[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

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

[*Gender Reveal* theme music ends]  
  
**Tuck:** Hey, everyone! Hope you’re all still hanging in there. This week on the show, I am sharing the second half of our live show from back in November, and if you haven’t listened to the first half, I highly recommend going back two episodes and listening to our interview with Alyssa Pariah - not because you really, really need that context to understand this episode, but just because Alyssa is one of the most incredible guests we’ve ever had, and I think everyone should hear what she has to say.  
  
Anyway, this half of the show features gender advice with BFF of the show, Z Griffler. We answer questions such as what counts as gender expression, whether skirts can be gender neutral, who’s trans enough to start HRT, and (this is not a joke) what the heck is gender.  
  
**Z Griffler:** According to Merriam Webster, masculinity just means “the male gender.”   
  
[Tuck laughing]  
  
**Z:** That does not help me!  
  
**Tuck:** But first, thank you so, so much to everyone who has joined us on Patreon in the last few days, including, but not limited to Kai, Madalyn, Ozzy, Riley, Courtney, Molly, and Beth, as well as everyone who has been with us on the Patreon for months, weeks, years at this point. As you no doubt know by now, our patreon pays our hosting and equipment fees, it pays for tape syncs, it pays for transcriptions for the show, it funds our trans BIPOC grant program, and it’s my primary source of income. So if you can spare a dollar, or five dollars, or ten dollars a month to support the show, please head to [patreon.com/gender](https://www.patreon.com/gender) where you’ll receive a weekly newsletter, stickers, pins, all that good stuff.

No big new merch news this week, but we still have all sorts of great shirts, stickers, mugs, and more, over at [bit.ly/gendermerch](https://teespring.com/stores/gender-reveal). Everything in the store is $29 or less, lots of things are three or four or five dollars, and 100% of proceeds are donated to trans artists and trans organizations, 10/10 would recommend. But for now, it’s time for This Week in Gender.  
  
[news fanfare plays]  
  
**Tuck:** Because it is such a short episode this week, we have a luxurious four-part This Week in Gender for you today. Part one: South Dakota.

[bell rings]

**Tuck:** Just wanted to give everyone an update from our This Week in Gender segment from two weeks ago. As you know, South Dakota legislators were trying to prevent doctors from helping trans kids medically transition. On Monday, the South Dakota State Health and Human Services Committee voted five to two to kill the bill, which is obviously great news, but eight other states have similar legislation in the works for this year, so let’s hope that this defeat starts a national trend of not passing transphobic legislation.

Part two: Giggle.   
  
[bell rings; background music starts, it is fun Saxophone]  
  
**Tuck:** I just wanted to touch briefly on last week’s This Week in Gender topic. I regret to inform you that since then, Giggle has updated their FAQ section and somehow made it even worse. I highly recommend going back and listening to last week’s segment, because otherwise this isn’t going to make any sense, not that it really makes any sense in any context.  
  
But, the page now says, “Question: Are trans girls welcome on Giggle? Answer: Yes, trans girls are 100% welcome on Giggle. Giggle’s gender verification onboarding process is a gatekeeper to stop men from getting onto the platform, not girls or those who identify as girls.” Ah, yes. Men, girls, and those who identify as girls. The three genders!  
  
“Question: Why is biometric gender verification software used to access Giggle? Answer: The aim is to create a safe and secure platform for girls. Biometric gender recognition software ensures that those within the platform are verified as girls. This involves taking a selfie, and the gender recognition software produces a result. This process is closely monitored by real girls. Bioscience, not pseudoscience like phrenology, is behind this process. It determines both male and female genders, and does not discriminate by race or age. Gender identity is a separate issue. If you are experiencing any difficulty, real girls and members of the LGBTQ community can help you at Giggle HQ.”  
  
Anyway, just wanted to bring this up because 1) they clearly aren’t learning, 2) they are legally able to sell that facial scan to facial recognition software companies, I’m just saying, 3) “bioscience”, 4) ah, yes, the two genders, 5) “gender identity is a separate issue”, and 6) okay, but imagine if they actually meant girls every time they said “girls”, and so they had pre-teens sitting in a warehouse, closely monitoring everyone’s selfies to determine whether you are, in fact, a real girl, worthy of joining them. Neat!  
  
