

Beyond Additions and Exceptions: The Category of Transgender and New Pedagogical Approaches for Women's Studies

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The article argues that while introductory women and gender studies courses typically take social construction theory as foundational, their textbooks, supplemental materials, and teaching strategies simultaneously rely on a definition of "woman" that assumes particular body parts. Such a linkage elides the existence and particularities of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects on the one hand, yet posits them as exceptions on the other. This combination stabilizes the normativity of hegemonic sex and gender embodiments by naturalizing nontransgender bodies. Rather than simply arguing for greater inclusion of trans subjects under the sign of woman or man, the article suggests that careful attention to the positioning of transgender bodies necessitates a broad theoretical reframing of how women's studies textbooks and curriculum are designed, and how gendered bodies more broadly are taught and conceptualized.

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In "The Progress of Gender: Whither 'Women?'" Robyn Wiegman (2002) considers the various ways that feminist scholars grapple with questions of gendered and sexed bodies, noting in particular that transgender and intersex scholarship constitutes a key site through which such questions play out.¹ She writes that this problematic "marks one of the most profound challenges for feminist theory today: not simply addressing the persistence of the divide between genetic bodies

and discursive gender, but offering a political analysis of the socially constructed affiliations between the two” (125).² The challenge that Wiegman describes for feminist scholarship proves similarly complex for feminist pedagogy: Can women’s studies’ earlier failures to consider transgender studies’ scholarship and interventions be rectified simply by including within our courses consideration of formerly omitted subjects?³ How can we best approach teaching about gendered bodies in women’s studies courses, particularly regarding the positioning of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects? Must such bodies and subjects be made the examples par excellence of gender construction and/or disruption? What relationships emerge between the theoretical frameworks and pedagogical strategies employed to teach about gendered bodies, and the actual gendered bodies in the classroom (students, instructors, and guests)?

This article argues that while introductory women and gender studies courses typically take social construction theory as foundational, their textbooks, supplemental materials, and teaching strategies simultaneously rely on a definition of “woman” that assumes particular body parts. Such a linkage elides the existence and particularities of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects on the one hand, yet posits them as exceptions on the other. This combination stabilizes the normativity of hegemonic sex and gender embodiments by naturalizing nontransgender bodies. Rather than simply arguing for greater inclusion of transgender subjects under the sign of woman or man, we suggest that careful attention to the positioning of transgender bodies and subjects necessitates an extensive theoretical reframing of how we design women’s studies textbooks and curriculum, and how we teach and conceptualize gendered bodies more broadly.

Attempts to reconcile transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies with the category “women” do not further the project of teaching gender, nor can they create a field of women’s studies that is wholly inclusive of all women. It is only through the continual interrogation of the epistemic bases of women’s studies and of the broader construction of gender that we can promote a scholarly practice that understands gender as productive of all subjects in difference, rather than as a technology that socially produces some subjects more than others. We propose an approach to textbook selection, syllabus construction, and teaching that approaches gender genealogically, with attention to broad historical processes, such as colonialism, modernity, (trans)nationalism, globalization, and the rise of disciplines and institutions like medical science and prisons. In this sense, the introductory course will offer a critical analysis of the very processes by which gender emerges and works, rather than the tools for simply locating and analyzing particular gendered subjects.

In this article, we resist casting transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies as exceptional tools for teaching primarily to nontransgender students and avoid a personal-experience framework that positions individual bodies as special objects of inquiry, without attending to the production of such

experiences and narratives. To this effect, we shift away from an additive model, in which transgender bodies and identities are assigned their own separate unit. We suggest instead that discussions of transgender bodies and subjects can and should be integrated throughout an introductory women and gender studies course, and we offer both material resources and pedagogical strategies for such an approach.

From Women's Voices to Genealogies of Gender

Syllabi for introductory courses in women and gender studies are often structured around textbooks written specifically for these classes, and course teaching plans and syllabi trajectories tend to roughly mirror those textbooks. The textbooks' epistemological projects, organizational rubrics, formal structuring, and substantive contents order how they are able to theorize the body and what they assume the body to be. In the following, we examine three introductory women and gender studies textbooks regularly assigned in programs in which we have participated as both students and instructors. We do not claim that these textbooks are the most frequently used or representative of all introductory textbooks in the field; our aim is not to locate an "ideal" text or even to promote certain materials in and of themselves. Rather, we use these three texts as examples to demonstrate some of the pedagogical and theoretical issues that various introductory textbooks pose, and to think more concretely about the principles of selection for choosing a textbook that might help instructors avoid the traps of addition and exception.

The fourth edition of Amy Kesselman, Lily D. McNair, and Nancy Schniedewind's *Women: Images and Realities, A Multicultural Anthology* (2008), first published simply as *Women: Images and Realities* (1995), claims to give us women's realities and "voices" through "short stories, poems, autobiographical accounts, and journal excerpts as well as analytical and descriptive essays from a variety of disciplines" (2). Although images themselves, these voices are poised to counteract false images of women constructed by patriarchal institutions and knowledge production. The textbook begins by discussing the social construction of gender and, to a lesser extent, sex—categories that with some difficulty form the basis for the "realities" upon which the textbook is ostensibly founded. The editors write that

[w]hile gender is a social category, the word "sex" describes the physiological identities of women and men. The distinction between sex and gender enables us to see that the particular expectations for women and men in our culture are neither immutable nor universal. Recently, however, feminist scholars have argued that sex itself is not a purely biological category, but has been powerfully shaped by gender. For many years, for example, doctors have insisted that sexually ambiguous genitalia be surgically altered so that they

fit into the prevailing divisions between male and female, thereby showing the power of gender to constitute sex. (10)

Narrating feminist theory's progress from less to more accurate accounts of realities, the editors' inquiry starts with female experience and moves to regarding sex as physiological base and gender as socially constructed superstructure. While the editors acknowledge that gender may "shape" sex, they nonetheless hold onto some sense of sex as ontologically prior to gender, except in the case of intersex surgeries. Arguing that sex is not "purely biological," they imply that it may still be partially biological. Because nonintersex persons' sexes are unmarked, readers may infer that natural biology produces three types of sex, only one of which is produced by gender via medical intervention. This process then effaces the social production of the sex of nonintersex males and females. In this logic of exception sex is biological, except for those for whom it is less so.⁴

Exception comes to centrally organize this textbook, providing the unmarked logic that allows the textbook to delimit the meanings that can pertain to the category "women." The mobilization of exception and the production of women—both being processes that go unacknowledged—are achieved through a discourse of experience that is, in turn, enabled by these processes. After explicitly naming consciousness-raising as an organizing framework, the editors write that "the book moves back and forth between personal experience and social realities, illuminating the way sexism affects women's lives" (1).

