

Before Trans Studies

CASSIUS ADAIR, CAMERON AWKWARD-RICH, and AMY MARVIN

Abstract In conversation with Emmett Harsin Drager and Andrea Long Chu’s “After Trans Studies,” this collaborative essay also turns to questions of field formation and the ethos of trans studies. Situating the growth of the field in the material conditions of precarity under which trans knowledge-workers work, the authors argue that trans studies can’t be “over” because, in fact, it isn’t yet here. Rather than viewing this as only a dismal proposition, however, they insist that the tenuousness of trans studies provides us with the opportunity to envision and enact more sustaining ways of being “in the field.”

Keywords trans studies, discipline, queer studies, field, academy

Perhaps analogous to the way that trans people—our lives, our literatures, our activism—are iteratively “discovered” by the media, trans studies, with its institutional life, its laborers, and its literature, is iteratively discovered by academia, including by trans studies scholars themselves. As a result, trans studies is always just now arriving. First because there is an essay and a handful of scholars, then an anthology or three, then a hiring initiative and an interdisciplinary journal, then, it seems, the field is “flourishing.”¹ Now there are articles and books and a cluster hire in Arizona and a handful of tenure-track jobs in California that go by the name “trans studies.” An abundance of small beginnings! But given that the first seeds were sown decades ago, of course one might take a look at a field full of tiny tentative plants and see only weak growth. Maybe, then, it makes sense to declare the field a failure, leave it fallow.

We would like to propose that, actually, the “field” of trans studies has not yet happened. Further (to stretch this metaphor), we contend that the field has not yet happened, not because its seeds were flawed from the beginning but because the sprouts have been struggling to survive in the poison soil of the contemporary university system. Trans knowledge laborers have largely remained contingent or have been outright discarded. The production of “very good monographs” (though, we think, there are many good monographs) has, until

recently, been constrained because trans books have largely been tasked with discovering/defending the existence of trans life to skeptical editors/reviewers. Furthermore, the relative lack of tenured/tenure-track trans studies faculty ensures that the institutional skepticism toward trans studies as a unique knowledge practice will endure. Graduate students and faculty alike must iteratively discover on our own that there is much more to trans studies than we have been led to believe by our various gender studies or queer theory classes: this was certainly the case, it is worth noting, for the three of us.

But if this sounds like a dismal proposition, it need not only be that. In fact, the tenuousness of trans studies at the end of the university ought to lead us to value knowledge work differently than even other “identity knowledges” have (Wiegman 2012: 3). After all, if trans studies is not a project of making possible trans thought in, adjacent to, and hostile to the academy, then what are we all doing here?

All of this is to say that, although we are most directly responding to a recent entry into the field’s self-accounting, we hope this essay will be read in conversation with the much longer history of inquiries into “what are we all doing here.” These include but are not limited to: Jay Prosser’s *Second Skins* (1998); Viviane Namaste’s *Invisible Lives* (2000); Susan Stryker’s “(De)Subjugating Knowledges” (2006a) and “Transgender Studies: Queer Theory’s Evil Twin” (2006b); b. binaohan’s *decolonizing trans/gender 101* (2014); Regina Kunzel’s “Flourishing of Transgender Studies” (2014); Treva Ellison, Kai M. Green, Matt Richardson, and C. Riley Snorton’s “We Got Issues: Toward a Black Trans*/Studies” (2017); Kai M. Green and Marquis Bey’s “Where Black Feminist Thought and Trans* Feminism Meet” (2017); Cael Keegan’s “Getting Disciplined: What’s Trans* about Queer Studies Now?” (2020); and so on.

