[theme music]

**Molly:** Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we ask intrusive personal questions, and hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I'm your host and resident gender detective, Molly Woodstock.

[theme music]

**Molly:** Hello everyone! I hope your Pride month is going well. I'm very tired because it turns out that going to Pride events every night for a week is very exhausting, especially when you don't normally leave your house more than once a week, but it's also very fun and great and good. I was also on the Vegan Warrior Princesses Attack! podcast this week pretending to know things about the Equal Rights Amendment, so check that out if you're into it! I'm really excited to get to This Week in Gender, but before I do, I need to remind you that this show, as always, is sponsored by our very generous and kind Patreon donors. You know who you are, I couldn't do it without you, and I am so endlessly grateful for all of your support. Special thanks to Chance this week, who just donated $15 a month, which is so wild and amazing. Thank you so, so much.

If you feel like you've learned a lot from this show and you have the financial means to donate, please consider donating $5 or more per month on Patreon.com/gender or any donation you want at paypal.me/mollywoodstock, and in return I will send you stickers and possibly other fun things. And with that, it's time for This Week in Gender

[triumphant into music]

**Molly:** As promised, this week in gender we're talking about the recent ruling in Masterpiece Cakeshop vs. the Colorado Civil Rights Commission. You've probably seen headlines about how the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a guy who wouldn't make cakes for gay folks, and that's true, but we're gonna unpack it a little bit more here, because there's a lot that folks probably haven't gleaned from just push notifications.

So. In 2012, a couple named Charlie Craig and David Mullins went into Masterpiece Cakeshop in Colorado to ask for a cake for their wedding. Of course, Colorado hadn't legalize same-sex marriage in 2012, so they were going to go to Massachusetts to get married. Then they were going to have a reception in Colorado. And the owner of the cake shop, Jack Phillips, says look, I'm not going to sell you a wedding cake because it is against my religion to participate in same-sex marriage. I don't believe in same-sex marriage, I refuse to endorse it by providing you a wedding cake. Come back on your birthday, I'll sell you a birthday cake, but I won't do same-sex wedding cakes.   
  
So it goes to court and the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, which I will henceforth call the CCRC, said that Jack illegally discriminated against Charlie and David. In fact, not only did Jack discriminate against Charlie and David, but he's done this at least six other times. The case seems pretty clear-cut because there's literally a statute in Colorado state law that says it is discriminatory and unlawful for a person to deny goods and service to an individual or a group because of sexual orientation. But Jack argues that making this cake would infringe on his freedom of religion and his freedom of speech.

Okay, here's where it gets weird. In 2014, this guy named William Jack starts going to bakeries in Colorado and asking them to make cakes that are eyeball-shaped, that say "homosexuality is a detestable sin and God hates sins," which are both quotes from the bible, apparently. The bakeries all say no, and William sues them, and in that case, the CCRC says the bakeries are allowed to refuse to write offensive speech on their cake. So they are allowed to say "no, I will not write 'homosexuality is a detestable sin' on my cake." So Jack Phillips says, "if they're allowed to refuse to write to refuse to write homophobic messages, how come I'm not allowed to be homophobic?" I guess?

Now, keep in mind that David and Charlie didn't say, "hey, can you please make me a cake that says 'gay marriage is good and also Jesus was gay?'" They just want a cake that they would eat at a wedding. Okay, so the CCRC rules against Jack. One commissioner even says, quote "freedom of religion has been used to justify all kinds of discrimination throughout history, whether it be slavery or the Holocaust." Jack appeals the case to the Supreme Court and the court comes back with a narrow 7-2 ruling in favor of Jack. And you might say, how could a 7-2 ruling be narrow? I can explain.

Seven judges, everyone except Sotomayor and our queen Ruth Bader Ginsberg, ruled in favor of Jack, but not all of them agreed that Jack actually has the right to deny wedding cakes to queer couples. What they agreed on was that Jack was entitled to a fair hearing from the CCRC and that the hearing he had received was not fair and not neutral because that one commissioner had compared what he had done to slavery. So, the ruling does not actually mean that folks now have the right to discriminate against queer people. It just means that when folks do discriminate against queer people, they're allowed to go to a trial that doesn't, say, compare their actions to the Holocaust.

