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Expansive Gender Pedagogy in the Undergraduate Classroom: The Gender and Sexuality Galaxy

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ROLL ME A RAINBOW. 1974 BY PAT STEIR. GIFT OF STANELY M. FREEHLING. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO.

Introduction and Context

In 2023, Professor Anne Marie Butler (she/they) and three students at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Annitta (she/they), Mazey (she/her), and Nico (they/he) developed The Gender and Sexuality Galaxy worksheet (Appendix) to create an inclusive and productive tool for students learning about gender, sexuality, and attraction. Many Gen Z students come to the college classroom with some prior knowledge about gender, sex, and sexuality. However, most need guidance in learning about the intricacies and possibilities of these identifications. The worksheet helps students explore attraction, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexual identity by allowing them to learn about how each of these categories is different and where they might intersect. This article details the research, development, trial study, and revisions to the worksheet, contextualizes it as a pedagogical tool, and discusses how others might use this resource in their classrooms. We argue that the development of this worksheet, a collaborative, student-centered project, and the resulting article, co-written by Butler and Mazey, both enact transformative pedagogy in their processes, and parallel the self-actualization the worksheet encourages through intersectional learning about expansive ideas of gender, sexuality, and attraction.

Kalamazoo College is an undergraduate only, predominantly white, liberal arts college with approximately 1400 students, situated in southwest Michigan, on the stolen lands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi. The College operates on the trimester schedule and one section of WGS 101: Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality is offered every term. As the only faculty member with a (half) line in the WGS program, Butler teaches this class two out of three terms. In the spirit of feminist pedagogy, commitments to self-reflection and collaboration are critical to the class.

In this article, we follow Diane Fujino et al. and bell hooks in conceptualizing transformative pedagogy as learning that takes place in a collaborative, socially invested, and socially engaged learning community. Fujino et al.'s discussion of the Transformative Pedagogy Project (TTP, 2015-present) at University of California, Santa Barbara guides how we understand our project as breaking down student/professor hierarchies and valuing lived experience. In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks describes how in her early, segregated schooling, she learned from her Black teachers that her experiences were "central and significant" (37). In the creation of this worksheet, student lived realities of cultural identity, gender, sexuality, and attraction are valued in the overall design, the conceptualization of the identity groupings, and the included terms and their definitions. In addition to scholarly articles, the research group was guided by online resources and by the group members' own ideas about how they would want to interact with such a worksheet, based on their various identities. Student experience is also valued in the worksheet itself, where students think about how they experience their own identities to understand more about how gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual identity, and attraction relate to one another.

"The Genderbread Person" and "The Gender Unicorn" worksheets have helped many people, including students at Kalamazoo College in WGS 101, use self-reflection to identify with and understand the concepts of gender and sex identity, gender expression, and attraction ("Genderbread," Pan and Moore). In WGS 101, The Gender Unicorn worksheet activity involves a follow-up discussion which, while acknowledging the usefulness of the worksheet, also critiques its insistence on the use of spectrums within apparent binaries, lack of diversity in sex options, and its inability to fully capture a range of diverse genders, attractions, and identifications.

After about five years of wishing that there were a more updated and inclusive model for this activity, Butler put out a call for students to join an independent study group that would design a gender and sexuality worksheet: Annitta, Mazey, and Nico, all of whom previously took courses with Butler, responded. Butler's prior efforts at teaching WGS 101, including using existing worksheets, gave her time to reflect on classroom needs, and the cognizance that seeing patterns in student needs year after year is the most important experience those wishing to develop pedagogical tools could have. Certainly, Butler's teaching experiences were not always successful, but learning from many different classes and students has enabled her to develop better awareness of student learning needs, a process that is always in progress. Introspective students with good critical thinking skills are well positioned to discuss how various learning materials impact them, and Annitta, Mazey, and Nico were crucial to the development of the project. Their perspectives enabled the group to collaborate while working with difference to ensure that the model would be as inclusive as possible. Butler identifies as a white, queer, cisgender woman. Annitta identifies as both Chicana and Indian, and as an intersex and genderqueer person. Mazey identifies as a white, heterosexual, cisgender woman. Nico identifies as white, queer, and transmasculine. In this group we not only developed a resource that we feel will benefit many people, but we also challenged ourselves to understand our own learning related to our gender, sexual, and attraction identities, and to recognize our investments in this learning tool as transformative pedagogy.

Our goal in redesigning The Genderbread Person and The Gender Unicorn worksheets was to create a model that works for many different types of people who are at different places in their understanding of gender and sexuality. Our target demographic for this model is young adults and older, with a particular focus on how the model might be used in an advanced high school or college classroom. We developed The Gender and Sexuality Galaxy by the end of the fall term, and the activity was trialed with varied students, faculty, and staff in an IRB approved study at the beginning of the winter term. Mazey stayed on in a second term of independent study to work with Butler on the trial, model adjustments, and write up of this project. This worksheet's development was a collaborative learning, reflection, and creation experience involving students and professor in equal measure. For

Butler, this research, development, and writing became a way to engage more fully with her own and her students' capacities for transformative living.