Importantly, “the field” represented by even the small list above is obviously not a unitary one: the genealogies of trans studies can be variously traced through black and woman of color feminist theory, disability studies, postcolonial theory, queer theory, poststructural feminisms, indigenous studies, and trans community organizing and cultural production. While in this essay we aim to disrupt a dominant field imaginary by foregrounding trans precarity as a condition of trans studies’ formation, we want to note that the field imaginary we engage here is that of a decidedly white trans studies. To some extent, our terrain has been dictated by the piece to which we are responding; however, we hope that rather than reinforcing the terms of white trans studies as trans studies per se, our engagement will reaffirm the field’s necessary cross-pollination with black feminist theory, woman of color feminisms, and disability studies in particular, whose ongoing conversations about care labor, pedagogical labor, and the politics of citation undergird our thought.²

Before continuing further, it is worth pausing to explain the essay at hand. “After Trans Studies” is a conversation between Andrea Long Chu and Emmett Harsin Drager (2019) that rallies behind the self-defined polemic that “trans studies is over,” or at least approaching the crossroads of a necessary major overhaul (103–4). To set out this bold new path of trans studies after trans studies, or (dare we say) post-post-post-transsexual studies, Chu and Harsin Drager raise concerns that the current practice of trans studies lacks proper field definition and unacceptably constrains conversations about trans (and especially what they call “transsexual”) lives.

Harsin Drager and Chu find that trans studies has failed to distinguish itself from queer theory, insofar as it lacks a distinct set of theories and prestigious theory battles to call its own. Chu, in particular, calls for the production of theory through strife, calling up a metaphor of field development as an elite battle, or “a small number of very good monographs that we can really yell at each other over” that cultivates real disagreement (104). Both authors insist this disagreement has been foreclosed because of dogmas within the field, dogmas that they do not ever really name but one of which implicitly might be something like “trans is a good [read: politically radical] object.” That is, Harsin Drager and Chu agree that trans studies has served as a constraining “church” sacrificing rigorous inquiry to “warmed-over pieties,” in part by imposing a feel-good “gender affirming” approach, which, they argue, precludes potentially controversial claims about trans lives and bodies (104). The picture they give is of trans studies as a wobbly church that must be shaken from its dogmatic slumber. Only the din of elite battle, in this view, will awaken its clergy from the paralyzing combination of queer theory and hugboxing.

Further, Chu and Harsin Drager tie the failed development of trans studies to the continued inability of the field to address the figure of the transsexual and the conversations of transsexuals. In this account, the field’s capitulation to the methods of queer theory has decentered the transsexual and relegated her to the medicalized, problematic, backward shadow of true affirmative transgender progress (110). Trans studies’ apparent sacrifice of the transsexual to the demands of queer theory has led to a further silencing of everyday transsexual life beyond the demands of antinormative politics and theory, and has collapsed the ability to “speak candidly about our lives as transsexuals” (113). Candidness beyond trans studies’ enforced political optimism, by contrast, would enrich the field’s articulated critical trans affects by adding bitterness, satire, and disappointment to the mix (105–6). Ultimately, the authors conclude that trans studies is over, has been over for transsexuals since its beginnings, and must give up its attachments to antinormativity to be transformed into something other than a failed derivation of queer theory.

Although we agree with some of this conclusion, we were inspired to write this essay out of a question about the assumptions that ground the thinking that leads there. In particular, the idea of being “after” trans studies invokes a rise to power and consolidation that seems to us to have not occurred, or at the very least to be so unevenly distributed that it is thinkable for trans studies to be “over” in some places but simultaneously absent or antagonized in other places.³ So where is this vision of trans studies coming from? What must these authors themselves disavow or ignore (or simply not know) for this vision to so cohere that they can insist that there are dogmas we all know well enough to leave them virtually unnamed? And, most importantly, what are the material conditions that have produced this situation in which the five of us—and, implicitly, the wider cohort of late-stage grad students and recent graduates who have, will, or currently do labor under the sign of “trans studies”—can have such noncompatible views of what constitutes the field space? That is, how is it possible that, from one point of view, we can be “after trans studies,” whereas, from others, it seems that we are still hanging out in the “before” or to the side of the time of institutionalization?

