**Tuck:** Shopping for sex toys can sometimes feel overwhelming or dysphoric, but shopenby.com aims to create a better experience for the queer, trans, and gender nonconforming community. As a Black- and trans-owned sex toy company, the cuties at shopenby.com are sensualists with a mission. Two percent of all proceeds are donated to organizations focused on improving the lives of queer and trans people of color. Shopenby.com is also a carbon negative company, and every sale funds renewable energy and forest conservation projects. Visit shopenby.com and use the code GenderReveal at checkout to get 10% off and bring more pleasure and affirmation into your life.

[Gender Reveal theme music starts]

**Tuck:** 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, Tuck Woodstock.

[Gender Reveal theme music ends]

**Tuck:** Hey everyone, I hope you're all hanging in there. I want to give a special warm welcome to any new listeners who found us via Gaby Dunn coming out officially and making our podcast part of their official coming out announcement. It was truly an honor and a privilege to be part of that process for Gaby, and if anyone else wants to do a celebrity gender reveal, we are available. Anyway, this week on the show we are continuing and maybe finishing up our check-in series by catching up with LaTisha Rico. We first spoke with Tish like three years ago, way back in episode 10, and it has been such a joy to watch them grow and flourish and have a whole human baby between then and now. In this episode we talk about navigating fatphobia, racism, transphobia, and a pandemic *while pregnant*, and about conceptualizing gender as a decolonial act.

**Tish [voice clip]:** Just really thinking that before settlers and colonizers arrived to this land, there has always been multiple genders, and it will continue to exist even when this colonial project blows up on itself, because it will eventually.

**Tuck:** Just a heads up that we do briefly reference Indigenous murder and genocide a couple of times in this episode, as you do. But before we get to that, just wanted you to know that we really truly have all of our July merch up in the shop now including a new design by Meg Potoma that says $5 Misgendering Fee that's available as a shirt, a sticker, a tote bag, and a fanny pack that you can fill with all of the $5 bills that you get when people misgender you. Or maybe you're never misgendered and you just have cool fashion. Anyway, all that and much more is available through the end of July at bit.ly/gendermerch.

Also, if you're a fan of Gender Reveal, did you know that you can get more Gender Reveal by joining us at patreon.com/gender? For example, last week, we released a special Patreon-only This Week in Gender segment covering gender news from the Czech Republic, written and recorded by our friend M Solarova. Also there's a newsletter every week with podcast sneak peeks and also pictures of my cat. So again, that's patreon.com/gender.

We've got a Theymail message this week. Theymail is a program where listeners send in a little bit of money and we share a little message on the show. This message says, “Why buy your Pride flag swag where rainbows only show up in June, when you can snag quality queer wear from fellow queers 24/7/365? One hundred percent trans-owned and queer-operated since 2017, NerdyKeppie is excited to support Gender Reveal.” Thank you. “Find dresses up to 5X with pockets, boots, patches, houseware, transmasc-approved button-downs and so much more at nerdykeppie.com—that is nerdykeppie.com. Use code REVEALED for 20% of orders $25 and up. Wow, you get two promo codes this episode!

And with that, it's time for This Week in Gender.

[Transition sound effect, with low metallic chimes and hi-hats plays briefly]

[Somber, gentle chords play]

**Tuck:** Let me start by saying that I am not qualified to do a deep dive into the way that Black women, cis or trans, are denied access to womanhood, nor am I qualified to talk extensively about the gatekeeping and policing of women's bodies in sport. Many people do that better than me and hopefully they will be on the show someday.

But last week there was a lot of discourse—like on Twitter?—that seemed to be about whether testosterone would have a scary and irreversible effect on your human body. And there was also an incident in which cis Black women were denied access to women's sports based on their testosterone levels. And I think those two conversations are connected, and I certainly think that it's connected to the fervor in states across the country to ban trans girls and women from playing on sports teams.

When we give governing bodies the right to govern our bodies and our genders, trans people are not the only ones harmed, although if they were the only ones harmed, it would still obviously be a huge issue. But, case in point, two cisgender women from Namibia were recently banned from participating in the 400-meter Olympic races, due to their testosterone levels. 200? I guess still okay at that T level. 400-meter? Banned from the competition. Everyone involved seems to agree that these two women's bodies naturally produced this level of testosterone, they're not injecting, and everyone seems to agree also that these are in fact cisgender women, but regardless of these women producing this testosterone naturally in their women's bodies, the World Athletics has a rule that requires that no female athlete have a testosterone level above five nanomoles per liter, quote, “unless they have a DSD or a tumor.” Okay, we'll just leave that last part, that's wild.

