In 2014, a *TIME* magazine cover featured a full-length photograph of trans actor and activist Laverne Cox, with an accompanying caption that read “The Transgender Tipping Point.” Their cover story, *TIME* implied, marked the moment when transgender crossed the threshold of cultural acceptability. The cover story’s subtitle, “America’s next civil rights frontier,” suggested that the last “next frontiers”—presumably gay rights or even the Black Civil Rights Movement—had been eclipsed by the need to expand the possibilities of gender. Transgender cultural acceptance was thus positioned in a progress narrative in which concerns about sexuality and race had moved on to concerns about gender-diversity.

*Transgender*, was not, as that story might suggest, a term only then breaking through to mainstream awareness. In their introduction to *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, published a year before *TIME*’s “transgender tipping point,” Susan Stryker and Aren Z. Aizura included a graph generated by the Google Books Ngram Viewer that charted the prevalence of *transgender* between 1900 and 2008 in Google’s massive corpus of digitized and text-searchable books. The graph showed a hockey-stick-shaped line that inflected sharply in the early 1990s and shot steeply upward through 2008. A new graph (Figure 1) shows how *transgender*’s prevalence rose even more rapidly between 2008 and 2019.

Far from being a breakout phenomenon in 2014, *transgender* was already ubiquitous. As Aizura and Stryker note in that same introduction to *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, according to a 2011 Public Religion Research Institute poll, “91 percent of people living in the U.S.A. report that they have heard the term transgender,” with a strong majority (89%) agreeing that trans people should have the same rights as everybody else. A 2021 Pew Research survey suggests that awareness of *transgender* has only grown in the intervening decade. Nearly half of all respondents (42%) to that survey claimed to know a trans person personally (a 5% increase since 2017), while roughly a quarter knew someone who identified as non-binary or used gender-neutral pronouns. Most people overall still consider gender to be determined by assigned sex at birth (56%), while among those under 30, only 44% held that view. All the while, opinions about trans people have become increasingly polarized, to the point that we are now primary battlegrounds in the contemporary culture wars.

Heightened trans visibility and representation, in other words, did not only result in a tipping point toward greater understanding and acceptance. It has in fact gone hand in hand...
Figure 1: Screenshot of transgender usage on Google Ngram Viewer.
with greater hostility and violence against trans people. The 2017 anthology *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Tourmaline, Eric A. Stanley, and Joanna Burton, directly addresses this paradox. That is, visibility itself has been a trap for trans people, particular those who are already the most visible and vulnerable: trans women of color, as well as undocumented, poor, and disabled trans people. One contributor to the anthology—legendary activist and Stonewall veteran Miss Major Griffin-Gracy—points out that transphobes upset to see Laverne Cox on the cover of *TIME* magazine don’t aim their violent indignation at Cox; instead, it’s trans women they encounter in their everyday lives who bear the brunt of their transphobic violence.

In addition to outright physical violence, trans people have been increasingly targeted by legislation that allows others to discriminate against them based on religious belief, that denies them affirming healthcare or medically assisted gender-transition, that bars them from sports or public restrooms that match their gender identity and expression, and that excludes them from gender-appropriate shelters or social services. These dangerous attempts to regulate public space and healthcare access propagate unreal fantasies that trans women are perverse men trying to infiltrate sex-segregated spaces to harm other women and girls—fantasies that have fueled the rise of transphobic “gender-critical” feminist ideology, particularly in countries where right-wing populist movements have gained strength and power. At the same time, trans men are depicted as victims of a “transgender craze” that’s stealing daughters from an otherwise “natural” path to womanhood; in this depiction, transmen must be protected from themselves. In all cases, trans people are scapegoated as the signs and symptoms for all manner of social ills.

Rather than teetering on a “tipping point,” transgender might better be imagined as a fulcrum or pivot-point around which swirl a whole host of cultural anxieties about social change, technology, and the hazy boundaries between gender, sex, race, sexuality, and species. We have plenty to feel anxious about: a fragmented social media environment that fuels the spread of misinformation; an escalating series of environmental crises driving a swell of climate refugees; an as yet insatiable demand for consumer goods and services in the global North that capacitates the extraction of resources and power from non-renewable sources to keep the wheels of racial capitalism grinding on; the precipitous rise of precarious gig-work economies in cities with unprecedented income-inequality; and a rising wave of xenophobic, racist governments and social movements that has yet to crest.

