



6-2-2016

Jesus "Camp": Camp, Christianity, and Gender Ambiguity in *Transamerica*

JoAnne C. Juett

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, juettjc@uwec.edu

Recommended Citation

Juett, JoAnne C. (2016) "Jesus "Camp": Camp, Christianity, and Gender Ambiguity in *Transamerica*," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 15 : Iss. 1 , Article 11.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol15/iss1/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Religion & Film by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

Jesus "Camp": Camp, Christianity, and Gender Ambiguity in *Transamerica*

Abstract

Stanley/Sabrina Osborne is on a spiritual journey, seeking to reconcile her own "fatherhood" while posing as a Christian follower of the "father" God. Through "Bree," Director Duncan Tucker humorously, but seriously confronts religious metanarrative, as he allows the main character Stanley/Sabrina Osborne to play Christianity as pure camp, a deeply ironic and humorous disguise for the transitioning transsexual. At the same time, the text of *Transamerica* is subversive, challenging assigned gender roles and exposing the range of gender ambiguity. Yet, it never fails to remind us of the actuality, the materiality of the suffering borne by the inner conflicted transsexual and the outer physical violence Stanley/Sabrina endures to ensure transition. *Transamerica* is a journey beyond the self and the soul; it is a journey toward reconciliation and redemption.

David: We're not gender-challenged. We're gender-gifted. I've been woman and I've been man, and I know things you single sexed people can't even begin to imagine.

Toby: Dude, I thought you were a real guy.

David: We walk among you. (45).¹

Director Duncan Tucker explores issues of gender and transsexuality in *Transamerica* through the complexity of social space, most pointedly in this scene where Toby and Bree arrive at a transsexual party. Here in the intimate illusory, yet real space of transsexual Mary Ellen's Dallas home, gender is conspicuously fluid. The camera allows a glimpse at male-to-female transsexuals in various stages of transition, at a female-to-male mystic, at Toby (the young son who's gender bends throughout the film), and at even the straight (or so we are told) Mary Kay cosmetic saleswoman. The party, the "mixer," analogously mixes gender, and gender confusion reigns. Toby thinks that David is a "real guy," and Bree believes that the straight Mary Kay "genetic girl" "could not pass on a dark night at two hundred yards." Gender-challenged, gender-gifted, woman, man, single sexed compete in the narrative of David's explanation; these disparate discourses hold in tension, disrupting each other and forcing the possibilities of alternatives for gender definitions.

Within the social space of the Dallas party, competing gender discourses metaphorically dance, sing, and occasionally raise their skirts to reveal themselves,

like Mary Ellen as she dances her jig to the fiddle music of Calpernia. While Mary Ellen, in an aside, admits to living a stealth life outside of her Dallas home, Melissa and Sandi speak candidly of holding hands in the recovery room after their sex reassignment surgery. Humor obscures the cruel reality of the need to succumb to conventional medical discourse, as Debbie proudly displays pictures of her “new vagina,” and Kelly and Callie subject Toby to a campy physical exam, concluding that he has “testosterone poisoning.” Streetwise Toby ironically speaks the language of conservative theology, while David, shrouded by mysticism and the unspoken language of the tarot, proffers a spiritually anticipatory reply to Toby’s confession, “[w]e walk among you.” Bree silently remains stealth, appearing only on the outside of the circle of partygoers; she is clearly conflicted about her own gender identity that has been so rudely disrupted by the appearance of Toby in her life.

Transamerica lays before us competing discourses in the form of a road trip of sorts, a multilayered “journey” that cuts across physical, emotional and spiritual spaces inhabited by preoperative Stanley Schupak/Sabrina Osborne (Bree) and her son, Toby. Although the film would appear to be a linear narrative, the layers within the film allow time and space to turn back upon themselves. Duncan Tucker writes that, “Bree and Toby unwittingly pioneer new territory in their own lives as they travel from the Northeast to the Southwest, and the sweep and scope of the

landscape they pass through mirror their interior journeys” (xiv). But the journey cannot be simply reduced to the binary oppositions of exterior and interior. Throughout the film, linear progression is punctuated with the unexpected; one might apply to *Transamerica* the same words Lefebvre uses to describe his work, *The Production of Space*: a “chaotic flux of phenomena” (8). Riki Wilchins describes the auteur perspective of the trans experience, how the viewer “travels through our lives and problems like tourists” (63).

