

# WRC TODAY

## { Feminist Snack Break }

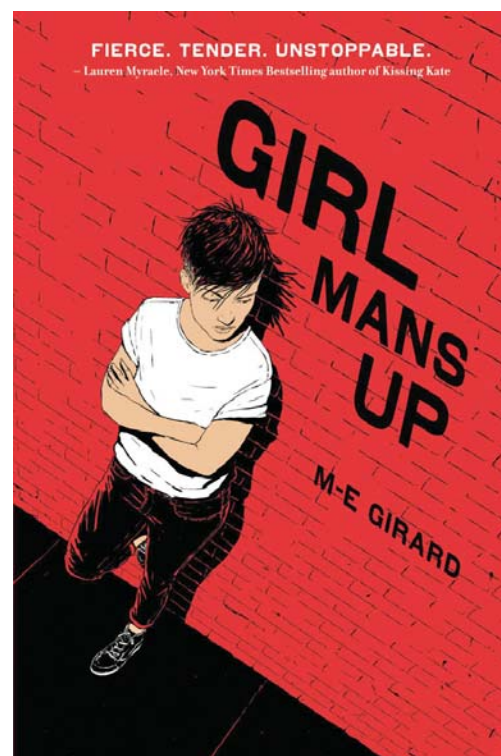
Happy February everyone! Since we are in a new year and with the spring semester in full swing, we at the Women's Resource Center are interested in trying something new. Each month in the WRC Today we will showcase a staff recommended book that pertains to feminism, and women's and gender issues. In addition to having a monthly staff recommended book, we will also be showcasing a staff recommended book each week on the Women's Resource Center social media pages.

To kick off this new section of our newsletter the first staff recommended book that we would like to suggest is *Girl Mans Up* by M-E Girard. This is not necessarily a book about feminism, but it is a book about the real life consequences that gender roles and sexism has in real life. The story follows a girl names Pen, a Portuguese Canadian student, through her journey exploring gender as a very masculine-presenting woman. It is a unique and stunning exploration of how gender effects everyday life and figuring out what it really means to be a woman. Pen is an extremely relatable, strong female character and her story illustrates just how complicated the world of gender is.

### ..about the book..

GIRL MANS UP is about a queer teen named Pen who realizes the only way she'll get people off her back is by standing up for herself--even if that means her relationships with her friends and her family get messed up in the process. It's also about a gender-nonconforming teen who struggles to own her identity as a girl when she looks and acts like a boy and everyone around her expects her to be one or the other.

**M-E Girard** lives just outside Toronto, where she splits her time between writing YA fiction about badass teen girls and working nights as a pediatric nurse. A 2013 and 2015 Lambda Literary Fellow, M-E is a proud feminist who is endlessly fascinated by the good, the bad, and the ugly regarding the concept of gender. Her debut novel GIRL MANS UP (September 2016, HarperTeen | HarperCollins Canada), was a 2017 William C. Morris YA Debut Award finalist. You can find her online at [www.megirard.com](http://www.megirard.com) and all over social media.





# student voices

Welcome to the Student Voices section of the WRC Today! This section may look a little different for some of you. If some of you remember, the Student Voices section of the WRC Today was actually launched in the Spring of 2016. We collaborated with Gender Studies to feature written pieces by students in the four newsletters we distributed last Spring semester. Student voices began as a space for students on campus to be able to discuss various topics relating to women's and gender issues, have their voices be heard and to get various perspectives on these topics. When initially launched, the Student Voices section was not open for all students on campus to submit pieces. However, that is changing this year!

While the purpose of Student Voices continues to be offering a space to heighten gender consciousness (being aware of what it means to have a gender identity and navigate from a gender place), we have decided to open up the section to allow all students on campus to submit not only written pieces, but also visual art, self-reflections, poetry and much more. If you want to join the Women's Resource Center in heightening gender awareness at the University of Northern Colorado, then submit your piece to us! Topics can vary anywhere from identity and intersectionality to injustice and gender.

If you are interested in submitting a reflection or piece (e.g. short story, poetry, visual art, etc.) to be featured in our monthly newsletter and online content, submit to, or for more information, contact Emily Hedstrom-Lieser at [emily.hedstromlieser@unco.edu](mailto:emily.hedstromlieser@unco.edu).

