

**‘NO ONE LIKE ME SEEMED TO HAVE EVER EXISTED’:
A TRANS OF COLOUR CRITIQUE OF TRANS SCHOLARSHIP AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT IN POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

By

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Graduate Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
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Abstract

This thesis considers the burgeoning development of trans studies and trans policies in post-secondary schools in Canada and the United States. It is concerned with the impact of trans scholarship and trans policies on trans students of colour. The thesis consists of a textual analysis of scholarship, policy documents and newspaper articles. The tendency to prioritize the experiences of white trans people in contemporary scholarship is replicated in trans studies curricula and reinforced through policy documents. These whitening practices affect trans students of colour and limit their ability to find meaning in trans studies. Similarly, these practices limit racialized trans students’ access to university programs and services.

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Dedication

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This thesis is dedicated to every trans person out there who has faced the terror of the first day of class, dreading having their ‘old’ name read aloud on the class list; every racialized trans person who poured through trans studies courses looking to find validation of their experience only to not find themselves there.

Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson. Thank you for starting the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries; for fighting for us racialized trans folks and for inspiring a trans activist movement built on the premise that ‘if you mess with one trans person, you are messing with all of us’.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Abstract | ii |
| Acknowledgements | iii |
| Dedication | iv |
| Table of Contents | v |
| Chapter One: Introduction | 1 |
| Trans Students in Post-Secondary Institutions: Policies, Scholarship and Reporting..... | 2 |
| Objective and Scope..... | 7 |
| Emergence of the Thesis Questions..... | 8 |
| Methodology..... | 10 |
| Theoretical Framework: Towards a Trans of Colour Critique..... | 11 |
| Synopsis..... | 15 |
| Chapter Two: Trans Scholarship | 16 |
| Trans Scholarship..... | 17 |
| Black Studies, Queer Studies and Trans Studies: Replicating Exclusion..... | 18 |
| Where is Trans Studies Located? The Impact of the Site of Inquiry on Scholarship..... | 21 |
| Weaving Together Disability, White Privilege and Trans Identity..... | 23 |
| ‘I Couldn’t Find <i>Myself</i> in History’..... | 31 |
| Trans Studies in Post-Secondary Institutions..... | 39 |
| Location and Impact..... | 44 |
| Chapter Three: Trans Policy | 53 |
| The Experiences of Trans Students on University Campuses..... | 55 |
| Anti-Discrimination Policies..... | 58 |
| Anti-Discrimination Policy in Practice: The University of Iowa as a Case Study..... | 60 |
| Policies Governing Access: Leadership Examples and Terrible Warnings..... | 66 |
| The University of Toronto: Access Through Recommendations..... | 70 |
| University of Vermont: An Example of Leadership..... | 75 |
| Whose Policies: Racialized Trans People and Policy Development..... | 78 |
| Trans Scholarship, Trans Policies..... | 80 |
| Chapter Four: Conclusion | 82 |
| Bibliography | 86 |

Chapter 1: Introduction

In keeping with theories of transgender citizenship that imagine it as a compromised citizenship, doing so requires trans people to construct their identities in line with neoliberal imperatives, sacrificing self determination for the social recognition and citizenship that come with being an efficient and productive worker.[...] The marginalization experienced by trans people of colour, for instance, or trans people who do not speak English or French goes unchallenged through tacit acceptance of a neoliberal citizenship regime. The self-sufficient model of the citizen-worker thus ‘undermine[s] the potential for a politics of resistance and create[s] fractures within [trans] communities based on class, race, [...] and ability,’ in ways suggestive of the notion of compromised citizenship described above. (Cattapan, 2009, p.7)

Trans Students in Post-Secondary Institutions: Policies, Scholarship and Reporting

The recent publication of The Transgender Studies Reader (Stryker and Whittle, 2006) marked an important moment in the development of trans¹ scholarship and trans studies. The Reader reflects a moment when trans scholarship is being developed into a new field of study. This text gathers historical and contemporary scholarship by and about trans people.

Overall, the Reader lacks an analysis of the ways that identities are shaped by intersecting experiences of racialization, class, disability and other systems of oppression and marginalization. Through this omission, The Transgender Studies Reader, a first offering as a canonical textbook of trans studies, fails to reflect scholarship about a diversity of trans experiences, in contrast to the individual work of other trans scholars such as Leslie Feinberg (1996), Jean Bobby Noble (2007) and Viviane Namaste (2000). Individually and in very different ways, these trans scholars insert a more complex understanding of trans experiences into trans studies through their exploration of interlocking systems of race, disability and class.

¹ I will use the term trans throughout this thesis to describe people who may identify as Transsexual, Transgender, gender-variant, genderless or another gender entirely. Trans is widely understood as an umbrella term which refers to people whose gender does not fit neatly into the dichotomous and mutually opposed binary of man and woman.

Content such as theirs fills in the gaps in trans scholarship exemplified by The Transgender Studies Reader that construct the trans body as white, non-disabled, and male.

Concurrent to the development of this scholarship and trans studies curricula, post-secondary institutions have been grappling with how to deal with requests by trans students for programs, services and policies that are reflective of their experiences. As trans scholarship indicates², the ways that sex and gender are understood has shifted as an articulation of a trans experience enters popular consciousness. Missteps in how these requests by trans students are handled by post-secondary schools indicate that they are still struggling with the fact that concepts of sex and gender have changed.

Over the past ten years, several post-secondary institutions have developed policies governing recognition and access for trans people. According to the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GenderPAC), two-thirds of the top twenty-five universities and colleges in the United States had policies explicitly related to gender identity and/or to trans students by 2007 (Jacobs, 2007). Ethan Jacobs and Elizabeth Perry (Jacobs, 2007; Perry 2006) have both written articles about the development of trans policies in post-secondary institutions across the United States. Both authors and the GenderPAC study make distinctions between ‘publicly funded’ and ‘Ivy League schools’³. The first school to adopt a gender protection policy was the University of Iowa in 1996, and Brown University was the first Ivy League school to explicitly include gender identity as a protected ground in 2005. Since then all eight of the Ivy League schools have developed trans-related policies (Perry, 2006).

In Canada, there is less data available about trans policy development compared to the GenderPAC study. However, it is worth noting that Queens University in Kingston, Ontario

² See Joanne Meyerowitz, How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States (Meyerowitz, 2002).

³ I am troubled by the systemic classism implicit in distinguishing between publicly funded and privately funded schools; and in particular, the privileging of privately funded schools and those who attend them.

established the Transgender/Transsexual Policy Group (TG/TS Policy Group)⁴ in 1998. The University of Toronto recently published a statement outlining the processes for applying for a name/gender change at the school and published a list of trans resources including locations of gender-neutral washrooms and information on trans-specific health services on campus.

A literature review of trans policies at post-secondary institutions in North America suggests that two main types of policies being developed. These are: a). Trans-specific policies that address how trans people use public space, health care; and b). Policies that speak to the areas of discrimination and harassment. There are important differences between policies developed to address harassment and discrimination and policies that deal with issues of access to programs and services. In a university context, access issues include name, gender and sex changes on university documents; access to gender-segregated spaces such as washrooms, athletic facilities and residences and student housing for trans people; access to trans-knowledgeable services at university health centres and counselling programs; and the inclusion of trans relevant material into academic curricula.

The first type of policy limits its scope to dealing with attitudinal and behavioural shifts and the second type of policy focuses on the practical needs of trans students in their day to day lives. Both types of policy are necessary, and indeed they inform each other. The university is required to respond to students' requests for access to programs and services because anti-discrimination policies mandate that trans students have the right to full participation.

In her article "Theorizing Transgender Citizenship in Canada", Alana Cattapan explores access to social programs and resources as a marker of citizenship. Although her research focuses on government administered social welfare programs, I would like to apply her work to

⁴ Found online at: http://www.queensu.ca/humanrights/2TG_TS_Main.htm on August 1, 2010

the university context. We come to understand university citizenship⁵ when cisgendered⁶ students are called by their chosen names, able to access gender segregated university spaces and have their genders accurately reflected back to them by the university. This is what we come to understand as full citizenship within the university nation. To further this analogy, trans students are seeking a sort of citizenship within the university, with both the rewards and problems associated with that citizenship implicit in their struggle. Cattapan asserts that trans people have,

a diminished or partial citizenship in which trans people cannot access the civil, political and social rights available to cisgendered citizens...however transgender citizenship is [also] a compromised citizenship that requires trans people to negotiate and construct their identities in certain ways, in order to access the same civil, political and social rights otherwise diminished (2009, p.5).

In this vein, I turn to the university context. I argue that trans students have had a diminished or partial access to full citizenship as belonging at school. Writing trans students into anti-discrimination policies is a way of rendering them visible and making them part of the citizenry of the university. Creating policies that govern access to the social, health care and administrative programs and resources currently available to cisgendered students is an attempt to grant trans students access to the full benefits of belonging to the student body.

⁵ I am using an analogy of citizenship and nationhood whilst I am troubled by their very nature. Notions of citizenship and nationhood are rooted in a history of coloniality and the violent subjugation of Indigenous people by colonial forces. Today, people living on occupied land risk replicating complacency about this violence and occupation through the legitimization of colonial structure, institutions and governance that prevent the self-determination of indigenous people.

Similarly, the notion of citizenship is fraught with problems. Citizenship to any nation is granted to few through very subjective means. The process of becoming a citizen, including through immigration or naturalization is a complex and costly one that is rooted in systemic racism, classism, islamophobia, homophobia, ableism, and transphobia.

Trans students who are without status face additional barriers in university settings (see <http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org/dadt>). Cattapan's concept of transgender citizenship is useful in that it offers a way of describing the power and privilege implicit in the concept of access. However, I am concerned that the use of citizenship as an allegorical concept risks rejecting the lived experiences of non-status trans students.

⁶ Cisgender is a term used by Julia Serano in her 2007 book *Whipping Girl* to describe non-trans individuals. The term was popularized on the internet before entering into academic discourse. Cisgender addresses the othering of transgender people by naming non-trans experience as a marked experience, rather than it being neutral or unmarked. Linguistically, the term refers to the singular rather the plural.

Cattapan acknowledges the limitations of the citizenship model, noting that marginalized people are regularly denied access to the rights and freedoms that are implicit with Canadian citizenship. She adds that trans people who are racialized, disabled, unemployed and who do not speak one of the official languages face many additional barriers. Citizenship is not universally granted, it is granted subjectively, based on power relationships and a history of systemic violence against marginalized populations (Cattapan, 2009).

Similarly, trans students who are further marginalized may still be denied access to full citizenship or participation in the university despite trans inclusion policies. Racialized trans people face multiple barriers to access within and outside the post-secondary context. Much has been written about systemic discrimination on campuses and the “chilly climate” it creates for students who are not identified as white, heteronormative and non-disabled.⁷

Policies are a first step towards addressing this issue of access, but they must allow for a multiplicity of trans identities within their scope to afford benefits to a diversity of trans students. To create a trans policy that does not take into account the specific experiences of trans people who are racialized parallels the kind of troubled coherence and compromised citizenship to which Butler (1993) and Cattapan (2009) refer.

Scholarship informs trans studies curricula and trans policy development. Scholarly writing which does not challenge exclusionary practices informs policy in ways that are not beneficial to those who need policies most, marginalized students.

⁷ (Bartlett and O’Barr, 1990; McConaghy, 1997; Sandler and Hall, 1986; Ponterotto, 1990; Freyd, 1998/updated 2008)

Objective and Scope

I am interested in the experiences of racialized trans students in post-secondary schools at two key moments in trans history: the development of a field of scholarship about trans people and the development of trans-specific policies at universities across North America.

In this thesis I conduct an analysis of the emerging field of trans studies and contemporary trans scholarship in universities throughout Canada and the United States. I then examine some of the trans policies recently developed in these settings, comparing those policies that deal with issues of discrimination exclusively with those that consider access to programs and resources. Following this, I conduct a brief review of contemporary literature regarding trans students in universities in both Canada and the United States.

I consider two key questions. First, what impact does trans scholarship and the emerging field of transgender studies have on racialized trans students? Secondly, how is the development of trans policies at post-secondary institutions affecting racialized trans students?

Namaste (2000) utilizes a reflexive approach to scholarship, one that prioritizes consultation with those most affected by the research. Namaste challenges trans scholars to generate projects that could improve the world in ways identified by trans people themselves. Through this method of sociological research, lived experience legitimates a particular understanding of the 'social world'. Trans people have an intimate understanding marginalization and exclusion in society and are able to provide valuable insight into the contradictions that are manifest in the 'social world'. As Namaste explains,

[a] reflexive sociology needs to consider how to go about collecting, interpreting, and validating data in a manner that respects the members of the sample population. This is especially important within the context of studying Transsexuality, given the outright disrespect within the studies that limit themselves to the medical and psychiatric productions of Transsexuality (p. 47).

To explain how I came to this project, I will turn briefly to an auto-ethnographic narrative of my experience re-entering the classroom as a trans man.

Emergence of the Thesis Questions

I began my master's degree in 2006, five years after completing my undergraduate degree. Much had changed since I last entered a classroom; I had gained practical experience using the sociological theory I had learned in undergrad through work at several social-justice and social service agencies. I had realized that I was interested in furthering my understanding of the world around me, specifically to understand why situations, events, and behaviors manifested themselves as they did. This led me to pursue graduate education. I applied to and was accepted into the University of Toronto's Sociology and Equity Studies in Education department at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Perhaps the biggest change since I was last a student was that I had come out as a transsexual man, had changed my name, and had begun sex-reassignment. Sex reassignment or transition is an ambiguous process of changing one's physical body through hormones and surgery. Though my transition had begun during my last year of undergrad, the beginning of my Master's degree marked the first time that I would be enrolling as a trans man. More specifically, I would be re-entering the classroom as a trans man who also identifies as black, and has been labeled with dyslexia. These identifiers affect all of my experiences, and affected my re-entry into the university environment.

My experiences during my first semester of school, and throughout my course work profoundly affected me. I was not called by my chosen name, I felt uncertain about the ability for the school to handle the issues of trans students due to a lack of articulated policy, and I found little trans scholarship in the course curricula.

According to my Alma Mater, without changing my name or gender with the Ontario government, I was the same female student who had graduated five years earlier. I received a letter from the university during that first semester indicating that I would be referred to as my old name and gender until I produced valid government documentation indicating a legal change of status.

As a trans student my identity was challenged on a daily basis. To help process and understand this experience, I turned to scholarship. I researched trans scholars and found there was a growing field of transgender studies taking root in many universities. I was very interested in this developing body of research, as I hoped it would help me to articulate my troubles with the university. I thought I would find my experience as a black trans person reflected in the research.

Instead, I found a lack of integrated race analysis in some of the emerging trans scholarship. I had taken courses in critical disability studies, women's studies and queer studies and had been similarly dissatisfied with the lack of integrated analysis in the course content.

My research into trans scholarship suggested that trans studies was developing with the same lack of understanding of interlocking systems of oppression that I had found in my encounters with women's studies, critical disability theory and queer theory. My frustration with these exclusionary practices lead me to develop my first research question – what is the impact of trans scholarship on racialized trans students? After my experiences with university administration and the university's initial unwillingness to refer to me by my name, I researched trans policies at other schools. I was interested in how other schools addressed issues such as name changes, access to social spaces on campus and access to gender-specific resources. Again, I found a singular essentialized trans body upon which these documents relied.

This discovery helped shape my second research question – what is the impact of trans policies on racialized trans students?