Drawing from the fluidity of the discourse, filled with gender conflicts and contradictions, and from the reality of transsexuality as conflict and change, Tucker never allows temporal or cultural stability in *Transamerica*. Tucker’s textual agenda combines imaginative fiction with political reality and a complex materiality, achieving a narrative about:

a hero who goes on a journey to achieve a goal, encounters friends and enemies, and comes back home changed...A cross-country America *Lord of the Rings* about a misfit coming to terms with family...a quintessential outsider...The final element clicked into place when a woman I know sat me down one evening and told me that what was under her skirt wasn’t what I thought was under her skirt. I’d had no idea—at first I actually thought she was kidding. Then she lowered her voice for me from a pleasant contralto to a deep bass—and reality shifted. Coming out to me was an act of trust and of courage. She shared stories about her life that were sometimes harrowingly sad, sometimes hilarious, and sometimes both at the same time. I was moved and enthralled by our conversation that night. Over the next several months I read extensively and I talked at great length with a number of trans women, and the character of Bree began to evolve. (x)

Tucker consciously includes metanarratives created through religious discourse, but he challenges it through textual, imagistic, and lived discourses that are both conflicting and conflicted. Tucker humorously, but seriously confronts religious metanarrative, as he allows Bree to play Christianity as pure camp, a deeply ironic and humorous disguise for the transitioning transsexual. More introspective is the way that in the course of the journey, *Transamerica* makes room for a broader theological perspective, as the spirituality of the Native American winds its way through the dialogue, settling for a fleeting hint at stability through the person and location of Calvin, although in the end, we are never quite sure of his “read” of Bree. *Transamerica*, then, becomes a journey beyond the self and the soul; it becomes a journey toward reconciliation and redemption.

Bree is on a spiritual quest of sorts, seeking to reconcile her own “fatherhood” while posing as a Christian follower of the “father” God. Interestingly, the Christian moniker donned by Bree when she first meets Toby begins to increasingly stick through their journey. The hat with the slogan “I’m Proud to be a Christian” that Toby buys Bree, ironically with money he’s taken from her, appears again following Bree’s sex reassignment surgery. Furthermore, Bree envisions her own multi-layered spiritual, physical and psychological journey as parallel to the suffering and death of Christ. Threads of this vision weave themselves through the dialogue. Yet, even in the most seemingly serious moments

of discourse, *Transamerica* rejects the opportunity to sermonize, and chooses instead to take us to what might be called "Jesus camp." Although *Transamerica* opens the possibilities of spiritual experiences through various religious traditions, the moments of high camp belong to "Jesus."

Camp, in the form of cinema, carries a complexity not unlike that of gender. In particular, when one recognizes that camp emerged from the gay community, a sexually transgressive community, then such an approach toward one of the film's seriously exclusivist subjects seems most appropriate. To take on Christianity, its institution of the church, and its sanitized Christ through campy humor and irony radically opens the possibilities for spiritual inclusiveness.

Jack Babuscio contends that camp emerged from a "gay sensibility" (117ff). He refrains from any connection to sensibility as a critical movement, and instead, prefers to define gay sensibility as "a creative energy reflecting a consciousness that is different from the mainstream" (118). Gay sensibility can be considered actually a response to the mainstream, and one possible mode of that response comes in the form of camp. I would argue that in *Transamerica*, a narrative that Tucker writes nearly 30 years after Babuscio's writing, the sensibility has shifted to a transgender sensibility that is much broader in its inclusion of alternative perspectives, requiring an even greater need for alternative responses, such as camp.