# Gender is not given

by Katie Glide

Each day we are diving deeper into breaking apart the two boxes of male and female that our society has put gender into. Miley Cyrus recently told the Out magazine that: "I don't relate to what people would say defines a girl or a boy, and I think that's what I had to understand: Being a girl isn't what I hate, it's the box that I get put into." As a society over the years, we have placed "male" and "female" into very refined and opposite boxes. The typical male was masculine, strong, sporty, a hunter, the color blue and the typical outfits of suit/tie, t-shirts and pants. Then the typical female was defined as feminine, the color pink, dresses, "at home mom," teachers, cute and pretty. With these two boxes, it makes it really hard for kids who can't confirm to either to be themselves especially because it is against the norms of society. Though it is hard, people have been emerging to claim what they really feel.

With this curiosity for my Gender Studies 101 class assignment I interviewed fellow students around the University of Northern Colorado asking "is gender a given?" Gabrielle Howard, a sophomore Theatre Education student told me "people only conform to gender stereotypes because that is what society pressures them to do. Without the outside pressure, the only way to tell gender would be via genitalia, but even that isn't accurate because gender is not real." Going back to the fact that it is humans who created gender to suit social norms, therefore it is "not real." "Someone's gender expression can be completely different than the gender they identify with. For example, a person who identifies as male may like to dress more "feminine" but that doesn't mean they identify as female," said Karen Gonzales, a Junior in Jazz Studies. Just because someone is wearing a pink dress with sparkles does not mean they identify as a "female." I spoke to the Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion, Liane Ortis about the issue of whether gender is a given. She said: "I believe that gender is only a given because we've created the construct of gender and all of the gendered expectations that go along with the construct. This construct is broken into a binary (male/female, masculine/feminine, man/woman) with heavily gendered expectations where folks are expected to live up to the expectations and stereotypes of that binary." For Liane, they are breaking the binaries by identifying as a transgender and uses preferred pronouns of they, them, and theirs. "Gender will likely always be a concept we use to understand ourselves and each other, but it doesn't mean we have to be so limited to only two views on gender. I believe gender identities can provide safety, identity, and community and really just give us some practical language to communicate."

Liane is not the only one who is tearing the typical boxes of gender; many celebrities are discovering who they are and expressing it proudly for all to see. Caitlyn Jenner for example, followed her heart and realized they did not feel comfortable in their body as a male. Seeing such changes and new forms of expression is a definite way of teaching people more about the language and identities outside of the binary so others won't feel so marginalized in their gender identity and/or gender expression. This is the goal for many celebrity and gender activists such as Ruby Rose, Caitlyn Jenner and Laverne Cox. Just because gender is not an obvious identification any more, does not mean it is wrong or "unacceptable". It is simply: instead of just having gender and sex, there is gender, sex, identity and expression. Giving people the chance to feel comfortable in expressing who they are in more ways than the typical norms we have formed.



*Hello! My name is Katie Glide and I am a sophomore Theatre Education Major with a minor in English here at UNC. I was born in England and moved to America when I was five years old, and then my passion for Theatre began!*

**Consulting Editor to this Piece:** Dr. Ather Zia, Assistant Professor, Gender Studies and Anthropology



# I'm a Girl... Right?

by Emily Campbell

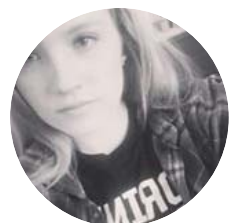
Gender is simply a set of characteristics that helps define masculinity, femininity and other such traits. At birth every child is assigned a gender based on their genitals, which they're expected to follow as they grow and mature into adults. Society perpetuates gender on children from a young age and forces them to maintain this gender throughout their natural lives. However, gender is not a given, and there is no way to determine what gender a person will become. Growing up with my brother as my role model had a profound effect on the way I acted before my sister was born. I always preferred being dirty and playing sports with my brother and his friends over Barbie dolls. Not to say I didn't have Barbie's, I just preferred the latter. For the first four years of my life primarily my father raised me because my mom worked long hours. This led to my basic personality being masculine. For all practical purposes I was one of the guys. It wasn't until my younger sister was born things begun to change with me. I felt a sort of responsibility to be more feminine to show her what being a girl was all about. There was a visible change in the way I interacted with guys. I was more flirtatious and I became friends with more girls. Deep down I hated being friends with girls, and even now I have only two friends who are girls while the rest are all male. To me it seemed girls were all drama and gossip. In some ways I regretted becoming something I didn't agree with, but it was what I had to do to make sure that my sister knew what it meant to be a girl.

