[*Gender Reveal* theme music plays]

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

[*Gender Reveal* theme music fades out]

**Tuck:** Hey everyone. Hope you’re all hanging in there. This week on the show, I am really excited to share my chat with friend of the show, Beth Easton. They called in all the way from the UK and I had a blast talking to them. You probably know Beth as the designer of our Support Trans Media shirts, and I’m excited for you to get to know more about them as a nonbinary parent, as an artist, as a fellow Sagittarius--

**Beth:** There are times when I really go all in on the making PowerPoint presentations about how angry I am about things.

**Tuck:** --And as a person who, like many of us, is spending the quarantine thinking about gender.

**Beth:** You’re stuck inside. So, what are you doing because you think other people want you to act that way? And what are you doing because you actually want to? And like, you can try different things. You’re not gonna see anyone.

**Tuck:** But first, the quickest of reminders that are merch store is stocked with four designs through May 31st. That’s two of Beth’s designs: At Least it’s Spring in Hell, and Support Trans Media. There’s also Niko’s iconic Surf Don’t TERF t-shirts and tank tops in there for maybe the last time ever—who can say? Better grab one just to be safe. And we also have a new design by Annie Mock. That’s all through May 31st. After that, we are clearing out everything and adding a bunch of all-new Pride merch? But like, Pride merch that *doesn’t* suck. What a concept! We have a couple of new designs that I’m really excited about. If you would like to contribute a design for the shop, please hit us up on Twitter or Instagram or at genderpodcast.com. And as always, we will split the proceeds 50/50 between you and and LGBTQ org of your choice. And with that, it’s time for *This Week in Gender*.

[*This Week in Gender* intro, a newsy fanfre, plays]

[Sparse bass and electric guitar music plays]

**Tuck:** You may have heard last week that WNYC has cancelled the *Nancy* podcast. *Nancy* is a show devoted to stories and conversations about the queer experience, with an emphasis on queer joy and pop culture. It was created in 2017 by Tobin Low and Kathy Tu, which made it not only a queer show, but a queer show hosted by two queer folks of color, which is obviously a huge deal. *Nancy* was a big influence to me when I was developing *Gender Reveal*. The fact that this show is cancelled is wild to me for many reasons. One is that I don’t put it past straight executives to make bad decisions about queer culture but cancelling your queer show before Pride month is *wild* to me. And yes, they are putting out episodes through Pride month but it’s just a bad look. And for that matter, when is the last time that any podcast was cancelled? Like truly the only other podcasts I can think of off the top of my head that have been officially cancelled are *Another Round* and *See Something Say Something*. I’m sure those aren’t the only examples but it is just bizarre to me that the only podcasts that anyone bothers to cancel are about marginalized voices, and all of the other shows just go on and on until episode one-thousand.

Anyway, third reason why this is wild is that, yes, there are many, many queer shows. There are shows by queer people of color. But this is the only queer-focused show that I know that was made by an NPR member station, which means that public radio doesn’t have a queer show anymore. And I just wanna know why we can’t have literally one nice thing? There are so many shows about politics, there are so many shows about science, there are so many shows about the arts. We need all of those things. I’m glad those shows exist. There are so many game shows on NPR—yeah, sure, why not, but also... Can we just have one thing? Can we have one space for us?

I just wanted to take a moment and thank Tobin and Kathy and Zekia and Matt and Jeremy and Parker and Sara and everyone else who has worked on that show over the years. To be honest, so many of my favorite people in radio have contributed to *Nancy* at some point or another, including friends of the show like Lewis Raven Wallace, Liza Yeager. It feels weird to be losing the space where I heard and discovered and appreciated so many different gaydio icons.

[Sparse music ends]

**Tuck:** And unfortunately, losing *Nancy* isn’t an isolated incident. I don’t have data on this, but I’m watching my friends lose their jobs. I’m watching queer outlets shut down, and I would put money on the fact—or the guess—that journalists and radio producers affected by layoffs right now are disproportionately queer and trans and brown and otherwise marginalized. Because we’re had to fight the hardest to be hired in the first place. We’ve had to fight the hardest to get our stories told in the ways that they deserve to be told. And then, of course, we are the first to go when budgets are tightened even the slightest amount.

So I’m taking this as a reminder that no matter how many passionate and talented queer and trans and brown journalists exist in the world—and by the way there are thousands of us—we are always going to be underrepresented, and underpaid, by the way, as long as straight, white, cis media execs decide which stories get told and by whom.

I mean even in June, when everyone suddenly wants to talk about queer people for once, do you know how many straight white guys have been pegged to write stories about Stonewall? I’ll give you a hint, it is more than zero.

