

# DRAG GNTT

*“Participatory design research, documenting the experience of Gainesville local drag performers”*

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## Dedications

**James Budd Dees**  
**To the love of my life,**  
**this work is a statement of our life, love, and**  
**work of art.**

### **Alma Delia García Guerrero**

To my aunt. If there's someone who made me believe in my potential, it should be you, the strongest, more successful family member. Your life story inspired me to do great things. I believe this work is part of that, and I hope I have made you proud. Until we meet again. Rest in power.

### **Gilberto Corona Álvarez**

To my dad. I'm so privileged for having a father that gave me the love and support to become who I am. Thanks for being an example of character and honesty, your unconditional love has allowed me to navigate this life and surround myself with wonderful people. Thank you for the sacrifices. Te Amo.

### **Alexis Simone Corona García**

To my sister and my confidant. We've been through so many things in this life, and we've just become closer. Thank you for giving me consolation in my darkest time and for so bluntly believing in me.

### **Lorena Monserrath Grajales Corona**

To my niece. At only 12 years of age, life has already given you some tough lessons. I adore that everyone compares all your good (and not so good) qualities with mine (even you). It's unfair, and soon you'll realize it is all yours alone. You are brilliant. Like our aunt Alma was for me, I hope I can be that person for you.

### **Victoria Isabella García Corona**

To mi amor. My niece. I love you incondionaly. Thank you for reminding me what life is about. You're a lot!

### **Lorena del Carmen García Guerrero**

Mom, I hope I've made you proud. You're the foundations. I've spent half of my life without your presence, but there hasn't been a day where I don't think about you. You are restless. I don't know what's going on up there but thank you.

### **Gainesville Drag and Queer Community**

Where to start! This project is nothing and means nothing without you. I'm so fortunate to have found a sense of belonging with so many members here. I've learned so much about issues that our community faces. I came to the US believing that this was a safe haven for queer people. In so many ways, it is because I found myself surrounded by love. At the same time, I've witnessed friends suffering and dealing with so many issues ingrained in systems of oppression. Thank you for believing in this project and being re-designers for justice with me. It's only the beginning.

## **Dr. Dori Griffin**

Thank you to my chair, my mentor, and my most significant teacher inspiration. You've changed the way I see design. Thank you for helping me navigate academia, for your high standards, constant guidance, and cherished encouragement.

## **Maria Rogal**

Thank you for this opportunity, it is my most significant life accomplishment to be part of the MxD program, and it is all because of you. Thank you for changing my life and, for allowing me to use this opportunity as a platform to give back to the communities I'm part of. I will forever cherish the values you installed in my design practice.

## **Kenneth Kidd**

Thank you for your continued interest and investment in my work. You inspired me to stay curious.

## **Victoria Gerson**

Thank you for sharing your experience. You're an outstanding scholar. I'm so thankful that we connect when I need it the most. You had mentored me and grounded me when everything seemed too complex and unreachable. What you bring to the program is invaluable. I'm so glad that, as a queer person, I could relate on so many different levels.

## **Fellow MxD Cohort**

You've been nothing but family. I'm so glad that we got to share a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Your life and body of work are an inspiration to my practice. We're so lucky and privileged for being part of this fantastic experience. Thank you for your friendship

## **Community**

Thanks to all the people who informed this process for giving me insight.

This case study documents my process of research, identification, and co-creation —with members of the drag community— **a visual ethnography about Gainesville drag culture.**

This study documents drag performance as an integral element of public-facing Queer communities. Its aim is to contextualize the importance and nuance of drag as an activity supporting LGBTQ+ individuals and communities and as a publicly visible format for sharing elements of LGBTQ+ community identity with broader audiences. This project focused on **conversations** with the Queer community (performers and allies) and centers reflections on drag venues as safe spaces, to build on the **oral and visual history** and promote the drag art form. The project weaves together past and present stories and contributes to the **collective creation of safe spaces for Queer people.**



**Figure 1:** A place to call home: La Capilla del Cerrito, Autlan de Navarro (Jalisco) & Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, Gainesville (Florida). Photos by Gilberto Corona.

## About Me

I was born in Autlán de Navarro, Jalisco, México. The name Autlán has its origins in the Nahuatl language, associated with its proximity to the water (the Pacific Ocean) and the Sierra Madre (mountain system of México). My hometown is a valley, connecting vastly different worlds. The region is famous for the Nocheztli, the cochineal insect used in deep red pigments distributed during the Viceroyalty of New Spain. The carminic acid used in this dye also protects it from predators. It now colors crimson lipsticks.

I received my Diseño para la comunicación gráfica (Design for Graphic Communication) degree from the Universidad de Guadalajara in 2012. Since then, I've designed for a variety of firms and nonprofits including Aqua Comunicacion, MDM Modama International Exhibition of Footwear, Thomson Reuters, TATA Consultancy Services, and CENSIDA in Mexico. Shaped by my life experiences, my research and practice focus on design for social impact. I acknowledge frameworks that support horizontality, mindsets around decolonization, and theories from the global south that I use to approach LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, and their intersections.

Since my arrival to the USA in 2018, I've been invested in learning about race, activism, and figuring out how to navigate culture, language, and political discourse. My research topic is an exploration at the intersection of these interests.

As a cis-gay Mexican immigrant, I was privileged to find a place I now call home, Gainesville. The attachment to the city started when I got engaged to my now-husband Budd Dees. Relocating to a new country was rugged and disorienting at times. Despite having a constant feeling of being an outsider, I momentarily found a sense of belonging, thanks to the Gainesville Queer community, and a year later, through my affiliation as a candidate for the MFA program at the MxD.

For the past three years in the MxD program, I've been able to practice community-centered design. This design method allowed me to understand research paradigms and, at the same time, my own immigrant experience. Thanks to the MxD, I was able to connect with politicians, city officials, and communities that are often labeled as marginalized or vulnerable and to which I belong as POC or in higher regard to the local queer community. Nonetheless, I discovered and understood the privilege I held, which allowed me to harness design as a tool for social change.

### The Importance of Queer History

Two quotations illustrate for me the accuracy, intimacy, and importance of queer archives and the documentation of queer spaces. I was invited to partake in a conversation with scholars Alex Bitterman and Dori Griffin. Bitterman shared insights about his most recent work, an open-access multi-authored book called *The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods*.

Gay spaces across the United States are steeped in important and ephemeral history. However, the stories of these spaces—and the people that lived the struggle to gain LGBTQ+ rights—are largely unrecorded, undocumented, and are not centrally collected or archived beyond Wikipedia entries and oral histories. Evidence demonstrates that the preservation of historic sites allows for future generations to benefit from intangibles related to community and identity (Bitterman and Hess 2021, 340).

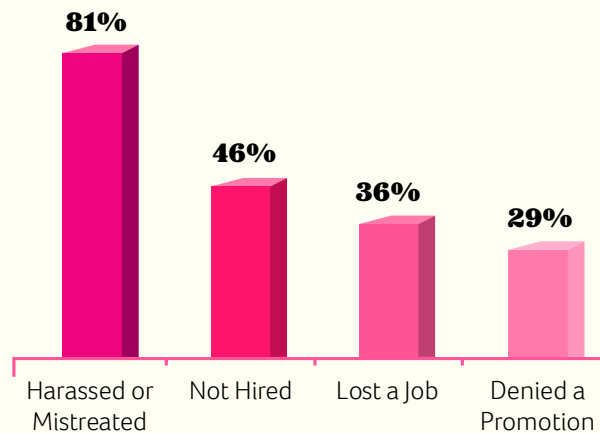
Stories of LGBTQ+ people falling in love, or being best friends, or dealing with simple everyday life are rarely captured in history books that focus on so-called important world events. But these tender moments remind us what we have always been fighting for – the force that animated the Stonewall Riots: **The freedom to be ourselves, to love ourselves, and to love each other.** (Hugh n.d.)

Being Queer in Florida



Figure 2: Online news article. Protestors stand in front of Florida State Senator Ileana Garcia's office after the passage of the Parental Rights in Education bill on March 9. Joe Raedle/Getty Images.

Discrimination experienced by transgender workers in Florida



The Williams Institute, March 2015

Figure 3: Employment Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Florida. Bar Chart: Gilberto Corona.

In Florida, LGBTQ+ rights remain both important and under threat. Figure 2 shows protesters against Florida's HB 1557, also known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill. Data retrieved from this NPR article shows that 21% of gay and lesbian youth and 22% of bisexual youth have attempted suicide, compared to 7% of straight youth. Figure 3 shows quantitative data illustrating the context, importance, and urgency of this work in the realm of employment. Based on these initial explorations, I anticipated collaborations centered in the local Queer community which includes a wide range within the spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities. This data address some of the many issues the local transgender community faces.



### Key Concepts (for framing the research)

What many designers don't realize is that they have the power to truly create change. As problem solvers, collaborators, and challengers, we have the power to develop approaches around systemic impact, from micro-campaigns to macro policy changes. Our mode of being moves beyond visual to intellectual and actionable (Carroll 2020).

Antionette Carroll is the founder of the CRXLAB. Creative Reaction Lab's work is based on the belief that "systems of oppression, inequality, inequity are by design; therefore, they can and *must* be redesigned" (Creative Reaction Lab 2020). Influenced by Carroll's design process Equity-Centered Community Design (Creative Reaction Lab 2018), I assume a position as a re-designer for justice due to my close relationship with the Gainesville drag community. CRXLAB states that "those who are impacted by the scenario" are the ones who have the power to change it, to redesign it. I assume that my role as (re)designer is not to design from my own point of view but to connect with co-researchers, equals, and (re)designers from within the community. "Design' refers to the ability to envision a desirable future, create attainable projects and, subsequently, strive to render them tangible reality" (Nelson & Stolterman 2012).

Dr. Renata M. Leitão, social justice-focused design researcher, and founder of the virtual conferences PIVOT as well as co-chairing at the DRS Pluriversal Design Special Interest Group (PluriSIG). Leitão writes that "Paulo Freire (1970) has suggested that people who live within oppressive circumstances can avoid fatalism by apprehending their current situation as a historical reality susceptible to transformation through their own agency" (Leitão and Roth, 2020). Approaching the term "culture" allows one to harness design as a tool to arrive at desired futures; agency and collaboration are critical to this process. "Design practice can be understood as the medium between values and ideals of a culture and the tangible reality (Buchanan, 2001; Tunstall, 2013; Leitão and Roth 2020; Noel and Leitão 2018). Therefore, the driving force of any community design is that community itself, and what that community considers important.

Freire was a Brazilian educator, sociologist, philosopher and advocate of critical pedagogy whose definitions of oppression and critical approach to pedagogy are foundational to scholars who have shaped the teaching of many disciplines, and design is no exception. Dr. Lesley-Ann Noel is a design researcher co-chair at the DRS Pluriversal Design Special Interest Group (PluriSIG) whose work centers design through emancipatory, critical, and anti-hegemonic lenses, focusing on equity and social justice. The particular case of Noel (2020) invites us to re-think a design curriculum beyond the western canons. "Using an emancipatory research perspective would help designers to focus the development of research that is accountable to and gives voice to the communities that they are serving" (Noel 2016, 459). Noel's work is grounded on decolonial perspectives that are based on sociological theories. My research research presents a framework that builds on the notion of community and (re)designers as equal participants in the process of design.

Design for social innovation is a term that encapsulates collaboration models grounded in horizontality, more specifically in theories that have been produced by scholars in the global south and Indigenous communities' knowledge. Madina Tlostanova is Professor of Postcolonial Feminisms at Linköping University, and her research work centers on western epistemic canons to decolonize the main modern/colonial institutions for knowledge production and distribution. "Design not only materializes various human needs but also embodies our spiritual values, the zeitgeist of different époques, while at the same time synthesizing new cultural, moral and social values" (Tlostanova 2017). Tlostanova's endeavor to decolonize design practice centers on the idea that we live in a post-capitalist world. Her conceptual framework allows me to communicate the purpose of this research and my understanding of participatory co-design methods. "In emancipatory research, there is the epistemological assumption that knowledge is defined from multiple cultural lenses while there is also the acknowledgment of issues related to power" (Mertens, 2015; Noel and Leitao 2018).

Co-design is an umbrella term often used as a synonym for participatory design; these two concepts are rooted in participatory-action research which, as its name suggests, is grounded in research, action and collaboration. However, participatory design is a term associated with western epistemology due to its origins in the Scandinavian school of design. On the other hand, co-design is a term used by scholars from both Global South and Global North. Co-design aims to approach complex problems by offering myriad tools influenced by models that go beyond design practice and, more importantly, beyond the epistemologies of the current civilization model of capitalism. The collaborative experiences nourished by the MxD program since 2019 define my understanding of co-design.

Dr. Sarah Corona Berkin (Universidad de Guadalajara) is an intercultural researcher. She is also director at the Maria Sibylla Merian Center for Advanced Latin American Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Her work includes interculturality and participation of Indigenous peoples and horizontal methodology for the social and cultural sciences.

In Horizontal Methodologies we aim to work from the conflicts generated by coexistence to build autonomy for voices and viewpoints, in order to create a new knowing with the other so scientific virtue becomes a political instrument for creating within the public space a better place to stand for everyone. (Corona Berkin 2017)

In *En Diálogo. Metodologías horizontales en las Ciencias Sociales* Sarah Corona and Olaf Kaltmeier (Bielefeld University) described horizontality as the horizon, a vision for reciprocity and collaboration between co-researchers. Horizontality is a methodology for social sciences that aims to produce knowledge based on reflections between subjects as a result of a dialog. Authors describe dialog from its etymological definitions based on logos in opposition. This assumes that dialogues are not merely based on orality; thus, meaning is created through gestures, artistic expressions, and materiality (Kaltmeier and Corona Berkin 2012, 13-15) that are often found on cosmovisions that align with notions of el "Buen Vivir or *Eu Zen*" (Kaltmeier and Corona Berkin 2012, 19; Escobar, 2018).

Horizontal methods offer a way to create meaning guided by a shared vision of social change. To engage in a horizontal process, we must then understand theories of power and social structures. To truthfully engage in reciprocity, we construct/re-configure ourselves as we allow ourselves to challenge our paradigms and preconceptions in both researcher and co-researchers.

Through these dialogues and autocritical reflections, we can arrive at the foundations and purpose of our fieldwork, which is in itself the problem statement. Horizontal methods challenge academia and epistemological ideals of knowledge production as they understand the privilege held by academics and their affiliations with hegemonic structures of power.

Arturo Escobar is a Colombian-American anthropologist whose work focuses on political ecology, anthropology of development, social movements, anti-globalization movements, and post-development theory. His book *Designs for the pluriverse: radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds* presents a vision for design theory and practice that aligns with social justice and relationships to Earth. *Designs for the pluriverse* is both a social and design theory. Escobar's proposal is a framework for "An Outline of Ontological Design" (Escobar 2018, 105-133) and "Design for Transition" (Escobar 2018, 138-164). This is a comprehension at the intersection of "Earth, Territories, Ancestrality, Un/Sustainability, Autonomy, Futurity, and Sustainment, the pluriverse" (Escobar 2018, 189). Escobar's works take inspiration from Indigenous movements, in particular, the work of Colombian groups and the Zapatist movement. The efforts of the Zapatistas of Chiapas in Mexico center on Indigenous knowledge. These movements include equitable gender relations and autonomy, among other horizontal relationships. The Zapatistas shared their vision as "Un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos" (A world where many worlds fit), which Escobar shares as a motto for this work and what he calls the pluriverse.

Escobar invites us to rethink modernity and post-capitalism toward a "world-making practice of design" that is not only human-centered or situated in the Anthropocene but also ecological and sustainable. His approach invites us to rethink design practice to a place-based framework that includes the "interdependence of all beings" (Escobar 2018, 151). In my perspective, perhaps the most important takeaway from his approach is the contributions to ontological design theory. Escobar cites Anne-Marie Willis, professor of design theory and design philosophy. "We design our world, while our world acts back on us and designs us" (Willis 2006, 80). This approach helps me understand the concept of agency and the idea that everyone is a designer. Assuming a (re)designer's role allows us to arrive at what Escobar defines as the pluriverse.

While Queer studies is not the main source grounding this research, I kept it in mind throughout. It is useful to note a few instances of overlap between Queer theory and co-design here. This may serve as a brief outline for a studio process, but I imagine there is a book to be written analyzing the co-design model from a Queer lens. Queer theory necessarily draws from the margins, bringing what is unseen and unspoken to the forefront. Authors and Women & Gender Studies professors. Dana Luciano (Rutgers University), and Mel Y Chen (U.C. Berkeley), co-edited *Queer Inhumanisms*, a special issue of *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*. Luciano & Chen write that “Queer has been used variously to denote the unsettling of norms, to call attention to how sexuality, gender, and race are constituted and regulated by hierarchies of humanness” (Luciano & Chen, 2015). Similarly, co-design seeks to reposition marginal (geographic and identity margins) at the center to focus a model on equity. Both strategies of thought seek to undermine mainstream established models of knowledge, questioning those and wondering why other ways of knowing have been diminished. The concern with decolonizing our knowledge systems rings true for Queer studies as well. And both systems often seek to critique relations of power, capitalism, heteronormativity, and western supremacy.

Not only do both areas of inquiry seek similar goals at the outset, but they also proceed in ways that are remarkably similar. Queer studies focuses on objects and materiality of the past; these artifacts are left in the loss of an active Queer historicization. Likewise, co-design models insist on materiality as means for researching, benchmarking progress, and producing positive futures. Like Escobar, Luciano and Chen promote the idea of the non-human to explore interconnectedness. “Queer ecocriticism also takes up an understanding of ecology as naming not the idea of the 'natural world' as something set apart from humans but a complex system of interdependency” (Luciano y Chen 2015, 188). The role of non-humans, efforts to honor the earth, and the emphasis on the deep meanings of objects like sequins and boas are considered valuable in shaping a Queered co-design effort.

Stephanie Springgay (McMaster University) and Sarah E. Truman (University of Melbourne) are co-directors of *WalkingLab*, a research-creation project. *WalkingLab* advances the theory and practice of critical walking methodologies. “We draw from walking events that ask us to imagine a past, present, and future that are radically different from ongoing settler colonialism and White supremacy” (Springgay and Truman 2019, 86). Springgay and Truman’s work in *Qualitative Research and Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* promote that “As an archive it is not rooted in a fixed notion of a past but rather a futurity and urgency, shifting between fields of destruction, subversion, and regeneration” (Springgay and Truman 2017, 860). Finally, both threads of scholarship are desperately seeking equity and justice for communities. They both look toward a future that depends on fairness, a balance of power, even a destruction of power dynamics.

These pressure points between the two should not suggest a perfect marriage. As I discovered during the preliminary research, drag and local drag history depends on a delicate fulcrum of isolation from the mainstream and emphasis on inner life, community legends, and storytelling. To arrive at the pluriverse, “a world where many worlds fit”, design must honor the independence and power drag carries within Queer subculture, while also allowing it an facilitating interaction with accessible histories, mainstream cultures, and academic relational positioning.



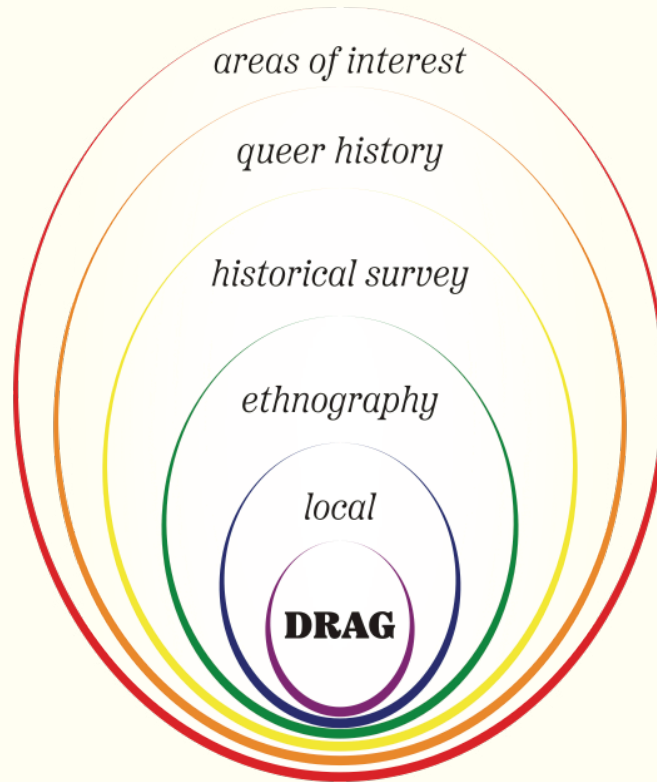
**Figure 4:** Benefit event for Pulse victims at the University Club, the only gay bar in Gainesville, Florida. (J'adore Boheme LaGore [@theadorelagore] 2017).

**Research Question based on Social Context**

- **What are the stories of queer people and drag performers in Gainesville?**

**And**

- **How do we harness the power of design to accessibly sustain local drag culture and queer histories?**

**Intersectional approach**

**Figure 5:** Areas of interest diagram. Gilberto Corona.

My research lives at the intersection of different areas of interest (Figure 5). The main areas are Queer studies, historical surveys, ethnographic research, Queer design, and ephemera. Based on initial explorations about ephemera, I understand that taking seriously the design of ephemera could be a way to harness design's power to expand design canons and develop a method for archiving unrepresented groups' histories. Queerness informs every aspect of my work and provides a focus for my research.

