Gender: Reflections and Intersections

Gender: Reflections and Intersections

VICKI L. NYGAARD (SHE/HER)

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VICKI L. NYGAARD

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Contents

Acknowledgement

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We gratefully acknowledge and thank the Snuneymuxw, Quw'utsun, Snaw-naw-as and Tla'amin, on whose traditional lands we teach, learn, research, live and share knowledge.

How This Book is Organized

Each of the 31 students was asked to create both an “academic” contribution and a “free choice” contribution. While some people chose to do a second academic article as their “free choice”, others elected to create art, music, collage, and so on. Additionally, not all free choice contributions needed to be tangible, in the sense that people could “see” them in the published book itself. For example, several people were needed through the semester to work on the Editorial and Book Launch Team.

Because of people’s differing roles in the book project, or in some cases, due to issues beyond the control of some class members, in the end, not every student ended up with two “viewable” contributions. Regardless, the eclectic collection you find here is the result of the collaboration and support shared by all 31 students in the Sociology of Gender Relations class at Vancouver Island University over the Fall of 2022. Every single person in the class played an integral role in this publication and I hope they are very proud of the book we collectively produced.

To the best of the Editorial Team’s capacity all pieces were edited for clarity, comprehension and correctness. However, some pieces have been published *as is* with the potential for polishing at a future time. Thank you for your grace in overlooking any errors. As with all worthwhile things, this will continue as a work in progress.

VLN & AB

Introduction by Vicki L. Nygaard

By the Fall semester of 2022, I'd been teaching sociology at British Columbia universities for just over 30 years. I was feeling pretty burnt out from a punishing teaching schedule, a disappointing setback at work the previous summer, and significant family losses. As usual, I was working on my course outlines close to class start-up. I desperately needed inspiration. Despite having taught gender classes approximately one million times[1] over my career, even chairing a women's and gender studies department in recent years, I was surfing the Internet for something new and exciting. I became intrigued when I came across a syllabus developed by Professor Dawne Moon at Marquette University in Wisconsin who had assigned an online class book project in 2020.

The main question I needed clarity on so I could get my course outlines uploaded in time for the first class was "can we do this?" A colleague suggested talking to the rockstars at Vancouver Island University's Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (CIEL) to see if they had insight. As I had leaned on CIEL so often in those first months of the pandemic, trying to learn how to do my job in completely different ways, I had made some solid connections. I reached out to Anwen Burk, one of the Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Specialists. She immediately said the only word I needed to hear to get my course outline uploaded – YES!

With only that yes and my heart pounding in my chest, I walked into my third year Sociology of Gender Relations class and announced that this semester we were going to write and publish a book. They looked stunned, and terrified. I felt stunned, and terrified. I told them I didn't yet know how we were going to do it but, if they were willing, we would figure it out together, with Anwen's help.

The fact that not a single student dropped the class and that this book exists here for you to read is a testament to the student's faith in that initial vision, their perseverance despite the confusion and missteps along the way, their dedication to putting in the many long hours required to refine and rework their pieces against ridiculously tight timelines, and their deep commitment to "trusting in the process" even when they felt pretty sure that wasn't such a good idea. Apparently, it was. And they have a dynamic and interesting publication to be proud of to prove it.

You would not be reading this at all if it weren't for the expertise and dedication of my colleague Anwen Burk, to whom an enormous debt of gratitude is owed. She makes the seemingly impossible not only possible, but also fun.

I also want to acknowledge the amazing support of the Dean of VIU Social Sciences, Elizabeth Brimacombe. Her encouragement, from the first minute she heard about our project through to the book launch itself, was key to making this book a reality.

This book is dedicated to those students of Sociology 322 who reignited my passion for education and for the reminder that anything really worth achieving involves both risk and hard work. Working together, we really can make miracles happen. Thanks for hanging in there with me, people. Look what we did!!

[1.] One million may be a slight exaggeration (wink).

Introduction by Anwen Burk

This is the kind of project that makes me love my job. As a Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Specialist I often get to work with innovative instructors, but I don't always get the opportunity to work directly with students. When I received the phone call from Vicki about creating a book with her class I immediately wanted to make it happen and I am so happy that it all came together.

One of my favourite parts of this project was attending the "launch" in December. The whole class came together to celebrate and share their work. This is something we so rarely do. We are usually so busy rushing onto the next course or and the next assignment that we forget to reflect on the work that we have just completed.

I would like to thank Vicki for inviting me to be a part of this project. I would also like to thank BCcampus for providing the platform we are using to host this book. Finally, I would like to thank the students in the Fall 2022 term of Sociology 322 for welcoming me into their class and being such good colleagues.

Messages from the Editorial and Publication Team

Angela Goerz

Being involved behind the scenes in the creation of this book was an adventure! I started off by being very excited to step outside of my comfort zone and do something that I had never done before. The excitement wore off pretty quickly when I realized just how overwhelming the task was! Fortunately, I had knowledgeable and patient mentors (thank you Vicki and Anwen!) and colleagues to walk through the process with. After countless emails, snacks and many post-it notes, we were able to get things completed. The editorial team made this experience very enjoyable and I am thankful I was able to work along-side them during this experience.

TK Hannah

Putting this book together with Vicki, Anwen and my colleagues was full of deep thought, laughter, and countless colour-coded sticky notes. Everyone on the team came with their unique strengths, talents, and perspectives which made the processes work so well! It would be a lie to say this project was all sunshine and rainbows, I had many fears and worries along the way but Vicki was a great support throughout it all. And here we are! We did it! I want to give a huge shout-out to both Vicki and Anwen for their tireless work on this project. They went above and beyond to create this amazing experiential learning opportunity for us and it is something we will all remember for years to come.

Maven Laberge

When Vicki initially announced we were going to write a book the class was silent, we were already thinking of the future blood, sweat, and tears we'd be pouring into it. But then we realized what an amazing opportunity and experience this would be for us; to publish as an undergrad. As the semester gained speed so did the pressure and although disagreements and anxiety were running high, we got through it together. It was then, at the book launch, that we could finally take a deep breath and a step back to see what we had created with pride.

Rayel MacLean

Being a part of this process has been both the most challenging, and most rewarding experience. From the initial planning stages to our editing days, final revisions, and everything in between- I am so grateful to my classmates, Vicki, and Anwen for their guidance and collaboration. Learning from those around me

has been an invaluable experience and I am so impressed with the passion and work everyone has put into this project. This book is a huge accomplishment, and I am proud to have been a part of it.

Madeline McIntyre

Starting off with the project was very intimidating! However, through this process I have learned so much and had such an enjoyable time with my peers learning about the process of creating a book. I am very proud of our end result and look forward to reading and celebrating all of my classmates incredible work!

Katie Near

I cannot describe the anxiety I felt when Vicki announced we would be writing an entire book in a four month semester. It was an incredibly daunting task to present to a room of 30 unsuspecting students. But thank goodness she did. This opportunity to share personal stories and experiences and hold space for such important conversations was amazing (and the work put into it really helped build character, lol). But really, the process of collectively writing a book, sharing in the stress and anxiety with my peers, and being a part of the editing team is something that I will remember for many years to come. Thanks Vicki for challenging us to do something amazing! And thank you Anwen for helping us along the way!

Zoe Paine

At the beginning of SOCI 322, we all agreed that the task of a collaborative book was daunting. However, with perseverance and teamwork, we produced an incredibly meaningful collection of academic and creative pieces. Being the class photographer and a member of the publishing team, I harnessed my visual creativity and organizational skills. Throughout this whole process, I have felt a deep sense of accomplishment and pride for myself, my co-creators, and my instructor. Ultimately, co-creating *Gender: Reflections and Intersections* will be one of the most cherished memories of my degree.

Tara-Fay Sedar

It was hard to conceptualize how a class of roughly 30 students was going to pull this off in 4 months. There were a lot of challenges along the way yet, we trusted in the process. I had the privilege to not only contribute to the book about a topic that I am very passionate about, but also had the opportunity to experience the editing/publishing process first-hand. From peer review in class to joining a small editing/publishing team to edit final drafts. It was tedious work but exciting as we were exposed to a variety of writing styles and interesting topics. There was a tremendous amount of work that went into the entire process. We could not have done this without Professor Vicki Nygaard's collaborative spirit and encouraging words. Thank you for going above and beyond as a Professor to provide us with an experiential learning experience that many of us will not soon forget. A huge thank you to Anwen Burk for assisting us on this journey and making the publication a reality.

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1. Gender Relations Word Search

AIDAN BROT (HE/HIM)

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

D W N Q T H S W W Y O U F Y F I Q E O R
B P P D G J M C W K W E M Z N U Z Z B Q
P E N I N I M E F E M B B S G X T P J F
T K E X R J I X U A I N Y E D A M F E J
G Q L X C A V E L S W N L P O D M F C R
K S A G C K C E E R O F M Y D R Z T T C
Z H M Z Z U V X T R U E S T X P B O I G
H T D I J M U U N E V G I O R W L A F A
F E B I N A R Y H G T E X E E L A F Y W
A X J P L T H C Z U U L E R D P C K I J
J X S V F F T Y N C Z I S E N W O T N A
T I D E N T I T Y N H V E T E S J P G C
V Z E M U H Z N T I M I T S G A V A M U
M X N L M Q F W M M U R P A S S I N G O
T N J A F Q W L U B N P P D N R I F S K
B I T L V W H T P O P A Z S A R S J W H
V U N I P N M I S O G Y N Y R W K S W W
L W N I N R Z J R M B M O Q T Q N T Y Y
Z E Q U A L I T Y W X J X V H B W G U D
E G V Q X E N I L U C S A M U I F F U Z

Word Bank

Identity

Bisexual

Stereotypes

Transgender

Female

Masculine

Sexism

Equality

Privilege

Binary

Male

Objectifying

Misogyny

Feminine

Passing

2. The Gendering of Sports: Societal Views of the Sex Segregation of Male and Female-Dominated Sports

AIDAN BROT (HE/HIM)

Growing up in western society, there have always been expectations for children to contribute and play various sports and activities. However, society has limited the selections for which sports to play depending on an individual's assigned gender at birth. Many sports were decided upon for children prematurely as they were, for the most part, separated into two categories, "male sports" and "female sports." A primary issue is the idea of "male sports" and "female sports." Society has implemented in children's minds that certain sports and activities are only meant to be played by boys while others are intended to be played by girls (Xu, Fan, & Brown, 2021: 264). For example, many sports involving contact, such as football or hockey, are heavily pushed on young boys, while sports such as gymnastics, dance, and cheerleading are pushed more on young girls to perform (Anderson 2008: 258). This influence has increased the manipulation of the "traditional" view within western society as men and women are taught to have specific roles even within the sports world. Although, as a society, we have claimed to have drifted away from the traditional gender roles as an entirety, there are still continuously strong gender roles being subtly placed on children based on their assigned sex at birth within the sports world (Anderson 2008: 264). There are various views within society about the sports played by men or women, as some are viewed as superior to others solely based on the sex of the participants playing the sport. These views are placed by fans, media, and even those administering the sports leagues. These reinforce the gender norms for the athletes, furthering the control that the assigned gender roles hold over them. These gender roles and stereotypes tie in within the social hierarchy as well as specific sports are only played by those with higher social status or wealth. For example, golf is seen as a sport predominantly accessed by wealthy, older white men. The same goes for sports such as water polo. More affluent individuals access these sports as these sports are primarily seen in wealthier nations or only played at a youthful level through private schooling institutions (Moss 1993). These sports separate classes based on wealth. Researching and discussing these issues of gendering within sports can help identify the problems that transpire from gender roles within sports and follow the outcomes of these issues for the wider society to acknowledge and learn from so that children can become more comfortable in figuring out which sports they receive the most enjoyment from, without experiencing the feeling as if they are stepping away from an assigned role given to them.

According to Anderson (2008), the stereotypical gender roles placed on children in the sociological system further extend to the sports world they contribute to. From a young age, children are pushed towards different sports depending on their sex. Parents will always push their male children into sports that involve more physical contact, such as football, basketball, hockey, or baseball. In contrast, female children are pushed towards very individualistic sports that mirror the opposite of the "male sports," such as dance, cheerleading, and gymnastics (Anderson 2008: 258). Plaza et al. state that the different perceptions of the sports belonging to the two sexes consistently indicate that sports were more likely to be perceived as "masculine" when they involved physical contact and the use of force or heavy objects

(e.g., rugby, team sports, fighting sports) and “as “feminine” when they involved characteristics such as gracefulness and expression (e.g., dancing, ice skating, gymnastics)” (2016: 203). This imprinted idea that these sports belong to one sex and not the other has significant effects on the mind of kids growing up. By cognitively persuading children to believe that they are unable to contribute to a sport based on their sex, negative premonitions begin to form within the psyche of these children. These individuals begin to resent the sports of the other sex as they are not permitted to contribute to them, making those sports inferior or not significant enough (Anderson 2008). These ideas only seem to grow as individuals age more.

As children from a young age begin to resent the sports of the other sex, they also begin to feel pressured to conform to a role based on their sex. Young men will perceive that since they and all the other young men play sports involving more contact and physicality, they must play this role in their daily lives. This cognitive idea will make them believe that the behaviour within their sports must be translated over to their lives outside of sports. This makes them believe more physical, and brute attributes are primary characteristics of the role of a “man” within the real world (Plaza et al. 2016: 212). On the contrary, young women are taught to believe that sports that involve more expression, gracefulness, and less physicality are meant for them to play (Fields 2005: 13). Sports such as ice-skating, cheerleading, and dance are pushed more so on young women than men, giving these women the idea that these styles of sports are “female sports”. By incorporating this mindset into young women, society is forcing on them that, just like men, their behaviour and actions in sports must translate to their personal lives. This plays a significant factor in the stereotypical roles that are forced on women to be restrained, delicate, graceful, and faint (Fields 2005: 15). As children are so impressionable, these methods and ideas of “male sports” and “female sports” place a scare factor into them, making them not want to break away from these gender norms as they do not want to be singled out or seen as different from anyone else.

For the few individuals who do break away from the gender roles placed on them by contributing to a sport that is not forced on their assigned sex at birth, there are many stereotypes placed on them by society. Anderson states that it is widespread for society to view any man who contributes to a sport dominated by women as gay or bisexual, and any woman who plays a male-dominated sport is perceived as a lesbian (2008: 261). These gender stereotypes create negative ideas about gender perception as being gay as a man or woman is then deemed a negative commodity. These stereotypes of being gay by playing a sport of the other sex are always used negatively, meant to insult the individual. These terms place a pessimistic view of being gay for individuals, believing it is a cynical lifestyle to live. According to Anderson, studies have shown that since the 1970s, these terms and stereotypes in sports of being gay as a man or woman have significantly increased the number of individuals rejecting the idea of being gay out of fear or shame and continuing to conceive of the idea of gender roles within sports (2008: 262). This shame of being perceived as gay has provided a high quantity of inequality for gay athletes, as their sexuality is rejected within the world of sports. Placing children in this state of mind at such a young age gives them the perception that both men and women are exceedingly one-dimensional in life by serving a particular set role and that by stepping away from the norms of their sex, they are outcasting themselves in society. These roots of gender roles dig deep in the sports world of children, forming misconceptions of who they are or have to be from an extremely young age.

In contrast to the statements relating to specific sports being highly dominated by men, in recent decades, there has been a dramatic gender transformation in sports, most evident in youth sports. Parents, peers, and communities have all advocated more for young women to step out of the expected gendered roles in sports pushed on them. Although the forced gendered roles in sports still heavily

dominate the sports society, small progress has been made in recent years to counteract that (Cooky & Messner 2018: 2). Millions of young women have flooded into soccer, basketball, and other sports in recent years, setting these sports apart as less of a "male sport," and more as an activity shared by both sides (Cooky & Messner 2018: 6). Partly as a result of this substantial increase in participation, there has been a dramatic change in the cultural viewing and acceptance of girls' athleticism. As much as the stereotyped "female sports" behaviour has been degraded, the female leagues within sports that are played by both sex have been degraded just as equally. An example of this would be women's basketball. According to Grappendorf, Simmons, & Hancock, most average sports viewers hold the male side of a sport such as basketball to a much higher standard than the women (2020: 3). Their findings suggested that this opinion did not resolve from an experience of watching both the male and female leagues of basketball yet derived solely from the preference of gender of the viewer, who are most dominantly white males (Grappendorf, Simmons, & Hancock 2020: 3). Seeing as these sports such as basketball have transitioned from being solely masculine sports to being gender neutral only in recent years, the inclusion of women into sports such as basketball seems not to have an entirely positive outlook from everyone. By basing a preference of viewership towards a sports league on gender, it limits the availability for individuals to continue to play the sports they enjoy, as their sports are degraded by the viewers or the common public based solely on the sex of the players playing.

Many individuals view female athletes as less of an athlete within their selected sports than their male counterparts, solely based on the current viewership situation of demeaning female sports. This has extended so far as now children from a young age are cognitively taught that female athletes are inferior to male athletes, no matter what sport they play. In a study conducted in the United Kingdom, researchers questioned 278 young boys and 237 young girls to illustrate or describe someone who frequently played sports or someone they perceived as an athlete. More than "80% of all the children drew the sports figure as a man, and more than 60% of them identified the sport that the figure was playing as soccer" (Xu, Fan, & Brown 2021: 265). These results suggest that, from an early age, children internalize widely accepted sport-related gender types, which have far-reaching effects on attitude and behaviour (Xu, Fan, & Brown 2021: 265). The results from this UK study suggest that children learn certain habits and behaviours from a young age to identify female sports as inferior to male sports and that the ideal athlete is a male figure. These ideas can cause harm to the world of female sports, as it is internally present to female athletes that they are seen as inferior athletes to their male counterparts, especially to the female athletes that play neutral sports such as basketball or soccer, where a heavy bias is placed towards the male leagues from the viewers and spectators.

A subtle way female athletes playing neutral sports is subdued is by placing them in sports similar to that of the male sport yet have enough changes that male viewers can mimic them to oppress the idea of female athletics. According to Cooky & Messner, girls and boys are routinely sex-segregated into separate sports leagues (2018: 4). This does not solely mean that they are split into two leagues of the same sport. Primarily they are placed into different sports entirely. For example, boys play baseball, while most girls are channeled into softball. By doing so, this allows society to allow female athletes to play neutral sports, yet by having enough of a difference between the sports of baseball and softball, where there are many changes in rulings and playstyle, those who oppress female sports in society can continue to do so while being able to route for the male counterpart of the neutral sport. These sex segregations in similar sports, such as baseball and softball, do not break away from the gender mistreatment in sports of female athletes. Although there has been a rise in young female athletes contributing to playing neutral sports that, in the past, have been predominantly male sports, the overall attitude of society towards female sports contribution has been primarily negative. By placing such negative ideas associated with female

sports, most young women will not feel as inclined to play sports in school as the young men, as they hear how society views all levels of female athletics as if it is more a hobby than anything. These gender roles of superior and inferior sporting leagues based on sex are one of the primary factors in how children, especially young women, are taught to believe that sex and gender in sports are paramount. When in reality, these gender roles in sports are a sociological way to undermine female contribution to sports and to integrate sex segregation into adolescent activities.

The division of sports reaches even further than the idea of sex and gender. Another issue that ties into roles in the sports world is the division of sports based on social status and wealth. Many sports, such as golf, water polo, horseback, and automobile racing, are commonly only played by the more fortunate and wealthier. At a youthful level, these sports are predominantly played through private schooling institutions. These institutions have higher budgeting from being accessible solely to wealthier families who wish to place their children in their programs (Moss 1993). Moss explains how the mental image of an individual playing golf throughout society is an older, wealthy, white male, and that this is primarily the demographic of players contributing to the sport of golf (1993: 95). This is the primary reason as to why sports such as these are not universally played by most people, as there is a gateway to enter the world of these sports that are only unlocked through social status or wealth. By having higher status or wealth in society, individuals can frequently play these sports, which by doing so, ultimately displays one's power and wealth to the rest of society (Kidd 2013, Moss 1993).

One of the primary factors in sports that divides wealthier sports from the sports played by the majority of society is the 'country club'. Like many other terms from the world of leisure and sport, the words' country club' tend to have an expansive meaning. These words suggest a certain tendency to exclusivity, smugness, and materialism (Moss 1993: 93). Country clubs are primarily seen as the housing of golf courses in society, as this is where most courses are found. By placing an exclusive sport into a system of clubhouses where individuals have to pay high amounts of wealth to enter, the demographic of golfers becomes even smaller as fewer people can afford to join. This also separates the status of golfers, as those who can afford to purchase golf bags, clubs, and balls, are still segregated from those who can afford to enter the clubhouse. By doing so, the separation reaches beyond excluding athletes from playing golf but also divides golfers depending on their social wealth and status. The 'country club' is one of the largest areas in sports that separate classes in sports, as it creates a sort of hierarchy within the sports world, only allowing access to those with wealth and status (Moss 1993: 96). Many children of wealthier families grow up playing these sports that are only accessible to those with wealth, dividing them from other kids their age who cannot afford the same activities and luxuries (Kidd 2013). Implementing a social system and hierarchy based on status and wealth into the sports world of children, internally teaches them that there is a difference between those who can afford luxury sports and those that cannot and that luxury sports are superior to others as it is more expensive to play and only acceptable to a particular few.

The division of wealthier sports, such as golf, reaches a level of gender or sex segregation as well. As stated earlier by Moss, golf is demographically viewed as a rich, older white man's sport, not by coincidence (1993: 95). As golf is seen as a "male" wealthier sport, the exclusion of women in golf has become paramount. By affiliating this exclusive sport with the male sex, the inclusion of women attempting to play golf is minimal. Female athletes are seen much more rarely than male athletes in golf, as society has placed the sport within the spectrum of "male sports". By doing so, gender roles extend even to these exclusive sports as female athletes are internally taught that this sport belongs to the other sex and is not meant for them. Kidd argues that sex segregation in golf is beneficial as it allows male athletes to bond in a sport that demands less physicality and more bonding time with others (2013: 555). However, this argument

makes no effort to address the sex segregation of women in golf, as it solely focuses on the benefits of segregation and inclusion for wealthier male athletes. This ideology is very one-sided. By making wealthier sports, such as golf, more accessible to the general population, both class division and gender roles within sports may be reduced. This can be done primarily by reducing golf's pricing, especially the cost and exclusivity of the 'country club' scheme.

Gender roles in sports have always been a predominant issue yet have become more subtle forms of sex segregation. The primary issue is the idea of "male sports" and "female sports." Societal views of sports have implemented in children's minds that certain sports and activities are only meant to be played by male athletes while others are intended to be played by female athletes (Xu, Fan, & Brown, 2021: 264). Examples include any sport involving contact, such as football, wrestling, or hockey, which are heavily pushed on young male athletes, while sports such as gymnastics, dance, and ice skating are pushed more on young female athletes to perform (Anderson 2008: 258). These gender roles placed on children create a system in which kids develop relationships with the sports they are allowed to play while resenting the sports performed by the other sex that they are taught are not meant for them. By doing so, society creates personalities within children that can develop into individuals who harbor resentment or disapproval of activities solely based on the effects these gender roles have placed on their cognitive development. According to Anderson, these effects lead to many young men forming habits of homophobia (2008). These effects of gender roles can be viewed throughout society as female sports such as basketball and soccer are often scrutinized due to the sex of the players. By creating negative societal attitudes towards a sport based on sex or gender, restrictions on sports possibilities concerning an individual's gender are formed. Gender roles in sports have, and continue to, create gender segregation and conflicts in class and social status. Future research on gender roles in sports should investigate the explicit and implicit pathways by which gender stereotypes may influence individuals' behaviors in the sport context. By doing so, ways to counter gender segregation and stereotypes in sports may be identified and used to discard these societal patterns, so that children growing up do not feel a pressure to conform to a role in the sports world, based on their sex.

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3. First Nations Women: Reclaiming Power

DESTINY F. DAVIDSON (SHE/HER)

Keywords: First Nations, Feminism, Female Chiefs, Indian Act

Disclaimer:

> I am a First Nations woman from the Haida Nation who feels comfortable with the word "Indian"; nevertheless, I strive to use it only when discussing law; otherwise, I use "First Nations."
>
> The term First Nations is used to identify Indigenous peoples across Canada, except Inuit or Metis peoples.

Introduction

Prior to colonization, many First Nations communities passed down their inheritance and wealth through their mothers. This is a practice frequently performed by matrilineal societies where women hold positions of power and leadership within their communities (University of British Columbia 2009). First Nations Peoples who had inhabited the land since before recorded history had efficient, traditional modes of leadership and governance. Before contact, hereditary chiefs were often in charge under the traditional government structure. As the name suggests, Hereditary chiefs inherit the position and responsibilities per the community's history and cultural norms. Traditionally, hereditary chiefs were groomed from birth by the women of their community. Boys would often speak female dialects of their traditional language until a certain age due to their time with their female teachers who taught them everything. Although many First Nation spokespeople, or hereditary chiefs, were traditionally men, the matriarchs were responsible for choosing them and taking the title away in the event of malpractice (Anderson 2009:118). When settlers came to Canada, they took their patriarchal social norms and ideas with them and attempted to understand First Nations society through this lens. After the establishment of the Canadian Federation and the introduction of the 1976 Indian Act, women lost authority, power, and status. They were removed from positions of respect and high status within their communities (Voyageur 2011b:680). While assimilation laws caused the marginalization of First Nations peoples and ever further marginalized women, the amendments of these laws also allowed them to rise again publicly. Women are reclaiming their power, authority, and status; First Nations communities' political and social structure is constantly changing. They progressively assume elected posts as chiefs and councillors and become the community's decision-makers. What has women taking back their power looked like on a community and personal level?

Colonizing Canada

For more than a century, First Nations peoples' daily life has been governed by a set of laws known as the Indian Act. In 1867 the British parliament passed the Constitution Act, creating the Canadian Federation (Ontario 2022). Just nine years after the establishment of the Canadian Federation was the

introduction of the Indian Act of 1876. This power has varied from broad-based political control, such as imposing band councils as governing bodies on First Nations communities, to control over Indians' rights to practice their culture and customs. The First Nations' ideals, which included collectivism, community ownership of land, living harmoniously with nature, and equality, conflicted with the foundational ideas of Canada. First Nations people are systematically deprived of their social, political, religious, and economic standing in Canadian society due to the increased regulation and legislation under the new colonial administration. They quickly found themselves in a position of inferiority to other Canadians (Anderson 2009:100; Voyageur 2011b:68).

The Indian Act

The Indian Act is a piece of a long history of assimilation policies that aimed to eliminate First Nations peoples' cultural, social, economic, and political uniqueness by integrating them into ordinary Canadian life and values (University of British Columbia 2009). Before the Indian Act of 1876 was The Gradual Civilization Act, introduced in 1857, which promoted enfranchisement to incorporate First Nations people into settler culture in Canada. The act was deemed ineffective since just one individual was voluntarily enfranchised (Morden 2016:115). Thus, the Gradual Enfranchisement Act was passed by Congress in 1869. First Nations people have been enfranchised in accordance with the Indian Act by enrolling with Canadian military services, leaving reservations for extended periods of time and for women, marrying an non-Fist Nations men (University of British Columbia 2009; Morden 2016:115). The establishment of the Indian Act of 1876 introduced the elections of Chiefs and Band Councils, which worked with Indian Agents who had the most say in decisions. The Indian Act states in section 74 (2) that a council of a band "shall consist of one chief, and one councillor for every one hundred members of the band, but the number of councillors shall not be less than two nor more than twelve and no band shall have more than one chief" (Government of Canada 2022). Although there are no current restrictions on gender for band council members, women were not allowed to hold elected leadership roles in Canadian reserve politics until 1951, according to the Indian Act. For seventy-five years, the Indian Act prohibited women from engaging in politics. In 1951, the Indian Act was amended allowing women to return to politics (Voyageur 2011b:67; Huhndorf and Suzack 2010:7; Anderson 2009:100).

Male Bias in the Indian Act

Male bias within the Indian Act extended further than band council politics; it was evident when looking at how Indian status emphasized males rather than females while incorporating rules specifying that status only passes through male lineage. A woman had to give up her Indian status if she married a non-Indian, according to the original Indian Act provision. Indian women were disproportionately affected by compulsory enfranchisement since Indian males could not have their status forcefully terminated without going through a drawn-out legal procedure (University of British Columbia 2009; Day 2019:175). First Nations women were treated as second-class citizens under a new social structure that denied them their rights, and they were also viewed as inferior to both Indian and white males (Voyageur 2011b:68; Day 2019:174). In recent decades, the systematic marginalization of First Nations women in all its manifestations has catalyzed women's activism (Huhndorf and Suzack 2010:5).

Female Political Resistance – Stealthy Women

Women's organizations took up informal political channels despite the gendered restriction on women and their political participation beginning in the 1930s. The British Columbia Indian Homemakers' Association was founded when the Department of Indian Affairs funded and urged Native women to

frequently get together to share best practices for more effective household management (BCIHA). Women would assemble in these groups to knit, sew, and exchange parenting, cooking, and other domestic-related skills and expertise (Voyageur 2011a:67). However, homes and amenities on many reserves were insufficient to perform even basic household activities due to inadequate resources for everyday living; hunger was a more pressing issue. Homemakers would often host drives for food and clothing and put on craft sales to raise money for their communities. As they learned more about the struggles that their communities were going through and the particular challenges and discrimination that Indian women faced, Indian women grew more politically involved throughout time (University of British Columbia 2009; Voyageur 2011a:68). These "get-togethers" gave First Nations women a forum to organize their protests and plan how to improve their miserable living circumstances on the reservation. The opportunity for women to share knowledge and debate political tactics acquired from their male relatives who were active in reserve politics allowed them to grow as individuals and as a group. Additionally, it encouraged these women to establish regional branches of the Canadian Homemakers Association on Canadian Indian Reserves (Nickel 2018:103; Voyageur 2011a:67; University of British Columbia 2009). Political frameworks included politicking motherhood, community caregiving, and concern with the political results involving land claims and First Nations rights to seek more inclusive interpretations of unity than the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) advocated. Since its founding in 1968, the BCIHA has advocated for better child welfare, education, housing, and health (Nickel 2018:91). First Nations women remained politically silenced until the revision of the Indian Act in 1951, where gender-discriminating political and cultural restrictions were removed, allowing status women to vote and run for band elections within their reserve community. As a result of the amendment, women are no longer required to influence men's decisions behind closed doors, as was the case when the Indian Act restricted their open participation. Currently, women lead openly, and their decisions are documented in the historical record (Voyageur 2011b:82). According to Statistics Canada (2022), in 2019, 27% of First Nations councillors and 19% of First Nations Chiefs were women.

How Women Introduced Themselves to Reserve Politics

As women return to their rightful positions of power, we can examine how their role as band councillors and chiefs' contrasts with that of a male chief. In two studies where female chiefs across Canada were interviewed regarding their positions, there was majority agreement on how they approach their jobs and the expectations held on them by their community. It was stated that a vast majority of participants in either study came from a politically involved family. Additionally, many of the participants in either study were born into the community of their council and also had some background in politics, whether that be band council administration or a postsecondary experience in law or social work. Furthermore, many women stated that they wanted further involvement in reserve governance as they wanted to see a change in their communities and were encouraged by their community members to run for office (Voyageur 2011a:72; 2011b:67; Anderson 2009:106). Voyageur's 2020 study of elected First Nations female leadership found that many of the 169 elected chiefs felt that their position as councillor prepared them for the inner workings of the political system and managing public needs (Voyageur 2011b:68).

How Their Leadership Roles Differ from Men's

Both of Voyageur's studies, *Out in the open: Elected female leadership in Canada's First Nations Community* (2011) and *Female First Nations Chiefs and the colonial legacy in Canada* (2011) demonstrated how gender impacted the experiences female chiefs had while in office, particularly how their methods and leadership styles varied from those of their male counterparts. Interviewees in

Cora Voyageur's research believed they could provide a broader skill set than men since many of these women had transferred their background abilities to their high-ranking positions. Skills brought to the table included communication, community service, formal schooling, and agency work. While several women believed that their academic background had equipped them with the necessary abilities for the position, many of the chiefs said that sometimes you had to rely on your instincts when making decisions. When addressing the complexities of First Nations community challenges, female leaders believe intuition may be as significant as reasoning or the logical decision-making process acquired via tertiary education (2011b:72-84). Similarly, in Kim Anderson's research, female chiefs value communication and transparency, whether it is with the community about council happenings or with each other about critical concerns. As stated by one of Anderson's participants, good leadership requires transparency; everything is available to anyone who wants to see it, and that is how you get support from your community (2009:103-115).

Another chief remarked that women's communication style is far less aggressive and confrontational than that of males. The chief added that it was not unusual for males to curse, shout, and beat on tables during a meeting, but this is no longer a problem as more women have entered the office and brought a more soothing influence to the table (Anderson 2009:112). This may be related to the perception of a female chief's leadership job as caring; they are more inclined to base their decisions on the possible influence on the following generation. Half of the chiefs in Anderson's study mentioned their roles and motherhood. Chief Mckay equated her role to look after her kids, wanting them to improve. She says, "I guess it's the mother inside of us that makes us want to do what's best for everyone and not just ourselves … Although they're [community members] not their kids, they're looking to them for good leadership, to take them in a good direction" (2009:113).

A chief in Voyageur's study states that men tend to be more susceptible to corruption and lose sight of communal needs. In contrast, women have a different perspective when looking at family, community, and wellbeing (2011b:69). Similarly, a participant in Anderson's study revealed that "woman chiefs get right in there and they help with the work. The male chiefs still rely on the women in the background to research so they do the work, and the men stand up front and center, taking in all the accolades" – another chief added that male chiefs would often talk the talk but rarely walk the walk (2009:113). Although these female chiefs expressed their active involvement in the work they are doing, they are often expected to take care of issues such as child and elder care, health and healing, education, and social services, areas regarded as "soft" issues and women's work (Voyageur 2011b:78).

Sexism as a Challenge

Gender plays a significant role in these chiefs' political lives; many of the chiefs in both Voyageur and Anderson's studies felt that they needed to acquire more skills and put in more effort than men did to be elected to council. Additionally, it was expressed that there was a need to prove themselves as chiefs for others to listen to them (Voyageur 2011b:77; Anderson 2009:117). Women in Voyageur's study revealed that when they took office, male employees stated that they would not work for a woman. The women would sometimes feel threatened, bullied, and intimidated by their male counterparts as they would frequently get offended if the chief was not agreeing with what they were saying (Voyageur 2011b:70). One chief reported that someone attempted to run her over when she was walking along a road on her reserve. In contrast, another stated that her house was vandalized. A bullet was placed in her doorway with a letter instructing her to "back off" (Voyageur 2011b:70). Many of the chiefs interviewed expressed times when they faced sexism from both community members and partnering male councillors.

Furthermore, it is evident from both research studies that some male councillors would feel threatened by powerful women with authoritative voices. Women were often disregarded while speaking or not credited for their contributions. A chief said that she would say something in a meeting, everyone would listen, then go on, and then a male counsellor would say the same thing. However, the other councillors would applaud his proposal (Voyageur 2011b:76). Many First Nations men have internalized patriarchal norms of post-settler life and therefore feel that women, even in high-ranking positions, must remain submissive. Regardless, women continue to overcome settler norms by remaining visible as political leaders in their communities.

How to Increase Women's Influence and Participation in Politics

Many of the chiefs think that this patriarchal perspective is preventing women from participating in the politics of their communities since women and men believe they must be at home with their families. In Anderson's research, a political leader noted that being a political leader is a full-time job since constituents contact and visit their home to discuss issues they think need to be addressed (Anderson 2009:116). Although it might be daunting, many chiefs encourage young women to participate in politics by serving as leaders. Some chiefs emphasized the need to work with the younger generation to guarantee that there would be individuals capable of taking over the task of the present generation. Several chiefs advocated a return to traditional models of government, in which women and men made choices equally on the front lines, to enhance women's involvement in politics (Anderson 2009:118).

Conclusion

Despite the establishment of patriarchal acts by the Canadian government diminishing women's power and status, women are regaining what was taken from them. With the help of their communities, women in First Nations reserves across Canada are being elected into band councils as both councillors and chiefs. They no longer do the chief's work while being paid an administrators salary. Ironically, what gave them the power to prevail is the same thing that took away their power; however, they still feel the effects of colonization as men have internalized the patriarchal norms of settler society. Regardless, this generation of council chiefs is encouraging and preparing the next generation of women to step up and embrace the hardships that come along with reclaiming power with the intent of advocating for their people and producing healthier communities. This article demonstrates the need for women in political positions as they bring forth a caring, holistic perspective for the community influenced by motherhood. Women taking back their power brings communities one step closer to re-establishing traditional political governance where women are seen as equals to men.

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4. Image of Terri-lynn Davidson

DESTINY F. DAVIDSON (SHE/HER)

Terri-lynn Davidson dancing a mask and spreading eagle down to honour the Chiefs of Haida Gwaii from both Skidegate and Gaw Tlagee (Old Massett) at a potlatch in October 2022.

With settlers and the establishment of the Canadian Government came a long history of assimilation policies that targeted First Nations people's ways of life. As an attempt to integrate First Nations people into settler lifestyles, the Canadian Government attempted to eliminate their cultural, political, social, and economic practices with the introduction of the Gradual Civilization act of 1857 and the Gradual enfranchisement act of 1869. Both of these laws were made as an attempt to strip First Nations peoples from their Indian status and prompted them to embrace the Canadian lifestyle. In 1884, as part of its assimilation effort, the federal government amended the Indian Act to prohibit the potlatch until 1951. Potlatches are seen by First Nations peoples as a way to redistribute wealth and conduct various types of business while holding ceremonies which often included masks. The government and its allies saw the celebration as anti-Christian, irresponsible, and wasteful of property. The Indian Act marginalized women and stripped them from any sort of status. Women are now reclaiming their status and culture in numerous ways including at potlatches and taking part in traditional ceremonies.

5. The Gendered Challenges for Transgender Women in Sports

HAYES EVANS (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Transgender, Fairness, Bills and Laws, Patriarchal society, and Heterosexual norms.

There is a considerable amount of research accessible that pertains to the challenges that transgender women face the detrimental effects these challenges have on their psychological health. The primary argument against transgender women is that they inherently pose an unfair advantage over cisgender women due to supplemental testosterone levels, physical composition, and strength (Bianchi 2017; Jones et al 2020; McClearen 2022). Given this widespread argument, research that seeks to understand the biological differences between individuals competing in female categories has been a significant area of study (Bianchi 2017; Flores et al 2020; Hilton & Lundberg 2020; Luther 2021). It's widely accepted in academia that transgender women face far more criticism than transgender men and cisgender individuals; however, upon reviewing the literature, there has been a minimal initiative to address the inequality transgender women experience.

Historically, competitive sports reinforce traditional gender roles through various applications (McClearen 2022; Flores et al 2020). For example, men and women are only eligible to participate in binary gender categories. Furthermore, feminine and masculine characteristics are associated with specific sports (e.g., gymnastics is more suitable for women and rugby for men) (Flores et al 2020). Even within male and female categories of sport, the regulations, equipment, and standards vary according to gender (Flores et al., 2020). The public attitudes towards sports favor hyper-masculinity and applaud aggression that accompanies outstanding sportsmanship. In contrast, feminine traits like compassion and elegance are withheld from recognition (Flores et al 2020).

Sports as a heavily gendered institution is not a new phenomenon, and perceived fairness has been debated for decades (Bianchi 2017; Hilton & Lundberg 2020; Luther 2021). At one point in time, women, people with disabilities, non-heterosexuality, and ethnic backgrounds were acceptable factors that prohibited individuals from participating in sports (Cunningham & Pickett, 2017; Luther, 2021). Since then, society has made tremendous strides to promote inclusivity for most individuals in sports. More recently, attitudes toward the LGB community have become increasingly more accepting (Cunningham & Pickett 2017). However, these advancements for LGB members in the sports world are not as welcoming toward transgender individuals.

Gender identity is not a linear process. The blanket term transgender (trans) best describes those whose gender identity does not align congruently with their assigned sex at birth (Papoulias 2006). Further, one can identify outside the bounds of gender binaries, known as non-binary. For some individuals, the journey to authenticity will include medical and surgical measures to affirm their gender identity. Notably, not all trans individuals want or need hormone replacement therapy and gender reassignment surgeries; neither of these is required for an individual to identify as transgender (Bianchi 2017). The

word transgender emerged from the contributions of Harold Garfinkel, where he first coined the term "transsexual" (Papoulias 2006). This work was a pivotal starting place for feminist sociologists such as Judith Butler, examining the social enforcement of gender norms (Papoulias 2006). Around the early 1990s, activism regarding trans people gained some traction as they challenged the hegemonic gender binaries of this era (Papoulias 2006). Today thirty years later, the queer community continues this battle to seek equality (Bianchi 2017; Cunningham & Picket 2017; Flores et al 2020; McClearen 2022).

It's widely recognized in North America that increasingly more individuals identify as transgender (Bianchi 2017). With more trans representation available in different sectors such as music, television, and sports, individuals are becoming more comfortable in expressing their gender identity. Although this is a significant gain for the LBGTQ+ community, public attitudes have become problematic toward transgender athletes. Government officials, sports legislation, and policy and lawmakers are targeting trans individuals by implementing laws, bills, and regulations (Bianchi 2017; Luther 2021). As Luther (2021) addresses, there are 144 anti-trans bills in the United States. Approximately 50% of those bills target trans athletes and their ability to compete in sports congruent with their gender identity (Luther 2021). The recent surge in gender panic has generated strict and inhumane controls over trans bodies. In the context of sports, some states enforce bathroom bills, prohibiting transgender individuals from using the washroom that aligns with their gender identity. But this is only the beginning with bills and laws. Several states require hormone and sex verification testing (McClearen 2021). The justifiable argument for these extreme measures is "perceived fairness".

This article will discuss this is a valid argument and bring attention to the harmful consequences the trans community is experiencing because of these actions. There have been several approaches to better understanding the gendered challenges in sports associated with transgender women. After reviewing many studies, a common strategy when studying transgender women in sports is to compare them to cis-gendered women or biological men (Bianchi 2017; Hilton & Lundberg 2021; McClearen 2021). The fairness argument advocates transgender women should not be able to compete against or with cisgender women due to an influx of testosterone (Hilton & Lundberg 2020). This argument comes from the skills thesis, in which Bianchi (2017) states sports should decide which competitor is more skillful. One way to maintain the skills thesis is to alleviate hormonal advantages. There are several reasons why a competitor may obtain abnormal advantages, such as steroid use, genetic factors, and hormone replacement therapy. The objective for policy and lawmakers is to diminish hormonal advantages and to promote fairness amongst the players (Bianchi 2017). However, high testosterone levels within the body do not equate to improved skill or performance. The desired effect of testosterone is dependent on how the body responds to the hormone (Bianchi 2017). Rather the argument against trans women should discuss if trans women have higher levels of functional testosterone (Bianchi 2017). The use of the word "functional" describes the effectiveness of testosterone in enhancing athletic abilities (Bianchi, 2017). Currently, no evidence supports the claim that all trans women possess effective and higher testosterone levels (Luther 2021). If it were the case that trans women did, it would be an unjust advantage because cisgender women cannot train harder or change their diet to obtain equivocal testosterone (Bianchi 2017). Under the premise of this argument, there is no natural or genuine way for cisgender women to obtain similar hormone levels.

There are several counter-facts to disprove this controversial argument. One way is to discredit the merits of the skills thesis argument by presenting the potentially unfair genetic attributes that have led to the victories of many sports competitors (Bianchi 2017). For example, one of the most well-known Olympic athletes, Michael Phelps, has an extensive wingspan and hypermobility in his joints (Bostwick

& Joyner 2012). Furthermore, Lance Armstrong uses and manages a surplus of oxygen, and one of the most admirable Women's volleyball athletes, Flo Hyman, had a disease that led to her excessive growth (Bostwick & Joyner 2012). These genetic attributes are unique to the individual and likely positively influence athletic performance. These examples illustrate how genetic predispositions can potentially be unfair in comparison to their competitors, like the argument against trans women competing in female categories. The only difference is that minimal measures have accounted for genetic benefits in gender-segregated categories (Bostwick & Joyner 2012). Because genetic advantages exist within the current guidelines and regulations in sports, this argument should not solely exclude trans women. Instead, the rules must account for all genetic advantages or none. Furthermore, all human bodies produce and use testosterone, at different volumes and effectiveness. And if sports administrators would like to continue monitoring hormone levels, this should include all competitors, not just trans women.

Research has shown time and time again that exercise and participation with peers can have positive impacts on mental and physical health, self-confidence, and improved social skills (Luther 2021). These are just a few examples of how beneficial sports can be for well-being. The exact message that promotes sports to children contradicts itself if the children are not cisgender. Ultimately, creating tension between transgender and cisgender children in sports (Luther 2021). Transgender individuals are far more likely than their cisgender peers to experience bullying, harassment, depression, suicidal ideation, violence, and rejection (Luther 2021; Pascal & Devita 2022). Navigating adolescent life is challenging enough, let alone being transgender poses far too many difficulties; inclusivity of sports would surely help bridge this gap. Many seem to view fairness in terms of winning and losing, but we should establish fairness in who can and cannot compete; without excluding minority groups (Luther 2021).

Fairness is a concept that gains meaning in a specific cultural moment and is always subject to change (Luther 2021). As previously mentioned, fairness was once used to justify the exclusion of women, people with disabilities, and BIPOC individuals. Several decades later, it seems unfathomable that these rules ever existed. Historically speaking, not much has changed as another marginalized group gets silenced. This seems to be anything but fair for the transgender community.

In application to the effects these laws can have on trans individuals, I'd like to briefly discuss the experiences of two Black trans women from Connecticut named Terry Miller and Andraya Yearwood (Luther 2021). These two young women were members of the high school track team and performed exceptionally at that. In 2018, Yearwood placed first in her category at the Connecticut state track meet, and her teammate Miller placed second (Murib 2022). Most accomplishments, such as Yearwood and Millers would call for celebration; however, this is far from the experience they received. The girls hardly got to enjoy this achievement before the parents of their track team took measures into their own hands to prevent these girls from competing again (Murib 2022). This petition is an example of many legal actions that have fuelled groups such as evangelical Christians, anti-LGBT organizations, and Alliance Defending Freedom. In this case and many others, young black trans women are seen as villainous rather than victims (Luther 2021; McClearen 2022).

Understanding discourse and how this concept operates within power relationships have been of central focus to many sociologists. Michel Foucault first coined discourse when describing something immersed within everyday society (McClearen 2022). Discourse conveys typical beliefs and social norms within that period, meaning that discourse is always subject to change. By applying Foucault's discursive formation to cisgender and trans women, we can better understand how the power relationship works. The primary mechanisms for producing and reinforcing discourse are through media and government legislation.

Traditionally, advertisement seeks to make viewers feel good about themselves and empower them (McClearen 2022). More and more companies are utilizing cisgender actresses, and athletes to promote the ideal image of what it means to be an empowered woman. On the other hand, political tactics bestow the view that transgender women cannot co-exist in that category. Thus, the discursive formation exists to uplift the spirits of cisgender women through media, while legislative efforts instill fear that trans women somehow threaten them (McClearen 2022).

For discourse to work, society must adopt the belief that white cisgender women are weak and require protection to validate prejudiced opinions against trans individuals (McClearen, 2022). Furthermore, trans women must be seen for only their biological makeup as "real men" and can therefore endanger the safe spaces and opportunities of cisgender women (Murib 2022). Ironically, the belief that trans women are men is not only transphobic but a contradiction. The argument that "men" when referring to trans women, shouldn't be allowed in the same changing rooms and restrooms because it's unsafe implies that women need to be taken care of (Murib 2022). But who else could protect these women other than men themselves? In other words, benevolent sexism and infantilization function to reinforce a heteronormative patriarchal society (McClearen 2022).

One critical component to address is the lack of media and policing of transgender men. Because the very patriarchal structure that has kept women out of sectors like education, sports, and the workforce is still seen to be effective. Much like the views concerning trans women, trans men are viewed as "real women" (Schilt & Westbrook 2015) Thus, it's comical to government officials that they'd be a threat to someone assigned male at birth (Luther 2021). The discrimination trans people face is influenced by the observer's belief systems attached to gender.

Bathrooms and sports are two heavily gendered sectors (Murib 2022). Both mechanisms attempt to maintain sex-segregated functions to enforce gender binaries within the bounds of society. Recently, bathroom bills have not seen as much success (Schilt & Westbrook 2015). A possible explanation for this failure is that bathrooms have never been sex-segregated. Take, for example, restrooms in households, for those with disabilities, or on airplanes. The biological differences between individuals aren't a valid argument for who can and cannot use a toilet. However, in the context of sports, sex characteristics are presented as the premise for the exclusion of trans individuals. The basis of this argument resorts to science to grasp any relevance. As Murib (2022) states, "gender, in this conceptualization, is not a social construct, but instead being in possession of certain genitals, or the more updated form: specific chromosomal configurations." From a sociological lens, the foundation of segregation and discrimination comes from physical and biological characteristics.

Although transphobic rhetoric is still very prevalent today, combating this discourse can be achieved through learning, teaching, and gradual acceptance of gender as a spectrum. The agenda to erase trans individuals has taken on many forms before. For example, lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals threatened this system for years. The gradual acceptance of these individuals illustrates that social progress is attainable. There is nothing fair about the experiences trans people undergo; however, continuous advocacy, education, and the alliance of other demographics will help to bridge inequality.

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6. What does it Mean to be a Woman?

HAYES EVANS (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Womanhood, Gender inequality, Transgender, Patriarchy

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Throughout history, the answer to this question was "*less than*"

The status of a heterosexual white man

If that doesn't enrage you to your inner core

Then, we are not fighting the same war

Gender is formed through social processes

Not who should or shouldn't be allowed to wear dresses

"One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" argued Simone de Beauvoir

She illustrates the evolution of womanhood, most tend to ignore

Womanhood is felt, experienced, and known

Gender is an identity that should never leave someone alone

7. How Gender and Sexual Identity Shape Sex Work Experiences

SAMANTHA FURNEAUX (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Queer identity, Sex work, Safety

Gender and sexual identity are both extremely prominent research topics today. However, these topics are lacking in research regarding gender and sexual identities in sex work. When people think of sex work, most people think of strip clubs, prostitutes, and women selling sex to men. However, this is not always the case. Sex work can be defined as "the act or practice of engaging in promiscuous acts in exchange for money" (George, Vindhya, & Ray. 2010). Although this definition can be used to define numerous acts in which sex is used for gain, it is generally assumed that sex work refers to the forms of illegal actions by people such as streetwalkers, escorts, and brothel workers (George et al. 2012). Despite the vast amount of sex work, few areas of sex work have been addressed in research, mainly focusing on the experiences of cisgender female sex workers. Although some research focuses on male sex workers (particularly those who have sex with other men), there is a lack of research on transgender female sex workers as well as non-binary sex workers. Many people of different genders and sexual identities participate in sex work. This paper examines how one's sexual identity and gender have defined one's experiences in sex work. This will be done by reading and researching published articles. For this paper, sexual identities will be defined by how one thinks of oneself in terms of to whom one is romantically or sexually attracted. At the same time, gender in this paper will refer to how someone identifies (male, female, non-binary, trans). This paper will examine how men, trans, and non-binary peoples' experiences have been shaped by their experiences in sex work through gender.

Transgender people have faced discrimination on systemic, interpersonal, and institutional levels. Previous literature has discussed and supported that most transgender women's only viable career option is in the sex work industry (Nadal, Vargas, Meterko, Hamit, & McLean 2012). Nadal, Vargus, and Fujii-Doe (2012) conducted a qualitative research study on male-to-female transgender women. These women were interviewed on their experiences in the sex work industry. Nadal et al. found that "there was severe hindrance placed upon these transgender women when finding work and that many felt sex work was their only option due to discriminatory hiring practices" (2012). However, one interesting finding from Nadal et al. was that many of these women reported a positive experience within the sex work industry. Many reported this because they stated that "they felt appreciated as real women by their male clients" (Nadal et al. 2012). This is interesting as it shows how many trans sex workers could feel more comfortable in their bodies.

Additionally, many of these women chose to stay in sex work because of positive experiences and appreciation for other aspects of their lives that they received. However, there also needs to be a light shined on the negative experience many transgender women face in sex work. Because sex work is illegal in many places of the world, specifically in places like the United States, Japan, and Canada (not the actual work but the purchasing which hinders Canadian sex workers). There are negative and

pervasive societal attitudes toward sex workers which allow for trauma and victimization towards sex workers to occur and continue. Due to societal attitudes, many transgender sex workers are at a higher risk for dangerous outcomes (Nadal et al. 2012). For example, transgender sex workers are often victims of physical violence and emotional abuse, engage in high-risk behaviors (e.g., risky sexual practices and substance abuse), and are even abused in the criminal justice system (Nadal, Davidoff & Fujii-Doe 2014). Thus, regardless of one's personal view of whether sex work should be criminalized, sex workers (particularly transgender sex workers) experience significant trauma, potentially damaging their physical and mental health. Additionally, Police edicts and other similar devices are used to penalize prostitution and persecute transgender people in public places, showing that prejudice and violence against their identities also manifest in the control of urban space (Soich 2021).