[Optimistic music starts]

So, if you care about queer stories, trans stories, black and brown stories, disabled stories, immigrant stories, please try to show up, as I know that you do, for individual, independent creators whose voice you want to hear in the world.

If you take a look at the Gender Reveal patreon page, we take a lot of the money that comes in from y’all, thank you so much, and we pass it straight on to people like Beth Easton, today’s guest, or a gallery spot in Portland that’s run by trans black and brown people. We send it to Sara Merck, Queer Appalachia, Caleb Luna, Queer Public, MariNaomi, Maleb Chansky, Emma Jayne, Emilly Prado, Carta Monir, Maia Kobabe, Katelyn Burns, *What The Trans!?*, *Queersplaining* and Callie Wright, Rose Eveleth, NK and Phoebe from *Bitchface* and *The Heart*. And honestly if you heard those names and you’re like “there’s one that’s missing,” there probably is, let us know! We will probably try to send money to them as well.

So thank you for helping us do that. Shoutout this week to our new Patreon supporters, including Max, Z, Victor, Lydia, Haven, Kate, Claire, Jackie, Maddie, Kimberly, everyone else who has supported us in any way, everyone else who has supported trans media in any way. Thank you so much.

It feels fucked up to plug our Patreon right now, but we’re at [patreon.com/gender](http://patreon.com/gender). Don’t forget to support the guests you hear on this show as well as us. And also, I know that not everyone has money to throw around right now. Even without the pandemic, we’re all trans and we’re all passing the same $10 around while saving up for really expensive surgeries. So if you’re cis or if you’re otherwise in a position to donate, please do that. Maybe send a little extra to whomever you’re supporting. And then also, if you are in the situation where you cannot donate monetarily, I 100% get it, and please know that spreading the word of the work you care about really, really does help so much, and really does mean the world to us. And we couldn’t do it without you.

[Optimistic music ends]

Support the stories you believe in, and maybe one day we can build—I was going to say our own media empire, but we’re not about empires here. Maybe we can build a system in which the voices that we care about are elevated without relying on some white guy named Steve deciding that like, yes we actually can tell that story. Because honestly, those companies only care about queer people when they’re profitable to them. Like, the reason I don’t run ads on this show is because then the only way that I can make money is to sell things to you, and having brands decide that I am selling enough things to you, and that you are profitable enough for me to get paid. And that’s bullshit. So I’m asking money from you directly.

Thank you for supporting trans media. And this has been *This Week in Gender*.

[*This Week in Gender* outro music, a newsy fanfare, plays]

[*Gender Reveal* theme music plays]

**Tuck:** Beth Easton is an aggressively queer nonbinary illustrator and comic artist. They are chronically ill and have a small child who never sleeps.

[Main theme ends]

**Tuck:** As you know, the way we always start the show is by asking, in terms of gender, how do you identify?

**Beth:** I identify as nonbinary and sometimes I say nonbinary trans, because I feel like sometimes like to separate the two. But I’m not about that. So nonbinary trans, or just nonbinary is fine.

**Tuck:** Do you remember how you learned that nonbinary identity existed?

**Beth:** Uh, I think it was Tumblr.

**Tuck:** Yes!

**Beth:** [laughs]

**Tuck:** I don’t know why that was my hope, but it was. I love it!

**Beth:** Well, I was 17, so of course it was Tumblr. Where else would I have learnt it from?

**Tuck:** Tumblr making us all trans.

**Beth:** Yeah.

**Tuck:** What pronouns do you use?

**Beth:** I use they/them pronouns.

**Tuck:** Great. So, we’re recording this a couple days after Mother’s Day, and you are a nonbinary parent who grew a child in your body, but is not a mom. Can you talk about being a parent who is not his mom who is often assumed to be a mom, and what that experience has been like?

**Beth:** Yeah. Um, it’s really weird, as well, because it’s not actually Mother’s Day in the UK. We have a different Mother’s Day

**Tuck:** Mm, mhmm.

**Beth:** We have the same Father’s Day, though, it’s very odd.

**Tuck:** Weird.

**Beth:** I mean, it’s great, I like being a nonbinary parent. Attie, although he doesn’t talk, technically calls me Zazzi. My partner and I are like, “yep, that’s Zazzi, and she’s mummy, and that’s how it works.” But I go to toddler groups and take him to nursery and people assume that I am his mum. And I’m like mm, eh, [sigh], what you’re saying is I’m the primary caregiver, or you’re saying you gave birth to him, which both are true, but they just don’t make me his mum. It’s not worth having the conversation every single time. And also it’s like, basically ‘cause my girlfriend transitioned fairly recently, she obviously told the nursery like now, “his dad is now his mum, it’s not that complicated, I’m just telling you.” And they’re really good about it. And they very much get like a... “He has two mommies now.” His teacher will be like, “I’ve made sure everyone knows that Attie has two mommies now.” And I’m like, “nnn...nnooo.”