Initial explorations for this project were reflections concerning Queer history in broad national, state, and local settings. This contextualized my approach to the more specific question of how to document Queer cultural histories in Gainesville. Other humanities areas influence design practice, ethnography being one of them. I based my research frameworks on horizontality and pluriversal education perspectives based on action research, grounded in ethnographic work. One of the aims of this project was that the collaborations that emerge will also serve as instruments to document local Queer history, especially from local drag performers. My research work presents a case study that explores the effectiveness of co-design in a Queer intersectional approach.

## Methodology



My approach to this project uses **Co-design Design Frameworks**. *Social Impact Design, Inclusive Design, Participatory Design, Human-centered Design, Decolonial Design, and Co-design* —familiar terms within (social) design practice—.

**Figure 6:** A healthy thriving community framework diagram. Gilberto Corona.

The north star of this project was to create a framework that sustains a healthy, thriving community (Figure 6). The approach was built on co-design frameworks, participatory methodology, and design methods from the design thinking process.

Antionette Carroll’s call for a critical approach to design thinking became clear during my July 2021 attendance at How Design Thinking Protects White Supremacy, one of the CRXLAB webinars. As Carroll states:

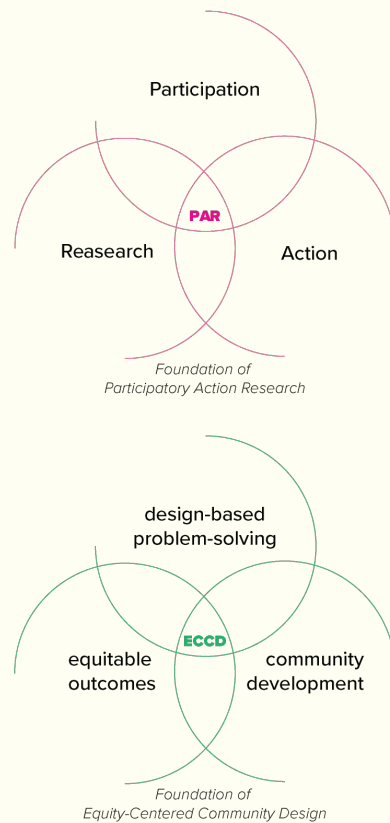
We’re so focused on the buzzword and the steps of design thinking that we forget the overarching lessons within it. People who are too focused on its base level are not diving deeply enough into its rich overlap of behavioral science, anthropology, sociology, design, science, and business. We need to strive for mastery instead of just buying in. (Carroll 2016)

Carroll’s approach to design permitted me to visualize social design practice. Moreover, Carroll’s work allowed me to position myself as a POC and as a (re)designer. This study presents how I’m serving to the queer community I’m a part while also serving as an ally of the trans community I’m close to. Antionette Carroll’s framework allowed me to undertake the role of (re)designer and engage with co-designers (drag performers and allies).

On decolonizing design, Tlostanova Madina states that:

Decolonial Design, then, would not be a mere tool of modeling the environment so that it can model the human being. Rather, it would be a creative and dynamic reflection and realization of the people’s forgotten and discarded needs, wishes, and longings, which would be inevitably linked to the local cosmologies, ethics, and systems of knowledge seen not as the dead and museumized past, or as a conservative fundamentalist dystopia, but as a living and breathing present and a promise for the future. (Tlostanova 2017, 4).

Madina Tlostanova’s claims overlap with the concepts of decolonial aesthetics as well as the systems of knowledge and cosmologies I’ve encountered through conversations with drag performers.



**PAR**

- Collective process
- Reflection-action
- Non-linear
- Iterative
- Evaluation
- Mutual learning
- “Others” like “them”

**ECCD\***

*We believe in...*

- Historical context (**See**)
- Radical Inclusion (**Be seen**)
- Process as product (**Foresee**)

*Which requires us to...*

- Design at the margins
- Start with your self
- Cede power
- Make the invisible visible
- Speak to the future

**Figure 7:** Venn Diagramming Equity-Centered Community Design process and Participatory Action Research Methodology. Gilberto Corona.

Equity-Centered Community Design is a unique creative problem-solving process based on equity and humility-building, integrating history and healing practices, addressing power dynamics, and co-creating with the community. This design process focuses on a community’s culture and needs so that they can gain tools to dismantle systemic oppression and create a future with equity for all. ECCD is one of the processes in the emerging Equity Design Field (Creative Reaction Lab 2018). “The ultimate goal of social designers should be to nurture local communities’ capacity to (re)create their own autonomous trajectories, in pursuit of the good life as their culture defines it” (Leitão and Roth 2020).

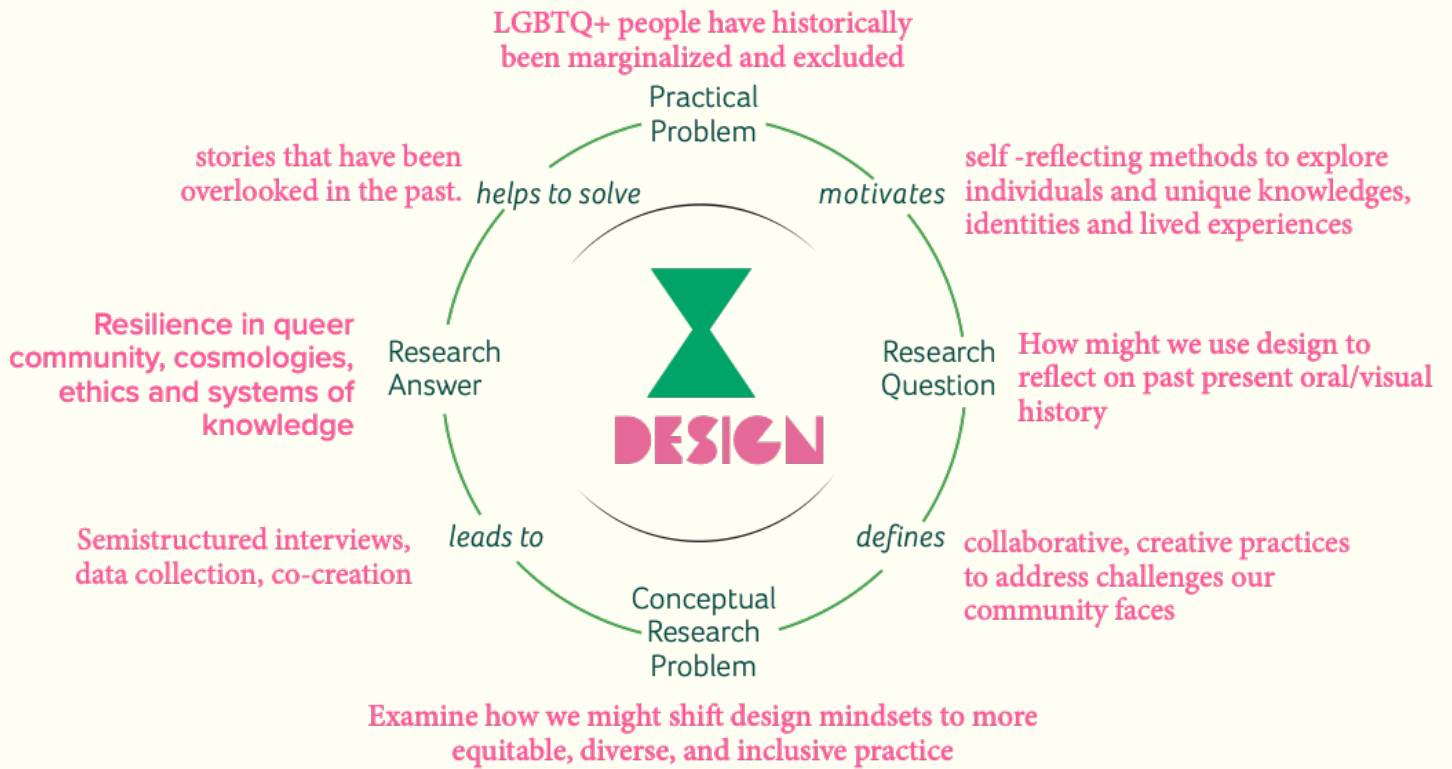
Asset-Based Community Development focuses on the strengths and capacities of local communities. It rests on the conviction that sustainable development emerges from within a community, not from outside, by mobilizing and building upon local resources. In contrast, most conventional development work can be characterized as needs-based, i.e., interventions typically focus on problems and deficiencies. This has the unfortunate effect of encouraging communities to denigrate themselves as victims and to put their worst face forward in an effort to attract external assistance. It also leads concerned outsiders into becoming charitable ‘fixers.’ (Bergdall 2003, 1)

As framed by the Equity-Centered Community Design process (Creative Reaction Lab 2018), in this project I aimed to:

- Invite Diverse Co-Creators
- Build Humility and Empathy
- Define & Assess Topic and Community Needs
- Ideate Approaches
- Rapid Prototype
- Test and Learn
- History and Healing
- Acknowledge, Share, and Dismantle Power Constructs

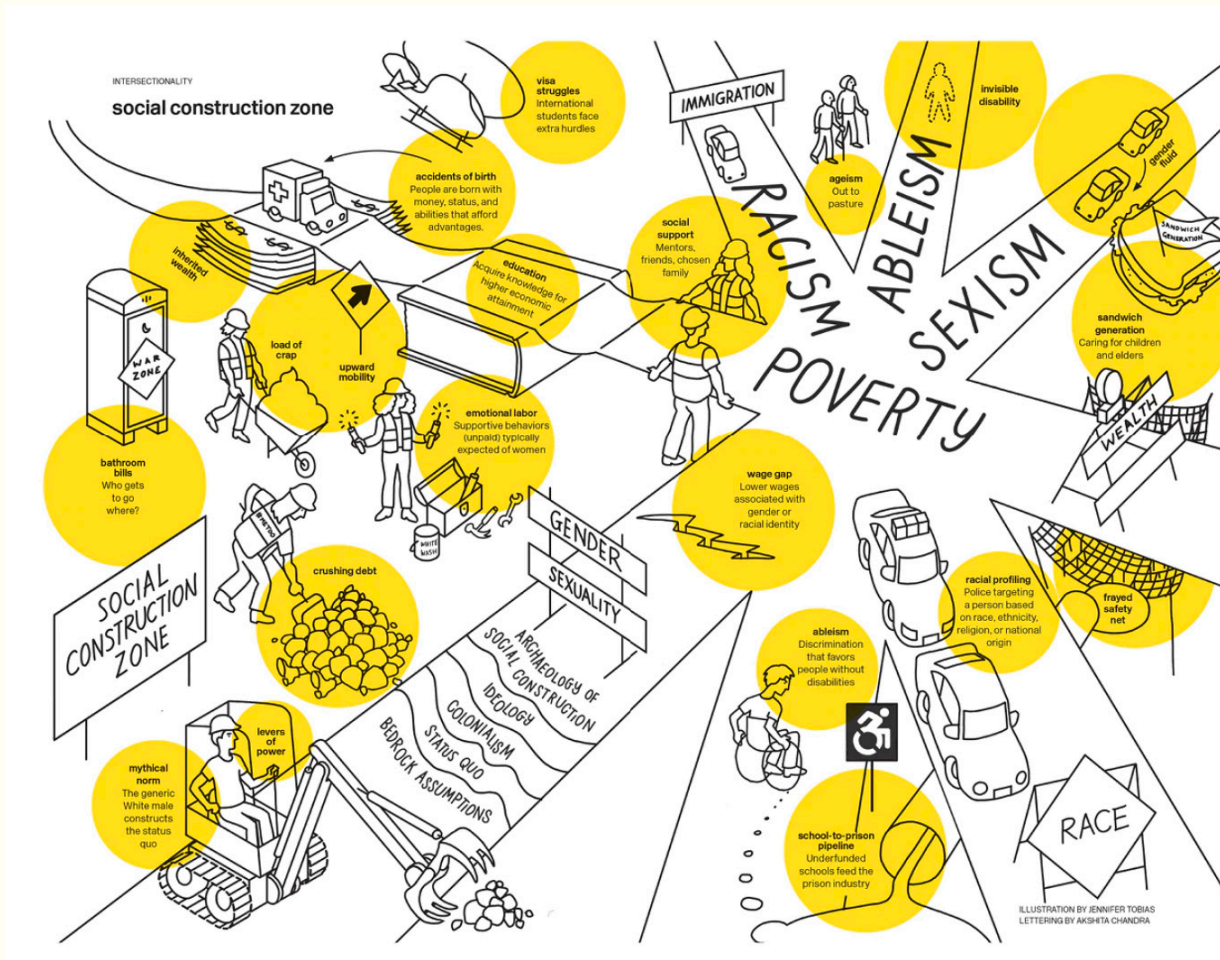


**Problem Statement**



**Figure 8:** Conceptual Problem diagram for how to approach LGBTQ+ stories through co-design. Gilberto Corona.

The importance of this research is centered around the fact that Queer spaces have historically been safe spaces for LGBTQ+ communities. (Return to Figures 2 and 3 to review why safe spaces are critical for LGBTQ+ communities in Florida). By exploring Gainesville drag scene, it became clear to me that I was encountering black transgender women. For that specific reason, it was important to explore feminism, race and gender.



**Appendix 1:** Illustration by Jennifer Tobias, Lettering by Akshita Candra. Source: *Extra Bold: A Feminist, Inclusive, Anti-racist, Nonbinary Field Guide for Graphic Designers* (Lupton et al. 2021, 18-19)

Dr. Jennifer Tobias is a scholar and illustrator. With Ellen Lupton, Tobias co-authored *Extra Bold: A Feminist, Inclusive, Anti-racist, Nonbinary Field Guide for Graphic Designers*. Tobias writes "An image of a traffic accident can help understand the concept of intersectionality" (Lupton et al. 2021, 16). Understanding how these identity configurations influence individuals allows me to understand the concept of intersectionality. One of the main factors is that people whose identity is at the intersection (Appendix 1) rely on spaces like local gay bars as a place for community, a sense of belonging, and sometimes even as an income source. As I mention intersectionality, I acknowledge feminism as the movement that leads to these perspectives, also associated with Queer studies. Drag culture might look like a specific research topic. Yet I realize that the drag universe intersects with many voices and cultural sensitivities. I understand drag as an art form, a culture, a means of creation of safe spaces, a political discussion, and an economic niche. Approaching this topic demands gender-inclusive perspectives that can also be a model for horizontal research.

## Methodology

In this project, I used participatory design methodology to research, identify, communicate, and co-design deliverables with local drag community members who perform or have performed in Gainesville, Florida. I employed generative research and methods of design thinking to document the stories of drag performance, mainly through video ethnography and semi-structured qualitative interviews (page 41-44), Venn diagrams (figure 7), stakeholder ecosystems (figure 10), brainstorming sessions (figure 14), co-design workshops (page 45-53), analysis of the workshop using an asymmetric clustering matrix (figure 46), fieldwork, user research, a research planning survey (figure 11), and an opportunity mind map (figure 17). The methods used are shown in the project timeline (figure 9).

This project followed guidelines established by the University of Florida's Institutional Review Board (IRB 202102185). My IRB outlined the process and anticipated outcomes for the project and ensured safety for project participants. The performers I engaged with adults over 18. I used an inclusive process to communicate the oral and visual history of the Gainesville Queer community, particularly as related to drag performance. I learned about the performers, their contexts, hopes, dreams, aspirations, and challenges, in order to communicate these with the Gainesville community at large in a digital format that is accessible. These stories will be shared, with participants' permission, in the resulting visual ethnography. As a designer, I also continue to learn from this design experience/partnership and continue to create new scholarship relevant to graphic design's disciplinary discourses.

Proposed Framework

- Data Collection** understand context, evaluating sources for relevance and reliability.
- Connect** with performers, leaders, and collectives.
- Understand** political panorama and responsiveness from the community concerning local resources and creation of safe spaces.
- Create** a device, strategy to identify needs reflecting on local history.
- Build** graphic materials to represent the drag community and create opportunities for collaboration.

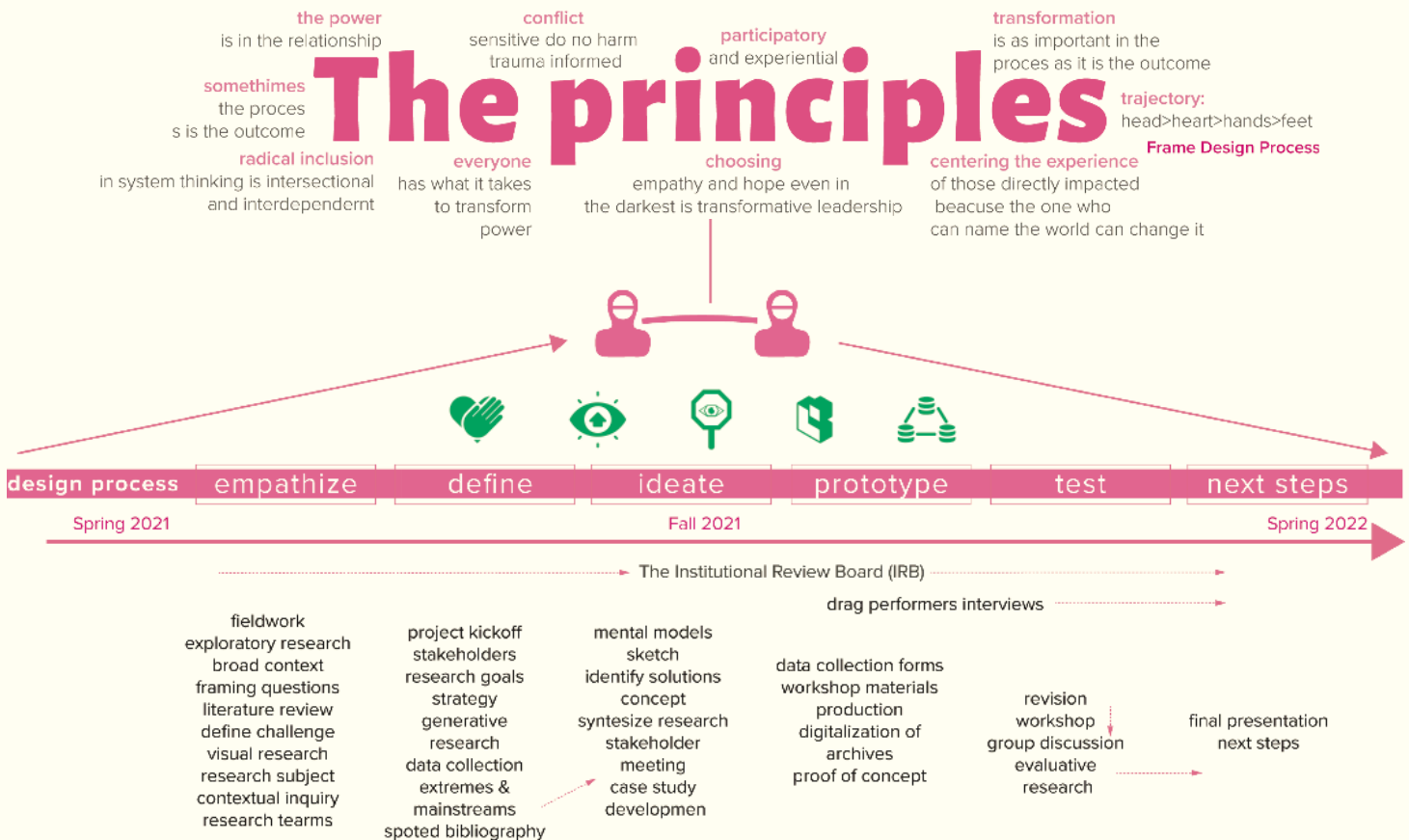


Figure 9: Project Timeline and principles of design for justice. Gilberto Corona.

Principles of Design

I decided to use the principles outlined by the Frame Design Process to create the project outline (Figure 9). As explained by the notions of social design in this document and the problem-solving approach to design known as design thinking, I used these stages to describe the design process through a mental model. Utilizing this strategy is explained by design researcher Nigel Cross who is a pillar of the development of design as an academic discipline. He states, “Designerly ways of knowing rest on the manipulation of non-verbal codes in the material culture; these codes translate ‘messages’ either way between concrete objects and abstract requirements; they facilitate the constructive, solution-focused thinking of the designer” (Cross 2006).

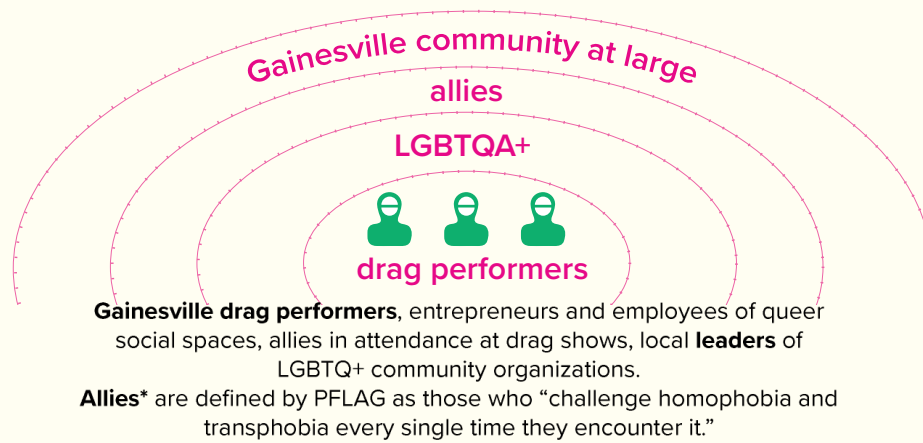


Figure 10: Stakeholder ecosystem. Gilberto Corona.



Higher level of advocacy promoting LGBTQ+ rights and safe spaces.



A nonprofit organization founded by a drag performer that offers camps retreats for trans youth.



