

# Trans 101

---

Alex Palmer (he/him/his)

# What does 'trans' mean?

- Someone who is trans has a gender identity that *isn't* solely the one they were assigned at birth
  - Someone who identifies wholly with the gender assigned at birth is described as cis
  - The reason for having this word is so that trans people are not immediately 'othered'
- This might mean identifying with another binary gender or identifying as non-binary (not male or female)
- Some trans people may undergo medical treatment and some may not - this is *not* a requirement for being trans

Someone's identity should always be respected!



# Gender, sex and binaries

As explained on the previous slide:

- gender identity is not a strict binary
- gender identity is not dictated by assigned sex

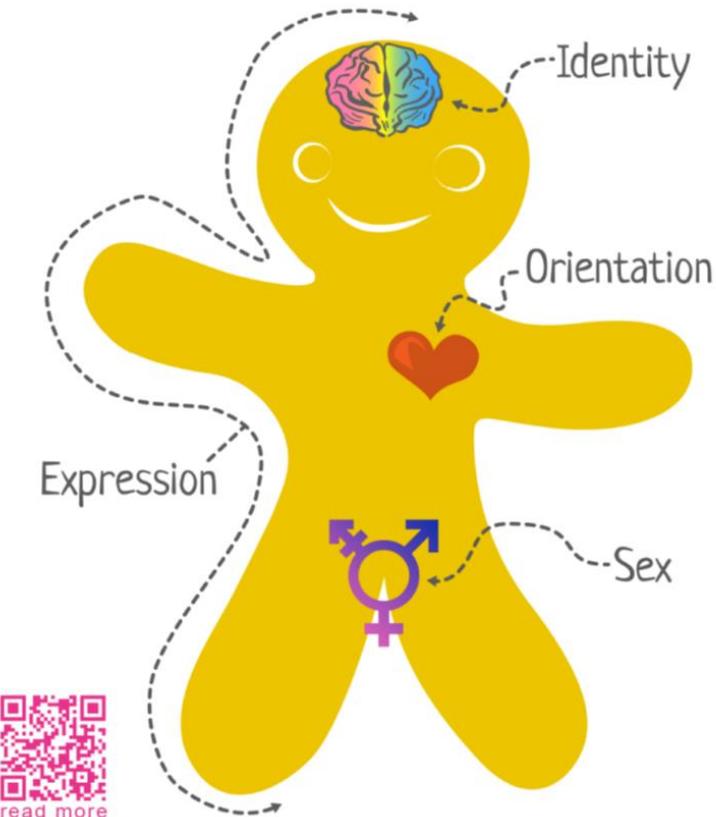
Biological sex is *also* not a strict binary

- ‘male’ and ‘female’ are not discrete categories that never overlap
- biological sex can also be regarded as a spectrum of characteristics
- the biology that you learned when you were 14 is a reductive oversimplification of the truth

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/beyond-xx-and-xy-the-extraordinary-complexity-of-sex-determination/>

# The Genderbread Person

by [www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com](http://www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com)



Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.



Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.



Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.



Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.

# What pronouns and titles might trans people use?

- Binary trans people might use he/him/his or she/her/hers
- Non-binary people might use they/them/theirs
  - The singular 'they' is grammatically correct and you probably use it all the time
  - e.g. "Someone's left *their* coat behind! Do you think *they*'ll be back for it?"
- Non-binary people might also choose to use pronouns like zie/hir or xe/xem
  - If you aren't familiar with a pronoun, ask the person for a couple of examples!

Don't assume what pronouns someone uses, or how they identify, from how they look: expression is not the same as identity.