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs] But it’s closer than it was before. Because they thought I was mummy, and my girlfriend was daddy, and neither of those were correct. So... I guess we’re closer?

**Tuck:** So you and your partner are both trans. How do you handle your kid’s gender?

**Beth:** I think we decided before he was born that we were going to be really chill about gender, which is kind of the best way to do things. But to use he/him pronouns for him until he can tell us that that’s not what he wants. Mostly for ease with, like, other people, and with taking him to schools and all sorts of things. It’s easier to say, “oh yeah, *he* does this,” rather than if I say “they” then it comes into a whole conversation and I already have to have that conversation about myself all the time. And because he’s nonverbal it’s not something that he can have a say at the moment. Like, people assume that he’s a girl a lot of the time. And I’ve had some quite funny conversations with people where they’ll be like “oh, you’ve got such a pretty little girl, what’s her name?” And I’ll be like, “It’s Atticus.” ‘Cause I don’t correct them on the pronoun bit. And they’re like, “oh, Atticus is a funny name for a girl.” And I’m like, “yup. Yes it is.”

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** Cis people are oblivious a lot of the time. Like, I’ve also had a very similar conversation where someone came over to me who was at this toddler group that I was at, and they were like, “I’m not trying to be rude—” and I was like, okay, what are you gonna say to me? And they’re like, “Why do you put Atticus in girls’ clothes?” And I’m like, “what do you mean?” And she’s like, “oh, well, he’s wearing flowery trousers.” And I was like, “well... he’s four.”

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs] And I had to do this whole thing where I was—‘cause she has a daughter—and I was like, “well, when your daughter wears blue trousers, they’re not boys’ trousers. They’re just blue. So do you understand what I’m getting at here?” And she’s like, “ah, yeah!” But sometimes you just really have to spell it out for people. Which is a lot of work, but it’s quite funny, and I end up with little anecdotes about it, so it’s not the worst thing in the world.

**Tuck:** Yeah. I saw on Twitter that some celebrity couple, perhaps, is being touted as the first trans parents in the UK, which is wild because you exist, and so do many other trans parents. So uh, what the hell is up with that, and also how does that feel to see that being claimed?

**Beth:** They’re quite a well-known trans couple. And apparently neither of them had said they were the first trans parents. I think that it said that they thought that they might be the first trans couple who had conceived with both of their genetic material through a surrogate in the UK. But I don’t know why they would think that.

But it was very weird to see, ‘cause I was like, that’s blatantly not true. And you’d think that if you had been within the trans community you would know that. So I kind of see them as—I can’t think of a better way to explain it—like, cis trans people?

**Tuck:** Yeah, mhm.

**Beth:** [Laughs] Like, the kind of trans people who aren’t really within the community and they’re much more interested in fitting in with cis narratives than they are fighting for trans right.

**Tuck:** Mhm.

**Beth:** They’re like, very disconnected from the whole community. And I know a lot of trans parents within the UK. Freddie McConnell was one of them, who did the whole seahorse documentary. And he had a baby on his own. And he’s been fighting to be legally recognized as the father of his child, rather than the mother. And he’s had that rejected many times, and is now taking it to whatever Supreme Court or whatever we have. And knowing that’s going on, and knowing that that’s like, a thing that he is going through in order to improve the lives of other trans people as well as himself. And like, comparing it to this couple who sold their story to a newspaper and want to be seen as this like, sideshow attraction is a very weird dichotomy to be watching.

**Tuck:** I always have the sense that being trans in the UK is somehow even more of a shitshow than it is in the United States, but I’m never really sure exactly what’s going on. So what’s the trans political climate in the UK right now? Is there still anything going on? Is it all sidetracked by coronavirus? What’s up?

**Beth:** Um, I think it’s fairly similar to the fact that I’ve seen a lot of stuff about Trump still trying to push through anti-trans healthcare stuff. I think that it’s quite similar to that. I think that we’ve had the most notable thing recently was Liz Truss, who is the Equality and Women’s, I don’t know what her title is. [Laughs] Um, but she basically decided that within her meeting of her committee that she would basically say that she would fight to protect single sex spaces and prevent trans children from making negative decisions that would impact their lives. Which obviously they’re talking about surgeries and hormones and things. But it’s one of those things where they’re like clearly just uninformed. The Equality Act of 2010 protects trans people within single-sex spaces and allows us—well, not me, ‘cause I’m nonbinary so I don’t fit into that—but allows trans people to use a women’s only space, and protects them for that. And... ugh!

