

Instructor: Prof. Greta LaFleur
Department of American Studies
Summer 2021: “Gender and Transgender: Introduction to Transgender Studies”
MWF 6-8:15pm
greta.lafleur@yale.edu
Office Hours: 5-6pm on Mondays, or by appointment.

This course offers students an introduction to the growing body of scholarship in transgender studies, a field that has drawn from and built upon at least three decades’ worth of thinking in gender studies, queer theory, sociology, feminist science studies, literary studies, history, trans art and trans activism. This course encourages students to develop careful analyses of the representation of trans and gender-nonconforming peoples in a cultural context dominated by a two-sex model of understanding human gender differentiation. Students will explore readings in transgender history; feminist, queer, and transgender theory; transgender autobiography and filmic memoir; early sexological writing; contemporary cultural and political writing and debates; trans and intersexed people’s political activism; and recent work on transgender politics and the law. Students will be introduced to discussions and debates central to the development of both gender and transgender studies, such as the relationship of transgender studies to both queer and feminist theory; the sex/gender distinction (and whether it continues to be useful); the epistemological relationship between gender and sexuality; the possibility of reconstituting the binary gender system through a dominant culture of surgical intervention; “inclusion” debates in lesbian feminist cultures around trans femininity; the relationship of racially- and locally-distinct cultures of gender nonconformity to “transgender” as an identity category; the racialized and nationalist politics of “transgender” cultural studies; and the relationship between American trans politics and homonationalism. Registration for this course requires the student’s attendance at five film screenings throughout the semester; film screenings will be scheduled during evenings. This course does not require prior experience with trans studies or queer theory, although experience in these fields is advantageous.

Assignments

- 5 Response Papers: 25% (5% apiece)
- Wikipedia Page Creation & Feedback Assignment 30%
 - Final Seminar Paper of 10 pages: 45%

Content Warning

There are a number of essays, novels, films, and other texts on the “Gender and Transgender” that graphically represent physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional violence and abuse, as well as racism, transphobia, and epistemological violence of all kinds. Many of these texts are very difficult to read or watch. If you think you might be unable to read, watch, or otherwise engage with these texts in a classroom context, this course is not a good fit for you.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will develop a critical vocabulary for discussing, questioning and challenging of the integrity of gender categories in both gender and transgender studies.
- Students will develop an understanding of the social, medical, legal and cultural histories of “transgender,” as an epistemology and genre of cultural representation, in the United States.
- Students will gain a basic familiarity with the major questions, ideological foundations, intellectual genealogies, and trends that have marked the development of transgender studies.
- Students will develop an understanding of the way that (especially) American transgender cultural norms and even liberation movements can and do intersect or act in complicity with oppressive social structures, such as racism, settler colonialism, the prison industrial complex, and American (especially medical) consumer tourism and imperialism. Students will explore a basic introduction to critiques of queer liberalism, via work in critical trans studies.
- Students will become familiar with some of the central texts—especially autobiographies and recent films—of American transgender cultural studies.

Required Texts

- Mock, *Redefining Realness* (ISBN 9781476709130)
- Jia Qing Wilson-Yang, *Small Beauty* (ISBN 978-0994047120)
- Leslie Feinberg, *Stone Butch Blues* (9781555838539)
- Coursepack, Available at TYCO (262 Elm Street; coursepacks can be preordered online here: <https://www.tycoprinting.com/product/course-packets>)

Recommended Texts

- Stryker and Whittle (eds), *The Transgender Studies Reader* (ISBN 9780415947091)
- Preciado, *Testo Junkie* (ISBN 9781558618374)

IMPORTANT: *Stone Butch Blues* is out of print. You must acquire this book via another source. It can be easily acquired through the library (if no copies are available in the library, you must use Interlibrary Loan). Consult with a librarian if you are having difficulty finding the book through the library. Used Copies are available widely online and in used bookstores. The book is also available in an e-book version at <http://www.lesliefeinberg.net/>. Feel free to print it out and bring it to class.

Texts are available at the Yale College Bookstore and can be either rented or purchased. Please note that the *Transgender Studies Reader* frequently can be found used for significantly cheaper than the bookstore price (check Powell's, Alibris, etc), and can also be borrowed from the library, or via BorrowDirect or Interlibrary Loan. *Testo Junkie* can be purchased for a price cheaper than the Yale Bookstore's price by going to The Feminist Press website (<http://www.feministpress.org/books/beatriz-preciado/testo-junkie>) and ordering it there.