Rather than—or in addition to—being evidence of constraining intellectual trends and political desires, we see the limits of existing trans studies as being shaped by the political, economic, and institutional conditions into which it emerged and continues to emerge. Put bluntly, the “great failure” of trans studies is that we can’t all afford to write. To point out gaps in the intellectual project of trans studies and to pin these gaps on the attachments of its laborers without engaging with the simple fact that most trans intellectuals are not afforded the time, money, and energy to participate in it seems to miss the whole ballgame. These are not abstract concerns about intellectual style but material questions: questions about who gets jobs, who gets read, who gets cited, who reviewers demand you cite, who has access to the university in the first place, and so on. Besides the obvious point that an academic field only exists insofar as it has people doing the work of cultivating it (teaching courses, training grad students, publishing, organizing conferences, reviewing journal articles, etc.), relegating talk of money and time to a footnote is precisely what grants Chu and Harsin Drager’s argument for a return to “the transsexual” the appearance of newness or controversial polemic: there are plenty of transsexual scholars, but they work and have worked under the conditions of precarity.

After all, the issue that Chu and Harsin Drager invoke as somehow verboten within the field—the very real friction between forms of transness (transsexuality) that strive to embody the norm through nonnormative means, forms that strive to expand what might be considered in a colloquial sense “normal,” and those that really do seem to be derived from a commitment to anti- or nonnormativity and the consequences of those tensions for trying to make any

coherent trans politics/epistemology/theoretical stance—is literally the debate that runs through trans discourse of at least the last half-century. That is, it was not only Jay Prosser who warned us and continues to warn us about the subsumption of trans epistemologies to queer/poststructural feminist ones—so did Viviane Namaste (2000, 2009), C. Jacob Hale (1997, 1998), Trish Salah (2007, 2009), Henry Rubin (1998a), Talia Bettcher (2014), and every 1990s trans community newsletter (OK, OK, we exaggerate, a little). Prosser is merely the trans thinker on this question who is regularly taught, perhaps in part because *Second Skins* is a text that fits nicely into the “debate” format through which transness often shows up on gender studies syllabi.

Our corrective to the absence of this strain of thinking in contemporary trans studies, then, is not to insist that it hasn’t happened. Rather, we wish to cite a genealogy of trans studies that is decidedly political and (most importantly for our argument) decidedly material, unafraid to critique queer theory and its subjectless critique to foreground the lived experiences of sex workers and other trans laborers. Viviane Namaste (2000, 2005), for example, stands out: her work throughout the aughts and beyond centers transsexuals while explicitly pushing against the tethering of research on transsexuals to the methods of queer theory and women’s and gender studies departments more broadly. Namaste’s (1998) humorous video, “How to Become an American Transgender Theorist (a Recipe),” for example, parodies the limitations and stagnation caused by the dominance of American academic queer theory over understanding transsexual lives.

In the video and in her writings, Namaste considers queer theory a form of imperialism that decides whether other modes of life are properly queer, and hence liberatory rather than problematic, conveniently ignoring the ways its own practice often becomes a largely shallow enterprise. Namaste’s critique of imperialism links with a critique of upper- and middle-class transgender politics, especially when transgender theory and organizing leaves out transsexual sex workers, prisoners, drug users, and poor people more broadly. For Namaste and other trans thinkers and activists such as Mirha-Soleil Ross, contesting the erasure of trans people by queer theory is not a matter of recentering the abstract figure of the transsexual but rather of ameliorating the material conditions that cause economically disenfranchised trans people to be erased from knowledge production and barred from institutions more broadly, including contesting larger political structures such as global capitalism (Namaste 2005).

The field of transsexual critique continues to expand as we consider more scholars. Salah (2013), for example, has argued that Sandy Stone’s (1992) “post-transsexual” move (later renamed “transgender,” as Salah points out) gave too much ground to Janice Raymond’s ([1979] 1994) specifically antitranssexual project. Salah navigates tensions between Namaste, Prosser, queer theory, and

antinormative-focused trans studies to develop a space beyond antitranssexual politics and cultural production while also not completely dismissing “queerly-identified” trans people as irreconcilably traitorous to the transsexual cause (2009, 2007). Salah (2013: 181), turning to the politics of cultural production while also refusing to totally reduce aesthetics to politics, also acknowledges the collective labor involved on the part of trans people, many who are sex workers, to create counter-publics beyond “queer or feminist economies of prestige.” In doing so, Salah acknowledges the work involved in creating transsexual spaces and the cultural production that contests those spaces’ erasure.

