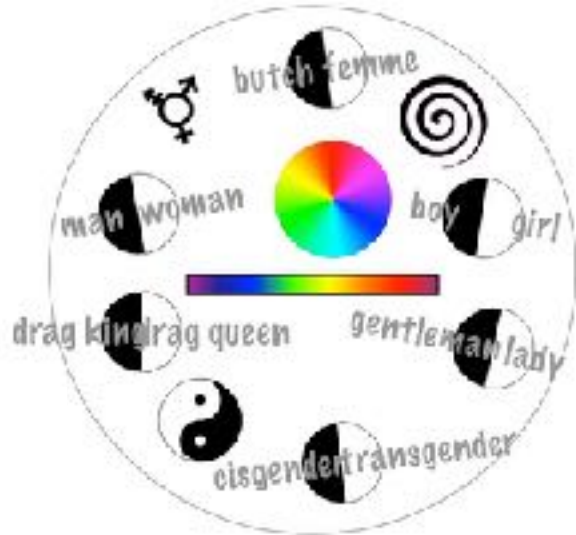




BEYOND THE BINARY IS...WHAT?



GENDER BINARY



GENDER POLYNARY

YEP, POLYNARY IS A REAL WORD!

Today, there's a great deal of talk and writing about "beyond the binary." But no one is saying what that might be. I first called myself not-man, not-woman back in 1989, and I've been analyzing just what that means for the past thirty years. The answer is simple: beyond the binary is a polynary. Let's look a little closer at these terms.

A binary is a space or phenomenon defined by two and two only fixed, unmoving parts. If the same space is defined by more than two parts—any of which can grow, shrink, or move around—you've got a polynary. The gender binary means that the only valid identities are girls, boys, women, and men. The gender polynary allows for a whole slew of other identities, any of which may exist as part of a binary or as a spectrum, a spiral, a rainbow, or any other form.

In the gender binary, everyone has to stay on their own side and be satisfied with what they've got. The only possible interaction between men and women, boys and girls is struggle. In a polynary, there exists the possibility for cooperation, compromise, and independent growth. So, that's what lies beyond the gender binary. Now, How is all this useful in day to day life in our divisive world today?

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THIS YEAR'S LECTURES, PERFORMANCES, & EDUTAINMENT



Kate Bornstein: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us

This is my autobiographical signature piece—my most personal stories, my favorite comic and dramatic monologues, and even a chapter from my upcoming memoir, *A Queer and Pleasant Danger* (BeaconPress, spring 2012).

On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us is an entertaining introduction to the notion of sex and gender beyond the binary—as well as a deeply moving affirmation of spirit for sex-and-gender outlaws. If you don't mind the f-word every now and then, the show is even child-friendly.

Campuses and conferences alike have chosen this piece for both celebrating and increasing the awareness of trans identities.

Keynote/Plenary/Graduation Addresses

I've had the privilege, honor, and great joy to keynote local, national, and international symposia, conferences, and orientation sessions. If you'd like to bring me in to speak at your event, the first thing we'll do is talk in depth about the theme of your event. My job will be to supply the keynote that will energize your attendees and send them out the door fired up and ready to apply in the real world what they've learned at your event.

Pride Week, Pride Month, Gay Days, Gaypril, Trans Pride... You Name It, We Can Celebrate the Pride of it.

I've changed my message about pride, and I think you deserve an explanation.

With the inclusion of several generations of gender outlaws—and with several absolutely delightful permutations on sexual preference—the shape of LGBTQetc. has become less defined, more amorphous. It's scary, belonging to a group of people that's always shifting its definition of membership. But the fact that we do open our arms to include a wider range of sex positivity and gender fluidity—that's something we can take pride in: the pattern of inclusivity our community has followed over the last four or five decades.

Pride today is more than the pride we can take in claiming an identity, and then proclaiming our identity (coming out) to ourselves, our loved ones—and those with whom we work side by side. That was pride in our identities in the world. Yay us, look at who we are. More and more LGBTQetc are increasingly vocal about a pride we share in the celebration of our unique desires. And we can take pride in the progress we've made in sharing power within our own ranks, with a greater awareness of racism, classism, ageism, religious bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, lookism, ableism, national jingoism, and heteronormativity.