The University Club, only gay bar in Gainesville and the main venue for performance shows.



Pride Community Center of North Central Florida founded in 1990 and responsible for local pride event.



The Florida Queer History Project, founded in June 2016, is an archive of oral histories dedicated to highlighting the queer experience.



Podcast about oral history of drag in Gainesville.



A nonprofit organization founded by a drag performer for POC trans population.

Figure 11: Research planning survey, recognizing collective efforts. Gilberto Corona.

**Potential partners were identified, connecting with various institutions seeking graphic materials and historical context.**

Identifying potential partners during the planning phase allowed me to locate resources. I engaged to some degree with each of these organizations. I was able to discern to which extent sustained collaboration was possible and whether or not they could provide a better understanding of the local context. I found that the non-profit organizations founded by drag performers were the best way to recognize collective efforts and also engage with past stories of Gainesville’s drag scene.

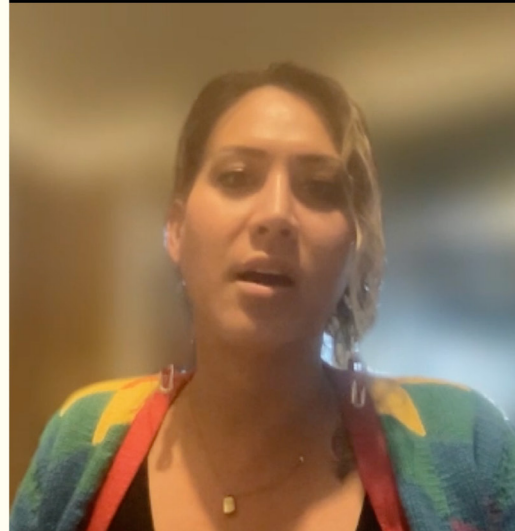
## Insights from video ethnography

Faith Taylor



Faith is a party hostess. You know, my fans my friends, and they're all very important to me. And, you know, without the patrons of the bar and it would not be possible. So I always pay them respect by mingling with them before and after the show.

I also have a big passion for the lesbian community, is a very unsung community you know, if you ever walked into a gay bar in the eighties, nineties and early 2000, you would notice men in thongs and see those dancing on the bar, but you never really saw any burlesque dancers or female Go-Go dancers and so I partnered with the Les Vixens burlesque troupe to create Vixens, which is actually got its start on the University Club stage on a Thursday night.



**Figure 12:** Dominic Guiriba. A Jacksonville transgender woman created a TRANScending Adolescence nonprofit for transgender teens to learn coping skills. (Cravey 2020)

I've talked with Christina Guiriba via zoom about the nonprofit TRANScending Adolescence. Guiriba shared insights about how she founded the nonprofit and her vision and goals for the association. She talked about her branding and expressed that she would be willing to network with designers who could help increase awareness about the transcending Adolescence's work. Guiriba shared some of the challenges the association encountered during the pandemic. Due to the pandemic, the first summer camp event will take place during the summer of 2022.

Faith G. Taylor is Guiriba's drag persona. Faith has a long trajectory as a professional drag performer across the country. She is also the host every Thursday at the local gay bar. She shared, "I was a cast member of the Metro. That was where I met Lady Pearl, who was a staple in the Drag community in Gainesville for a very long time. She ran what is now the longest-running drag show in the state of Florida, which is *Thursday Nights at the University Club in Gainesville.*"

## Context

### Insights from video ethnography

Natalia Dupree

Data Collection Build Create Connect Understand

**Drag used to be exclusive, and people would pay for drag, so you put on those fabulous costumes and show off.**

I start performing. I started out when I was snicking into **melody club** when I was 15 years of age and doing shows, and we would get \$50 back then, you know, we would get pay that back then. Now they are still paying 50 dollars here in Gainesville. And I think that a little disrespectful when girls spend \$50 on stacking.

So it's just, I wish that I had some free time on my hands to actually put a platform here for the girls to perform and for them to be paid their worth.



**Figure 13:** Regina Livingston speaks to the county commission on March 22 (Cabrera 2022)

Ms. Regina Livingston, is the CEO of Unspoken Treasure Society. UTS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit with chapters in Gainesville, Jacksonville, and Atlanta. "We want to make sure that every Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming voice of color can be heard and equally understood" ("Where the Trans Community Come Together to Make A Difference" n.d.). I asked Regina about her association, their vision, and their hopes for the future. I asked about their image and how UTS utilizes design to create awareness about the voice of trans people of color. She expressed that she was looking for help to re-design her website. She also commented that some people have a misconception that UTS is exclusively for trans people of color. She mentioned that she needed help for a Spanish campaign that can help promote to other POC. On March 21, 2022, along with the The Pride Community Center of North Central Florida, UTS and PFLAG Gainesville hosted the We Say GAYnesville Rally Saturday at the Heartwood Soundstage in downtown Gainesville.

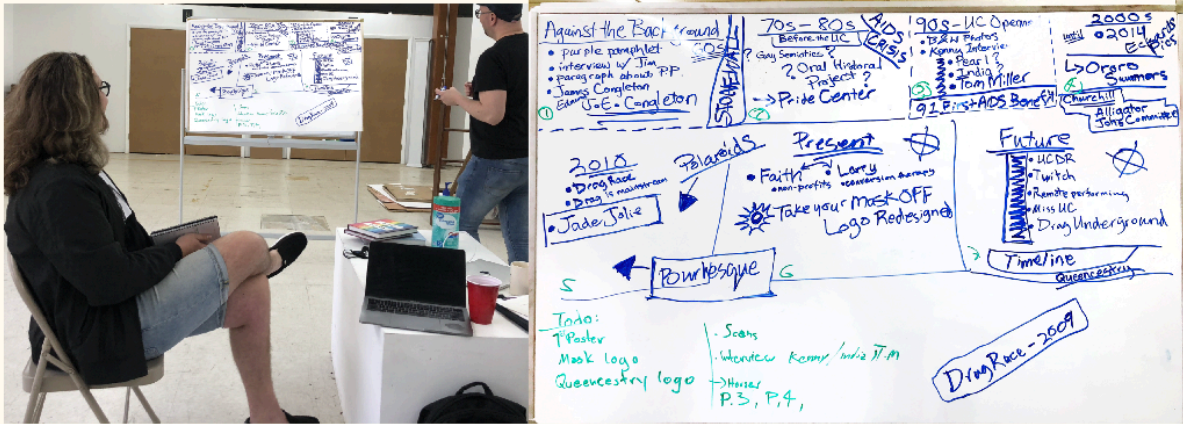
Regina's drag persona is Natalia Dupree. I asked about her drag last name. Dupree is a dynasty of re-named drag performers. She also shared about her upbringing as a drag performer. Dupree started performing at the Melody Club, a now-closed bar. She shared some anecdotes about the time when the University Club and the Melody Club were opened. She shared about how certain drag performers were associated with one or the other.

### Preliminary exploration

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



Joshua Reed shares found imagery from past performer Lady Pearl



Joshua Reed, Budd Dees and I engage in a brainstorm session to map out a timeline about the history of drag in Gainesville

Figure 14: Joshua Reed, Budd Dees, and Gilberto Corona gather to brainstorm about a tentative chronology of local drag history. Joshua shares found imagery from former performer Lady Pearl.

### Preliminary exploration

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



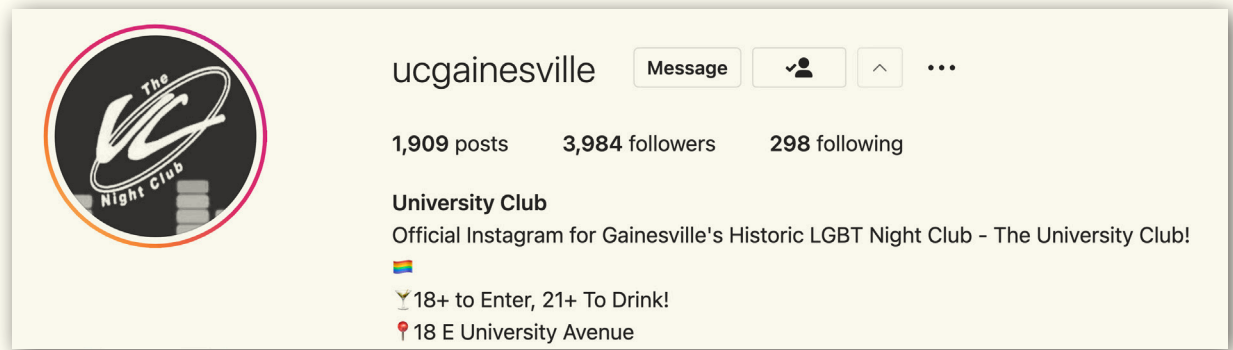
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|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Poster 1: 60's, Stonewall era, Lavender scare, UF</b></p> <p>Against the background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purple pamphlet</li> <li>• interview with "Jim"</li> <li>• PP thick description</li> <li>• J.E Congleton picture?</li> </ul> | <p><b>Poster 3: 90's, UC Open, (91) first AIDS benefit event</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B&amp;W Drag portraits</li> <li>• Kenny Interview (30 years of UC)</li> <li>• Lady Pearl/India Brooke</li> <li>• Tom Miller Documentary</li> </ul>                  | <p><b>Poster 6: Faith Taylor, trans youth association, pastor Larry Green leader</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profits</li> <li>• Take your mask off Logo (previous mural)</li> <li>• Covid</li> </ul>                 |
| <p><b>Poster 2: TBD 70's-80's, AIDS crisis</b></p> <p>Before UC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pride center</li> <li>• Associations movements</li> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Poster 4: 2000's (photo scans),</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ororo Summers</li> </ul> <p><b>Poster 5: 2010's Jade Jolie, (polaroids)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drag Race</li> <li>• JJ interview</li> <li>• Burlesque</li> </ul> | <p><b>Poster 7: Future, drag houses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UCDR (local competence)</li> <li>• Miss UC (local pageant)</li> <li>• Twitch, virtual drag</li> <li>• Drag Underground</li> <li>• Queencestry</li> </ul> |

**Joshua Reed and Budd Dees (brainstorm)**

Figure 15: Brainstorm clustering from meeting with Joshua Reed, Budd Dees, and Gilberto Corona



## Context

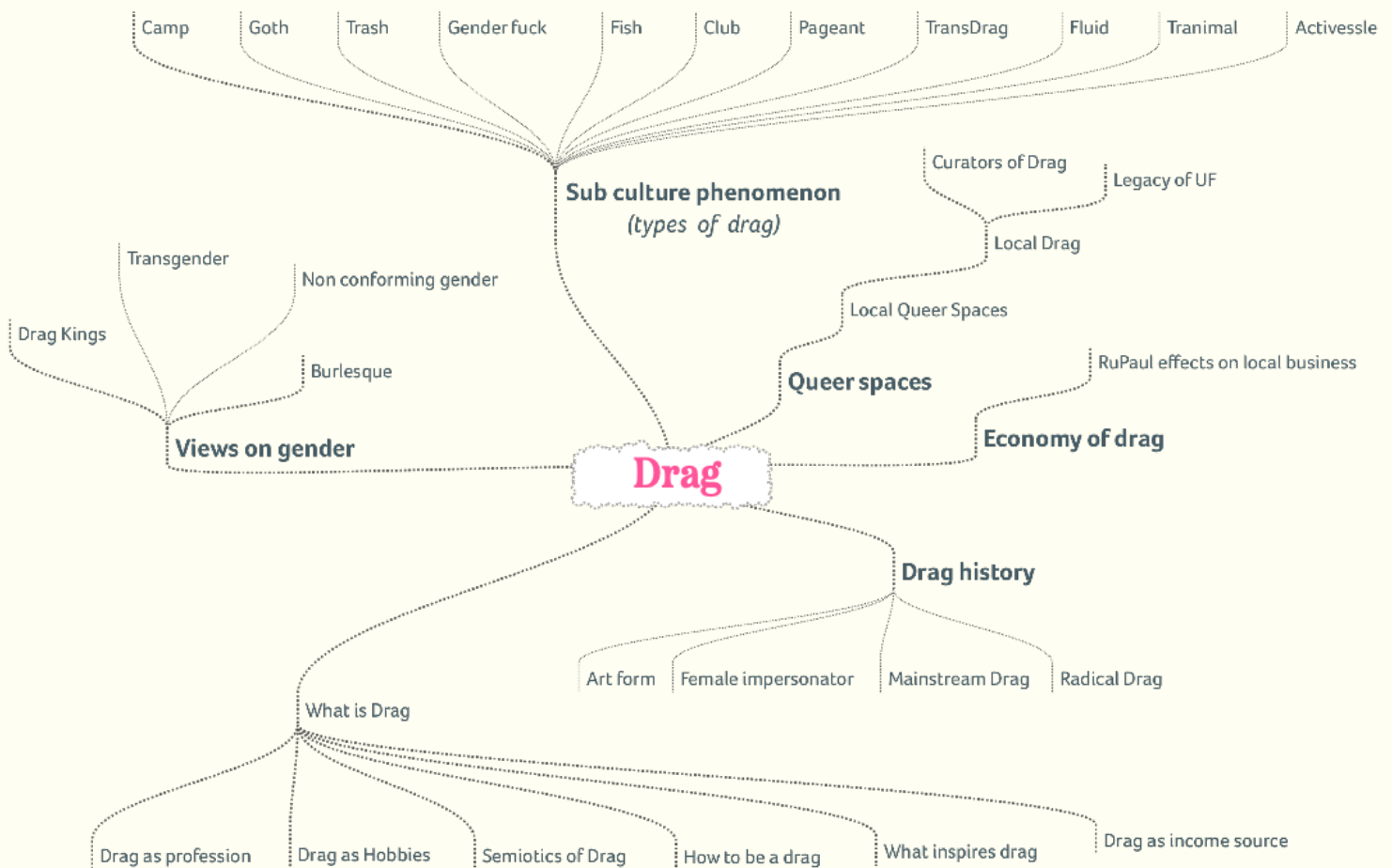


**Figure 16:** Official Instagram for Gainesville's Historic LGBT Night Club - The University Club! ("University Club [@ucgainesville] • Instagram Photos and Videos" 2022)

Their Instagram "Official Instagram for Gainesville's Historic LGBT Night Club - The University Club! ("University Club [@ucgainesville] Instagram Photos and Videos" 2022) account is full of memories and tenure moments and reminds us why "the place to be is UC".

Joshua Reed is responsible for designing posters and managing the social networks for the University Club. Joshua is a self-taught professional drag/fashion photographer who has developed the vernacular aesthetic of the Gainesville drag scene for years. Reed's label, Joshua Reed Photography, is also responsible for documenting a living archive of the drag legends that have performed at the University Club.

Reed's input was valuable to this project. He is very knowledgeable about the local context, and he is responsible for the curation and documentation of the oral history of the Gainesville Drag Scene. His insights allowed me to map the blueprints of what our idea could be if expressed as a book or magazine about the history of drag in Gainesville. This was a critical moment for the project. He served as a liaison for the Research planning survey. Thanks to this meeting, I was able to narrow down which performers I needed to connect with.

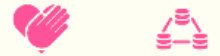


**Figure 17:** Opportunity Mind Map, mapping areas of opportunities around drag subject. Gilberto Corona

## Becoming Familiar with Drag Culture

At the beginning of the project, I had a general knowledge about the topic of drag derived from being a fan of this art form and, more importantly, by the fact that my marriage has put me in a role that might be considered a drag show producer. I'm someone who is often designing promotionals or carrying around props, running the spotlight, or even helping queens with their costumes. I was recently defined as a drag father by a local drag performer called Aldo (Emma Gratton). Aldo is like me, a Mexican immigrant living in Gainesville. I met Aldo at the local gay bar in 2021. During our initial conversation, he expressed a desire to become a drag queen. I introduced him to my husband, who offered a "hot spot" at a downtown drag event. Emma became his drag daughter, and now I'm also a drag father because of that. In addition I used some of the terminology explored during the preliminary research with Reed to create an opportunity mind map (figure 17). This method of visualization allowed me to spot tertiary resources that helped me frame the context of the research.

Context (broader)



Understand Data Collection

“It all started with two drag transgender women”

Drag in history



Marsha P Johnson



Sylvia Rivera



Greenwich Village

MAINSTREAM

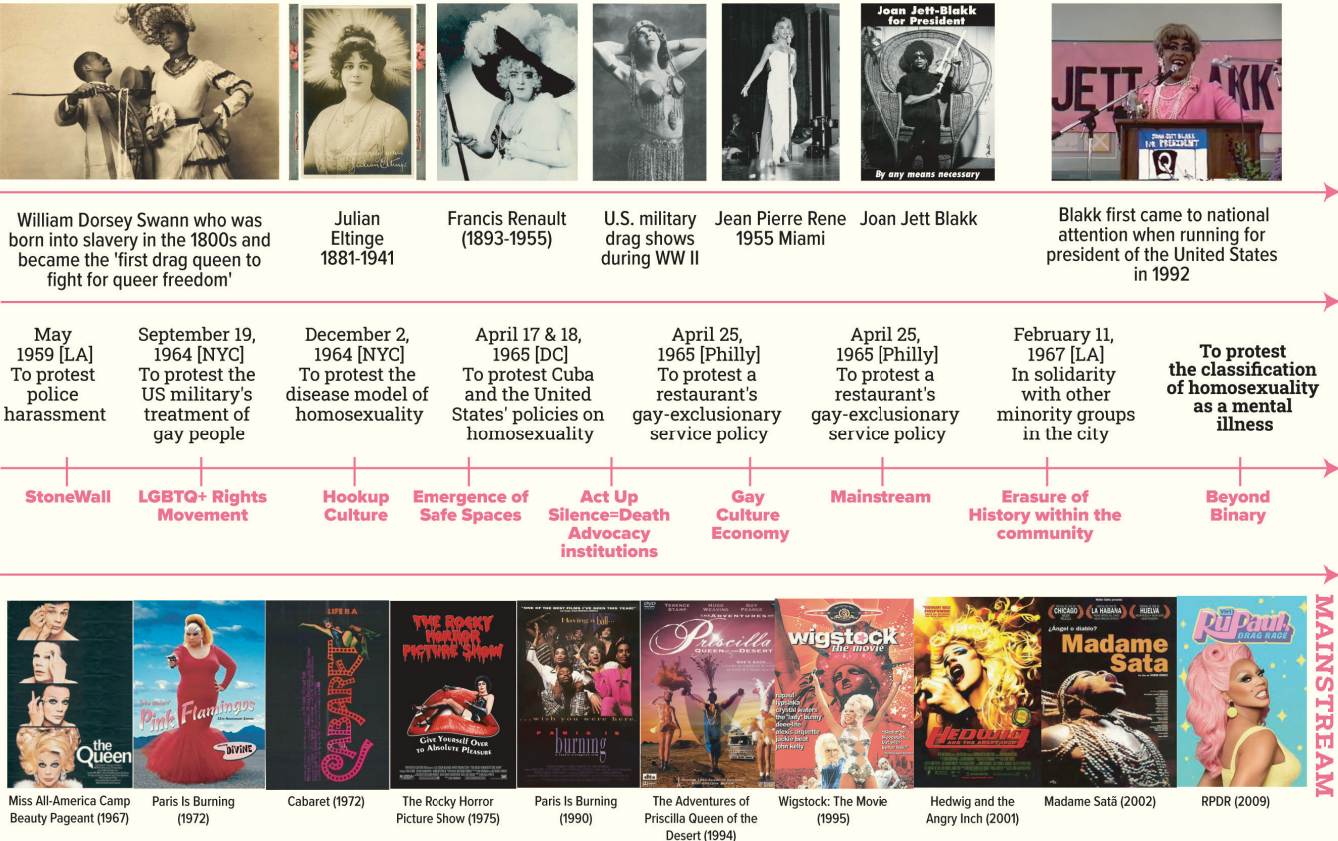


Figure 18: Visualization of generative research showing a broad national context of the subject of drag. Gilberto Corona.

Visualizing a broad timeline of the drag subject allowed me to communicate an understanding of a national political/historical panorama that reflects a broader context. Some of the items included in this visualization are common knowledge. For me, this was a crucial part of my preliminary research. One of the initial inquiries for my study was to arrive at a better understanding of drag performance and drag communities to avoid cross-questioning. In retrospect, this allowed me to keep the semi-structured interviews more conversational

Context (Florida)



Understand Data Collection

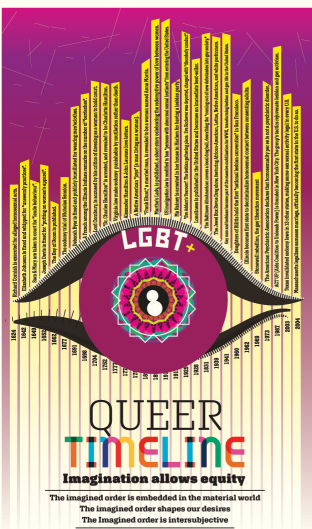
Literature review (secondary / tertiary sources)



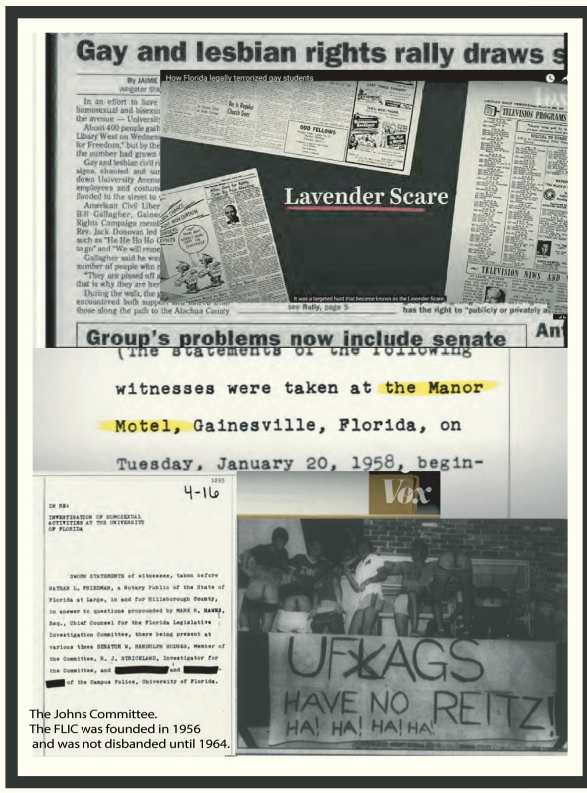
Figure 19: Visualization of generative research showing the subject of Queer in the context of Florida. Gilberto Corona.