Namaste and others frame the transsexual as a situated group of people, a heterogenous group of racialized, class-oppressed, disabled, and otherwise marginal figures who should be thought of as a group, not by the fact of their genders but by their shared need to surmount serious deficits of institutional access. Contrary to Chu and Harsin Drager’s generalized transsexual, which attempts to focus on a transsexual who simply has conversations like “we” do (a telling use of “we”), Namaste centers on transsexuals who have a specific marginalized relationship to class status, and who have a need to smash the institutionalized barriers that stand in their way through collective counter-publics. This emphasis on situated material needs is missed by Harsin Drager and Chu’s call to the transsexual “we,” and especially the call for trans studies as a field of theory battles. Is a call for restricted elite monographs to be yelled over really a call to bring the transsexual voice and transsexual theory, and ultimately a more robust trans studies, into development? We worry that, whatever voices emerge from this practice, this method of knowledge making does little to challenge and change the material conditions of the academy that has vanished “the transsexual” in the first place. Insofar as there has been something that we might call “transsexual theory,” in other words, its aim has been to transform or even wholesale resist institutionalization—not to argue that our existing institutions should have more fights.

Furthermore, while there might be work that invokes trans as queer again, we think that there is no good reason to call this “trans studies.” In fact, it is arguably one of the discourses that has been a block to trans studies’ arrival. Harsin Drager, that is, is onto something when they note that many of the “most cited texts about trans people . . . have been the work of non-trans (i.e., cis) scholars recycling the same citations, concepts, and metaphors” (Chu and Harsin Drager 2019: 104). However, the problem is not that these scholars are cis, but that they might not actually represent “the field.” If there is a force making queer and trans studies synonymous with one another, it is not, in our eyes, the attachments of trans studies scholars to being politically good objects. Rather, it is the fact that those making hiring decisions often view these fields as interchangeable. For

example: in the 2018–19 cycle there were thirteen tenure-track job ads listed on the Women/Queer Studies wiki that in some way mentioned trans studies (Academic Jobs Wiki n.d.). Of these, only 2.5 did not either collapse trans studies into queer/sexuality studies or simply include trans studies (or, in one case, “intersectional expertise in . . . transgenderism,” whatever that means) among a long list of useful et ceteras to the desired candidate’s primary focus. Put yet one more way—if there is something we should be bitter about, it is not what “trans studies” is or might become, but the way it is marketed and, more broadly, the university-as-market.

Here, we arrive at our most fundamental difference with Chu and Harsin Drager, we think. It is not only that we do not recognize the unstated dogmas that Chu and Harsin Drager feel we are beholden to as trans studies’ own; also, we do not recognize their model of field-space as our own. What they are after, it seems, is not only different ideas but also a different “emotional habitus,” one in which various kinds of intragroup bad feeling (anger, strife, bitterness, true disagreement) are not only more tolerable but are understood as central to intellectual advancement (Gould 2009: 32). “Why,” Chu and Harsin Drager (2019: 104) want to know, “are we so nice to each other?” To which we respond: given that trans studies inevitably unfolds within the context of a world in which trans people are overwhelmingly poor, discarded, fucked over and fucked up, regarded as unreliable narrators, and so on, why would we want our small corner of the small corner of/adjacent to the university to be a battleground rather than a shelter?

In positing that trans studies hasn’t yet happened, then, we do not mean that trans individuals (including the aforementioned, undercited “transsexual” materialists) have been absent from intellectual life. What we mean instead is that there is not yet a trans studies that has been able to organize itself around the sustenance and survival of trans life. As such, we must amend our own cheeky polemic—that trans studies has not yet happened, and thus cannot be over—to acknowledge that, precisely to the extent that trans work in the academy has been a battle/field, trans studies has already happened.

