

Winter 11-2017

# Bi-Lights: Gender with a Purpose

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## Recommended Citation

Robinson, Jaynetha, "Bi-Lights: Gender with a Purpose" (2017). *Gender & Sexuality Studies Student Work Collection*. 11.  
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# Bi-lights

Gender with a Purpose



**Puzzle Activity**  
 Help Jay Find  
 His Gender

Terms, Themes, and Theories

**Gender**  
 4 Things You Should Know

**Featured Story:**  
 Gender, Thirty-one  
 Flavors and More  
 p.24



Figure 3. Adorable kids at the table foundation (Online image). Retrieved from <https://www.zaccc.com/adorable-kids-at-table>

**Hidden Identities**  
 Who, What,  
 Where, When

**Impact of Gender**

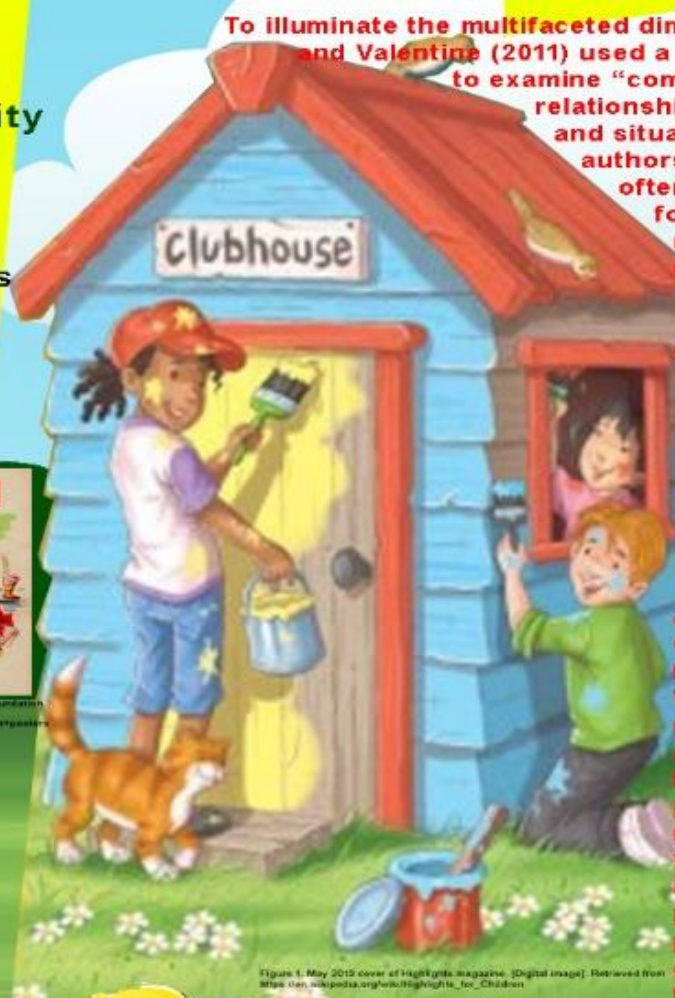
**Poetry Corner**  
 Let's Read!

[www.Bi-lights.com](http://www.Bi-lights.com)

\$4.95 U.S. \$4.95 CAN



October 2017



To illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of gender, Spade and Valentine (2011) used a “metaphorical kaleidoscope” to examine “complex patterns of identity and relationships for people across groups and situations” (pp. 3, 55). What the authors found was that gender is often defined by what it is not, for example, “it is not sex,” nor is it “an essential identity” (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 6). Gender, therefore, stands apart from biological determinism and its rigid and essentializing classification processes. These processes often center on binary opposition and the conceptualization of gender is no exception; for example, Lucal (1999) stated “gender is constructed around heterosexuality in the context of patriarchy” (p. 30). Gender discourse challenges the boundaries created by Western culture’s dominant narrative that there are “two and only two sexes, male and female, and two and only two genders, feminine and masculine (Bem, 1993; Lucal, 2008; Wharton, 2005, as cited in Spade & Valentine, 2011, p.3). From a sociological perspective, scholars view gender as a social construct that “derives [its] significance through human interaction” (Williams, 2006, p. 67; see also Lucal, 1999). In this view gender is seen as multidimensional and fluid as well as “negotiable and dynamic” (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 6).

Figure 1. May 2013 cover of highlights magazine. (Digital image). Retrieved from <http://www.zaccc.com/adorable-kids-at-table>



Figure 2. Undated cover of highlights Hello Magazine. (Digital image). Retrieved from [https://www.wikiwand.com/en/highlights\\_for\\_Children](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/highlights_for_Children)



# Gender This Month

**Featured Story:**  
Gender, 31 Flavors  
and More

We are all flavored by our uniquely "personal biography" (Collins, 1993, p. 40)