To break it down a little bit more, liberal justices Kagan and Breyer explicitly said that bakers can refuse to write a certain message, as long as they deny that message to any customer. So you can be a baker and say "I won't put swastikas on my cake because I'm not a Nazi psychopath," but you can't say, "I will write 'happy wedding' on this cake for straight couples but not a cake for gay couples." I assume that makes sense, except for the part where you'd write "happy wedding" on a cake.

Alito and Gorsuch, I guess we should note, *did* think that if you're allowed to refuse anti-gay messaging on your cake, if you're allowed to say "no, I will not put 'homosexuality is a sin' on a cake," you should also be able to refuse to make wedding cakes for gay people. I don't understand how those two things are the same in any way? But that's the argument they made. But it was just two of them, not seven.

So. This was a narrow ruling. The narrow ruling just means that it doesn't set a precedent for every time a queer person is discriminated against. Folks still aren't necessarily allowed to discriminate -- they just need fair hearings that take their religion into account in a neutral way. However. Despite being narrow, this case has already emboldened other folks to publicly act on their homophobia and transphobia. Very recently, a high school teacher was fired for saying that his religious beliefs from prevented him from respecting his trans students names and pronouns. It's also very very very *very* important to note that Colorado ruled using a *state law* that protects LGBTQ folks from discrimination. Only 21 states prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. So you might have heard about the Tennessee hardware store that put up a "No Gays Allowed" sign, that actually has been up since 2015. Yeah, that's because that's *allowed* in Tennessee. Someone is literally allowed to say "no gays allowed in my store," because they're one of the 29 states that don't have laws against that. In conclusion, the Masterpiece Cakeshop decision isn't nearly as devastating as we think it is, but what is devastating is the fact that it is already legal to deny services folks to LGBTQ folks in 29 states. This has been, This Week in Gender.

[music]

**Molly:** And hey, if that was useful to you, please consider sending this podcast to a friend, posting about it online, or donating to the show via Patreon or PayPal. Because you know, it takes a lot of work to become a constitutional scholar in your free time. Okay, back to the show.

[intro music starts]

**Molly:** Mal Blum is a write and singer-songwriter who has been making music for more than 10 years. They're made many appearances on the Chris Gethard Show and have written articles for Autostraddle and Huffington Post. Their post recent LP was called "You Look a Lot Like Me" and it was released in 2015 on Don Giovanni records. One super-quick note is that this interview was recorded a while ago, and so when we talk about Pride this year, we actually mean last year, 2017.

[intro music ends]

**Mal:** Thanks for bringing the podcast to me.

**Molly:** Yeah, it's my first off-site podcast! We're just in a hotel room. You're spinning on a chair, I'm sitting on the floor, it's like a normal thing that podcasters do.

**Mal:** Do you want me to come down to the floor?

**Molly:** No --

**Mal:** I don't wanna be above you.

**Molly:** No, this is great.

**Mal:** You should totally feel free to sit on one of the beds if you want or that --

**Molly:** No, this is fine, I have back support --

**Mal:** Okay, okay

**Molly:** So it's great.

**Mal:** Whatever you like [laughs]

**Molly:** Okay, alright. Uh, first question that I ask everyone is, with regards to gender, how do you identify?

**Mal:** I identify as a nonbinary transgender person and both together. Those things feel important terminology-wise. [pause] Did you ask me my pronouns?

**Molly:** No, but I was about to.

**Mal:** Whoo!

**Molly:** What are your pronouns?

**Mal:** I use they/them singular pronouns.

**Molly:** Great. Why does it feel important to you that transgender goes along with nonbinary?

**Mal:** Because it seems that sometimes people don't consider nonbinary people [laughing] to be transgender! And I think that comes from a few different places, but I just want to be clear to people I'm talking to.

**Molly:** And, with regards to sexual orientation --

**Mal:** Woo-hoo!

**Molly:** -- how do you identify?

**Mal:** Why do I keep saying "whoo!" after everything?

**Molly:** I don't know. It makes me feel like I did something great.

**Mal:** You did!

[Molly laughs]

**Mal:** You made a podcast! With regards to sexual orientation, I date ... everyone. I date everyone. [laughs]

**Molly:** Great! Easy.

**Mal:** [laughs] I date everyone. So … whatever you like to call that, whether you want to call that queer or bisexual or pansexual or being a person in the world [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah! Great

**Mal:** That's me.

**Molly:** Great. You're one of the first nonbinary transgender folks that I saw out in the world being a musician and just seeing that was just really cool and powerful to me. Were there folks that you saw that like, made you feel comfortable or were you just like, fuck it, I'm going to be the first one?