So we take a day, week, or month in which we celebrate the pride we take in our accomplishments—and we deepen our resolve to accomplish as much or more in the year to come. That's what I want to talk about when I address your Pride celebration.

Come Out, Come Out, Whatever You Are

National Coming Out Day is both an exhilarating and scary holiday for LGBTQetc people.

Coming out as any gender or sexuality that's different from what people think you are is a frightening thing to do. You can lose your family, your home, your friends, and your job. If you come out with the intention of following the nature of your evolving desire—you can lose a lover. Been there, lost all of that. I've got lots to say about coming out. Most of it is encouraging and uplifting, and the rest of it is comic relief. I can deliver the kind of Coming Out talk that's just right for where you live.



KICK-ASS FIERCE & POPULAR SPOKEN WORD PIECES

Sex, Bullies, and You: How america's bully culture is messing with your sex life

This is my call-to-arms piece, my call for unity with everyone whose sex life or gender presentation has been wrecked by some bully. *Sex, Bullies, and You* is a 60 minute performance version that formed the basis of the bully section in my book, *Hello, Cruel World*. There are sex-and-gender bullies of all ages, and many hold positions of real power in the culture, or on your campus. Bullies make life seem less worth living.

Bully culture began way back in school, when kids were teased, harassed, beaten, raped, or murdered for nothing more than their sexuality—or for the way they expressed themselves as masculine or feminine. It was simply love that made those kids stand out. You'd think it would be love that could make us stand together.

Sex, Bullies, and You is the piece I wrote to inspire that kind of love. If there's any sort of homophobic nonsense going on where you live, this is the piece I want to deliver for you, your allies, and all the people who just need to wake up and feel the love. Then, we can get on with the business of cultural revolution.



Dangerous Dreams & Damned Desires: The personal politics of sex positivism & gender anarchy

Sex, love, gender, and desire—even when they're consensual and respectful—are rarely granted any seat at the table of public discourse. For example, could you teach or enroll in a course in masturbation on your campus? At your community center? How about a simple little—hands on themselves only—workshop for teens on the subject of making their own bodies feel great? Could you do that where you live? Why not, and what can you do about it?

For thousands of years, radical notions of consensual, respectful desires have been demonized, silenced, and invisibilized. It's time we talk with each other about sex. *Dangerous Dreams and Damned Desires* is edutainment, drawn from my book, *Hello, Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks, and Other Outlaws*.

Desire is the stuff of laughter, tears, and paradox. I've been able to successfully tailor this performance piece for many different audiences. The outer edges of our desires are some of the most life-affirming dreams in our lives. With this performance, I'll gently lead each member of the audience as close to the edge as they're willing to go.



Reconciling Transgender and Religion: A Tao of Mitzvah, Martyrdom, Sabbath, & Boddhisatva

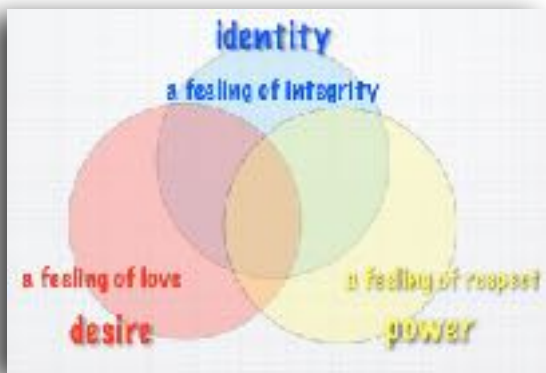
- *Tao* is a word meaning roughly the center path. *Mitzvah* is the Jewish word for a good deed done, unasked-for and with no strings attached. Optimally, we move through life performing *mitzvahs*.
- *Martyrdom* is self-injury or self-destruction for a greater cause. *Sabbath* is a period of rest in which we honor the goodness of ourselves. We rest and renew in *Sabbath*.
- A *Boddhisatva* is an enlightened teacher who doesn't stop teaching until the cessation of suffering of all sentient beings.

Many of us have spent our lives listening to people—those who speak on behalf of many of the world's largest religions—call us freak and bad and evil for so long, that we default into thinking of ourselves as bad. We come to believe that we deserve the hurt we feel, and that the best good deed we can perform is an act of martyrdom.