As the body of research surrounding sex work has grown, there have been calls to look at gender as central to the lives of sex workers. Much of the research on sex work has been focused on women, specifically cis-gendered women; this includes research on their current and past health needs and inequities. However, the experiences of men in sex work remain an under-researched topic. It has been argued that the lack of research is due to male sex workers' fear of coming out. The fear of ignorance surrounding homosexuality, as well as the greater sexual autonomy connected to men, and that of male sex workers, undermine the popular notion that sex work is inherently a violent act against women (Matthen, Lyons, Taylor, Jennex, Anderson, Jollimore, & Shannon 2018). Researchers have noted, however, that due to the distinct characteristics of male sex workers, research devoted to developing a better understanding of this population is needed. **S**cholars have noted that a majority of research on men's sex work is characterized by the pathologizing of men sex workers rather than attempts to understand their experiences without judgment (Matthen et al. 2018). Much of the early literature on men sex workers was conducted by psychologists and characterized men sex workers as deviant; studies were designed to explain men sex workers' assumed psychopathologies (Matthen et al. 2018). A significant amount of research has been devoted to sex workers' early experiences of sexual abuse as a factor for later entry into sex work (Matthen et al. 2018). However, researchers have been less successful in investigating and explaining why so many survivors of childhood sexual abuse do not participate in the sex industry (Matthen et al. 2018). Although male sex work remains criminalized in many parts of the world, questions about its normalization are warranted. In post-structuralist and post-modernist conceptualizations of risk, the construction of 'deviance' is a consequence of social groups increasingly encountering one another as risks (Minichiello, Scott, & Callander 2015). As mentioned, male sex work has historically been viewed as deviant because of its association with homosexuality. Thus the decriminalization of homosexuality in many countries may have resulted in less policing, both socially and legally, of male sex work (Minichiello et al. 2015). Kaye (2004) has argued that new social meanings for male sex work in the 1970s were derived through the "progressive integration of male prostitution into the gay cultural orbit" (Kaye, 2004), and there have been legislative reforms that allow gay men and women to present more visibly as social groups and communities. This change helped facilitate the appearance of more gay-identifying men in samples of male sex workers in the USA, with some men reporting a positive and professional approach to their work (Minichiello et al. 2015). For the first time, researchers began challenging the constructions of male prostitution as a criminal (male sex workers as victims) or health (male sex workers as agents) problem. Recent research suggests that male sex workers who identify as gay or bisexual tend to identify sexual pleasure as an essential aspect of their work along with other positive work-related experiences, such as earning ability, the flexibility of work, skill development, and client satisfaction (Minichiello et al. 2015).

There is extensive research on trans women working in sex industries. However, little scholarly research

has documented the workplace experiences of trans men and non-binary sex workers. Both genderqueer performers and trans men have written about their experiences doing sex work, such as porn, and have also discussed their work in media, such as podcasts. Unfortunately, scholars, especially those with no lived sex work experience, do not always engage with sex worker writing as sources of knowledge, and academics' lack of connection to sex worker communities can, in some part, help explain the underrepresentation of research on transmasculine and non-binary sex workers. Another explanation for this lack of research is the claim that trans men and non-binary people represent a minimal number of workers. However, this argument collapses if we turn to studies by trans advocacy groups. The American Transgender Discrimination Survey (Grant, Mottet, Tanis, & Min 2011) showed that of the 6450 trans and gender non-conforming people sampled, 11% had sex work experience. Transfeminine people were more likely to have done sex work than transmasculine ones, 15%, and 7%, respectively. As the report noted, 'this data unearths the reality that some transgender men have also done sex work at some point in their life (Grant et al. 2011). The American Center for Transgender Equality (James, Herman, Rankin, Keisling, Mottet, Anafi 2016) conducted the U.S. Transgender Survey.

The survey included responses from 27,715 trans and non-binary people. It showed that one in eight or 12% of respondents said they had done sex work. Among the sex-working sample, 50% were trans women; 19% were transgender men; 23% were AFAB (assigned female at birth), non-binary people, 7% were AMAB (assigned male at birth) non-binary people, and 1% were crossdressers. It was found through the study that transfeminine people were twice as likely to do sex work (13.1% *vs.* 7.1%) (James et al. 2016). However, as the U.S. National Transgender Discrimination Survey noted, while most discussions of sex work and trans people focus on transgender women, this finding shows that many transmasculine [and non-binary] people are engaged in the sex trade. At the same time, the small amount of data generated by trans advocacy groups provides a starting point. However, researchers, service providers, and policymakers still know little about transmasculine and non-binary sex workers. There needs to be more research conducted in this area to gain more knowledge and insight. This is where future research should focus their attention as this is a growing demographic. In this study, while most respondents are from the USA, the experiences of sex workers from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Norway, Thailand, and the U.K. were included. In addition to providing much-needed background information about the population, the article also documents client demographics, safety, and harm reduction issues. Disparagingly, fewer transmasculine and non-binary people in the industry than workers of other genders do not justify excluding them in research that affects social policy and services. It does justify excluding them because this growing demographic is showing up in sex work.

Looking at the past five years, the shift to online-based sex work has been particularly notable among men (including transgender and cisgender men) and non-binary sex workers who have few opportunities to work out of formal indoor sex work venues, such as massage parlors, and have been displaced from street-based solicitation in many urban centers due to urban planning efforts to eradicate visible sex work (Koenig, Murphy, Johnston, Pearson, Knight, Gilbert, Shannon, & Krüsi 2022). Furthermore, the introduction of phone apps to connect for non-commercial sexual encounters ("hook-up" apps) among men who have sex with men also contributes to the popularity and normalization of online sex work (Koenig et al. 2022). In addition, a growing body of research has elucidated how soliciting services online benefits sex workers' occupational health and safety and reduces their risk of experiencing workplace violence through increased opportunities to enact personal safety strategies (Koenig et al. 2022). These strategies include using pseudonyms, only seeing regular clients, pre-screening new clients, and letting their social networks or other sex workers know details about a transaction ahead of time (Koenig et al. 2022). Such strategies are essential in jurisdictions where sex

work is criminalized and sex workers lack access to legislated occupational health and safety protections (Koenig et al. 2022).

In Conclusion, sex work has shaped not only the experiences of those involved in sex work but also the way that researchers look at sex work and how it is studied. Pre-existing analytical tools such as the risk environment framework help characterize how structural factors, workplace conditions, and interpersonal/individual behaviors shape health inequalities among sex workers and intersect with sex work criminalization. Intersectionality theory argues that multiple forms of oppression, such as those experienced by Black women and sexual and gender minorities, are mutually constitutive and interdependent. Stigma and discrimination across the risk environment produce distinct experiences of health care services among women living with HIV depending on their intersecting racial, sexual, gender, and sex worker identities. This can also be seen at a macro-structural level, where interacting contexts produced by multiple forms of criminalization and institutional discrimination reduce access to services and increase police violence, disproportionately impacting racially minoritized and marginalized communities (Platt et al. 2022). Nevertheless, there has been little quantitative research on the extent to which oppression and discrimination at the intersections of race, gender, and sexual minority identity among sex workers may increase instances of violence and repressive policing.

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8. A Poem to My Friends

SAMANTHA FURNEAUX (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Queer, Ally, Safety

How do I let myself be happy

When I have to hide part of who I am

How do I let my loved ones know

That I envy the happiness, they have found

How do I let them know

That my own struggles are built around

How can I keep my secret

Who I am as a person

9. Ungendered: The Future of Fashion

SYDNEY GALLANT (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Fashion; Identity; LGBTQ; Non-Conformity

The Fashion industry has been used to construct and reinforce the gender binary, but is it possible the same industry is now being used to deconstruct it? Feminist Theorist, Judith Butler, defined gender as something one does or performs, not something one is; it is a result of repeated gender performance (2004). Meaning, no gender exists on its own, it is brought into existence and meaning through performative acts. Through institutions like fashion, individuals are able to express and perform their gender identities.

Fashion has predominantly serviced the binary, however, it also has been a successful instrument in creating space in society for those who identify outside of it. The term "gender nonconformity is used as a way to signify that one's gender expression breaks cultural expectations for 'normatively' doing gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987). Gender identities such as trans, queer and non binary are considered gender nonconforming. The visibility of gender non-concomfority identities, accepted or not, implies the existence of choice outside the binary. Society has been structured to acknowledge masculine and feminine as the right choice for individuals, and the consequence for non-conformity has been unequal treatment in the forms of harrassment and violence towards trans, queer, and non binary individuals. Through institutions in both public and private relationships, the binary is reinforced constantly, and any behaviour outside of it is not only discouraged, but traditionally punished. Violence against those living outside the binary has been an ongoing issue in society, particularly against the Trans community. The notion of gender as a binary should not be pursued at the cost of lives. Societal norms and roles surrounding gender fuel the division amongst gender identities and impede empathy while encouraging the 'othering' of individuals. It is arguable over time, with greater exposure and inclusion within society, the heteronormative gender norms and rules which encourage violence and aggression towards trans and non binary individuals will decrease in power, if not be rejected completely. By acknowledging the presence of a new market, adapting retail environments to be more inclusive, and providing more visibility of gender nonconformity individuals inevitably decreases the power the binary holds over society. Fashion as a means of gender performance undeniably challenges the gender binary and its 'natural' place within the industry, and in turn, society.

Fashion is not naturally gendered. Society assigns, enforces and polices the use of gender. The industry traditionally has adhered to the binary: male/female. In the West, society is organized by a patriarchal system of governance, with men and women being physically, biologically, and anatomically different thus normalizing the differential treatment of genders. Gender norms are entrenched in society and policed through our relationships, institutions and at times in history, the criminal code. Until 2012, if a person was diagnosed as Transgender, it was considered a disorder under the American Psychiatric Associations Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (Lee 2012). In the United States, during the 1950s-60s, police in New York and other American cities enforced a "three-item rule" which enforced citizens to wear three articles of clothing that reflected their assigned sex at birth. Trans and

LGBT people were victimized and routinely harassed under this law. There was little to no incentive for fashion as an industry to service or adopt practices that would cater to those outside the gender binary at the time. Yet, moments of social activism by the LGBTQ community such as the StoneWall Riot of 1969 in New York City brought the unequal treatment and level of violence enacted upon trans and queer individuals to public attention. StoneWall created exposure to the injustices endured, while creating empathy in the general public for gender non-conformity and encouraged the deconstruction of gender. Events such as StoneWall, ultimately paved the way for institutions like fashion to continue to challenge its inflexibility and power in society.

During World War II, women and other minority groups entered areas of society that had been traditionally been closed off from, including the military and workforce. Once the war was over, there was a pushback from women and other groups for everything to return to 'normal.' Individuals who were not visible in society were looking to create space for themselves. The fashion industry took notice. Introduced by American fashion designer Rudi Gernreich, unisex clothing "implied a neutral non-gendered style, and to an androgynous style- a subcategory of unisex- which has the characterstics of both masculinity and femininity" (Myriam 2019). Women not only entered new areas of society, but were outwardly encouraged to do so for the war effort. The traditional feminine choice options at the time no longer appropriately reflected the lives of the women they were servicing, thus fashion designers challenged the binary and provided a new choice based on the old market's new need, working clothes. Throughout history, gender and fashion have always intersected. Sociologists Patrik Aspers and Frederic Godart argue "fashion is inherently performative, as a source of negotiated societal change rather than a mirror of social structure" (2013). In line with Butler's argument of gender being performative, fashion is used as a form of expression, and means to perform our most inner identities to the outer world. Mirroring the social activism seen in the 60s by the gay community, Trans individuals are currently fighting for equal treatment and space in society. Fashion can be seen paralleling these societal shifts towards gender equality with the introduction of unisex fashion in the 60s and the introduction of genderless or gender neutral fashion in the twenty-first century/today. Dr. Joanne Entwistle suggests "our body is not just the place from which we come to experience the world; it is through our bodies that we come to see and be in the world" (Reddy-Best 2020). As society undergoes a new process of socialization, it is moving away from gender as a fixed binary system, to a fluid one, rife with choice. As a result, fashion went from servicing an exclusive male/female market, to dressing bodies of all gender identities.

Mainstream fashion is meant for the conventional, 'normal' everyday clothes and bodies one would see going out to the grocery store. Men dress typically in plain, mundane looking clothing, attempting to ascribe to society's ideas of masculinity. Women dress typically in more light colours, extra accessories etc. attempting to ascribe to the ideals of femininity. Fashion retailers traditionally have provided service and dress options that mirrored the societal norms of gender as either/or. When mainstream fashion was willing to service the burgeoning new market of trans and gender nonconforming identities in the mid 2000s, the LGBTQ community began to serve themselves. In 2012, Mary Going founded a startup company 'Saint Harridan' that would meet the needs of those outside the binary. Predominantly run online, Saint Harridan "began producing apparel and accessories that could be worn during these new same-sex or same-gender weddings, in addition to other everyday spaces"(Reddy-Best 2020). In Canada, same sex marriage has only been legal since 2005, and only in 2015 did the United States Supreme Court legalize it in all fifty states. By providing formal wear that sparked confidence and matched the consumer's identity, it allowed for society to see flourishing examples of gender non-conformity and develop feelings of familiarity towards identities typically presented as the 'other' or wrong. Saint Harridan's success as a company catering to trans men and masculine women also undermines French

philosopher Michel Foucault (1977) “analysis of the body as a docile and passive object upon which power or knowledge is enacted.” Consumers of Saint Harridan showed great individual agency during a period when society was pressuring them to conform their bodies to our ideals rather than their own.

In 2015, Selfridges & Co., a chain of high end department stores, took it a step further when they opened a new store titled Agender. The creative director for the space, Faye Toogood “chose not to divide the space according to binary labels and used intentionally neutral packaging to free from preconceptions that would ordinarily colour such purchases (Bardey 2020). Providing spaces in mainstream retail for genders outside the binary is fundamentally key to furthering gender equality in society, and deconstructing the strict rules regarding even what the binary itself should look like. Western society routinely favours cisgender male and females, yet it is worthy to consider whether eliminating a standard or model of strictly male or female appearance would decrease preferential treatment based on gender. How would the differential treatment of genders be impacted if dress and fashion could no longer indicate gender at all?

As gender roles are deconstructed and shifted in society, fashion’s role as an industry also comes into question. From its onset, “the traditional fashion industry has been providing design and service based on gender identity; however, masculinity and femininity have diversified with the advent of genderless fashion trends and thus current consumers independently define and express their gender identity” (Kim et al 2022). It no longer provides a comfortable or easily navigable pathway for shoppers when options are only presented as two choices of gender. Thus with the introduction of unisex and the current trend of genderless/ gender neutral clothing, the fashion industry’s new role is to provide choice for identity expression. No longer should it attempt to dictate a gender identity onto consumers.

Fashion is a profit driven industry, which means the market and securing profits can be seen as its main motivators. Historically, it has not been viable to provide gender neutral choice in mainstream fashion. Whether it be in production and design, retailers, or the marketing itself. At present, research has indicated the market fashion serves, along with their capital, are no longer satisfied with the binary approach to fashion. A recent study shows “fifty-six percent of Gen-Z consumers who have a spending power of over 140 billion dollars shop outside of their designated gendered area” (Kim et al 2022). Gen-Z cohort ages range from 10-25 in 2022, these individuals are being socialized in a time where gender is not exclusively male or female, but proliferation of choices are available in the expression of identity. As they continue to enter the market as consumers, the demand to reduce the pressure to conform to masculine or feminine ideals will increase. The effects of internalizing male or female as the only right and moral options for identity can lead to detrimental effects for those who do not fit those identities. This leads to poor mental health and a lack of self expression. It also produces an environment of oppression, and very little understanding or empathy for those who will not ‘conform.’

In the study, ‘Analyzing Genderless Fashion Trends of Consumers’ Perceptions on Social Media,’ showed consumers’ interest in genderless fashion has grown rapidly; both consumers’ and media news outlets posts continue to increase, especially in 2020, when it doubled compared to 2019 (Kim et al 2022). It is unlikely the fashion industry will ever be fully genderless. However, society is currently undergoing a process of socialization to normalize gender as a fluid construct. It no longer is the most economical choice for the fashion industry to adhere to the norms and rules of the binary. As the gender conversation evolves, it could imply a gender fluid approach adopted at all levels of fashion.

From large fashion houses to mainstream fast fashion companies, the industry is publicly challenging our understanding of gender by providing new imagery of masculinity, femininity, and the blurring

of the two. Starting at the top, high end fashion has made space for the creation and execution of designs that continue to push the limitations of fashion based on gender. In 2015, Alessandro Michele was hired by Gucci as the new creative director for the company, his collections providing inspiring new imagery on the notions of masculinity and femininity. Still organized under the division of male/female, his second menswear collection has been described as "'defining,' compromising garments that incorporated 'ruffles, bows, embroidery, applique, lace and jacquards'"(Clark and Rossi 2020). His willingness to play with the constructs of gender in clothing, allows for fashion icons and celebrities in society- who wield tremendous influence on what is accepted or not- to introduce new images of how gender may be performed. In December of 2020, Vogue, a well-known American fashion magazine, presented an alternative form of masculinity by posing Harry Styles as the first male on the cover appearing in a custom-made blue Gucci dress (Wheeler 2020). Styles has an enormous following of fans spanning from fashion to music to film, the level of audience a person such as Styles reaches is incredibly powerful, particularly when it comes to the spreading of messages. Using Styles as the face of a controversial move by the industry will help ease the moral discomfort of many individuals who believe it is 'wrong' for men to wear dresses. The choice of Harry Styles did however, receive some criticisms from the the queer community. American actor Billy Porter, who is famous for his 'Tuxedo gown' at the 2019 Oscars, criticized Vogue's decision, commenting "I had to fight my entire life to get to the place where I could wear a dress to the Oscars and not be gunned now. All he has to do is be white and straight" (Carras 2021). It is important to have allies outside the queer community who are willing to advocate for the fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of their identification. However, Porter is highlighting the importance of examining how the intersections of a person's gender, race, and class determines the level of opportunities and freedoms granted to them in and by society. A queer black man, who has lived the experience of being oppressed by the gender binary, would have made visible to society how oppression intersects for many individuals of society in regard to race, sexuality, gender, etc. Such an analysis, while important, falls outside the scope of this paper. It is also noteworthy that Mr. Styles has never publicly confirmed nor denied his sexuality or gender identity to the public.

High end fashion or couture fashion has always provided society with larger than life choices for dress, and challenged mainstream ideals of what garments should or should not look like. It is rather significant for the trend of gender neutral clothing to enter the mainstream market and everyday fashions when it holds such a controversial political charge. However, in 2016, "global fashion brand Zara introduced its 'ungendered' line: the collection harkened back to the 1960s 'unisex' while also referencing the fact that the featured garments are standard everyday wear for many women and men, typically distinguished only according to size and fit" (Clark and Rossi 2020). Whether consumers are shopping online or in store, providing a collection that is 'without gender' will challenge consumers ideas about what makes a garment mens, womens, unisex, and now without gender? By providing a welcoming space for those outside the binary, it also allows for open dialogue about gender. It allows for questions like what makes a T-shirt masculine or feminine? And who is allowed or should wear it? Critics of the 'ungendered' line have argued 'the industry seems focused on a masculine style for all genders, erasing femme identities and perpetuating a standard that femininity is still very narrowly defined and only acceptable for a limited scope of identities" (Clark and Rossi 2020). Many of the current ungendered fashion lines consist of basic t-shirts, sweatpants, and lounge wear which have toed the line of more masculine ideals with neutral tones and non-fitted silhouettes. Ultimately, not putting forth any new designs or creations but simply relabelling more popular male lines. It has been a valid critique of 'ungendered' clothing to over represent masculine apparel, however, it is a safer guarantee from a business perspective to continue the existing trends of masculine dress being adopted by individuals other than cismen. It is still easier in the Western

world for women to appear manly than it is for men to appear feminine. It does seem rather impossible to remove the category of masculine or feminine altogether from garments; Yet the introduction of ungendered lines further deconstructs the gender binary by challenging the inflexibility of the structure and allows for a more fluid movement between the two.

To return to the original question posed at the beginning, will the future of the Fashion industry be without gender? It is rather unlikely. The gender binary is the foundational structure on which the institution of fashion was built. Although a complete erasure of gender is not on the horizon, the deconstruction of the Western understanding of gender is in full force. By utilizing the fashion industry as an instrument, non-conforming gender identities are triumphantly reducing the binary's power in society. Increasing the visibility and awareness of the LGBTQ community in fashion, through avenues like marketing, further normalizes the creation of space for them in society. Future research should investigate the consumer patterns of gender neutral or genderless collections from high fashion to everyday street wear. Further research is necessary on the production and design of clothing intended for trans individuals and non binary individuals, focusing on design structure and appropriate measurements. Feminist theorists should also focus on the intersection of fashion and gender to further investigate how the deconstruction of gender is unfolding in society and the resulting consequences. Fashion in sociology has traditionally been overlooked, consequently, there are endless avenues of opportunity for further research. As long as gender is a part of society, it will continue to construct and be constructed by fashion.

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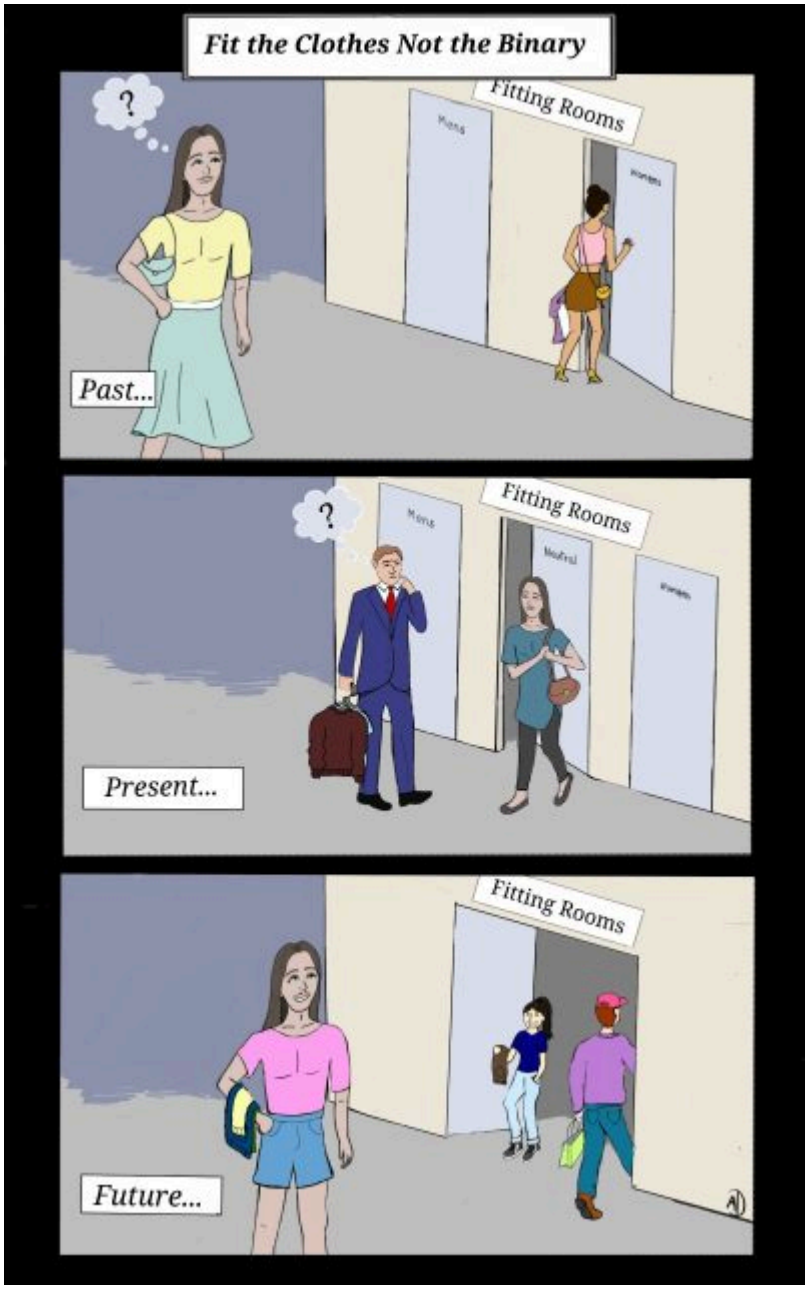
10. Fit the Clothes Not the Binary

SYDNEY GALLANT (SHE/HER)



Illustrator: Arielle Dorkin

11. Gender Bias in Diagnosing and Treating ADHD

ANGELA GOERZ (SHE/HER)

Many people assume that ADHD is something that only affects males. In this paper, I will discuss what ADHD is and look at various reasons why people may make this assumption. Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder described as inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that affects development and interferes with functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). There is no definite known cause, although research shows genetics may play a factor. There are a variety of risk factors, from talking too much, to executive functioning problems, social problems, and impulsiveness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). There are three different types of ADHD: 1) ADHD – impulsive/hyperactive; characterized by impulsivity and hyperactive behaviors without distractibility/inattention, 2) ADHD – inattentive and distractible; characterized by distractibility and inattention without hyperactivity and 3) ADHD – combined type; characterized by hyperactivity and impulsiveness with distractibility and inattention (Hopkins Medicine (2022). ADHD can affect any gender but studies show that boys are diagnosed with ADHD anywhere from 2:1 to 10:1 in male-to-female ratios (Slobodin & Davidovitch, 2019). With the higher proportion of boys being diagnosed, we will take a look at the differences in symptoms between genders, referral rates, gender socialization, any treatment differences, gender differences in adults with ADHD, and stigma.

Do more boys have ADHD than girls or are symptoms different resulting in boys being diagnosed more times than girls? A 2002 meta-analysis from Gershon (2002) found that boys rated significantly higher in hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattention. Boys were also found to be significantly more likely to externalize problems, like impulsivity and running, whereas girls were significantly more likely to internalize problems, like inattentiveness and low self-esteem. Due to more girls internalizing problems, there is a higher risk for them to develop anxiety and depression. In regards to intellectual functioning, girls scored lower than boys on Verbal IQ (the ability to understand concepts framed in words) and Full-Scale IQ (overall cognitive and intellectual functioning), with no difference found for Performance IQ (overall visuospatial intellectual abilities). It should also be noted that there were no differences found in social functioning or neuropsychological functioning. Coles et al. (2012) also found that boys with ADHD had higher rates of conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and higher aggression, whereas girls had higher intellectual impairments. Due to the disruptive nature of hyperactivity, boys are often attended to, to correct their behaviors, resulting in inattentive behaviors from girls being ignored. This can potentially lead to a bias in under-identifying girls with ADHD. This can also create a bias in academic support, leading girls to be diagnosed with a learning disability rather than ADHD, providing more academic support but no support for ADHD (Gershon, 2002).

Differences in the expression of ADHD symptoms, resulting in significantly more disruptive behaviors in boys, find girls are less likely to be referred to a school psychologist by a teacher, even though they meet all the other criteria for a diagnosis of ADHD (Gershon, 2002). This results in boys being referred for a diagnosis between 6:1 to 9:1 times more than girls (Sciutto et al. 2004). Many teachers had higher referral rates for boys due to their belief that medication would be more effective and work more quickly for boys with ADHD, whereas they felt that behavior intervention would be more effective and work more

quickly for girls (Coles et al. 2012, Sciutto et al. 2004). Teachers were measured on their referral rates on the symptoms of hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and hyperactivity plus aggression. Sciutto et al. (2004) found that teachers referred more boys than girls in each of these categories but referred boys significantly more than girls in the hyperactivity category by approximately 1.5 times. Overall, teachers were found to refer more boys than girls based on gender, regardless of symptom type or population sample size. These findings tell us that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease", and that due to boy's symptom expression of hyperactivity, causing increased classroom disruption, they will consistently be referred for an ADHD diagnosis over girls.

With so many more boys being diagnosed with ADHD due to the symptom expression of hyperactivity, we need to take a closer look at the role that gender socialization plays. Many parents treat their children differently based on gender, buying different clothes and toys, as well as providing opportunities for different extracurricular activities, such as socialising activities for girls and sports for boys (Blakemore & Hill, 2008). Parents also tend to interact differently with their children based on their gender, Blakemore & Hill (2008) noted that when parents interact with girls, their interactions tend to provide tolerance of emotional vulnerability and focus on language and social relationships. On the other hand, when parents interact with boys, they are more likely to be permitted to express mild aggression and anger and take bigger physical risks, but not show emotional vulnerability. They also noted that boys tend to be punished more harshly than girls and therefore have had more aggression modeled toward them. With more emphasis on sports and aggression and less on emotions and vulnerability, parental interactions may play a role in why boys express ADHD symptoms differently than girls. In their research, Mowlem et al. (2019) also found a gender bias regarding parents' perception of ADHD being that it only affects boys. Parents may refer their boys for testing when impulsive behaviors and hyperactivity are observed, however when the same behavior is seen in girls, there is no concern with the behavior and therefore, no referral for testing.

Helicopter parenting may also play a factor, Buchanan & LeMoyne (2020) found that males and females interpreted this parenting style differently. Males may feel that their parents were executing administrative tasks leading to them feeling more empowered, for example, if a parent were to contact a teacher due to a low grade, a male may feel like their parent is cleaning up their mess, whereas females are more likely to feel like they did not perform well and internalize that they are unsuccessful at correcting the problem. In regards to socialization, it should be noted that while it is mostly boys that are being diagnosed with ADHD, it is mostly mothers and female teachers that make the "first determination that the child's behavior falls outside the normal range of what little boys do" (Rosenfeld et al., 2006). They also noted that from this point of view, ADHD can be seen as a resistance to submission and a lack of motivation to engage in learning acceptable social skills. Medication is then given to boys to enforce emotional control and self-discipline.

Research by Bergey et al. (2022) focused on intersectionality and ADHD, and found that more children from lower-income families were diagnosed, compared to moderate and high-income families. Children from high-income families being the least diagnosed. They also found that African American children and Caucasian children were the highest groups of children to receive diagnoses.

Studies have shown that there is no gender-specific treatment for boys and girls with ADHD. Studies like that of Rucklidge (2008) have found good outcomes with operant conditioning, suggesting that the neurotransmitter pathways can be modified by behavioral management. Medication is often prescribed for children with ADHD and studies have shown that for children with additional comorbidities, like

those of anxiety and disruptive disorders, adding behavioral management treatments to the medication has statistically improved the child's outcomes. It should be noted that adding behavioral management treatments to medication did not show improved outcomes in children that did not have additional ADHD comorbidities. Behavioral treatments have been shown to have such an improvement, that it has the potential for a decrease in the dose of medication prescribed. Parents that use both treatments for their children have reported that their children closer relate to neurotypical children more than those parents whose children have only been prescribed medication. This treatment is useful for boys and girls, however, due to the increase in girls having the comorbidities of anxiety and depression, dual treatment is more likely to be used for girls, giving girls an increase in dual treatment compared to boys.

Although there are no reported gender differences in treatment, with boys being diagnosed 2:1 to 10:1 over girls (Slobodin & Davidovitch, 2019), it tells us that a lot of girls are going undiagnosed and therefore are not receiving any treatment. Rucklidge (2008) mentions that with each year that passes that a child goes undiagnosed, the higher the likelihood that secondary emotional problems will start to arise, resulting in relationship problems, feelings of under-achievement, and misattributions, thus further increasing the risk of girls developing anxiety and/or depression. If the gender referral bias were able to be removed, and girls were equally referred for diagnosis and treatment, they would be able to greatly benefit from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as it can take into account the individual's circumstances, experiences, frustrations and belief systems and tailor a unique approach to help effectively manage ADHD (Rucklidge, 2008). Klefsjo (2021) confirms that there is no specific gender difference in the treatment of ADHD, but does state that girls tend to have increased non-ADHD medication prescribed due to emotional symptoms as well as more psychiatric problems than boys, before an ADHD diagnosis.

With girls being underdiagnosed in childhood, it can lead to further concerns in adulthood. Rucklidge (2008) points out that many adult mental health professionals do not believe that ADHD is a psychiatric disorder that affects adults, compounding this is that women often present with very different histories than men do, for example, less hyperactivity, history of receiving abuse, and greater mood instability. It is also noted that continuing education regarding the presentation of ADHD symptoms in women needs to be done in the psychiatric field. There is an added gender stereotype for women that they are supposed to be organized, be able to multitask, keep themselves and their surroundings tidy, and overall run the household (Rucklidge, 2008). When women are unable to meet those expectations, they are left feeling like a failure, creating feelings of low self-esteem and shame. The longer that ADHD in adult women goes undiagnosed, the more likely these women are to attribute their "shortcomings" to a character flaw, further increasing feelings of guilt and low self-esteem (Rucklidge, 2008).

While undiagnosed adult women suffer from negative stereotypes, undiagnosed men have a higher likelihood of entering the prison system. According to Rosler et al. (2004), 64% of male prison inmates suffer from ADHD. Having better access to ADHD treatment while in the prison system, could potentially help inmates with ADHD have a better understanding of themselves and thus reduce the reoccurrence of crime in the future. Both adult men and women with ADHD report being victims of child abuse, with women, also reporting being victims of sexual abuse (Rucklidge, 2008), this can further exacerbate the likelihood of women with undiagnosed ADHD having emotional problems and men with undiagnosed ADHD ending up in the prison system.

One of the reasons that many people with ADHD go undiagnosed is because of stigma. Canadian Sociologist Erving Goffman defines stigma as an "attribute which is deeply discredited by their society

and is rejected as a result of the attribute" (Goffman, 1963). Many parents may feel that they do not want this stigma to follow their child, and rather than get them diagnosed, they may avoid assessment and believe that they will grow out of it. Parents are not wrong in feeling like their child will face stigma, Metzger et al. (2020) found that teachers' assessments of their students may be persuaded by their perceptions of their students. The stigma around ADHD can follow the child into their classroom. Since children with ADHD are often assumed to be more likely to get into trouble and to be more violent and lazy than non-ADHD children, teachers may perceive the student's academic abilities more negatively causing an implicit bias. Students with ADHD have a full range of academic abilities, matching those of non-ADHD students, yet when a teacher knows that a student has ADHD it is difficult for the teacher to remain objective in their evaluations (Metzger et al. 2020). When teachers view students with ADHD less positively than their peers and they tend to have lower expectations and lower evaluations for those students, these lowered expectations and evaluations may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy by the students, creating a downward spiral as each year passes. This research is consistent with the Modified Labeling Theory, which shows that the process of stigmatization begins as soon as an individual receives a diagnosis. The individual is then labeled and linked to negative cultural beliefs associated with the diagnosis. In the case of ADHD, it is often labeled as a stable condition and is linked to being a troublemaker. This can cause assumptions about what school work a student is able and willing to do in an academic setting and fewer educational opportunities are provided (Metzger et al. 2020). Children are not the only ones who can face stigma from an ADHD diagnosis, adults can too. The research from Canu et al. (2008) found that adults tend to have greater hesitation when initiating a social relationship with a peer who has ADHD compared to a peer that does not. This research also found that males were judged more harshly than females, especially when it came to the prospect of dating, this may be because society still views ADHD as a disorder that mainly affects males. Interestingly, adult females were shown to believe that ADHD is a legitimate psychological disorder, however, they were not shown to be tolerant towards others who have the diagnosis (Canu et al. 2008). This can create a potential problem with bringing awareness for adults to seek to get an ADHD diagnosis, on one hand, it would be highly beneficial for adults to have a course of action and treatment for ADHD and the comorbidities that exist, but on the other hand, the increased stigma could prohibit many adults from talking about it as they wish to have their diagnosis stay confidential.

Dual stigma is an added concern to individuals who identify as transgender. Individuals who identify as transgender and who have also been diagnosed with ADHD are more susceptible to bullying, depression, and other psychological problems than an individual with one of these stigmas. This poses a greater risk of isolation, dropping out of school, and substance abuse (Bowman-Campbell, 2013). More research needs to be done regarding the dual stigma between transgender and ADHD individuals, as there is currently very little information.

It is clear that there is a gender bias in diagnosing and treating ADHD. Continued education is needed in the professional and public sectors when it comes to ADHD. Professionals need to be made aware of the different gender expressions of ADHD and the benefits of combined behavioral and medical therapies. The public needs to be made aware of what ADHD is and how stereotypes can create an unfounded bias toward individuals with ADHD. Further research should be done in regards to girls and women who suffer more emotional problems with ADHD, specifically if these emotional problems are directly due to ADHD or develop due to living with undiagnosed ADHD for years. With greater education at all levels, individuals with ADHD will be able to understand their individual needs and difficulties, have access to the treatments that they need, and see a reduced stigma in society. This education will help more girls to be correctly diagnosed and help in reducing mental health problems later in life.

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12. Gender Role Development in Cis-Gendered One and Two-Parent Families

MARSHALL HAGEL (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Gender Role, Family, development, BIPOC, Gender Characteristics

INTRODUCTION

A gender role is a social construct that involves a certain set of behaviours, demeanours and attitudes regarded as appropriate for a person's perceived gender identity. These gender roles develop and are learned throughout our lives from a variety of sources, but recent research indicates a strong connection between gender role development and the number of parents in a household. This was shown in academic literature as early as the 1990's by Russell and Ellis (1991) whose study indicates the development of an androgynous gender role is more likely to arise among people raised in one-parent families. The most recent census done by Statistics Canada and The Government of Canada (2022) reveals that one-parent families account for 28.2% of total families with children, a 1.1% increase from 2011. This makes understanding gender role development among one and two-parent families more pertinent than ever before as the traditional family becomes less conventional. Understanding gender role development and how it may connect to family structure is further encouraged by Western culture's increased awareness of gender diversity as transgender and non-binary individuals get further accepted in today's society. This may be understood by examining research that considers how gender roles are influenced by a family's structure while also examining differences in parents' gender, and culture. This is to understand how other factors may work alongside family structure in influencing gender role development.

WHAT IS A GENDER ROLE?

Gender roles, previously known as sex roles, but the term has since changed to reflect a more standardized differentiation between the terms sex and gender. Sex is based on a set of biological characteristics and gender is socially constructed characteristics that are commonly attributed to certain sexes that can vary vastly from culture to culture (Blackstone 2003). Gender roles are represented by a particular set of emotions, attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions that are associated with a certain gender more so than others (Levesque 2014). These representative traits then help to dictate or possibly explain the gender role that an individual has filled or will fill. Gender characteristics that are associated with gender roles are frequently described as gender stereotypes which can be particularly powerful in dictating a person's self-perception and perception of others. Examples of common gender role stereotypes for men include assertiveness, aggression and independence which denote a traditionally masculine gender role. These gender roles often involve positions of power, labor jobs and an overall "provider" role. Female stereotypes consist of being nurturing, sensitive and emotional often described

as a traditionally feminine role (Slivkin and Stright 2000). Female gender roles conventionally consist of being a caretaker, teacher etc. often with a focus on caring for children. These roles develop and are perpetuated beyond just the family structure. The education system, colleagues/friends, and mainstream media have a particularly strong influence on gender role development (Ward and Grower 2020). However, this paper will focus mainly on the influence of the family structure.

CANADA'S FAMILY STRUCTURE

The latest 2021 census from the Canadian Government will highlight statistics and information on what Canadian families look like. In 2021, Canada had a total of 5,976,755 families with children, and 4,286,165 families without children, and as previously mentioned, 28.2% of families with children are one-parent families. Of the 1,302,670 one-parent families in Canada 77.2% percent are families in which the one parent is a woman and 22.8% are families where the one parent is a man (Statistics Canada 2022).

As non-binary and transgender populations are smaller in size when compared to Cis gender populations, single parents that fall into these classifications were included in the binary gender categories to protect anonymity. However, this is unfortunate as such information would have been applicable to understanding gender role development in families.

GENDER ROLE DEVELOPMENT IN TWO-PARENT FAMILIES

To understand how gender role development in a single-parent family differs compared to two-parent families, the two-parent family first needs to be examined. While older research material suggests an increase in androgynous traits in single-parent children, research on two-parent families showcases the opposite, demonstrating an increase in stereotypical gender roles. This can be specifically described in a study done by Endendijk et al. (2016)

where the specific trait of aggression is studied with two-parent families. Aggression, which is typically described as a masculine gender trait, therefore, is found in more male oriented gender roles, (Slivkin and Stright 2000) is shown to have an increased likelihood in two-parent families. This is attributed to fathers as they are much more likely to use physical control on boys than girls causing boys to develop more stereotypical masculine traits, leading to masculine gender roles (Endendijk et al. 2016). The lack of stereotypical gender roles, such as aggression, for boys in single-parent families can further be accounted for by the fact that single-parent families are more likely to have a female parent than a male parent (Statistics Canada 2022) resulting in less physicality being showcased by the parental figure and reducing the likelihood of a trait like aggression arising. For females, it follows the same path. Two-parent families are more likely to encourage traditional gender role development than single-parent families, especially if those parents follow conventional gender roles themselves.

GENDER ROLE DEVELOPMENT IN SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

The increase in separation and divorce rates dating back to the 80's has created a push for Sociologists to understand the possible effects it may have on childhood development. One of these effects is gender role development (Brenes, et al. 1985). A study done by Brenes et al. (1985) showcases this early interest in the subject. The study examined gender-role development in preschoolers from both one and two-parent families. This study establishes that there is a noticeable link between gender role development and family structure as children from one-parent families had an increased understanding of gender role stereotypes and had less preference for the type of toys they played with. Early childhood gender role

development has been linked to family structure; however, this has been shown to go beyond early ages as college students raised in one-parent homes have a higher percentage of androgynous gender role traits (Ellis and Russell 1991). The family structure-gender development link seen in college-age students is further punctuated by evidence that females and males who were raised in one-parent families where the parent is female showcase increased masculine gender role traits (Slivkin and Stright 2000). This may be indicative of the child having to fill the gender role that's left empty when one parent is separated.

How exactly are gender roles developing in single-parent families? This is an important question in the understanding of family structure's influence on gender roles. Utilising information provided from past studies done on both single and two-parent families, it can be surmised that with only one parent to emulate, gender roles become blurred for children. There is no concept of the traditional gender role if they have never witnessed these gender roles in person. However, this includes the assumption that gender roles are only expressed at home by parents. Traditional gender roles are present everywhere, whether it's through media, music, movies, tv, the internet, video games, or at school, gender roles are impossible to escape. If this is the case, then why do children who grow up in single-parent families still express more androgynous and fluid gender roles despite outside influence on them encouraging traditional gender roles? This is because not many other factors can influence someone's development, especially early development, more than a parent can (Morawska et al. 2021).

CHINA GENDER ROLE STUDY

Beyond western research, evidence of family structure affecting gender role development has also been shown in China. China much like Canada, has experienced a disrupted traditional family structure in recent years with more than 20 million one-parent families (Chen et al. 2018), this makes it a valuable resource to compare how a different culture can impact family structure's influence on gender characteristics and roles. Research done in China reinforces past studies by showcasing an increased amount of androgynous gender role traits in children raised in one-parent households. However, there are some noticeable differences in studies done in China compared to western studies. Females raised by a single female showcased a higher amount of feminine gender role traits compared to western studies, which observed females raised in a one-female family showing a higher amount of masculine gender role traits (Slivkin and Stright 2000; Chen et al. 2018). Culture can alter family structures' level of influence or kind of influence on gender role development, something that should be considered as Canada is a melting pot of cultures and has a population that is 23% immigrants (Statistics Canada 2022).

FUTURE

If further research is done on strictly Cis-gendered parents, then it should be done with our modern understanding of gender and use a more multifaceted look than just family structure. It should consider family structure, gender identity as well as gender expression. This is recommended due to family structure already being extensively researched. Therefore, there is a need for understanding how the family structure works alongside gender expression and gender identity within the subject.

CONCLUSION

As the traditional Canadian family become decreasingly traditional there is a need for understanding the implications of that especially as Sociologists. One of these now obvious implications is changes in the development of gender roles. There is a large amount of evidence suggesting family structure has an important and powerful role when it comes to someone's gender role development. This is demonstrated

by research that dates to the 1980s and is further reflected in more contemporary works. People raised in single-parent families are much more likely to possess androgynous or non-traditional gender roles compared to two-parent families. This has been demonstrated multiple times by research but there is still much work to be done in the field (Ellis and Russell 1991). With the understanding that family structure does indeed play an integral role in gender development, there must then be an understanding that it is not the only contributing factor. Many factors go into developing an individual's gender role and one component is not the only determining influence, as culture, media, and socialization all have a hand in forging gender roles. To clarify this, in Western cultures there is evidence of certain links in gender role development, such as possessing more masculine gender role traits when raised by a single-parent mother (Slivkin and Stright 2000). This is not true across the globe, as evidenced by research done in China (Chen et al. 2018). The implications of family structure are far-reaching and will hopefully be further researched as time goes on to better understand gender role development and how gender characteristics arise, especially with more contemporary conceptions of gender expression and gender identity.

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13. A Gamer's Observations: Gender Representation in Video Games

MARSHALL HAGEL (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Video games, representation,2SLGBTQIA+, entertainment, media

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The video game industry is one of the largest entertainment mediums in the world according to some research reports 40% of the world's population are active gamers, that's over 3 billion people (DFC Intelligence, 2022). At first glance, since the gaming industry involves such a mass amount of people, you'd think there's a lot of room for inclusion and proper representation however, you wouldn't have to dig very far to find some fundamental problems. This is most notably showcased by the perpetuation of gender roles and gender stereotypes in video games. One of many examples is the damsel in distress stereotype, where the male character is always showcased as strong and brave, almost functioning as a god in a lot of games whereas the female character is often weak, submissive, and frequently sexualized. This essay will aim to showcase, gender as it's treated and represented in video games while also focusing on examples of games that have and haven't represented gender properly.

Starting off I'd first like to examine the treatment of Men in video games. It's no secret and really no surprise that men are the main gender represented in video games with white men specifically being greatly overrepresented in video games (Williams et al., 2009). Often being depicted as overtly masculine, being depicted as the hero character, and due to the nature of being in a video game, the male protagonists take on an almost godly position over the other characters in the game. Sometimes the male characters literally being gods. It can be debated that there are games that have a female protagonist or god-like characters but within the context of there being a gender representation gap, this depiction of men can perpetuate gender stereotypes.

I'll look at this more when discussing women in video games but the sexualization or lack of sexualization of men in video games contrasts greatly when compared to the sexualization of women. While there are examples of sexualized male video game characters, Nathan Drake from the Uncharted games is a light example, as it is incredibly hard to find overtly sexualized male characters in mainstream games. Nathan Drake's sexualization is very different in contrast to a sexualized female character like Quiet from Metal Gear Solid. Where Nathan Drake is sexualized in the same way a character like Indiana Jones would be considered sexualized (attractive, smart, masculine, strong, charming, etc.) he's not a sexual object in the game, he keeps his clothes on and his sexualization is never a core part of his character. Where in contrast to this, Quiet from Metal Gear Solid is sexualized and a textbook example of a sexual object within the game, her clothes do not stay on. It goes even beyond that as her sexualization is written right into her character, described in-game as "she breathes through her skin". Given as an explanation as to why she is wearing the absolute minimum amount of clothing despite being in an active warzone in Afghanistan. Examples like Quiet are not hard to find at all whereas even a soft example like Nathan Drake is much harder to track down.

Click here to see an image of Nathan Drake.

Click here to see an image of Quiet.

An interesting genre of games that tend to have a smaller gap between how male and females are represented are fighting games. Both men and women are highly sexualized in these types of games such as Mortal Kombat and Super Street Fighter, which are the two biggest franchises in the fighting game genre. Even then in a game like Mortal Kombat, there's still the opportunity to choose armor-clad men but very few if any armor-clad women. It should also be noted that fighting games are really the only place you can find overly sexualized males to the degree that women are in other genres of video games, and that's only because it's been the nature of fighting games to overly sexualize their characters since the 1990s. Sexualization and sexual objectification are almost expected in these games and have become a part of the genre, which is why it's probably one of the few game genres to consistently sexualize men in the same way women are sexualized in other games.

Directing focus now to women, I'm going to acknowledge that in video games female characters are regularly offered much more sexualized clothing/armor options compared to male characters, it's unfortunately been like this for a long time, but it has also been discussed and written on plenty of times. So, alternatively, I'd like to focus on the actual characterization that women are provided in games, such as how they are written or how they work into the video game world and game mechanics. The writing for female characters in games has always been problematic and mirrors similar narrative tropes found in film. As previously mentioned, the damsel in distress trope was very prevalent in video games, found as early on as Princess Peach in Super Mario Bros. (1985) and Zelda in Legend of Zelda (1986). While as a trend the damsel in distress trope has fizzled out in modern gaming in preference of more fleshed-out narratives, there are still plenty of examples today, seen in Resident Evil 7: Biohazard (2017) and Bioshock Infinite (2013).

Recent years in gaming have found a surge of strong female protagonists, in characters such as Ellie from The Last of Us (2013), Aloy from Horizon Zero Dawn (2017), and Female Commander Shepard from Mass Effect 3 (2012). However, the prevailing gender of narratively crafted characters is still male, and non-crafted characters are where proper video game gender representation lies. A non-narratively crafted character is a blank-slate character that many video games use to help immerse players into the game. These character types are then created by the player in some way. This can be as simple as choosing the gender of a silent protagonist at the beginning of a game such as in Far Cry 5 (2018) or as complex as choosing every minute detail of your playable character, from the pitch of their voice to the highlights in their hair, as is found in Sims 4 (2014). Leaving the playable character as open-ended as possible helps maximize representation for not only male and female players but can help to represent the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Overall representation of2SLGBTQIA+ is severely lacking and what representation there is, can be very problematic. Grand Theft Auto 5 (2013) is the second-best-selling video game of all time with around 170 million copies sold globally (Take-two Interactive Software, 2022). However, within this virtual world, trans background NPCs (Non-playable characters) were depicted in caricatured ways, and in a video game that is played by millions globally, this posed serious issues with how trans people are represented and perceived by others. It wasn't until early 2022 that the re-release of the game removed transphobic content but, after the game being released with the content for almost a decade it's safe to assume that some damage was done, especially in the context of a game that is known to attract a younger audience and was played by so many people.

Alternatively, The Sims series has been a beacon of 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in the video game community for years. Same-sex couples were in the games since the first entry in the series, The Sims (2000). The Sims gave players the option to choose sexuality and gender preferences for their sims (Playable characters) or let their sims organically develop their own sexual and gender identity. As the games went on, they really perfected gender representation in my opinion and many online trans communities have discussed how The Sims has helped people achieve a sense of gender euphoria and cope with feelings of dysphoria. This goes back to the use of character creators in games being key, as I previously mentioned Sims 4 (2014) has a very in-depth and open character creator. The reason Sims 4 is the gold standard for gender representation is because of how open-ended the character creator is and that allows for the representation of seemingly anyone. The gender of a player's sim can be as binary or non-binary as someone wants. Even playable and non-playable sim's sexuality, as well as gender, work in fluid ways. Characters' sexualities and gender expression can change as the game and characters evolve and interact.

While The Sims series is great when it comes to gender representation its success lies within the players' decisions and the fact that almost all the characters are completely blank, non-narratively crafted characters. The true lack of successful gender representation lies in games with narratively crafted characters. A game that consists of all narratively crafted characters yet still succeeds in representing a multitude of genders is Mass Effect 3 (2012). The playable protagonist of the game who is known as Commander Shepard is a prominent male character from previous entries in the series however, in this game the player is given the option of choosing Shepard's gender, male or female. While many games have done this with their protagonists prior to Mass Effect 3, it's a notable example as both the male and female versions are fully voiced by separate voice actors and the female version feels like its own character. By this I mean the female version isn't just a female clone of the male Shepard, she has her own nuances and characteristics that separate her from the male Shepard.

Mass Effect 3 is unique in its depiction of its playable protagonist, but successful gender representation also shows up in the non-playable supporting characters that appear throughout the series. A noticeable aspect is the use of the damsel in distress trope, whereas in Mass Effect 2 the trope is used on the male character Kaidan, who is depicted as being inferior to the protagonist and must be saved on multiple occasions. While there are other female damsel-in-distress-type characters in the series, it's interesting to see the trope used on a male character, especially since it is such an anomaly narratively in video games.

Another notable supporting character in the Mass Effect series is the character Liara who in-game is a race known as the Asari. The Asari are an interesting race because they are gender neutral and have remained a fantastic way of establishing the concept of non-binary genders to players. This in turn helps understanding of gender fluidity, accomplished through the accessible medium of video games. The most recent entry to the series Mass Effect Andromeda (2017) goes even further in explaining that since the Asari interact with humans operating on more binary pronouns in Mass Effect, some prefer male or female pronouns while others will prefer gender-neutral pronouns. I remember playing Mass Effect 3 growing up was one of my earliest introductions to the idea of gender neutrality and helped to positively disrupt my understanding of gender. While characters like Liara still aren't perfect as they are depicted as being "alien" in Mass Effect games, there is still value in flipping gender tropes on their head with Kaidan and introducing the massive demographic of gamers to the idea of gender going beyond just male and female.