While the negative consequences of these big-picture problems affect us all, they fall especially heavily on trans people. A report from the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey showed that trans people were at that point already four times more likely than the general population to live in poverty, twice as likely to have HIV/AIDS, and 50% more likely to have been incarcerated. Thirty percent of trans people had experienced homelessness, and nearly half—41%—had contemplated suicide. The COVID-19 pandemic, layered on top of an AIDS pandemic that has never ended, has only amplified these inequities and their effects. While it’s too soon to know how permanent some of the consequences of COVID-19 will be, it’s already clear how the management of this pandemic, like that of others before it, created disproportionate hardships for people marginalized by race and class. In some parts of the world, gender-policing became part of public health efforts to reduce COVID-19 transmission. Panama, for example, implemented a gender-based quarantine, with women and men allowed to go out on alternating days of the week. People out on the wrong day could be fined, which created an impossible double bind for trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people who lacked government-issued identification documents confirming their genders.
Remixing Transgender Studies

While COVID-19 is not the first virus to have massively reconfigured social and political life, we have certainly become newly adept in the past two years at collectively developing modes of survival through our theory and activism. Likewise, the work of trans studies as a field responds to many of the significant global changes that have taken shape in the last two years and since the publication of the two previous volumes of *The Transgender Studies Reader* in 2006 and 2013. One of the biggest changes in the field of trans studies since the second volume of the *Reader* was published was the 2014 debut of *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, a new journal for interdisciplinary cultural studies imagined as offering a counterpoint to the more psycho-medical perspective of *International Journal of Transgenderism*, established in 1997. There’s an even newer online publication, *The Journal of Applied Transgender Studies*, for more disciplinary social scientific work, as well as specialized journals such as the *International Journal of Transgender Health* and even a *Journal of Queer and Trans Religious Studies*. As a result of these new outlets for up-to-date scholarship, what a transgender studies collection needs to do has shifted. What you’ll find in this book is not a survey of all scholarship on transgender topics or a selection of the most important recent works in a field. Rather, it is a set of curated conversations among scholars who imagine themselves as somehow doing interdisciplinary work in transgender cultural studies broadly defined—conversations that mix old and new work to stage intergenerational and interdisciplinary dialogues, interject historically significant work that remains relevant for understanding contemporary issues, and sample some work in adjacent fields that has been central to the development of contemporary work in trans studies. It’s intended as a useful text for classroom use, as well as an introduction to and overview of the field itself and its now decades-long history.

As a field, transgender studies is no longer at a tipping point on the threshold of recognition; it has arrived. It’s a vibrant area of inquiry, with a growing cadre of trans studies scholars trained and mentored by other trans studies scholars and a burgeoning presence of transgender studies material on syllabi and on the academic lecture circuit. It’s worth pausing for a moment to reflect back on the field’s trajectory, as documented in the previous volumes of Routledge’s readers, before looking ahead to how we’ve remixed that work here. As Stryker and Aizura noted in the introduction to *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, the earlier volume from 2006, edited by Stryker and Stephen Whittle, could be “taken as an account of field formation,” an account that was “engaged in the kind of identity politics necessary to gain speaking positions within discourse” and which consequently “featured a good deal of auto-ethnographic and self-representational work by trans subjects.” Given that this was the first compilation of work in a field then already a decade-and-a-half in the making, it had a significant amount of ground to cover. Its 50 chapters included materials documenting how transgender phenomena appear in a wide range of contexts: from nineteenth-century sexological research, to early queer theory, to engagements with feminist scholarship, to visual and narrative representations of trans bodies and lives, to the importance of trans autobiography, to some field-founding essays that are still widely taught today and continue to inspire new scholarship.

