

What Is Your Gender Aptitude?

adapted from Kate Bornstein's *My Gender Workbook*

How many genders do you really think there are?

- A. Two.
- B. Well, there are two sexes. Is that what you mean?
- C. I'm going to guess there are lots of genders and two sexes.
- D. When do you want me to stop counting?

Which of the following most accurately describes you?

- A. I'm a real man.
- B. I'm a real woman.
- C. I'm not a real man or a real woman, but I'd like to be.
- D. None of the above. I'm something else entirely.

Has someone else ever accused you of being not really a man, or not really a woman?

- A. No.
- B. Yes.
- C. No, but I've felt that myself.
- D. Yes, and I've had to agree with them.

Do you feel it's possible for someone to change hir gender?

- A. No. And what does "hir" mean, Flake-o?
- B. I think people can try, but no. Not really, no.
- C. Yes, with proper supervision, surgery, and hormones. I think so.
- D. How many times?

If you met someone who you think is one gender, but you find out they used to be another gender, you think to yourself

- A. Is this some costume party?
- B. The poor, brave dear!
- C. Wow, and I didn't even know!
- D. Yeah, yeah. But can you do a good Elvis?

If you see someone on the street whose gender is unclear to you, do you

- A. Dismiss that person as a freak?
- B. Try to figure out if it's a man or a woman?
- C. Mentally give them a makeover so they can pass better as one or the other?
- D. Notice they're staring at you, trying to figure out what you are?

What do you believe the essential sign of gender to be?

- A. The presence or absence of a penis.
- B. A combination of genitalia, secondary sex characteristics, hormones, and chromosomes.
- C. It's an energy thing. People have male or female energy.
- D. Whatever.

Have you ever questioned the nature of gender itself?

- A. No, it's not polite to question Mother Nature.
- B. I question the nature of my own gender, but gender itself? No.
- C. I question gender, but I get the spooky feeling I'm not supposed to do that.
- D. The nature of gender? Isn't that an oxymoron?

Is the male/female dichotomy something natural?

- A. Well, duh. Of course.
- B. It's probably a combination of nature and nurture.
- C. Probably, but there are a lot of exceptions walking around!
- D. There's a male/female dichotomy? On what planet?

Have you ever worn the clothes of the opposite sex?

- A. Hey, give me a break. No way!
- B. Yes, but when I wear them, they're for the right sex.
- C. What sex in the world would be opposite of me?
- D. Several of the above.

When you go into a department store to buy yourself clothing do you shop mostly in a department labeled for your assigned gender?

- A. Well, duh! Where else?
- B. No, because sometimes the other departments have stuff that fits me better.
- C. Yes, because it's very important to me to do that.
- D. I will shop in any department for anything that's fabulous.

When the store clerk asks, "How can I help you, sir," you --

- A. Smile.
- B. Wince.
- C. Curse.
- D. Curtsy.

When the store clerk looks up at you inquiringly and says, "Yes, ma'am?" you

- A. Wish you'd grown that mustache after all.
- B. Smile.
- C. Purr.
- D. Brightly exclaim, "Gee I'm sorry . . . would you like to try for Door Number Three?"

Have you ever been discriminated against, harassed, or attacked because of your gender presentation?

- A. No.
- B. No, I've been careful.
- C. Yes, and it happens to women every hour of the day.
- D. Yes.

When was the last time you were aware of something about your gender that was holding you back in the world?

- A. I can't recall a time like that.
- B. Do you want that in minutes or seconds?
- C. Do you mean the times I did something about it, or the times it overwhelmed me?
- D. It was just before I changed my gender the last time.

Give yourself 5 points for each A answer, 3 points for every B, 1 point for a C, and no points for any D answers.

If you haven't guessed it by now, when it comes to your Gender Aptitude, or level of gender conformity smaller is better. But don't fret, please. It's just an aptitude, and like any other part of human potential, with a little or a lot of work, you can always improve. Let's see what the numbers translate into. Finally, remember that even with serious issues, it is okay to have some fun.

0-18: "GENDER SUPERSTAR": Whoa! This stuff must seem like kid's play for you. Either that or water in the desert, huh?

19-29: "GENDER OUTLAW": You've been working not only on your own gender, but the subject of gender itself for quite some time, huh? I'm willing to bet things are still a bit scary and a bit serious for you in your life.

30-52: "GENDER NOVICE": You're not always taken for "normal," are you? In fact, you probably get an infrequent but regular bout of the gender willies from time to time, don't you? Fret not. You've got a very rewarding journey ahead of you. All it's going take is some practice.

53-69: "WELL GENDERED": Hiya, Mister Man! Hello, Ms. Lady!

70-75: "YOU'RE CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK!": I've always wanted to meet you! Can I have your autograph, please? Ah, Captain, you finally get to truly go where no man has gone before.