As someone relatively new to the culture of Florida, I needed to visualize the context of Queer life in Florida (Figure 18; see the literature review for more details). My existing knowledge was limited by the intellectual milieu of my path and positionality. I found this exploration to be challenging as I acknowledged unexamined beliefs. It is important to emphasize that there's a lack of accessibility to queer archival records. Most of the queer archives are found inside libraries in University systems, for example, the University of South Florida. The USF Libraries' Special Collections, Collection ASM0231 - Florida LGBTQ+ History collection, and the Fasana/Graham Archive). I recognize the privilege I hold for accessing some of these archives. I later confirmed through my interactions that most of the specifics were not common knowledge as anticipated. Florida is considered by some people the mecca of drag pageants. Pageants were a challenging topic with little to no access to sources about history. Most of this knowledge exists only within the drag community. It is clear to me that there are opportunities in the future to explore pageantry systems in Florida. However, I was able to access knowledge primarily through oral history or YouTube videos recorded at pageants.

Context (local)



- 1800–1920
- 1868: Florida's first specific sodomy law, which was enacted in 1868 (punished by imprisonment of 20 years)
- 1917: the Florida Legislature added a lesser crime, a second-degree misdemeanor (imprisonment not exceeding six months). Homosexuality was not addressed specifically in the 1917 law.
- 1900–1960
- 1950's, the city government worked to shut down as many gay bars as possible and enacted laws making homosexuality and cross-dressing illegal.



1956-1964 FLIC

Drag queens, often vilified in gay and lesbian communities even today for being flagrantly gender-bending, were central to the protest. They proved their importance to queer liberation in their courageous public demonstration of their rage.

Well before Stonewall, Florida was the site of the Florida Legislative Investigative Committee—known as the Johns Committee—from 1956 to 1964. The first stirring of postwar queer visibility drew backlash in the form of state-sanctioned persecution (Travis 2012).

Coming Out of the Campus Closet: The Emerging Visibility of Queer Students at the University of Florida, 1970–1982  
 Jessica Clawson | University of Florida

The first mention of queer students in the Alligator appeared on November 24, 1970.

Figure 20: Acknowledging history, Queer history in the local context. Gilberto Corona.

## Activism and legacy



Understand

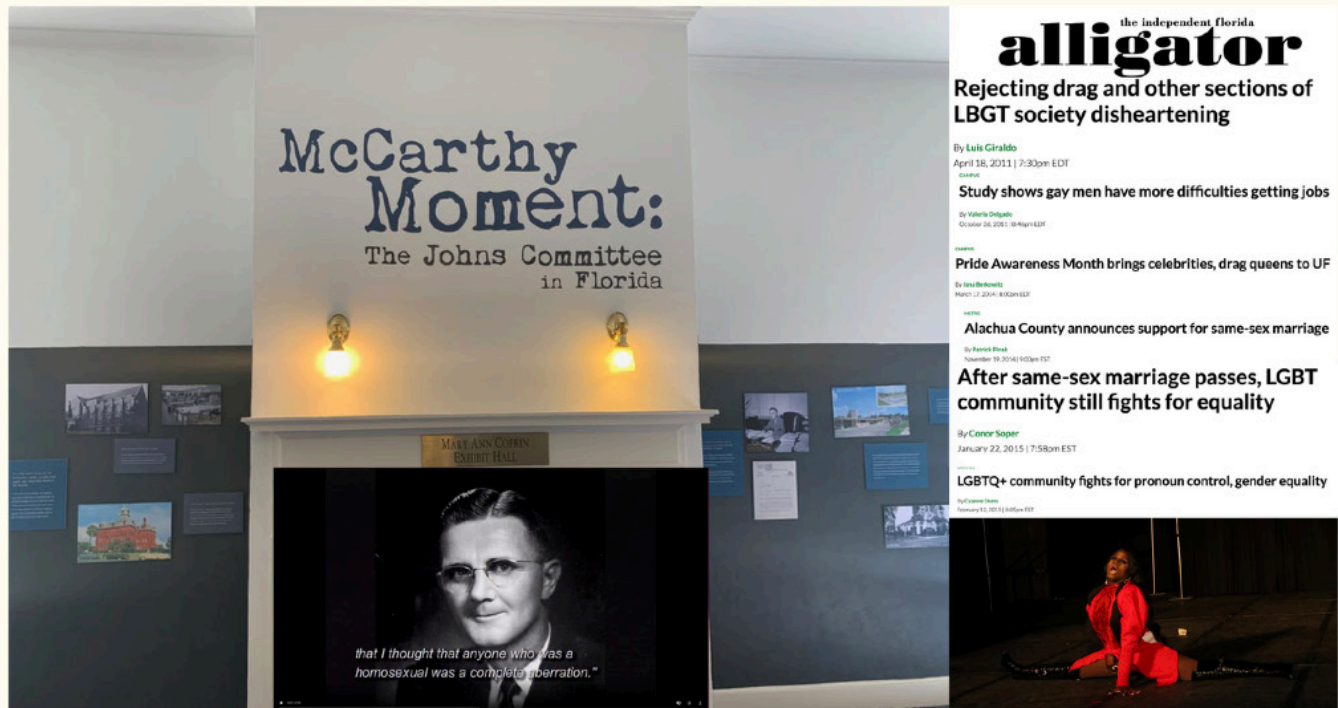


Figure 21: Local Context, the shameful history, the legacy of J. Wayne. Gilberto Corona.

The persecution of queer people in Florida during the 1950s is a reasonably accessible subject. Gainesville's Matheson History Museum (Figure 21), located a few blocks from the local gay bar, includes a permanent exhibition dedicated to this matter. Based on the Florida context (figure 19), I knew that this was an essential part of the local history due to the role that J. Wayne Reitz played during the persecutions. In addition, one of the most important drag events that occurs in Gainesville happens at the Reitz Union building. During pride awareness month (PAM), drag celebrities from the Rupauls franchise perform at the Ritz. It's one of those days where the walls of inequities that prevent access to this institution are lifted. Gainesville natives and the local queer community gathers at the Grand Ballroom to enjoy their favorite performers. In its name, the building disguises the shameful history. It is also one of the most coveted spots for local queens to perform. These walls are cultural norms and individual feelings of inaccessibility more than official policy to keep people out. Libraries are open to all; you just make an appointment, no matter who you are. Yet they are still inaccessible.

### Conversation with Local Gay Club Patron

Oral history allows me to understand the context and struggles of local gay community.

The persecutions made against Queer community during the 1950s resulted in the loss of homes for queer faculty. Stonewall happened, but Gainesville was focused on fighting its own battles. Figure 22 shows an interview with an anonymous senior patron. During our conversation, the patron shared feelings associated with the persecution that occurred during his childhood. He shared how one of his close friends was persecuted. He also shared that friend had passed at the age of 100 last year (2020).

## Preliminary Interview



Understand

About the Johns Committee? In 1957, my father came down to Gainesville to teach at the University of Florida. He brought the family down. We rented a house for one year. It was a professor who had left. The professor was, what was his first name, James Congleton. He taught English. All we knew were that these houses were available for rent. But I did some volunteer work at a UF Library years later and I saw a collection on the John's committee. Well we know what it was. My father, who was anti-gay, said oh, Professor Congleton, he was one of the worst, from what he heard. People hid themselves. He had a wife and a daughter. You know they had to have cover in those days, late 50s.

Well when I did research on the John's committee at UF, I cringed when I saw in some paperwork the name **James Congleton** professor of English terminated after 22 years service. All they need is an accusation. That's so cruel. I know the committee went after quote communists and homosexuals. That impacted our family that we rented a house... The professors went on sabbatical to try to escape scrutiny. They left for a year. And then the next year we rented another house. And I don't know if that Professor left for the same reason, but I suspect he did, because he and his wife, who had one child, let me put it this way, he came on to me one time. And I denied him as a young guy. Probably because he wasn't cute. But anyway, I'm sure he left for the same reason. But it caused so much tragedy in these people's homes.

Now if you want to know something you won't hear from probably anyone else there is one huge irony of the John's committee. Okay. They went after, forget communists, how are they going to identify them? But they went after so-called homosexuals. They don't use that word in the 2020s. They went after homosexuals and they got rid of a lot of them I'm sure. But a professor of political science called Manning Douer, Douer Hall is named after him on campus. One of the ugliest men I've ever seen. But he was a professor of political science. He did research and helped the Florida legislature on reapportionment. I don't know if you know that term, but it's after the 10-year census. You have to divide up districts according to population. He did a lot to help the legislature on reapportionment. Well he was gay. They left him alone. Two reasons: he helped the legislature a lot. They needed his help. But more than that, he had the goods on the legislators. He knew who was gay in the legislature. He said, you go after me, it's payback time. Now that's a double standard. But a lot of people don't know that story. His name Professor Manning Dauer, as in Dauer Hall. This is helpful information isn't it? In other words if we know you and you work with us and you help us, we'll leave you alone. Everybody else we'll get them fired. Plus also you know everything about who's gay in the legislature and we're not doing anything about that.

Anonymous

March 14<sup>th</sup> 2021

[G.C.] So you were working at the library?

I was doing volunteer work. I don't want to identify any closer than that. But I did look at collections on the Johns Committee. And I don't know if it's ever happened to you, but when you get nervous a wave goes over your head. When I saw the name 'James Congleton, terminated after 22 years service'. We found out why he left. Sabbatical. But they actually fired him. Probably a very good professor of English, but they fired him, because I'm sure nothing more than an accusation.

I was only 11 so what do I know. But we were in the middle of it. We did not know that that's why these houses we rented were available until later.

Well we were here from 57-59, three years later, 62 permanently after that we returned. The only reason we left was my father had to go back to Connecticut to teach because he had not adequately researched. He needed to be teaching the final year that he retired from the Connecticut school system. So he took the family back to Connecticut for 3 more years. I still did not know about this for many, many years. and I had a professor who was single the whole time through all of this and he was never affected. I don't think he was gay, I think it was just eccentric. But there were no accusations. He was left alone, a single man. It's really unfair to consider a single person probably gay. But he taught from 57 to 86. He was left alone, totally single, professor of philosophy. He died last year at the age 100, close friend of mine.

That's everything I know about the Johns Committee, except maybe you didn't know, this is more politics, and the Cold War. In my 11th year in high school, which would be 1963 to 64, there was a requirement by the Florida legislature that we had to take a course in high school called, get ready for the title, Americanism Versus Communism. First of all Americanism is not a political philosophy, unless you of course make it one, but that is not taught in political science. But what it really comes down to is us versus them, and heavily propaganda. This is the Cold War. We had to take that, and I thought I was smart, but I absorbed the doctrine and everything. Soviets are bad. Americans are good. That's really all I have to say on that, but can you imagine a course called Americanism Versus Communism? Reminds me of the old television and radio program with the Lone Ranger, which, at the end of the program, it said, "truth, justice, and the American way."

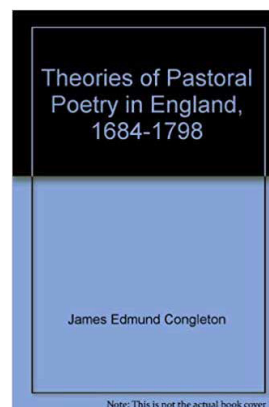


Figure 22: Interview with an elderly patron from the local gay bar. Gilberto Corona.

### Preliminary conversations

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



Sally B. Dash, a member of the HBDA who shared the history of the collective, stories, and photos.

Hoggetowne Burlesque and Drag Alliance

Figure 23: Conversation with Sally B. Dash, member of the Hoggetowne Burlesque and Drag Alliance.

### Archive shared by Sally



Figure 24: Hoggetowne Burlesque and Drag Alliance archive, more than 100 files of ephemera design and photographs from their events

Local burlesque performer Sally B. Dash shared the history of the Hoggetowne Burlesque and Drag Alliance (HBDA) collective (Figure 23). One of the reasons why they founded the alliance was to coordinate the schedule of events to prevent overlapping. The burlesque community is mostly made up of AFAB entertainers. Its close relationships with drag performers can be seen in the archive of photos Sally shared (Figure 24). This archive includes more than 100 pictures, including ephemera design and images from their events.



### Data collection



Figure 25: Portraits of former drag performers found outside the restrooms of the local gay club. Gilberto Corona.

### Preliminary visual exploration

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



Kenny Scott and Budd Dees (Cindi Tv)

Kenny Scott, shares photos and his experience working at the only gay bar in town for over 30 years.

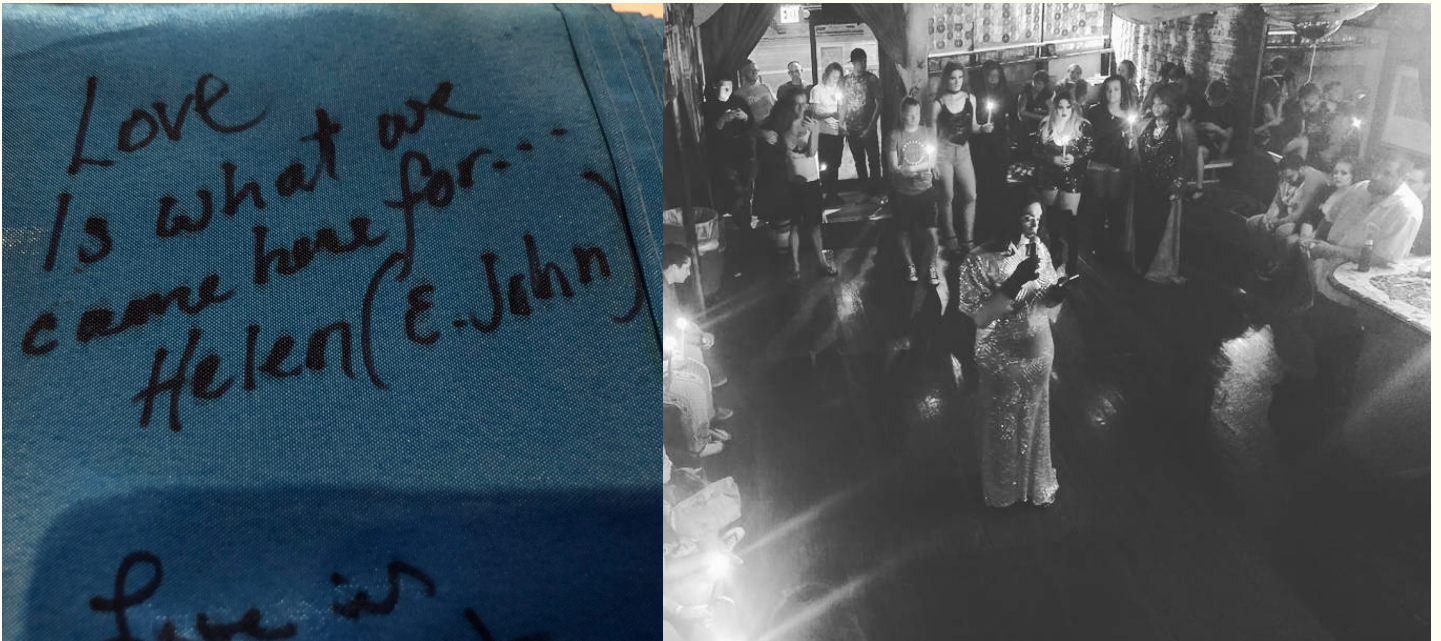
Figure 26: Kenny Scott, James Budd Dees (Cindi Tv) and Gilberto Corona.

## Preliminary visual and oral exploration

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



Understand



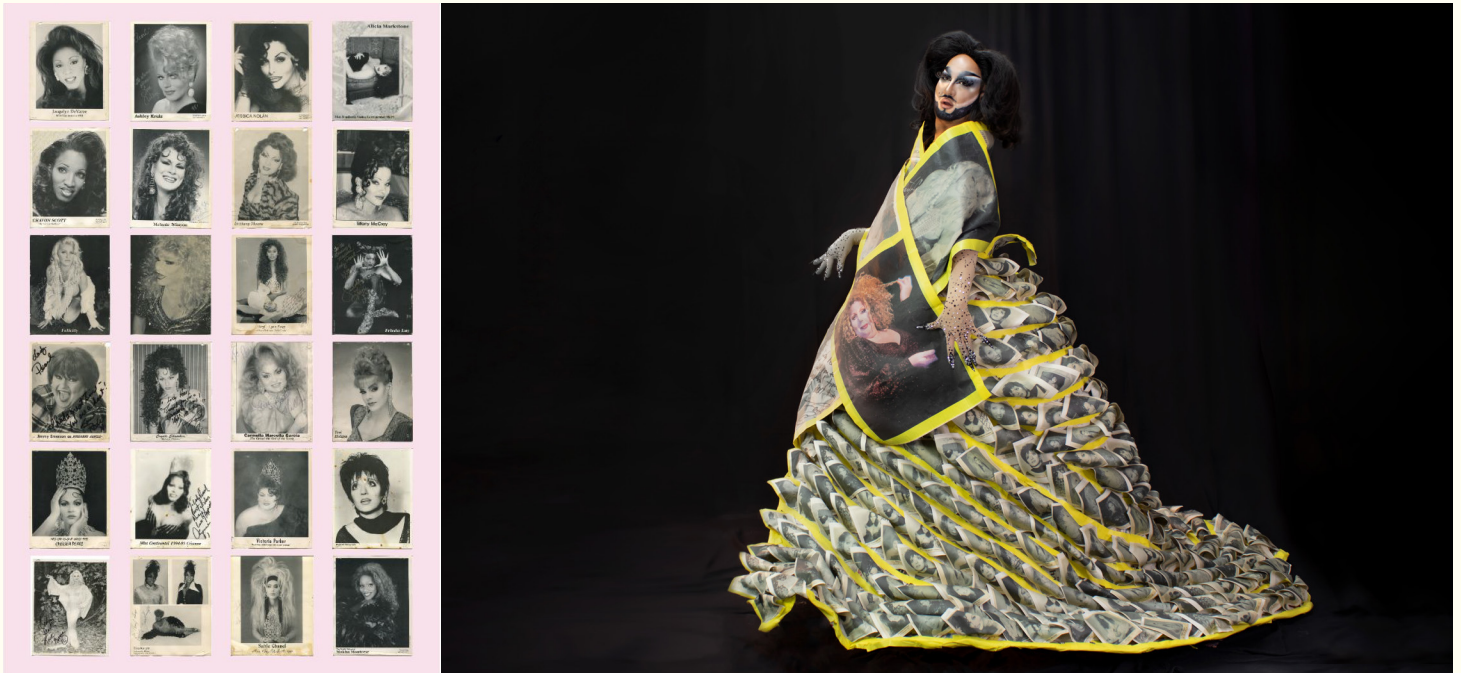
Peace flag signed by patrons at UC during the Pulse benefit

**Figure 27:** Scott shared a peace flag. The closeup of the flag shows a handwritten quote: "Love is what we came here for... Helen (E. John)". Gilberto Corona.

I reached out to Mark Spangler, the University Club owner, to ask for permission to scan some of the portraits installed on the club's walls (Figure 25). Kenny, who has been working for over 30 years at the University Club, showed me a collection of photographs he found in the storage room (Figure 26). He also shared a peace flag signed by patrons during a charity event for Pulse, the Orlando nightclub shooting that resulted in the killing of 49 people and 53 wounded (Figure 27).

## Honoring past queens through co-creation

Involve co-researchers (community) throughout the process



Scanned portraits from former queens found at UC, dress made out of new the queenss portraits (collaboration with Budd Dees aka. Cindi Tv)

**Figure 28:** Scanned portraits from former queens are turned into a newspaper dress in collaboration with James Budd Dees aka Cindi TV.

Scanned portraits from former queens found at the UC offered a chance to explore costume design in a new way. In collaboration with my husband Budd Dees, who is also a Drag Performer (Cindi TV), we created a sculptural dress made out of newspaper with the queens' portraits. The dress (Figure 28) was shown during a local drag competition (The Univesity Club Drag Race) under the category of paper challenge. We decided to use this archive to re-purpose and honor past queens. The image shows Lady Pearl's portrait, the queen who started the AIDS charity events at the UC back in the 1990s. Lady Pearl, who is also on the facade of the club building, has also been the inspiration for local filmmaker Tom Miller.

## Re-purposing archives (Purple Pamphlet)

Screen-print on golden fabric using The purple Pamphlet, re-claiming derogatory terms.



**Figure 29:** 2ft long fabric sculpture. The fabric design is a typographic manipulation of the derogatory terms found in the Purple Pamphlet. The artwork is screen-printed onto gold lamé. The sculpture was installed in the third floor at School of Art + Art History during Fall 2021.