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** I feel like there are more important things for the government to be worrying about. But instead the government are deciding that we have to be vigilant and aware of the coronavirus, but also go back to work, instead of caring for us about that. And then just throwing trans people under the bus. So it’s a fun time!

**Tuck:** You talked about how these trans parents are not really aware of the rights that they should be fighting for, so what are the main issues for trans activists in the UK right now?

**Beth:** I would say, like, personally, I think it’s really important—because I am a trans parent, so this is something that’s in the forefront of my brain—but like, to make more people aware that trans parents exist. And not even just trans parents. Like, you know, lesbian couples and gay couples doing things like applying for school places for my son. The form that you had to fill in online said “Mother: [Name]; Father: [Name]” and didn’t give you any other options. It wasn’t like Parent 1 and Parent 2. So just like, an awareness that not everyone is that like, standard nuclear family, and not everyone wants to be.

There’s been a lot of shit about trans kids and like, media just making up stories about the fact that trans kids are harming cis kids, and that trans kids are having surgeries and getting hormones that are changing their lives and ruining them for the worse. I used to be a youth worker, and I think that people actually really need to speak to trans kids before they make these decisions. And it’s very obvious that they don’t. And I spent a lot of time as a youth worker calling schools and saying “You need to let this child use the toilet. They’re not using the toilet all day because they can’t find one where they feel safe.” And “you need to let this child go by this name, and you don’t need the parents’ permission to do that.” Because they schools always come back and say, “well, we have to ask the parents if it’s okay for us to refer to their child by a different name.” And that’s not true.

[Laughs] Ugh. It was like, a fucking weekly thing that we did. A kid would come in and be like, “my school have said I can’t go by this name,” “my school have said I can’t do P.E. with the boys,” and I’m just like OH MY GOD. I hate school so much.

**Tuck**: Yeah. Ihave talked to cis people who are about to have a kid who are suddenly concerned that, you know, gendering their kid is somehow bad allyship. So what is the best thing that cis people can do as parents to create a world that’s more trans-equitable. Like is there language to be using with their kids, or just things they should be teaching their kids, or things they should be doing? Like, maybe they should be the ones calling to say “let kids pee wherever they want to pee.” Not wherever they want to pee! That’s chaotic.

**Beth:** [Laughs]

**Tuck:** In the bathroom they wanna pee.

**Beth:** [Laughs] Just everywhere.

**Tuck:** [Laughs] Just wherever.

**Beth:** In the classrooms...

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** I definitely think that from a young age, it’s really important to just let a kid be a kid, and not care about the ways that they interact with gender norms. Like if you’ve got a little boy and he wants to wear a dress, let him do it. And if you’ve got a little girl who keeps telling you that she’s gonna be a builder one day and you think that that’s weird, then that’s *your* issue and not your child’s, and you need to deal with that yourself.

And I also think that, like you said, like with the parents calling in and telling the school that they want kids to be able to go to the loo wherever they want to go, I think that it’s really important for cis parents to take that stand so that trans parents or parents of trans kids don’t have to always be doing the work. I think that if you jump to correcting people when they misgender your child—so obviously I said earlier people always go “oh you’ve got a lovely little girl,” and I’m like, “yeah, I have.” Because he doesn’t care. If he learns to talk and decides that he does care then that’s what we’ll deal with at that time. But your child is the one who knows best about who they are, and so you should just let them be that.

**Tuck:** In addition to being a parent, you’re also an artist. You made the famous Support Trans Media shirts, so thanks so much for doing that. I was wondering if you could talk about the role that art plays in your life and in your activism. Because I know that so much of your art is about trans rights and other forms of activism.

**Beth:** Yeah. Um, I find it really funny every time you say it’s a famous shirt. [Laughs] When I was at school and college—college being somewhere you go from like 16-18 year olds in the UK—like, I really wanted to be an architect. And I think the reason for that is that I really wanted to have, like, doing the air quotes here—like a “legitimate” way to be kind of creative and arty while also having a job. And also, I have been chronically ill for a very long time, and got to the point where I could not do education anymore. My body didn’t work. And I also got pregnant at 18, so I was also finishing my A-levels and also failing my A-levels because I had morning sickness in my exams. And I kind of took that as a sign to just chill the fuck out, and be a person who likes to make art, rather than a person who’s gonna do a seven year degree course to become an architect for no apparent reason.