**Mal:** [laughs] Wow. That's so powerful, wow. I -- fuck it, I'm going to be the first one -- no, more so I was like, fuck it, what's wrong with me?

**Molly:** Awwww

**Mal:** [laughs] You know, because for so long, I didn't think there was a word for people like me, and for a long time, my gender trajectory was like, when I was a little kid I was a very trans little kid, very much trans-narrative, sort of a binary trans narrative that you would see, and then … and then I totally didn't think about that at all for like … 15 years, and then in college I was like, oh, something's going on, I'm trans, but I had never seen any sort of trans narrative that weren't binary trans narratives and I was like, this doesn't fit all the way and I don't know what to do about this, and there's never gonna be a word for people like me, there's never gonna be a pronoun for people like me. Which of course, I was wrong. There are genders in all different cultures all over the world. But I was just feeling really, like, what do I do? So I repressed that for a couple years.   
  
And then.. honestly the person that had the biggest impact on me is my friend Arra, who is another nonbinary person who was just, one day was like, "I use they pronouns! These are my pronouns, you can use them too if you wanted to." And I was just like, "I *could*?" [both laugh] Cool.

**Molly: Y**eah.

**Mal:** But no, I can't think of anybody in pop culture or media that helped me get there.

**Molly:** It seems like mainstream outlets like the New York Times for instance, are getting excited about DIY women and nonbinary artists in a way that they haven't previously?

**Mal:** Yeah

**Molly:** Why do you think that is?

**Mal:** My thought is that it's sort of a changing of the guard sort of situation, where -- I might be wrong about this, but -- maybe it's like the next generation is obviously more progressive and radical than it has been. Obviously there's a lot to be done still. These things aren't always generational, clearly, but I do think that there has been more space opening up for new voices and I think the most compelling new voices are going to be women and nonbinary folks, people that haven't had so much of a voice in media or music before. Not to say that there's a lot of space for them [laugh]

**Molly:** Slightly more

**Mal:** Yeah

**Molly:** On Spotify, there is a really cool thing where you did a commentary on all of the tracks on your album and on the commentary to "Better Go," you talked about how that track is about feeling alienated by mainstream culture and being unsure whether you're actively rejecting that culture or just sort of failing at it. And that's something that I feel a lot about gender.

**Mal:** Mmm

**Molly:** I don't know whether I'm actively rejecting this gender that I was assigned or whether I'm just absolutely failing at it.

**Mal:** Mmm

**Molly:** So, you know, is that something that you've ever felt about gender, or if not, what's that song about?

**Mal:** Yeah. Well, that song, I think, I was thinking more about, like, capitalism [laughs]

**Molly:** Uh huh. Totally

**Mal:** But I definitely feel that. I have felt that way about gender. For me, it was a bit of not giving myself allowances, because at the end of the day, it's a way of invalidating myself to be like -- and I think it is a bit of transphobic sentiment to be like, oh, you're just trans because you're failing at being a woman, you know. It's like, well, no. [laughs] I don't know. And also, at a certain point, it doesn't matter why I'm trans. I am trans. So, even if that were the case, then you know what? Fine. You still have to accept that I exist. [laugh] You know?

**Molly:** Yeah. And I definitely wasn't trying to accuse you of that being your situation for you.

**Mal:** Oh, no, no,

**Molly:** I was just being like, here's my shitty inner monologue [laughs]

**Mal:** Oh, no, I didn't think that you were

**Molly:** Oh cool cool cool

**Mal:** I was just talking to past me. You're doing great, you're great, everything's great.

**Molly:** [laughs] You once said, in an interview -- I'm going to quote you now --

**Mal:** Do it

**Molly:** "We live in a culture that thrives on misogyny, homophobia, transphobia and white supremacy. We all swallow this culture and work within this culture and just being queer, sadly, doesn't absolve people from perpetuating it, especially in the microcosm that is the music industry."

**Mal:** Wow, I said that? I sound smart

**Molly:** Yeah, according to the media.

**Mal:** Yeah!

**Molly:** Can you talk more about that?

**Mal:** Yeah. I think that like in any industry, it is like a microcosm of the culture that we live in in the Untied States and those things are profitable, privileged, identities and therefore they're the mainstream norm and therefore anything that diverts from that is not valuable and dismissed. But even in making DIY or punk communities, those value systems don't just go away, And also just being queer, those dynamics aren't just absolved, just by being in queer spaces. And I think I thought that for a long time.   
  