Research and Trial Model Development

Throughout our development process, we read many sources that talked about gender, sexuality, and related topics to ensure that our model was rooted in research that aligned with how we wanted to think expansively about these issues. We had many discussions about what we wanted people to learn from this activity, and how the model helps enable that learning in two ways: it helps students learn about sex, gender, sexuality, and attraction for better understanding of these concepts and their relationships, but it also helps them learn about themselves beyond the classroom, aligning with hooks' discussion of self-actualization: this "knowledge offered [to] students [will] empower them to be better scholars, to live more fully in the world beyond academe" (6). Self-actualization can be seen as a part of transformative pedagogy, where social experiences are valued as learning, and historicized through lived reality (Fujino et al.).

We began our research by looking at the two most popular existing models of this activity. The Genderbread Person was popularized by Sam Killermann beginning in 2011 but previously existed in multiple unattributable forms ("Breaking"). The Gender Unicorn, another popular model, was designed by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore for Trans Student Educational Resources and is dated 2015. We found additional existing models that had similarities to these two, but that replicated some of the unhelpful structures therein. We began our discussions around existing models by articulating what we felt was helpful or problematic about the designs.

All the students working on the project – Annitta, Mazey, and Nico – had some previous experiences with either The Genderbread Person or The Gender Unicorn. Both Mazey and Nico used The Gender Unicorn in WGS 101 with Butler, and Annitta had seen The Genderbread Person used in various student organizations on campus. While our group had varying levels of familiarity with the terms and concepts we wanted to include in our new model, we worked together to read scholarly articles and had open discussions that allowed everyone to learn and grow together. Like Fujino et al.'s approach, we "blend[ed] scholarly reading and theories with personal experience, intuitive knowledge, and social critique" (73). Our collaborative and dynamic development valued student identity processes, feelings about terms and labels, and personal evaluation of how scholarly sources approached the topics of these lived experiences.

What we liked about existing models was that many attempted to let the participant indicate the degree to which they identified with a particular term. We wanted to keep the idea that participants could shade in each section, not fill in boxes or bubbles. However, we found that in visualizing degrees, many models employed a spectrum where gender or sex options are based on the idea of points along a single continuum. Although the idea of gender as a spectrum has become popular within the past decades, and is a tool for unthinking static gender, a spectrum that is a line, as seen in many existing models, reinforces binaries when the points at each end are opposed, and is problematic when in between points are considered "in the middle" or some mix of the two binary points, thus reinforcing the idea that the two "opposites" are the norm.

Based on our personal experiences, we knew that our model could be more complex in the options and categories we included. As a WGS professor and WGS students, we have spent many classes discussing binaries and the harm they cause to all, particularly those that fall further outside of their prescribed norms. We remarked that many existing models included only man, woman, or other; feminine, masculine, or other; or some variation of these. Judith Lorber describes how "multiple categories disturb the neat polarity of familiar opposites that assume…one normal and one deviant identity, one hegemonic status and one 'other'" (145). Although existing worksheets were well-intentioned in their efforts to move beyond socially constructed, heteronormative categories by including a third and sometimes fourth option, they ultimately fell flat. We additionally felt the use of the term "other," as seen on some worksheets, perpetuated harmful ideas that anything outside of listed categories was not the "norm."

The problems extended to the figural design featured by many extant models: some kind of cartoonish character. Nico remarked that a figure instructs students that gender, sex, and attraction are located somehow in the body: sex is in the genitals, gender in the brain, and so forth. Although the figures are tools for understanding that sex and gender are different, in part so that students can understand transgender as a concept, the use of a cartoon model invalidates the seriousness of trans people. A figural model where sex and gender are indicated as "located" in different places risks equating trans people with cartoons, silliness, and magic (i.e. a unicorn). We decided that a figural representation was inappropriate for our target audience and that a non-figural model would bypass problems with expressions and identities located on/in the body.

Such a character also makes these models feel as if they are for young children. It became clear that the youthfulness of these models made them feel less inclusive for older students with more lived experience. Nico felt that, while The Gender Unicorn was developed by Trans Student Educational Resources, its infantilizing nature and linear spectrum options ultimately make it an inaccurate and unhelpful worksheet for trans people who are young adults and older. The infantilization and dismissal of trans people is rampant in many state and cultural structures. Pfeil and Pfeil argue that infantilization, as a process that denies self-determination, is violently enacted upon trans people by the state in part through the regulation of healthcare including medications, surgeries, and mental health (Pfeil and Pfeil). These harms could not be more aptly illustrated than in the current year, 2025. It is more important now than ever that worksheets such as ours are

careful about the information or representations presented and their possible implications.