I hope to bring an integrated analysis and understanding of interlocking systems of oppression to trans studies and trans policy development that I have not yet found through my research. I will develop an analysis of both trans scholarship and trans policy development at post-secondary institutions that moves us to consider the more complex connections of power, identity and difference which inform these experiences.

Methodology

I use a textual analysis⁸ to consider trans scholarship, trans studies curriculum and trans policy development at post-secondary institutions in Canada and the United States. By textual analysis I mean that I do a close reading of my selected texts to see how they speak to the presence of an integrated trans body. I review the texts to see what they say (and don't say) about trans racialized people. Through this textual analysis I highlight the gaps in trans scholarship.

The texts that I consider include The Transgender Studies Reader (Stryker and Whittle, 2006), Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation (Clare, 1999), and Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People (Namaste, 2000). I'm reading these texts to see how they address racialized trans people's experiences. To investigate the impact of these texts on trans studies curriculum development, I review trans studies courses taught at Simon Fraser University, the University of Toronto and Simone de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University.

The policies affecting trans students that I consider include non-discrimination policies and access policies. Specifically I examine those created by the University of Iowa, the University of Vermont and the University of Toronto.

⁸ See Alan McKee (Mckee, Alan. (2003). Textual Analysis: A Beginners Guide. London: Sage Press)

My analysis of these documents is rooted in a trans of colour critique. Through the development of this critique, I hope to better understand the impact of these policies on trans students who are racialized.

Theoretical Framework: Towards a Trans of Colour Critique

Central to my analysis is a consideration of the way in which racialized trans voices are excluded through the continued privileging of whiteness within both trans scholarship and policy development. Critical race theory informs this analysis. I turn to Frantz Fanon as an important theorist in this regard.

In Black Skin, White Masks Fanon (1967) describes the process of racialization, namely the marking of signifiers of difference on the body and the moment of being recognized as different from outside of oneself. Through this process racialized people experience being consistently defined from without and through the lens of a colonizer-centric world view. This world view suggests that colonized people are less valuable than their colonizers.

Paul Gilroy's assertion that "white supremacy [is] a principle of exclusion" (2000, p.334) builds on Fanon's work. Gilroy suggests moving away from the centrality of race as an organizing principle while still recognizing the impact of white supremacy and the experience of racialization on those that Fanon would call colonized subjects (Gilroy, 2000; Fanon, 1967). Gilroy's push for us to move away from race as an organizing concept connects to Judith Butler's suggestion that this kind of practice limits the possibility of a more complex understanding of the social world (Butler, 1993). Gilroy and Butler's analysis has helped me shape my inquiry into the experiences of racialized trans students while still questioning the ways that such a consideration risks reinforcing race as a means of organizing. Additionally,

Gilroy's considerations of gender and nation building have helped me to consider Cattapan's concept of transgender citizenship that I apply to the university nation. Gilroy (2000) states,

[g]ender differences become extremely important in nation-building activity because they are a sign of an irresistible natural hierarchy that belongs at the center of civic life (p.127).

This quote is helpful in understanding the ways that gender and nationhood are intrinsically connected and helps push this notion of the university as nation further. For if gender is an important part of nation building, as Gilroy suggests, then the university nation replicates the differences between trans and cisgendered citizens through a hierarchical deployment of citizenship rights and privileges.

My work is influenced by Roderick A. Ferguson's seminal work, Aberrations in Black: Towards a Queer of Color Critique (2004). Ferguson's development of a queer of colour critique has been helpful in my development of the trans of colour critique that I will employ throughout the following chapters. Ferguson describes a queer of colour analysis in his introduction, stating,

[t]o restate, queer of color analysis presumes that liberal ideology occludes the intersecting saliency of race, gender, sexuality and class in forming social practices. Approaching ideologies of transparency as formations that have worked to conceal those intersections means that queer of color analysis has to debunk the idea that race, class, gender and sexuality are discrete formations, apparently insulated from one another. As queer of color critique challenges ideologies of discreteness, it attempts to disturb the idea that racial and national formations are obviously disconnected (p.4).

Ferguson uses his queer of colour analysis to mark the intersectionality of systems of oppression. Similarly, I am developing a critique which would consider this intersectionality. This trans of colour critique, as I am calling it, is my attempt to insert into both trans scholarship and trans policy development a "challenge [to] ideologies of discreteness" and an attempt to connect the experiences of racism and transphobia that affect trans students of colour. By doing so, I hope to

better understand the nuanced ways that scholarship and policy impact on students of colour facing marginalization through interlocking systems of oppression.

I also utilize texts by Audre Lorde to formulate my analysis. Lorde (1984) writes about the importance of bringing an integrated analysis to any academic or activist project. Lorde states:

[m]y fullest concentration of energy is available to me only when I integrate all the parts of who I am, openly, allowing power from particular sources of my living to flow back and forth freely through all my different selves, without the restrictions of externally imposed definition. Only then can I bring myself and my energies as a whole to the service of those struggles which I embrace as part of my living (1984, p. 121).

Research that writes trans people as white, straight and non-disabled does not consider the interconnectedness of the power exchanges implicit in this construction and is limited as a result.

Similarly, policy development that does not consider the experience of racialization on trans students of colour restricts its use only to those that are defined by, as Lorde states, the “externally imposed definition”(p.121). Also shaping this critique is Noble’s articulation of the experience of trans people as a bodily experience shaped through a concept of ‘incoherence’. Noble argues that part of the marginalization of trans people necessarily involves a rendering of trans bodies as unintelligible. He argues that trans activism and scholarship responds to this rendering. This scholarship, and the scholarly field which extends from it risk replicating an exclusionary politic. Noble writes,

[q]uite apart from the ontological questions, would it not also be unwise to grapple with these questions without heeding the experiences of many of critical politics as they shift from social movements to discursive and scholarly fields inside dominant institutions? (2007, p. 5-6)

My critique of both policy and scholarship is positioned at a moment when this shift “from social movement to discursive scholarly fields” is at a critical moment and the innate white supremacy

active within both trans social movements and scholarship threatens to exclude trans people of colour from existence.

Trans scholarship has attempted to write trans bodies into coherence. However, by doing so, trans scholars risk replicating the process of rejection, at times through omission of specific kinds of trans people in their scope or through the outright disavowal of particular kinds of trans or gender variant identities. Racialized trans experience written out of trans scholarship represents part of this rejection, as does, as Namaste points out, the similar rejection of trans sex workers, drug users and people living with HIV/AIDS (Namaste, 2000).

These texts have been helpful in developing my methodology and theoretical framing in this thesis. My experience as a trans student enrolled in the University of Toronto has helped shape my research questions, and the telling of this experience in this introduction offers an insight into the contradictions facing trans students.

I want to produce a thesis that is useful to racialized trans students by advocating for change in post-secondary institutions. I also want this thesis to be useful to those wanting to challenge the implicit privileging of white trans identity in trans scholarship and policy development.

In keeping with this goal, I have chosen to write this thesis using plain language. This effort draws on my personal commitment to addressing the inaccessibility of some academic language to those not well versed in it. A commitment to clear and direct communication has been a useful strategy in ensuring that when I speak people have a better chance of understanding what I am trying to say. Therefore what I say can be of greater use to those both inside and outside the academy. My understanding of plain language as a theoretical framework and the ways that it can help with research dissemination has been shaped by arts-informed research. The fundamental tenant of arts-informed research is the use of an accessible language format.

Synopsis

Chapter two explores trans scholarship and the development of a new field of study. Through a textual analysis of existing scholarship, I consider the ways that the prioritization of whiteness has informed the emerging ‘Trans Studies’ canon. I will do a close reading of The Transgender Studies Reader (Stryker and Whittle, 2006), Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation (Clare, 1999), and Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People (Namaste, 2000). Chapter three outlines current policies at the University of Iowa, the University of Vermont and the University of Toronto and the ways in which they influence the experiences of trans students. I would like to consider in this chapter the limitations of policy, along with the opportunities they present, all the while maintaining a critical analysis of the impact on racialized students. I look at the relationship between policy development and scholarship. I will examine where the two meet and where they diverge, and will ponder what we need both scholarship and policy to be to respond to the needs of a diverse body of trans students.

Finally, in the conclusion, I look at the possibilities for future research; specifically scholarship that considers the experiences of racialized trans people in academic settings. I also look at suggestions for the development of policy which considers the trans racialized body.

Chapter 2: Trans Scholarship

To restate, queer of color analysis presumes that liberal ideology occludes the intersecting saliency of race, gender, sexuality and class in forming social practices. Approaching ideologies of transparency as formations that have worked to conceal those intersections means that queer of color analysis has to debunk the idea that race, class, gender and sexuality are discrete formations, apparently insulated from one another. As queer of color critique challenges ideologies of discreteness, it attempts to disturb the idea that racial and national formations are obviously disconnected (Ferguson, 2004, p.4).

How did we get here, how did we get this far that you would need a PhD in my own [...] history to understand my people's struggle? (Abstract Random, 2009)

Trans Scholarship

In this chapter I examine six key texts that have shaped the framework of Trans Studies. I provide a close reading of the texts and when needed identify their shortcomings, that is, where they reproduce the very problems they are challenging. I also identify the two texts which I feel do an exemplary job. At the end of the chapter I briefly explore how trans scholarship manifests within the university.

To explore the different approaches to trans scholarship, I consider Viviane Namaste's Invisible Lives: the Erasure of Transsexual and Transgender People (2000) and Leslie Feinberg's Transgender Warriors: Making History From Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman (1996). I then examine more closely Whittle and Stryker's The Transgender Studies Reader, (2006) and Eli Clare's Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation (1999).

I have chosen these texts for a variety of reasons. Not only are they seminal texts in the field and used frequently in course study, but also they speak back to one another and by doing so, offer divergent views.

Trans scholarship is still relatively new. Similarly, trans studies is a newly emerging field of academic inquiry. To understand how these texts shape academic inquiry in the field, I look at trans studies courses at the University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University and Simone De Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University. By doing so I hope to better understand the intimate relationship between what is written and what is taught. And I wonder if this particular relationship threatens to erase marginalized voices from existence.

Black Studies, Queer Studies and Trans Studies: Replicating Exclusion

During the black power movements and the decolonization projects of the late 1960's and 70's in North America, diverse communities began to call for change in education such that it would be more reflective of their struggles and history. While black history curricula was slowly integrated into some primary and secondary schools, popular education workshops and courses were developed in the community and scholarly writing on the topic multiplied (Johnson, 2006). The development of this body of scholarship and of a field of black studies necessitated defining what was meant by the word 'black'. This process of delineation resulted in an exclusion of voices of LGBT black people (Johnson, 2006).

The development of queer scholarship and queer studies followed a similar trajectory. Springing from activist communities organizing around the gay liberation movement and early AIDS activism, queer studies set out to challenge heteronormativity and rethink the way that sexuality, sex and gender were understood. I would argue that the development of queer studies has also participated in a process of exclusion which renders certain queer bodies out of coherence.

Sara Ahmed (2004) argues that despite the fact that heteronormativity is challenged through queer studies, we are now witnessing the development of homonormativity. This homonormativity privileges white, able bodied and cisgendered queer people. Ahmed explains,

the closer that queer subjects get to the spaces defined by heteronormativity the more *potential* there is for a reworking of the heteronormative, partly as the proximity ‘shows’ how the spaces extend some bodies rather than others (2004, p. 152).

Ahmed helps us consider how the legitimizing of queer comes through its proximity to heteronormativity, through a construction of a coherent queer subject. Thus, to maintain their intelligible status, queer subjects must maintain this prescribed homonormativity.

Queer studies is implicated in privileging cisgendered voices, something that lead to the development of trans scholarship as distinct from queer studies. As Stryker writes,

[t]he field of transgender studies has taken shape over the past decade in the shadow of queer theory. Sometimes it has claimed its place in the queer family and offered an in-house critique, and sometimes it has angrily spurned its lineage and set out to make a home of its own. Either way, transgender studies is following its own trajectory and has the potential to address emerging problems in the critical study of gender and sexuality, identity, embodiment, and desire in ways that gay, lesbian, and queer studies have not always successfully managed (2004, p. 214).

Trans scholars have responded to what I will call a cisgendered-normativity in queer studies by creating new research about the lives of trans people. Although Stryker offers a discussion about some of the problems implicit in queer studies, her analysis does not take up the way that race is omitted from much of queer studies. That is while Stryker positions trans studies as a response to the erasure of trans people from academic scholarship, trans studies has also replicated some of the glaring omissions within queer studies, namely a silencing of voices of racialized LGBT people.

For black queer and trans people, the limitations present in black studies, queer studies and trans studies render the possibility of finding belonging within the scholarship impossible.

Thus, I interpret these areas of scholarship as (straight) black studies, (white) queer studies and (white) trans studies⁹.

E. Patrick Johnson, in the introduction of his edited collection, Black Queer Studies: a Critical Anthology states that,

Lesbians, gay, bisexuals, and transgendered people of color who are committed to the demise of oppression in its various forms, cannot afford to theorize their lives based on ‘single variable’ politics. [...] to ignore the multiple subjectivities of the minoritarian subject within and without political movements and theoretical paradigms is not only theoretically and politically naive, but also potentially dangerous (2006, p. 5).

Johnson’s assertion in the quote that we “cannot afford to theorize [our] lives based on ‘single variable’ politics” strongly resonates with me. In my research, I have found that trans scholarship, black studies and critical disability scholarship lacks an interconnectedness that would better reflect my lived experience.

For black trans people in Canada, the danger of which Johnson speaks is very real. Specifically, there is a lack of protection for trans people through the Canadian Human Rights Act¹⁰, and our history has been erased from the scholarship. Equally alarming is the real threat of daily violence at the hands of a largely transphobic public (Namaste, 2000; Halberstam, 2005; Sloop, 2000; Wilkinson and Gomez, 2004).

I find solidarity within both communities of colour and trans communities. However, I have felt that belonging to one group compromises my belonging to the other. For example, as a black man my experiences of being read as male are very different than my white trans brothers.

I face heightened targeting by police, as I have been stopped on more than one occasion by

⁹ Based on a literature review of trans scholarship, trans studies may also be considered as (white, straight) trans studies. Much of the writing about trans people, both from medical and community-based perspectives presumes heterosexuality post-transition. There is new research and writing about trans people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or otherwise, including the work of the Gay, Bi, Queer Trans Men’s HIV Prevention Working Group in Ontario. See their project “Primed: The Back Pocket Guide to Trans Men and the Men Who Dig Them” (GBQ Trans Men’s Working Group, 2006).

¹⁰ Found online at: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/h-6/index.html> on August 20, 2010

police and questioned without cause or provocation. For example being read¹¹ as male for a white FTM¹² does not hold the same potential for harassment and targeted policing as it does for a racialized FTM. The racialized visibility of trans people of colour in public space is often overlooked in white trans community organizing. However, while having your gender reflected back to you can be an empowering experience, for racialized trans men being read as male also comes with the potential for danger.

In a different way, trans people of colour also face barriers to solidarity in racialized community organizing. For example, in some of my activism within black queer communities in Toronto, I have not been recognized as male and have been referred to by the wrong gender pronoun. I have also faced ridicule and harassment for being trans. This is in contrast to the solidarity I have felt when discussing racialization and experiences of racial profiling. I have not felt the same solidarity when expressing excitement about my transition or the frustration of waiting for my name change process. Racialized trans people constitute an important part of communities of colour and trans communities yet they cannot fully participate in either due to the marginalizing practices rooted in white supremacy and cisgendered privilege. I look to trans scholarship with this tension and a search for belonging in mind.

