

the



GENDER book

www.thegenderbook.com

by mel reiff hill
and jay mays
and a whole big
beautiful community

[Rough Draft]
for updates, please
check ww.thegenderbook.com

Hi, my name is Boston.



this book may blow your mind. If you're like me, you probably grew up with some ideas about what it means to be a boy or a girl.

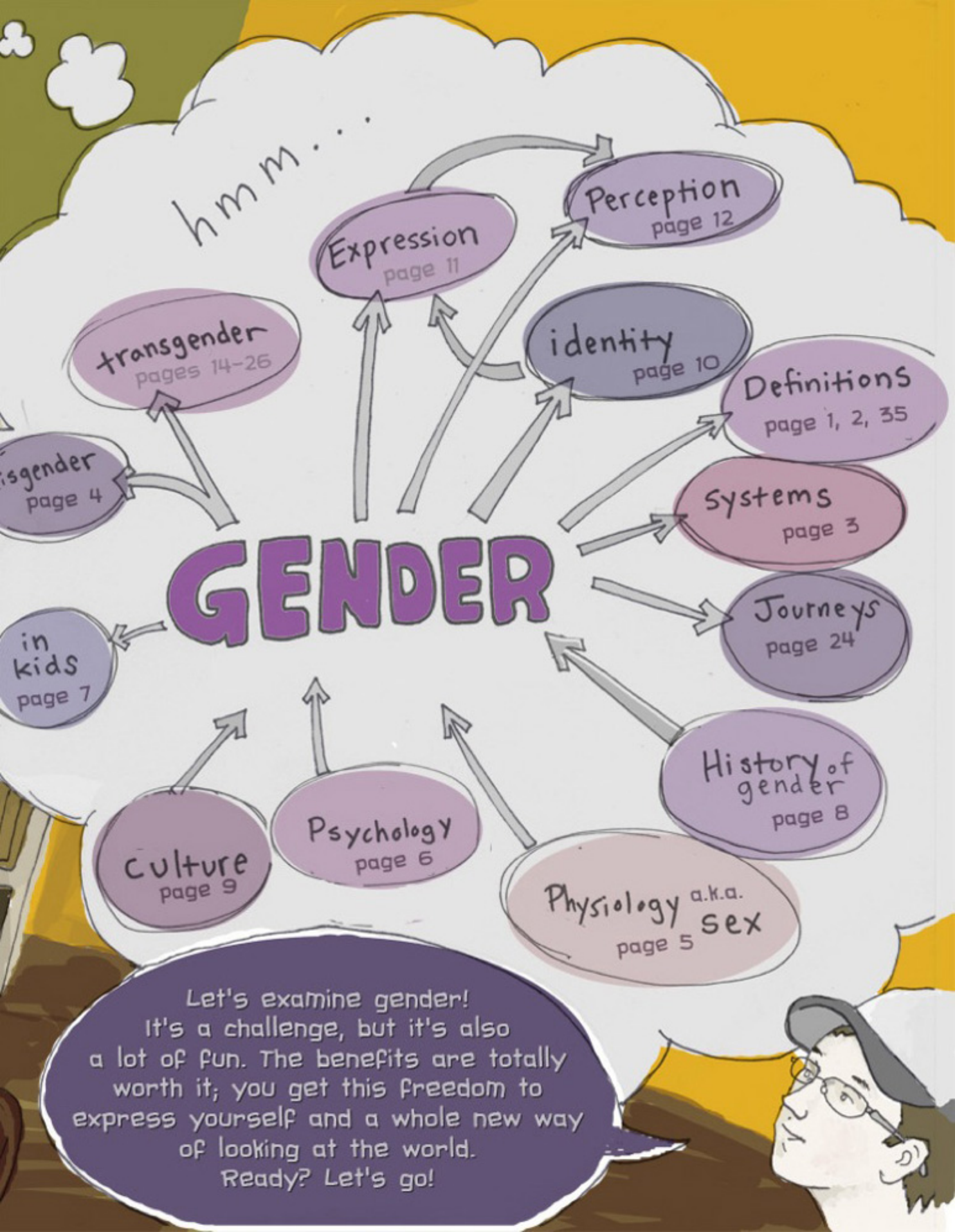
I remember being told which side of the department store I could buy my bathing suits in, which roles I could inhabit in make-believe games, and fairy tales where the prince was always the hero. As I grew up, I realized not everyone fit into these boxes.

My mom could be the breadwinner, my brother could be sensitive, and I might not match a lot of them myself.

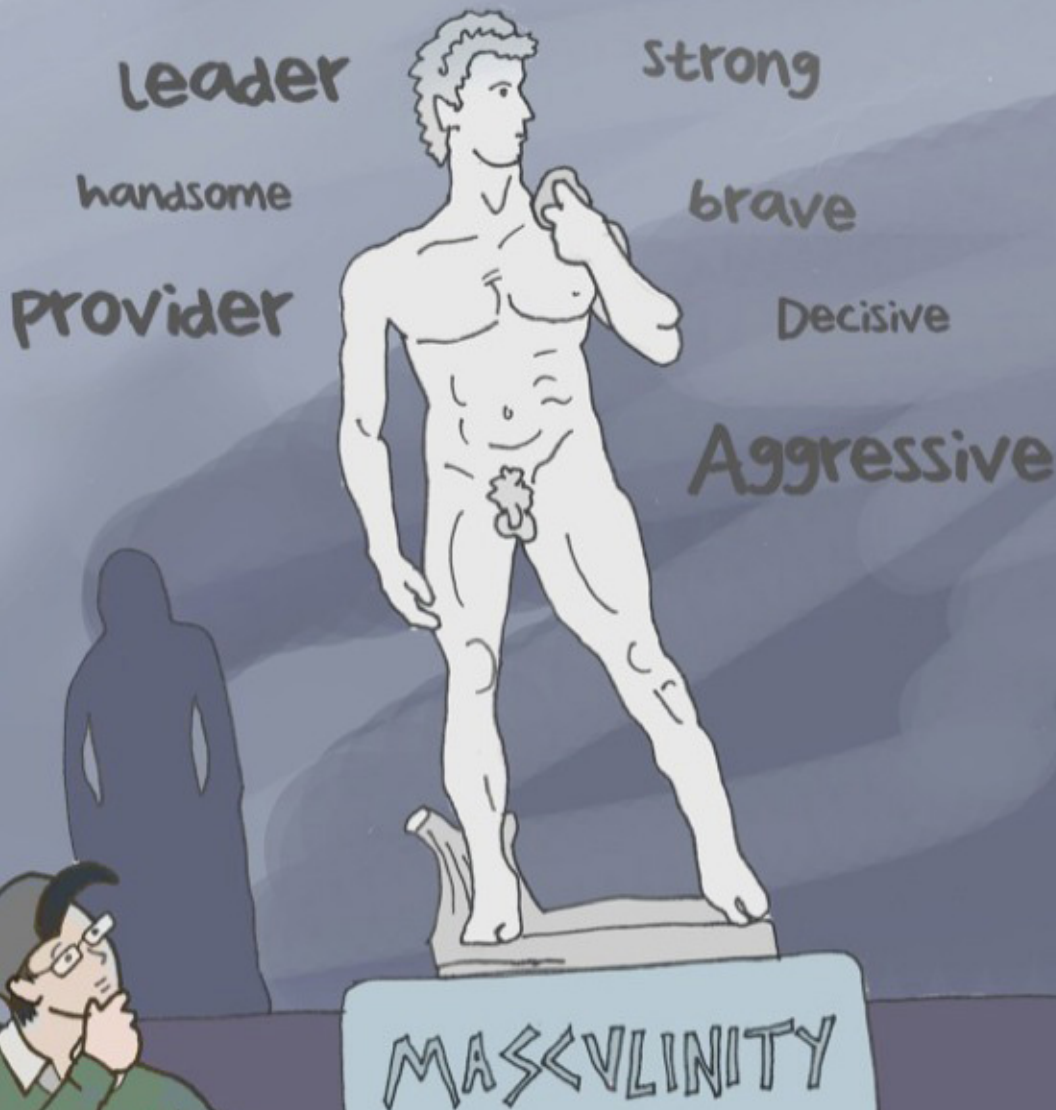
So I set off to discover all I could about this thing called gender. This book is the result of countless interviews, over 200 surveys, many hours in the library, and a bunch of soul-searching of my own. I met some incredible people along the way whose stories I'll share.



And so, the idea for the GENDER book was born...



Gender Assumptions



What are the words and images that first pop into my head when I think about masculinity and femininity?
Where do these ideas come from?
Do I agree with these terms? Do you?

I guess a good place to start to explore the idea of gender is within my own culture, and with my own thoughts.

Sensitive

Graceful

mysterious

empathetic

caring

Passionate

Beautiful

Femininity



FEMME

seductive foxy
fancy powerful

If you asked others what came to mind for them when thinking about gender, what kind of answers do you think you'd hear?

DEFINING GENDER



Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and cultural expectations of what it means to be male or female, masculine or feminine, or any combination, or any absence of gender thereof, which can be expressed through characteristics, traits, behaviors, and more. Rather than "being a gender," we "do gender;" it's a performance.

Gender can also be thought of as a system "of classification that ascribes qualities of masculinity and femininity to people" (1) or a system "of symbols and meanings... a way of thinking and seeing" (2). We get messages about what it means to be masculine or feminine from our society, and those messages change over time and differ depending on the culture.

GENDER is . . .

fun!

a set of social
agreements

a label

a figment of our imagination

beautiful

a balancing act

a tool used to
communicate

a barrier; nothing more

an adventure

*a journey of self discovery and self reflection
simultaneously liberating and binding*

endless performance

an attitude

a social construct

one facet of a multi-faceted identity

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

(and why they aren't true.)

One of the first things to do was to unpack a lot of inherited beliefs about gender and examine them for myself. Before you leave this page, I'd invite you to do the same. After all, before I could even ask, "what is gender?" I had to figure out what gender *isn't*.

hmm..
Some of
these don't fit.
Garage sale
time!



S

GENDER is obvious
Nope! The only way to be sure you know how someone identifies is to ask them.

weaker sex

GENDER IS THE SAME AS SEX

No way! Maybe it matches for you, but not everyone feels that way. The short answer is that sex lives between your legs, while gender lives in between your ears.

see gender versus sex, pg. ---

Some genders are better than others

GENDER is static
Nope! gender can change over the course of your life.

body parts have gender significance.

just because most women have breasts doesn't mean everyone with breasts is a woman (for example) or that a woman without them is any less a woman. The same is true for any part.