# “What should I *not* do?”

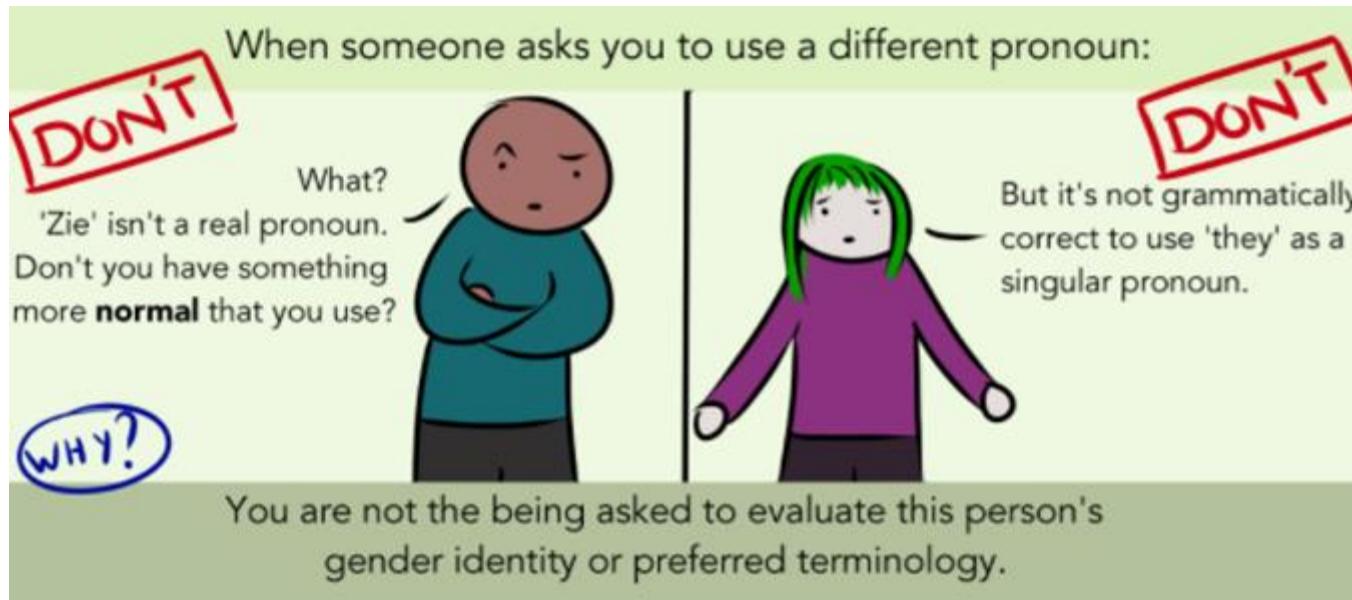


Image taken from <http://www.robot-hugs.com/pronoun-etiquette/>

# “What should I *not* do?”



Image taken from <http://www.robot-hugs.com/pronoun-etiquette/>

# “What should I *definitely* do?”

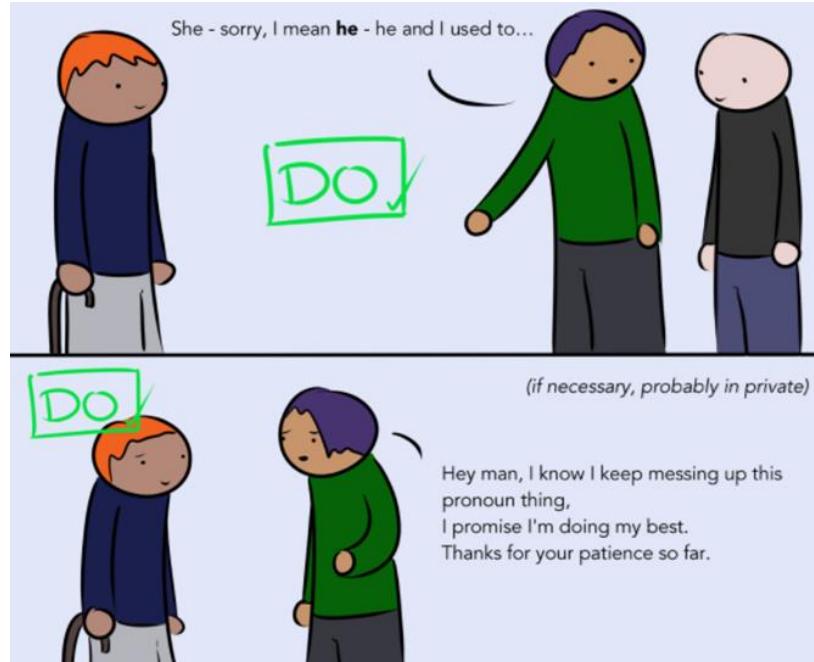


Image taken from <http://www.robot-hugs.com/pronoun-etiquette/>

# Transphobia 101

---

# What is transphobia?

The basic definition is “prejudice or discrimination against trans people”

This might take the form of

- Assuming everyone is cis ('mothers' as opposed to 'pregnant person')
- Assuming that 'biological sex' is always more important than gender identity (it's not)
- Assuming that 'biological sex' is a defined binary that everyone will fall into (they don't)
- Misgendering or deadnaming a trans person
- Denying access to gender-specific facilities (the notorious 'bathroom bills' in NC)

and while some transphobic acts are 'worse' than others, **that doesn't make any of them acceptable.**

# How to make positive changes

If things go wrong, work to improve them:

- First of all, *apologise* (a little thing goes a long way)
- Ask *why* something was transphobic if you don't understand
- Find out what would be better
  - Change the vocabulary used in lecture materials
  - Preface content with an explanation of why a term is being used (for example, it's shorthand)
  - Open a discussion with students on why a term isn't always accurate/exceptions to the rule

# Examples of good practice in the department

- Personal Gender Pronouns handout circulated
- Individual WCs converted to All Genders Welcome toilets
- Maternity/paternity/adoption guidelines updated to avoid gendered language
- Risk assessment forms updated to include more gender options
  - These now include 'other' and 'prefer not to say'
- Gendered language in some modules has been updated to be gender neutral
- Changes to supervisor forms (from September 2018)

Department of Chemistry

Risk Assessment 2017-2018

Do you identify as:

Male:	<input type="radio"/>
Female:	<input type="radio"/>
Other:	<input type="radio"/>
Prefer not to say:	<input type="radio"/>



Creative commons licence link:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