Where is Trans Studies Located? The Impact of the Site of Inquiry on Scholarship

Although trans scholarship has emerged out of multiple sites of inquiry, including cultural studies, comparative literature, and psychology, academic courses offered on the topic are often connected to sexual diversity studies (or queer studies) and women and gender studies

¹¹ In trans communities, many people use the term ‘read’ to refer to the process of being seen and perceived as the particular gender they are intentionally presenting.

¹² FTM= Female-to-Male. Trans men are often referred to as FTMs. Some people reject this label, feeling that they were never female or that their gender is not in transition as the label would suggest.

(Stryker, 2006). In the three institutions I've focused on, trans courses are connected to sexual diversity studies, queer studies and women and gender studies. Locating trans studies work within gender studies versus psychology or comparative literature is significant and results in a very different reading of trans experiences. Trans experience read through the lens of psychology has tended to produce narratives that equate transsexuality with psychiatric disability (Stryker, 2006). Stryker explains,

[a]cademic attention to transgender issues have shifted in those ten years from the field of abnormal psychology, which imagined transgender phenomena as expressions of mental illness, and from the field of literary criticism, which was fascinated with representations of cross-dressing that it fancied to be merely symbolic, into fields that concern themselves with the day-to-day workings of the material world (p.2).

Current trans research reflects this shift and exemplifies the fact that the context in which trans studies research is initiated impacts the areas of discourse.

Writing about trans experiences within academic fields of study outside of the scope of medicalizing discourses is a relatively new analytical shift (Stryker, 2006). Before 1990, most research into trans experiences was undertaken by and for medical professionals (Love, 2004). Medical discourses about trans people tended to position the trans person as disabled¹³ and requiring of medically corrective treatment¹⁴ (Meyerowitz, 2002; Stryker, 2006). In Ontario there has been community-based activism¹⁵ aimed at rethinking how transsexuality is perceived, particularly within medical communities. In general, trans activism since the early 1980's has

¹³ I am troubled by the disavowal of trans-as-disability present in much critique of the medicalization of transsexuality. This disavowal re-inscribes disability as bad or unwanted and risks further marginalizing trans people who identify as disabled, whether through the labeling of gender identity disorder or another disability altogether.

¹⁴ Transsexuality is listed in the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), a tool use for diagnosing psychiatric disabilities. (footnote this sentence) Transsexuality has been listed in the manual under various medical terminologies since its initial listing. Transsexuality is currently described as Gender Identity Disorder (GID) in the guide.

¹⁵ Some of these initiatives include the Ontario study Trans Pulse, and the Trans Human Rights Campaign

challenged the classification of transsexuality as gender identity disorder¹⁶. Waszkiewicz, (2006) in his study of gate-keeping access to trans health services by gender identity clinics states,

[i]ndeed, many advocates for transsexual self-determination resist the classification of gender diversity as mental illness. GID classifications employ stereotypical notions of gendered behavior, stemming from a medical model based on gender essentialism (p. 24).

This push to consider trans identity as something to be celebrated rather than something to be pathologized is visible in the shift from a predominately medicalized voice in early trans scholarship to a more reflexively informed trans-centered voice in current research.

Heather Love (2004) posits that trans rights movements have influenced the development of a trans scholarship created by and in the interests of trans people. She states,

[t]his situation has changed a good deal recently with the emergence of an independent movement for transgender and transsexual rights. Along with the development of this strong and visible activist culture, a new and exciting field of scholarship has emerged – transgender studies. Over the last 10 years, people experiencing unprecedented forms of gendered embodiment and identification have produced a remarkable range of writing (p.1).

Academic writing about trans issues changed in the decades following the emergence of an LGBT rights movement in North America, with scholarship becoming more relevant to trans people.

Weaving Together Disability, White Privilege and Trans Identity

In this section, I will discuss six seminal texts that launched trans scholarship in North America. While I have some reservations about these works, it is important to note the significance of their contribution to the field. I will discuss the work of Leslie Feinberg, Eli Clare, and Katrina Roen as they represent the closest examples of an intersectional approach to trans scholarship which follow Audre Lorde's direction. I like what these authors are doing in

¹⁶ Sometimes referred to as GID.

their work and their work offers a trans of colour critique. However, these texts are not frequently used in core course material. In contrast, more frequently used course content by scholars such as Viviane Namaste, and Stryker and Whittle paint a more one-dimensional interpretation of trans people's lives. I consider these different approaches to scholarship beginning with Leslie Feinberg.

Feinberg's Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman (1996) incorporates autobiography, chronological archiving, and photography to document the lives of gender variant people throughout history. Feinberg's text is written in plain language and is accessible to non-academic and academic readers alike. Hir¹⁷ experiences within working-class communities, as a Marxist organizer and class activist lay the foundation for hir analysis of trans history.

Feinberg's text is an intimate account of hir discovery of trans people after a life of searching for such evidence. Feinberg writes, "I couldn't find *myself* in history. No one like me seemed to have ever existed" (1996, p.11).

Feinberg learned about the existence of trans people through a visit to a museum. The ethnographic exhibitions ze¹⁸ visited were steeped in stereotypical interpretations which place indigenous cultures in the past through interpretive labels and out-dated dusty exhibition displays (1996). Ze describes this as a moment of discovery and describes the ensuing lifetime of self-education aimed at correcting the misinformation ze learned in school about trans and indigenous people. Although this is not stated explicitly in the text, my interpretation is that the author discovers trans history, and through that process discovers the many layers of white supremacy of the school system. The explorations Feinberg undertakes within the book indicate clearly the

¹⁷ Hir- a gender-neutral pronoun used by many gender-variant and transgender people, and explicitly used by Feinberg.

¹⁸ Ze- a gender neutral alternative to the gendered language of 'she' or 'he'

omission not only of the lives of trans people within academic curricula, but those of racialized people, too. I would argue that ze's introductory chapter, "My Path to Consciousness" refers not only to becoming conscious of the omission of trans lives in popular culture but also to the author's realization of ze's own participation in the erasure of racialized trans identities through systems of whiteness and white supremacy (1996).

Feinberg's recognition of the impact of white supremacy, racism and classism on trans people's history offers a new way of chronicling trans history. Her work makes connections to the ways that colonization has recorded some trans people's lives and erased others, and the complex ways that colonization, racism and transphobia created violent exchanges between colonizers and indigenous communities around the world. Feinberg's work challenges the popular idea that trans identity is a new entity; something that grows out of a North American context.

I'm interested in Feinberg's text as a valuable resource when considering contemporary experiences of racialized trans people. Based on my reading of Feinberg's work and my experience with trans of colour communities, the historical persecution of racialized trans people through colonization and the subsequent erasure of their stories from more contemporary considerations of trans history have shaped racialized trans people's experience of the world. Based on Feinberg's text I have understood a paradoxical relationship between the historical erasure through genocide, violence, and white supremacist processes of colonization and the subsequent imagining of trans identity as a white North American concept. This is why trans voices of colour are invisible in chronicles of trans history and throughout much of trans scholarship and why much of early trans history, terminology and knowledge is largely

unavailable. The inaccessibility of this content allowed for a recreation of the trans body as unusual. It also facilitated a medicalization of trans identity.

Feminist scholar Katrina Roen tackles the one-dimensionality of early trans scholarship in “Transgender Theory and Embodiment: The Risk of Racial Marginalization” (2001). Roen asks, “[h]ow can transgender theorising be critical of its own racialised politics in a way that is productive for those who place race first and gender second?” (2001, p.664). Her critique of the prioritizing of whiteness within trans scholarship is an important contribution to this emerging body of knowledge. Roen’s work speaks directly to my research question which reflects on the value trans theory offers for racialized trans people when it is devoid of a meaningful race analysis. Thinking about Roen’s article, I question how trans theory can help us understand the experiences of, for example, the black trans men subjects of Ziegler’s film, “Still Black? Portraits of Black Trans Men” (2008).

Eli Clare’s important text, Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness and Liberation (1999) offers an insightful reading of the interconnectedness of ableism, white privilege and transphobia. Clare draws important connections between the experiences of ableism, racism and transphobia. His analysis of ‘freak shows’ in the late 19th and early 20th century draws valuable conclusions about the ways that class, race, disability and gender create patterns of othering and exclusion that affect those who embody multiple sites of oppression (1999).

As a trans person who is racialized and labelled with dyslexia, it is important to me that Clare names the ways that disabled, racialized, working class trans people experience transphobia differently than white, non-disabled, middle class trans people (and positions his own whiteness within his analysis). I am struck by the way that Clare writes about whiteness and white supremacy. Clare uses his experience of white privilege and whiteness to provide insight into

the ways that racialized, working class and disabled trans people (along with many others) are exiled within trans community organizing and academic scholarship.

Centering his text on his own experiences as a white trans man who identifies additionally as working class, disabled and queer, Clare creates an important space for us to consider the potential for intersectionality and collaborative struggle from the margins of dominant society. I appreciate Clare's attempt to make experiences of disability and race central to his contribution to trans scholarship. Clare takes care not to conflate gender, sexuality, disability and the experience racialization.

Yet Clare sometimes simplifies complex histories of trauma through simplistic phrasing. For example, in describing the decline of the freak show and its impact on the many racialized, disabled and trans people it employed, he writes,

[t]he end of the freak show meant the end of a particular kind of employment for the people who had worked as freaks. For non-disabled people of color from the United States, employment by the 1930s didn't hinge heavily on the freak show, and so its decline didn't have a huge impact. And for people from Africa, Asia, South and Central America, the Pacific Islands and the Caribbean, the decline meant only that white people had one less reason to come kidnap and buy people away from their homes. But for disabled people the end of the freak show almost guaranteed unemployment, disability often being coded into law as the inability to work (1999, p. 86).

Surely the end of the freak show as a means of income for racialized non-disabled people from outside of North America meant multiple things, much more than the simplified phrasing, "the decline meant only that white people had one less reason to come kidnap and buy people away from their homes". For those who were violently abducted from their homes, life in North America with no means of income and presumably without the resources to find their way back to their countries of origin, the decline of the freak show would have been significant. Too, the expression that Clare uses to describe this act of violent race-based trauma seems somewhat

flippant and in contrast to the thoughtful considerations on racial violence and white supremacy in the rest of his text.

Language is a very powerful thing. I recently co-authored a paper which was presented at the Society for Disability Studies conference in 2008. In this paper, entitled “How Disability Studies Stays White and What Kind of White It Stays”, we argue that much of the writing in the emerging field of disability studies positions disability and race in binary opposition (Ejiogu and Ware, 2008). Challenging the appropriation of the word colonialism in emerging disability studies narratives, we state,

[w]hile it's necessary to pay close attention to the many violences done onto particular bodies in order to maintain notions of able-bodiedness, intelligence, sanity, and productivity within a capitalist market, the appropriation of the term colonialism erases violent histories and contemporary realities. As people who carry with us transgenerational injuries as a result of legacies of colonialism and slavery, but who also benefit from ongoing gendered colonial violence enacted onto First Nations peoples in Canada, this (mis)use erases these violences while ignoring the messy ways in which power, privilege, and domination work (2008, p.11).

I like to apply our assertion that “this (mis)use erases these violences while ignoring the messy ways in which power, privilege, and domination work” to Clare’s text. Clare’s use of language simplifies the experiences of racialized violence perpetuated by the freak show and discounts the ways that power and privilege work. Clare’s statement that, “for disabled people the end of the freak show almost guaranteed unemployment” contrasts to the prospects faced by racialized non-disabled people suggesting that all disabled people are white (1999). In this example, the use of whiteness as neutrality is exemplified by the naming of (white) disabled people. Clare’s text does not directly address what happened to the gender-variant people employed in the freak show after its decline. I am left wondering what happened to those with multiple identity positions such as racialized trans people with disabilities after the freak show’s demise?

Despite the need for further consideration in this section of Clare's text, Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation is still an incredible example of writing connecting race, gender and disability within scholarship. As Clare explains,

[t]he stolen body, the reclaimed body, the body that knows itself and the world, the stone and the heat which warms it: my body has never been singular. Disability snarls into gender. Class wraps around race. Sexuality strains against abuse. *This* is how to reach beneath the skin (p. 137).

Clare's use of personal voice challenges the medicalized voice dominant in early writing about trans people and still dominant in writing about disabled people. His nuanced approach to addressing intersecting identities and interlocking systems of oppression and domination is an important contribution to trans scholarship.

I offer Clare, Feinberg and Roen's texts as examples of the kind of critical analysis needed in the development of trans studies course content. Although these authors write about racialization and the experiences of trans people of colour, they are relatively unique within much of early trans scholarship. I now turn to a consideration of Namaste's Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People (2000) and Stryker and Whittle's The Transgender Studies Reader (2006). I begin with Namaste.

Namaste's seminal text, Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People (2000) was one of the first scholarly texts to consider the lives of trans people and the ways in which trans experiences are taken up in literature and popular culture. Namaste suggests that there has been systemic erasure of trans people from history, social services and community work (Namaste, 2000). Namaste's research builds upon Butler's theory of regulated or forced coherence (1993) and suggests a measurable impact of this erasure on the day-to-day lives of trans people. I will return to this theory of trans erasure repeatedly throughout this thesis as I strive to understand the experiences of racialized trans students on campus.

Namaste's own experience as a trans woman and her work in community agencies informs her research. Her text is divided into an analysis of theory, culture and research. She argues that trans people are systemically erased or made invisible in each of these areas (Namaste, 2000). She explains this erasure further,

My research clearly demonstrates the institutional exclusion of transsexuals and transgendered people: how administrative practices and social policies (or lack of social policies) marginalizes these individuals, as well as why many TG/TS¹⁹ people chose not to make use of the existing services (p.269).

Namaste's assertion of systemic and strategic barriers to institutional access for trans people can be applied to post-secondary institutions across North America. As Namaste claims in this quote, "administrative practices and [...] social policies (or lack of social policies) marginalize these individuals", something that the creation of trans policies in post-secondary institutions attempts to redress.

Namaste adds much needed breadth to early discussions within trans scholarship. In her research, trans people who are francophone, seropositive, prisoners or ex-prisoners, and sex-workers are centralized in the research. She argues for a fulsome understanding of trans experiences of exclusion in North America.

However, it is my contention that Namaste does not spend enough time considering the role of racialization on the experience of erasure. Her work speaks to trans people at the margins: sex workers and people living with HIV/AIDS. I offer the following trans of colour critique of her work. To restate, a trans of colour critique challenges ideologies of discreteness, it attempts to disturb the idea that racial and national formations are obviously disconnected (Ferguson, 2004, p.4). Namaste's research would benefit from a more articulated consideration of the ways that these formations overlap creating different experiences of life on the margins.

¹⁹ TG/TS- Transgender and Transsexual

Despite this Namaste's text offers an important insight into trans erasure. Her work is useful in considering the experiences of trans students in institutions and the ways that trans people of colour have been written out of scholarship.

The Transgender Studies Reader, (Stryker and Whittle, 2006) attempt to gather contributions to trans scholarship that have shaped this new area of inquiry. Their approach incorporates less of an integrated analysis of interlocking systems of oppression than Namaste.

'I Couldn't Find *Myself* in History'

Whittle opens the forward to The Transgender Studies Reader by suggesting that, "trans identities were one of the most written about subjects of the late twentieth century" (Whittle, 2006). He elaborates,

in the 1990's trans became a cultural obsession, exerting a fascination across many scientific and humanities fields, and many communities of interest. [...] It is now possible, simply by "telling" or theorizing my own life and the lives of other trans people, for me to build an academic career based on the fascination of the "Other" with people like me. It is their obsession that has given us the opportunity to use the power of the media to tell our stories, to theorize our lives, and to seek equality and justice (p. xii).

