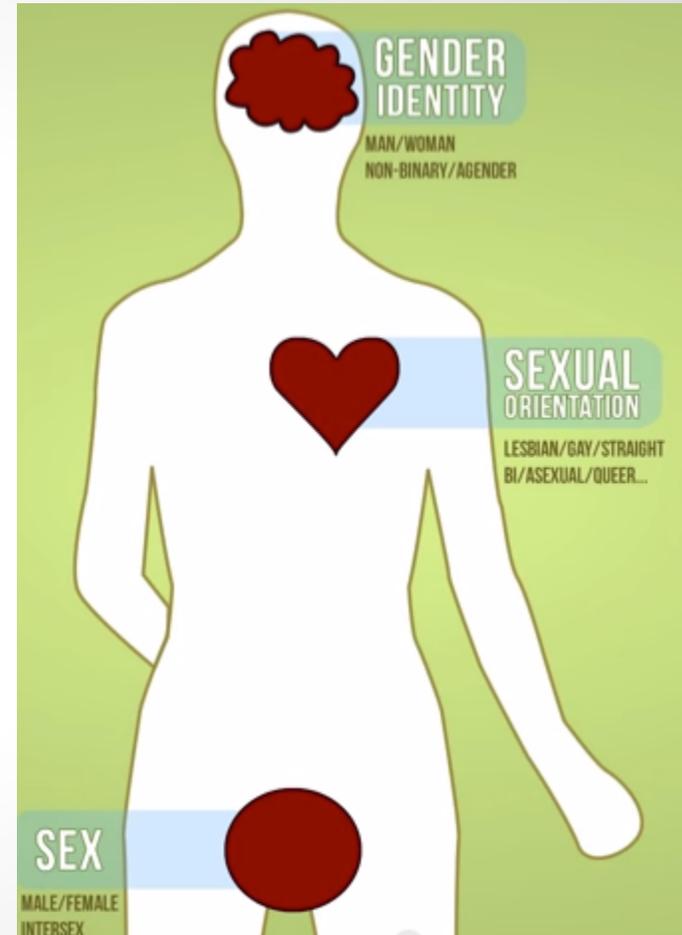


# **GENDER AND SEXUALITY 101**

St. Jude's Forum 6/21/15

# The Difference

- **Biological sex:** genitalia and associated secondary sex characteristics
- **Gender:** Internal experience
- **Sexuality:** Attraction to others



## **Before we begin...**

- **gender and sexuality are not binary!**
  - complex spectrum
  - discarding binary --> flexibility and expansion
  - understand humans, gray areas, the divine
- **can be fluid and change over a lifetime**

# Before we begin...

- “You label the experience, not experience the label.”
- up to every individual to decide identity
  - respect even if you don't understand

## Before we begin...

- 2013 study: **21%** experience LGB attraction
- **30%** of all suicides are LGBT
- **92%** of LGBT youth hear negative messages
- **25-40%** of homeless youth are LGBT
- new social justice frontier

**What is sexuality?**

## Some terms



- **Heterosexual:** Attracted to people of another gender (“straight”)
- **Homosexual:** Attracted to people of the same/ similar gender (“gay”)
- **Bisexual:** Attracted to more than one gender, generally in different or gendered ways
- **Pansexual:** Attracted to people regardless of/blind to gender
- **Queer:** umbrella term for not cisgender and heterosexual

# Yet another spectrum!



- **Allosexual:** Experiences sexual attraction
- **Asexual:** Does not experience sexual attraction. May still:
  - experience romantic attraction
  - have a sex drive
  - become aroused
  - appreciate aesthetic beauty

# A better definition

- complex interplay of attraction/feelings
  - affectational: behavior and social interaction
  - erotic: sexual feelings and desires
  - romantic: emotional love and connection
  - aesthetic, sensual...
- CS Lewis' Four Loves?

