

## APC Podcast 2.3: Jama Shelton

### Key terms & concepts

#### Dimensions of Gender:

While our 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:** our body, our experience of our own body, how society genders bodies, and how others interact with us based on our body.
- **Identity:** our deeply held, internal sense of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither; who we internally know ourselves to be.
- **Expression:** 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.

**Body:** Most societies view sex as a binary concept, with two rigidly fixed options: male or female, both based on a person's reproductive functions (genitals, sex chromosomes, gonads, hormones, and reproductive structures). But a sex binary fails to capture even the biological aspect of gender. While most bodies have one of two forms of genitalia, which are classified as "female" or "male," there are naturally occurring intersex conditions that demonstrate that sex exists across a continuum of possibilities. This biological spectrum by itself should be enough to dispel the simplistic notion of the "Gender binary"- there are not just two sexes.

**Adulthood** is "a way of naming a specific form of ageism, identifying how the world is structured for adults, which in itself is an interpretive term, but young people are only ever seen as adults in training and not complete humans. It manifests in a way that we adults know better than you- what you should do, what you can do, what your needs are. For example, when you do something well we're surprised, impressed, too excited." (Definition provided by SP2 PhD candidate Kel Kroehle and Dr. Jama Shelton)

#### Important works by Dr. Jama Shelton

[LGBT Youth Homelessness: What are You Going to Do about It?](#)

["It Just Never Worked Out": How Transgender and Gender Expansive Youth Understand their Pathways into Homelessness](#)

[Transgender youth homelessness: Understanding programmatic barriers through the lens of cisgenderism](#)

[Where Am I Going to Go? Intersectional Approaches to Ending LGBTQ2S Youth Homelessness in Canada and the US](#)

## Useful resources

[Attic Youth Center](#): The Attic is Philadelphia's only agency exclusively serving LGBTQ youth and allies. Founded in 1993 as a support group for LGBTQ youth that met in the "attic" of a mainstream social service organization, The Attic has grown into a comprehensive multi-service youth agency, whose first goal was to reduce the isolation felt by LGBTQ youth by providing a sense of safety and community. The mission of The Attic is to create opportunities for LGBTQ youth to develop into healthy, independent, civic-minded adults within a safe and supportive community, and to promote the acceptance of LGBTQ youth in society.

[The True Colors Fund](#) is a national nonprofit organization working to end homelessness among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, creating a world in which young people can be their true selves.

[Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America](#)<sup>1</sup>

[Bending Gender, Ending Gender: Theoretical Foundations for Social Work Practice with the Transgender Community](#)

[Guide to "The Language of Gender" by Gender Spectrum](#)

[New York Times Lens photography feature "Beyond the Narrow Expectations of Gender"](#)

[Social Justice and Social Determinants of Health: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Intersexed, and Queer Youth in Canada](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Prevalence and Correlates of Youth Homelessness in the United States  
Morton, Matthew H. et al. Journal of Adolescent Health , Volume 62 , Issue 1 , 14 - 21