As a trans person of colour looking for myself in the reader, it seems that Whittle's reading of "people like me" (Whittle, 2006) is literal. Much of the content of the reader is by and about people like him, white scholars of trans experience²⁰. This text is divided into the following sections: Sex, Gender and Science; Queering Gender; Transgender Masculinities; and Multiple Crossings: Gender, Nationality, Race. The text includes publications from as early as 1877; however, the bulk of the collection focuses on the 1990s and the early 2000s.

²⁰ Whittle is a law professor from the United Kingdom and has been awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his work on parental rights of LGBT people in the United Kingdom. Any analysis into the meaning of his accepting this award from the state would slip into armchair psychology, and thus I will refrain from implying a detailed understanding of why and for what reason he accepted the award. I will simply state that Whittle is writing from a place of privilege afforded to few trans-identified people.

My reading of the collection suggests a noticeable lack of writing by and about racialized trans people. This omission concerns me as it replicates a systemic erasure of racialized trans people. A cursory reading of the table of contents of the book indicates that theorizing about race and racialization is left to the end of the book, in the last chapter. Indeed, of the book's fifty articles, only six articles located in this latter section position race as central to an article's topic. In the last paragraph of his forward, Whittle offers an explanation:

The public articulation of a trans voice and trans consciousness has not only influenced sex and gender studies, but it also impacted on trans people themselves, and has provided a collection of materials that coherently explain their own experience as genuine (p. xv).

Whittle's framing of a singular trans voice and trans consciousness is problematic because it negates the diversity of trans experiences and participates in the rendering of only certain trans bodies as coherent. If the articulation validates trans lived experience, as Whittle suggests, then the exclusion of racialized voices risks reinforcing the idea that trans people of colour's experiences are not genuine or valid, or even more problematic, not affected by the realities of racism. Racialized trans people then, are unable to "coherently explain their own experience as genuine" (Whittle 2006). To return to Feinberg's search for representation discussed in the introduction, trans people of colour who search for home and reflexivity in this book will not find it. Instead perhaps they will be left feeling what Feinberg felt, "I couldn't find *myself* in history. No one like me seemed to have ever existed" (Feinberg, 1996).

By offering an inadequate supply of contributions by and about racialized trans people in the reader, Whittle is implicated in the creation of a trans studies that is one of whiteness and singular identity. This not only narrows the scope of the trans studies canon but also the depth of future trans studies courses built on its content.

Stryker, as the co-editor of the reader, writes the introduction to the reader, “(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies” (Stryker, 2006). In this introduction, Stryker gives two examples of skirmishes between trans activists and gay activists. The first example illustrates a debate between trans and gay activists about both the medicalization of trans people and the merits of ‘including’ trans voices and experiences into queer discourse. The second example illustrates a growing concern that the inclusion of trans voices in history will result in the erasure of white middle-aged men from history (Stryker, 2006).

Stryker uses this narrative framework to introduce the reader to a schism between the ‘old guard’, those with deeply entrenched ideas about transsexuality and its necessary medicalization and the ‘new guard’ those who perceive transsexuality as a life choice to be celebrated and recognized and written into discourse. Although Stryker challenges these marginalizing discourses, she does not problematize the dominance of these kinds of debates in queer and trans organizing and their affect racialized trans people.

I am concerned with the idea that recognizing the historical contributions of trans people to LGBT movements is somehow ahistorical or a rewriting of history. I am interested in problematizing this concern, something that Stryker does not do in her introduction. I would like to suggest that the role of white gay men in founding LGBT activism has been over-represented in ways that do not accurately reflect historical facts. To shape this argument, I turn to a historical review of both the Compton Cafeteria and Stonewall riots as examples of catalyzing moments in early LGBT activism.

Racialized, working class queer and trans people were are the forefront of the movement, leading both the Compton Cafeteria riots in 1966 and the Stonewall riots²¹ in 1969, something that Stryker writes about in Transgender History (Stryker, 2008). Sylvia Rivera, a Latina trans woman and founder of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), long maintained that she threw the beer bottle that “tipped the crowd’s mood from playful mockery to violent resistance” (Stryker 2008). This protest laid the seeds for the ensuing gay liberation movement and it was one month after the Stonewall riot that the Gay Liberation Front, the Gay Activists Alliance, and STAR were formed (Stryker, 2008).

Despite the leadership from racialized and working-class communities, organizations like the Gay Liberation Front and more contemporary gay-rights groups participated in a process of exclusion that would leave out trans and racialized queer people and issues their activism. As Sylvia Rivera recalls,

[w]e were all involved in different struggles, including myself and many other transgendered people. But in these struggles, in the Civil Rights movement, in the war movement, in the women’s movement, we were still outcasts. The only reason they tolerated the transgender community in some of those movements was because we were gung-ho, we were front liners. We didn’t take no shit from nobody. We had nothing to lose. *You* all had rights. We had nothing to lose [...] It’ a shame that it has taken thirty-two years for people to finally realize how much we have given you, to realize the history of the trans involvement in this movement (2007, p. 118).

White gay men built upon the work of racialized and working class trans people and created a movement in collaboration with these same community members. Thus the reinserting of trans people back into historical accounts of these events, and I am specifically referencing racialized and working class trans people here, does not erase the contribution of white gay men but rather

²¹ On June 28, 1969 during a riot at a bar called the Stonewall Inn in New York City, racialized trans women, drag queens and sex workers amongst many others resisted arrest by police who were performing a regular raid on the bar.

redistributes the credit and acknowledgement for the work in ways that are more reflective of actual events.

Unfortunately, these important connections are not mentioned by Stryker. By including only six articles about racialized trans people out of fifty articles in the reader, Stryker and Whittle participate in a revisionist history which writes out the contributions of trans people of colour to trans activist movements, history and scholarship, especially when none of the other articles are challenging whiteness.

The prioritization of writings by white trans scholars about white trans people's history suggests that all trans people are white. As I have suggested throughout this paper, this is simply not accurate.

Jessi Gan has researched the way that racialized and working class trans people have been written in and out of historic chronicling of the Stonewall riots. I would like to consider her work in this context, as I think it is useful for examining the choice of articles for The Transgender Studies Reader (Stryker and Whittle, 2006). Gan suggests,

The myth that all gay people were equally oppressed and equally resistant at Stonewall was replaced by a new myth after Rivera's historical 'coming out', that all transgender people were *most* oppressed and *most* resistant at Stonewall (and still are today). This myth could be circulated and consumed when, in the service of liberal multicultural logic of recognition, Rivera's complexly situated subjectivity as a working-class Puerto Rican/Venezuelan drag queen became reduced to that of 'transgender Stonewall combatant' (2007, p. 128).

Similarly, The Transgender Studies Reader puts forward a myth that white trans people's experiences are a sort of essentialist trans experience, suggesting that the ways in which the medicalization of trans identity, the queering of gender, the taking up of masculinity and concepts of gender, nationality and race are experienced the same way by *most* trans people.

To be fair, the lack of early content about racialized trans people seems to result from a scarcity of early writing on the topic (Stryker, 2006). However, the omission of diversity in contemporary sources seems to have stemmed from editorial choices. Like Whittle, Stryker herself justifies their editorial choices, stating,

Even given our editorial choices, which admittedly limited the range of cultural and ethnic diversity of work included in this reader, we were struck by the overwhelming (and generally unmarked) whiteness of practitioners in the academic field of transgender studies. This is due, no doubt, to the many forms of discrimination that keep many people of colour from working in the relatively privileged environment of academe, but also to the uneven distribution and reception of the term “transgender” across different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic communities...[transgender studies] is impoverished by the relative lack of contributions from people of colour, and is therefore ultimately inadequate for representing the complex interplay between race, ethnicity, and transgender phenomena (p.15).

Stryker suggests that limited inclusion of articles about racialization and gender is based on a lack of writing by racialized people and discrimination keeping racialized scholars from working in the academy.

However, the lack of writing connecting racialization and gender in the reader is due to the privileging of whiteness by the many white contributors, rather than exclusively from a deficiency of voices of colour as Stryker implies. As is exemplified by both Feinberg, Clare and Roen, authors who are not of colour have an important role to play in addressing the experiences of racialized trans people in their trans-themed research.

In addition, I challenge Stryker’s suggestion that naming this scholarship as transgender studies limits interest in the scholarship by racialized communities. By making this argument, Stryker is taking up part of Feinberg’s critique of the limitations of the word transgender and its relevance and adoption by trans communities globally (Feinberg, 1996). My reading of Feinberg’s considerations of the diverse nomenclature for trans identities around the world and my research into the writing of trans scholars of colour does not suggest that using the word transgender

would turn people off of having their research included in such a reader. I suggest, for example, including an article about language and the diverse ways gender variant people talk about and identify ourselves in the reader.

As part of my own journey trying to find a sense of belonging in trans scholarship, I have sought out writing about racialized trans people. I would argue that articles that feature a thoughtful analysis of gender variance within racialized communities would still fall under transgender studies even if the word transgender is not explicitly named.

For example, Oyeronke Oyewumi (Oyewumi, 1997) has written about Yoruba society in Nigeria “prior to colonization by the west” (Oyewumi, 1997, p. 31). She writes, “Gender was not an organizing principle in Yoruba society” explaining instead that multiple gender identities and a diverse range of physical anatomies were present and accepted within Yoruba communities (Oyewumi, 1997). The author notes that after the introduction of a hierarchical, dichotomous opposed gender-based system of organizing that the multiplicity of gender in this society became flattened into two-dimensions. This article does not specifically use the phrasing transgender or transsexual yet it offers an analysis of the intersecting realities of racialization, colonization and gender- the very connection that Stryker posits is missing from much of trans scholarship (Stryker, 2006).

By leaving out articles that do not name transgender people as such strategically leaves out entire communities of gender variant people around the world. Feinberg’s detailed chronicling of various nomenclature was an attempt to write people back into history; Stryker seems to have paradoxically used this nomenclature to justify producing a textbook for trans studies that “is impoverished by the relative lack of contributions from people of colour, and is therefore ultimately inadequate for representing the complex interplay between race, ethnicity, and

transgender phenomena” (2006, p.15). I appreciate Stryker’s acknowledgement and consideration of this fact but am ambivalent about its meaning considering the impact of producing a textbook with such inadequate content.

I am troubled by the lack of intersectionality in The Transgender Studies Reader. As Lorde suggests, it is only through recognition of the interlocking forms of oppression and our intersecting identities that we can bring about change through a full immersion of ourselves in our work (Lorde, 1984).

Paul Gilroy critically examines the impact of dichotomous, mutually exclusive camp-based organizing (Gilroy, 2000). Patricia Hill Collins reviews Gilroy’s critique stating,

Gilroy deploys varying meanings of the term *camps* to refer to the myriad activities and ways of thinking that divide people into oppositional and often armed groups. According to Gilroy, ‘camp thinking’ fosters group-based identities that in turn lead to exclusionary politics, [...] [and] the deeply entrenched ‘raciology’ that buttresses racial and ethnic strife (2002, p.152).

As Gilroy suggests, placing people into the individual camps of trans identity and racialized identity divides people oppositionally and forces those who occupy multiple identities to cut themselves into pieces and be divided amongst disparate groups. It creates an impossible situation for racialized trans folk, as the diversity of our experiences is either flattened, or divided into multiple sections unable to fit into one whole piece. Any scholarship written from this place of singular encampment necessarily misses the bigger picture. Whatever the justification for its production, there is a measurable impact on the future lives of trans people through the creation of a textbook like The Transgender Studies Reader (2006). Readers like it become embedded in curricula, informing and shaping what is taught and understood about who trans people are and what their experiences of the social world are like. As a textbook, The Transgender Studies Reader (2006) is a first offering in what will likely be a series of books

compiling texts important to trans scholarship. Its content pulls together individual writings by trans authors and scholars. Through the selection of particular scholars' writing, the Reader replicates a trend in scholarship on the topic to date, the creation of a singular essentialized trans voice, one that is not reflective of the true diversity of trans experiences.

Thankfully, Clare, Feinberg, Oyewumi and Roen are writing racialized trans people into their work and by doing so are creating space to expand the scope of developing scholarship on trans issues. These authors are contributing to the canon, and helping to shape a trans studies that incorporates an intersectional and interconnected analysis of race, gender and disability into its fabric.

As a textbook, The Transgender Studies Reader (2006) provides a variety of articles typifying early trans scholarship, something that lends itself to being the main reader for a trans studies course. This means that some courses may assign this text exclusively on the reading list, thus limiting course content and decentralizing voices of trans scholars of colour. When anthologies like The Transgender Studies Reader enter a classroom setting the omission of writers of colour and writing about racialization becomes written into curricula. I would like to consider in more detail how this happens, specifically: how trans scholarship is employed within post-secondary institutions; what catalogues like The Transgender Studies Reader teach students about who trans (and what) trans people are, and what impact this work has on trans racialized students.

Trans Studies in Post-Secondary Institutions

To consider how trans studies is taken up in post-secondary institutions, I will review trans studies courses offered at the University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University and Simone

de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University. I am making an assessment of these courses based on what is available- course syllabi on the university websites. I am unable to make a statement about the course pedagogy, what is taught, and the ways in which the syllabus content is dissected and applied in the classroom.

The University of Toronto began offering a fourth-year introductory course about trans studies in 2008. Their website defines the school's understanding of trans studies as,

an emerging interdisciplinary field of scholarship with a variety of roots: in culture, academia, social services and social movements (Found online at <http://www.uc.utoronto.ca/content/view/526/2534/> on August 3, 2010).

This course, entitled “Intro to Trans Studies” is located within the undergraduate program at University of Toronto's Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies. The course draws heavily on the content in The Transgender Studies Reader (2006) and the reader makes up the bulk of the readings for the course.

The syllabus suggests that the course was developed with an interest in naming the ways in which marginalization renders trans people in different ways. For example, there is a week dedicated to “Cultural Representations & Defining ‘Trans’”. The assigned readings for this week include Namaste's “Beyond Image Content: Examining Transsexual's Access to the Media” (Namaste, 2005); Helen Hok-Sze Leung's “Unsung Heroes: Reading Transgender Subjectivities in Hong Kong Action Cinema” (Leung, 2002); Roen's “Transgender Theory and Embodiment: The Risk of Racial Marginalization” (Roen, 2001) and Evan B. Towle and Lynn M. Morgan's “Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the “Third Gender” Concept” (Towle and Morgan, 2002). Three of the four assigned readings for this week are from The Transgender Studies Reader (2006), specifically the section of the reader dealing with racialization, nationality and gender. Additional weeks include some readings about

racialization and trans people, and these readings also come from the reader. There are only six readings centralizing discussions of race and whiteness in the reader, significantly all six are assigned readings.

Although the course readings are fleshed out with two additional contributions not included in the reader, the bulk of the course readings come directly from The Transgender Studies Reader. The course goal of investigating, “ how things like class, age, race, citizenship, capitalism, colonialism, gender, disability and sexuality become socially constructed ” requires assigning the entire concluding section of the reader: *Multiple Crossings: Gender, Nationality and Race*. By assigning the reader as the main text book for the course, the curriculum is limited in breadth. In order to speak to intersectional identities and interlocking systems of oppression, much of the reader’s content is disregarded. Instead the latter section of the book is heavily discussed. My reading of this suggests that there is an interest in the intersectionality present in the latter third of the reader, despite the deprioritization of this content by the editors, according to their forward and introduction.