Part three: Scotland.  
  
[bell rings; background music changes, it is marimbas]  
  
**Tuck:** Over in the UK, politicians and activists are working on passing Scotland’s gender recognition reform bill, which updates the 2004 gender recognition act, to make it easier for trans men and women in Scotland to change the gender marker on their birth certificate. Between now and March 17th, people anywhere in the world can fill out a consultation form in support of the reform bill. I’m going to put a link in the show notes that explains exactly how to do this, but here’s what you need to know:  
  
They’re going to ask you five questions, and the first question is, “Do you have any comments on the proposal that applicants must live in their acquired gender for at least three months before applying for a GRC?” The GRC is the thing you need to change your gender marker on your birth certificate. The way that activists suggest you answer is that, on one hand, the GRA currently requires that folks spend two years living as their gender before they can get legal recognition on their birth certificate, and so three months is obviously an improvement from that, but they are asking you to suggest that they eliminate this type of gatekeeping entirely.  
  
Question two, “Do you have any comments on the proposal that applicants must go through a period of reflection for at least three months before obtaining a GRC?” So that means that once you apply to get your gender marker changed, you have to wait three months to, I don’t know, make sure you’re really sure. So, please ask that they remove that requirement entirely; it makes no sense and serves no one.  
  
Question three, “Should the minimum age at which a person can apply for legal gender recognition be reduced from 18 to 16?” Your answer should be yes. Also, request that children younger than 16 be able to change their gender markers with parent or guardian support. Because currently, everyone is banned from getting a GRC until they’re 16, which obviously could cause a lot of problems for trans youth, who are enrolling in school with an outdated birth certificate.  
  
Question four, “Do you have any other comments on the provisions of the draft bill?” Your answer should be yes, add nonbinary people! Because right now this only works for trans men and women, and the cool thing about nonbinary people is that we also exist and are worthy of basic legal rights. So, please request that they add nonbinary folks to this reform bill.   
  
Question five I honestly didn’t write down, but there is a step-by-step guide for all five questions linked in the show notes. Thank you for taking time out of your day to speak up for Scottish trans rights.  
  
Part four: TERFs.  
  
[bell rings, background music ends]  
  
**Tuck:** Before we go, I want to share an email from a listener named Constance, who writes, “I just started your podcast, so I don’t know if you’ve touched on the subject since, but in the very first episode, you said TERFs are ‘a group of mostly lesbian feminists’, and from my personal experience of getting bullied by them, they’re mostly straight women using lesbians as an argument to support their cause. The vast, vast majority of lesbians I interact and have interacted with are far from being TERFs. Many of them are trans and/or nonbinary themselves. I think putting the blame on lesbians like that can be harmful, especially since it’s not the case at all. Of course, I’m not saying lesbians cannot be TERFs, as I’ve seen that and kept far away from them.”  
  
Constance, I just want to say you’re right! Thanks for writing in and pointing that out. Also, I think that many of us are saying “TERFs”, often when we really mean “garden-variety transphobes” anyway, so maybe we should just stop saying “TERF” and start saying “transphobic assholes”. This has been This Week in Gender.

[This Week in Gender--a newsy fanfare--outro plays]

[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

**Tuck:** This interview took place at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon on November 23rd, as part of the 2019 Trans Action and Care conference. For part one of this event, please download our episode with Alyssa Pariah. For more advice episodes like this one, check out Gender 102, 103, 201, 202, 301, 401, and 402.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music ends]  
  
**Z:** Hey, check!  
  
**Tuck:** Cool, we’re gonna make a podcast again. When you’re ready.  
  
**Z:** Podcast two!  
  
**Tuck:** So this is the other type of show that Gender Reveal does, which is an advice show, where people send in questions about gender, and we give some sort of spicy take on them that mostly boils down to do whatever you want. So, this is Z Griffler, they’re my best friend, they show up on Gender Reveal all the time.  
  
