, 1023F/G and 1024F/G.

Required Course Materials: Available through Library Course Readings Service on OWL

Supplementary Course Materials: Available on OWL

Technology Requirements:

- Regular internet access (high speed recommended)
- Computer that
 - enables connection to outside websites (flexible firewall)
 - has multimedia playback capabilities (video/audio)
 - is capable of running a recent version of Internet Explorer, Safari, or Firefox

OWL login instructions and technical support information:

To access OWL, go to <http://owl.uwo.ca> Students may use Internet Explorer to access OWL; however, **Firefox is the preferred browser for using OWL.**

To log into OWL, students use their Western account credentials. The login is what precedes the “@uwo.ca” portion of students’ UWO email addresses.

- *If you do not know your Western account*, please contact edu.tech.support@uwo.ca for instructions.
- *If you know your Western account, but you do not remember your password*, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 519 661-3800 (or x83800). You will need to provide your Western username, your 9 digit Student Number and they may ask for other identifiers such as birth date.
- *If you require technical assistance in OWL*, information addressing common problems is available on the OWL home page. Students can also contact the ITS Helpdesk at 519-661-3800.

Evaluation:

| Assignment | Type | Due Date(s) | Weighting |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| <i>1. Participation</i> | <i>In-class</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> | <i>30%</i> |
| <i>2. Seminar Facilitation</i> | <i>In-class Discussion/ Activity</i> | <i>From week 3 and ongoing</i> | <i>15%</i> |
| <i>3. Mid-term Paper: Media Deconstruction</i> | <i>Critical Reflective Essay/ Review</i> | <i>Week 5, Thursday, February 7, 2019</i> | <i>20%</i> |
| <i>Topic Outline (Final Paper)</i> | <i>Brief</i> | <i>Week 10, Thursday, March 21, 2019</i> | |
| <i>4. Final Paper</i> | <i>Critical Research and Reflective Essay</i> | <i>Week 12, Thursday, April 4, 2019</i> | <i>35%</i> |

Late and Resubmission Policy: Any assignment handed in after the due date will receive a 2% grade deduction for each day late following the due date. This late policy will apply to all assignments for which no application for extension has been made. Late assignments will not be accepted two weeks past the due date.

NOTE: All assignments must be submitted electronically on OWL as well as in hard copy in class. All papers should be written in 12-point using Times New Roman font, with default 1-inch margins. Please use either MLA or APA.

1. Participation (Ongoing; Weight 30%)

You should be reflecting on your reading for the week and this is an opportunity to share your ideas in class. Your comments in discussion opportunities in class should reveal cohesive, critical and reflective responses to the assigned readings. You could identify a theme across the readings/viewing if you like, but this is not a requirement. You can focus just on one particular reading/viewing (although it is expected you read all required readings) and examine how it further informs your understanding of the topic and/or how it relates to your experiences and your understanding of transgender issues. You may also pose questions for reflection and further discussion in response to the readings/viewing. Your participation will be evaluated based not on anecdotal reflections but on how the course readings inform your understanding of themes and issues.

2. Seminar Facilitation (Week 3 and ongoing; Weight 15%)

Each week, small groups (2-3 students) will facilitate discussion for 20 – 30 minutes. Your discussion is not a presentation, but you may decide to bring in visual aids to help support your discussion and/or supplement your readings of the course material for that week. You should prepare at least two critical questions to be emailed at least one day in advance to me. These questions will form the basis of your reading and discussion. We will sign up for groups/weeks in week 2.

3. Mid-term Paper: Media Deconstruction (Due: Week 5, Thursday, February 17, 2019; Weight 20%)

Generally, this will be a story you locate in the media regarding the representation of a transgender person, a trans* issue, or some law/policy regarding trans* issues, lives, etc. Your job is to provide a critical analysis and deconstruction of the story using key frameworks from the course readings to support your thinking. At least three sources from the course must be referenced. While you will have to provide a brief summary, you should spend the majority of the paper critiquing the story elements for particular issues that align with embodiment, trans* rights, trans* inclusivity, and the livability of a life, etc. Length: five-six pages. Further details for this mid-term paper will be provided in class.

4. Final Paper (Due: Week 12, Thursday, April 4, 2019; Weight 35%)

This paper is a reflective research paper on a particular topic in transgender studies. You are required to outline a particular topic, either one introduced in the course, or one that is an extension of the course, and then conduct research that provides you with resources beyond the course content. Your paper is an essay that allows you to provide final reflection on trans* issues that has always troubled you, puzzled you, or excited you. You must choose a topic that has meaning for you but that can be examined via scholarly research. You should insert your

own reflections in this piece, rather than keeping it a purely research-based paper. Some suggestions: you could undertake a literature review in which you engage with the relevant reading in a way that demonstrates your knowledge and deeper understanding of trans* studies; you could undertake a critical analysis of resources, policy, or narrative accounts (trans* self-expression) that relate directly to the trans* issues raised within the content of the course. You will provide a brief outline/proposal of this paper two weeks prior (March 21, 2019, week 10) to its due date. **Please refer to at least three course readings in addition to at least two external sources. Length: seven – eight pages.**

Topic & Reading Outlines:

Week 1: Thursday, January 10, 2019

Introduction to the Course & Gendered Positionality

Required Readings:

Bettcher, T. (2014). Transphobia. *TSQ: Transgender studies quarterly*, 1(1-2), 249-251.