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COURSE POLICIES

LATE WORK

Late work is unacceptable. I will accept late work up to one week after the assignment is due. So, for example, if an assignment is due in-class on Friday, June 11th, I will accept the assignment up to but no later than 5pm on Thursday, June 17th. After 5pm on the following Thursday, I will simply not accept the assignment, and you will receive a 0% as a grade.

There are penalties for turning in late work. I will deduct one half grade (5 percentage points) from your assignment grade for each day that it comes in late. So, for example, if you turn in a paper that receives the grade of a B (85%), but you turn it in three days late (on a Friday), your final grade becomes a C- (70%). Remember, even an F (55%) is better than taking a 0%. It is in your best interest to turn in your work on time.

ATTENDANCE

Per Yale Summer School requirements, there are no excused absences. Any absences will cost you 1/3 of a letter grade on your final grade. If you must miss class for religious observance, please let me know at the beginning of the semester and those absences will be excused. If you become seriously ill or if a personal or family emergency will cause you to miss more than two classes, please let me know as soon as possible. If you miss class on a day when a paper is due, you are responsible for turning in your work on time via email, or for contacting me before class and making alternate arrangements to otherwise submit the assignment. Tardiness is similarly unacceptable; two tardies of more than 5 minutes will be counted as an absence.

GRADING SCALE:

A+	98-100
A	94-97
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	59 and below

DICTIONARY

Make sure to have a good dictionary by your side while reading the assigned material. If you do not have one, you should use (frequently!) Yale's subscription to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), which is available online through the library website <http://www.oed.com/>

***CANVAS**

This course is registered on *Canvas, Yale's online course management system. To access your account, go to <https://classesv2.yale.edu> and login; then click the tab with the course number in the upper, left-hand corner. You will be able to use *Canvas to access the class syllabus, occasional readings, and assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS

Five, One-Page Response Papers (5 x 5% apiece = 25%)

Students will offer a ~500 word response to that week's readings on dates specified on the syllabus. Response papers *must* address the readings for the week in which the response papers are due. Response papers should be single-spaced and **no longer than a page**. Response papers can address any topic that a student might choose, but must address *more than one* of the readings due that week (or, if we are reading one single book, the response paper must address more than one chapter of the reading, or that week's reading and a previous week's reading). Possible approaches to the response papers: a) organize your response paper around an idea or question that interests you, and identify the way that the author of each piece conceptualizes this issue. 2) Start with a moment of the text that you did not understand or that you found difficult, and track the way that the other writers from that week explore the same idea. Use the other authors to help you elucidate the parts of the primary reading that you did not understand. 3) Identify a point of disagreement or difference in perspective between two authors (usually organized around a shared idea or question), and explore how each author approaches the question and tackles the problem. Students must cite specific passages from the readings for the week to support their ideas, questions, or assertions, using MLA, Chicago, or APA citation.

Wikipedia Page Editing and Feedback Assignment (25% + 5% = 30%)

The midterm assignment will ask students to, individually or in groups of up to 3, create a Wikipedia page on a trans (or nonbinary or intersex or gender nonconforming) person, history, event, phenomenon, idea, etc. Each student/group must meet with either Olivia or Greta prior to beginning the project in order to propose their topic and get it approved. Entries should be no shorter than 750 words; longer is welcome. The Wikipedia page must be live by the deadline, with a hard copy of the text submitted to Canvas by the deadline as well. One week later, each student will be required to submit an evaluation of a peer's Wikipedia entry page. Evaluations should be no longer than 500 words, and include one paragraph assessing and explaining the strengths of the entry, and one paragraph assessment and explaining where the entry might be revised. The Wikipedia page itself is worth 25% of the final grade; the evaluation is worth 5%.

Final Essay: 45%

The final essay will be a 10 (no more than 10!) page critical essay on a topic of your choice that will incorporate a minimum of five outside critical sources. It must be double-spaced, size 12 Times New Roman font, standard margins (1.25 on left and right, 1 inch on top and bottom), with proper MLA citation. The topic that you choose must address one or more of the course readings.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments must be submitted to the dropbox on *Canvas by the time of the deadline. Please submit your documents in Microsoft Word “.doc” or “.docx” files. If you use OpenOffice.org to write your assignments, please make sure to save them in one of the above formats, although I will also accept “.rtf” files. If you submit your essay in a file format that I cannot access, I will consider it late or missing and you will be penalized accordingly.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

My email policy is simple: email me if you have questions about the class that cannot be answered by the syllabus or your peers. Emailing your instructor is a genre of formal correspondence. Do not address me with "Hey," or not at all; "Dear Greta," however, is always an appropriate way to start an email. I will reply to emails within 24 hours, unless they ask for information that was offered in class or is available on the syllabus.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Interacting with your classmates

“Gender and Transgender” is a discussion-based course, and we will spend a great deal of time during class participating in guided discussions of the literature that we will be reading. The following are some basic suggestions for how to engage in class discussion.