And then I moved away from home, and was a bit freer to be who I was. Not because my family weren’t supportive, but I just think that as with all queer kids, you kind of go “I don’t know whether I’ll be accepted,” and instead of coming out, you wait till you’re not within the household anymore to try it. I was out to friends, everybody knew I was queer, it was very obvious. But [laughs] nobody at home did.

And I moved out, and I was like, you know? I’m gonna be as queer as I can. And my mom followed my on Instagram, and so that’s how she found out.

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs] And yeah, and it became just a thing where I was really angry. I’m always really angry about things. I’m angry about how terrible the world is for a lot of different people. And I want to educate people but I also like to draw, so I thought, what better way to do it than to make queer art? And it’s really bizarre, but I went to a zine fair a long time ago. And it was like an hour away from where I live. I was sittin’ there, it was quite busy, and this like, baby trans masc person walks past me. And I like try to make eye contact with them, and they completely like, looked the other way, almost intentionally. And I was thinking, “what’s going on?” And then they came back around like 10 minutes later, and they came up to me and were like, “I follow you on Instagram. I just wanna say it’s really nice to see a nonbinary adult living their life and doing things that are important to them.” And I was like, “....I love you.” [Laughs]

It was just really, really sweet. And that’s not why I do it, but knowing that people seeing me living my life with my kid and my trans girlfriend and like, being happy most of the time is really really important. So that’s why I try to show that kind of thing through my art and just through my Instagram Stories, which is mostly like me saying “I’m so tired, Atticus, go to sleep.”

I am the parent of a lot of the kids who went to the youth group whose parents weren’t supportive. I sort of adopted them all. They sort of adopted me, to be fair. They were like, “can you be my parent? You’re a parent.” And I was like, “yeah, sure!” And it’s really nice to see them, like, living their lives. A couple of them have aged out of the youth group now so it’s ethical for me to be friends with them. It’s really lovely seeing these kids who are looking up to me, and I’m like, “oh god I need to make a good impression.” [Laughs]

**Tuck:** Yeah! What is that like, ‘cause you’re not terribly terribly old?

**Beth:** No, I am 23. I feel terribly, terribly old. [Laughs] Age has become bizarre to me. Especially within the queer community—and I was talking to my friend about this the other day—that I have been out as *something*, so not as nonbinary, I came out as queer when I was 13. So I’ve been out for a long time. I’ve been out for ten years. And there are some people I know who haven’t been out for that long. So I’m kind of an elder to them? But not really? And it’s a really weird concept to get my head around. People see me and assume I’m a lot older than I am. So it’s kind of one of those things where I just take it on board, so I’m like, “okay, sure, I’ll be your parent, adult to look up to, whatever.”

So, the friend I was talking to, she is nearly 37 I think, and she is pansexual and like, she’s very big on that. But she’s like basically I’ve become her trans knowledge base. If she needs anything, she needs to know how to word something to be trans-inclusive she’s like “Beth, please help.” Which I’m always happy to do.

But we were talking about it, and she only came out like five years ago. And I was like, “oh, well I’m older than you now. This is like the one time I’ll be older than you.”

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs] And she was like, “yeah, that’s really weird.” Like, within my local community there are a lot of older trans women but they have only been out for a very short amount of time. And so you see them doing their baby steps of transition, and you see them going through the weird, awkward hyperfeminine phase—they’re like, “I must be as feminine as possible.” And like, that’s not weird in itself, but that’s not for them, it’s for other people. And it’s odd to have conversations with them and feel like they’re not as educated on trans issues. And then I have to step back and be like, it’s because this is not a community they’ve been part of for a long time. They don’t sit around reading about gender, which is like my favorite thing to do. So it’s a very very odd relationship to have to people, ‘cause you just assume that people who are older than you are more knowledgeable and more experienced, and a lot of the time they aren’t.

**Tuck:** Yeah! It’s really interesting because I have realized just recently that I’m a person who, when I have a special interest, I jump all into it. So, when I moved to Portland I immediately became a writer at the local Portland magazine, and I forgot that most people who live in Portland don’t have an encyclopedic knowledge of all things Portland, they just live here. And I feel like it’s the same thing as being trans. Being trans should not mean that you have to have an encyclopedic knowledge of all things trans. But unfortunately that means we end up with a lot of trans people, including trans people who are given platforms but who’ve not really like, done the work to understand the community, like the people who you talked about earlier. And I think that can be really tricky and really frustrating when it’s like, I want all trans people to have a voice. And also, you can be trans without knowing anything politically about what’s helpful for trans people. Like you can be a damaging trans person.

