**Tuck**: Hey, before we start the show I want to tell you about a new podcast made by two friends of gender reveal. The show is called “Cancel Me Daddy,” an iconic name. It's a show about the canceled culture grift economy, hosted by journalist Katelyn Burns, who you may remember from Episode 48 of this podcast, and Oliver-Ash Kleine, one of the co-founders of the Trans Journalist Association. Together, Oliver and Katelyn promised to dispel censorship myths, laugh at outrageous takes, and shed light on whose voices are being left out of the conversation. Subscribe to Cancel Me Daddy wherever you get this podcast or you might... get…. canceled.

[Gender Reveal theme music plays and stops]

**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.

**Tuck**: Hey everyone, I hope you're all hanging in there. This week on the show we have a surprise guest by which I mean, it was a surprise to me when I booked it like one week ago. Zackary Drucker is here to talk about her new documentary series Lady and the Dale, which chronicles the “complex contradictory life of Elizabeth Carmichael, criminal, auto executive, and transgender pioneer.” I stole that quote from the New York Times. Zackary and I also talk about gender clownery Tucker Carlson's shitty dad, life after the trans tipping point, and being T4T pre-T4T. So before we get to that, just a couple of quick things. First, our merch store has been restocked so you can head to bit.ly/gendermerch right now to see all of our new February stuff. We've got a new design that says, “Welcome to Fabulous Gender Hell.” We've got matching designs that saying “Make it Gay” and “Make it Trans.” Great advice. We also restocked our popular “Nature is Queer and I am Nature” design featuring some real-life intersex Cardinals. Last but extremely not least, we are bringing back our “Femmes can be Thems” design on a long sleeve shirt. As always, these designs will disappear, out of the shop at the end of the month. So head to bit.ly/gendermerch by February 28 to grab what you want. Also, as always, we do not make any money off of the merch store at all--- like $0. So if you'd like to support the show and the work that we do, the best place to do that is patreon.com/gender, where just $1 or more gets you access to our weekly newsletter. We've got a special Theymail message this week. Theymail is a program where listeners donate a little bit of money to the show, and we read their little message on air. This message comes from my good friend, Em Solarova, who writes “Person Who is a YouTube show about being a non-binary trans person in Czech, my first language, with its complex and rigid grammatical structures tied to binary gender. It is borderline impossible to express anything in Czech without gendering myself and everyone else. Yet I exist. So, naturally, I am taking to YouTube to chronicle my trials, tribulations, and explorations with having a heavily gendered parent tongue. Find Person Who on YouTube starting February 6.” There will be a link in the show notes if you want to check this out, I really recommend it. Obviously, there are subtitles and English versions, obviously, you're not supposed to just be able to understand Czech. But it is so interesting to hear how Czech is gendered even more than languages like Spanish. I learned a lot from Em about that so check that out. In the meantime, it's time for this week in gender.

[Chimes start and transition into music]