- Always ground your comments in the readings. It is an extremely important scholarly skill to be able to refer back to the text—readings from the current week, past weeks, or other relevant material you have come across in your studies—to ground your point. Even if your feelings or reactions to the issue at hand come from personal experience, find points in the readings, or in your classmates’ ideas, with which your reaction resonates (or doesn’t resonate).
- There is often no “wrong” or “right” way to read the texts that we’ll be reading, but rather, positions or approaches that we can take to better understand different modes of representation. I encourage students to try to engage with each reading and each other sympathetically, which means to read with an open mind, and a commitment to understanding the foundations of each other’s ideas and arguments.
- Listen to each other, don’t simply wait to speak. We are all here to learn together and from each other; you do not come to class to simply listen to and learn from the instructor. If you disagree with something that your peer says, politely and clearly state that you disagree, and why.
- Remember that representation is rarely reality. The representations of trans and gender-nonconforming peoples and cultures that we will be exploring in this class are not direct, universal, or in some cases in any way accurate reflections of reality. These representations will sometimes even exist in much closer proximity to what we now think of as “propaganda” than any sort of objective analysis, although they will certainly *claim* to be an objective analysis. Our goal is to consider these representations within the intellectual, cultural, and overall geopolitical context in which they were produced, consumed, and circulated, in order to work toward building a long historical understanding of the emergence of “transgender” as a category of experience in North America.
- Conflict: in a class like “Gender and Transgender,” it is likely that we will experience conflict. Even the most fundamental vocabularies within trans cultures and transgender studies are constantly under heated debate and frequently in flux, and there can be a lot of pressure or judgment around using or not using the right words. If something a classmate (or professor!) says offends you, please engage with them clearly, firmly, and respectfully (e.g. “I prefer that you not use that word. Would you be willing to say XXXX instead in the future?”). Similarly, if a classmate or professor asks you to reconsider a way that you are speaking or acting, try not to immediately get defensive. Try to listen to your peer/professor, consider what they are saying, consider your speech/behavior, and decide whether or not you are willing to act or speak differently. Our classroom is a mini-community, and I encourage all students to join me in a practice of “calling in” rather than “calling out,” in order that we can learn with each other via support, accountability, and kindness rather than shame and silencing. For more on “calling in,” see: <http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/2013/12/calling-less-disposable-way-holding-accountable/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Definitions of Plagiarism, Cheating, and Documentation of Sources
 From the Yale College Undergraduate Regulations, 2013-14

By coming to Yale, students have implicitly asked the College to help them develop a broadly based, highly disciplined intelligence, not just to learn material, but also to be guided toward a deep and supple understanding of the subjects they study. Course readings, lectures, and discussions are all crucial elements of this learning. Less obvious, perhaps, is what students' own writing contributes to this process. It may sometimes seem that exams, lab reports, and papers are meant primarily to measure how much has been learned. But when students complete written course work, they are not demonstrating what they have learned, but are rather doing the very work of synthesis and reflection that constitutes advanced learning. Every writer has had the experience of making discoveries while writing an essay. To have this discovery is to make knowledge, and making knowledge is what joins all students to the project of the university.

Those students who cheat forfeit the opportunity to make such discoveries. Certainly there are other reasons not to cheat. One who borrows unacknowledged ideas or language from others is stealing their work, which denies them their due credit and also impedes that free exchange of ideas on which the university depends. Yale regards cheating as a serious offense, for which the standard penalty is two semesters of suspension. But the much more grievous wrong is to the cheating student. Writing is one of the most powerful sites of learning; students who turn in someone else's work, therefore, are giving away the very substance of their educations.

College course work frequently requires that students build on previous scholarship or collaborate with other students. The following definitions help clarify the proper procedures for conducting and documenting such collaborations and the expectations of Yale College. For a fuller discussion of these issues, see the Writing Center website.

TUTORING CENTER

If you find yourself struggling in my course, please come see me. In addition to any help I can give you, Yale also offers tutoring services. Please see the website for additional information:

<http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/tutoring-and-academic-support#3>

THE WRITING CENTER

Students are encouraged to take advantage of Yale's wonderful writing center. Many students tend to avoid the Writing Center, thinking that it is a resource for "bad" writers. This is not the case! The best writers know that feedback, revision and review is a *crucial* part of the writing process. The Writing Center is a wonderful resource—please use it! You can make an appointment with a writing center staff member online at

<https://www.yalewco.com/index.php>

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Resource Office on Disabilities works with all students at the University to include Yale College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and all Professional Schools. Registering with the Resource Office on Disabilities is a required first step for students who wish to request a disability related accommodation or service. Students must contact the Resource Office and meet with the Director to discuss accommodation(s). Appropriate documentation is required and will be discussed with the student.

