

Neither Male nor Female | The Neutral Gender Has Arrived 77

By [Hope Alexander](#)

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Are you male or female? You no longer have to be either, at least in New South Wales Australia, where local government has taken a great leap forward in allowing the option of no gender to be assigned on birth certificates. This allows people born without clear gender, those who ally themselves with neither the masculine or feminine to live as they wish to, neutrally.

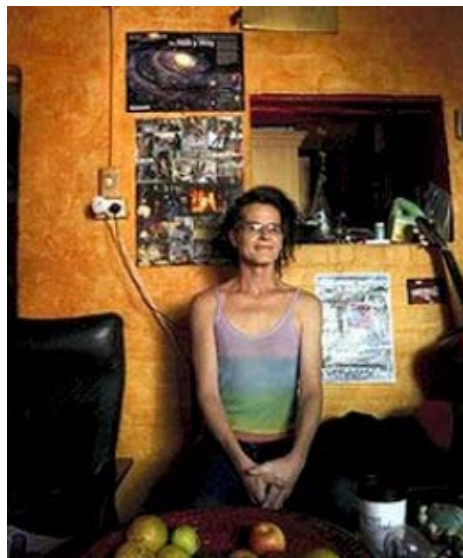
From [source](#): *This Mardi Gras, Norrie received a gift that no other androgynous person in NSW has had before.*

The night before the parade, the postman brought a certificate from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages that contained neither the dreaded "M" nor its equally despised cousin, "F".

Instead, it said "sex not specified", making the 48-year-old Sydneysider, who identifies as neuter and uses only a first name, the first in the state to be neither man nor woman in the eyes of the NSW government.

We often ignore the issue of androgyny. Perhaps because the vast majority of the population do identify with one gender or the other, even if it is not the gender they were born. Perhaps it is because our brains like to see the world in terms of dichotomies, light / dark, male / female. We ignore the grey areas in between because they don't appeal to our brains, but that does not mean that there aren't people who live in the neutral zone, between gender.

As Norrie points out, it may not just be androgynous people who wish to apply for gender neutral status:

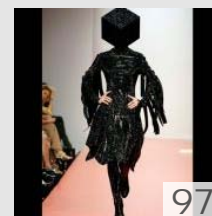


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"It's not a detail I think should be part of my identity," neither he nor she said. (Norrie prefers "zie".)

"I think there are a lot of people who would like to have this kind of certificate and not just people who are physically different. Many women would like to have them because gender can so often lead to discrimination."

Imagine that, a world in which it didn't actually matter whether or not one was male or female. A world not almost entirely centered around the gender dichotomies that currently drive large sectors of the economy.

It seems unlikely that becoming gender neutral is a trend that will catch on any time soon. There is too much tied up in people's self image when it comes to gender. Femininity and masculinity are both prized qualities in our culture. To give them up to lead a life that is not dependent on the tried and true formula of partnering up and producing progeny is perhaps too revolutionary a shift for our species to survive.

We don't all need to be genderless, but we do need to recognize those who are. People like Norrie, who live in the grey area between male and female, being physically and mentally androgynous deserved to be recognized as a viable 'third option', whether that feels comfortable to our primal brains or not.

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[Stepeno](#) 2 months ago

I find it very difficult to grasp the thought of a "Gender Neutral" person. It is a very controversial subject that is not likely to be taken well by the general public. Throw it in the mix with Gay Marriage and racial issues that already plague us today... Great for discussions, but there really doesn't seem to be a clear answer because there will always be too much disagreement from those for and against the topics.



[Ralph Deeds](#) 2 months ago

A jackass in the Michigan state legislature recently introduced a bill which would prohibit transsexuals from having the right to change the sex listed on their drivers' licenses and other official state records.

Lynn 2 months ago

This is great,I can't wait to shed my tired old gender identity.

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