The second volume of the *Reader* was a field-forming collection in its own right. Rather than seeking to trace the emergence of what has come to be known as transgender studies, the volume published only new essays to offer a time-stamped document of some of the most influential work in the field at that moment. It addressed and reframed some of the first volume’s shortcomings. As the editors write, the second volume directed “its critical gaze at the inadequacies of the field’s first iteration, in order to correct them, taking aim at its implicit whiteness, U.S.-centricity, Anglophone bias, and the sometimes suspect ways in which the category *transgender* has been circulated transnationally.” The second volume published essays.
on the various ways “transgender” had migrated into international human rights discourse, philanthropy, and the work of non-governmental social service and social change organizations; how trans people were being represented in mass media and made creative work of their own; how transgender transects the boundaries of other body-based categories—such as species and race—that arrange biological difference in hierarchies deemed more or less worthy of life; and how the administrative regulation of gender-crossing people reflects, in part, the increased role of state surveillance in everyday life. Drawing from the vocabulary of cultural theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the volume sought “to propagate transgender rhizomatically, in unexpected ways that trace lines of flight from the harsh realities of the present moment.” It attended, in other words, to how transgender built on its past to develop new methodological, activist, and identitarian approaches to trans survival.

The Transgender Studies Reader Remix combines the most-cited chapters in the two previous volumes with new trans studies work and older scholarship from other fields. It asks what those potential “lines of flight” might be: what tools has transgender studies offered us to theorize and dream up new ways of living? How has the field helped us to reconceptualize histories of gender and sex in connection with other forms of embodied difference? What connections have we made or might we make across other bodies of cultural theory and activist movements to further those critical aims? How can we think and live in “trans” ways that enable us to ethically function amidst a collapsing ecology, amidst a sea of retrograde populist nationalisms threatening to engulf us all?

Much of the recent work in transgender studies seeks to develop “trans” as a mode of analysis. The Trans- issue of WSQ: Women’s Studies Quarterly in 2008 was an important point of departure for this critical project, calling attention to the conceptual work performed by the prefix trans- itself, meaning “to cross.” The introduction noted that adding the hyphen marked a distinction between the “implied nominalism” of ‘trans’ (that is, “trans” as a name for an object that “trans studies” studied) and the “explicit relationality of ‘trans-,’ which remains open-ended and resists premature foreclosure by attachment to any single suffix.” In other words, the hyphen marked the difference between studying “transgender” as a thing and studying the process of how gender boundaries are crossed over, or “transed.” Among other things, this shift informed a new generation of historical scholarship, helping to ask better questions about how to understand gender-variance in the past, before the term transgender or the concept of gender itself existed, as well as a new generation of transnational scholarship, helping to ask better questions about cross-cultural comparisons of gender-variance. The issue editors focused work they considered “doubly trans-,” that is, work that put trans- of transgender into engagement with the trans- in other sorts of categorical crossings (such as the transnational, transgenic, transspecies, transracial).

Eva Hayward and Jami Weinstein expanded this sense of “prefixial” trans through their development of an “asteriskial” concept of transness—that is, trans with an asterisk, or trans*. The asterisk as a symbol attached to the trans- prefix first emerged in online discussions about the relationships between various kinds of trans identities—transgender, transsexual, transvestite—and the need for a short-hand term that was not over-invested in the border wars between different kinds of transness. It referenced the fact that in database searches, the asterisk is a “wildcard operator”; an asterisk following a word in a database search multiplies the possible data retrieved or attachments generated. It can bold words when typed before the first letter and after the last, amplifying the intensity of the word among a string of others. The asterisk is used to suggest that “transing” could operate on many operands simultaneously. Unlike the hyphen, which marks a single point of attachment, the asterisk symbolically marks an undefined generative space next to trans—trans*—or even between the broken parts of words—trans*gender or trans*plantation—to signify something unnamed, perhaps ultimately unrepresentable, that serves as a placeholder for all manner of
connections, both existing now or yet to come, in ever-shifting arrangements of categories, names, materialities, and processes of becoming. It suggests a space of generative possibility, where ontology—the sense of being—might multiply and where new ontologies, enlivened by the possibilities of transing whatever suffix trans- attaches to, might emerge.

