2014 Call for Papers for the Trans/Gender- Variant Caucus
National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA)
November 13-16, 2014, San Juan, Puerto Rico

The NWSA Trans/Gender-Variant Caucus welcomes papers for the 2014 NWSA annual conference. These trans/gender-variant-related themes are orientated towards the full NWSA 2014 CFP which can be found here: http://www.nwsa.org/files/NWSA%202014%20CFP_Final.pdf

If you are interested in being a part of the 2014 Trans/Gender-Variant Caucus panels at NWSA, please send the following information to the designated panel organizer (listed under each theme) by Thursday, February 6, 2014:

• Name, Institutional Affiliation, Mailing Address, Email, Phone
• NWSA Theme your paper fits under
• Title for your talk
• 50-100 word abstract

We will try to accommodate as many qualified papers as possible, but panels are limited to 3-4 presenters. NWSA will make the final decision about which panels are accepted. Presenters accepted into the conference program must become members of NWSA in addition to registering for the conference.

Theme 1: Nation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression

This theme invites interrogations of the nation-state’s interventions into people’s (both citizens and non-citizens) gender identities and expressions. For instance, how can trans/gender-variant feminist activists and scholars interrogate and resist the nation-state’s systems of identification as they function to naturalize gender, sex, and their alignment? How can we combat transphobia and gender-rigidity within bureaucracies charged with social services, healthcare, and ensuring public safety? When these bureaucracies produce undesired (raced, classed, etc.) subjectivities and geographies, how can we transgress, disrupt, and transform them? How do the nation-state’s transphobic practices and circuits adapt in reaction to gender transgressions? How can we challenge the recalcitrance of state-driven identification methods that limit people’s mobility, participation, safety, and self-expression on the basis of gender? What new pedagogies might we derive from gender-transgressive community organizing and transnational coalitions? Given how national modes of identification limit the mobility of gender-variant people--how possible is it for gender-variant transnational activists to participate physically in transnational coalitions? How do contemporary formations of empire continue to mask the nation-state’s multivocality, dynamism, permeability, and fluidity, particularly with respect to gender identities and expressions? This sub-theme seeks transgressive reconsiderations of the nation-state’s taken-for-granted authority over identity expression and such authority’s effects on citizens’ lived
experience.

• Mindful of the state’s adaptive capacities in response to confrontation, how can we rethink, challenge, and transgress both old and new forms of national identification methods?
• What critical engagements must we still pursue in relation to the everyday militarization of gender in public space and the embodied ramifications of such gender surveillance in relation to the prison industrial complex?
• In what ways can the intersections of disability studies and women’s and gender studies serve as a productive platform from which to critique the nation-state’s role in gender identity and expression?
• Within debates about corrective gender surgeries on infants, gender reassignment surgeries, the increasing visibility of intersex identities, the body’s fluidity continues to be a site of struggle and source of unease for the nation-state. How do marginalized bodies continue to foil the nation-state’s desire for fixity? How do the gender binary and the power and privileges it affords to some and not others ensure that fixity?
• Social media are increasingly important modes for trans* coalitions. How can we use them as even more effective modes of resistance to oppressive state regimes? In what ways do they present useful points of departure in rethinking methodologies for researching the nation-state’s role in gender identity and expression?

Please submit materials to theme organizer Kael Sharman at sharman@uwindsor.ca

Theme 2: Trans- Feminisms
Within identity-based fields such as women’s and gender studies, the prefix “trans” far exceeds a simple definition that indicates movement or border crossing. For self-defined trans* (with an asterisk) communities, the term has come to refer to a wide range of non-cisgendered experiences and embodiments. Recently, trans- (with a hyphen) indicates not just the plural locations between rigid conceptions of bodies and identities but a far-reaching challenge to the very assumptions of fixity or linear progression in investigations that can also include transnational, transcultural, transgenerational, and/or transsspecies subjects. How do these various iterations of trans intersect with, challenge, and delineate feminisms? What are the ways trans- feminisms are being defined, understood, or enacted, and how are they in conversation and/or contradiction with each other? How can women’s and gender studies facilitate explorations of the meanings and implications of trans- feminisms while also attending to the specificity and importance of trans* identifications? The questions of this sub-theme focus on exploring the meanings and potentials of trans- in multiple contexts across and beyond the academy.

• In what ways do trans- feminist analyses help us redefine feminist and trans/gender-variant politics and epistemologies?
• In what ways do women’s and gender studies traffic in the objects, knowledges, languages,
desires, and bodies of trans-feminisms? And what are the opportunities for coalitions and convergences among trans-feminisms without co-opting self-chosen trans*/gender identifications and/or objectifying trans* people?
• How can hierarchical relationships among regions and across North/South, race/class, and other hegemonic borders be critiqued by paying careful attention to trans/gender-variant phenomena, knowledges, and practices? How may these critiques help generate transnational, transcultural trans* alliances?
• What are points of encounter between the human and the animal, between trans/gender-variant and animal studies? And how do those encounters move us toward transspecies critiques?
• How can transgenerational perspectives intersect with or challenge foundational concepts in trans/gender-variant studies?