But let's break this down a bit. Five nanomoles per liter is like 150 nanograms per deciliter, which is the unit you might use—ng/dL—to measure *your* level of testosterone if you're the type of person who measures your testosterone. If you Google, like, “average T levels,” you'll see a zillion different numbers because this is kind of fake, but let's say that on average cis women have between three and 50 nanograms of T per deciliter. That's less than 150, which is the cap. But, you know, averages kind of don't mean anything, the worldwide average for female height is five-foot-four, but six-foot-something women are still allowed to play basketball.

Anyway, let's say cis women average, like, three to 50 nanograms. Okay. The average for cis men is anywhere from like, 300 to 1000 nanograms. So when we're talking about these female athletes having quote unquote “high T levels,” we're not necessarily talking about like, *cis guy levels of T*, we're just talking about maybe higher T than, like, your mom, maybe—I don't know your mom, impossible to say that—but if women with T higher than 150 are banned from Olympic athletes but their bodies are naturally producing that much T, how are they possibly supposed to compete? These women are required to reduce their T levels by taking hormones. That's right, cisgender women with naturally high T levels are required to go on HRT in order to compete with other women.

So who are these women with these naturally high T levels? Well, I could find five examples of women being banned from the Olympics for the way their bodies naturally produced T, and most of them are Black and none of them are white. Thinking about the way that we have historically done science and research, it's very possible that what we and I'm saying “we,” in quotes, think of as the average T levels in cis women is and was based off of white women—just throwing that out there.

But regardless, the Olympics governing body requiring Black cis women to go on HRT in order to be forcibly worse at their sport, perhaps, and also perhaps allow white women to catch up to them is not only overtly racist, but is also a really interesting pairing with legislation currently being passed across the United States. Because as we know, several states have been working to prevent trans women and girls from playing sports due to fears around testosterone giving them some sort of innate advantage, but those states aren't typically saying, like, “Oh, just go on HRT and change your levels; then we’ll let you play.” In fact, they're typically working to make it harder for people to access HRT. And regardless, there's no evidence that having higher than average T levels makes you any better at sports—maybe I should have said that at the top: there is *no evidence that having high T levels makes you better at sports*. And besides, even if there was, Yao Ming somehow grew body that was seven-foot-six and they still let him play basketball against other human people, so what the fuck.

Anyway, this is all we have time for today; I'll drop some links with further information in the show notes. There's an article I like from Scientific American about how T doesn't naturally pick you better in sports, but please, just remember that, once more: higher-than-average testosterone is not inherently scary or monstrous. It does not make you more aggressive, it does not make you an automatic sports champion. It does not make you any less of a woman, except when you're specifically taking testosterone on purpose to make you less of a woman, in which case, hell yeah, dude. But that's another conversation for another day.

[Chords fade out]

This has been, This Week in Gender.

[Gender Reveal theme music excerpt fades in]

**Tuck:** LaTisha “Tish” Rico is a Dene artist and youth worker. Originally from a small town on the Diné Nation, they now reside in so-called Portland, Oregon. Tish creates art through bead embroidery, and is reconnecting with their culture by learning how to weave using Diné techniques. Tish also fronts the anti-colonial band With War and side note, is also one of the winners of the spring 2021 Gender Reveal Trans POC Grant. Tish’s greatest creation, Naabaahii Rose, was born December 2020.

[Gender Reveal theme music excerpt fades out]

**Tuck:** The way we always start the show is by asking in terms of gender, how do you describe yourself?

**Tish:** I consider myself nonbinary, and right now I'm using they/them pronouns, and specifically for the public and then with my family, I'm okay [?] with using she/her with them.

**Tuck:** Yeah, so the last time we talked on the show was for season one, which was like three and a half years ago. So how do you feel like your relationship with gender, or just the way you think about gender, has changed in the last few years?