Basing the textbook on personal experience allows the constitution of the subjects of experience to go unquestioned. *Women* is assumed as a relatively stable category, a group of persons that exists before the social, and then enters into the social. In her well-known essay "The Evidence of Experience" (1991), Joan Wallach Scott suggests that projects aimed at making visible the experiences of historically marginalized groups often use experience to naturalize identities and differences. However, she writes that "[i]t is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience" (779). If we fail to attend to the historical processes that produce, position, and constitute the identities of subjects and their experiences, the integrity of categories like "sex," "male," "female," "women," and "men" may go relatively unquestioned. Further, the positing of a stable assumed subject circumscribes what counts as relevant experience: because the category of women is assumed in advance, the experiences with media, the law, sexuality, violence, or health that will be counted are those of the group of women that has been assumed from the start. To apprehend women's experience, women must be recognized as women.

Who are these women whose experiences are reported in *Women: Images and Realities* (2008)? How do we know who is a woman? In the textbook's introduction, "females" are contrasted to "men," "men" are assumed to be "male," and "women" seems interchangeable with "female." These identities are construed as the very premise of the relations that constitute the women

and gender studies classroom: “Men who have taken women’s studies courses have often found it intellectually and emotionally challenging to be in a course focused on women, taught by women, and usually including a majority of female students. By listening to women’s experiences and sharing the experience of being a male in a sexist society, men can both benefit from and contribute to a women’s studies course” (3).

Despite the careful separation of sex and gender that the editors earlier outline, they nevertheless tend to use sexed and gendered categories interchangeably, such that “woman” aligns with and is synonymous with “female,” while “man” aligns with and is synonymous with “male.” Positing this as the very condition of the women’s studies classroom’s possibility enacts a violence of nomination—a coercive gendering or sexing through naming that can be tangibly felt by classroom participants interpellated through such equations. These formulations of sex and gender are also central to the textbook’s rubric of feminist epistemology tethered to transparent experience:

We have tried to gather into this book, once again, readings that will be meaningful to you and challenge your thinking about what it means to be female in the United States. You will hear the voices of women of different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds who have made various choices in their lives. Because the selections reflect a wide variety of female experience, some parts of this book will resonate for you while others will not. (1)

The meaning of being female is the starting point of investigation that is illuminated by the voices of women. The voices of women reflect and bring us back, circularly, to the female experience that assumes a certain body. We are thus left with a very particular prescription for the bodies of women that forecloses the possibility of relationships between bodies and identities that do not follow this prescription. It thus becomes difficult to question what counts as women’s bodies or female bodies.

Through an unarticulated logic of exception, the experiences of women and of females are, at times, implied to be one and the same, and at other times are treated as separate, although the editors do not explicitly narrate this decoupling. Only one “voice” in the textbook is marked as that of a transgender person. This essay, by Mr. Barb Greve, is described as one way to think about “systems of domination that interact with gender in women’s lives,” despite Greve’s self-identification as a transgender guy (vi). Greve’s article appears in a chapter titled “The Perils of Heterosexism,” which, the editors note, addresses “attitudes toward lesbians,” “the consequences of heterosexism for all women,” and “bisexual and transgender persons” (415). The chapter seems to be about women until it is about a transgender person, whose self-identification as guy is deleted from the editors’ description. Here, the logic of exception is once more at work: while not a woman or a lesbian, this person can be included in the chapter. Is this transgender narrative then included under the rubric of

“women’s experience”? Despite including this transgender guy in a chapter on women’s lives and female experience, narratives of or by transgender women are not present. Transgender men are thus constructed as anomalous, transgender women as impossible.

This then raises broader questions about the effects of rubric and organization. How should chapters be described? In a textbook organized around “women” and “female” experiences—categories here enabled by biological essentialism—where to place a piece by a transgender guy? How does this piece relate to the textbook’s early explanation of the social construction of gender and physiologically based sex that is only interrupted by medical procedures on the bodies of intersex persons? How might the placement of this piece in this chapter lead many students to an understanding of sex, gender, transgender, and womanhood that is harmful, especially to transgender, gender-nonconforming, and intersex persons?

Taking a different organizational and conceptual approach, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey’s *Women’s Lives: Multicultural Perspectives* (2007) makes several important interventions. The textbook foregrounds activism, global political economy, and U.S. domination internationally and, thus, questions U.S. exceptionalism in a way that Kesselman, McNair, and Schniedewind’s text does not. Unlike many overview feminist texts that patronizingly tack on a few writings by women of color, this text centralizes such work. The editors articulate a commitment to analyzing multiple modes of hierarchy and identity: “We want to present a broad range of women’s experiences to our students in terms of class, race, culture, nation, disability, age, and sexual orientation” (xxi). Notably, “women’s experiences” are central objects of inquiry, and the exposition of those experiences is a central aim of the textbook. But this textbook does not claim to transparently carry voices. *Women’s Lives* notes the importance of theory as a tool for understanding and begins to unpack experience, arguing that women are subjects multiply positioned by and within hierarchal systems that “shape our life experiences in important and unique ways” (ibid.). Systems of oppression and questions of resistance are more crucial for this textbook than an essentialized notion of “women.”

Given these concerns, the textbook is explicitly organized around an activist approach to “conditions facing women today” (9), such that each of its chapters is about a different “issue,” so to speak. Yet, the textbook still assumes that women have certain types of bodies. While *Women’s Lives* proffers an understanding of power’s positioning of subjects and constructing of experience, it nevertheless sets up the bodies of nontransgender women as the default model for the body. In part, nontransgender bodies and embodied experiences are normativized through the failure to name these bodies as nontransgender when they are discussed. Although the textbook engages social construction, “women” remains a relatively undeconstructed category, in that women are people who have a certain type of body, even before they come into interaction

with systems of oppression and privilege. The issues that sort and title the textbook's chapters arise from these women's interaction with such systems. Still under-theorized are the ways that these systems constitute the very subjects with whom they interact. This means that the presumption of a certain body as the basis of "women's lives" enables the formal organization of the textbook by issues. In turn, the organization of the textbook makes it difficult to disarticulate the unquestioned links between particular genders and particular bodies that lie at its foundation.

Consideration of transgender people and issues does appear in the chapter titled "Women's Sexuality," which includes Leslie Feinberg's essay "We Are All Works in Progress" from his *TransLiberation: Beyond Pink or Blue* (1998). Feinberg focuses on the key terms of "sex" and "gender" to describe the category of transgender and his own identity, while also discussing bodies, language, race, class, medical institutions, violence, and the law.⁵ Only in one sentence does Feinberg specifically mention sexuality, when he discusses the ways in which doctors coercively craft intersex infants' sexuality and sex. That Feinberg's essay appears in *Women's Lives'* chapter on sexuality is telling of the ways that transgender has been folded into the rubric of sexuality, both in scholarship and activism.⁶

Considering the broad range of topics Feinberg addresses, *Women's Lives'* editors might have included his piece in a number of other chapters. Placement in any chapter, however, would not avoid an uneven representational weight placed on Feinberg's essay as the only text written by a transgender-identified person and pertaining to transgender people. For example, including it in the chapter titled "Women's Bodies" would continue the disproportionate scrutinizing of transgender persons' bodies. Because the textbook's language and organizational structure centralize "women," Feinberg's essay can only be included under a logic of exception similar to that in Kesselman, McNair, and Schniedewind's textbook.