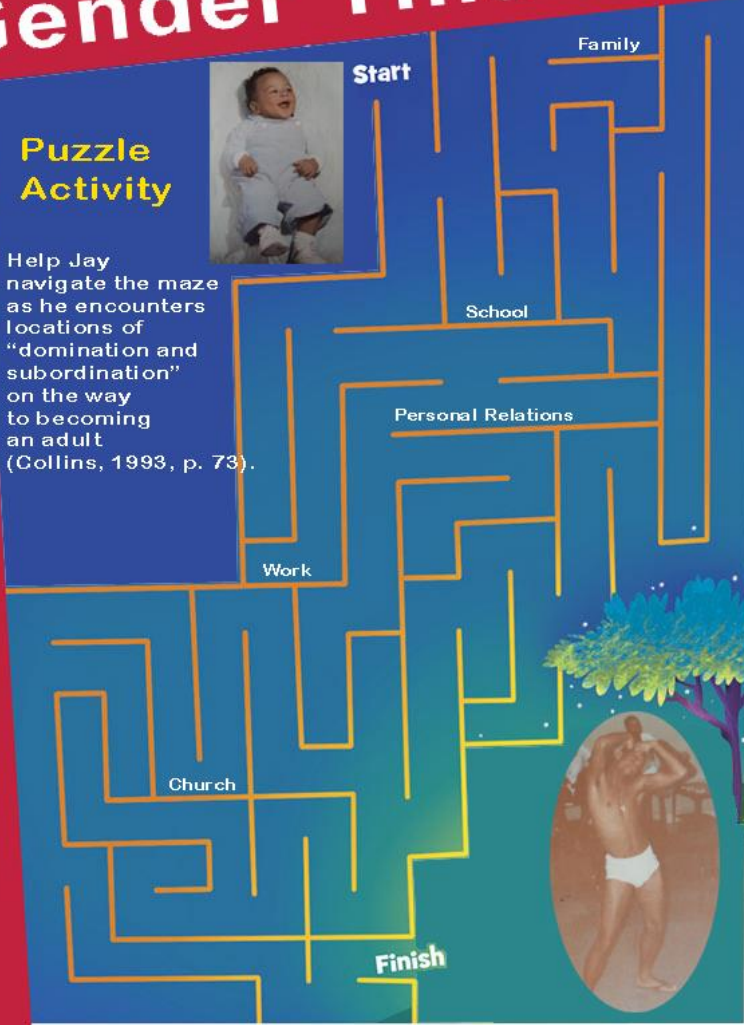
Farah, Jude, Lou, Toni, Joni, Mal, Dorian, Mika, Stevie, Robin, Jackie, Carey, Darby, Casey, Gabby, Morgan, Frankie, Aidy, Jamie, Eli, Harley, Madison, Bailey, Danny, Taylor, Cameron, Hayden, Emory, Stef, Jean, Sidney, Audrey, Frances, Laurie, Tyler, Phoenix, Mackenzie, Parker, Jules, River, Charlie, Harper, Quinn, Jay, Paris, Shay, Bobbie, Jordan, Ash, Jo, Kai, Val, Nic, Kami, Billie, Chris, Ali, Sam

Figure 3. Illustration of gender neutral names. (Online image). Retrieved from <http://rainbowwriting.com/index.php/resources/illustration-of-diversity-curriculum/>

## Puzzle Activity



Help Jay navigate the maze as he encounters locations of "domination and subordination" on the way to becoming an adult (Collins, 1993, p. 73).



## What Does Gender Mean to You? 4 Things You Should Know

1. Gender isn't who you are. It's something you do (West & Zimmerman, 1987).
2. "As individuals, we are complex combinations of multiple social identities" (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 56).
3. Gender is fluid. "It is complex, multifaceted, and ever-changing depending upon the social context, whom we are with, and where we are" (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 159).
4. The process of gender socialization, from a parental standpoint, may actively begin as early as pregnancy, while from a child's standpoint may begin "by the time they are conscious of the social relevance of gender, typically before age two" (Kane, 2006, p. 177)

## Impact of Gender



"Gender is briefly described as the meanings, practices, and relations of femininity and masculinity that people create as they go about their daily lives in different social settings" (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. xiii).

"gender is a matter of attribution and enactment. Some social scientists call gender a performance, while other term it a masquerade. The terms 'performance' and 'masquerade' emphasize that it is through the ways in which we present ourselves in our daily encounters with others that gender is created" (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 7).

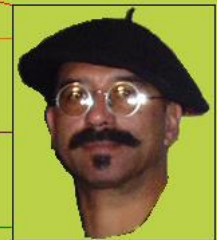
"the American gender system interacts with, and is modified by, a complex set of categories of difference and inequality" (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. 7).

Figure 4. Meteor hurtling towards earth. (Online image). Retrieved from <http://www.nasa.gov/content/images/content/62959main-meteor-071115>

## Hidden Identities: Draw a Line to Jay's Gender

- L  
Lesbian
- G  
Gay
- B  
Bisexual
- T  
Transgender
- Q  
Queer or Questioning

(Sometimes gender is not so obvious)



## Terms, Themes, and Theories

Gender-variant, cross-gender, and transgender are terms used to describe people "who had not claimed a binary [male/female] identity" (Rahilly, 2015, p. 354)

An overarching theme in gender discourse concerns the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity.

Hegemonic Masculinity - Hegemonic masculinity is the notion that men are superior to women

(Connell, 1987, 1995, as cited in Pyke & Johnson, 2003, p. 3). According to McGuffey and Rich (1999), "The concept implies that there is a predominant way of doing gender relations . . . that enforces the gender status quo: It elevates the social status of masculine over feminine qualities and privileges some masculine qualities over others" (p. 166).

Emphasized Femininity - Emphasized Femininity insists on compliance, nurturance, and empathy as the ideals of womanhood to which all women should subscribe (Spade & Valentine, 2011, p. xvii).

Giddan's (1984) structuration theory posited that gender is a social construct whereby "the recursive relationship between social structure and individuals" functions to create our gendered selves (as cited in Rieman, 2004, p. 11).

## Poetry Submission

### A boy/girl in the department store

If I with over to her/him  
and kissed her/him gently,  
oh so very gently,  
They would slap the cowboy shit  
right out of me.  
I know, they're one of those types.

Jay Robins on