**Tish:** I definitely feel like it's kind of changed a little bit but also still very similar. Thinking about gender for me is a decolonial act, really thinking about what does it mean for gender for Indigenous people, specifically of North America, specifically of the US and what does that look like for myself, being an Indigenous person. And also really thinking about this, I recently became a parent—I had a baby about five months ago. And so being a pregnant person, I was very much like, “I don't want to be in a grouping of women. I don't want someone to think of me as a woman in the way that westernized views of women.” And then I got pregnant, and then having the baby, there's a lot of different groups for Indigenous women and Indigenous mothers and Indigenous motherhood and it's like, what is that for me and do I feel like I find myself in that way? So it's been kind of complicated, you know, as I've gone through this life change, and feeling okay with baby calling me mommy, but also feeling kind of weird when someone else is like, “Oh, you're a mommy,” I feel like it might have gotten more complicated? I don't know.

**Tuck:** Yeah, that makes sense. Did you end up joining those Indigenous women, mother, mommy groups?

**Tish:** Yes/No? There was one time when there was a baby shower for Indigenous mothers, and the person who ended up inviting me is a friend of mine. And so they were like, “Oh, it really made me think about, you know, the words that we're using and also, you're welcome to be with us, you know, I know it's different for you,” and I think it really made the person who put on the event really think about what words they're using, or how do you invite or make sure that all people who can give birth, feel like they're connected? So I did eventually go, and it was nice, but it still felt kind of weird.

I ended up joining—so the group is folks who are raising their babies to be nonbinary babies that are using they/them pronouns or children who are using they/them pronouns. Unfortunately, being in the Portland area means that it's majority white folks, and I think that the intentions are good, but at the same time just constantly seeing that me and one other person are the only people who are people of color, I feel it's kind of weird being in this place of trying to raise a child being a nonbinary person who's also Indigenous and also raising a baby who's Indigenous and nonbinary. And how do we fit into these spaces where we don't quite fit?

**Tuck:** Yeah, what I'm hearing is that it was slightly uncomfortable to be a nonbinary person in the Indigenous groups and then uncomfortable to be an Indigenous person in the nonbinary groups and that's an experience that makes a lot of sense to me that it's like, we're always outside in some way.

**Tish:** Yes.

**Tuck:** And I'm sorry that that's the case, it sucks, but I guess, ah, it also makes sense.

**Tish:** Yeah. Thankfully I found a few people online who, you know aren't from this area, who also get it, or are Indigenous and nonbinary or at least understand multiple genders and understand people are reconnecting in a different way through gender, and so that's been really nice, but those folks don't have children. People have been very supportive and really loving and really excited, but to to navigate it kind of by myself has been really interesting.

**Tuck:** Yeah. Well, let's back up a little bit. Can you talk about the decision to have a kid that you are raising as nonbinary with they/them pronouns and sort of how that's played out so far?

**Tish:** Yes. So, while pregnant, my partner I talked about it, and we wanted to raise baby as nonbinary and they/them pronouns because we just wanted—we just wanted them to feel that whatever gender they may choose or whatever gender may feel right for them or, you know, or if they want to be like, “What the fuck is gender? I don't care.” That's the choice that they can make.

It's been going okay. I definitely, for people who are not within my household, I have been very firm about my baby’s they/them pronouns, and within my family, they get it but they don't get it? To them, it's more of understanding that the baby is gender neutral, but still using a gendered pronoun for them. But also in this really weird thing of my own culture, that there are certain things that are done for different gender, trying to figure out, how do I raise my baby to be able to experience the ceremonies, experience the things that are important and at the same time trying to have baby understand that whatever they decide or whatever is right for them was not our choice.

**Tuck:** Yeah. So before your family met baby in person, did you tell them the assigned sex of the baby or did they demand to know this? Were they just guessing? How are they coming to gendered pronouns?

**Tish:** We weren't telling anybody sex of baby. And then as I got closer and closer, it was kind of a pressure thing from both my partner's family and also mine. So my partner and I talked about it and we're like, “Well, to the public we don't want people to know, it's none of their business.” And with our own families, we kind of were just like, “Okay,” and so we told them, and then our families just decided to start, yeah, using gendered pronouns, which is unfortunate, and probably something I’m going to end up talking to my mom about [laughs] where I'm at least explaining or attempting to explain, ‘cause it's a newer concept for my family.

**Tuck:** Obviously, some nonbinary people have physical gender dysphoria and some people don't. Did being pregnant change the way you felt about your body or having a body that is gendered?