Early in the process, we each designed a mock-up and brought it back to show the others. Developing the ideas individually allowed us to be creative without influencing each other, and to then decide what parts of each mock-up we wanted to modify and use. Butler called her mock-up The Gender Galaxy because it featured stars with sections radiating from their centers. Wondering if someone else already had this idea, we searched for "gender galaxy" and discovered The Gender Galaxy by Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights ("Gender and Sexuality Galaxies"). This model aligned with many of the goals for our own model. It deprioritized hierarchies, binaries, and linear spectrums while visualizing varied relationships of gender and sexual identities. However, it also separated sexuality and gender into two different galaxies and is interactive through instructor-led prompts rather than self-led learning. We wanted our model to integrate gender and sexuality as related parts of identities. Further, the Action Canada model presents only two attraction models: sexual and romantic. We differentiated our model significantly from that of Action Canada by incorporating gender, sexuality, attraction, and sex into one galaxy, by prompting students to interact with the worksheet by shading each identity to any degree, and by allowing students to self-identify in provided blank spaces.

The final version of the initial design was made with Canva. Drawing on the idea of the page as a galaxy, we developed spherical "planets." We spent significant time discussing what these planets would be called; the categories that students would explore and how they were named. The Gender Unicorn (Pan and Moore) and The Genderbread person ("Genderbread") both use the sections gender expression, gender identity, and some category indicating sex. In our discussion it became clear that while there are drawbacks to some of these categories, they contain language with which the general public and many students will have some familiarity. We therefore named the initial planets gender expression, gender identity, sex, attraction, and sexual identity.

The sexual identity planet occupied a large portion of our attention. Some models call this category "sexuality," "sexual attraction," or "sexual orientation." The Genderbread Person and The Gender Unicorn do not present a sexual identity category, instead opting for two attraction categories. We discussed that "orientation," as well as the association of certain attractions and acts with prescriptive terms, can be limiting (Zeigler 250). "Sexuality" is larger than either sexual attraction or the interaction of gender identity and sexual preference, making the term too broad to describe the focus of this planet. Lorber raises a series of helpful questions about categorizing sexuality: "conventional sexual categories are hard to document empirically. At what point does sexual desire become sexual preference? What sexual behavior identifies a 'pure' heterosexual or homosexual?" (148). On our model, separating sexual identity and sexual attraction allows students different ways of understanding how sexuality is experienced and identified with and

demonstrates that identification with a term does not necessarily precipitate attractions, nor vice versa. This conceptualization is in line with contemporary understandings of how non-binary people may identify as lesbian, for example. We reject transphobic and gender essentialist ideas that only women who have sexual attraction to only other women have exclusive rights to a lesbian identity. As Lorber contends, "we have to think not only about how these characteristics [of bodies, sexualities, genders, and racial-ethnic and class positions] intermingle in individuals and therefore in groups but what the extent of variation is *within these categories*" (146, emphasis in original). In this project, we are intent not only on diversity within groupings, but without as well: categorizations have uses, and they also have limitations. We decided on "sexual identity" instead of "orientation" or "sexuality," allowing participants to find affinity with labeled groups and identities while offering an unfixed way of understanding sexual identity categories and attractions.

Further, we wanted to separate attraction from its hegemonic alignment with sexuality. Lisa Diamond examines the relationship between sexual attraction and romantic attraction and how these two feelings do not always coincide within one partner (173). We recognized that our model needed to have space for people who experience dissimilarities between sexual attraction and sexual identity and thus placed sexual attraction on the attraction planet. This layout also encourages students to understand that attractions do not have to define identities: here, they do not need to identify as a particular sexual orientation to experience attraction. This inclusivity follows Antonsen et al.'s description of how asexual people may have non-overlapping romantic and sexual attractions (1627). Acknowledging that attraction and sexual identity are not necessarily aligned better recognizes asexual and aromantic people as well as illustrating the potential flexibility of both attraction and sexuality.

To tackle the issue of identification as a spectrum, a point, or a box, we developed the idea that people would indicate a degree of identification or affinity: on each planet we created slices like a pie chart. These slices allowed us to create more spaces and include a wider variety of identifications. Importantly, in the instructions we encourage people to shade in none, some, or all of the space in each section. Informed by Galupo et al.'s study on non-binary transgender people and gender identity, we thought about how gender can be a blend of identities, or at least flexible. We decided that our worksheet should encapsulate a fluid experience of gender and sexuality, so that identities might overlap and be multiple. We wanted to emphasize unlearning prior assumptions and ideas, especially ingrained binaries, by moving away from the "in between" of a linear spectrum model to a notion of "beyond" (Galupo et al. 172). Annitta had previously encountered The Autism Spectrum Wheel and brought this model to the group's attention. She explained that it was a way to move away from binary spectrums and instead visualize how certain traits of autism can be coinciding or not felt at all (Apricott Team). We decided to modify this base model, recognizing that pie slices were a more useful

way to display identities: the umbrella term for the category of identity could be placed in the middle of the planet with options radiating out from it, avoiding the binaries of a linear scale. Students could therefore indicate how much or how little they might identify with a term, addressing one of our foremost goals: inclusivity through dehierarchization and decentralization of normative terms.