I wrote a song about it when I was like 19. I didn't know that's what the song was about but I would go to -- and this obviously, because it's through my lens doesn't deal with necessarily misogyny or racism -- because the narrative is like you're not accepted, and then you go to gay spaces, you got to gay bars, and then you're accepted, you find yourself, you feel comfortable, people are there for you, it's community, but I would go to gay spaces, and I just felt very uncomfortable still. They're very gendered and they're not necessarily different than straight bar culture except that it's gay, so as a young trans kid, I would just sort of get drunk and try to disappear myself from that. I think of that sometimes, insofar as it's a simple example of how just because something is one aspect of a marginalized identity doesn't mean that it's necessarily absolved from being uncomfortable for another axis of identity, if that makes sense.

**Molly:** It absolutely makes sense. A lot of your songs are about depression and anxiety --

**Mal:** Whoo-hoo!

**Molly:** -- and more than half of trans folks suffer from either depression or anxiety --

**Mal:** Oh, I didn't know that

**Molly:** It's like an unusual terrible thing. I was wondering if you had tips or words of solidarity for other trans folks or queer folks that are dealing with that stuff.

**Mal:** Yeah. Nothing. Nothing but [laughs] solidarity. I didn't know it was more than half of trans folks, but that makes total sense. I like to joke a lot when I'm feeling vulnerable and something that happened once with a psychiatrist was he was like, "well, we should put you up on your medication because you're still depressed and you should go up on your medication until that resolves completely," and I was like, yeah, I … am trans. And I am really sad and unless you have a magic gender pill, I don't think that's ever gonna resolve completely. [laughs]   
  
Which is a joke, but it's really not a joke because yeah, I didn't know that statistic but obviously I know a lot of our community is affected by suicide. That's a dark part of it. But I guess for me, all I want to do is make people feel better, like, *ever*. That's all I want to do. But at a certain point, I'm like, what can I tell you? The things that have helped me are like, therapy and medication yeah, certainly, but also tools that I've gotten from those things, not just those things. So you know, I make sure that for me, I try to shower every day because that's something that when I first got very very depressed, that was a marker for me. I stopped showering, I stopped eating correctly or, appropriately for me, how I should be eating meals. So for me, it's about checking in with myself, doing little markers to keep myself in some sort of grounded routine so I can see if I'm starting to get weird. And also forgiving myself if I have a bad mental health day, treating it like a cold or something.

**Molly:** Totally. A thing that will come and go and not like the rest of your life is gonna be this bad.

**Mal:** Yeah. Which is hard, and that's where medication helped me because before, every time I was sad, I was like, I'll be sad forever, --

**Molly:** Yup.

**Mal:** -- I've never been happy --

**Molly:** Yup!

**Mal:** [laughs] So just having that perspective, of being like, this is probably going to last a few days and then … but I'm also, I'm not great at taking my own advice sometimes. I don't always eat right or sleep or exercise. I take on, I internalize everything that anyone ever says to me. I'm not the most on top of my mental health, but I try and that's the most I think you can ask anyone to do. So I guess if I had any advice, it would be to be as kind to yourself as you would be to a friend who's going through something similar.

**Molly:** Totally. And also, not that anyone asked me for my advice, but speaking of friends --

**Mal:** Hey, do you have any advice Molly?

**Molly:** [laugh] I just feel like the best and most helpful thing for me has been to find spaces that are queer-normative and trans-normative and surround myself`f with folks that see me and respect me because nothing fucks up my mental health like being in a room full of people that refuse to respect the person that I am. I do think all of your advice is really good and solid and things that I implement, but also I can work out and eat well and still be depressed because I'm not being gendered correctly.

**Mal:** Totally. That's a thing.

**Molly:** So. All of those things together

**Mal:** Yeah, that's the thing, that's why I was like, I don't think going up on Lexapro is going to resolve the way that I walk though the world and being misgendered 20 times a day.

**Molly:** Exactly

**Mal:** Yeah, and I feel like it's important, I should probably say: I don't mean to equate being trans with mental illness. I just think that when you are trans, you have a harder time often --

**Molly:** Yeah!

**Mal:** And that can affect your mental health.

**Molly:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Mal:** [laughs] I don't want to come off being like "trans people are mentally ill"

**Molly:** No! It's just that being treated like shit all of the time --

**Mal:** Yeah

**Molly:** -- can lead to depression and anxiety, which is fair.

**Mal:** Yeah. Totally.

**Molly:** And it doesn't always, and those people are incredible.

**Mal:** Yeah. I haven't met them yet, but I believe that they exist.

**Molly:** No. [laughs] They sound -- it seems like someone out there.

**Mal:** Maybe it could be generational too. I really wonder about that sometimes, about the next generation of trans kids and what their experiences will be like and how they will or won't relate to the way that I navigate through the world now.