**Tish:** That's a really good question. I definitely feel like I initially thought, when I was pregnant, that I would be okay with going to the Women's Health Center, and things like that, and I realized that eventually I felt very uncomfortable being in that space. I wasn't uncomfortable being pregnant, but I was uncomfortable navigating those spaces. And in the beginning, a person had mentioned, “I saw that you're nonbinary, you can go to the Trans Health Center instead,” and looking back, I kind of wish that I had done that. I thought that I would have been fine. And then at the end being like, “Wow, I really fucking hate coming here,” and it's also very hard to be like, “I want a person of color and if that person is not a person of color, I don't know how much more uncomfortable they're gonna make me.” And so the doctor that I ended up seeing, I ended up making all my appointments with her. That was kind of a thing too; I felt uncomfortable being in this space, but I'd rather be with a person of color. And so that's why I continued to be there.

Breastfeeding made me uncomfortable. I didn't think it would happen, but it did. And so I made the choice to stop. So that was some feelings I didn't think I had and then all of a sudden I did. And so I definitely feel like if I ever decide to have another child, I think I know how to navigate things a little bit better. And hopefully we're not in a pandemic then. [chuckles] Because I definitely feel like the pandemic made me make choices I normally wouldn't have made, because those are my only choices available. Because I definitely felt like when I went and saw my doctor and I was a person of color, I definitely was like, “Okay, this is it, ‘cause I don't know any other hospitals who take my insurance, and also are letting people come in person,” because as a person who's of a bigger size, I definitely didn't know what to expect. All the online articles and health shit says that being a bigger person is going to be more difficult for you to have a baby, there's going to be complications, XYZ.

I definitely experienced some fatphobia when I first went. That's why I ended up being like, “I want this one doctor who's not going to be fatphobic towards me.” One of my experiences, a person who was so fatphobic to me, they told me that I had miscarried because they couldn't find my baby because they didn't do the ultrasound correctly on me.

**Tuck:** Oh my god. That's so traumatic.

**Tish:** Yeah, it was very traumatic. Because when they first check it out, they put a wand inside of you to check for the baby's heart, and the person didn't know how to do that for a fat person's body. And so, when she couldn't find the heartbeat, she was just automatically like, “I can't find baby,” and I just remember bawling and crying and she was like, “I'm gonna go find somebody,” you know, basically someone higher up than her, and then that person found baby, and she’s like, “Oh, it's right here! [chuckles] Baby’s right here!” I think all the fatphobia was really what was most difficult for me to experience throughout my pregnancy, I think.

**Tuck:** Yeah, that makes sense. I also forgot that you did your whole pregnancy and whole parenting so far in the pandemic. That's wild, that we've been in here that long.

**Tish:** Yeah, my bandmates and I had our first in person practice last week, but two weeks ago, so we're all vaccinated, and we're just talking about the last time we were together, and we're like, “I full had a baby, like I fully was pregnant, had the baby,” and then two of them hadn’t seen me all the entire time I was pregnant, so like so them, you know, it was like, was it real? It could have just been like I was wearing a fake pregnancy bump, and just pretending to show pictures online like this, that's the only way they had seen me, because we hadn't seen each other. And they're like, “Yeah, cuz you look the same! You look like how we left you.” [laughs] So, you know. And we just made jokes about that. So it's just such a wild, wild thing.

**Tuck:** Yeah, well, I did not see you pregnant but I do know you acquired a baby somehow— [Tuck and Tish laugh]

**Tish:** That looks just like me, so!

**Tuck:** Yeah, who looks identical to you! I mean you had a bunch of other changes too, asides, obviously, this huge one. Do you want to talk about what work you're doing now? It's different than the last time we talked.

**Tish:** Yeah, so I ended up leaving my last position, and I'm currently working for a Native nonprofit in Portland. And so one of the things that I do is I work with the two-spirit group there, which is really amazing. And probably one of the highlights and the best things that I do is being able to work with two-spirit youth. It’s so beautiful to see and it just feel so welcoming to be in a space where people use they/them pronouns for me. That's when I really started using they/them pronouns is when I started working there, because there were so many other folks who use the other pronouns that I worked with when I started working there, and I was just like, “Whoa, this is really amazing.”

**Tuck:** I mean, earlier we were talking about, you're in this, you know, Indigenous space as a nonbinary person, you're in a nonbinary space as an Indigenous person. Is either the two-spirit group or your coworkers, is that a space where you can talk with other people about what it looks like to think about gender in a decolonial way or to approach your kid’s gender in decolonial ways? Is that an opportunity to sort of collaborate with other people? I think of gender more and more recently as like a group project that we're all doing. And I feel like that's a cool cohort to have for the group project.