Further, it is telling that the one essay specifically raising the category of transgender focuses on identity. Typically, when such discussions are included in introductory women and gender studies courses, they appear under the rubric of identity, as Viviane Namaste and Georgia Sitara note in their "Inclusive Pedagogy in the Women's Studies Classroom" (2005, 60–61). This mode of inclusion forwards a curricular framework that tends to separate gender from mutually constitutive identity categories. When textbooks slot works by transgender scholars under seemingly transparent identity categories, they may ignore the ways that categories like race, class, or nation constitute and are shaped through gender. In an essay like Feinberg's, class is shown to be crucial in determining access to hospital care, yet this point could easily be missed if either gender or sexuality is made the sole focus of questions of power routed through identity. When personal experience functions as the central narrative trope and source of knowledge, the experiences of a single author come to stand for all experiences

of transgender people. Furthermore, when these narratives do not include an analysis of race, such narratives and their placement imply that race does not organize the life of the author (who, when white, is typically unmarked as such) or, for that matter, transgender people more generally, whether white or of color. Because race and class are integral to the construction of all gendered subjects, if we avoid placing essays directly discussing transgender subjects under an identity rubric like gender or sexuality, we can open up the possibilities of examining multiple mutually constitutive modes of identity, without conflating them with one another. Moreover, instructors should call into question unmarked categories that may appear in such essays, regardless of textbook placement.

Also moving away from discrete identities as an organizing rubric, Namaste and Sitara suggest an approach that situates transgender-related topics and texts within broader questions central to women and gender studies (64, 77). Such an approach requires consideration of questions pertaining to transgender bodies and subjects, and the institutions and social processes that interpellate them, in conceptualizing the entire curriculum. We want to suggest that introductory texts and syllabi that are less organized around identities or issues might be more conducive to centralizing transgender subjects in curriculum conceptualism.

A third textbook, *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World* (2006), edited by Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, does not explicitly discuss transgender topics, but nevertheless provides a much more historical framework for opening such discussions. The editors offer an account of the histories of state and national formations, the rise of modern science, the production of categories like race and sex, the operation of transnational capital, the legacies of social movements, and the processes by which citizenship is conferred or denied. Identities are treated as categories of historical inquiry, so that their constitution must be accounted for, and the ontological integrity of identities prior to the social cannot be taken for granted. The theoretical and organizational framework of this textbook opens up a genealogy, demonstrating the ways by which gender has been and is continually constituted through transnational processes.⁷ By tracing connectivities between varied social phenomena in different parts of the world and tracking their shifts at key moments, the authors make clear that identity is neither given nor hermetically sealed, but is changing and contingent, part of social and cultural trends both sweeping and minute. Identities emerging and dispersed unevenly across geographies both adjacent and far-flung arise from and produce spaces marked by shifting borders, changing regimes of rule, and competing knowledge paradigms.

All of these phenomena determine gendered identities and their intersections, in ways that proceed from, as well as exceed and precede, the historically limited yet influential appearance of the nation form. The textbook allows for a theorizing of gender that moves us away from ahistorical conceptions assuming the timelessness and spatial omnipresence of gender formations that are actually specific to the contemporary United States. This is a key intervention

for transgender studies, as well as women and gender studies, insofar as both fields are culpable of taking for granted historically and geographically specific gender categories, while projecting them beyond their purview of relevant spatial-temporal applicability.

Examining these three textbooks at the level of an overall framework reveals what may have initially seemed paradoxical: namely, the two textbooks that actually include an essay about transgender identities (by transgender-identified authors) are those that are most founded on normative assumptions about the relationships among sex, gender, and bodies. In contrast, the Grewal and Kaplan text, which does not explicitly cover transgender identities, nevertheless opens possibilities for productive discussions that attend to transgender bodies and subjectivities, without treating them as exceptions. Rather than merely attempting inclusion or addition of singularly representative transgender “voices,” this approach aims to consider the genealogies of sex and gender so as to understand that all bodies are historically produced and culturally constituted.

From Supplemental Bodies to Supplemental Texts

Although the textbook provides the primary structure and conceptual framework for a course, it is only one component. Supplemental materials covering topics not found in the textbooks themselves provide a rich variety of resources for analyses and also guide students in critical discussions and interpretations of texts. As with the textbook examples above, we draw on various supplemental materials as examples of how we might choose or use supplemental texts to teach critical analyses of gender. The strategies and questions we offer here can be applied more widely to any number of supplemental materials in introductory women's studies courses, rather than being limited to the particular texts we cite.

Consider, for example, Jean Kilbourne's filmed lecture *Killing Us Softly 3* (1999), directed by Sut Jhally. Often used in women's studies classrooms to teach critical analyses of media representations, the film is particularly employed for course units on beauty ideals and advertising, because it critiques the production and perpetuation of gendered anxieties about the body in advertisements, often through the language used to describe women's bodies. In the film, Kilbourne analyzes a series of print ads regarding their forms of objectification, violence, and sexism conveyed in relation to women's bodies. Yet, her understanding of women's bodies remains limited, such that “women” always refers to subjects with certain body parts.

For instance, Kilbourne analyzes advertisements that exploit body insecurities, citing one ad that lists numerous “flaws” with women's breasts. To the delight of many in her audience, she then offers a hypothetical counter-ad that applies a similar scrutinizing gaze to the shape and size of penises: “They'd be doing the same thing to men they've always done to women if there were

copy that went with this ad that went like this: ‘Your penis may be too small, too droopy, too limp, too lopsided, too narrow, too fat, too jiggly, too pale, too pointy, too blunt, or just two inches.’”

Although this strategy reveals the vastly different gendered representations and affective strategies taken up by advertisements, it leaves unproblematized the connection between penis and man, or absence-of-penis and woman. Kilbourne points to how women’s bodies are frequently represented in ways that men’s bodies are not; but what bodies (and body parts) are considered “women’s” and “men’s”? Certainly there are real inequalities in gendered media representations, but feminist analyses should also address the ways that gender is so unquestionably tied to particular bodies, and how analyses like Kilbourne’s foreclose the possibility of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects. At whose expense are Kilbourne’s jokes made? What happens when men do not have penises or women do? Does everyone agree on what counts as a penis? We might ask whether Kilbourne’s analysis accounts for the ways that gender becomes legible and is read through structures of power like racialization, class privilege, and compulsory heterosexuality.

While Kilbourne’s analysis aims to demonstrate that gender is socially constructed, in part, through media representations, it does so through attaching certain genders to certain physical bodies. This coupling is integral to the processes that construct sexist gender hierarchies. The assignment of gender categories to particular bodies organizes social relations and maintains matrices of power. These processes are constitutive of the gendered representations that Kilbourne critiques, yet her satirical response falls short of analyzing the ways in which these representations are based on hegemonic gender designations. By neglecting to acknowledge or critique dominant couplings of bodies and genders, Kilbourne is able to neatly flip the terms of the binary she sets up. The absence of this critique is connected to her failure to interrogate the ways in which the category of women is constructed in conjunction with a host of other identity categories. For example, Kilbourne only addresses race when people of color are present in the images she analyzes. As a result, her analysis foregrounds white women as the subjects of inquiry, without citing whiteness as centrally constitutive of the definition of women she uses. This enables her to collapse all power dynamics into gender, which serves as the principal division that organizes identities unequally in terms of the body. The elision, perhaps even derision, of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies is thus intimately tied to the recentralization and naturalization of whiteness.