Please submit materials to theme organizer Anson Koch-Rein at anson.kochrein@gmail.com

Theme 3: Technologizing Futures
The emergence of web 2.0 technologies has dramatically shifted the landscape of trans/gender variant theorizing and praxis. But the effects of these changes are not always clear. For example, in the field of trans/gender-variant studies, the rise of digital technologies has transformed both trans/gender-variant identities and trans/gender-variant pedagogies. But how have trans* engagements with digital scholarship impacted the ways in which that scholarship is evaluated and assessed? Does the proliferation of social media platforms actually democratize the terrain of trans* knowledge production and/or organizing? What does the term “online activism” mean, and does this term adequately capture the future possibilities of trans* politics? This sub-theme asks us to consider the ways that technology has refigured conceptions of time and space and the bodies that inhabit these realms.

• Is online trans* production activism? How might online productions resist or transgress limiting institutional definitions of knowledge production and activism?
• How might trans/gender-variant studies take up technologies in ways that transform or transgress existing limited ideas about race, gender, sexuality, nation, ability and other categories?
• How might we more critically understand the convergences between trans* identities, gender non-conformity, and technologies of self-fashioning?
• What kinds of conversations do emerging technologies make possible concerning issues of access, ability, and the posthuman body?
• In what ways are technologies implicated in the global march of empire? Do digital platforms offer opportunities to contest or resist imperialism? What are the limitations of digital protest strategies?
• How are new technologies challenging and transforming trans/gender-variant pedagogy? What new strategies need to be adopted within the academic institutions to
support the rise of digital scholarship?
  • In what ways are the conversations in critical code studies and digital humanities exposing how technologies are built and how human subjects interact with those technologies?

Please submit materials to theme organizer Cael Keegan at caelkeegan@gmail.com

**Theme 4: Love and Labor**

As currently theorized, the focus on love and labor permeates contexts as disparate as slavery, colonialism, academia, sex work, domestic work, reproductive rights struggles, health care, the tourist industry, and relationships. In what ways does imagining a trans* subject extend or shift love-and-labor’s focus on gendered expectations of caregiving, emotional labors within intimate relations, the global trade in the artifacts of love (diamonds, flowers, etc.), the privatization of child-rearing, the consumption associated with parenting citizen subjects, and/or the mobilization of love as a political paradigm in activist labors? In what ways are love and labor implicated in trans* people’s lives? This sub-theme asks us to consider how questions at the intersections of love and labor push forward trans* theorizing.

• How have scholars critically engaged love discourses shaping trans* people’s labor within and across private and public spaces?
• In what ways has love and labor generated new circuits of US imperialism and militarization across territories, nations, and communities, especially those with military outposts, and how are trans* and cis subjects involved?
• How can discourses of trans- and cis-gendered nationalisms, patriotism, and imperialism be shaped and intersected through a love-and-labor lens?
• How might trans* and gender variant people’s transition-related participation in global migration be theorized with respect to carework and leisure?
• How might love and labor in trans* sex workers’ lives be theorized?
• How have ideas of love influenced cultures, policies, structures, and/or trans* and cis-gendered labor in academia?
• Although associated with relations of affinity, care, and attachment, “love” can also function as appropriation, exploitation, and even violence across generational, gendered, racial, and colonial borders. What are the methods by which the paradoxes of love can and should be exposed and resisted in scholarly and activist contexts?

Please submit materials to theme organizer Sonny Nordmarken at snordmar@soc.umass.edu
Theme 5: Creating Justice

The field of trans/gender-variant studies, alongside queer and feminist studies, constantly wrestles with and engages in questions of justice through its emphasis on theory and praxis. And while creating justice is a complex process that these fields have investigated across many historical and contemporary contexts, there is too often no obvious, consistent, or unproblematic path to the fulfillment of justice in trans/gender-variant, feminist, queer, antiracist, disability, and other anti-oppression struggles. How can the knowledge of our disparate justice-seeking pasts address the particularities of our present circumstances? What does justice look like in the context of the trans/gender-variant struggle in particular, and how do we map the ways such particularities shift over time and space? How do we make strides towards different forms and shapes of justice in the trans/gender-variant movement, and what kinds of creative strategies might be used in pursuit of this multivalent ideal? For this sub-theme, presenters are invited to share insights on creative, innovative, and transgressive modes of seeking justice in the context of the trans/gender-variant movement.

• How do historical campaigns for trans/gender-variant justice inspire or contextualize later efforts? How do more recent campaigns for trans/gender-variant justice creatively reinvent efforts made by others in earlier time periods of trans/gender-variant, or other movements’, struggles?
• How can the arts be used in the service of trans/gender-variant social justice? How can creativity itself become a generative force in the pursuit or reinvention of trans* justice?
• In what ways does the creative uses of language—including trans* specific terminology, pronoun creation and use, and subversive language in trans* and queer communities—aid us in our efforts to create socio-political space and justice for trans/gender-variant communities?
• What are the trans/queer/feminist/socio-economic/anti-racist potentials of restorative justice movements, especially in spaces of incarceration? How can these movements impact the more punitive approach to criminal justice favored by most nation-states around the world, especially in regards to imprisoned trans/gender-variant individuals?
• What might we learn from the pathways for young people, trans/gender-variant youth in particular, that empower them to envision and pursue justice?

Please submit materials to theme organizer Kayden Althen at kaydenalthen@gmail.com