When we conceptualized our terms and definitions, we were unconcerned with creating terms that would be useful in data analysis. Our goal with this activity was to explore, not to measure. Yet the problem of definition persisted on our terms list and in how we labeled the planets. Reworking the idea of the category of "other," an exclusionary grouping, we decided to leave blank spaces on each planet. Ho and Mussap discuss how people may want to indicate more than one gender expression or gender identity, such as transgender and woman (217). Leaving blank spaces allows students freedom to choose any identification they want to include. If they feel unrepresented by the extant terms on the planet but are not sure what else to put, they can refer to the terms list to see if there are any terms with which they find affinity. When students are allowed to develop their own ideas about how they identify, and can reject prescribed identifications, they can recognize that identities may be part of larger social constructs. Identities both oppress and enable. Self-identifying may help students to negotiate this dissonance.

We also wanted to include cultural genders such as two-spirit to recognize Indigenous peoples of North America who use that term, but we knew we needed to define the term carefully so that non-Indigenous people would understand its cultural importance and be wary of appropriating it. Nico reported hearing non-Indigenous people describe themselves as two-spirit, lacking the cultural awareness that they perpetuate settler-colonialism. We defined two-spirit as "a gender specific to some North American Indigenous communities that embodies aspects of masculinity and femininity" in recognition that two-spirit is not a universal term.

Our discussion on two-spirit led us to include "cultural gender" on the terms list both so that those with a cultural gender identity could be represented and could fill in any cultural gender in the blank space, and so that other students could learn the importance of cultural gender identities. For the definition of cultural gender, we stated "gender associated with one's cultural background, which may not be recognized by the state." The inclusion of two-spirit and cultural gender and their definitions that indicate their importance for marginalized communities demonstrates that normative ideas about gender, sexuality, and attraction, for example, are cultural products that correspond with hegemonic modes of understanding, and that, as Margaret Robinson summarizes, alternative ways of understanding these ideas can mitigate settler-colonial constructs (1675).

Blank spaces also give room for new terms or phrases to be added to the worksheet. Our word bank encompasses current inclusive language, but as Marilyn Roxie points out, language surrounding identities is constantly changing. Lorber, writing in 1994, understands androgyny as a mixture of unchanged masculinity and femininity, and therefore inadequate to fully express ambiguities of gender and gender expression. More recently, Roxie discusses the historical lineage of the word androgynous, which, while in current usage, has taken the place of other terms that are now thought to be derogatory or disrespectful. We included androgynous on our terms list and as an option on the gender expression planet because we understand it as offering a gender expression identification that includes masculinit*ies* and femininit*ies* that may be appropriated in any combination and to any end. The discussion about androgyny reminds us that as inclusive as this worksheet currently is, we do not know what new terms and concepts will be defined in the future, and we wanted to leave space for ever changing language. The instructions state "the terms list is non-exhaustive and does not represent every possible identification" in part to indicate this temporal fluidity.

Fluidity was crucial for the attraction planet, around which we made several important decisions based on our research and lived experience. Shape.com had a useful article that explained in simple terms sexual, physical, emotional, romantic, and aesthetic attractions (Chatel). We asked ourselves if an alternate attraction model could list types of attraction and ask the user to select a few ways that they want to think about their attraction(s). In this way, we strove to dehierarchize attraction. After debriefing the five categories we ultimately decided that these were what we wanted to include on the wheel. Our initial design had two concentric wheels that allowed students to choose expressions or identities that they were attracted to under these categories: the outer having the overarching types of attractions and the inner with two blank slices for students to fill in.

Allowing students to self-identify within different categories aligns with the questioning of dominant knowledges (Fujino et al.) in which students can reject labels being imposed upon them or feel that they experience X attraction so they must identify in Y way, and instead guides students to question what they know about themselves. We endeavored to balance this self-identification with guidance on terms and groupings that may help students articulate that for which they may not have language. Antonsen et al. discuss differences in romantic attraction for asexual and allosexual (non-asexual) people, making clear that the attraction wheel needed to have room for personalization in each category. For example, asexual people may or may not experience romantic attraction (1616).