Simon Fraser University developed a trans course in 2005, entitled “Thinking About Gender”. This course is currently taught by Helen Hok-Sze Leung. Leung describes the course content as follows,

In this course, students will develop analytical skills to think about gender from critical, creative, and culturally diverse perspectives. Through theoretical readings, fiction, and films, we will explore the following topics: the concept “gender” and its relation to the sexed body; intersexuality and ethics; gender and mass culture; transgender issues; drag culture and the performance of gender; indigenous knowledge and the critique of colonialism. Throughout the course, we will question conventional beliefs about gender and challenge ourselves to explore new ways of imagining and living gender (found online at www.sfu.ca/gsws/course.../CourseOutlineGDST200Leung1107.pdf on August 25, 2010).

Leung is intentional in her naming of the importance of incorporating culturally diverse perspectives on gender, celebrating indigenous knowledge, and including a critique of colonialism in trans studies.

To understand how Leung proposes to undertake this work, I read through the course description on the Simon Fraser University website. According to the website, the course requires students to read Kate Bornstein's guide book, My Gender Workbook (Bornstein, 1998); view Jackie Kay's film "Trumpet" (Kay, 2000) and read a course reader which "includes articles by Ann Fausto-Sterling, Sharon Preves, Susan Bordo, Judith Halberstam²² and others"²³.

Many of the assigned authors listed on the course syllabus have written about trans racialized people in their work. For example, Jackie Kay's "Trumpet" (Kay, 2000), tells the story of Joss Moody, a black jazz trumpet musician who transitions into a masculine identity. The story is set in London, and complex readings of race, gender, family, class and identity are present throughout the story.

Halberstam²⁴ has written extensively about masculinity and trans identity, specifically focusing some of their²⁵ early work on racialization and masculinity in drag king culture. Halberstam's "Mackdaddy, Superfly, Rapper: Gender, Race and Masculinity in the Drag King Scene," (Halberstam, 1997) is an example of this early work. Without knowing all of the course content, Leung's "Thinking About Gender" still appears to offer a more critical look at racialization and gender than is presented in The Transgender Studies Reader (2006).

²² As written on Simon Fraser University website as of date of publication. Halberstam has recently published several texts under the name Jack Halberstam, and may prefer to be identified as such.

²³ Found online at www.sfu.ca/gsws/course.../CourseOutlineGDST200Leung1107.pdf

²⁴ It is unclear from Simon Fraser's website which texts by Halberstam are included in the photocopied course reader.

²⁵ I have used the gender neutral pronoun "they" to describe Halberstam as I am not familiar with their chosen gender pronoun.

Simone de Bouvoir Institute at the University of Concordia in Quebec has recently begun offering a course entitled, “Introduction to Trans Studies”. As of 2009, the course was being taught by Trish Salah. Salah describes the course goals,

This Introduction to Trans Studies will constitute a sustained attempt to engage the question of what is being introduced to the academy under the rubric of Trans Studies that is, how the discipline is being composed, delimited and legitimated—as well as our role as actors within that process. We will consider what does the process of producing this body of knowledge and array of disciplinary practices entail for transsexual, transgender, intersex and other sexual minority communities as well as for better established academic formations that have taken trans people as objects of knowledge (Women’s Studies, Lesbian and Gay Studies, Anthropology and Psychology, for instance) (Found online at http://www.trans-academics.org/trans_studies_syllabi on August 27, 2010).

Salah takes on the creation of trans studies head-on in this course, considering and critiquing the formation of trans studies as a field of study. She implicates the students taking her course and trans scholars in the formation of trans studies and the resulting impact of the area of study on “transsexual, transgender, intersex and other sexual minority communities”.

During Salah’s twelve-week course, students are expected to read thirty-four articles, of which ten are explicitly centered on the experience of racialized people. Though this amounts to only 30% of the course content, it is far greater than the sum of the course readings offered in the University of Toronto course²⁶.

Through critically examining the role of scholars in generating research that impacts on trans lives, Salah provides a timely intervention into trans studies. She suggests that what we write about has implications for racialized and marginalized trans people. Scholarship impacts on policy development, as I will further discuss in the next chapter, and policies directly affect the day-to-day lives of trans people both on and off of university campuses. By inserting this intervention into the classroom discussions, Salah provides a liminal space to pause and consider

²⁶ This may also reflect a greater content than the course at Simon Fraser University. A full review of the assigned course readings is not possible as this data is not listed in the course syllabus found on the university’s website.

what we as trans academics are doing when producing bodies of knowledge in a site of academic production: the classroom. This liminal space is one of consideration and reflection.

I would like to return to Whittle's forward to The Transgender Studies Reader (2006) as a contrast to Salah's work. Whittle writes,

It is now possible, simply by 'telling' or theorizing my own life and the lives of other trans people, for me to build an academic career based on the fascination of the 'Other' with people like me (p. xii).

Trans scholars who write about their lives without an analysis of white privilege can still form academic careers based on their work, and can be considered valuable contributors to trans studies. Systemic white supremacy is designed to support those who choose to ignore the real ways that white privilege work through a constant prioritizing and centralizing of a white voice as neutral and dominant. Salah instead cautions trans scholars to consider the ways that this impacts on marginalized trans people. My research into trans scholarship and the growing field of trans studies suggests that too many white trans people have theorized about their own lives at the expense of their racialized counterparts. I appreciate Salah's efforts to consider the process of developing this field of study as part of a larger conversation about how trans studies affects the lived experiences of trans people, specifically those on the margins.

Location and Impact

I would like to take a moment to consider the impact of each of these courses on their home departments. To return to Cattapan's theory of transgender citizenship, the inclusion of trans studies curricula suggests a writing in of trans citizens to the university curricula. However, the limited impact of trans studies curricula on the rest of university curricula reflects the

invisibility of trans citizens in the university. This invisibility prevents a feeling of belonging by trans students interested in taking additional courses outside trans studies²⁷.

The University of Toronto course is located within the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies. Leung's course is located within the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. Salah's course is offered at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University.

Salah's course may be offered through the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, but the course content and ideology does not seem to have permeated outside of her classroom. According to their website, the Simone de Beauvoir institute was established to. “

strives to stimulate the investigation, understanding and communication of the historical and contemporary roles of women in society, and to encourage women to develop their full creative potential (found online at <http://wsdb.concordia.ca/aboutus/> August 1, 2010).

Despite the fact that the introduction to the school describes a place where feminism is broadly understood to connect interlocking systems of power and state repression (Rail, 2010), in the “About Us” section of the website, the institute's focus is identified as being centered on women's experience of society. Although the meaning of the word woman in this context can be understood to include trans women in its definition, its use does not reflect the complex analysis featured in Salah's course. Her course has us consider the experiences of those on the margins including gender variant people who are perhaps most incoherent.

As a part-time faculty member Salah is limited in her influence on shaping departmental policy. The Simone de Beauvoir Institute website makes a clear distinction between those considered full-time faculty and those considered part-time faculty. Part-time faculty teach courses, whilst

²⁷ Of the three universities reviewed, all three offer one trans studies course. It is not currently possible to major in trans studies in any of these three schools.

full-time faculty conduct research, teach and participate in university service²⁸. A review of the institutional mandate suggests that Salah's course has not shaped departmental policy.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, several women's centres, women's studies departments and women-focused organizations have changed their scope to reflect changing ideas about the nature of gendered violence, to reflect an inclusion of trans people, and to expand their understanding of gender advocacy. The mandate of the Simon de Beauvoir Institute does not reflect this trend.

It may be that the website is simply out of date²⁹, and in need of revisions to fit the current scope of the work being done. Leaving out any mention of trans people from the institute's mandate is part of the 'erasure' of trans and gender variant people from the descriptor- the very erasure described by Namaste³⁰ in one of the required readings in Salah's course. Similarly, the descriptor does not offer enough insight into the fact the historical and contemporary roles of women in society are not experienced the same way by all women.

D'bi Young has problematized the lack of consideration of the lived experiences of racialized women in women's studies courses in her song, "Ain't I a Ooman, Sojourner?" (Young, 2000). She sings,

Ain't I an ooman Sojourner?
 Welcome class to feminism 101
 Where we elaborate 'pon Betty Freidan and Gloria Steinem.
 And discuss the liberation of the white, middle-class ooman from oppression in
 society [...]
 Woman got the vote in 1918.
 Prof, I don't really understand what you mean?
 When you say ooman could you be more specific
 If my recollection serves me correct

²⁸ Found online at <http://wsdb.concordia.ca/people/full-timefaculty/>

²⁹ I would argue that updating an organizational mandate to reflect current scholarship in the institute should be a top priority for a well functioning department. The webstie is the first form of outreach to the outside world.

³⁰ Interestingly, Namaste is an associate faculty member at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, as of the time of this writing. She is also the Concordia University Research Chair as of the time of this writing.

If my recollection serves me correct
 In 1918 I wasn't voting yet
 In 1918 I wasn't voting yet
 Come make we look 'pon this here shit-uation
 This Feminism 101
 Where we elaborate 'pon
 Betty Freidan and Gloria Steinem
 Cannot have room for I
 And forces the exclusion of the Black ooman
 Black, Black, Black ooman
 And Audrey said," Step into my head"
 Come on and step, step, step, step into my head
 Black Bush Ooman
 step into my head

Young cautions against the slippage implicit in the creation of an essentialized category of 'woman' as it negates the different ways that this experience is felt by trans women, racialized women and other marginalized women. Additionally, it risks replicating the production of a discrete category of identity which does not allow for a more critical consideration of intersecting realities and which reinforces a process of delineation and exclusion.

The University of Toronto's Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies website also offers a limited institutional mandate. It describes the centre's research focus as follows,

Among these questions are how we frame and categorize sexual differences, why we fear some and celebrate others, how medical, religious, and political authorities respond to them. What is the nature of sexual identity and orientation? How and why is sexuality labeled as lesbian, heterosexual, perverse, normal, gay, or queer? How do cultures at different times and places divide the sexual from the non-sexual? (found online at <http://www.uc.utoronto.ca/content/view/284/1414/> on August 1,2010).

This description makes no mention of gender identity and centers instead on concepts of sexuality and sexual identity. There is a difference between theorizing about gender and theorizing about sexuality, although there are points of intersection between these two concepts (Namaste, 1996).

Gender identity is often conflated with sexuality in troubling ways. Trans people's inclusion in queer communities represented by the term LGBT³¹ suggests a relationship between trans identity and queer identity that does not always exist. There are many straight-identified trans people who are not associated with LGBT communities or who socialize primarily outside of queer communities. Trans inclusion in the initialized LGBT ignores the complicated and at times tenuous relationship between trans communities and LGB communities (Stryker, 2008; Namaste, 2000). The medicalizing discourse prominent in early trans scholarship featured an intrusive sensationalization of trans people's sexuality. This history leaves behind it a complicated relationship between sexuality and gender for many trans people.

Racialized people have also had a tenuous relationship with queer communities. The invisibility of racialized people in queer organizing and the white supremacy present in much of this organizing precludes a sense of belonging by many racialized queer people. Additionally, white supremacy has shaped the perception that queerness is a white North American identity, despite the reality that diverse sexual preferences exist throughout the world.

The placement of trans studies curricula in a centre for sexual diversity, one which does not articulate a connection to gender diversity and the way that the process of racialization disavows

³¹ I would like to problematize this conflation, through an analysis of the inclusion of Trans in the acronym 'LGBT' in community organizing and in scholarship. This initialism has been widely critiqued. For the purpose of this discussion, I will simply point out that many trans people feel that their inclusion into the LGBT initialism reflects a tokenistic inclusion at best.

A quick search on EBSCO, through the University of Toronto libraries website if the phrase "LGBT" pulls up 84, 262 hits. This is in contrast to a search for "trans" which pulls up 2,084 hits. Without reading all of the articles in the first example, this is at best an estimation, however it is worth noting that a review of several pages of hits indicates that the majority of these articles have but a cursory mention of the unique experiences of trans people, if these experiences are mentioned at all. The inclusion of the T in the initialized LGBT obscures a real invisibility of trans folks in LGBT organizing and scholarship (Namaste, 2000).

In addition the initializing of a multiplicity of queer and trans identities into a four-category list necessarily omits the diversity of sexual and gender identities present in LGBT communities. LGBT refers to terminology popularized in white North American communities. Words describing trans identities outside North America are not part of this acronym, replicating the marginalization felt by many racialized people in white LGBT communities.

the participation of people of colour from LGBT communities offers little in the way of engaging racialized trans students.

To conclude this review of trans studies courses and departmental mandates, let me turn to Leung's course at Simon Fraser University. This course is offered through the department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. The departmental website describes its focus as,

The department's courses focus on expanding traditional scholarship by studying the ways gender has structured intellectual and social traditions and by exploring how knowledge can be reshaped when women are included. The programs also examine ways that issues of gender intersect with other structures of power, such as class, race, ethnicity, species and disabilities to shape social structures and ways of thinking (found online at <http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/index.html> on August 1, 2010).

The department focuses on research about gender and its intersections with experiences of racialization, class and disability. However, the scope of what gender means is limited; in this statement, gender equals women. The mandate states that it produces scholarship which studies,

the ways gender has structured intellectual and social traditions and by exploring how knowledge can be reshaped when *women* are included [emphasis added] (found online at <http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/index.html> on August 1, 2010).

Equating gender with womanhood is not new. Much has been written about the need to expand concepts of gender advocacy and what gender means (Darke and Cope, 2002; Feinberg, 1996; Kaplan, 1996). By suggesting the essential category of woman is a distinct one, the mandate does not make connections to the more complicated ways that gender, race, class, disability and other structures of power are interconnected. I return to Young's critique of the way that white supremacy is at play in the creation of the notion of an essential concept of 'woman'.

Considering the content of the three trans studies courses I have reviewed, and the mandates of the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University and the Gender, Sexuality

and Women's Studies department at Simon Fraser University has lead me to conclude that offering a trans studies course has not necessarily changed the ideological framework of the departments. Despite offering introductory trans studies courses, the theoretical framework and areas of research of each department has been shaped without a consideration of trans scholarship or trans experiences. I remain dubious that any change to the university setting can be affected through the inclusion of this scholarship in academic curricula when the departmental frameworks are not affected.

From my review of both emerging trans scholarship and trans-themed curricula I have understood a complex relationship between scholarship and sites of academic inquiry. In addition, as I will explore further in the next chapter, there is also a strong relationship between these concepts and trans policy development.

Based on what I have researched and considered in this chapter, who and what is written about by trans scholars defines what trans studies looks like. Academics who omit discussions of whiteness and racism from their scholarship create a body of writing that erases the experiences of trans people of colour. There are several scholars who have written about the intersections of white privilege, racialization, class, disability and trans identity in their work. Unfortunately, this kind of scholarship is not reflective of a large part of trans literature.

The creation of The Transgender Studies Reader (Stryker and Whittle, 2006) marks an important moment in trans scholarship, but its lack of critical content about racialized and otherwise marginalized trans people is a noticeable omission. Because it is the first reader of its kind, its content has shaped some early trans studies courses, thus writing the omission of racialized and marginalized voices into trans studies curricula.

Where trans studies is located within academia affects what kind of scholarship is produced. Writing that is situated under the rubric of trans studies tends to prioritize trans experiences and reflexive inquiry versus that produced through psychology or medicine which tends towards a pathologizing of trans experiences (Stryker, 2004).

