*[Gender Reveal* theme music plays]

**Molly:** Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we ask intrusive personal questions and hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I'm your host and resident gender detective, Molly Woodstock.

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**Molly:** Hello everyone, and congratulations for making it all the way through 2018. I know it's really fucking hard to be a trans person in the world right now, but you did it, you pushed through, you made it, and I am so, so proud of you.

This week on the show, instead of doing the usual format with the intro and the This Week in Gender, and a long interview, I'm sharing three teeny tiny stories about our three Gender Reveal grant winners. They're all from very different places in the world, they're all doing very different work, and I hope you'll stick around and listen to all three of them. Before we get started, just a quick reminder that these grants were all 100% funded by Patreon donors, who also pay for my editing software, transcription, hosting fees—everything else we do to make the show happen. You can start 2019 on a high note by supporting trans media at [patreon.com/gender](http://www.patreon.com/gender).

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Our first guest this year is poet, writer, and zinester Rae White, who uses they/them pronouns. Rae called in all the way from Queensland, Australia, where it is currently summer.

**Rae:** It is hot—it’s like a small sauna in here. Queensland's great!

**Molly:** I mean, I would take a small sauna right now if you wanted to switch really fast!

**Rae:** [laughs]

**Molly:** As always, I started by asking Rae how they identify in terms of gender.

**Rae:** Ahh, nonbinary and transgender. Sometimes genderqueer, it depends on how I'm feeling. I feel like sometimes there's a lot of words that don't suit how I feel about gender, so I just pick a couple.

**Molly:** Are there any words that, like, you did use, but then you moved away from them? Because I feel like I started using genderqueer, and then I switched to nonbinary, and I like, wouldn't be able to tell anyone why? [laughs]

**Rae:** No, that's pretty much exactly my experience. Yeah, I couldn't—I couldn’t tell you why because I love the word “queer.” But yeah, I went from being “genderqueer” to—maybe “nonbinary” because it's more something that you can explain to cis people? [laughs]

**Molly:** Rae is the founder of *#EnbyLife*, a collaborative zine started in 2016. And before you mention it, yes, Rae is aware that some people don't love the name of the zine.

**Rae:** Um, I guess I was concerned that, uh, I know that there's like a lot of people who don't like the word "enby." uh, but I think that might be an infantilization kind of thing, where it's like, [baby voice] "Oh you're such a cute little enby," like, kind of. [laughs]

**Molly:** Nevertheless, it's called *#EnbyLife*, and it's full of stories, poetry, and art by nonbinary people. The original zine is available for very, very, very cheap on Etsy, or pay-what-you-want on Gumroad, but Rae is now working on a new iteration of *#EnbyLife*, which will live entirely online.

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**Rae:** So, it will be an online journal, uh, 'cause I thought that in terms of the accessibility of print media, it can be a little bit difficult, you know especially—even, like, digital zines for people with, you know, screen readers, it can be, ah, quite tricky. Obviously though, in terms of it being an online journal, not everyone has access to the internet, etc., etc. But I wanted to make it as accessible as I possibly could. So it will be online, it's a website at [enbylife.net](http://www.enbylife.net).

**Molly:** Rae plans to use their Gender Reveal grant to support the many artists and writers who contribute to [enbylife.net](http://www.enbylife.net).

**Rae:** So when I first did *#EnbyLife*, I didn't pay my contributors. I gave them a copy of the zine, but I think it was something that, uh, was done in error, and I think that artists should be paid for their work. So I will be paying creative people who, um, submit and are accepted to *#EnbyLife* $20 AUD for their work—which is not enough, it's never enough, but it's, you know, hopefully a small payment for their amazing work.

**Molly:** Rae told me that they were sitting in a Starbucks, which, yes, is apparently a thing that also exists in Australia, when they learned that they had just won the Gender Reveal grant.

**Rae:** I had just had a bunch of coffee, so I was already having a lot of feelings, so I just, you know, started getting a bit teary. Because coffee does that, and so does money! I'm really appreciative of, you know, as someone who is low income, to get some money to—obviously not to pay myself, but to pay artists and creatives for their work, because I know that whenever I'm submitting poems, or other art that, you know, I'm submitting to places, so often it's, like, you know, we're not going to pay you, it's just for exposure—and look, that's—that's a whole other political conversation. But you know, stuff that I want, I want to be able to pay people because I as an artist want to get paid. And you know, we live in a shitty capitalist society, so, you know, money pays our rent and I want to, I want to be able to pay people and not just through exposure or, you know, being like, "Well done, good job! I have enough followers on Twitter to make you famous!" Like, that's just—that's some bullshit.

**Molly:** Yeah, you know, what's so funny about that is when you said, like, "Not to pay myself, obviously." Because I feel like, you know, I have this Patreon, and I'm like, "Please donate to the Patreon so that you support Gender Reveal.” And if I start making enough money that *I* would start making money, I'm like, "Oh no! Now I need to create a grant and just give it to other people!" But then the people also who *won* the grant? Like *both* of you were like "Oh, this money isn't for me! I'm giving it to other people!" So, like, none of us are comfortable making *any money*. We're just like, "Oh someone else! Give it to someone else!"

**Rae:** It's so true, though! Like, I was, the day I got your email, I also got an email that said that I've been shortlisted for this big prize in Australia, that's the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, which is just *massive*. And I was just so amazed, and my first thought was, "Oh, I'm immediately going to donate to Gender Reveal, so they can do—

**Molly:** Awwww!

**Rae:** —like, if I win, that's what I'm going to do! So they can give more grants! And I'm like, god, I'm such a masochist!