**Z:**  Yeah!  
  
**Tuck:** Do you wanna introduce yourself? I don’t know what else to say about you, one time you made me a ringtone of Michelle Obama telling men to be better.  
  
**Z:**  I did!  
  
**Tuck:** Um, what else about you?  
  
**Z:**  That was a viral ringtone!  
  
**Tuck:** It did go viral, yeah. [both laughing] Oh, you made me trans!  
  
**Z:** Yes.  
  
**Tuck:** That was cool. Did you know you can make people trans? [both laughing] Yeah, this is the part of the show where we ask questions! The first question...  
  
**Z:** Oh, I’m gonna--  
  
**Tuck:** You read.  
  
**Z:** I’m gonna read it, yeah!  
  
**Tuck:** Go for it!  
  
**Z:** Okay!

[transitional chime]

**Z:** “Recently, I came out as nonbinary and I’m struggling with sexual identity terms, because most of them seem to be rooted in the gender binary. Can you talk about how you or other nonbinary folks use sexual identity terms?”  
  
**Tuck:** Yeah! How do you use sexual identity terms? I… [both laughing] It is rooted in the gender binary. I know nonbinary people who use “gay” to mean that they’re dating men, I know nonbinary people who use “gay” to mean they’re dating women, I know a lot of nonbinary people who say “if you’re dating me, you’re gay! Everyone’s gay with me.” I also know a nonbinary person who identifies with “straight.” So, that can really be anything you want it to mean. They’re really flexible labels because they don’t apply to us.  
  
I use “gay” specifically as a nonbinary person to mean that I’m primarily attracted to other nonbinary people, because that feels really, really powerful to me. Besides that, I’m really primarily attracted to people whose gender seems really similar to mine, and that is really really important to me. So when I use gay, I mean specifically, I am atrtacted to my own gender because I’m a narcissist. [audience laughter] But you can use it however you want. What about you, Z?  
  
**Z:** Well, I’m asexual, so that’s just a cheat code for me. [both laughing]

**Tuck:** Do you have more?  
  
**Z:** Nope, that’s all I got.  
  
**Tuck:** Perfect!

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** This person says, “I am one of the cool kids who realized I was trans/nonbinary because of the show.” Hell yeah! “Anyway my question is, I have B-cup boobs that I guess are pretty small compared to some other folks. I usually wear compression sports bras, and haven’t binded yet. When I’m wearing clothes, I don’t mind the way they look when they’re compressed, but it makes me feel icky when I can see the ~tiddy~ shape.” I love that, there’s the tildes around “tiddy” - the *tiddy* shape! [both laughing]

“But then when I’m naked, I love my boobs and feel super empowered by how cute they are! This is really confusing, especially as a ‘new’ trans person. Should I look more into binding and continue to go that route? Should I consider top surgery? I know you don’t have all the answers and that it’s a personal choice--” Thank you “--but I guess I’m just confused by all of this. I don’t know who else to ask. Thank you for coming to my TED talk.” [audience laughter] Do you want me to answer?

**Z:** I mean, I can just preface this by saying that bodies are really complicated, and the ways that we feel about bodies can be really complicated in different contexts.  
  
**Tuck:** Yeah. Oh, gosh, this is a spicy part of the podcast and it’s harder when everyone can see me!  
  
**Z:** Just hang out with me for a second.

**Tuck:** I think everyone should do whatever makes them feel good for themselves, and what keeps them safe. So I want the caveat that if you’re doing something for safety, then I 100% support whatever that thing is. And a lot of people want to pass as one binary gender or the other to keep themselves safe, and I respect that. That said, I personally feel like I should get to do what I want to do with my body because it’s my body, and so I would not personally get top surgery if I felt good in my naked body, because I want to keep the body that makes me feel good. So, this person, if you’re not feeling good when you’re wearing clothes, but you’re feeling good when you’re naked, then yeah, maybe binding sounds like a really great solution for you, actually.  
  
**Z:** Yeah, I mean it’s kinda just, feel things out and see what makes you feel cozy (as people like to say that I say a lot), and what makes you feel safe. But just don’t feel obliged to follow any transition script that you don’t want to.  
  
