

## **PREFACE**

*Introduction to Transgender Studies* is the first introductory textbook to the field of transgender (trans) studies. While numerous outstanding books are available in the rapidly growing field of trans studies, they often focus on theory, with an intended audience of graduate students; or they are autobiographical or biographical and thus look at only one person; or they explore only one topic, such as health care, legal systems, history, or coming out as trans to family and friends. In contrast, *Introduction to Transgender Studies* is the first full-length textbook to introduce trans studies as a rich field of study that encompasses and connects global contexts, intersecting identities, historic and contemporary issues, literature, history, politics, art, and culture. Each of its twelve chapters includes key concepts, original artwork by Cameron Rains, never-before-published essays by trans people and allies from around the world, an extensive list of film and television of interest, numerous topics for student discussion, in-class and out-of-class activities, and ideas for writing and research that range from informal reports to formal research projects.

### **Intended Audience**

The intended audience for *Introduction to Transgender Studies* is undergraduates in courses ranging from introductory gender studies courses and introductory LGBTQ+ studies courses to more specific classes focusing on the expanding field of transgender studies. This text can also be used in graduate courses focusing on pedagogical practices in gender studies, feminist studies, LGBTQ+ studies, and transgender studies.

### **The Need for This Book**

The seeds for this book came from my own teaching in the writing program at Stanford University, where I taught feminist rhetoric and queer rhetoric, as well as my teaching at City College of San Francisco in the LGBT Studies Department and Berkeley City College in the Women's Studies Department. In all these settings, undergraduates were eager to learn about contemporary transgender issues as well as the rich global history of gender diversity through the ages. Textbooks published for courses in LGBTQ+ studies often have minimal focus on transgender issues and experiences. More broadly, in women's studies, feminist studies, and gender studies, most textbooks highlight women's issues and women's lived experiences; more to the point, they tend to focus on cisgender

women and rarely consider the experiences of trans women. Even the feminist and gender studies texts that now include masculinity studies often do not consider trans studies or the expansion of gender beyond the binary. When trans issues are introduced, they are often discussed within the context of a person transitioning and crossing the gender binary from one pole to another. While *Introduction to Transgender Studies* honors trans people who identify along a male/female binary, it is also mindful of ancient cultures that honored gender diversity with third-, fourth-, and fifth-gender identities as well as contemporary nonbinary, agender, and gender-expansive identities.

### **A Welcoming, Student-Centered Approach**

*Introduction to Transgender Studies* takes a student-centered approach. In my women and gender studies, feminist philosophy, LGBT studies, and transgender studies classes, I have often found that students experience a good deal of anxiety, trepidation, and confusion when studying issues pertaining to sex and gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Even students who identify within the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex (or differences of sex development)+ community often find it difficult to distinguish among sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. I wrote this book to create a safe space for the full spectrum of undergraduate students, ranging from those who have never thought about gender issues to students who identify as transgender, trans, nonbinary, agender, and/or gender expansive.

In short, the language and the artwork in this book are meant to be welcoming. They invite the reader and the instructor to find ways to discuss gender issues and gender identities and issues in a safe and comfortable way. I have tried to make the text welcoming to newcomers who may not have thought about trans issues, as well as to gender-expansive students who have. Often, these students sit side by side in the same classroom. The text promotes dialogue, communication, and mutual respect.

### **Class-Tested**

The first two chapters of this book were piloted with great success among undergraduates in a wide range of institutions of higher learning, including community colleges, public state universities, and private colleges and universities. At the University of Colorado in the United States and at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom, these chapters were successfully piloted in graduate courses, with the goal of students' considering the material in light of their own pedagogical practices in teaching.

## Writings from the Community

As one person living in the United States and as a nonbinary trans white person, I have been aware that my voice is unable to capture the wealth of diversity regarding trans issues around the world. Thus, each chapter concludes with brief contributed “Writings from the Community” essays. The majority of the writings were specifically commissioned for this textbook and relate to the overall chapter theme. Each piece allows students to hear the voices of people from different parts of the world; most of the contributors identify as trans, and all have thought deeply about gender identity, intersecting identities, intersecting oppressions, and their own lived experience.

The writings include not only Andrea Jenkins’s poem “Blues for SOGI” and her essay explaining the importance of the Transgender Oral History Project at the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota but also a recounting of Eileen Chester’s experiences as a Two-Spirit person from the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation in British Columbia attempting to find a recovery center that will be open to a person who is Indigenous and Two Spirit. (Andrea Jenkins is an award-winning poet and the first out African American transgender woman elected to a city government in the United States. Eileen Chester is a returning community college student who works two full-time jobs while attending college.) The Ugandan LGBTQI+ activist and educator John (Longjones) Abdallah Wambere discusses the climate for trans people in his home country. Two of the essays are written by a mother and her trans teenage son, and two other essays written by medical doctors focus on points of access to medical care for trans people (one written by a cisgender ally, the other written by a trans man).