# How to help

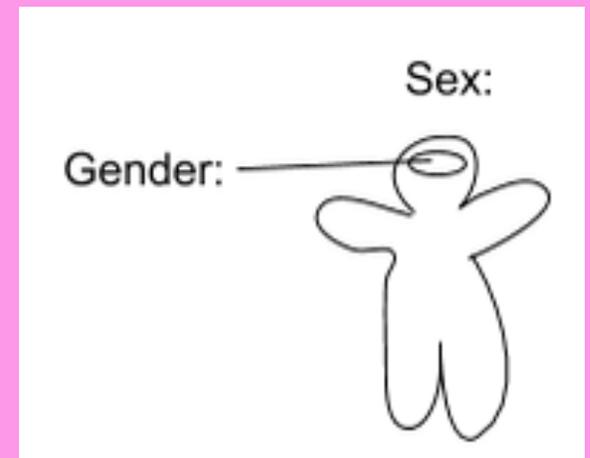


- learn more!
- acknowledge non-binary orientations
- expand current ideas of partnership

**What is gender?**

# What it's not

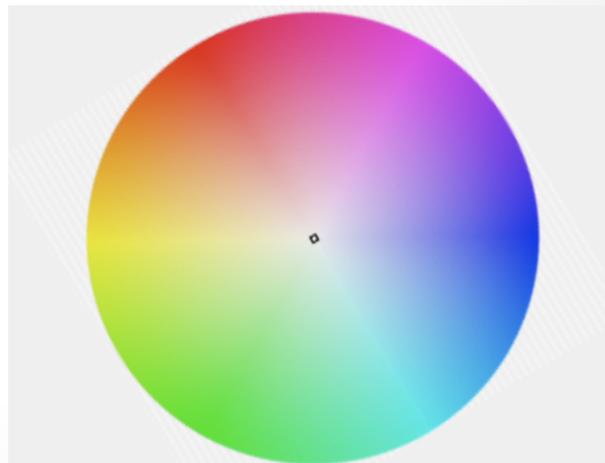
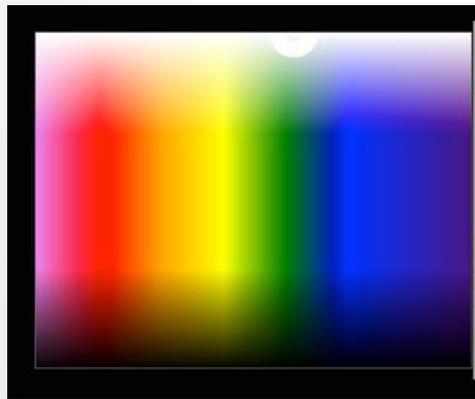
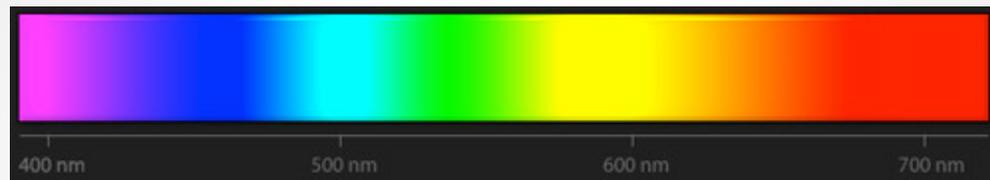
- stereotypes: pink/blue, dolls/sports, long hair/short hair
- biological sex
- able to be consciously chosen or changed



# What it is

- a societal construct
  - human idea of gender roles, masculinity/femininity
  - not the same in all cultures!
- doesn't mean it's not real!
- internal feeling/experience
- can be related to presentation/expression, gendered norms, pronouns, and physical body shape
- or not!