**Tuck:** This week in gender, we're talking about walking while trans. In 1976, New York introduced a vague anti-loitering law in order to target sex workers, which is clearly already extremely bad. Because the law was written so vaguely, it allowed New York police to arbitrarily detain and arrest anyone doing anything that could possibly be construed as loitering for the purpose of prostitution. So for example, standing on the street, walking down a street, lingering on a street corner, waving at a car. In 2016, the Legal Aid Society brought a class-action lawsuit against New York and members of the NYPD, challenging the constitutionality of the law, after representing several women who were targeted because they were wearing a “short dress, a skirt and high heels, tight black pants, or a black dress.” Yes, you will be unsurprised to learn that the police used loitering for the purpose of prostitution law to target women, specifically women of color. According to the cut in 2018, 152 people were arrested under this law, and of them, half for Black, 42% were Latinx and 80% were women. Of course, police especially targeted trans women and transfeminine folks of color. Per the Legal Aid Society, police have arrested transgender women for standing outside, speaking to one another, speaking to other people, or walking from a subway or grocery store back to their house. The discrimination was so egregious that this law became widely known as the walking while trans ban. Norma, a member of Make the Road New York, says that “For more than 40 years, black and brown transgender women like me have been harassed, profiled, and arrested for expressing our gender identity and public. Once my boyfriend and I were arrested under the law for simply walking together and holding hands, and until this day I still carry the scars and fear of the interaction with the police and the unjust arrest.” Honestly, y'all, there are so many more stories like that, that are honestly way more horrific and more detailed. I'm just going to spare you those because we're all just trying to make it through the day. But you know, you know. So, for years if not decades Coalitions of sex workers, trans activists, and organizations like Make The Road New York and the Legal Aid Society have banded together to protest the walking while trans law. Last summer, the movement to repeal the band gained new attention in momentum, thanks to the Black Lives Matter protests drawing the country's attention to different forms of racist policing. Thanks to tireless advocacy and lobbying efforts of those activists, the law was officially repealed last Tuesday, February 2. The repeal also dismisses open cases of folks being prosecuted under the law and seals prior violations and convictions that were previously standing in the way of folks accessing housing and employment. So, a win all around! I will say a lot of cis reporters writing about this one, which I don't love because what if we hired trans reporters, but also I didn't even see any of them say anything particularly egregious in an article, mostly about trans women of color and sex workers. So we're getting there folks, it's a win all around. This has been this weekend gender.

[Chimes play and fade out and new music plays]

**Tuck**: Zackary Drucker is an independent artist, filmmaker, and cultural producer. She has performed and exhibited her work internationally in museums, galleries, and film festivals including the Whitney Biennial 2014, MoMA PS1, Hammer Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario, MCA San Diego, and SF MoMA, among others. Drucker is an Emmy nominated producer for the docu-series *This is Me* and was a producer on the Golden Globe and Emmy Award winning Amazon show *Transparent*. *The Lady and the Dale*, her directorial debut for television, premieres on HBO in early 2021. The way we always start the show is by asking, in terms of gender, how do you identify?

**Zackary:** Hey Tuck, I identify as a human, and as a trans woman, and gender clown in the tradition of my chosen grandmother, Flawless Sabrina. I identify as an outsider and heretic and an artist, and so happy to share space with you today.

**Tuck:** Can you talk a little bit more about gender clown as a tradition by Flawless Sabrina?

**Zackary:** (Laughs) Flawless Sabrina, I talked about a lot, because I met her when I was 18 years old and she was the single most influential person in my development as a human. As an artist, she was truly the gender-expansive being, who was a maternal figure to many people. (She) never took medical steps to transition but kind of just mixed the signals of gender. She was always wearing makeup. She was always wearing an outlandish outfit and wig, in the Upper East Side where she lived. She was always just kind of going out into the world as a creature of her own invention. If you asked her how she identified, she always said gender clown. That was her preferred way in seeing herself like that was her prism. It's funny because when she has kind of visited my dreams, she really is a gender clown (laughs). She does all this clowning. I don't know if this is too esoteric but you know, spirits often will show you things, it doesn't come in through language it comes in through symbols. She's always showing me things as if she's kind of pulling things out of the hat. She has a very clowning spirit, I think, even in the afterlife. And furthermore, I would also say that in my imaginative internal world, Flawless Sabrina had a lot to do with Liz Carmichael coming into my life. I think her story was never told in any kind of dignified or respectful way. She had a very, kind of, bombastic life and a lot of questionable decisions that was ultimately maligned because of her trans identity and not because of the real criminal things that she had done in life.

**Tuck:** Right. Well, let's talk about Liz. The Lady and the Dale is a documentary about this very complicated person at times she worked as a professional con woman. She explicitly says at one point that she doesn't care about the public good.

**Zackary:** (laughs) yeah.

**Tuck:** And yet, you know, it is hard to not root for her, I think, at least as trans people. I don't know what it's like to be cis and watch this. You're also in Disclosure. You appear in Disclosure, this documentary that talks a lot about the need for better trans media representation. So I'm curious if you see Lady and the Dale as… uh… furthering of our need for better trans representation or rebellion against the demands for better trans representation?