The assignment of sex and gender is always bound up with the production and assignment of race. For example, scientific racism places the body at the center of racialization processes, perhaps most explicitly in the measurement of genitalia, which serves to mark racial difference and thus uphold claims about the inferiority of colonized peoples in relation to white superiority.⁸ In the psychic register also, the status of penises has indexed racialized exclusion

from normative gender. David Eng (2005) argues that white masculinity and normative gender and sexuality are secured through imagining Asian American men as always already castrated, and, therefore, in hegemonic terms, not men. Relatedly, scholars like Frantz Fanon (1967) and Kobena Mercer (1994) suggest that racist fantasy imagines black penises as inordinately larger than white men's and imagines black men as sexually violent and uncivilized. In each case, the racialized scrutiny of genitals enables the essentialist binary that rigidly aligns bodily morphology with sex and gender. Thus the production of sexual difference is tied to that of racial difference and vice versa.

In light of the ways that racialization processes work hand in hand with the maintenance of normative gender, Kilbourne's joke about penis size must be analyzed in relation to racial and gender hierarchies. Her critique of gender hierarchies suggests that persons within a gender binary ought to be treated more equally in media representation; however, her joke does not account for or destabilize binary sex–gender as a technology deployed in the production of racialized subjects, nor for race as a mechanism in the production of a binary sex–gender. Because normative gender implies whiteness, it is held at a certain distance from people of color regardless of transgender status, while the appeal to white people to occupy gender normatively is also an enticement to the privileges of racial dominance.

Like Kilbourne's film, written materials about beauty cultures often define genders by body parts—often repeated in the textbooks themselves. For example, such a figuration is present in the “Women's Bodies and Beauty Ideals” chapter in Kirk and Okazawa-Rey's *Women's Lives* (2007), which begins by stating that women's bodies, normatively presented as “our” bodies, go through menstruation, menopause, and pregnancy, among other experiences. Naming various ways that bodies may be technologically altered, the editors specifically discuss “women” until writing that “transsexual people may choose to have surgery to make their physical appearance congruent with their internal sense of self” (122). Transgender subjects thus remain outside the category of “women,” and the editors seem to approve of transgender engagements with medical technology, which is viewed as healing and corrective. This stands in contrast to their critique of the broader “beauty business”: for example, medical technologies, including liposuction, breast augmentation, and diet drugs, that are implicitly linked to pressures from patriarchal cultures.

Arguing against such dichotomies, Nikki Sullivan's essay “Transmogrification: (Un)Becoming Other(s)” (2006) critiques the framing of some body modifications, or resistance to them, as transgressive, and others as attributable to false consciousness. Demonstrating the connections between a range of culturally produced practices, Sullivan contends that body modifications should be considered in terms of their similarities, correspondences, and divergences, rather than their being discretely marked as liberatory or conforming. She asserts that *all* bodies continually engage these technologies and are inscribed

by social processes and institutions. In this context, marking transgender-identified people's engagement with medical technologies as distinct from that of nontransgender women again positions transgender bodies as exceptions—such that, for example, transgender women's breast augmentations are viewed as corrective procedures fundamentally different from augmentations for nontransgender women. Might this framework even imply that transgender women's breasts are not “women's” breasts?

Other classroom materials may be subtler in linking genders to physical bodies. Course units addressing violence against women may incorporate the documentary *Socially Acceptable? Violence Against Women—Contexts/Solutions* (2003), a project of the Regents of the University of California that was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice and produced by Lisa Rudman. The film interviews students and staff and faculty members to illuminate attitudes and social pressures leading to sexual assault on college campuses. It begins by discussing socialization processes and gender roles that foster an environment of violence against women. A discussion of such behaviors is critical to movements to eradicate sexual assault and other forms of violence, yet the film assumes that socialization and entry into gender roles occurs after subjects already have discrete gender identities, presumably based on their bodily configurations. Further, although the film briefly notes that sexual assault and domestic violence are not limited to heterosexual pairings, when they are not specifically labeled “same-sex,” the film assumes normative definitions of sex, gender, and bodies.

The film's references to men and women implicitly refer to male and female bodies. Coupled with its statistics showing that men constitute the vast majority of perpetrators of sexual assault and domestic violence and far more women than men are sexually assaulted, such references make it difficult to think about such assaults and violence outside of a heteronormative framework, thereby effacing such acts involving queer and transgender bodies. Assaults against transgender women are frequently recorded as perpetrated against gay men. Moreover, by the film's own admission, state racism, anti-immigrant policing, and homophobia block many marginalized communities from formally reporting instances of violence. Although the statistics presented do not account for these communities, such reports are nonetheless cited as justification for the increased policing of marginalized people's presumed sexual violence and sexual deviance. The invoking of statistics as the primary measure of violence frequently accompanies agendas for harsher laws and expanded police forces, which are promulgated as the main solutions for addressing violence. Yet, increased policing and draconian laws are disproportionately employed against poor, queer, immigrant, and nonwhite people, drawing on longstanding portrayals of these communities as pathologically perverse and thus as main sites of domestic and sexual violence.

Similar rhetoric linking bodies and genders might appear in any number of topics assigned in women and gender studies courses, from “women's sexuality”

to “reproductive rights.” For example, Erna Buffie and Elise Swerhone’s *The Pill* (1999) is an excellent documentary for teaching a course section on reproductive justice. Among other topics, it discusses U.S.-based pharmaceutical companies’ early testing of birth-control pills in Puerto Rico, where those administering the pills did not fully disclose pertinent information, including the facts that Puerto Ricans taking the pill were among the first test populations and evidence of its deleterious side effects. As the pill became more widely distributed throughout the United States and pharmaceutical companies claimed that it was safe, activist organizations worked to expose the pill’s side effects. Pedagogically, the film is useful for showing how the United States’ colonial domination over Puerto Rico shaped the medical, corporate, and government policies regarding the pill’s testing, marketing, and distribution. Racism and sexism informed decisions as to which populations were deemed more dispensable than others and hence more appropriate as test subjects for the new drug. At the same time, the film promotes the assumption that all women share the same reproductive organs and capacities.