One of my initial thoughts for this project was to turn the oral history and findings into a visual narrative that could then be used as a fabric for costume design. This concept was born based on the idea that drag performers could use their artistic language to communicate the purpose of this project. Due to its complexity and my constraints, this idea was re-oriented into the design of a single costume. The outcome was a 2ft long fabric sculpture. The fabric design is a typographic manipulation of the derogatory terms found in the purple pamphlet. I screen-printed these onto gold lamé and installed the sculpture in the third floor at School of Art + Art History (UF). I believe that this was a successful way to reclaim language and history. As a cultural outsider, I also think that using a golden color was a way to show respect for the history while criticizing the legacy of queer life in Florida.

The infamous Purple Pamphlet, also known as Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida was anti-homosexual propaganda. This is probably the most relevant item in the library, it's a clear **statement of the power of design (in a negative way)** but also is a powerful image that has a potential for re-utilization. As the word queer was once **pejorative**. I believe, that by using this imagery, the project could **embrace the past to move forward**. It's important as many other items on this list reference its relevance of it. It is a great part of the methodology where I intend to acknowledge past, struggles, and oral history. This item is a statement of the importance of the **creation and continuation of safe queer spaces**. (literature review in this document)



Participatory design research,  
documenting the oral and  
visual history of Gainesville  
local drag community.



Interview Consent (Drag Performer)  
<https://forms.gle/gfsMvwn0gpgjQJF57>

## IRB

**Figure 30:** IRB consent for drag performers. This image was given in advance to performers during the initial reach out. Consents were signed on paper before the video interviews.

### Institutional Review Board approval

IRB202102185 Approved on October 26th

*Participatory design research, documenting the oral and visual history of Gainesville local drag community.*

### Protocol includes:

- Semi-structured Interview Written Consent (Drag Performer)
- Co-design Workshop Written Consent
- Semi-structured Interview - Fully Anonymous Verbal Consent
- Semi-structured Interview Written Consent (LGBTQA+ Allies, Drag Employees and Leaders)

### Topics of interest

- Education/professional development/learning (formal, informal education)
- Experiences and interactions with others
- Empowerment
- Personal needs and support systems
- Equity
- Belonging—Queer Spaces, Community, Gainesville
- Futures (aspirations/dreams)
- Everyday life experiences/personal stories and histories
- Opportunities, including jobs
- Economy (including food, transportation, housing)
- Effectiveness of designed materials and communication

### For drag performers

1. What does drag mean to you?
2. How did you learn to perform drag?
3. How did you decide on your drag name and persona?
4. How does being a drag performer relate to your gender and/or sexual identity?
5. Can you talk about the emotions associated with doing drag?
6. Tell me about how drag impacts your financial situation?
7. Can you share a piece of design (promotional or costume) and what it means to you?
8. Why do you think drag has become mainstream in recent years?

### For allies, community leaders, and entrepreneurs/employees

9. What does drag mean to you?
10. Tell me about your relationship to the drag community?
11. Tell me about a specific drag or drag-related experience you've had or observed?
12. What's unique or valuable about the Gainesville drag community in particular?
13. What do you see as the general perception of drag?
14. What's the role of drag in the LGBTQ+ community? In the local community at large?
15. For entrepreneurs/employees only: tell me about why you book drag performers in your venue?

IRB202102185 employs qualitative methods to collect data from participants with permission. Data was obtained through meetings, interviews, workshops, and observations with participants who chose to work with the researcher(s). Participants elected to share existing stories or create new stories in response to questions asked.

### The Data was Collected in the Following Ways:

**Methods** of obtaining information were qualitative and included observations; interviews described below; a collection of or new materials such as drawings, photographs, sketches, ephemera, and notes; discussion during informal meetings with participants—centered around oral and visual history, design project; and participatory workshop.

#### **Observations & Documentation of Context:**

Collection of notes in investigators field diary/notebook; note-taking, photographs, voice recording, and video recording (all with informed consent). I've observed, documented, and collected data during interactions, work in process, the environment, and participants' activities. I used interviews, videos, photographs, notes, and other documents to create stories.

**Informal conversations**, unstructured, and semi-structured interviews: NOTE there is a list of topics and questions. These are more than can be asked in a short discussion. I expected to ask a few (around 5), depending on the participants. These questions were provided for insight into the research direction. The purpose of interviews and conversations was to capture in-depth information, including goals, ways to support their communities, efforts, and

ways to collaborate, etc. See the questions attached. Some data was transcribed.

**Design Research:** For designers to learn about design research practice and co-design/horizontal methods.

**Queer-Ethnography:** Exploring Gainesville drag communities. Narratives about oral and visual history.

**PhotoVoice:** Offer participants to document their daily lives and experiences. This "allows communities to represent themselves and generate photographs for community dialogue, and wider advocacy and communications to bring about positive social change" (source: <http://participatesdgs.org/methods/photovoice>).

**Design Workshops:** Video, photography, audio recording, collection of designed materials, progress materials, choreography.

**Data Collection:** It includes existing or new materials, drawings, sketches, ephemera, notes, photography, videography, interviews, informal conversations, formal meetings, presentations, and graphic design workshops. Materials participants may want to share related to life or drag art.

### Video Ethnography Includes Semi-Structured Interviews with Performers, Show Directors, UC-Owner, and Movie Director Tom Miller.

Interviews took place at LGBTQ+ friendly venues, and places participants invited me to. Twenty-two participants were interviewed between November 11, 2021 and January 30, 2022. The data was gathered directly from the participants themselves. I chose participants who are show producers at the University Club. I was able to interview all the directors who are responsible for each day of the week except one performer. Inertia was the performer who has re-scheduled on many occasions. Inertia is also one of the producers involved in DragCon, an annual cosplay event hosted at the Ritz Union sponsored by the LGBTQ+ student alliance. I also interviewed performers who are non-profit directors. I've interviewed India Brooks, a multidisciplinary artist and scholar. India was an active performer when Lady Pearl and the Melody Club were still around. Brooks is one of the first female impersonators from the local scene to achieve international recognition in the drag world. I interviewed movie director Tom Miller and University Club owner Mark Spangler. The more than 18hrs of raw video resulting from these video interviews are stored in a secure location. Since then, raw montages and compilations related to the topics identified have been shared with participants.

#### Venues LGBTQ+ friendly and anticipated venues for interviews:

- One Love Cafe, 4989 NW 40th Pl, Gainesville, FL 32606
- Unspoken Treasure Society, 1001 NE 16th Avenue Gainesville, FL 3260
- The Fox Lounge, 109 S Main St, Gainesville, FL 32601
- Curia On The Drag, 2029A NW 6th St, Gainesville, FL 32609
- Pride Community Center of North Central Florida, 3131 NW 13th St, Gainesville, FL 32609
- University Club, 18 E University Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601
- Personal Studio 2708 NE Waldo Rd, Gainesville, FL 32609

#### Topics identified:

- oral history of local drag
- drag families
- identity
- art form
- business
- safe space
- political



Figure 31: Still screenshots from video interviews.

|    |                                       |                             |            |                 |   |
|----|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------|---|
| 22 | <a href="#">Faith G Tylor</a>         | @January 30, 2022 6:00 PM   | Done 🟢     | Interview       | <b>Transcending Adolescence Director</b>        |
| 21 | <a href="#">London Darling</a>        | @January 29, 2022 9:00 PM   | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer (Director)                       |
| 19 | <a href="#">Emma Gratton</a>          | @January 29, 2022 6:00 PM   | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 20 | <a href="#">Star Shine</a>            | @January 29, 2022 6:00 PM   | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
|    | <a href="#">Inertia</a>               | @January 28, 2022 6:00 PM   | Reschedule | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
|    | <a href="#">Degree Application</a>    | @January 28, 2022           | Done 🟢     | To do           |   |
| 18 | <a href="#">Mark Spangler</a>         | @January 21, 2022 10:00 AM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | UC Owner  |
| 17 | <a href="#">Tom Miller</a>            | @January 17, 2022 10:00 AM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Movie Director                                  |
|    | <a href="#">Ororo Summers</a>         | @December 31, 2021 8:00 PM  | Reschedule | Interview       | Drag Performer Ocala Pride Director             |
|    | <a href="#">Lana Vandal</a>           | @December 31, 2021 8:00 PM  | Reschedule | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
|    | <a href="#">Tatiana Summers</a>       | @December 30, 2021 6:00 PM  | Reschedule | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 16 | <a href="#">Craven Moorecox</a>       | @December 28, 2021 7:30 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer (Director)                       |
| 14 | <a href="#">Rachel Boheme</a>         | @December 26, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer (Director)                       |
| 13 | <a href="#">Kar Giardino</a>          | @December 26, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 12 | <a href="#">Kelly Kelly</a>           | @December 24, 2021 10:00 PM | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer (Director)                       |
| 11 | <a href="#">Shauntel Elexia Black</a> | @December 22, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer (Director)                       |
| 10 | <a href="#">Tifanni Sparkles</a>      | @December 22, 2021 6:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 9  | <a href="#">Natalia Dupree</a>        | @December 22, 2021 1:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag performer <b>Unspoken Treasure Society</b> |
| 8  | <a href="#">Tiffani Ross</a>          | @December 22, 2021          | Reschedule | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 7  | <a href="#">Helena La Fuego</a>       | @December 21, 2021 3:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 6  | <a href="#">Marisol Lords</a>         | @December 10, 2021 8:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 5  | <a href="#">Alexia Fantasia</a>       | @December 10, 2021 2:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
|    | <a href="#">Committee Meeting</a>     | @December 9, 2021 2:00 PM   | Done 🟢     | PiLoT Milestone |   |
| 3  | <a href="#">Juniper Thorne</a>        | @November 22, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 4  | <a href="#">Helix Harem</a>           | @November 22, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 2  | <a href="#">Foxxie</a>                | @November 12, 2021 10:00 AM | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |
| 1  | <a href="#">India</a>                 | @November 11, 2021 9:00 PM  | Done 🟢     | Interview       | Drag Performer                                  |

Figure 32: Notion, project management and note-taking software. I use Notion to manage interview schedules and, through-out the process.



**India Brooks**

[LEGENDARY RECOGNITION]

India:

---

I'm from here, I went to school in Daytona.

---

My whole life, I grew up close to the beach. Unfortunately, I was adopted.

---

My parents didn't accept me for who I am. At 17, I left home.

---

You have to remember. I was gay or trans at that time, where you couldn't be. I quite literally have to fight for my life. There was a night where I thought you're going to read about me in the paper. So I think for many years, I carried a lot of emotional baggage over all of that. I felt like I needed to fight for everything, and sometimes I fought when I didn't need to. You know, as years have gone by, I became older and wiser. I change a lot. I became a better person, more compassionate.

Gilberto:

---

You think the club or like performing arts and dropping was a safe space for you back in those days?

India:

---

Oh, sure, absolutely. Yeah, the gay clubs have traditionally, throughout LGBT history, been safe havens.

---

**Kamonii A Dior**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Kamonii:

---

My name is Kamonii A black. I am 21 -finally-

---

I am cancer [and] I'm 6'3 so [...laughs].

---

I'm from Williston, Florida.

---

Kamonni is this young country boy in drag which is another route I took because I was already doing makeup.

---

I didn't know what I wanted to do, to be honest. I always wanted to show up to dance in heels, so I got my first pair of pumps. It was during covid.

---

I graduated early from high school, and I was practicing and practicing, and I ended up coming this way. I would say I'm still growing every day, and I'm ready for the outcome [for the] future.

Kamonii:

---

Most of my inspiration came from my mom. The A stands for Anne, which is my mom's middle name. My mom passed away in 2016, and she was just so interested in, like she was like very country, 5 kids, I was the youngest. She never had like a gay uncle or a gay father or whatever, so she was so new to gay stuff, so it took a minute to break out of the shell.

---

So she is my main inspiration; also Chaka Khan, Beyonce, and my dance coach.

---

**Foxxie Monroe**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Foxxie:

---

[...] and I think that's the importance of what we do as drag queens. You know, we just help everybody in our community home in on their piece where we stand and what we do. We all serve a purpose and we just have to stumble upon it.

---

Unfortunately, I lost my uncle at a very young age due to HIV. He went by foxy, that's where Foxxie comes from. That's [is] the fun inspiration behind that name.

---

I wish she [Foxxie's uncle] was still here with me to kind of guide me and show me the ropes. But he is with me, and its spirit, and that's why I keep his name. I always remember who Foxxie was. The love that he tried to exude and share with people this is so powerful.

---

It's a beautiful feeling, and a lot of the time it's kind of funny because I grew up in a predominantly black area here in Gainesville. So on Wednesday night, it's just, you know, the feeling of family. People get to come home and we all get to see each other, have a little fun and see a little drag, and share a little love.

---

**Helix Harem**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Helix:

---

Drag is a service to the community, like tonight we're collecting [food] for *Bread of the Mighty Food Bank*.

---

Just making somebody smile and feel like they belong in a space and they have a family. It doesn't really matter what's going on the outside.

---

**London Darling**

[SHOW DIRECTOR]

London:

---

Gainesville's drag scene is talented and diverse. It's so crazy.

---

The thing with Gainesville is that there are always new people. There are always new people coming to Gainesville. There are always young people coming from all over; coming to the University of Florida. They're coming here just to get away from wherever they were before.

---

It's so crazy that these talents come through Gainesville, present Queens included, past Queens included.

---

There are just so many different queens, which is amazing because I think that sometimes they don't get the recognition that they need or that they deserve. And I hate that.

---

I always wanted to tell them to keep pushing through [. However,] when I look at Gainesville Queens, compared to other cities [. In Cities] I've been to, and have gone to. I can say that Gainesville for being such a small city has so many different styles of drag, which is amazing.

---

**Jadore Lagore**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Jadore:

---

I think about Gainesville. [In my opinion.] I got very lucky to be in a community that kind of just accepted me with open arms, that I did not receive a lot of hate, just a little bit there.

---

I think that [Gainesville drag scene] a great community full of diverse queens that a lot of different things. I wish maybe we could all come together more. I think that it is just drag. Some people have different opinions than others, which is what it is.

---

**Juniper Thorne**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Juniper:

---

It meant protest to me. It was a way to explore my gender individually. As I have gotten more on it, I got more into performance and what performance can do for art, and what performance can do for protest.

---

I'm a scholar as well scientist or biological sciences. This is my persona, learning how to do art, be loud, be filtered, and do all the things I cannot do as a scholar.

---

It relates more to my gender. I don't mean sexual identity. To some nearby sexual identity, but like; I am bisexual, so there is that. I'm also non-binary, so kind of more gender than sexuality.

---

I wanted to invoke a little bit of nature, a little bit of mystical edginess. Juniper cedars are trees, and I just enjoy them. I wanted to be like something that says "locally Florida," and something that's about the nature of Florida, and then also has mystical properties.

---

**Tiffany Sparkles**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Tiffany:

---

I feel like the show director is mostly like Kelly Kelly and Shauntel. They're mostly like pageant aesthetic. They have the big jewel, the big hair, and then there is like the Boheme Coven, which is like an alternative. And then you have like the dancing girls. [She is considered a dance diva]

---

**Elena La Fuego**

[DRAG PERFORMER]

Elena:

---

Like historically, [Drag] has been seen as female impersonation only.

---

{During the} past two or three years, [it has] been interesting to see the idea of [female impersonation] not being the sole point of drag.

---

It is more performance art-based. You see more people like Fifi O'Hara who do not identify as drag queens anymore. They identify as queer artists and performers. So I feel like that has changed a lot.

---

There is much diversity in Gainesville, and that is really cool to see. I really like it.

---

We as humans like to go out and have different experiences, and you'll see. In Gainesville, we have one designated gay bar. It is called the gay bar. There is only one. So for other bars. To have drag night or gay night; however, they want to call it. It lets the LGBTQ community know that there is a safe space for us to go out and venture out outside of our little community that we have made.

---

**Marisol Lords**

[DRAG PERFORMER/DIGITAL PRESENCE]

Marisol:

---

I used to co-produce the show with my designer *Zednem*, formerly known as Sally Summers. I believe it was a lovely little thematic show that happened once a month before the pandemic hit.

---

We wanted the experience to be very inclusive and very welcoming. [The thematic show could be] a little introduction to ballroom culture, which essentially [what] started drag.

---

There are several talent nights throughout Florida. There is. So you think you can drag in Tampa? There's Twisted Tuesdays in Orlando. Just to name a few. So regarding drag scenes, everything single city, I believe, has its own drag scene that they all treat pretty much the same in Florida, where we're not all like the same we are very different, but we just kind of blend together, really nice.

---

**Rachel Boheme**

[SHOW DIRECTOR]

Rachel:

---

Gainesville drag is literally everything. We have one person that will fill any role in drag. If you want the pretty spooky queen, the pageant queen, the bald queen, whatever, your type is.

---

We've expanded and continue to expand into different things in our hometown. I'll go to a random place like Valdosta, where you might think there's no drag, and there's a whole drag scene there.

---

**Shauntel Elexia Black**

[SHOW DIRECTOR]

Shauntel:

---

You would definitely see hip-hop and pretty much a good vibe, you know,

---

Whether on weekends I feel like there's more like a college crowd, so it's definitely more than Ra Ra Ra [everyone laughs]

---

**Kelly T Kelly**

[SHOW DIRECTOR]

Kelly:

---

Gainesville is like the definition of a perfect stepping stone.

---

[Gainesville] is a good place to begin [in Drag and] accessing a platform that won't be available in big cities. Most [-of this-] might sound like bullshit. But it's kind of [in reality] you can in just walk off the street, hang out [for] a couple of nights, and then, hey!. We're going to put you on a show.

---

## Star Shine

Star:

---

These kids are growing up having more access to drag. They're able to express themselves now. [Times have] changed dramatically from the time I was a teenager.

---

Times have changed dramatically from the time I was a teenager. These kids are growing up having more access to drag. They are able to express themselves now.

---

Nowadays, it is okay now to say: I'm gay, I have a boyfriend, I have a girlfriend. You know, it's okay to say: I'm bisexual. It's okay. Kids have more opportunities now than they did when I was a kid. But now they are coming to these cities, especially college towns, away from their parents. They can experiment.

---

## Faith G. Taylor

---

Faith is a party hostess. You know, my fans, my friends, and they are all very important to me.

---

Without the patrons of the bar it would not be possible. I always pay them respect by mingling with them before and after the show.

---

I also have a big passion for the lesbian community. [The lesbian community] is a very unsung community you know. If you ever walked into a gay bar in the eighties, nineties, and early 2000, you would notice men in thongs. [You could] see [gogo dancers and men in thongs] dancing on the bar. You never really saw any burlesque dancers or female Go-Go dancers. I partnered with the *Les Vixens Burlesque Troupe* to create *Vixens* which is actually got its start on the University Club stage on a Thursday night.

---

## Natalia Dupree

---

Drag used to be exclusive, and people would pay for drag, so you [would] put on those fabulous costumes and show off.

---

I started performing out when I was snicking into melody club when I was 15 years of age. I was doing shows, and we [drag queens] would get [paid] \$50 back then, you know. We would get pay [\$50] back then. Now they are still paying 50 dollars here in Gainesville. And I think that a little disrespectful when girls spend \$50 on stacking.

---

So it's just, I wish that I had some free time on my hands to actually put a platform here for the girls to perform and for them to be paid their worth.

---

Co-design workshop invitation



**Invitation sent to drag performers. The workshop took place at a church in front of the only gay bar in Gainesville.**  
 Access to this site was obtained thanks to Dr. John Lowe Director of Music and Organist at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and music performer at UC.

The entrance is located in front of City Hall, just around UC. Please use the door indicated in the map.

**Monday February 28th**  
**Holy Trinity Episcopal Church** 6:00 pm-7:00 pm  
 100 NE 1st St, Gainesville, FL 32601

Figure 33: Co-design Workshop invitation structure sent to interviewed performers. The workshop took place at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in front of the UC.

Co-design workshop materials



Main reflections for further iterations

**“I like to add a forum where new comers can get mentorship”**

**“Differentiate queens with a longer trajectory”**

### Website Structure

Website structure

**Drag Performers**

**Associations**

**GNV Queer Scene**

**Gay Clubs in GNV**

Figure 34: Co-design workshop material: Structure for the speculative website.

Co-design workshop materials



**Values and Style** What values and style are appropriate for the project

**TARGET VALUES:**  
Community, Creativity, Inner Harmony, Love, Fun

**STYLES**  
 1-Contemporary: Clean, Modern, Neutral, Elegant  
 2-Queer Punk: Pink Black, Crafty, High Contrast, Textured aesthetic  
 3-American Kitsch: Bold, Contrast, Cartoon-like, Dramatic, Vintage  
 4-Club Vernacular: Gradients, Aesthetic, Camp, Ballroom  
 5-Pride: Trans Flag inspired, Colorful accents, Pastel or Vibrant  
 6-American: Red, White, Blue, Stars, Stripes

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>TARGET VALUES</b></p> <p>Write down 4 keywords that represent the values of our drag community</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <p><b>STYLE</b></p> <p>Arrange from favorite to less favorite</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|--|---|

\*Check the look and feel to explore possibilities

Values recognized by participants:

**“rule-breaking, small, family, pageantry/glam, expression, integrity, diverse, drama, safe space welcome/ inclusive”**

Preferred style:

**“Club”**

Figure 35: Co-design workshop material: Values and aesthetic styles proposed to performers during the workshop.

Co-design workshop materials



**Type / Logo Design** Select one of the following directions

Mixing type to create the image

|                       |                  |                                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| <p>duckwalk</p>       | <p>mug</p>       | <p>social justice /diversity</p> |
| <p>dance on heels</p> | <p>activist</p>  | <p>vanity mirror</p>             |
| <p>lip sync</p>       | <p>editorial</p> | <p>chunky yet funky</p>          |
| <p>pageant hair</p>   | <p>editorial</p> |                                  |
| <p>particled</p>      | <p>editorial</p> |                                  |

Preferred logo design:

**“Debates around the logo design pointed at specific elements from different ideas, conversations among participants pointed at pros and cons for stylistic choices”**

Figure 36: Co-design workshop material: Logo design, inspired by the different styles of drag found in the local scene.