Gender bending means you're gay.

Sure, I can think of a lot of gender nonconformists who are gay or bisexual, but I can also think of a lot who are straight! Similarly, not all GLB folks are gender benders.

see the birds and the bees, pg. ---

Gender is pink + blue

Actually, this is pretty recent! the colors used to be reversed. Just an interesting example of how a culture's gender can shift.

there are only 2 genders

this misconception is so common it has its own name- the gender binary. Actually, there are (at least) as many genders as there are cultures, and lots of more helpful ways to think of them than simply masculine and feminine.

see the gender binary, pg. ---
see gender across cultures, pg. ---

women are not as

So if we throw out those assumptions that don't work, what's left? It seems clear to me that gender isn't biology, it isn't your sexuality, it isn't always obvious, it isn't how you were raised or what surgeries you can afford, it isn't static, and it's not how others see you. Gender is, simply:

how you see yourself.

People sometimes confuse gender and sex. While **gender** refers to one's identity and the expression of that identity, **sex** is a label that refers to a person's reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormone-dependent characteristics like body hair and breast tissue.

Our sex marker, the M or F, is used by doctors, lawmakers, and institutions as a way to classify us, like on our driver's license or birth certificate.

But is it really necessary to do so?





You were born a little baby, the doctor saw a little baby penis, and decided you fit best under the "male" sex category.

Maybe this matches your chromosomes and secondary characteristics, and maybe it doesn't. In fact, it's hard to know for sure. When was the last time you had your chromosomes tested?

Say it doesn't match, what then? It doesn't have to be a fight, but for many it is.

If it's gender versus sex, which wins? At the end of the day, your sense of self is more important than your blood work or body parts in determining what makes you... you.



the tastest Papayas
come from



trees
whose
flowers are
hermaphroditic..



INTERSEX

bodies not 100% gender conforming

1 in 100 births⁵

A person who is intersex could have some of both sets of sexual organs, differently developed sexual organs, unique sex chromosomes, and/or unexpected levels of hormones for someone of their body type. There are lots of things a doctor might look at to label someone intersex, and lots of folks are without even knowing it. Let's learn more.



Garden snails can mate with any other adult of their species. That's a real hermaphrodite.

HORMONES

e.g.

Androgen
Insensitivity
Syndrome
and
Congenital
Adrenal
Hyperplasia

All people have both estrogen and testosterone in different levels, and the way our bodies process these hormones can make our experiences very personal (3). While lots of people with more testosterone identify as masculine, for example, there are also many people whose gender identity doesn't correlate with their hormones at all.

Some people have sex characteristics, such as internal and external genitals, that are not exclusively "male" or "female." Even with "typical" bodies, you can't really make assumptions about gender based on body parts. We tend to think of breasts as a feminine body part, though not everyone who has them is feminine. And the same is true in reverse; a woman who has a double mastectomy is no less a woman.

BODY PARTS

GENES

e.g.

Klinefelter's
Syndrome
and
Turner
Syndrome

Most folks are familiar with DNA, the code for developing life from one cell to many. Genes specify everything from eye color to body hair (which also happens to be moderated by hormones; it's all connected). Some of these genes are given gender significance. Two kinds of bodies are common that correlate to the famous XX and XY chromosomes, but they aren't the only combinations of chromosomes out there. Plus, some folks have multiple kinds at once!

F.Y.I...

The only true hermaphrodites are animals and plants like me. Today we use the more appropriate term "intersex" for our human friends.



Hermaphroditus was the child of Hermes and Aphrodite.

One topic many of my friends feel strongly against is genital surgery on kids to "correct" ambiguous genitals.

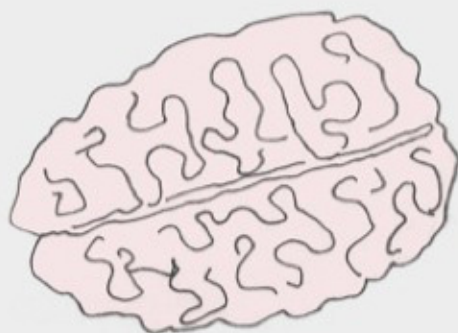
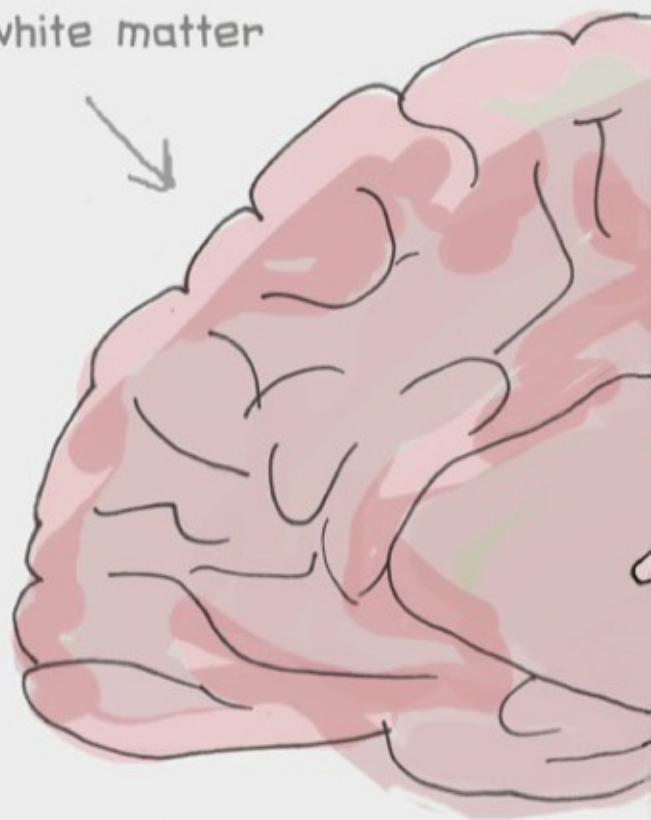
What do you see as the pros and cons to this?

SEX DIFFERENCES: the

I did some research and I didn't find any differences on how our brains function. Sure, some are bigger or smaller, but they all work very similarly no matter what body you were born with. I did come across some fascinating research, though!

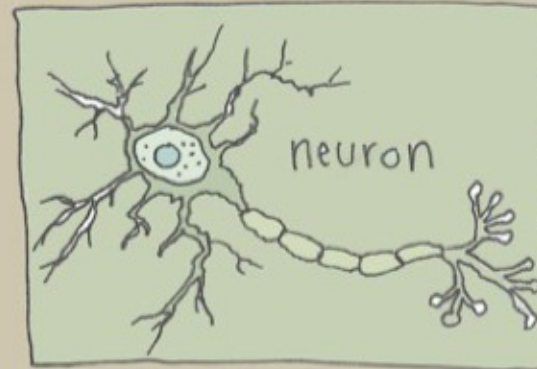
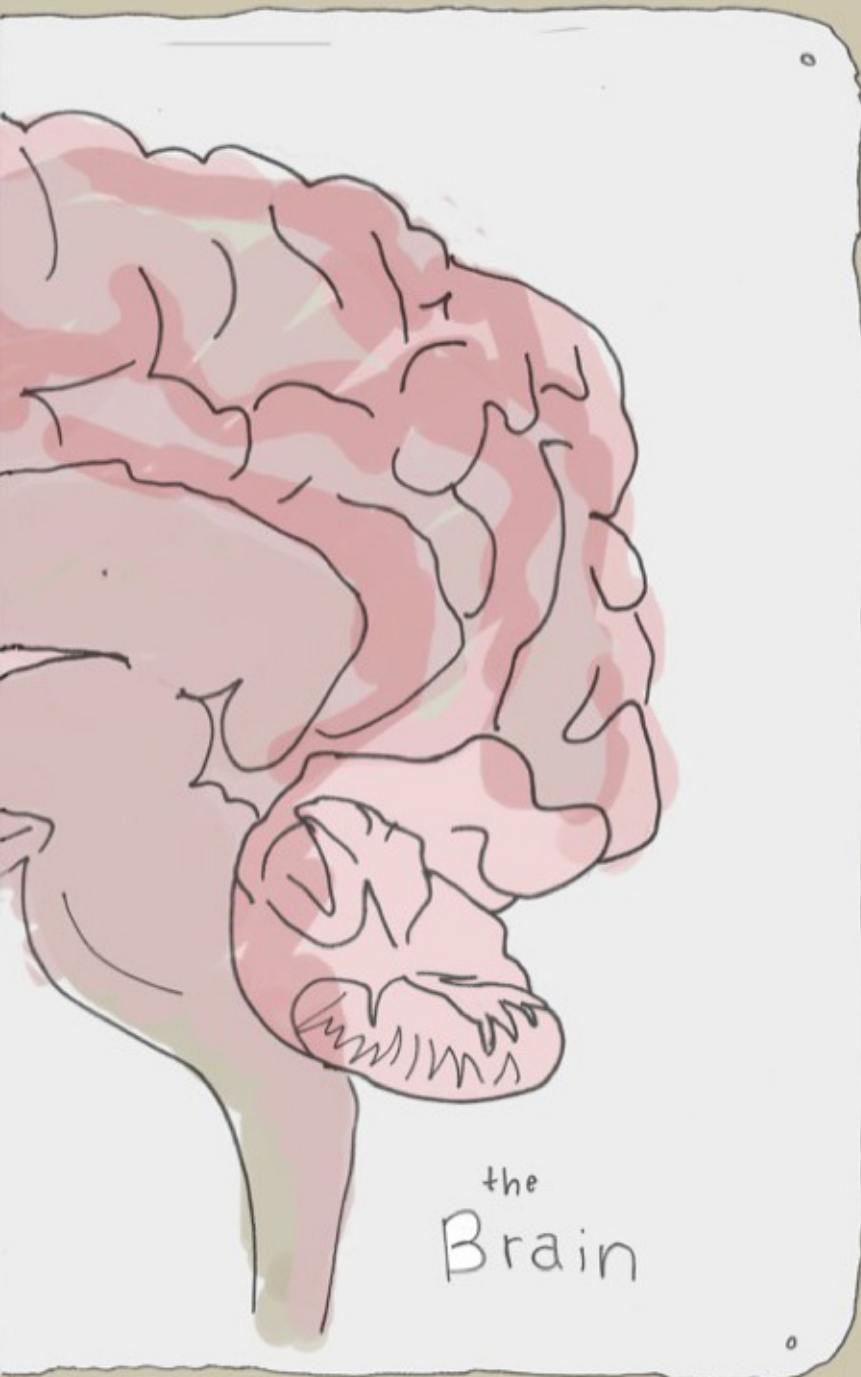


white matter



Curious? See

BRAIN



One study in particular found that the shape of a structure in the white matter of our brains seemed to depend on that person's gender identity, rather than on that person's sex (5).