**Tuck:** Right, exactly. I think that it’s really easy to see a bunch of nonbinary folks with boobs getting top surgery and being like “Ah, yes, I must get top surgery in order to be nonbinary” and that’s not true. My instinct was just to flash everyone and I’m not gonna do that, so...

**Z:** I can flash everybody! [audience laughter]

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** Next question! This person says, “I’ve been struggling with two phrases that I hear often. When talking about pronouns, I hear many people use the term ‘preferred pronouns’, which seems unnecessary to me. Aren’t they just our pronouns? To me, the word ‘preferred’ makes it seem like it’s just a preference, and not real. I have a similar struggle with the word ‘identify’ in reference to someone’s gender. When someone uses the phrase ‘female-identified people’ in reference to a group of women, why don’t they just call them ‘women’? Am I missing something?”  
  
**Z:** Nope.  
  
**Tuck:** No, that person’s right. [audience laughter] That’s it, that’s the whole answer. You’re right, you can call women “women” and you can call pronouns “pronouns” and that’s it, that’s the whole thing.  
  
**Z:** That’s the whole thing!  
  
**Tuck:** Go ahead!

[transitional chime]  
  
**Z:** So, “Why are pants and short haircuts gender neutral? Can a person who is trans/nonbinary/masc who uses he or they pronouns wear a skirt if they feel like it? I am assigned female at birth, don’t bind at this time, and I am frequently misgendered. I am trans, genderqueer, nonbinary, agender, and if I present with a skirt, and/or before I cut my hair, people who supposedly have some inkling of trans issues have questioned my appearance. I feel like I need to walk around with a sign. How important is appearance?”  
  
**Tuck:** So this is one of the times again where I show up as really stubborn. Because there’s two paths that this person can go down feasibly, and one of them is presenting in a way that doesn’t match their internal feeling of gender so that people maybe read them in the way that they want to be read - even if it means that their expression is different than what they’d want, because at least it means that maybe people will address them with the correct gender more often. Or, this person can just be like “fuck y’all” and keep dressing the way that they’re dressing, and be like “I am dressing this way, and I am wearing a skirt, and also I’m nonbinary” or “also I’m a trans man” and I highly, highly, highly recommend doing the second one if you feel safe, because we need that represenation really badly.

Everyone in this room I think knows that being nonbinary or being trans can look a zillion different ways, but a lot of cis people think they’ve never met a trans person, and all the ideas that they get about trans people are from the media, and the media has a very specific idea of what trans people look like, and what nonbinary people look like. And so it is a pain in the ass to have to move around and be misread constantly, and have to be like “No sorry, I’m trans”, “No, sorry, I’m nonbinary”, “No, sorry, I’m” -- don’t apologize, I don’t know why I’m apologizing -- “No, I’m trans”, “No, I’m nonbinary”. That’s something that we have to do in order to get to a place where everyone can wear a skirt, and everyone can wear a dress, and everyone can be whatever gender they want.

**Z:** Hey, Molly.  
  
**Tuck:** What?  
  
**Z:** But the first part of the question: “Why are pants and short haircuts gender neutral?”  
  
**Tuck:** Yeah, I mean because of patriarchy, obviously! [both laughing] I mean, another part of the question was “Can a person who is trans/nonbinary/masc who uses he or they pronouns wear a skirt”, and it’s like, *yes,* they do.

**Z:** Yeah.

**Tuck:** That happens.

**Z:** They sure do.

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** This person says, “I am assigned male at birth, in my mid-30s. I just recently realized I am nonbinary. It feels both wonderful to have a name for all the feelings I have had for a long time, and frustrating because I don’t know what to do with it now. I am particularly worried about how to navigate this when I am this far along in life. Do you have any advice for feeling good in my new understanding of myself, without making it a huge deal for everyone around me?” [both laughing] Yeah, this is [???]. I love you, whoever did that!

