

dr hab. Agnieszka Graff, prof. ucz.  
Ośrodek Studiów Amerykańskich, Uniwersytet Warszawski

## „TRANSTRENDERS” – lesson plan

Link to video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdvM\\_pRfuFM&list=PLhcg2qQsycN0\\_RgLTAlnxx3EqZ2aXf3SK&index=196](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdvM_pRfuFM&list=PLhcg2qQsycN0_RgLTAlnxx3EqZ2aXf3SK&index=196)

This video is an episode of series of lectures/performances entitled Contrapoints. The series is a cult youtube phenomenon in the US and beyond. You may want to start by reading on WIKIPEDIA about Natalie Wynn, the artist responsible for this video. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ContraPoints>  
Watch as much as you think your students can take. 6-10 minutes may be enough. It is not easy, but you do not need to follow all the details to find it really funny and liberating.

### Discuss the video:

1. Discuss the two opposed perspectives on what it means to be TRANS voiced here. They are both parodied in a friendly way. All the characters played by the same person who is also TRANS. Note that *trans* is not necessarily transsexual...

**Tiffany Tumbles:** The essentialist position expressed by Tiffany: being Trans as dysphoria, a medical condition that needs to be cured by hormones and surgery. To this person, gender is a biological reality. “I was diagnosed! IT is real!” “You do not have a female brain, you have a fashion disaster”

**Baltimore Maryland:** The gender-constructivist position: to be Trans is to be non-binary, to have no need to commit to one sex, to distrust of the idea of “female brain” and “male brain”. This person has a strong commitment to the idea that gender binary is oppressive and a social constructionism. “I don’t like society fitting me into categories”. Uses the pronoun THEY. “Aren’t we all freaks in the eyes of society?” “How do you know you have a female brain?”

**What makes the video hilarious is that both trans persons are bitchy and that the interviewer is a “real woman” also played by Natalie Wynn ...**

Try to get the students to see that the two positions COEXIST. The beauty of this video is pro-TRANS but accepting of different approaches to it.

### 2. Here are SOME KEY TERMS TO help your DISCUSSION:

**Trans** – An abbreviation that is sometimes used to refer to a gender variant person. This use allows a person to state a gender variant identity without having to disclose hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

**Transgender** – A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity.

**Cisgender** – describes someone who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based on their physical sex.

**Gender Variant** – A person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society (e.g. transgender, transsexual, intersex, genderqueer, cross-dresser, etc.).

**Transgendered (Trans) Community** – A loose category of people who transcend gender norms in a wide variety of ways. The central ethic of this community is unconditional acceptance of individual exercise of freedoms including gender and sexual identity and orientation.

**Transhate** – The irrational hatred of those who are gender variant, usually expressed through violent and often deadly means.

Here is a great glossary:

<https://www.uis.edu/gendersexualitystudentservices/about/lgbtqterminology/>