

Sex refers to one's physiological characteristics only.

Most people start with the assumption that there are two sexes, the **sex binary**.

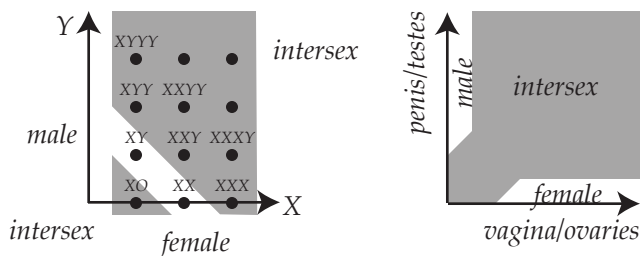


However, about 1 in 100 people are born with some kind of **intersex** condition, which is any physical condition that is neither fully "male" nor fully "female," and which can include uncommon chromosome patterns such as XO, XXY, XYY, etc., ambiguous genitalia, and hormone imbalances. In order to include this reality, the sex binary must be expanded to the **sex spectrum**.



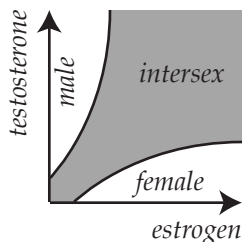
This is still too simple, because one's sex is determined by multiple factors, including genetics, genitalia, and hormones. These can be, for the most part, defined scientifically.

Chromosomal sex (below left) is determined by X and Y chromosomes. People may be born with any pattern, but there must be at least one X.



Gonadal or genital sex (above right) is determined by genitalia or the gonads.

Hormonal sex is determined by the balance of the sex hormones. All people have both estrogen and testosterone, but in different proportions.

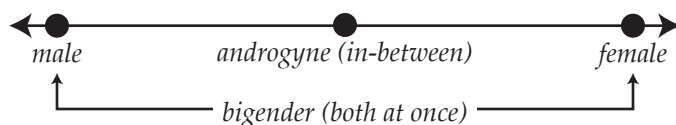


Gender refers both to one's psychological, innate, intrinsic sense of self, and to a social construction.

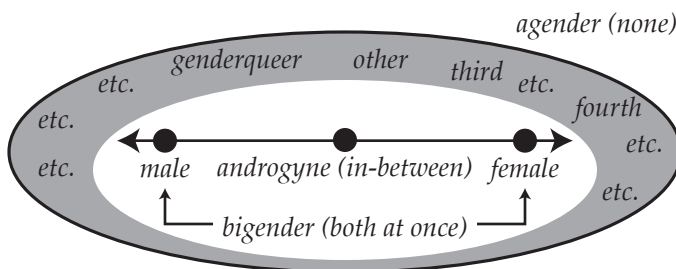
Most people start with the assumption that there are two genders, the **gender binary**.



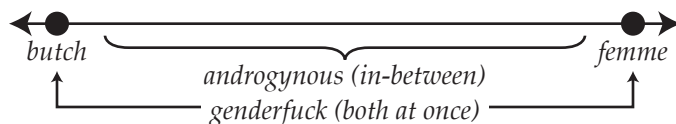
However, there are many people who do not fit into either of these categories. For example, **androgynes** identify as some combination of male and female ("in-between"), while **bigender** people identify as both male and female at once ("both"). The gender binary must be expanded to the **gender spectrum**.



This still does not include all people. A **genderqueer** person is one who identifies as something entirely different from male or female. One may identify as a **third** or **fourth** gender, which is simply a matter of self-definition. Finally, an **agender** person does not identify with any gender at all ("none"). We must expand the gender spectrum further to the **gender space**.



Gender, like sex, has many components. The gender space applies mostly to **gender identity**, which is one's intrinsic identity. The socially constructed part of gender is called **gender expression** or **gender presentation**. We can use the gender spectrum, but with different terminology, as the **gender presentation spectrum**.



A **transsexual** is someone whose *gender identity* and assigned *sex* are "opposite" (one is male and one is female).

A **crossdresser, transvestite, drag queen, or drag king** is one whose *gender presentation* and *gender identity* are "opposite." A crossdresser dresses for personal comfort or relaxation, a transvestite dresses for sexual satisfaction, and a drag queen or drag king dresses for the entertainment of others.

A **transgender person** is anyone whose assigned sex, gender identity, and gender presentation are not all the same, or whose gender is neither solely male nor solely female.

Standard Disclaimer: This is one trans person's understanding of the meaning of these terms. Others may have a different understanding and define these terms slightly differently. Created by Rebecca G. Bettencourt; Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo; Sept 25, 2009.