Instructors may want to guide classroom discussions by using some of the following points. First, instructors might ask how the film conceptualizes the category of women and conveys an understanding of women’s bodies to its audience. Second, teachers might introduce the concept of biopower to consider how the film describes the disciplining of bodies and subjects in terms of reproduction, as well as the broader regulation of the very categories of identification through which subjects come to gain meaning as, for example, women. In other words, it is precisely through the biomedical logic of the sex–gender binary, in which reproductive organs transparently determine sex and gender, that governmental and pharmaceutical institutions are able to locate subjects deemed properly suitable for medical experimentation. This mode of constructing gendered subjects is also a technique of colonial biomedicine that produces racialized populations. The category of women becomes the basis for identifying and organizing racial and national subjects and populations for either protection—from knowledge of side effects or from population curbing as such—or testing, which risks death and scripted population reduction. Third, teachers can then offer a critique of violence that considers the relationship between coercive medical practices and the maintenance of hegemonic gender. Teachers might also ask how some subjects who did not identify as women may have received the pill, while others who were not legible to state and medical authorities as women may have been denied access to it. And finally, we can connect these discussion points to questions of healthcare access for transgender and gender-nonconforming people generally—connections highlighted in Feinberg’s essay “We Are All Works in Progress” in *Women’s Lives* (2007).

Regardless of the topic, merely including transgender subjects and bodies under the category of women or men is not enough. Certainly, such inclusion broadens the conversations available to students and instructors and can call

into question the attachment of certain genders to particular bodies. But more importantly, critically attending to the position, or assumed absence, of transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and identities can transform the theoretical frameworks, teaching strategies, and sociopolitical environment of the classroom.

Positioning Questions: Classroom Strategies

Pedagogical strategies for engaging transgender topics tend to situate transgender bodies and identities as the primary example through which students are meant to understand the divide between sex and gender, as well as how these categories are socially constructed. For example, in “Teaching Transgender History, Identity, and Politics,” Elizabeth Reis (2004) writes that “[t]ransgendered bodies pose the question that feminists have long asked: is biology destiny?” and locates transgender bodies as disruptive to biological essentialism (171). Yet, in doing so, transgender bodies become abstracted figures of exception, tools for teaching against biological essentialism and the sex–gender binary. This approach can easily displace gendering processes onto only transgender bodies, effacing the ways that all bodies are continually gendered. Indeed, Reis earlier asserts that “[t]ransgendered people make explicit what the rest of us take for granted concerning our gender identities and gender presentations. Most of us feel comparatively comfortable with our bodies; . . . the majority does not question the fundamental issue of whether we are female or male” (167).

While Reis stresses that she aims to help students understand how gender norms affect everyone, positioning transgender bodies as the instrument for making these norms visible naturalizes nontransgender bodies, leaving them unmarked as such. Further, the broad claim that nontransgender people experience less discomfort with their assigned sex and gender identities tends to homogenize and binarize transgender and nontransgender populations. Not only might individuals within these supposedly discrete categories understand their bodies in a variety of ways, but this broad claim is made possible only by thinking about gender in isolation from other identity categories. Understandings of, and relationships to, gender shift in conjunction with mutually constitutive categories like race, class, sexuality, nationality, and disability. Moreover, any given social location presents a range of ways by which one might experience gender.

Highlighting transgender bodies as figures allowing us to teach against biological essentialism, or even to ask what it means to be male or female, woman or man, is a risky pedagogical strategy. Even as this approach can broaden notions of gendered bodies and identities, it can also simultaneously foreclose further complexities by implying that the burden of gendering processes rests only on transgender people, and that transgender and nontransgender populations understand their gendered bodies in fundamentally different ways. Does naming transgender bodies as disruptive to essentialist claims—in ways that

nontransgender bodies, it is understood, are not—then situate transgender-identified students or instructors as outsiders, leaving others in the classroom unmarked observers? Does this entail teaching primarily to nontransgender students, either by positioning transgender students as objects of analysis or assuming the absence altogether of transgender subjects in the classroom? Are connections between transgender and nontransgender students and instructors then further engaged, or are they foreclosed? Is there room in this schema for all students—both transgender and nontransgender—to articulate a range of understandings of their bodies and genders, from normative to discomforting?

Rather than asking questions about transgender bodies specifically, more productive teaching methods might turn those questions back upon themselves, effectively denaturalizing *all* gendered bodies. One strategy for beginning this process lies in the confidential student-information form often given early in the academic term, where students may indicate not just their name and major, but their preferred gender pronoun (PGP). Without spotlighting individual students, the very act of requesting pronouns opens up space for an early conversation about the function of language in producing and destabilizing gender, such that all gendered bodies are understood as socially constructed. Even for students who had previously taken their pronouns for granted, the act of naming this choice can demonstrate that gendered referents are unstable and must be continually reiterated, regardless of bodily configuration. This strategy performs several functions: it serves as a concrete example of how gendered bodies are produced socially and discursively; it evenly distributes the construction of gendered bodies across all students, rather than linking it only to transgender bodies; it opens up space for transgender or gender-nonconforming students to self-identify to the instructor; and it lays the groundwork for ongoing class discussions about the social and discursive nature of gender, particularly if instructors return to this initial question of pronoun use later in the course. Importantly, this approach allows for attention to transgender identities and bodies, yet does not rely on them as the primary tool for teaching gender as socially constructed.⁹

Transgender topics are also frequently broached in the classroom through transgender-identified guest speakers, who typically discuss their personal experiences and answer students' questions. Sara E. Cooper and Connor James Trebra write in "Teaching Transgender in Women's Studies: Snarls and Strategies" (2006) that such personal narratives and guest lectures significantly augment students' ability to engage with transgender topics. At times, they note, even students in the class who are transgender-identified can serve as sources of information for their classmates. While engaging individual narratives can certainly work against the tendency to totalize transgender bodies and identities, the incorporation of personal experiences must be undertaken with extreme caution.

For example, Cooper and Trebra are pleased that in response to a Kate Bornstein essay (1994) about medical transition options, students' curiosity leads

to “direct questions about body parts, surgical processes, costs, psychological requirements . . . and the various motivations behind choosing a full transition” (160–61). Access to such information may well benefit transgender students in the classroom. Yet, encouraging nontransgender students to closely examine and uncover details about transgender bodies and medical transition processes can replicate long-standing medico-legal discourses that position supposed deviant bodies as curiosities and objects of investigation to be measured and classified in order to reinforce their otherness and inferiority, particularly as those bodies are gendered, sexualized, and racialized. In relation to such processes, we might ask how questions directed at guest speakers or at transgender bodies in general enact a form of violence in the classroom.

In “The Calculus of Pain: Violence, Anthropological Ethics, and the Category Transgender” (2003), David Valentine argues that violence is a complex and shifting term that is not limited to bodily harm and that an event is constituted as violence, in part, by how the subjects experiencing that event articulate its meaning (43). Valentine asserts that theoretical and scientific scholarship on transgender bodies and subjects, however well-intentioned, can also constitute forms of violence, particularly in relation to histories of pathologizing medical discourse on gender variance. Thus any academic work positioning transgender bodies or subjects as objects of inquiry must attend to the complexities and possibilities of the violence of such work both inside and outside of the classroom.