Garner, T. (2014). Becoming. *TSQ: Transgender studies quarterly*, 1(1-2), 30-32.

Girshick, L. (2008). Introduction: Identity boxes. In *Transgender voices: Beyond women and men*, (pp. 1-22). London: University of Hanover Press.

Williams, C. (2014). Transgender. *TSQ: Transgender studies quarterly*, 1(1-2), 232-234.

Recommended Reading:

Feinberg, L. (1998). We are all works in progress. In *Trans liberation: Beyond pink or blue*, (pp. 1-13). Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press.

Week 2: Thursday, January 17, 2019

What is Trans Studies? Situating the Field

Required Readings:

Stryker, S. (2006). “(De)Subjugated knowledges: An introduction to transgender studies.” In S. Stryker & S. Whittle (Eds.), *The Transgender Studies Reader*, (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Routledge.

Stryker, S., Currah, P., & Moore, L. J. (2008). Introduction: Trans-, trans, or transgender? *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, 36(3), pp. 29-65.

Valentine, D. (2007). Chapter 1: Imagining Transgender. In *Imagining transgender: An ethnography of a category*, (pp. 29-65). Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 3: Thursday, January 24, 2019

(Whose) Trans* history

Required Readings:

Namaste, V. (2014). “We paved the way for whatever tolerance they have in their lives”: An interview with Michelle de Ville, “The First Door Bitch in Montreal”. In D. Irving & R. Raj (Eds.), *Trans activism in Canada: A reader*, (pp. 19-25). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.

Stryker, S. (2017). Chapter 2: A hundred-plus years of transgender history. In *Transgender history: The roots of today's revolution*, (pp. 31-58). New York: Seal Press.

Recommended Reading:

Stone, S. (1991). The empire strikes back: A posttranssexual manifesto. In K. Straub and J. Epstein (Eds.), *Bodyguards: The cultural politics of sexual ambiguity*, (pp. 280-304). New York: Routledge.

Week 4: Thursday, January 31, 2019

Media versus Trans* Self-Representation

Required Readings:

Glover, Julian Kevon. 'redefining realness? On Janet Mock, Laverne Cox, TS Madison, and the representation of transgender women of colour in media', *Souls*, 18(2-4), 338-357.

Rogers, T. (2010). What the pregnant man didn't deliver. In R. Plante & L. M. Maurer (Eds.), *Doing gender diversity: Readings in theory and real-world experience*, (pp. 462-464). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Serano, J. (2007). Skirt chasers: Why the media depicts the trans revolution in lipstick and heels. In *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*, (pp. 35-52). Emeryville, CA: Seal Press.

Recommended Reading:

Skidmore, E. (2011). "Constructing the 'Good Transsexual': Christine Jorgensen, Whiteness, and Heteronormativity in the Mid-Twentieth-Century Press," *Feminist Studies* 37, (2), 270-300.

Week 5: Thursday, February 7, 2019

Feminism and Trans Debates

Media Deconstruction DUE

Required Readings:

Riddell, C. (2006). Divided sisterhood: A critical review of Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire*. In S. Stryker & S. Whittle (Eds.), *The transgender studies reader*, (pp. 144-158). New York: Routledge.

Elliot, P. (2010). Feminist embattlement on the field of trans. In *Debates in transgender, queer, and feminist theory: Contested sites*, (pp. 17-31). Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing.

Serano, J. (2007). Trans woman manifesto. In *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*, (pp. 11-20). Emeryville, CA: Seal Press.

Week 6: Thursday, February 14, 2019

Queer and Trans*

Required Readings:

Cromwell, J. (2006). Queering the binaries: Transsituated identities, bodies, and sexualities. In S. Stryker & S. Whittle (Eds.), *The transgender studies reader*, (pp. 509-520). New York: Routledge.

Elliot, P. (2010). Desire and the '(Un)becoming other': The question of intelligibility. In *Debates in transgender, queer, and feminist theory: Contested sites*, (pp. 61-83). Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing.

Prosser, J. (1998). Judith Butler: Queer feminism, transgender, and the transubstantiation of sex. In *Second skins: The body narratives of transsexuality*, (pp. 21-60). Columbia University Press, New York.

Reading Week: February 18-22, 2019

Week 7: Thursday, February 28, 2019

Gender Creative Child & Education

Required Readings:

Ehrensaft, D. (2016) Chapter 2: What's your gender? From boxes to spectrums to webs to gender infinity. In *The gender creative child*, (pp. 21-47). New York: The Experiment.

Payne, E., & Smith, M. (2014). The big freak out: Educator fear in response to the presence of transgender elementary school students. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 61, 399-418.

Rands, K. (2009). Considering transgender people in education: A gender-complex approach. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60(4), 419-431.

