

dissonance and discomfort for people who are not societally conscious. If you take a closer look at the graph, you can see that the axes are not equivalent. One incremental jump on the cis/trans axis takes you much further toward “non-normative” than one on the hetero/queer axis, and this is due in large part to the visual nature of gender identity.

It takes incredible strength to make oneself vulnerable by visually presenting in a non-normative fashion. It may seem odd to some that an already towering queer man has decided he prefers to wear platform heels and earrings or that a genderqueer person has decided not to consistently present as one or the other gender, instead going through life somewhere outside of the binary. But if you take a step back, you will recognize the incredible strength that these folks have to embrace a non-normative identity, and you will question yourself for questioning them. Let’s face it, it would seem to be a pretty terrible way to live if you felt uncomfortable in your own body or with the way the whole world saw you.

I suppose that the point I’m trying to make is that, for many allies (which includes people within the community), the acceptance stops right around the point in which gender expression has just crossed over to the “most definitely” non-normative. For those readers who fit this description, my question to you is—at which point did our allegiance to minorities become something that possessed boundaries?

It may seem a little harsh to say that there can’t be allies at all levels of acceptance, but as someone who is heavily involved in this community, I am tired of making incremental progress at best.

As a cis-hetero female who falls cleanly within the gender binary (I’m just a little queer sometimes), I was accepting, but was always skeptical, of non-binary gender identities. What helped me were the many studies coming out or in progress that have attempted to explain “Gender Identity Disorder” in neurobiological terms. If you’re interested, you can go to PubMed and look up papers on transfolk, BSTc and putamen. You should find a few papers and if you search for it you should be able to find news articles as well if you run it through a search engine. However, what truly did it was the knowledge that I have no right to decide whether or not *someone else’s* way of life is acceptable.

My real point is, there’s a lot of misunderstanding outside and *especially* inside the LGBTQ community with regard to individuals who fit less within the normative gender standards of the surrounding world. But I hope that by educating each other about those who are misunderstood and by owning and attempting to conquer our own prejudices, we can come to be more inclusive of members in our community, and our world.

### We deserve it.

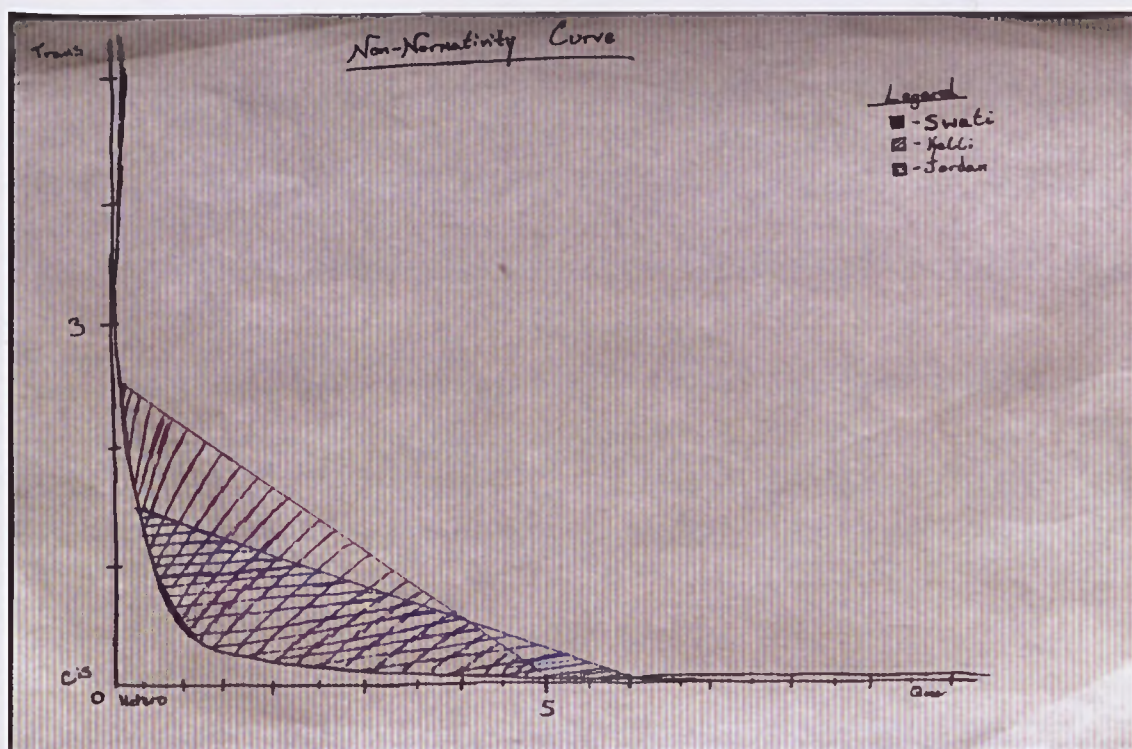


Fig. 1:  
This is the “Societal Implication/Non-Normativity Curve”  
Hard to see, but it is charting me and my editors, Kelli and Jordan. I’m the green corner segment, Kelli is the purple segment and Jordan is the blue segment.  
Y-Axis: Cis-Trans  
X-Axis: Hetero-Queer