



A Deep Dive *into*:

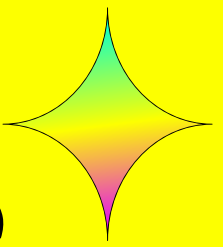
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# To be, or not to be (gendered).

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A zine exploring the phenomenon of  
*having a gender* as an interaction  
between self, language, and culture.

# How does someone become a gender?



*There are two competing ideas:*

## Essentialism:

The idea that one's gender is biologically predetermined.

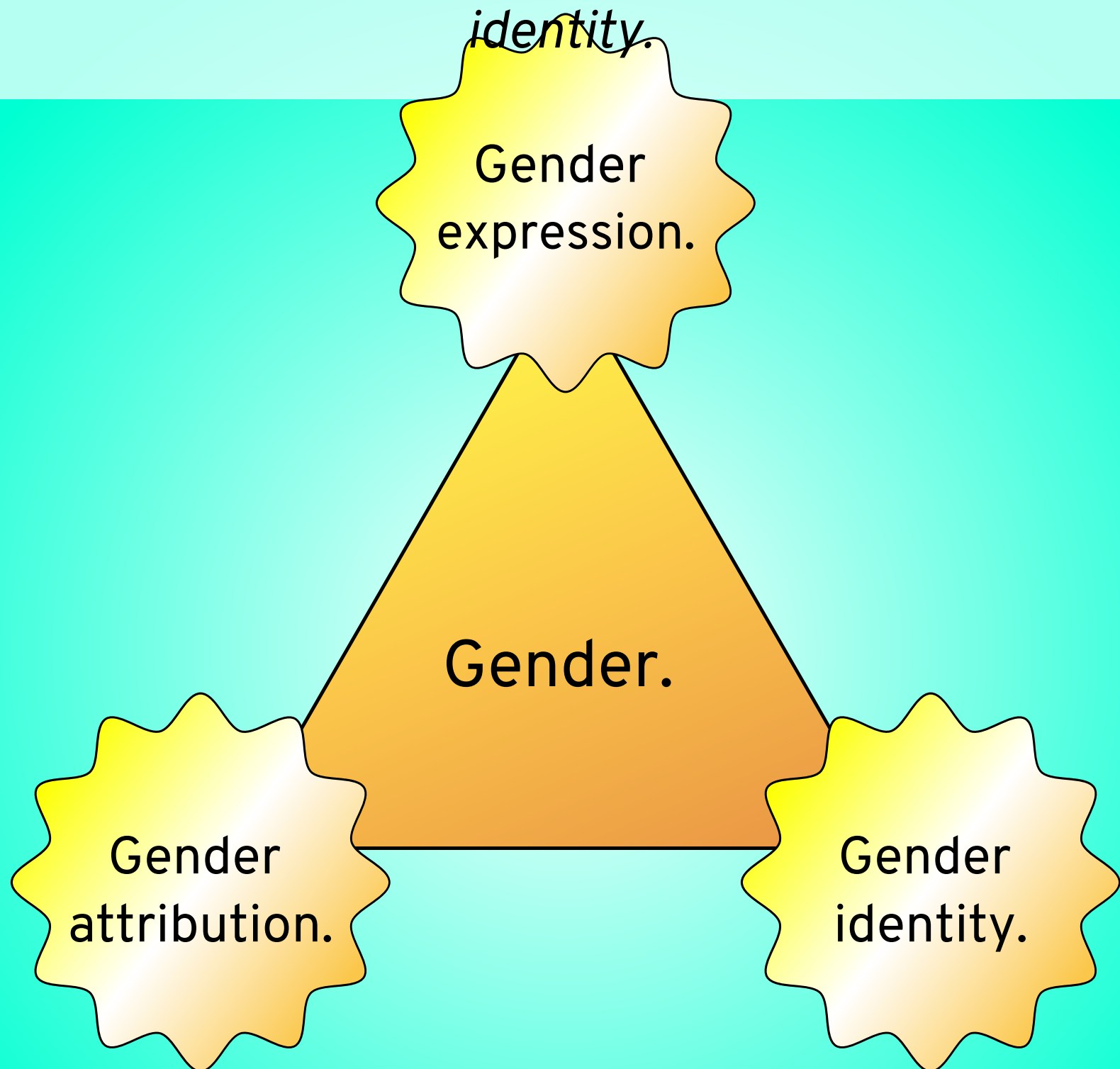


Social Constructivism: The idea one's gender is constructed throughout their life; determined in part by the individual and in part by the cultures they exist in.