**Molly:** Oh, absolutely

**Mal:** I don't know enough kids to generalize but the ones that I meet at our shows are incredible. They're actually just fuckin awesome.

**Molly:** Right

**Mal:** And a lot of times they're there with their parents and you can tell that their parents are really happy to see them asserting themselves in the world and I don't know, that helps me. [laugh] It helps me to see that.

**Molly:** Absolutely

**Mal:** You know, they're just living their lives, they're just going about their days, but I'm like, that's cool, you're 12 and you -- they'll be like "you use the same pronouns as me!" and I'm like, that's fuckin awesome! That is so awesome! You're 12 and you know that you can have agency over your pronouns? You're going to kill it [laugh]

**Molly:** Absolutely. It's really amazing.

**Mal:** I don't even -- yeah. I'm older and I don't even know. I'm like, *I* don't even have agency over my pronouns.

**Molly:** I have a few friends that are having kids and more than one has asked me, "Is it okay if I gender my child?"

**Mal:** That's the thing! I know some parents that are like, "We're raising our child genderless," and I'm like, this is like an oppressive violent system sometimes, gender can be for sure, but also, I feel like you should inform your child of [laughs] American culture of gender because they're going to have to go through their lives, and you should maybe have conversations` with them, allow them to know what options they have, but I don't know that you should necessarily assume that your child won't have a gender.

**Molly:** Right

**Mal:** I mean, what do I know, I'm not a parent, but I don't think I would do that.

**Molly:** Right. Dismantling toxic masculinity, whatever that means, is the key to fixing most things, and so when parents of very young folks that were assigned male are like "can I call my kid a he?" I'm like "yes, but also tell them it's okay to have feelings."

**Mal:** Yeah! No, I actually, seriously, believe that a lot of issues would be resolved if we allowed men to experience a full range of emotions, 100%. This is a thing that I think about if I need to explain this to somebody in a pinch, about how toxic masculinity is so scary is like, one time I saw this guy hit this kid in his car and this kid was on a bicycle. He was fine. But he was startled, and he got off the bike, and this older man got out of the car and you could tell that obviously he was scared because he just hit a kid on a bicycle (it was like a teenage kid, you know), but instead, because we tell men you can't experience fear and vulnerability and sadness, you can only have anger, anger's the only manly fuckin emotion, instead of being like "are you okay?" he got out of the car and started yelling at the kid. He was like, "You fuckin idiot!" blah blah blah blah blah and to me, I was like, that's it! That's it in a split instant.   
  
That's the problem. Because maybe -- I mean, maybe he's just an asshole. That's also possible. But maybe if that guy was brought up to believe that masculinity doesn't necessarily negate feeling the full range of emotions and emotions aren't feminine or even if they are feminine that's doesn't make them worse, being feminine isn't worse, whatever -- maybe he would have gotten out of the car and been like "are you okay? I'm so sorry I *hit you with my car.*" Which is to me, a normal thing to say.

**Molly:** Absolutely. Speaking of dismantling things, you've also written a couple of articles for Autostraddle about NYC Pride (TM).

**Mal:** [mournful sigh]

**Molly:** You want to talk about that for a little bit? Because I love that topic.

**Mal:** Yeah. Fuckin ehhh, NYC Pride (TM). It really is trademarked! They've sued people. They've sued people. They're ridiculous. They're absolutely ridiculous. What to be said. What can I say? I don't know. I have no words.

**Molly:** Alright, here's a question.

**Mal:** Hit me

**Molly:** I am going to New York for Pride week. It seems fun and chill. Is there any reason why this isn't a fun, chill thing for me to go to?

**Mal:** No, you should totally go, it's great, I love it.

[Molly laughs]

**Mal:** I mean, there's a few things going on with me and NYC Pride. Also I'm just a grumpy … I feel like New York's grumpy uncle or something. First of all, I do have a chip on my shoulder, because obviously the first Pride was Stonewall, the Stonewall riots, which took place in New York City. Quote unquote "Pride" was meant to commemorate them and now NYC Pride (TM) is such an example of something that was political and community-led being sort of bought by corporations and sold back to us as "this is what you said it was!" except it isn't at all that anymore and in fact, there are aspects of it that are actively harmful to us as a community.   
  