It takes a great deal of practice to truly honor our own goodness through the exploration of our outlaw desires, whatever those desires happen to be at any given moment. That's how we learn to trust ourselves to determine our own identities: we move through life doing good deeds, we rest in the sabbath of celebrating our outlaw desires.



THIS YEAR'S WORKSHOPS: SEX, GENDER, AND SURVIVAL



Hello, Cruel World: An Outlaw's Mini-Guide to Survival

Sometimes, whatever it is that gives you the most joy, pleasure or relief also gets you into the deepest trouble—especially when you try to explain it to other people. Like when you love someone you're not supposed to love. Or when the way you express yourself makes other people queasy. As harmless as you feel you're being, people may still think you're bad, wrong or immoral. There are far too many people who are in that position in life, and it goes far beyond simply sex and gender.

This workshop is 90-120 minutes of me talking with you about doing anything it takes to make your life more worth living. Anything. With the single rule: Don't be mean. I love doing this workshop, and the discussion that follows it. The workshop is available with or without the truly fun audio/visual bells and whistles.

Gender is what I know best. I'm currently touring with two gender workshops. Both of these workshops help make gender theory more accessible, providing a deeper experience of gender theory in both body and spirit.

How to Have a Gender-Free Orgasm*

Could it really be possible to have an orgasm with your clothes on and without touching yourself or being touched by anyone else? Can you really reach ecstasy simply by breathing? Can gender possibly be irrelevant when it comes to orgasm?

In this workshop we'll explore the unlimited possibilities of orgasm, particularly the vast range of orgasms that lie beyond those achieved by genital stimulation. Although this is a participatory workshop, there will be no nudity and you will not be asked to work with a partner. You could even invite the CEO or the Dean of Students. Oh, please do!

Your Gender: Now You See It, Now You Don't

One of the basic tenets of postmodern gender theory is that gender is mutable. Theoretically, we're all capable of being/performing any gender we enjoy being, or need to be. The trick to developing this talent is to consciously shift our gender in two steps: first you'll take your current gender off, then you'll put another gender on.

That's easier said than done, but this workshop will give attendees tools to play with their genders, in any way they choose. This is a 90 minute to two-hour workshop for both small and large groups of people. There is also a version of this workshop for acting students.



*This workshop, and the description of it here, were written and developed by Barbara Carrellas, picture above & right. She is my partner and author of *Urban Tantra: Sacred Sex for the 21st Century*. Barbara trained me on how to facilitate this workshop, but it's even more fun if you bring the two of us.

Beyond the Binary Is...A Polynary. OK, Now What?!?

(continued from the first page)

Yes, we live in divisive times. Well, guess what? Divisiveness itself depends on the idea of a natural, unchanging binary: men and women, conservative and liberal, globalism and nationalism, and so on. It's only polynary thinking that may result in cooperative, compassionate change for the better—both personally, and socially.

So, here's the deal: if we can figure out how to break the back of the oppressive personal and social matrices that depend on the gender binary, we'll have a darned good idea of how we can break the back of pretty much any other binary that's preventing peaceful and fruitful coexistence.

I look forward to speaking more about this with you in person on your campus, or at your conference.

XOXOXO,

Kate

From the Vault: More Fabulous Lectures & Workshops



I've been touring for just over twenty years—here are some oldies but goodies I've worked on that might be just right for your school. If so, I'm happy to give you more details.

How to Achieve World Peace Through Gender Anarchy and Sex Positivity: A workshop that applies the principle, “the personal is political” to gender, sex, and activism.

Election Year Politics Beyond the Binary of Red and Blue: Deconstructing bipolar politics, using the tools used to deconstruct bipolar gender.

The Language of Paradox: a one-week residency workshop in which six to twelve students discover and learn to articulate whatever paradox that gives them the most pleasure, and causes them the most trouble. Students work with me to create a script that we perform and video at the end of the workshop.

To book me for a visit to your town, school, campus, or conference, please [send me an email](#), and kindly include the best times to reach you by phone. The way to reach me for personal matters is by [Twitter](#). I'm looking forward to working with you soon. xoxo Kate