Transfeminine lives are often seen as having, in and of themselves, political consequences, theoretical limits, and some kind of relation to a ‘beyond’ of gender. While former sports celebrity Caitlyn Jenner has come to stand for the notion that ‘transgender’ is now a ‘respectable’ identity, Olympic gold-star medalist Caster Semenya, despite not being transgender, is now caught up in a fraught and ugly fracas over the question of “what is a woman?” Some debates within both feminist and queer thought ask: How stable is the LGBTQ acronym as a concept? While some strains of feminism seek to exclude trans lives from a definition of womanhood on the grounds of “gender realism,” others explicitly reject any kind of gender naturalization. Similarly, some openly apolitical or conservative ‘queer’ and gay rights discourses question whether trans lives fit within a program of assimilation and advancement, while others claim that a structural transsexuality lies at the center of a politically-charged “gay communism” that unites queer theory with a critique of capitalism. In this context, theorists continue to differ on matters such as: the continued relevance of “queer” as a rubric, the utility of the figure of the “post-transsexual”; and the relation of trans embodiment to normativity, gender nonconformity, and the gender binary. Some have announced (already!) “the end of trans studies.” How can we understand, parse, and adjudicate these conflicting and overlapping questions?

In this course, we will read treatments of these questions by (predominantly) trans and intersex philosophers, exploring, discussing and weighing a variety of dissenting opinions on trans gender ontology, epistemology, and liberation. What do ‘trans’ and ‘queer’ have to do with (and to) each other as rubrics? What has trans feminism been, and what might it be? What are the consequences of abstracting “trans”? Readings will include texts by Susan Stryker, Emi Koyama, Julia Serano, Jules Glueson, Sandy Stone, Cathy Cohen, Juliet Jacques, Joni Cohen, Mario Mieli, Andrea Long Chu, Viviane Namaste, Treva Ellison, Jack Halberstam, Jordy Rosenberg, and Marissa Brostoff, among others.

*The Bureau of General Services—Queer Division is an independent, all-volunteer queer cultural center, bookstore, and event space hosted by The LGBT Community Center in Manhattan.*
Week 1: July 10th | Trans optimism, trans pessimism

- Mario Mieli, excerpt, *Towards a Gay Communism*: “Homosexual Desire is Universal”
- Andrea Long Chu and Emmett Drager, “After Trans Studies”

Supplemental:
- Viviane Namaste, “Against Transgender Rights”
- C. Riley Snorton and Jin Haritaworn, “Trans Necropolitics”
- Jordy Rosenberg, excerpt, “The Daddy Dialectic”
- Bassichis, Lee and Spade, “Building an Abolitionist Trans & Queer Movement…”
- Kai Green, Marquis Bey, “Where Black Feminist Thought and Trans* Feminism Meet”

Week 2: July 17th | Transmisogyny, trans womanhood, trans feminism

- Julia Serano, “Putting the Feminine Back into Feminism”
- Viviane Namaste, “Tragic Misreadings: Queer theory’s erasure of trans subjectivity”
- Nat Raha, “Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism”
- Joni Alizah Cohen, “The Eradication of ‘Talmudic Abstractions’”

Supplemental:
- Susan Stryker, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein above the village of Chamonix”
- Talia Bettcher, “Trans Women and the Meaning of ‘Woman’”
- Emi Koyama, “The Transfeminist Manifesto”

Week 3: July 24th: Anti-Queer and ‘Gender-Critical’ Contestations

- Biddy Martin, “Sexualities without Genders and Other Queer Utopias”
- Sandy Stone, “The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto”
- Victoria Smith, “Feminists and Transgender – Why There is a Debate”

Supplemental:
- Raewyn Connell, “Transsexual Women and Feminist Thought”
- Grace Lavery, “You Keep Using This Phrase, ‘Adult Human Females’”
- Sophie Lewis, “SERF ‘n’ TERF: Notes on Some Bad Materialisms”

Week 4: July 31st | (Trans)normativity, Racialized Labor, Abolition, Camp

- Marissa Brostoff, “Notes on Caitlyn, or Genre Trouble”
- Treva Ellison, "Black Trans Reproductive Labor" (Video/audio lecture)
- Cathy Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?”
- Annamarie Jagose, “The Trouble with Antinormativity”

Supplemental:
- Jack Halberstam, “Trans* - New Configurations of Body, History, Memory and Kinship”
- Sarah Lamble, “Retelling Racialized Violence, Remaking White Innocence”
Extended bibliography, with titles containing set readings bolded


Kate Bornstein, Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us (New York: Routledge, 1994).


Roderick Ferguson, Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique (University of Minnesota Press, 2003).


Aaron Jaffe, “Cis Fears and Transphobia: How Not to Debate Gender,” Verso, June 2018.


José Esteban Muñoz, “‘The White to be Angry’: Vaginal Davis’s Terrorist Drag,” *Social Text* 52/53, 1997, pp. 80-103.

José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (NYU Press, 2009.)


Paul Preciado, Counter-Sexual Manifesto, transl. Kevin Gerry Dunn (Columbia University, 2018).


Janice Raymond, The Transsexual Empire, 2nd ed. (Teacher’s College Press, 1994).

Pamela Robertson, Guilty Pleasures: Feminist Camp from Mae West to Madonna (Duke, 1996.)


Susan Stryker, Transgender History (Berkeley, CA: Seal, 2008).
