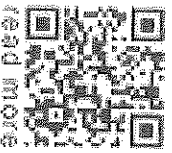
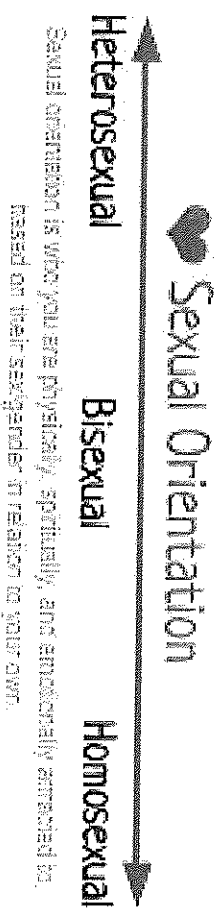
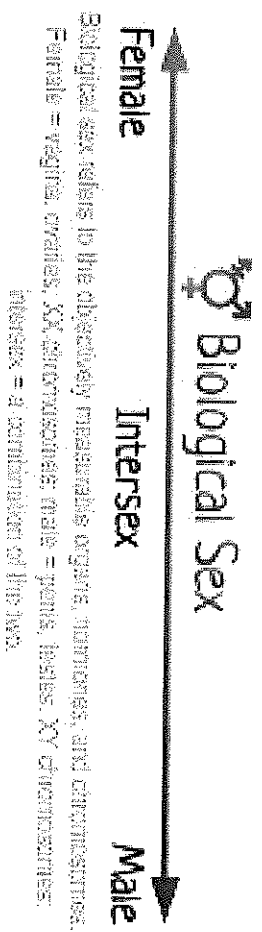
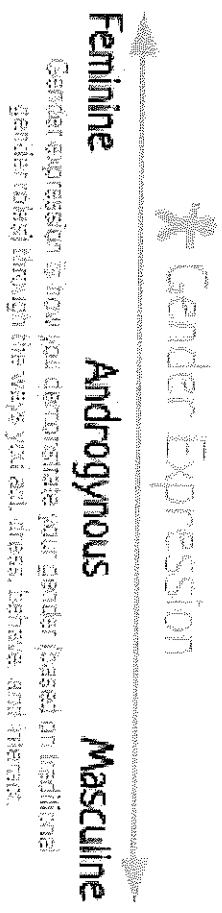
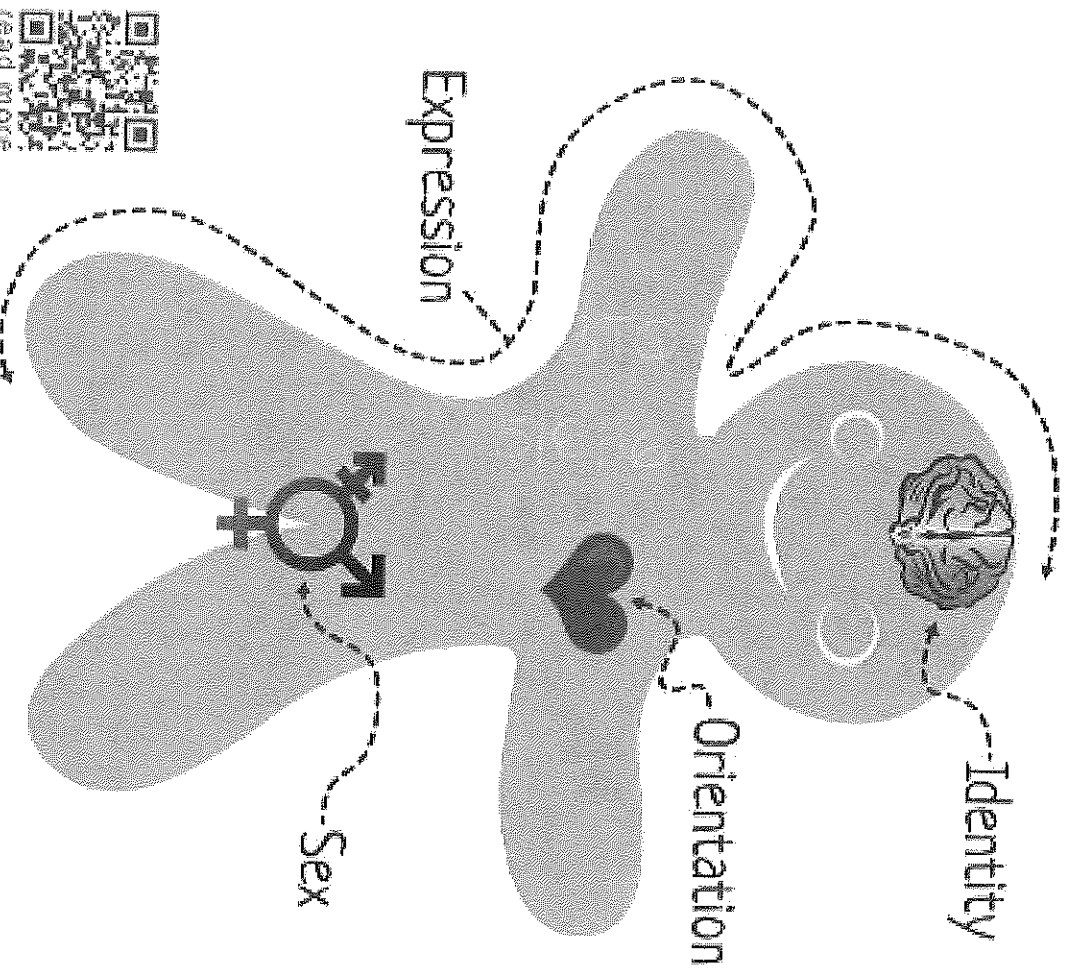