**Molly:** [laughs] Yeah, right! It's true, we're both this way. It's wild, like, I mean, I really, like, being trans is just like passing the same $20, like, in a circle.

**Rae:** That's exactly what it is, it really, really is. Which is beautiful—like, it's a beautiful society that we live in, in terms of, you know, queer community and queer culture, but also...uh, look, fuck capitalism. [laughs]

**Molly:** Okay. Anti-capitalist ranting aside, we got to back up a bit and talk about the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. You see, in addition to making zines, Rae is a celebrated poet.

**Rae:** My poetry is a little weird, sometimes a little creepy and gory, very trans, very queer. I feel like every single time I write a poem it's even more queer than the last one, which is just—it's a life goal, honestly!

**Molly:** But unlike most very queer, very trans poetry, Rae's poetry collection—which, by the way, you should totally buy—was shortlisted for what seems to be Australia's biggest literary prize.

**Rae:** It's a book called “Milk Teeth”, which I think was an excellent title for it, because it just sticks in people's minds and kind of also creeps people out.

**Molly:** In their report, the judges for this award wrote that “Milk Teeth” "challenges preexisting categories: gender, interior and exterior landscapes, the way we assume language is fixed. In this book, bodies are abject and monstrous. But they're also sexual, ordinary, and thriving like tropical houseplants in a north-facing room." Since Australia is apparently a place where increasingly queer and trans poetry can potentially win a huge national prize, I asked Rae to tell me what the country is like for queer and trans people.

**Rae:** Oh, god. I mean, it's probably just from my, you know, white, cis-passing privilege, but it's all right! [laughs] I know that a lot of my mates get yelled at on the street and stuff, that kind of jazz...there's still transphobia here, obviously. It's not a kangaroo-tastic utopia or anything—

**Molly:** [laughs]

**Rae:** I know a lot of trans people—like basically all my friends are queer and trans, and it's fantastic. Last year, we got marriage equality, and it was this huge thing that meant that there was a lot of homophobic and transphobic posters around and stuff from the right being all, like, super into throwing queer and especially trans people under the bus for their cause. But, you know, we got marriage equality, so that's nice. Would like more trans rights. Overall, Australia's OK for trans stuff?

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**Molly:** If you are excited about Rae's work, you can check out the existing *#EnbyLife* zine on Etsy or Gumroad as well as at [enbylife.net](http://www.enbylife.net). If you'd like to submit your work to the zine, keep an eye out.

**Rae:** I'm planning to open up submissions next year when, you know, the kind of festive season is over and everyone's offices, relatives, have calmed down and everyone can, like, chill out.

**Molly:** You can also visit [raewhite.net](http://www.raewhite.net) to order a copy of *Milk Teeth*, which you should totally do. The Australian dollar is very weak against the US dollar right now, so it's pretty affordable at least for Americans, and you're supporting trans art! Plus there's something sort of delightful to me to know that someone personally is carrying this book of queer, trans poetry across the whole world for me. Anyway, Rae is a treat and a delight, and I really hope they win a bunch of prize money and fly over here to hang out. Before we got off the phone, I had to ask them what their ideal future of gender would look like.

**Rae:** Oh no, I hoped—I hoped because I was a small guest that you wouldn't ask me this! Oh my god. Um, I think...there was this interesting discussion that I listened to at the local Queensland poetry festival that talked about utopias that was really interesting, because people kept on talking about how someone's utopia would be someone else's dystopia—

**Molly:** Mmhmm...

**Rae:** —and I feel like this is me just being, like, a super pessimist, but I feel like there would never be a way in which we would have, like, everything be perfect, and everything be utopian, because you know someone's going to hate that and someone's gonna not enjoy that. And not just cis people, like, I guess like other trans people as well, like, might be like, "That's not how I picture my world, my gender." But I think, like, if we could all just be a bit more compassionate and listen to one another, that's something that wouldn't be such a big deal—you know, for everyone to have, like, their utopian ideal, um, ideal ideal of gender! [laughs] You know, something that actually happens and something that can be fulfilled. Maybe if we just stop being assholes to one another, that would, that would assist in that. So, I dunno, I think it'd be nice if everyone was, uh, compassionate—like, radical compassion—and if everyone listened to one another and helped learn from one another. ‘Cause gender's hard and it's tricky, and it's, you know, confusing and upsetting—and I think it could be less so. I dunno, I have a lot of feelings about people just being nice to one another! [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah!

**Rae:** So, that's my—my ideal look at gender is people exploring and being nice to one another and not assuming that everyone is, I dunno, automatically wrong or something. And also just, like, if people could just stop yelling at my partner from cars, that'd be just brilliant, like that would be my ideal look at gender is just people to just stop yelling at trans people. Anyway…

[*Gender Reveal* theme music plays]

**Molly:** That's gonna do it for this mini episode. We're dropping two more tiny stories this week, so check your feeds, order your copies of *Milk Teeth* and *#EnbyLife*, tell your friends about Gender Reveal, leave us a review, throw us some money at [patreon.com/gender](http://www.patreon.com/gender), and cross your fingers for January 31, when we’ll find out whether Rae won the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards.

This tiny episode was produced and edited by me, Molly Woodstock. Our logo is by Michelle Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music by Blue Dot Sessions. We'll be back so, so soon with more feelings about gender.

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