The site of inquiry produces specific narratives, and the lack of writing about the impact of racialization on trans people of colour replicates an erasure of marginalized voices in academia.

Based on my research, both trans scholarship and trans studies curricula development do not seem to have affected the ideological framework of the academic departments in which they are housed. Academic departments and institutes offering trans studies courses or employing trans scholars do not necessarily have an articulated description of the impact of gender identity and trans theory on their overall work.

Thus for trans racialized students, the marginalization of their voices is part of a larger feedback loop which prevents them from feeling belonging in trans scholarship and trans studies while the sites of academic inquiry which offer courses on the topic remain unwelcoming to many trans students.

There is some indication that trans scholarship influences university policy (Wakefield, 2009). In turn, additional research suggests that trans policy development can help to make changes to the day-to-day experiences of trans people in some institutions (Drake and Cope, 2002). My research in this chapter has illustrated that the erasure of racialized voices in trans scholarship has been replicated in trans studies curricula. I am concerned that this erasure may also be replicated in trans policy development.

In the next chapter, I will turn to a consideration of trans policy development in order to further flesh out this connection between scholarship, policy and university life for trans students.

Chapter Three: Trans Policies

Policies govern the administrative methods of institutions. Policies “mandate or prohibit behavior” (Orsher and Quinn, 2003, p.1) in an attempt to create a desired environment. Trans policies at post-secondary institutions attempt to create an environment that is welcoming to trans students. As of the date of this writing, 293 schools have created non-discrimination policies explicitly protecting trans people from discrimination on the basis of gender identity or gender expression (Transgender Law and Policy Institute, 2010). I am interested in the possible limits of policy as well as the opportunities they offer for making change in post-secondary institutions. I am also interested in how trans policies affect the experiences of racialized trans students. In this chapter, I will explore the development of trans policies in post-secondary institutions, making connections between scholarship and policy development.

Trans policies in post-secondary institutions tend to fall into one of two categories: those that deal with issues of discrimination and harassment of trans people and those that govern how trans people access university programs and resources. In this chapter I will review a few examples of each of these kinds of policies. Specifically, I will consider the anti-discrimination policy created by the University of Iowa, the University of Vermont’s trans access policies and programs and the University of Toronto’s general position statement regarding trans people at the university. In the process of considering these 3 examples, I will briefly reference trans resources developed (and not developed) by Northeastern University and Northern Essex Community College. By examining these examples I illustrate the different approaches to trans

inclusion in universities. I will consider the language of each policy and the way the policy is used and promoted within each university context.

The Experiences of Trans Students on University Campuses

Some of the data that I consider comes from a recent plethora of newspaper articles about the experiences of trans students on university campuses in the United States. I begin with these newspaper articles. Most of articles I consider are published in student newspapers and scholarly presses dedicated to research in education and pedagogy. Articles about the experiences of trans students have appeared in academic and educational journals such as The Chronicle of Higher Education and the Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education, amongst others.

Several non-academic or off-campus newspapers have covered requests by trans students for help with access issues on campus. One LGBTQ newspaper in particular, Bay Windows, which circulates in the New England area of the United States, has featured several articles about trans students. For example, in 2003 they published “Northeastern Pressed on Trans Policy” (Kiristy, 2003) about Northeastern University’s initial resistance to policy development related to trans issues. Despite publishing more than four articles about the experiences of trans students and about trans policy development, Bay Windows’ coverage consistently presents the trans body as one-dimensional. Put differently, the authors discuss the trans part of each subject’s identity but make no mention of their other, often intersecting part of their identities.

For example, in Kiristy’s article, we do not know if the trans students requesting policy development are racialized or identify as disabled³² or working class or as migrants. Their

³² My use of the term disabled rather than ‘person with disabilities’ is intentional. My research has been informed by critical disability studies and the development of a social model of disability. This theory challenges that people have physical, sensory, intellectual and psychological variations but that these do not themselves create disability. Disability is created through the systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society. Use of disabled instead of person with a disability is an attempt to intervene in the problematic notion that disabled people themselves are the agents which create disability.

identity as trans sublimates the rest of their lived experiences. Other short pieces published in Bay Windows betray a similar omission in reporting (Kiritsy, 2003, Jacobs, 2007).

LGBTQ newspaper The New York Blade recently published “Ivy League Schools Enact Trans Benefits” (Perry, 2006). Arizona-based Echo Magazine, has also contributed to this expanding body of writing by publishing a several articles about trans students (Echo Magazine, 2007). Both The New York Blade and Echo Magazine’s reporting position trans issues as unrelated to other experiences of marginalization.

Articles about trans people on university campuses have also been featured in non-LGBT-specific community-based news outlets. Through a review of this literature, I have found a difference in the way that trans issues are reported between LGBT newspapers and those with a broader audience. Articles in non-LGBT newspapers reflect less-nuanced understanding of trans people than in LGBT-focussed papers. Despite some problems, the articles in The New York Blade and Echo Magazine reflect a level of trans knowledge and a familiarity with trans issues.

For example, Newsweek published an exposé about a trans neuroscience professor at Stanford in 2006 (Kalb, 2006). Newsweek positions its trans subject as a sensational character. As Other, the trans professor occupies dualistic identity of both male and female and this trope is used as a way of discussing gender inequity in the sciences³³. The article, “A New View of The Boys Club; a Transgendered Stanford Professor Speaks Out Against Discrimination in the Sciences” (2006), investigates systemic sexism within the sciences. Unfortunately, the article reinforces as many gender stereotypes as it purports to challenge.

³³ I am troubled by the way that Newsweek recreates the trans subject as a sensationalized subject reduced to being only a gendered being. I am concerned with the transphobic reporting in the article and the use of language which sets up the trans subject as not fully male and yet not a woman either. This dichotomy replicates a binary opposed concept of male and female that has been challenged by many trans scholars, activists and community members. Additionally, this work denies any sense of identity fostered by the subject of the article, his chosen gender and gender pronoun is challenged throughout the article. See Tanya Titchkosky's “Disability: A Rose by Any Other Name? “ People-First” Language in Canadian Society” (Titchkosky, 2001)

Noble's scholarship has been useful in articulating why I am so troubled by the Newsweek article. He explains the process of rendering of trans bodies as unintelligible in

“Refusing to Make Sense: Mapping the In-Coherences of ‘Trans’”. He states,

To render something in-coherent, on the other hand, means two things simultaneously: first, it means a lack of organization, or a failure of organization so as to make that thing difficult to comprehend; but it also means failing to cohere as a mass or entity. The reading of an ftm body as gendered male involves presenting signifiers within an economy where the signifiers accumulate toward the appearance of a coherently gendered body (2007, p.171).

The Newsweek article obscures the reality of the trans subject, marking him as Other and as oppositionally different from the largely cisgendered readership. As Noble suggests, the trans body is at most a “permanent place of modulation of what came before by what comes after, never fully accomplishing either an essentialist stable ‘reality’ but also of permanent in-coherence” (2007, p.5). This process is exemplified by the Newsweek treatment of the trans subject, specifically the way that the trans professors’ pre and post-transition life is presented. In fact, so much of the text of the Newsweek article is taken up with the construction of the sensationalized trans subject as Other that any discussion of gender inequity in the sciences is but a negligible portion of the overall content. The author not only renders the article’s subject unintelligible but she also fails to provide any new insight into the actual experiences of the trans-identified professor in the university setting.

This kind of reporting typifies mainstream reporting about trans students in university settings. Those looking for information about how to best advocate for racialized trans students must turn to trans scholarship to fill in the gaps present in popular reporting. For this reason, it is even more crucial for trans scholarship to be informative about a diversity of trans experiences

As these articles indicate, there has been a measured increase in reporting about trans issues in local newspapers, educational publications and scholarly writing about the experiences

of trans people on university campuses. At the same time, there has been noted increase in the development of a body of policy documents governing the ways that trans students access university resources and services. I will spend the rest of this chapter examining these policies, including their connections to scholarship and popular reporting about trans students.

Anti-Discrimination Policies

I am particularly concerned with anti-discrimination policies and policies governing access to programs and services in universities and colleges. I begin with anti-discrimination policies. Some policies require only compliance while others require “endorsement, education and support” (Darke and Cope, 2002, p.63). Anti-discrimination policies are an example of the latter; they require training, institutional support at all levels, and administrative support. Darke and Cope’s research into policy development suggests that anti-discrimination policies are only successfully implemented with full support from all levels of the organization. They state,

These policies can be difficult to monitor and enforce and can be undermined at any level...An anti-discrimination policy works only if the organization as a whole is committed to making it work (2002, p. 63).

For policies to work, they must be rooted in a policy environment; where the concerns and values of the policy are reflected and supported at all levels of the institution (Orsher and Quinn, 2003)³⁴.

I consider a recent study about harassment reporting by trans students in post-secondary schools (Jacobs, 2007). The study’s data is from the United States- and indicates that of the 651

³⁴ I have worked as a diversity consultant in Toronto for the past ten years in Toronto, working with organizations on the development of anti-discrimination policy as part of my work. In my work, I have found that anti-discrimination policies alone do not necessarily result in systemic changes to an organization’s environment. Based on my experience as a consultant, I have found the value of creating a strategic plan with an articulated training timeline as an important first step towards creating the kind of policy environment that is required for systemic change to happen within organizations. I will consider the steps beyond anti-discrimination policy development later in this chapter.

college student participants, 30% of them reported experiencing harassment based on failure to meet expected norms of masculinity or femininity (Jacobs, 2007). The study further suggests that the “majority of those who experienced harassment or discrimination came from schools without non-discrimination policies” (p. 2). A key finding was the increased tendency to report discrimination since the development of the anti-discrimination policies reviewed (Jacobs, 2007)³⁵. As Brittney Hoffman states in the article,

These students feel so much safer and more empowered to speak out about these incidents and feel comfortable to go to their administrator or dean of students to report these incidents and make sure they're dealt with at the structural level (Found online at <http://www.edgeboston.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=glbt&sc2=news&sc3=&id=22669> on September 7, 2010).

If anti-discrimination policies result in an increase in reporting, my reading suggests that this is directly related to the existence of the mechanisms for doing such reporting. People cannot officially report transphobic harassment when transphobia is not considered harassment within an anti-discrimination policy. While the efficacy of anti-discrimination policy can be questioned, this study indicates that such policy increases the agency of trans students and facilitates their self-advocacy.

However, the study does not cover what happens after these incidents are reported, how complaints are processed or how schools strategize around prevention of future occurrences. The study fails to consider what barriers to reporting are faced by racialized, disabled, or otherwise marginalized trans students reticent to seek assistance from administrative offices. The report does not take into account the fact that the discrimination faced by racialized trans students may be an amalgam of transphobia, racism and other forms of oppression. In may in

³⁵ However, the research does not indicate the rate of reporting before the creation of the policies, so it is unclear how much reporting has increased. This study does not specify the gender identity of its participants thus it is unclear whether any of the participants self-identified as trans or not. Nonetheless, the study still provided valuable insight into the impact of anti-discrimination policies on gender variant people, which includes trans students.

fact come at the hands of the very same administration staff that are responsible for recording and processing such a discrimination claim. For example, a trans student who is not called by their chosen name in university communications and by administration staff in the registrar's office may be uncomfortable with seeking assistance from an equity office at the same university, since, presumably, the process of misnaming may be repeated.

Anti-Discrimination Policy in Practice: The University of Iowa as a Case Study

The University of Iowa took the lead amongst post-secondary schools in adapting its existing anti-discrimination policy to include trans people in 1996. As the first³⁶ school to create a trans policy, the University of Iowa took the lead in creating intentional space for trans people on university campuses. Their non-discrimination statement (University of Iowa, 1996) was groundbreaking and set a precedent for schools across North America. The University of Iowa's anti-discrimination statement included protection for trans and gender variant people, protection that did not exist through policy at any other school in North America at the time (Transgender Law and Policy Institute, 2010). Their policy states,

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference. The University also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to University facilities (Found online at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/non-discrimination-statemt.html> on July 20, 2010).

This wording is typical of most anti-discrimination policies governing the treatment of trans students. Schools like Brown University and Seattle University have similar anti-discrimination trans policies (Perry, 2006).

³⁶ This school was the first to have a recorded 'gender protection' policy.

In this kind of policy, trans people are part of a list of protected groups. As has been well documented, many of the students who self-identify as members of the protected identities face regular discrimination in university settings (Bartlett and O’Barr, 1990, McConaghy, 1997, Sandler and Hall 1986, Ponterotto, Joseph G. 1990, Freyd, 1998/updated 2008) despite anti-discrimination policies put in place to prevent such discrimination.

Some policies are developed out of a need indicated by trans students themselves, some stem from recommendations in scholarship and still others seem to be influenced by changes to state laws (Jacobs, 2003; Transgender Law and Policy Institute, 2010). In 1996, Iowa City, Iowa created a law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression (Transgender Law and Policy Institute, 2010). Seemingly, the university adopted similar anti-discrimination language in its policy statement from the same year. The gender protection coverage listed in the University of Iowa’s anti-discrimination policy thus stemmed not from an interest in mitigating the experiences of transphobia faced by trans students but from a requirement of state law concerning access.

Fourteen years after the policy’s creation, not much has changed for trans students at the University of Iowa. According to the school’s website, at the time of writing there are no trans-specific programs or resources for trans students. The University of Iowa has a “Resources for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Students” webpage which lists resources aimed at LGBT students, such as support networks, curricula focused on LGBT issues, financial aid support and education and advocacy resources. On the webpage, the university celebrates its groundbreaking strides in support for LGBT students, marking it as a LGBT friendly school. It can be extrapolated that trans issues are tangentially highlighted on this webpage

None of the resources listed on the “Resources for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Students” webpage are specifically for or about trans people. The University of Iowa misses an opportunity to “come out as a trans-positive organization” (Drake and Cope, 2002, p.77).

The “Resources for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Students” webpage proclaims that,

Iowa was the first state university to officially recognize the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Allied Union (in 1970), and was the first public university in the country to offer insurance benefits to employees' domestic partners (in 1993) (Found online at http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/undergrad_diversity/glb.htm on August 7, 2010).

Interestingly, the university does not celebrate its groundbreaking gender protection anti-discrimination statement. This seems surprising, especially considering that other schools, such as the University of Vermont have capitalized on the creation of trans resources, positioning their efforts as part of the leading edge in university student life resources³⁷. As Drake and Cope state, “Creating inclusive policies is futile if that fact is not known beyond your own front door” (Drake and Cope, 2002, p.78).

I conducted a brief search of the University of Iowa website to uncover what trans content the University of Iowa offers. Search results from the phrase “transgender” include a link to the school’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Allied Union, the LGBT Staff and Faculty Association webpage. It also uncovers a link to an article about a lecture by Feinberg at the university in 2003.

According to the University of Iowa website, the school hosted Feinberg in 2003. Feinberg gave a talk, "Trans Liberation as the Basis for Unity," and led a press conference. Hopefully, this kind of programming will continue and help to put in practice the theory behind

³⁷ See <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmpr/?Page=News&storyID=14419>

the policy created back in 1996. Trans-relevant programming is a first step towards creating a trans-knowledgeable environment that is supportive of the gender protection policy.