Pedagogical strategies that foreground transgender people’s choices to transition medically, legally, and/or socially again risk positioning only transgender bodies as those explicitly engaged in gendering processes. Valentine (2008) has elsewhere argued that an emphasis on transgender people choosing to engage in sex-reassignment surgery overshadows the choice that nontransgender people make in *not* having such surgery, naturalizing both the nontransgender body and the agency of the nontransgender subject. This imbalance is also apparent in the selection of Greve’s essay as the single reading addressing transgender bodies and identities in Kesselman, McNair, and Schniedewind’s *Women* (2008). The textbook’s introduction notes that readers will engage with the voices of women “who have made various choices in their lives” (1). Yet, only Greve’s essay singles out a choice of gender identity, an exception that leaves all other authors unmarked as nontransgender, their gender presumably naturally conferred by virtue of their sexed bodies. Do nontransgender people exert no agency in deciding on their own gender identities? Encouraging direct inquiries into only transgender people’s bodily choices easily obscures the choices that all gendered subjects continually make, and the structures of power that govern those choices. Here again, transgender bodies are positioned as educational tools—but at whose expense? Too often, the use of such questions—whether directly addressing a transgender-identified person or not—privileges the positions,

bodies, and educational needs of nontransgender students, casting transgender students as objects of inquiry or simply assuming that no transgender students are in the class.

The use of personal experience again necessitates attention to Scott's (1991) assertion that experience often circumvents analysis of how knowledge and identities are produced. Significantly, she argues that experience "becomes evidence for the fact of difference, rather than a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world" (777). Pedagogical use of personal experiences should contextualize such narratives within broader systems of power and critically assess their interpretation both by the speaker and by the audience. Without this framework, Scott warns, we risk reinforcing systems of inequality as being natural rather than produced and may foreclose important questions about how identity categories and subjectivities are constructed.

Instructors need not rely on seemingly transparent experiences related through personal narratives, but might instead open up broader questions and concerns that are critical to the field of women and gender studies. Namaste and Sitara (2005) model a way to move beyond narrow debates about identity when they propose teaching about the Kimberly Nixon legal case, in which Vancouver Rape Relief (VRR) refused to train a transsexual woman as a volunteer counselor. While the case could easily be reduced to a debate of inclusivity (that is, are transsexual women included in the category of woman?), the authors argue that it might instead introduce students to a number of theoretical positions in feminist scholarship, such as the use of experience in various strands of feminism (64–65). Their aim is not for students to "debate the merits of VRR's position, but rather to encourage them to think theoretically: to understand the claims about knowledge and being that underlie their position and to be able to situate these claims within a history of feminist scholarship" (65). In this approach, transgender-related texts and even narratives of personal experience do not limit discussions to a particular group/body/identity, but open up students' understandings of the many ways that feminist scholarship has addressed questions of the body and lived experience.

Paired with Scott's article, the Nixon case provides a point of entry for students to critically consider how such narratives function in feminist theory and in women's and gender studies, rather than insight into one transgender woman's experience. This approach attends to the specificities of transgender subjects as they are represented, interpreted, and evaluated by institutions and structures of power, yet refuses to position them as exceptions. Transgender bodies and subjects here are neither abstract, universalized examples of gendering processes nor specific figures of authority speaking from personal experience; rather, as with all bodies, they point toward a broad range of questions and critiques that are central to women's studies.

Coming from Mars: A New Approach

Drawing on the textbook model provided by Grewal and Kaplan's *An Introduction to Women's Studies* (2006), transgender bodies and identities might be taught in relation to a broad range of topics introduced in women and gender studies, not just identity and the social construction of sex and gender. When teaching social construction, Grewal and Kaplan's textbook proves effective, because it tracks a long history of the emergence of sex and gender as categories, and treats all sex and gender as socially constructed rather than innate. *An Introduction to Women's Studies* begins with a set of articles describing a range of historical and cultural conceptions of gender, making clear that gender cannot be presumed to depend on particular body parts. Transgender bodies and identities are not specifically referenced in this section, but the textbook's structure creates space for beginning productive discussions about transgender topics. By providing examples from a broad array of historical moments and sociopolitical contexts, it helps ensure that transgender-identified people do not serve as the sole example throughout history for undoing a sex–gender binary characterized as timeless.

However, when presented with examples of bodies or identities conceptualized outside of the contemporary sex–gender binary defined by Western medico-legal systems, students may tend to collapse them all into the category of transgender.¹⁰ Such a move necessitates discussions about the historical and cultural specificity of terms and identity categories, particularly given that terms like “transgender” and “transsexual” are rooted in Western medical discourses of pathology. Because Grewal and Kaplan encourage their readers to think transnationally, students are already prepared to engage these concerns. This connection can usefully segue into the text's next sections on the rise of Western science and medical conceptualizations of gendered bodies. Using this concrete example to engage students in conversations about linguistic choices can encourage more careful attention to writing assignments, deepen discussions about debates of identity in feminist thought, and build on earlier dialogues about the linguistic and discursive production of gender.

Instructors may also confront the tendency to consolidate many gender-nonconforming bodies or identities—particularly non-Western identities—into a catch-all “third gender” category. Evan B. Towle and Lynn M. Morgan (2002) elucidate the political and scholarly pitfalls of this move in their essay “Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the ‘Third Gender’ Concept,” arguing that anthropological scholarship has typically used the third gender concept either to support Western ideals of gender normativity, or to signal liberation from those norms. In each case, they argue, an imperialist framework effaces the particularities of non-Western peoples and histories, selectively positioning them as instruments for legitimating Western transgender-identified subjects. Similarly, use of the third gender concept as a broad, homogenous category can uphold the normativity of Western gender

schemas, confining all nonconforming bodies and identities to this third space and leaving the categories of male and female (or man and woman) unproblematic. Such critiques pair usefully with the third section of Grewal and Kaplan's textbook (2006), which examines histories of eugenics and imperialism to demonstrate how sex and gender are forged through empire and race, rather than having existed prior to these formations.

Towle and Morgan's argument also encourages students to think more complexly about the various ways in which gendered language and categories are produced and employed. Alongside Grewal and Kaplan's textbook, this discussion helps students avoid broad generalizations, as well as to think and write about gendered bodies and subjects in a more historically grounded way. Students are also encouraged to critically examine academic fields of study. Because Towle and Morgan frame their analysis as an intervention into anthropology as a discipline, their inquiries usefully coincide with the ways that Grewal and Kaplan's textbook considers the very field of women and gender studies, not merely the experiences, bodies, or category of women. Both Towle and Morgan's essay and Grewal and Kaplan's textbook prepare students to understand and evaluate different methodologies. Students can then think critically about the very questions being asked and the sociopolitical contexts through which they arise.

The act of turning questions back on themselves encourages students to more critically navigate the narratives of personal experience that are so frequently used to teach about transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and identities. One text for helping students begin this process is a 1989 episode of *The Sally Jesse Raphael Show* titled "I'm Not a Man, I'm Not a Woman." It features a guest named Toby who identifies as neither male nor female, man nor woman, and avoids pronouns altogether. Like all daytime talk shows, the episode is designed such that the guest answers questions from Raphael and members of the studio audience. Yet, this expected procedure is quickly turned on its head, as all inquiries into Toby's bodily configuration, gender identity, and presumed nonnormative status are calmly returned to the questioners. Raphael and audience members find themselves confronted by their own questions, as Toby asks how they came to identify themselves as women or men and even what they mean by such categories. Floundering in this unexpected role reversal, Raphael is unable to articulate answers to her own questions, at one point simply avoiding the entire predicament by exclaiming, "Toby, it's almost as if you got here from Mars!"

