

SDSU's Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs
Presents

A Symposium on “Social Identity, Passing, and Epistemic Authority”

About the Theme: From standpoint theory to epistemic justice, scholars have argued for decades that a person's social identity has a direct impact on what they know and how they know it. However, this relationship between who you are and what you know is made far more complex by the phenomenon of 'passing.' Among other effects, passing muddies the waters when it comes to social identity and, therefore, complicates what we can say about who knows what.

- Can a white person that passes as non-white, like in the famous case of Rachel Dolezal, speak with authority about racism?
- Does a disabled person that rejects that identity and passes as non-disabled have any special knowledge about living in an ableist society?
- Does it even make sense to think about gender in terms of “passing,” given what the trans community has taught us about gender identity?

Over the course of a day and presentations from three speakers, this symposium will invite the audience to grapple with these difficult questions and more.

Campus and community co-sponsors: SDSU Disability Employee Resource Group; SDSU Department of Classics and Humanities; SDSU Department of Sociology; SDSU American Indian Studies; SDSU Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; SDSU LGBTQ+ Studies.

Friday, March 21

9 a.m.–5 p.m.

SDSU Love Library, LL-430/431

Leon Williams Room

Hybrid Event

[Register for Zoom attendance](#)



For more information or to request disability accommodation, please contact IEPA Director

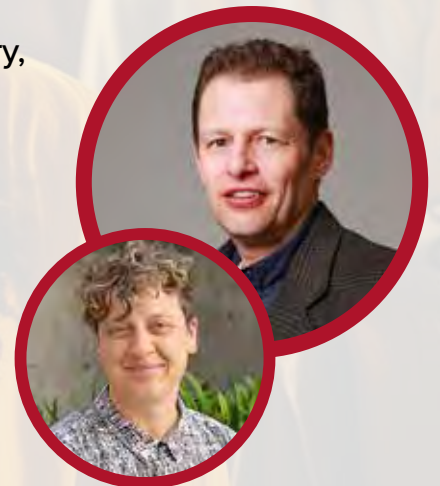
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SDSU

College of Arts and Letters
**Institute for Ethics
and Public Affairs**

SCHEDULE | FRIDAY, MARCH 21

- 9–9:30 a.m.** ■ Coffee and Welcome
- 9:30–11 a.m.** ■ **Dr. Talia Mae Bettcher**, professor of philosophy, CSU Los Angeles (author of *Beyond Personhood: An Essay in Trans Philosophy*)
Commentator: Dr. Marie Draz, associate professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies, SDSU
- 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.** ■ Break/Lunch on your own
- 12:15–1:45 p.m.** ■ **Dr. Kim Tallbear**, professor of native studies, University of Alberta; Canada research chair (CRC) in Indigenous peoples, technoscience, and society (author of *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*)
Commentator: Dr. Olivia Chilcote, associate professor of American Indian studies, SDSU
- 1:45–2 p.m.** ■ Break
- 2–3:30 p.m.** ■ **Dr. Jeffrey Brune**, associate professor of history, Gallaudet University (editor of *Disability and Passing: Blurring the Lines of Identity*; editor-in-chief of *Disability Studies Quarterly*)
Commentator: Dr. Jess Whatcott, assistant professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies, SDSU
- 3:30–4 p.m.** ■ Panel — All Speakers
- 4–5 p.m.** ■ Reception (light refreshments)



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