After the publication of the gender protection policy by the University of Iowa, several colleges and universities followed suit and created similar policies. GenderPAC's annual "Gender Equality National Index for Universities and Schools" (GENIUS) index suggested in 2007 that trans-based anti-discrimination policies were becoming widespread (Jacobs, 2007). The study also suggested that administrators were learning how to implement policies to protect all gender variant students from experiences of discrimination and exclusion (Jacobs, 2007). As Brittney Hoffman from GenderPAC explained,

We really have seen a growing and more sophisticated awareness of how gender-based discrimination affects all students, and we've really over the past two to three years especially seen these schools respond (Found online at <http://www.edgeboston.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=glt&sc2=news&sc3=&id=22669> on September 7, 2010).

My reading of Hoffman's statement suggests two things. First, her statement suggests that policy development results in a measurable adoption by the school of the tenets of the policy. Also, Hoffman suggests that having a "sophisticated awareness" (Jacobs, 2007) of how transphobia affects helps inform the way that anti-discrimination policies are practiced by members of the university community. I would like to problematize this statement. The picture may be less rosy than Hoffman suggests.

There are multiple protected grounds in most anti-discrimination policies which include protection from discrimination based on sex, gender, race, disability, religion amongst others. There are training and educational resources (See, for example, Government of Canada, 2006) aimed at providing further insight into the ways in which harassment works to affect marginalized people. Despite the existence of both policy and training resources aimed at helping

people put the policy into practice, research has suggested that these alone do not eliminate discrimination or harassment (Ashenfelter and Heckman, 1974).

Ahmed, for example, studies the development of diversity policy in universities in the United Kingdom in her article “The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism” (2005). She argues that anti-discrimination policies can be used as evidence that the school is excelling at equity, despite the actuality of incidents of discrimination and harassment on campus. She states,

[a] document that documented the racism of the university became usable as a measure of good performance [...] The document becomes a fetish object, something that has value, by being cut off from the very process of documentation. In other words, its very existence is taken as evidence that the institutional world documented by the document (racism, inequality, injustice) has been overcome, as if saying that we ‘do it’ means that’s no longer what we do (p. 2).

Considering Ahmed’s quote it is unlikely that the development of anti-discrimination policies alone in post-secondary institutions in the United States (no matter how widespread) will result in a measurable change for trans students. Many students face barriers to participation in post-secondary schools despite anti-discrimination policies (Bartlett and O’Barr, 1990, McConaghy, 1997, Sandler and Hall 1986, Ponterotto, Joseph G. 1990, Freyd, 1998/updated 2008), suggesting that the policies themselves do not prevent discrimination.

Similarly, the addition of a gender protection clause into such policies does not address the problem of policy efficacy. It does not address the ways that other protected groups, such as racialized students, have not found protection from harassment despite being officially protected through policy.

Part of developing a “sophisticated awareness of how gender-based discrimination affects all students” involves frequent and intensive training and promotion of a trans-supportive environment. However, as the chilly climate still felt by marginalized students despite anti-discrimination policies illustrates, there is still a lot of work to be done.

As a diversity consultant, I have worked with several prominent organizations in Toronto to develop policy that reflects anti-transphobia practice, anti-racism practice and a commitment to challenging white supremacy. Doing this work has illustrated that behaviour is something that is difficult to change. Attitudinal and behavioural changes require intensive training, personal commitment, and institutional support. In my experience, behaviour is rarely changed solely because of it being mandated to do so.

Orsher and Quinn study the role of policy in educational settings. They state,

[p]olicies may not always achieve their goals, particularly because they have to be implemented by local individuals who function as ‘street level bureaucrats’ deciding when and how to interpret rules (2003, p. 53).

Policies are open to interpretation by those who are expected to follow them. Difference in policy interpretation and implementation often results in varied outcomes. In the university setting, those governed by administrative policies such as anti-discrimination policies number in the tens of thousands.

I suggest that it is difficult to expect tens of thousands of people to have the same interpretation of how to implement the guidelines of policy in their day-to-day interactions at the university. I hypothesize that due to the sheer number of people impacted by the policy, policing compliance becomes a key issue in post-secondary institutions. In the case of trans policies, it is often trans students themselves who carry out the policing, reporting experiences of transphobia to institutional authorities (Perry, 2006; Jacobs, 2007). As Ahmed points out,

[i]f the statement of commitment does not necessarily commit the university to doing anything, then practitioners have to keep up the pressure; it is this pressure that can mean that the documents don’t work.[...] We have to put pressure on the document because it doesn’t work, and the pressure on documents is what makes them not work (2008, p.4).

Ahmed suggests that the need for policing of compliance is an indicator that the policy document is not working. Trans students are forced to “keep up the pressure [on the document]” in order to make the document work for them, however, this very pressure indicates a problem in the system which the policy is not able to address. Thus the incidents of reporting increase, whereas the frequency of incidents of harassment or discrimination does not necessarily decrease. This concept is reflected in the GenderPAC data. There has been measured increase over the past 10 years in reporting of transphobic incidents by trans students since the creation of multiple trans policies in post-secondary institutions across the US (Jacobs, 2007).

My reading of the results of the GenderPAC study suggests that students feel better able to name and challenge their experiences of discrimination because they are included as protected citizens in policy. I also understand that anti-discrimination policies do not decrease the incidents of harassment on campus; they merely increase the tendency to report incidents to school administration.

Thus, the trans citizenship is still challenged as demonstrated by acts of discrimination and is not addressed by the creation of anti-discrimination trans policies alone.

Policies Governing Access: Leadership Examples and Terrible Warnings

Several universities have created policies supporting access to programs and resources on campus by trans students. For example, Brett Genny Beemyn, Andrea Domingue, Jessica Pettitt and Todd Smith’s inspirational article “Suggested Steps to Make Campuses More Trans-Inclusive” (2005) is full of strategies for making campuses more accessible to trans students, including policy development. Their recommendations include making changes to campus healthcare, residence halls, bathrooms, locker rooms, gender segregated clubs, sororities and

fraternities, and allowing for trans-friendly administrative policies concerning university records. (Beemyn et. al, 2005). These recommendations would see post-secondary campuses creating gender-neutral washrooms, residence and locker room facilities, improved trans-knowledgeable health care and access to medical transition services on demand, and name changes on demand fulfilled with ease.

Few schools have programs and services which meet all of these recommendations; however several have procedures or policies addressing one or more of these suggestions³⁸. There is an old adage which suggests that if you cannot be a good example, you will have to be a terrible warning. Beemyn et. al suggest a goal to strive for, a good example of how to address access issues for trans students on campus. Some schools have taken a leadership role in addressing some of these recommendations whilst others are left being terrible warnings of what not to do. To illustrate these two approaches, I will quickly consider two very different responses to requests for access by trans students.

Northeastern University has created gender-neutral housing for student as a result of pressure from the student body. In 2003, the school “refused to agree to the request by some students and staff to add transgender-inclusive language to the school's non-discrimination policy” (Jacobs, 2003)³⁹. Despite the initial resistance, the school recently created a gender-neutral housing policy in response to requests from multiple student requests (Tisley, 2010). The Northeastern University website states,

[w]e hope that students in the process of discovering their gender identity, who do not wish to identify themselves by gender, gay or bisexual students, and students who feel more comfortable with a roommate of a different gender will be able to find a

³⁸ For example, Gender PAC’s study indicates that 140 had created gender-neutral washrooms and 30 had gender neutral housing.

³⁹ Found online at <http://www.baywindows.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=glbt&sc2=news&sc3=&id=68095> on September 7, 2010

more compatible roommate and living situation within this community (Found online at <http://www.northeastern.edu/reslife/livinglearning/fyllc/gnh.html> on August 25, 2010).

Northeastern responded to requests by trans students for gender-neutral housing. As a result, the university now has trans-knowledgeable language on the website that clearly articulates the need for gender-neutral accommodations.

In contrast, the Northern Essex Community College has opted not to create any formal policy related to trans students despite accusations of transphobic discrimination in 2007 by a trans man (Jacobs, 2009). The student, Ethan Santiago, filed an Affirmative Action complaint with the college after being denied entry into a men's locker room on campus (Echo Magazine, 2007). He had been using the locker room for some time, but was officially banned from using the space after he applied for a locker (Jacobs, 2009).

Santiago must now use a gender-neutral facility. He must also make the request to access the facility each time he requires to do so, a necessity that requires him to repeatedly out himself as trans to staff. Santiago has indicated that he will continue to use the men's locker despite the ban (Echo Magazine, 2007). This exemplifies a compromised transgender citizenship wherein in order to participate he must adapt himself to facilitate inclusion.

In an interview with Echo Magazine, Northern Essex Community College issued the following statement,

[c]onsistent with its legal obligation to ensure equal access to its educational programs and facilities, Northern Essex Community College provides male and female locker rooms for use by its male and female students and employees. Moreover, although not legally obligated to do so, the College provides gender neutral facilities, including restrooms and locker rooms, when requested. The College takes these steps in order to be sensitive to the needs of its students and employees regardless of whether they fall within a legally protected category (Found online at <http://www.baywindows.com/index.php?ch=news&sc=glt&sc2=news&sc3&id=94347> on August 30, 2010).

This statement illustrates the close connection between state law and the development of access policies. In this example, the college states it has created equal access for all students whether or not they are part of a legally protected group. However, male and female locker rooms are not accessible to many trans, gender variant and gender non-conforming students. As previously mentioned, many students face discrimination on campus due to a perception that they do not meet the gender expectations of other students and staff.

As Sheila Cavanaugh argues in “Queering Bathrooms: Gender and the Hygienic Imagination” (2010), there is a tendency by washroom users to police expected gender norms. I challenge Northern Essex Community College’s suggestion that there is “equal access to [...] facilities” when they only provide male and female locker rooms. As Cavanaugh suggests, trans students face an increased scrutiny when entering gendered-segregated spaces like locker rooms and washrooms. Access policies at post-secondary schools need to address these spaces specifically in order to prevent further experiences of discrimination and transphobic violence.

For trans men like Santiago, being banned from using the men’s locker room or other gendered facilities which reflect his gender identity is an outright denial of his ability to claim citizenship in the university nation. Santiago’s tacit use of the men’s locker room is akin to attempting to access government services without status in a particular country. It comes with immeasurable risks, including the potential of deportation from the university nation through expulsion based on documents like student codes of conduct. Policies governing access need to be reflective of a diversity of trans experiences. The University of Iowa has taken an important step through the creation on their anti-discrimination policy but needs to develop a plan for trans access to programs and services. Hopefully the school will follow Northeastern University’s

example of listening to student requests and will heed Northern Essex Community College's terrible warning.

The University of Toronto: Access Through Recommendations

The University of Toronto does not include any formal mention of trans people in its anti-discrimination policy. As the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office writes in a statement on their webpage,

Our current policies do not explicitly refer to discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. However, the University follows the practice of interpreting "sex and/or sexual orientation" to encompass all forms of gender identification and gender identity. This is in keeping with recent legal rulings and with the recommendation of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Thus any University policy that refers to sex or sexual orientation should be read as including gender identity. Any policy that includes sex or sexual orientation currently can be read as to include gender identity. These policies include: the sexual harassment policy and procedures, the statement on prohibited discrimination and discriminatory harassment (which gives effect to the human rights code), and the Code of Student Conduct (Found online at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Trans.htm#Is%20there%20a%20non-discrimination%20policy%20regarding%20gender%20identity%20at%20U%20of%20T?> on August 26, 2010).

The university includes trans people in its protected grounds under the rubric of sex or sexual identity. In 2000, the Ontario Human Rights Commission issued a policy clarifying the use of sex to cover protection from discrimination on the basis of gender identity. The document, "Policy on Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity" (2000) states,

Gender identity is not an enumerated ground in the *Code*. However, the existing legal structure in the *Code* can support a progressive understanding of the ground of 'sex' to include 'gender identity' and protect individuals who are subject to discrimination or harassment because of gender identity. This approach toward the application of the *Code* has been accepted for some time (Found online at <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/PolicyGenderIdent?page=PolicyGenderIdent.html> on August 25, 2010).

Similarly, the University of Toronto has employed the use of sex as a protected ground in its anti-discrimination policy to offer protection from discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Other than this interpretation of the school's anti-discrimination policy, the University of Toronto has not implemented any formal policy concerning trans students. However, in 2009 the University of Toronto issued a recommendation for registrars' offices, university staff and faculty. Describing the recommendation, the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office states,

Beginning May 2009 students can change their name and or gender on their academic record, class lists, [or on] ROSI by writing a letter addressed to your college registrar or the registrar of the School of Graduate Studies and request that your name be changed from A to B, or your gender to male or female. Please be sure to provide your student ID number (the University requires this). You will need to take the letter of request to the relevant registrar's office in person (Found online at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Trans.htm#I%20want%20to%20change%20my%20name> on August 23, 2010).

Trans students must write a letter indicating their request for a change of name in official university records. As with Santiago's forced outing to locker room attendants in the Northern Essex Community College example, there are problems with requiring that trans students out themselves to potentially transphobic staff or faculty. This process puts them in the vulnerable and potentially violent situation of disclosing their gender identity to others. The requirement to write a letter places the onus of recognition and visibility on trans students themselves and does not afford them the same markers of citizenship afforded cisgendered students. Trans students who are stealth⁴⁰ may be reluctant to request a name change in a letter because of the potential for it to out them as trans to other staff, faculty, and even students present in the office at the time

⁴⁰ Stealth is a term used in trans communities to refer to trans people who are perceived by society to be cisgendered because of socially constructed markers of gender and sex. Stealth trans people may disassociate themselves from trans communities to avoid any potential reading of them as trans rather than as cisgendered.

of processing. For trans students who are already out on campus, this can still be a traumatic experience.

I would like to consider the exact wording of the University of Toronto recommendation. The recommendation “Statement Concerning Change of Student Personal Information in Official Academic Records” states,

The accuracy of students’ academic records is fundamental to the integrity of the University’s academic mission. It is important that the University’s records identify individual students’ achievements accurately and can authenticate that transcripts are those of the student or alumna named.

While it is usual for the University to require the student’s formal legal name to be used on its official academic records, the University will consider a request from a student to change the name and/or gender recorded on their record. The University must balance its duty to protect the integrity of the academic process and its records with the student’s interest in using a name which may differ from their formal legal name but is consistent with their identity (Found online at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Assets/LGBTQ+Digital+Assets/LGBTQ/STATEMENT+CONCERNING+CHANGE+OF+STUDENT.pdf> on September 8, 2010).

The university will strive to maintain a balance between what it classifies as student interest and “the integrity of the academic process”⁴¹. However, my reading of the statement reads in favor of the academic process. The majority of the statement describes the importance of maintaining the “accuracy of student’s records” and offers little in the way of helping students figure out how to actually complete the process. Instead, the statement prioritizes the authentication and validation of identity. The statement further reads,

1. When a student applies for admission, the name and gender recorded in the University’s academic record are as provided on the application for admission. The University takes steps to verify the authenticity and legitimacy of academic and other documents submitted in support of the application, including the identity of the student.
2. Students may request a change of name and/or gender recorded and used by the

⁴¹ (Found online at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Assets/LGBTQ+Digital+Assets/LGBTQ/STATEMENT+CONCERNING+CHANGE+OF+STUDENT.pdf> on September 8, 2010)

University in their official academic record. In dealing with requests for changes, the University will require the student to establish and authenticate his/her identity. The University will advise the student that where the name on the records is not the formal legal name of the student, future employers, licensing bodies, or other educational institutions may require proof that the transcripts and diplomas are the legitimate academic records of the individual submitting them (Found online at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/Assets/LGBTQ+Digital+Assets/LGBTQ/STATEMENT+CONCERNING+CHANGE+OF+STUDENT.pdf> on September 8, 2010).