Unpacking this text requires an investigation of the privileges granted to nontransgender people, not only in the ways that nontransgender people might more easily skirt the kinds of questions that are directed at Toby and transgender-identified guest speakers in classrooms, but more fundamentally in the ability to remain unmarked as nontransgender. Students can come to see how all gendered bodies are produced through structures of power, while

still foregrounding the ways that social, medical, and state policing of gender is disproportionately applied to subjects and bodies clearly marked as nonnormative. Why, we ask students, should these questions be directed only to Toby, and why is it so disruptive and unsettling for Raphael and many viewers, both onscreen and in the classroom, to be confronted with the same questions? More broadly, we ask students to consider how the very genre of the talk show—with its many similarities to the freak show—works to construct normative ideals of gender, race, class, dis/ability, and sexuality, prescribing a particular way of seeing for its audience. This particular episode of *The Sally Jesse Raphael Show* is noteworthy for the ways that the gender-nonconforming person does not remain positioned as the object of inquiry, even in the context of the talk-show format, which depends on just such a positioning. Toby actively refuses such a position and an easy reliance upon experience, throwing the show's structure into (productive) chaos.¹¹

Although this particular example may be difficult to access, similar strategies can be employed in relation to any number of texts, including written personal narratives or even willing guest speakers, with instructors encouraging students not to ask direct questions about individuals' bodies or medical histories, but rather about why such questions themselves arise and what effects they may have. While often assumed to undo assumptions about the sex–gender binary, question-and-answer sessions based on personal experience might instead (re)produce ideals of normative gender as attached to particular bodily configurations, positioning the transgender-identified speaker as an abnormal object of inquiry. Students should thus be encouraged to consider how such questions may work to uphold oppressive gender structures.

This pedagogical approach opens up space for making crucial connections to the ways that various bodies marked as deviant, monstrous, or abnormal are policed and examined through any number of sites, including family and kinship formations, legal and medical institutions, criminal-justice systems, media representations, and educational systems. Thus, *The Sally Jesse Raphael Show* episode or other personal-narrative texts need not be relegated to a special section on transgender topics, or even simply to a section on media cultures. With the above approach, it may also be productive to schedule such texts during sections on Western medicine and eugenics, citizenship and state power, and law and criminal-justice systems. Personal narratives can serve as texts for critical analyses, rather than seemingly transparent facts of experience, and link transgender bodies, subjectivities, and politics to broader course topics and theoretical concepts, avoiding the additive model of syllabus design.

Along similar lines, consider *Toilet Training*, a 2003 documentary by Tara Mateik and the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, which addresses the policing and disciplining of gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects in relation to gender-segregated bathrooms. Examining bathrooms in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, the film interviews a range of individuals who have experienced

harassment or violence in bathrooms, as well as lawyers, teachers, activists, and feminist scholars. While some transgender-identified individuals are interviewed, these segments do not focus on individual personal histories or bodies; rather, they highlight different perspectives and analyses of gender regulation, examining how such practices are bound up with the regulation of race, sexuality, disability, and class status. Interviewing various people who are perceived to transgress gender norms, and thus implicitly conveying that all bodies are subject to such regulation, the film makes clear that the policing of gender extends beyond transgender-identified people. It treats transgender as one of many critical categories of identity, refusing to position transgender bodies as exceptions or as special objects of inquiry.

Toilet Training also includes an educational toolkit—downloadable from the Sylvia Rivera Law Project website—with suggested discussion questions and an interview that Mimi Nguyen (2003) conducted with attorney Dean Spade and author Craig Willse, describing Spade's 2002 arrest for reportedly being in the “wrong” restroom at New York City's Grand Central Terminal. Assigning the interview alongside the documentary opens a number of productive discussion points, as Spade and Willse name gender as a regulatory system intimately connected to racialization processes, consumer capitalism, the policing of public spaces, the prison industrial complex, and systems of heterosexism and homophobia. Similarly, the film itself creates opportunities for nuanced discussions of gender regulation in relation to disability rights, public education systems, and violence against women and other marginalized groups. Here, bathrooms provide a concrete example for discussions of many central debates in the field of women and gender studies, including, but not limited to, questions of transgender inclusion.

Toilet Training might be taught as part of a section on the criminal-justice system, demonstrating the connections among state-policing practices, the prison-industrial complex, and critical legal theory. The documentary's discussion of consistent arrests of transgender women of color in New York City's public bathrooms can be read alongside Spade's arrest as a white transgender man engaged in a political demonstration, thereby encouraging students to consider how racialization processes and economic injustice work with and complicate regulatory gender systems for all subjects. Further, the film's attention to questions of violence against women—arguing that within much feminist work, this debate operates on narrow definitions of the terms “violence,” “women,” and “safety”—supports a more nuanced classroom discussion of anti-violence theory and activism. For example, it asks us to consider the construction of safety as something purportedly accomplished through gender-segregated spaces, such as multi-stall, binary-gendered bathrooms. Interviewees in the film note that such constructions may still be unsafe, even for many normatively gendered individuals, in a variety of ways; for example, racism, classism, and sexual assault are still possible, even if all occupants of a space are nontransgender women. Such

questions help move classroom discussions into more complex considerations of anti-violence organizing and encourage students to question how and by whom safety is defined for a range of bodies and spaces. In contrast to films like *Socially Acceptable?* (2003), *Toilet Training* actively resists conflating gender with body parts, and those racialized/sexualized body parts with violence, and instead offers analyses and possibilities for change that carefully attend to systemic violence and state power. This framework is aligned with the project's overall approach, which aims not to incorporate more subjects comfortably into existing structures of power, but to critically examine and transform those structures themselves.

In this way, *Toilet Training* usefully avoids both the additive-model approach and the space of exception—troubling strategies that go hand in hand. The additive model inscribes transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies as an addendum, afterthought—the necessary and constitutive outside that allows for the maintenance of hegemonic gender. Exception entails not exclusion per se, but an included exclusion that functions as a scripted transgression enabling certain women's studies projects and classrooms to take nontransgender subjects as the proper subjects of gender and the regular objects of women's studies inquiry. While adding transgender subjects to the curriculum, women's studies leaves intact a theoretical and pedagogical framework that centralizes nontransgender subjects as the default. The theoretical gymnastics then required to enact this addition entail the logic of exception, whereby transgender and gender-nonconforming subjects are addressed though need not be taken up on the same terms as nontransgender subjects. The notion that (certain) transgender subjects are comparable to or aberrational within the category of women erases the intersections between these categories, the modes of differentiation that organize identities hierarchically, and the structures of power through which all gendered subjects are interpellated.