**Z:** Yeah, it’s not your job to make other people comfortable. It’s just not.

**Tuck:** Yeah. I mean, if this person feels really good and they’re like “Hey, it feels really wonderful but now I don’t know what to do with it, and I don’t know how to navigate it; how do I feel good without upsetting other people?” Just focus on what feels good. Archie Bongiovanni has a zine or a poster or something that says “Don’t overthink what feels good” and I think about that all the time. Don’t overthink what feels good, do whatever you need to do to make this a wonderful experience for you, and if there are people in your life who are making you feel like you’re too much, then maybe you need to shift who’s in your life, because there are so many other people who are so happy to be in community with you, and I just think that if anyone comes out as trans, and the people who are around you are making you feel like you’re a burden, that’s on them. That’s not on you, you’re 100% not a burden, and you never are.

**Z:** Yeah, and I think just to add onto that, the advice we always give to people all the time is just explore, see what makes you happy, see what steps need to change - if anything needs to change - and work on those things, and take your time, and pretend that there’s no script, ‘cause there’s no script!

**Tuck:** There is no script!

**Z:** Great!

**Tuck:** Yeah, be easy on yourself, and then -- that’s what I was gonna say, is if you’re looking for community that will be so thrilled with you - and this goes for every question - but if you want to a community to talk about clothing with, if you want a community who will help you try out a bunch of different pronouns and names, there is a Gender Reveal Slack! It is at [bit.ly/genderslack2](https://gendereveal.slack.com/join/shared_invite/enQtNTE5MzgwNjMwNjQwLWM4YzhlMjk3OGQwN2VjMjk1MmM1OWE1NjlhYzM1NTVhYmNlZTI0YjE3NDQ0YjY3ODQ3M2M3NDYxMjk0NmVjZjQ), that’s “bit.ly” and “genderslack” the number 2, and it’s just a lot of people hanging out together (including a lot of people in this room), and being supportive in this really, really beautiful way. So if you don’t have access to other community, which I think a lot of you do, or you want it to be more anonymous, you can do that!

**Z:** Yeah, and the Gender Reveal Slack is just good and pure. It’s maybe the most pure thing on the internet.

[transitional chime]

**Z:** “I am assigned female at birth, agender, and I use they/them pronouns. I am also a musician, and I absolutely love singing in choirs, specifically SSAA choirs, which are typically termed ‘women’s choirs’. I love the music they can create, and the opportunity to exist and make music in what has the potential to be a safe space for marginalized genders. However, they are very rare, and often filled with older women who subscribe to first-wave feminism. I recently joined one such choir in the state where I live, and loved the professional way in which they ran the rehearsals and approached choral music. However, I felt increasingly dysphoric during the first rehearsal as the group was incredibly ‘woman-centric.’ Even the uniforms have a mandatory skirt.

“When I asked if a black suit would be acceptable, I was told ‘Sorry, no.’ I am not anti-skirt, and I actually own a dress that I love to pieces. However, the attitude of the group left me feeling unwanted and unwelcome as my current gender, and I would have to go back to pretending I’m a woman in order to fully participate in the experience. I decided not to continue singing with the choir before it’s too late and I’ve paid a bunch of money for the music and uniform. How do I communicate my reasons to these women so that they may be potentially more welcoming to others in the future, without getting emotional about my own gender or making it seem like I’m in a huff over something as quote/unquote ‘insignificant’ as clothing?”

**Tuck:** Ugh.

**Z:** Bleh.

**Tuck:** So, this person has every right to be uncomfortable. I really need to know if this is branded as being a “woman’s space” or not, because there’s two different angles to go at this, and one is like “You are not being inclusive to a range of genders with this dress code”, which is true. But even if it was an all-women’s choral thing, there are plenty of women who also don’t wanna wear dresses, and who would feel dysphoric or extremely uncomfortable. Butch women exist and masc-of-center women exist, and so I think just pointing out that not everyone’s gender identity allows them to wear skirts and dresses - including some women - could maybe help, but these people also seem.. Bad.

**Z:** Yeah, I basically said the same thing. It’s like, is this a choir for women? Or is it a choir for everybody but cis men? Who are they targeting with this choir, and who are they intentionally excluding? Because that would really change the way that I would approach the conversation. As Molly said, you can just say, “Hey, not everyone loves wearing a skirt” and just see where that goes, but if you’re starting from the point of “This choir should include other genders”, that could be a much more fraught conversation.