A student may register and submit documentation to the Resource Office even though a specific accommodation request is not anticipated at the time of registration.

Documentation provided to the Resource Office on Disabilities is kept confidential. Information submitted directly to the Resource Office will not become part of a student's permanent record at Yale.

Students who are unsure about their eligibility for assistance from the Resource Office should schedule an appointment with the director of the Resource Office on Disabilities.

For more information, please see the Resource Office on Disabilities website:

<http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/student-information>

Resource Office on Disabilities
Yale University
35 Broadway (rear entrance), Room 222
P.O. Box 208305
New Haven, CT 06520-8305

Phone: 203-432-2324
Fax: 203-432-8250

Office hours:
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE

NOTE: Make sure to show up to class today having read and finished all of the readings below!!

Monday, June 7th: Introduction to the Course, Introduction to the Terms

Required Reading:

1. Janet Mock, *Redefining Realness*
2. C. Jacob Hale, "Suggested Rules for Non-Transsexuals Writing about Transsexuals, Transsexuality, Transsexualism, or Trans ____."
 - a. sandystone.com/hale.rules.html

3. Kyla Wazana Tompkins, "We Aren't Here to Learn What We Already Know"
 - a. <https://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/2016/09/13/we-arent-here-to-learn-what-we-know-we-already-know/>

Wednesday, June 9th

Required Readings

1. Susan Stryker and Aren Aizura, "Transgender Studies 2.0." *Canvas
2. Susan Stryker, "(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies," *TSR: 1-17*
3. Dean Spade, "Mutilating Gender," *Canvas

Friday, June 11th

*****Response Paper #1 Due By Start of Class**

Required Reading (and viewing!)

1. FILM: *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria*
2. Susan Stryker, "A Hundred Years of Transgender History" OR "The Current Wave in Transgender History."--- *Canvas
3. Joanne Meyerowitz, Introduction to *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*---- *Canvas
4. STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) Manifesto, "Transvestite and Transsexual Liberation." *Gay Dealer* 1969/1970

WEEK TWO

Monday, June 14th

Required Readings:

1. Richard von Krafft-Ebbing, "Selections from Psychopathia Sexualis with Special Reference to Contrary Sexual Instinct," *TSR* 21-27. [6 pages]
2. David O. Cauldwell, "Psychopathia Transexualis," *TSR* 40-44 [4 pages]
3. Harry Benjamin, "Transsexualism and Transvestitism as Psycho-Somatic and Somato-Psychic Syndromes," *TSR* 45-52 [7 pages]
4. T. Benjamin Singer, "From the Medical Gaze to Sublime Mutations: The Ethics of (Re)Viewing Non-Normative Body Images," *TSR* 601-620. [19 pages]
5. Magnus Hirschfeld, "From The Transvestites: The Erotic Drive to Cross-Dress," *TSR* 28-40 [12 pages]

Wednesday, June 16th

Required Reading (and Viewing!)

1. FILM: *Southern Comfort* (dir. Kate Davis, 2001)
2. Paul Preciado, *Testo Junkie* (long chapter on medical experimentation in Puerto Rico), *Canvas
3. Toby Beauchamp, “The Substance of Borders: Transgender Politics, Mobility, and the US State Regulation of Testosterone.” *Canvas
4. Jules Gill-Peterson, “Toward a Trans of Color Critique of Medicine,” from *Histories of the Transgender Child*, *Canvas

Friday, June 18th

*****Response Paper #2 Due By Start of Class**

Required Reading

1. Donna Haraway, “The Cyborg Manifesto,” *Canvas
2. Sandy Stone, “The Empire Strikes Back: A Post-Transsexual Manifesto.” *Canvas

NOTE: Start reading *Stone Butch Blues!* You will need to have all of it read by Wednesday.

