

Call for Papers

Raising Theybies: Perspectives on gender open parenting

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Raising Theybies brings firsthand accounts of “gender open parenting” together with academic scholarship on gender, sex, social justice, and childhood. Gender open parenting, also referred to as “gender fluid parenting,” “gender expansive parenting,” “gender autonomous parenting,” and “gender creative parenting,” goes beyond challenging gendered stereotypes and encouraging fluid gender expressions, as practitioners fundamentally argue that we do not know a child’s sex until they declare it themselves. Gender open parenting, then, is not only a gender-based philosophy of parenting, it is also a radical statement of a child’s right to self-determination, and is inherently linked to social justice and children’s empowerment while also directly critiquing the equation of sex with biological immutability.

Erroneously labeled “gender-less” or “gender neutral” in media accounts, the story of “baby Storm” went viral in 2011. This story was the first widespread media exposure to the practice of “gender open parenting.” Although the language for describing this style of parenting is far from settled, since 2011, there have been increasing numbers of parents raising “theybies,” children raised with they/them pronouns from the start, whose parents refuse to socially gender or sex their children, and who often pursue legal strategies to reject male/female binaries for their children.

Part guidebook, part commentary, *Raising Theybies* addresses this increasing popularity, featuring academic scholarship alongside advice, reflections, and tales of love by families forging gender open parenting frameworks. While we anticipate a majority of the personal reflections will be from parents, we welcome any accounts of those directly involved in or supporting families, where one of the children uses they/them from birth.

We recognize that raising children “gender open” is a new conversation for many in the Anglo-Western/European context, but that various indigenous and racialized contexts have traditionally engaged in parenting outside of a Western sex/gender framework. We invite submissions from these communities and their insight into the sexing of children, even as they may be critical of discussions around “gender open” frameworks. *Raising Theybies* will be published in English, however, we also welcome pieces reflecting on the strategies of families in non-Anglocentric contexts.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Decision making: factors in contemplating gender open parenting
- Values: social justice, community, culture, empowerment, self-determination
- Parent and child identities: feminism, queerness, indigeneity, race, gender, sexuality
- Struggles and support: partners, other family, community, care workers, strangers, institutions, media, social networking
- Legalities: birth certificates, identity documents, school registration
- Everyday interactions and daily living: diapering, nudity, caregiving
- Special events and milestones: baby celebrations, baby announcements, gender reveal parties
- Consumerism: shopping, clothing, toys, gifts
- Language: grammar, translation, misunderstandings, explanations
- Research: socialization, childhood, identity and gender development, education

Submission process:

Written submissions are due: June 30, 2019. Submissions must:

- Be no longer than 8,000 words
- Be submitted as a Word (doc or docx) file
- Include author information: name, affiliation (if appropriate), contact information, 150-words or less biography
- Be accompanied by a 250-word abstract and 4-6 keywords
- Be typed double-spaced with left justification and all pages numbered

We are also interested in artwork (greyscale), please email to discuss.

Authors will be notified of acceptance August 1, 2019.

Inquiries and completed submissions should be sent to adinne.schwartz@gmail.com.

Please note: we recognize that writing is a complex process and are happy to work with first time authors willing to share stories of their families! Email Adinne in advance of the due date at the email address listed above if you wish to discuss proposal ideas prior to submitting a chapter.