The recommendation does not articulate how requests will be approved, nor does it indicate the timeline for the process. The statement makes no mention of the request in writing requirement as indicated on the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office's webpage. Additionally, the process for approving such requests is not articulated. The Sexual and Gender Diversity Office webpage states that questions by administrative staff and faculty about the process of trans students' name changes can be directed to the office. The Sexual and Gender Diversity Office offers more details about how to go about a name change than the actual University of Toronto statement. Trans people, as the target audience of this statement, are not specifically mentioned in the document. The statement also does not discuss any potential for genderless or multi-gendered students to list a gender neutral designation on their records.

The Sexual and Gender Diversity Office also provides a list of additional resources for trans students seeking access to facilities on campus. This information is located on a section of their web page called "Resources for Trans People". Many of the resources on this list would be applicable to other students; as the resources are useful to a variety of students. For example, the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office webpage lists a number of gender-neutral washrooms on campus. The website offers a statement explaining the value of gender-neutral washrooms which reads,

Single person, gender-neutral washrooms thus become the best solution to ensure access and to eliminate barriers for all persons, no matter what their gender, physical ability, health status, or shyness. Currently, very few buildings on campus are equipped with these non-discriminatory facilities (Found online August 17, 2010 at <http://www.sgdo.utoronto.ca/washrooms.htm>).

The statement on the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office webpage positions access to gender-free facilities as way of addressing discrimination. The statement makes important connections between advocacy for disabled students and trans students. This consideration reflects an understanding of intersecting identities and offers a complex justification for providing such a resource and its benefit to all students. Positioning washroom access as an issue individually facing trans student or disabled students exclusively misses an opportunity for cross-community solidarity and mobilization. Such a positioning also negates the experiences of trans students with disabilities. In contrast, trans students who are disabled find themselves reflected in the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office webpage statement.

Overall, the University of Toronto document employs a tentative tone. The decision-making process is arbitrary and open to interpretation. I am puzzled by the very different voice spoken in the “Statement Concerning Change of Student Personal Information in Official Academic Records” and the text on the Sexual and Gender Diversity office webpage. I doubt the same team authored both documents. The text on the Sexual and Gender Diversity office webpage speaks from a well-informed place about trans theory and its interconnectedness with issues of disability and sexuality. The “Statement Concerning Change of Student Personal Information in Official Academic Records” in contrast, is written in more formal language and does not make the same connections. This kind of mixed messaging is troubling. It suggests that there is no university-wide understanding of an institutional commitment to access for trans

students. Depending on where students seek their information about access to programs and services, they may or may not find trans-knowledgeable assistance.

University of Vermont: An Example of Leadership

Perhaps the most holistic example of trans policy development at the post-secondary level is found at the University of Vermont. The school is in the development stage of a new student information system designed to allow students to change their names on class lists, transcripts and formal university documents online with ease (Wakefield, 2009). In addition, the university has a LGBTQA Centre at University of Vermont webpage outlining trans access to gendered spaces like the campus gym, washrooms and dormitories. They have identified 40 single use gender-neutral washrooms and explicitly name the ways that these washrooms are beneficial to the entire student body⁴².

The website offers an easy way for trans students to find out how to navigate the university. The University of Vermont is one of few post-secondary schools to create an access-based policy *and* a transparent way for students to navigate their questions related to the policy.

The University of Vermont has taken strides to position itself as a trans-friendly campus. They have done so by issuing a press release resulting in multiple articles covering its programs and services (SunGard, 2010; Transgender Law and Policy Institute, 2010). The University of Vermont does not limit its trans inclusion mandate to anti-discrimination or university program access; a preliminary search of its website indicates that it has created resources for trans students seeking employment after graduation and has developed multiple points of interest on their website concerning trans-specific topics.

⁴² Found online at <http://www.uvm.edu/~lgbtqa/?Page=transpolicies.html> on July 20, 2010

The University of Vermont is specific in its process for policy development. It indicates that all policies,

[go] through the official University policy development process (refer to the navigation links in the left border for the process requirements, definitions, etc) [...] By establishing specific requirements for all members of the University community, policies connect the university's mission to individual conduct, institutionalize impartial expectations, support compliance with laws and regulation, mitigate institutional risk, and enhance productivity and efficiency in the university's operations (Found online at <http://www.uvm.edu/policies/?Page=&SM=SubProcessMenu.html> August 7, 2010).

The school's policies are in place to benefit the students, to protect the university from institutional risk and to comply with laws and regulations governing areas outside of the university under which jurisdiction it falls. The institutional risk described in the quote likely refers to the threat of lawsuits by students claiming discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment at the hands of university staff and faculty. The State of Vermont explicitly wrote into law gender identity as a protected ground in 2007. State law indicates that it prohibits any action that,

has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment (Found online on August 16 at <http://www.glad.org/rights/vermont/c/students-rights-in-vermont/>).

As the quote indicates, the university is obliged to actively create an environment that does not deny trans students' access to school resources. Depending on how you interpret the wording, the school also has a responsibility to address any transphobic environments on campus. Through its recent programming and procedural changes, the University of Vermont is responding to the requirements of state law. By promoting itself as a trans friendly campus the university is going beyond the requirement of the legislation, speaking directly to potential trans students and encouraging their enrollment.

However, I would like to return to my trans of colour reading of trans policy development. I am interested in who exactly the University of Vermont is soliciting through the promotion of themselves as a trans-friendly campus. In 2009, I read the university's news bulletin "All in a Name: New Software Benefits Transgender Students" (Wakefield, 2009) with great interest. This article is a good-news story, one that tells of trans access and prioritizes the needs of trans students over bureaucratic or administrative red tape. I was disappointed when I found that the article chose to tell the story of a (yet another) white trans man, David Sokup. By following Sokup's experience they are putting a face to the experiences of trans students on campus. But this face is one that of a white, blond man. This representation replicates an understanding of trans experience as always already white, and in many cases, male.

I would like to extrapolate from Allan Berube's research about whitening practices in gay men's communities. Berube posits that there are practices of whitening which "construct, maintain, and fortify the idea that gay male means white" (2007, p. 237). I would like to suggest that a similar practice constructs the idea that trans means white *and* FTM. Whitening practices render the white trans man as only trans, whereas trans racialized people are always already racialized *and* trans.

The University of Vermont plays into this practice by highlighting the experience of Sokup as representative of a universal trans experience. For example, the bulletin tells of Sokup's experience with the reading of the class list at the beginning of each new term. He explains the trauma of being called by his birth name rather than his chosen name and how that practice set up questions about his gender for the rest of the term from other students. I am not questioning that this was indeed a traumatic experience for Sokup. Instead, I am questioning the

positioning of Sokup's narrative as typical of all trans students. Sokup's experience is not a universal experience. For many trans students who do not have Anglo or English names in classrooms across North America, the reading of the class list can result in additional trauma that is rooted in systemic racism, islamophobia and white supremacy *as well as* transphobia. The article does not address the root problem with the reading of the class list at the start of the term.

I suggest the problem described in the University of Vermont press release is with the reading of the class list all together rather than being a problem with which name is read aloud from that list. The reading of the list requires that professors' attempt to pronounce names which may be unfamiliar to them and allows for the public reading of trans students' legal names. There are other ways of ascertaining who is or isn't in the room without reading aloud the class list. To name but two suggestions I offer: having students say their name aloud one by one and comparing the names to those on the class list; having students visit the professor's desk at the end of the first class confirming their presence on the list.

This trouble exemplifies the reason for my discomfort with trans policies which do not take into account the ways that racialization affects students. By creating policies that are about (white) trans students only the systemic problems faced by marginalized students are not addressed at their root. Instead disconnected policies are created which address the symptoms rather than the core of the problem.

Whose Policies: Racialized Trans People and Policy Development

One of the commonalities among the trans policies that I have reviewed is that they tend to flatten the experiences of trans people into one dimension. As illustrated through the University of Toronto's Sexual and Gender Diversity Office's webpage statement about the

usefulness of gender neutral washrooms, policies often have more than one application and are relevant to those not specifically named in the policy. In this example, the gender-neutral washroom list is part of a body of resources for trans students, despite the fact that gender-neutral washrooms are beneficial to all students.

I suggest that policies which are framed as ‘trans resources’ miss an opportunity for cross-community solidarity and advocacy. For example, information about access to gender spaces like shower facilities and locker rooms would also be beneficial to disabled students who work with an attendant to change for the gym or take a shower. Problems arise when an attendant presents as a different gender than the student and they attempt to use a gender-segregated locker room. These students may also benefit from access to a mixed gender or single use facility. In another example, a student whose religious or cultural practices require individual-use facilities for showering or changing may also prefer to use such a facility. By only addressing trans student’s access to gendered facilities, without linking in the other students who may similarly benefit from their use (including racialized, disabled trans people), universities creates a disconnect between the experiences of trans students and those of other marginalized communities on campus. By listing these kinds of resources on trans information web pages, post-secondary institutions also do not get the word out to cisgendered students who may never visit this section of a school’s webpage.

Anti-discrimination policy also positions the identities listed in their protected grounds as distinct and mutually exclusive. Discrimination that is based in systemic racism, transphobia and ableism all at once weaves a complicated and nuanced experience which is often hard to articulate through the language of most anti-discrimination policies. Trans people who are

racialized face multiple oppressions, and it can often be difficult to tease apart which form of discrimination they are facing in any given situation. For example, a racialized trans student who experiences discrimination on campus may be uncertain if their experience was one of racism or transphobia. Because several schools require reporting of discrimination through equity offices students have to choose which equity officer to go to for support.

For example, at the University of Toronto, the student in this example would have to consider whether to visit the Office of Sexual and Gender Diversity or the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office for support. Because most anti-discrimination policies do not address interlocking oppressions, these kinds of experiences separated into different rather than overlapping incidents. A complaints process initiated from this standpoint would necessarily omit part of the story, complicating the student's process of resolution.

Trans Scholarship, Trans Policies

Many of the changes seen at colleges and universities have stemmed from student pressure (Jacobs, 2003). Erica Rand (2003) conducted a small study of trans students in post-secondary settings in the United States. Writing about one student's experience, Rand transcribes,

When I finally started school at the local branch of the University of Maine System, things got rough. I had to use my birth name on all of my records because it was still my "legal" name. That meant that prior to the first class for each course, I had to approach the professor and ask that they use my chosen name instead. Most were great about it, but occasionally the professor would forget and use my birth name during attendance, drawing confused stares from my classmates (2003, p.11).

A few years after this study was published, the University of Maine developed a series of policies and supporting documents related to trans students, both related to access and anti-

discrimination⁴³, however they have not yet addressed the university student information system. It is unclear from the university webpage whether these policies were a result of Rand's research, or if they stem from student complaints, changes to state law or otherwise.

Ed Garton, a transgender graduate student in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program, directly inspired the systemic changes at the University of Vermont. His research, which was generated for his Masters-level comprehensive exam inspired changes to the school's student information system (Wakefield, 2009). A new field of scholarship is developing which documents the needs of trans students offering valuable information for schools who choose to take notice and act on the research.

. For example, Lydia A. Sausa's "Updating College and University Campus Policies: Meeting the Needs of Trans Students, Staff, and Faculty" (2002) and Jeffrey S. McKinney's "On the Margins: A Study of the Experiences of Transgender College Students" (2005) and Brett Genny Beemyn's "Making Campuses More Inclusive of Transgender Students" (2005) suggest that new writing about trans students, scholarship and policy development is emerging in the relatively new field of scholarship about Higher Education and Student Affairs. Post-secondary schools would be wise to use this research to inform their policy development.

However, a review of these articles suggest a similar omission of critical race theorizing in their analysis. If these kinds of articles are to shape the development of policy in post-secondary institutions, then such an omission runs the risk of replicating the creation of policy devoid of an intersecting analysis of racialization, gender, transphobia and marginalization.

In the next chapter, I will conclude by considering the implications for future research in order to generate scholarship that shapes both academic curricula and policy development in post-secondary institutions into something that is useful and relevant to racialized trans students.

⁴³ <http://www.umaine.edu/eo/policy/nondiscrimination.htm>

Chapter Four: Conclusion

To restate, queer of color analysis presumes that liberal ideology occludes the intersecting saliency of race, gender, sexuality and class in forming social practices. Approaching ideologies of transparency as formations that have worked to conceal those intersections means that queer of color analysis has to debunk the idea that race, class, gender and sexuality are discrete formations, apparently insulated from one another. As queer of color critique challenges ideologies of discreteness, it attempts to disturb the idea that racial and national formations are obviously disconnected (Ferguson, 2004, p.4).

My research has focused on the university as a site of inquiry. In this thesis I have considered scholarship, course syllabi and policy documents from universities in Canada and the United States. Trans scholarship and policy development impact the ways in which trans students access the university. I have considered the effects of these documents on racialized trans students in particular. I have strived to create a thesis that could be beneficial to racialized trans students attending post-secondary schools in Canada and the United States.

Alana Cattapan describes her concept of transgender citizenship as an essential tool in identifying “what gaps exist between the quality of life and citizenship experienced by cisgendered people and that (sic) experienced in the diverse lives of trans people, hopefully working to inform and inspire reform” (Cattapan, 2009, p. 12). I have considered trans citizenship in a university context to shape my analysis throughout this thesis. Audre Lorde’s writing about both intersectionality and relating across difference has been helpful in developing a trans of colour critique of both trans scholarship and trans policy development at colleges and universities. I have offered the development of a trans of colour critique as a means of challenging the whitening trend in scholarship and policy development.

My research has illustrated that trans scholarship constructs an understanding of the lived experiences of trans people in society. I connect the development of a body of scholarship lacking in an analysis of interlocking systems of oppression to the creation of a particular kind of trans studies curriculum. I insert a trans-of-colour critique which challenged the centralizing of whiteness present in much of contemporary trans scholarship. Through the omission of a racialized trans perspective in this writing, much of trans scholarship to date constructs white trans experiences as *the* trans experience, skewing our understanding of the very different ways in which trans people on the margins experience the world.

Similarly, trans policy development attempts to write trans bodies into coherence. Trans policies allow for a limited trans citizenship in the university nation. I understand this citizenship as limited because the policies require that trans people construct their identities in particular ways to access this citizenship. These exclusionary practices prevent trans people from articulating the complexities of their identities fully.

The rapidly flourishing collection of trans scholarship and trans policy documents would benefit from an intersectional and interlocking analysis of systems of power such as race, gender, class, disability for example. Without this kind of analysis, trans scholarship and policy negate the possibility of relating across difference (Lorde, 1984) as difference is not able to be fully articulated.

The conclusions of my work are that there is an intimate relationship between what is written, what is taught, and what is practiced. The tendency to prioritize the experiences of white trans people in contemporary scholarship is replicated in trans studies curricula and reinforced through policy documents. These whitening practices impact on trans students of colour, limit their ability to access the university fully and prevent a sense of belonging.

My research suggests that a storm is brewing, for without a sense of belonging and sense of protection in the university setting, racialized trans people will never be able to access the citizenship afforded to cisgendered students in the university nation. If we want to create change that would be beneficial to trans students from racialized communities in post-secondary institutions, we will need to build connections across the differences of gender, race and sexuality in new ways that are relevant to trans students of colour. To better understand what specific changes are required, further research is needed into the day-to-day experiences of racialized trans students in post-secondary schools.

Through the employment of a trans of colour critique and research into what is needed to allow for a full trans citizenship for racialized students, we can work towards making systemic changes to address the disparity of trans experiences in post-secondary schools.

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