

Introduction to Transgender Studies 101

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"Introduction to Transgender Studies," published earlier this month by academic LGBTQ book publisher Harrington Park Press, is the first ever introductory textbook intended for transgender/trans studies at the undergraduate level.

For undergraduates/faculty, this means an enjoyable and lively classroom resource for "Transgender 101," when offered by their school—and very little excuse if such a course isn't provided.

Encompassing and connecting global contexts, historic and contemporary issues, literature, history, politics, art, and culture, author Ardel Haefele-Thomas embraces the richness of intersecting identities—how race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, nation, religion, and ability have cross-influenced to shape the transgender experience and trans culture across and beyond the binary.

"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," says Haefele-Thomas. *"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."

In addition to dozens of personal stories throughout the book, each of the book's twelve chapters features "Writings from the Community," a series of fascinating and deeply personal essays that relate the chapter theme to the lived experiences of trans and LGBTQ+ people and allies from different parts of the world, as well as an invaluable list of "Films and Television of Interest."

"I wish I'd had something like this book when I was growing up in Oklahoma in the 1960s and 1970s. I'd felt trans my whole life but kept my mouth shut and my head down about it. I learned the word transsexual from reading a "Dear Abby" column in my hometown newspaper when I still was a preteen, but I had a hard time finding information that rang true with me — the only books I could find in the card catalogue of the Carnegie Public Library of Lawton, Oklahoma, about the kind of people I thought I was were textbooks of abnormal psychology." – From the Foreword by Susan Stryker Ph.D., Associate Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and author of "Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution."

"A book like this matters to everybody. The more I speak and perform as a trans artist, the clearer it becomes to me that everyone suffers from the painful and damaging belief that there are only two genders in the world. In that way it is so helpful for everyone to be reminded that ever since human beings began to organize themselves into societies there have existed different genders and sexualities outside the heterosexual norm. And it helps all of us who identify as queer or trans to understand that we are not alone in the world. That we all have a history to which we can proudly belong." – From the book's Introduction by playwright and performer Jo Clifford.

View "Introduction to Transgender Studies" on the Harrington Park Press website at www.harringtonparkpress.com/intro-to-trans-studies/

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