As video games become more popular, the desire for proper representation within video games becomes

stronger. This stems from decades of poor gender representation, such as females acting as nothing but a demonstration of the male protagonist's strength and superiority and being created for the male gaze resulting in over-sexualization. It hasn't been until the past decade of gaming that the number of female protagonists with complex and strong characteristics has significantly risen, but there is still a noticeable misrepresentation in the video game industry when it comes to females. Lack of representation continues to plague the
2SLGBTQIA+ community especially when it comes to narratively crafted characters. Recent games such as Celeste (2018) and The Last of Us Part 2 (2020) which have strong written, narratively crafted protagonists and antagonists that are a part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, show a promising trend toward better representation in the future. Even though it may be seen as too late, games such as Grand Theft Auto 5 re-releasing with transphobic content removed makes me optimistic, as gaming companies become increasingly aware of their influence on society and that there is a responsibility to try and not misrepresent groups of people. Until narratively crafted characters that represent gender in respectful and meaningful ways become the norm, character creators and non-narratively crafted characters are crucial to gender representation in video games. Character creators that go as in-depth as The Sims 4 or as surface level as a binary character selection, all help to make games feel more inclusive and representative of all the different people that play, something that I hope the gaming industry continues to prioritize going forward.

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14. Creating Gender Expansive Early Childhood Education Settings

TK HANNAH (THEY/HE)

The early childhood education field is situated in a state of tension: standards of education and care in early childhood settings are subjected to broad guidelines by provincial governments; however, as this field remains within the private sector, there is a lack of oversight or practical guidance as to how to reach these standards. Many early learning centres are taking strides to attempt to address issues of gender inclusivity within their programs, with some approaches being more effective than others. In this article, I highlight the tensions in the early childhood education field in British Columbia, Canada in meeting their legal duty to provide children with an environment free from discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression. I explore how early childhood educators employ various practices related to gender and gender diversity in early childhood settings, and how such practices can either work to maintain or destabilize cisnormativity. While outlining common approaches used in an attempt to recognize gender diversity, I categorize the approaches as (1) "red light," (2) "yellow light," or (3) "green light." These terms refer to (1) common practices that maintain cisnormativity in early childhood education, (2) common approaches that have various implications to be troubled, and (3) best practices that help destabilize cisnormativity in early childhood settings.

The Gender Affirmative Model, developed by psychologists Colt Keo-Meier and Diane Ehrensaft, "is the leading approach for working with transgender and gender-expansive (TGE) children and their families" (Keo-Meier & Ehrensaft, 2018). In the early childhood education field, the Gender Affirmative Model provides an effective framework for creating educational environments and experiences that support the gender health of all children. Gender health refers to a "child's opportunity to live in the gender that feels most real or comfortable to that child and to express that gender with freedom from restriction, aspersion, or rejection" (Timmons & Airton, 2020, p. 5). According to gender diversity researchers, Pastel et al., this model relies on "the evidence-based idea that attempting to force someone to live as a gender with which they do not identify does that person harm" (p. 60). Pastel et al. outline the four central beliefs upon which the Gender Affirmative Model is based:

- No gender identity or gender expression is pathological (wrong, "sick", needing to be "fixed")
- Gender identities and gender expressions are diverse and vary across individuals and cultures. Supporting children's gender health requires cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive practice
- Gender is a complex integration of biology, development, socialization, culture, and context
- Gender can be fluid or fixed. When gender is fluid it can change for an individual throughout their life. Additionally, these changes can take place at different times for different people. (p. 61)

Early childhood settings that adopt these guiding ideas into their daily work with children are using a gender-expansive practice.

The Canadian educational system has seen a significant shift in gender-expansive practices, which aim to reduce discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression (Travers, 2018). Driving factors in these changes is the addition of gender identity and gender expression in the Human Rights Code

and numerous legal cases against educational institutions for failing to meet the needs of transgender/gender-expansive children and youth (Travers, 2018). In 2016, bill 27 was passed in British Columbia, which called for the inclusion of "gender identity or expressions" (General Attorney, 2016) among protected grounds in the Human Rights Code. This amendment to the Human Rights Code inspired the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) 1 2 3 curricula (Edwards, 2018). SOGI 1 2 3 aims to help "educators make schools inclusive and safe for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities" (SOGI 1 2 3, n.d.) This curriculum has been in effect since 2018 in British Columbia (Edwards, 2018).

To a lesser degree, British Columbia's early childhood educators have also been grappling with their legal duty to create a learning environment free from gender identity and gender expression discrimination since the amendment of the Human Rights Code (Timmons & Airton, 2020). This effort is particularly challenging for the field of early childhood education due to a lack of oversight and guidance in the field (Timmons & Airton, 2020). Childcare centres remain primarily a private sector and thus are not subjected to the same curriculum regulations through the provincial government as the public education system is. Numerous studies have shown that early childhood educators often do not engage in conversations about sexuality, gender identity, and gender expression with children because they are "inexperienced or misinformed (and feel unqualified to teach about the subject)" (Sullivan et al., 2019, p. 24; Chapman 2021; Meyers et al., 2016). Furthermore, many educators "may possess opinions that are heterosexist, homophobic or anti-LGBTQ" (Sullivan et al., 2019, p. 24). The critical need for training to educate early childhood educators to unlearn anti-2SLGBTQIA+ beliefs and to deliver practical guidance on creating gender-affirming learning environments is evident.

Early childhood educators in British Columbia receive general guidance on curriculum through the provincial government. The British Columbia government produces frameworks for practice in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Ministry of Health, and the Early Learning Advisory Group (Ministry of Education and Child Care, 2019). The Early Learning Framework was built to bridge into the British Columbia primary school curriculum, with the newest Early Learning Framework being published in 2019 (Ministry of Education and Child Care, 2019). This framework provides broad guidance on curriculum expectations in early childhood across British Columbia. Although the provincial government recommends using the Early Learning Framework, it is not mandated, thus many early learning centres do not use it.

The Early Learning Framework attempts to address issues of diversity and inclusion related to gender identity and gender expression. One of the "pathways" (previously referred to as "learning goals") in the Early Learning Framework is titled "Family composition and gender orientation" (Ministry of Education and Child Care, 2019 p. 72). This pathway specifically addresses gender diversity and provides critical questions for educators to reflect upon such as: "Do children have opportunities to experiment with transgressing gender stereotypes?" and "How might I pay attention to responses as children play with or transgress gender norms and share new ideas with colleagues and with children?" (Ministry of Education and Child Care, 2019 p. 72). Although critical reflection is an essential practice for early learning professionals, it fails to address educators' biases and concerns about being too "inexperienced or misinformed" (Sullivan et al., 2019, p. 24) to provide children with gender-expansive early learning experiences.

The Early Learning Framework is open to interpretation and various approaches to reaching these expectations. As such, early childhood educators can either maintain or destabilize cisnormativity in the field of early childhood education. How educators approach the guidelines and respond to the critical

self-reflections is influenced by each educator's perceptions and positionality. These perceptions and positionalities may be rooted in cisnormativity, heterosexism, and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ viewpoints. Early childhood educators should receive explicit training on inclusivity and how to provide children with gender-expansive early learning environments to destabilize cisnormativity. However, due to a variety of barriers and tensions that exist within this field, early childhood educators often lack such appropriate resources. In response to this issue, this article will outline clear examples of commonly employed practices in the early years to provide insight into ways these practices work to either maintain or destabilize cisnormativity.

Red Light!

Reframing/Redirection

Early childhood educators maintain cisnormative standards through the corrective methods of reframing and/or redirecting non-normative expressions. In the article, "Even if you say it three ways, it still doesn't mean it's true: The pervasiveness of heteronormativity in early childhood education," Alexandra Gunn (2011) interviewed early childhood educators regarding their experiences with transgender and gender-expansive children. When confronted by gender creativity in the early years, educators reported using reframing methods to conceptualize the behaviour within cisnormativity. For example, when educators witnessed children who were assigned male at birth wearing dresses, they often reframed the experience to associate the behaviour with traditional masculinity in other cultures, affirming to the child that it was an acceptable behaviour because "boys and men in Scotland wear kilts" (p. 286). Often, this reframing extended into a more overt corrective method: redirection. For instance, in the same study, an early childhood educator redirected a child by suggesting he remove his dress and wear a kilt instead, in an attempt to categorize the child's gender transgression as acceptable within cisnormativity (Gunn, 2011).

Yellow Light!

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Developmentally appropriate practice, a psychoeducational analysis of children's development that encourages educators to teach children concepts based on what the framework conceptualizes as "developmentally appropriate" for their age, is rooted in childhood innocence ideologies. Currently, a common belief in early childhood education is that children are "too young" or "too innocent" to talk about sexuality and gender identity and thus, such topics are conceptualized as developmentally inappropriate (Chapman, 2021; Gunn, 2011). The conceptualization of childhood innocence and the need to protect children from certain information can be traced back to the 17th century (Warin & Price, 2019). Many philosophers from the 17th century and beyond who held this belief were central to the development of developmentally appropriate practice, which has been predominant in the field of early childhood education since the 1980s and continues to be today (Elkind, 2015). Developmentally appropriate practice is problematic as it is created with the normalized child in mind and overtly excludes racialized, transgender, gay, and disabled children (Ruffolo, 2009). The normalization of particular bodies and thus the abnormalization of other bodies establishes stratification within the early childhood education field (Ruffolo, 2009).

Opponents of gender-expansive practice employ various constraining discourses, such as developmentally appropriate practice, to counter the efforts of those working towards gender-expansive

practices. In these discourses, developmentally appropriate practice is used to maintain cisnormativity and to justify the exclusion of the 2SLGBTQIA+ curriculum and conversations about 2SLGBTQIA+ in the early years (Chapman, 2021). The belief that children are "too young" or "too innocent" to talk about gender and sexuality is rooted in the underlying harmful belief that diverse genders and sexualities are intrinsically more sexual and dangerous than normative genders and sexualities. The narrative of developmentally appropriate practice is also used in enabling discourses as it is employed by those who support gender-expansive practices to legitimize the appropriateness of gender-expansive practice while soothing the anxieties of those who might contest that children are "too young" to talk about diverse genders and sexualities. Regardless of how it is politically employed, developmentally appropriate practice constricts authentic gender-expansive practices as it remains saturated in the idea that diverse genders and sexualities are more sexual and dangerous than normative ones.

Victim Discourses

Victim discourses are employed by actors in early childhood education in both enabling and constraining discourses about gender-expansive teaching environments. When 2SLGBTQIA+ topics are included within texts and/or class discussions in educator training programs, the learning is often rooted in victim discourses (Sullivan et al., 2019). In these discourses, the experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ students are often exclusively represented through victim narratives which portray queer students as "victims of bullying, depressed, and prone to self-destructive behaviors such as suicide" (Sullivan et al., 2019, p. 22). Transgender and gender-expansive people being portrayed exclusively through the use of victim discourses has many harmful implications. As author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) states, "the single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story" (13:03). Through victim discourses, transgender and gender-diverse people's experiences are reduced to a single narrative around the inevitable subjugation of gender diverse people. They fail to hold space for the multitudes of experiences in the lives of gender-diverse people, both positive and negative, fantastic and mundane.

Single-story stereotypes that are steeped in victim discourses are present in childcare centres. One of the most common areas in which this can be seen is within children's picture books where 2SLGBTQIA+ characters are depicted through the use of victim narratives. Books that are used by early childhood educators to teach gender diversity often depict transgender and gender-expansive characters as rejected, isolated, bullied, and sad. For instance, in *10,000 Dresses* (2008), the leading character, a young child named Bailey faces various levels of rejection by her family as they dismiss her assertions that she is a girl, not a boy. In the end, her brother tells her to "get out of here, before I kick you!" when she expresses her wish to wear a dress. At this point, she runs away down the street, finding solace in the company of an older child in the neighbourhood (Ewert & Ray, 2008). Rudine Sims Bishop (1990), professor and children's book author, explores the importance of discourses in children's books. She states that "when children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society in which they are a part" (Bishop, 1990 p. 1). Unfortunately, it is uncommon for children's books to have depictions of positive narratives around gender diversity, such as themes centering queer joy and stories of transgender leaders.

The use of 2SLGBTQIA+ children's books that portray children as victims reinforces the fears and worries of parents/guardians and educators. Rather than supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ children, they perpetuate victim narratives, thus furthering "single-story" misconceptions and the "othering" of particular children. Victim

discourses result in "transgender children and their experiential realities [being] ignored or portrayed in an inferior light in early childhood education curricula" (Sullivan et al., 2019, p. 24). In addition, the aforementioned problematic developmentally appropriate model ties into victim discourses, with many opponents to gender-expansive practice arguing that children are "too young" to be exposed to such tragic narratives. Implementing adequate 2SLGBTQIA+ competency training in early childhood education could help counteract some of the typical yellow light practices that inadvertently prevent educators from engaging in authentic gender-expansive practices.

Green Light!

In this section, I will outline common ways that educators work towards authentic gender-expansive practices through various methodologies such as the language and conversations they have with children, modeling of behaviour, and play-based pedagogical choices. These approaches will be outlined under "Prevention Over Intervention," "Go with the Flow," and "Walking the Talk". This section recognizes that "children primarily learn by doing, second by what adults model" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 126), and finally by what adults tell them. For effective gender-expansive practice, educators can combine various approaches to destabilize cisnormativity and enhance children's understanding.

Prevention Over Intervention

Gender-expansive practice is rooted in a preventative approach that seeks to actively prevent discriminatory experiences rather than merely intervening when they occur (Timmons & Airton, 2020). This practice maintains the assumption that any child may come to later identify as transgender or gender-expansive. It further maintains that all children (transgender or cisgender; gender conforming or gender creative) benefit from gender-expansive teachings (Timmons & Airton, 2020). Actors within children's lives, such as educators and parents/guardians, should implement gender-expansive practices early, as by ages 2-3, children are already well along in their learning of gender.

As noted in Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper's (2008) influential book *The Transgender Child: A Handbook for Families and Professionals*, by ages 2-3, children learn that adults and peers "gender" toys and clothes. They begin to look for cues of how to act based on their inner sense of gender (cisgender, transgender & gender expansive children) (Brill et al., 2008). By ages 3-4 years old, children create a gender scheme of how "boys" and "girls" should behave (Brill et al., 2008) and stereotypes begin to emerge based on what children have been exposed to. At this age, many transgender and gender-expansive children "struggle with language to express their differences" (Brill et al., 2008, p. 62). Gender-expansive practices aim to provide children with accurate information about gender, gender identity, and gender expression (Timmons & Airton, 2020). Early childhood educators can engage in gender-expansive practice by using accurate language which works to reiterate that diverse genders, gender expression and anatomies are "normal, not pathological" (Timmons & Airton, 2020, p. 11).

Anatomy is a common conversation topic in the early years, as much of the early learning revolves around bodily functions and caring for our bodies. When discussing anatomy, gender-expansive educators might say "Many boys have penises, but some boys have vulvas and vaginas. Many girls have vulvas and vaginas, but some girls have penises" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 35). They may extend this to include "People of all genders have different types of genitals" and "each person's genitals look a little different from everyone else's. Vulvas, penises, and scrotums come in different sizes and shapes" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 35). The use of gender-expansive language when discussing anatomy highlights the diverse bodies that exist while working against the simplistic idea that genitals dictate one's gender.

Children are engaged in ongoing discovery about the embodied experience of living within a gendered society. Educators can work to resist the imposition of restrictive colonial understanding of gender expression and gender identity through language they use with children. Educators might state that "there is no one way for girls or boys or people of any gender to act or look" (Welcoming Schools, n.d.). While discussing gender identity, educators can define key terms such as "cisgender" and "transgender". For instance, educators might say "cisgender is a name for people whose grown-ups (like doctors and parents) guessed their gender right. The grown-ups might have guessed they were a girl, and when they got older, they said, "Yup, they are right! I am a girl!" and "transgender is a name for people whose grown-ups (like doctors and parents) guessed their gender wrong. Grown-ups might have guessed they were a boy, but when they got older, they said, "No, actually, I am a girl!" (Pastel et al., 2019) Through this approach of using accurate information when discussing anatomy, gender expression, and gender identity, educators can work to prevent children from developing cisnormative assumptions about gender and harmful gender constructs.

Although the use of language is important in gender-expansive practice, for gender-expansive practice to be effective, it is insufficient to exclusively provide verbal information to children. By ages 4-6, children tend to "associate gender with specific behaviours" (Brill et al., 2008, p. 63). At this time, children develop gender scripts that conflate behaviours with gender, such as "girls wear makeup, so that means anyone wearing makeup is a girl" (Brill et al., 2008 p. 63). However, repeated exposure to books, stories, and people who defy these norms will help children adapt to their gender constructs (Brill et al., 2008). Early childhood educators can make pedagogical choices within their early learning classrooms to expose children to people, representations, and experiences, which work together to create a gender-expansive classroom culture (Pastel et al., 2019; Timmons & Airton, 2020).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that a lack of personal connection to diverse communities contributes to oppressive and discriminatory viewpoints (Cakal et al., 2011; Groyecka et al., 2019; Pettigrew et al., 2013). As such, it is beneficial for children to build connections with diverse community members before these viewpoints are formed or to challenge already formed viewpoints. Children who may come to know themselves later as transgender are also at risk for developing these oppressive viewpoints, which may contribute to struggling with internalized transphobia. Many early childhood educators welcome guests into their centres to support children's connection with people of all genders, including transgender and gender-expansive community members. For instance, early childhood educators might invite "a firefighter into the classroom who happens to be a trans woman" (Pastel et al., 2019, p.136). By not making the guest's gender the "primary reason they are being invited into the classroom" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 136), early childhood educators avoid "othering" transgender people while providing children with positive representations of diverse genders.

In gender-expansive classrooms, gender diversity is represented through conscious and intentional choices of pedagogical materials. Books about gender diversity, including those that focus on joy, not only adversity, are included in the classroom. Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) discusses the importance of diverse literature in her article "Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors". Bishop (1990) argues that books can be windows "offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange"; sliding glass doors, where "readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated" or mirrors, where "literature transforms human experience and reflects it to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience" (p.1). She contends that in this way, reading can become "a means of self-affirmation" (Bishop, 1990, p.1).

However, marginalized communities, including the transgender and gender expansive community, are often unable to find their "mirrors" within children's literature (Bishop, 1990).

By including positive books featuring transgender and gender-expansive characters, we enable these children to find their mirrors. As argued by Bishop, books on marginalized communities are also beneficial for children within dominant social groups, as they offer a "window" experience into the real world of diverse communities. Gender is inextricably interconnected to other "social identities, statuses, and cultural/historical contexts" (Pastel et al., 2019, p.170). A true gender-expansive practice actively works against all oppressions and avoids the perpetuation of ableism, racism, eurocentrism, classism, sexism, etc. in gender work (Pastel et al., 2019). Gender-expansive educators work to ensure that diverse literature is present in their classrooms, such as stories of Black, Indigenous, people of colour, disabled, non-Western, and lower-class transgender and gender-expansive people.

Educators use toys and play-based pedagogical materials to explore gender diversity through play. One example of a play-based pedagogical material often utilized by educators in gender-expansive classroom environments is persona dolls and/or puppets (Pastel et al., 2019). These pedagogical tools, introduced by and exclusively manipulated by educators, are used for various educational pursuits, including "generating communication, supporting a positive classroom climate, enhancing creativity, fostering cooperation and integration into the group and changing attitudes" (Kröger & Nupponen, 2019, p. 1). Persona dolls and/or puppets are life-like and are "made and dressed as real people with a real-life history. Each one has [their own] name, gender, race, and personality" (Pierce & Johnson, 2010, p.106). Children are inclined to interact with these pedagogical tools and "quickly begin to empathize with the dolls, who become like members of the classroom" (Pastel et al., 140 p. 140). Through the introduction of transgender and gender-expansive persona dolls and/or puppets into the classrooms, early childhood educators assist children in developing "language to think about issues [of identity, diversity, discriminatory teasing and exclusion] in a climate of safety" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 140). Through play, children develop the skills to apply anti-oppressive "ideas to their own lives and the life of the classroom" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 140). As previously noted, children learn best through "doing", as such, playful interactions with persona dolls and puppets offer an effective method for gender-expansive teachings by providing a pathway for children to engage in critical thinking about gender.

Going with the Flow

Gender-expansive practice avoids any urge to decide or figure out if someone is gender-expansive, transgender, or cisgender (Pastel et al., 2019; Timmons & Airton, 2020). By following the child's lead or "going with the flow," so to speak, educators recognize that gender identity and expression can be fluid and constantly changing. In gender-expansive practice, educators recognize children's gender agency, which refers to a child's "right [...] to tell us, the adults (parents, teachers, and others), what they understand their gender identities to be" (Pastel et al., 2019, p. 13). Early childhood educators can follow the children's lead, responding to gender conformity and gender creativity with the same welcoming yet neutral responses (Pastel et al., 2019; Timmons & Airton, 2020). For instance, when children select clothing to wear in dramatic play, educators respond to all choices of expression in the same way, reiterating that all children can decide to dress however makes them happy. Furthermore, when a child expresses a desire to be called by a different name or pronoun, even in imaginative play, educators using gender-expansive practice respect this expression of gender agency and call them by their desired name or pronoun. In these daily interactions, educators show children that children's gender agency is respected.

Walking the Talk

Early childhood educators must model recognition and acceptance of gender diversity through their behaviours and interactions in their day-to-day practices – I refer to this as "walking the talk". Modeling can be employed in numerous ways to encourage gender inclusivity in children, families, and community members. Educators model introducing their pronouns to children, families, and co-workers. For instance, they might say to a new student "My name is Sally, and I like to be called he or she." Educators actively work to destabilize cisnormativity and gender assumptions by introducing pronouns, reinforcing the understanding that gender presentation does not equate to gender identity and/or pronouns. Educators also incorporate pronouns in daily traditions, such as songs and storytelling.

Educators can model noticing and pointing out when they make assumptions about another person's gender and/or when they put gender stereotypes on someone. For instance, educators might state in front of their students, "Johnny's dancing was so beautiful, but I called it cool. I should remember that people of all genders should hear all different types of compliments." This practice is vital as educators often unintentionally reinforce gender stereotypes through daily interactions, such as in affirmations used in the example above. When educators own their mistakes, they model to children how to recognize and accept mistakes and repair any harm.

Conclusion

In British Columbia, there has been an increased focus on mainstream media and educational policies and curricula on creating inclusive educational experiences that support diverse gender identities and gender expressions. However, the field of early childhood education has received very minimal practical guidance on gender-expansive practice and creating gender-expansive classroom cultures. Many early childhood educators and childcare centres have begun to implement approaches that can work to maintain or destabilize cisnormativity. In this article, I outlined these various approaches and classified them under the categories "red light", "yellow light", and "green light". Red light practices, such as reframing and redirecting, work to maintain cisnormativity and thus, should be avoided. Yellow light practices, including developmentally appropriate practice and victim discourses, should be approached with caution as they have implications that may unintentionally work against gender-expansive practice. Green light practices are effective in creating gender-expansive early childhood experiences that destabilize cisnormativity and create affirming environments for all children. When green light practices, such as "Prevention Over Intervention" "Going with the Flow," and "Walking the Talk", are employed in educators' language, pedagogical choices, and interactions with others, educators create expansive learning environments where all children can see their unique selves reflected.

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15. Sunshine, Sourdough, Seafoam, Sanct and Spaghettification

EDEN HATCH (HE/HIM)

Sunshine, Sourdough, Seafoam, Sanct and Spaghettification

When I wrote this music, I was a much much different person. It was the beginning of my student career and I had only just begun discovering my own identity. My friends and I had entered a talent show to show that we had created a band, despite not winning the show, we would eventually go on to write four of the five songs that appear in tandem to this book. In addition to writing these songs, each song has its own small thought piece that I hope will offer a little more detail about what I was thinking when I was creating each of these pieces. As mentioned before there are four songs that were written by me and my friends, most of these were written around 2019-2020, before I was fully out to both my parents as well as my general social group. The final song Spaghettification was written as sort of a reflection on how my identity has developed from that point to where I am now as a Gay man now living on Vancouver Island as opposed to a young Freshman College student in Alberta. In my personal opinion I believe these songs are best listened to while reading the rest of the book, as just like how this music was made with the cooperation of friends, one i able to tell that this book as well was not just made by a collection of students, but a group of comrades, all united in a specific goal. In conclusion, I hope you enjoy the music I've written, as well as the rest of the book as well.

Sunshine: When I hear this song, I think of my journey through the rocky mountains to actually get to the island, The haunting guitar, the road leading ever on, the Harmonica, the hum of the car engine going onward. A world of endless possibility was ahead of me then, I had shed my old identity and was moving towards one where I was free to express myself however I saw fit. Which I feel is the perfect metaphor for anyone's journey of self exploration, A world of endless possibilities ahead of you, and though it may be scary venturing into the unknown, the road takes you ever on promising adventure around every corner.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/gri1/?p=114#audio-114-1

Sourdough: A thudding drum beat, and a more plucky tune with attitude. When this demo was recorded we didn't have a drum to use, so we instead had someone strum their muted guitar, leading to the fun sounding kick drum sound. We didn't often make harder sounding stuff so I'd like to imagine it was proof that we could make something you could tap your toe to as well. I'd like to think it could symbolize how I felt the need to break through norms surrounding me at the time, of course as one could expect, growing up in rural northern alberta wasn't really the place where expression of oneself was always looked kindly

upon, and finally being away at college allowed me some time to actually question why I subscribed to these ideals.

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Seafoam: In hindsight I wish I had used a regular piano as opposed to a melodica in this piece, The guitar is what makes this ong as opposed to its somewhat screechy wistful melody. But I think that's also the beauty of the song, a perfect imperfection. Which is another good metaphor for one's gender identity. You don't need to be perfect within everyone's eyes to be proud of something, I'm still proud of what me and my friends had accomplished at the time, making almost a whole cd in a dorm room was impressive to us. Just like how I didn't have to "act gay" in a sense to feel gay you know? I don't need to be a stereotype to feel legitimized in my own identity.

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Sanct: This song was the final song on the CD that me and my friends had made, a tearful farewell to the probably three people who had even bothered to buy our album. I'd like to think of it as a goodbye to the old to welcome in the new. Just like how Sunshine reflects the infinite potential of the future, I think Sanct represents the tearful release of old memories and identities to welcome in the future. We often hold onto our old memories whether they end up being bad or good. But eventually we need to move on in order to grow as individuals. I had realized I wasn't the same person I had started as, but as I'm sure many others do, I still feel a nostalgic melancholy for the past version of myself, if that makes any sense.

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Spaghettification: Originally the intro song to a concept album I would make if I was much more talented, it was about an astronaut who had been sucked into a black hole. I had wanted to make that whole album a more in depth exploration of how I have explored my gender identity, with the astronaut

eventually accepting his new existence despite the insistence of ground control to do otherwise. I feel like I've grown a lot since I've moved to the island, and that I've become a much better person for it.

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16. What Does "Two-Spirit" Mean?

EDEN HATCH (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Two-Spirit, Indigenous, transgender, culture

As much as modern history would want you to believe, people have been breaking the Eurocentric gender binary long before the twentieth century. One such example of this departure from our modern binary is the idea of being “two-spirit” within the Indigenous community. The term “two-spirit” is relatively new within the language of first nations people, created to replace the more offensive colonizer term “berdache.” Defined by Oxford (2018) as “a person…who is recognized as having adopted a gender role intermediate between those traditionally associated with men and women”, the term berdache shows that it was a common enough concept within the indigenous community to earn its own classification for the colonizing settlers. According to Smithers (2022), the term two-spirit became the replacement term in 1990, as a way for the two-spirit youth of that generation to search “for a collective, Pan-Indian, that was more affirming than label such as ‘gay,’ ‘lesbian,’ or ‘transgender.” Since its creation, two-spirit has been defined as a more “umbrella term that captures the fluidity of their sexual identities and dynamism of gender in Native cultures” (Smithers 2022).

This definition was an incredibly positive force for the native community, as it allowed for self-expression outside of the forced gender binary placed upon the first nations community due to years of colonization. This fact is very important as for many it was due to this enforced gender binary that would leave them feeling ostracized and persecuted by their wider community, leading some to never feel truly safe expressing themselves even within their own social life. Smithers (2022) notes that the creation of the two-spirit label also allowed native individuals to avoid and “undermine homophobic stigmas associated with labels like ‘gay’ and ‘lesbian’…during the 1980s and early 1990s” Unsurprisingly these differences in gender ideals were present between the colonizers and the first nations since the begging. There are even reports dating back to the 16th century of Spanish “references to “sodomites,” hombres afeminados (“effeminate men”) and mujeres varoniles (“masculine women”) among Indigenous communities.” (Smithers, 2022)

Modern Viewpoints Regarding Being Two-Spirited

Though the term Two-Spirit is relatively new, within the Indigenous community, two-spirit individuals have had a place within many indigenous cultures for a long while. According to Morrison, Sadika, and Morrison (2019), Two-Spirit people in some indigenous societies performed a multitude of roles such as “medicine healers…participated in traditional ceremonies…advised and guided both men and women and maintained a balanced environment in the community.” Though those who identify as two-spirit no longer perform many of these duties, being two-spirit is just as respected of a social role today, as it was all those generations ago, despite the many major changes to the role requirements and the definition to the word itself. Within the Modern post-colonial worldview, being two-spirit allows one to embrace their first nations
heritage while still maintaining their queer identity. Often being two-spirit is mistaken to simply mean that one is a part of the LGBTQ2+ community, and the First-nations

community, while this is an important aspect of it, to be two-spirit within modern culture, is to also focus on the importance of being able to represent oneself in a way that is separate from the colonial rhetoric regarding gender, while still showing respect to those who came before us that were also two-spirit. Being two-spirit is not without its difficulties though, Hunt (2016) points out that some parts of the first-nations community "are still impacted by the imposition of colonial gender and sexual norms...many two-spirit people face targeted violence in their communities" showing that deep-rooted colonizer teachings are still present within modern-day indigenous society. Some two-spirit people even feel they cannot participate in the wider LGBTQ+ community because "these services cannot provide necessary supports...due to the tendency to minimize the colonial abuse that continues to affect Indigenous communities."(Morrison, et al 2019) Another problem that the two-spirit community faces is actually educating people on the subject of being two-spirited, many two-spirit youths feel that the current definition is taken too literally, some mentioning that this "literal definition is how most non-indigenous LGBTQ+ people understand the term." (Laing 2021) and while inherently there is nothing wrong with this, the literal term propagates a more gender and sexuality focused role, as opposed to the term's original purpose, which was to not only describe their sexuality but how the individual also fit into their larger social society and filled their specific social niche. Much like the indigenous community as a whole, the two-spirit community is growing and learning to adapt to modern society in a way that will allow them to continue contributing to society while still maintaining a strong connection to their own culture and heritage.

Prominent Two-Spirit Figures

Though there are not many notable historical two-spirit figures within Canadian history, there are many contemporary two-spirit individuals who can teach us just as much, if not more, about being two-spirit within colonial Canada. One such person would be Joshua Whitehead for his book, Jonny Appleseed, which tells the tale of a two-spirited Man in Winnipeg. Often both physically and mentally abused while on the reserve, the main character Jonny decides to move to Winnipeg to escape the reservation and feel more able to express himself. Throughout the novel, we learn about Jonny's past as a two-spirited person growing up on the reserve. As he grows throughout the book he comes to learn that the reservation is just as much a part of his identity as being two-spirited is, pointing out the often-rocky cultural ties that many other two-spirited people may face when trying to explore their own identity. The book explores themes of growing up on the reservation as a two-spirited person, as well as ideas of the fetishization of first-nations culture, and intergenerational trauma and love. Joshua Whitehead himself is also a member of the indigenous two-spirit community, which truly shows in his writing as many parts often feel all too real as opposed to events simply written to advance the plot.

Another prominent figure of interest is that of Beverly Little-Thunder, a two-spirit activist who is still active within the community today. Beverly in her youth was an active member of not only the American Indian Movement (AIM) but also the women's liberation movement, as well as constantly being an active force for good within her community by sharing cultural teachings, assisting elders, as well as both her and her children participating in traditional Lakota dances. Unfortunately, when Beverly revealed to her community that she was attracted to women, she was labelled as a deviant and isolated from her spiritual community. Thankfully this dildn't stop Beverly, as she went on to found the Woman's Sundance. Through her website (https://www.kunsikeya.org) anyone interested is able to find information to participate and learn traditional Lakota practices.

Both of these people are powerful examples of what it means to be two-spirited, they show that to be

two-spirit, one must not only be in touch with their true self, but also in touch with their cultural heritage. This beautiful synergy allows both individuals to truly embrace what being two-spirit is all about, thriving within a community that accepts and celebrates your differences not just because it's your right to, but because you are a valued member of the community with much to teach others.

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17. Support Instead of Stigma

NAARS (SHE/HER)

Top Image by ooceey from Pixabay

The 2SLGBTQ+ community has faced, and continues to face, tremendous stigma and discrimination, even within the mental health field. These experiences lead to detrimental impacts on an individual's health and wellbeing. To stop the negative impacts to 2SLGBTQ+ people's mental health and general wellness, we must work towards destigmatization. It is time to educate ourselves, and to show up to support the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Conceptualized by Naars & Modified by the Editorial Team

18. Bisexuality, Biromanticism, and Society

STORI JENSEN-GRANGER (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Bi, Heteronormativity, Biphobia, Transphobia, Race, Mental Health (2SLGBTQ+-, BIPOC-, and mental health-related, respectively)

Introduction

Bisexuality and biromanticism are two lesser-known 2SLGBTQ+ terms in modern society, when compared to other sexual/romantic identities like gay or lesbian, for example. Moreover, there are many ways in which bi-ness is shown, presented, and accepted (or not) in society. This piece aims to answer the following questions: What does it mean to be bisexual?; What does being biromantic mean? (both of these preceding terms will be referred to as 'bi' for the remainder of this piece unless otherwise stated); How does gender play into being bi?; How is bi-ness generally received in society?; and finally, What are the impacts on mental health of coming out as bi?

Bisexuality, Biromanticism, and Gender

What do bisexuality and biromanticism mean? In short, bisexuality refers to being attracted to "more than one gender", with such genders usually being bisexuals' own gender and different from their own gender (Brennan 2021). Those who identify as bisexual may have varying amounts of attraction towards the genders they are attracted to; ie. being attracted to one gender more, or to all of the genders they're attracted to an equal amount (Brennan 2021). On the other hand, biromanticism occurs when someone is romantically attracted to people of two or more genders (Brennan 2021). While biromanticism and bisexuality sound quite similar, biromanticism is different since those who are biromantic don't have to be sexually attracted "to the same people they're romantically attracted to" per se; this definition includes those who identify as "biromantic asexual, bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual, or pansexual" (Brennan 2021). One can also identify as both biromantic and bisexual since bisexuality refers to sexual attraction and biromanticism to romantic attraction (Brennan 2021).

Moreover, gender intersects with bi-ness in two distinct ways: Who a bi person may be romantically or sexually attracted to, and how someone who is bi may express their gender. As shown in the previous definitions of bisexuality and biromanticism, gender may be a deciding factor for bi people in determining who they are or aren't romantically or sexually attracted to. Also, being bi can affect how you present your gender (aka. gender expression), and your gender expression can affect how others perceive your bi-ness or lack thereof. For example, a woman might dress more feminine when her partner presents more masculine than her, or more masculine if her partner presents more feminine than her. Due to this changing of gender expression depending on the gender of a bi person's partner, some bi people may identify as non-binary, or gender non-conforming, to some degree (such as identifying as a demigirl, demiboy, or as genderqueer, genderfluid, etc.) (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 6). In this sense, someone's sexual or romantic attraction can't be disconnected from how they express their gender (Pollitt et. al.

2021:12). Finally, in a study done by Pollitt et. al. in 2021, participants who were cisgender women had a harder time being seen as bi (or at least not heterosexual) than cisgender men, and had to "demonstrate much more dramatic gender nonconformity to be seen as nonheterosexual" (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 8, 12).

Bi-ness and Society

The acceptance of bi-ness in present-day society is varied, due to two main factors: Heteronormativity and Biphobia.

According to Roni Graham, heteronormativity is the "teeming promotion of heterosexuality as the only 'correct' way to engage in relationships", and it affects the comfortability of the extent of outness of bi people (Graham 2021). It is also implicit in everyday society, and is especially prominent in "discussions of sexuality and gender" (Pollitt et. al. 2021:5). Due to heteronormativity, a societal norm is that heterosexual expectations "require not only sexual attraction and desires toward a different sex, but also gender conformity and attraction to people of a different sex who are also gender conforming" (Pollitt et. al. 2021:2). If this norm is disturbed, those who disturb it are deemed to be deviant, and in turn are marginalized and stigmatized (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 2). In other words, heteronormativity leads to androgynous gender presentation to signify nonheterosexuality, leading heteronormative societal norms to "feminize gay men and masculinize lesbian women to ensure consistency in the dimensions of sex, gender, and sexuality" (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 12).

Additionally, heteronormativity has created heteronormative discourses: In their 2021 journal article 'Heteronormativity in the Lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Queer Young People', Pollitt et. al. describe heteronormative discourses as how "people use masculinity and femininity norms to enforce heterosexuality" (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 9). In this article, the authors also discuss how heteronormativity can be seen in different ways within race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and family: "Gender informed sexuality, and vice versa; both then informed (sometimes thwarted) desires for particular family constructions." (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 15). Race/ethnicity also determines how the latter parts of humanity are viewed and in turn how heteronormativity is viewed and experienced by people of different races and ethnicities (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 15). For example, some of the Latinx participants in Pollitt et. al.'s study "feared expressing gender nonconformity because of hegemonic masculinity and homophobia in their communities", evident in machismo (Pollitt et. al. 2019: 9). Delving into the linkage of gender and heteronormativity, the affinity of sexuality and gender arise again in how they are "inextricably linked under heteronormativity", shown by non-binary presentation determining gayness in men, and the same gender presentation type in women rendering them to struggle "to be visibly read as queer." (Pollitt et. al. 2021: 12).

According to Obradors-Campos, biphobia is the everyday experience of structural oppression faced by bi people due to "the hegemonic heterosexist worldview", and is ingrained in implicit ways in everyday society, "such as symbolic power, binaries, and essentialized assumptions" (Obradors-Campos 2021: 224, 221, 210).

Due to biphobia and heteronormativity, two negative but widespread viewpoints, bi people's acceptance in society is both received positively and negatively, the latter reception of which mainly being due to biphobia rather than heteronormativity. Most are accepting of bi people, but those who aren't usually come from a heteronormative and biphobic standpoint (Zambon 2022). Such nonacceptance can be shown by recent changes in a higher acceptance of lesbian and gay people, but not that of bisexual people, with some treating "bisexuality as if it does not really exist, for example, by denying it or ignoring it" (Zambon 2022). Another example of this is others assuming a bi person is gay or straight strictly

by how they present their attraction (in a straight-passing relationship or a homosexual relationship, respectfully) (Zambon 2022). Patriarchy also appears in society's diverse view of bi-ness, with some bi people describing "sexual fluidity as an almost reluctant openness to being with men." (Pollitt et. al. 2021:10). With negative reception of bi-ness in society, bi (and lesbian) woman are sometimes fetishized by men, which is due to "how bisexual women are only viewed through the heteronormative lens of fulfilling the male gaze rather than existing in genuine relationships." (Graham 2021). There are many stereotypes about bi people: They all like to have threesomes, they will only date cis people, they will cheat, and that bi-ness is "just a phase" (Brennan 2021). Due to such stereotypes that heteronormative society has created, bi people have been called many demeaning names, including 'greedy', 'indecisive', and 'confused' (Graham 2021). Bi people are none of these, since a) there aren't any links between promiscuity and sexual preference, b) being bi is valid, and c) 'bi' refers to "an attraction to their same gender as well as other genders" (Graham 2021; Brennan 2021). According to bi activist Robyn Ochs, bi people have a wide range of amounts of sexual tendencies, being "from asexual to super-sexual", and in turn are diverse in sexual behaviour or lack thereof (Ochs 2012: 172). There is also a relationship between heteronormativity and biphobia, with the former leading to the latter, shown both in the mind frame that bi people are "disrupting" the social norm of heteronormativity, and that heteronormativity is the basis of biphobia (Obradors-Campos 2012: 212). Additionally, internalized biphobia in bisexuals can arise due to living in a heteronormative society (Obradors-Campos 2012: 213).

Moreover, mainly because of biphobia, there is a discourse between bisexuals and other communities within the 2SLGBTQ+ umbrella (Ho 2012: 4). This is because of the assumption that bi people "don't experience discrimination because they can camouflage themselves more into society's heteronormative gaze" which isn't entirely true, due to the existence of biphobia providing means of discrimination (Graham 2021). Another reason for such discourse is due to bisexuality sometimes being seen as "cowardly" in the gay community, and "as a betrayal" in the lesbian community; related to the latter, bi women "were said to be sacrificing their lesbian lovers to help themselves play into the hands of men" (Ho 2012: 5).

Finally, given the heteronormative society we live in, mainstream media depicts many more heterosexuals than bisexual relationships: This can lead to many bi people growing up not seeing themselves represented in media, and in turn "questioning the validity of their attraction" (Graham 2021). While the media is becoming much more inclusive of bisexual and other kinds of 2SLGBTQ+ relationships, a continuous increase or at least equilibrium with that of heterosexual relationships would be beneficial. It would also help if streaming services stopped cancelling most of its LGBTQ+ tv shows, as well as having more autobiographies written by bi people (Ochs 2012: 174).

Coming out as Bi and Mental Health impacts

Due to heteronormativity and biphobia, the reception of bi people coming out to close people in their lives can have various outcomes. Outness is defined as the degree to which someone wants to disclose their sexual orientation to those they're close with (Morris et. al. 2010: 65). Two negative outcomes of coming out for bi people are being rejected by a friend or family member, and being subjected to jokes or slurs (Brown 2019). Moreover, although bi people make up over half of the 2SLGBTQ+ population, they often still feel invalidated due to heteronormative society in implicit ways, such as "the fallacy that being bisexual is "just a phase" or an experimental part of one's romantic desires" (Graham 2021). Additionally, bisexual women are more likely to be traumatized due to interpersonal violence than heterosexual women are (Balsam 2012:1). Additionally, in a study performed by Morris et. al., not being

out was associated with higher psychological distress, which in turn led to a high degree of suicidality (Morris et. al. 2010:63). On the other hand, being out correlated with a much lower degree of psychological distress, as well as being involved in LGBTQ+ communities and self-identifying as bi leads to more outness among bi women (Morris et. al. 2010: 68). Improving mental health for bi people could be done through many aspects of society: Having more representation in media, having laws protecting sexual orientation diversity, mental health resources being widely offered to bi people, and more (Morris et. al. 2010:71).

Conclusion

In conclusion, bi-ness can affect more than just someone's sexual and/or romantic attraction. There are many intersections between bi-ness and gender, whether it be who a bi person is romantically or sexually attracted to, how they express their gender because of their bi-ness, how bi-ness is accepted or not accepted in society and the reasons for said reception occurring, and their mental well-being.

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19. Gender (or lack thereof): A Playlist

STORI JENSEN-GRANGER (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Song, Gender, Trans, Pronouns (2SLGBTQ+ related)

Spotify playlist link: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1x8O8tWIaWJ2yl8U0AFbhn?si=6bc782e716ef4231

Description

The first song on this playlist is 'Boys Will Be Bugs' by Cavetown (Genius, Skinner 2019). This song is about "the toxic masculinity toward teenage boys that is portrayed in society", and how the artist of this song, Robin Skinner, separates himself with the stereotype portrayed, insofar that he "doesn't wanna be mean and bully anyone; he just wants to play with bugs." (Genius, Skinner 2019).

The second song on this playlist is 'Daughter' by Ryan Cassata (Genius, Cassata 2017). It is about Ryan Cassata, a multi-talented trans man's experience of coming out to his father and how he'll always be his dad's "little girl" (Cassata 2022; Genius 2017).

The third song is 'Cloud 9 (feat. Tegan and Sara)' by Beach Bunny and Tegan and Sara (Genius et. al. 2021). It is a more inclusive version of Beach Bunny's version of 'Cloud 9' that the band created in 2021, with Tegan and Sara and Trifilio using she/her and they/them pronouns, respectively, for verses following Beach Bunny's first verse (for which Beach Bunnyused he/him pronouns for who the speaker is referring to in their song (Genius et. al. 2021).

The fourth song is 'Not a Phase' by Jessie Paege (Genius, Paege 2019). This song talks about the

endurance of bisexual people with others believing that bisexuality is “just a phase”, and the eventual acceptance of themselves (Genius, Paege 2019).

The fifth song is ‘I’m Not A Girl, I’m Not a Boy’ by Scout Parker (Genius, Parker 2018). This song is about Scout Parker expressing their annoyance of cisnormativity, expressed in the lyrics “Just met and you think I’m someone else/While I’m tryna do me so I feel myself/Assumptions got me so annoyed” (Genius, Parker 2018).

The sixth song is ‘I Wanna Be A Boy’ by Addison Grace (Grace 2022). In an Instagram post, the artist Addison Grace (who uses he/they pronouns) stated that this song of theirs is about “not only for those who “want to be a boy” but for everyone who’s ever felt insecure about themselves and like they were somehow made “wrong”” (Genius, Grace 2022).

The seventh song on this playlist is ‘Boys Don’t Cry’ by The Cure (Genius, The Cure 2022). It is about toxic masculinity and the harmful stereotype that boys and men shouldn’t cry/express emotions, shown by the lyrics “I tried to laugh about it/Cover it all up with lies/ I tried to laugh about it/Hiding the tears in my eyes/’Cause boys don’t cry/ Boys don’t cry” (Genius, The Cure 2022).

The eighth song is ‘Stones’ by Miki Ratsula (Ratsula 2019). It is about the experiences of “a young boy who is ‘“specially different” like the artist” (Ratsula uses they/them pronouns), and “a young girl who wears “a pink dress that falls to her ankles like chains””(Galaxy Magazine 2019).

The ninth song is ‘I/Me/Myself’ by Will Wood (Genius, Wood 2020). It is about Will Wood (the artist of this song)’s “frustration with the limitations of the male gender role, the maladaptive ways (he’s) coped with that frustration, and trying to figure out if this experience or any other regarding (his) gender can or should define (him)” (Genius, Wood 2020).

Finally, the tenth song is ‘They/Them/Theirs’ by Worriers (Genius, Denitzio 2015). It is about how the lead singer, Lauren Denitzio, prefers “gender-neutral pronouns when meeting people”, and how they think “there’s often a pressure to define yourself in a very specific way — specifically as a queer person, going beyond that and naming exactly what your gender identity is and exactly where you are on the spectrum. And I don’t really have one” (Genius, Denitzio 2015).

‘Gender (or lack thereof)’ songs:

1. ‘Boys Will Be Bugs’ by Cavetown

2. ‘Daughter’ by Ryan Cassata

3. ‘Cloud 9 (feat. Tegan and Sara)’- Beach Bunny and Tegan and Sara

4.‘Not A Phase’- Jessie Page

5. ‘I’m Not A Girl, I’m Not A Boy’- Scout The Wise

6. ‘I Wanna Be A Boy’ by Addison Grace

7. ‘Boys Don’t Cry’- The Cure

8.‘Stones’ by Miki Ratsula

9. ‘I/Me/Myself’ by Will Wood

10. ‘They/Them/Theirs’- Worriers

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20. “What are you? A f*ggtt or something?”: Identity Pressures in the Heteronormative Society

ANONYMOUS

I realized at a young age how badly I failed femininity. Being born an identical twin, it was constantly evident; a perfectly feminine version of me always standing by my side. My “tomboyishness” felt fairly accepted until fifth grade when I started expressing my masculinity more publicly. Prior to this, I almost always wore the same clothes as my twin and I almost always hated it. The pressure I felt of needing to appear identical to my twin paired with my discontent with her feminine choices had been brewing for some time. But as a child who was quiet and meek, I tended to keep my feelings about it to myself. Gabriel, on the other hand, was passionate, bold, and determined. And so, who led our twinship game of “follow the leader” was always clear.

My gender nonconformity had been evident to my family starting in early childhood. This is when I started expressing a strong preference towards masculine-coded toys, clothes, activities, and behaviors. Having four gender-conforming children, this was unfamiliar terrain, and my mother wasn’t sure what she should do. My mother and maternal aunts discussed whether or not they should allow me to wear boys’ clothes and put the issue to a family vote. Thankfully, the majority voted “yes”. But there were some implicit and explicit rules. Boys’ clothes were not bought, they were hand-me-downs from my elder brothers and cousins and were categorized as “home clothes”, not to be worn in public. In public, my twin and I were perfectly dressed in identical and outlandish feminine outfits.

Right before starting fifth grade, I was at the mall with my mother and twin buying ‘first day of school’ outfits. I hid in the parallel changing room, trying to hide away from the eyes of the women trying on clothes as Gabriel put on the outfits which she picked out for us. She would come out of the changing room and pose, and with a nod or shake of the head, I would express my opinions on how I liked her choices for us. This is a routine we had become immensely familiar with. On this day, Gabriel came out with a bright pink shirt covered in flowers, and denim bell-bottom jeans. Her smile stretched across her face, “Mom, I love it”, she said with a twirl. My eyes started to well and my throat felt tight, I tried to choke down my tears to avoid any attention drawn to me. Through my stifled cry, I looked her up and down and said “What are you trying to do?! Kill me?!”.

This day was different. Seeing how upset I was, my mother took me aside and said, “you don’t have to buy what she buys, let’s look at the boys’ section for you”. The girls’ section was embarrassing, but the boys’ section was completely nerve-racking. My heart was pounding, and my face felt flushed. The social expectation to assimilate into the heteronormative/cisnormative society is deeply ingrained in childhood, so this public display of gender nonconformity was terrifying for me. I tried to look disinterested as my mother held out clothes and asked quietly “what about this?”, briefly looked up from the ground to nod or shake my head, before returning my gaze to the dusty off-white floors. We left the mall that day buying Gabriel her floral shirt and bell bottoms and myself a red basketball jersey and baggy boys’ jeans. As soon as we reached the car, a feeling of euphoria fell over me, this was the first time I felt the extreme joy that

visibility could bring. It felt like being so close to danger and getting away, unscathed. Even at a young age, children are aware of the risks of non-conformity. This feeling of euphoria wouldn't last, as this was the year that I became acutely aware of my "otherness" and the danger that visibility holds. This was the year I inherited a new name from my classmates and the older children at school: "He-she".

By the time I was thirteen, my androgynous look made my gender perplexingly unidentifiable to others, which was quite infuriating for them. This is when a new name began. The first day I was called "f*ggot" I was skateboarding to my grandparents' house after church on a beautiful spring Sunday. I turned the corner and across the street, there were three middle-aged men sitting together outside. As I skated, I could feel their eyes looking at me up and down, inspecting and scrutinizing my gender expression. As I got closer to their house, one of the men stood up, eyes locking on me, and yelled "fucking f*ggot!" I skated faster and avoided walking that road for a long time.

As I reached my mid-teens, I desperately tried to find a cause to explain why I was different. I imagine that the pressure I felt to categorize myself is something that many other queer folks can relate to. When you refuse to assimilate into the "norm" of the majority, society demands that you provide an easily digestible answer as to why you are not the same, to define yourself in contrast to the dominant society. I decided that I must be a lesbian. "Lesbian" seemed like a very plausible answer: I was assigned female at birth, was rather fearful of men, and had an intense discomfort with presenting femininely. Neatly gift-wrapped as an insult, this identity had been offered to me countless times by others to explain my difference. Perhaps, I thought, they were on to something. Although "lesbian" never felt like home to me, I embraced the answer to my "otherness" as confidently as I could.

Inspired by the badassery of the riot grrrl movement, I listened to Bikini Kill on repeat and adopted their man-hating/ 'fuck you' attitude. Whenever I was called a "f*ggot", I would lock them dead in the eyes and yell back "actually, I'm a fucking dyke!". It was a public service act, as I understood it since they were obviously unaware of a more accurate insult to use. In my mind, calling me a f*ggot was illogical. My idea of gender was highly based on anatomy and since I didn't have a penis, I couldn't be a "f*ggot". With the frequency of this word directed at me, it became akin to a nickname and before long, I started to like being called it. I took pride in the possibility that people saw me as a young queer boy, not a lesbian girl. This was not an option I thought was available to me. I started to keep a notebook to note down whenever I got called this word. I would log the details of what I was wearing, how I was moving, and how I was talking so I could intentionally set out to replicate these moments. Renegotiating my self-presentation, I inadvertently started a secret self-driven effort to conform to the "queer man" category.

When I was twenty-two, my discomfort about gender had still not gone away. I was living with my long-term girlfriend, Victoria, while working as a teacher at a daycare. At the daycare where I worked, the children at the school were instructed to call me "Miss". And every time they did, it felt like a kick to the gut. Though I had hinted at my discomfort with my gender throughout the years, I finally began talking more openly about the confusion I was experiencing toward my gender.

