

R.Jackson
Annotated Bibliography

Written Sources:

Bornstein, Kate. Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us.
New York: Vintage, 1995

Part autobiography and part theory, Bornstein talks about her transition from male to female and her later decision to identify as neither as a jumping off point to completely deconstruct gender identity.

While my original project idea was to primarily make a piece that critiqued the gender binary, Bornstein also affected me with the notion that during her gender change she had not put any thought into how her behaviors were possibly reinforcing gender stereotypes. That someone could become a woman without thinking about feminism seemed like a really strange idea to me, and I decided to incorporate that into my project ideas when I read this back in fall quarter.

Bornstein, Kate. My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely. New York: Routledge, 1998

Bornstein uses the fun and performative format of a workbook full of quizzes and games to continue her deconstruction of gender, this time working with broader categories of identity as well as spending more time on social power structures.

Kate has a really good discussion in here of androcentrism and (the concept that society centers on men and that 'male' is constructed as the default or natural identity for mankind – everything else is derivative or aberration) and the concept that there is a 'perfect identity' that everyone is expected to either be, be like, or be liked by.

Nestle, Joan, Clare Howell, and Riki Wilchins, editors. Genderqueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary. Los Angeles: Alyson Publications, 2002.

This book starts off with a short series of theoretical essays by Riki Wilchins and then presents a wide spread of oral history pieces from genderqueers of all possible stripes – transsexuals, drag queens, lesbians wrestling with butch/femme dynamics and how that colors how society views them, people without a specific gender identity that they claim, etc.

This book has helped inform the mode of my piece – I am using a multiplicity of voices to circle around a set of ideas rather than trying to pre-script a rigid concept myself. I really like decentralized modes of creating historical record. In addition, this book helped me appreciate a wider range of what I could consider to be transgressive gender expression.

Nichols, Bill. Introduction to Documentary. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Nichols tackles the subject of documentary in a somewhat plodding, methodical format, exploring what documentaries are, what they are about, what styles they employ, and their history.

I particularly draw influence from the sections on the participatory and performative modes of documentary, which I plan to employ in my work.

Serano, Julia. "Skirt Chasers: Why the Media Depicts the Trans Revolution in Lipstick and Heels." Bitch Magazine. Fall 2005, Issue 26.

This essay looks at traditional mainstream media depiction of transgendered people and its use of the portrayal of feminine adornment to create the image that transgenderism is an artificial identity category (or, more simply put, just a bunch of men in dresses).

As I am working on the representation of transgendered people, I have made part of my research a study on how we are already represented. I had already made a mental note to avoid such visual clichés as the transwoman putting on makeup before going out, and this piece put a little more specific background behind that decision.

A/V Sources:

The Brandon Teena Story. Dir. Muska, Susan and Greta Olafsdottir. 1998.

This is the documentary on which the Hollywood film *Boys Don't Cry* was based. It chronicles the late life, rape, and murder of female-to-male transsexual Brandon Teena using numerous interviews as well as tv newscasts.

While a powerful film, this is a clear demonstration of what I am going to try and avoid in my work – a near-constant sequence of talking heads.

Lewis County: Hope and Struggle. Dir. Anne Fischel. 2004.

A documentary by Evergreen Faculty Anne Fischel, this piece explores the history of the labor struggles of early 20th-century Centralia through the lynching of Wesley Everest and the recent creation of a commemorative mural.

I chose this video as an influence to this project because of the beginning, in which Anne Fischel films herself packing her video equipment into her trunk and explaining, in voiceover, her relationship to her subject – she is an academic from New England, an outsider to the era, place, and class of her documentary subject. I have realized that while my video may be autoethnographic, I had not constructed my concept to be *visibly* autoethnographic: in fact, I had not included any plans to reference myself or describe my relationship to the subject I am working with. I am now thinking of sewing a thread of autobiographical narrative into my piece, reflecting on myself, my relationship to the film, and my process.

Lightning Over Braddock. Dir. Tony Buba. 1988.

Tony Buba begins with a film about steel mill closures in his hometown, only to move onto a highly reflexive and dramatized narrative about his own film career.

Buba's work is useful to me because it represents a turn I realize my own work could take. While I have a plan for one video in mind, I realize that my project as it is outlined in my treatment could also become a context for a meta-documentary chronicling the ways in which this project is pushing me out of the closet and how I have gotten myself into the situation of having to deal with my own gender quandaries in a more public way than I know I am ready for.

Southern Comfort. Dir. Kate Davis. 2001.

Southern Comfort follows trans man Robert Eads through his last year of life as he battles ovarian cancer. The film also documents his last attendance of Southern Comfort, a transgender conference event.

I found myself immediately thinking of this as the film that I should send to my conservative Christian stepdad. I feel that it is deliberately constructed for an audience whose acceptance of trans issues would be grudging, and it makes sure to give screen time to the 'social actors' of the piece mentioning their faith in God. This film is also very heterocentric – emphasis is placed on the fact that none of the characters is homosexual. This is apparently assuming an audience that cannot handle dealing with more than one queer issue at a time. This is an example of what I am not doing.

Serano, Julia. "Cocky." <<http://www.juliaserano.com/av.html>> (Mar. 10 2006).