**Zackary:** Wow. Well, in terms of Disclosure... You know, I think that we grapple with the troubling history of trans and non-binary people being cast as deceptive, as criminals, as charity cases, as tragic figures, as people who just further other characters’ progress or development. The many ways that trans people were on the sidelines and used as plot devices--- much like the gay and lesbian filmmakers in the early 1970s post-Stonewall. There were a lot of films that tried to holistically repair the negative representations of gays and lesbians, it was this very kind of sanitized two men holding hands walking down a beach or you know there were these very like wholesome images. I think that with trans representation too, we've been in a period of telling our affirmational stories just to offset the century or more of misrepresentation. I feel like Liz’s story represents maybe a new era of giving a closer look at figures who are not solely heroic but are flawed and human in their flaws and their imperfection. I think that Liz gives us all a lot of allowance to kind of cut ourselves a little slack. We are all imperfect and yet, if we are acting ethically and generously and creating love and opportunity for understanding. You know, helping repair the world. We're doing okay. You know, there's a lot of people out there who are causing harm who also walk around thinking that they're perfect. I think, Liz kind of taught me how to give myself a break. (laugh)

**Tuck:** I love that. So, obviously, when trans people talk about each other we typically don't use people's, you know, old names, old pronouns. In this series, the interview subjects refer to Liz with her old name and pronouns when talking about her before she transitioned. Once we get to the part of the story, where she transitions, most of the interview subjects switch to using her correct name and pronouns, except like Tucker Carlson’s shitty dad or whoever. Can you talk about how y'all approached name pronoun, also like visual representations of Liz in the film and whether it felt complicated for you... having to figure out how to handle that?

**Zackary:** It was a huge quandary, I mean, just conceiving of that first episode which is Liz's first chapter in life. I mean it's the first 45 years of her life, up until her entrance into the world as a woman. Even the only information we had about Liz in the first 45 years of her life was through official documents--- mostly an enormous FBI file that was over 1000 pages of information. But it was this incredible kind of narrative ultimately of her criminality from the 40’s through the 70’s. In terms of names and pronouns, I mean, ultimately, we had to work with the family... You know we didn't impose any expectations on the family, we let them talk about Liz freely and in their own words (sigh). Whew. I have a huge extended family, I know that, if and when I'm gone, that you know, some of the kids in my family will probably talk about me differently, time moves on. People have different conceptions of your transness. I mean, Liz's youngest son, Michael, who we interviewed didn't want to acknowledge on camera that he knew that Liz was trans. Of course, there was no easy way to put that in there, but he did not want to be on camera acknowledging that he was aware of that. Ultimately, we could not have told this story without Liz’s surviving family members, taking a leap of faith. And, yeah, we've met them halfway. Then obviously you have the other polarity which is the kind of openly transphobic journalists, in the piece, who misgender Liz intentionally to be mean. So, there, it is this whole spectrum, ultimately of people seeing Liz differently and kind of evaluating ultimately what are those prisms, in which people perceive transness and what are the ideological kind of differences. I mean, I think that's really what we're getting at. The story of Liz and Dick, it's like this inciting relationship, it reverberates through time and continues to impact trans life today.

**Tuck:** Yeah, do you want to talk more about that?

**Zackary:** Well Dick Carlson certainly wasn't the first reporter to out and publicly humiliate a trans person. We go back all the way to the story of Charles Hamilton in the last episode, who in the 1740’s in the United Kingdom, was outed, and was flogged from town to town. He made his way to the US and then it happened all over again. In the US, there was another media storm. So we kind of dive deep into the annals of history to follow the path forward. In light of that history, kind of understanding that things would not have gone any other way for Liz. It kind of helps you understand her place in the overall arc, of the social justice movement, the trans rights movement.