Opening up to my girlfriend, I told her that I took pride and could relate to the experience of being a woman but that I didn't really feel like one. I told her that I wanted to look and sound like a man, but I also didn't want to be a man. I felt disgusted at this desire, but I was tired of hiding this confusion. The more we talked about my gender, the more we began to fight. One afternoon while we were driving home from running errands, this argument became particularly heated. Victoria thought I was hypocritical and told me that I was a transman and that I couldn't claim affinity with womanhood if I wanted to be *that* masculine. As we pulled into the driveway, Victoria said "you can't be both, so just fucking pick one". Her

words hit me hard, and I stayed up late into the night searching the internet, hoping the web would have answers for me. And it did. I found an article about the terms ‘genderqueer’ and ‘non-binary’. I was both overwhelmed with emotions and honestly, a little petty, imagining the ways in which I would use this “I told you so” moment in our next fight.

Before this time, identity scripts available to me were quite limited: straight, gay, lesbian, woman, man. I did not feel that I belonged to any of them. Having a category, a name, that could encompass some aspects of my identity was a great relief. But I am not sure that I would have felt the need to have a category to identify with if it were not for the pressures of the external world. Claiming identities works in this way, to create social equilibrium by conforming to something when we refuse to assimilate into the majority. Naming my queerness and non-binary gender identity helped me, and others, see that my feeling of who I am was legitimate and valid. Yet this pressure to define me and my identity wasn’t entirely internally motivated. It was in response to a world that expects heteronormativity/cisnormativity and demands an explanation for any non-conformity. I found that aligning my identity into a neat category made my difference more palatable to others. I truly believe that our identities are unfixed and ever-changing in relationship with and response to the external world. I wonder how these narrow identity categories can ever feel right for us as they are unable to hold the complexity and ever-changing nature of our being.

21. Media, Tickets, and Pay: How Sports Perpetuate Gender Norms

JARED KEIM (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Sports, equality, media,

Sports have always been at the forefront of social entertainment. Spectators appreciate sports as a wholesome form of competitive entertainment while others get personally invested and view it as a form of 'war' – but sports have never the less always brought people together. Historically, women's participation and accomplishments in sports have been marginalized. While women's rights have come a long way, sport today continues to be a hyper-scaled sphere skewed in favour of male dominance. So, why does this happen and why does it continue to be this way? This article will utilize a critical lens to dive into some of the gender perception problems that accompany sports, the role of sports media and how society at large perpetuates gender differences.

"You throw like a girl" is a phrase that we have all heard at some point in our lives. The phrase has been used in the context of an insult regardless of whether it is applied to a woman or a man. The derogatory nature of the phase makes it seem that any girl throwing a ball would be substandard as compared to the throw of a boy. But what are the origins of this sexist judgment? To answer that question we must look at how we generally frame sports and gender as a society. There is a historical separation between boys and girls, most significantly, within sports. Sports are often not viewed as a 'womanly' pursuit and so the number of opportunities for girls to even play sports were limited. "In the 1800s women were encouraged to participate only in recreational sports such as horseback riding and swimming."(Georgia State University 2022). Thus, not only was the number of female participants less, each sport was divided strictly along gender lines. As a result, we rarely see co-ed sports being incorporated into our athletic sphere growing up. This may also be because there are very few co-ed sports at a professional level. This creates a divide at a young age where it becomes acceptable to criticize an athlete's performance strictly based on their gender.

It would be far too simplistic to blame males for the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in sports (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2014). While males do account for a lot of gender discrimination, it is clear that there is room for improvement for both genders in erasing stereotypical judgments and language. From a young age, we begin to see the world around us act and enforce gender roles. Thus, we start to define what is and what is not within our gendered sphere. "She's like one of the guys" is another phrase that is often used when describing the merits of letting a girl participate with a group of boys. As discussed shortly, media also contributes to these enduring beliefs through the choices made by media in its portrayal of the 'perfect' feminine body.

The image of female athletes as being less capable than men has led to the development of different standards for the sexes, even within the same sport. Some examples of rule changes based on gender include: in Grand Slam tennis tournaments, women play best of three sets while men play best of five;

in cross-country skiing, men's mass event starts at 50 kilometres and women's start at 30; in Olympic hockey, women must wear a face mask when men do not need to (Chamberlin 2019). These types of differences continue to help push the divide. The original rules have been shaped or altered to accommodate the less capable female athletes. Many people argue that these changes are for biological reasons, but what is the scientific basis for concluding that female athletes cannot play best of 5 tennis? Or that their facial skin is more susceptible to injury than a man's? The idea that we feel the need to change how the event takes place based on gender associated biological reasons is exactly why the narrative that women aren't "as strong" as men has developed.

When we are comparing athletes and men vs women, we often forget we are looking at a hyper-successful group of people. Instead of celebrating the success of these athletes universally we often dilute it down to one factor, men vs women. Again, there is often no objective standard to warrant a diminishment of female athletic accomplishments. The average female softball player can throw a softball at speeds up to 77 mph (Wikimedia 2022) when most average people could only hope to throw a ball at 50 mph. In the 100m dash in the Olympics, Usain Bolt holds the male record for the 100m sprint at 9.58s, whileFlorence Griffith Joyner, an American female sprinter holds the record for women at 10.49s. Do these fractional differences justify gendered divides concerning athletic performance? And if numbers are the sole driver for respect, why is Christine Sinclair not as widely respected as Cristiano Ronaldo or Leo Messi? As of September 6, 2022, Christine Sinclair had scored 190 goals in 317 games to become the soccer player with the most international goals, male or female (Wikimedia 2022). Behind all this, our society hides behind biological factors to create a narrative that there is an inherent difference between gender.

Much of our perception is driven by the media and the choices they make regarding coverage. "'Over the past 30 years, we have not seen meaningful change in the amount of coverage female athletes receive," said CherylCooky, a professor of interdisciplinary studies at Purdue University." (Purdue 2021). Historically, men's sports have been at the focus of sporting channels airtime. This is for a multitude of reasons such as the "holy trinity". The "holy trinity" is a concept by Steven Jackson that states that for nationalistic masculinity there are three aspects: alcohol, masculinity and sport. Sports have always been a way for beer companies and others to reach out and target a male audience. The companies know that they can count on having a large, captive male audience to receive their pitch. Because of the size of the potential audience, sports channels can charge a higher amount for advertising space – the sheer economics mean that the sports media have a vested interest in providing wide coverage of men's sports.

This increase in airtime for men's sports also gives room to celebrate these athletes and their accomplishments outside of the sport. Many male athletes use their profiles to also promote worthy charitable causes – which become indirectly supported by the sports media which gives the male athletes more airtime. At the same time, female athletes are largely kept out of the spotlight without giving them the space to celebrate accomplishments and use them to gain a following. In terms of actual airtime, there have been next to no changes to how much women's sports get shown in the media. Purdue found that in 1989 women's sports made up 5% of sports channels' airtime while in 2019 it made up 5.4%. The same study found that taking the World Cup (soccer) out of it decreased women's airtime by 3.5%. The available airtime is substandard with lower budget productions with fewer commentators, less editing, lower quality and less excitement. Building this excitement is the job of these media companies and they are routinely failing women's sports. (Purdue 2021)

Creating and offering more prime time slots for women's sports on television is extremely important. Not

only would it assist in creating a social wave that could create a wider audience attracted to watching women's sports, but there are also massive benefits that come along with it. One of the biggest reasons to show and celebrate women's sports more is to create role models. Young women need athletic role models, and while male athletes can still be role models for female athletes, it is important to show young women role models that are a reflection of themselves. Accessibility to female athletes and their accomplishments is key to driving excitement and respect for female athletes.

The lack of more fulsome media coverage is generally attributed to the fact that women's sports do not generate the same ticket sales as men's and cannot generate the same large audience thus, advertising revenues are less. The failure to significantly promote female sports in the media leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy since if women's sports are shown less, the audience will always be less. This has led, not only to a significant difference in public profile but also a tremendous pay gap for the athletes.

The pay gap has always been a part of gendered suffering. In 2020, based on average non-sports annual earnings, men earned about 29% more than women in Canada (Pay Equity Office Ontario). In sports, this is made exponentially worse. Adelphi University in New York took a look at the 2019 averages for certain sports. Basketball is a wildly popular sport in North America with both a men's league and a women's division of the NBA known as the WNBA. However, the average men's NBA player earned approximately $8,321,937 (Adelphi University 2021) while the average women's WNBA player earned approximately $75,181 (Adelphi University 2021). This does not take into consideration the fact that many athletes have the opportunity to increase their earnings through sponsorships – which are more readily available to men than women. Further, the prize winnings for tournament placements are often far larger for men than women. In 1973, Wimbledon equalized the prize money for men and women but it took until 2007 for the other Grand Slam tennis tournaments to catch up (Tignor 2021) – and tennis remains an anomaly compared to most sports. A big part of this pay gap comes from massive endorsements through media that athletes sign. If women's sports don't get publicity, people won't watch, they won't attend the events, and big companies won't see them as a worthy investment.

While men are generally blamed for the lack of focus on female sports, we must look at the deeper societal problems that have contributed to this form of gender discrimination. In terms of viewership, in a study conducted about viewership done by Shauna Moran at GWI, she found that viewership is a problem for women's sports because of both genders. Men as well as women tend to watch male-only sports teams, while 25% of men also watch women's only teams; only 32% of women also follow a women's only team. While this is can be attributed to media attention for women's sporting events, it is also to understand that this is not solely a male-driven problem. Women must as well engage in watching women's only teams. Not only that, it is even more important for women (and men) to be going to women's only sporting events in person. The more tickets sold, the more popular the event, the more media coverage.

Even if female athletes get airtime, the coverage often has an inappropriate focus. "There is often a focus on women's sex appeal and femininity rather than their athletic accomplishments" (Prior 2019). We know the media to be such an influential part of how we value and treat certain aspects of our lives. Often, men's sports and athletes are ascribed this "toughness" and "grit" that comes along with the work ethic of playing a professional sport. However, women's media and sports media often have a focus on having to be physically and modernly attractive while also having to be an elite athlete – no one requires male athletes to also be attractive. "Negative stigmas are often attached to athletic women, and consequently are used as a mechanism to control and limit women's participation in sports." (Chinurum,

Lucas & O'Neill 2014). Much is often also made about the fact that a female athlete is a mother – as if it is even more amazing if they have athletic success despite being a parent. Many male athletes are fathers but this is not highlighted as something that contributes to them being a successful athlete. "They [women] are treated as fragile and encouraged to constantly monitor and control their bodies to avoid embarrassment or unattractiveness." (Barker & Scheele Pg 39). Young women may stay away from these activities due to this "tomboy" look because they wish to avoid the label. This means that while professional women athletes compete, they must also do so in a way that aligns with society's overall view of femininity.

In 2009, Bradley Wright wrote an article about the differences in how female athletes are portrayed in media. He uses the example of an ESPN magazine article about an extremely talented female basketball player, Candace Parker, to highlight the differences. Wright writes: "Then I read the article about Candace Parker…[H]ere are its opening lines:…' Candace Parker is beautiful. Breathtaking, really, with flawless skin, endless legs and a C cup she is proud of but never flaunts. She is also the best at what she does, a record-setter, a rule-breaker, a redefiner.' Can you imagine any mainstream magazine taking a similar approach to a male athlete? "Baseball player…is a hunk. A complete hunk with chiselled features, rippling biceps, and a larger-than-average penis that he is proud of but never flaunts." Ah, I don't think so." (Wright 2009) It is daunting that in the last 13 years so little progress has been made in addressing media stereotypes of female athletes. "A2018 study in Body Image (2019) found female Olympic athletes featured in Sports Illustrated issues are most often posed in ways unrelated to their sport (i.e. posed, facing the camera, smiling, tight clothing). In contrast, the magazine portrayed male athletes predominantly in action with their sport or training, highlighting their endurance and strength." (Turner 2022) There is much work still to be done to ensure that female athletes' media profiles are not overwhelmingly tainted with sexualization.

While some people may argue that it is more important to address other spheres of gender discrimination, given the pervasive nature of sports there is significant value in taking proactive steps to narrow the gender gap. "Sports are a telling reflection of a society's values, and they are a significant contributor as well, especially in the United States. Sports impact our culture, our other sources of entertainment and our economy." (Arkansas State University 2020). Sports crosses all cultures and has the ability during an event to influence a large audience – all of whom are sharing a collective experience. If all participants in sports – athletes, coaches/managers, organizations, and media – made a conscious effort to eliminate the gender divide between female and male athletes and sports, the trickle-down effect on the rest of society could be profound.

So, how can we begin to address gender discrimination in sports? Just as the problem is multi-faceted, it will take action on several fronts to address the ineqality. Firstly and most importantly, we must reframe how we view female athletes and women's sports entirely. Scrap the old dialogue of who is better – men or women – and start to celebrate both as separate entities. This starts at a societal level. We have this insatiable need as children, teens, and adults to compare men against women and vice versa in sports to prove the 'superiority' of one sex. "With the evolution of gender roles in our society, we have started to see women participate in certain sports that were at one time only associated with one gender. The definition of a female athlete has also changed. Women athletes today are not only seen in a feminine manner, but also as a more emotional and physically empowered individual that younger athletes can look up to." (Chinurum, Lucas & O'Neill 2014). With this more modern perspective, we can shift societal dialogue – recognizing the sporting accomplishments of all athletes without resorting to a childish playground narrative of which gender is 'better' or engaging in juvenile sexist descriptors.

Secondly, the media needs to do much better in how it portrays female athletes. Coverage needs to be significantly improved – both quantitatively and qualitatively. Language and image choice are critical to changing public perception which will help educate the wider society. Media sources need to put a higher importance on bringing the overall level of quality and excitement around women's sports up. A good example of how increased exposure can generate excitement comes from women's hockey in the recent February 2022 Olympics. The women's final (Canada vs. the USA) was heavily publicized and generated an audience of 3.54 million – making it the second most-watched hockey game in 2019 – male or female. (The Athletic 2022) This demonstrates that female sports can generate an audience when given the opportunity to shine.

Advertisers and sponsors need to make a conscious decision to expend resources on promoting and supporting female athletes. This will be challenging since advertising budgets cannot just exponentially expand and it is hard to ask such big corporations to forego spending all of their marketing resources on the currently much larger audience for male sports. The payoff for investing now is that it will mean a larger audience for female sports in the future – but it can be difficult to get financially motivated companies to view the wider social impact of their actions. Companies may be more inclined to invest in female sports when they can see that their target audience appreciates and supports their investment.

That leads us to the final point in narrowing the gender divide in sports: the consumer. Consumers wield enormous power when they act in a concerted manner. If readers of print media complained every time a sexualized description was used for a female athlete, the publishers would make more of an effort to ensure that articles are appropriately focused on the athlete's accomplishments, not their gender. If consumers regularly and intentionally purchased the products of those corporations that openly supported female sports, other corporations would start to follow suit. If consumers bought more tickets and attended more female sports, the audience would grow – and the money would follow.

Sports will always be a massive part of our society but it could do more to help close the gender differences in sports. Patriarchal narratives in sports have diminished the accomplishments of female athletes and created ingrained stereotypes that portray women as less capable or strong. Although daunting, with a concerted effort from all consumers and participants of sports, it is possible to use sports as a vehicle for change.

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22. It's Time to End the Silence on MMIWG

It's Time to End the Silence on MMIWG

Photo by Caitlin

Model: Breeanna

23. Lifegiving

~Life Giving
Beneath the veil of beauty
More than bone and flesh
Hidden in the depths
Is a soul like the sea
It belongs to a woman as life giving as the air we breath
Whose love is vast like a forest of trees
Strong in the storm, a sustainer of life
Sacred and yet silenced
Embodying all she can be
There is a woman who begged to be set free
As if life giving was not all the power she should need

24. The Co-occurrence of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria

MAVEN LABERGE (THEY/SHE)

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Gender Dysphoria, Transgender, Neurodivergent, Neurotypical

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Introduction

The co-occurrence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Gender Dysphoria (GD) typically go unnoticed within the adult population however, there has been a gradual increase in reports of GD and ASD over time. Both conditions are rare; with the global population prevalence rate for Autism Spectrum Disorder estimated at 1 in 100 and Gender Dysphoria at 1 in 5,000 (Coleman-Smith et al 2020). This means that Gender Dysphoria is more uncommon than Autism Spectrum Disorder individually and when they co-occur they become increasingly rare with a rate in one study being 6% of the sample group (Asperlagh et al., 2018).

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by: impaired social interaction and communication skills, and restricted and repetitive behaviour, interests, or activities (DSM 5). Gender Dysphoria is characterized by distress, often accompanied by incongruence between experienced or expressed gender and the gender assigned at birth (DSM 5). Those who experience Gender Dysphoria generally want to alter their physical appearance to match their gender identity and how they view themselves internally.

There appears to be a high percentage of autistic traits and Autism Spectrum Disorder in those diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria when compared to the general, cis-gendered population (Cooper et al 2022). It was found that transgender adults were 3.03-6.36 times more likely to be autistic than cisgender people (Cooper et al 2022). However, it is unclear whether this is an actual increase or whether there is increased visibility, acceptance, and ease of obtaining transgender-related care, making it appear as though there is an increase. It is not likely that there is a single cause of Gender Dysphoria but rather a variety of biological, social, and psychological factors (Van Der Miesen et al 2016).

Theories:

There are varying hypotheses that have been proposed as explanations for how Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria are linked; however, there is no consensus regarding what the link is. The theories listed below are some examples of the hypothesized links between Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria.

1. Extreme Male Brain Theory.

According to this theory, people assigned female at birth have been wired to think empathetically while

those assigned male at birth are wired to think more systematically. When there are high levels of testosterone, it results in an extreme male brain or male pattern of thought, which would lead to ASD and GD. This hypothesis potentially only applies to those assigned female at birth.

2. Social Interaction Difficulty

This theory is used to explain Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder in children. An example that is commonly used to explain this theory is a child with autism that is bullied by the same binary (two opposite forms of gender i.e. Masculine – Feminine) gender may come to dislike them and grow to identify with the opposite gender due to the negative experiences they had.

3. Communication Issues

Those with Autism Spectrum Disorder find it difficult to communicate with others which may contribute to other people not picking up on the social cues about assigned gender. This could lead to the child not being regarded in a way that aligns with their assigned sex which could lead to Gender Dysphoria.

4. Manifestation of Autism

A child that is assigned male at birth and has Autism Spectrum Disorder may become interested in female clothes, toys, and activities which could lead to Gender Dysphoria. This theory claims that though this may appear as Gender Dysphoria it is in fact OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder).

5. Rigidity

Those with Autism Spectrum Disorder may need more rigid structures and concepts. When it comes to gender differences they may experience difficulty understanding both their assigned gender and their experienced/desired gender. This could create distress within their gender identity which could lead to Gender Dysphoria.

Although these theories have been created by those who are thinking through the lens of the gender binary, and many of the stereotypes and expectations that come along with it, some of these theories do bring up certain experiences that adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria speak about in “Healthcare clinician perspectives on the intersection of autism and gender dysphoria”. In that study they have individual study participants explain their experiences with co-occurring Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria. The personal experiences that they speak about regarding their gender have similarities or a common theme to the theories spoken about above (Cooper et al. 2022).

Study Participants’ Personal Experiences

The first topic brought up by the participants in the study “Healthcare clinician perspectives on the intersection of autism and gender dysphoria” by Cooper et al. (2022) is the experience of bodily distress which is covered in theory 5- “Rigidity”. The participants spoke about their experience with a variety of negative emotions regarding their bodies including depression, anxiety, anger, and disgust. Some experienced a dissociation from their bodies, explaining that they didn’t feel connected to their body and found that they were rigid within it due to it not matching their gender identity.

Puberty was especially distressing and surprising for these individuals as their bodies did not develop as they wanted/expected them to (i.e. the development of breasts and curves, or deeper voice and facial

hair) (Cooper et al 2022). Some participants described this experience as “sensory dysphoria”; feeling distressed in their bodies due to the experiences of their body changing with no control over the outcome. One aspect that some with Autism Spectrum Disorder experience is confusion about things not applying to the strict rules they have in their head. This expected rigidity when it comes to gender identity can lead to gender dysphoria that is based on confusion about what their gender is. Many will either opt to reject gender or they will attempt to remain within the gender roles.

According to the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, a person must have received an assessment of Gender Dysphoria before any physical interventions can be made, but many gender clinics do not have clinicians that easily recognize Autism Spectrum Disorder which can create many issues for the person receiving the diagnosis (Coleman et al 2022). For transgender people to begin their transition (when an individual changes their external self to match their internal self) they must meet a standard assessment for gender dysphoria. However, the assessment for Gender Dysphoria was written with strict guidelines and parameters which do not include the complications and nuance that Autism Spectrum Disorder may create for an individual’s experience (Coleman-Smith et al 2020).

Clinicians in one study mention that those with co-occurring Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria refer to their gender and experience Gender Dysphoria differently from those without ASD (Cooper et al 2022). Examples of this are, different thinking styles, social differences, and sensory sensitivities. They will also speak about their gender differently when compared to non-autistic people. Those who are neurotypical and cis-gendered typically describe gender as something that is innate and has certain roles that each gender characteristic fills. Many neurodivergent people describe gender as a social behaviour that they don’t understand, saying that they didn’t even realize that gender was a thing that existed. This can create issues when they are attempting to get diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria so that they may transition. Some admit to attempting to seem more neurotypical when they are in a gender clinic so that they have a higher likelihood of receiving a diagnosis (Cooper et al 2022).

Recommended Clinical Guidelines for Transgender People

These experiences that have been reported by transgender individuals may be due to the lack of clinical guidelines or formal consensus regarding how to treat Gender Dysphoria for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. However, in the Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, researchers developed some recommendations that clinicians could use. These recommendations were made for children and adolescents but many of them can be applied, with some alteration, to adults as well (Van Der Miesen et al 2016).

1. If a clinician is not available that is knowledgeable in both Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria, then a clinical team should be assembled that includes both Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria specialists. It may take longer to diagnose and treat both Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder, and it is recommended that the treatments not be rushed and that they be approved by a group of specialists (Van Der Miesen et al 2016).

2. There are similar treatments for Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder. An individual will typically experience flexible thinking and communication skills, as well as better insight after the treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorder. The needs and concerns regarding gender should consistently be assessed and the patients should be given time to understand the concerns they have regarding their gender (Van Der Miesen et al 2016).

3. Individuals should receive an education regarding the topic of the co-occurrence of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Gender Dysphoria (Van Der Miesen et al 2016).

Although the above is mainly for children and their parents, when receiving treatment/assistance from gender clinics, many of these guidelines can be used when treating adults as well. These guidelines are useful and will make a patient's experience at a gender clinic more open and understanding; however, not many adults have had positive experiences at these clinics. Accessing a gender clinic can have various barriers for people because of their autism and due to their reliance on the clinics to assist them in their transition, this can lead to their Gender Dysphoria not being treated.

Due to patients' autism, Some interactions with these clinics have been described as a battle to gain the support of medical professionals. Participants in the Cooper et al study explained that when speaking to gender clinicians they had to come across as neurotypical since communicating with professionals was challenging for them (2022). This is because many of the questions that the clinicians asked about their experience with Gender Dysphoria were open-ended, which is quite difficult to comprehend and answer for those with ASD.

Conclusion and Recommendations

For those who have co-occurring Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder, navigating their identities, and relationships, and consulting with professionals within the medical field continue to demonstrate that they experience certain hurdles that others are not aware of. With these two disorders, which are quite rare on their own, their occurring simultaneously can make it difficult to diagnose an individual properly. It also shifts how these disorders present themselves as their profiles can change from person to person. Despite there being a growing awareness of the existence of these disorders co-occurring, many, including clinicians, are unable to properly recognize this and treat them.

There continue to be more studies being published every year on this subject, and with that, the destigmatization and general knowledge grows. However, this is still a minuscule amount because belonging to one of these groups (being transgender or having ASD) already has stigmas surrounding them. Therefore, belonging to both may create increased stigmatization and discrimination against this group.

For change to truly occur clinicians will need to go through a screening process to ensure there are no internal biases that would interfere with their practice; education on GD and ASD would begin early on in a child's schooling to remove stigma, and there would be established guidelines regarding how to properly treat an individual with co-occurring Gender Dysphoria and Autism Spectrum Disorder so that these disorders can be properly recognized and treated appropriately.

With these changes implemented it would allow those with GD and ASD to feel accepted and have a better understanding of themselves and their identity. It would create an environment early on in their lives to recognize their identity without an underlying fear of being discriminated against, and they would have the necessary resources to assist them. Currently, these changes are occurring but at a small scale due to individuals rather than a large group, company, or the government taking charge. Individuals making these steps to include these changes will be an example to be followed for building a better system.

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25. Gendered Stereotypes & Disney Movies

EMMA LACHMAN (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Gendered Stereotypes, Adolescents, Gender Roles, Disney Movies

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Children are very susceptible to social influences during as they go through early developmental stages which can affect how they develop gender-typed behaviour. Although gender is fluid and can change with maturation, the early years of childhood development are a very pivotal time. During this age children start to develop their own gender identities and begin setting expectations as to how other genders should behave and act. In this article, I will be looking at how Disney movies support traditional gendered-stereotypes in their animated characters and how that impacts children's gender identity and behaviours. As it has been shown that a child's gender role identity is strongly affiliated with their self-perception because these will influence and determine how parents, peers, and adults will choose to interact with them (Bogt, et al, 2010). So I will be looking at how Disney movies impact children's gender development.

Majority of parents will put on Disney movies for their children, as that is what's popular for young children, but what they are neglecting is how harmful these movies can be for their child's gender development. These movies support traditional gender-stereotypical roles, and in almost every Disney movie the princesses are portrayed in the same manner. Which is usually in a calm, submissive, docile and helpless matter. The problem with this is that children are always observing, and mimicking what they see whether it be from parents, peers or even from movies. If movies have characters that are demonstrating specific and stereotypical gender roles children will watch and mimic those behaviours in real life. This can be a concerning factor when looking at how a child's gender will be constructed. Disney movies have set specific gender expectations on their characters, and since these movies heavily influence children it can leave them to only portray certain behaviours that are expected with their gender.

Theories

It has been established that adolescence is a critical and delicate time in a child's gender identity, and being exposed to gendered stereotypes in animated movies can be very harmful in a child's development. There are multiple theories that have been applied to better understand the gendered stereotypes that are present in animated films, specifically Disney movies.

Social Cognitive Theory suggests that repeatedly observing gendered stereotypes in movies can contribute significantly to a child's concept of gender (Hine, et al, 2018). This theory explains how children learn these gendered behaviours through the process of modelling, and direct tuition (Hine, et al, 2018). This is often done through a process called modelling. Modelling occurs when children learn gendered behaviours from others, and it has been shown that children will learn best from people of the same gender (Hine, et al, 2018). Direct tuition occurs when a child is rewarded for demonstrating behaviours

that are generally associated with their gender. This direct tuition can occur through parents and peers, and in this case films and media. As previously mentioned children mimic behaviours from adults, peers, or even characters they praise. Children then will begin to implement these behaviours into their personal life (Bogt, et al, 2010).

Research Studies

A study followed young girls aged 4-7 that watched Disney movies, and idolized Disney Princesses discovered that girls implement the princess storyline into their playtime, but also demonstrated strong gendered expectations (Golden, et al, 2018). Disney Princess media leaves young girls to address powerful and consistent messages regarding gender norms and roles. Many girls will watch these movies and then alter their behaviour to mimic the princess they admire, or relate with most. Follow up studies found that these young girls began exhibiting traditional gendered-stereotyped behaviours in the classroom (Golden, et al, 2018).

Though it appears through research that Disney movies more strongly impact young girls it can also impact boys. In a similar study research found that boys who watch Disney movies whether there is a strong female lead or not, they too learn gendered stereotypes (Coyne et al, 2016). Even if the intention of Disney movies isn't to negatively impact children, it does. These movies enforce gendered ideas and stereotypes, girls need to be complacent, if they want a happy ending, and boys need to be strong and silent. In several older Disney movies such as, Sleeping Beauty and Snow White is where it is especially noticeable. The princesses in both these films are quiet and reserved, both beautiful, but both considered damsels in distress. Aurora in Sleeping Beauty is portrayed as an innocent girl who pricks her finger and they only way she can be saved is from a prince, who is brave enough to fight off the dragon to save her. Similarly it is seen in Snow White, she is dotting to the seven dwarves she lives with, then is helplessly cast under a spell, and the only way she can be saved again is by a prince. This narrative is a lot more harmful as it suggests that girls only get a happy ending if a boy saves them, and that they are always a damsel requiring salvation. This narrative structure is referred to as the "Cinderella complex" found in one study (Coyne et al, 2016). It assumes that women depend on men for a happy ending. Girls are very vulnerable at a young age and can be easily influenced, and these gendered-stereotypes can be harmful to girls specifically. These movies unknowingly instruct the youth that watch it, to follow these gendered-type behaviours and it greatly impacts their development and how they perceive society and the roles they will play in it.

It has been proven in multiple studies that these animated movies portray their characters to have stereotypical gender roles (Coyne et al, 2016). For example, female characters are given traits like being physically weak, helpless, submissive, fearful, yet affectionate, and dotting. While male characters are typically physically strong, courageous, independent, and usually they occupy a silent leadership role. So the question is, have Disney movies become more progressive?

Although there has been limited research conducted on newer Disney movies, research has found that Disney movies have become a lot more progressive when it comes to gender stereotyped roles (Aley & Hahn, 2020). In recent Disney movies such as Frozen, Elsa is a powerful ice queen and she does not need to be married or have a prince to be powerful and successful. This is creating a better narrative for children, and not enforcing gendered stereotypical roles, where only a male would have those qualities in their animation movies. However, another content analyses found that there are still strong messages of traditional gender role stereotypes (Aley & Hahn, 2020). The women in these Disney films tend to be sought out for because of their beauty, and this enforces the idea to young girls that if they are beautiful

life will be perfect, and things will be given to you, like prince charming. The men in these film are still highly based around masculine traits, Disney movies have just made male characters more personable, and more attractive. They have not addressed nor changed the gendered-stereotypes present in their characters, nor have they taken into considerations its impact on the youth watching these movies.

Conclusion

In conclusion to my research it is very clear that Disney movies, though a very popular form of media that parents use to entertain their children, can be a lot more harmful than anticipated. Most parents would never suspect that the content that would be harmful for their children would ever come from a Disney movie, but it can and it does. Children as we have found observe the adults and peers around them and will mimic their behaviour to better understand their own identity. The same thing is applicable when it comes to Disney movies, they watch, learn and observe from these characters and what is portrayed from these characters is very important because it does play a significant part in a child's gender identity. However, it is possible for Disney movies to alter their approach on how characters are portrayed, as noted there has been improvement with the newer movies created. For the young audience who watches these movies they can absorb a lot of information on how their gender should behave, and what is expected from them, this can lead to false assumptions about gender roles and expectations resulting in very harmful outcomes for the child's development. It is proven that viewing harmful stereotypical media frequently can ultimately affect children's self-worth, and roles in their relationships, and how they view themselves in society.

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26. Abstract Vagina Art and Poem

EMMA LACHMAN (SHE/HER)

She

She is told to look perfect
Yet she is told that she is always wrong.
The wrong shape
The wrong size
The wrong smell
The wrong amount of hair

She is told that she cannot express pleasure
Yet she is always over sexualized.
She is told to keep up feminine hygiene
Yet she is always told she is dirty.

But,
She has always been unique
She has always been colourful
She has the right to express sexual desires She has the right to feel safe
She has the right to be protected

She is allowed to be perfectly imperfect

27. Taking the Red Pill: Awakening the Phallic Curse

RAYEL MACLEAN (SHE/HER)

Keywords: internet, subculture, deviance, echo chamber

What is the Manosphere?

The men's liberation movement was formed in the 1970s in response to the social climate brought about by second-wave feminism (Messner 2016). Initially, the movement was intended to coincide with the feminist ideology of the time, however, these anti-sexist views were not homogeneous within the group (Messner 2016). Nearing the end of the 70s and beginning of the 80s, the men's liberation movement split into two separate branches, one of which was pro-feminist, and one that was anti-feminist (Messner 2016). Since this split, men's rights circles have expanded and adapted with the times. With the rise of social media, a new online world has emerged and with it, a new wave of men's liberation (Ging 2019).

The Manosphere is a term popularized by porn marketer Ian Ironwood through his publication of *The Manosphere: A New Hope for Masculinity* (2013). This online network refers to a loose confederacy of communities concerned with male rights, and more critically, the threat of female power (Ging 2019). As a result of online networking, these groups have been able to connect and form a subculture through which they propagate radical ideologies and form a harmful echo chamber that shields them from societal policing.

Who is in the Manosphere?

The Manosphere consists of four core communities. Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) are those who believe that gender equality and feminism directly serve to disadvantage men (Marwick and Caplan 2018). They believe that women's right to education, right to a life in the public sphere, and women's right to vote have all contributed to a decline in male power (Marwick and Caplan 2018). They advocate for political movements to reverse women's rights and increase male status (Marwick and Caplan 2018). Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW) is a community that believe society is tailored toward feminist ideologies and that women are inherently toxic (Lin 2022). MGTOW will typically avoid any connection with women and separate themselves from wider society (Lin 2022). Pick-Up Artists (PUAs) are the influencers of the Manosphere who teach men how to manipulate women into giving them what they want (Jane 2018). They disregard consent entirely and believe that men are owed sex by default. Popular PUA websites, such as the (now deleted) Return of Kings page, validate rape and mock sexual consent based on their own sexual entitlement (Jane 2018). Involuntary Celibates (incels), much like PUAs, feel as though they are entitled to relationships and sexual encounters with women, but are unable to attain them. They feel that they are discriminated against and barred from sexual fulfillment because of female cruelty (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021).

Although each group within the Manosphere represents a unique set of struggles and concerns, they

all share a common ethos. The foundation of this network lies in gynocentrism, which is the belief that modern society has been infiltrated by women and tainted by feminism (Lin 2022). Through this supposed power struggle, they believe that women hold unsubstantiated and unnatural power that must be taken back by men through forced submission. Additionally, these communities all share a common set of linguistic features and symbolic models that unite them as a subculture.

Subculture

Previously, the cultivation of community has been reliant on geological proximity and the construction of in-person relationships (Blackman 2014). Naturally, this traditional method of community formation is a slow and prolonged process that requires time to gain substantial reach beyond inner-circles and underground movements. The internet, however, has eliminated the necessity of proximity and accelerated the formation of communities and subcultures through the rapid exchange of information and enhanced reach.

Although radicalized groups have been historically capable of obtaining reach and influence, the internet has allowed for the Manosphere to expand substantially and at rapid speeds. Reddit forums, social media platforms, and specialized websites have provided platforms on which these individuals have shared their opinions and created communities around their struggles. These platforms have aided in the formation of an anti-feminist utopia, serving as a safe place for the most violent male impulses.

Subculture formation is driven by society's stigmatization of deviant groups (Blackman 2014). As prospective members of a subculture form feelings of shame and victimization due to their ideas or ways of life. They search out others who share similar political and/or identity markers in order to connect and feel less alone in their struggles. This is true for the Manosphere. As wider society has become increasingly validating of women's rights and feminist ideologies, the ideals of those within the Manosphere have become deviant and looked down on. As a result, those who hold these ideologies have become radicals and deviants of a society in which they believe they are disenfranchised. This results in feelings of stigmatization and ostracization (Daly and Reed 2022). The simple action of sharing these common experiences and ideologies online has resulted in a male-centric internet culture with its own cultural symbols and linguistic features.

The cultural symbols of the Manosphere reside in the adaptation of the Red Pill and Blue Pill, a concept derived from the film '*The Matrix*.' To take the Red Pill, according to those in the community, is to learn the "truth" about female nature, dominance, and male oppression (O'Malley, Holt, and Holt 2022). It is to awaken oneself to the agenda of feminist society and to realize that men are the victims of societal progress. The Blue Pill is the default and describes those who remain ignorant and live in accordance with gynocentrism and "the female will" (O'Malley et al. 2022). Additionally, the community has created a third option, the Black Pill. To take the Black Pill is to relinquish your will and realize that there is no way out (O'Malley et al. 2022). It is the white flag of the meninist world, usually accompanied with feelings of suicidality and hopelessness. In conjunction with the Black Pill, incels may report that they are "going ER." This is a reference to Eliot Rodger, a self-identified incel and misogynist terrorist who killed six people and injured seventeen before committing suicide (O'Malley et al. 2022). Before his death, he sent out a document explaining his motivations which included hatred toward women, jealousy toward sexually active "normies," and helplessness (O'Malley et al. 2022). This document has become a manifesto for the incel community and to "go ER" is to relinquish hope and ultimately enact violence against others and themselves (O'Malley et al. 2022).

The linguistic features of the Manoverse include terms such as: Alpha Male/Chad, Femoid, Betabux, and The Wall, among others (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021). An Alpha Male or Chad exists at the top of the social hierarchy. He is physically attractive, appealing to women, and therefore holds the most privilege among males under gynocentrism (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021). Femoid is a term used in reference to women in order to delegitimize their humanity and, in turn, legitimize harmful ideas and acts that may be done toward them. A Betabux is a man who is not a Chad, but who has managed to attain a relationship with a woman (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021). According to the forums, women resort to engaging in relationships with Betabux only after they have hit "the Wall" or if they are seeking financial support from them. "The wall" refers to the age at which a woman's sexual marketability declines, which according to those in the Manosphere, is twenty-five (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021).

Online spaces have given a platform to anti-feminist communities that have evolved to form a network of deviantized groups with similar radical ideologies. Accelerated reach, communication, and stigmatization have all resulted in the formation of a subculture with its own cultural symbols, linguistic attributes, and political focus. These characteristics and communication methods set the stage for the normalization and propagation of deviant ideologies as the subculture evolves.

Echo chambers and normalization

The aforementioned linguistic and symbolic features of the Manoverse contribute to the formation of an echo chamber in which deviant, and oftentimes violent, rhetoric and actions are normalized. Echo chambers are environments in which opinions, political stances, and/or belief systems are continuously reinforced through repeated interactions with others who share similar attitudes (Cinelli et al. 2021). Due to the commonalities shared by individuals within the echo chamber, outside influence is unsubstantial and quickly dismissed. It is through this constant perpetuation and re-framing of information and testimonials that the communities within the Manosphere have constructed these chambers.

In addition, methods of neutralization are used to justify and normalize deviant behaviour. Neutralization refers to the ways in which deviants justify their behaviour through the cultivation of internal acceptability (Sykes and Matza 1957). Through the neutralization process, these behaviours are validated, normalized, and separated from the moral compass of wider society (Sykes and Matza 1957). These techniques serve to delegitimize the harm of radical idealization and violence, ridding the perpetrator of guilt and external morality (Sykes and Matza 1957). Common neutralization techniques found in Manoverse discourse include the denial of the victim, the condemnation of the condemners, and the appeal to higher loyalties.

Denial of the victim, or victim blaming, is typically associated with the idealization of sexual violence and acts of forced submission. Validation comes in the form of blaming the victim for the acts of violence they have endured rather than the perpetrator. Victim blaming is commonly used in events of sexual violence by insisting that the victim was "asking for it" due to provocative dress or mannerisms, or that they deserved it as punishment as a result of being rude or offensive (Jane 2018).

Condemnation of the condemners is used to shift the scope of blame from the perpetrator to the institutions or individuals who condemn their behaviour (Sykes and Matza 1957). For example, blaming modern society for separating women from their natural role and, in turn, forcing men to re-establish hierarchy through violence. This technique is used as a means through which the morals of Manoverse communities are separated from the moral compass of society. Through condemning the systems that

serve to repress their behaviour, a community is able to create their own set of moral standards and locus of acceptability.

The appeal to higher loyalties involves the justification of deviance based on the claim that the deviant is a partisan of values that are higher than those that belong to their condemners (Sykes and Matza 1957). This technique is present in the Manosphere's favourability toward evolutionary biology and psychology (Van Valkenburgh 2021). They often assert that it is simply natural for women to submit to men and that the gynocentric order of modern society has removed individuals from their natural states of being (Van Valkenburgh 2021). In this, feminism and female power are categorized as unnatural and directly defiant of evolutionary norms. Thus, it is pivotal that men reclaim their power and should not be subject to retaliation as they are simply restoring natural order. Although society may condemn a perpetrator on account of his violence, the higher powers of evolution and natural order permit him to act in his "nature" regardless of societal norms and moral regulations.

The delegitimization of women is also used as a technique through which normalization occurs within Manosphere communities. The term "femoid" specifically serves to remove personhood from women entirely, likening them as more comparable to droids than human beings. Additionally, women are often referred to based on their value within the sexual market. For instance, in an incel chat room, women are said to have all of the power as they possess a "pot of gold between their legs" and are "born with the power to hand out the prize of the only real goal that exists" (O'Malley et al. 2022). Through the delegitimization of women, the legitimization of violence and hostility towards them is validated. This sexual objectification typically declines as a woman hits "the Wall" and becomes sexually inadequate, according to the beliefs of the Manoverse. This is interesting to note as women over twenty-five retain societal power in the real world, however, they are not recognized as important by those in the Manoverse as they are not sexually favourable.

The dangers of the Manosphere

Members of the Manosphere are typically socially isolated, reject outside information, and do not have buffers or protection against the radical views they readily consume through online spaces. Incels in particular have described themselves as NEET (not in education, employment, or training) (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021). This is an issue as intervention is rendered impossible as they become further integrated into their ideologies, turning echo chambers into sinkholes (Radicalisation Awareness Network 2021).

Additionally, these dialogues do not exist in a vacuum. Although specified forums are the pillars of the Manosphere, its influence seeps into other social media spheres and is readily accessible. For example, *TheMan0verse* is one of many YouTube channels that are easily searchable and contains graphic videos of women being beaten and humiliated in public with vulgar titles such as "Cop DESTROYS Feminist Face!" and "DESTROY Modern Women Seeking EQUAL Rights!". Algorithms are also an issue in the propagation of harmful content through social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook. One wrong click or misguided Google search has the potential to expose impressionable minds to these radical ideologies as algorithms race to form new suggestions based on initially innocent interactions with ambiguous content. This avid accessibility is especially concerning as new generations of young men join the online world and potentially become influenced by misogynistic ideologies.

The influence of the Manosphere is not confined to online spaces or manufactured echo chambers. Forum discourse readily validates violent fantasies towards women and encourages aversive behavior

through the encouragement of rape, intimate partner violence, and other acts of gender-based violence. The case of Eliot Rodger is only one of the numerous acts of violence against women that have been applauded in MRA, PUA, and incel circles where members idolize anti-feminist hate crimes (Blackman 2014; O'Malley et al. 2022).

The Manoverse is not a dark corner of the internet that can be disregarded or diluted. The normalization, perpetuation, and idealization of violence against women cannot be ignored as these acts of terrorism continue to take the lives and basic rights to safety away from women around the world. Internet connections are not a buffer against misogyny as it continues to perpetuate both online and in the physical world despite decades of progress in women's rights. The Manoverse is not a hidden club of delinquents, but a propagating agent of hate and violent masculinity that is far too prevalent in all "verses" of life.

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28. The Construction of Feminine Ideals and how they exclude Non-Normative Bodies.

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Keywords: Femininity, Gender Ideals, Plus Size, Inclusion

INTRODUCTION

The construct of femininity is societally accepted as a very plainly defined construct. That is, until someone whos physical body brings to question where the boundary of that construct starts and stops identifies themselves within it. We are shown images of petite people with small features and slim limbs and expect them to dress, and act within what we as a society have deemed as feminine. However, we have managed to neglect those whose physical identity does not fit within the structure of femininity previously described, in this case, I speak of the so-called "plus- size person". Plus-size people defy some of the binary which we have created for the definition of femininity and due to this lack of conformity, it is often that those who break this mold are considered 'unattractive', 'unhealthy', or 'less than' their slimmer counterparts.

For generations, people have fought against this societal structure which segregates larger individuals from their smaller counterparts. The normative approach to femininity has never included these people as they don't fit within the constraints which have been societally selected. Whilst femininity is a factor applied to one's gender in this case it is based on the body instead. Generally, it is through a societal perception that we determine what being 'male' or' female' means based on attitudes and mannerisms and how these things engage with masculine or feminine identification. (Stets & Burke 2000) However, in the case of plus-size bodies, the conversation often sways from mannerisms and attitudes and focuses solely on appearance.

Within the last decade, we have seen that there is a great deal of fluctuation within gender identity. However, for a long time, one's biological sex was solely linked to their gender identity, males are masculine, and women are feminine. "From a sociological perspective, gender identity involves all the meanings that are applied to oneself based on one's gender identification. In turn, these self-meanings are a source of motivation for gender-related [behaviour]." (Stets & Burke 2000 Pg.2) Yet, in the case of plus-size or larger people the aspect of femininity is not always assumed but something that is to be strived for. Whilst there have been many changes in the past decade to how society views plus-size women, there is still an inherent separation between the identity and the construct itself. What is it that segregates these people from a gender identity as a whole even though they align with the most basic societally enforced trait, which is feeling and presenting as feminine? Within this paper, I intend to highlight not only how femininity is enforced within the basic definitions of what it means to be feminine but also how it is that plus-size people are often left out of this category.

THE HISTORY OF THE PLUS-SIZE BODY

To look at how it is that we currently analyze the aspects of femininity and how it affects plus-size people it is first important to look at the history of plus-size people and body image. In the 1830s being plus size or 'plump' was not only fashionable but a sign of great wealth and fertility (Stearns 2002). Being 'plump' assumed that there was money well spent on food and that women were highly fertile and capable of having many children. (Stearns 2002).

It wasn't until the 1890s to early 1900s that the battle began with body fat. Throughout the 1900s body ideals changed and were questioned in small ways- what size the hip-to-waist ratio should be, should you have large breasts or small breasts, and is slimness ideal? (Stearns 2002). The issue with diet began to emerge as the meaning of the word evolved "from its initial meaning in English, of a regimen specifying certain types of food to remedy illness, to its modern usage of losing weight" (Stearns 2002 Pg.6). No longer was food used for health and wellness but viewed for the way it could affect the body. The value of food and the status of body image evolved once again in the Western world in the early 1900s around the time of the first world war. People who were seen as fat or getting fat were considered categorized as wealthy and therefore unpatriotic as they were seen as being in good health when there were so many without the money needed to eat enough to gain such healthy weight. (Stearns 2002). Suddenly a fat body was made into the villain, not for the negativity of the physical weight gain but because of what it symbolized, perhaps noting the first time in history that being fat was made to have a direct link to something negative.

Since this time, our minds have evolved to make the body a much more malleable entity, in the sense that it is something that societally we believe can be changed depending on what we deem as acceptable or on-trend (Peters 2017). The evolution of social media has created a world in which digital imagery can be manipulated in so many ways that it allows users to create content that may appear completely different from their physical appearance. Applications allow you to alter your size and facial structure, apply filters that even your skin tone and some filters even alter the sound of your voice (Vandenbosch, Fardouly, & Tiggemann 2022). The transformative aspects of the internet and social media have played an important role in how body image is interpreted in modern times. (Vandenbosch, et al 2022) Overall, the evolution of the societally valued body has not aged well for that of plus-size people. The ideology surrounding fatness is that there is something that needs to be changed and that change is only possible when people subscribe to the culturally relevant description of what body type is currently on trend.

ANALYSIS OF FEMININE GENDER NORMATIVITY AND ASSUMED GENDER ROLES

In the most basic of understandings, how society enforces gender roles is through the constructs of masculinity and femininity. When analyzing these ways in which gender is traditionally interpreted through gender roles it is important to acknowledge that we are discussing gender in terms of those assigned male at birth (AMAB) and assigned female at birth (AFAB). (Abeyratne, Ratnayake, Wijetunga,Wijenayake & Bulugahapitiya 2022) This is vital in discussing gender as there are people who do and do not identify with how they were assigned at birth within the gender binary. In doing research into this topic it became apparent that most research regarding gender norms was done with those whose gender identity aligned with that which they were assigned at birth. Therefore, a great deal of the data that follows will refer to people that are AMAB and AFAB specifically.

In the most basic understanding of societally enforced gender roles, Men are to be masculine, domineering breadwinners who are big and strong and built of steel. Women are to be feminine,

submissive and homemakers who are petite, thin, and amicable. The aspect of femininity that is prominent in the discourse of plus-size femininity is the inherent belief that feminine women must look and present a certain way. (Kwan 2010) For generations now this rhetoric has been instilled in women through media, literacy, ad campaigns, fad diets, and much more that the end-all goal is to be and remain thin. The opposite of this is to 'let oneself go' or 'give up. A great deal of experimental research suggests that the exposure young people receive when viewing idealized thin feminine bodies often results in a notable impact on the psyche of the individual over time. (Beale, Malson, & Tischner 2016)

Body ideals are linked with how women compare their levels of femininity. We assume that how a body is determined is no longer simply by an assigned sex but by how it fits within society's cultural ideals of that gender. Peter's (2017) argues that the fat female body has always been something left out of the conversation when it comes to understanding the innate femininity of the female form. She argued that the fat body was always categorized "as a caricature: as grotesque, unthinking and undermining, or an object of mockery, pity, and disgust." (Pg.180) There has never been room within such a thin space (femininity), for people who take up so much space, it was simply an area for one type of visual being and there simply was no alternate space.

In encouraging this rhetoric societally there has been a generation raised on the idea of self-policing themselves to never look how we as a society have deemed as unfeminine. In regulating femininity this attaches identity regulation for fatness, race, class, gender, disability, and age, as well as the ways these regulations affect aspects of the body (Fahs 2017). This sort of self-regulation in turn has led to an upturn in things such as eating disorders and body dysmorphia in people who actively self-regulate to maintain their current body and avoid becoming what they have deemed as unattractive (Fahs 2017). The topic of eating disorders and body dysmorphia regarding self-esteem, and internalized fatphobia is far beyond the scope of this essay itself. However, it is important to note how the aforementioned self-regulation plays into self-policing and acknowledge the importance of its role.

Overall, men and women tend to follow traditional gender role ideology and conformity to gender roles according to their sex. (Parent, Davis, Morgan, Woznicki, & Denison 2020) In fact in a study done by Parent, et al, when studying the constructs of both femininity and masculinity against one another it was apparent that how masculinity was measured was not based on physical gender role indicators while femininity was defined solely on it in terms of body ideals. Terms used to describe femininity were words like small, thin, soft, good-looking, etc. (2020.) This process simultaneously makes it so that a variety of people (in this case plus-size people) are not able to abide by these policies and are therefore not made to feel they can identify within the culturally understood constraints of femininity.

PLUS-SIZE REPRESENTATION

Within current-day representation, plus-size bodies are only now being fully integrated into the structures of femininity. We are seeing larger bodies in plenty of mediums- such as media, television, and fashion magazines. For a long time people in larger bodies were given a primary story which was to exist in discomfort with their bodies- their vessel was something that needed to be changed. (Hynnä & Kyrölä 2019) Stories in the media portray the larger person who upon losing weight was met with all the positive changes they ever desired, luck, love, and lust. This sort of discourse was fueled by generations of normative enforced femininity which led people to believe that the ideal woman was thin. Being 'fat' has been made to be a negative thing, "For example, fat studies scholars have noted that fatness is often seen as a symbol of self-indulgence and moral failure." (Fahs 2017 Pg.185) Many pondered why plus-size

people should be allowed to promote their fatness- what kind of example did this set for young people to glorify being 'unhealthy'?

Whilst there is a current surge of body positivity there are still generations of people who have been influenced by the fear of being 'fat'. In a study done by Breanne Fahs women were asked to discuss the idea of a 'dreaded body'-

"When imagining a dreaded body, one-third of the sample (7 women) mentioned fears about threatened or impaired femininity. The fear of not being personally sexy or attractive, particularly along stereotypically gendered lines, appeared in some women's responses, such as Rhoda (57, White, Heterosexual) who connected fear of fatness and fear of losing femininity: 'Not being fit and not feeling pretty enough or desirable enough. I wouldn't want to be disgusting and I would turn somebody off and not be considered attractive so that's what I'm afraid of." (2017 Pg.189)

The general assumption was that when one lost their femininity it was related to a change in appearance. The discourse surrounding plus-size women and exercise is often that being bigger is solely related to the diet and exercise routine of the individual. It can be pointed out however why the topic of exercise is difficult for some plus-size people as they are "expected to engage in exercise and mocked when they do so. The purpose of the exercise, for them, is always assumed to be weight loss, not pleasure, fun, or fitness only." (Hynna & Kyrola 2019) This refers to an idea called body privilege, which draws off of the notion of white privilege: "the ability to move through the world and engage in various mundane activities in relative comfort, without drawing excessive attention but also without feeling invisible." (Kwan 2010)

Plus-sized people lack this sort of body privilege as they are scrutinized in many different ways for simply existing in their body. We see further examples of this when we look at the ways plus-size fashion is dealt with. The world of size-inclusive clothing has been evolving since the 1990s, and although ever-changing, the struggle to appear attractive or 'on trend' while existing in a larger body has always been a difficult task (Hynna & Kyrola 2019).