Week 8: Thursday, March 7, 2019

Disability and Trans*

Required Readings:

Gorton, N. (2013). Transgender as mental illness: Nosology, social justice, and the tarnished Golden Mean. In S. Stryker & A. Aizura (Eds.), *The transgender studies reader 2*, (pp. 644-652). New York: Routledge.

Marshal, Z., Burnette, M., Lowton, S., Rainbow, Smith, R. D. T., Tiamo, J., Udegbe, O., & Vo, T. (2014). A conversation about art and activism with trans and genderqueer people labeled with intellectual disabilities. In D. Irving & R. Raj (Eds.), *Trans activism in Canada: A reader*, (pp. 125-135). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.

Ware, S. M. & Marshall, Z. (2014). Disabilities and deaf culture. In L. Erickson-Schroth (Ed.), *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource for the Transgender Community*, (pp. 54-61). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Recommended Reading:

Slater, Jenny, Jones, Charlotte, and Procter, Lisa. 2016. "School Toilets: Queer, Disabled Bodies and Gendered Lessons of Embodiment." *Gender and Education*, 1-15. doi:10.1080/09540253.2016.1270421.

Week 9: Thursday, March 14, 2019

Trans* of Colour

Required Readings:

- Gossett, C. (2017). Blackness and the trouble of trans visibility. In R. Gossett, E. A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), *Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility*, (pp.183-189). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Munoz, J. E. (1999). "The white to be angry": Vaginal Creme Davis's terrorist drag. In *Disidentifications: Queers of colour and the performance of politics*, (pp. 93-115). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Koyama, E. (2006). Whose feminism is it anyway? The unspoken racism of the trans-inclusion debate. In S. Stryker & S. Whittle (Eds.), *The transgender studies reader* (pp. 698-705). New York: Routledge.
- Vidal-Ortiz, S. (2014). Whiteness. *TSQ: Transgender studies quarterly*, 1(1-2), 264-266.

Week 10: Thursday, March 21, 2019

Decolonizing Transgender

Required Readings:

- Bhanji, N. (2013). Trans/scriptions: Homing desires, trans(sexual) citizenship and the racialized bodies. In S. Stryker & A. Aizura (Eds.), *Transgender studies reader 2*, (pp. 512-527). New York: Routledge.
- Dutta, A. & Roy, R.(2014). Decolonizing transgender in India: Some reflections. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1 (3), 320-337.
- Roen, K. (2013). Transgender theory and embodiment: The risk of racial marginalisation. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 10(3), 253-263.

Week 11: Thursday, March 28, 2019

Trans* Space

Required Readings:

- Bergman, S. B. (2009). The nearest exit may be behind you. In *The nearest exit may be behind you*, (pp. 11-17). Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- Cavanagh, S. (2010) Chapter 2: Trans subjects and gender misreadings in the toilet. In *Queering bathrooms: gender sexuality and the hygienic imagination*, (pp.52-78). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Sreedhar, S. & Hand, M. (2006). The ethics of exclusion: Gender and politics at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. In K. Scott-Dixon (Ed.), *Trans/forming feminisms: Trans-feminist voices speak out*, (pp. 161-169). Toronto, ON: Sumach Press.

Recommended Reading:

- Transgender Law Centre. (2010). Thinking critically about structures and institutions in our world: Peeing in peace: A resource guide for transgender activists and allies. In R. Plante & L. M. Maurer (Eds.), *Doing gender diversity: Readings in theory and real-world experience*, (pp. 415-422). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Week 12: Thursday, April 4, 2019

Resistances & Activism

Final Paper DUE

Required Readings:

Cava, Peter. 2014. Activism, Politics, and Organizing. In L. Erickson-Schroth (Ed.), *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource for the Transgender Community*, (pp. 567-589). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Spade, D. (2015). Rethinking transphobia and power – Beyond a rights framework. In *Normal life: Administrative violence, critical trans politics and the limits of the law*, (pp. 50-72). Durham, UK: Duke University Press.

Attendance Policy:

Please note the attendance policy of the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research: "In classes without final examinations, persistent absenteeism (defined by the Department as three [3] weeks in half courses, and six [6] weeks in full courses) may be rendered grounds for failure in the course (after due warning is given)."

Scholastic Offenses:

Scholastic offenses are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offense, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com." <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>

Academic Accommodation:

Please contact ws-ugrad@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you. Students requiring academic accommodations for tests, essays, and examinations, should consult the senate's policy on academic accommodation, which states: "Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department." For Western Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Students experiencing emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

http://se.uwo.ca/student_experience/wellness_initiatives/mental_health_resource_guide.htm
for a complete list of options of how to obtain help.

Technology in the Classroom:

As a courtesy to others, please turn off your cellphones during class unless you have an on-call responsibility, for example as a caregiver or a parent.

Research generally shows that using an electronic device in a classroom will reduce one's ability to learn, as well as the ability of others around them to learn. Thus devices such as laptops are welcome only to the extent that they aid in your engagement in the class, but we will revisit this policy if it becomes apparent that devices are detracting from the course.