My parents always got comments about why they would let me dress like a boy. So I traded my t-shirts for cute tops. My basketball shorts morphed into skirts and tight-fitting jeans. My sneakers traded themselves for strappy sandals and UGG boots. Don't even get me started with how much Starbucks I would drink. But, this is what it meant to be a girl. It was those little nuances that people said you had to follow. God forbid any girl says she doesn't like Starbucks or shopping. Those are girly things that girls have to like. We have no choice in the matter because society tells us we don't have a choice. Or do we?

It is the society that shaped the way I saw my own self and how I interacted with people. I was never told to "man up" but it was always "act like a lady." Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman bring a thought provoking look at gender in American society. They look at gender as a series of interactions that we do on a day-to-day basis. Through these interactions we "achieve" our gender. Making gender a living, breathing entity that can grow and change with the person who possesses it. Think of an actor for example. They are told to play a part. How well they play that part determines whether or not the audience finds it believable. In this case the audience would be society and the actors are the people in society attempting to achieve their gender. When an idea like gender is broken down into something as simple as interactions, it's easy to see how people just go along with their assigned genders. It's easier to flow with the current than swim against it, and most people who try to swim against it will eventually succumb to the pull of the current. Simply put they follow the path of least resistance. We see this happening in kids at a very young age. Boys tend to be more aggressive and violent towards others, whereas girls are gentle and tend to be more nurturing. This division usually begins around first grade when kids begin to assess their genders. Boys will choose to become more aggressive like they see in social media, or maybe even in their households. Girls will become more flirtatious and soft, copying how they perceive they should be. This reinforces the idea that gender is all an act. Children will copy what they see, and unfortunately are very impressionable. They will pick up this act at a very young age depending on who their main caretaker is. A girl raised like me solely by her father will most likely be more masculine in nature, and vice versa for boys. I know even for me, being primarily raised by my father, even now I have more masculine tendencies in the way I act and talk. In some ways this can be an advantage, because I'm almost like a chameleon and I can fit into all different situations. As I've matured some of those tendencies have changed to become more feminine or disappeared altogether.

Gender is not a given. Gender is fluid and changing like a river. Both girls and guys can choose who they want to be and portray to society. If the gender they want to portray is the one assigned at birth, then let it be. Even when society pushes people one way it's our job to push back and say, "no I won't let you determine who I become."

*My name is Emily Campbell. I'm a history major here at UNC and I have an emphasis in secondary education. I want to try and improve the lives of others around me.*



**Consulting Editor to this Piece:** Dr. Ather Zia, Assistant Professor, Gender Studies and Anthropology

The Marcus Garvey Cultural Center Presents...

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2017

uplifting our roots

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

### Wednesday, February 1st

#### MGCC Open House

1:00-3:00 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center  
*Light Refreshments Provided*

### Friday, February 3rd

#### Health Food Forum

7:00-8:00 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center  
*Light Refreshments Provided*

### February 4th & 11th

#### Black Talent Showcase Auditions

2:00-5:00 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center  
*Sign Up Online @ [tinyurl.com/blacktalent2017](http://tinyurl.com/blacktalent2017)*

### Tuesday, February 7th

#### Soul Food Night

6:00-9:00 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center  
*Dinner Provided*