This is interesting, but perhaps the important thing to remember is that science just hasn't found significant differences when comparing brain functionality.

For further reading for more studies!



It's a **GIRL!**

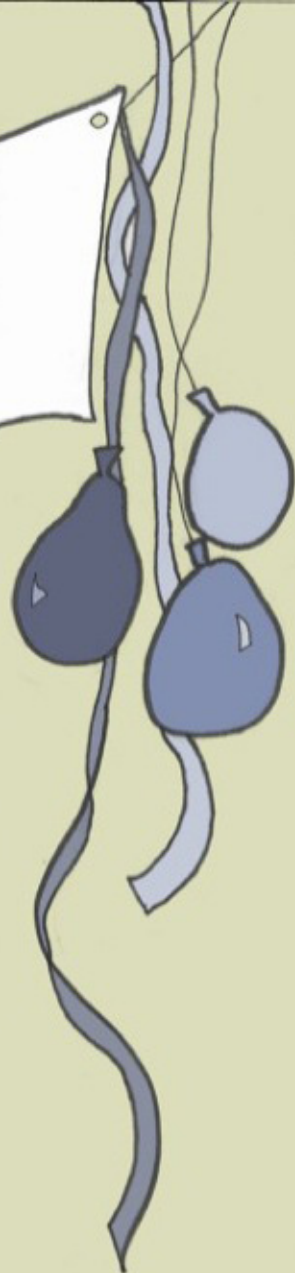
My readings taught me that, after an ultra sound, people sometimes use different tones of voice, and also describe the movements of a fetus in the womb with gendered adjectives, once genetic sex has been assigned (7). If this is so, how can I determine how much of my behavior and preferences are because of my biology, and how much is socialization, conscious or unconscious? Can gender-neutral parenting really exist?

What would it be like if dolls and trucks and fishing and playing house were cool for anyone?



it's a **BoY!**

When I was younger, I certainly preferred some toys to others, and I noticed that some were pastel colors like pink, and other toys were bright blue and green and other bold colors. What toys did you want to play with? Were there any games you wished you could play but were off-limits to you?



תורה TORAH

And the man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man". - Genesis 2:23

c. 1312 B.C.E.



66 AGAIN, THE MALE IS BY NATURE SUPERIOR, AND THE FEMALE INFERIOR; AND THE ONE RULES, AND THE OTHER IS RULED; THIS PRINCIPLE, OF NECESSITY, EXTENDS TO ALL MANKIND. ☺

- POLITICS
BOOK I SECTION 5

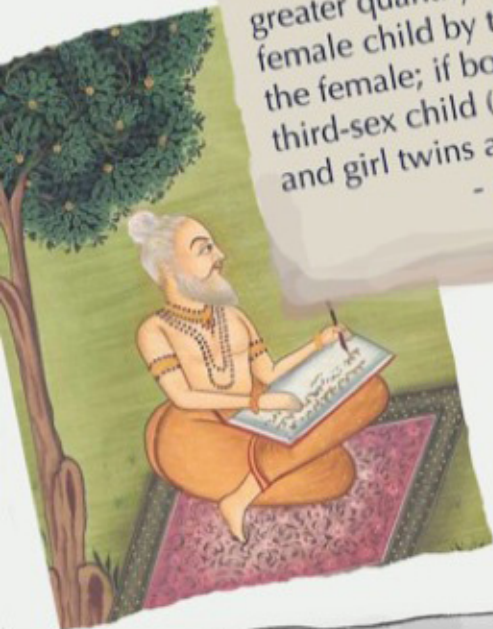
ARISTOTLE

384 - 322 B.C.E.

SNAPSHOTS of GENDER

different times
different places
different cultures

"A male child is produced by a greater quantity of male seed, a female child by the prevalence of the female; if both are equal, a third-sex child (napumsa) or boy and girl twins are produced..."¹²
- Manusmriti 3.49
circa 100 C.E.



"At the height of the Classic period, Maya rulers presented themselves as embodying the entire range of gender possibilities, from male through female, by wearing blended costumes and playing male and female roles in state ceremonies" ¹³

Rosemary A. Joyce, referring to the Mesoamerican civilization between 250 - 900 C.E.



JOAN D'ARC

1412 - 1431 C.E.

"Joan defended herself for having put on male clothing again, publicly stating and affirming that [there was] much wrongdoing and outrage against her in prison when she was wearing female clothing..."¹⁰



"We have strong energy of both male and female... [T]raditionally... two-spirit individuals, they were very important and very honored, and they were looked at [as] messengers from the spirit..."¹¹

- Denise Cole

WE CAN DO IT!



Nepal adds "third gender" to 2011 census.

"In 2007, Sunil Babu Pant, a gay activist, won a Supreme Court case that forced the [Nepalese] government to guarantee full, fundamental equality for all sexual and gender minorities." (15)

Poland elects trans parliament member

"For the first time, a transsexual woman and an openly gay man were sworn into the Polish parliament on Tuesday, as Anna Grodzka Robert and Biedron took their elected seats in Warsaw. Both Grodzka and Biedron are members of the new progressive party, Palikot's Movement, and won their seats after an Oct. 9 election." (16)

I'm a librarian, so I went to books first, and then to databases full of articles. But gender is a living thing, so I went right to the source.



I asked people how they experience gender, today, in their communities.

The answers were as unique as the individuals surveyed, spanning quite a few ethnic, social, racial, and religious backgrounds. Take a look!

Kokumo →

I am a trans-gender / intersex woman of color. I am an artist and production company executive.

Too many people believe that race and gender have nothing in common. Race dictates gender roles and subsequent expectations.

I think my [feminist, activist, friendship] community encourages flexibility in my representation of gender. Furthermore, I feel supported in subverting gender norms in my community, but less so when I venture out of it.

Emma →

I grew up and still live in a conservative Midwestern city... My experiences of a lack of community and lack of resources, and being oppressed within these larger systems, make me know how important it is to do more for those coming after me.

As a Texan, I know that women are regarded as less than, but as a pagan, I find that women are raised up. As a transwoman I've felt both of those truths.

Q-roc →

Janet →

Jac →

My [social, transgendered, atheist, arab, lebanese] culture is pretty conservative on gender and gender roles. I try not to let it influence me, but I love the acceptance and community I get by conforming to the roles. It's so easy for me, yet I'd like to experiment with my appearance and look more. So my community supports me as it restricts me to certain presentations of gender.

web communities [Drupal, tumblr, reddit] help me be comfortable with the fact I hadn't had the stereotypical FTM experience, and many others didn't have that experience either, and it's okay.

my experience of gender in my [Trans] LTBG, Jewish, Legal] communities is constantly evolving.

As much as I would like it to not be so, I find myself bargaining with myself in each different situation. Depending on where I am and who I am with, I present a different shade of gender.

-Alanna

Elissa →

fox ↑

MEDICAL- Only islands of acceptance. Even psychologists are divided.

CHRISTIAN- Mixed. Still a lot of judgment.

POLITICAL- Conservatives need education by fellow conservatives. We habitually shoot ourselves in the foot here.

BRIDGE- Mostly accepting.

I'm a bit of a recluse, to be honest. And my communities [Asexual, African American, Polyamorous] don't much affect how I identify, although the asexual bit seems to mesh with it nicely.

in Buddhist teachings there is no gender at the core of everything.

I live in a heavily Armenian community and apparently can be "challenging" to (some people's) ideas of what a proper female should be, and they are very comfortable letting me know that. It has greatly helped me understand the problem of being - not only a gender surfer, but of being anyone having to be different in any way within any community. I'm bothered by this for everyone, not just for gender-folk...

... I see policing happening in communities that I would not expect. For instance, the lesbian community has been a place where I and the people I love have not felt safe because there has been a lot of body policing and exclusionary spaces.

Sometimes I have to hide under the pretext of being "male" or "female" for the sake of surviving, and moving through the world with (some) ease. But I'm still me, despite whatever mask I may be forced to hide beneath. And no matter what, I try to be as true to myself as the situation allows.

The communities I identify as a member of are:
queer, homeless, educational, artist, photographer, chicano(a), Feminist... ect.

I experience gender in these communities as:
difficult at times, because my lack of gender makes others uncomfortable.

My gender is influenced by my community only by the fact that my gender identity is celebrated and not seen as a flaw.

