



WE EXIST: BEYOND THE BINARY  
STUDY GUIDE

[www.weexist.co](http://www.weexist.co)

Available for educational screening:  
<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/weexistacademic>



## Part I - Getting Ready to Watch the Film: An Anticipation Guide

The film you are about to see, “We Exist: Beyond the Binary” is an account of a gender non-binary person’s experience. Through their story growing up as well as interviews with their family, other non-binary individuals and medical professionals, We Exist paints a picture of the *gender binary* and what it is like to exist outside of it.

The five statements on the next page connect to some of the issues, events, and questions covered in the film. Before watching try to determine or guess, based on what you might already know, whether you agree, or not, with each of the statements.

Explain your thinking in the spaces provided.

- If you are very confident and think you know the correct answer, your explanation might begin with “I agree (or disagree) because I know for sure.... “
- If you are not totally positive, or guessing, your response might begin with “I’m not positive (or ‘I’m guessing’), but I think I agree (or disagree) because...”
- After watching the film you will have a chance to confirm and expand on correct responses, and to correct responses that weren’t accurate.

**Before Watching the Film**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree or disagree</b>	<b>Why? What do you know or think that leads you to this response?</b>
Gender Identity and sexual orientation are linked.		
Gender expression and gender identity are linked.		
You can tell someone's gender identity by their appearance.		
It is rude to ask someone what their pronouns are (he/she/they).		
A person can only have one identity (race, gender, class).		



## **PART II - Watching the film: Getting Ready for Discussion – Two Tasks**

### **Task #1 –**

In one of the [largest surveys](#)<sup>1</sup> of transgender and gender non-conforming Americans ever conducted, 70% of respondents reported being denied access, verbally harassed, or physically assaulted in public restrooms.

Both Lauren Lubin and Tyler Ford talk about some of the hardships that they have encountered identifying and living as gender non binary.

As you watch the film, identify specific pieces of information (experiences, commentary, quotes from interviews, specific images, etc.) that illustrate the hardships Lauren and Tyler identify.

Use the spaces on the following pages to identify specific pieces of information from the film that can be used as evidence to support the conclusion that the gender binary can be harmful for people who live outside of it.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Herman-Gendered-Restrooms-and-Minority-Stress-June-2013.pdf>

<b>Examples of denied access to services or places</b>	<b>Explain your thinking.</b>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

<b>Examples of concern for personal safety</b>	<b>Explain your thinking.</b>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

<b>Information supporting the conclusion</b>	<b>Explain your thinking.</b>
1.  2.  3.	1.  2.  3.



## **Task #2 – Three Questions to think about while watching the film**

“We Exist: Beyond the Binary” argues that the *gender binary* is a *construct* -an idea or theory containing various conceptual elements, typically one considered to be subjective and not based on empirical evidence.

Other examples of constructs are:

### **Government**

If government wasn't a social construct, there wouldn't be so many differing opinions on what is the "best type of government".

### **Family**

The stereotypical family dynamic varies from culture to culture; there is no inherent family structure.

### **Deviance**

Deviant behavior is *extremely* relative. One society may consider something to be wrong or different, while another may not.

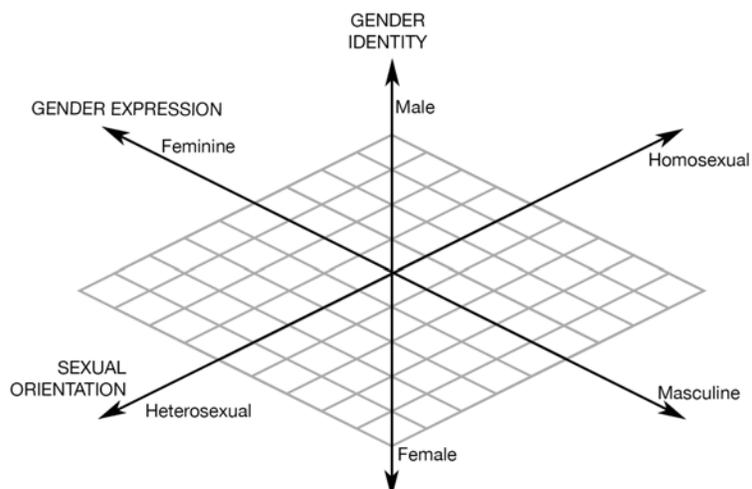
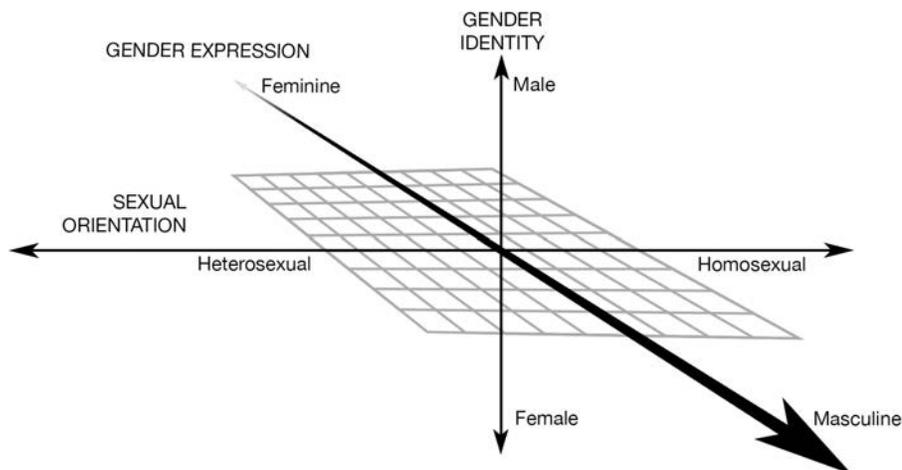