Camp has been co-opted into straight camp in many ways, most notoriously by Susan Sontag in her “Notes on Camp.” Although she acknowledges a certain “homosexual estheticism” about camp, she understands camp as “artifice.” My point is not to develop a critique of camp interpretation within this essay, but rather to point out that the camp in *Transamerica* is a true descendant of camp as it sprang from the reality of the social space of gay sensibility. Camp has everything to do with the reality of marginalization, even erasure, of those whose gender situation lies beyond or between established norms. Having established this lineage then, camp can be understood, according to Babuscio, as “a relationship between activities, individuals, situations and gayness” (here we substitute transgender) (118). Babuscio defines four basic features of camp: irony, aestheticism, theatricality, and humor (119ff). Irony appears as incongruence, a contrast between an individual or thing and its context. The aesthetic feature offers a viewpoint that distances itself from the normative in order to critique the world as it is. Camp additionally functions as a “metaphor of theatre,” taking on a role so as to recreate or transform the self. Humor “results from an identification of a strong incongruity between an object, person, or situation and its context...Humor constitutes the strategy of camp: a means of dealing with a hostile environment and, in the process, of defining a positive identity.”

Apart from the campy introduction to the prim, proper and pink-attired Bree, a subtle narrative nod to camp waxes into a full campy moment when Bree arrives at the police station to bail Toby out of jail. In her conversation with the police sergeant, Bree learns that Toby has been working as a prostitute. Although perhaps an unintentional reference, Tucker has provided here the perfect opening to the campy nature of this film. The etymological origin of camp is extremely uncertain and contradictory. One possible source is the acronym KAMP (or K.A.M.P.), initials denoting the phrase “known as a male prostitute” (Core 115). Fabled stories abound as to how the initials found themselves lexically transformed to represent the phenomena of what is now known as “camp,” including one that claims that KAMP at one time was written on certain files in the Los Angeles Police Department (Cleto 29). When Bree arrives at the police station, she soon learns that Toby is a male prostitute, or a KAMP in such legendary police reports. Little does Toby know that he will soon be released, in the height of irony, to “Jesus camp” with Bree.

Indeed, when another officer brings Toby to meet Bree for the first time, Toby immediately assumes that Bree is a missionary from a church group.

Bree: My friends call me Bree.

Toby: Jesus the Reformer?

Bree has no idea what he's talking about.

Cop: One of the churches that sends missionaries to guide street people back to God.

Bree: Oh. No. I'm—

Bree hesitates. She doesn't want to believe she's in any way connected to this human equivalent of a bad odor.

Bree (cont'd): I'm from the Church of the Potential Father.

From the outset, Duncan Tucker humorously dissects religion in a way that parallels Bree's impending surgery. Although at first, Toby's question seems to be a shorthand inquiry into Bree's profession, it actually foreshadows her own quest to be "reformed." Bree creates a theatrical moment as she takes the opening offered by the cop's explanation to claim a connection to a non-existent church. Yet, the irony lies in the "potential" of the entire situation—the potential that Bree could father a son in her past, the potential of rescuing Toby from his current plight, and the ultimate potential of familial reconciliation. The campy moment cuts through all stigma and exclusion to create new "potential" possibilities.

"Jesus camp" would not be complete without the symbolic breaking of bread or sitting down at the table as "family." In a trinity of theatrically humorous scenes, Bree and Toby, and later all of Bree's family, sit down to eat together. Each campy moment is highlighted by the impetus to pray over their meals. The first time is in the coffee shop where Bree takes Toby right after she posts his bail.

Interestingly, it is Toby who responds, most likely out of habit from the missionary reform efforts, by folding his hands and waiting for Bree to pray. In true camp style Bree realizes his expectations and so offers a pseudo-serious prayer: "Oh—yes...God bless this food, and bless this restaurant, and the people in it, and everyone else everywhere. Sic transit gloria mundi, in excelsis deo. Amen." The Latin aesthetically transforms the grittiness and the awkwardness of the moment into the sublime: "this passes the glory of the world, glory to God in the highest." Yet, the only high that Toby seeks comes in his response: "Do you have any percs? Vicodin, anything with Codeine?"