GENDER ACROSS COMMUNITIES

Krista

indie

Jane

bast

Zuri

Senorita
Cranky
Pants

Aud

Mason

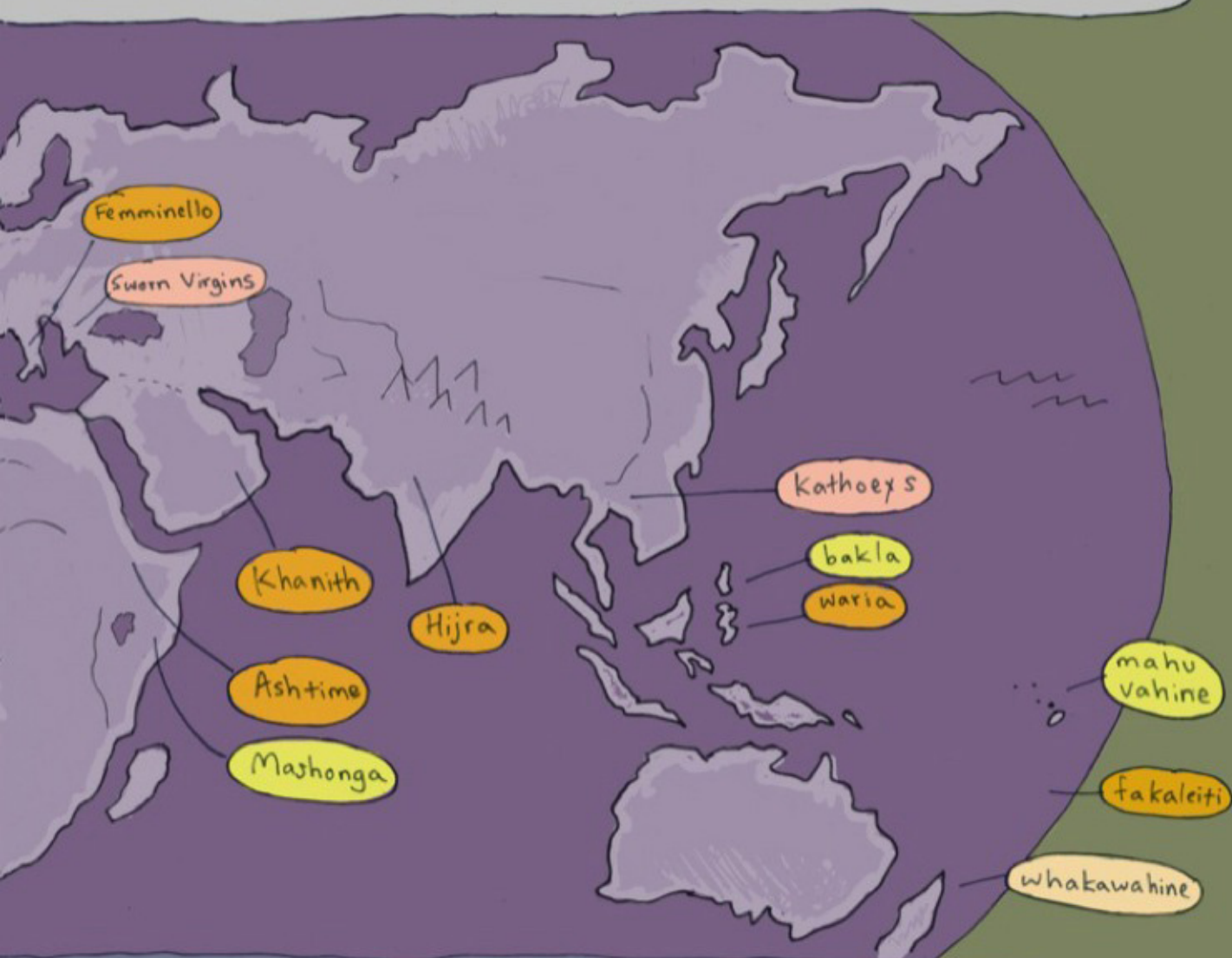
GENDER ACROSS CULTURES

Many societies throughout time and across the globe have had additional or intermediary gender roles coexisting with their versions of masculinity and femininity.

Here are a few:



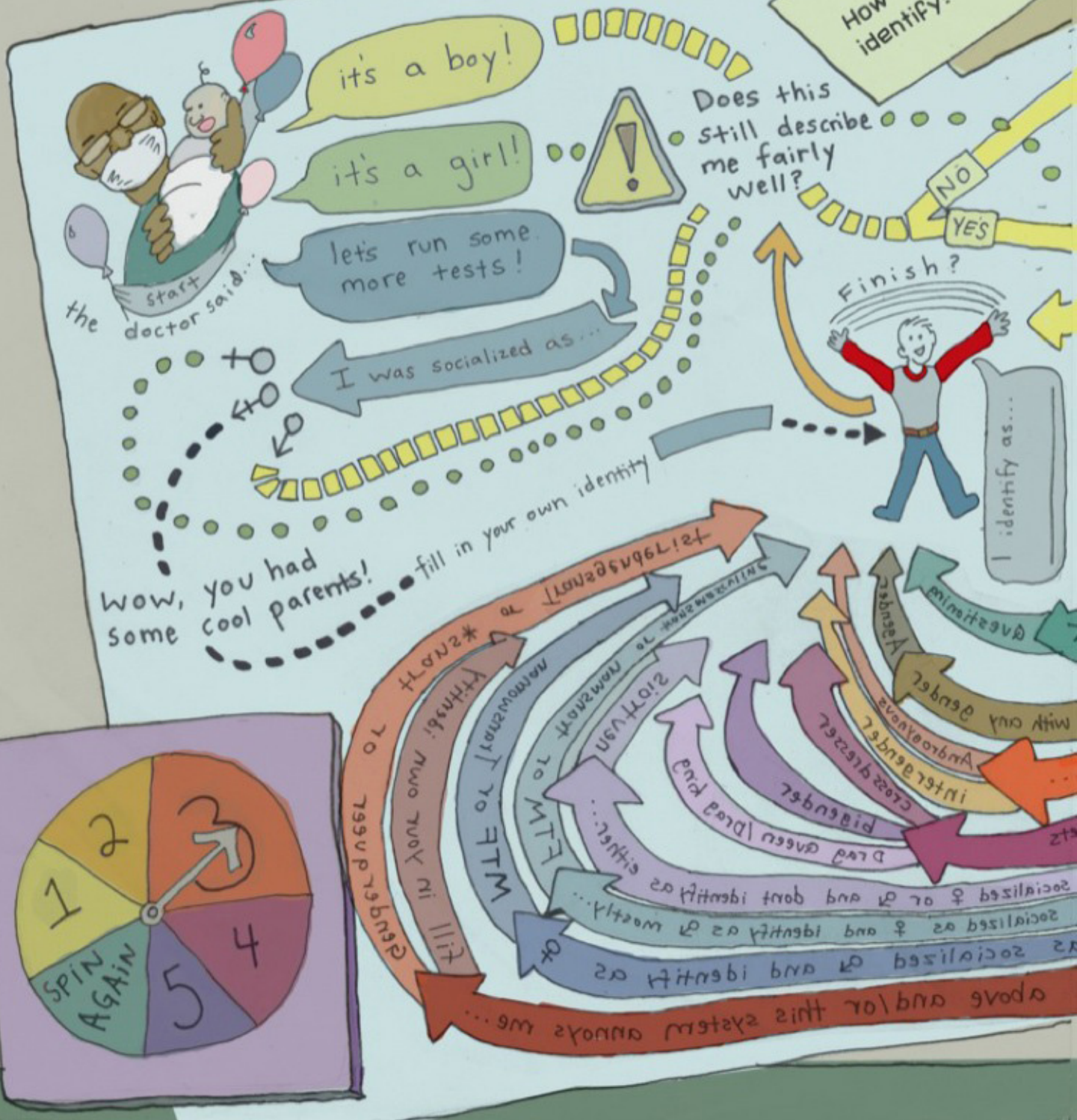
So, we've talked about how gender changes within one culture, from person to person and from one community to another, but there's an even larger world of gender out there to explore. Most cultures have roles that correspond roughly to our Western concepts of male and female, but did you know that they don't end there?

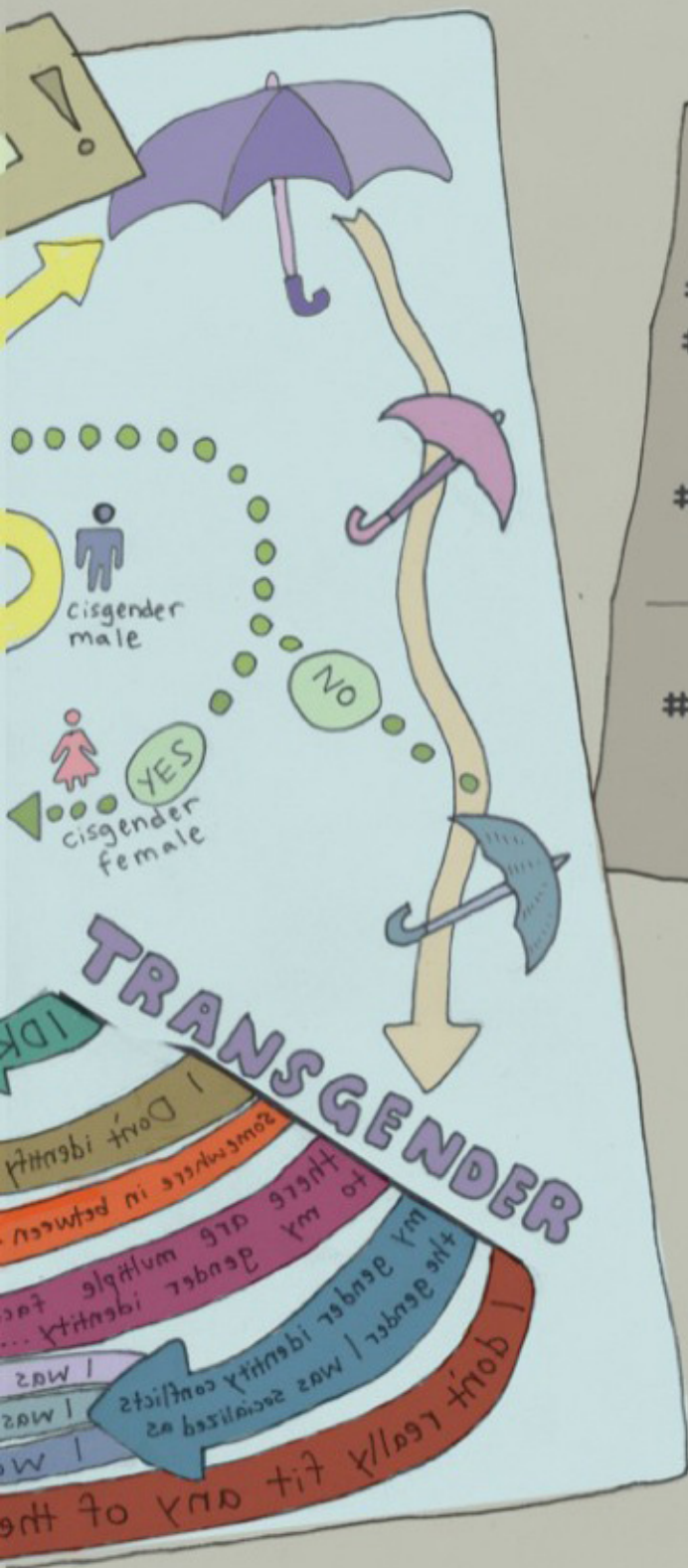


Some of these gender roles are highly regarded, given special status in religious rites or social functions, while others are regarded as second-class citizens, and the words describing them may be used very negatively. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Think of how different masculine and feminine roles can be in each place and time! There's a great diversity of gender out there, each colored by its parent culture.

is a person's innate understanding of self, which can be male or female, masculine or feminine, or any combination, or any absence of gender thereof. (1)

is a person's innate understanding of self, which can be male or female, masculine or feminine, or any combination, or any absence of gender thereof. (1)






RULES

- #1 There are no rules.
- #2 play as often as you like; your identity can change.
- #3 You can claim many words, or eschew labels altogether, it's up to you.
- #4 This game is just for fun, the answers are within yourself.

