

Trans: Gender and Race in an Age of Unsettled Identities. By Rogers Brubaker. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. 256 pp. \$24.95 (hardcover).

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In *Trans: Gender and Race in an Age of Unsettled Identities*, Rogers Brubaker takes on the “trans moment” exemplified by the media spectacle surrounding Caitlin Jenner coming out as transgender and Rachel Dolezal being outed as white by ancestry while continuing to identify as black. Brubaker seeks to understand identities generally and race specifically by thinking about race via the trans of transgender in its various forms. That is, for Brubaker, “trans is not just a social phenomenon to think *about*; it is also a conceptual tool to think *with*” (68). He interrogates a central tension in the contemporary politics of identity between, on the one hand, chosenness, which emphasizes choice, autonomy, self-fashioning, and subjectivity, and, on the other, givenness, which focuses on essence, nature, and objectivity. By reading the notion of transracial through the lens of transgender, Brubaker charts the similarities and differences in the malleability of categorizations across gender and race.

The first section engages explicitly the media coverage and public conversation on Caitlin Jenner and Rachel Dolezal and is mired in the limitations of this comparison. Brubaker charts opinions on the legitimacy of changing one’s gender or race as either essentialist (neither may be legitimately changed), voluntarist (both may be legitimately changed), or gender voluntarist and racial essentialist (gender may be changed but race may not), with the category of gender essentialist and racial voluntarist notably absent from the Dolezal debate. Brubaker often describes the Jenner and Dolezal debates as intertwined or twinned, yet this framing misses, or downplays, the ways in which the joint framing of Jenner with Dolezal was not accidental but rather political. While Brubaker acknowledges that the Dolezal story was deployed by some as a strategy to delegitimize transgender individuals, including Jenner, he does not grapple with the implications. What does it mean to understand race via transgender when transracial was being deployed to delegitimize transgender? While Brubaker acknowledges that both Jenner and Dolezal are idiosyncratic cases, in his discussion Jenner stands in for a

large and increasingly visible transgender community while Dolezal is a more singular case. Brubaker only briefly identifies, rather than fully engage with, other cases of individuals who have crossed racial lines.

This section might have been strengthened by serious engagement with the literatures on intersectionality, which he only briefly acknowledges. Such engagement might have opened up greater interrogation of the logic of whiteness underlying the Dolezal affair and of the economic resources central to the Jenner transition, for example. Framing the transgender moment through Jenner encourages the framing of the trans moment through whiteness and economic privilege. Taking Jenner as his example may contribute to Brubaker's optimism about the acceptance of transgender people, relegating those who would not affirm a trans person's identity as cultural conservatives and radical feminists. However, this misses the persistent and pervasive mistreatment, violence, and hardship faced by transgender people, as made clear by *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey* (2016).

In the second section, Brubaker moves away from the intertwined Jenner and Dolezal debates in order to think with trans through three distinct approaches: the neocategorical approach, the anticategorical approach, and the postcategorical — that is, the trans of migration, the trans of between, and the trans of beyond, respectively. Here the book hits its stride as we are invited along as Brubaker thinks about race and ethnicity by thinking with the trans of transgender. This is not a text about transgender experience but rather a meditation on how race specifically and identity categories generally can be questioned and rethought by taking seriously what is made visible by the multiple articulations of transgender. I do wish there was more sustained engagement with the state and, as noted above, the political. While throughout the text there are occasional references to birth certificates, the census, legal precedents, and adoption, there is no sustained analysis. I would have liked to see Brubaker develop more fully the role of the state in the construction and maintenance of the sex/gender and racial classification schema. The orientation of the text is to understand race via the trans of gender. As such the text raises, but may not resolve, important questions and tensions for gender and race scholars alike. In the process, Brubaker systematically charts the contours of gender categorization and offers a clear and broad overview of the many articulations of transgender. Yet, ultimately for this text, transgender people are metaphors for thinking about race, and this is perhaps the limitation of thinking with trans

without deeply engaging the voices of transgender people and the scholarship from transgender studies.

A sociologist and scholar of ethnicity, Brubaker describes himself as an “outsider” to the study of race and gender generally and transgender issues specifically. He describes the book as an “essay in trespassing” (xi). But who is allowed to trespass on whom in which fields and be published in a university press? And yet, as much as I was troubled by the project, I found the text provocative, stimulating, and engaging. This is not the place to look for the most up-to-date, cutting edge ideas from critical race studies, gender studies, or transgender studies. However, it is a place to read along as a thoughtful scholar “thinks with trans” in creative and generative ways. Accessibly written, the book would spark productive debate in many classroom settings but should be read alongside works from within the literatures and identities on which Brubaker is trespassing.

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Freedom without Permission: Bodies and Space in the Arab Revolutions. Edited by Frances S. Hasso and Zakia Salime. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016. 304 pp. \$24.95 (paperback); \$89.95 (hardcover).

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This book is a valuable contribution to growing literature examining the political, aesthetic, affective, and performative dynamics associated with the Arab Uprisings of 2011–2013. Editors Frances S. Hasso and Zakia Salime identify “spatialized gender and sexual dynamics and symbolism” (2) as the central themes that animated contributors’ research and