**Beth:** Yeah, exactly. I was trying to explain this to my girlfriend the other day, because she um, gets very easily swept up in the hatred online, especially on Twitter, for trans women. And also being a trans woman herself, it’s very difficult for her to understand that it’s not about her. Like, that people aren’t saying I hate *you* specifically. They’re just uninformed. And like you said the other day when we were doing the gender party, that they’re just wrong. Transphobes are wrong. That’s it.

It’s weird because, yeah, like you say, you really want every trans person to have a voice. But like you said, there are damaging trans people. And it’s difficult to say to people “you don’t need to be an activist, you just need to be a person.” And if you want to be an activist that’s fine, but you shouldn’t have to be. You shouldn’t have to have that thrust upon you just because you are trans. Like, you can just be a person living in the world. You don’t have to know every single thing that’s going on with trans rights. You don’t have to know every single trans person that ever existed. And if people expect you to be the person who educates them because you are the trans person, you are the token tran, that’s their issue and not yours.

And I feel like the whole “that’s not my issue, that’s your issue” thing has freed me from a lot of stuff. Like, I used to take on a lot of people’s feelings about who I was as a person because I thought, well, they think this for a reason. Now I'm like, look, if you think all trans people are ridiculous, that’s not my problem. I don’t need to deal with it, I don’t need to engage with it.

**Tuck:** You mentioned before being angry all the time, a la the Hulk. Which is something that I deeply relate to. You’re also Sagittarius, right?

**Beth:** I am. I’m a big ol’ Sagittarius.

**Tuck:** So we’re supposedly the happy fire signs, but I don’t relate to that.

**Beth:** We are the angry fire signs, I would say. [Laughs]

**Tuck:** So I’m wearing this shirt that you made right now that says “Trans Lives Do Not Exist For Your Shitty Opinion Pieces,” which is a great way that I can manifest anger without putting any effort into it, is just walking around with this shirt on. But I really relate to being angry about this all of the time, and feeling like no one is listening and no one is helping, or the people who are listening aren’t in positions of power. So yeah, what do you do with this anger, other than make this very good t-shirt?

**Beth:** Yeah. [Laughs] My mum, when I was younger—I was very depressed for a very long time—and um, she spent ages telling me that I shouldn’t be angry about everything, and that I should let stuff go. And she meant it in a good way, obviously. She meant that I was keeping all of this pent up inside me and I wasn’t letting it out. And I think that finding art and finding activism through art has really helped. but because I fit into various different minority groups in terms of disability and transness and queerness, I have a lot to be angry about a lot of the time. And other than making art and just randomly yelling, I don’t have many ways of fighting that. Although there are times that I really go all in and the making PowerPoint presentations about how angry I am about things.

**Tuck:** I think that anger is really useful. Because before I was really angry, I was also really depressed, and I had all of this guilt and shame and loathing that I just turned in on myself, right? And it’s just so much more helpful to be angry at the world, angry at the people who are hurting you, angry at a system that is built to harm you, than it is to be internalizing all that, right? So.

**Beth:** Yeah, exactly. I do think that, like... I mean, it’s obviously cathartic to make art. But there’s something even more cathartic about sending it out into the world and other people saying “oh my god, I agree,” or “you have shared something I didn’t know how to express,” or “you have found a way to express.” I feel like finding that community who are also angry about the same thing and want to change it means a lot.

**Tuck:** I have a feeling that I’m going to ask this on all the rest of the interviews for indefinitely—

**Beth:** [Laughs]

**Tuck:** —but um, obviously Pride is cancelled for this year, and all queer in-person gatherings are suspended for further notice, although I guess the UK is opening back up, so who the hell knows. But it certainly isn’t safe to be gathering in large groups right now. So I’m curious how you’re coping with the lack of IRL queer and trans community.

**Beth:** I think that personally it’s been difficult, but the fact that my partner is also trans and we live together with our child, we’re in a very trans-affirming environment, very queer-affirming environment. We’re not in a place where we’re not getting any positive transness going around. But also I feel like I’ve kind of leant into making more kinds of community events happen and like, interacting more online with the groups that I’m a part of. So my friend set up—years and years ago—set up a support group, like a meetup group, it’s called Trangst, which I love. But it’s always been a monthly meeting. And obviously because of the whole lockdown situation, he basically decided to set up a Discord. So we’ve basically been having online quizzes and just chats about all sorts of things. And obviously within Discord you can have the different chats with different subjects and stuff, so.