We have edited *The Transgender Studies Reader Remix* with this notion of trans* methods in mind. The concept of a “remix” can itself be a way to think about what trans-with-an-asterisk can do. It speaks to how trans people remix the world. Remixing is a survival practice: taking existing paths, forging new ones, constantly coming up with new combinations of living to access the social, medical, and communal care needed for life. While not all trans studies scholars personally identify as trans people, this mode of survival is reflected in the intellectual work of the field. We who work in it reach across the theoretical and institutional boundaries of numerous disciplines to develop trans* methodologies, to (re)write trans histories, to access and practice trans-focused care (medical and otherwise).

Trans* as method is different from transgender as an identity label. Too often, transgender is merely coopted into a neoliberal vocabulary of diversity and inclusion—as the “next frontier,” or even a “bridge too far”—in ways that actually eclipse both the quotidian and spectacular forms of violence many trans people face. While some trans people may be more accepted into the fold of liberal models of inclusion, the vectors of race, class, ability, sexuality, and immigration status cut across embodiments to capacitate many shifting positions in relation to gender. That is, crossing socially constructed gender boundaries is not the unique property of a “transgender person”; such crossings are characteristic of many practices of resistance, freedom, fugitivity, and disidentification from structurally oppressed positions within an ideological matrix always intent on transforming difference into social hierarchy. Focusing on the nonidentitarian features of transness as a concept or logical operator that cuts across how all the categories that rank and order life function (e.g., sex/gender, race, species, the human and the animal) enables their remixing in ways that can lead to other (potentially better?) ways of living.

A remix also evokes being in a club, feeling the pulse of new rhythms and unexpected twists on old beats vibrating through one’s body, hearing lyrics lifted from one work transposed over the instrumental tracks of another, noticing how sounds are sampled and looped to interlace novelty with nostalgia. To experience a remix is to experience the simultaneity of the familiar and the fresh, to look back and sense previously unrecognized synergies while remaining open to the potential for the unexpected. It is to inhabit the different temporality of a nonlinear spacetime. That’s what we aim for in this trans studies remix: we invite readers into a conversational spacetime spread out over decades, where some old-school tracks sound different than they did back in the day and lend resonance to contemporary sounds.

Remixing is a fraught practice. Of all the infinite ways a track can be mixed or remixed, it only comes out one particular way in any given iteration. This reader represents one particular take on how the field of trans studies could be remixed. Remaking requires cutting. Some of the source materials that could have gone into this mix simply didn’t make the cut, not because they’re not good or no longer relevant but simply because they don’t fit the structure or rhythm we sought. Even the included essays were in many cases pared down to amplify the connections between essays in a given section, trans studies as a field, and the remix as a collection. This was exciting work to undertake but also imbued with feelings of loss. One of the hardest parts of putting the *Transgender Studies Reader Remix* together was everything we had to leave out from the first two volumes. There are brilliant and important pieces there, written not just by an earlier generation of scholars but by amazing colleagues still active in the field who are producing vital and timely work. We urge readers who want to take a deeper and more expansive dive into the field not to neglect the content of those earlier volumes. This one does not replace them.
Remixing involves not only loss but risk, particularly with regard to how it samples materials from genres with significantly different cultural and socio-political origins. It is weighted with the possibility that it may appropriate rather than respectfully recognize difference. Is it appropriative to juxtapose Black feminist work or work from the global South or Indigenous work that never imagined itself as doing “trans studies” with work originating in Anglophone trans studies in the global North that is so often unmarked as white? Or is doing so a way of changing what “transgender” means and what “transing” does by bringing trans studies into older, deeper, and broader problematics, especially those that actively shape emergent trans–of–color critique and trans scholarship as a whole? Is it offering trans methodologies for recasting how the body means to others who might find those methods useful?

Rhythms and Vibrations: A Remix of Trans Thinking

The Transgender Studies Reader Remix, like each of the previous volumes, contains 50 chapters. They’re organized into ten sections of five chapters. Each section revolves around a central theme or topic, and we imagine the pieces chosen as all somehow talking with one another within and across sectional boundaries. As noted, this represents one particular take on how these articles can be put into conversation. We invite readers who spend time with the entire volume to notice how the works could be rearranged into other conversations and how they speak to one another across as well as within the sections as we’ve arranged them.

