TRANS 101

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SEX & GENDER

• Gender refers to your identity and the expression of that identity.
• Sex refers to your physiology, DNA, chromosomes, genitals, etc. Based on a cursory examination at birth.
Gender is usually understood in a binary like this:

OR

MAN

WOMAN

A occasionally, a spectrum like this:
There are many different ways to think about and visualize gender spectrums. The Reuleaux triangle accommodates a broader range of gender expression and identities, as well as room for ambiguity, non-conformity and variation between and across cultures.
GENDER EXPRESSION

- Gender expression is the external manifestation of gender.
- Any person of any gender identity can have any gender expression.
- Gender expression is culturally, ethnically and racially specific.
TERMINOLOGY

- **Assigned sex** is “the sex one is labeled at birth, generally by a medical or birthing professional, based on a cursory examination of external and/or physical sex characteristics such as genitalia and cultural concepts of male and female sexed bodies.” This is a way to refer to someone’s sex without making assumptions about their current sex, body and identity.

- **Cisgender** describes people whose gender identity matches the sex and gender role they were assigned at birth.

- **Transgender**: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity is different from the sex and gender role they were assigned at birth.
• **Trans man**: A person who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a man. Use he/him/his pronouns for trans men.

• **Trans woman**: A person who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a woman. Use she/her/hers pronouns for trans women.

• **Non-binary**: An umbrella term describing gender identities that fall outside of the gender binary. Genderqueer is used in a similar manner. It is used both as an umbrella term and a specific identity.

• **Two-Spirit**: A concept present in some, but not all, indigenous cultures across North America and parts of Central and South America. It is a term of reverence, traditionally referring to people who display both masculine and feminine sex or gender characteristics.
TERMINOLOGY

- **Transition**: The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender, with their outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

- **Gender dysphoria**: Gender dysphoria is a formal diagnosis “used by psychologists and physicians to describe people who experience significant dysphoria (distress) with the sex and gender they were assigned at birth.”

- **Misgender**: Being referred to or labeled as being a gender other than the one you identify with.
Throughout the history of English, many gender neutral pronouns have been proposed. The two most popular ones today are in the table to the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Possessive adj.</th>
<th>Possessive pronoun</th>
<th>Reflexive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>them</td>
<td>their</td>
<td>theirs</td>
<td>theirselves</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ze</td>
<td>hir</td>
<td>hir</td>
<td>hirs</td>
<td>hirself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binary</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>her</td>
<td>her</td>
<td>hers</td>
<td>herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>himself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taylor has an apple.

They have an apple.

I give the apple to Taylor.

I give the apple to them.

Taylor's apple is on the table.

Their apple is on the table.

The apple is Taylor's.

The apple is theirs.

Nico has a book.

Ze has a book.

I give the book to Nico.

I give the book to hir.

Nico’s book is on the table.

Hir book is on the table.

The book is Nico’s.

The apple is hirs.
WHAT DO TRANS PEOPLE FACE TODAY?

2 IN 5
transgender people have attempted suicide. Sexual assault was the biggest cause, followed by physical assault, harassment in school, and job loss due to bias. (National Center for Transgender Equality)

32
states do not have state-wide non-discrimination laws that cover gender identity (American Civil Liberties Union)

2 times
the rate of unemployment compared to the general population (National Center for Transgender Equality)
WHAT DO TRANS PEOPLE FACE TODAY?

90% of trans people reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job. (National Center for Transgender Equality)

72% of victims of anti-LGBT homicides are transgender women, and more specifically, 67% of anti-LGBT homicides are trans women of color. (The Anti-Violence Project)

1 IN 2 trans people avoided public washrooms due to safety concerns. (Trans Pulse Project Canadian Institutes of Health Research)

more than (57%)
RESPECT: BE PROACTIVE

- Educate yourself. Seek out books written by trans people, find transgender content creators online and keep up with what they are writing and posting.
  - Suggest specific books/resources to local libraries/school libraries
- Ask people what their pronouns are before assuming what they are. In group settings, have everyone introduce names and pronouns (or put on name tags).
- Use gender-neutral language and avoid terms like “both genders” and “opposite gender.”
- Use the name and pronouns trans people ask you to use.
THINGS TO AVOID

- Assuming sexual orientation.
- Asking about genitalia, surgery and sex. Do not ask a trans person about their genitalia, if they are on hormones or other invasive questions; if they want you to know about these aspects of their life, they will tell you.
- Asking about birth/pre-transition name, pre-transition photos.
RESOURCES

BMC Resources:

• A Brief Encyclopedia of Gender & Sexuality Terms in English
  • bmclgbt.org/general-resources

• Trans 101: A Brief Guide
  • Available soon at bmclgbt.org

• On the Male Side of Middle
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoljapEHmDA

• Safe Zone Training Manual (2016)
  • bmclgbt.org/kaleidoscope

• Contact People list
  • bmclgbt.org/kaleidoscope
RESOURCES

General Resources:

- Trans Bodies, Trans Selves
- The Gender Creative Child
- The Transgender Child
- Gender Diversity (http://www.genderdiversity.org/)
- Gender Spectrum (http://genderspectrum.org/)
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project (http://srlp.org/)
- Trans Youth Family Allies (http://www.imatyfa.org/)
- Trans Student Educational Resources (http://www.transstudent.org/)
- What Cis People Say To Trans People Vs. What We Hear
DISCUSSION

• Groups of 10-12
  • Introduce names + pronouns

• First set of questions:
  • How much of this did you already know?
  • How will you think differently about gender now?
  • What behavior would you have to change in yourself to become an ally to trans people?
EXAMINING TRANSPHOBIA IN MEDIA
DISCUSSION

• How is this clip transphobic?
• Who is at the center of this narrative? How do we know this?
• Think about the ratio of Chandler’s dad speaking vs. being spoken about. What does this suggest about the character? About trans women in general?
• Where else have you seen a narrative like this?
• What are the subtle ways that the other characters invalidate Chandler’s dad’s gender identity?
DISCUSSION

• What are some concrete ways you can be an ally to trans people?
• How do you think the election will shape this?
• What do you know about Trump/Pence’s policies about trans people?
  • What are some things you can do to stand in solidarity with trans people during this time? (Donating, calling your local representative, etc.)