## PART III – After Watching the Film – Identity, Expression, and Orientation

Gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation have often been thought of as rigid and connected. The more these subjects are researched, the more we learn that they can be both fluid and disconnected.

In the film, we talk about 3 axes:

- Gender Identity (Man/woman)
- Gender Expression (Masculine/Feminine)
- Sexual Orientation (Gay/straight)



Based on these axes, match these ways of identifying to the points on the grid. (A.-G.)

(B.) Female, straight, feminine

(D.) Female, gay, feminine

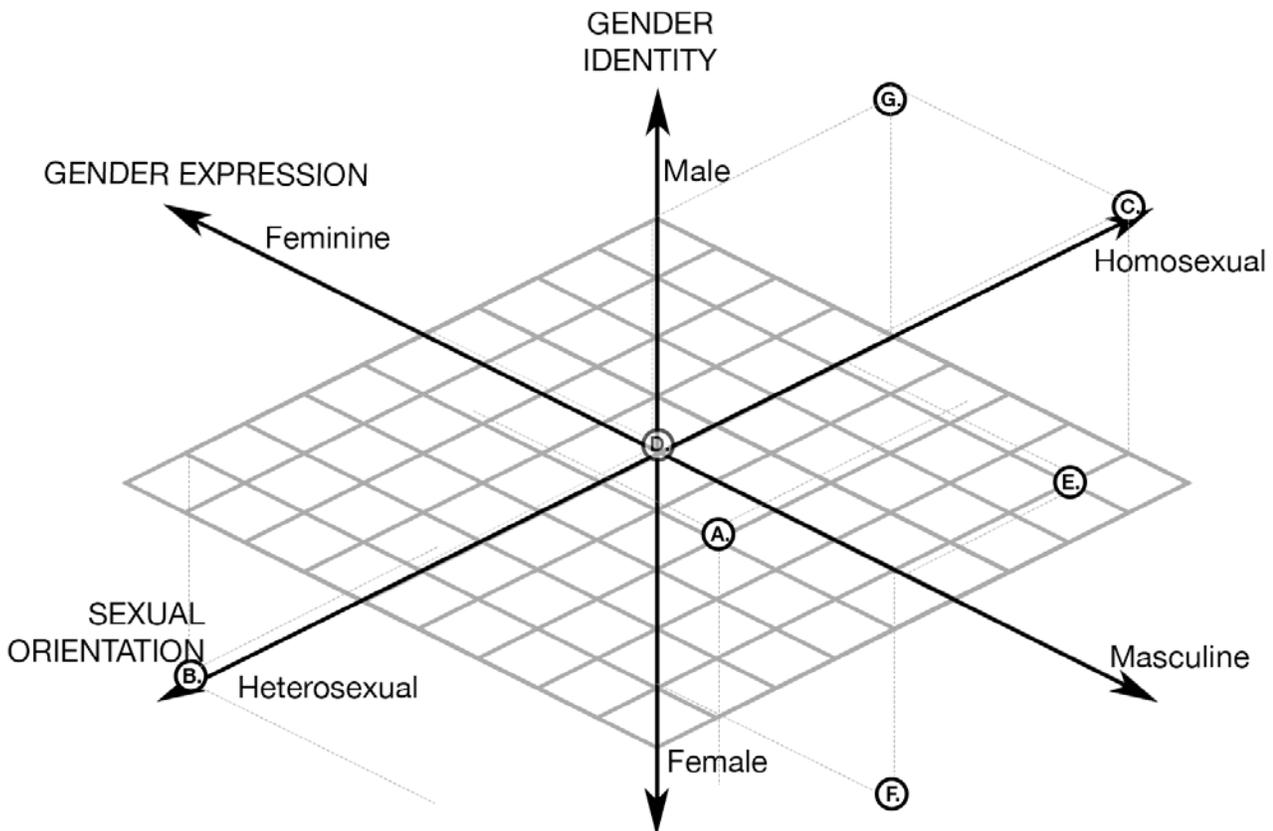
( ) Female, bisexual, masculine

( ) Male, gay, masculine

( ) non binary, gay, masculine

( ) Male, straight, masculine

( ) Male, gay, androgynous





**Part IV– After Watching and Discussing the Film: Confirming or Rethinking Initial Responses**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree or disagree</b>	<b>Why? What do you know or think that leads you to this response?</b>
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Gender expression and gender identity are linked.		
You can tell someone’s gender identity by their appearance.		
It is rude to ask someone what their pronouns are (he/she/they).		
A person can only have one identity (race, gender, class).		