**Tish:** Yeah, I would definitely think so. My coworkers, there's a few people who are Indigenous and nonbinary and being Indigenous from different nations, or Indigiqueer. And so being Indigenous and queer, Indigiqueer is a word that, to me, resonates, and I really love. When we're together in a space, we can see each other and validate each other, and it feels good and great. There's this idea that in past, people who are two-spirit or trans or queer also took care of the children, and often were the extra support. You know, if a family member had passed, then it was the trans or two-spirit or the Indigiqueer folx who ended up becoming the parents of those children, and it just makes me really think about how beautiful it is that we are also youth workers, and we are the ones that are helping the parents raise, you know, and be a part and learn their culture and be a part of that. And so that to me was really special.

All of us sought out youth work, all of us wanted to be there to support youth and be the people who are like this kid does use they/them pronouns, this is this kid's name, or having youth come to you and talking about wanting to start hormones or what does that look like and how do they navigate medical systems, and specifically, I know that some other youth aren’t out yet. And so that's also I think that we navigate.

A lot of families were put into residential schools specifically by Christian folks and were put into these places where they were beaten or hurt for thinking outside of the Christian view. And so a few of the kids do come from a background in which they are not able to be out. And so that's unfortunate, but knowing that I can be that support for that youth and be like, “Okay, let's navigate this together. Let me work with your advocate, and let's see about how I can support you.” But to have a kid feel comfortable enough that they can talk to me about it. It's really amazing and really awesome.

**Tuck:** I was also thinking about something that you said one time about how it's frustrating when people say the future is nonbinary because it kind of erases that the past has also been nonbinary, and that the binary is actually more recent.

**Tish:** Yeah, I guess so. You know, going back to thinking about this westernized view of gender, and we talk about the Indigenous people existing in this space on this continent, and we always talk about “time immemorial, we've been here for so long, we don't remember when we started.” But we've been here, we've been on this continent for thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands of years, and the United States, this colonial project has been here for 300 to 400 years. The westernized forced view of gender is so new to Indigenous people, is so new to this land. And for me, whenever someone says “the future is nonbinary,” it’s kind of a slap in the face, because I'm like, “It's always been nonbinary and it's always been outside this view.” There's multiple nations around the world who, before they were colonized had views of gender in various ways. And it wasn't until this forced view to—“you have a choice: A or B.” It's not been that way.

And so for me it's definitely, you know, a path for myself, thinking about how many genders are within my own culture, and what does that mean, and also in learning about my holy people, some people say that there were folx who have no gender at all; that there are holy people who have every single gender ever existed ever; and that some are both feminine and masculine at the same time or some are, you know, and just really thinking about what does that mean for me and myself, and thinking about other people's cultures. You know, some cultures have had eight genders, and I'm like, “That's incredible.” Just really thinking that before settlers colonizers arrived to this land, there has always been multiple years, and it will continue to exist, even when this colonial project blows up on itself, because it will eventually, and that there will still also be nonbinary people still existing.

**Tuck:** Well, kind of speaking of decolonization and Indigeneity, I would love to talk more—I think, With War existed the last time we talked, but it's done so well since then—so how has With War been going, how has it been being a front person? I'm just excited to hear about it.

**Tish:** Yeah, actually, when we first had our conversation, I think I had—we had one practice. [Tuck and Tish laugh]

**Tuck:** You had one practice, and now I have five With War shirts. [Tuck and Tish laugh]

**Tish:** So I appreciate the shout out. I don’t know, it was really amazing to have the support before we even did anything. But yeah, we've been a band for several years now, and this past year, we kind of took a pause because pandemic. Also because I was pregnant.

So yeah, so we had put out a demo EP; we put out a two-song promo. I really appreciate how folks have received us, it feels so good to go to places outside—actually even inside, but going to other places and people who are Indigenous and part of the Hardcore scene being like, “I didn't know you existed before I saw you and holy shit. This is amazing. I really like what you're doing” and just, you know.