We know this because there have been casualties. In the drafting of this essay, we found ourselves evoking the figure of the “lost trans scholar,” a person whose contributions to a larger genealogy of trans studies have been foreclosed on. Among this number: people who left the academy as students or faculty members owing to hostile conditions or inadequate compensation; people who work in the academy but under conditions in which they do not have sufficient support for trans-related research or teaching; people who are in the academy and attempt to work in trans-related areas only to experience such significant ideological pushback or emotional cost that they burn out and devote their energy elsewhere; people who were in the academy and published trans work who, for

reasons of inadequate cultural memory or a too-narrow field imaginary, are not frequently cited and have fallen off gender and women's studies syllabi; people who are creating art and writing related to trans studies but whose work is taught as "objects" rather than as theoretical interventions, or does not enter the academic conversation at all.⁴ (Two of us, it bears stating, could be counted within that number.) By "lost," then, we do not mean to suggest that such people are not actively making trans knowledge and culture—they/we are. However, we do mean to suggest that their absences from the university and from standard genealogies of trans studies are meaningful; we cannot know what trans studies might have been (and might yet be) had trans academics labored under less hostile conditions.

To the best of our knowledge, these casualties have not been due to individuals' refusal to genuflect to field dogmas. Those of us who have failed to achieve the (purported) economic security of an academic trans studies position do not believe that this failure occurred because we are, for example, too skeptical of antimedicalization frames. No, we did not get jobs in trans studies because there were so few to be had, so few that any particular trans studies scholar has to be preternaturally talented—or perhaps simply famous—to fill those slots. This is not a field-specific pathology or a personal whine; it is to say that trans studies feels less "over" if you belong to one of the decades of trans studies scholars who did not benefit from the (mythical) moment when it presumably "happened," nor if you belong to future cohorts of trans students who we, as some ragtag gender-freak version of a beloved community, might be nurturing, teaching to think about knowledge production as less of a zero-sum game.

Field, after all, is a concept and a space that might support warfare, but it need not. While a field might be a battlefield or a hunting ground, or might be an athletic field ("a field of play"), it most often is simply an open space populated by flora and fauna, a space that might be cultivated, made habitable, or left alone. From the *Oxford English Dictionary*, at least, it isn't clear that these more literal meanings of *field* as an open space preceded *field* as an area of inquiry, but it does seem true that these three meanings suggest three very different kinds of engagement that are possible within a field—warfare, play, cultivation. All of these suggest collective action, all of these are ways of being together, but they are obviously oriented toward very different ends. If warfare is the primary model we inherited (and to which some wish to return) and play (by which we mean to invoke both "sometimes pleasurable engagement" and "forms of uncompensated activity") seems to better reflect what the academic humanities presently are, then cultivation can model what they might yet be.

Following José Muñoz (2009: 1), if trans studies "is not yet here," then we have the ongoing opportunity to "think and feel a then and there," to "dream and

enact . . . other ways of being in” and adjacent to “the world” and the university. We desire a trans studies that yearns toward collaboration and solidarity, orientations that demand practices of care and communal cultivation. That is, we see the ideal trans studies as primarily a collective practice, not necessarily tethered to a telos of novel theory (although novel theory should certainly be welcome). We desire the creation of a space in which trans thought can unfold, in which trans students might learn ways to live as trans in the world, and in which disagreement occurs, but not for its own sake.⁵ Such cultivation is complicated when the people doing the work are so dispersed, consumed, crushed (and, of course, also doggedly persistent) in so many small ways that their contributions go unnoticed or forestalled. Yet that complication is not, in the end, sufficient to dismiss hope as “a critical affect and a methodology” of field formation (2). As Muñoz reminds us, “Both hope and utopia, as affective structures and approaches to challenges within the social, ha[ve] been prone to disappointment, making this critical approach difficult . . . [but] the eventual disappointment of hope is not a reason to forsake it as a critical thought process, in the same way that even though we can know in advance that felicity of language ultimately falters, it is nonetheless essential” (9–10).