The first section, “Trans/Feminisms,” pays attention to the central role that feminisms have had in transgender studies. It positions Sandy Stone’s “The Empire Strikes Back: A Post-transexual Manifesto” as a point of departure for the field. When Stone issued her manifesto, the word “transgender” was not yet in widespread use, but it came to name the space of imaginative, critical, and theoretical possibility that Stone envisioned when she called upon like-minded gender-changing people to go beyond the limits imposed by the psychopathologizing discourse of transsexuality. Stone’s title referenced Janice Raymond’s book The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male. Raymond was one of the first TERFs—Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists—and she had targeted Stone, a trans woman then working as a recording engineer as part of the all-lesbian Olivia Records Collective. We include “Sappho by Surgery” from Raymond’s book as a representative example of the kind of transphobic feminism that has generated a robust transfeminist counter-response. One such work is “A Transvestite Answers a Feminist,” by gay trans man Lou Sullivan, later an important activist and now something of a cult icon for many contemporary transmasculine people. Written before his transition when he still identified as a “heterosexual female transvestite,” Sullivan offers a contemporaneous transmasculine critique of second-wave feminist frameworks hostile to transing gender. We then move beyond the United States with Karine Espineira and Sam Bourcier’s chapter, “Transfeminism: Something Else, Somewhere Else,” which traces the development of transfeminism in France (transféminismes) and Spain (transfeminismo). Daniel B. Coleman, in “Transmasculine Insurgency,” explores how location and feminist socio-cultural formations rooted in different racial/ethnic communities in Latinx contexts work in relation to trans life. As these authors show, transfeminism—a term coined by disability and sex–work activist Emi Koyama—emerges and is enacted differently across context.

“Trans Matters, Black Matters” remixes another foundational work in transgender studies, Susan Stryker’s “My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage,” with recent work in Black trans studies, trans–of–color critique, a classic work of Black feminism, and feminist science studies work on materiality. Stryker uses the figure of the monster to explore how the attribution of transness can expel one from human community while simultaneously enabling an empowering sense of
connection to a primordial ontological state—the “darkness” of the chaotically generative cosmological void from which all existence spills forth. We pair this with Marquis Bey’s “The Trans*-ness of Blackness, the Blackness of Trans*-ness,” which develops a nuanced sense of how Black racial fugitivity and gender transness trace different roots toward the same “anoriginal lawlessness” of a groundless state of being from which difference emerges. Hortense J. Spillers’s “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book” is part of the genealogy of both contemporary Black feminisms and trans studies that Bey draws from and extends. Slavery and its afterlife have attenuated the possibility of Black women’s inclusion in the white patrilinéal ordering of gender, Spillers contends, and—in a move that preceded and informed Stryker’s articulation of a (white) trans gender-monstrosity enlivened by darkness—she asks Black women to forego attempts to belong to a racialized gender ordering that will never serve them and, instead, to formulate a new “insurgent” ontological ground. Other selections in the section include “TransMaterialities: Trans*/Matter/Realities and Queer Political Imaginings,” in which feminist science studies scholar Karen Barad brings a physicist’s perspective to bear on the materiality of the cosmological void and puts quantum field theory into dialogue with work in queer and trans theory. A selection from Zakiyyah Iman Jackson’s “Theorizing in a Void” offers a nuanced engagement with the possibilities for rupture from racial hierarchies encoded into notions of gender and the human, thus completing a circuit between Black feminisms, trans studies, and science studies.