And I think it's really funny because I just remembered there’s a comment of someone who was like, “Oh, you live in Portland. There's not even Indigenous people there,” which is false. “You know, how are you just saying all these things in front of a bunch of white bros, like white dudes”—

**Tuck:** Isn't there actually a very high percentage of Indigenous people in Portland?

**Tish:** Yeah, there's so many Indigenous people who exist in Portland. There are over 300 different nations represented here. It's one of the most highly populated Indigenous cities with Indigenous people. And so it's really wild to even say that. The people whose ancestors are originally from here, they're still fucking here. And to say that they don't exist or are not in the Hardcore scene, like, “you're not from here so you can't say that”—you know, to say that is really, really disrespectful to Indigenous people, because we are here, you just—because you don't fucking see us doesn't mean we don't exist or that we don't exist in Hardcore, because we do.

Every time that we've played a show, there has been people who have come up to us, and been like, “I'm from this nation. I thank you for existing,” or like, “Wow I can't believe you exist, and you're talking about the things that you're talking about. I didn't think that I needed this from Hardcore and wow, this is really amazing.” And that's been so special to me. And I, yeah, I definitely feel like there hasn't been a show whether we play in Philadelphia, whether we've played in Boston, whether we've played in San Diego, that I think more than anything feels so special. It's just being able to meet other Native folks who are in Hardcore, and to have them value the things that I'm saying.

I try to be as brutally honest about our history, about our current president, and the way that violence against us is overlooked. And I know some of my lyrics I definitely have written as a frustration towards white folks, and that, you know, “you don't see us, and when are you going to stance, because we fuckin’ exist and we're still here,” and that there's a lot of folks who don't understand that there are 574+ nations that are, quote unquote, “recognized by the federal government,” and that there are so many nations that are “recognized by the state,” quote unquote, it's, like, over 200. And then there's so many other different nations who are not recognized by the US government or by the state, but their people still exist and their people are still here. And a lot of major cities—LA, Portland, Seattle—all these major cities were able to be built because the government decided that they didn't want to recognize those people, but they still exist. D’Wamish people still exist; the Chinook people still exist. The government doesn't recognize them because otherwise it means that we need to recognize the treaties that they broke and return the land back to them, and how much money that they'll fuckin’ owe them, because they just decided not to recognize those things.

**Tuck:** Mm. Yeah, I can hear, in my brain, white people listening to this and being like, “Yes, I want to decolonize gender. What do I do as a white person that doesn't make it more fucked up?” Is there anything that white people can do to not make it actively worse?

**Tish:** Um, please don't take on the identity of two-spirit. There's several nations who came together who came up with the term two-spirit. There are words in Indigenous language that is hard to translate into English. And so when these folx of the different nations came together to talk about their relationships to gender, and their roles within their own societies, and their own cultures, their own nations, that this is a term that they came up with to best explain what is true for their nations.

And so oftentimes that's a role within their cultures. It's different for every culture, it’s different for every nation, but it specifically is not only just about gender, but also talking about roles. And so if you are a white person, please do not, or non-Native person, please do not take on the gender of two-spirit because it's not true for you. So I definitely think that's my first thing.

I definitely would say to really take the time to learn about how gender has been taken away from Indigenous people. There was an author I read a while back, and they had wrote about gender specifically with Indigenous nations in California, and how Spaniard colonizers came and actively and violently forced nations to rid themselves of those people that were of different genders. And the person speaks about it as gender-side: they would go to these different nations and say, “Who are these people?” Because the Spaniards realized that these nations had these people who were outside of the binary, and that they played an important role, and basically were like, “If you don't want your children to be, like, fed to dogs, if you don't want to be fed the dogs, if you don't want us to murder you and kill you, you will tell us who these people are, and who were not willing to conform.” And just how horrible that is to lose all of the knowledge that those people had because they were such a big part of their tribes, their nation's livelihood. And it's definitely something that people should be aware of, and I don't think that people ever talk about, but I think it's really important to read some of those things and so that we folx can understand that, you know, people being outside the binary is not new.

**Tuck:** Every time we talk about that it just makes me feel so many feelings at once, because on one hand I'm like, “Wow, I love thinking about these people who existed” and then at the same time, makes me so mad about, you know, the way they were treated by colonizers, so I'm just sitting here with all of these feelings at the same time.

**Tish:** Yeah.

**Tuck:** But I wanted to ask you about beading because you've gotten really into beading since we last talked. What drew you into that, and how does this, and what role does this play in your life, I guess is what I'm asking.