**Tuck:** We were talking to a trans scholar, Hil Malatino, two weeks ago about his work in the trans archives. Last week, we talked to Diamond Stylz, she was talking about what she learned in the trans archives. You just now were talking about this historical element of the documentary but I know that there's a strong emphasis on history and trans archive in all of your work. So I was hoping you could talk to us about your relationship to trans archives and what it means to you and the role it plays in your work?

**Zackary**: I mean, I think that locating one’s self in history strengthens your position in the present. I have always had just a deep curiosity and interest about what got us here today. You know, I think it's staggering and overwhelming sometimes to think about what people have to go through in order for us to have the agency and autonomy that we have today to self-define. It's always provided for me, a kind of endless source of gleaning survival strategies. We come from a very diverse tradition that there is nothing except for an internal feeling that unifies us and therefore, we are born into every country, every part of the world. That no matter who tries to legislate against us, silence us, kill us, that we will be born into the world, no matter what. We will persist. We're obviously connected to our predecessors, through biology through our DNA, through our families of origin, but we're also connected to predecessors, in other ways. People whose names we know and don't know, quite honestly. The path that we are walking in has been blazed for us by generations and generations. For me, that's always been a source of strength. I've always felt fortified by that. I hope that other folks do too. I hope the young people do especially right now, as their rights, in particular, come under fire, their right to gender related health care comes under fire and their right to participate in sports.

**Tuck:** Yeah, so you've been making art about trans people and trans visibility for more than a decade…? How long has it been now?

**Zackary:** I feel like my first moment of publicly putting work out was in 2005, 2006.

**Tuck:** Over the last 15 years like the visibility of trans people has changed so dramatically, and the way that we talk and think about gender and trans people has changed so dramatically…

**Zackary:** It's enough to make your head spin (laughs)

**Tuck:** It really… (laughs). Yes, so I'm curious like how that shift in public consciousness around transness or transgenderism, as it would have been called a few years ago, how that's affected your work or if it has?

**Zackary:** It's just so spectacular to witness, it's so expansive. I very much am a middle of the road kind of trans person in terms of my gender. I'm not super fem. I go by Zackary. I always described myself as an androgen when I was young, but today I would have called myself non-binary. I think, I feel like I exist between generations in so many ways. When I transitioned, I always said that I was a transsexual, people did not understand what transgender meant... yet. (laughs) It was just such a different time, sometimes it's stark, it's stark when you look back on that. I think *oh my god I transitioned,* you know*, 15 years ago*, this many of my girlfriends did not survive the life. Yeah, it can feel really staggering.

**Tuck:** I do want to dig into this a little bit because you said something like, “that you know if I came out today I would be non-binary,” and I think there's a lot of especially folks that came out before we had such ubiquitous language for that experience, have sort of reinterrogated their gender and been like, “Oh, when I felt like there were two options, I went for this one because I knew I wasn't the other one. Now I feel like there's this larger buffet of options, and it's changing the way I think about gender.” It seems like you were really ahead of that I mean, you know, especially with the influences of Flawless Sabrina and others like you were sort of always aware that gender fuckery and gender clownery were possible.

**Zackary:** I got in trouble in high school for having a hat that said *fuck gender roles* it's funny these days, gender fuckery.

**Tuck:** (laughs) It's one of those things that like if a kid wears that hat today it would be like, almost boring, but wearing that hat, you know like 15 years ago...

**Zackary:** Yeah in 1997...

**Tuck:** you're just like, yeah, you're like... Damn… 20 years ago, yeah.

**Zackary:**. (laughs) yeah…

**Tuck:** So anyway, all of that is to say is like, do you feel…. ?

**Zackary:** I feel good, no I feel good… I like being a woman. I like using she/her. I feel like it's more an inflection point and a source of inspiration. The younger people who have just totally skewed the gender binary because it oppresses all of us and I think it's really the key to dismantling systems of oppression. I just am here for it, I just love it. I just am such a celebrator when it comes to like the young people who are just taking it to a new place. It just seems so crucial. I don't know, I meet people who present cis, who you would perceive as cis, you know, constantly surprised at who has crossed gender feelings. I think everybody does actually. I think cis people included and that like, I don't know, I think misogyny is so rooted and men's resentment for women's ability to express and emote and be more self-actualized because masculinity is such a straightjacket.