### Thursday, February 9th

#### FAFSA Workshop

4:00-6:00 PM in Michener 335  
*Snacks Provided*

### Thursday, February 9th Cont.

#### Dominique Christina

#### Author, Educator, Feminist

6:00-7:00 PM in the UC Ballrooms  
7:30-9:00 PM Workshop

### Monday, February 13th

#### "Blackbird" Film Showing with the Gender & Sexuality Resource Center

7:00-10:00 PM at the Women's Resource Center  
*Light Refreshments Provided*

### Wednesday, February 15th

#### Food for the Soul: Chicken & Waffles

12:30-1:30 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center

### Thursday, February 16th

#### Read In

3:00-4:30 PM, 1st Floor Mari Michener Gallery

### February 16th-18th

#### Big XII Conference on Black Student Government

University of Texas, Austin

### Tuesday, February 21st

#### Brotherhood & Sisterhood Circle

Marcus Garvey Cultural Center (Brotherhood Circle)  
Women's Resource Center (Sisterhood Circle)  
6:00-8:00 pm  
*Dinner Provided*

### Thursday, February 23rd

#### Family Feud

6:00-9:00 PM at the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center  
*Sign Up for teams @ [tinyurl.com/familyfeud2017](http://tinyurl.com/familyfeud2017)*

### Monday, February 27th

#### Trap Yoga with instructor The Ebony Yogini

8:30-9:30 PM in Harrison Den  
*All equipment provided*

### Tuesday, February 28th

#### Black Talent Showcase

7:00-9:00 PM in Kepner Hall 2050,  
Milne Auditorium

Please contact [Autumn.Johnson@unco.edu](mailto:Autumn.Johnson@unco.edu)  
for additional information or questions.

Any person requesting disability accommodations for these events  
please contact 970-351-2289 at least three business days in advance.



**UNC**

Marcus Garvey Cultural Center

Cultural Services | Michener Library  
Gender & Sexuality Resource Center  
Women's Resource Center

# { Gender & Sexuality Resource Center }

## ..February Events..

### **Wednesday, February 8th**

Queer Graduate Student Affinity Group  
Margie's Cafe  
12-1pm

Screening of Pride (followed by discussion  
facilitated by GSRC director Stephen  
Loveless)

Lindou Auditorium in The Michener Library  
7:00 pm – 11:00 pm

### **Thursday, February 9th**

Queer People of Color (QPOC) Affinity  
Group  
North Hall Lounge #179  
2-4pm

Screening of Pride  
Lindou Auditorium in The Michener Library  
7:00 pm – 11:00 pm

### **Friday, February 10th**

Queer Crafting Affinity Group  
GSRC  
3-5pm

Trans\*/Non-Binary Affinity Group  
GSRC  
5:30-7pm

### **Monday, February 13th**

Safe Zone Training  
Register on GSRC website for Location  
1-4pm

### **Wednesday, February 15th**

Safe Zone Training 201  
Register via email to [gsrc@unco.edu](mailto:gsrc@unco.edu) for  
Location  
12-1pm

### **Thursday, February 16th**

Straight Facts About Queer Life Training  
Register on GSRC website for Location  
6-9pm

### **Friday, February 17th**

LGBTQ+ Christian Affinity Group  
GSRC  
4-5pm

### **Thursday, February 20th**

Queer People of Color (QPOC) Affinity  
Group  
North Hall Lounge #179  
2-4pm

### **Wednesday, February 22nd**

Asexuality Affinity Group  
GSRC  
6-7pm

### **Friday, February 24th**

Queer Crafting Affinity Group  
GSRC  
3-5pm

For more information or questions about these events please contact the Gender & Sexuality Resource Center at 970-351-2906. Any person requesting disability accommodations for these events please contact 970-351-2289 at least 3 business days in advance.

# { VDAY }

While 14th of February is primarily known as Valentine's Day it is also V-DAY, a global activist movement to end violence against women and girls. V-Day's mission is simple in that it demands that violence against women and girls must end. V-Day started in 1998 when Eve Ensler, the writer of The Vagina Monologues, and a group of women established in response to women wanting to share their stories of survival with Eve Ensler after every performance of The Vagina Monologues. Now the V-Day movement has grown substantially and now includes One Billion Rising and the City of Joy. For more information on V-Day please visit: <http://www.vday.org/>



## ..VDAY Events..

### Vagina Pops!

Vagina Pops will be sold for \$1 (money raised will be donated to the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program)

Wednesday, Feb. 8, Ross Hall (11am - 1pm)

