

PLEASE EDIT ME

For the Record: Boring Sentences About My Gender

This is a living document. It lives online at <http://bit.ly/boringgendersentences>.

Acknowledging that my gender is to some degree public property, it is open to anyone to add, subtract and comment in whatever way they see fit. It is also open to me to delete anything I don't like and to add to and change what I want.

– Harry Josephine, 25/8/16 and onwards

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I don't give a fuck what you think of my gender.

(I do.)

I could write a clear, accessible, balanced, kind, compassionate, searching, understandable essay on my gender, but I won't.

I could acknowledge that I was raised male and that that means something, but I won't.

I could acknowledge that sometimes I feel like a woman and that that means something, but I won't.

I could say “gender is an ongoing negotiation between bodymind and social space”, but I won't.

I could say “sex is a biological fiction and a social reality”, but I won't.

My gender troubles me. My gender is troubling. I want my gender to trouble you. I want to cause trouble.

I could acknowledge that gender is a class system which divides and exploits labour in part through divisions based on reproductive capacity, but I won't.

I could acknowledge that gender is a class system which distributes violence in part through divisions based on clothing choices, bodily postures, social behaviours and quiet signals, but I won't.

I could say “I understand that my penis is a problem for you”, but I won't.

I could say “I understand that my breasts are a problem for me”, but I won't.

I wrote a whole book about my gender and I lied to myself and to everyone else that it was about technology and violence. (It was.)

I could acknowledge that the neutral descriptor “non-binary” is reactionary and inaccurate and that its politics frequently nauseate me, but I won't.

I could acknowledge that the political term “genderqueer” is not a thing that you but a thing that you are, but I won't.

I could tell you what I think about hormones and surgery for myself and for others, but I won't.

I could tell you what clothes and jewellery and make-up and presentation I prefer, but I won't.

I know that doing a thing and then saying that I'm not doing that thing is a sneaky and failed strategy that barely passes for poetry let alone politics.

I could argue that identity politics should be a guerilla struggle rather than a clash of states, in which territory is chosen strategically in order to inflict maximum damage on a system of oppression but cannot be permanently held, in which the fight moves from site to site and does not attempt to root belonging in border control, and I do, but I won't, not now.

I could say “I just want to be a woman”, but I won't.

I could say “I just don't want to be a man”, but I won't.

I just want to pee in safety.

I could talk about what I see and feel when standing in front of a mirror, but I won't.

I could explain myself to you, but I won't.

I could say that, regarding gender politics, the single most important thing is to support people in their self-identification and to provide them and everyone else with the resources necessary to a flourishing life, regardless of your analysis of gender and everything it intersects with, regardless of what you think their identity says or does to the gender system, because a person is not a system, and I will. I will say it again. The single most important thing in gender politics is to support people in their self-identification and to provide them and everyone else with the resources necessary to a flourishing life.

I do give a fuck what you think of my gender.

(I don't.)

(I won't.)

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My pronouns are she and they

If you must name my gender:

- My friends call me a tranny
- My movement calls me a genderqueer trans femme
- The government calls me a non-binary trans woman

Everything may change