**Tuck:** When I look at your body of work you know across genres, Lady and the Dale, you know, going back 10-15 years. This theme that jumps out at me, is these unlikable or these are complicated trans characters that have families that love them and support them and care for them. What about those stories speaks to you or feels really vital for you to tell?

**Zackary:** I mean, that's kind of a key point to Liz that does really surprise people. You know so often, trans and non-binary people are conveyed as satellites as totally disconnected from larger family units. Liz, I think was most successful at being a matriarch, at holding her family together. Doing so, I think in sometimes questionable ways but nonetheless the way that her children and grandchildren saw her allowed us, as viewers, to see her differently as well.

**Tuck:** Liz, as we mentioned, Liz gets outed by the media multiple times, and it creates this relationship between investigative journalism and transphobia, because, obviously she should not be violently outed as trans and that is not news. But I do understand a journalistic argument for sharing that she had a history of conning people. When she you know was being accused of then conning people again. As a journalist and a trans journalist, I was just thinking about how complicated--

**Zackary:** So complicated (laughs)

**Tuck: ---** it would be.

**Zackary:** I mean, honestly this series we created would not have been… it would have been such a different series a few years ago. It would probably be such a different series a few years from today. I mean the conversations that I've had around this series, the last time that I did this much press was when Transparent came out seven years ago--- it was 2014. And it's a world of difference. Media competency and familiarity with, because now there's been any number of, you know, name the show, name the films. It's been *Pose*, it's been *A Fantastic Woman*. There's been *The Nano*. There's been, you know, this is the global conversation now. That's the most palpable change is just the level of ease in which conversations around trans folks by allies- just journalists who know. Then it's also interesting, talking to journalists who are more resistant to a modernizing world (laughs), but that's everywhere. I mean that's at the heart of so much cultural conflict I think is a resistance to a modernizing world. I think that's why trans folks right now in this particular moment are being scapegoated as physical manifestations of modernization. Witnessing how Liz is treated in the media over time as well, gave me some perspective. In the 70’s when she was being outed, it was kind of in that vacuum space between Christine Jorgensen and Renee Richards. You know there's kind of like a 25 year period of not many other trans media figures and obviously, Jorgensen was a darling of the media. Liz comes along, it's still not in people's imagination that trans folks might be starting a car company (laughs). So Liz was able to kind of slip under the radar right and Carlson outing her is an early example of seeing that on television, on local television. Of course, you know, Renee Richards, Carolyn Cossey, Tracey Africa, there's so many examples of trans people being outed in their industries or in the press. But then by the 80’s when Unsolved Mysteries happens and Liz is on Unsolved Mysteries, the local reporting on her then was somehow, just so much more derogatory than the 70’s. You get a little taste of it in that third episode with the local sheriff, that you know, misgendering Liz. And, I mean, the thing is, Tuck, is that the transphobia was so embedded in the story that we couldn't have taken it out if we wanted to. We couldn't have properly gender Liz if we wanted to. It was so baked into the material. It was astounding I had plenty, plenty of moments of being aghast.

**Tuck:** Yeah, I wanted to ask what it was like being a trans person in the room for some of those interviews, particularly with the people that are sort of still various levels of overtly transphobic.