No matter how you finish, everybody wins!





hey Mel, what're you working on?

oh hey Boston... I was just painting a self-portrait. Wanna see?

It's about gender expression: all of the ways I share my gender with the world!

I only recently started to present to others how I want to be seen as a woman, and I am much happier and confident about myself. I actually don't fear so much anymore how people see me because for once I am who I want to be. I do feel some pressure to be more feminine to conform how they want me to be, but for now I dress how I want to dress. I present myself as a woman how I wish to be seen to the best of my ability.
-Brenna's survey response

I dress more like a boy (I'm biologically female) and act and speak more like a boy, but am able to switch comfortably into a feminine role when needed.

-Bryce's survey response

Colors you like

Style + Haircut

hobbies

makeup

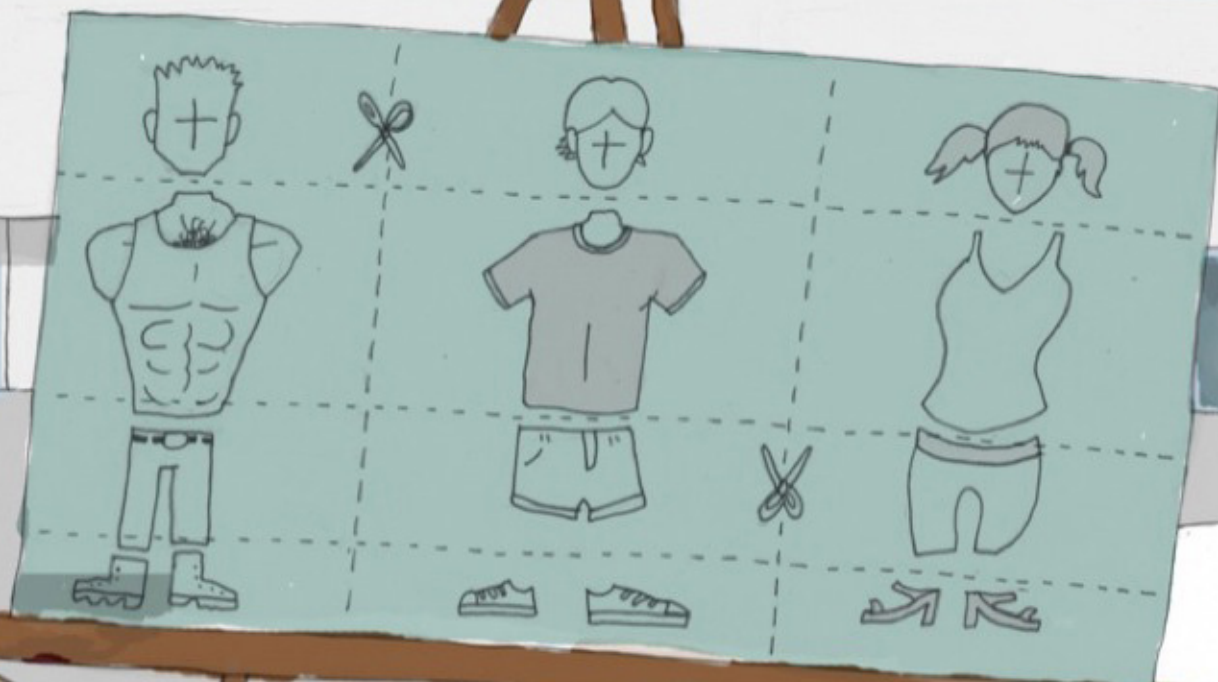
Job

How you walk

Clothing

Shoes

GENDER EXPRESSION



Oh cool, I get it. Gender expression refers to the outward intentional and unintentional ways gender is communicated to other people, such as hair, clothes, makeup (or no makeup), the name we call ourselves, mannerisms and speech, our pronouns, and activities, like the sports we play and jobs we hold, for a start. One's gender expression is complex and always shifting, a big part of the way your gender identity is communicated to others and yourself.



GENDER

PERCEPTION

how is your gender seen?
how do you see others?

Haircut & style
Facial color, shape, hair
Clothing & Accessories
Body size & shape

How closely does your view of yourself align to how others see you?

It's not very damn close at all, and that hurts. Inside, despite being a very liberal and feminist person, I'm a girly girl, I like pink and fairy tales and don't want to be strong all the time, but I'm type cast by my size and by my gender, and no one bothers to get to know who I really am inside.

-Em's survey response

* Many people suffer slurs and physical harm just because they do not conform to gender roles. The murder of Willie Houston, harassed initially for holding his wife's purse, is a tragic reminder of how fear of gender nonconformity affects us all.

"Passing"



Good afternoon
um...

Scientists have found the
following traits clue us into
a new person's gender:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Sir

80% certainty

So if gender identity is a person's innate understanding of their gender, and gender expression is how we show our gender to the world, then gender perception is how others read our gender (and how we interpret the gender of others).

People are said to "pass" when their gender identity is consistently correctly identified by strangers.

This is important to one's comfort (and often safety*) navigating a largely binary world. However, most people have the experience of being misgendered by well-meaning strangers at one time or another. While it can be very upsetting (or frustrating or amusing or however you deal with such misunderstandings), it's important to remember that how others judge your gender, as with other aspects of life, is never as important as how you see yourself.

PRONOUNS


are a language's shortcuts used to describe people, places, or things. We're most interested in the uses for people. In English, people pronouns tend to be gendered, though since the 1800s there's been a movement for a gender-neutral pronoun to avoid awkward contractions like s/he, which appeals greatly to folks outside the gender binary.

I used to think these were all the pronouns out there for people, but the more folks I meet, the more I learn. Choosing our own pronoun(s) can be really empowering.

Hey Naomi,
so I never did
ask: what are
your preferred
pronouns?



pronoun	gender
he/him	masculine
she/her	feminine
they/them	neutral
ze/hir	neutral
phe/per	neautral
thon/thon	neutral
ey/em	neutral



I like zie/hir,
thanks for
asking, Mel!

Yeah, it's good to know.
Sometimes I get offended if
people assume my prnouns
without asking, you know? I
never mind a polite question; it
shows the person cares
to get it right.

example

He left his dog with his pal.
She took her power tools.
They are a good friend.
Ze likes to brush hir teeth.
Phe's pet is per goldfish.
Thon did all of thon's dishes.
Ey looked at em skeptically.

MORE Gender Neutral Pronouns

zie, ne,
one, xe,
sie, ve,
tey, e,
yo, co,
re, ne,
hu, ta,
ve

try it!

the "pronoun game" is a fact of life for many transgender folks and their allies. See if you can go 24 hours without gendering someone with your language. ("Alex took Alex's dog to the park.") It can be tricky! Often, though, it's the best course of action when you don't know someone's preferred pronouns yet.

THE BIRDS + THE BEES

where gender intersects
sex and sexuality



Andi

"sex,
gender, and
orientation are all
fluid entities capable
of ranges of
expression &
emotion."

we're a
straight couple.
one of us just
happens to be
transgender.

"I am a
human-
sexual"

"I'm just starting to
experience how my
gender is unrelated to
my sexual orientation,
when for so long they
were linked when
moving within the
lesbian community."

sean

Christyna

a note on

Possibilities

anyone
of any
gender can
be attracted
to anyone
else of any
gender(s)

anyone
of any gender
can be any-
where from
asexual to
very sexual

anyone of any
gender can be with
anywhere from zero
to multiple partners!



How do you identify?

Sexual identity and gender identity can be easily confused, but they're as different as apples and oranges! Sexual identities can be based on gender identity, though, since a lot of people's sexual preferences are gender-dependent. Not only what gender(s) the person is attracted to, but also that person's own gender identity can go into making a sexual identity. For example, a person who identifies as a woman (regardless of the sex assigned to her at birth) that tends to like other women would usually be called a lesbian. But! You never know, she may prefer another term. Just like with gender, only you get to decide how you identify!

"I am a pangender, pansexual student"

Sincerity →

How does it work?

There's no one way to get it on. We may not have the same exuberant diversity in sex as we see in the animal or plant kingdoms around us (just think about the bee's role in pollination), but humans are pretty creative. Where there's a will, there's a ton of ways to, ahem, express our affection for one another. The specifics of what works best for each body and gender identity is unique to the individual who inhabits it, and there are no rules saying which acts boys can do or which parts girls have. If it's on the body of a girl, it's a girl part, no matter what it looks like. Especially with gender benders, ask what names your partners might like for their parts. Understand some parts may be off-limits. Ask for permission, communicate respectfully, and (no matter the genders involved) make a safer sex plan that works for you. Oh yeah, and have fun.

wow, such diversity!
everyone's unique.



the GENDER BINARY

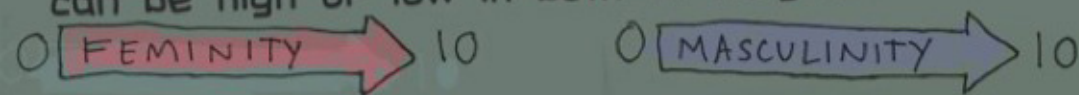
is the system of belief in only two genders:



Everything from driver's licenses to census forms to public bathrooms presents us with two options: men and women, masculine and feminine, male and female. Unfortunately, this doesn't account for the great diversity of gender identities or intersex individuals.

