

Gender Nonconformity, Race, and Sexuality: Charting the Connections

Toni Lester

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How are culturally constructed stereotypes about appropriate sex-based behavior formed? If a person who is biologically female behaves in a stereotypically masculine manner, what are the social, political, and cultural forces that may police her behavior? And how will she manage her gendered image in response to that policing? Finally, how do race, ethnicity, or sexuality inform the way that sex-based roles are constructed, policed, or managed?

The chapters in this book address such questions from social science perspectives and then examine personal stories of reinvention and transformation, including discussions of the lives of dancers Isadora Duncan and Bill T. Jones, playwright Lorraine Hansberry, and surrealist artist Claude Cahun. Writers from fields as diverse as history, art, psychology, law, literature, sociology, and the activist community look at gender nonconformity from conceptual, theoretical, and empirical perspectives. They emphasize that gender nonconformists can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or anyone else who does not fit a model of Caucasian heterosexual behavior characterized by binary masculine and feminine roles.



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