In our utopian turn toward an alternative meaning of “field,” we also desire modes of scholarship that turn away from the contextless battle of independent hero-scholars to the more fragile and multiplicitous work of growing trans life. We emphasize the care involved in sustaining community, including communities of thought, as we work alongside one another and challenge each other to do better rather than allowing the inequalities of the academy to be obscured. We align ourselves against any model of trans studies, but also trans activism and trans “representation” more broadly, in which a select few, not in conversation with or dependent on larger communities, are given a false mantle to define or even “save” all other trans people. We believe that emphasizing care in this context calls us to be more attentive toward our dependency on others, our responsibilities to each other in the context of material differences, and the important but devalued work of supporting friends, building spaces, teaching, and cultivating connections.

We do not believe that emphasizing care and hope leads to the sort of dogmatic, fragile church of agreement that Chu and Harsin Drager attribute to trans studies. Instead, borrowing from the field imaginaries emergent in disability studies, we hope that emphasizing the work of care in the context of real fragility and dependency can allow us to disagree, express negative feelings, and even sometimes express a thoughtful bitterness and satire that promotes self-reflection about disconnection, failure, and conflict. Indeed, we suggest that there is no particular reason that the most important field questions need revolve around

determining what “true” trans phenomenology is; even asking if an ethics of care can organize a field of thought is itself an interesting intellectual project, one around which a future trans studies might organize.

We recognize the risks of this proposition: emphasizing care means that we should also beware the “revolving door” of its practice, in which cultivation goes unrewarded, and people are continuously kicked out the door after their care labors have been sucked dry by vampiric institutions. This is not a call to pump more hours of unreciprocal care into soul-crushing academic departments, impossibly underresourced classrooms, or other dead-end labors. Rather, we call attention to care to also call for giving critical attention to—and attacking—the material conditions that give rise to this “revolving door.” Someone, after all, needs to imagine what intellectual life can look like outside extraction; trans studies, the precursors of which were literally medical studies of trans people as sites of knowledge extraction, seems as good a site as any for this work. Indeed, such imagining is already beginning: Hilary Malatino and Aren Aizura’s 2019 seminar “We Care a Lot: Theorizing Queer and Trans Affective Labor,” cotaught at the Society for the Study of Affect Summer School, is simply one recent example. As trans people, we know—along with marginalized people across many identities—how it feels to try to do care work at the end of the world. This is a form of knowledge that we can cultivate together, no monographs necessary.

Thus what is this not-yet-here trans studies, a trans studies of the then and there? To us, another way of asking that question is, What are the necessary conditions that will make trans life more livable in the here and now? For some of us, that would mean the immediate end to the contingent nature of our knowledge production and pedagogical labor in the form of the radical expansion of benefits-eligible, living-wage positions within the academy. For others, it would mean the end of the wealthy North American university’s expansion into our neighborhoods as landlord, segregator, speculator, and evictor (New York University in New York City [*Washington Square News* 2017] and the University of Michigan in Detroit [Alvarez 2019; Mihaylova 2019]). While the former may seem less radical, we don’t see these as inherently contradictory dreams, as we should be able to demand educational justice that doesn’t come with an attendant reinvestment in the university-as-hedge-fund. But because it feels contradictory to both lament the casting-out of people from the university and to question the validity of academic institutions per se, we must acknowledge that this is tricky work, a hard needle to thread; it requires, above all, not lockstep agreement among different types of people but a feeling of trust. Institutional access for trans people continues to be completely broken in the academy, resulting in a highly skewed contribution, whether or not their voices are transsexual ones. Many trans people have been erased from the narrative of trans studies, and many others have

been excluded. It's possible that there is no "trans studies" as a social and intellectual practice that doesn't eventually require an abolitionist stance toward higher education. Therefore, it is critical that trans studies produces not the tools for career advancement but an ethic of solidarity, an orientation toward each other, even as it conserves our bitterness toward the conditions that harm or abandon us.