Further along in their journey, Bree offers a prayer at an Arkansas roadstop café, deep within the heart of the Bible belt. Again, as they sit at the table, Toby lowers his head and clasps his hands, waiting for Bree's prayer. This time, Bree's prayer appears much more sincere, but not enough to escape another aesthetic moment:

Dear God, bless this meal, and please help Toby to find the strength not to take any more drugs, so that when we get to L.A. he can get a job and find a nice apartment, so even if he never finds his real father, he can lead an independent life. Amen." This time, Toby affirms the prayer with an Amen of his own. According to Christopher Isherwood, "[t]rue High Camp always has an underlying seriousness. (195)

The metanarrative of the Christian prayer exists in tension with the transgressive images of Bree and Toby and in tension with the lived space where Bree's prayer

for Toby's independence thinly veils a wish for her own. This tension, then, opens the narrative "potential" and moves the story forward toward new transformative possibilities. The moment fades quickly, though, as Toby turns once again to his own interests and asks if he can purchase a "cool hat."

Toby not only purchases a hat for himself, but in a campy moment, he purchases a hat for Bree as well. She at first appears grateful, until she sees the wording on the cap: "I'M PROUD TO BE A CHRISTIAN." She finishes the sentence she had begun before reading the cap, "I'm very—" with the word, "touched." A true touch of irony; perhaps she is emotionally touched, although the word may well refer to her questions about her own state of mind at this point.

Even after Toby discovers that Bree is really a transitioning transsexual, he remains convinced that she is a Christian missionary. The final prayer moment comes with high drama when Toby and Bree go to dinner with their family at a Phoenix restaurant. When the waiter brings the food, Toby once again clasps his hands, waiting for Bree to pray. She tries to stop him, but Bree's mother sees Toby's actions and asks him if would like to pray. Although this request catches him off-guard, Toby responds probably out of habit with a short prayer: "God bless this restaurant, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive, forever and ever." Should this moment have ended at point, it might not qualify for camp, but the

ensuing extension of the prayer pushes the moment over the edge into the heart of camp.

Elizabeth continues the prayer with “[a]nd thank you, Lord, for bringing Toby to us.” Murray, Bree’s father, tries to end the moment by beginning to eat, but Elizabeth has more to say: “And please let us all stay together in health and spirits, in Jesus Christ’s name, Amen.” Bree, desperately wanting the moment to end responds with Amen, but Sydney seizes the theatrical moment and adds, “Shalom Yisrael.” At this point Murray, who is Jewish, coughs a toothpick out of mouth, and in absolute irony shouts “Jesus Christ. You know what’s good? I’ll tell you what’s good. This toothpick I just ate.”

Although Toby has not yet realized that Bree is no missionary by the time they reach her parents’ home, Toby does know that Bree is a transsexual. The moment of the outburst that reveals his strong response to this revelation intertwines with some of the strongest irony of the film. Toby has just learned that Bree is a transsexual, and he announces this to Sammy at Sammy’s Wigwam. As Bree and Toby argue over his blatant revelation of her secret, Toby insists: “I never even heard of a trannie church lady. You can drop me off in the next town.”

Bree is not content to let Toby’s comment be the last word, at least not on the state of her spirituality. She continues the argument: “So you think I don’t have

the right to belong to a church? My body may be a work in progress but there is nothing wrong with my soul.” She glances at her “Christian” cap and continues: “Jesus made me this way for a reason (so go the lyrics to the title song as well), so I could suffer and be reborn, the way he was.”

Toby: So you’re cutting your dick off for Jesus?

Bree: That’s not how it works. I’ll just have an innie instead of an outie.

Note here how Bree steers away from the theology of the conversation and focuses instead on her physical transformation. But, she can’t escape the queering of Christ revealed in her words. Lisa Isherwood writes that:

[t]he queer Christian body is a transgressive signifier of radical equality. . . . It is a body that acts stubbornly in the face of life as it is, and is a space in which creative rebellion is rooted in the everyday business of life. In the language of Christianity it is a redemptive space. (Queering Christ: Outrageous Acts and Theological Rebellions. 252)

The reflective moment allows the Christian metanarrative to be read in new ways, seen in the new light cast within the space of transgressive images and the reality of the lived space of Bree’s suffering body and mind. The narrative builds to an anticipated climax of “creative rebellion,” but it takes a campy turn toward the pedantic, with Bree’s puerile explanation of her sex reassignment surgery.