GENDER AMAGAMATRON

is what most psychologists use when measuring gender. In this system, masculinity and femininity are two separate scales- you can be high or low in both or neither

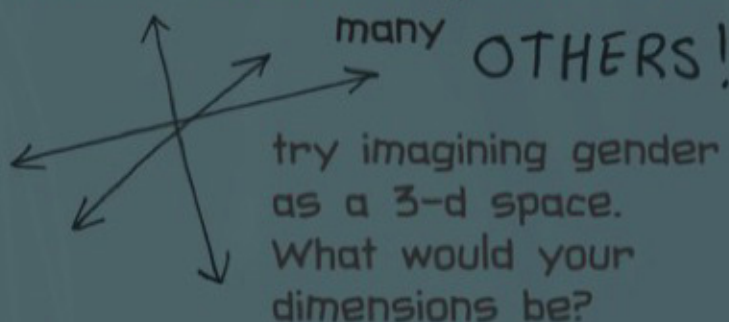


ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS



GENDER SPECTRUM

imagines infinite genders ranging from the very masculine to the very feminine. More expansive than the binary, but still quite restrictive. Fortunately, there are



Turns out there's not just one way to think about gender. What new ways can you visualize the genders?

Some see gender as a horseshoe, where the conforming (masculine and feminine) genders are closer together than the nonconforming possibilities.

Others create colorful gender diagrams. None of these are right or wrong, but as we start to think more about gender, let's consider how inclusive each system is to gender minorities.

CISGENDER

If you're most comfortable in the gender you were assumed at birth, that's called cisgender.

each identityland has its own language of pronouns + words specific to the residents.

borders change over time.

Sometimes immigrants are treated as second-class citizens.

New islands are often discovered

Some identities are populated entirely by travelers.

some genderlands have more resources + power than others.



Imagine gender as a planet.

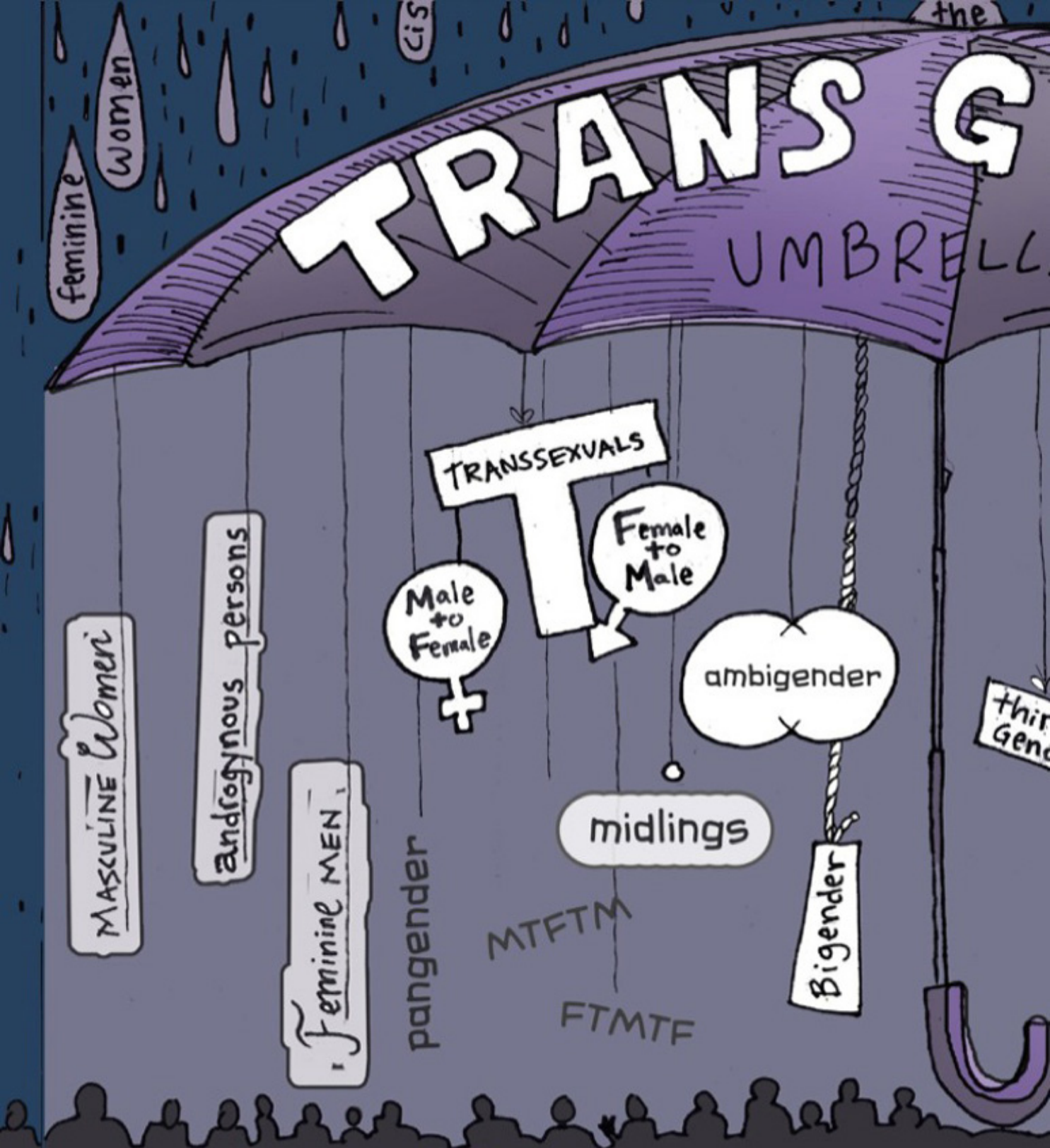
All people grow up somewhere on that planet, most in Ladyland or in Manlandia. Lots of people are comfortable where they're born and stay in that same area their whole lives.

Some people, though, are citizens of Manlandia but are born in Ladyland. Just like in the real world, you can't tell someone's citizenship by looking at them, it's very personal. As we get older we may want to move to a place where we are more comfortable.



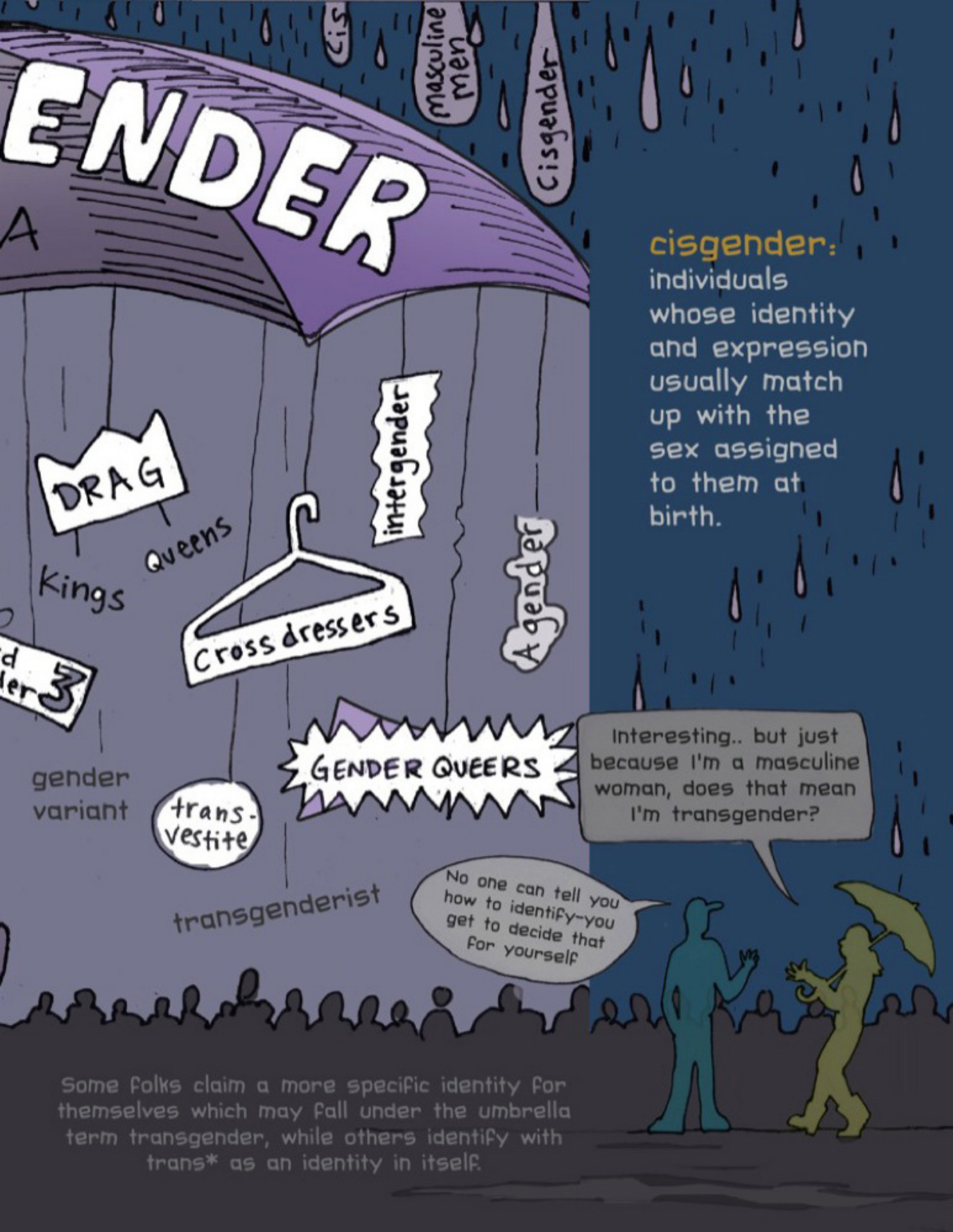
TRANSGENDER

Anyone who lives outside their expected gender land, crossing state lines, so to speak, **could** be said to be transgender.



Transgender (umbrella term)

Encompasses any individual whose identity crosses over or challenges their society's traditional gender roles or expressions.



GENDER

cisgender:
individuals
whose identity
and expression
usually match
up with the
sex assigned
to them at
birth.

DRAG

Kings
Queens

Cross dressers

intergender

Agender

GENDER QUEERS

gender
variant

trans-
vestite

transgenderist

Interesting.. but just
because I'm a masculine
woman, does that mean
I'm transgender?

No one can tell you
how to identify-you
get to decide that
for yourself

Some folks claim a more specific identity for themselves which may fall under the umbrella term transgender, while others identify with trans* as an identity in itself.

TRANSWOMAN

A.K.A. MTF
male to female FTF
transsexual

Is an identity that refers to people who were assigned a male sex at birth and have since realized their gender identity is female.