For me, it deeply saddens me to go to something that was incredibly important for the gay rights movement in America, and you go to it now and it's just a bunch of banks and vodka companies trying to sell you shit and straight people there to ogle. To then pretend that it's still a community event … and the there's other layers to it as well, right. Also, they say that they're a nonprofit. They make like a million dollars a year. They tried to get me to play for free this year -- that's what my article was about this year. Oh, they trademarked the phrase "NYC Pride." The fact that anybody would trademark the phrase "NYC Pride" is abhorrent to me. Then on top of that if any other grassroots organization is like "NYC Pride party!" they have sued, and will sue you. And it's just so far removed from what I think Pride represents. And that is the case in a lot of cities in America, unfortunately, but NYC being one of them hits close to home because I'm like, this is where the shit went down. If anything, you should -- whatever.   
  
But the thing this year was that they reached out to me pretending to be -- Heritage of Pride, which is the organization that runs this, reached out to me and said they were a nonprofit volunteer-run organization, and they asked me to play at their Pride-fest music event where they headliner was going to be LeAnn Rimes and they were like, "we're asking queer artists to donate 20 minute sets." So I wrote back, because I was like, they're lying, they're absolutely lying. If I didn't know, if I wasn't familiar with their organization, I would have no idea. I would be like okay, it's a nonprofit, volunteer-run organization, but they're a corporate-sponsored event, heavily corporate-sponsored, and LeAnn Rimes is not donating a set. And if I was younger, when I was younger, I would not have known any of that. I absolutely would have done it, and it's not right.   
  
So I wrote back and I was like, "is LeAnn Rimes donating her set? And is this a corporate-sponsored event?" And they were like, "No, we're not corporate-sponsored, we're corporate-*affiliated*, and we can't comment on LeAnn Rimes" and whatever. So then I was like, fuck this, so then I wrote that article. I was like, I'm gonna do research on this, so... yeah. I looked up all their financial records and we just looked into it a lot and yeah, they were sponsored by like 40 different corporations this year, and LeAnn Rimes is obviously not donating her set, so the thought that they would be paying -- and her general range is something between 50 and 100 thousand dollars, something like that, so even if she was giving them a discounted range, a benefit rate, it would not be lower than 25 grand or something.   
  
So just the thought that any organization claiming to be about the LGBT rights movement would pay thousands of dollars for a straight person who's not even -- she's not even an outspoken advocate for gay rights! She's just a straight person who's kind of okay with gay people -- to headline an event while asking the queer local musicians on the bill to donate their time is just another aspect of how they're evil. I think they're an evil corporation and it's a slap in the face. The only reason that they're more evil than other evil corporations is because they're pretending to be for the community. That's what really grinds my gears about it.

**Molly:** Right. I actually did happen to walk by Stonewall during Pride in NYC last year and they have the huge banner on Stonewall that's like, "Pride is sponsored by this vodka company," and I'm like, you know why they get vodka companies to sponsor Pride? Because so many LGBTQ folks are alcoholics because of homophobia and transphobia and queerphobia and the constant oppression of being a queer and trans person.

**Mal:** Yeah. Some marketing exec probably knows that information and is like, "Oh, let's put vodka ads at Pride." That's why, when I wrote the first thing for Autostraddle, I was like, yeah, but, I used to go as a kid and it was a powerful space for me just being around other gay people, but then I remember also seeing other ads like that and remember thinking as a kid, "Out of the closet and into the bar? What does that mean?" And having that imaging exposed to you at events that are supposed to be for -- there are gay kids that go to stuff because they just want to be around other gay people. And I'm just like, yeah, there's some fucking evil marketing executive that was like, "yeah! Yeah yeah yeah, we'll sell vodka to the gay people because they have substance abuse issues." And then the kids see that and it just makes me mad.

**Molly:** Well, with the little time we have left, I have two questions that I also ask everyone.

**Mal:** Yeah.

**Molly:** One is just, is there anything else that's coming up for you around this that we haven't talked about that you want to make sure is mentioned?