“The Coloniality of (Trans)Gender” addresses how currently dominant ways of thinking about sex/gender are a part of an ongoing practice of European colonization. This practice not only works through the assumption that there are two kinds of bodies (sexes) and two categories of people (genders) but the even more fundamental assumption that body-difference is a naturally given way of assigning people to social categories. We open with Saylesh Wesley’s “Twin-Spirited Woman: Sts’îyóye smestiyeiw slhá:li,” in which a contemporary Indigenous trans and two-spirit woman asks her grandmother—a powerful matriarch of the traditionally matrilineal, matrifocal Stó:lō people—to dream a name in their native language for the kind of person Wesley knew herself to be; doing so was a profound enactment of Indigenous survivance, asserting the power of a living culture to imagine in the present a part of itself that had been erased and suppressed through colonial violence. Postcolonial feminist philosopher María Lugones’s “The Coloniality of Gender” provides a theoretical scaffolding for the rest of the work in this section and highlights how the “somato-centricity” of the Eurocentric colonial world order installed a “modern/colonial gender system” that divides people according to physical difference and expunges the multiple genders and gender roles that previously appeared in many premodern, Indigenous, and non-Western gender-systems. Deborah Miranda’s “Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California” offers a detailed account of how two-spirit people in her own ancestral culture were explicitly targeted by Spanish colonizers as part of an overarching project of cultural destruction and genocide. A short selection from Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa’s Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza traces the U.S.-México borderlands as a space of constant transition and division, where everyday survival and creative abundance take shape at once. She writes the connections between the racial and ethnic mixing that characterizes the U.S.-Mexican borderlands and the place of queer and trans people amid border space. A final piece by Aniruddha Dutta and Raina Roy, “Decolonizing Transgender in India: Some Reflections,” highlights the need to bring a decolonial perspective not just to trans studies of the Americas but globally. It discusses how “transgender” as a form of identity overwrites multiple forms of gender-variance present in South Asia and in the global South more broadly and functions as a universal standard against which local variations are measured, even as the term is reworked and embodied in different ways across different transnational contexts.
“Queer Gender and Its Discontents” examines the close and sometimes contentious relationship between trans and queer studies. Queer theory tends to focus on sexuality and desire and has treated transness as the expression of a queer potential to disrupt heteronormativity. Trans studies, on the other hand, has been more attuned to questions of embodiment and identity and sees gender as a process of categorizing people that allows desire to “take shape and find its aim.” We include a selection from “Subversive Bodily Acts” in Judith Butler’s paradigm-shifting *Gender Trouble*, as well as one from early trans theorist Jay Prosser’s critique of queer theory’s skewed and partial uptake of trans phenomena in “Judith Butler: Queer Feminism, Transgender, and the Transsubstantiation of Sex.” José Esteban Muñoz’s “The White to Be Angry,” about transfeminine drag artist Vaginal Davis, offers an excellent example of a queer-of-color disidentificatory approach to gender performativity, while Jack Halberstam’s “The Transgender Look” explores queer gender representation in several important trans-developed or trans-focused films of the 1990s. Trans studies scholar Cáel M. Keegan discusses tensions in how trans studies and queer studies both have, and have not, found institutional homes in academic departments of women’s studies in “Getting Disciplined: What’s Trans* About Queer Studies Now?”

“Sexology and Its Critics” historicizes and critiques the idea that trans issues are properly in the domain of scientific or medical studies of sexuality. While of course trans people want good healthcare and might need to talk with doctors and therapists, the idea that there’s something inherently pathological about being trans has been a powerful way of controlling and marginalizing trans life since the nineteenth century. This section includes two case studies from late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sexual scientists. “Case 131” in Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s 1877 *Psychopathia Sexualis* documents a transmasculine life, while “Case 13” in Magnus Hirschfeld’s 1910 *Transvestites* documents a transfeminine life. It’s possible to read both case studies “against the grain,” to recover trans perspectives from them beyond the intent of the doctors. Hirschfeld, a Jewish socialist who was himself gay, is justly remembered for trying to improve the quality of life for trans people through medical science and legal reform. But as two other contributors to this section note, the very sexological research into hormonal and surgical techniques that many trans people have found life-saving are also rooted in sexology’s often explicit racism and support of eugenics. Kadji Amin’s “Trans* Plasticity and the Ontology of Race and Species” examines how late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century glandular therapies now commonly called xenotransplantations (non-human to human transfers of biomatter) functioned as a tool of eugenics and white racial and gender rejuvenation. In “The Matter of Gender,” Nikki Sullivan explores how the concept of gender itself was first articulated by sexologist John Money and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins as a way of conceptualizing how trans and intersex people could have identities as men and women that did not align in normative ways with their natal genitals. Jules Gill-Peterson’s “Trans of Color Critique Before Transsexuality” dives into the archive of the Johns Hopkins University Hospital, which pioneered many of the endocrinological and surgical techniques for altering the genitals of trans and intersex patients, to show how the mid-twentieth-century discourse of “transsexuality” was based on white norms that erased the ways that trans people of color both solicited and evaded the attention of medical science.