# A helpful model



# Why it matters

There are a lot of problems.

conflating gender identity  
and sexuality

legal difficulties changing  
identification

dysphoria and misgendering

insurance/monetary cost of  
transition

transphobic and transmisogynistic violence  
and hate crimes

corrective therapy

inequalities in jail

parental rejection and youth homelessness

basic utilities like bathrooms

“man in a dress” jokes and tropes

access to proper medical care

inaccurate/harmful media representation

representation and visibility

mental health and  
suicidality

derogatory jokes and comments

respect of pronouns and identities

gatekeeping for transitioning

# Basic terminology

- **Cisgender:** Gender aligns with the sex characteristics of the body they were assigned at birth
- **Transgender/Trans:** Umbrella term for all those whose gender does not align with the sex characteristics of the body they were assigned at birth
- **Dysphoria:** hmm, I'm going to need more space...

# Dysphoria

- discomfort or a “state of unease”
- **Body dysphoria:** discomfort with physical body and the way it functions
- **Social dysphoria:** discomfort with how somebody is perceived and treated socially
- and more :(

# Trans

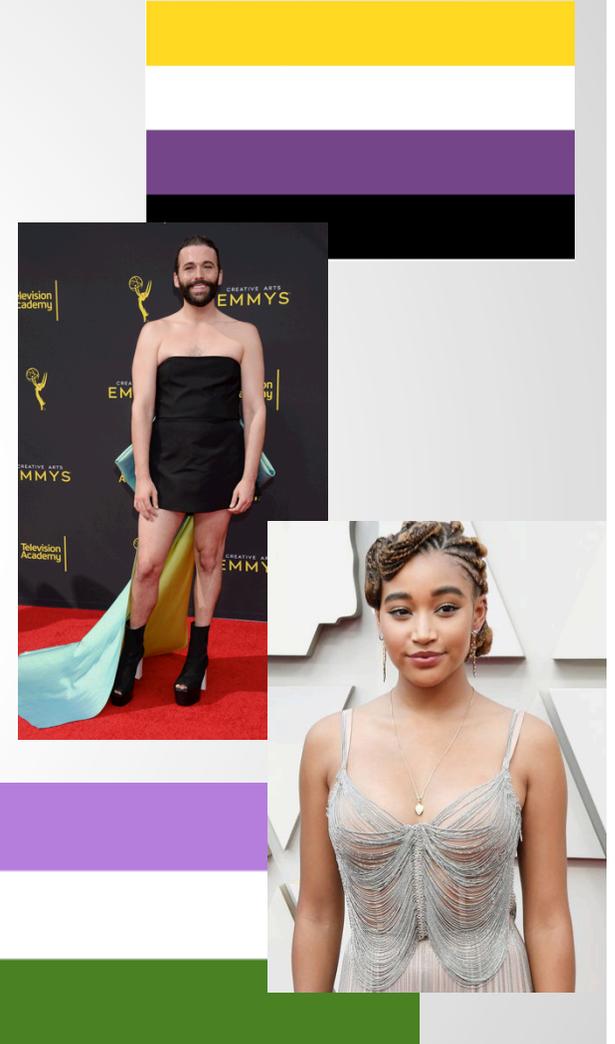


- Umbrella term including transgender, nonbinary, agender, etc.
- Also includes “binary” trans people ie trans men and women



# Nonbinary/Genderqueer

- Umbrella terms and distinct identities of their own
- people who fall outside or between the gender binary (remember the spectrums?)
- Also includes identities that are... not binary (genderfluid, agender, etc.)



# Genderfluid



- Moving between genders or having a fluctuating gender identity
- Can change gradually over time, day to day, or over a few hours
- May include binary identities, but also nonbinary and genderless identities

# Agender



- Does not have a gender identity/is genderless
- Can be defined by lack of gender or presence of a neutral gender
- Synonyms/subcategories include: neutral gender, genderless, neutrois, etc.
- shocking: this one's a spectrum too!

# How to help

- learn more!
- gender neutral facilities and language
- ask for pronouns if unsure
- respect pronouns! no misgendering!
  - active act of harm
  - says: my comfort > your comfort
- participate in social justice
  - equal rights and protection for all trans people
  - justice for hate crimes, transphobic violence and murder



# Finally...

- don't just tolerate...
- ...allow community to be transformed!
- scripture welcoming everyone
- first step is education -- congrats!