**Mal:** I mean, I guess not off the top of my head. Something that I've been thinking about a lot is that, because I've been playing this new song a lot that's about how I feel invisible a lot in terms of when I am misgendered. And sometimes that manifests in depression and anxiety like you said, but sometimes I'm just like, I'm a ghost! [laughs]

**Molly:** Totally!

**Mal:** But actually it's just because I feel very sad. So anyway, I wrote a new song about it, about what you're saying about not feeling seen. But something I've been thinking about a lot is like, when we do Trans Day of Visibility and when I'm misgendered 20 time a day, like I said, and I'm feeling really invisible as a trans person or even as myself, the other side of things is that I feel like it's important to acknowledge that also being visible as a trans person is dangerous.

**Molly:** Totally

**Mal:** In my opinion, it would be way worse just based on how transmisogyny functions in our culture, and so I feel like that's something that is worth touching upon, just insofar as mentioning that as I am fighting to be seen, that is, in a way, a privilege, sort of. Everything sucks and then you die. [laughs]

**Molly:** I have written on my paper, I did not turn it into a question, I wrote down, "we're gonna die and maybe it's gonna be alone and no one will find the things we left behind.” But I didn't make it a question, I was just "this feels right." [laughs]

**Molly:** I have written on my paper, I did not turn it into a question, I wrote down, "we're gonna die and maybe it's going to be alone and no one will find the things we left behind." But I didn't make it a question, I was just "this feels right." [laughs]

**Mal:** I played that last night!

**Molly:** Did you?

**Mal:** Yeah!

**Molly:** Last question, for everyone, real easy softball: what do you think the future of gender looks like?

[Mal bursts out laughing]

**Molly:** Or what would it look like in your ideal world?

**Mal:** Jeez! Oh God. I don't know. What would gender in my ideal world look like? It would look like everybody just let everybody do whatever they want and leave them alone. [laughs]

**Molly:** Yeah. 100%

**Mal:** You know [sighs], sometimes I feel like straight people specifically will be like, "I can't wait for us to be done with gender! I can't wait for gender to be over!" And I'm just like, cool cool cool, cool cool, that would be great, here's the thing: it's still here. And so while it's still here, we can push those boundaries while still respecting that people live in a gendered world and go through that everyday and let's not discount and dismiss them. I don't know. The reason I thought of that is because I thought, "what if we lived in a genderless world?" but like, I can't even imagine what that world would be.

**Molly:** Totally

**Mal:** Cuz, I can't imagine not feeling gender all the time or thinking about gender 12 hours a day.

**Molly:** Mmm-hmm

**Mal:** I don't even know what living in a genderless world would look like or if it would be -- especially when we're talking about issues of sexism and stuff, if it's even -- sometimes when you're like, "we could be done with gender!" it's like, let's not use that as an excuse to be brush aside issues of sexism, which are important to tackle. So I don't know. I have no guess for you. My prediction is that gender is going to get weirder and there are gonna be young kids that are gonna be like, "these are the genders that we have now!" and I'm gonna be like, "I could never have even fathomed that!" and I'll be like 80 and I'll be like, "wow! good for you!" and I hope I don't fuck that up.

**Molly:** [laughs] I love that world

**Mal:** Yeah. Like, wow! In my day, we'd just started using "they" pronouns, and now you can just upload your gender into the server --

[Molly laughs]

**Mal:** -- and send it to somebody with your Google Glasses and be whatever gender you'd like to be that day.

[Molly keeps laughing]

**Mal:** That's incredible! I hope I don't offend you. I'm gonna go back to my vintage Jersey Shore reruns.

[Molly continues laughing as end music begins]

**Molly:** That's going to do it for our show. Whatever you do, you got to go check out Mal's music. It's on Spotify, it's wherever else you get music. It's truly so great, I love it. If you like the show, please text a friend and be like, "hey what's up, I heard this cool podcast, here's a link." You can also support us financially at patreon.com/gender or paypal.me/mollywoodstock. And if you donate $6 or more, I will personally send you a fun bonus surprise in the mail.

Last week I did a consult with this big organization about how to make their events more inclusive to nonbinary folks. I can do that with your organization or event too. If you want to get in touch for any reason, whether it's that, comments about the show, questions about gender, you can reach me at gendereveal@gmail.com or on Twitter. I'm also on Twitter and Instagram under my own name. What is that name? Well, our show today was edited by me, Molly Woodstock. Our logo is by the talented Michelle Leigh, and our theme song is by the legendary Breakmaster Cylinder. We'll be back next week with more feelings about gender.

[theme music ends]