We considered how the privileging of some types of attraction as related to gender and sexuality is a heteronormative construct. The emphasis on sexual attraction can be seen as related to the measuring of variant sexualities against normative heterosexualism (Galupo et al.). The more we understand asexuality and asexual theory the more we must recognize that romantic and sexual attraction may not be the two most important, or indeed even relevant, ways that people might want to think about themselves. Antonsen et al. found that "many similarities were observed between romantic and

aromantic asexual individuals. This suggests a high degree of complexity in asexual diversity, where binary classification as romantic or aromantic does not capture the full extent of the very heterogeneous group" (1628). The shortcomings of binaries are not surprising to us, but discussing this study in our working sessions solidified the choice to include five categories of attraction and to let students self-identify in all categories.

The last aspect of creating the worksheet was defining the terms in our word bank. As a group, we drew on literature that had good definitions, and on our own experiences with these terms, to collectively write out the definitions. The Trevor Project's "Resource Center" was one of the most helpful resources for conceptualizing definitions ("Resource Center"). We also drew on a web source developed from Roxie's work on definitions (Roxie), among a large amount of the literature cited in this article.

Our trial design represents a term's worth of research, discussion, design development, and personal reflection. In addition to reading and discussion, each student working on this project completed a weekly reflection writing in which they attended to personal learning, their peers' ideas, and their commitment to and participation in the work. They also engaged in weekly self-grading. These reflections on our collaborative work contributed to the self-actualization of the students working on this project. hooks states, "making the classroom a democratic setting where everyone feels a responsibility to contribute is a central goal of transformative pedagogy" (39). In the independent study that generated this worksheet, students contributed to each other's learning processes, working from personal experience, research, and reflection.

Methods, Results, and Revisions

At the end of the fall term, we gained IRB approval to trial our worksheet. At the beginning of the winter term, we set up four two hour walk-in sessions over a two-week period during which students, faculty, and staff could drop by and participate. The purpose of the trial was to gauge how our initial version succeeded in its content, design, and user experience. We advertised the study by email, by asking professors to publicize it in their classrooms, and by flier. Our trial total was 30 participants ages 18 and over, the majority of whom were students.

The anonymized study consisted of four documents: an instructions sheet, an informed consent form, the worksheet, and a response questionnaire. Participants first received the instructions, the informed consent, and the worksheet. They received verbal and written instructions that they were to read and sign the consent form, if they agreed to participate, then they should complete the worksheet. They received the feedback questionnaire after completing the worksheet. We separated these activities because we wanted to avoid participants' worksheets being swayed by the response questions. Upon completing the worksheet and response questionnaire, participants returned all papers to the researcher. Participants were instructed verbally and in written instructions that they

could stop at any time, and that upon completing the worksheet and/or feedback questionnaire, they could revoke consent from its inclusion in the study and/or publication. All participants consented to have their responses referenced anonymously in this article.

Conducting this study was crucial in our design revision. We found that most participants were very positive about the worksheet. They loved the idea of a galaxy and felt its design was a creative way to include many identities on one worksheet. Their positive discussion included responses such as, "I like being able to fill in as much space or as little space in each section of a planet;" "It felt very open and like there's no wrong answer;" and "It allowed for a spectrum of identities to be expressed." Participants also gave positive feedback on the terms list from the back side of the worksheet. This terms list gave a definition for every term on the worksheet as well as terms that participants could choose to write in any of the blank spaces if they felt that the provided words did not encompass their identity. One participant stated, "It provides me with common identities, but gives me room to define my own, less common ones." The positive feedback signaled that we had made a good start on an important idea.

Suggestions from the trial also allowed us to make significant improvements. Several participants suggested changes to the instructions, such as "in the directions…include the idea that identity and expression could change over time," which we adopted. Further, in the study model, the sex planet had four areas: Intersex, Female, Male, and blank. Several participants remarked that this planet was not as inclusive as the others, particularly for trans people. One participant stated, "the 'sex' threw me off and still feels weird to answer being trans and queer." Based on such comments we included language in the instructions that not all the planets need to be filled out; people are invited to skip ones they do not want to do. We also added an additional space on the sex planet: None. We discussed eliminating the sex planet entirely. However, the goal of this worksheet is to be useful to a wide variety of people, which includes those that need visual learning about how sex and gender are different, and those that have personal experience with transness. These changes now allow students to opt out of the sex planet, while providing more possibilities for trans students, and guidance for students who are new to these concepts.