"As fatness is something that is often read as "unfeminine" or "masculinizing" for a woman, fat people and their appearance are always in danger of being read as frumpy or tired, and thus expected to make an extra effort to look stylish and polished in everyday situations." (Hynna & Kyrola 2019 Pg.1) Femininity is not something that is assumed of larger bodies but something they are expected to strive for.

In Western media today plus size people are shown as examples, ranging in all means of positive and negative feedback. While some speak in the way of body positivity and the importance of visibility and acceptance within the plus-size community, (Hynnä & Kyrölä 2019) many view plus-size people negatively. Plus-size people are often made hyper-visible in both cases as "objects that are constantly subject to a prurient, disapproving gaze" (Peters 2017 Pg.179). In some cases, fat bodies are praised for fighting against the cultural creation of feminine understanding and showing that their bodies are capable of fitting within the determinants of the world in more ways than just their bodies (Hynna & Kyrola 2019). In other cases plus-size, people are put on a pedestal to be used as an example, if you look like this you are 'uncultivated' or 'uncared for' thus causing fear in the thinner more culturally accepted version of a feminine person leading them to believe if they gain weight they are 'letting themselves go' or 'losing control'(Fahs 2017). Ultimately while there is a great deal of discourse which surrounds the enforced aspects of femininity, there are notable aspects of change in the ways in which modern people are coming to understand the true identification of a feminine individual.

CONCLUSION

When analyzing the topic of femininity it is important to acknowledge that many people identify with the traits of femininity, and many identify as plus size. In doing research for this essay it was apparent that there is a lack of research done on the effects of femininity within the realm of plus-size people for those who identify as non-binary, or trans. Whilst a great deal of this material can be analyzed in broad scope the inference that femininity and the plus size body is something that is only understood by women is not realistic. There is a notable male/female binary within most of the research found on this topic which can once again skew how we interpret femininities. To identify as feminine the societal belief is often that someone must present as female and ideally be thin, and enjoy stereotypical feminine aspects of identity. In reality, there are people of all genders and sexualities who identify as feminine. The same goes for those who are plus size and identify as feminine.

To assume someone must fit within a specific construct to identify themselves in a certain way is to negate the intersectional realities of modern life. Plus-size people, like all people, are highly capable, individual, confident, and beautiful people with the ability to identify themselves in any way that they see fit. Within society, the dialogue is often that to be identified as feminine one has to look a certain way. However, this negates the reality that no two people are the same. There is an ever-growing change in the manners in which people are accepting one another, from self-love campaigns, to all bodies welcome gym, and health programs- the world is opening up to the reality of an intersectional existence. When we as a society can engage and acknowledge how plus-size people have been historically labeled and simultaneously ostracized for their size there is a possibility that there may be room for growth. The ideal being that we can grow from a place of seperation to a cohesive socital understanding that plus-size people can identify in whatever manner they see fit.The cultural, structural identity of feminity is archaic in design but ultimately something which is still used to this day to define gender roles and identity. Whilst there are now many people who don't identify or look at how these structures may want them to, now more than ever people are taking back the narrative to change this way of thought.

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29. An Analysis of Non-Consensual Pornography in the Media

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Keywords: Misogyny, Non-consensual pornography, Revenge Porn, Abuse, Domestic violence

Content Warning: Sexual assault and Violence

As sex is a centre for organization in most societies (Moloney and Love 2018, as cited in Dozier 2005), the expression of oneself through sexuality is important to strengthen confidence, improve mood, reduce stress, and create intimacy between individuals. Sending intimate photos to someone you trust can be beneficial in romantic relationships to build a sense of security and trust. Sadly, there is a wider problem at hand once an individual chooses to hit send: you are no longer in control of what that person chooses to do with the image. A shocking phenomenon of non-consensual pornography (NCP) distribution has become increasingly popular in recent years. Also known as 'image-based abuse' or 'revenge porn', sexually explicit photos or videos of an individual are posted online or shared via text message. Reportedly, "...perpetrators are not always being motivated by vengeance. Many act out of a desire for profit, notoriety, or entertainment, including hackers, purveyors of hidden or 'upskirt' camera recordings, and people who distribute stolen cellphone photos" (Hearn and Hall 2019). Commonly superseded by harassment and intimidation, the victims of this abuse are overwhelmingly female (Salter and Crofts 2015).

The use of blackmail constitutes a real threat to the livelihoods of individuals being violated publicly. For this analysis, an examination of online misogyny's destructive nature by sharing non-consensual pornography will be the main focus, as it is crucial to address its damaging effects, as the exploitation of women deserves appropriate legal attention. The term pornography itself is gendered and sexualized, which is seen to be embedded in power relations regarding the domination of females (Hearn and Hall 2019). Heterosexual pornography depicts many patriarchal, complicit, and sexist masculine practices which are reinforced and preserved for consumers to see as normative treatment of females (Hearn and Hall 2019). Because of this, the term revenge porn can be misleading as it implies taking a nude photograph or video of oneself or allowing someone else to be seen as pornographic, which is inaccurate. Although once shared publicly for sexual entertainment, it can be correctly described as pornography (Hearn and Hall 2019). This non-consensual act of uploading an explicit image to a website for millions to see or share is extremely violating. In a matter of seconds, the victim's friends, family, and those at one's workplace have the potential to see it. Some would argue that non-consensual pornography is a form of domestic violence as it is used as a tactic of threat for abusers to keep their partners from leaving them, revealing other abuses, or threatening custody rights over children (Cyber Civil Rights Initiative 2022). According to a Washington Post article, "4 out of 5 adults said they send or receive explicit texts and photos" (Prasad 2019). A 2013 survey, 'Effects of Revenge Porn' found that 90% of victims of revenge porn were female; This included an age range of girls as young as 11 years old to early '30s (Cyber Civil rights Initiative 2022).

Victims Speaking Out

In the 1970s and 1980s, people began producing their amateur photos and videos, often sharing them with others (Salter and Crofts 2015). It was immediately evident that the use of these images and tapes had the potential to be used in malicious ways (Salter and Crofts 2015). One of the first instances of revenge porn being distributed was allegedly by Leon Isaac Kennedy, an American actor and producer who released the video to punish his ex-wife Jayne Kennedy for leaving him (Salter and Crofts 2015). A 2020 news article suggests that the tape was stolen from the home and Leon Kennedy was framed for releasing it. According to TMZ (2020), Kennedy filed suit against Ebony Magazine in 2014, which originally reported on the incident, stating that he "viciously leaked" the tape. Both Jayne and Leon experienced professional and emotional damage from the tape being public, resulting in the termination of Jayne's employment as a sportscaster for the National Football League (NFL) where she was the first black female working with The NFL Today program. As a previous model, actress, and pageant winner, her entire career was negatively impacted with her name being tarnished (TMZ 2020).

Many stories like the Kennedy's exist. The Guardian's (2019) piece on victims of revenge porn highlights several cases that have been described as life-altering. One story in specific touches on a victim going under the alias Ruth King. After receiving a call from a friend that explicit videos of her had been circulating at worksites, King recounts how disgusted and humiliated she felt, knowing it was her ex-boyfriend that posted the videos online and onto various porn sites (The Guardian 2019). While in the relationship, King mentions how abusive her partner was, showing her the videos and explaining how he would distribute them if she attempted to break off their relationship. In fear for her life, she ultimately made the decision to leave as she was being physically and emotionally abused (The Guardian 2019). The impact this had on her life was dreadful as she experienced online and face-to-face harassment from random men, which brought on feelings of depression and isolation from family. As it became all too overwhelming, King attempted to commit suicide in 2017. She recalls noting that although it felt like a selfish thing to do, she felt there would be no end to the exposure she was receiving (The Guardian 2019).

Another story within The Guardian (2019) article features a girl who was a victim of nude photos being posted to online porn sites when she was 17 years old. At 23, Mikala Monsoon understands how it felt to be in constant fear and worry for her safety and life ahead as her full name was added to the photos each time they would resurface (The Guardian 2019). She soon became tired of hiding and changed her name and moved cities. Deciding she did not want to simply avoid the situation and wanted to have her voice heard and share with others who may have experienced the same thing, she created a website to post a petition to have companies enforce policies of consent before allowing individuals to upload content on the internet (The Guardian 2019). By making this website, revengeonrevengeporn.com, Monsoon felt empowered to help other women who had chosen to stay silent.

The last story involves a woman by the name of Folami Prehaye, a 49-year-old who turned her poor experience into a positive one when the photos of her were leaked to the media by her ex-partner, being seen by everyone in her life (The Guardian 2019). At first, Prehaye was very isolated and did not eat. Her ex was charged soon after, receiving a six-month suspended sentence. Sadly, he was not charged with a sex crime, something individuals throughout the UK are trying to change in relation to their laws (The Guardian 2019). To take back control of her life, Prehaye gave interviews sharing her story to support others instead of hiding in the shadows.

More recently with the COVID-19 pandemic, a group working at a New York law firm shared concern for individuals being isolated and on their devices 24/7 (Goldstein 2020). The C.A. Goldberg law office

assists victims of sexual violence and NCP. One lawyer, Seifullah, described how new social distancing regulations put forward by the government left victims of both NCP and domestic abuse vulnerable as people were made to stay inside (Goldstein 2020). Whether a global pandemic was occurring or not, Seifullah emphasizes that abusers will continue to abuse, and explicit photos will be distributed regardless (Goldstein 2020). A distressed victim of domestic abuse confided in the lawyers, saying that her abuser had threatened her not long after quarantine that he would give explicit photos of her to her place of work if she did not get back together with him. This scare tactic used to bully, humiliate, and harass a victim of abuse that is vulnerable in such a situation where safety and freedom are at stake can be torture (Goldstein 2019). On top of these incidences, those who are attempting to get justice for their photos being distributed have had court dates set back due to covid-related delays. Unfortunately, this can cause more stress and trauma for the victims who see their information being online as an overwhelming threat to their safety.

These stories of resilience in women in the face of an extremely destructive invasion of privacy are admirable considering the harmful outcomes revenge porn can cause. Not only do victims suffer emotionally but have a new sense of fear instilled through forms of online harassment. Online spaces offer endless avenues of conversation for like-minded individuals, often bonding over campaigns, political views, and advocacy (Barker and Jurasz 2019). Women are often excluded from participating, being the target of hate speech and abuse from misogynists (Barker and Jurasz 2019). When expressing the need for fairness and equality over social media, women are met with direct threats to their life. The phenomenon of gender-based abuse and online violence is experienced by 46% of women globally, who have received a misogynist or sexist comment from men online (Barker and Jurasz 2019).

Media Conflict

Such sexism is reiterated often in media by influential male figures such as the 45th president of the United States, Donald Trump. A famous 2005 Access Hollywood interview catches Trump commenting on “grabbing women by the p*ssy”, a controversial and disturbing statement that made massive headlines criticizing him during his 2016 presidential campaign (Prasad 2019). Sadly, not his first or last insulting comment, Prasad (2019) noted that while one person may be the target of a comment, all women are targets when overhearing sexist remarks because it perpetuates the notion that women are weak and unworthy of respect. As a prominent figure for an entire country as well as a media influence who is known globally, these sexist comments toward women have a far reach. The encouragement of violence against women in media and the online world poses a serious risk as it has the potential to harm individuals offline.

Salter and Crofts (2015) discuss the power of online forums, and how they are highly cited as being popular places to post revenge porn. The site Is Anyone up? was created in 2010 by Hunter Moore, who originally made it to post nude photos of girls he was romantically involved with, encouraging his friends to post as well. It became increasingly popular, with 240,000 visitors on the site each day globally, garnering $13,000 a month in revenue from advertisements (Salter & Crofts 2015). The Rolling Stone labelled Hunter Moore ‘The most hated man on the Internet in 2012 (Salter & Crofts 2015). With thousands of non-consensual photos being uploaded daily by ex-boyfriends and girlfriends as revenge porn, individuals began reporting to authorities about online hackers accessing their emails and posting their content on the website along with detailed personal information including their full names and addresses. This prompted the FBI to look into the allegations of hacking, raiding Moore’s home in 2013 resulting in his arrest on fifteen counts of computer hacking, aggravated identity theft, conspiracy, and

aiding and abetting (Salter & Crofts 2015). Moore was sentenced to two years and six months in prison, along with $2145.70 in fines (Morris 2022). Sadly, this did not deter him or his followers from supporting online abuse and threats of violence against women. Today, Moore is apologetic for this horrific act of displaying non-consensual pornography to millions, but when asked if he wishes he'd never done it, he replied: "flat out no" (Morris 2022).

The newest influencer of misogyny is using old masculinist grifts to increase his online popularity. Andrew Tate, a thirty-five-year-old from Washington D.C. is known for his derogatory remarks directed toward women and his desire for power and control (Cousineau, 2022). Tate began using social media to relay his messages to display "real masculinity", becoming famous for his videos on gender-violence rhetoric. The larger issue at hand is the effects that mainstream media has on the young individuals who use it. With Tate's anti-women, anti-feminist remarks, he is using popular platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to address easy ways for men to tap into violent misogyny (Cousineau 2022). By framing boys as protectors and leaders and himself as a self-help guru, Tate's attempt at building an army of angry men has been successful (Cousineau 2022). Amongst many videos posted online, Tate has stated that "women belong in the home, can't drive, and are a man's property" (Das 2022). He has also made comments reflecting how he would inflict physical pain onto a woman if she was to accuse him of cheating, imitating how he would choke her and verbally assault her (Das 2022). These various instances of aggressive behaviour being posted on social media have a way of presenting themselves to vulnerable individuals; Those who are seeking control and a place to feel seen and powerful, like Andrew Tate, now have a community where they are able to share their common beliefs. Fortunately, Tate is now banned from most large social media platforms, as many complaints were made regarding his widespread hate for women. He was found to violate guidelines on both TikTok and Twitter, with one woman online labelling him as "the scariest man on the internet" (Das 2022). Although banning individuals like this online will not solve the misogyny within society, it is a way to make a statement that online platforms can remove such controversial and hateful content.

Protecting Victims

As far as the non-consensual distribution of pornography goes, different areas of the world record and criminalize image-based abuse differently. Intimate, educational and employment opportunities are at stake once images or videos are released, so victims must report the crime as soon as they are aware of the incident. Unfortunately, according to the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative (2022), "victims are routinely threatened with sexual assault, stalked, harassed, fired from jobs, and forced to change schools. Some victims have committed suicide". As non- consensual pornography is a form of domestic violence when abusers threaten a victim with its distribution, laws must be set in place to keep individuals safe. Canadians introduced into law Bill C-13 in 2015, making intimate images that are distributed as an indictable offence with a punishment of up to five years in prison (Nigam 2018). Throughout the United States, 42 states have laws outlawing the distribution of non-consensual photos. In 2015, England and Wales also enacted a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment, with Ireland, Scotland, Malta, Germany and France following suit shortly after in 2016 (Nigam 2018). Australia first made the act of distributing non-consensual pornography against the law in 2012, each state having different laws regarding punishment, but each includes a minimum of two years (Nigam 2018). Although there are certain laws put in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of individuals that are victims of image-based abuse, there are still many steps to be taken to both combat the distribution harmful content and provide support to those affected.

Conclusion

Sadly, the reality of revenge porn being produced and distributed is much larger than we know and see. Individuals deserve the right to express themselves without having to worry for their safety and well-being if the tables happen to turn on them due to cruel intentions by others. The warning signs of sharing explicit photos are constantly directed at women, warning them not to send them if they don't feel they can trust the person who is receiving them. Much of the time, the person on the receiving end is someone who they trust not to share publicly. The above anecdotes share how common it can be for someone you once trusted to turn on you, threaten you and blackmail you for revenge. As well, photos that weren't sent exclusively by the person can be found through hacking or taken without the individual knowing. It is unnerving how misogyny can work its way into mainstream media and harm individuals by using images or videos as exploitation. Women deserve to feel safe, respected, and secure without being mistreated and abused through the non-consensual sharing of their private images. It is important that the risks are examined as well as teaching both males and females how to respect one another's autonomy in the age of the ever-growing internet.

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30. Crossword Puzzle

BREEANNA MILLER (SHE/HER)

This digital crossword puzzle was created using a keyword from each academic contribution included in this book. It is representative of the unique and expansive topics covered in our work.

You can access the crossword puzzle by or clicking here (https://app.lumi.education/run/zqAdPj) or by clicking on the image below.

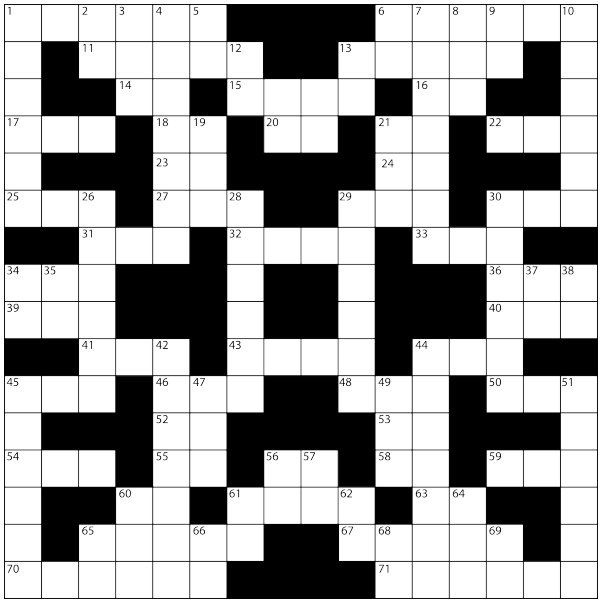

Image by OpenClipart-Vectors from Pixabay

31. Gender Bias In Sexual Assault Laws, Reporting, and Prosecution In Canada

HEATHER NALEZYTY (SHE/HER)

Keywords: sexual assault, gender bias, law, discrimination

Content Warning: The topic of this paper covers the historical context of rape, sexual assault, and gender bias in current Canadian law. Examples of recent sexual assault cases in Canada are discussed, which may be emotionally distressing to some readers. If you need to reach out, please call the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888.*

On August 4, 1982, the *Canadian House of Commons* passed *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code in Relation to Sexual Offences and Other Offenses Against the Person* (Biesenthal, 1990: 1). This act made fundamental changes to the *Canadian Criminal Code,* mainly towards the substantive, procedural and evidentiary components of sexual assault cases, and became solidified as Canadian law on January 4, 1983 (Biesenthal, 1990: 1). Although sexual assault has been recognized as a criminal offence for nearly 40 years, it remains one of the most underreported crimes in Canada, one of the hardest to prosecute, and statistics show disproportionately impacts women. For example, a study conducted by Statistics Canada looked at self-reported violent crime rates over a ten-year period covering 2004 to 2014; this study showed that while robbery and other forms of physical assault had declined roughly 35-40%, rates of self-reported sexual assault saw no decline (Perreault, 2015: 5). Additionally, Indigenous women in Canada experience a higher rate of victimization than any other demographic (Conroy & Cotter, 2017: 8). Why is it that a crime that has been recognized for nearly half a century is still vastly underreported and shows no changes to the rates of victimization while other violent non-gendered crimes report downward trends? This paper aims to look at the historical context of rape, which enshrines current and historical male discourses that condone or excuse male sexual violence, as well as discuss the present-day gender-based myths that impact women when attempting to report and prosecute their abusers.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

In Canada, approximately 30% of all women aged 15 and older have experienced some form of sexual assault; however, current statistics suggest that only 6% of these assaults are reported to the police (Statistics Canada, 2019; Cotter, 2019). To understand the discrepancy between rates of victimization and the vast underreporting of sexual assault seen today, we first must look at the historical and cultural context of rape and the consequences of reporting. During early European development, patriarchal constructions of gender solidified male control and entrenched systems of male power (Whisnant, 2009). Women were seen as property, belonging to either their fathers or husbands. Their sexual purity determined their value; virgins were of high worth, and females who had sexual contact outside of marriage were deemed impure and of lesser value (Whisnant, 2009). Consequently, rape was viewed as a property crime that was committed against a woman's father or husband; oftentimes, the reparation for committing this crime was to pay a fine to the male figure to account for the loss of value to his property

(Burgess-Jackson, 1996). During this time period, women frequently kept their assaults quiet as it would lessen their societal worth and bring shame to their families; furthermore, courts at the time were more concerned about protecting men from accusations, and women received harsher punishments for false allegations than did the men who were found guilty of rape (Padureanu, pg. 85). As a result, a woman either stayed quiet or dropped charges in order to protect her standing in society, her value as a woman, and the reputation of her family. While this system of protecting men at the detriment of women's bodily autonomy may seem outdated, it is still very much present within our current society.

Until 1982, the *Canadian Criminal Code* referred to sexual assault under three categories; rape, attempted rape, or indecent assault. Rape was written in law as "a male person commits rape when he has sexual intercourse with a female person who is not his wife" (Biesenthal, pg.1). This wording provided immunity for marital rape and perpetuated hegemonic male discourses in Canadian society that a woman was her husband's property while denying her the right to bodily autonomy. Additionally, for a woman to charge her abuser, vaginal penetration was a required element and failing to report within a 24-hour time frame was often fatal to the Crown's ability to prosecute (Somerville, et al., 2012). In 1982, the *Government of Canada* passed Bill C-127, which removed rape from the Criminal Code and replaced it with three sexual assault offences; basic sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, and aggravated sexual assault (Somerville, et al., 2012). These changes in the *Criminal Code* removed the idea that only men could be found guilty of sexual assault, marital rape was no longer provided immunity, proof of vaginal penetration was removed and failing to report immediately was no longer detrimental to pursuing charges (Somerville, et al., 2012). Sexual assault charges covered a broader spectrum of sexually violent crimes, provided more adequate protection for violence against women, and created stronger legal footing for women attempting to prosecute their abuser. These changes in the *Criminal Code* were meant to provide women with more protection towards bodily autonomy and gender equality; however, the gender roles and myths that have risen out of centuries of male-dominated attitudes toward the entitlement of a woman's body have limited the ability of current sexual assault laws to be meaningfully applied.

RAPE MYTHS, STEREOTYPES AND SEXUAL SCHEMAS

Humans make sense of the world around them by creating schemas based on prior knowledge or experiences. The *SAGE Glossary of the Social and Behavioural Sciences* defines schemas as "knowledge structures of an event or concept based on previous perceptions of that event or concept" (Sullivan, 2009). While schemas can be created out of scientific knowledge and proven fact, they can also be built off widely-held myths and stereotypes that have remained prevalent or unchallenged over time. Rape myths, which are deeply rooted throughout history and legal doctrines, have continued to promote a patriarchal culture that condones male sexual violence against women and has enforced a system of inaccurate sexual schemas that continue to further male sexual dominance over women. 'Real rape' ideologies are based on inaccurate beliefs of what sexual assault looks like; commonly held 'real rape' myths suggest that the perpetrator will be a mentally deranged stranger, the assault will be violent, and the woman will fight back. There a numerous myths that are prevalent in current society that upholds negative beliefs around sexual assault. The majority of these myths perptuate the belief that women lie about sexual assualt as means of revenge or regret or victim-blame women for dressing certain ways, their use of drugs or alcohol nullifying the assualt, or not behaving in a certain manner post-assault. These myths often diminish men from accountability and shifts the onus onto female victims and victim-blaming; any assault that doesn't align with 'real rape' stereotypes are discounted, and the legitimacy of the assault is brought into question. Current research suggests that although men are more likely

to believe false schemas around sexual assault, widespread rape myth acceptance also has negatively affected a woman's ability to process and understand her own experiences with sexual assault (Ryan, 2011). Not only do these sexual schemas exonerate men from culpability and help justify sexual assault by the denial that a 'real rape' occurred, women oftentimes shift their inner dialogue in a way that results in self-blame; "if I wasn't so drunk; if I had fought harder; but he's my husband; I shouldn't have been there." These internal dialogues strengthen gender role ideologies that classify women as submissive objects to be owned by men while also forcing females to take responsibility for their own victimization. It is critical to note that these stereotypes and 'real rape' myths do not only impact individual men and women's understandings of what constitutes sexual assault; evidence shows that 'real rape' myths are so perverse that they obscure both police reporting and prosecutorial decision making within our criminal justice system (Johnson, 2012).

GENDER-BASED BARRIERS TO REPORTING AND PROSECUTING SEXUAL ASSAULT

As mentioned earlier, only 6% of sexual assault crimes are reported to the police; furthermore, statistics show that less than 1% of all reported sexual assaults resulted in the accused being convicted (Cotter, 2019; Johnson, 2012). What is it about sexual assault that makes it so difficult to reach a conviction? Police officers, judges, and court jurors are often seen as the 'gate-keepers' of our legal system, and they are not immune to upholding the negative sexual assault and gender stereotypes that construct current ideologies of rape culture. Research studies have looked to understand the impact of rape culture on police decision-making with findings that suggest officer adherence to 'real rape' myths and stereotypes (O'Neal, 2017). Police officer discretion allows officers to make judgements when responding to calls or complaints, and their decision on how to proceed can have an immense impact on case processing and legal outcomes (Acquaviva, et al., 2022). Police officers have the ability to use their discretion from the very onset of a sexual assault claim; they decide if the victim is deemed credible enough to believe, if a formal report will be made, what investigative resources will be utilized and whether or not a case moves forward by recommending charges to the Crown (Acquaviva, et al., 2022). Additional research has shown that police officers show more involvement and support in sexual assault investigations that follow patterns of 'real rape' myths, specifically when the perpetrator was a stranger who used physical force or weapons and forceful penetration was documented (Page, 2007). Not only are police attitudes towards offenders skewed by sexual assault schemas, but victim characteristics, heavily influenced by male perceptions of gender roles, also play a role in police discretion. Irrelevant victim characteristics interpreted by police can also impact legal outcomes when considering credibility in a case. Things such as the victim's alcohol consumption, prior sexual history, the time it took to report the assault and level of emotionality all influence police perceptions of credibility, which in turn impacts the legal outcomes of the case (Page, 2007). This creates a deeply misogynistic bias within our policing system where only 'legitimate victims,' whose victimization follows traditional gender role expectations, are deemed worthy of legal intervention (Page, 2007). For the women that do come forward and report an assault, they can be met with skepticism, doubt and even blamed if they do not align with the ideal portrayal of the perfect victim. This creates a cyclical system that leaves women questioning the legitimacy of the sexual assault and further perpetuates the 'real rape' myths being upheld in society.

For those women who are deemed worthy of the criminal justice system, their fight against gender role expectations and patriarchal ideals does not stop after the initial police intervention. In sexual assault cases, a victim's risk-taking behaviours can be called into question to discredit the legitimacy of her claim; perceived credibility, drug and alcohol use, prior sexual history, age and the victim/offender relationship can all be challenged to favour the accused's innocence. As previously mentioned, the

Canadian Criminal Code was amended in 1982 to reflect less restrictive wording around sexual assault; however, the amendment also brought another major development in sexual assault prosecution. Bill C-127, known as the rape shield law, was introduced in an attempt to reform the way victims of sexual assault were impacted by misogynistic attitudes persistent within the legal system (McNabb, et al., 2021). The rape shield legislation was meant to provide victims with expanded evidentiary protections; defence counsels would no longer be able to introduce the prior sexual history of the victim to negate her credibility at trial (McNabb, et al., 2021). Rape shield law was not only enacted to provide victims with stronger protections but to protect the entire court system from distorted truths based on rape myths and irrational lines of reasoning (McNabb, et al., 2021). This protective legislation was challenged time and time again by men who cited that questioning prior sexual history during the cross-examination was critical to their right to due process; the courts frequently sided with these complaints, thereby placing men's perceived legal discrimination over a woman's right to bodily autonomy and a fair trial (McNabb, et al., 2021). Despite the Supreme Court's attempts to create rape shield provisions, we still see the use of irrational lines of reasoning and cruelty in cross-examination, as well as trial judges who are biased towards 'real rape' myths. During a sexual assault trial in 2014, Albertan Federal Court Justice Robin Camp was interrogating a victim on the stand when he questioned if she could have prevented the assault by closing her legs (Fine, 2016). Similarly, in a 2017 court case where a 17-year-old girl brought accusations against a 49-year-old man, Judge Jean-Paul Braun made assumptions that because the victim was overweight, she must have been flattered to receive attention from a good-looking man (Kassam, 2017). As we can see, the legal profession has historical ties to hegemonic masculinity and class privilege, which has the ability to strengthen the hierarchical and patriarchal social structures that uphold 'real rape' and perfect victim myths that are detrimental to prosecuting sexual assault cases (Craig, 2016).

ELIMINATING THE GENDER BIAS

Rape myths, the idea of a perfect victim, and historical gender expectations all have damaging impacts on women's ability to report assaults and reach convictions within the Canadian criminal justice system. Not only are these myths illogically based on outdated beliefs, but they have damaging impacts on the adjudication of sexual assault trials. Canadian laws are meant to be equally applied to all, but as we can see, these laws can be bent to favour male dominance and perspectives while silencing gender-based violence. Moving away from a misogynistic approach to the legal prosecution of sexual assault will require a re-evaluation of the systems currently in place. Women coming forward with sexual assault allegations should not be met with police discretion based on an individual's personal belief system; all accounts of sexual assault should require a thorough investigation regardless of if the victim is deemed credible by the responding officer. Additionally, all people working within the legal sphere (police officers, lawyers and judges) should be required to continue their education with yearly certifications that centre around current sexual assault research and victimization. While changing the gender bias in sexual assault reporting and prosecution may seem bleak, I believe that we are starting to see a shift in our criminal justice system. Judges, such as Camp and Braun, are being removed from their benches for their inhumane treatment of victims during the trial. Societal structures and gendered expectations are being called into question through the actions of feminist and sexual assault advocacy groups. Although it is debatable whether or not misogynist assumptions that permeate our legal system will ever be fully diminished, we are moving towards a more victim-centred system.

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32. Gender-based Dates Calendar

HEATHER NALEZYTY (SHE/HER)

Key Words: female, LGBTQ2+, transgender, activism, discrimination, visibility

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In Canada, we have an overwhelming amount of commemorative dates recognized by our government. However, while most Canadians are aware of notable holidays, many gender-based dates don't receive the same amount of visibility. In this calendar, you will find a list of national and international commemorative dates that look to raise awareness of gender-based issues still prevalent worldwide. We have also provided ways to get involved for any dates that interest you.

DISCLAIMER: This is a partial list of all gender-based commemorative dates due to the limited space within our textbook. The author has chosen to exclude things such as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, 'Movember", and racial awareness holidays in order to give attention to lesser-known events from a gender-based perspective. We encourage you to continue to look into additional dates using our calendar as a starting point. For readers with an electronic copy of Gender: Reflections and Intersections we have provided hyperlinks with further information; readers with a hard copy can access these links as well, but we have also provided additional ways to get involved that do not require the provided links.

TRIGGER WARNING: Many of these dates have been created in need to call out misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of gender-based discrimination and violence. This calendar brings awareness to topics such as sexual assault, gendered violence, hate crimes and other global practices that are violent and oppressive to females and the LGBTQ2+ community alike.

You can access the calendar by clicking here.

URL: https://tinyurl.com/4y3d8529

33. The Unspoken Gender Bias in the Medical Industry

KATIE NEAR (SHE/HER)

Keywords: gender, bias, healthcare, inequality

Although men and women have similar anatomy and often experience many of the same health conditions and illnesses, women are often overlooked and frequently treated differently in regard to involvement and care in the medical community. In a world where gender equality is a driving force, it can come as a shock to discover that there are countless women who are still disadvantaged due to their biological sex. The medical industry provides almost all of us with the care necessary to achieve and maintain a physically healthy body that is free from pain, illness and ailments. Diagnosis is a powerful tool that creates space for illnesses to be properly treated, and can help predict the outcome of the patient; therefore, an unarguably needed resource for all. Although readily available for the most recognized and commonly represented members of the population– namely heterosexual caucasian men– there are some distinct few who receive a lesser quality of care than the aforementioned, among them women. Women everywhere are made to jump through hoops imposed by a patriarchal medical system in order to attain the most basic of medical care – incorrect diagnoses, poor treatment, and a lack of autonomy over their own health and bodies to name a few. All these experiences shed light on the gender bias in the medical field and allow insight for everyone to experience such inequalities on a first hand basis.

The history of medical practices and views towards women are important to consider when approaching the topic of a gendered medical bias. Even in recent Western history; some instances dating to less than a century ago, many women suffering from what are now common illnesses were dismissed, and were instead diagnosed with what doctors called hysteria. Hysteria, derived from the Greek word for uterus, was a common diagnosis for a variety of ailments proposedly caused by “an unfulfilled, unemployed uterus moving out of place, [and] wreaking havoc on the organs it reached”(Cleghorn 2021:abstract). Instead of taking the conditions of women and looking at them with a sense of validity, the doctors of the time, all of them men, regarded the women as inherently deficient. Although hysteria is no longer a valid medical diagnosis, there are still assumptions placed upon women that stem from these sexist roots.

Women, not unlike many groups, suffer at the hand of assumptions and stereotypes every day, and the medical field is just the same. The female body is assumed to be different from the male body, and although there is some validity to such a belief, the differences are often vastly exaggerated. These perceived assumptions create the opportunity for biases to blossom. When an alpha bias, the exaggeration in the differences between male and female bodies, becomes present, both sexes are at risk of being treated differently. Although there are biological differences between men and women, the exaggeration between the two sexes often ends with one of them being excluded. For example, heart attacks occur more frequently in men forty five years and older, and women are not usually affected until they are at least fifty five years, but there are internal changes and genetic precursors that can lessen the disparities between the two; just as a man could have a heart attack at forty years old, so could a

woman. However, although in some cases the odds of having a heart attack are even between men and women, due to the alpha bias, there is a difference in diagnosis between the sexes that becomes present. If a man and a woman are both in the hospital experiencing the symptoms of a heart attack, the man is more likely to get an accurate diagnosis due to the alpha bias and the assumptions that accompany it. As well as the fact that although women are less at risk until they reach an older age, once they reach that age their risk of a heart attack surpasses that of men. Yet they are still overlooked in favour of their male counterparts in medical settings due to the alpha bias.

Furthermore, there is also the problematic beta bias. The beta bias is the opposite of the alpha bias. Where the alpha bias augmented the biological differences between men and women, the beta bias minimizes them, often to the point where they become non-existent. The beta bias becomes problematic when men and women are treated as if there are no differences in their biological needs. For example, there are illnesses that solely affect biological women, like uterine cancer, PCOS, ovarian cancer, and pregnancy. The beta bias would cause women to not receive the diagnosis for their illness or ailment due to the fact that they would be treated the same as a biological man; men are never tested for uterine cancer or PCOS, so women would not be either. These biases are often described in relation to healthcare as "Type A: exaggeration or construction of difference between female and male bodies in ways that compromise health and/or cause inequity in care; and Type B: the absence of difference between female and male bodies while making one sex (typically male) the standard for both" (Thompson and Blake 2020:23). Being conscious of these biases is crucial in the development of the medical industry as they bring further awareness to the possibility of other gendered prejudices blooming.

It is essential to recognize that the gender bias in the medical field does not only apply to diagnosis. There are many forms of gender bias present in regards to the treatment women receive as well. The medical industry is a male-oriented field, and women often suffer the consequences of the expectations and beliefs that stem from such patriarchal systems. For instance, it is said that "some women are unable to cope effectively with their illness when they do not have an adequate explanation for their physical symptoms" (Levin et al., 2003; Waldron et al., 2012 as cited in Thompson and Blake 2020:22). The term 'medical gaslighting', where legitimate claims of pain or unwellness are dismissed as something more minor or deliberately overlooked, is becoming a very common experience for women attempting to seek medical advice. Whether it is "an autoimmune disorder attributed to depression, or ovarian cysts chalked up to 'normal period pain'" (Northwell Health 2022), medical issues in women are constantly being dismissed. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that women typically receive less medication for their ailments than men. In a study focused on the treatment rates for nonpregnancy-related abdominal pain, it was demonstrated that even though both the men and women presented the same pain levels, the women were treated with pain medication at a lesser rate. The study demonstrated that, "after controlling for age, race, triage class, and pain score, women were still 13% to 25% less likely than men to receive opioid analgesia" (Chen, Schofer et al. 2008:416), wherein opioid analgesia was the chosen pain medication in the study. A discrepancy of such a high degree is a clear demonstration of the gender bias at work. Although often done with intention, it is important to acknowledge that much of the poorer treatment given towards women can be done on a subconscious level. To exemplify the concept, nurses see, treat, and admit dozens of patients on any given day. If a woman goes to the emergency room or a walk-in clinic complaining of chest pains, but is also presenting with signs of extreme anxiety, the nurse may make the subconscious assumption that their health issues are of a mental nature rather than physical. It is the fact that gender biases are so ingrained into the medical industry as a whole that renders it such a difficult topic to identify and an even harder one to address.

Another concern that is both ingrained in the industry and difficult to address is the blatant control the medical field has over people, especially women. Depending on where someone lives, there are instances where they may only have access to a single medical establishment for care; or in some cases, no access to medical care at all. If there are situations that make them feel ignored or if they have their ailments dismissed, there are often no other places for them to seek out proper treatment. Thus, if a woman goes to see a doctor with concerns regarding her health and gets dismissed, as has been shown to be a common issue, there may be no other options for her to access the support she needs. Another major factor in regards to the control women are subjected to in terms of medical care is the focus on who holds the control. In terms of where medications and treatments come from, it is the politicians, courts and health insurance companies that really regulate who can or, more importantly, who cannot access the services provided by the medical industry. Societal status has a huge influence over the access women have to medical care. There was a university study performed in the United States that looked into the access women had to birth control. It was noted in the study that "since doctors who serve communities insured by Medicaid are more likely to require exams for contraception prescriptions, we know that poorer patients face greater obstacles in gaining access to birth control than wealthier ones. Since poorer patients are also the least likely to be able to handle such obstacles, we can assume that at least some poor patients who want birth control and have access to doctors through insurance are not receiving it" (Delston 2017:705). This is devastating when you take into consideration that in America, 21.55% of women under the age of 24 are living below the poverty line; especially when contrasted against the percentage of men the same age living below the poverty line, which totals to only 16.49% (Statista Research Department 2022). Although Canadian statistics are lesser then the statistics of their American neighbours, the information still helps to provide a scope into the North American treatment of women. This enhances the struggle many women face when trying to attain access to even the most basic of medical care.

When exploring the topic of gender bias and lesser treatment of women in the medical industry, it is important to acknowledge the lack of autonomy women experience. As previously mentioned, women struggle to access even the most basic means of expressing medical autonomy, such as accessing contraceptives. This blatant lack of autonomy has been proven to be indirect causes of sickness, trauma, and even death in women. It is important to acknowledge the outside contributing factors to what encompasses a woman's autonomy. There have been studies that show that it is not always the outside circumstances a women experiences that remove her autonomy; often times, the woman is supported in such decision making, it is simply the resources available to her or her own personal life situation that take away her autonomy. For example, it was found that "in addition to autonomy in decision-making power, attitude and experience of gender-based violence was used as an indicator of female autonomy" (Banda et al. 2015: 407). Although the gender bias is often the key feature leading to a lack of autonomy, and has been shown to carry a large influence over the issue, it is important to recognize that there are other factors at play that hold power over the access to medical care a woman can achieve. According to a report done by the United Nations Human Rights Commission, "maternal mortality and morbidity is a consequence of gender inequality, discrimination, health inequity and a failure to guarantee women's human rights" (UNHRC 2011 as cited by Banda et al. 2015: 405). This statement shows that the flawed medical system is not only making the access to healthcare more difficult, but is actually leading to the death of women.

Much of the lack of autonomy women face is in regards to their own sexual and reproductive rights. The term 'reproductive rights' is used in regards to both men and women, however, is more widely associated with women as individuals. Women are quite often marginalized but none more so than

indigenious women living in industrialized countries. For example, indigenious women are extremely underrepresented in data collection which creates a gap in statistical data leading to disparities between populations. This disparity prevents any possibility of any kind of effective action being taken to offer more care to such women. Of the 90 national and sub-national surveys conducted under the last two rounds of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and Demographic Health Surveys (DHS), only 43 included a question on ethnicity and only 27 of the published reports included an analysis based on ethnicity (United Nations 2018). This aids to demonstrate how that although the statistics are representing troubling information, there is always the consideration for those who are not aswell represented. Ethnicity happens to be an impactful factor to the quality and care of the medical services thet are offered.

In conclusion, women across the globe are subjected to poorer medical care simply due to their gender.. Whether done intentionally or not, due to the medical industry's historically sexist roots, modern day women are still held to a standard that bears detriment on the quality of care they receive. Although we as a society are becoming more consciously aware of the gender bias in the medical industry, there has not yet been a great deal of progress made to eliminate this inequality. Fortunately, as more women enter the medical field themselves, the discrepancies within the industry should ideally begin to diminish as the next generation of doctors view patients with a greater sense of empathy, responsibility, and knowledge of the inherent gender bias.

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34. Beyond the Gender Binary: Exploring the Māhū and Hijra

ZOE PAINE (SHE/HER)

Keywords: 'Third gender,' hijra, māhū, transgender, LGBTQI2S+

We may hear the remark, "What happened to just men and women?" However, 'third genders,' or gender identities that do not fit into the binary, have been part of our world for longer than most may think. North American Indigenous groups, such as the Navajo, recognize a 'third gender' through the nádleehi. Albanians in southeastern Europe designate women who engage in men's roles in the community as sworn virgins. In Mexico, there are the muxes, who are AMAB (assigned male-at-birth) but present themselves in a feminine way. Across the world, throughout history and in contemporary contexts, gender-diverse people have existed, and will continue existing despite potential oppression and persecution.

Through providing a sociocultural context of 'third genders,' it may be easier to understand how gender nonconforming individuals and communities reject the male-female dichotomy. This essay will first explore what the term 'third gender' means, and how it has been contested by various scholars and queer individuals. A discussion will follow with a focus on the māhū of Polynesia and the hijra of South Asia, which are two examples of 'third genders' from different parts of the world. Finally, we will consider whether the term 'third gender' should continue to be used despite its prevalence across academia.

The Term 'Third Gender'

Before discussing the māhū and the hijra, we will first consider the concept of 'third gender' more generally. Gender is very complex and encompasses social attitudes, performances, beliefs, and understandings of oneself and the people around us. Sex, on the other hand, refers to the biological characteristics an individual is born with. Although frequently used interchangeably, sex and gender are two separate parts of an individual's identity (Ingrid 2001:134). Individuals whose sex does not align with their gender identity may consider themselves to be under the transgender umbrella, which includes identities such as non-binary, gender-queer, gender-fluid, transmasculine, transfeminine, among many others. Moreover, it should be noted that concepts of femininity and masculinity will change depending on temporal and spatial landscapes. There is no one right or wrong way to perform femininity and masculinity, or to tread outside of the binary; these performances will look very different depending on the year, place, and culture.

In 1975, the term 'third gender' was coined by M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies, in which the term was used to describe gender variance among non-Western cultures (Towle and Morgan 2002:472). Since then, scholars such as Gilbert Herdt (1993) and Will Roscoe (1998) have written extensively on the 'third gender' concept, illustrating examples of binary gender nonconformity among the Sambia and Indigenous peoples of North America, respectively.

During the 1970s LGBTQ+ movements, the term 'third sex' began to be replaced by 'third gender,' as we slowly started to contemplate the differences between sex, sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity (Ingrid 2001). It is thought that the term 'third sex' can be traced as far back to Plato's Symposium, as he writes about an androgynous individual who appears to live outside of the gender binary (Scobey-Thal 2014). Furthermore, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs wrote about the 'third sex' to describe gay men, as they had "a female psyche contained in a male body" (Kennedy 1981:106; Scobey-Thal 2014); Ulrichs was a 19th century German lawyer and activist who was ostracized from his field of work for being gay.

With the knowledge we have now about the many possibilities for sex and gender identities, the idea of a 'third sex' is messy, as it conflates sex, gender, and sexuality into a single category. Perhaps the closest thing to a true 'third sex' would be individuals who are intersex (for example, people whose genitalia do not match their chromosomes at birth), but even then, there may be an attempt to 'other' anyone who is not born strictly male or female. As we explore the māhū and the hijra in the coming sections, consider what we have briefly learned about the term 'third gender' and how it could apply to individuals who do not conform to the gender binary.

Exploring the Māhū

The māhū are gender nonconforming1 individuals who reside in areas of Polynesia, specifically Hawai'i and Tahiti (Nanda 2014). Since there is such vast cultural variation within Polynesia, there are different names for māhū depending on the region (Nanda 2014:58; Roughgarden 2013:337). Despite having different names, most will recognize that this third gender is AMAB but takes on feminine roles, characteristics, and clothing styles. Translated from Tahiti, māhū means "half-man, half-woman" (Nanda 2014:59). Due to early European contact, Polynesia underwent mass colonization efforts in the 19th and 20th centuries (Besnier 1996). European explorers came to Polynesia and believed the communities were "primitive" as their ways of life did not align with Christian ideals (Besnier 1996). The māhū were specifically targeted due to their unorthodox ways of performing gender, which affected their livelihoods and ability to express their identities.

It should be noted that the term māhū is, in some cases, contested. Matzner (2001:para. 2) notes that māhū is a "Hawaiian word which locals typically use in a disparaging way to refer to drag queens and gay men. In pre-contact Hawai'i, this word did not have the negative connotations it has today." However, in Matzner's oral history project, in which several gender nonconforming individuals from Hawai'i were interviewed, many still preferred to be referred to as māhū. The reclamation of the term provides gender nonconforming individuals with both a sense of autonomy and cultural inheritance. One of Matzner's informants, Page Peahi, explains how she prefers the term māhū over transgender to identify herself:

> Transgender.I don't like to identify myself as a transgender because I don't know what is that word. I can identify with mahu because it's a Hawaiian word for us – transgenders. Growing up, that's the word people used. Reading about Hawaiian history, I've noticed that there were mahus in the [Hawaiian] monarchy; they had a place. So I could really identify myself as a mahu in a positive way, not a negative way. The boys would yell, 'Hey, mahu! Mahu!' And they would mean it in a derogatory way. But I can identify myself as mahu. Actually, mahu is either more female or more male, so it's like … androgynous. (Matzner 2001:para. 45)

Although Page prefers to self-identify as a māhū, if someone does not want to be defined by that term, it is important to respect their right to identify how they want. For the purpose of this paper, though, we will continue to use the term māhū in relation to Polynesian AMAB individuals who take on feminine roles.

In comparison to hijra, māhū are not defined by possessing "special powers," but rather by their ability to hula dance, chant, sing, and perform traditional Hawaiian craft making (Besnier 1996; Nanda 2014; Robertson 1989). These activities are traditionally reserved for AFAB (assigned female at birth) individuals who continue to identify as women, but māhū adopt these activities as part of their gender identity performance. Furthermore, māhū engage in women's work and speech patterns; their public participation in such behaviours is a defining feature of their identity (Nanda 2014:62). Additionally, the māhū role is not rigid and can change over time. While māhū are believed to have been born into their gender variance, they are still able to abandon their roles if they wish (Nanda 2014:63).

A māhū individual's sexuality is not the most important aspect of their identity but can still be a seen as a major feature. Nanda (2014:65) notes that māhū are recognized as "receivers" as they are essentially substituted for cisgender females. Māhū will perform oral sex on non- māhū (cisgender) men, as they are viewed as a "convenient, pleasurable, relatively pressure-free alternative to women for the release of sexual tension" (Besnier 1996:301). Therefore, sexual relations that māhū may engage in are not the primary determiner of their identity, but rather an outcome of the roles they take on in society (Besnier 1996). Unlike hijra, māhū are not castrated, but will sometimes practice "tucking" in which they place their genitals between their legs (Nanda 2014). Over time, this will create the appearance of smaller genitals, which further associates māhū with feminine roles and ideals.

Ultimately, the māhū are one example of many gender nonconforming identities seen across the world. While not all māhū are the same, there is the expectation that they will dress, act, and work like the cisgender women around them. As we learned, gender nonconforming individuals do identify as māhū, while others prefer terms such as transgender or "queen." Besnier (1996:307) asserts that the māhū "blurs gender categories rather than affirms them," as their feminine self-presentation defies the otherwise dichotomous roles they may assume.

Exploring the Hijra

The hijra are gender nonconforming individuals who reside in India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Much like the māhū, while hijras are AMAB, their behaviour, dress, and mannerisms are feminine (Nanda 2014). Hijra tend to wear jewellery, makeup, and traditional women's clothing such as saris. The sari functions as an integral part of performing gender, as adorning it signifies the hijra individual is "enter[ing] the society of the hijras" (Hall 1995:67). Although hijras appear to be women, they are denoted as "not-women" due to cisgender females having the ability to reproduce and typically being more submissive in their behaviour (Nanda 2014:30). However, hijra are simultaneously viewed as "not-men" due to experiencing impotence, also known as erectile dysfunction (Nanda 2014:29).

Hijra have an intimate relationship with Hinduism. Unlike the māhū, hijra are believed to possess powers through their connection to Arjun, Shiva, and Bahuchara Mata, who are Hindu deities (Nanda 2014:30). American cultural anthropologist Serena Nanda (2014:30) notes that Arjun is associated with an androgynous appearance, whereas Shiva is associated with asceticism, or the renunciation of sex. Moreover, Bahuchara Mata is perceived as an aggressive "Mother Goddess," who is heavily connected to aspects of fertility (Nanda 2014:31). It is thought that hijra "receive a call from their goddess" to undergo the removal of their genitals, or else they will be faced with "being born impotent for seven future births" (Nanda 2014:31). Furthermore, their calling from the "Mother Goddess" will compel their participation in social events such as weddings and funerals, in which they will bless the attendees (Ingrid 2001:135).

Although hijra occupy an important place within the social structure of India, they may still face "familial

rejection, cultural isolation, and societal neglect" due to challenging the gender binary (Hall 1995:12). This rejection could begin as early as childhood, or whenever hijra start to display gender nonconforming attitudes to their families (Hall 1995:37). The ostracization from family members may lead hijra to seek out familiar faces, in which they will co-create gender nonconforming communities with one another. However, it is often imperative for hijra to undergo castration, in order for their new community members to accept them (Nanda 1990). Many hijra are happy with the initial castration and elect to have more gender-affirming surgeries (Nanda 1990:69). Meera, a hijra woman, explains that she received 18 successful gender-affirming operations:

> Why I got operation on was, I wanted to be like other women, to be very attractive . . . Our feelings are like women, only. After the operation we become like women. I am taking these hormones now. See, we have spent so much money to get the operation done, we can spend some more money and become full-fledged women by developing breasts. . . now I am nice and fat, like a woman. It is only for this purpose that we get operated on. (Nanda 1990:81)

Meera's account signifies the importance of undergoing various operations, as well as taking hormone replacements, to her physical and mental wellbeing. Like Meera, other hijra will elect to have gender-affirming surgeries, but there is not always the opportunity to do so.

In 1871, the British passed the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) in India, which sought to erase the existence of any kind of "deviant" gender, such as that of hijras (Hinchy 2013:196; Scobey- Thal 2014). As hijra operate outside the gender binary, they were labelled as "eunuchs" due to their inability to perform colonial masculinity (Hinchy 2013:200). Furthermore, 18th century Indian kings forced hijra to wear both turbans and women's clothing in order to identify themselves as separate from cisgender men and women (Nanda 2014:30). After years of oppression, in April of 2014 the Indian Supreme Court recognized hijras' right to identify outside of the gender binary (Scobey-Thal 2014; Woltmann 2020). American author Suzy Woltmann (2020:14), whose research often explores gender issues, notes that since 2014 "hijras have reported better quality healthcare, less violent crime, and more job opportunities." Now, Hijra and other gender nonconforming individuals are able to identify as a 'third gender' on passports and other personal documents (Hossain 2017:1425; Scobey-Thal 2014).

The hijra are one of many gender nonconforming communities across the world. An integral aspect of hijra life is their association with Hindu mythology, which may guide them to perform dances and sing for various audiences. Although the term hijra has been widely used to describe gender nonconformists among some South Asian populations, there is the potential for it to be considered derogatory as we learn more about queer lives and identities. As the term hijra translates loosely to "eunuch," redefining how we refer to gender nonconforming individuals, such as the māhū and hijra, will certainly change with time (Hinchy 2013:199).

The 'Third Gender' Debate

Through learning about the māhū and the hijra, it seems that the term 'third gender' recognizes any gender identity that falls outside of the normative cisgender male and cisgender female identities. However, this term may be seen as too reductionist, due to 'third' being synonymous with 'other' (Mejia 2021; Towle and Morgan 2002:484). Anthropologists Towle and Morgan (2002:477) assert that employing the term 'third gender' "ignores the diversity of experience within [gender] categories." It begs the question of whether using the term 'third gender' to describe individuals who exhibit gender

nonconformity is correct. Should we categorize the hijra and māhū not as 'third gender' identities but rather as non-binary and/or transgender identities?

Non-binary feature writer, Atalanta Sawdon Harkavy (2021), notes that "Non-binary acts as an umbrella term, not a 'third gender'." Harkavy (2021) goes on to note that the distinction between the two terms is, essentially, up to the individual who wishes to identify themselves either within or outside of the gender binary. Some non-binary people do use the term 'third gender,' while others opt for more specific terminology, such as pangender or agender (Mejia 2021). The continuing use of the term 'third gender' by some academics may point toward the lack of knowledge surrounding the implication of what 'third' means. Yet, other academics have pointed out the problem with 'othering' gender variant individuals (Towle and Morgan 2002). Overall, it seems that the best way to decide which term to use is to consult the groups themselves, but even then, there will be variation in preferences among informants.

