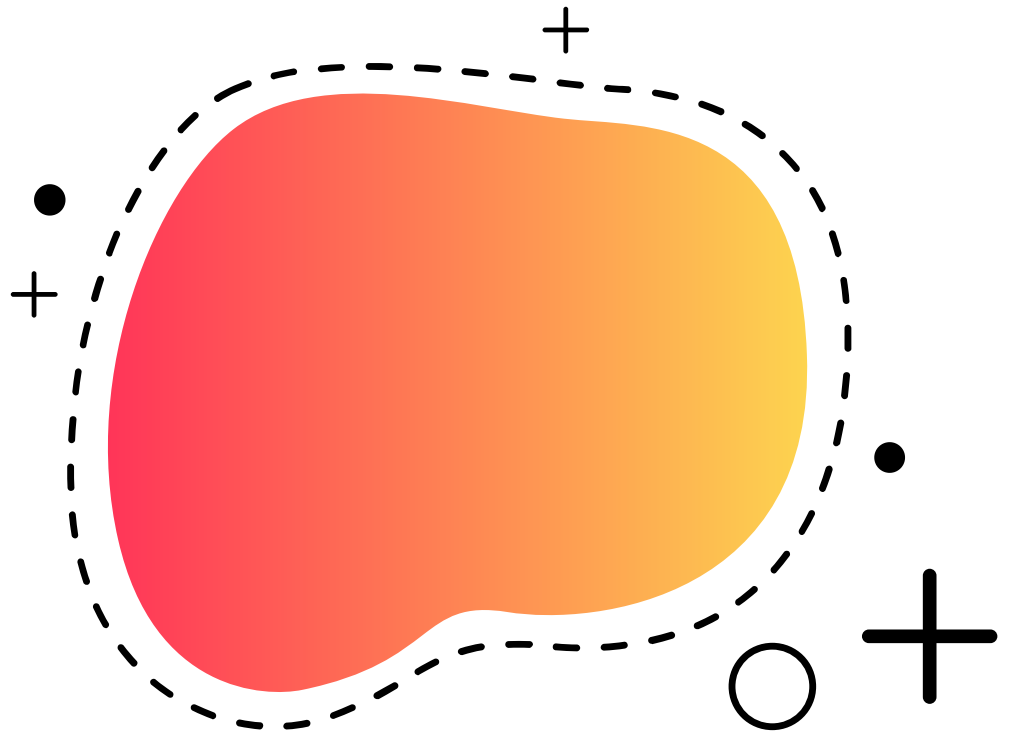


DESCRIBING GENDER



BEYOND THE BINARY

**ideas for describing gender without the
framework of a male-female binary**

FROGWATCHING.ITCH.IO

about the creator

i'm a white queer and trans person living in germany.

my pronouns are they/them in english and en/ens in german.

some words i use to describe my gender are genderqueer, trans, genderful and nonbinary.



Describing Gender Beyond the Binary by frogwatching, 2020.
Updated 2023.

you're free to share and reuse the contents of this zine as long as
give credit and use the material non-commercially.

to view a copy of this license, visit
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.

this zine came about because of my frustration with visualisations of the gender spectrum that are centered around the male-female binary.

nonbinary genders are so often defined and described in relation to binary genders. even the word itself references the binary!

nonbinary **not binary**
 3rd gender
 in the middle
 other
 none of the above
 both-and
 neither-nor

all these descriptions only make sense when you view the male-female binary as the standard or the framework.

i really don't like describing my gender in relation to the binary.

part of that is a dislike of describing my gender by what it's not. but it also doesn't feel right because using the binary as a jumping off point to understand my gender is inherently flawed.

my gender has nothing to do with binary genders. my gender exists regardless of whether binary genders exist. my gender is its own entity.