**Zackary:** Uh, It was eye opening. I think having come out as trans so long ago will prepare you for people saying outrageous shit, basically (laughs). And so, I feel pretty unflappable, ultimately, and I was able to sit through--- I didn't, I was not present for the Dick Carlson interview which was probably the worst that we included. That was kind of an interview that my co-director Nick Cammalleri had done years before we were trying to do another interview with Carlson but he canceled. Ultimately, we included his, you know, egregious transphobia. There was a lot of transphobia that we didn't include. I mean, I feel like we were pretty conservative, actually, with what we included. Because sitting in those interviews we’d typically ask folks about Liz's gender identity if they knew that she was…. And granted, what was interesting was some people--- one of the engineers in particular, said that he knew Liz was trans and it wasn't a big deal to him. He said, essentially, people probably noticed at first and just got used to it. He was like I never really thought much about it but certainly. He always read her as trans. He was remarkable. Many of our other subjects did have negative things to say, not only about Liz’s transness but about trans people in general. It wasn't appropriate or necessary to include it. Just for fun, I asked the editors to create a transphobia montage (laughs) at one point. Just so we could like see it and absorb it and be like (laughs). It was really something, it was difficult. Then again, it was also surmountable, I was also able to hear it and move on and not feel like my own identity as a trans person was under attack. Ultimately… ah… most of the folks we interviewed were elders, you know. But many of them, their views of trans people have not changed over 50 years, you know. So it's like the things that they would say about Liz being trans was stuck in the 70s, you know like, the length of people's indignation can be surprising.

**Tuck:** I was listening to some interviews you did back when Relationship came out, which for listeners was a photo series that you and Rhys Ernst did to document your relationship, somewhat incidentally documenting your gender transitions. It was in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, it was made into a book. Anyway, y'all in this interview we're talking as if T4T relationships were rare, almost unheard of, I think, at one point, you said there wasn't any language for that relationship at the time. So I heard this and I frantically texted my friend who's a trans scholar, and I was like “wait is T4T *new*?” And he was like, “I think that the term was popularized in 2016 by Torrey Peters.”

**Zackary:** Yaaaaas, she tattooed on her arm.

**Tuck:** How does it feel to have invented T4T? (laughs) No I’m just kidding!

**Zackary:** Well T4T was a Craigslist thing.

**Tuck:** Right of course, of course.

**Zackary:** And that's where Torrey created a community on Craigslist and found that there was an element of sisterhood and camaraderie on Craigslist. For Rhys and I, I mean, there are so many incredible examples of gender expansive people finding each other through time but so few representations and you have to look really hard to find them. Southern Comfort was a documentary that Rhys and I had seen when we were together. Yeah, there are a few kind of notable examples of trans folks coming together but that was why we put the series out there. Because there could be a trace of it through history. I think that loving other trans and non-binary people is such a magical space to create of just total acceptance, you know? In a world kind of like free of cis-normative ways of seeing, you know, it can be a kind of amorphous, like cathartic space to live in.

**Tuck:** Right. I mean, it's wonderful to not have to explain something right.

**Zackary:** Right! I’m just saying.

**Tuck:** Yeah. So, what was it like... I mean, you were talking about just the difference doing press for Transparent versus doing press for Lady and the Dale but what was it like being, you know, on a press circuit as like the documented T4T couple? (laughs)

**Zackary:** (laughs) I have screenshots of interview questions that Rhys and I were answering, and I screenshotted them because we had the most irreverent, bombastic responses to some of their questions. (laughs)Oh, I mean they're also really inappropriate and sexual. We never like we never sent them but we were just like, it's funny because we documented our own exasperation at being asked these questions and I'm like, *come on, reall*y?

**Tuck:** I mean I think you have to have fun with it in order to survive that type of, you know, interrogation. You have to be like “oh I'm going to I'm going to be in charge, I'm going to be the one having fun here I'm going to be the one saying inappropriate things here” even if you don't send them.

**Zackary:** Yeah, then ultimately I mean, the future is here. It's just unevenly distributed and they think that we are messengers of the future, in many ways. We're kind of always waiting for the world to catch up. In the case of Liz Carmichael, I feel like, you know, it took until 2021 for the world to catch up with her. We are so often out of sync with the world around us. I think we're a few steps ahead in a lot of ways. So, we're constantly coming into situations where we're like “okay haven't caught up to us yet” (laughs) and just being patient. I think patience is hard, a hard one. It has been in my life. I love Sarah McBride, said once, very succinctly I think on Twitter--- you know that like, this is our one life, like, we're not gonna wait for equity for respectful treatment or recognition of our identities. We have this one life to live.

