

# “Is There a Transnational Queer Studies?”

Since its birth in the early 1990s, queer theory and queer studies have circulated globally, by way of conferences, internationally influential essays and books, and other flows of scholarly information. However, in 2010 it is still worthwhile asking, “is there today a truly transnational queer studies?” This lecture will examine two ways of answering that question: one is practical and skeptical; the other is theoretical and optimistic. In the first half of this talk, I will discuss the sometimes frustrating, if always exciting and rewarding work of co-editing a massive new anthology that attempts to capture “queer studies” in its current complexity and global circulation. The process of constructing *The Routledge Queer Studies Reader* (co-editors Hall and Jagose) has revealed many of the impediments to realizing a transnational queer studies. The field remains constricted by linguistic, geographical, and base theoretical “norms,” even though, as a political and intellectual project, it claims to devote itself to challenging normative concepts and processes. On the other hand, there is cause for optimism. A highly dynamic “queer conversation” is flourishing globally that reveals the continuing, open-ended potentials of the field. In referencing Gadamerian concepts of dialogic challenge and epistemological change, I will conclude my talk with a set of reflections and queries that should lead to a productive conversation among audience members on the inherent limitations and still-to-be-realized potentials of queer studies in a transnational context.



## Lecture by Professor Donald E. Hall

Donald E. Hall is Jackson Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of English at West Virginia University. He received his PhD from the University of Maryland and taught for 13 years at California State University, Northridge, before joining the WVU faculty in 2004. A long-time social activist in the queer rights movement, he has also published widely in the fields of gender studies, Victorian cultural studies, and higher education studies. He is the author or editor of ten books, including *Queer Theories* (Palgrave 2003), *Subjectivity* (Routledge 2004), *The Academic Community: A Manual for Change* (Ohio State, 2007), and *Reading Sexualities: Hermeneutic Theory and the Future of Queer Studies* (Routledge, 2009). He has taught as a visiting professor in Rwanda, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Hungary, and Romania, among other locales.



**November 25 (Thursday), 2010**  
**5:30-7:00 pm, Building 10, Room 301**