C. Riley Snorton and Jin Haritaworn’s “Trans Necropolitics” opens the next section, “Regulating Embodiment.” Snorton and Haritaworn, in their contribution, draw on post-colonial theorist Achille Mbembe’s reworking of Michel Foucault’s concept of biopolitics to point out how, for racialized and colonized subjects, the political management of their life is often solely for the purpose of orchestrating their death rather than managing their lives. They show how trans-of-color death has often been mobilized to enhance white trans life. Relatedly, much of the work in this section is characteristic of the “biopolitical turn” in
trans studies in the early twenty-first century when a newly robust national security apparatus took shape amid the “War on Terror.” Toby Beauchamp’s “Artful Concealment and Strategic Visibility: Transgender Bodies and U.S. State Surveillance After 9/11” explores this fairly recent historic shift, while Clare Sears, in “Electric Brilliance: Cross-Dressing Law and Freak Show Displays in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco,” roots practices of surveilling gender-variance in a much deeper history of regulating public space according to white, heterosexual, and able-bodied norms. In “Incarceration, Identity Politics, and the Trans-Cis Divide,” political scientist Paisley Currah examines the capitalist marketplace logics of incarceration in relation to “freeze frame” policies that work against trans peoples’ access to healthcare on the inside, while legal theorist Dean Spade, in “Trans Law and Politics on a Neoliberal Landscape,” explores the limitations of contemporary rights-based activism as it has taken shape amid massive prison system expansions, growing income inequality, and reductions to social safety net benefits.

“Historicizing Trans” tackles one of the liveliest topics in contemporary trans studies: using trans* methodologies to understand gender-variance in the past, before current identity categories and gender concepts existed. The section opens with Leah DeVun and Zeb Tortorici’s reflection on how we might use trans to develop cross-temporal historical analysis and, conversely, how historical analysis helps us reconsider transness in new ways. Their conceptual framing of “trans*historicities” in “Trans, Time, and History” likewise helps us to engage trans history writing from early essays such as Leslie Feinberg’s “Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come,” to more recent work in the field. Mary Weismantel’s “Towards a Transgender Archeology: A Queer Rampage Through Prehistory” uses trans theory to suggest how current ideologies of a biological sex/gender binary inform a misreading of the deep human past that serves only to naturalize presentist frames of reference. Other work in this section explores much more recent history. Paul B. Preciado’s “Pharmaco-Pornographic Regime: Sex, Gender, and Subjectivity in the Age of Punk Capitalism” offers a provocative riff on post-WWII techno-science that positions the pharmaceutically altered, hypersexualized trans body as the paradigmatic figure of our historical era. In “ONE, Inc. and Reed Erickson,” Aaron H. Devor and Nicholas Matte offer a history of the contentious and largely unremembered support of gay activism by a wealthy trans man from the 1960s to the early 1980s, while Afshaneh Najmabadi’s “Reading Transsexuality in Gay Tehran (Around 1979)” documents how trans and gay categories of identity rooted in a Eurocentric frame of reference shifted before and after the Iranian Revolution.

“Transing the Non/Human” begins with a classic work of feminist science studies, Donna J. Haraway’s “A Cyborg Manifesto,” which provided a point of departure for her student Sandy Stone’s “Posttranssexual Manifesto.” Haraway’s cyborg offered a way to rethink many of the binaries that characterize contemporary embodiment: nature/culture, machinic/organic, human/animal, male/female, nonliving/living. Hil Malatino’s “Biohacking Gender: Cyborgs, Coloniality, and the Pharmacopornographic Era” discusses both Haraway and Preciado to suggest that however liberatory it can feel to engage in DIY practices of body-transformation that point to some better posthuman cyborgian future, these very frames of reference remain embedded in capitalism and coloniality—an embeddedness that Haraway acknowledges in her work. Mel Y. Chen, in “Animals Without Genitals: Race and Transubstantiation,” reads representations of genital presence/absence in a variety of cultural texts to show how moments of “transness” make visible the way race and species operate as categories that create hierarchies between different kinds of life. In “Lessons from a Starfish,” Eva Hayward similarly reads moments of transness in “The Cripple and the Starfish,” a song by not-yet-out as trans artist AHNONI of Antony and the Johnsons, to put species difference and disability in conversation with trans studies in ways that open up new ways of thinking about the capacity of life to regenerate itself in new forms. In “Trans Animisms,” Abram
J. Lewis links practices of magic in trans activism to the concept of animism, or ontological liveliness, in the lives and belief systems of two important mid-twentieth-century trans activists, Reed Erickson and Angela Douglas. Rather than idiosyncratic manifestations of strangeness or madness, Lewis shows how this sense of animistic magic has played a central role in trans activism.