Co-design workshop materials



Preferred display font:

**“Again, conversations pointed at specific styles with no clear tendency”**

### Typography

Display fonts, intended for headlines

**DRAG GAINESVILLE**  
Vigante  
Paris is Vogueing designed by Giuseppe Salerno is inspired by the movement and glamour of the fashion and New York ballroom scene. Based on the classic style line, pairing with the movement and direction of strokes we get a soft feel to embrace the feeling of Vogueing Art Expression.

**Drag in Gainesville**  
Berkshire is a bespoke typeface commissioned by Tinsy Kasper and Reginald 'Dragno Bert' The Berkerton exhibitor at MAMA PSL. As part of a timely conversation at the intersection of history, the legal system and social justice.

**Drag Gainesville**  
The New Black is based on the garage from the Chicago Freedom Movement, an activist campaign spearheaded by Martin Luther King Jr and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The campaign marked the expansion of their civil rights activities from the South to the northern cities.

**GNV Drag**  
Gilbert Baker the creator of the iconic rainbow flag to honor the memory of Gilbert Baker, activist and NYC Pride pioneer with Patrick to create a free font inspired by the design language of the iconic Rainbow Flag, the font was named Gilbert after Mr. Baker.

**GNV DRAG**  
PROUDTYPE IS A VARIABLE FONT CREATED BY NOEL, TREVOR AND NARRA SIMONS. THE THROCKLE IS INSPIRED BY GAYCE MOVEMENTS, WORTHY.

Repertoire of fonts for display.  
What personality or philosophy is more effective

**DRAG**  
Hegante

**GNV Drag**  
Cooper

**DRAG GNV**  
Blimey A

**Gainesville Drag**  
Adisa

**DRAG**  
Yondu

**Drag**  
LosLana Niu Pro

Figure 37: Co-design workshop material: Typography, showing a repertoire of fonts designed by POC designers, women designers, or fonts inspired by social movement.

Co-design workshop materials



Reflection

- Performers showed excitement about how they were represented
- Club Vernacular was the style with the most positive reactions
- Some participants suggested adding a frame to the all pictures

### LOOK AND FEEL

Style in use

See how styles are applied then discuss them

Figure 38: Co-design workshop material: Look and feel, showing variations for the website based on the proposed aesthetic choices.

Co-design workshop materials



Reflection

- Performers shared appreciation for the project
- Participants expressed that the navigation bar with chronology was a good idea.

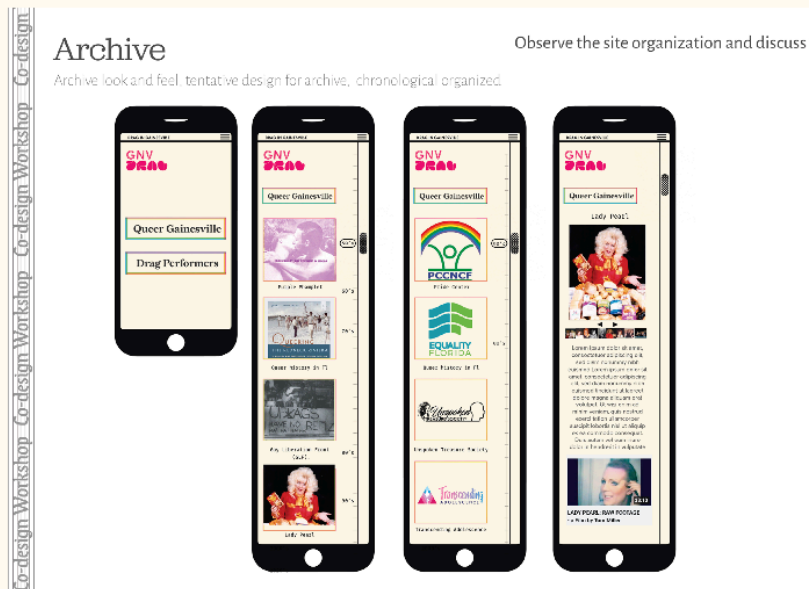


Figure 39: Co-design workshop material: Archive, showing archive organization using one of the proposed styles.

Workshop



Figure 40: Co-design workshop photo ethnography: Kamonni and Foxxie.



# Co-design Workshop

## Workshop



Figure 41: Co-design workshop photo ethnography; performers and members of the queer community.

## Workshop



Figure 42: Co-design workshop photo ethnography; Natalia Dupree, founder of the Non-profit Unspoken Treasure Society.

Latest iteration based on workshop analysis



Figure 43: Iteration based on the elements highlighted by participants during the workshop.

Final Brand



Figure 44: Final brand: Drag in Gainesville logo, resulting from the insights provided during the workshop.



Digital Workshop

Current phase

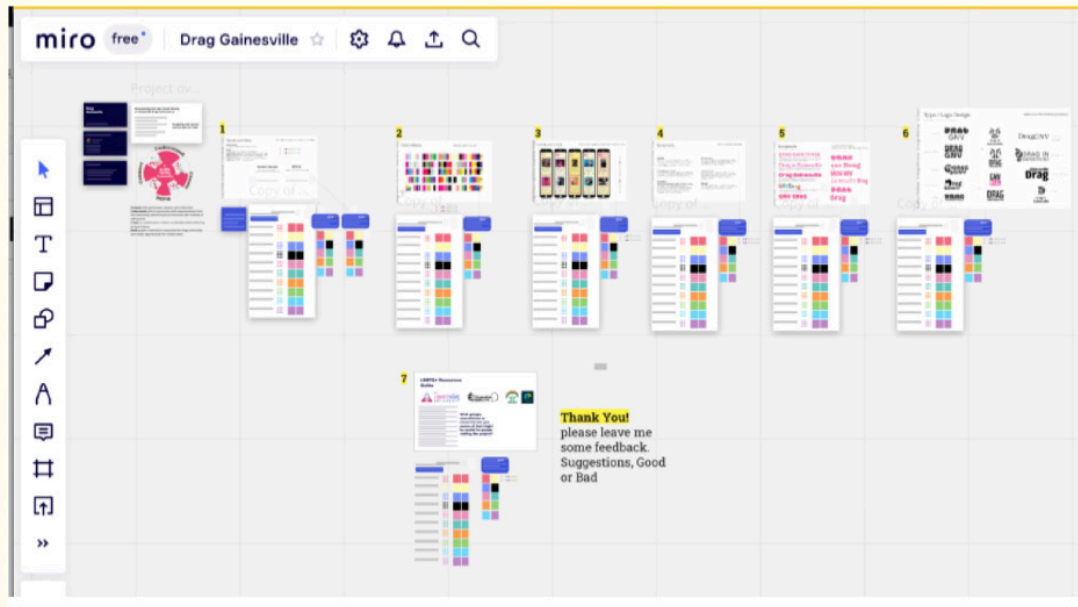


Figure 45: Miro Board for the digital version of the co-design workshop.

Asymmetric Clustering Matrix

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help Last edit was seconds ago

W45

|    | A                       | B                  | C   | D           | E  | F              | G                 | H          | I                                       | J        | K              | L     | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S |
|----|-------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------|--|----------------|-------------------|------------|---|----------|----------------|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2  |                         | 1                  | 2   | 3           | 4  | 5              |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3  | Pride                   | 1                  |   |             | 3  | 3              |                   |            | q5.a5 observed in fashion choices       |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4  | Queer punk              | 4                  | 1   |             | 2  | 2              |                   |            | conversation surrounded vernacular club |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5  | American kitsch         | 4                  |   | 1           | 2  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6  | Contemporary            | 1                  | 4   |             | 1  | 1              |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7  | Club                    | 1                  | 6   | 1           |  | 4              |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8  |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 | Pride                   | community          | friendship  | glamorous   | diversity                                    | acceptance     | excellence        | community  | creativity                              | glamour  | diverse        | drama |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | representation          | creativity         | love  | acceptance  | diversity                                    | community      | integrity         | expression | art                                     | hair     | welcomelinklsh | neon  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12 | activism                | small              | diversity   | unity       | expression                                   | flair          | family            | pride      | platform                                | dance    | safe space     | pink  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13 | rule-breaking           | supportive         | family  |             | family                                       | creativity     | diversity         | fun        | hygiene                                 | love     | glam           | stage |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15 | Club                    | american           | vintage   | pagentry    | contempo                                     | punk           | pagentry          | club       | contempo                                | contempo | punkclub       |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | pride                   | club               | contempo  | performance | glam   | american       | american          | glam       | american                                | pride    | pride          |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17 | contempo                | contempo           | punk  | glam        | american                                     | american       | glam              | american   | pride                                   | pride    | pride          |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18 | american                | punk               | american  |             | american                                     | club           | performance       |            | club                                    | club     | punk           |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 21 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 22 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23 | Keywords/Video feedback |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 24 | opportunity             | longer             | Joy   |             | New possibilities                            | History        | community         | good vibes | good vibes                              |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 25 | youth                   | even volume        | Love  |             | Good vibes                                   | Sustainability | love              | community  | india brooks                            |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 26 | coming out              |                    | Hope  |             | Comfortable                                  | Compensation   | bad stuff (add dr | love       | crystal light                           |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 27 | community               | advice on entering | Truth   |             | Having fun                                   | Platforms      | family            | family     | more drag                               |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 28 | community               | community          | Honesty   |             | opening up                                   |                | tips              | tips       | equal pay                               |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 29 | platform                |                    | missing: not booked queens  |             | community                                    |                |                   |            | emma's interview                        |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 30 |                         |                    | opportunities young queens  |             | accessible                                   |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 31 |                         |                    |   |             | expression                                   |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 32 |                         |                    | I feel as if queens do treat everybody with respect. It's sad transwomen queens like me and a lot of other girls don't get any help at all from a lot of these older queens |             | follow in footsteps-models who inspire       |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 33 |                         |                    | real  |             | unique                                       |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 34 |                         |                    | rude  |             | note   |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 35 |                         |                    | wise  |             | audience feedback                            |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 36 |                         |                    | messy   |             | party  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 37 |                         |                    | truth   |             | mingling w/worded "girls paid their word"    |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 38 |                         |                    | teasty  |             | I like seeing the girls introduce themselves |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 39 |                         |                    | help  |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 40 |                         |                    | lyng  |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 41 |                         |                    | advice  |             | Missing performers                           |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 42 |                         |                    |   |             | Message alternative shots                    |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 43 |                         |                    |   |             | UCDR would be a great addition               |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 44 |                         |                    |   |             | Advice to new girls                          |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 45 |                         |                    |   |             | People want a feature film                   |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 46 |                         |                    |   |             | Make the interviews more                     |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 47 |                         |                    |   |             | Audio balance                                |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 48 |                         |                    |   |             |  |                |                   |            |   |          |                |       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

Figure 46: Asymmetric clustering matrix, analysis of workshop materials.

Discussion Of Workshop Experience And Designed Outcomes

Co-designers

Based on the analysis from the workshop (figure 46), 11 people were in attendance, including drag performers, show directors, trans associations leaders, and allies. This workshop represents the shared vision of designers (co-researchers) whose work is influenced by pluriversal co-design praxis. We intended to gather a diverse overview of the drag scene. Queer bodies, who deconstruct gender norms in their daily lives, aimed to engage similar goals via design and representation. More importantly, our goal was also the creation and continuation of safe queer spaces. In attendance were a variety of drag artists both new and experienced.

Structure and Activites

I asked participants to add their voices to a project that celebrates queer life and history in Gainesville, FL. I began by summarizing queer history specific to the area, and sharing a bit about participatory design, and what I learned from the participants. Then I gave each participant a packet of design possibilities. Oral storytelling, visualized histories, and even branding decisions were left up to participants to debate, relatively unstructured. Each person voted and justified decisions about font, web architecture, and organizing identity philosophies. Everyone practiced co-design strategies, assuming their roles as re-designers. Divided into two groups, the drag performers and allies in attendance evaluated the overall progress of this effort as well as design minutiae. They performed this evaluation by annotating printed materials, circling favorite features, ranking style choices and values, and writing their own thoughts in the margins. Some of these processes were prescribed, while others were initiated by co-designers themselves. One group of designers, for example, decided to name a list of potential features for the organizing website, like creating a forum for new queens to grow and learn as they enter the scene. Despite my request to choose one design strategy, co-designers occasionally ranked their choices. One queen even flipped the page over to write their opinions and emotions associated with power relations within the drag community (figure 47).

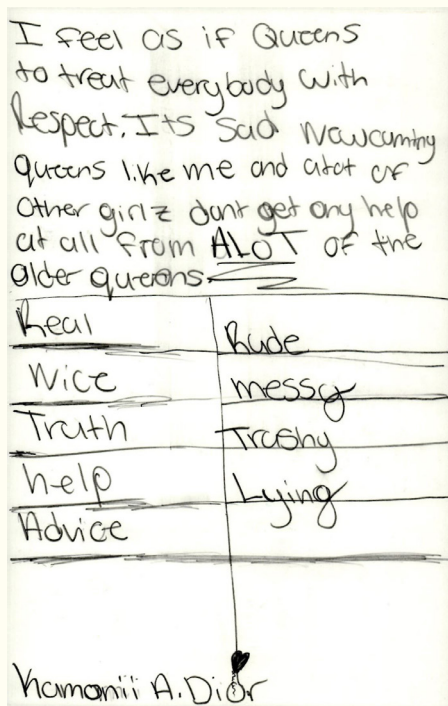


Figure 47: Kamonii takes ownership of the materials and provides unexpected insights.

### Outcomes

This workshop intersected critical theory, design, and queer issues; it also helped to understand aesthetic values within queer communities. Furthermore, it elevated ephemeral design, recognizing it as part of queer history. This meeting also pitched a compilation of stories of drag performers who practice social design, and reunited its actors. It was crucial to map out public representations of the drag scene. The co-design activities were a way to connect with those performers furthering a conversation in relation to safe queer spaces, diversity, and gender representation. The diverse nature of participants' backgrounds offered insights into designerly ways of thinking. It allowed me to concentrate on the way designers articulate co-design praxis.

The workshop was a crucial device to capture the emotions and intangible struggles that the LGBTQ+ community has and continues to suffer. Creating a safe space and honoring the bond that I already have as part of this community was crucial to holding space for listening and sharing. As evidenced by this, many of the personal stories shared instances of struggle, trauma, questioning, and personal rebirth through drag.

Classroom teaching experience in Typography I at the University of Florida helped me to understand my role as facilitator better, as did prior interactions with co-design practitioners. Having material activities, which while visually exciting, also taught me about the opinions and experiences of the drag performers present, and also how to manage personalities and hear perspectives of dissent. One performer wanted to note that pay should be different for experienced performers, stayed away from the two main groups, and left the workshop early. I was able to reassure that they were heard and accept criticism for the process and realized that some interpersonal dynamics between drag performers were not able to be overcome in the span of this project.

The conversations ignited by the workshop tasked queer designers and artists to consider political and societal change as an real endgoal for their daily expression. As a dialog that has a potential for re-utilization, this gathering laid the foundation for conversations about drag history that looks to the future. The word queer was once pejorative, but rescued to advance queer theories and movements. By using the past and imagery developed from the workshop, Queer projects can embrace the past to move forward

The multiplicity of voices made evident that drag performers and queer allies refused to be condensed into a single strategy. The co-design process not only allowed me to see this reality, but also honor it. Based on participant feedback, I presented the final brand (figure 42), a remix of ideas and styles that reflect the diversity of voices and the elements that the participants highlighted. Debates around workshop materials allowed participants to take ownership of the project they were part of; this allowed me to reinforce and validate one more time the aspect of a co-design community-based approach. Based on Escobar's theory of pluriversal design, the framework proposed by this study allowed the realization of the communal, giving co-researchers the conditions for the community's ongoing efforts of self-creation. Based on Caroll's approach, I see that co-researchers are indeed designers and active participants in the process. This allowed us to dismantle the system of oppression and power constructs by reclaiming power and autonomy to shift and re-orient the goals of the project. The exchange that occurred during the workshop allowed the drag performers and participants to engage horizontally. As expressed by Sarah Corona, understanding their role as co-researchers and mutuals allowed us to arrive at a third text, one which is the exchange of knowledge and viewpoints which then enabled us to engage with the pluriversal.

I realized that the workshop experience provided means for co-creation. During the event, participants engaged in conversations among themselves. They challenged and embraced different viewpoints from both functional and aesthetic standpoints. Dr. John T. Lowe, Director of Music and Organist at the Episcopal church and piano performer at the Uncertainty Club, was responsible for allowing the workshop to take place at the church. In retrospect in a conversation with Dr. Lowe, we concluded that there was a possibility for discomfort from part of some of the performers. Churches carry emotional baggage for the queer community for obvious reasons. This is only my own thought process; I was not present enough when looking for space to survey co-designers about their connection or repulsion to such a site. I acknowledge that some of the performers have expressed strong connections with faith, for example, during the interview with the performer Kelly T. Kelly during Christmas Eve. Some of them embraced Christianity because of their upbringing and heritage as southern religious people, while others expressed having no interest or association with any religious institution. In the case of Juniper Thorne, Faith Taylor, and India Brooks they expressed a sense of belonging due to their connection with earth and the local ecosystem. For others, their philosophical beliefs come from the Satanic Temple, a philosophical belief that has a lot of misconceptions in the public sphere. Future co-design workshops might be better served by a different venue, such as the associations run by drag performers.

Co-researching with the drag community permitted me access to oral histories and even the inspiration for a blueprint of what future project trajectories might look like. Yet "we don't know what we don't know." I imagined the drag community would be very familiar with the history of LGBTQ+ persecution in Gainesville, such as the events surrounding the "Purple Pamphlet" of the 1950s. Yet the shameful history of discrimination and hate at University of Florida is hidden within academia. In the same manner, co-researchers permitted me to access the oral history (figure 31) or even drew the blueprints of what a future trajectory would look like (figure 24, 25). During the co-design workshop, I employed cultural symbols about drag culture (figure 32). Using a traditional design approach to concept development allowed co-researchers to take ownership of the creative process (figure 33-42). In retrospect, I comprehend that some aspects of the design process might be distractions (figure 37). I understand that my duty as the principal investigator is to discern what's essential and what might add unnecessary complexity. As a designer, it seems essential to show how typography is also a medium to nourish some of the values and styles proposed (figure 35). Surprisingly to me, there were very sophisticated conversations from a group of not traditionally trained designers, analyzing the motivations, origins, and effects of the typography presented. I believe that acknowledging what worked, what didn't work, and what could be (figure 43, 44) is relevant for the contribution of horizontal perspectives. Co-design takes time, and to make the most out of it, we need to embrace uncertainty, rejection, and re-direction.

## Conclusions

So what? The intersection of queer, horizontal, and participatory approaches in this study lead to collaboration within a community that is knowledgeable about the relationships of powers imposed by the institution of the University of Florida. During a competition for new performers, a young queen asked an experienced queen about a group of students who wanted to interview and film her. The experienced performer considered it a distraction, even saying that once the paper is written there is no benefit to the performer. So co-researchers were explicit about how students write papers at their expense. Arriving at a genuinely horizontal process was possible due to the time spent nurturing relationships between co-researchers. I was explicit about this power relationship and how it has impacted the local Queer community. Sharing the process of reclamation used for the Purple Pamphlet (figure 29) allowed me to share some of the findings and possibilities for future trajectories for this project. Responses of surprise and interest from these instances confirm that this part of the history is not accessible to all of the queer community. It may also be important to note that the workshop process, asking queens for their thoughts and input on designs about them, ignited vibrant discussions and even unprompted sharing. Making them feel really heard, rather than a means to an end, was an important feature of this meeting.

I believe that my role as a social research designer allowed me to deliver a unique framework that provided genuine communal interactions. By immersing myself in the “local,” I facilitated paths for the co-researchers (drag performers and allies) to take ownership during the process that is itself the outcome.

Drag Gainesville is intensely personal, both for me and those involved. Acknowledging my positionality, bias, vulnerabilities, and privilege was crucial for the success of this project. Undertaking this project in the queer community, of which I’m a part, allowed me to create a genuinely horizontal exchange; I understand that being somehow a familiar face allowed me to relate to the co-researchers even through the lens of a camera. By utilizing a video-ethnography method, I reflected on my role as a researcher. I analyzed moments in which I was leading a conversation. Still, at the same time, it allowed me to identify moments in which my interactions gave validation to drag performers who were not necessarily considered leaders in their community. I reached, to some extent, to the community’s innermost desires, memories, and moments that I believe make this work relevant first and foremost to the community I was serving; I think that this co-design experience will forever be embedded into the Gainesville Queer history. For the field of social design, especially to the Pluriverse and of course for queer studies, I built upon the idea of connecting people to place and connecting different worlds. Drag Gainesville helped to transform preconceived notions of what “design” should be. Design is the poetry of communication and interdependence, process-focused, and values voices that may not often be heard. This project is political and disruptive. It’s urgent in the actual political climate of Florida and is a model that could be referenced, grown, and distributed.

## Future Directions

I conclude this Project in Lieu of Thesis with a robust framework for collaboration with the Gainesville queer performer community. I've created new relationships and trust bonds over the past years. I believe that this is only the beginning. I anticipate future directions for this research project. For instance, I've identified queer archives with a nationwide presence that could be opportunities to open a chapter devoted to Gainesville. Now that the project deadlines have been reached, I imagine that the project will take shape in an online format. The following list includes some of the short and mid-term objectives.