Avoiding this erasure requires reformulating the very terms by which gender is thought and taught in women's studies. As Gayle Salamon suggests in "Transfeminism and the Future of Gender" (2008), transgender bodies and subjects are already fully within women's studies' area of inquiry, and transgender studies can use the theories and methods that women's studies has developed to give an account of gender. Yet this will only be possible inasmuch as women's studies can offer a rigorous genealogy of gender that does not stem from an assumed transgender–nontransgender binary of embodiment. In this context, the aim is not to make the category of transgender align more easily with the category of women, but rather to critique these categories themselves. Wiegman (2002) notes that the ongoing scholarly strength of women's studies does not stem from demarcating and concretizing its objects and areas of inquiry, but rather it is by troubling and genealogizing the production of the categories of analysis that women's studies continually reaffirms its theoretical intervention.

In the space of the women's studies classroom, this intervention cannot emerge simply through exceptional and additive inclusions of transgender and

gender-nonconforming bodies and subjects. Rather than constituting supplements to already-formed women and gender studies courses, considerations of these bodies and subjects offer one of many ways to pursue a critical examination of gendered bodies and systems of power more broadly. Teaching about transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies in this way is transformative for teachers and students in ways that an additive approach cannot be. It alters the very structure of the syllabus, such that units designed around discrete identities or experiences become impossible to maintain. It reframes teaching practices and the levels of engagement asked of students, such that class discussions cannot simply remain at the level of basic fact-gathering, but instead also interrogate methodologies and the sociopolitical effects that such methods might have. And it radically shifts the focus of the classroom itself, such that nontransgender students and instructors no longer occupy the unmarked position of privileged investigator, but instead grapple with gendering processes alongside any transgender-identified individuals in the classroom. Fundamentally restructuring the women's studies classroom and curriculum in this way assists students and teachers in formulating a more critical and complex understanding not only of gendered structures of power, but of the field of women's studies more broadly.

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Notes

1. Both "transgender" and "transsexual" are contested and continually negotiated terms. For the purposes of this article, we use *transgender* to refer to those bodies and subjects that identify or are identified in ways that exceed normatively bounded categories of man or woman. We use *gender-nonconforming* as a broader term encompassing many (although perhaps not all) transgender subjects, as well as those bodies and subjects that

break from idealized gender binaries or are interpreted as nonconforming, because of the ways that gender norms are read through mutually constitutive categories like race, class, sexuality, religion, disability, and nationality. For our purposes here, transgender gestures more toward identity and identification, whereas gender-nonconforming addresses a relation to norms that may involve, but need not rest on, identity and identification. These broader and less rigid terms are useful precisely because we are interested not only in pedagogical engagements with transgender-identified people, but also in the wider range of gendered practices, identities, and bodies that inhabit and emerge in women's studies classrooms. Where "transsexual" appears in this article, it refers to specific work by scholars who have taken up the term.

2. Susan Stryker's introduction to the 1998 *GLQ* "Transgender Issue" suggests that by the late 1990s, women and gender studies, media studies, cultural studies, and queer studies were all beginning to engage with transgender studies' questions and interventions. She notes that "at least four reputable academic journals besides *GLQ* (*Social Text*, the *British Journal of Gender Studies*, the media studies journal *Velvet Light Trap*, and the new *Sexualities*) have scheduled transgender studies special issues for 1998, when a major anthology, *Reclaiming Gender*, is also due out from Cassell" (146).

3. Throughout this essay, we shift between "women's studies" and "women and gender studies," a move that highlights ongoing conversations about the proper name for both the field and its object(s) of study. Wiegman's essay (2002) suggests that we might rethink these questions, "interrupting the demand for referential coherence in order to define the impossibility of coherence as a central problematic and most important animating feature of feminism as a knowledge formation in the contemporary academy" (107). Following this critique, we aim to avoid constraining subjects and fields within language. While our article asks for close attention to the work of language and the attachments that particular terms have been made to carry or may come to carry, we attempt to move beyond an empiricist desire to define identities, bodies, or fields of study with finality and accuracy. Instead, we intend to disrupt the imperative to anchor terms to rigid meanings. We are more concerned here with the work that terms do in relation to structures of power.

4. The category of intersex is frequently taught alongside or collapsed into the category of transgender. We purposely limit our discussion in this article mostly to transgender and gender-nonconforming bodies and identities to avoid the pattern of conflating intersex and transgender issues. We believe that discussions about ethical and productive strategies for specifically incorporating intersex issues into women and gender studies curriculums are vital, and acknowledge the work already published on this topic by Emi Koyama and Lisa Weasel (2002), as well as by April Herndon's "Teaching Intersex Issues" (2006) for the Intersex Society of North America, among others.

5. In *TransLiberation: Beyond Pink and Blue*, Leslie Feinberg (1998) discusses her preference for gender-neutral pronouns such as "ze" and "hir," writing that the struggle to identify oneself with words offers "the gift of new language—of fresh concepts," and can "help change the way people think about what's 'natural' and 'normal'" (72). This consideration of pronoun options can play a useful role in classroom discussions of language and the discursive production of gender, as we note later in this article.

6. For further discussion, see Susan Stryker's "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin" (2004). Stryker notes that "[w]hile queer studies remains the most hospitable

place to undertake transgender work, all too often *queer* remains a code word for 'gay' or 'lesbian,' and all too often transgender phenomena are misapprehended through a lens that privileges sexual orientation and sexual identity as the primary means of differing from heteronormativity" (214).

7. We draw here on the Foucauldian understanding of genealogy, a type of critique that traces the various emergences of concepts or sociopolitical phenomena that are frequently spoken of as timeless or ahistorical, while explicitly refusing to seek their truth, origin, or linear development. Judith Butler (1999) usefully describes a genealogical critique as one that "investigates the political stakes in designating as an *origin* and *cause* those identity categories that are in fact the *effects* of institutions, practices, discourses with multiple and diffuse points of origin" (xxix).

8. For further discussion of the historical relationships among sexualities, gendered bodies, and scientific racism, see Siobhan B. Somerville's *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (2000) and Jennifer Terry's *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (1999).

9. As with any pedagogical strategy, this is not a move without risks. Transgender-identified students may find themselves having to choose whether or not to come out to the instructor in their confidential information form, a choice often fraught with anxiety and safety concerns. Yet most social interaction, particularly in the classroom, tends to force this choice regardless, and we have found that explicitly framing this as a choice that all gendered subjects make can better help alleviate the ways by which such a choice is unevenly weighted for certain subjects.

10. For detailed discussion of the politics of language regarding the term "transgender," see David Valentine's *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (2007). For related discussions involving the use of the terms "gay" and "lesbian" in relation to non-Western subjects, see Martin Manalansan's "In the Shadow of Stonewall: Examining Gay Transnational Politics and the Diasporic Dilemma" (1997) and Joseph Massad's *Desiring Arabs* (2007).

11. This episode might be usefully taught in conjunction with Peggy Phelan's *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (1993), which argues, contra visibility politics, that for marginalized subjects, there may be political potential in pursuing the unmarked.

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