# Gender expression, gender attribution, and gender identity.

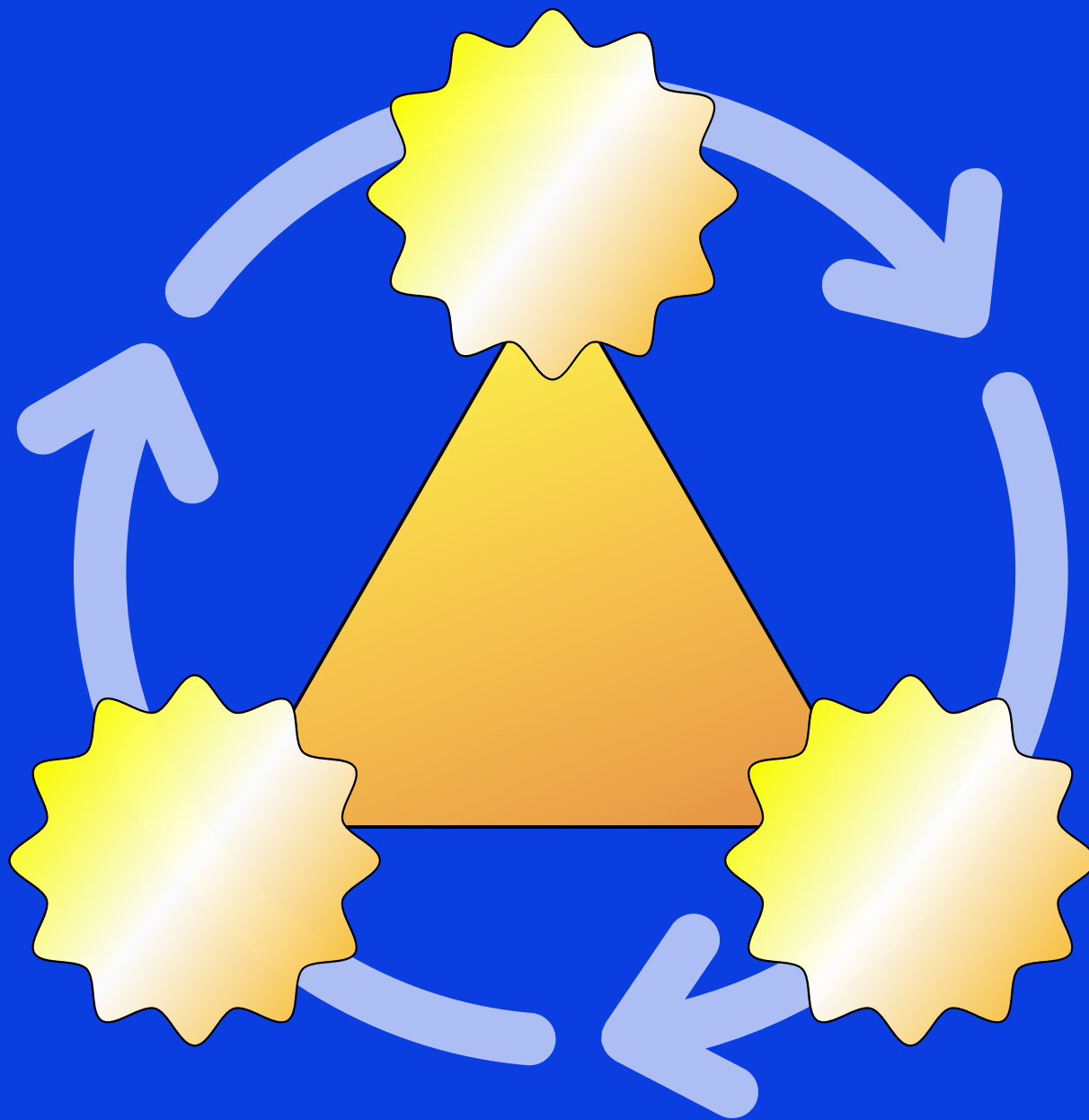
Gender is an interaction between three components:  
*gender expression, gender attribution, and gender  
identity.*