Transamerica takes a turn toward the serious when Bree finally undergoes sex reassignment surgery. Yet, even the moment with Bree in her hospital room,

recovering from the surgery, reveals an underlying humor and aestheticism. The scene opens with Bree painfully making her way to a drawer and taking out her Christian cap. At that moment Margaret enters, and the two engage in a brief, medieval discourse, of sorts:

Margaret: Hello, my lady. How are you feeling? And don't say 'like a new woman.'

Bree: I feel like a medieval heretic who's been impaled on a very large and very thick stake. With splinters.

Textually, Margaret names Bree as a "lady," an act that sets up the aesthetic third space moment implied through Bree's self-allegory of the medieval heretic. Bree as "a lady" transgresses the normative of medieval gender, which, historically, would have rendered her a heretic and eligible for tortured execution. Ironically, medieval impalement was one of the most blatant sexual and gendered, if you will, of all tortures, where a large stake would be driven through the anus or vagina of the victim until emerged from the mouth. Binary oppositions of male/female, Christian/heretic are disrupted, crudely analogous to the piercing of the heretical body with the stake. Bree now exists as physically female, but she remains Toby's father. The cap projects a reminder of Bree's missionary ruse, but points more deeply to the "soul" she claims would not change, regardless of physical transformation. The scene folds the mental, physical and social space within the hospital room to open alternatives or ironically various "potential" epistemological

possibilities for a transformed transsexual life. New ways of knowing are opening to Bree, symbolized by the painful rupturing of her figurative heart. Tucker includes in the acting directions: “She’s [Bree] in pain, but Margaret understand that every tear is a victory: the walls around Bree’s heart have cracked wide open.” A radical space opens for possibilities Bree has never experienced. Tucker is careful to weave humor through the otherwise seriousness of the transition, producing camp out of the catharsis.

As Susan Sontag notes in, the whole point of camp is to dethrone the serious. Yet, camp in *Transamerica* does much more. All of the campy humor and irony, the theatrical gestures and the aesthetic moments embrace the dominant code only to queer the discourse in order to dismantle the hierarchical values of the metanarrative and open possibilities for empathy and acceptance with lived transgendered spaces.

What *Transamerica* reminds us is that transgender exists both as discursive construct and a materiality. At the same time, the text of *Transamerica* is subversive, challenging assigned gender roles and exposing the range of gender ambiguity. Yet, it never fails to remind us of the actuality, the materiality of the suffering borne by the inner conflicted transsexual and the outer physical violence he/she endures to ensure transition. *Transamerica* demonstrates that transgender

persons are not mere objects of language, but they are, at the very least, in the words of Chris Weedon:

sites of discursive struggle, a struggle which takes place in the consciousness of the individual. In the battle for subjectivity and supremacy of particular versions of meaning of which it is part, the individual is not merely the passive site of discursive struggle. The individual who has a memory and an already discursively constituted sense of identity may resist particular interpellations or produce new versions of meaning from the conflicts and contradictions between existing discourses. Knowledge of more than one discourse and the recognition that meaning is plural allows for a measure of choice on the part of the individual and even where choice is not available, resistance is still possible. (106)

Yet, *Transamerica* takes another step beyond the discursive struggle, revealing the materiality of the struggle and opening radical possibilities of resistance, resistance to the reduction of gender to the norms constructed through religious discourse in turn enacted through cultural materiality.

Transamerica panoramically and microcosmically visualizes the lyrics of Dolly Parton's Oscar-nominated "Just Travelin' Thru" that she wrote for the film:

Questions I have many, answers but a few
But we're here to learn, the spirit burns, to know the greater truth
We've all been crucified and they nailed Jesus to the tree
And when I'm born again, you're gonna see a change in me
God made me for a reason and nothing is in vain
Redemption comes in many shapes with many kinds of pain

Oh sweet Jesus if you're listening, keep me ever close to you
As I'm stumblin', tumblin', wonderin', as I'm travelin' thru
I'm just travelin', travelin', travelin', I'm just travelin' thru
I'm just travelin', travelin', travelin', I'm just travelin' thru
Oh sometimes the road is rugged, and it's hard to travel on
But holdin' to each other, we don't have to walk alone
When everything is broken, we can mend it if we try
We can make a world of difference, if we want to we can fly

And so, in the final scene of *Transamerica*, we see Bree and Toby at least metaphorically “holdin’ to each other.” Although so much as been “broken” for both of them, they are at least attempting to “mend” both themselves and their relationship. We are left to wonder about their futures, yet, we know that whatever happens next, these two people have transformed. What lies ahead may be best stated in the opening words of Parton’s song:

Well I can't tell you where I'm going, I'm not sure of where I've been
But I know I must keep travelin' till my road comes to an end
I'm out here on my journey, trying to make the most of it...