**Tuck:** Yeah. Well speaking of the future. You made the short film called Mother Comes to Venus. There's this character in it that says something like... this is not a direct quote but like we are post tipping point, and trans people have been in dozens of movies. We need to give cis white men a chance. So obviously that's a *joooke*, but like, do you think or worry there'll be sort of like a post tipping point backlash and trans people are gonna be once again invisible-ized? Especially once we convince them that they need to… you have, you have done this. But especially once you know trans roles consistently go to trans people they're like oh well this isn't fun anymore.

**Zackary:** I mean, the future, it could be so fractal and there's so many different ways that they can go. I feel like…. there's even like... things that we can't conceptualize or expect ahead of time. Somehow the feature is always better and worse simultaneously. It goes in both directions at the same time and progress happens alongside opposition. My instinct is to say that we are already in the backlash for the tipping point and that you know oftentimes the political change lags behind culture, and that we are in that lag time right now. I feel like many of these social concerns, considerations that we're talking about will be divided along class lines, and that will probably be more of a binary in the future even.

**Tuck:** Yeah, you said something.... somewhere and I didn't write it down so I'm going to recap it very poorly. We were talking about how it could bifurcate more in the future. Where there's sort of middle-upper-class trans people who have all of these privileges and resources that older trans folks never had. But then there's still going to be poor working-class trans folks still don't have access to that, and there's going to be sort of like two levels of like passing and two levels of assimilation almost. That's something that we just talked with Kai Cheng Thom about that same thing. Is that something that you think about?

**Zackary:** I do. I think that we will probably witness a transition into post-capitalism in our lifetimes, and that could be actually a really good thing. I mean, I think that we've reached a point in advanced capitalism where it is actually breaking. Many economists, a century ago, anticipated that around now would be the time that capitalism would expand so much that it would burst. I love thinking about utopian versions of the future, where people are in community. We’ve kind of surpassed this point of narcissism and cult of personality and the endless pursuit of fame or success. I think that could burn out soon (laughs). I hope that it does. I think that personal responsibility, ethical action, and people advocating for folks with fewer resources and less access and privilege is the way forward. You know, being in community with each other is kind of the only way out. It will always be our saving grace, as humans... kindness and generosity to each other.

**Tuck:** Well that would segway perfect into our wrap-up question but before we do that... Is there anything else we haven't talked about yet that you want to talk about?

**Zackary:** I mean, we really did have to untangle and figure out how to structure her story and kind of separate her identity as a trans person from her criminal history. You know, because they were so conflated. Because the history was always such that trans women were perceived as masquerading as women to commit fraud or to commit a crime. It is a very complicated, challenging space to navigate.

**Tuck:** Yeah I have conversations with a friend of mine, same friend as before, I'll give them this third shout-out in three consecutive episodes somehow! But my business partner Cass Adair, we talk a lot because especially when we first started working together, I was so paranoid as sort of trans educators, about saying any sort of like in-group language around cis people. Because they would pick it up, and I was like, “no, this isn't for you.” You heard us say transsexual now you're saying transsexual like *stop.* So I've been actually working through that because I think that it limits my ability to do interesting work and have interesting conversations when I'm constantly trying to rein it back. So, I would love to hear, because you obviously don't subscribe to that and you make really challenging work and you're making this work that's like, *Oh, we have this terrible societal narrative that trans women are just men who are conning us and now we have this con woman* (both laugh). You know, like you're really challenging that. So how do you work up the nerve to do that but in like a positive way?