### Current

- digital workshop
- analysis from workshops (visualization)
- video approvals from participants

### Next Steps

- edit individual/topic videos
- produce headshots or collage portraits
- edit thematized versions of videos
- acquire funding for domain and hosting services
- create final designs based on feedback
- launch site
- design topic-related visual narratives
- reach out to new performers
- repeat what worked
- contribute to the field of Design Research



## Initial literature review

### A Str8 Subject in Mayor Milk's Court: Queer Str8ness and World-Making in an LGBTQ Anthology Project

Positionality, Queering History, Autoethnography, Queer theory, Narrative, Drag politics, Research, Ethnography

*This critical autoethnography interrogates the nuances of queer str8 subjectivity and scholarly standpoints by tracing the narrative experiences of the author during a longitudinal queer archival project on late social activist Harvey Milk. Episodes of the author's journey into the queer archive are interlaced with theoretical discussions of queer str8 theory and considerations of identity reflexivity. Questioning the roles of queer str8s in queer activist scholarship and probing the limitations of cis-straight-identified privilege in a queer archive, in particular, this narrative punctuates the need for cis-straight scholars to engage in an honest and carefully contoured reflection about their roles, ethos, personal place, and social space in queer world-making. (Black 2018)*

**Jason E. Black** offers a great paper exploring queer making and **autoethnography**. The author examines limitations based on **identity reflexivity in the queering of America's narrative**. For me, it's a great way to express positionality. I **compare** this reading with "A Natural History of the Drag Queen Phenomenon" where the positionality of the authors is not articulated. As a heterosexual author, it's great to see how he aims to dismantle heteronormativity. I relate this to my work as I explore topics where I'm only an **ally** in that sense.

### Drag: The Complete Story (A Look at the History and Culture of Drag)

Drag History, Drag Subculture Phenomenon, Economy of Drag, Queer Economy

*This fearless book observes this increasingly complex world by exploring drag's journey – from the surprising to the sophisticated, to the utterly bizarre – through the twentieth century and up to the present day.*

**Simon Doonan** includes references from the Victorian era and female impersonation in theatre contexts. Also, cross-dressing androgynous archetypes from mythology and old civilizations. This book gives a very compelling representation of the subculture drag phenomenon. This book is relevant to my research topic as it helps me frame what has been included and excluded in "drag history". The categories and imagery used as a reference are also useful to explore terminology. (Doonan 2019)

### Queer X Design: 50 Years of Signs, Symbols, Banners, Logos, and Graphic Art of LGBTQ

Design history, Queer history, Ephemera, Gender, Archive

*The first-ever illustrated history of the iconic designs, symbols, and graphic art representing more than 5 decades of LGBTQ pride and activism. Beginning with pre-liberation and the years before the Stonewall uprising, spanning across the 1970s and 1980s and through to the new millennium, Queer X Design celebrates the inventive and subversive designs that have powered the resilient and ever-evolving LGBTQ movement. The diversity and inclusivity of these pages are as inspiring as it is important, both in terms of the objects represented as well as in the array of creators; from buttons worn to protest Anita Bryant, to the original 'The Future is Female' and 'Lavender Menace' t-shirt; from the logos of Pleasure Chest and GLAAD, to the poster for Cheryl Dunye's queer classic The Watermelon Woman; from Gilbert Baker's iconic rainbow flag to the quite laments of the AIDS quilt and the impassioned rage conveyed in ACT-UP and Gran Fury ephemera. More than just an accessible history book, Queer X Design tells the story of queerness as something intangible, uplifting, and indestructible. Found among these pages are sorrow, loss, and struggle; an affective selection that queer designers and artists harnessed to bring about political and societal change. But here is also: joy, hope, love, and the enduring fight for free expression and representation. Queer X Design is the potent, inspiring, and colorful visual history of activism and pride. (Campbell 2019)*

As a queer designer, this book is a powerful and emotional inspiration. As I explore queer history in a national context this book is valuable to frame the **social transformations**, the objects included not only show the beauty of the symbols used to lead the queer revolution. It also gives a comprehensive narrative of the **intangible struggles and emotions that the LGBTQ+ communities have and continue to suffer**. As I also intend to harness the power of design in participatory research, Queer X design gives the positive and political context of American iconography, a crucial element to appeal to intended audiences. This book intersects **critical theory, design, and queer issues**, it also helps to understand aesthetic values within queer communities, furthermore, it elevates ephemera design to its recognition as part of queer history.

## Are Drag Queens Sexist? Female Impersonation and the Sociocultural Construction of Normative Femininity

Research, Queer theory, Feminism, Ethnography, Drag, Safe Spaces, Gender, Drag as Politics, Patrons, Drag Subculture phenomenon

*These theories argue that female impersonators utilize highly stereotypical and overly sexualized images of the feminine, in order to gain power, prestige, and status within the queer community. This study challenges popular feminist perspectives on drag, first on a theoretical level, utilizing advances in contemporary queer theory, and secondly on an ethnographic level, based on a year-long field study that involved both participant observation and unstructured interviews with several female impersonators and nightclub patrons at a local queer oriented nightclub in a city in southern Ontario, Canada. Aiming to understand the degree to which performers identified with the normative femininity they performed, this study argues for a more complex understanding of what motivates individuals to become drag queens, one that incorporates female impersonators' unique subjective understandings of their own gender identities. Overall, this study calls for a more holistic perspective on female impersonation, which does not limit itself to any one theoretical model of drag. (Nixon 2009)*

"This thesis presents a great compass to guide my own research. In the same way, I've explored feminism as part of my initial concerns for this topic. This author explores in depth the "utilization of female gender as a vehicle to achieve male status superiority" (Schacht 2002b). Nixon explores these relations with fieldwork and interviews in clubs based on the R.Q. that aims to clarify **whether or not Drag appropriates normative femininity for utilitarian purposes (not internalizing)**. Nixon utilizes queer theoretical/social constructivist perspective for the deconstruction of conceptions of sex, gender, and sexuality presented by the group of drag performers in his study. Nixon approaches feminism in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd wave, the last one being more understanding of the art of drag as non-normative acts beyond the binary. This work helps me frame **ontological relationships between male, masculine female, and feminine concepts**".

## Chicks with Dicks, Men in Dress: What it Means to Be a Drag Queen

Drag in Florida, Ethnography, Drag History, Gender, Research, Drag Subculture Phenomenon

*One of the burning questions about drag queens among both scholars and audiences is whether they are more gender-revolution-aries than gender-conservatives. Do they primarily destabilize gender and sexual categories by making visible the social basis of femininity and masculinity, heterosexuality and homosexuality? Or are they more apt to reinforce the dominant binary and hierarchical gender and sexual systems by appropriating gender displays and expressing sexual desires associated with traditional femininity and institutionalized heterosexuality? We address this question through a case study of drag queens at the 801 Cabaret in Key West, Florida.*

*On the basis of life histories, observations of their performances, and focus groups with audience members, we examine the role of gender and sexuality in the process of becoming a drag queen and in the personal identities of drag queens. We find that transgenderism, same-sex sexuality, and theatrical performance are central to the personal identities of these drag queens, who use drag to forge personal and collective identities that are neither masculine nor feminine, but rather their own complex genders. (Taylor and Rupp 2004)*

This case study (1998-2001) is relevant to my research topic as it helps clarify the **difference between female impersonators and drag queens**. The authors explore gender identities through ethnography fieldwork in Florida. It is relevant to my research because it was produced by female authors exploring binary conceptions. Other items from the literature review also cite the authors. It also helps me building un the concept of drag as a safe space and as gender benders. Their interpretation of drag and female impersonators is also adequate.

"Some scholars view drag as primarily reinforcing dominant assumptions about the dichotomous nature of gender presentation and sexual desire because drag queens' appropriate gender displays are associated with traditional femininity and institutionalized heterosexuality (Frye 1983; Dolan 1985; Tewksbury 1993, 1994; Gagné and Tewksbury 1996; Schacht 1998, 2000, 2002a, 2002b)".

### **Coming Out of the Campus Closet: The Emerging Visibility of Queer Students at the University of Florida, 1970–1982.**

Johns Committee, UF Queer History, Gainesville Queer History, the '70s, '80s, Archive, Gainesville Queer History

*This historical work chronicles the emergence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer (LGBTQ) student visibility at the University of Florida from 1970 to 1982. It focuses on the establishment of an LGBTQ student group and student reactions to queer visibility. This work relies heavily on the student newspaper for the student perspective and shows how the emergence of queer students as part of the expansion of student affairs offices and how queer student movements grew from other social protest movements. Higher education history has almost entirely omitted queer experiences, and queer history has not looked deeply into higher education. (Clawson 2014, 209)*

This case study led me to great image archives from local newspapers. The case study describes the evolution of the term queer. Clawson intersects sexuality with the creation of spaces. In the context of spaces for **queer student visibility**. During the decade of, the 70s-80s there was an emergence of people coming out of the closet. For queer people in the United States, visibility became a matter of pride (Travis 2012; Clawson 2014). This was an echo of the national context, people coming out of the closet paved the way for an association-like act-up in 1987. Clawson mentions

#### **If Stonewall was part of the consciousness of queer students at UF, it was not made known in the sources.**

In the fifteen years of the student newspaper I read, Stonewall was not mentioned once. Nonetheless, Florida's queer history is significant to that of the nation. (Clawson 2014, 213)

If Stonewall wasn't part of the discourse around visibility it was a response to the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee.

### **Gender Spectrum | Understanding Gender**

Gender, Terminology, Safe spaces

*Gender Spectrum works to create gender-sensitive and inclusive environments for all children and teens. Among the work that gender spectrums offer is a comprehensive guidebook exploring the challenges that thousands of families face every day raising a teenager who may be transgender, non-binary, gender-fluid, or otherwise gender-expansive, The Transgender Teen: A Handbook for Parents and Professionals Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Teens (2016) created by Gender Spectrum founder Stephanie Brill and Executive Director Lisa Kenney (Gender Spectrum 2019)*

"Gender Spectrum offers Educational Services and Youth Development through programming and consulting. GS is a valuable and accessible resource. I try to construct inclusive perspectives to approach this topic. I choose this website because it is intended to be useful for teenagers and younger audiences. As a starting point, this **builds upon the idea of early exposure to issues of gender and identity. Introducing inclusive vocabulary creates safe and inclusive spaces.** It helps me to curate included in the terminology section.

### **Behind closed doors. [videorecording]**

Johns Committee, UF Queer History, Gainesville Queer History, '50's, Archive, Gainesville Queer History, Testimonials

*The Legislative Investigation Committee probed unpopular groups in Florida during the 1950s and '60s. Also known as the Johns Committee, investigators questioned civil rights activists, suspected Communists, and homosexuals. Includes live interviews with Art Copleston, Merrill Mushroom, and Julia Penelope; and a narrative about the first Johns Committee target, Sigmund Diettrich (who is now deceased), by former colleagues. (Beutke 2000)*

"This documentary has become one of the central pieces of the LGBTQ+ affairs department at UF. BCD acknowledges the past struggles and injustices that suffered queer people. The Johns Committee targeted allegedly communist organizations. During the '50's white southerners were concerned about a communist who was allegedly conspiring with black people to end white supremacy. This 'legal persecution' was a disguise and a response to the ending of racial legal segregation from conservatives. Professors were taken out of the classroom, investigated, and interrogated many of them were fired based on accusations related to even their aspects. J. Wayne Reitz, former president of UF, cooperated with the persecutions that took place. In many declarations made by Reitz, it is clear that his positionality, was in great part, the reason why more than 50 students were expelled. The documentary is very important for **acknowledgment of the legacy that still affects UF students' development.** Also to provide a reference of the queer local history. As I intend to frame oral local queer history, with this source, I'm able to intersect the Reitz legacy with the annual celebrations of the Pride Student Union."

### **“The most profoundly revolutionary act a homosexual can engage in”: drag and the politics of gender presentation in the San Francisco gay liberation movement, 1964-1972**

Drag, Drag history, Drag politics, Gender, Liberation Movement, Queer History, Sexuality, '60's, '70s

*This article traces the debates about drag that emerged in gay organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960s and 1970s, illustrating how contrasting conceptions of the role of gender presentation in gay activism, as well as implicit class and racial divisions in gay organizations, fostered vastly different interpretations of drag and gender transgression as cultural statements. Historically, homosexuality and gender deviance have long been intertwined in both medical and cultural discourse. (Hillman 2011)*

This article from the history of sexuality journal offers different interpretations of drag and gender transgression as 'cultural statements'. The article offers a **counterview to the art of drag and fears of exacerbating stereotypes around that time**. It is valuable to contextualize the national context of my research focus. It also helps in framing items including the context of drag. The article describes The Queen documentary. On one hand, pointing to the **humanization of men behind the performance. In contrast, the fear of perpetuating the myth and unfair stereotypes for uneducated audiences** ("Magda at the movies," Vector 4, no. 7 1968:22). The text continues to debate the political and cultural meaning of drag as a constituent of gay liberation. The article is a great way of expressing valid concerns about the patronization of the 'gay lifestyle' but it also extends further understanding in contexts related to gender identities and sexuality. I undertake further research on topics related to the gender spectrum.

### **Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories**

Ephemera, Queer History, Research, Feminism, Safe spaces

*The anthology is divided into four parts, addressing materiality, nontextual archives, marginalization, and cataloging of queer lives. The essays in this volume take the embodied, affective, and personal experiences of archival research and overlay them on the scholarly and intellectual experiences, while also using them to inform knowledge creation beyond the traditional usage of manuscripts and objects. In the foreword, Ann Cvetkovich acknowledges the shifts in the landscape over the twelve years since the publication of her influential book *An Archive of Feelings* (Duke, 2003), which addresses "the traumatic loss of history" for LGBTQ people not represented in conventional archives (p. xvii). Cvetkovich asserts that these essays "affirm the importance of the archive as a site of practice—that archives are not static collections to be judged by what they include or exclude but places where we do things with objects" (p. xvii). The volume does not ignore archival omissions, but it is a relief to at least temporarily move beyond critiques of archival failures and absences to understand what scholars can do with the materials archivists preserve. Even though many archives have a long way to go in improving accessibility on a number of levels, researchers nonetheless do find a way to make spaces for themselves in our reading rooms. (Wooten 2017)*

A contemporary **approach to ephemera, object, materiality, and queer archival research**. The essays in this book range from poems to semiotic analyses of objects. The central tie of the work is the archive/counter archive-building through community formation. This is a source that could potentially support my discoveries in ephemera design. Part of my interest as a research design is to be able to identify future trajectories for the body of work concerning design canons and queer ephemera design. It's also relevant as it frames archives and materiality in queer lives as a safe space, a concept that is a keyword and central focus of my proposal.

### **The Oxford handbook of feminist theory**

Feminist, Research, Gender, Ethnography

*The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory provides a rich overview of the analytical frameworks and theoretical concepts that feminist theorists have developed to analyze the known world. Featuring leading feminist theorists from diverse regions of the globe, this collection delves into forty-nine subject areas, demonstrating the complexity of feminist challenges to established knowledge, while also engaging areas of contestation within feminist theory. Demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of feminist theory, the chapters offer innovative analyses of topics central to social and political science, cultural studies and humanities, discourses associated with medicine and science, and issues in contemporary critical theory that have been transformed through feminist theorization. The handbook identifies limitations of key epistemic assumptions that inform traditional scholarship and shows how theorizing from women's and men's lives has profound effects on the conceptualization of central categories, whether the field of analysis is aesthetics, biology, cultural studies, development, economics, film studies, health, history, literature, politics, religion, science studies, sexualities, violence, or war (Disch and Hawkesworth 2016)*

The Oxford handbook of feminist theory was a great introduction to the feminist theory. There are many reasons why I should explore feminism. As I mention during the initial explorations of my topic, intersectionality is everywhere, we are all situated in some part of the “pyramid”. By exploring Gainesville drag performers it’s clear to me that I will encounter black transgender women, for that specific reason, it is important to explore feminism, intersectionality, and gender. Understanding feminism and the evolution of the theory helps me frame different discourses of gender chronologically. It also informs queer theory as I approach non-conforming and non-heteronormativity. Based on critiques made by feminists against the art form of drag during the second wave. Based on the fact that the drag local scene is diverse and bio queens are part of this tribe. I’m interested to understand how can drag be approached using feminist theory. If not specifically feminism some of the branches that originated thanks to feminist theorists.

## A Natural History of the Drag Queen Phenomenon

Stereotypes, Drag, Demographics

*The drag queen cultural phenomenon has been described at length. However, is the depiction of outlandish and hyperbolic womanhood and taunting, and formidable behavior at the core of drag queens? public persona has still to be fully accounted for. We argue that these aspects of the drag queen’s public appearance could best be understood in a signaling framework. Publicly donning extravagant women’s costumes attracts harassment and brings financial mating, and opportunity costs, generating the conditions for the transmission of honest signals. By successfully withstanding those odds, drag queen impersonators signal strategic qualities to members of the gay community. Data collected among gay and straight participants support a costly signaling reading of the drag queen cultural phenomenon. Participants generally agree that successful drag queens typically incur costs, while gaining specific social benefits. (Moncrieff and Lienard 2017)*

This paper offers a harsh critique of the art of drag. The study collects **quantitative data** (Qualtrics survey/Likert-type scale). The references used to present the context and background are somehow accurate. The **taboos and misconceptions are expressed but the statements perpetuate negative stereotypes of drag performers**. The authors refer to signaling theory by comparing animals and prisoners. They framed the cost of drag as “particular **behavioral signals** enhance individuals’ reputation and welfare while being entirely decoupled from any reproductive payoff”. It’s important to acknowledge resources that critique the art form of drag as a way to address possible findings and misconceptions. One of the central motivations for this project. **Stereotypes, Drag, Demographics**

## Homosexuality and citizenship in Florida

60’s, Johns Committee, Queer history, Gainesville Queer history, UF queer history, Archives, Ephemera

*“Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida, also known as the Purple Pamphlet, was an anti-homosexual Propaganda pamphlet published in January 1964 by the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee of the Florida legislature led by Senator Charley Johns. The booklet contained several pornographic images and a glossary of terminology used in the gay community. It was sold for 25 cents a copy, with a discount for bulk orders of 100 copies or more.*

*The Johns Committee had for several years conducted a witch hunt for homosexuals in public schools, universities, and state government agencies, believing they were part of a Communist strategy to “subvert the American way of life by controlling academic institutions and by corrupting the nation’s moral fiber.” By publishing its findings, the Committee hoped to persuade the Legislature to enact comprehensive anti-homosexual legislation, and to “shock Floridians into accepting its program.”*

*[The report] viewed homosexuals as the carriers of a degenerative disease that posed a greater menace to society than child molesters. ... The committee expected readers to select a theory conforming to its own views, and the pamphlet portrayed gays as sex fiends who spent every free moment searching for anonymous partners, recruiting youth, or transmitting venereal diseases.*

*Instead of becoming a best-seller as its authors hoped, the Purple Pamphlet provoked a backlash of criticism for its explicit photographs of gay men involved in sexual activities. A Dade County official threatened to bring legal action against the committee, and the state Attorney General ‘warned the FLIC to cease distribution of this ‘obscene and pornographic material.’ A gay book club in Washington, D.C., sold reprints of the pamphlet for two dollars apiece.*

*The backlash from the pamphlet controversy destroyed the committee, which disbanded on July 1, 1965, after the Legislature refused to continue to fund its activities. The records of the FLIC’s investigations were sealed by the Legislature until 2028, although in the early 1990s, redacted copies were placed in the Florida state archives for public inspection.” (Florida Legislative Investigation Committee 1964)*

The infamous Purple Pamphlet, also known as Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida was anti-homosexual propaganda. This is probably the most relevant item in the library, it’s a clear **statement of the power of design (in a negative way)** but also is a powerful image that has a potential for re-utilization. As the word queer was once **pejorative**. I believe, that by using this imagery, the project could **embrace the past to move forward**. It’s important as many other items on this list reference its relevance of it. It is a great part of the methodology where I intend to acknowledge past, struggles, and oral history. This item is a statement of the importance of the **creation and continuation of safe queer spaces**.

### An LGBTQ+ safe haven on University Avenue

Queer history, Oral history, Archives, Research, Queer Economy

*The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) community has been largely ignored by historical institutions in their collecting practices. Yet this community has had a significant impact on American culture, politics, and public policy, especially from the last half of the twentieth century to the present time. [...] These efforts are often hampered by a population that often hides or discards the material evidence of its history because of societal pressures suggesting that it is not a history to be preserved and indeed celebrated. (Botero 2020)*

*"Conventional wisdom holds that there is not much LGBTQ history to document in Pennsylvania outside of major cities like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh." (Botero 2020)*

*The local newspaper offers insights to 4 drag performers of Gainesville. The article raises awareness about the importance of safe queer spaces in Gainesville and invites to give donations using a GoFundMe to relieve the impact suffered by the pandemic (Botero 2020)*

The interviewees include a transgender woman and a close friend of mine. Also, two 20 years old's college students and Ph.D. candidates remain anonymous. This is an interesting and **diverse overview of the drag scene** showing a transgender woman, a straight female, and two queer younger individuals who are more intentional about **deconstructing gender norms through the art of drag**. It's crucial to map out what are the public representations of the drag scene, It's also another way to connect with those performers and further a conversation in relation to safe queer spaces, diversity, and gender representation.

