



# TRANSFEMINISMS

## FEMINIST TRANSITION POLITICS

### CALL FOR PAPERS

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In this issue of *Comment S'en Sortir ?* we wish to map the alliances, common struggles, and translations of concepts between trans, feminist, anti-racist, and queer movements and theories that we collect under the concept of “transfeminisms”. “Transfeminism” has been defined as a movement for trans women, by trans women (Koyama, 2003), as a feminist project in which trans women fully belong to the political subject “women”. We wish to reflect on the concept of transfeminisms by moving away from the “women” category. Through the use of this term, we want, on the one hand, to reclaim feminist tools in order to consider trans subjectivities. On the other hand, we want to encourage feminism to reevaluate its own critical tools. Therefore, we refer to the perspectives on transfeminism recently offered by Kristina Scott-Dixon (2006), Gayle Salamon (2010), or Anne Finn Enke (2012), for they question the critical, self-reflexive, interdisciplinary, and unruly potential of this term. According to these authors, transfeminism is not a subdivision of feminism. Instead, it represents the possibility of a radical paradigm shift within Feminist Theory and Gender Studies; an epistemological turn rendering the dichotomies upon which many theories took form (sex/gender; man/woman; biological/social; materiality/performativity) obsolete.

Through the term transfeminism, we wish, firstly, to think about theoretical practices introduced by trans subjects (of knowledge) in feminism. Secondly, we wish to address the multiple trans uses, ways, and *arts of making* regarding queer and feminist tools, as well as arts of making it involved in the fabrication of the bodies, subjectivities, engagement, and languages of trans people.

We do not wish to recreate a global vision of the exchanges between Trans Theories and Feminist Theories, but rather to focus on a selected number of important issues in order to build theoretically and politically fruitful transfeminist convergences.



# TOPICS

## **1) Sex, gender, and sexuality: definitions and boundaries**

Taking trans issues into account, our task is not only to think about what it means to be or become a “man” or a “woman” and how it appears to be a problematic dichotomy in view of trans subjectivities, but also to think about how terms such as “cisgender”, “transgender”, “transsexual”, “trans”, “trans\*”, “trans-” (to name only a few) renew the issue of boundaries between biology, culture, social, technology, and politics.

## **2) Materiality/performativity of the body: trans bodies phenomenology**

Is gender only a performance? Is it a fantasy, game, psyche, or language, normative, legal, or administrative acts? Or is it exclusively material and prediscursive, a matter of pure flesh, anatomy, and biology? How and where do the boundaries between the bodies and identities of butch, FtM, queen, king, boi, MtF, fem, genderfucker, trans, tranny, and other queer identities stand, whether in Paris, Barcelona, New York, Berlin, Bombay, Tel Aviv, or São Paulo? What are the tensions, conflicts, and issues between trans communities and queer communities depending on geopolitical and economical contexts? Do queer thoughts help us to consider trans identities or do they “invisibilize” them, as Viviane Namaste says (2000)?

## **3) Psychiatric power and medical power**

The diversity of trans politics and trans identities leads us to think about the plurality of relations in psychiatric power. We want to ask the following questions: How do psychiatric power and medical power produce “transsexualism” as a mental illness? Do they take place within the power apparatuses described by Michel Foucault – the production and management of the population, state appropriation of “sex”, and paradox of differential diagnostic (Dorlin, 2011)? Conversely, how did trans patients contribute to modifying the analytical frame of gender issues at work in sexual psychopathology, psychoanalysis, and psychology of gender? How did they contribute to renewing the critic of sexual binary and to reconsidering the legitimacy of normalization processes of bodies and subjectivities (Sennot and Smith, 2011)?

## **4) Subjectivation/objectivation: epistemological issues and the institutionalization of Trans Studies**

The development of research on trans issues in francophone European universities urges us to reflect on the relation between objectivation and subjectivation, between neutrality and partiality, and between the political and the scientific, and doing so taking into consideration the specificities of trans issues and research on this topic. On the other side of the Atlantic, regarding Trans Studies as well as other fields, the institutionalization of knowledge raises several questions: how can we go beyond a discourse on ourselves? Should we look for a better discourse on ourselves? Does one have to be trans to do Trans Studies? Do Trans Studies lead to an inevitably militant knowledge limited to trans issues? How can we link trans issues to power relations of class, sexuality, race, age, religion, *etc*?



## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To propose an article, please submit an abstract up to 500 words and a presentation of the author, including your name(s), discipline, contact details and a short biography (up to 150 words) by May 15, 2013. Send proposals to [redaction@commentssortir.org](mailto:redaction@commentssortir.org).

For further details, please check the journal website: <http://commentssortir.org/>

## DEADLINES

- **Submission of proposals:** May 15, 2013

Acceptance decisions will be communicated by May 31, 2013

- **Submission of articles:** October 15, 2013

Definitive acceptance: December 15, 2013

- **Publication:** December 2013

Articles should not exceed 7 000 words, including references.

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