The feedback for the sex planet also helped us conceptualize one important change we implemented throughout. Early in our thinking, we discussed if the sex planet would be called "assigned sex" in recognition that sex is a social construct. Although this is an option that some models present, and it does some work towards a trans-inclusive worksheet, Nico expressed their feelings that it is not an entirely accurate description, as many intersex children are assigned either male or female. Annitta also discussed how she identifies as intersex, which led to the idea of sex as an identity. Considering that "identity" indicates self-actualization and choice, we thought about using "sex identity," but from this idea jumped to using the plural "sex identities" so that people

would feel welcome to identify with as many sex categories as they like. We then decided to change the language on all the planets to plural. The pluralizing of the planet categories is a major part of the model's broader inclusivity, as it indicates to students that they are free to find affinity with multiple labels and ideas at once (Galupo et al.).

In the initial design we struggled most with the attraction planet. We did our best to think through how it would be inclusive in allowing multiple attraction styles and objects, and accessible in how it would be interacted with, but we expected constructive feedback in this area. One student remarked, "the attraction planet leaves two spaces under each category. As a bisexual person, I have attractions to more than just men or women." Due to this feedback, we adjusted the layout of the model and were able to add three areas under each attraction to better indicate that there are an infinite number of possible attractions. We also changed the labels on these areas from a simple description, i.e. physical, to a phrase, i.e. "physically attracted to." This language change embodies inclusion as the language itself now guides the students to better understand different types of attraction and the flexibility they have to self-identify how they feel attraction and to what degree they feel it. We again later changed "physically attracted to" to "physically (touch) attracted to" to clarify that our definition of physical attraction is about desire to be in physical contact with or to touch someone, hugging, for example.

Many study participants also reported learning that aligns with self-actualization in which students discover more about themselves and have thoughts and feelings about identities they may not have had before. Responses included, "I had to really look deep inside myself;" "It helped me clarify some of my feelings;" and "I didn't realize there were so many elements of attraction and I realized more about what I am attracted to in a partner." The self-actualization indicated by students is part of transformative pedagogy that enhances students' understanding of the importance of lived experience and self-determination.

Discussion

This worksheet engages two overlapping learning goals: learning about sex, gender, sexuality, and attraction in general, and students learning about themselves beyond the classroom. Objectives for students who complete the workshop include feeling seen and included, a sense of belonging, and learning terms they identify with but for which they did not have a name. However, due to arriving at the worksheet from different backgrounds, specific outcomes depend on the knowledge and exposure to ideas with which the student entered the classroom, with both learning goals dependent upon prior exposure to language, similar activities, and self-knowledge.

Criteria considered for assessment are understanding the differences between sex, gender, attraction, and sexuality, and gaining an increased awareness of the

myriad ways in which people may choose to identify. These goals are assessed with qualitative information in the form of responses during in-class debrief and any related comments given on anonymous feedback forms such as those used throughout the term and course evaluations. Feedback may also be collected at the instructor's discretion through other qualitative means such as reflection writing.

Assessment for this activity is not straightforward. Because one of this activity's primary goals is that the students learn about themselves within the process of understanding the potential expansiveness of gender, sexuality, and attraction, direct, quantifiable measurement is unproductive. Further, typical assessment measurements do not align with engaged, feminist pedagogy in this case, where individuals come to this activity with various backgrounds, and all have individualized outcomes resulting from this activity. hooks is instrumental in understanding these functions, stating, "I can circumvent [unequal power dynamics with] pedagogical strategies that affirm [the students'] presence, their right to speak…rooted in the assumption that we all bring to the classroom experiential knowledge." She continues, "if experience is already invoked in the classroom as a way of knowing… it lessens the possibility that it can be used to silence" (84). Applying a uniform assessment beyond learning about sex, gender, sexuality, and the self is moot for this activity; such a measurement is defeated by the learning goals of the activity itself, the related outcomes of which are individualized since the learning depends on the individual. Thus, our learning goals and outcomes focus on the individual as part of a community of learners on topics about sex, gender, sexuality, and attraction and about connecting lived experience to knowledge production.

It is crucial that the instructor introduces the activity with the acknowledgement that because every student's lived experience is different, every student's worksheet will be different, and that their work is confidential. Students may complete the worksheet in class and then discuss it on the same day; they can begin the worksheet in class and then take it home to finish it; or they can complete it entirely at home. The instructor should explain that each planet can be filled out to whatever degree the student wants, and that planets and categories may also be left blank. Attention should be drawn to the terms list that should be either attached or printed on the back of the worksheet.

Students may not be familiar with some of these terms nor aware that these terms may describe a part of their identity. Our goal is to encourage self-exploration and reflection, and for students to be validated regarding some things about themselves that they may not have shared with others, or that they simply have not yet recognized within themselves. The success of this goal is illustrated in part by the feedback from one participant, who stated, "it made me make some notes in my head so that I can better understand myself." Reflecting on and understanding of the self is a major part of transformative pedagogy and self-actualization. As Fujino et al. propose, "the objects of knowledge [in transformative pedagogy] emerge from a

place of lived vulnerability" (72). The worksheet as a safe space for vulnerability allows students to engage with it in an unfearful way.