### The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods: Renaissance and Resurgence

Queer history, Oral history, Archives, Research, Queer Economy, Gender, Research, Safe Spaces

*This open access book examines the significance of gay neighborhoods (or 'gayborhoods') from critical periods of formation during the gay liberation and freedom movements of the 1960s and 1970s, to proven durability through the HIV/AIDS pandemic during the 1980s and 1990s, to a mature plateau since 2000. The book provides a framework for contemplating the future form and function of gay neighborhoods. Social and cultural shifts within gay neighborhoods are used as a framework for understanding the decades-long struggle for LGBTQ+ rights and equality. Resulting from gentrification, weakening social stigma, and enhanced rights for LGBTQ+ people, gay neighborhoods have recently become "less gay," following a 50-year period of resilience. Meanwhile, other neighborhoods are becoming "gayer," due to changing preferences of LGBTQ+ individuals and a propensity for LGBTQ+ families to form communities in areas away from established gayborhoods. The current 'plateau' in the evolution of gay neighborhoods is characterized by generational differences—between Baby Boom pioneers and Millennials who favor broad inclusivity—signaling various possible trajectories for the future 'afterlife' of these important LGBTQ+ urban spaces. The complicating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic provide a point of comparison for lessons learned from gay neighborhoods and the LGBTQ+ community that bravely endured the onset of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This book will be of interest to students and scholars in various disciplines—including sociology, social work, anthropology, gender and sexuality, LGBTQ+ and queer studies, as well as urban geography, architecture, and city planning—and to policymakers and advocates concerned with LGBTQ+ rights and social justice. (Bitterman and Hess 2021)*

This item is helpful to frame many of the aspects of my research. Based on a conversation with my thesis chair and Alex Bitterman, I received some recommendations to address queer stories found in queer spaces. Alex told me that archiving and recollecting visual artifacts was important to concede **safe spaces as part of a thriving and healthy community**. The book offers insights into cosmopolitan cities around the world. The multiauthored open-access book also **frames critical periods** that I took as an influence to communicate the context/timeline of queer subjects.

As noted by Alex, the latest period of queer spaces (2000-present) represents a shift in **technological advances** that have changed the interrelationships and **dynamics of socialization**, leading to a "plateau" or decline for sustainable queer spaces. This book helps approach concepts that I intend to explore, like Queer history, Oral history, Archives, Ethnographic Research, Queer Economy, Gender, and Safe Spaces.

### Hello from the Pluriverse Podcast

Design theory, Podcast, Co-design, PIVOT speakers

*The Hello from the Pluriverse Podcast aims to open up and create a space to have conversations about the pluriversality in design. Inspired by Arturo Escobar's Designs for the Pluriverse, we share stories and experiences of designers from other countries, women designers, designers of color, designers from the LGBTQI community, and designers from our little corner of the world in New Orleans. In the Hello From the Pluriverse publication, each chapter highlights the work of the designers and design thinkers featured in the podcast. (Noel n.d.)*

The podcast features conversations with designers whose work is influenced by pluriversal co-design praxis. The diverse nature of projects and backgrounds of the guest speakers offer insights into designerly ways of thinking. Broadly, I enjoy the podcast format because it allows me to concentrate on the way designers articulate co-design praxis. In particular, this is another way of connecting with resources shared in the classroom. And explore work from designers associated with the PIVOT proceedings of 2020.

### Visiones sobre el rol social del Diseño. (Only Spanish)

Design theory, Design thinking, Global South design

*Mariana Pittaluga, designer by the design theory specialist has written a Universidad de Buenos Aires work that captures the thinking of 17 international experts, including Antonio Fernández Olombrada, founder of Blash Design, sponsor of our Institute, about the importance and role that design plays today and its value to society. It is a book that brings together seventeen authors who talk about the social role of Design. It is published by Wolkowicz and the cover image is the social poster designed by Coco Cerrella "Right to Work". If the utopian mission of 20th-century modern design revolved around democratization through the design of objects and spaces that could improve the lives of all sectors of society and not just those of an elite, as was the case up to that point; perhaps the challenge of 21st-century designers is to design so as not to consume as capitalism requires, and to reinvent to contribute to the construction of a less unequal society. The idea of this work is to give an account of a current picture of some of the different discourses on the social role of Design. It is an invitation to reflect on the practice of designers.*

This book is a compilation of 17 stories from designers who practice social Design. The focus of the Mariana is to frame the design praxis from the XXI century as theory, it lays a chronological reflection on the evolution of terminology from design practice. The author aims to occupy spaces -as designers researchers- that expand preconceptions of Design from their aesthetic qualities to a more theoretical and historical framed vision. The books exposed me to Design theory interpreted by Global South designers.

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## Appendix

**Appendix 1:** Illustration by Jennifer Tobia, Lettering by Akshita Candra. Source: Extra Bold: A Feminist, Inclusive, Anti-racist, Nonbinary Field Guide for Graphic Designers (Lupton et al. 2021, 18-19)

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## Glossary of Terms

### Understanding Gender

The terms curated in this section are based on GenderSpectrum.org. I chose this website because it is intended to be useful for teenagers and younger audiences. As a starting point, this builds upon the idea of early exposure to issues of gender and identity. Introducing inclusive vocabulary creates safe and inclusive spaces.

**AFAB/AMAB:** Acronyms meaning “assigned female/male at birth” (also designated female/male at birth or female/male assigned at birth). No one, whether cisgender or transgender, gets to choose what sex they’re assigned at birth.

**Agender:** A person who sees themselves as not having a gender. Some agender-identified people see themselves as being gender neutral, rather than not having any gender, but in any case do not identify with a gender.

**Body:** our body, our experience of our own body, how society genders bodies, and how others interact with us based on our body.

**Cisgender:** Refers to people whose Gender identity aligns with their assigned sex at birth (cis- from Latin, meaning, “on this side [of].” In contrast to trans, from the Latin root meaning “across,” “beyond,” or “on the opposite side [of]”).

**Identity:** the name we use to convey our gender based on our deeply held, internal sense of self. Identities typically fall into binary (e.g. man, woman) nonbinary (e.g., genderqueer, genderfluid, etc) or ungendered (e.g., agender, genderless) categories. The meaning associated with a particular identity can vary among individuals using the same term. A person’s gender identity can correspond to or differ from the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Gender literacy:** the ability to participate knowledgeably in discussions of gender and gender-related topics. Gender literacy is not about expertise so much as it is about a stance of openness to the complexity of gender and the idea that each person determines for themselves their own identity.

**Gender:** People tend to use the terms “sex” and “gender” interchangeably. But, while connected, the two terms are not equivalent. Generally, we assign a newborn’s sex as either male or female (some US states and other countries offer a third option) based on the baby’s genitals. Once a sex is assigned, we presume the child’s gender. For some people, this is cause for little, if any, concern or further thought because their gender aligns with gender-related ideas and assumptions associated with their sex. Nevertheless, while gender may begin with the assignment of our sex, it doesn’t end there. A person’s gender is the complex interrelationship between three dimensions: body, identity, and social gender.

For example: Male, Female, Androgyny, Boi, Cisgender, Gender identity, Gender identity disorder, Genderqueer, Gender role, Intersex, Pangender, Third gender, Transgender, Transman, Transwoman, Transsexualism, Womyn)

**Genderfluid:** People who have a gender or genders that change. Genderfluid people move between genders, experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than static.

**Genderqueer:** An umbrella term to describe someone who doesn’t identify with conventional gender identities, roles, expression

and/or expectations. For some, genderqueer is a Non-binary identification, and for others it is not.

**Gender binary:** A system that constructs gender according to two discrete and opposite categories: boy/man and girl/woman. It is important to recognize that both cisgender and Transgender people can have a gender identity that is binary.

**Gender dysphoria:** First, let’s look at the word “dysphoria.” According to Merriam-Webster, dysphoria is “a state of feeling very unhappy, uneasy, or dissatisfied.” So, in the broadest sense, gender dysphoria is when someone feels very unhappy, uneasy, or dissatisfied in relation to their gender. This is something many people experience, including feeling a tension between how someone feels about their body compared to how society genders their body, or a conflict between how someone sees themselves in contrast with expected gender roles or expectations.

Gender dysphoria is related to gender congruence, which is the degree of harmony we feel in each dimension of our gender). Gender dysphoria, which can occur in relation to any dimension of gender, can encompass a broad range of feelings, from mild discomfort to unbearable distress; the intensity, pervasiveness, frequency, and triggers of gender dysphoria vary widely from person to person. Feelings of gender dysphoria can, and often do, change over time. For example, an individual’s experience of gender dysphoria may lessen as greater congruence is achieved.

**Gender expansive:** An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden their own culture’s commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms.

**Gender expression:** This is our “public” gender. How we present our gender in the world and how society, culture, community, and family perceive, interact with, and try to shape our gender. Gender expression is also related to gender roles and how society uses those roles to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms.

**Gender inclusive spaces:** Inclusivity, in its very definition, means to be open to everyone and not limited to certain people. In regard to gender, this means that services, establishments, schools, practitioners, government agencies, and other institutions are welcoming of all kids, regardless of their gender identity or expression.

To create gender inclusive spaces, all adults must take responsibility for the safety of all children, regardless of the clothes they wear, the toys they play with, or other gender expressions. Moving from the notion of gender as a binary concept to a more expansive understanding of the complex nature of the gender spectrum only occurs with a concerted effort by all adult stakeholders and allies.

**Gender role:** The set of functions, activities, and behaviors commonly expected of boys/men and girls/women by society.

**Heteronormativity:** The body of lifestyle norms that hold that people fall into distinct and complementary genders (man and woman) with natural roles in life. It also holds that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation, and states that sexual and marital relations are most (or only) fitting between a man and a woman. Consequently, a “heteronormative” view is one that involves alignment of biological sex, sexuality, gender identity, and gender roles.

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**Non-binary:** An umbrella term for gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine.

**Personal Gender:** While the dimensions of gender and the desire for congruence are common to us all, ultimately gender is personal. Each dimension of gender is informed by our unique intersection of identities, experiences, and personal characteristics. We are more than our body, gender identity and gender expression: we are also our race, ethnicity, class, faith, sense of geographic place, family history, and more. Our gender is personal because, while we share some of these aspects of self with others, the way that all of these identities, influences and characteristics come together is unique to each of us.

**Social gender:** how we present our gender in the world and how individuals, society, culture, and community perceive, interact with, and try to shape our gender. Social gender includes gender roles and expectations and how society uses those to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms.

**Social congruence measures:** changes of social identifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, gender identity, name and/or pronouns;  
**Hormonal congruence measures:** the use of medical approaches such as hormone “blockers” or hormone therapy to promote physical, mental, and/or emotional alignment;

**Surgical congruence measures:** the addition, removal, or modification of gender-related physical traits; and

**Legal congruence measures:** changing identification documents such as one’s birth certificate, driver’s license, or passport.

It is important to note, though, that a transition experience can be a very significant event in a person’s life. A public declaration of some kind where an individual communicates to others that aspects of themselves are different than others have assumed, and that they are now living consistently with who they know themselves to be, can be an empowering and liberating experience (and moving to those who get to share that moment with them).

**Sexual orientation:** Our sexual orientation and our gender are separate, though related, parts of our overall identity. Gender is personal (how we each see ourselves), while sexual orientation is interpersonal (who we are physically, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to).

**TERF:** is an acronym for Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist, and is used to describe those radical feminists, like Brennan, who oppose inclusion of transgender women in spaces they reserve exclusively for women assigned female at birth.

**Third gender:** The terms third gender and third sex describe individuals who are considered to be neither women nor men, as well as the social category present in those societies who recognize three or more genders. Contemporary gender theorists usually argue that a two-gender system is neither innate nor universal. A sex/gender system which only recognizes the following two social norms has been labeled “heteronormativity”.

For example: Eunuch, Fa’afafine, Fakaleiti, Hijra, Kathoey, Khanith, Mukhannathun, Muxe, Sworn virgin, Two-Spirit

**Transboy:** A child who was assigned a female sex at birth and has a boy gender identity.

**Transgender:** Sometimes this term is used broadly as an umbrella term to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex. It can also be used more narrowly as a gender identity that reflects a binary gender identity that is “opposite” or “across from” the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Transgirl:** A child who was assigned a male sex at birth and has a girl gender identity.

**Transphobia:** Fear, dislike of, and/or prejudice against transgender people.

**Transition:** “Transitioning” is a term commonly used to refer to the steps a transgender, Agender, or non-binary person takes in order to find congruence in their gender. But this term can be misleading as it implies that the person’s gender identity is changing and that there is a moment in time when this takes place. More typically, it is others’ understanding of the person’s gender that shifts. What people see as a “transition” is actually an alignment in one or more dimensions of the individual’s gender as they seek congruence across those dimensions. A transition is taking place, but it is often other people (parents and other family members, support professionals, employers, etc.) who are transitioning in how they see the individual’s gender, and not the person themselves. For the person, these changes are often less of a transition and more of an evolution. Instead of “transitioning,” a more apt phrase is “pursuing congruence measures.” A person can seek harmony in many ways.

**Transsexual:** This term is used in different ways in English-speaking countries. In the US, it is considered an older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities and is considered offensive by many people. Still used by some people who have permanently changed, or seek to change, their bodies through medical interventions, including, but not limited to, hormones and/or surgeries. Unlike the term transgender, transsexual is not an umbrella term. Many transgender people do not identify as transsexual and prefer the word transgender.

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## Drag (Sub)culture

The drag subculture terminology is imperative for the undertaking of this project. As a first encounter with the drag subculture, this comprehensive list is helpful to exemplify the diversity within this subculture. This list is based on a shared understanding of gender expression and identity. As an evolving phenomenon, the drag subculture continues to expand its definition. It is adding more categories to describe expressions and identities adequately. As I explored past studies and perspectives, it's essential to clarify that some terms might not reflect the contemporary language; therefore, it's important to note that some items might be considered offensive and outdated.

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**Activessle Drag:** Activessle drag queens use the art of drag and religious imagery to call attention to sexual intolerance, challenge issues of gender and equality, promote human rights and so much more. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, as they became known, perform a quasi-spiritual function and act as social counselors. Their mission: to promulgate universal joy and expiate stigmatic guilt. Think of activessle drag as the meeting place of flamboyance, community service and glitter.

**Androgynous:** This style involves bending or blurring the lines between male and female.

**Bio Queen** (faux queen, AFAB drag queen, female drag queen, bio queen, diva queen, or hyper queens):

A drag queen who identifies as a cisgender woman, a transgender (FTM) man, or as a nonbinary person who was assigned female at birth ("AFAB"). These performers are generally indistinguishable from the more common cisgender male or transgender (MTF) drag queens in artistic style and techniques. While all these terms are used both by performers and in the media, many are considered offensive.

The term "faux queen" is rejected and considered outdated by many drag artists for implying that AFAB drag queens are not as "real" as cisgender male drag queens, and the terms "bio queen" and "female queen" are considered by many performers to be transphobic as they imply that a transgender (MTF) woman who performs as a drag queen is not female and that a transgender (FTM) man is. Other descriptions include "biologically challenged" drag queen, "female female impersonator", or "female impersonator impersonator." All of these terms are generally considered acceptable only when used by the performer themselves, and many drag queens reject all terms that define them by their sex.

**Camp:** A camp queen is one who goes for the laughs. They accomplish this through their painting, costumes, performance or any combination of these. Their style can be completely off the wall and original or it could be any of the above styles but done with comedic take.

**Club Queen:** A club queen is a queen that either comes from the 1980s/1990s NYC club kid scene or has drawn inspiration for their drag persona from there. They are known for slaying "Drag Balls," with fierce yet sometimes outrageous fashion and unique make-up techniques.

**Crossplay:** is costume play (cosplay) in which the person dresses up as a fictional character of the opposite gender. Crossplay's origins lie in the anime convention circuit, though, like cosplay, it has not remained exclusive to the genre. As the name implies, crossplay is a portmanteau of cross-dressing and cosplay. Genderplay crossplay is a costumed gender performance which plays with or parodies traditional gender

roles, perceptions and issues by intentionally presenting a confusing gender identity.

**Cross-dressing:** is the act of wearing clothing commonly associated with another gender within a particular society. The usage of the term, the types of cross-dressing both in modern times and throughout history. The term cross-dressing denotes an action or a behavior without attributing or proposing causes for that behavior. Some people automatically connect cross-dressing behavior to transgender identity or sexual, fetishist, and homosexual behavior, but the term cross-dressing itself does not imply any motives. However, referring to a person as a cross-dresser suggests that their cross-dressing behavior is habitual and may be taken to mean that the person identifies as transgendered. The term cross-dresser should therefore be used with care to avoid causing misunderstanding or offense. Another problem which many cross dressers recognize in the attempt to attribute motives for their behaviour is the pathologization of cross dressing inherent in this sort of research. Many cross dressers feel that rather than attributing motives for cross dressing, research should rather focus on the reasons for why cross dressing is considered taboo by society, or why clothing is gender-segregated at all.

**Drag:** In the past, whether in Shakespeare, pantomime or kabuki theatre, drag was defined as women's clothing worn by man. In the present drag is fuel by everything and is not limited to a certain gender. I use drag as an umbrella term to include all forms of drag representation and all gender identities (and nonconforming) that integrates the vibrant drag performer community.

**Drag Kings:** are mostly female (but not limited) performance artists who dress in masculine drag and personify male gender stereotypes as part of their performance. A typical drag king routine may incorporate dancing and singing or lip-synching. Drag kings often perform as exaggeratedly macho male characters or impersonate male celebrities

**Drag Queen:** This is also an umbrella term, more traditionally used to describe female impersonators. This term is more used in contemporary drag culture and involves many categories of drag (Camp, Clown, Glam, Look queens, Goth, Trash, Pageant, Fluid, Transsexual, Activessle, Bio queens, etc..)

**Female impersonator:** Umbrella term for men giving performances presenting as women, though it's often used synonymously with drag queen. (Occasionally, women, as well, in which case "impersonator" isn't strictly accurate). Another term for a drag queen female impersonator, is still used—though it is sometimes regarded as inaccurate, because some contemporary drag performers are not attempting to pass as women. Female impersonation, has been and continues to be illegal in some places. Going in drag while retaining clearly masculine features is referred to as skag drag. Some performers draw the distinction that a female impersonator seeks to emulate a specific female star or celebrity, while a drag queen only seeks to create a distinctive feminine persona of his or her own.

**Fluid Drag:** A fluid queen is one who does not stick to one type of drag, rather, they use many influences that create a melting pot of techniques and styles to create their look or persona. These queens tend to be very versatile in performance and style

**Genderfuck:** as a form of gender identity or gender expression, uses parody and exaggeration to call attention to its transgression of gender roles, seeking to expose them

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as artificial, oftentimes by manipulating one's appearance to create gender dissonance or ambiguity in stark opposition of the gender binary. In this way, genderfuck shares many characteristics with genderqueer, although they are two separate concepts.

Examples of genderfuck in relation to physical performance or appearance include people prominently displaying secondary sex characteristics of different sexes together, such as breasts and a beard.

**Goth:** A goth queen is exactly how it sounds: dark and gloomy! This type of queen thrives off of creating looks inspired by classic goth and horror films. You won't see an eclectic group of colors in this queens closet... it's all black! Most tend to do white face and very dark themed makeup stylings.

**High Drag:** High drag is about over aggregating all the stereotypes of not just femininity but what one thinks of drag queens. It involves big hair, big boobs, and big hips, over the top costumes.

**Impersonation:** This is when Drag Queens perform as stars. These queens spend years perfecting their impersonations and some will even have plastic surgery so they can look more like the star they are portraying.

**Pageant:** Drag pageantry is a highly developed form of pageantry for female impersonators and transgender women, styled after traditional beauty pageants or beauty contests.

**Skag/Bear Drag:** Skag or Bear Drag depending on who you speak to is a style of drag where the queens do not attempt to hide their male appearance.

**Tranimal:** A.K.A. "terrorist-drag," tranimal drag deconstructs fashion and makeup, often using found objects, elements of surrealism and mixes of performance art, punk rock, racial and social issues. These drag queens often purposely use unkempt wigs and clothing. Most still hide male attributes, but don't necessarily shave or tuck, creating a constant push and pull between the genders.

■

**Transsexualism:** is a condition in which a person identifies with a physical sex different from the one with which they were born. Transsexualism is stigmatized in many parts of the world and has become more widely known in Western cultures in the mid to late 20th century, concurrently with the sexual revolution and the development of sexual reassignment surgeries. It remains controversial, however. Discrimination and negative attitudes towards transsexualism accompany certain religious beliefs or cultural values. There are other cultures, however, that have not only held a place for transsexuals but even culturally consent them, such as the so-called two-spirit (third gender) people in some native American tribes in Canada, US and Mexico.

**Transvestism:** is the practice of cross-dressing, which is wearing the clothing of the opposite sex. Transvestite refers to a person who cross-dresses; however, the word often has additional connotations. There are many different usages and meanings of the term transvestism. Some of them contradict each other; the only thing they have in common is They describe a behavior of people dressing in clothes of a gender that is different from the gender they were assigned (usually at birth) or the gender they are living in. It does imply some inner motive for cross-dressing, but does not specify this motive.

They (usually) exclude transvestic fetishism and they usually do not include transsexualism, or transgender people who completely change their gender role.

The word transvestism therefore should be explained when used; most of the time using cross-dressing will avoid much potential confusion. If encountered, it is necessary to find out which particular meaning it has in the context in which it is presented. In scientific literature, cross-dressing has mostly replaced transvestism.

**Transvestic fetishism:** Not to be associate with the art of drag or subculture. But as a sexual fetish for the clothing of the opposite gender. It is one of a number of cross-dressing behaviors and is primarily a psychiatric term. (Attraction to the clothing of the same gender is called homeovestism).

**By Gilberto Corona**