It’s been nice to have sort of a general thing where sometimes I just put a picture of Attie doing something weird, and I’m like, “how’s your day going? Here’s my weird child.” And [Laughs] sometimes it’s talking about struggling to get hormones or trying to find ways to feel more affirmed in our bodies and stuff. And I have been trying—being *that* trans person—I’ve been trying to encourage people to question the ways that they experience gender. And like, you’re stuck inside. So what are you doing because you think other people want you to act that way, and what are you doing because you actually want to? And like, you can try different things, you’re not going to see anyone.

Which has been really cool. Like the other day I wore a big sequin jumpsuit thing with my boobs out, and normally I’d be uncomfortable, but it was actually really nice. And I was like, huh, I wonder why this is? Why am I comfortable at home in this outfit? And it was very interesting. I’m still thinking about why I was comfortable about it. But it’s a great time to experiment, I think.

**Tuck:** It is! Yeah, I’m just realizing that we haven’t gotten a chance to talk about it yet, because the podcast has been not happening, but isolation is a really incredible time to play with gender presentation, explore what feels good when there’s no one around to misgender you for looking that way. Experiment with things that you wouldn’t necessarily want to experiment with out in public. And it’s been really amazing. I was joking on Twitter the other day that we had to end quarantine before I went on HRT out of boredom. [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs] Yeah. I have literally been sitting around thinking, do I want to start testosterone? And I keep thinking about it, and I’m like, I really don’t. I just would like to have a beard. But I don’t want to start testosterone, because I’m so changeable in like, just as a person, but also within my gender. I’m like, I would like to have a beard, but also somedays I would really like to have soft facial skin, and I don’t want to have to like, hate the fact that I have a beard. ‘Cause gender is wild.

**Tuck:** Gender is wild. I think about that, too. I actually want most of the things except the beard, and the beard doesn’t go away when you stop taking T, so. And I’m like, a naturally incredibly hairy person, so, I’m just like “oh no.” Anyway. Who knows? Gender, it’s chaos.

Uh, this is the part of the show where I ask what else that you want to talk about that we haven’t talked about yet.

**Beth:** Oh! I wanted to talk about how, uh, as a nonbinary person, people treat me differently to how they treat binary trans people.

**Tuck:** Mm!

**Beth:** So, this is just an example of my life, but when my girlfriend came out, obviously people were like “oh, it’s gonna take us some time to get used to her new name and her pronouns” and blah blah blah. But they all did it fine, and quickly and easily. But because I haven’t changed my name, and I still look the way that I do, and I use they/them pronouns, people almost completely forget about who I am. I would much rather that my girlfriend had an easy time of people gendering her correctly, and I’m happy to fight people about my own pronouns. But it’s a very weird experience where people are almost like, “they/them is too hard, I can’t do it, but I understand this transition from this one thing to another thing.”

I just wanted to say that. It’s a bizarre experience to have.

**Tuck:** It is! It’s really strange. I have, I assume it’s because regardless of people’s feelings about the concept of trans people, they understand what they think a man is and what they think a woman is. So if you’re like “I’m not a man, I’m a woman,” they’re like, “OK, I know how I treat women,”—you know, rightly, or wrongly—

**Beth:** They have a concept of what that is.

**Tuck:** Yeah, “that’s how I’m gonna treat you.” But yeah, I mean, talking about not having changed our names is really really. Because you know that I’m playing with other names right now, and I don’t know how much of it is a dissatisfaction with my own name, and how much of it is just wanting people to slow down a little bit when they’re gendering me. You know? Thinking about T is the same way. Like how much of it is because I want to look different or feel different, or how much of it is just wanting people to slow down when they’re gendering me. I don’t know. It’s hard to make those choices. And I know that I’ve been really strident in the past that I shouldn’t have to make any changes for people to gender me correctly, and that’s true. But righteous indignation isn’t gonna get me gendered correctly.

**Beth:** I know, exactly. Like, I wear a t-shirt sometimes that says They/Them, Be Cool About It. I have this t-shirt, I’ve had it for years, I wear it. Nobody genders me correctly, unless they are my trans friends. And they’ll just look at my t-shirt and they’ll be like, “what does that mean?” And I’m like, “well, those are my pronouns.” And they’re like, “what is a pronoun?”

**Tuck:** [Laughs]

**Beth:** [Laughs]

**Tuck:** Yeah. I was at the grocery store the other day. And I was wearing a shirt that says I Don’t Want to Look or Be Cis.