Transamerica offers many challenges, many questions, and few, if any answers. *Transamerica* touts the incomplete, the fluid, the ambiguous, the spaces in between; in fact, Duncan Tucker admits that “[y]ou’ve got to be sneaky to be

subversive.” The film queers the familiar, such a journey and Christianity, to reveal that binary oppositions cannot possibly hold all possibilities. As Tucker insightfully notes: “perhaps if we were built like starfish, we’d divide the world into kinds of five.” Tucker divides the world of *Transamerica* into multiplicities far exceeding a world “of five.” To that end, he reminds us in his reflections on his script: “Think of gender as a rowboat: some people perch carefully in the center, others sit to one side or the other, still others lean out precariously over the edge. And some people cannot keep from tipping the boat over completely.” In the end, *Transamerica* demurely cracks open the possibility that in the future, gender on the big screen may indeed be “just travelin’ thru”!

¹ All dialogue quoted throughout the essay has been taken from *Transamerica: The Shooting Script*.

References

- Babuscio, Jack. "The Cinema of Camp (AKA Camp and the Gay Sensibility)." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject, A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. University of Michigan Press, 1999. 117-135.
- Bornstein, Kate. *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Bornstein, Kate. "Gender Terror, Gender Rage." *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. New York: Routledge, 2006. 236-243.
- Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer." *Performance Studies*. Ed. Erin Striff. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. 152-205.
- . *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

- Cleto, Fabio. "Introduction: Queering the Camp." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject, A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. University of Michigan Press, 1999. 1-44.
- Core, Philip. *Camp: The Lie that Tells the Truth*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. Plexus Publishing, 1996.
- Goss, Robert E. *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2002.
- Halberstam, Judith. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press, 2005.
- Hausman, Bernice L. "Body, Technology, and Gender in Transsexual Autobiographies." *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. New York: Routledge, 2006. 335-361.
- . "Recent Transgender Theory." *Feminist Studies* 27.2 (2001): 465-490.
- Isherwood, Christopher. "From The World in the Evening." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject, A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. Minneapolis: The University of Michigan Press, 1999. 49-52.
- Isherwood, Lisa and Elizabeth Stuart. *Introducing Body Theology*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1998.
- Isherwood, Lisa. "Queering Christ: Outrageous Acts and Theological Rebellions." *Literature & Theology* 15.3 (2001): 249-261.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991.
- Meyer, Moe, ed. *The Politics and Poetics of Camp*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Prosser, Jay. "Judith Butler: Queer Feminism, Transgender, and the Transubstantiation of Sex." *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. New York: Routledge, 2006. 257-280.
- Punday, Daniel. *Narrative after Deconstruction*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Epistemology of the Closet." *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Ed. Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin. New York: Routledge, 1993. 45-61.
- Shapiro, Judith. "Transsexualism: Reflections on the Persistence of Gender and the Mutability of Sex." *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*. New York: Routledge, 1991. 248-279.
- Sontag, Susan. "Notes on Camp." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject, A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. University of Michigan Press, 1999. 53-65.

Stone, Sandy. "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto." *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*. Ed. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub. New York: Routledge, 1991. 280-304.

Stryker, Susan. "(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies." *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. New York: Routledge, 2006.

—. "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* (n.d.): 212-220.

Tucker, Duncan. *Transamerica: The Shooting Script*. New York: Newmarket Press, 2006.

Valentine, David. *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

—. "The Categories Themselves." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10.2 (2004): 215-220.

Villarejo, Amy. "Queer film and Performance: "In Theory"." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 7.2 (2001): 313-333.

Weedon, Chris. *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1987.

Wilchins, Riki Anne. *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender*. Ithaca: Firebrand Books, 1997.