

Bodily aesthetic affects in trans erotica: towards a wider 'spectra of desire.'

Zowie Davy PhD,
School of Health and Social Care, University of
Lincoln, UK

Background

- ▶ ‘bodily effects that disrupt or denaturalize heteronormatively constructed linkages between an individual’s anatomy at birth, a non-consensually assigned gender category, psychical identifications with sexed body images and/or gendered subject positions, and the performance of specifically gendered social, sexual, or kinship functions’ (Stryker, 1998: 149)

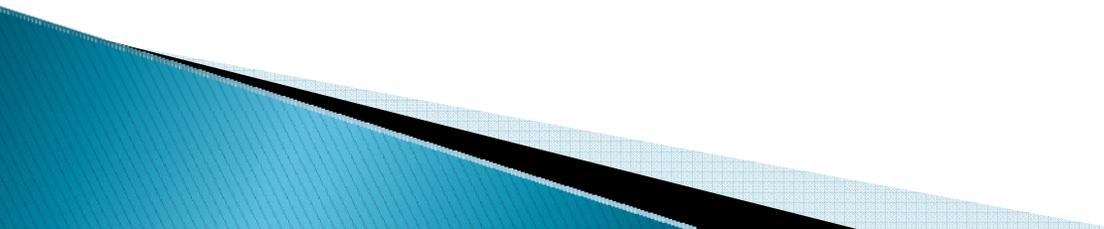
Background

- ▶ the art of life [rather] than a science or scientific knowledge (or pseudoscientific knowledge) of what sexuality is. [Because s]exuality is a part of our behavior. It's a part of our world freedom. Sexuality is something that we ourselves create—it's our own creation, and much more than the discovery of a secret side of our desire. We have to understand that with our desires, through our desires go new forms of relationships, new forms of love, new forms of creation (Foucault, 1994: 163).

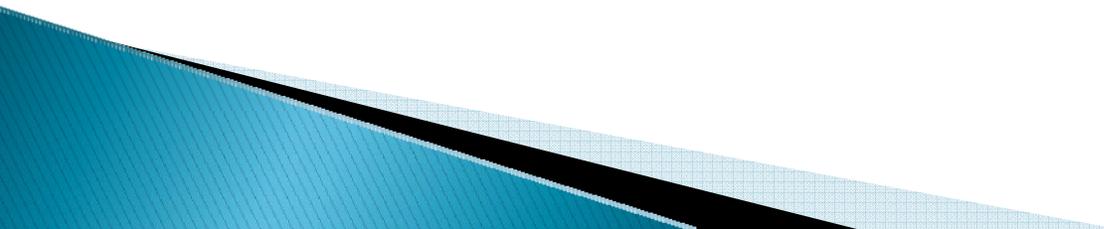
Background

- ▶ Sexual desire is constituted upon many factors, other than the gender of those who are desired, and analyses that neglect these factors miss the intersected bodily aesthetic images that generates desire.

Methodology

- ▶ This narrative approach allows a focus on the intentional motivations of the writers rather than the motivations of the researcher.
 - ▶ The analysis focuses on three collections of trans erotica stories, consisting of over fifty narratives that acknowledge erotic practices, desires and fantasies.
- 

Analytical approach

- ▶ I will attempt to adhere to Sandy Stone's (Stone, 2006 [1991]) call for theorizations that illuminate trans desire through a wider 'spectra of desire.'
 - ▶ I will attempt to incorporate theories of trans sexuality that begin from the transitioning and transitioned body itself.
 - ▶ Consequently, I foreground transsexual and transgendering transitioning practices and the erotic aesthetic descriptions as invocations of sexual critique toward the established orders of sexuality, such as hetero/homo/bisexuality.
- 

Analytical approach

- ▶ attractions and erotic intensities undermine 'our best attempts at deciding conclusively, on [sexual] identities and selves' (Crawford, 2008: 133).

Medical restraints

- ▶ representations forces sex back into the closet and 'robs transwomen of their erotic possibilities' (Dreger, 2008: 56).

Medical restraints

- ▶ I faithfully reported each foray into heterosexuality to the hospital's noncommittal therapist, desperate to be the good patient upon whom she would confer surgery when my waiting time was up. I finally informed her that I could not be straight [and] that the only thing which still gave me my somewhat limp, estrogen impaired erections were other women (Wilchins, 1997a: 142).

Out of the closet

- ▶ 'Josephine': 'As she pulled herself close to me, I felt a flat muscular chest up against my back, in addition to the unmistakable lean hardness of a man against my buttocks. I gasped. A she-male. I was so incredibly aroused' (Rosenkrans, 2006: 199).

Learning new tricks inn transgender studies

- ▶ The ritual of penile masturbation just before surgery,' euphemistically called, 'wringing the turkey's neck' is suggested to be the most 'secret of secret traditions' (Stone, 2006 [1991]: 228).

A becoming language

- ▶ The mixture of constructed penises that cover hormone enlarged clitorises, known also as micrococks or micropenises that fuck neovaginas, or the kissing of reconstructed scrotums made from the labia majora that envelop a 'wet cunt' (Sprinkle, 2006)

A becoming language

- ▶ Deterritorialization is often witnessed in climaxes that, for example, Cait (Cait, 2006: 106) describes as ‘ripping up from a place I hadn’t found before.’

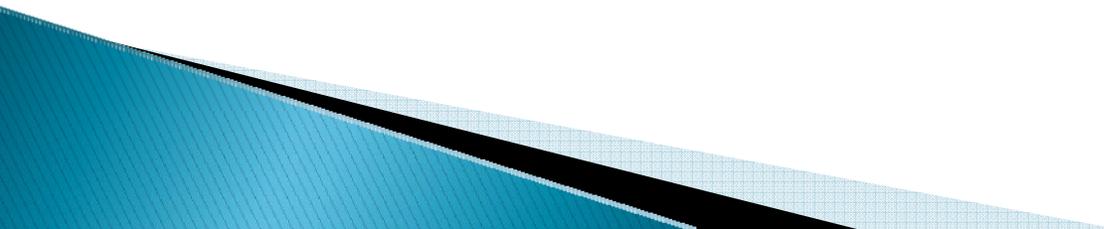
Shame

- ▶ ‘it felt like fluid shame had finally been given the permission to escape out of my body. It felt so good, I felt so clean, and I felt so free’ (Rosenkrans, 2006: 198).
- ▶ ‘for a longtime after that fuck, I knew I mattered in the world. I knew I had something good about me [...] my counterpart was real and not some insane figment of my damaged sexual fantasies’ (Patrick Califia, 2006:70).

Breakthroughs

- ▶ my daily voice, my daily body, my daily fears. I am changing; we are dancing. We have broken through [...] and I wondered if I would ever break through, as I wandered through one-night stands and short-time lovers, remembered the details of their bodies, but not their faces, their technique, but not their words (Wilchins, 1997a: 144).

Reterritorializations

- ▶ ‘I am filled with a kind of wonder now, my body showing me things novel and unsuspected’ (Wilchins, 1997a: 147).
 - ▶ ‘know for the first time and with certainty beyond simple trust that I am free’ (Wilchins, 1997a:149)
- 

Reterritorializations

- ▶ I fucked his pussy with the dildo and gave his dick a hand job while he vigorously friggged his clitoris. It was so far out to see a man frig his clit. When he came, it sounded like a woman's orgasm, but with a man's voice. He was, of course, capable of multiple orgasms (Sprinkle, 2006: 23).