Additional self-actualizing learning reflected in feedback includes, "I learned new terms," and "[the worksheet] allowed me to think about the many intersections and fluidity of gender and sexuality." More specifically, many study participants indicated that they learned a lot from the attraction planet, and that the idea of different attractions was a new concept for them and this area of the worksheet allowed for deeper personal understanding. One participant commented, "I was fairly confident I was on the ace spectrum for sexuality, but hadn't heard 'Aesthetic' used in that context before and found it was super accurate to me." Another responded, "I hadn't heard of emotional attraction before… I learned about more levels of attraction and how I feel about them." This worksheet recognizes that many people are not raised in a space that is accepting of deviations from heteronormative expectations and ensures that participants may engage in some self-discovery by having definitions for a wide variety of terms.

It is important for students to feel that their mental and emotional well-being is prioritized and included. In making this model we wanted everyone to feel like their identity was important and valid. This validation is also why we left blanks in the wheels because if we missed any identity or term, we wanted students to be able to write it in. Having this worksheet as a class assignment allows students to feel a sense of belonging where prior experiences of expressing gender or sexual desires outside of heteronormativity may have been met with ridicule, dismissal, or violence. When they see terms on the planets, they can know that there is someone else who also filled out that sheet, perhaps choosing those or other terms. The feeling of not being the only one, and that choosing something "different" is supported and encouraged by this worksheet, enables students to feel safe in reflecting on their identities in this format. Following hooks, it is a practice of theorizing as healing for those with direct experiences of violence as well as for those who, although feeling generally safe and loved in their identities, may still wonder about being different.

There are several ways to approach the debriefing of this activity that depend on when and where students complete the worksheet. When deciding when to debrief, instructors should consider that if the discussion of the worksheet happens in class period after the worksheet is distributed, students have time to reflect before discussing it, which may be desirable. Importantly, the students should know that they will not turn the worksheets in, nor will they be asked to show them to the class or to anyone else. In line with this confidentiality, when Butler asks her students to share about such a worksheet, she does not ask them to share *what* they filled out. Instead, the students talk about the *experience* of doing the worksheet, such as what it was like to fill it out, and if they learned about themselves or in general.

Butler has used The Gender and Sexuality Galaxy in three WGS 101 classes since the trial and design revisions concluded. She noticed that her students often share that they were able to understand how sex, gender, sexuality, and attraction are different. They also frequently remark that there were parts of the worksheet that made them rethink their possible identifications and attractions. To ensure that this debrief is a safe space, the instructor could ask pointed questions about a broadly applicable learning experience, such as, "what did you learn about different ways that people can experience attraction?" or "what was a term that stood out to you as new or that you now understand in a different way?" Students may also engage in an individual writing reflection activity, using a prompt such as those above, or such as "make some notes about if you felt any resistance or apprehension about any part of this worksheet, and try to be curious about why that may have been your reaction." These debrief approaches prioritize students' safety by never requiring them to disclose how they filled out the worksheet. Instead, creative ways to reflect on the learning experience can be employed. However, it is always possible that someone will see someone else's worksheet, or that someone will share something they later realize they were not ready to share. It is therefore vital that, no matter the class demographics, instructor assumptions about the students' political investments, or the political moment in which the class occurs, the instructor has cultivated an atmosphere of trust and community in the classroom before engaging in this activity. An alternative approach for instructors who question if their classroom is the right environment to have students actually complete the worksheet could be to teach some of the terms, and then to have students think together about how the worksheet illustrates flexibility and diversity in gender, sex, sexuality, and attraction, affirming that anyone could feel any of the ways this worksheet describes.

Conclusion

The student and professor team that created this worksheet represents a collaborative, dynamic, and feminist approach to resource development for the WGS classroom and beyond. Our process of transformative pedagogy and self-actualization during worksheet creation is one that we encourage other groups to use, particularly for the development of teaching resources. Teaching resource in all fields should be developed with guidance from those who will use them: students. Too often teaching resources are developed without student input. hooks states, "as a student in a predominantly white institution [it is] easy to feel shut out or closed down" (86). If teaching activities are designed within the matrices of predominantly white institutions, such as those that occupy the hegemonic space of academia, and without attention to student needs prioritized by asking real students how they experience this activity (either through collecting reflection responses/feedback or by student input in development) their inclusivity and ability to call-in students of many different backgrounds is forfeit.

