

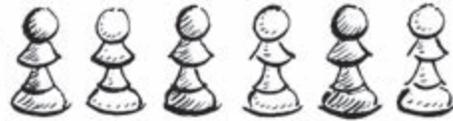
GENDER PRONOUNS: AN INTRODUCTION

BY EM DEMARCO

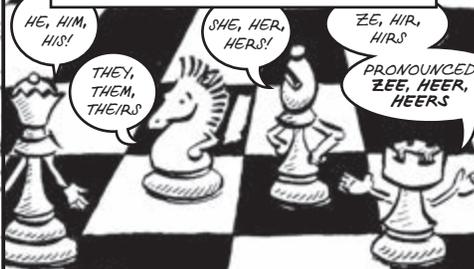
CAVAUGHUGH QUICK, 24, IS A PROGRAM MANAGER AT DREAMS OF HOPE, A QUEER YOUTH ARTS ORGANIZATION. QUICK TEACHES WORKSHOPS ON GENDER PRONOUNS.



'TRADITIONAL' MALE AND FEMALE GENDER IDENTITIES ARE SET UP AS OPPOSITES ...



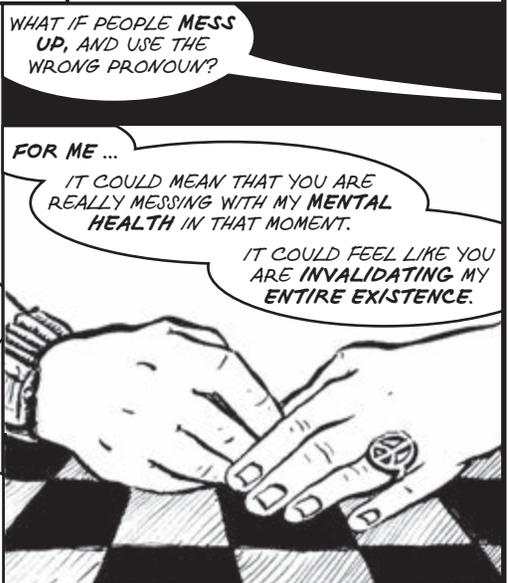
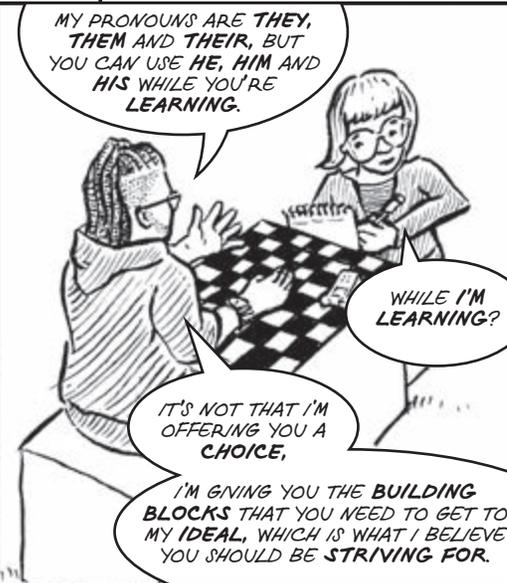
BUT SOME PEOPLE IDENTIFY AS NON-BINARY, GENDERQUEER, OR AGENDER.*



THE PEOPLE THAT HOLD THOSE GENDER IDENTITIES HAVE PRONOUNS THAT RESONATE WITH THEM.

*GOOGLE GENDER IDENTITY, FOLKS!

WAIT, I CAN'T ASSUME YOU ARE A SHE OR HE, BASED ON WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE OR HOW YOUR VOICE SOUNDS?



"IT TOOK ME 25 YEARS TO UNDERSTAND WHO I WAS, AND BE OK WITH IT, AND THEN PREPARE MYSELF TO SHARE THAT PERSON WITH THE WORLD ...

"... AND THEN ASK THE WORLD TO ALSO UNDERSTAND, AND TO BE OK WITH IT."



A FEW FINAL TIPS:

ASK EVERY-ONE FOR THEIR PRONOUNS.

CREATE A QUESTION THAT'S COMFORTABLE FOR YOU.

AND REMEMBER, MISTAKES WILL HAPPEN.

OTHERWISE, IT WILL SEEM LIKE YOU'RE ONLY ASKING BECAUSE YOU THINK THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THEM.

BUT AVOID ASKING INVASIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR APPEARANCE, VOICE OR MANNERISMS.

APOLOGIZE, USE THE CORRECT PRONOUN AND MOVE ON.

IT FEELS WEIRD TO ASK SOMEONE WHAT THEIR PRONOUNS ARE, BUT THERE WAS A POINT IN TIME WHEN IT FELT WEIRD TO ASK A WOMAN WHAT HER NAME WAS ...

SO IT'S FINE THAT IT FEELS WEIRD, BUT THAT'S NOT A REASON NOT TO DO IT, BECAUSE IT'S JUST PART OF CHANGING, LIVING BREATHING SOCIAL CONTRACTS WITH ONE ANOTHER!