**Tish:** Yeah, so one of the beautiful things that came out of my job is learning how to do beadwork. It’s not really something that is done in my culture—there are people who are from my nation who are beaders—don't get me wrong—but also it's definitely something that was taught to us by folx of other nations. And a friend of mine who is an old coworker, and she taught me and she gave me a lot of information about, you know how to be respectful and mindful about not appropriating things from another culture works, but also being encouraged to be like, “Hey, if you want to do beadwork, awesome, let's do it, let me show you how to do it.”

There's a saying that beadwork is medicine, and at least for me and what I've taken from that is it has really helped with my mental health. And there's also the saying that when you're doing beadwork that you should be in a good space mentally. And so if you're upset or sad or in a place where you can't give good feelings to your work, that you shouldn't be doing it. Because otherwise, you can give those bad vibes to a person that ends up with your work. I really definitely feel like that's definitely helped because it's really helped me really like, “Okay, ground yourself, just really think about what you're putting into this piece.” And then, you know, life changes, like: I got pregnant. And so I learned a little bit about my own culture, you know, in my own culture, you're not allowed to make knots while you're pregnant. And so then I had to figure out, what do I do? What does that look like and, you know, and I have friends now who bead, and so they've been so helpful and being like, “Oh, you could do this instead. And you could do this.” And I even had a friend who was like, “I will tie all the strings for you, I’ll come and tie the strings for you.” And I was like, “Honestly, that to me is love: to have someone say, ‘I will do that so you can continue beading.’” That's probably one of the most beautiful things somebody ever said to me.

And so when I got pregnant and then I realized I was gonna have unpaid maternity leave, I got really serious about selling my beadwork, and I just kind of started thinking a lot about how do I tie this to my own culture, what does that feel like, and I released a collection that was all-black earrings, and one, because I’m Native and I’m alt, quote unquote. [laughs] That's really cheesy to say that! [laughs]

**Tuck:** I mean, you know for a fact that I love the all-black beadwork, and so I’m right there with you!

**Tish:** So you know! And so when I was trying to explain the piece, it really made sense for me to really think about my own culture, and these feelings of being alone and feeling like loneliness and all these feelings that being pregnant in a pandemic felt for me. I think I really have been taking in a lot of my own culture’s aesthetic and trying to piece that with beadwork. So yeah, it's this really awesome and amazing experience.

**Tuck:** All right, well, is there anything else that we haven't talked about yet that you want to talk about? Anything on your mind?

**Tish:** So I'm just really excited that, because my band is back together, we're planning to write an LP. Definitely lots and lots of feelings about things that I was already really upset about before the pandemic, but also during the—the negative ways in which Indigenous people were treated during the pandemic. And that people recognizing that, you know when you send body bags to Indigenous people asking for PPEs, that that's a fuckin’ way of saying that genocide is not over, and we're planning to record hopefully by the end of the year and have something out in 2022. And then we're looking for a record label, you know, who fits us. But we're definitely really excited about putting something out.

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

**Tish:** I would love if this—this is going to sound really silly, but I love for the future of gender, that people just stop fucking talking about gender, and that people are able to make the choices that are right for them and people respect that, you know, and that people are able to be what feels right for them, whether that's nonbinary, whether it's saying like, “Fuck gender completely, fuck the western view of gender completely,” whether that's being comfortable being a cis person, or, but also respecting that other people are not. And the future of gender is just people respecting that folks have different things going on for themselves, and that if people were just willing to appreciate people for who they are, I think that would be so incredible.

[Gender Reveal theme music starts]

**Tuck:** That's gonna do it for this week's show. If you learned something or you just had a good time, please share this episode with folx in your community. You can find Tish’s beadwork and other merch at RoseRico.com, and you can listen to with or at withwar.bandcamp.com. We are on Twitter and Instagram @gendereveal and at genderpodcast.com, where you can find episode transcripts and many more resources. Our July merch is available for just a couple more weeks at bit.ly/gendermerch.

This episode was produced by me, Tuck Woodstock, and edited by the amazing Julia Llinas Goodman. Our logo is by Ira M. Leigh, and our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music this week by Blue Dot Sessions.

No new episode next week; we are getting ready for our Episode 100 Spectacular. It's truly going to be so much. So we'll be back in two weeks with more feelings about gender.

[Gender Reveal theme music ends]

**Tuck:** Yes, I'm very excited to own the With War record to go with my, again, *five* t-shirts.

**Tish:** [laughs] I appreciate you so much.