**Zackary:** I mean I think being willing to be uncomfortable, being willing to put yourself in a room where you know that it's not gonna be easy. I think sometimes you need to have an easy day and sometimes you have to kind of greet the day and all the challenges that might bring. In challenging stories, I did really kind of wrestle with the restless spirit of Liz Carmichael. Making this project in quarantine, in lockdown. We were working 50 to 60 hours a week, through this whole year and the world's you know everything happening in the world outside of this project. It was just like being on a ship out at sea with Liz. I came to the project not understanding *why her story,* and I had to come to that. I had to understand that, it was a complete learning experience for me. Then of course, by the end I realized like wow, her story has so much to do with where we're at today. But that wasn't clear to me at the outset, it was revealed to me over time and through the process. So, yeah, I would say it's like a willingness to be uncomfortable and to not know is what catapulted me into this particular project. The thing that I'm working on now, same, I do not feel comfortable and that is the feeling that's leading me. It's kind of like *how can I* (laughs) *figure this out?* Like how, you know? I've always found that I learn best in those situations that I'm disarmed.

**Tuck:** Yeah, it's uncomfortable to be learning, I think you're absolutely right.

**Zackary:** Yeah.

**Tuck:** Do we get any hints on what you're working on now or is that embargoed?

**Zackary:** It's totally clandestine. It's just starting, I shouldn't. Nothing is even signed yet. Yeah, you know, I'm really relieved and grateful for the many people in our community who are creating podcasts and TV shows and films and all kinds of media. There's such, I mean, we're galvanized, and we are doing this together. To me, that's the biggest reward of 2021 is that none of us are in this alone and that we are doing this work together. The Lady and the Dale is not the one show, it's one of many. Ultimately, post trans tipping point, that’s it. We can tell many different kinds of stories now, whereas, you know, before that we weren't. It was a flash in the pan, and it was one story at a time, and they were few and far between. So yeah, we truly are kind of witnessing a new era.

**Tuck:** The way we always end the show is by asking, and I think this is a great question for you honestly, is by asking in your ideal world, what would the future of gender look like?

**Zackary:** (laughs)It would be a space of self-discovery and liberation. Gender would be a la carte for every human being born into a body. We all come into this world, in a body (laughs). And none of us chose those bodies, that as a part of the human experience right. We come into the world. We didn't choose the body we live in, but we learn how to live in it and how to create as much positive change as possible. I know for sure that gender is not determined by our biology. I know that our gender has nothing to do with our genitals, I just feel completely clear on that. And there are no essential differences between men and women. I don't know, just lived experience the older I get, each human being is completely different than the next. Even if there's a dominant experience, it's only because of cultural conditions. It's only because of the structures that people have accepted and pressures that have been put on them from previous generations. Ultimately, we owe it to ourselves and the people around us to be our truest selves. So I hope in the future, people do not feel constrained by the bodies that they're born into.

**Tuck:** That's gonna do it for this week’s show. The first three episodes of The Lady and the Dale are available now on HBO and HBO Max. The finale drops on February 14. I do recommend watching it if you can, I watched the whole thing and thought it was really excellent. Zackary is on Instagram @ZackaryDrucker and at ZackaryDrucker.com where you can watch several of her short films. We are on Instagram and Twitter at @gendereveal and our website is genderpodcast.com, where you can also find transcripts of the show, a form to contact us and other resources. Our nonprofit merch shop is at bit.ly/gendermerch where one 100% of proceeds are split between trans artists and LGBTQ organizations like the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, G.L.I.T.S. and the Trans Woman of Color Collective. You can support our work at patreon.com/gender, where a $5 donation will get you Gender Reveal stickers in the mail sent by yours truly. Today's episode was produced and edited by me, Tuck Woodstock. Our producer for the season is Isaura Aceves. Our logo is by the talented Ira M. Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music this week by Blue Dot Sessions. We'll be back next week with more feelings about gender. Special thanks again this week to Callie Wright for helping us troubleshoot this audio. Subscribe to Callie’s show Queersplaining wherever you get this podcast, and we'll be back next week with more feelings about gender.