As we learn more about gender, and the many things that encompass it, it is important to consider things from a cross-cultural perspective. The māhū and the hijra are only two examples of many gender nonconforming groups with others spanning the globe. However, we must be critical when using terms such as 'third gender' when referencing gender variant individuals and communities, as such monikers may be considered outdated or even disrespectful. Finally, it is essential to the livelihoods of such individuals that further studies and fieldwork are conducted, as it is likely that attitudes and beliefs have shifted over the past 30 years of research into the area.

[1]People who do not conform to the commonly accepted gender binary; those outside the traditional binary of masculinity and femininity being automatically assigned to AMAB and AFAB.

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35. ELI HE/HIM

ZOE PAINE (SHE/HER)

ELI HE/HIM

"Coming out as transgender has been one of the most impactful experiences of my life. It's hard sometimes but I am so much happier living as my authentic self."

Photos by Zoe Paine

Text by Eli

36. TransTape(c)

ELIJAH T. PARKER (HE/HIM)

Keywords: gender dysphoria, self-harm

The following is an original poem and artwork by Elijah T. Parker collectively entitled “TransTape©”. It gets its name from the common brand of chest binding tape, which the creator uses. As a trigger warning, the poem talks about self-harm and suicidality.

TransTape©

scissors, pasties,
four strips of TransTape,
two little pink pills

in front of my mirror
I check on last week's rash
I scratched; it scarred

the first drug I took to affirm my gender
was Benadryl (unless you count
the drinking, but that's a different poem)

I apply the tape to feel safe
in my favorite t-shirt that will only fit
for the next three to five days

because I am only comfortable in my skin
when I can feel a lit match
drilling between my middle ribs

causing pink ridges of pain
which are dulled for four to six hours
by each pink pill

I am allergic to
the adhesive that
holds my life together

by the time I get them removed
the twin tumors will be tissue
that is probably more scar than breast

I will keep taping until I can
safely kill those mutated cells
instead of something else

is it self harm if I hurt more without it?

Elijah T. Parker

37. Gender and the Spectrum of Homelessness

THOMAS RODEN (HE/HIM)

Keywords: Homelessness, Research Methodology, Feminist Critique, Government Policy and Intervention

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The way we envision the homeless experience is important as it will inform policy creation, funding allocation, and the direction of research into the topic. Typically, the homeless experience is conceptualized as one of sleeping on streets or in shelters and the homeless individual is most likely to be thought of as male (Bretherton 2017). This conceptualization of homelessness stems from the fact that homelessness is socially defined; the definition of homelessness will reflect the way that society is socially organized and follow society's broader normative assumptions (Watson 2000). Thus, the typical interpretation of homelessness is of the male experience, purports patriarchal norms, and has no consideration for the experiences of homeless women. At best, homelessness is thought to be gender neutral with other factors like poverty or mental illness being of greater import than the role of gender (Schwann et al 2020; Sociol 2010).

Traditional homeless research has often taken the form of point-in-time counts where researchers count every homeless person they can see in a given area on at a specific time (Sociol 2010; Reeve 2018; Bretherton 2017; Schwann et al 2020; Uppal 2022). This strategy has been augmented by also asking homeless outreach services how many people they have served at the same given time using the assumption that most homeless people will contact a homeless service at some point in their life (Sociol 2010; Uppal 2022). Homeless researchers may also use period prevalence measures by counting the usage of homeless services at various month or year-long intervals (Sociol 2010; Uppal 2022). The problem with the way that homelessness is structured, is that traditional methods of research into homelessness are often blind to the fact that homelessness is normatively defined producing inaccurate images of who experiences homelessness (Klodawsky 2006). In the cases of point-in-time counts and usage of homeless outreach services, researchers ignore that men and women experience homelessness differently (Bretherton 2017; Reeve 2018). Women are more likely to seek out temporary shelter with relatives or friends and avoid using the mainstream shelter systems as much as possible (Schwann et al 2020; Fotheringham et al. 2013) As such, homeless women are often invisible to traditional data-gathering methods that expect homeless women to be present on streets or using homeless services (Reeve 2018; Bretherton 2017).

The actual reality of homelessness is that there is a spectrum of homelessness (Schwann et al. 2020). This spectrum includes both previously mentioned components of homelessness: unsheltered (street living) and emergency sheltered (overnight shelters for homeless individuals) living (Schwann et al. 2020). However, the spectrum of homelessness also includes the categories of provisionally accommodated (temporary accommodation or any housing situation that lacks security) and those at risk of homelessness (precarious housing situation or living below public health and safety guidelines) (Schwann et al. 2020). The spectrum of homelessness arises from feminist research concerned with

the difference between housing and home ownership. The concept of "home" goes beyond just having a shelter to include ownership of one's residence and decision-making power within one's home (Klodawsky 2006; Fotheringham et al. 2013). The shift to focusing on "home" is what allows consideration of individuals who are living in hotels or with friends and/or family as homeless as they lack ownership and agency in their housing situations; this is also known as hidden homelessness (Uppal 2022).

Putting aside the discussion of gender for a moment, newer research has shown that across all demographics, the proportions of hidden homeless in Canada are far greater than the proportion of those who were unsheltered (Uppal 2022). This is supported by data from other countries that have reported the proportion of homeless people that are hidden homeless can be as high as 76% (Bretherton 2017).

While homeless women are more likely to avoid areas typically associated with homelessness, there are still some that live on the streets (Reeve 2018). However, traditional methods of data gathering still often miss these women due to failure to account for differences in experience between men and women (Reeve 2018). One key difference is that homeless women on the street are more likely to choose locations that are out of sight or out of the way. This includes public washrooms or just choosing to move away from more populated city centres (Reeve 2018). Women are also more likely to disguise their homelessness. Interviews with homeless women give examples of women taking measures to hide that they are homeless such as sleeping upright on benches while wearing a poncho instead of using blankets or taking a suitcase into airports or business parks to mimic other travellers (Reeve 2018). Women engaging in these strategies are much more likely to also avoid engaging with outreach teams and are therefore likely to be missed in any street counts being conducted (Reeve 2018).

The motivation why homeless women practice street living differently than men are due to the way that public spaces, the streets, are culturally defined and organized as male spaces whereas private spaces like the home are often defined as female (Klodawsky 2006; O'Grady and Gaetz 2004). This organization of spaces necessitates that women's homelessness is structurally different from male homelessness. It is also worth noting that homeless women are placed in situations where they are excluded from environments that are culturally coded as female and as such are more likely to be stigmatized as "deviant" than homeless men, for whom the streets are coded as male space (Klodawsky 2006; O'Grady and Gaetz 2004). This means that even women who are "streetwise" are likely to be unable to be fully comfortable as homeless men are more likely to hold the monopoly on money and social power (O'Grady and Gaetz 2004).

The way that the streets are socially constructed and defined also determines what kinds of money-making are available to people; in general, men are more likely to have access to more lucrative opportunities (O'Grady and Gaetz 2004). Studies show that men and women have employment opportunities, but men make significantly higher weekly earnings and are much more likely to be offered full-time work (O'Grady and Gaetz 2004). Studies also show that similar numbers of men and women engage in sex work to make an income while homeless but women, unlike men, are rarely able to operate independently and are often under the control of a pimp (O'Grady and Gaetz 2004).

Homeless women are more likely than men to engage in survival sex (Reeve 2018). Survival sex is different from using sex to earn an income as survival sex is specifically motivated by the desire to avoid or escape living on the street (Reeve 2018). There are 5 general forms that survival sex can take. These include seeking someone to spend the night with, developing an ongoing relationship with a housed man specifically for housing, temporarily reuniting with exes for accommodation, engaging in sex work

to be able to afford a hotel, and using sex work to find a client that will allow them to stay with them for the night (Reeve 2018). Survival sex may also be used to barter for necessary survival items (ex. food) or services (ex. laundry) (Reeve 2018). A 2011 study found that in a sample of 400 single homeless women, 20% used sex work to pay for hotel rooms, 28% spent the night with a housed man specifically for access to accommodation, and 19% engaged in sex work for the opportunity to spend a night with their client (Reeve 2018).

Homeless women also face unique challenges when it comes to motherhood as well (Reeve 2018). Lack of childcare presents a significant impact on a woman's ability to find adequate employment to escape homelessness, as well as the lack of transitional housing programs and low-income housing options (Schwann et al 2020). While family shelters are an option for homeless mothers, staying at these shelters often has a risk of child removal due to mandatory reporting legislation and can create reluctance to use shelter programs (Schwann et al. 2020). This risk is much higher for indigenous mothers (Schwann et al. 2020). Homeless mothers also face increased stigmatization as they are seen as "bad mothers" due to their inability to provide stable housing for their child's illness (Schwann et al. 2020; Fotheringham et al. 2013). The feeling of increased societal pressure may lead to a higher prevalence of mental illness in homeless mothers (Schwann et al. 2020; Fotheringham et al. 2013). Furthermore, it has been observed that mothers that are no longer providing direct care for their children due to child removal or the mother sending them to live with relatives are often unable to access family-specific supports. Instead, women are treated as single by the system (Reeve 2018). Finding housing for homeless mothers can also be made more difficult by the need to ensure that housing is close enough to necessary services like school and take into account neighbourhood safety (Schwann et al. 2020).

Access to housing has been identified as an issue that is primarily related to income rather than discrimination (Watson 2000). While poverty is an issue that affects both men and women, it can have a greater impact on women as they are more likely to be paid less than men. Criteria for entrance to supportive housing programs may use average male incomes entrance requirements (Watson 2000). Furthermore, women are more likely to have a greater share of domestic responsibility (childcare in particular) and are therefore less likely to be able to work full-time (Watson 2000).

A major difference exists between men's and women's homelessness regarding their causal factors. Research demonstrates that men's homelessness occurs through early life social exclusion that continues into adulthood, whereas women's homelessness is more often associated with relationship breakdown (Bretherton 2017). This difference also accounts for part of the misrepresentation of homeless women in homeless statistics. Women who access domestic violence services like refugees are often recorded as victims of domestic violence rather than homeless (Bretherton 2017). This separation of homelessness and domestic violence services can become extremely problematic as women who access specific domestic violence services are then often barred from also accessing homelessness services (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Women experience increased risk from domestic violence as they are most often the lower wage earner in their homes (and have more precarious job security), and are less able to avoid homelessness should they flee from an abusive partner (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Women escaping domestic violence are also shown to frequently give up their jobs as well as familial support making it more difficult to secure their housing and often forcing them to rely on shelters (Schwann et al 2020). While it may be possible for women to gain access to domestic violence-specific services, these services often require police reports and criminal investigation to partake. This may lead to a higher risk of violence due to retaliation from the abuser (Schwann et al. 2020). Studies show that women on the street are also at significantly increased risk of experiencing violence as 37% of women experienced sexual

assault in 2016 (Schwann et al. 2020). This often leads to a desire to avoid living on the street and may encourage a woman to remain in an abusive relationship if she has nowhere else to go as this may be the safer option (Schwann et al. 2020).

One major step that can be taken to ameliorate the risk of homelessness for women would be the integration of policy and services for domestic violence and homelessness (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Canada's National Housing Strategy in 2017 has shifted programming to a housing 1st model with the emphasis being placed on achieving rapid rehousing for people entering homelessness. However, it has focused on the standard or male-centric definition of homelessness and ignores women's specific needs surrounding housing and homelessness (Yakubovich and Maki 2021; Fotheringham et al. 2013). The implementation of the National Housing Strategy has shown positive results but these results have been male favoured (Yakubovich and Maki. 2021). As of May 2020, Canada has committed to providing $76 million for domestic violence shelters, sexual assault clinics and non-profit gender-based violence organizations, as well as $344 million towards the national housing strategy and $1 billion towards rapid rehousing initiatives (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). While this is a good step, the problem with funding remains as it is segregated at the policy level, and will run into the same issues that are already present in the system where women can access some services but get locked out of others (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). A major boon to Canada's efforts to combat both homelessness and domestic violence would be to produce an intersectional definition of homelessness. It would incorporate domestic violence as a primary cause of women's homelessness and focus on producing intersectional policy and programming to address both issues simultaneously (Yakubovich and Maki 2021).

There are working examples of what intersectional policy would look like in other countries. One example is the United Kingdom's Domestic Abuse bill that provides priority housing for domestic abuse survivors which recognizes homelessness as a primary concern for those experiencing domestic abuse. As such, it seeks to act as a preventative measure to avoid the experience of homelessness entirely (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Another example is found in Scotland where it is now possible for the tenancy to be transferred from the abusive partner to the domestic abuse survivor (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Other countries have also developed an intersectional policy that focuses on providing short-term funding to provide financial and advocacy support to domestic abuse survivors. This includes connecting housing providers with domestic abuse services to provide rapid relocation and rehousing to domestic abuse survivors (Yakubovich and Maki 2021).

There are several potential ways that policy could be developed to help better address women's homelessness. The first priority needs to be on creating a more standardized and intersectional definition of homelessness which acknowledges both the range of experiences of homeless people as well as the multitude of causal factors for homelessness (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). This would go a long way towards allowing new policies and programming to be shaped to better fit the needs of the people accessing them. It would provide more clear direction to research on homelessness and provide better guidelines for the outcome evaluation of programs (Yakubovich and Maki 2021). Overall, if these changes aren't made, Canada will continue to ignore a significant part of its homeless population simply because they are not visible enough. The problems they face will only continue to grow; implementing these changes must be of paramount importance.

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38. Reflection on Working in a Shelter

THOMAS RODEN (HE/HIM)

I've had the unique pleasure of being able to work at a men's shelter for 2.5 years now. In general, it was a very illuminating experience for me as before that time, I had never really had any contact with a homeless person before. I've always told people that the biggest thing I learned from working in the shelter is that homeless people really are just people; you get all the same kinds of people at the shelter as you do everywhere else in life (good and bad).

In regards to gender, one of the first things that stuck out to me was the differences in how the shelter residents reacted to female vs. male staff members. I only rarely felt like I was in a risky situation or like I wasn't being respected but I know my female coworkers were much more likely to be actively threatened by residents and more commonly had to deal with constant sexual innuendos and having their authority be ignored. One of my coworkers ended up quitting because she was physically threatened twice in two weeks (though it was from a community member and not a shelter resident) whereas I have never been threatened in the entire time I worked there.

While I worked at a men's shelter, we also did a lot of community outreach programs like lunch and dinner programs as well as a laundry and shower program and we also handed out snacks and other supplies (socks, toiletries, etc.) from the front desk to the community. Due to this, I also had lots of contact with homeless women. One of the biggest differences was that I got offered sex quite often; as the shelter didn't have a parking lot, I had to walk roughly 5 minutes to get to me car and it was pretty common when going home from the afternoon shift (9:30pm) for me to get approached by a woman with an offer. The very first time it happened was incredibly awkward for me but overtime, it quickly became apparent that this was a common process for them as I began to notice that the same women would always approach me with the same script and that even their response to me rejection was scripted as well.

When working a night shift, it was also readily apparent that the women in the community would come at weird hours. Usually by 12:00am the crowd at the front of the shelter would disperse and everything would be quiet until around 2:00 when women would start to show up with requests for food or whatever else. We never had many show up but they were very systematic about sticking to their schedule and they always made sure to hide whatever we gave them in pockets or under their shirts whereas men hardly ever made the effort to conceal what they had. Another thing that was common was that single women would often come to sit on our front steps because they knew that we had cameras and that they would be safer there than anywhere else at night.

During the day, we always had more women than men making use of our laundry and shower programs and most of them came dressed up a bit so that they didn't really look homeless. I got pretty good at it but when I first started it wasn't uncommon for me to have the complete wrong impression for why they were coming to the shelter and assume that they were actually dropping off donations or had a meeting in the building. One important note though is that the women that came for the shower and laundry were not usually the same women that we saw coming by the shelter at night. To me, this implies that the women coming during the day were hidden homeless and likely not actually on the street. It also shows that the number of homeless may be much higher in Nanaimo than official statistics state as we

had so many coming that we would have to start turning some away when our programs ended for the day.

One of the parts I most loved about working at the shelter was getting a chance to talk to the residents about their lives. Interestingly, most of the residents in the shelter were in their middle age so they often had a lot to talk about. One of my favourite guys to talk to used to go on tour with various rock bands in the 70s as a roadie or stage hand and we made a kind of game out of guessing whether or not he was telling a true story or just making things up. On a less happy note, I always found it incredibly moving to hear about how our residents ended up at the shelter. For a lot of them, it started with broken childhoods and them turning to drugs and alcohol to cope with it. Others talked about bad endings to their relationships where they were forced to become homeless as a result. We did have one guy that actually chose to be homeless, I'm confident that he could have been successful had he wanted to but he doesn't want to have to work so he has set up a permanent camp for himself in the woods and he rides his bike all around town. He only comes to the shelter when he wants to stay for a few days to shower and make conversation before he checks himself out and goes back to his camp. I think it's worth bring him up in particular because he chose to be homeless (assuming he is actually telling the truth); this is something I feel confident in saying that women would not choose for themselves as they are at significantly more risk in being homeless than men are.

I never got to work with women to the same degree that I did with men but, in general, I think that men are capable (or at least more likely) to be able to enjoy or be comfortable being homeless. While there was definitely a lot of anger and depression in their situations, the shelter could sometimes feel extremely cheerful and just as there was a lot of guys struggling, there was a lot of guys that seemed more than happy just doing their own thing everyday. In contrast, the times I had contact with homeless woman were tinged with anxiety and desperation (on their part) like they felt they weren't really supposed to be there. Also, while it's not something I can directly comment on, I have heard from people working at the women's shelter that it is much more rife with anger and frustration and that they have far more problems with behaviour between residents than we ever did at the men's shelter.

39. The Table

ANONYMOUS

E.J.

I don't want a seat at the table,
I want to shatter it.

I want to break the glass,
Flip the tabletop,
Pull the tablecloth like a rug beneath heavy feet,
Slither my way past whisky tongues,
Pull the daggers from their hands,
And curse the teeth they seethe

I want to watch them burn into glorious ash,
Pray gratefulness into the destruction that surrounds me,
And the vines that follow,
Invasive greenery on unholy land

I want to breathe life into places that demand death,
Wage war on those who refuse to breathe the light
And seek refuge from the sun's beams

I don't want a seat at the table,
I want to wither my greys into spaces they've been scorned,
Decorate the graves with roses,
And thoughts,
And prayers

Dreaded, not compliant.

Because I refuse to play a part in the old fashioned,
On the rocks, orange peel between my teeth,
Bitter, sunken, drunken mess,
Ribbons around their fingers because
"They know best"

I don't want a seat at the table, I want to break it

40. Passing, Transition and the Non-binary Experience: The Challenges of Living Outside of the Gender Binary

EVA RUTZEBECK (SHE/THEY)

Keywords: Non-binary, Transgender, Two-Spirit, Presentations, Passing

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Passing as transgender and non-binary is a complex topic which is more important than ever before to try to understand. This is due to many more trans and non-binary people coming out and beginning their transitions. Passing or to pass is the idea, in general, that a person of one group can appear to be a part of another group and can refer to one's race, nationality, gender and/or other attributes (Dias et al. 2021). Historically, passing referred to black slaves who attempted to gain freedom by passing as white (Dias et al. 2021). For my purposes, to pass will refer to when a trans person reaches a point in their transition where they are indistinguishable from a cis person of the same gender both visually and through mannerisms (Dias et al. 2021). For example, a trans man being indistinguishable from a cis man (Dias et al. 2021). Passing is not always the goal for trans people. Many trans people do not wish to pass, while many others do (Anderson et al. 2019). Passing is often used to protect oneself from the many dangers and difficulties that come with being a trans person (Anderson et al. 2019). However, there are many situations where a trans person cannot pass. One of these such situations is when someone is non-binary or when their gender identity does not fit neatly into the normalized gender binary (Anderson et al. 2019). Non-binary people are unable to pass because they are not transitioning from one gender to another as many binary trans people do (Anderson et al. 2019). Non-binary people have a unique gender identity that is outside of the normative gender binary (Anderson et al. 2019). This inability to pass can cause many complex challenges in the day-to-day lives of trans people, binary and non-binary alike, and the issues around passing are worthy of discussion.

Non-binary people, just like other trans people, have always existed across various cultures all over the world (Richards et al. 2016). Non-binary is a gender identity that is often used as a broad umbrella term to classify an individual's identity when that identity is outside the realms of man or woman. Sometimes this incorporates both or neither into their identity (Richards et al. 2016). For this essay, non-binary as an umbrella term will include those who identify as non-binary, genderqueer, bigender, genderfluid, agender, and other identities that are not strictly binary. Many non-binary people do not consider themselves to be transgender, but many others do. It is a personal choice and I wish to acknowledge that as this essay will be discussing non-binary issues in tandem with trans issues (Darwin 2020).

Due to colonization and the destruction of native cultures, our Western society is a very binary cisnormative one (Darwin 2020). Throughout history, non-binary people have presented themselves in

different ways. One of the oldest known non-binary gender identities originated in India 4 thousand years ago (NewsyHub 2022). They are known as the Hijra and were well-respected individuals that were believed to have the power to bestow curses or blessings (NewsyHub 2022). When the British colonized, they enforced a binary gender system on India; however today the Hijra is legally recognized as a third gender (NewsyHub 2022). In the Americas before colonization, indigenous people may have had two to ten genders, known today as the two-spirit people. They were also nearly lost to colonialism (NewsyHub 2022). These two identities just scratch the surface of the long and varied history of non-binary identities. There are likely many instances of non-binary identities and people that have been lost (NewsyHub 2022).

Today many non-binary people are forced to use their assigned gender for legal and day-to-day matters. In some places, such as in Canada, a non-binary or otherwise gender non-conforming person can use an 'X' marker on legal identification as opposed to an 'F' or 'M' (Richards et al. 2016). However, while being able to have an 'X' on one's legal documentation is a huge step, it does not solve all the problems that come with identifying outside of the gender binary. The issue of 'passing' is one of these many problems.

As mentioned, passing is a complex topic for trans people and to be clear a trans person who passes is not lying or being deceitful, they are simply existing in a specific way (Anderson et al. 2019). Trans people by the very nature of their existence challenge the idea of a biological gender-sex binary and challenging that binary can be a dangerous feat (Anderson et al. 2019). Trans people are currently one of the most at-risk groups for becoming victims of physical and sexual violence (Anderson et al. 2019). Because of this, the trans community has various strategies for keeping themselves safe (Anderson et al. 2019). Passing is one of those strategies, however, this is not to say that it is the only reason a trans person would want to pass (Anderson et al. 2019).

Many trans people wish to pass to affirm their own identity through how they present themselves to the world (Anderson et al. 2019). Many trans people use passing as both a way to protect themselves and a way to affirm their identity (Anderson et al. 2019). Passing also helps trans people be legitimized in a cisnormative society; trans people who pass can more easily navigate an often-hostile environment and cis people are more likely to acknowledge and respect their gender identity (Anderson et al. 2019). For example, if a trans person passes they can more easily avoid being misgendered both in public and private (Anderson et al. 2019).

However, trans people shouldn't need to pass for their identity to be respected and the fact is that passing is a fragile state; Once someone knows a person is trans they will always know, which could lead to even more unpleasant or dangerous situations that the passing trans person had previously avoided (Anderson et al. 2019; Broussard & Warner 2018). Passing, can often be complicated and imperfect, and for some being trans and visibly trans is a large part of their identity and to be cis-passing could be felt as a loss (Nicolazzo 2016). The concept of passing in general can be problematic on its own, as it can reinforce the idea of the cisnormative gender binary, while passing can feel liberating to some, not being able to pass can be devastating to those who wish to (Anderson et al. 2019). It can also reinforce colonial ideas of what gender looks like, not to say that one shouldn't look how they wish but the idea that all women look a certain way, or all men act a certain way with no exceptions is harmful (Anderson et al. 2019). Those who do not wish to pass can also feel pressured into doing so, and others still may make changes to themselves they don't want or aren't ready to make. This is in the hopes that they pass and avoid harassment and discrimination (Anderson et al. 2019).

For many non-binary people, passing can be a near impossibility as they often have nothing to pass as. Passing as a concept can reinforce the idea that trans people are going from one sex/gender to

another when often that isn't the case (Nicolazzo 2016). There is no one way to be non-binary, and there is no one way to be trans in general, but non-binary people have no single goalpost to aim for in their transition (Darwin 2020). Transition for some non-binary individuals involves nothing but an internal acknowledgement of their identity, while for others transition involves a wardrobe change, surgery, and hormone replacement therapy (HRT) (Darwin 2020). Unfortunately, for many non-binary individuals, there is no way to pass and fit back into the cisnormative system (Broussard and Warner 2018). Many non-binary people will always be going against the binary systems and expectations of gender, often leading to more discrimination (Broussard & Warner 2018). If a non-binary person chooses to stop presenting as their assigned gender and become more androgynous, they will be perceived as attacking the binary gender systems and face more challenges as a result (Broussard and Warner 2018). On the other hand, many non-binary people pass as their assigned gender and therefore do not suffer those challenges. However, the difference between passing and hiding their identity in those circumstances is up for debate (Darwin 2020).

Some of the challenges non-binary people face occur within the medical system. Passing and transitions in general sometimes involve various medical and non-medical interventions that alter how someone looks (Anderson et al. 2019). Medical transitions are procedures such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and surgeries, and non-medical transitions (also called social transitions) are things like changing one's wardrobe and choosing a new name and pronouns (Anderson et al. 2019). It should be said that many trans and non-binary people will often choose not to medically transition, and it is more often that non-binary people may make that choice (Nicolazzo 2016). There are plenty of non-binary people who do choose to undergo a medical transition (Bellamy-Walker 2018).

Non-binary people experience high levels of medical discrimination to the point where many will avoid medical visits to avoid mistreatment and discrimination (Kattari et al. 2020). This discrimination is far more likely if they have other intersecting factors such as being a person of colour, disabled, or of a lower social economic status (Kattari et al. 2020). Many doctors and other physicians will deny the existence of non-binary people and refuse to work outside the binary (Bellamy-Walker 2018). In many cases, non-binary people who wish to go on HRT or have surgeries will be denied for the reasoning of them being 'not trans enough.' The events of such denials can be devastating to the patient's mental and physical health (Bellamy-Walker 2018).

The idea of 'not being trans enough' often comes from the idea that one must medically transition to be trans also known as trans medicalism (CopsHateMoe 2022). Trans medicalism is the idea that being trans is a wholly unpleasant experience and that to be trans one must wish to have surgeries and HRT to become as close to the 'opposite sex' as possible to fully pass (CopsHateMoe 2022). Trans-medicalism in this way denies the existence of non-binary people, many of whom as stated do not wish for such things (CopsHateMoe 2022). Trans-medicalism often plays into the idea that gender is inherently biological and binary which can be harmful to those who identify outside of the gender binary and do not wish to have surgeries or HRT (CopsHateMoe 2022). It can also be damaging to those who may want one but not the other as they may feel pressured to get both to be trans enough and to pass as cis (CopsHateMoe 2022).

I spoke with a non-binary individual named Royal (age 23) to get their thoughts on the issue of passing for non-binary people. While their thoughts and feelings are unique to them I believe it is essential to hear the opinions of a non-binary person. They wish to remain mostly anonymous so they will only be referred to by their first name. Royal spoke about how they felt that passing as a non-binary person

was an impossibility (Royal 2022). Royal has an image in their mind of what they wish to look like but presenting as non-binary isn't exactly something that can be done (Royal 2022). They said:

> Confusing people is the closest I could get to passing, no one will ever look at me and know I'm non-binary like they could if I was a trans man, people could look at me and know I'm queer by how I'm dressed which is all fun and good but I'll always be misgendered in public and that's just something I have to live with (Royal 2022).

They continued by saying how looking visibly queer can be dangerous and even though they want their preferred pronouns used they often do not correct people for fear of discrimination (Royal 2022).

> I rarely if ever correct someone when they misgender me, it's a habit of biting my tongue to ensure my safety. I have to pick my battles when it comes to this sort of thing and most of the time outing myself to a stranger to avoid the discomfort of being misgendered just isn't worth it (Royal 2022).

When asked about their thoughts on the idea of passing in general they said:

> I think the idea of passing is great for the people who want it and can do it, but it sucks for everyone else. I feel like things would be better if we could all just look however we wanted without fear of discrimination. If a trans woman wants to look cis good for her and the same goes for if she doesn't but if she doesn't look cis and doesn't want to she'll be under way more scrutiny and in more danger, a lot of the time and that's not fair (Royal 2022).

Finally, Royal was asked what they think could be done to help non-binary people navigate society better.

> Firstly, abolish gender markers on IDs and passports, if I get pulled over I don't need a cop to know I'm trans by seeing a big X on my license. Then really making it easier to get the care we need, I don't need to convince my primary care doctor or a therapist I need breast implants to get them, why should I have to get their approval to get top surgery and have them removed? These things should be on the same level of availability but they aren't. The same goes for HRT. Just make this stuff easier and stop stigmatizing it, the changes I make to my body aren't anyone else's business and I shouldn't be afraid of getting discriminated against for them (Royal 2022).

In conclusion, trans and non-binary people have always existed in one form or another and are struggling to continue to exist today due to the binary society colonizers have created (Darwin 2020). Passing as cis is one of the many strategies trans people use to protect themselves and is also the transition goal many trans people have (Anderson et al. 2019). However, it can be extremely difficult or impossible for non-binary people to pass, as their only options to pass are the gender they were assigned at birth or the 'opposite' gender. There are no other societally recognized options (Darwin 2020). The pressure to pass can reinforce these binary options (Anderson et al. 2019). Our cisnormative society is often hostile towards trans and non-binary people's existence. In the medical area, this is very clear (Bellamy-Walker 2018). Non-binary people experience a lot of discrimination within the medical system, due to transphobia and doctors' refusal to understand their gender identity (Bellamy-Walker 2018). They are often denied gender-affirming care due to 'not being trans enough,' which plays into the false idea that all trans people wish to pass and appear or be cis (CopsHateMoe 2022). There are suggested ways that society at large could make life better for trans and non-binary people. For starters removing gender markers from legal documents and making gender-affirming medical care easier to access—in short, making society overall more accepting and accommodating to people who do not fit within the gender binary.

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41. Misogynistic Technology: How Contemporary Technology Supports Sexism and Endangers Wome

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Keywords: self harm, misogyny

The culture and products of the tech industry have been manipulated or designed to perpetuate violence against women. The outcome of misogyny in our modern tech industry comes from a plethora of areas; from the fraternity effect that comes from a lack of diversity within a given professional field, to how men and women are socialized to see women as lesser (Barker, Scheele, 2019), to the broader sociological structures of rape culture. Within the confines of this op-ed, I hope to show the worrying effect that our modern technological world has on reinforcing and perpetuating misogyny within the 21st century.

Through examining both the culture within the tech industry as well as the applications that they create I hope to better understand how misogyny becomes reproduced through such technology. To begin let's examine a popular application made by the corporation Meta. The application Facebook perpetuate profit driven abuse to young women and girls that directly cause mental and physical harm (Wells, et al., 2021). This gender based societal violence is especially noteworthy within Facebook, and other applications owned by Meta. As pointed out by Adrian Daub (2021) in his work How sexism is coded into the Tech Industry, the current system of algorithmically based systems, and user created data pools relies heavily on the unpaid and unregulated labour of countless millions of individuals, who all reflect the socialisation of and social structures of our contemporary society. Within these user created databases, any biases such as transphobia, misogyny or homophobia can be recreated through these systems. Within these algorithms, Meta and its products such as Facebook and Instagram create a traumatising and continued attack on every one of their user's mental health, especially the mental health of women. For example, a regular aspect to Metas applications is how the algorithms regularly perpetuate toxic thought specifically tailored to its female demographics; be it promoting body dysmorphia, self-harm or other types of content that is damaging to women's self-esteem (Wells, et al. 2021).

There are also specific and separate ways that Meta perpetuates gendered discrimination within the nonbinary and non-gender conforming communities that use its platform. In regard to this very issue of, Facebook's history of failing communities within the LGBTQIA+ communities Bivens, (2017) states that

[T]he issue at hand is not supplying advertisers and marketers with better data about gender. Since corporate data collection comes with serious risks, including surveillance of marginalized populations, our efforts should not be geared toward creating more "authentic" and "real" data sets by programming more inclusive (and granular) categories on surface or deep software levels. Facebook's attempt to ally with trans and gender non-conforming communities resulted in programming practices that actively misgender them. This misgendering reinforces hegemonic regimes of gender control that perpetuate

the violence and discrimination disproportionately faced by these communities. The capacity for software to invisibly enact this symbolic violence by burying it deep in the software's core is the most pressing issue to attend to. (Bivens, 2017, P. 323)

The production of applications that Meta has created are incredibly troubling when it comes to how they negatively affect young people's mental health, specifically young women and girls (Wells, et al., 2021). The negative mental health effects are even more daunting when looked at through a lens of intersectionality, where women of countless intersections of operation within our white supremacist, heteronormative, misogynistic capitalism must deal with overlapping operations in relation to the negative mental health outcomes of Meta's products (Wells, et al., 2021). The denigration of female users' mental health which Meta is fully aware of is simply the largest example of gendered based violence that the corporation exhibits. This is on top of issues of child trafficking and political and hate related harassment that regularly target women within Metas applications (Wells, et al., 2021). "The documents also show that Facebook has made minimal efforts to address these issues and plays them down in public (Wells, et al., 2021, What Facebook knows, para 2)". This mental health crisis of women (that relates to countless other gender-based crises) that Meta has helped to profit from is directly related to how tech companies utilise already tangible aspects to societal misogyny to increase profits (Wells, et al., 2021).

Similar to all the other large tech companies investigated within this op-ed, the Taxi like service, Uber has also consistently been shown to create a toxic work environment for women (Masters, 2017). Reports of a toxic work environment and regular sexual harassment from upper management, came early on for Uber (Masters, 2017). Uber has done more than create a sexist working condition for its office staff, the actual applications that Uber creates have been utilised countless times for stalking and harassment purposes.

You might assume that having untrained drivers who are heavily incentivized into working long hours often late into the night would lead to the largest public safety issues being that of vehicle related deaths, but in actuality by far the largest threat to the public that Uber poses is that of sexual violence to both customers and drivers. "The most striking statistic — almost 6000 incidences of sexual assault.17 The sexual assault figures reflect both Uber riders and Uber drivers as victims1 (Turnball, 2022 p.279)". Within these same safety statistics fatal car accidents only make up 97 total fatalities within the same time frame (Turnball, 2022). Making sexual assault 61 times more likely to happen to drivers and passengers in an Uber than a fatal car accident (Turnball, 2022). I'm sure we are all aware that these statistics on sexual assault are guaranteed to be drastically under reported, especially when the rapist may have knowledge of where you live. The statistic of 6000 assaults does not even begin to show the true nature of Ubers applications and their disregard for women's safety. This statistic does not cover any sexual harassment which also plagues the ride sharing industry (Wall, 2022).

This staggering sexual assault statistic is the living embodiment of our current misogynistic tech industry, where frat culture is allowed to run rampant, thus creating a product that does not care about women's safety. These applications (like many in the tech industry) fail to create protections against harassment as well as failing employees when they do come forwards (Turnball, 2022). Simple solutions, such as optionally matching female drivers to female riders as pointed out by Wall (2022) could create safer usage for both groups of women. Additionally, having further safeguards such as background checks for drivers would create a safer environment for passengers. All of these obvious answers to passenger and driver safety that Uber refuses to implement would slightly undercut the quarterly profits for the company, so we are unlikely to see them implemented anytime soon.

The capability of misogynistic violence against women to be perpetuated by large tech companies

applies outside of the world of the internet and the practices of online sexism. A specific example would be the creation of Apple's new air tags (Matei, 2021). A device that could easily and discreetly track anything, be it your car or your child's backpack (which came in handy for my family when my 5 year old nephew decided to get on the bus with his school friend and ended up in Maple Bay). But the air tags were immediately utilised for stalking behaviour against women upon their release (Matei, 2021). Apple has since tried to address this glaring misogynistic application of their product by letting customers who own an iPhone be notified of the presence of an air tag. This still does not address the fact that most humans do not own an iPhone (Matei, 2021). This real-world technological innovation fails to properly address how it can be utilised for the advancement of misogynistic violence. A direct product of the fraternity styled leadership within the tech world, where men (usually white and straight men) fail to realise how communities that lack their privileges might be drastically harmed by their actions. This same principle of being able to track someone's whereabouts, can be seen throughout Silicon Valley. The worst example in line with that of Apple air tags would be that of the app Snapchat and its Snap Map, which utilises location settings to track your friends in real time and know exactly where someone is.

Cyber sexism has real, noticeable, and usually devastating repercussions on the safety and security of women and girls (The Economist, 2019). Additionally, online misogyny violates the rights of women and girls to equality and freedom from discrimination. It also contributes to the normalization of violence against women within our culture. More specifically this violence is disproportionally normalised within different internet cultures leading to misogynistic violence becoming extremely normalised in some radical corners of the internet. (Kirkpatrick, 2017). "In America, women hold just 25% of jobs in computing, and leave the tech and engineering sectors at twice the rate of men (The Economist, 2019 para 1)". Similar statistics exist throughout the Western world showing the degradation that women face within the tech sector. This exploitation of women within tech is particularly noteworthy within the confines of the video game sector.

There are problems of misogyny in countless industries from around the world but the workplaces within the video game industry are literally a cesspool of misogynistic corporations that refuse to change leadership, hire women and promote them to prominent roles, or address their blatant misogyny in any meaningful way. The worst example of this in recent months comes from one of the largest production companies in the industry, Activision Blizzard. Activision Blizzard was recently investigated by the California Attorney General and had massive fines levied against them for their disgusting and dehumanising work culture.

[As reported by the New York Times] In one case, the lawsuit said, a female employee died by suicide during a business trip, as a result of her sexual relationship with her male supervisor. Before her death, male colleagues allegedly shared explicit photos of the woman, the lawsuit said (Browning, 2021, Para 5).

This case study of Activision Blizzard shows us the scope at which current workplace harassment exists within the field of tech. Activision Blizzard is one of the single largest producers of video games, with some of the fields largest products, having the two top selling games of 2020 in the U.S.(as reported by GameStop, 2021) and are known for some of the largest franchises in gaming such as Call of Duty and World of Warcraft. This abuse and attack of female staff within the video game industry is as mainstream and as systemic as any abuse can be. We can clearly see that today's heads of industry have been socialized for decades into a system of toxic masculinity, one that exists on countless levels of different tech industries.

In Graeme Kirkpatrick, (2017) work How gaming became sexist they examine how video games culture

developed between 1981 and 1995, which showcases video game culture before and after its sexist transformation.

Gaming culture was formed at this time, but it did not inherit the sexist values of the pre-

existing technical culture. It was in the context of establishing itself as a discrete realm

within and against the technical milieu that gaming acquired an idea of itself as avowedly masculine (conclusion para 2).

Within my own life I have come face to face with the conceptual idea of "video games being for boys only" that gaming is a section carved out for heteronormative version of masculinity and that gamers and gamer culture can be vitriolic towards women and oppressed minorities.

Something else that sets Silicon Valley apart is the entrenched belief among the powerbrokers that they are not only changing the world but changing the world "for the better." That confidence creates a sense of moral exceptionalism and arrogance that distances Silicon Valley from real-world people and problems. In fact, the tech industry faces many of the same issues that other industries face with sexism, racism and ageism, but is blind to it, which means there is even less of an urgency to change Silicon Valley itself for the better (quoted by Emily Chang in the Economist, para 6 of interview, 2019).

It is incredibly important for sociologists to recognize the need to research how technology drives our society and opens up different avenues of understanding within any given milieu. I believe that the current conglomeration of massive tech giants is incentivizing the continued sexism within our society.

In 2014, information concerning Google's hiring practices of women and people within the BIPOC community became public (Mundy, 2019). The statistics were staggeringly awful. Soon after, other large tech corporations "including LinkedIn, Yahoo, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, eBay, and Apple [followed suit releasing their own numbers] (Mundy, 2019, para 15)". Despite the dismal results, the businesses have now pledged to spend hundreds of millions of dollars enhancing the working conditions of these marginalised employees (Mundy, 2019).

This shows us how progress is made through placing operations and practices of marginalisation into the light; it allows these practices to slowly be dismantled. The money that these tech monopolies are putting into better hiring practices won't end the misogyny of the online world and in my opinion will likely not raise the diversity of the upper echelons of these corporations by much, but it will help to slowly weed out the most blatant aspects of the fraternity-based culture that exists within these tech giants. Over time with these misogynistic cultures dissipating, true change will slowly come to these tech giants, who will be pressured to make changes to address the poisonous misogyny that they help to fester online.

There is no simple answer to fixing the misogyny within our contemporary tech industry. It is an issue that has been growing for decades and may take decades to undo. As a start, having women throughout corporate entities, especially within the higher echelons of leadership, will begin to unravel the frat house style of management that has filled the tech industry with the fumes of toxic masculinity for decades. Additionally recognizing the fact that these tech companies remain profitable through supporting violence against women is key to creating the necessity for new corporations that work to end these principals of violence, thus undercutting the profitability of these misogynistic corporations.

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42. The Manosphere: How online misogynistic forums are dedicated to upholding hierarchy

DAVID T. SCHNEIDER (HE/HIM)

Within the not so deep depths of the contemporary internet lives a thriving and growing group of communities that explicitly and relentlessly hate women. It is a loose collective of different online cultures that overlap in their hatred of women and their longing to return to a state of male supremacy in society; it is known collectively as the manosphere. To understand the manosphere and the prevailing ideology within it we must first understand that it does not contain just one social group of misogynists, but instead includes a multitude of misogynistic cultures that overlap in membership and thought (Van Valkenburgh, 2021). [The manosphere is] united in their adherence to Red Pill "philosophy," which purports to liberate men from a life of feminist delusion (Ging, 2019, abstract para 1). The term "red pill" being in reference to the film series The Matrix, where the character Neo is given the choice between a red pill that will set him free and a blue pill that will leave him in the simulation (Ging, 2019). The red pill metaphor can be seen as the definitive moment where a member of the manosphere chooses to accept the false premise that society systemically oppresses men and thus direct action is required to address this perceived oppression (Ging,2019). This false conception of current gender relations found throughout the manosphere reflects a malevolent attempt to hold onto male supremacy within our society. It is this attempt to hold onto male supremacy that creates an ideologically consistent through line within the manosphere. It is through this through line that we can better understand the overlapping interests of male supremacist cultures online. This article will utilize two distinct case studies of male supremacist cultures within the manosphere to showcase this through line and create a better understanding of how online male supremacy is maintained and perpetuated. Specifically, the online groups of the pickup artist and incel communities.

This article will show that, within the manosphere, a consistent and constant theme exists that transcends each and every misogynistic cultural group within the manosphere, that of a dedicated upholding of hierarchies in our contemporary society. The manosphere perpetuates an ideal masculinity that has never existed in an attempt to hold onto the social oppression of countless marginalized groups It is through this backing of hierarchy that we can better understand the manosphere and its ever-increasing presence in our contemporary society. This article hopes to investigate these online cultural groupings in a broader sense without focusing on thought leaders within said communities. This article will instead investigate the larger cultural trends within these misogynistic associations with the hope of better understanding a common framework within these two communities.

For our first case study let us look at the online and real world community of pickup artists. The history of "pickup artists" predates the modern internet and can draw its modern incarnation back to the book The Game written by Neil Strauss (King, 2018). The Game is full of misogynistic tropes as well as aggressive disregard of consent (King, 2018). Within the pickup artist community, concepts of heteronormative sexual harassment and perpetuation of rape culture are regularly taught and repeated as being viable ways of learning how to develop "game" (Van Valkenburgh, 2021). Inside the community of pick-up artists

there exists an aggressive entitlement over female bodies. So those within the community are socialized into the idea that success with women depends solely on their capability to fallow a particular structure of misogynistic tropes and a disregard for principals of consent (King,2018).

In his work Digesting the Red Pill American sociologist Shawn Van Valkenburgh shares this impactful insight (2021). An important facet to developing game is learning to distinguish between genuine and superficial forms of rejection. For example, the sidebar asserts that women challenge would-be seducers with "rapport breaks," defined as expressions of displeasure, refusal, or negativity that may seem like discouraging signs, but are really just "faux indicator[s] of disinterest" (XI) (p.10).

It is through this blatant disregard for female consent that we can see how the pickup artist community perpetuates male supremacy through violence and harassment against women and the perpetuation of ideals of rape culture.

Within the pickup artist community, the development of meaningful and profound relationships is scorned and criticized due to the overwhelming misogyny within the community (Van Valkenburgh, 2021). Instead of creating ways to develop meaningful relationships with partners, the pickup artist community focuses on vapid sexual success, thus creating a feedback loop of loneliness. This loneliness drives members deeper into the manosphere, cutting out "any phenomenological experience of a potential partner's emotional displays (Van Valkenburgh, 2021:14)".

Another dynamic of the manosphere's growth comes from the capability for any group in our digital world to create a profitable circle of consumerism within the community. Consumerism lives in the manosphere and is a fundamental aspect to how it is perpetuated (Das, 2022; Van Valkenburgh, 2021). By having misogynistic cultural items for sale, as well as many other industries such as hyper masculine advertisement (e.g., male sex drive pills, or emergency survivalist paraphernalia) to selling ads for other media members within the manosphere community (Barker, Scheele, 2019). This constant consumerism that is able to exist within the manosphere allows for the manosphere to perpetuate itself over the long term and allows for it to emphasize a mixing of cultural groupings to boost profits (Das, 2022) This corporatization helps to perpetuate ideological growth of many areas of reactionary thought of supporting current hierarchies within our communities as a way to maintain and preserve one's status (Van Valkenburgh, 2021).

Like many internet rabbit holes there are countless levels to the manosphere that allow for entry levels that slowly pull individuals into deeper and more radical aspects of intense misogyny that includes male supremacy rape culture, and deplorable thought patterns (Das, 2022; King, 2018). Our second case study the incel community could certainly be seen as one of the darkest corners of the broader manosphere culture. Within the incel community we can see how they are the opposite side of the same misogynistic coin from the pickup artist community. Instead of leaning into attempting to gain some form of "game" incels retreat into their own loneliness and feast on their own self-pity (Ging, 2019).

There is a serious lack of theoretical frameworks and understanding on how gender extremism is a growing phenomenon as compared to other forms of violent extremism (O'Malley, Holt, Holt, 2022). This is why it is so important to grow a deeper understanding of how incels continue to grow their community in affiliation with other groups within the broader manosphere (King, 2018; O'Malley et al., 2022) As noted by O'Malley et al. (2022) the correlative reason for the age demographic that the incel community inhabits (and the manosphere overall) comes from the fact that the age group in question (18-29) are dealing with newly formed socially based stressors of attempting to make it through the fog of early adulthood. As

described in their work Gender Barker and Scheele (2019) express this same idea in understanding toxic masculinity: “We might also have heard the common idea that masculinity is in crisis. This describes a double bind in which men try to meet old standards of masculinity in a world which is going through changes” (Barker & Scheele, 2019, :58). If masculinity is to move past these communities of hatred, we are going to need to accept a world where people can live their authentic selves as well as focus on socializing in less toxic environments while continuing to build a community that shows supportive masculinity.

It is here within the Incel community that we can see the obvious through line of male supremacist direct action that is the manosphere. The incel community has regularly been noted as an extremist movement, that has perpetuated terrorist action in countries all around the globe, spreading violence directed specifically at women (O’malley, et al. 2022). As noted by O’malley, et al. (2022) in their work An Exploration of the Involuntary Celibate (Incel) Subculture Online “Research on violent extremists and terror groups illustrates that members frequently operate within online spaces that resemble traditional criminal or delinquent subcultures” (p.5). This attribute of extremism can be directly related back to the manosphere where any particular individual may exist within multiple misogynistic communities at once or transfer from one to another over time. A particular area that drastically requires more study is how members of the manosphere may fall down the proverbial rabbit hole into more extreme communities such as incels (Górska, Kulicka, Jemielniak., 2022).

The consistent violence that has come from the incel community in recent years is purely based on the subjugation and proliferation of violence against women (Hoffman, Ware, Shapiro,2020). “[I]ncel violence arguably conforms to an emergent trend in terrorism with a more salient hate crime dimension (Hoffman et al., 2020:1)”. Although this community of gender-based terrorists may seem to be a modern phenomenon, Hoffman, et al. (2020) notes that it is rooted in the past with examples such as the École Polytechnique de Montréal terrorist attack of 1989 which explicitly targeted female college students.

Within these two distinct communities of pickup artists and of incels many differences exist, the largest and most glaring being the fact that they see women through different frameworks. Through the framework of a pickup artist-based lens, women are placed at the highest levels of objectification, having their humanity fully removed to the point of being seen as a market-based commodity (Van Valkenburgh, 2021). For the incel community, women are seen as existing outside of humanity “taking on a ‘them’ perspective (Górska et al., 2022: 12)”. In actuality all of these communities have a simple function, that of policing women be it through seeing them as property (for pickup artists) or to police them through extreme acts of violence (as we see in the incel community) (Górska et al., 2022). At the end of the day this enforcement of a male (white supremacist, cis and heteronormative, ableist) dominated society is the end goal of the ideological framework of the manosphere (Górska et al., 2022). Both case studies show that these communities within the Manosphere fail to see women as human and both seek to enact power over women in an attempt to hold onto societal hierarchies.

Within these separate cultures of the manosphere a consistent thread of ideology can be seen, that of a false concept of deserved privilege leading into hierarchies that support said privilege. For both of our case studies that of the pickup artist and the incel community’s other supremacist thought patterns such as white supremacy and ableism exist in tandem with male supremacy, both reinforcing and perpetuating these concepts of supremacist hierarchy that make up the manosphere (Trott, Beckett, Paech, 2022). We can see how both the manosphere and white supremacy can work to create a sense of community around a shared sense of beliefs that create a shared locality of ideas within a community (Trott et al, 2022). It is through this shared belief of red pill thought that the manosphere is able to grow,

by exporting itself to other communities that share a similar idea on upholding contemporary hierarchies such as the aforementioned white supremacist community (Trott et al, 2022). Men still have to deal with the hellscape of modern capitalism and may live seriously unhappy and unfulfilled lives and suffer from inadequate societal help (Barker & Scheele, 2019; Van Valkenburgh, 2021). Men also grow up in a society that has continually perpetuated ideas of male and white supremacy to them from birth, leading to the growth of the communities that make up the manosphere (Barker & Scheele, 2019; Van Valkenburgh, 2021). This of course does not excuse men from supporting supremacist hierarchical systems instead it shows us that diverse communities can and do combat the affects of echo chamber fueled hatred by showing men the reality that exists outside of these echo chambers (Ging, 2019)

Given the ways in which these echo chambers function, most notably to exclude, intimidate, and spectacularly punish some women with a view to warning off all women (Siapera 2015), the issue is not whether there is a direct or meaningful correlation between the manosphere's articulations of antifeminism and the actual people who produce them. Rather it is in understanding the manosphere as a discursive system or network of systems and in seeking to determine the extent of the ideological, psychological, and material power it exerts (Ging, 2019:16).

This power is specifically a power to uphold and perpetuate hierarchies within our current sociological status quo (Ging, 2019). It is the ideological belief of believing in male supremacy and directly ties together the manosphere with the need to impose male supremacy.
There is a reason why the pickup artist community sees heterosexual relations through a lens of market capitalism. Both hierarchical structures of capitalism and misogynistic heteronormativity reinforce one another. (Van Valkenburgh, 2021). "If [pickup artist culture] denies any needs for emotional connection, it encourages the pursuit of sexual relationships that resemble commodity relations (Van Valkenburgh, 2021: 16)". It is through this conception of sexual encounters as commodity exchange that best showcases this sharing of hierarchical uniformity within the manosphere; be it heteronormativity, male domination, capitalism or white supremacy the manosphere is dedicated to tying hierarchies within our contemporary society together. (Ging,2019; King, 2018; Valkenburgh, 2021).

The manosphere is an aggregate of diverse communities brought together by a common language that orients them in opposition to the discourse and rhetoric of feminism. While the concerns of, say, young men interested in seducing women, libertarian Bitcoin farmers, and fathers caught up in contentious custody hearings are quite different, vocabulary contributes to a sense of common identity. Misandry, which until recently was used almost exclusively within the manosphere, functions as part of a common linguistic practice. This creates a sense of community across divergent subgroups, builds ties between individuals, and helps to solidify the ideological commitment of [men's rights organizations]to oppose feminism (Marwick & Capla, 2018, Conclusion para 1).

It is through this opposition to feminism that the manosphere becomes a clear vessel of hierarchy's that wish to maintaining and reincorporating privileges within our contemporary society (Marwick & Capla, 2018). Within the confines of the broader incel community, there exists a broad expression and explicit conceptualization of utilizing violence against women for ideological and political purposes (Górska et al., 2022). Specifically, within the confines of rejection, men within these incel communities can be seen in their most violent form.