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** This person says, “I’ve identified as a genderfluid woman for a long time, but recently realized that I actually identify more as a nonbinary person. I’ve never considered medical treatments to help me feel more aligned with my identity, but recently I had surgery including voluntary sterilization, and was surprised by how much it helped with my dysphoria. Things like getting my periods don’t make me dysphoric, I’m considering getting treatment through an online clinic that specializes in trans health, and my issues with this are A) my insurance won’t cover my treatments and I’m broke as hell, B) the alternatives are going to local clinics that might not be LGBT inclusive and they might dismiss me, C) I can’t help but feel like an imposter and worry that I’m somehow harming ‘real’ binary trans people by pursuing this treatment. I don’t want to transition to being a binary male and I’m still comfortable with certain aspects of my body while still feeling masculine a lot of the time and having what feels like dysphoria. Am I just a confused asshole? I feel that way sometimes, but part of me knows that if I don’t explore HRT I’ll always regret not knowing if it could help me.”  
  
**Z:** That’s a lot.

**Tuck:** It’s a lot, but it’s really just like, oh, you gotta just do it.

**Z:** Yeah. I mean, okay, let’s address the ABC. A) It sucks that people don’t subsidize trans healthcare, period.

**Tuck:** Yeah, we gotta do what Alyssa said.

**Z:** Yeah, we gotta do what Alyssa said. B) There are some clinics, even in the same area as other clinics, that will be so much better about trans healthcare than others, and it’s just super, super, super, super local. If I’m just doing the super America-centric thing of assuming they’re in America, one clinic across the street from another could be the worst thing in the world, and then the other one is just like, “Oh, whatever you want, cool!” And that’s just how it is. And then--

**Tuck:** I mean, I wanna recognize that it’s terrifying to go to the doctor as a trans person.

**Z:** Super scary.

**Tuck:** So, I recognize that, yeah, this is obviously a hurdle, not having money is obviously a hurdle, so these first two, A and B, feel like really valid concerns to me. C…

**Z:** Is… no.

**Tuck:** C the one that’s like, “Oh, but if I transition will it be hurting binary trans people?” and the answer is always no.

**Z:** It is no.

**Tuck:** If you feel like you need to explore HRT, then explore HRT. You’re not hurting other trans people by exploring HRT, ever.

**Z:** They make a lot of it. [audience laughter]

**Tuck:** What?

**Z:** They make a lot of HRT. Like, there’s not a limited supply and it’s like “Oh, well, we’re gonna have to take it away from him!”  
  
**Tuck:** Yeah, exactly! [both laughing] Yeah. So just feel good. Feel good exploring, it’s not hurting anyone. If people tell you it’s hurting them, then it’s their problem. It’s their weird transphobia.

[transitional chime]

**Z:** “I have been wondering about gender expression. Mostly what it is, and what is not considered gender expression. Does an individual have complete agency to determine what is and what is not a part of their gender expression? Or, is there always some gender expression, since the point of gender in contrast of sex is about social roles, and it somehow just bleeds into the expression automatically? Is all expression gender expression?”

**Tuck:** Uh, hey, is all expression gender expression?

**Z:** No.

**Tuck:** Okay, tell me about that.

**Z:** I think it depends on if something is something that you do because it helps you feel like yourself, versus something that you’re just doing.

**Tuck:** Yeah. I mean, the example that I give in presentations for gender expression versus gender identity is that, I’m normally wearing overalls, and I’m just like “I could be here in a tux or I could be here in a ballgown or I could be here dressed like a gay toddler, and my gender expression would be different all the time, but my gender identity inside would be the same, because there’s a lot of reasons that people wear clothes that aren’t just gender expression, like maybe there’s a dress code in your choir. But I think that if you’re wearing something that makes you feel really good, that’s kind of always gender expression.

**Z:** Yeah. I think it also depends on how much one ascribes their identity to what they’re wearing, and that could be super fluid and spectrum-y in itself.