# Gender is fluid.



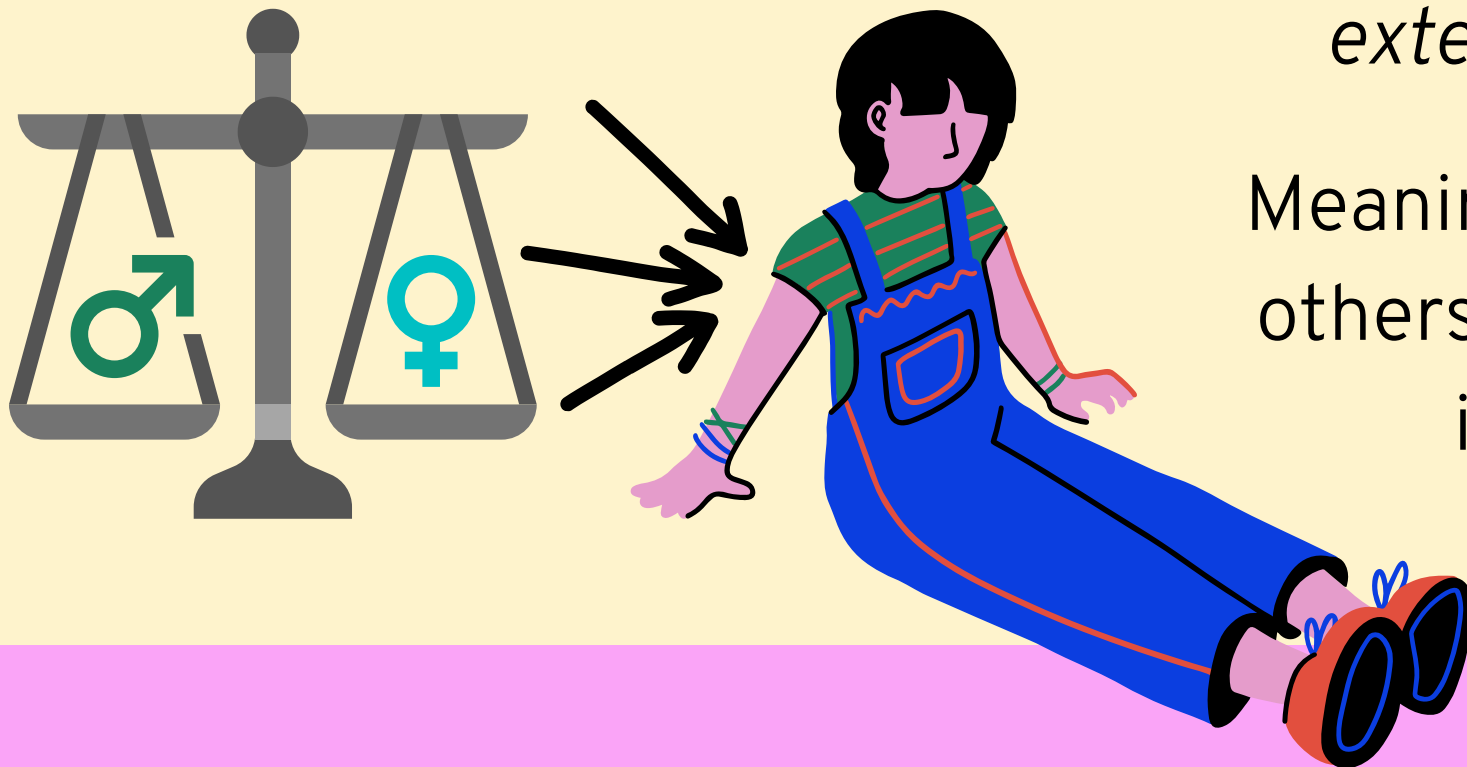
Gender expression, gender attribution, and gender identity tend to change over time.



As these *components of someone's gender* shift and evolve, their *gender* changes too.

# (Cis)gender attribution.

Gender attribution is the idea that gender is *externally imposed*.



Meaning that the way others read someone influences their gender.

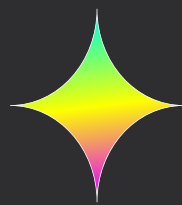
Gender attribution is affected by the culture you live in, how others perceive you, and so on.

- In our cisgenderist culture, binary genders are typically the *only options*.

- Therefore most folks are automatically attributed to either the *masculine* or *feminine* categories.

- This leaves no space for transgender and gender non-conforming identities to be *publically acknowledged*.

# We don't get accurate trans narratives.



As a result of cultural cisgenderism, trans narratives are often *inaccessible* to trans and cis people alike.

The stories that we do receive about trans people are often misrepresented, depressing, or violent.



*The Danish Girl (2015)*



*Orange is the New Black (2013)*

Without trans visibility, young trans people don't get to see their experiences represented, which can lead to feelings of *isolation* and *confusion*.



# Language and gender.

Many young trans people's identity epiphany occurs when they first access stories of trans experiences.



Vocabulary affects gender identity.



*You can't become what you don't know.*

This is what people mean when they say  
**trans visibility saves lives.**

Because stories of trans joy and success can be life-changing.

Because cis people benefit from a less rigid gender culture too.

**We need trans visibility.**

Because trans kids should know they're not alone in their experiences.

Because there are more than two genders for people to become.

## Citations.

Reitz, N. (2017). *The representation of trans women in film and television*. *Cinesthesia*, 7(1), 2.

Kennedy, Natacha. 2018. *Prisoners of Lexicon: Cultural Cisgenderism and Transgender Children*. In: *Normed Children: Effects of Gender and Sex Related Normativity on Childhood and Adolescence*. Bielefeld, Germany, pp. 297-312. [Book Section]