As our society progresses to accepting all people to live within their diverse real selves, the slow and dying gasps of traditional hatred-based power structures will continue to attempt to reinforce and bolster said power structures and maintain the preexisting hierarchy. "The threat that Manosphere's

communities pose to women and minority groups and its documented power to incite violence should not be underestimated (Górska et al., 2022:16)". If we are to combat the growing violence of the manosphere and prevent future men from following down the online rabbit hole into extremism, then we must first recognize the underlying ideology of this extremism. Clearly, denoting how the manosphere works to entrench and recreate male domination and heteronormativity is one necessary and poignant way of combating the growth of misogyny in our contemporary society

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43. An Intersectional Approach to Understanding the Challenges of Autistic Women

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Keywords: Disability, Intersectionality, Women, Diagnosis, Autism

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In the media, roles filled for Autistic characters are often portrayed by men. Examples include the movie *Rain Man*, and TV shows such as *The Big Bang Theory, Atypical* and *The Good Doctor*. While the media attempts to showcase Autism, there is a general assumption that only males can be Autistic. Autism may also be perceived as a dichotomy, either an Autistic individual is a genius or requires substantial support. Yet, two important factors are missed in the media presentation and stereotypes. Autism exists on a spectrum and women can be Autistic. The way Autism is often presented in the media is just one example of gender bias. Through an intersectional framework, gender bias in the research literature, diagnostic criteria and additional challenges women on the Autism Spectrum encounter will be explored in this article.

The theory of intersectionality was created by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to understand the intersecting nature of multiple oppressed identities. These identities form various experiences that differ from those who share one or a few of the identities (Crenshaw n.d.). Intersectionality originated from the need to understand Black women's challenges in society. It served as an expansion to feminist and antiracist theories which focused mainly on oppression in a singular way (Crenshaw n.d.). Crenshaw emphasized the importance of viewing oppression in terms of multiple identities by stating that Black women are not the dominant race and are also not men. Thus, creating multiple oppressive identities not otherwise faced by Black men or White women (Crenshaw 1991). The interesting feature of intersectionality is how it considers identities as intersecting facets of one another, rather than viewing individual forms of oppression through the lens of the most impactful (Pearson 2010). Furthermore, the framework of intersectionality allows for a better understanding of societal barriers and how to promote inclusion (Crenshaw n.d.). The theory of intersectionality can be utilized in disability research to explore the barriers in society associated with this marginalized population (Ballan 2008).

Along with intersectionality, the social model of disability views disabilities as the consequence of barriers in society that disable a person, which contrasts with the medical model (Saxe 2017). The main distinction between the social model and the medical model is that the medical modal emphasizes individual deficiencies (Saxe 2017). The barriers created for individuals with disabilities are constructed as part of the able-bodied communities that they live in. Removing social and physical barriers would allow people with disabilities to live normal lives (Ballan 2008; Saxe 2017). Autism has long been conceptualized through the medical model and thus promotes a deficit account (Saxe 2017). Autism advocates in the neurodiverse movement have promoted the notion of Autism as a difference in neurology and as a part of natural human diversity (Anon 2021). The theory of intersectionality connects the social model of disability

and the neurodiverse movement into a thorough understanding of how other social identities such as gender, class, and race, connect with an Autistic identity (Saxe 2017). Intersectionality allows for a greater understanding of the unique experiences Autistic individuals encounter, while allowing deficit-oriented practices to be challenged, and for inequalities to be examined within social structures (Liasidou 2013).

Gender is a broad term that describes characteristics of masculinity and femininity that are socially constructed. While it is important to acknowledge variation in gender expression and identity, it is beyond the scope of this article. When exploring gender from a male/female binary, those who are female with a disability often experience distinct challenges and disadvantages that set them apart from males with disabilities. (Saxe 2017). Negative outcomes for women with disabilities include higher rates of domestic violence, sexual assault and low employment rates (Naami, Hayashi, and Liese 2012; Saxe 2017; Thiara, Hague, and Mullender 2011). It has been noted that women with developmental disabilities face unfathomable abuse (Saxe 2017). In a study conducted by Pecora et al. (2019) revealed that Autistic women were 78.2% more likely to be a victim of unwanted sexual advances compared to 57.7% of non-autistic women (Pecora et al. 2019). Men's experience differs with disabilities as they benefit from privilege even though they are impaired by ableism within social structures (Saxe 2017). Aside from their autism diagnosis men live relatively unprejudiced lives (Saxe 2017). However, according to the framework of intersectionality, this would change based on sexual orientation, class, and ethnicity (Saxe 2017).

Three significant barriers describe the realities for women on the autism spectrum. For women who are cisgender, this sets the tone for gender inequality (Saxe 2017). Next women who are autistic are bombarded with an ableist society. This perpetuates a power struggle between themselves and their able-bodied peers. Often Autistic women face challenges to social inclusion in their communities (Saxe 2017). Lastly, Autistic women are underrepresented in the research literature and as such, diagnostic tools to assess autism have largely focused on the male population (Shefcyk 2015). Delving into these three identities allows for a greater understanding of the challenges that autistic women face (Saxe 2017).

According to the medical model, Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopment condition characterized by restricted or repetitive behaviours, sensory difficulties, and deficits in social interaction and social communication (CDC 2022b). According to the Center for Disease Control (2022), in 1992 the prevalence rate of autism was 1 in 150 children, and the current research as of 2018 suggests a prevalence rate of 1 in 44 children with a 4:1 ratio of males diagnosed to females (CDC 2022a; Loomes, Hull, and Mandy 2017). With a large population of individuals diagnosed with autism and with the numbers increasing, it is important to develop effective strategies that aid in the navigation of an ableist and neurotypical society (Saxe 2017). Furthermore, since women are viewed as the minority in autism research attention must be brought to the issue (Saxe 2017).

Sex differences in autism spectrum disorders have been identified and do not appear to present the same way in both sexes (Saxe 2017). Several studies examining sex differences in the presentation of autism demonstrate that women show less stereotypical characteristics such as repetitive behaviours compared to men (Mandy et al. 2012). In terms of fine motor skills, women generally have better control (Mandy et al. 2012). Women have more sensory issues than men and have greater difficulty in social situations, with challenges in communication (Lai et al. 2011). Furthermore, Autistic women experience more emotional problems and mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression (Mandy et al. 2012; Saxe 2017). Lastly, women often experience one or more intellectual/learning disabilities along with autism which may present difficulty in accurate diagnosis (Saxe 2017). Understanding the presentation of autism in women is important for several reasons. The differences contribute to specific barriers that

impact the process of assessment, diagnosis, interventions, and social inclusion (Saxe 2017). Applying intersectionality to the sex differences in research will allow for a better understanding of the challenges that Autistic women face (Saxe 2017).

In the research literature, women have been often underrepresented because of the "male as norm" ideology, also known as androcentricity which has dominated development studies for decades (Saxe 2017). Studies that have focused on autism have largely focused on male participants with few if any women included and have been generalized (Saxe 2017; Shefcyk 2015). Therefore, sex differences have not been accurately portrayed for Autistic women. Generalizing male characteristics of autism puts women at a greater disadvantage as androcentricity sets the foundation for autism research (Saxe 2017). With intersectionality in mind, women are not only at a disadvantage in research but the theories and interventions generated create barriers as supports are designed with males in mind (Saxe 2017).

One theory that contributes to androcentricity and has dominated autism research is the Extreme Male Brain Theory proposed by Cohen (2002). Essentially the Extreme Male Brain Theory suggests a difference in cognition and affective styles for females and males (Cohen 2002). Males tend to have systematic approaches to cognition while female approaches lean towards empathizing (Cohen 2002). Systematic approaches refer to being able to predict the future behaviours of others based on recurring patterns, while empathizing refers to examining the thoughts and feelings of others to predict behaviour (Cohen 2002). Cohen (2002) hypothesized that Autistic individuals display less empathy than is typical for a male and systemize more. The foundation of the theory rests in biological processes in the brain which are altered resulting in more male characteristics which set up a male bias (Cohen et al. 2011). The underlying mechanisms according to the theory include differences in Y or X chromosomes and exposure to testosterone in utero (Cohen et al. 2011).

The Extreme Male Brain Theory has inflicted harm on Autistic women and has created outrage (Saxe 2017). Women in the autism community have protested against the idea of having a male brain because the underlying assumption is that Autistic women do not have empathy (Saxe 2017). The major criticism of the Extreme Male Brain Theory is that attention to the needs of Autistic women has been relatively ignored. The policies and supports stemming from Extreme Male Brain research have contributed to significant barriers to women on the Autism spectrum (Saxe 2017). Intersectionality helps to explore the barriers that Autistic women encounter in research by recognizing male bias within procedures and protocols. The experiences of women in autism research are exceptionally different from that of males (Saxe 2017).

With the research literature focusing mainly on male participants, assessment and diagnostic tools have a strong male bias. Due to a strong emphasis on the male bias, it is highly probable that many women are underdiagnosed or misdiagnosed (Kirkovski, Enticott, and Fitzgerald 2013). Women who are better at masking their autistic characteristics and appear to be functioning well on the outside are particularly susceptible (Kirkovski et al. 2013; Lai et al. 2011). Part of the complexity of diagnosing women not only comes from sex-specific criteria but with having one or more intellectual/learning disabilities along with autism (Saxe 2017). Women who would benefit from an autism diagnosis may receive a diagnosis of a separate intellectual/learning disability, furthering the idea that autism is specifically a male disability (Saxe 2017). Without an accurate diagnosis and appropriate support, women have a lower quality of life. Over time this may manifest into more severe symptoms (Saxe 2017). Accessing an appropriate diagnosis can help guide women towards self-acceptance of their unique experiences and aid in self-compassion (Saxe 2017). The intersecting nature of being female with an Autistic identity highlight important barriers

to accessing an appropriate diagnosis. This is due to screening measures that are designed specifically for male characteristics (Saxe 2017).

The last significant barrier encountered by women on the autism spectrum examined through intersectionality is social inclusion. In general people with disabilities experience prejudice through dehumanization and infantilization (Saxe 2017). Furthermore, being disabled may lead to assumptions based on incompetence, and assumptions based on the notion that individuals with disabilities want to be cured (Saxe 2017). Individuals on the autism spectrum face additional discrimination due to differences in social interaction, communication and appearing less empathetic (Saxe 2017). Differences in social interaction and communication contribute to feelings of isolation in women which may be due to their intersecting identities (Saxe 2017). Additionally, feelings of isolation can lead to a sense of not belonging in society and contribute to mental health issues such as depression (Saxe 2017). Tragically, some Autistic individuals may go on to end their lives due to the isolation and difference they feel in comparison to others (Anon 2019).

Disability intersects with the way that individuals experience their gender. Autistic women often experience a distance from the male Autistic identity and feel removed from the stereotypes of femininity found in neurotypical women (Saxe 2017). Part of the reason that Autistic women experience disconnection from femininity comes from the differences surrounding the understanding of social and gender norms. Differences in conceptualizing the gender binary likely contribute to women feeling less like neurotypical women who understand societal expectations (Saxe 2017). Women are also expected to be empathizers and better communicators according to the Male Brain Theory (Cohen 2002). Thus, experiencing differences with neurotypical social situations and social norms put Autistic women at a greater disadvantage in society. This makes Autistic women more vulnerable to discrimination compared to neurotypical individuals (Saxe 2017).

The intersecting factors of being a woman with autism create experiences of social isolation otherwise not faced by individuals with other disabilities or men with autism (Saxe 2017). This excludes Autistic women in two distinct ways. The first way women experience exclusion is from the neurotypical female role, and secondly from the autistic community (Shefcyk 2015). Women in general are held to specific societal standards and Autistic women are subjected to the same standards. Yet, Autistic women have trouble fitting into a neurotypical female role (Saxe 2017). Second, the standards placed on Autistic women are not the same as those of Autistic men. This further complicates social communication and enhances the challenges women experience (Saxe 2017). From here, intersectionality demonstrates the marginalized experiences of Autistic women and the need to further break down the barriers (Saxe 2017).

Intersectionality of the challenges faced by Autistic women highlights various areas of concern that need to be addressed in further research. First, more attention to the inclusion of women in autism research is required in addition to comparisons between the sexes (Saxe 2017; Shefcyk 2015). This will allow for better sex-related supports to be implemented and facilitate a higher quality of life for women on the Autism spectrum (Shefcyk 2015). Second, utilizing an intersectional framework requires procedures within research to be changed in terms of participant samples (Saxe 2017). Intersectionality holds the position that women on the Autism spectrum have completely different experiences than men on the Autism spectrum and neurotypical females (Saxe 2017). A critical analysis through the lens of intersectionality would require 4 participant groups to be focused on in research. Two groups of neurotypical individuals and two groups of neurodiverse people broken down into binary sex categories of male and female (Saxe 2017). Third, a core feature of intersectionality emphasizes that barriers are

created within social structures. Therefore, to gain a thorough understanding of the challenges Autistic women experience, exploration of all social domains is required (Saxe 2017). Finally, autistic individuals in general need to be included in the conceptualization of research designs (Saxe 2017).

To conclude, both identity-first and person-first language were used throughout this paper to reflect the various ways one identifies with autism. Intersectionality provides a framework to view the complexities associated with being an Autistic woman in society. It highlights several barriers in the realm of research, diagnostic criteria and social inclusion that need to be addressed. Addressing barriers such as male bias in assessments, research bias and challenges with social inclusion both with femininity and in the Autistic community will help to better support women and contribute to a higher quality of life.

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44. Exclusivity: The Confining Binary Institution of Sports for the Non-Binary

MEAGAN SHARPE (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Sports, tokenism, public sphere, diversity
** speaks on non-binary identity and gender non-conforming individuals
** also mentions people living with disabilities

This article aims to explore and analyze some inherent factors that work to either consciously or unconsciously exclude non-binary identities from accessing professional or recreational sporting teams. The use of qualitative research will be vital to investigate the systemic roots of the undisputable lack of accessibility. Sporting institutions will be assessed through a lens of intersectionality, by recognizing both the material and intangible features of confinement. The effects of not being able to engage in community builders such as sports will be highlighted which include further marginalization and segregation. Furthermore, examining the tokenism, discrimination and aggression that takes place during sports or athletic-related work to exclude non-binary individuals will be explored. Lastly, this paper will look at the manifestation of gender displacement for non-binary people playing on sex-stipulated teams. Questions such as how is an individual outside of the binary supposed to identify with an institution that enforces the binary at every level? And whether is it possible to remedy this gap in gender inclusion will be investigated.

Gender can be a dysphoric, confining, and all-consuming force, especially within specific institutions within society. According to Lawley (2020), sport is a set of organized institutional arrangements that vary in terms of formality and eminence. Sports are a leading industry that has great economic merit, which holds fundamental cultural and political influence and can shape and maintain a nation's identity. In other words, the sporting industry is of great importance in society. Sporting institutions operate generally within the binary. Sports are divided into two separate mutually exclusive male and female leagues. Therefore, it can also be consequential for individuals who don't subscribe to gender. Typically, these individuals identify as non-binary. It is important to digest gender terms to comprehend the subject matter fully. The term non-binary encompasses the gender identity that is not entirely male or female and identities that lie outside of the gender binary completely. For context purposes, I will address some basic but crucial aspects of the non-binary identity. Many non-binary or gender non-conforming individuals use they/them pronouns as they are not attached to a gender; occasionally, some will use multiple pronouns such as they/she or will use all pronouns he/they/she. When thinking about the non-binary identity, it is helpful to address the overlap with the transgender identity, but they are not indistinguishable experiences (Erikianen et al. 2020). While some people experience being both transgender and non-binary, others may experience them singularly. Sometimes, complex gender identities can become umbrellaed in which all identities outside of the binary are recognized as interchangeable. We must appreciate and practice the differences. Sometimes the title of non-binary can represent a spectrum which includes those who identify as gender-fluid. Gender-fluid means that they incorporate both aspects of masculinity and femininity but don't identify as either male or female. Their

gender is often reflective of how they feel on a day-to-day basis. Non-binary can also embrace additional genders that lay outside of male, female or gender non-conforming actors (Erikainen et al. 2020). It is also significant to note that gender is not a fixed or stagnant characteristic; it can be fluid or changing throughout an individual's life.

Tokenism

Tokenism is the practice of making only a symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially in supporting disenfranchised minorities. When a body of individuals is limited to one or a few members that are of the minority, it is reasonable to predict that they will fall victim to tokenism. Kanter's tokenism theory examined by Stroshine (2011), labels member(s) of a collective that make up less than 15% of that collective as "tokens." These tokens are often isolated from the collective body and are persuaded or pressured into the stereotypical role that is consistent with their expected identity as a minority. Tokenism is being exercised against women working within male-dominated industries, racial and ethnic minorities, and the inclusion of individuals who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Rather than committing to restructuring systems that create oppression to prevent discrimination and encourage diversity, institutions, companies, or teams will hire a few tokens. The notion is that they will advance the perception that the team or institution demonstrates diversity and inclusivity. Token's experience can include but is not limited to harmful stereotyping, isolation, unwarranted responsibility, and added pressure to perform their condemned role (2011).

When tokens are trapped carrying the weight of their respected communities, they feel pressure to uphold their community's reputation as they unwillingly become the face and the sole actor representing the entirety of the community they belong to. Additionally, their performance reflects and condenses the experiences of all community members. This belittles the diversity and disparities of experiences within the LGBTQ+ community and allocates an impossible amount of accountability and obligation onto a single or small number of individuals.

Tokenism can also serve as a system of confinement, which entraps a token into what society deems as an appropriate role for them. This can result in repute or amplified visibility, where tokens stand out and are slowly recognized as separate entities from the greater collective because they represent something outside of the general population. Tokenism can also create an illusion of inclusion or a false sense of diversity which is a more relevant aspect of the spaces non-binary individuals occupy on sporting teams. This is referred to as "window dressing" (2008

para 11), which describes the action of a team recruiting diverse individuals. This allows them to manufacture an environment to appear more inclusive in response to the public pressure to be more heterogeneous. Research is primarily based on workplace settings but still provides very applicable information that is directly parallel to sporting institutions. One important distinction between a workplace and a sport-related environment recognizes the binary aspect of sports which can further eliminate the opportunity for LGBTQ+ members to participate in general, outside of tokenism.

Sex & Gender Segregation in Sports

For most individuals, their biological sex is assigned at the time they are born, based on the medical assessment of reproductive organs. Where gender differs is in the fact that gender is a social construct based on manufactured ideas on what a man or woman should look like, act like, be interested and what role they should play in society. Gender identity is a personal sense of self in which each individual

is responsible for identifying with and demonstrating their identity through binary or non-binary expressions. Cisgender is when an individual's gender matches their biological sex (Morris and Van Raalte 2016). Transgender is when an individual's gender is contrasting with their assigned biological sex (Morris et al. 2016). Genderqueer is sometimes used to describe an individual whose gender fits outside of the binary and is more fluid or non-conforming.

The arrangement of sex segregation as a way of dividing sports has an extensive and rich history. Currently, binary categorization remains the hegemonic norm and the rooted structure for sports (Phipps 2019). Sex stipulation revolves around the idea that men and women are divine opposites with ideals of complementary genders (Barker et al. 2019). You can distinguish heavy undertones of patriarchal values and prospects in the division of men's and women's sporting leagues. Men created and labelled the construct of a female athlete as inferior, weaker, smaller, slower, less athletic and less inclined to engage in physical activity; therefore, it was '
obvious' there needed to be a separation of men and women competing (Erikainen 2020).

The binary structure of sports has been fortified and practiced for such a substantial period, and it has become the normative way of looking at league division and organization. A direct result of such division created a difference in male and female uniform requirements. Women's uniform requirements are typically smaller and tighter, and men's are more concealing. For many queer individuals especially those outside of the binary, have difficulty adhering to the expected uniform without experiencing great gender displacement. One study explains gender as a negotiation in sports through materialized means such as clothing and gear (Erikainen 2020). Hegemonic masculinity ideology emerges through policies and regulations that are constructed to be seen as vital to keeping the game or sports fair between competing teams, but these impartiality conditions end up creating intra-squad inequity. For recreational sports, uniforms are not as heavily monitored, but in professional sports, failure to conform to uniform rules can disqualify participants. One of Caudwell's participants spoke to the concept of body visibility and the discomfort of wearing a conventional swimsuit created for them. When they attempted to remedy the issue and wore a t-shirt into a public pool, they were questioned and directly isolated from the collective based on how they varied from the materialized display of gender in sports spaces (Caudwell 2021).

The Public Sphere: the locker room

The public sphere is a realm where people exercise social life and engage in social events. Sports are practised through the public sphere and manifested by facilities, clothing (uniform/jersey), and training. They are entrenched in fitness culture, which is inherently white, heteronormative, and binary (Erikainen et al. 2020). One of the greatest gender challenges is the problematic infrastructure of physical activity more specifically the locker rooms. This challenge can be actively observed in the decision to use or not use the locker rooms which are most often the clearest manifestation of the binary gender system, as they are parted by male or female (Erikainen et al. 2020). In the locker room, the body is central in all aspects. The locker room is supposed to represent a safe space for individuals engaging in sports to use for storage, undressing, hygienic practices, social engagement in team bonding and preparation for the activity ahead of them. For individuals who identify as non-binary, what should be a safe space quickly becomes elusive and potentially harmful. According to Greey et al. (2022), locker rooms are the defining factor that allows or denies an individual from engaging in sports. Locker rooms are subscriptive membership or clubs in the public sphere in which one must play a sport or pay to attend a gym to be allowed to take advantage of the facilities. Memberships or subscriptions to locker rooms are divided into

two categories, a men's room and a women's room. This division undeniably reflects heteronormativity and cisgenderness. It ultimately fortifies the "dual-sexed model" (Lawley 2011 para 17), which is described as the separation of locker rooms by the male and female sex. This cisnormative system is directly exclusive of non-binary individuals, which can make camaraderie and social growth nearly impossible. One non-binary participant from a study spoke towards the concept of "insider status" (Greey 2022 para 17), which grounds the locker room membership theory in the lived experience of being unable to engage in locker room membership. Gender non-conforming athletes may be welcome to participate but find out they must use a neutral room, or they're left with no choice but binary rooms. They are often forced to sacrifice a defining portion of their identity (Morris et al. 2016). If there is a neutral room, they can avoid the binary construct but are then confined to a room alone, which can be further marginalizing. For many, having to participate in locker room culture is impossible, and they end up lacking the physical and psychological benefits of physical activity. They cannot fulfil their need for community and are left to self-segregate from participating (Greey 2022).

Neutral or genderless change rooms have been acknowledged as a preference of many people, although gender-neutral locker rooms come with their complications. Typically, washrooms or locker rooms that are genderless are also accessible spaces for people living with disabilities. This functional dual facility can create an unconscious association between people living with disabilities and being genderless or sexless (Erickainen et al. 2020). Barker et al. (2019) elaborate on how the lack of gender and accessibility reminds the public how people with disabilities are generally viewed as non-sexual and less masculine or feminine than their non-disabled peers. It appears that the current research has yet to find a resolution that is not at the cost of a marginalized group.

Locker room talk has been notoriously reported as an ideal of masculinity which is identified as 'bro' culture or toxic hegemonic masculinity that reinforces the binary structure of sporting institutions. Gendered language is a dynamic byproduct of the previously explained locker room membership. This type of language habitually intersects with sexism/misogyny, racism and homophobia; this includes common slurs such as "you throw like a girl," "grow some balls," and "man up," all of which reinforce the binary and discriminates against genders other than men (Erickainen et al., 2020) The usage of this language also grounds harmful stereotypes and creates a culture to protect it.

Case Study: A non-binary league in Scotland

Unfortunately, with non-binary gender identities becoming more visible, there is limited research on how non-binary individuals navigate sports. Therefore, validity must ground this paper in the current and relative event. In 2019, Scotland passed a policy that directly required there to be a non-binary league in "all Scottish... championship events, external events hosting on our behalf" (SA 2019, pp 9). The same policy acknowledges the lack of gender-neutral facilities but only recommends a case-by-case evaluation of that problem. Although this is a substantial step in the right direction, it still requires non-binary individuals to have to advocate for themselves rather than being able to simply enjoy an already existing facility. It also seems as though a non-binary league should require adequate equipment means such as a neutral area to prepare in. The lack of tangible evidence suggests an undertone of tokenism and that this policy is primarily a social initiative to create the perception of inclusivity. Regarding the concept of opening a non-binary league, one participant relayed the fact that attempting such a league would begin to pave the way for future developments. This would also work to highlight the discrepancy in sports for those who do not fit into the current binary structure.

Conclusion

In the current climate of heteronormativity expectations dominating all aspects of society, it is important to recognize the difficulties that gender non-conforming individuals face regularly. Unfortunately, gender inclusion within sports is yet to be rigorously researched; therefore, we still find a gap in remedying this problem of the sociology of gender in sports.

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45. A Shortlist of LGBTQIA+ Accessible Services Across Canada and the US

MEAGAN SHARPE (SHE/HER)

This is a list comprised of services, resources and assistance that are oriented towards the LGBTQIA+ community and are LGBTQIA+ friendly!

The Trevor Project

- The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and mental health organization that works specifically for LBGTQIA+ young people who lack access to adequate support. The Trevor Project is a safe, accepting and inclusive outlet/environment that directs in-need individuals toward effective crisis services. They provide numerous online resources and links, including a feature that allows you to connect with LGBTQ+ peers. The project runs by hotline, text or website chat.
- LINK: https://www.thetrevorproject.org/
- NUMBER: 1-866-488-7386

Sage

- Sage is an LGBTQ+ elder hotline that focuses on connecting older members of the LGBTQ+ community with support or crisis interventionists. It is a hotline that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offers over language translation services for over 180 different languages. This hotline operates primarily out of the United States but can be reached from within Canada.
- LINK: https://www.sageusa.org/what-we-do/sage-national-lgbt-elder-hotline/
- NUMBER: 877-360-LGBT(5428)

Pride Institute

- The pride institute is geared toward providing adult (18+) members of the LGBTQ+ community with a safe and inclusive environment that would be suited to harbour individuals needing treatment to recover from substance abuse, sexual and mental health complications. They provide 24-hour nursing care, a variety of therapies and personalized treatment plans. They also offer online health programs for those restricted by Covid-19 or other means. The Pride Institute values options; they have outpatient programs, programs with lodging, long-term residential programs and family therapy.
- LINK: https://pride-institute.com/
- NUMBER: 952-900-4325

National Runaway Safeline

- This organization runs a 24/7 crisis connect line that works to house LGBTQ+ youth who have fled their homes, aren't acquainted with a home anymore or are experiencing chronic homelessness. They focus on creating case-by-case solutions to remedy harmful and dangerous situations while

valuing and upholding confidentiality.
- LINK: https://www.1800runaway.org/
- NUMBER: 1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)

The It Gets Better Project

- The mission of the IGBP is to uplift, empower and connect young members of the LGBT+ community around the world. It offers many links to different resources and includes some personal stories as well as they have partnered with brands, celebrities and other influential individuals that support the LGBTQ+ community. They vitalize youth through the method of storytelling, where they help youth live, learn and socialize with like-minded peers. They occasionally host digital and live events that operate to create a safe environment for building intra-community connections. You can find their website online, or you can access them through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Tiktok and Twitch.
- LINK: https://itgetsbetter.org/

pflag Canada

- pflag is an organization that can be used to help parents understand, support and accept their LGBTQ+ identifying family members. They work to decrease adjustment time, mend and reconnect relationships after building healthy pathways of communication and generally preventing isolation and trauma. They have real-life inspirational success stories available on YouTube, along with links to other, more specialized programs and organizations. You can access a volunteer through email, over the phone or at one of their locations across Canada.
- LINK: https://pflagcanada.ca/
- NUMBER: 1-888-530-6777

46. Gender Dysphoria vs. Gender Euphoria

KENDALL SMITH (THEY/SHE)

Keywords: Gender, Transgender, Identity, Stigma

Intro

The terms gender dysphoria or gender euphoria are starting to circulate more but the meanings may not appear that often. Today many new and unfamiliar terms may be popping up and it may be hard for some to keep track of them all but certain terms are important to remember as you or someone you love may be experiencing them and not yet understand. To talk about these terms can help remove the stigma that may surround them, particularly what surrounds the phrase "gender dysphoria". The term gender dysphoria is something more talked about, especially in terms of how dangerous it can be. Gender euphoria is a positive counterpart and is lesser known to the general public. It is known that "the limited attention to gender euphoria in research means clinicians may also be unaware of the term or not understand what it means to their clients" (Beischel et al. 2022:276), but it is just as important to know as gender dysphoria.

Gender Dysphoria

Gender dysphoria can be defined as the distress arising from conflicts between a person's gender identity or expression and their assigned gender/sex. When someone's body or perceived gender does not match how they identify inside it can be extremely distressing. It is known that "dissatisfaction with one's appearance and the drive to look different from one's sex assigned at birth is central to gender dysphoria" (Peterson et al. 2017:480). Gender dysphoria can be triggered in many different situations as "when a community sample of trans and nonbinary individuals were asked to describe their gender dysphoria in a social context, participants described linguistic triggers, often in the form of misgendering or otherwise having their identity questioned, which caused an immediate increase to their experience of gender dysphoria" (Lindley and Galupo 2020:267). This immediate increase in gender dysphoria can be a huge weight on the person's shoulders and can pile up to cause a mental breakdown for example, panic or anxiety attacks. It can be seen that "these external triggers can lead to a disruption in social functioning with gender dysphoria serving as an intermediary between the distal stressor (i.e. misgendering) and the outcome (i.e. mental health symptoms)" (Lindley and Galupo 2020:267). Gender dysphoria can be so confining to some that it will cause symptoms of mental health struggle.

The stigma associated with this psychological distress is one major factor contributing to the accumulating stress because transgender people, who are more prone to experience gender dysphoria, are a minority. The stigma that is associated with a minority identity usually provides additional chronic stress, which contributes to more negative health outcomes. According to the minority stress theory, sexual minorities, underrepresented gender identities, queer and other sexual identities (LGBTQ+), and other sexual minorities frequently deal with unique and persistent stressors that are connected to

their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The internal conflict going on in a person's mind while experiencing gender dysphoria is made worse by stigma, discrimination, bullying from others, or denial from close family and friends. Although most transgender people have improved psychological well-being since transitioning, they still experience different forms of stigmatization in their day-to-day lives. Transitioning is a unique process through which transgender people transition from living in accordance with the sex to which they were born to living in accordance with their gender identification. A part of transitioning could be social transitions and/or medical transitions. Something to note is that a transgender person does not have to go through medically transitioning to be considered trans. Some transgender people "experienced that finding a job after the transition was difficult when they revealed their transgender identity" (Verbeek et al. 2020:226). Although the act of transitioning is not just one point in time like a switch to flick but rather the continual, diverse, and personal ways that people deal with societal and physical changes that affect their gender. Appearance also plays a big part in how likely someone will be stigmatized, for example how well a person "passes". Passing, as it relates to gender, is the perception of someone as belonging to a different gender or sex than the one they were given at birth. It is said that "low voice pitch in trans women was reported as an important factor that increased the likelihood of experiencing enacted stigma. Some trans women … mentioned low voice pitch as contributing to experiences of post-transition misgendering" (Verbeek et al. 2020:226). Another factor of stigma is that people may fear those who are going through a hard time due to gender dysphoria being labelled as a "mental illness." Although gender dysphoria is not a mental illness, some people may develop mental health conditions because of it. As a result of these experiences, some people keep "their transgender identity concealed, or showed signs of guilt or withdrawal, which may be a consequence of internalized stigma" (Verbeek et al. 2020:229) which is something that should not happen. Unfortunately, transitioning may have serious implications for the social lives of transgender people. Although it is not transitioning itself that causes issues but rather cisnormativity and transphobia. Cis-normativity is a belief that all or almost all people are cisgender. Although the amount of people who identify as transgender is relatively small, many trans persons and allies find it disrespectful to assume that everyone is cisgender unless otherwise stated. An assortment of unfavourable views, sentiments, or behaviours toward transgender people or transness in general are collectively referred to as transphobia. Fear, aversion, hostility, aggression, violence, or anger toward anyone who does not fit social gender norms are all examples of transphobia. Therefore, receiving social support is important during these times especially when it is from family and friends. Social support plays an important role in providing support and creates stronger resilience against the transphobia and discrimination that the individual may face. Receiving social support from fellow transgender individuals in self-help groups is also a way to find community during hard times.

However, there can be such things as gender-affirming interventions and affirming social experiences that can help alleviate gender dysphoria and improve mental health and well-being. It is known that "suffering from severe gender incongruence usually leads individuals to pursue hormone [replacement therapy] and [gender affirming surgeries]. The purpose of these [gender affirming medical interventions] is to alleviate the individual's distress by reducing the discrepancy between the individuals' [assigned sex at birth] and their experience" (Costa and Colizzi 2016:1954). After receiving hormone replacement therapy, a reduction in symptoms of anxiety among individuals has been reported. Over time "research reported higher emotional, social, and mental quality of life in hormone-treated FtM (female to male) adults, with hormone treatment duration associated with higher emotional quality of life" (Costa and Colizzi 2016:1962). Being able to access gender affirming medical care is such a helpful way for people who suffer from gender dysphoria on their road to overcoming it although it is not needed in some

cases and should never be forced upon someone. “It is clear from the literature that experiencing gender dysphoria can feel like excruciating pain and can negatively impact functioning across multiple domains, but gender-affirming interventions and affirming social experiences help alleviate gender dysphoria and improve mental health and well-being” (Austin et al. 2022:1407). Being able to get the help you need is very important when dealing with gender dysphoria especially when it is at a severe level.

Gender Euphoria

Gender euphoria is a term that is generally used to refer to a range of positive feelings. These include but are not limited to: confidence, comfort, assuredness, satisfaction, and happiness. It can also be explained as the psychological state of bliss and comfort that happens when the individual’s gender expression is aligned with their identity. These are in response to the affirmation of one’s body or one’s gender identity and are something that should be celebrated. When people feel secure in their gender, it may be because of factors like clothing or binding that help them feel more at ease with their gender or in social circumstances when their pronouns and names are used correctly. The transgender community talk about gender euphoria and how experiencing it is different for everyone as it is personal and unique to each different person. People have “expressed that they experienced or imagine they will experience gender euphoria from a diverse set of experiences that we grouped as 1) external or physical, 2) internal or psychological, and 3) social” (Beischel et al. 2022:282). This means that gender euphoria comes from a variety of experiences that may happen to people.

When your physical appearance matches who you identify as inside it can be a big deal. This can reference “changes in their sexed bodies, such as genitals, face shape, and fat distributions, often facilitated by biomedical transition (i.e., hormones and surgery)” (Beischel et al. 2022:282) can help you feel more like yourself. Since it is generally assumed that men have shorter hair and women have longer hair, even seemingly straightforward activities like a haircut can induce a significant amount of gender euphoria in people. Therefore, the beginning stages of transitioning can include cutting or growing their hair as the first big step into being who they are. Gender affirmation is a process whereby an individual undertakes changes, both medically and socially, which serve to affirm their gender and reduce their gender dysphoria. Another part of gender euphoria is self-affirmation which can be facilitated by a mirror. For example, seeing on the outside what they experience on the inside. A gender-euphoric social experience can also come from wearing the clothes associated with one’s identified or felt gender/sex rather than their assigned birth sex. This can present validation due to external appearances matching their gender/sex which can result in “passing,” also known as being assumed to be their identified gender/sex. Another social context where gender euphoria can arise is when someone uses the person’s preferred pronouns without asking or having to be corrected first. Some nonbinary people have indicated that when people struggle to identify themselves in public as either women or men due to confusion, it was validating for them. In the social context, gender euphoria can be experienced with other people because of bathrooms, relationships, and sex. Gender euphoria, to those who experience it, is said to be incredible to feel and can result in a huge boost of confidence particularly in a social sense. As it’s said, “while joy or happiness encompasses much of the emotional tenor of gender euphoria, participants also described feelings of confidence, attractiveness, and affirmation” (Beischel et al. 2022:286). Gender euphoria can be conceptualized and experienced as powerfully positive. It can result in a significant improvement in a person’s life that is fundamentally and completely worth fighting for.

Conclusion

In life, some people experience not only just a push away from their assigned at birth gender/sex but

also a pull toward gender/sexed aspects that feel more authentic and enjoyable to themselves. With this knowledge, we can advance our understanding of gender/sex minorities and help reduce stigma by recognizing that discomfort is not its only or main feature. These experiences also bring affirmation, satisfaction, and happiness. Over the course of the studies that have been done "findings counter the idea that gender dysphoria and gender euphoria are merely opposites, instead suggesting that a more complex and nuanced relationship may exist between experiences of gender dysphoria and gender euphoria" (Austin et al. 2022:1408). With the correct help and acknowledgement, dysphoria can turn into euphoria, but it is almost always a long road. There have been studies that "provide further evidence for the at-risk nature of transgender youth, emphasizing that mental health clinicians and physicians working with this demographic need to be aware of these challenges" (Peterson et al. 2017:480) which show just how important it is to be aware of these challenges to help those who are in need. There needs to be more studies done on gender euphoria/dysphoria to help those in need to a greater degree and help reduce stigma, especially in the social sense. If gender dysphoria especially is more widely known, it is sure that a great deal of stigma and pressure would be removed from those who suffer from it.

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47. Chain Reaction

KENDALL SMITH (THEY/SHE)

Keywords: Empowerment, Women, Poem

Chain reaction

There is someone I do not recognise across from me

She stands hesitatingly in front of the mirror

Doubting how she looks and critiquing every “imperfection”

Almost as if it could not be any clearer

She does not see her worth in this world

Someone that can move mountains and demand action

Someone who should know the impact that they can have

For she will never accept anything less than satisfaction

For people like her must stand together

To demand to be seen and accepted for who they are could gain a lot of traction

Nothing is more powerful than women coming together

And just maybe we can start a whole chain reaction

48. Gender Studies is Fundamental to Adolescent Development

JENNA SPORTAK (SHE/THEY)

Keywords: Education, Youth, Mental Health, 2SLGBTQIA+

Parents, students, and educators alike imagine that we all emerge from our high school education with a diploma in one hand, and the knowledge to equip us for life beyond in the other. This is hardly the case. Students' academic outcomes rely heavily on the content taught in school, the context in which it is taught, and most importantly their social relations with faculty and fellow peers. School becomes a place not only to gain knowledge but to acquire enriched and foundational life experiences, develop emotional and cognitive skills, and create positive and friendly environments for learning. However, the inverse can also be found within these structures, through marginalized students who feel exclusion strategies working against them. Educators and general faculty have the dire ability to "both reinforce a sense of exclusion or inclusion" in these marginalized youth, "by choosing to (re)act, or not, on questionable behaviour among the students" (Cederved 2021:para. 25). In this essay, research will be conducted through a sociological perspective to outline the importance of integrating gender studies into secondary school curriculum through the expansion of pedagogies, concerning the betterment of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth experiences, educational development, and life trajectories. Firstly, I will expand on foundational background knowledge regarding gender studies and pedagogies, then move forth to examine these marginalized youths' experiences and why they are at such risk. To follow I will explain the importance of educators and educational system supports, along with integration tactics to include gender studies in school curricula.

To begin, let us first answer the question of what gender studies are, and then specify its use in the context of this essay. Gender studies are viewed as an interdisciplinary field within the social sciences, that studies gender and sexuality in a broad range of areas. Gender can be broadly defined as "a scientific category that reflects the characteristics of relations between men and women as socially organized groups, distinguished from the biological determinant of their socialization" (Rykov 2003: 55). The term gender was first adopted in the scientific literature by an American researcher Joan Scott to "make a distinction between the biological and the social meanings of the role relations of men and women" in a society (Rykov 2003: 55). This meaning of the term gender lies within the idea that it is socially modelled, and represented in various situations and interactions within everyday life. Social constructionism is a branch of social theory formulated by conflict and feminist theorists. It inquires about the treatment of gender as a socially construed form of inequality based on sex and intersectional lines such as race, class, ability, and sexuality. Those unfamiliar with gender studies often associate it with women's or feminist studies. However, while many parallels are drawn, gender studies are not based on women but rather on the entire gender spectrum and the social relations between gender and society. It has "the aim of exploring and promoting anti-oppressive/social justice education to theorize and deconstruct social relations of power" (Kannen 2014:para. 2). Gender is the object of analysis, but to understand its interconnectedness to social behaviours and social systems is to study gender. Moving forward I

encourage keeping the idea of gender and sexuality as central to gender studies, with the core tenet of promoting social change in the foreground of your mind. The usage of this (possibly newfound) awareness of gender will aid in acknowledging and understanding 2SLGBTQIA+ youth narratives.

To provide further insight, the defining and understanding of pedagogy is to follow. In the simplest of terms, pedagogy can be understood as "the art or science of teaching children," otherwise known as a synonym for "teaching" or "education" (Anon. 2021:para. 1). Pedagogies are created on a macro-level, initially by philosophers and educators through designing pedagogical approaches with theories and proposed practices. They are then applied at a micro-level as educators create their pedagogies through learning said theories, developing techniques, and today incorporating new technologies (Anon. 2021). While classrooms are academic environments, they are also open to interpretation. This can be illustrated by the vast number of pedagogies in practice such as critical pedagogies, feminist decolonial pedagogies, and antiracist pedagogies, to name a few. Pedagogies are all similar in theory but are all diverse when exercised. This can be problematic as systemic issues and cultural/societal norms such as heteronormativity and cisnormativity have the potential to trickle down from one generation to the next. We can deduce from modern-day life experiences that this is precisely the case. It is believed that "school education introduces into the minds of the students a particular gender code using which the gender identity and the gender role of the individual are construed" (Rykov 2003: 58). Now onto the practice of critical feminist pedagogies, where critical and feminist pedagogy collide. "Critical pedagogy is traditionally defined as educational theory and teaching/learning practices designed to raise learners' critical consciousness regarding oppressive social conditions" (Anon. 2021:para. 4). On the other hand, feminist pedagogy promotes "forms of social justice such as sensitivity to differences, anti-oppressive teaching, and inclusive education" (Kannen 2014:para. 12). Educators versed in this collective pedagogy believe "school classes are oriented toward reinforcing traditional sex roles" (Rykov 2003: 58). Therefore, gender study classrooms taught through critical feminist pedagogy, are a particularly rich setting to study in. They have the "potential to be personally, pedagogically, and socially transformative" (Kannen 2014:para. 5).

Gendered Harassment and Policing in Secondary School

To understand the educational and societal climate that 2SLGBTQIA+ youth are exposed to let us examine their experiences in 'secondary' schools through a sociological lens. The emphasis is on secondary because the age range in question varies. There is not a firm hold on the North American high school age range within the research literature, therefore the scope has been expanded to include individuals aged 11-19. In the context of this paper, the use of "secondary," "adolescents," and "youths" will refer to this cohort. The age of youth beginning to develop and/or question their gender and identity, and the age of coming out has lowered over time; it is "suggested to occur at the age of 14" (Cederved 2021:para. 2). When considering the most pervasive descriptions brought forth by marginalized youth, we are faced with accounts of bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination, and escalated hostile behaviours. These descriptions not only include accounts from peers, but also "within the school environment from the curriculum, space, peers and teachers" (Bower-Brown 2021:para. 1). These forms of victimization include risks of "anxiety/depression, suicide, and elevated risk of substance use" (Vilkin 2020:para. 6). According to a study done by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), consisting of more than "6,000 sexual minority high school students, 86% reported being verbally harassed at school within the past year, 44% reported being physically harassed, and 22% reported being physically assaulted" (Heck 2013: 82). These can be seen as forms of gender policing which is the act of imposing traditional heterosexual gender norms upon those expressing gender non-conformity. School settings have been highlighted

as the place where “gender-diverse adolescents face the most discrimination, given the prominence of the gender binary throughout the school day (e.g. uniforms, toilets, changing rooms, sport), and the large proportion of time that adolescents spend at school” (Bower-Brown 2021:para. 1). Students are often left feeling alienated, and othered, feel a sense of exclusion and face a lack of support in these environments. This inevitably creates situations in which they are less integrated into their learning and education. While this impacts their educational outcomes, there are also substantial tolls on their mental well-being and physical health. Studies have shown that these impacts can be related to “lower levels of school belonging, feeling unsafe at school, poorer academic performance, more substance use, and more depressive symptomatology” (Heck 2013: 82). The experiences of these adolescents are expansive and mutually inclusive. With 2SLGBTQIA+ youth making up a sizeable demographic in secondary school populations, this should not be such a collectively held narrative.

We can begin to analyze the community’s marginalization and why they are the most at risk for victimization in schools and social settings. Primarily, these outcomes are directly related to the breaking of social norms. Heteronormativity and cisnormativity take shape through youth voicing their gender identities and displaying their gender expressions. Heteronormativity is the concept that heterosexuality is the normal or default mode of everyone’s sexual orientation, while cisnormativity is the assumption that all human beings are cisgender. Thus, cisgender individuals identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Both ideas are culturally engrained within our Western societies. These norms have restrictive boundaries, consequently people who dare to break free from their binary boxes are subjected to gender policing as a result. There is a saying that goes along the lines of people fear what they do not or cannot understand. This is precisely the issue these youth are facing from peers and institutional systems upholding and conforming to societal norms. Therefore, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is marginalized due to being seen as deviant beings, not conforming, and going against said social norms. They are subject to a process known as social typing; the act of labelling, being judged and treated negatively in response. This is a mechanism of social control, which is often followed by actions such as but not limited to bullying and harassment behaviours, and formal mechanisms like laws and policies. The effect ultimately creates the marginalization of this community. Relating to the GLSEN, another study was conducted with a sample of 1,580 public school principals, in which “95% of principals reported that students are harassed based upon gender expression, and 92% reported harassment based upon sexual orientation” (Heck 2013: 82). These practices and forms of social control are far more widespread than simply adolescent settings and experiences. Throughout society and various demographics, these social norms are held and acted upon through views of homophobia, and transphobia. Homophobia and transphobia then intersect with many facets such as racism, sexism, and ableism. Such an analysis, while important, falls outside the scope of this paper. But the acknowledgement that “students encounter ideas about gender and sexual politics via public culture” (Craven 2019:para. 18) is prevalent and key.

Moreover, there is a lack of anti-bullying policy and teacher/faculty support within educational systems, subsequently at-school victimization disproportionally impacts LGBT youth (Heck 2013). This is not a revelation as schooling and education are but one of many institutionalized areas in which societal norms are upheld. Therefore, our current students are being taught by past students who were educated to conform and lacked areas of discipline enriched by gender studies in their post-secondary educations. This embeds hetero-cis-normativity into their pedagogies and often values, beliefs, and ways of thinking or acting. Concerning the GLSEN study, “approximately 30% of principals reported that their teachers were either “fair” or “poor” at being able to address the bullying of sexual minority students” (Heck 2013: 82). Due to this, “students have reported that teachers ignore their pleas for help, appear indifferent to threats made toward trans youth, and rarely intervene in harassment” (Case 2014:para. 5). After these

youth bear witness to adults' "unjust or nonchalant treatment of students, the adolescents stop asking for help", considering the teachers to be "ignorant or uninterested" in them and their needs (Cederved 2021:para. 26). Shunning practices on account of gender expression, mannerisms, actions, and pronoun usage are also reported on behalf of teachers and school personnel (Cederved 2021). To lessen the victimization of these youth, there is a dire need to address these harmful practices to enact safety within school environments.

Making Things Better for 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth

The previously stated experiences and effects illuminate the importance of teacher allyship, and the relevant training needed within our educational system to provide better support for marginalized youth. The repercussions of educators, counsellors, and general school personnel's lack of knowledge are highlighted throughout. They are consistent within most of the literature, and research reviewed in preparation for this essay. Of the utmost importance is how negligent behaviours affect these youth regarding development and life goals. It is found that these students encounter decreased levels of academic achievement resulting in lower GPAs, as well as lower levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction. This may lead to stunting of social skill development. The concern of sex education in schools is a whole issue on its own. However, due to insufficient, exclusive, and often binary-gendered teachings, these students are delayed in understanding their identity leaving them to search for information alone outside the school context. Having a "lack of supportive networks and role models they could identify with risks enhancing the vulnerability and sense of alienation and isolation in LGBTQ adolescents" (Cederved 2021:para. 46). As a result "lack of teacher support increases the likelihood of gender-diverse students leaving school" (Bower-Brown 2021:para. 3), transferring schools, and fewer plans for post-secondary attainment.

Thankfully more workshops, training, and educational seminars are being held to provide counsellors, educators, and school personnel the ability to advocate and actively participate in the betterment of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth experiences. By becoming allies, "counsellors and educators can improve transgender students' safety within the school environment, which can lead to increased academic achievement and higher quality of life among these youth" (Case 2014:para. 7). In Case's (2014) study conducted in the United States, a workshop was held for a wide array of adults within the school system who were interested in expanding their knowledge. They were met with roundtable discussions, panels of experts, and presentations. One of the main pedagogical goals of the workshop was to provide opportunities for educators and counsellors to practice real-world ally responses relevant to their roles in the schools. Approximately, "93% of participants report they acquired new knowledge or skills as a result of attending", and "plan to share resources, workshop handouts, and ideas generated during the sessions with colleagues and direct supervisors when they return to their schools or counselling settings" (Case 2014:para. 36). Through this study alone, we can see how transformative and essential professional development training can be. However, this is only one instance, and more emphasis is needed on encouraging educators around the world to expand their scope of knowledge. Personal attitudes and efforts make a difference in terms of an adolescent's experiences of inclusion or exclusion. A lack of understanding and non-inclusive pedagogy shapes adolescents' beliefs (Case 2014), and to instil initiatives for change, they must come from within the confines of their education.

To begin integrating gender studies into secondary school curricula, the starting point must be an all-encompassing pedagogical shift. This could be accomplished by the previously stated practices, by educators pursuing relevant training; "educators must develop an explicit gender consciousness before

they can deliver a gender-conscious pedagogy" (Warin 2017:para. 1). Another route proposed within research is to advance early childhood education, undergraduate and master level degrees to effectively educate future teachers and instructors. This would be a preventative approach. Regardless of the direction taken, there needs to be explicit teacher training and continuation of professional development if we want to disrupt the current gender norms and pitfalls adolescents face in secondary schools. If educators learned new theories on gender, they could begin to re-establish their pedagogy towards more critical feminist pedagogy practices and models. Only once they are self-aware, teachers can bring about self-awareness in their students; "critical reflexivity on the part of teachers about their pedagogical practice could help raise awareness amongst students to question dominant gender ideologies" (Himabindu 2019:para. 2). Paired with this would be a fundamental restructuring of the school environment to support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. This could potentially involve more inclusive and progressive anti-bullying school policies, followed by training teachers to recognize and intervene when students are engaging in discriminatory behaviours. Accompanying this could be mandatory course material integration to include in-depth and conscientious lessons on gender, gender expression, sexual orientations, sex education, and intersectional identities to better conceptualize diversity, and to instil anti-oppressive teaching, and inclusive education. Internal programs, clubs, and affinity groups such as Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) also have an important place at the table in terms of bettering school environments and improving academic performances. By making these changes and "constructing an environment in which discriminatory behaviour is discouraged, and gender fluidity and flexibility are supported, schools and educators can support gender-diverse adolescents. This can reduce both the level and effect of discrimination" (Bower-Brown 2021:para. 48).

Admittedly, some would argue that gender studies should have no place within our school curriculums. This perspective is reoccurring and often stems from parents/guardians' opposition to the content taught within the discipline. Parental figures have a strong impact and role in the education of their children, through beliefs and values taught at home, or the public and private institutions they enrol their children in. These opposing views cause disruptions within the educational system, inevitably influencing personal pedagogical practices and disrupting the enactment of school policies and/or programs. We can infer from the long tradition of Parental Advisory Committees (PACs) that parents want to actively participate in their children's education. Many believe they have a right in determining educational goals and values. There is a common narrative that since parents are the taxpayers funding our schools, they have the right to provide input and have full transparency of course curricula. When schools begin to introduce gender studies practices, parental figures do not want their children to be influenced by conflicting views that go against their family beliefs, values, morals, etc. It is important to acknowledge the validity of their position and concerns, as most often parents want what they think is best for their children's development. Given their unfamiliarity with the subject and content, it is understandable to have doubts and concerns. Incorporating these studies is inherently breaking down instilled social norms that live within us all. Change can be intimidating, but without change, there is no progression.