Like Chu and Harsin Drager, we *are* bitter and see, undoubtedly, some critical uses for a bitterness that seeks to describe how and why the world fails to accommodate our desires. However, by Chu's own account of "real bitterness, the bitter disappointment of finding out the world is too small for all our desires, and especially the political ones," there must have first been desire, or even hope, to disappoint (Chu and Harsin Drager 2019: 106). In fact, hope, as Snorton (2009) has argued, might be understood to make transition and trans life possible in the first place; if dysphoria, dissonance, and unease alert us to the need to change, ultimately it requires wild, naive hope to see change through. To live and think as trans in this world, we cannot assume, in advance, that the world will not accommodate our desires. We must again and again find out.

Cassius Adair is an independent scholar and public radio producer based at Virginia Humanities, a state humanities council in Charlottesville, Virginia. His scholarship appears in *American Literature*, *TSQ*, *American Quarterly*, and *Frontiers*, and his essays and audio pieces can be found in various magazines and on National Public Radio member stations. Adair holds a PhD in English language and literature from the University of Michigan. He is currently working on two books: a monograph about transgender people and digital history and an edited collection of speculative fiction about academic life.

Cameron Awkward-Rich is the author of the poetry collections *Sympathetic Little Monster* (2016) and *Dispatch* (2019), and his critical writing can be found in *Signs*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *American Quarterly*, and elsewhere. He is an assistant professor of women, gender, and sexuality studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Amy Marvin is a feminist philosopher who received her PhD from the University of Oregon; her dissertation is on the politics of humor. Her work can be found in *Hypatia* and in the inaugural issue of *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly* (under Amy Billingsley). She was a coorganizer of the "Trans* Experience in Philosophy" conference, and her essay "Transsexuality, the Curio, and the Transgender Tipping Point" is forthcoming in *Curiosity Studies: Toward a New Ecology of Knowledge*. She enjoys gradually baking better and better breads.

Notes

1. For a (partial) list of announcements of trans studies' arrival, see Wilson 1998; More and Whittle 1999; Stryker 2006a; Joselow 2016; and Kunzel 2014.
2. For example, Hartman 2016; Piepzna-Samarasinha 2018; Price 2015; Erevelles 2011; Bailey and Trudy 2018; Cite Black Women Collective n.d.; Ahmed 2017; and Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. 2012.
3. We think of "places" here both in reference to institutional/social location and with respect to the uneven distribution of trans work across the global community of scholars. We also note the inadequacy of anglophone "trans studies" to engage non-Western forms of gendering in its scholarly practice, leaving much crucial transnational work not yet done; we here return to our point above about the racial (and, we should add, spatial) boundedness of the trans studies genealogy debates that rinse and repeat themselves every so often in the North American academy.
4. A very partial, off-the-top-of-our-heads list of work by those we might count among this expansive category of the lost includes Gan 2007; Bellwether 2010; Beemyn and Rankin 2011; Singer 2006; Prosser 2004; Rubin 1998a, 1998b; binaohan 2014; Perkins 1983; Escalante 2016, 2018; Brager and Lavery 2017; Janssen 2017; Ziegler 2008; and Bess 2018. We invite you to consider who else you might include here. Importantly, we might consider as "lost" even Stone and Stryker, insofar as Stone is remembered within the field almost entirely for an essay she wrote as a graduate student and Stryker was in nonacademic/contingent positions for over a decade.
5. In fact, this model of field-space is alive in many trans pedagogy publications, which orient trans studies (and attempt to orient women's/gender/queer studies broadly) to questions of how to enable the thriving of trans students. See, for example, Clarkson 2017. Further, trans knowledge work outside the university enables the circulation of trans writing in critical relation to the literary/academic market. Exemplary among these is Jamie Berrout's (n.d.) editorial practice through the Trans Women Writers Collective, which prioritizes making trans writing possible by circumventing institutional barriers inherent to publication. These two models might feel in conflict with one another but actually, we think, exist in a reciprocal relationship in the larger ecosystem of trans thought.

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