**Beth:** I love that shirt, I want one.

**Tuck:** You should get one! And I was wearing this shirt, and I was buying birthday presents for my roommate, among other things, and was kind of talking to the cashier as I was checking out. And he was like, “Oh! He or she will love them.” And I was like, “*They*...” And he was like, “Oh! *They* will love them.” And like, literally, I know this shirt is for me and not my roommate, but... I’m literally wearing a shirt about how I don’t want to look or be cis, and you forgot that there were more than two genders?

**Beth:** Yeah. Like, I... [Sigh] It really really bugs me on like, a molecular level, when I read things that say, “He or she does this.” So much so that, like, my brother is in secondary school at the moment. He’s thirteen. And the last time I went to see them, there was a letter from his school on the fridge that said something about a vaccination that the school was giving the kids. And it said “Please make sure that he/she does this, please make sure your daughter/son does this...”

And I was just like, oh my god. And I got out a pen and I corrected it, ‘cause I was like... I can’t look at this. I was like, look how easy it is to write “they,” “they,” “your child.” Why are you making it harder for yourself? It just... it’s just, more letters. Why?!

**Tuck:** Yeah. I was on a plane and the flight attendants kept saying ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen. And I realized that my brain automatically anything that tunes out anything that says ladies and gentlemen because I’m not a lady or a gentleman. And like, they could be giving me important safety information, and I’m not listening, because like, you didn’t say me. And it’s not like, out of spite. I just literally, my brain turns off. Like, that person is not talking about me, they’re talking about *ladies and gentlemen*.

**Beth:** Yeah. I chuckle when that happens. I’m like, hahaha, not me. I feel like that is a very Sagittarius thing, though.

**Tuck:** [Laughs] Nice.

**Beth:** [Laughs] When I was a kid, I was the kind of person who was like, if you don’t address me correctly, I will not be listening.

**Tuck:** Mhm.

**Beth:** Like, if they say “oh, ladies,” like, you know when you’re like a group of teenage girls, and everyone’s like “oh ladies,” and I’m like, I’m not a fuckin’ lady. Don’t talk to me like that. And my brain was just like, no. And I think it’s just years of being a rebellious little kid that has made me like this. That’s made me like, no, you’re not talking to me, I’m not listening.

**Tuck:** [Laughs] The way we always end the show is by asking: in your ideal world, what would the future of gender look like?

**Beth:** I think about this all the time, and I don’t think I’ve got a good answer. But I would like gender to be like, important, but not in the way that it currently is. I’d like it to be something that like, when people say “this is my gender,” it’s just cool, and like people are excited about it, rather than being like “well why don’t you fit into these two little boxes that I’ve asked you to fit into?” I just would like it to be freer.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music plays]

**Tuck:** That’s gonna do it for this week’s show. You can support Beth on Patreon on [patreon.com/betheastonart](http://patreon.com/betheastonart). Their patreon is critically underrated, and I strongly suggest signing up at the Big Dyke Energy tier because then Beth sends you a big gay care package every month, which is awesome all the time, especially awesome if you’re socially isolating in your house. 10/10 would recommend. You can find Beth on Instagram @betheastonart, and on Twitter @skeletonparent.

You can find us on Instagram and Twitter at @gendereveal and @mollywoodstock, and on [genderpodcast.com](http://genderpodcast.com/). And you can support us on Patreon at patreon.com/gender, where $1 a month gets you access to our newsletter, and $5 or more a month gets you stickers and other fun stuff in the mail.

And hey, did you know that June is a great time to ask your company to hire me to zoom into your workplace and teach everyone about gender, and like, how to stop misgendering you? It’s actually like the only month that many corporations actually consider spending money on a token trans gender, so uh, would recommend trying that if you’re up for it. That’s all at sylveon.co, link in the shownotes. Did you know I have a professionally consulting and like, workshoppy company, and that it is, uh, struggling in pandemic times? That’s all true, so thank you for your help.

If you wanna check out our merch store before everything resets in June, that’s at <bit.ly/gendermerch>.

You can also join our cute community of Gender Detectives at <bit.ly/genderslack2>.

This week’s episode was produced and edited by me, Molly Woodstock. Our logo is by Ira M. Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music this week by Blue Dot Sessions.

Happy birthday to my favorite Gemini, and yes, I did start dating after they DMed me to tell me that they liked the Gender Reveal podcast. What a time to be gay and alive.

We will be back so soon with more feelings about gender.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music ends]

**Beth:** [Gasps] Oh my god, I didn’t breathe that entire time.

**Tuck:** Ha!

**Beth:** I was just like, running out of breath, like, why haven’t I breathed in?