Despite the opposition's position, it is important to shed light on the fact that many 2SLGBTQIA+ youths have negative experiences within their family dynamics. There is often a lack of safety or security felt by these youth, stemming from the deviation from familial ideals and norms. One qualitative research study reviewed stated that "within the Swedish context, every fifth person in the group of 16 to 25-year-old individuals who are homosexual or bisexual reports experiences of physical abuse by a parent, partner, or another close adult; a figure that was twice as big as compared with non-homosexual or bisexual persons in the same age group" (Cederved 2021:para. 4). A lack of parental support towards gender diverse youth has also been associated with negative outcomes such as "shocking levels of homelessness

or under housing, physical and mental health problems, fewer indicators of hopefulness for the future, and suicidal ideation and attempts" (Anon. n.d.:para. 3). Due to this, there is a need for government-protected safe spaces such as schools, for youth to learn, share, and find belonging through peer support and diverse knowledge. This is where the Human Rights Code Amendment Act comes in; "As of 2017, gender identity or gender expression has been explicitly codified in all human rights legislation at the provincial, territorial, and federal level", in Canada (Anon. n.d.:para. 1). This means that the inclusion of gender identities and gender expression is among the protected grounds the code covers. The code includes, but is not limited to, "The rights of children and youth with respect to sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (SOGIE) apply to Canadian children and youth in a wide range of areas including sexual health education access to services, education (including gay-straight alliances, choice of companions at school events, and SOGIE inclusive curricula)" (Anon. n.d.:para. 2). It must be conveyed that this act and the educational system are not attempting to undermine parental figures, but to provide their children with an all-encompassing bountiful education, to aid in their critical thinking skills and their overall development. By providing a space and the right to pursue their educational desires, all youth have the opportunity to exercise their freedoms and follow their own will.

Concluding Thoughts

To conclude, incorporating gender studies in secondary school classroom curriculum through a comprehensive pedagogical framework would create, and cultivate better 2SLGBTQIA+ youth experiences. This would contribute to the greater potential within their education and towards future endeavours. By understanding and empathizing with these marginalized adolescents, we and most importantly those within the educational system can actively show allyship. This can provide informed intentional support to better care for these youth's needs. This outcome would also aid in the betterment of all students' experiences by instilling better-shared understandings, advocating for acceptance, and providing perspective for individuals' worldviews. By universally and regularly teaching gender studies, secondary school curricula could hold the potential to break down the heteropatriarchy and negative societal structures society is built upon early on in our lives. This would allow youth to grow into well-informed and better-equipped adults. The first step towards putting these practices into fruition would be for educators and institutions to acknowledge that this issue exists and is a prevalent one at that.

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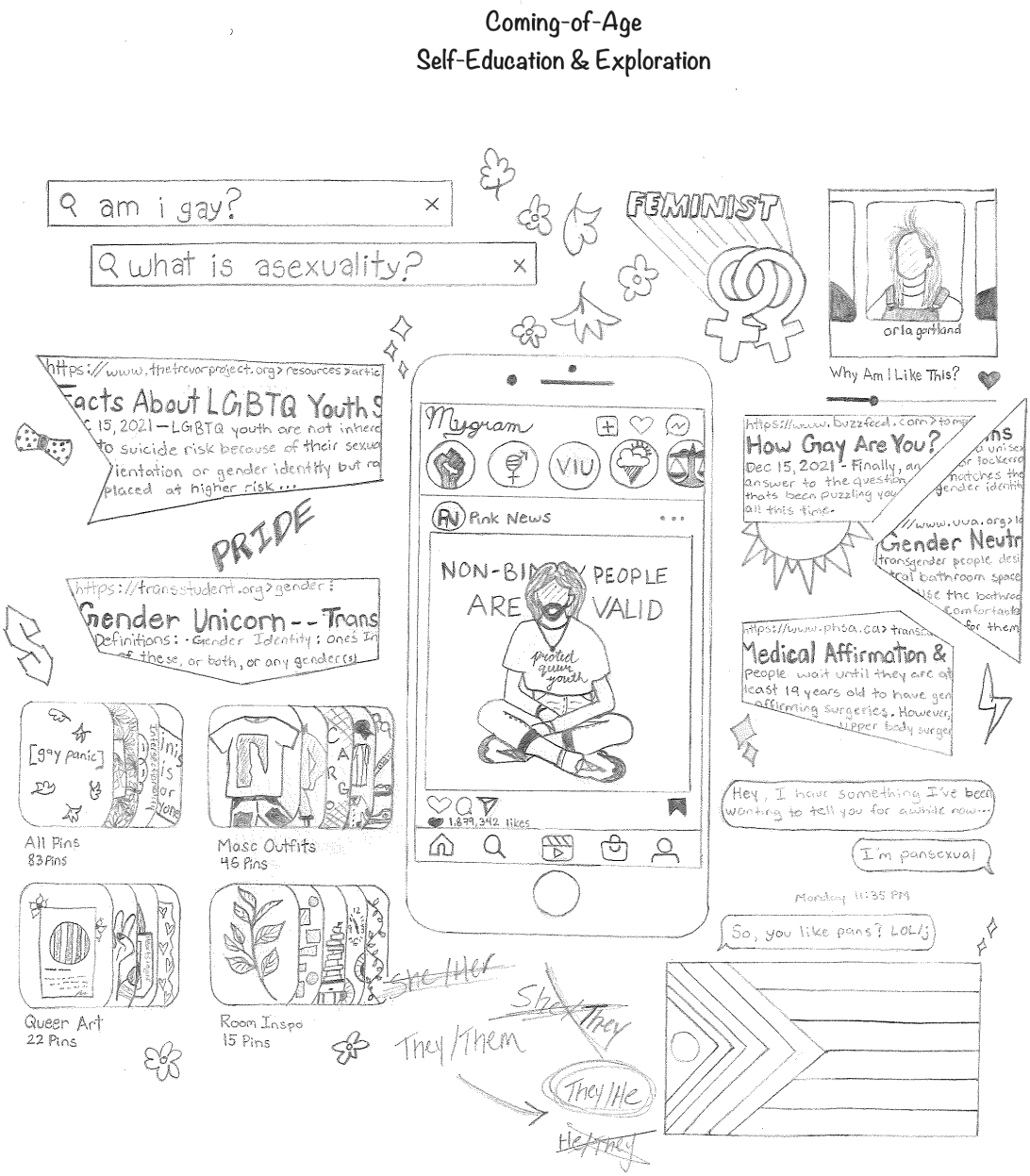
49. Coming of Age: Self Education and Exploration

JENNA SPORTAK (SHE/THEY)



50. Gender Socialization in Children

MAYA STINERT (SHE/HER)

Keywords: Socialization, Family, Children

Gender is an influential force that affects nearly every aspect of one's life. The roles, norms, and expectations regarding gender are instilled during formative years of an individual's life. During these years, children are introduced to social expectations via primary socialization. Primary socialization usually occurs in a familial setting and is established by agents such as family and friends (Robson 2019). This type of socialization serves as the playbook which children refer to in order to adhere to social standards. Gender is a significant part of this playbook, with the 'do's' and 'don'ts' of gender roles being strategically ingrained since birth. It is no secret that gender influences the manner in which an individual is raised. However, expression of feminine and masculine qualities transcends homelife and is salient in social spheres such as sports, school, and peer groups. Although encounters with gender socialization are unique and exclusive to the individual, many experiences share some common qualities. This essay will examine how gender socialization impacts the livelihood of both men and women. Socialization is considered to be a pivotal factor in creating well adjusted and upstanding members of society (Robson 2019). At first glance, the process of socialization may appear to be a beneficial procedure as it is a convenient way to create a symbiotic society in which everyone follows common norms and values. However, there are some caveats to this practice.

Socialization can ensure that outdated norms and attitudes surrounding gender are passed down generationally. According to Knafo, Lervino, and Plomin (2005: 400), children are cognizant of their gender by age two and can conceptualize their assigned gender roles by age three. This conveys that primary socialization is a swift and fast acting force which instills traditional gender ideals at an early age. Additionally, these expectations are so prominent during a child's upbringing that children who do not conform to either traditionally masculine or feminine roles are at risk of being diagnosed with a gender identity disorder (Knafo et al. 2005: 400). The socialization that transpires from traditional principles is often quite rigid and strict, with adherence to conventional gender norms being a top priority. Furthermore, Knafo et al. (2005: 401) also reported that children with older siblings of the same sex are often more prone to harsh gender socialization. This conveys that the family dynamic also significantly influences the type and degree to which gender roles are enforced on children. Although there is a general blueprint to gender socialization, it does vary based on cultural, ethnic, and familial backgrounds.

Gender socialization does not always create feminine women and masculine men. According to Knafo et al. (2005: 409), gender atypical children are children who possess qualities that are perceived to be abnormal for their gender. Through a study regarding these children, researchers were able to discern that parents socialize their sons more than their daughters to adopt the norms of their gender (Knafo et al. 2005: 409). However, males do not just feel the external pressures to conform when they are children. Instead, Jackson and Bussey (2020) suggest that men also experience the pressure to uphold masculine standards during adolescence significantly more than women do. This exhibits that

masculinity is highly valued in society and that ideals pertaining to traditional masculinity are still incredibly prevalent today.

Furthermore, this study elucidated that men were focused on denouncing certain gender behaviours, especially ones that were viewed as 'feminine', while women felt pressure to adhere to specific gender behaviours (Jackson and Bussey 2005). In a patriarchal society, feminine qualities are both feared by men and forced upon women. This highlights the notion that femininity is perceived to be a burden and is socialized as such. In regards to conforming to traditional masculinity, an analysis of past data trends has concluded that traditional masculinity has remained a stable force since 1993 (Donnelly and Twenge 2016). However, this same study revealed that complying to traditionally feminine gender roles has depleted significantly since 1993 (Donnelly and Twenge 2016). The discrepancy in conformity to outdated roles solidifies the results from the previous studies as it alludes to the idea that men are afraid to deviate from norms that enforce them as dominant or superior. Socialization is a prevalent factor in everyone's life, however some gender norms are perceived to be more obligatory than others.

Gender non-conformity is not only an outcome of primary socialization. This concept is also introduced in settings where secondary socialization is present. As Braun and Davidson (2016) suggest, the conformity to certain gender roles and norms plays a significant role in the socialization and acceptance process among peers. Although Knafo et al. (2005) propose that gender atypical students often find themselves in parental rifts, research suggests that cisgender students are usually quick to befriend a gender atypical girl in a classroom setting (Braun and Davidson 2016). However, it is crucial to note that gender nonconforming boys usually struggle in social settings as they are not as swiftly welcomed by their peers (Braun and Davidson 2016). This highlights the argument that society praises masculinity yet denounces femininity. The study conveys that gender socialization ensures that children view male norms as superior to female norms. Even gender conforming girls exhibit behaviours that reject femininity. For example, girls have the tendency to choose a male dominated activity such as sports over a feminine activity such as playing with dolls in order to convey their own criticism of feminine norms (Braun and Davidson 2016). In contrast to women, fitting into social situations heavily relies on whether or not men conform to masculine norms. However, women also suffer in this type of gender socialization as they are taught that their innate qualities are shameful and inferior. In order to curb this criticism, women will often choose to adopt more masculine qualities as it is a convenient way to earn peer acceptance (Braun and Davidson 2016).

Educational institutions are not the only setting that approaches the idea of gender nonconformity with suspicion and preconceived notions. According to Martin (2005), gender atypical children are perceived as worrisome because gender nonconformity is linked to homosexuality both implicitly and explicitly. The argument that society has reservations toward atypical children because they link them to homosexuality conveys that homophobia is still a rampant issue plaguing modern day communities. Intolerance and stigma towards gender identity and sexual orientation can be harmful to children because it stifles their gender creativity as they do not want to be labelled as an individual who deviates from their 'designated' sexual preference. In order to be perceived as socially acceptable, children must conform to either a feminine or masculine identity as well as reject homosexuality. The assumption from agents of socialization is that a certain gender identity directly correlates to a certain sexual identity (Martin 2005). Not only is this belief wrong, it also highlights why some parents are quick to sanction their child based on their gender expression. In order to dismantle this practice, society must work to dismantle homophobic perspectives as well as denounce the link between gender identity and sexuality.

Identifying as gender atypical is not an effortless feat, especially in a society that places high value on gender role conformation. In order to reject the gender standards inflicted on them by parents and other social structures, gender non-conformists will usually seek out environments in which they are free from social pressures (Knafo et al. 2005: 410). Furthermore, gender non-conformity is becoming increasingly understood and accepted within society. As Pyne (2014: para. 1) suggests, the public's view of 'gender independence' is shifting from "disorder to diversity." This highlights that although traditional gender norms are still the mainstream influence in society, our understanding of gender is beginning to transform.

Additionally, gender differences are socially constructed and have been maintained through macrosystems such as political, religious, and environmental institutions (Braun and Davidson 2005). By understanding this, it exhibits that these structures are the reason that traditional gender socialization has been able to maintain itself. It also alludes to the notion that by reworking these social structures, mainstream gender socialization can be transformed into something that is inclusive and respectful rather than discriminating and hindering.

Although socialization of gender atypical children is still widely executed through an unaccepting and homophobic lens, new studies show that attitudes and ideas regarding gender non-conformity are starting to evolve. As Pyne (2014) suggests, a growing number of parents are starting to accept the idea of atypical gender roles as being pivotal for human diversity. Critics of gender conformity are successfully disassembling the manner in which institutions, such as medical fields, view gender individuality (Pyne 2014). The push to rethink gender role socialization has led to medical professionals altering their approach and treatment of children who communicate gender individuality (Pyne 2014). The medical community is attempting to make active progress with regards to how they view gender nonconformist children. This is a critical step in creating a welcoming and accepting society for these children as most marginalized or oppressed individuals rarely find solace within the healthcare system. Advocates of gender atypical socialization propose that pressuring individuals, especially children, to adhere to traditional gender norms is "no longer considered ethical" (Pyne 2014: para. 8). This statement further solidifies that society is finally becoming committed to unlearning harmful stereotypes and destigmatizing gender independence. Diversity is a necessary aspect of society as it introduces new cultures, practices, and beliefs, which in turn aid in further developing humankind. In order to protect diversity, society must also protect children who choose to practice it.

Challenging institutional ideas surrounding gender independence is just one piece to the puzzle. The other significant agent that must reevaluate the means in which gender norms are portrayed is familial structures. Seeing as a large portion of norms, ethics, and values are instilled in the home, it is crucial that parents engrain positive attributes such as acceptance and open mindedness into their children. As Martin (2005) proposes, parents can create spaces that welcome gender nonconformity by both permitting and advocating for their children to transcend gendered behaviours. For example, denouncing the notion that toys are gendered (such as dolls for girls and trucks for boys) will promote children to explore their own gender identity more freely. Furthermore, teaching children that their atypical gender expression is something to be celebrated rather than criticized can aid in establishing positive attitudes such as confidence and self-assurance (Pyne 2014). Possessing these mindsets is crucial in relation to gender non-conforming individuals as societal expectations can have a detrimental impact on one's mental health. In order to overcome this hurdle, it is salient that individuals feel supported by their friends and family as well as recognize that gender should not dictate how they choose to be portrayed.

During childhood, boys are socialized to inherit the 'patriarchal dividend,' which highlights that men are subject to more institutional, financial, and societal power simply because of their gender (Driscoll and Grealy 2021). Although it is clear that men are the only ones who benefit from this dividend, it does not mean that they do not experience the repercussions of patriarchal standards too. As Knafo et al. (2005) suggest, boys experience more parental pressure to adhere to their gender roles than girls do (p. 409). These gender roles include behaviours that are categorized as 'toxic masculinity.' Teaching boys that they have to be tough, emotionless, and dominant in order to be socially accepted leads to boys internalizing harmful and destructive thought patterns and perspectives. As Driscoll and Grealy (2021) argue, men are both at an advantage and a disadvantage in terms of the patriarchy. Although the patriarchy allows men to indulge in certain privileges that other genders cannot, they are also at the mercy of this structure as they are constantly being judged and pressured to conform to traditional gender roles (Driscoll and Grealy 2021). This pressure is incredibly prominent during childhood however it heightens when boys reach their adolescent years and are surrounded by peers, such as classmates, who display hyper masculine qualities (Driscoll and Grealy 2021). The presence of external influences other than family members highlights that toxic masculinity is socialized in both primary and secondary settings. Understanding that toxic masculinity is a byproduct of the patriarchy emphasizes that everybody suffers from this pervasive force, not just women and non-binary individuals.

Social dominance theory suggests that men exhibit more masculine behaviours and less feminine ones as they age because of the value that society places on masculinity (Braun and Davidson 2016). This theory directly coincides with the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', which are behaviours and attitudes that assert men's dominance over women (Braun and Davidson 2016). These two ideas can be used to explain why men are usually less inclined to deviate from traditional norms than women. Furthermore, it also conveys that women are more likely to embrace masculine qualities because they are generally more accepted in society. Hegemonic masculinity shapes men into aggressive and combative beings. In a study pertaining to the effects of toxic masculinity, many of the men who received feedback that they did not score as high on a masculinity test as their counterparts started to behave in a hostile and derogatory way towards the other participants (Cheryan et al. 2015). This suggests that the adverse effects of traditional gender socialization remain prevalent throughout one's life. Individuals have to constantly communicate their gender role as well as ensure that they are still adequately complying to it. Additionally, with hegemonic masculinity being viewed as the conventional form of masculinity, it creates situations in which individuals feel pressured to appear tougher or more dominant than they actually are. Hegemonic masculinity has serious implications for society because it normalizes acts such as violence and inequality whilst simultaneously shaming men who do not fit the mold for this desired standard.

Another phenomenon of gender socialization is the transition from hyper feminine traits to masculine traits through the duration of elementary school. As Jackson and Bussey (2020) suggest, kindergarten and pre-k girls often present themselves as hyper feminine but become more interested in masculine activities as they get older. This occurrence is partially because children are introduced to secondary socialization via the education system and no longer rely on their parents to act as socialization agents. Furthermore, because masculinity is viewed as more valuable, girls may feel less pressure to adhere to feminine traits under the notion that participating in masculine activities is socially praised. It is socially advantageous for women to adopt masculine traits because society is quick to accept and applaud these behaviours (Jackson and Bussey 2020). However, as Jackson and Bussey (2020) suggest, the process of boys adopting feminine traits has an opposite reaction. This reiterates that masculinity takes

precedence in social settings. Furthermore, girls feel pressure to conform while boys feel pressure to denounce femininity (Jackson and Bussey 2020). The juxtaposing effects that both genders experience with regards to deviation from traditional gender roles further asserts that toxic masculinity is a crucial, yet dangerous, element of the socialization process. This is vital to recognize as it exhibits how easily these values are cultivated and spread and how society must be more conscious of the principles and ethics that are instilled in individuals at a young age.

Gender socialization plays a pivotal role in children's lives. Understanding gender can be a significant aid in navigating social and personal realms. However, gender socialization can have serious adverse effects on both individuals, groups, and communities. Dealing with social pressures to adhere to roles that are both outdated and demeaning can be stifling to individuals' gender creativity and expression. In a patriarchal society, everybody feels the negative effects of gender socialization to some degree. However, it is important to note that society is becoming increasingly more accepting towards gender identities that do not fit the norm. This is crucial as it highlights that even patriarchal societies are able to evolve and become spaces where all individuals feel welcomed. Hopefully gender socialization continues to expand and evolve as society continues to progress in the future.

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51. Reflections on Gender in the Workplace

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Keywords: Occupation, Gender Performance, Experience

Communicating one's gender identity is a task that varies based on factors such as settings and peer groups. The degree to which an individual expresses their gender is largely determined by the norms and rules of a designated environment or community. In my experience, my workplace has played a salient role in influencing how I illustrate my gender. In order to explore the diverse nature of my gender portrayal, I will reflect on four of my past jobs, all of which contrasted each other greatly. I was first introduced to the practice of conforming to workplace gender norms during my employment at a library. Unlike many of my other jobs, the library welcomed and encouraged gender diversity so although there were rules, they were subtly enforced. Personally, I found that this job allowed us to convey our gender identity in any way that we saw fit as long as it was appropriate. Although many of my co-workers used this unspoken rule as a means to explore their gender identity outside of the parameters of highschool that they were used to, I took the liberty of dressing and behaving more demure than I usually would. To this day, I am still unsure of why I felt the need to adhere to the stereotypical librarian criteria when my co-workers did anything but. Perhaps it was an excuse for me to examine traditional femininity without feeling sanctioned by my peers and family. Although displaying myself in this manner did help me blend in and be accepted by my older colleagues, it made me feel powerless. My self imposed compliance to the primary culture at work exhibited to me that although behaving in a docile and submissive manner was achievable, it was not something that made me feel empowered. Although I did not communicate my gender in a manner that felt comfortable and authentic, I am utterly grateful for this job opportunity as it gave me a judgement free outlet to explore my femininity in an otherwise restricting time of my life.

Subsequently, I found myself employed at a purse store shortly after leaving my position at the library. Although my femininity was challenged immensely during my previous employment, it was nothing compared to this job. Working at the purse store forced me to grapple with elements of femininity that I did not prescribe to nor want to implicate in my gender performance. To me, these components signified hyper femininity, which is not a trait that I often choose to embody. However, it was conveyed to me via the attitudes and behaviours of my coworkers that in order to be successful at this job, I had to be the pinnacle of femininity. This included dressing in 'professional' clothing, which included pieces such as dress pants and blouses as well as speaking in a manner that came across as bubbly and kind. Additionally, all of my co-workers were female. This made me feel like I was constantly being judged and pressured to conform to typical feminine traits by everyone around me, not just management. Furthermore, my customer demographic also significantly influenced the way I viewed my gender performance. The usual clientele of the purse store included middle aged conventionally feminine women. Personally, I felt as though these women were constantly challenging my intellect and knowledge of purses (which to be fair was quite minimal). I am unsure if this was intentional or

unintentional on their behalf. Perhaps they felt the need to establish a pecking order with me because I was younger and expressed myself as naive or weak minded. Whatever the reason was, it made me feel as though I was being sanctioned for attempting to act like a typical feminine retail worker. This only further asserted my original belief that I was in way over my head with this job and that I did not belong in an environment where such rigid gender roles were imposed.

My job as a cashier in a hardware store completely juxtaposed my previous employment. In contrast to the purse store, I did not feel pressure to conform to any kind of gender role. This could be attributed to the broad range of employees that this store possessed in comparison to my other job. Whatever the reason was, I never felt as though I had to present myself in a manner that was stifling or oppressive. Instead, management was solely focused on our job performance, which helped ease the pressure of maintaining an unrealistic persona. Perhaps I felt accepted in this workplace because I perceived the culture to be gender neutral, which was a massive change from what I was used to. However, this occupation was not without its flaws. I often found it difficult to build rapports with my co-workers because of their various backgrounds and age ranges. This was a bit isolating at times as I found that many employees had already formed friend groups based on their similarities and were not incredibly welcoming of new employees.

As a new employee, the cliquey nature of this workplace was definitely a challenging aspect however I never felt like I was an outcast because of my gender. Oddly enough, the only individuals that seemed to take note of my femininity were the customers. I was undermined and questioned about my ability as a cashier countless times because of my gender. For example, customers would regularly ask to speak to a manager or seek out a male employee if I offered them answers that they viewed as unsatisfactory. Although they almost always received the same explanation from other employees, it appeared as though they respected it more when it came from a man. This was undeniably the most frustrating aspect of my job as it conveyed to me that although I was more than capable to assist customers, they did not deem me as a reliable knowledge source.

Most recently, I worked as a groundskeeper on a golf course. This job was completely polarizing to the other jobs I've had because I was one of the few women who worked there. When I first began this job, I thought that my gender would for sure cause problems as it was a heavily male dominated field. However, this was presumptuous of me to think as the occupational culture was nothing short of welcoming and supportive. There were definitely instances of me being assigned tasks that were less labour intensive because of my gender however I recognized these gestures as accommodations rather than discriminations.

Furthermore, because my coworkers were predominantly male, I would often be misgendered by golfers and proshop employees alike. Once again, this was not done out of malice but out of ignorance as patrons did not discern groundskeeping to be a 'feminine' job. Although my experience at the golf course was mainly positive, I did hear sexist remarks from my co-workers regarding female golfers. This was troublesome for me as I felt that if I spoke out in defense of these women, I would be putting myself in an 'othering' position and my peers would no longer view me as one of them. I did not want to be perceived as someone who could not "take a joke" so instead I chose to keep my opinions to myself, a decision that I often regret. Navigating occupations that are not regarded as traditionally feminine can prove to be somewhat difficult as women may feel rejected or exiled by their coworkers. However, thankfully I never felt the effects of these pervasive actions.

Overall, I am incredibly grateful for the lessons that each of these jobs taught me. All of the workplace

cultures I endured helped me develop a more heightened and secure sense of my gender identity. Although not all of my experiences were positive ones, they were all equally beneficial in creating the person I am today. Unfortunately, workplace interactions are executed through a gendered lens which can have adverse implications for the individuals involved. It is crucial to note that not everyone has had such positive experiences with their past employment and some have felt the effects of gender-based judgement more than others. It will be interesting to see how and if gender in occupational settings evolves into a more inclusive space in the upcoming decades or if patriarchal themes will stay intact.

52. Iranian Women in Politics

JESSICA M. UNDERWOOD (SHE/HER)

Intro

To most people, when first thinking about Iran, what will come to mind is the relation to the Iraq/Afghanistan war. Although, upon taking a deeper dive into Iran, Iranian culture, and the relationship it has with Islam, we can see and identify issues that arise in the country. One of the most debated topics in Iranian history is women's rights. The issue surrounding women and how they exist in Iranian society is not a new phenomenon. The push for women's rights has been prevalent for over a century and there have been many gains and losses throughout that time. To better understand what is happening currently in Iran, it is important to look at the history of the women's rights movement. After the timeline has been established, it is almost as important to look at the country's leaders and those in government to see how they are going to respond to the protests.

History of Iranian Women in Politics

We begin to see the women's movement in Iranian politics start around the year 1925, or what is known as the Pahlavi Dynasty which was led by Reza Khan and lasted for 16 years before he was surpassed by his son, Mohammad Reza in 1941 (Iran Chambers Society, 2022). Reza Khan, a premier, dismantled and got rid of the previous dynasty and declared himself the leader of Iran or "Shah"; a title of the former monarch of Iran. The Arabian government during the same time he made himself Shah, The Majles, passed a new code that gave women the right to ask for a divorce and increased the legal age for marriage to 15 (Foundation for Iranian Studies, 2022). It was at this time that Reza Shah established the first women's center which was led by Shams, his daughter, and Hajar Tarbiyat. Hajar was a women's rights activist and was also one of the first women in Iran to be elected into the senate in 1971 (Foundation for Iranian Studies, 2022).

In 1935 Reza created an order, making it legally required for women to not wear the veil, otherwise better known as the hijab, when out in public. Due to the new law, and being ordered to abide by it, it was a traumatic time for women as they wanted to wear the veil because of their religion, but at the same time were afraid of being attacked by religious extremists if found not wearing the veil properly.

The first ever Hezb-e Zanan (Women's Party) in the sphere of politics was founded in 1943 by Hajar Tarbiyat, Safieh Firuz, and other women (Foundation for Iranian Studies, 2022). Another breakthrough for women around this time was having the first female lawyer, Mehrangiz Manuchehrian, who was an advocate for women's rights and taught law at Tehran University before becoming another one of Iran's first female senators in 1963 (Foundation for Iranian Studies, 2022).

During the 1950s, many events took place. In 1955, the ministry of labour created the Welfare Council for Women and Children. The council was founded to improve labour conditions for women and children through the avenues of law, social welfare, and health (Foundation for Iranian Studies 2022). Later in that year, The United Nations was brought in to assist the council which led to the first trained social worker living in Iran. Sattareh Farman-Farmaian, the first Iranian social worker, set up Iran's first social work school in 1958. The school started with 20 students in Tehran. It was a 2-year training course containing both theoretical and fieldwork. 7 years later this course was developed into a BA degree with

4 years of study according to university syllables (Iran Association of Social Workers, n.d.). In 1959, women's enfranchisement, or gaining the right of privilege and to vote, was brought before the government which the clergy objected to and was denounced by Mohammad Taqi Falsafi, a preacher and Ayatollah; an honorific title for someone high-ranking in the clergy.

In 1963, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi granted women the full right to vote in all elections (Sahimi 2010). This action was opposed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who was the first Supreme leader of Iran. Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei, the current supreme leader of Iran, was appointed by Ruhollah Khomeini to represent him on Iran's security council since 1989 (Brumfield 2013).

The first Family protection Law was introduced to the country in 1967 by the Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and his Prime minister, Amir Abbas Haveyda. The law served to limit men's former absolute rights to divorce their wives (Sahimi 2010).

A second Family Protection Law was introduced in 1975 which granted women equal rights for divorce, custody of children, marriage settlements, and limited rights of guardianship (Sahimi 2010). This law also allowed women to be judges, and members of the cabinet and reset the legal age of marriage to 18.

Perhaps the most infamous moment in the Iranian women's rights movement was the revolution that began in 1979. The revolution started on March 8, 1979, International Women's Day, when Ayatollah Khomeini made the veiling of women mandatory (CBC Radio 2022). Thousands upon thousands of women marched in the streets and were met with similar resistance as we are seeing today in Iran. Unfortunately, the revolution only had a short-term effect on the government's view about women wearing the veil. Instead of achieving equality for women, most of the rights that they had fought for were taken away (Sahimi 2010).

Only two years later in 1981, it became mandatory for women and girls over 9 years old to wear the veil again.

"Other changes also followed: gender segregation in the workplace, and at schools, beaches, and sporting events. And a slew of new laws governing divorce, child custody, inheritance, citizenship, and retribution — all tipping the scales against women" (CBC Radio 2022).

"In the 1990s, women activists focused on restoring some of their lost rights under family laws and succeeded in regaining the rights to initiate divorce and obtain child custody. Throughout this period, many women committed daring acts of disobedience to highlight the conditions they lived under" (Nahvi 2022).

In 1994, parliament enacted a law awarding a woman monetary compensation when her husband initiated divorce proceedings and she was not at fault (Esfandiari 2010).

President Mohammad Khatami was elected from 1997 to 2005 and the women's movement gained momentum once again.

Esfandiari, H., 2010 reports all of the following events that happened from 2002-2009. In 2002, parliament raised the age of marriage for girls from nine to 13. In 2004, 13 women were elected to parliament—the largest number since the revolution. In 2007, 43 women were elected into local councils. In the 2008 parliamentary election, 9 out of 585 women were elected. Tens of thousands of women from all social classes supported two reformist candidates who backed greater women's rights.

Iran had its first female minister, Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi, who was the minister of health from 2009-2013 (Vahdati 2021).

Since the return of hard-line politicians in 2020, government control over women's lives has become more rigid and invasive (Lamensch 2022).

"In July 2022, President Ebrahim Raisi ordered tougher enforcement of the country's hijab and chastity law, which states that "'violators will be fined, while female government employees will be fired if their social media profile pictures do not conform to Islamic laws" (Lamensch 2022).

Current Female Politicians in Iran

It was difficult to find research that clearly detailed women's experiences within current Iranian politics other than Wikipedia. I can infer that this would be the result of the Islamic Revolution, where women's rights were written over by male authority figures. There was a single resource found in the conducting of my research that had "good" information, produced by Manara Magazine. "There are currently only 17 female members of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis) elected in 2020, a total of just 5.8%. In the 1980 election, only 4 women — 1% — were elected to the Islamic Republic's first Majlis" (Manara Magazine 2022). 17 women may not seem like a big number but considering the barriers and obstacles that women are faced with to get any form of rights, such as divorce, 17 is pretty substantial. Between the years 1980 and 2020, there have been more than 80 members of parliament, and some were elected for numerous terms (Hanna 2021). Perhaps the two most infamous female politicians/lawmakers from Iran are Fatemeh Rahbar and Jamileh Kadivar.

Fatemah Rahbar was the longest-serving female lawmaker. She was a member of the Islamic Coalition Party, a conservative group, and had previously served three terms. She was set to have her fourth term in office but passed away due to the Coronavirus in March 2020 (Radio Free Europe 2020).

Jamileh Kadivar was a reformist lawmaker. She was elected in 2000 and was associated with the Women's Journalist Association (Korassan 2000), but after being charged with harming national security, she was exiled from the country in 2007. She was exiled for attending a conference in Berlin about Iran's reform movement, and this was seen as insulting Islam and the prosecution was seeking the death penalty (Gulf News 2000).

There is little current information about other current female politicians.

Current Issues

On September 16, 2022, the world's focus was drawn to Iran due to the death of a woman named Mahsa Amini. Amini was originally arrested by the country's Morality Police, or Guidance Patrol, for not following government legislation on how to properly wear a hijab. She was beaten while in police custody and has passed away because of those beatings. The Iranian government says that Masha had a pre-existing medical condition that caused her death but her family denies that claim. She fell into a coma due to her injuries and passed away three days later. This event has sparked worldwide protests and rallies in support of women in Iran, as well as pushing for justice to be served to the people who caused her death. Amjad Amini, Masha Amini's father, denied the medical examiner's report about her cause of death and holds the morality police responsible for his daughter's death (Iran International, 2022). Iranian Legal Medicine Organization announced that her death was "not caused by a blow to the head and limbs" but by multiple organ failure caused by cerebral hypoxia" (Iran International, 2022). However, the CT scan that

was taken of Mahsha Amini's body shows something far more sinister. The CT scan of her brain shows bone fractures/hemorrhaging, and brain edema; images of her chest showed bilateral diffuse alveolar hemorrhage and damage due to aspiration pneumonia, secretion retention, and superimposed infection (Iran International, 2022)

In response to the protests, the Iranian government has combated the protesters with violence, batons, guns, and tear gas. There have been videos of military and police officers who are walking through the streets and shooting civilians and protestors. There have been several fatalities as a result of these protests with the numbers continuing to rise daily. "The Oslo-based Iran Human Rights Organization said on Wednesday at least 342 people including 43 children and 26 women have been killed by security forces in the ongoing nationwide protests" (Iran International, 2022). The government is also trying to limit videos about the protests and morality police from getting on the internet and therefore isolating them from the rest of the world. This has caused a staggering increase in people buying VPNs or Virtual Private Networks to upload footage of what is happening. Top10 VPN recorded that the demand for VPNs skyrocketed to 2,100% on September 22 compared to the past 28 days (CNBC News, 2022). Even though VPNs are illegal in the country, many youths have been using social media platforms such as Tiktok and Snapchat to share what they are experiencing. Many videos that I have seen and have also been shared with news reports show women burning their hijabs and cutting their hair while crying. A lot of the people in those videos are young women as well as men who are protesting with them.

One aspect that has given the protests more momentum has been the students protesting at their schools. The Washington Post (2022) states that there have been over 130 Iranian universities that have participated in the protests and have been a major area for clashes between the morality police and protestors. Students are also protesting in other, less violent ways by leaving classes or not going to school at all.

Conclusion

The women's rights movement in Iran is not new and has been a persistent movement for the last 43 years. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that there have been protests about women's rights and what they can and can't do in Iran. This is also not the first time that the government has countered the women's movement with violence and murder. The tragedy that happened to Mahsa Amini's family is just one of many and has not been the last civilian killed by the Morality Police and the Islamic Republican Party. While these events have continued to occur, so has the determination, resilience, and perseverance of women has continued to grow and grow throughout this. The women and men of Iran who continue to protest are some of the bravest people in the world and their efforts have reached all corners of the globe. Let their actions and sacrifice be rewarded in victory.

Women. Life. Freedom.

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53. Brief History of the Women's Rights Movement in Iran

JESSICA M. UNDERWOOD (SHE/HER)

For a visual version of this content click here.

URL: https://tinyurl.com/xt3kpypu

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN IRAN: TEXT ONLY VERSION

1920

Women's rights were focused around the Veil

Education became more accessible

1930

The veil was banned in 1936 Many women did not leave the house due to fear of being attacked by extremists

1940

The ban against head coverings was removed, therefore becoming optional. • The Iranian Women's Party was founded • The first women's sufferage bill was brought forward though was denied by the government.

1950

Women gained the right to vote on a municipal level in 1952

1963

Women got the right to vote

The right to run for parliament

The right to have/obtain a divorce and keep custody of their children.

1970

Women had 22 seats in parliament and more than 200 in local council

1979

Revolution about women's rights and the compulsory hijab.

1980

Hijab was mandated and was brought to assent by the Islamic republic.

Other rights that women had were also stripped away.

1990

“Pink Revolution” where women wore colorful hijabs/veils in protest of the “traditional” colour of black

2000

Peaceful protests were held in objection to the discriminatory laws against women.

2010

The “My Stealthy Freedom” movement was started by Masih Alinejad in 2014 where Iranian women posted photos of themselves without the hijab or veil.

Zanan Magazine, a women’s magazine, started publishing after being shut down in 2008 by the government for how it portrayed women in Iran.

2020

Veils and hijabs are compulsory

World wide protests over the death of Masha Amini

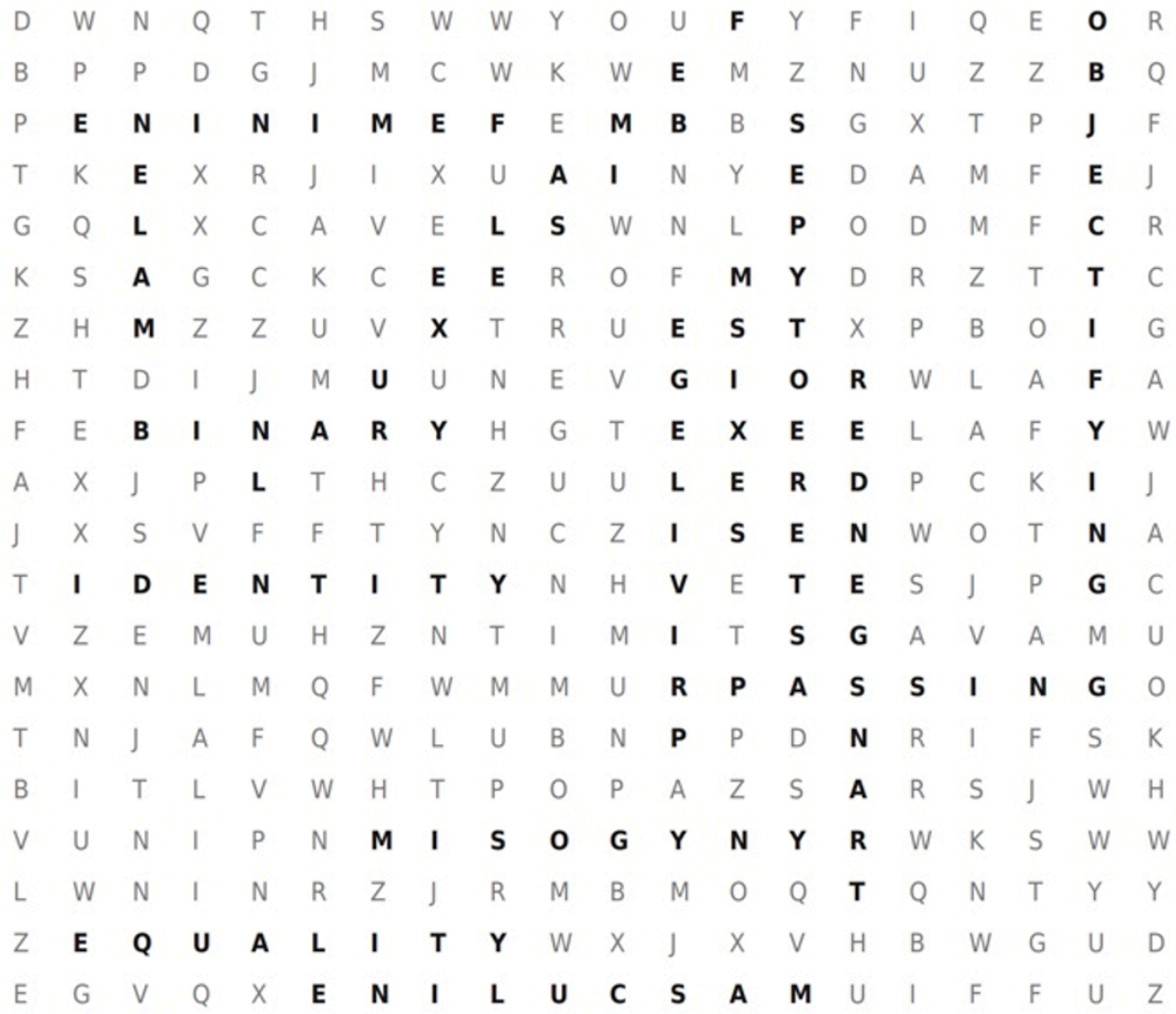
Protests in Iran being led by women

Protesting against the Islamic Republic and the politicians who run the country

Criticism of the Morality Police

54. Gender Relations Word Search: Answers

AIDAN BROT (HE/HIM)



55. Book Launch

ZOE PAINE (SHE/HER)

SOCI 322 Book Launch

GENDER: REFLECTIONS & INTERSECTIONS

A Collaborative Book Project

The class of SOCI 322: Sociology of Gender Relations is publishing their very own open-source book, available early 2023.

On December 7th, 2022, the class held a book launch event to discuss their academic and creative pieces. There was also a light buffet for guests to indulge in after the event.

Guest speakers Dean Elizabeth Brimacombe and Anwen Burk (not shown) from CIEL were also in attendance.

56. Book Launch

ZOE PAINE (SHE/HER)

SOCI 322 Book Launch

Gender is a very complex topic, and this book certainly reflects that. Topics ranged from unhoused women, the manosphere, nonconsensual distribution of intimate images, and more.

A big shoutout to Sociology Professor Vicki Nygaard (not shown), who was instrumental in the collaborative book process!

Contributor Bios and Pictures

Editors

Angela Goerz (She/Her)

Angela is from the traditional and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation and is working to complete a BA with a major in psychology. Her main take away from being involved in the book collaboration is how much planning, organizing, detail and thought go into planning and completing a book, especially with such a large group of people.

TK Hannah (They/he)

I am an uninvited guest who was born and raised in Bawating, in the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land of the Anishnaabeg, specifically the Garden River and Batchewana First Nations, as well as the Metis people.

Sociology Major

Snacks and coffee are essential.

Maven Laberge (They/She)

They were born on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh and raised on the traditional territory of the Quw'utusn

Majoring in Anthropology

One key takeaway from the creation of this book is the lack of awareness of topics outside of the gender binary. That most of the research that has been conducted is through a binary lens and does not allow for fluidity within an individual's gender identity.

Rayel MacLean (She/Her)

Dunne-za territory

Psychology and Sociology double major

Gender is the most wildly complex, yet incredibly specific concept.

Madeline McIntyre (She/Her)

Snuneymuxw Territory

Major in Communications

Working on this project has allowed me to dive deeper into the aspects of gender and gender identity that I myself have never learned about. I hope this book allows people to engage with heavier scholarly works in a way which is engaging and exciting, and perhaps even teaches them something they didn't know before!

Katie Near (She/her)

I am from the Snuneymuxw First Nation territory

I am indeed a Sociology major

My favourite thing that was taken away from this book was the enjoyment of the collaboration aspect of 30 people taking individual ideas to merge them into one creation.

Zoe Paine (She/Her)

I was born on the traditional Treaty 7 territory and Métis Nation of Alberta (Region 3).

Anthropology Major

Main takeaway from being involved in the 322 book collaboration —> My main takeaway from being involved in the SOCI 322 Book Collaboration was being part of a group who had a common shared goal. The mutual respect among myself and my peers helped to produce a culture of understanding and anticipation about the project. Even when things got tough, we were all there to support one another, which helped us to follow through with deadlines and various tasks.

Tara-Fay Sedar (She/Her)

Tara-Fay is a fourth-year student majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sociology at Vancouver Island University in British Columbia, Canada. Sedar has spent her entire life living on Vancouver Island and grew up in the Comox Valley on the traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nations. She moved to Nanaimo, BC to finish her undergraduate degree and resides on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw. Sedar's main takeaway from this project is being part of a collaborative experience that has allowed her to witness the process of planning, creating, editing and publishing a book with a large team.

Anwen Burk

Anwen was born and raised on the ancestral territories of the Cree, Blackfoot and Métis people. She is a Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Specialist with the Centre of Innovation and Excellence in Learning at VIU. She really enjoyed working with students on this project and was inspired by their creativity and hard work.

Author

Vicki L. Nygaard (She/Her)

Vicki was born in the traditional territory of the Lhtako Dene. Her degrees are in Sociology from UVic, where she began her post-secondary teaching career over 30 years ago. Midwifing this book into existence, with 31 contributors, has been a significant reminder that trusting in the process is challenging, *necessary*, and ultimately, rewarding.

Contributors

Aidan Brot (He/Him)

I was born and raised in the Snuneymuxw territory

Anthropology Major/ Sociology Minor

My main takeaway from being involved in the SOCI 322 book contribution was that I discovered how much more involvement and care go into a project written by an entire class rather than individual work, and how this project feels more fulfilling knowing it was a shared idea.

Destiny F. Davidson (She/Her)

Masset, Haida Gwaii

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology.

Destiny's main takeaway is that writing a book while taking 4 other classes is a lot of work and teaches you more about your time management (or lack thereof).

Hayes Evans (He/Him)

Hayes acknowledges and respects the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation people as the place he was born and raised. Evans is in his third year at Vancouver Island University, where he is interested in psychology and sociology. The biggest takeaway from being involved in this book collaboration was working with a diverse range of individuals and being exposed to different views regarding gender.

Samantha Furneaux (She/her)

I was born on the unceded territory of Musqueam First Nations

Major in Criminology, Minor in Studies in Women and Gender

The biggest takeaway would be the shockingly little research on queer people in sex work.

Sydney Gallant (She/Her)

Sydney was born in Ontario on the Indigenous Territory belonging to the Haudenosaunee Nation. I am currently working towards an undergraduate degree in Sociology with a minor in History. As students, we absorb what feels at times like endless knowledge. In contributing to the collaborative book, it feels empowering to have created a space to share and reflect on the knowledge we have all taken in over the course.

Angela Goerz (She/Her)

Angela is from the traditional and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation and is working to complete a BA with a major in psychology. Her main take away from being involved in the book collaboration is how much planning, organizing, detail and thought go into planning and completing a book, especially with such a large group of people.

Marshall Hagel (He/Him)

I was born and raised in the small town of Oliver in the Okanagan Valley on the unceded territory of the Syilx people. In my final year of a Sociology degree working on this book has been an incredibly valuable experience and has provided me with so much information on gender that I'll be able to use academically and professionally going forward.

TK Hannah (They/he)

I am an uninvited guest who was born and raised in Bawating, in the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land of the Anishnaabeg, specifically the Garden River and Batchewana First Nations, as well as the Metis people.

Sociology Major

Snacks and coffee are essential.

Eden Hatch (He/Him)

Traditional Territory: Nehiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux) and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot).

Sociology Major

This was an amazing opportunity to not only learn and explore my own Gender identity, but also to connect with my fellow classmates in creating something for other students to use and learn!

Stori Jensen-Granger (She/Her)

I am from the Comox Valley on the unceded traditional land of the K'ómoks First Nations.

Geography Major

It was an amazing experience to work with classmates from a variety of disciplines to create a book about the intersections of gender.

Jared Keim (He/Him)

Born on Tk'emlúpsemc territory

Sociology Major

I have learned to love the chaos of the process.

Caitlin Kellendonk (She/Her)

Indigenous territory name where born: Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4

Major: Sociology

Main takeaway from doing the 322 book project:

I am passionate about gender studies and my heart is full of gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate on this book.

Maven Laberge (They/She)

They were born on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh and raised on the traditional territory of the Quw'utusn

Majoring in Anthropology

One key takeaway from the creation of this book is the lack of awareness of topics outside of the gender binary. That most of the research that has been conducted is through a binary lens and does not allow for fluidity within an individual's gender identity.

Emma Lachman (She/Her)

I was born on the Indigenous Territory of Quw'utsun

Criminology Major

Your main takeaway from being involved in the 322 book collaboration —— I would say that my main takeaway from being involved in this book collaboration would be coming together as a class and having to work together in a way I have not had the privilege of doing in my four years of university. It was an honour to work with people of so many diverse backgrounds and to continue furthering my educational journey on gender.

Rayel MacLean (She/Her)

Dunne-za territory

Psychology and Sociology double major

Gender is the most wildly complex, yet incredibly specific concept.

Madeline McIntyre (She/Her)

Snuneymuxw Territory

Major in Communications

Working on this project has allowed me to dive deeper into the aspects of gender and gender identity that I myself have never learned about. I hope this book allows people to engage with heavier scholarly works in a way which is engaging and exciting, and perhaps even teaches them something they didn't know before!

Breeanna Miller (She/Her)

Born on Tsimshian territory, of Gitxsan and Cree heritage

Major in Sociology, minor in Psychology

Main takeaway from being involved in a book collaboration was giving myself more grace and learning to have patience. It has given me the opportunity to connect with my classmates on a deeper level, be creative, and share new ideas.

Naars (She/Her)

I am from Edmonton and the Cree called the area Amiskwaciy (Beaver Hills)

Majoring in Sociology

I was aware of the discrimination LGBTQ+ individuals faced in the health care system, however, while I was researching for this book it made me realize the problem is more severe than I initally presumed. This was a great opportunity to read my peers work and learn from their work.

Katie Near (She/her)

I am from the Snuneymuxw First Nation territory

I am indeed a Sociology major

My favourite thing that was taken away from this book was the enjoyment of the collaboration aspect of 30 people taking individual ideas to merge them into one creation.

Zoe Paine (She/Her)

I was born on the traditional Treaty 7 territory and Métis Nation of Alberta (Region 3).

Anthropology Major

Main takeaway from being involved in the 322 book collaboration —> My main takeaway from being involved in the SOCI 322 Book Collaboration was being part of a group who had a common shared goal. The mutual respect among myself and my peers helped to produce a culture of understanding and anticipation about the project. Even when things got tough, we were all there to support one another, which helped us to follow through with deadlines and various tasks.

Elijah T. Parker (He/Him)

Born and raised on Treaty 7 Blackfoot territory, currently living on unceded Snuneymuxw land.

Favorite part of the book process has been seeing everyone else's work, I love to see the variety of interest and knowledge within a feminist scope.

Thomas Roden (He/Him)

Ktunaxa Nation

Psychology Major

When writing a book, be prepared for things to change at any moment and flexible to adapt to unexpected situations

Eva Rutzebeck (She/They)

I currently live in Duncan, which is the land of the Cowichan Coast Salish Stz'uminus people and have lived there my whole life. My ancestors on my mother's side are from Telegraph Creek BC which is in the Tahltan Nation, of which I am a registered member. The Tahltan nation is just east of the Alaska Panhandle.

Psychology Major and Sociology Major

Talking about these topics with the class and then writing the articles lead to good discussions and better writing.

David T. Schneider (He/Him)

Sociology Major and a Political Studies Minor

David Schneider was born in the traditional and current territories of the K'o'mks First Nation and raised in the traditional and current territory of the Quw'utsun people.

The largest takeaway I had from creating this book was the power that exists when people come together and focus on their strengths in a community that can support their strengths.

Tara-Fay Sedar (She/Her)

Tara-Fay is a fourth-year student majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sociology at Vancouver Island University in British Columbia, Canada. Sedar has spent her entire life living on Vancouver Island and grew up in the Comox Valley on the traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nations. She moved to Nanaimo, BC to finish her undergraduate degree and resides on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw. Sedar's main takeaway from this project is being part of a collaborative experience that has allowed her to witness the process of planning, creating, editing and publishing a book with a large team.

Kendall Smith (They/She)

The traditional territory of the Halalt First Nations people

Sociology Major

The main takeaway for me from being involved in this book collaboration is how things like this can bring a community together. It was amazing to see everyone come together to work together towards the goal of publishing this book.

Jenna Sportak (She/They)

I am from the traditional territory of the Lhtako Dene and was raised on the traditional unceded territories of the Hupacasath and Tseshaht First Nations.

Double Major in Sociology and Women and Gender Studies

My main takeaway from this collaborative book experience would be the amount of diversity we have seen through the process of coming together as a class, which is now being showcased through this literature. With everyone having various interests of research and intersectional backgrounds guiding our goals, this project has allowed for an array of creativity and diverse knowledge to shine through. All of our pieces hold individual value that share or touch on one of our own personal narratives. In the end, while each piece has its own merits, we have been able to collectively create an entire book, nay, a piece of art that is expansive and continues the conversation of gender through an intersectional lens.

Maya Stinert (She/Her)

Born on territory of the Nehiyaw First Nation

Sociology Major

That publishing a book of this nature requires a multitude of diverse perspectives and lenses.

Meagan Sharpe (She/Her)

Meagan Sharpe was born on the unceded land of Kwikwetlem (Coquitlam) but raised on the unceded territory of the Snuneymux (Nanaimo). She is double majoring in Sociology and Political Science. She was excited to be able to investigate systemic issues that directly impact close and important members of her family.

Jessica M. Underwood (She/Her)

Born on Lekwungen Territory

Majoring in Criminology

It was a big undertaking but I found that subject I was researching very interesting and very relevant to current events happening in the world.

Illustrator

Eva Rutzebeck (She/They)

I currently live in Duncan, which is the land of the Cowichan Coast Salish Stz'uminus people and have lived there my whole life. My ancestors on my mother's side are from Telegraph Creek BC which is in the Tahltan Nation, of which I am a registered member. The Tahltan nation is just east of the Alaska Panhandle.

Psychology Major and Sociology Major

Talking about these topics with the class and then writing the articles lead to good discussions and better writing.