We admit that the amount of research and development that went into this activity is unrealistic for the development of many teaching activities and

approaches. The length of this article is intentional in acknowledging the labor that went into this project: it was impossible to give it its due credit in a short teaching activity write-up format, which would have sacrificed the important research discussion herein. Butler is privileged to work at an institution where the merger of undergraduate teaching and faculty research is highly valued, and where inclusive teaching practices are a part of ongoing equity, access, and inclusion discussions on campus. We hope that by publicizing this activity through a detailed write-up of its development process and background, we can illustrate one way to center student lived experience in collaborative student/faculty research. We further intend instructors that feel safe doing so to use this worksheet in their classrooms with the inclusivity we describe in mind, as part of their own self-actualization as teachers, and in service to their students. Most importantly, anyone can use this worksheet once or many times to explore their own feelings and experiences.

Acknowledgements

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The Gender and Sexuality Galaxy

Shade or color the sections of each planet according to the degree you identify with each option. You can shade none, some, or all of any section based on how you are feeling today. Identities, attractions, and expressions may be in flux, feel stable, or change. Each planet has a blank space for you to write in any other term you would like to include. You can skip anything you don't want to fill out. There is a terms list on the back to help you understand the terms on the planets. It also includes other terms that you might like to write in.
The terms list is non-exhaustive and does not represent every possible identification.

Developed by Anne Marie Butler, Mazey Perry, Annitta, and Nico, at Kalamazoo College, 2023-24.

Terms List

This list of terms is only a small fraction of the ways that people may identify.

Aesthetic/visual attraction: appreciating the physical appearance of another person, regardless of other attractions

Agender: the absence of gender

Alloromantic: someone who experiences romantic attraction

Allosexual: someone who experiences sexual attraction

Androgyne: someone whose gender identity includes identification with some parts of masculinity and femininity

Androgynous: Someone whose gender presentation includes some parts of masculinity and femininity

Aromantic: an umbrella term for someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction

Asexual: an umbrella term for someone who experiences little or no sexual attraction

Attraction: desiring an emotional, physical, sexual, romantic, or otherwise close relationship with another person. Someone can experience multiple types of attraction at the same time, and towards the same person or multiple people.

Bisexual: someone romantically and/or sexually attracted to genders both like and unlike their own

Cisgender: when someone's gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Cultural gender: gender associated with one's cultural background, which may not be recognized by the state

Emotional attraction: the desire to connect with another person emotionally, regardless of other attractions

Female: Someone who has a bodily make up consistent with normative understandings of female sex, including an alignment of XX chromosomes, ovaries, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics

Feminine: presenting or performing characteristics associated with women, within the context of social and personal understandings of gender

Gay: Someone who identifies with manhood and who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to others who identify with manhood. Also used an umbrella term to describe same-gender attraction.

Gender: social categories, normatively based on bodily sex and expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, that develop both internally and externally; a historical and ideological process of psychological, social, and cultural understandings of bodily sex; processes of identification with or against these understandings

Genderfluid: Someone whose gender identity is fluid and changing

Genderqueer: rejecting normative feminine or masculine appearance to transgresses binary gender

Gender identity: internal identification with or against psychological, cultural, and social expectations of gender categories.

Gender Expression: physical expression of gender through appearance, behavior, and/or mannerisms. Expression does not need to align with gender identity.

Heterosexual: someone who experiences romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of sexes and genders unlike their own, typically within the normative social patterns of sex and gender binaries

Intersex: someone who is born with chromosomes, gonads, hormones, genitalia, or primary or secondary sex characteristics that do not align with 'male' or 'female'

Lesbian: Someone who identifies as a non-man who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to others who identify as a non-man.

Male: someone who has a bodily make up consistent with normative understandings of male sex, including an alignment of XY chromosomes, testes, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics

Masculine: presenting or performing characteristics associated with men, within the context of social and personal understandings of gender

Man: Someone who identifies internally or personally with the social role and/or idea of men and/or masculinity

Monogamy: the practice of having a romantic and/or sexual relationship with only one person at a time

Non-Binary: an umbrella term for people who do not identify as either a man or a woman

Pansexual: someone attracted to others regardless of gender identity or expression

Physical/touch attraction: desire for non-sexual physical contact with another person, regardless of other attractions. Hugging, for example.

Polyamory: the practice of having a romantic and/or sexual relationship with multiple consenting people at one time

Queer: a politicized identity for people whose gender and/or sexuality is marginalized by normative binary, heterosexual, and state arrangements; an anti-assimilationist position that challenges heteronormative expectations.

Romantic attraction: desiring a relationship or connection with others, beyond friendship, regardless of other attractions

Sex: made up of chromosomes, hormones, gonads, internal and external genitalia, and secondary sex characteristics

Sexual attraction: desiring sexual contact with others; being sexually interested in another person, regardless of other attractions

Sexual identity: internal identification with or against psychological, cultural, and social expectations of sexual attraction

Transgender: Someone whose gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth

Two-spirit: a gender specific to some North American Indigenous communities that embodies aspects of masculinity and femininity

Woman: someone who identifies internally or personally with the social role and/or idea of women and/or femininity.