These women are from all kinds of backgrounds, races, classes, sexual orientations, and personal histories, but the one thing that they have in common is a female identity so strong that they desire to live, work, and love full-time in feminine social roles.

Hey Boston, sorry I'm late for our interview. What kind of questions did you have in mind?

Laser hair removal. Owch.

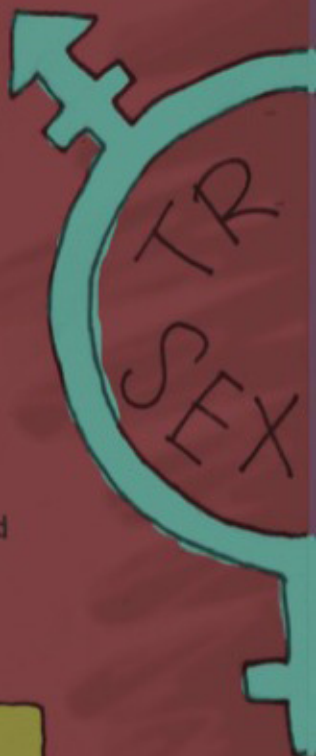
I guess you could say I dress pretty conservatively. I go to Mass, walk my dog, and work as a bank teller.

she & her

no pronoun preference.

HI, MY NAME IS...

Christina



I've been on HRT for 7 years now, and the physical changes from my estrogen and testosterone-inhibitors are pretty obvious: breast tissue growth, softer skin, and a general redistribution of fat.



Well, I can't speak for everyone, but I knew I was this way from a very young age. I came out at the age of 31. My mother didn't take it so well...

Last February, I traveled to Thailand for my Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS). It was a bit scary to go under anesthesia, but I was so ready. The healing process was rough... I'll not go into details, but I'm really pleased with the results, and so is my boyfriend.

There are other surgeries I've considered, too, like facial sculpting and shaving my "adam's apple" down, but not seriously.

***HRT** is
short for
hormone
replacement
therapy

No problem!
I'm just happy
to learn any-
thing you're
comfortable
sharing!

PHYSICAL TRANSITION

PHYSICAL TRANSITION

"top surgery" is something I'm looking forward to when I can afford it. My insurance won't cover it so right now I'm pre-op, saving up and doing some research. There are lots of methods.



T Testosterone

is a hormone that can be injected into a muscle or (less often) applied topically via a cream. I've been on T for 8 months now, and I've noticed increased muscle development, my voice has started to drop, and I even have a bit of facial hair coming in.

"bottom surgery" isn't in my future right now. The options seem pretty limited, though some of my friends have had good results.

***Pre-op** refers to a transsexual person who has not yet undergone surgery, as opposed to individuals, who have already undergone (post-op) or do not plan to surgically alter their bodies (non-op).

TRANSMAN

A.K.A. FTM

female-to-male
transsexual



"Packing" is when I stuff my drawers. Some packers are good for sex, and others help me pee standing up.

they say, "the clothes make the man" I tend to shop in the men's or boy's sections. I learned how to sew cause it can be hard to find pants that fit.

I use masculine pronouns (he/him)

D.J.



Transmen are people whose experience is usually that of being assigned female at birth and socialized as such, to determine at some later point that their gender identity is masculine to the extent that they desire to live full-time in those roles.

Though there is a wide variety of people who identify as somewhat trans-masculine, most who embrace the "transsexual" identifier prefer masculine pronouns, take masculine or androgynous names, and alter their bodies to match their gender identities.



CROSSDRESSERS

"As a crossdresser, I have a true gender gift, the ability to live and relate comfortably in both the masculine and feminine worlds. That is how I chose my femme name, which means "gift from God"

-Jane

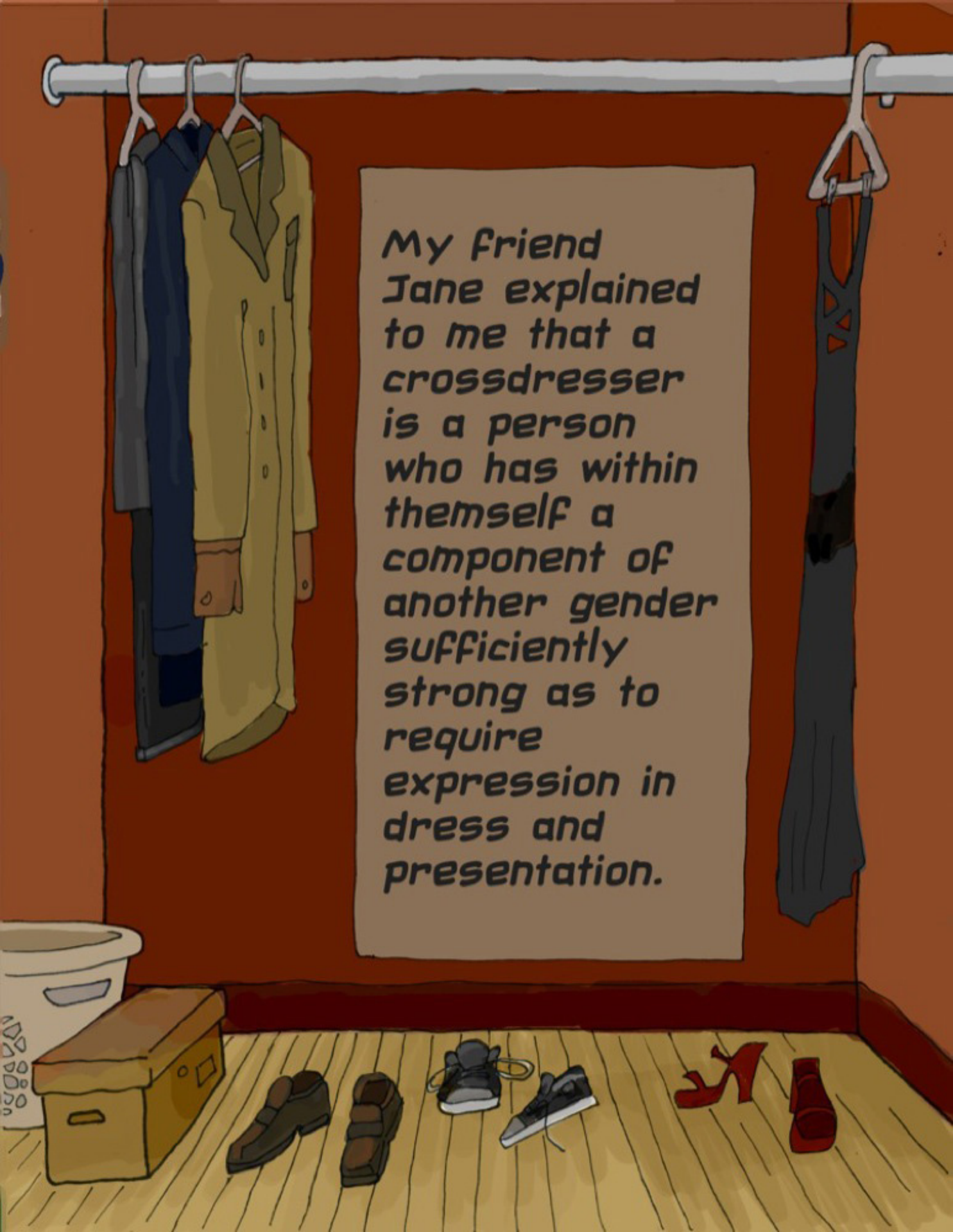


F.Y.I...

the term "transvestite" literally means one whose clothing crosses boundaries in latin. The term was originally coined by Dr. Hirschberg in Germany at his revolutionary sex institute. That facility was later raided by Nazi forces, and that term has been used hurtfully and improperly so much since, that we don't use it much anymore.

Hmm.. How is this gender expression different from the experience of those who identify as transsexual? How is it similar?





A cartoon illustration of a closet with a brown wall and a white rod. On the left, a grey jacket, a dark blue shirt, and a yellow trench coat hang on hangers. On the right, a grey dress hangs on a hanger. In the center, a large tan sign with black text reads: "My friend Jane explained to me that a crossdresser is a person who has within themselves a component of another gender sufficiently strong as to require expression in dress and presentation." On the floor, which is made of light brown wooden planks, there is a white bucket on the left, a brown cardboard box, and several pairs of shoes: two brown loafers, a pair of grey sneakers, a pair of red high-heeled shoes, and a pair of red flat shoes.

My friend
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to me that a
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DRAG QUEENS

I'm Rhonda. I use the term drag queen. I use the stage to perform gender as art, entertainment, and even for education.

Wow, that was an amazing show!

And great gloves! thanks for this interview.

oh, my pleasure, hun.

Drag is conscious, self-referential, often sexy performance of gender for an audience with or without the intent of making people laugh, cry, gasp, or think.

Historically, cross-gender performance has been used in theater, and is a huge part of queer history. Drag shows have several purposes: to entertain audiences; to generate revenue for drag artists; to support community; to raise awareness for causes and funds for health services.

Drag is pure MAGIC! It's a perfect way to be a rock star a song at a time! AND we get to create non-binary spaces to help audiences and performers alike see gender as fluid, autonomous, and fun!

DRAG KINGS



The dressing room is where transformation happens and art unfolds. Finding characters' personas and mannerisms in the clothes, hair, make-up, packing, and binding means esteem-building for kings and messaging for their audience!

Besides being fun and campy, drag is a form of activism for many performers, who choose to reconstruct traditional notions of gender and ask questions about identity, power, desire, race, class, ability, religion, citizenship, and more in their performances.

-Pedro Asty, resident drag king

Wow,
drag is
dazzling!



When I was a kid,
people called me a tomboy.
I liked to climb trees and play
softball. I still do, sometimes!
FYI: just because I like these
things, doesn't mean it's safe
to assume I'm a lesbian.
(or trans!)



Someone who
identifies as a
woman whose
gender expression
is closer to that
of cisgender men
than the societal
norms for women
usually allow.

A.K.A
butch,
AGG, stud,
macha, boi
bulldagger,
tomboy,
masculine-of-
center

MASCULINE

WOMEN

ANDROGYNOUS PERSONS

A.K.A.
andro,
androgyne

Sometimes
when I'm out in
public, folks don't
know whether to
call me ma'am or
sir. It doesn't
really bother me.
I tried for many
years to conform
one way or the
other. Today I'm
comfortable letting
myself naturally
fall in between the
M and F ends of
the binary.