## Content and Organization

The first two chapters of *Introduction to Transgender Studies* focus on definitions in the context of people’s personal stories, which help to underscore and explain each definition. Chapter 1 looks at primary and secondary sex traits, differences of sex development (also known as intersex), gender identity, gender expression, diverse gender possibilities, and the differences between gender and sex. Various terms under the trans umbrella are defined and explored, including the term *cisgender*. Chapter 2 explores sexual orientation and considers how gender identity and gender expression are often conflated with sexual orientation. Heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality are defined and considered within contemporary and historic contexts. Asexuality and pansexuality are also defined and examined. The chapter concludes by considering contemporary terminology and slang relating to sexual orientation.

Chapter 3 examines nineteenth-century sexology to illuminate why Western culture sometimes seems obsessed with gender-identity and sexual-orientation labels. In examining historical sexological taxonomies that are today considered homophobic and transphobic, the chapter also explores early outcries against these narratives of disease and disorder. The chapter concludes by looking at the work of present-day individuals and clinics working to make sexology inclusive of all people.

Chapter 4 focuses on riots, protests, and rebellions for trans rights in the mid-to late twentieth century. The chapter also explores why, in the United States, we often see a split between the LGB and the T communities. The chapter concludes with a look at Georgina Beyer, a Maori trans woman who became the first known transgender person in the world to become a member of parliament.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine twenty-first century issues, including bathroom access, education, sports, legal identification, and health care. They consider various countries around the world as well as individual states within the United States.

Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10 focus on various trans histories. Chapter 7 looks specifically at global Indigenous cultures that not only accepted but also revered gender diversity. The groups studied range from ancient India and the third-gender identity group known as the *Hijras* (who have existed for over four thousand years) to the third-, fourth-, and fifth-gender identities known as *Nádleeh* in Navajo culture. In general, Chapter 7 considers the history before colonization as well as the ways that colonial violence attempted to erase gender diversity. The chapter ends with a discussion of current de-colonial recovery projects.

Chapter 8 focuses on four historic figures who cross-dressed in order to fully embody their gender identity: Catalina/Don Antonio de Erauso of Spain, Le Chevalier/La Chevalière d' Éon of France, Dr. James Miranda Barry of England, and Frances Thompson of the United States. While this chapter focuses on individuals, it also raises important questions about the ways that historians gather history and make assumptions about their subjects. Several archival newspaper accounts help enliven this chapter.

Chapter 9 focuses on cross-dressing as a form of protest from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first. The chapter examines cross-dressing and troubling the gender binary as means of protest in the Enclosure Riots, the Luddite Riots, the Rebecca Riots, the 1990s antiwar protests in the United States, and the current #meninhibab protests against restrictive laws enforced on women in Iran.

Chapter 10 considers trans-related ancient art and artifacts from India, Nepal, and Egypt; it also focuses on Pharaoh Hatshepsut and the Chinese legend of General Mulan. The chapter then explores religious icons that were dual-gendered as well as the story of Joan of Arc.

Chapter 11 considers trans art and culture from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first. Musicians ranging from Billy Tipton (jazz) and Little Axe Broadnax (gospel) are discussed alongside the Canadian Two-Spirit artist Iceis Rain (rap/rock) and the San Francisco icon Shawna Virago (rockabilly/punk/folk). Visual artist Jess T. Dugan's trans elders photo project is also presented in this chapter as well as three other chapters, along with a one-time South African trans arts collective show. Authors and characters who embrace gender diversity are also explored, along with important novels, media, film, and television.

Finally, Chapter 12 looks to transgender archives and the necessity of uncovering and safeguarding trans histories around the world. The book closes with suggestions for further research at several of the online trans archives.

### **Instructors' Resources**

*Introduction to Transgender Studies* is accompanied by instructors' resources intended to support the book's use in a class setting. The resources are available to confirmed adopters. To request the resources, contact [coursematerials@columbiauniversitypress.com](mailto:coursematerials@columbiauniversitypress.com) or [bcohen@harringtonparkpress.com](mailto:bcohen@harringtonparkpress.com). The resources include sample syllabi for various course configurations in transgender studies and gender studies classes. For each chapter, instructors can access key teaching points with further discussion questions, in-class activities, research projects, and tips for using the book's film and television suggestions. The resources also include a brief description of various approaches to teaching the material in each chapter. PowerPoint presentations for each chapter (including approximately twenty-five to thirty slides per presentation) are also available.

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*Ardel Haefele-Thomas*