**Tuck:** Oh yeah, for sure.

**Z:** Gender is hard.

**Tuck:** Gender is hard!

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** Speaking of gender is hard! We have two more, so we’re almost done. There’s one more, but then Alyssa gave me one that you don’t know about yet.

**Z:** Oh, great! I love a secret one.

**Tuck:** This says, “I just listened to the Gender 103 episode. In that episode, there’s a comment that gender isn’t tied to femininity and masculinity. I’ve heard that line in the community before, I’ve googled it, I’ve asked people, but I don’t understand it. In my head, ‘gender’ is the sum of which masculine and feminine traits you possess and identify more strongly with, but this is apparently wrong and I don’t understand why, and it calls my own gender identity/nonidentity into question. I don’t understand what other criteria for defining gender exist, so why isn’t gender defined by an individual’s self-identification with feminine or masculine traits? Sure seems like an obvious way to go.” [laughing]

**Z:** Alright, yeah. What is feminine, what is masculine? Let’s start there.

**Tuck:** Yeah.

**Z:** And let’s… Okay, that’s a lot to start with. Let’s start with something simpler. Somebody could have every single “feminine” trait in the world, but they might still be cis, and that’s fine, so you can’t just use that to determine--

**Tuck:** You mean a cis man?

**Z:** Yeah, a cis man for instance! You could be the most feminine cis man in the world, and that doesn’t make you not a cis man anymore. You can’t just “trans” somebody in that box.

**Tuck:** Yeah.

**Z:** So you can’t use that.

**Tuck:** That’s not how you turn people trans.

**Z:** That is not how you turn people trans. You start a podcast.

**Tuck:** Oh, yeah, that’s true. That is true. [both laughing]

**Z:** So, yeah. I think if you yourself, in your own conception of yourself, want to use masculine and feminine as a way of figuring out how you want to talk about your gender, that's fine. But I think it’s important to also understand that that, in itself, is not the way that everybody thinks about their own gender.

**Tuck:** Yeah, I agree. If that framework helps you decide how you identify in terms of gender, then that’s great, because we all have to figure it out somehow. And the thing is gender’s fake, so there’s no test you can take about what gender you are, because it’s all just whatever feels best for you and makes you get through the day.

**Z:** That’s the whole reveal. [both laughing]

**Tuck:** That’s the gender reveal! And so whatever feels best for you is right! So many of the questions that we get are like, “Am I trans if being trans feels good, but maybe I’m not actually trans and I’m just tricking myself because I wanna be trans?” If you wanna be trans, you’re trans! If it feels good to be a boy, then you’re a boy, if it feels good to be a girl, you’re a girl! You can just be a boy, you can just be a girl, you can just be both or neither!

**Z:** Yeah.

**Tuck:** If you’re like “I’m really feminine so I’m a girl”, that’s totally fine; just don’t project that onto other people. Don’t assume that every feminine-to-you person you see is a girl, because we all have different definitions of masculinity and femininity. It changes over time, it changes over space, it changes over community, it changes within ourselves, and also some of us don’t use that to define gender. I don’t like associating masculinity or femininity with myself at all, and I don’t choose to engage with those terms, and that doesn’t mean that other people can’t; it just means it’s not helpful for me.

**Z:** Yeah, and... I don't know, just to wrap it up, I looked in the dictionary about masculinity.

**Tuck:** According to Merriam Webster!

**Z:** According to Merriam Webster, “masculinity” just means “the male gender”. [Tuck laughing hysterically] That does not help me! I’m extremely agender! I don’t know… [both sigh]

**Z:** Oh, god, I’m just trans, it’s fine.

**Tuck:** It’s fine.

[transitional chime]

**Tuck:** Okay, so the last question was from Alyssa before she left, and it was basically about how the mainstream media hates trans people, which we all know, and how the LGBTQ media is still dominated by these cis, white voices, such as - Dan Savage, was her example - who are not helping trans people. So she was basically asking what can we do as a community to counteract the fact that the mainstream media hates trans people, and then the queer media also hates trans people.