WEEK THREE

Monday, June 21th

Required Readings:

1. First half of Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues*

Wednesday, June 23rd

Required Readings:

2. Second half of Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues*
3. Cameron Awkward-Rich, “Trans, Feminism: or, Reading Like a Depressed Transsexual.” *Canvas

Friday, June 25th

*****Response Paper #3 Due By Start of Class**

Required Readings:

1. Julia Serano, *Whipping Girl*: “Introduction,” “Trans Woman Manifesto,” “Dismantling Cissexual Privilege,” “Bending Over Backwards: Traditional Sexism and Trans Woman Exclusion Policies”
2. Emi Koyama, “Transfeminist Manifesto.” [15 pages] *Canvas
3. Emi Koyama, “Whose Feminism is it Anyway? The Unspoken Racism of the Trans Inclusion Debate,” 698-705 in *TSR* [7 pages]
4. The African Trans Feminist Charter [4 pages] *Canvas
5. “Pussy Don’t Fail Me Now: The Place of Vaginas in Black Feminist Theory and Organizing.”
 - a. <http://www.crunkfeministcollective.com/2017/01/23/pussy-dont-fail-me-now-the-place-of-vaginas-in-black-feminist-theory-organizing/>
6. Elinor Burkett, “What Makes a Woman?” *The New York Times*, June 6, 2015.
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/opinion/sunday/what-makes-a-woman.html?_r=0

WEEK FOUR

Monday, June 28th

Required Reading and Viewing:

1. FILM: *Kumu Hina* (dirs.. Joe Wilson, Dean Hamer)
2. Aizura, Cotton, Balzer/LaGata, Ochoa, Vidal-Ortiz, “Introduction.” *TSQ* 1.3 (2014). *Canvas
3. Louis Esme Cruz and Qwo-Li Driskill, “Puo’Winue’L Prayers: Readings From North America’s First Transtextual Script” in *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16: 1-2 (2010), 243-252.--- *Canvas
4. Saylesh Wesley, “Twin Spirited Woman.” *TSQ* 1.3 (2014): 338-351. *Canvas
5. Boellstorff, Cabral, Cardenas, Cotten, Stanley, Kalaniopua Young, and Aizura, “Decolonizing Transgender.” *TSQ* 1.3 (2014): 419-39. *Canvas

Wednesday, June 30th

Required Reading

1. Deborah A. Miranda, “Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish

- California” in *GLQ: Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 16: 1-2 (2010), 253-284-
 ----*Canvas
2. Scott Morgensen, “Settler Homonationalism” in recent special issue of *GLQ* (“Sexuality/Nationality/Indigeneity”). ----*Canvas
 3. C. Riley Snorton and Jin Haritaworn, “Trans Necropolitics: A Transnational Reflection on Violence, Death, and the Trans of Color Afterlife.” [11 pages] *Canvas

Friday, July 2nd

*****Response Paper #4 Due By Start of Class**

Required Readings:

1. Bryn Kelly, “Other Balms, Other Gileads” --*Canvas (short)
2. Jia Qing Wilson-Yang, *Small Beauty* (hard copy; available in bookstore or in library, e-book available). Read the whole book (it’s short).

WEEK FIVE

******Wikipedia Pages Must be Live, and the Text Copy of the Page Submitted to Canvas, by Start of Class**

Monday, July 5th

Required Readings:

1. Malatino, “Introduction” to *Queer Embodiment: Monstrosity, Medical Violence, and Intersex Experience*--*Canvas
2. Malatino, “Prologue: Neither/Nor (Notes on Theory and Livability)” in *Queer Embodiment*--*Canvas
3. Malatino, “Impossible Existences: Intersex and “Disorders of Sex Development” in *Queer Embodiment* --*Canvas
4. Plemons, “Introduction” to *The Look of a Woman: Facial Feminization Surgery and the Aims of Trans Medicine*--*Canvas
5. Plemons, “On Origins,” in *The Look of a Woman* --*Canvas

Wednesday, July 7th

*****Response Paper #5 Due By Start of Class**

Required Reading & Viewing:

1. FILM: *The Salt Mines*, dir. Susana Aikin and Carlos Aparicio, 1990; ONLINE VIDEO, AVAILABLE THROUGH YALE LIBRARY
2. Morgan Bassichis, Alexander Lee, and Dean Spade, “Building an Abolitionist Trans and Queer Movement with Everything We’ve Got.” *Canvas
3. Dean Spade, introduction to *Normal Life*--*Canvas
4. Dean Spade, “What’s Wrong with Rights?” from *Normal Life*-- *Canvas

Friday, July 9th

*****Wikipedia Feedback Assignment Due Uploaded to Canvas by Start of Class**

Required Viewing:

1. *Disclosure* (Cox & Feder)

Required Reading:

1. Vivianne Namaste, *Sex Change, Social Change* “Chapter 4: Beyond Image Content: Examining Transsexuals’ Access to the Media.”

FINAL PAPER DUE UPLOADED TO CANVAS BY JULY 16th AT 8PM (EST).