Making creative work has long been a practice through which trans people remix and reimagine their worlds. The section of “Trans Cultural Production” includes Julian Carter’s “Embracing Transition, or Dancing in the Folds of Time,” which uses technical dance terminology and the metaphor of choreography to offer an expansive theorization of how “transition” can remake the relationships between bodies, time, and space. In “Performance as Intravention: Ballroom Culture and the Politics of HIV/AIDS in Detroit,” Marlon M. Bailey uses performance ethnography to explore how ballroom and house culture become sites of queer and trans of color survival through creative expressions of gender and community care, while Treva Ellison offers another deeply theorized account of trans-of-color gender performance as a mode of survival within racial capitalism in “The Labor of Werqing It: The Performance and Protest Strategies of Sir Lady Java.” Francisco J. Galarte, in “Transgender Chicano Poetics,” revisits the cultural production of an earlier generation of Chicana feminism and argues for an expansive jotería that includes trans people. A final selection from Eliza Steinbock, “Shimmering Phantasmagoria,” approaches trans studies by way of film theory to suggest how transsexuality can be considered a “cinematic” mode of embodiment.

Our last set of texts is organized around the theme of “Intersectionality and Embodiment.” The framework of intersectionality—a term coined by critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw and a core concept of contemporary Black feminism—is rooted, by way of Pauli Murray, in a genealogy of thought that has both Black and trans/nonbinary branches. Pauli Murray, a lawyer and legal scholar whose theorization of the intersections of misogyny and racism in the experiences of Black women in the southern United States—an apartheid system Murray dubbed “Jane Crow”—informed not only the concept of intersectionality, but the anti-segregation and reproductive rights rulings of U.S. Supreme Court Justices Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. In “Pauli Murray’s Peter Panic,” Simon D. Elin Fisher shows how Murray’s nonbinary transness foundationally contributed to our understandings of intersectionality from a specifically trans of color perspective. We include another classic work of intersectional Black feminism, the “Black Feminist Statement” of the Combahee River Collective, for the argument it makes against the biological essentialism it saw in contemporaneous white feminism—precisely the characteristic that underpins feminist transphobia. Two other works take the concept of intersectionality in other directions. Eli Clare’s “Selection from Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure” brings a disabilities studies framework to bear on questions of medically assisted gender-transition to critique the ways some able-bodied trans people deploy the pathologizing language of “defect” to describe their relationships with their genders. In so doing, they disavow disability stigma and imagine treatment as cure in ways that serve only to reproduce ableism. In “Hermaphrodites With Attitude,” intersex activist Cheryl Chase charts connections and divergences between the intersex and transgender movements in the 1990s while placing medicalized practices of genital-cutting in a transnational feminist framework. A final essay, Christopher Joseph Lee’s “Undetectibility in a Time of Trans Visibility,” reminds readers of the often unacknowledged centrality of the HIV/AIDS pandemic to the historical context in which trans studies took shape. Fisher repurposes the notion of “undetectability,” a term which often refers to an undetectable HIV viral load, and uses it to rethink questions of trans-of-color visibility and vulnerability to premature death through exposure to structural racism and transphobia.
We hope that you find a rhythm of your own as you read the *Remix*—whether that’s by reading within sections or skipping across them, reading the chapters in order or at random. We developed the *Remix* as a specifically trans project, one that highlights the cross-disciplinary linkages already looping underneath new and old trans studies tracks.

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Notes

2. See www.prri.org/research/american-attitudes-towards-transgender-people/.