

## Letter to Editor

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Dear Editor,

I have read the research article entitled “Female penis, male vagina, and their correlated evolution in a cave insect” by Yoshizawa, K., Ferreira, R. L., Kamimura, Y., and Lienhard, C. published in *Current Biology*, 2014 May 5;24(9):1006-1010. I want to congratulate the authors for this successful research and want to make some contribution in this regard.

Insects with their sex role reversed has not been documented till 2014. Thus, the discovery of such a phenomenon in insects is a very rare case to be occur in nature. In its finding by Yoshizawa, it was observed that female of *Neotrogla* genus have a rod like structure calling as a Gynososme; a true penis. While the male is known to have a vagina like opening from which the female receives voluminous sperm. During the research, it was found that mating of the insects is prolonged up to 70 hours and during copulation the female holds the charge. The insect was first discovered in Brazil (South America) from cave and then it was further found in the adjoining lands by Charles Lienhard and colleagues (2010). The insect feeds on the bat carcass and guano. In a general rule, female has been represented by ♀ and male by ♂. In case of *Neotrogla* genus, opposite sex requires a symbolic identification. Thus, a new sign is therefore being assigned to them for its symbolic identification. So, the female should be represented by ♂ and male by ♀.

The suggestion does not meet the criteria of different assigned symbols.

### Gender:

Is a social and cultural construct of what constitutes being a 'man' or a 'woman'. Based on the characteristics that a society or culture perceives to be 'masculine' or 'feminine'. Female is denoted by ♀ and male by ♂.

**Biological sex:**

Refers to the biological features of a person such as penis, vagina, breasts etc. Sex is determined by a complex relationship of genes, hormones and anatomy. Your sex can be divided into 3 categories (or some argue a spectrum): female, male and intersex.

**Sexual identity:**

How a person identifies with their sexual orientation. Eg. "I identify myself as straight/gay". This may not necessarily align with the person's sexual expression or sexual orientation.

**Homosexual:**

A clinical term first used over a century ago, often used inaccurately, to label people who are emotionally, physically and/or sexually attracted to and/or committed to members of the same sex. Used appropriately, it refers to affectional and/or sexual behavior between people of the same sex. Also known as 'gay'. ♀ lesbian (female homosexuality) and ♂ gay (male homosexuality)

**Heterosexual:**

A person who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of the opposite sex. Also known as 'straight'. Represented by ♂.

**Gay:**

Happy; also a common and acceptable term for male homosexuals. It is often used for both genders, as well as for the gay community in general. Represented by ♂.

**Lesbian:**

One of the most common and most preferred terms for female homosexuals. Represented by ♀

**Bisexual:**

A person who is attracted to people, regardless of their gender and/or sex. Once viewed primarily as a phase of gay or lesbian development, bisexuality is now regarded as a valid, independent sexual identity. ♀

**Intersex:**

People born with reproductive organs, genitalia and/or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male nor female, or is considered

(by the medical establishment and heterosexist society) to be biologically "ambiguous". ♂ ♀

**Queer:**

An inclusive term for people who are non-heterosexual – includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. For many GLBT persons, the term 'queer' has negative connotations, however, many GLBT persons have 'reclaimed' it as a symbol of pride. It is sometimes recommended that non-GLBT people do not use this term.

**Asexual:**

A person who is not sexually attracted to people of any gender/sex.

**Pansexual:**

A person who experiences sexual, romantic and/or physical attraction to people of all gender/sexual identities or expressions. ♀

**Gender identity:**

The sense that one is a man or a woman. How you, in your head, define your gender based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be 'masculine' or 'feminine'.

**Gender expression:**

The ways you express gender through your actions, dress and demeanour and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms. Generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity. It is important to recognise that individuals do not always express their masculinity/femininity in a manner that is consistent with their biological sex.

**Cisgender:**

A person whose gender identity, gender expression and biological sex all align. E.g. man, masculine, male.

**Genderqueer:**

a person who identifies as both a man and a woman or as neither a man nor a woman.

**Trans:**

This term is a shortening of the terms 'transgender' and 'transexual'. This does not include 'transvestites'.

**Transgender:**

Someone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex assigned at birth.

Transgender people may identify as 'men' or 'women' or decide that neither label fits them. In order to express their chosen gender, transgender people may transition from the gender that they were given at birth (biological sex). Many transgender people have heterosexual identities. ☒

**Transexual:**

A term used by many older transgender people to describe themselves. The term often refers to transgender people who have physically transitioned to their choice of gender.

**Trans-man:**

A person who was assigned a female sex at birth but identifies as a man.

**Trans-woman:**

A person who was assigned a male sex at birth but identifies as a woman.

**Transvestite:**

Someone who adopts the dress, and sometimes behaviour, typical of the 'opposite' gender for a variety of reasons including emotional and/or sexual pleasure. Transvestism is often a fetish for heterosexual men.

**Transitioning:**

In order to express their chosen gender, transgender people may 'transition' from the sex that they were assigned at birth (biological sex) with the help of medications or surgery. This process is referred to as 'transitioning'.