And my answer, which I should have worn the shirt, is to support trans media, and to show up for the media you want to see in the world, and you all did that, and I thank you so much. Really, it is just supporting trans media and it is sharing not just the articles that we all hate, which I am guilty of, but sharing articles that get stuff right that was written by trans journalists, sharing stuff by Katelyn Burns - there are so many amazing trans journalists out there doing work, and you can join their Patreons. You can join our Patreon but that’s not why I was mentioning that but you can, but you can show up to events like this, you can share the articles with your friends.

Also when the mainstream media, or Dan Savage, who I honestly think is the mainstream media, is saying something fucked up about trans people, you can write in and tell them that’s not okay, because the reason that all of these outlets are still being shitty to trans people, is because they’re like “Well, trans people are like whatever percent of the population, and so we don’t care, it doesn’t affect us, it doesn’t affect our bottom line when we’re shitty to trans people.” And so what we need to do is make it affect their bottom line when they’re shitty to trans people, and affect their social integrity when they’re shitty to trans people. That’s unfortunately the way people change!

I do equity presentations and it’s actually my pinned tweet right now, that I was giving a presentation and it says “How do I make other people care about diversity and equity?” and then it just says, “I don’t know how to make you care about people.” And that’s true! I don’t know how to make the New York Times care about trans people, and from a compassionate lens, like they’re just not gonna do it. But we can at least tell them it will hurt their bottom line, it will hurt their standing in society, when they continue to be this shitty to trans people. You can recommend trans educators. What about you?  
  
**Z:** Uhhh, what you said. [laughing]  
  
**Tuck:** Cool cool cool! Cool cool cool! Cool cool cool! Yeah, support trans journalists, show up for them.

**Z:** Oh, and make cis people help!

**Tuck:** Cis people. Show up for trans people, obviously. I know there’s at least like two of you in this room, cis people, hey!

[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

**Tuck:** I think that’s the show! So the way that we always end the show is by me just rambling about some credits, so I’m just gonna tell you that the show was made by me and Z. Thank you so much, Z, for helping and doing all of our sound, I appreciate it so much! [audience applause] Yeah, you can clap for Z, thank you so much!

**Z:** Bless.

**Tuck:** Thank you! Thank you to Eli and everyone else for having us, this was so fun! Thank you all so much for showing up, you’re perfect, I love you! If you have not listened to the show, you can find Gender Reveal in any application (podcast-type application not just any app). Our website is [genderpodcast.com](https://www.genderpodcast.com/), we are on social media @gendereveal, and also I’m on social media @mollywoodstock.

We have a merch store, and because I am just a moron, I don’t make any money off of it; all of the money goes to other trans people and trans organizations. That’s at [bit.ly/gendermerch](https://teespring.com/stores/gender-reveal). You could get shirts that say “support trans media”, which answered the last question! What else do I plug? The Slack, which we already plugged, the theme song that you heard (and I’ll play it again) is by Breakmaster Cylinder, and I think that’s it, right?

**Z:** People can ask their own gender questions.

**Tuck:** Oh, yeah! You can submit gender questions to us, there is a form in the show notes of every episode. Also if you want to give me money, we are at [patreon.com/gender](https://www.patreon.com/gender), or I am on [cash.app/mollywoodstock](https://cash.app/$mollywoodstock) and [paypal.me/mollywoodstock](https://www.paypal.me/MollyWoodstock).

**Z:** What’s the other thing you do with the money?

**Tuck:** Oh, yeah, well there’s a grant program! [both laughing] So, at least 20% of the money that comes in through the Patreon goes directly to a grant that helps other trans people. We have a grant once a year that supports specifically black, indigenous, and people of color, and then we have another grant that is open to everyone. So, it may also end up only supporting people of color, but white people are allowed to submit to that one. It gets directly bigger, directly proportional to how many people are donating to the patreon, so last time it was $1,100, and this time it’s gonna be $2,000. [audience applause]

Just jumping in here to add two credits! Our logo is by the amazing Ira M. Leigh, and additional music this week by Blue Dot Sessions. And that’s it! We will be back real soon with more feelings about gender.

[*Gender Reveal* theme song ends]