
the dfab trans* privilege checklist: a community project

Posted on [June 28, 2012](#) | [32 Comments](#)

[**update (february 6th, 2013)**: i'm re-evaluating my entire position on this issue, so please take this article with some piles of salt. at this point, i'm not even sure a dfab trans* privilege checklist is remotely useful; checklists are hopelessly limited in scope. still, it was good for me to write it; it was a good way to start thinking about how dfab trans* people are oppressed as opposed to how dmab trans* people are oppressed. further criticism will be cherished.]

i wrote a dfab trans* privilege checklist! i wrote it because i thought writing a privilege checklist would be a good way for me to work on checking my dfab trans* privilege. i'm posting it here because i think it needs to be a community project in order for it to be complete enough to be useful.

i need you to help me with it because i know it's incomplete and possibly flat-out wrong. i know this checklist can't cover the diversity of our experiences as dfab trans* people and i'm totally prepared to edit this checklist HEAVILY; i'll consider all feedback carefully. please totally discuss. i'm looking for feedback from everybody; dmab/dfab trans* people, cis people, queer people, straight people, poc, pwd— everybody.

(note: all contributors will get due credit and shiny-awesome links back their own spaces. also, these points don't apply to every dfab trans* person equally because intersectionality is kind of a big deal and we all have different lives. actually, i bet some of these points don't apply to dfab trans* people who aren't read as dfab. thoughts?)

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1. i have the privilege of being unaware of my dfab trans* privilege.
2. even if i'm read as my gdab (gender designated at birth) i'm able to distance myself from misogyny. after all, regardless of what other people may think of me, i know misogyny isn't really aimed at me.
3. statistically, i'm unlikely to be murdered for being trans*. (partial credit: harrow)
4. society isn't obsessed with whether or not i disclose my trans* status. when i do disclose my trans* status (either right away or later in a relationship), i'm relatively unlikely to face violence. (full credit: [reneta xian](#))
5. generally, i can expect dfab trans* people to not be featured in fear-mongering, transphobic ads. (tw: transphobia, transmisogyny! [example](#), [example](#).)

6. i probably don't experience the same level of simultaneous fetishization and desexualization as dmab trans* people do.
7. if i'm read as my gdab while wearing clothing designated for the other binary gender, i'm unlikely to be met with violence.
8. in general, people don't assume i'm a predator because i'm trans*.
9. in general, people don't assume i'm a pedophile because i'm trans*.
10. when i'm read as male, i may benefit from male privilege.
11. i can expect to watch tv without hearing derogatory jokes about trans* people of my gdab.
12. in trans*/queer spaces, i'm probably given more opportunities to speak and to lead than most dmab trans* people are, especially if i express my gender/non-gender in a stereotypically masculine fashion. (partial credit: aniel jaster.)
13. if i die under suspicious circumstances and the media picks up the story of my death, it's unlikely that my sex life and my body will be examined and judged. (tw: cissexism, racism, transmisogyny, violence! [example](#), [example](#).)
14. i'm often welcome in women's spaces that specifically exclude trans* women. these spaces may not acknowledge the existence of other dmab trans* people, but they are probably excluded by default.
15. if i'm visibly gender non-conforming, i'm unlikely to be harassed by store employees and by my fellow customers while shopping for clothing in what appears to be the "wrong" gendered section of the store.
16. in general, i don't have to be hyper-aware of systemic transmisogyny in order to protect myself from violence. (partial credit: harrow)
17. i can appropriate the systemically oppressive experiences of dmab trans* people without actually facing said systemic oppression.
18. in general, people don't fear me because i'm trans*.
19. if i speak about trans* issues, especially transmisogyny, i'll probably get more credit for my words and ideas than dmab trans* people do.
20. if i speak out against transmisogyny, i probably won't be seen as self-centered and i probably won't be told i'm taking up too much space.
21. if i'm outspoken or even aggressive while out as trans*, people probably won't attribute my outspokenness/aggression to my socialization. (partial credit: aniel jaster)

22. if i require access to sexual assault services, i'll probably be able to do so without experiencing harassment and/or rejection as a result of my gdab. (full credit: aniel jaster)

23. due to rampant transmisogyny in the feminist movement, i generally feel more comfortable speaking in feminist spaces than many trans* women do. (full credit: aniel jaster)

24. members of the queer community are unlikely to consider my sexual identity an illness or a perversion. (full credit: [reneta xian](#))

25. i'm probably not perceived as an agent of the patriarchy attempting to infiltrate feminist and lesbian spaces. (full credit: [reneta xian](#))

**related reading: [trans "people": intersectionality and the distribution of risk](#)

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update (february 6th, 2013): as i added at the top of this post, i don't exactly stand behind this post 100%. here are some of my main issues with it:

- maybe this shouldn't be a privilege checklist; is dfab privilege actually a privilege? or is it something else? i mean, it's obviously SOMETHING.
- this checklist doesn't do a good job of accounting for how people are read. for instance, a dfab trans* person who gets read as a woman (like me) is going to have a very different experience than a dfab trans* person who gets read as a man.
- i'm not sure how applicable any of this in other areas of the world. it's definitely written from the perspective of someone who lives in western bc, canada.
- this list is hopelessly non-intersectional. sure, privilege checklists are limited in scope and can't be applied to everyone equally, but i think i did a horrible job of leaving space for intersectionality. and i don't know how to fix it.
- if you think you can clear some of this up (telling me to delete the post doesn't count), go ahead. i'll listen.

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