A person whose
gender expression
is ambiguous or
between the
masculine and
feminine norms,
OR...



A person whose gender expression is about equally high in masculine and feminine qualities.

I've heard folks say, "He just hasn't come out of the closet yet." That's not true for me. I'm a straight guy, I just care about my skin and know how to cry at movies. And I love it! Ladies do, too. Who says what makes a man anyway?

Someone who identifies as a man whose gender expression is closer to that of cisgender women than the societal norms for men usually allow.

A.K.A.

sissy, dandy,
pansy, nelly,
pretty boy,
metrosexual



FEMININE MEN



third gender

agender

pangender

OTHER TRANSGENDER IDENTITIES

intergender

FTMTF

MTFTM

bigender

ambigender

midlings

ED. NOTE:

The gender book creators humbly acknowledge the limited scope of this book. We had to cut down for space, to focus on our Western culture (for genders in other cultures, see further reading), and simply because we can't know everything. If you don't see your identity here, please add it to our gender wiki!

Hey Boston, how's the research going? Remember, as you're learning about all of these identities, that they are only the tip of the iceberg. It's cool to identify simply as transgender, as a mix of those identities, none of the above, genderqueer like me, or make up something that fits you better!

GENDER QUEER

A term which refers to individuals or groups who "queer" or problematize the mainstream and patriarchal notions of sex, gender, and sexuality in a given society.

Genderqueers possess identities which fall outside of the widely-accepted gender and/or sexual binaries.

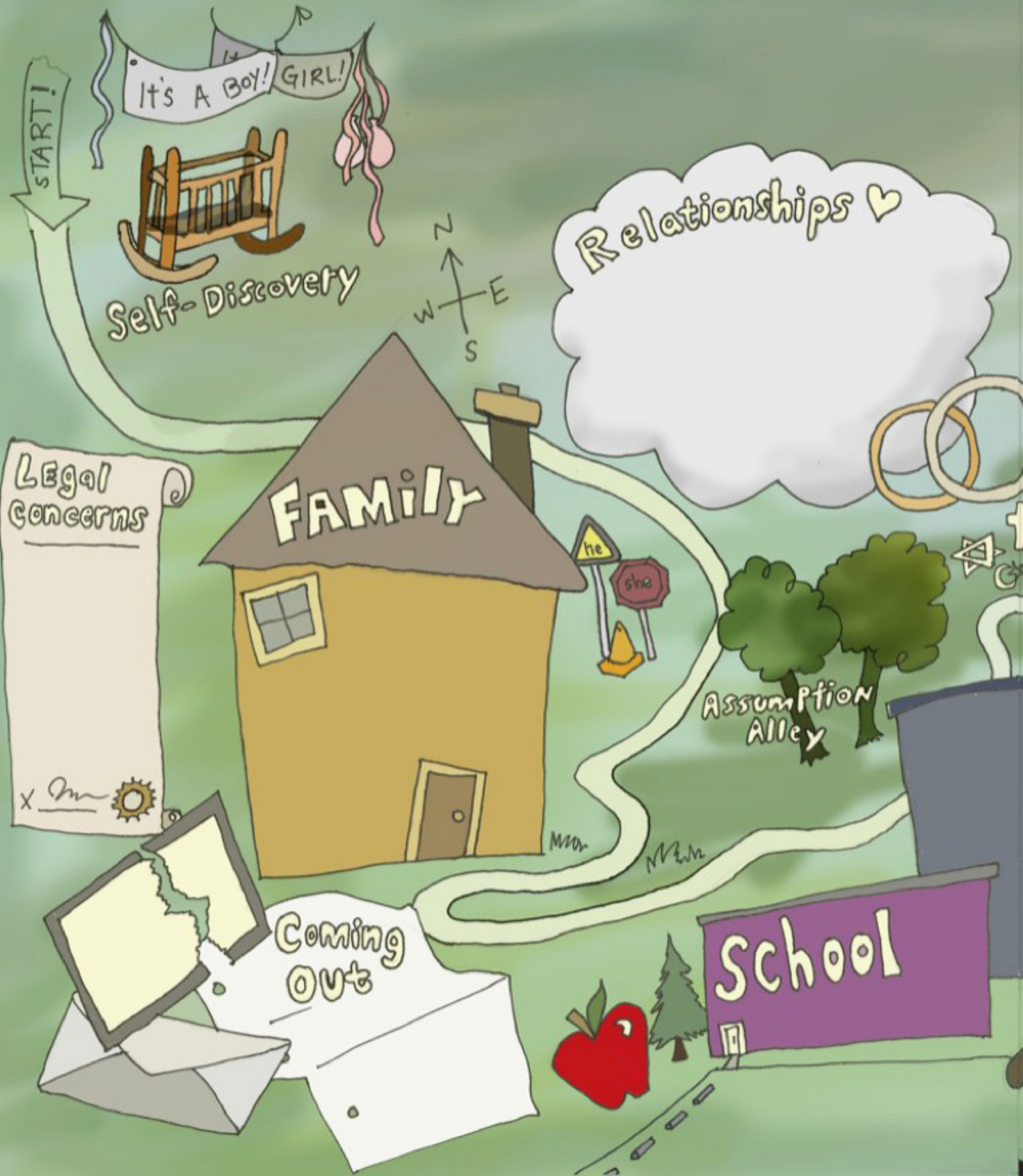
They often run the gamut of gender expression and may oppose a strict gender system altogether.



MEL,
the artist

I like "transdrogynous genderqueer" for myself!

WALK IN OUR SHOES



Remembering our Dead...





Example

LIFE TIMELINE



1948

I was born in 1948 in a small town Southern Illinois. During the 50's (especially after 1955 when we got our first TV) the norm for gender was quite clear. Boys did one set of things, girls did another set of things. Boys wore pants and suits; girls wore skirts, heels, and hose and jeans. (Jeans were OK for a girl, but other pants were not. Go figure The way one weaves the cotton makes it acceptable or not acceptable.) Some days I felt like I was a girl, some days I felt more like a boy ... it is still that way.

1962

I was 14 years old and bullying pushed me to try to be someone other than myself which resulted in my one purge (I threw all my girl things in the trash). Doing that ... denying myself ... hurt much more than the bullying. When I went to school the following week, I no longer cared what happened to me. When I was attacked, I fought back.

early
years

I think the things that I remember best and enjoy the best are times that I have been truly accepted for who I am. I can't tell you the number of times that I have been at a party or in a store shopping or at an event and I realize that I'm hanging out with the women and being taken totally as a female person ... frequently I'm not even in girl mode.

Your name:

Alexis (at this time ... but it has been Debbie, Art, Jasper, Monique, and shenoa and sometimes it still might be any of these)

Your gender identity/identities:

Gender Fluid or Possibly Bi-gender seems to describe it best at this time but it has changed over time ... I haven't changed, just the terms we use. Until the Gender Fluid term showed up, nothing really seemed to fit.

I went in for my mandatory therapist meeting. Explained how I felt being away from home. Explained that I sometimes felt like a girl and when I did, I dressed like a girl. He said, "There is nothing wrong with that. You need to be whoever you are. If this starts to bother you, then you should come back and see me so we can talk about it." He went on to explain that I was a transvestite... That turned out to be much less traumatic than I expected so I was good to go for the next four years.

1966, Purdue



1980

wow, Alexis,
thank you so
much for your
honesty.

Thinking about
the future is both
scary and exciting ...
Guess I will just do
my best to make
it fun!



HOW TO BE AN ALLY

"First, do no harm."

Nobody likes accidentally hurting someone's feelings. Here are some simple things you can do to make sure you are respecting the people around you. Check your assumptions & Consider the following common courtesy guidelines:

- Refer to someone as the gender they are presenting, or gender-neutrally using their chosen name, until you can...
- politely ascertain the proper gendered (or ungendered) language the person prefers...
- ~~it's okay to ask for preferred pronouns or the person's gender identity, while...~~
- ~~it is never polite to ask strangers about their genitals or medications or surgeries, because...~~
- some things are private, and that's okay. Respect that. Remember...
- not everyone is available as an encyclopedia of answers for your curiosity, ask first. And...
- if you've made a mistake in your assumptions, apologise and move on, always....
- making the effort to respect their identity first and foremost in your interactions. Thanks!



to the transgender community

Be a gender justice superhero!

Make positive change, if the other things come easy or you happen to find yourself in a position of power in our society. These are what make a real ally:

- Do the basic considerate stuff, consistently, be kind.
- Never stop learning, and share what you know
- Don't tolerate disrespectful jokes or insensitive language.
- Support political action that increases awareness of and protects the rights and safety of gender diverse people.

ally -
someone who supports the rights of other groups of people.



“

Learning as I go about the people around me - always asking as necessary. Remembering to use proper pronouns is still difficult, but I do believe it is necessary.

-Helen R.

”



CHALLENGES AND CONCLUSIONS

It's becoming more open minded, but it's been like living a few different identities is a MUST in order to be accepted, included, employed...

Gender expands beyond just a line with man at one end, female at the other, and transgender in the middle. It's not a line or a spectrum, it's the ocean and every person is pulling out a different fish or no fish at all.

- Ari

gender shouldn't matter to ANYONE but the person that gender identity belongs to. We're all here, we're all human, we're all equals. -Dezmond

no matter how you identify, you are BEAUTIFUL!

treat people be treated.



Always keep learning,
and don't be afraid to
create the world you'd
like to live in.

acceptance,
tolerance and a reason
to go embrace people is
what makes gender
beautiful to me.

at the end off the day its
you who decides who or
what you are, and that no
amount of hate or ignorance
is going to change that.
- Col.

It is hard to put into type what
gender means to me. It allows
me to be who i am, yet is just a
single challenge among many i
face throughout the day. Its
like having the proper founda-
tion, and now I can build my
dream house on top of it.
-Josie Katt

This is a topic that should
be discussed more! -Cait

as you would want to
- Johanna

b yourself and let everything
out wether its masculine or
feminine or neither or both! If
you are true to yourself you
will realize who you realiz are
and how you are most
comfortable being -Carlos

Topics covered...

what is gender?
gender versus sex
gendered behavior in kids
gender through history
gender across cultures
the gender binary
Identity & expression
gender perceptions
transgender umbrella...
drag queens & kings
transsexuals
genderqueers
crossdressers
how to be an ally
... and more!

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