

Sex vs. Gender

Sex: Biology chromosomes, genitals, hormones, etc.

Gender: performative interpretation of masculinity, femininity, etc.

We do gender through clothing, posture, perfume/cologne, EVERYTHING.

Important Terms:

Gender identity: How one interprets their own gender, an internal identity that is not necessarily expressed.

Cis: A prefix that comes from Latin; means the near side. Often used to describe somebody who is not transgendered or intersexed.

Cisgender: When your assigned sex (female or male genitalia, etc.) matches the gender (woman or man) assigned by society, their self-perception and presentation of their claimed gender matches up. (eg: sex is female, identifies as a woman; sex is male, identifies as a man).

Cissexual: When one's assigned sex is not intersexed, or their genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, etc. match up in appearance, and are big or small enough to be easily recognized as male or female-specific.

Fluidity: An aspect of oneself (sexuality, gender identity, racial identity, ethnographic identity, etc.) that is open to change, changeable.

Trans: A prefix that means 'across' or 'beyond.'

Transgender: One whose gender identity is across, or beyond the gender binary. The transgender category has no singular, fixed meaning. Transgender as a concept embraces variation, ambiguity, and fluidity.

Transgender as an Umbrella Term

Transgender is a category without defined limits. Anyone transcending or transgressing gender fits into the category, if you or someone who you know believe you are transgendered, you should not invalidate this identity or question your belonging under the Transgender umbrella.

Gender expression:

Gender expression: the performance of gender, the message about gender given to others through nonverbal and verbal interactions. Sometimes matches with gender identity, sometimes does not.

What sort of things do we do or use that are gendered in our everyday lives?

Safe Zone Sex vs. Gender

Gendered products –deodorant, shampoo, shoes, jackets, backpacks, purses,

What sorts of things in our lives are claimed by one gender or another? Which are gender neutral?

- Colors
- Emotions (anger/sadness)
- Scents

Discuss:

These claims of things to one gendered category or another tend to reinforce a binary in gender identities and expressions. Why do you think this is?

Genderqueer identity:

Genderqueer individual Riki Wilchins criticizes all and everyone who want to label her, saying that labels are too confining and do not reflect the specific experience of her (or anyone's) body. Though the personal can be political, gender expression as genderqueer can come from personal experiences.

Labels and boxes, some people are comfortable in boxes.

To be respectful, ask others what their preferred names or pronouns are. Whether or not they are transgender, they will appreciate the time you take to respect their gender identity.

Discuss:

React to this quote in regards to gender variant identities, etc.:

“Labeling someone is an act of violence.”

Being Mis-Pronounced!

Mis-pronouncing someone is to use the wrong pronouns when you are referring to them (to call a woman ‘he’ who prefers to be called ‘she’). If you or someone else ‘mis-pronoun’ an individual– Apologize, don’t make a scene over it, especially in public where you could be outing someone. Correct yourself if you remember after you mis-pronoun. Ask if you forget, it is a sign of respect. Correct others gently, if the person is commonly mis-pronounced, but be sure to ask if it is okay to correct others before you do so.

[Practice in small groups having people role-play being mis-pronounced, and correcting someone else gently when they mis-pronoun another person.]

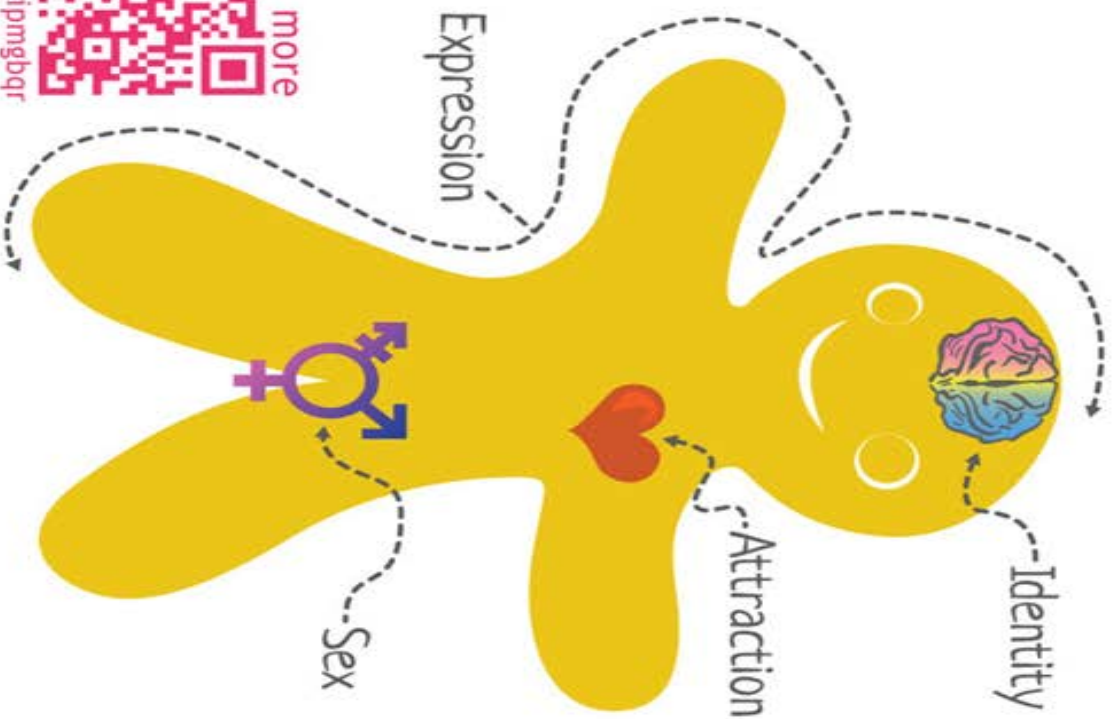
Discuss:

Is anyone exclusively male or female conforming? Why?

The Genderbread Person V2.0

by its pronounced **METROsexual** ©2014

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like Inception, Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more.



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