The Genderbread Person

by www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com



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VOCABULARY

There are as many ways to be transgender as there are transgender people. While you may hear the phrase "transgender community," it should not be taken to mean that all trans people are identical, that they have the same experience or understanding and view of gender. The language trans people use to describe themselves, their bodies, their gender and their sexuality varies from person to person.

Transgender refers to many different kinds of people who experience some discomfort with their assigned sex or expected gender role, including transsexuals and other gender variant people. Many gender variant people may not identify with the term transgender. Transgender people may choose to alter their appearance through style and dress. A transgender person might or might not engage in hormone therapy or have surgeries or other procedures so that their bodies match their gender identities.

Trans is an acceptable abbreviation of transgender or transsexual. Do not use "Tranny" as this is a derogatory and unacceptable abbreviation.

Transsexual is used to describe people who identify with a gender different than what they were assigned at birth. In some medical and legal discourse, transsexual is used exclusively to refer to people who have had or intend to have Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS). Today, many understand that transgender people might choose not to have any form of surgery. Because the meaning of the term transsexual may be controversial, Legal Services generally uses the term transgender.

Trans women are trans people who identify and understand themselves as women. Respectful labels usually refer to where someone is heading, to their future, and not to their past. A trans woman might identify as 'MfF' or 'male-to-female,' referring to their assigned sex (male) and self-identified gender (female).

Trans men are trans people who identify as male. A trans man might call themselves 'FtM' or 'female-to-male,' again referring to assigned sex (female) and self-identified gender (male).

Assigned sex refers to the sex one was identified as at birth. Sometimes people call this one's 'birth sex.' Most often this assignment is made on the basis of genitals. This is often used to refer to the gender someone was raised as before transitioning or coming out as trans.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. It is important to understand the distinctions between *gender identity* and *gender expression*. **Gender identity** refers to a person's self-conception of their gender, such as male, female, genderqueer etc. **Gender expression** refers to a person's gendered behavior and attributes such as masculine, feminine, androgynous. Note: gender identity and gender expression do not necessarily correlate and may vary over time or context (e.g., a person could have a female gender

identity and a masculine ["butch"] gender expression; a person could have a male or androgynous gender identity and a gender expression that varies between masculine and feminine depending on context).

Cisgender is an adjective you might hear in the context of trans issues, meaning non-trans.

Intersex people are born with bodies that don't easily fit into categories of male or female. Often intersex people undergo surgical procedures on their genitals as newborns, and might have been raised with hormone therapy and further surgeries. Today, many intersex people stand with transsexuals in demanding the rights to self-determine the form of their own bodies, opposing treatments on infants.

TAKING IT FURTHER

If you want to take your awareness of these issues further, here are some additional sources of information:

- *Down to Basics: An introduction to transgender issues* by Michelle O'Brien; <http://www.deadletters.biz/basics.pdf>
 - *Answer to the Streets: Developing accountability in transgender care* by Michelle O'Brien; <http://www.deadletters.biz/answer.pdf>
- Some resources for transgender law information include:
- The Transgender Law and Policy Institute - www.transgenderlaw.org
 - The Transgender Law Center - www.transgenderlawcenter.org
 - Sylvia Rivera Law Project - www.srlp.org
 - TGI Justice Project - www.tgijp.org