Thursday, Feb. 9, Ross Hall (11am - 1pm)

Friday, Feb. 10, Ross Hall (11am - 1pm)

Monday, Feb. 13, Ross Hall (10am - 2pm)

### Killing Us Softly 4

This newest edition of Jean Kilbourne's influential and award-winning Killing Us Softly series shows how the advertising industry continues to reinforce, and glamorize, a regressive and debased notion of femininity. Using a wide range of contemporary print and television ads, Kilbourne lays bare a misogynistic fantasy world of undernourished, oversexed, and objectified women, and examines these images against the

real-world backdrop of eating disorders, violence against women, and the political backlash against feminism. At once provocative and inspiring, Killing Us Softly 4 challenges people to question traditional gender norms and think critically about the fundamental relationship between representation and power. For more information about this documentary, please visit: <http://www.mediaed.org/killingussoftly4/>

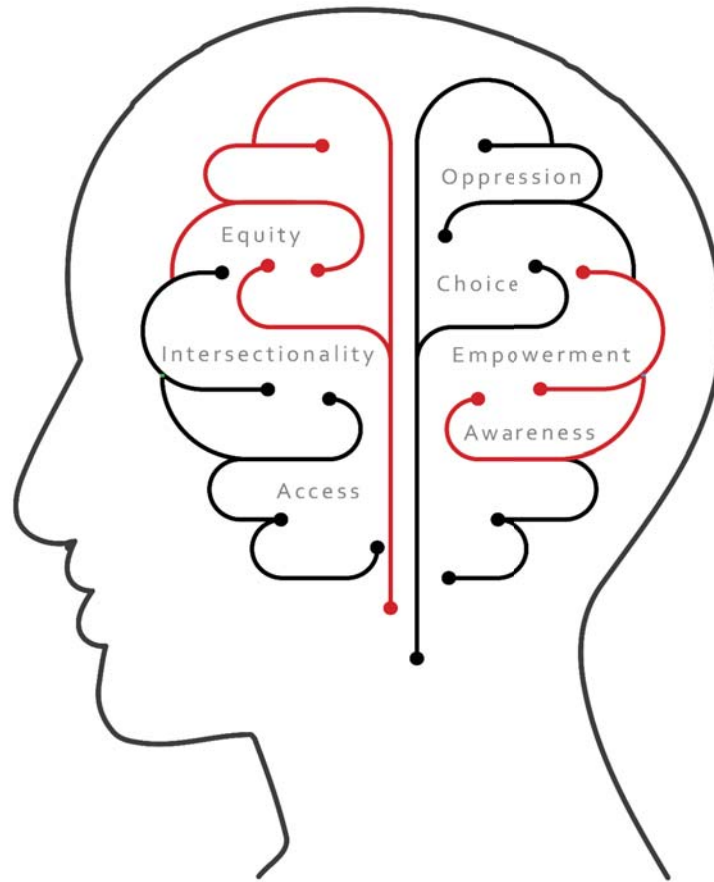
This documentary is 45 minutes in length and will be followed by a facilitated discussion regarding the themes of the film. This is a collaboration event between the Women's Resource Center and the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (ASAP).

Tuesday, Feb. 14, SWH (11am - 12:30pm)

Tuesday, Feb. 14, SWH (1:30pm - 3pm)



# { iNFB... Consciousness Raising Luncheons }



Throughout each month of the spring semester the Women's Resource Center will be hosting Consciousness Raising Luncheons. These luncheons are an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to engage in conversations about feminism. Each luncheon will host a different topic that will be based on current and prevelant issues that are occuring in our society. Lunch will be provided while food lasts so join us and activate your activism! For more information or questions about this event please contact the Women's Resource Center at 970-351-1492. Any person requesting disability accomodations for these events please contact 970-351-2289 at least 3 business days in advance.

**FEBRUARY 22**



**MARCH 30**



**APRIL 19**

**Free Food!!**  
(While food lasts)

**12 PM — 1:30 PM**

Women's Resource Center  
@ Scott-Willcoxon Hall

**Come Early!**



**Contact Us!**

970.351.1492

[www.unco.edu/womens-resource-center](http://www.unco.edu/womens-resource-center)