This is an online video of a 5-minute spoken word piece by a transwoman talking about the social implications of her penis.

While being a really amusing piece in and of itself and having some fun commentary on how a transwoman essentially appropriates the heterosexual male gaze ("My penis bends everyone that's straight"), this is an important piece to me mostly because it planted the idea that I really do not have to depend totally on interviews in my own piece – performances of spoken word and poetry could also fit in really nicely and add some stylistic variety.

The Ties That Bind. Dir. Su Friedrich. 1984.

Su Friedrich explores her family's potential ties to the Nazi part through interviews with her mother and two journeys to Germany.

I appreciated Su Friedrich's work because of her innovative interviewing techniques: rather than simply placing the subject onscreen talking, she uses close shots of the body, imagery from her journeys to Germany, and constructed visual metaphor to illustrate her mother's monologues. Since my piece uses interviews as a central point, I've found myself spending a lot of time thinking of how to make the work more visually interesting than a series of talking heads – I feel that if I only do that, this would probably be better off as a written essay or anthology rather than a video piece.

Transgeneration. Dir. Jeremy Simmons. 2005.

An 8-part documentary series totaling approximately 4-5 hours, *Transgeneration* is really similar to reality-TV modes because it takes the approach of following four transgendered college students around for a year and uses the narratives of their lives to essentially create a primer on trans issues for the mainstream. Simmons uses a mixture of casual footage and interview, but the presence of the filmmaker is generally not acknowledged.

This partially shaped the direction of my piece because it follows a pattern that shows up in most trans documentaries with a potentially mainstream audience: It portrays most aspects of gender as biologically essential. While this makes the issues a little easier to swallow for some people, it also enforces binary notions of gender. I am hoping to step outside of that, and should be able to since I am not necessarily targeting a mainstream audience. The fact that work like *Transgeneration* is being produced makes me feel less like *I* need to be producing work that attempts to de-otherize transpeople for the mainstream.

Online Sources:

Koyama, Emi. The Transfeminist Manifesto. 2001.

<<http://www.eminism.org/readings/pdf-rdg/tfmanifesto.pdf>>

Koyama makes a statement on what a trans-inclusive feminism should look like, and explores the complex relationships between the expression of femininity, its relationship to patriarchal oppression/objectification of women, its reclaiming and legitimization by third-wave feminist thinking, and how all of this applies to transwomen.

I have now read enough queer/gender/feminist theory to last me for a good while, but I feel it's been helpful even though my work is focusing on lived experience rather than theory. I feel it is important for me to have been informed by these explorations of the numerous nuances of notions of male privilege, essentialism, social constructionism, misogyny, and transgenderism in the context of feminist history.

Koyama, Emi. "Whose Feminism is it Anyway? The Unspoken Racism of the Trans Inclusion Debate." 2000.

<<http://www.eminism.org/readings/pdf-rdg/whose-feminism.pdf>>

Using the issue of the exclusion of transgendered women from the Michigan Women's Music Festival as a jumping-off point, this essay discusses anti-trans arguments from the feminist community and makes comparisons to the issues of women of color existing in primarily-white feminist communities.

Though my video piece will not be about trans exclusion from the feminist movement, I feel that tensions between the communities are important to be conscious of and look at for their value in the interesting arguments that get made, and my reading of this piece and things like it help me to be more conscious of the full complexities of the issues I am exploring.

Livejournal. <<http://www.livejournal.com>>

This is an online blogging network, and while it seems almost absurd to me to use it as a cited source in something for school, different communities on here are a really excellent source of anecdotal information as well as a networking tool for finding people that may be interested in participating in my project. The main communities I've been surfing for this project have been transgender (<http://www.livejournal.com/community/transgender>) and transfeminism (<http://www.livejournal.com/community/transfeminism>). This was the first place I saw the term "transfeminism," which I've taken a liking to.

Serano, Julia. "The Hot Tranny Action Manifesto." 2005.
< <http://www.hottrannyaction.org/manifesto.html>>

Manifesto of "Hot Tranny Action," a transgender feminist website. Discusses both transphobia, general cultural misogyny, distinctions between the two, and exclusion of transwomen from the feminist movement.

"Because anti-trans discrimination is steeped in traditional sexism, it is not simply enough for trans activists to challenge binary gender norms – we must also challenge the idea that femininity is inferior to masculinity and that femaleness is inferior to maleness. In other words, by necessity, trans activism must be at its core a feminist movement."

In thinking about my work, I have run across a lot of stories of violence and oppression that are a direct result of being transgendered, but not as much discussion of treatment that is recognized as being a result of a wider cultural misogyny that affects all women. This site touches on all of these issues.

Works not annotated/almost left out of the bibliography because their influence on my project was either not direct or was the same as works already annotated:

Boys Don't Cry. Dir. Kimberly Pierce. 1999.

Jagose, Annamarie. Queer Theory: An Introduction. New York:
New York University Press, 1996.

Lipsitz Bem, Sandra. The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Inequality. Yale University Press, 1993.

Wilchins, Riki. Queer Theory, Gender Theory: An Instant Primer. Los Angeles:
Alyson Publications, 2004.