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The Complexities Behind Identity

The LGBTQIA\* community are individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex and Asexual. The complexities existing within this community highlights some of the underlining issues behind gender expression; meaning how they manifest their masculinity or femininity, and how that influences and impacts education and advocacy. It is important to recognize the intersectionalities amongst LGBTQIA\* identities because it provides access to understanding beyond our paradigms, the other side of virtues in such community and the dynamics of family.

It is important to recognize the intersectionalities amongst LGBTQIA\* identities because it provides access to understanding beyond our paradigms also known as the safety zone theory - the idea that people are socialized into a certain way of thinking. We rarely move beyond our “safety zone.” We categorize and label things in our world. This certainty makes us feel “safe.” Consequently, there are false set thoughts regarding those with varying gender expressions. Walls and Costello (2011) discuss how a lot of people think they have not met a transgender [person] before and even question such terminology, saying ‘What is transgender? Such ambiguousness highlights the comfort zone of a bounded rationality, “the idea that decision-making, rationality of individuals is limited by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make a decision,” behind the fact if they have not realized they have met someone who identifies as LGBTQIA\*, then it is not necessary to go further into the subject or approach such community. Furthermore, Walls and Costello (2011) discuss on how you do not have to know everything, people are afraid of not understanding completely. Having that said, bounded rationality comes to be applicable in the sense of fear of rejection, or offending someone.

According to the reading, "The Social Construction of Sexuality," gender classification is further discussed and states, "this way of categorizing people obscured the hitherto accepted fact that many people do not have sexual relations exclusively with persons of one or the other sex" (67). “Categorization” portrays the various imaginary labels that are given to individuals. This reinforces the safety zone theory in the aspect of gaining control through labeling and postponing further exploration. This safety scope of knowledge overshadows other underlining issues related to history, sex analytics, and privilege. Bounded rationality is congruent to safety zone theory which brings focus to, the use of pronouns. According to Walls and Costello (2011), individuals have a difficult time with adapting towards, especially when people are referring to them on an individual basis. Walls and Costello (2011) specifically mention that pronouns are not a trivial thing, they are important to consider and [at least] be aware of. The use of the term, “trivial” significantly adds to the degree of the bounded rationality existing behind such “simplistic” act. In contrast to when pronouns are also used for, consists of the value society gives it. For instance, we highly value and reference pronouns when publishing literature or scholarly journals because it is a way to present less detection of bias and judgment. In both types of scenarios similar principles are applicable and to an extent, in relation to the LGBTQIA\* community, certain qualities can come to leak through and surpass such trivialness.

It is important to recognize the intersectionalities amongst LGBTQIA\* identities because it permits us to understand the other side of virtues in such community. There is an unseen negative side to those identifying as LGBTQIA\* that comes from our society’s preconceived notions. Individuals who have gender reassignment surgery often don’t have the choice recognized. In the reading, "Mutilating Gender," surgical procedure outcomes are discussed. It takes the scenario of how an individual identifying as LGBTQIA\* experiences surgery. The University of Connecticut Health Center states some of the factors behind the aftermath of surgery; described as the possession of a distinctive chest, hormone levels, no name change necessity and furthermore, an approval towards pronouns. Furthermore, highlighted is the preference existing behind a family tittle of which comes to display a certain gender role preference. The chest, hormones and even name change provide insight into the outcomes of surgery and reflects the extent of gender expression alterations as well. However, that leaves pronouns up to discussion and when it’s mentioned that a certain family tittle reflecting a certain gender role preference is favored, then it comes to shed light upon the different ways of embracing such changes. It is stated, "In order to maintain the medical interventions I am seeking, I need to prove my membership in the category, 'transsexual.'" Consequently, beyond accessibility comes the understanding of the degree of importance these surgeries may have to some individuals who identify as LGBTQIA\*. Therefore, the factor of belonging and approval from others, adds to this and, comes to be of high priority.

Society’s preconceived notions opens discussion on inclusion. Diversity, for *some* people, may come to represent an overall significant virtue however; such virtue becomes a vice as soon as it threatens what the dominant discourse considers acceptable. Beyond ethnicity, race, age, ability or disability, diversity within the members of the LGBTQIA\* community are seen differently. According to the reading, “Cisgender Privilege: On the Privileges of Performing Normative Gender," it is stated that "Privilege is the stability society affords us when we do not rock the boat" (455). Walls and Costello (2011) compare knowledge and allude to the idea of the LGBTQIA\* as unique distinctive unicorns. They argue that despite that some of us have met a transgender individual, there is still a lot of lack of understanding behind complexities. The fact that unicorns, mythological creatures, were compared to the ambiguousness that some people have about the LGBTQIA\* community also comes to incorporate a great analogy due to diversity within that community existing but not being acknowledged in a virtue constructive manner. It is segue into the melting point ideology as well which provides an opportunity for anyone who wants to melt, and assimilate to do so. However, in order to assimilate you would need to want to and society would want to let you. An example of such assimilation attempt comes to include the institution of marriage and having that said Walls and Costello (2011) mention that the segregation in relevance to the LGBTQIA\* community comes to lead to and reflect upon issues of marriage rights throughout states currently.

It is important to recognize the intersectionalities amongst LGBTQIA\* identities because it provides access to understanding dynamics of family also known as the concept of *familia* – the fact that families go beyond that of blood connection. This concept offers a potential solution to the false ideas set towards the LGBTQIA\* community. The article, "Social Support Received by LGB People in Poland: Presentation of a New Scale" comes to communicate the different family systems existing and sheds light upon the distinctiveness of families. It is mentioned that in addition to issues behind normal development, children with parents that identify as LGBTQIA\* come to face a greater complexity of communicating to others, such as peers, about their family constellation and how it comes to be distinctly different from common family roles that you would see in traditional nuclear families. Children of queer parents may be marginalized or shamed because of their parent’s identity. The concept of *familia* comes to cover the complexities within families. For instance, the fact that having a different family constellation is described, really only addresses half of the situation due to the other half going beyond appearance and consisting of love, care and nurture. The article, “Beyond the Nuclear Family Model” states that when many individuals think of the impact to families, images of isolation are brought up but to break this stereotype, many individuals such as transgender people have families and people they can relate to. The fact that family is followed up by the incorporation of the term, “people” really comes to draw the bigger picture of families surpassing the common nuclear family frame and coming to include friends for instance. This comes to reflect the mezzo and macro support network and constellation to an extent.

Dialog and communication are key components to progress. Walls and Costello (2011) discuss how discourse and the inability to talk add less awareness, and stress that it is not a debate. Therefore, if we come to incorporate this into family dynamics, implying that it is not a debate then it comes to communicate that there is a spectrum of opinions and views but despite that, every piece of the family comes to contribute awareness and hopefully further support. Interestingly, Walls and Costello (2011) do not fully touch on the subject of individuals who have a formed family but decide to come out at a later age. However, it is certainly briefly mentioned of which comes to further highlight that it could be a delicate subject amongst various family members and therefore, a delicate subject in everyone’s lives individually and in conjunction.

Recognizing that what you think or believe is true might simply be what who’ve been taught or seen to think. The unexamined ideas people hold about the LGBTQIA\* community are harmful and hurtful in concrete ways. Creating a more inclusive notion of family will help shape and transform our society into a more accepting community. By recognizing the importance of the LGBTQIA\* identities, we will become more effective advocates, allies and citizens in this country set on equality for all.

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