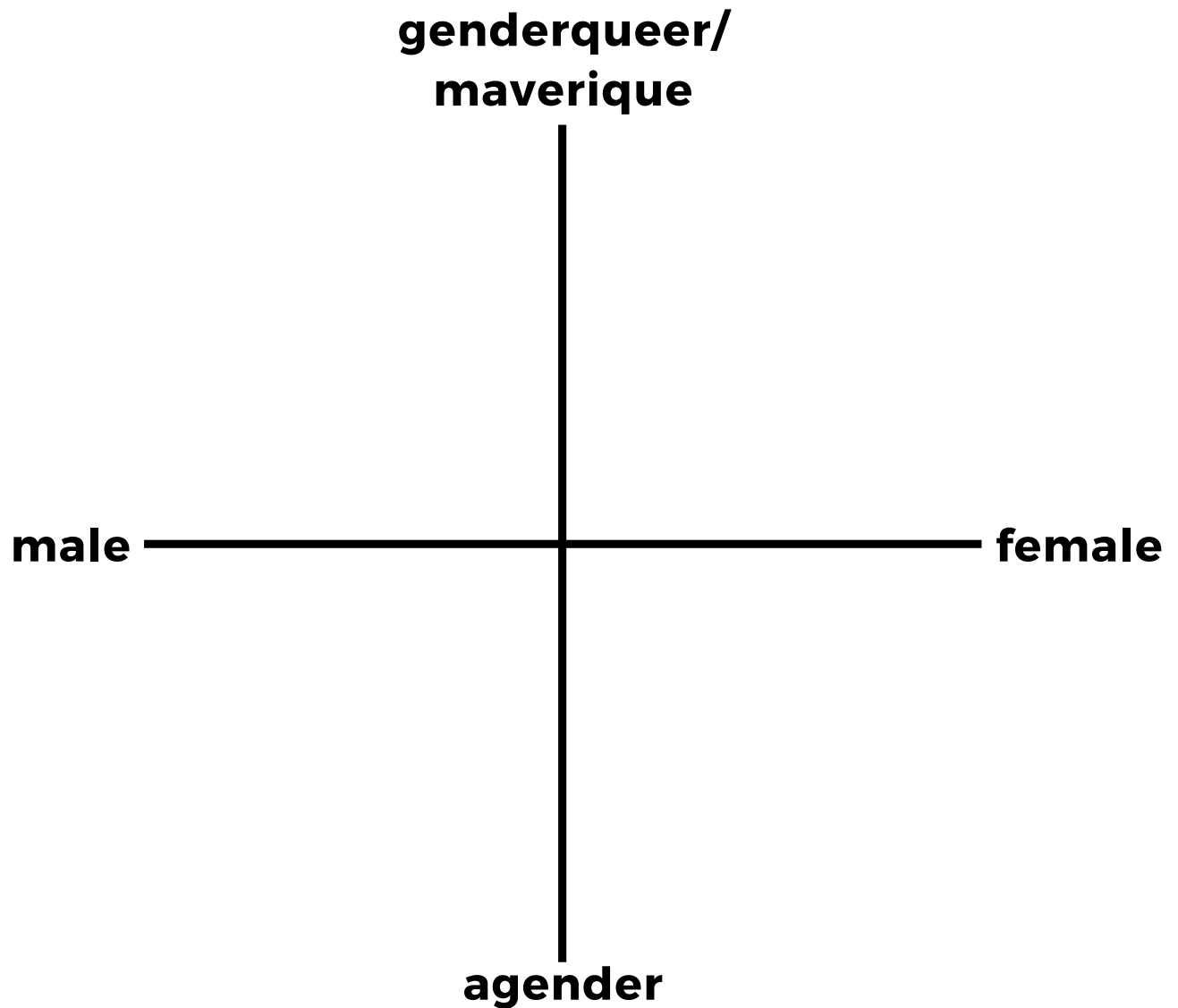
a map of gender that is structured around the binary can't accurately describe all genders.

this isn't sufficient:



4

but neither is this:



no matter where i put my mark on this map i still have to position myself as either closer to female, closer to male or exactly in between.

on the following pages are my attempts at making diagrams to describe gender that do not require people to position themselves along a female-male axis.

one part of deconstructing the gender binary is finding language that doesn't rely on the binary to express the things we want to communicate about our genders.

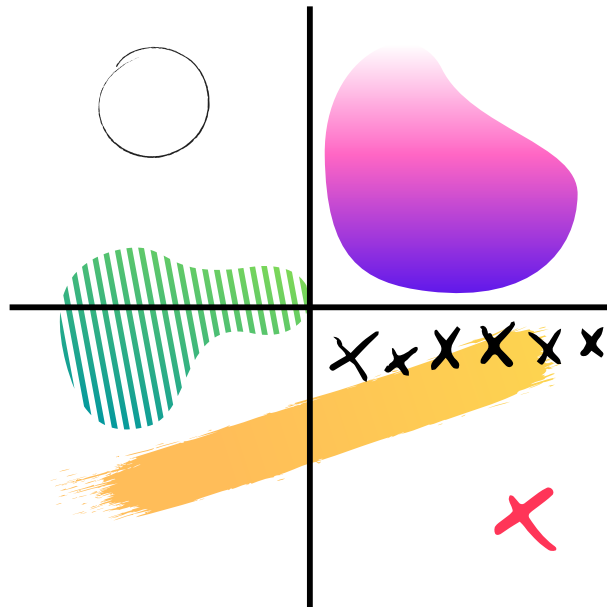
deconstructing the gender binary does NOT mean erasing the gender identities of women and men. it means decentering them and recognising that to be female and to be male are just two variations in an infinite pool of gender experiences.

in fact, i strongly encourage women and men to try to describe their genders in the frameworks in this zine. you might discover that there is great variation in how people with the same identity words experience their genders.

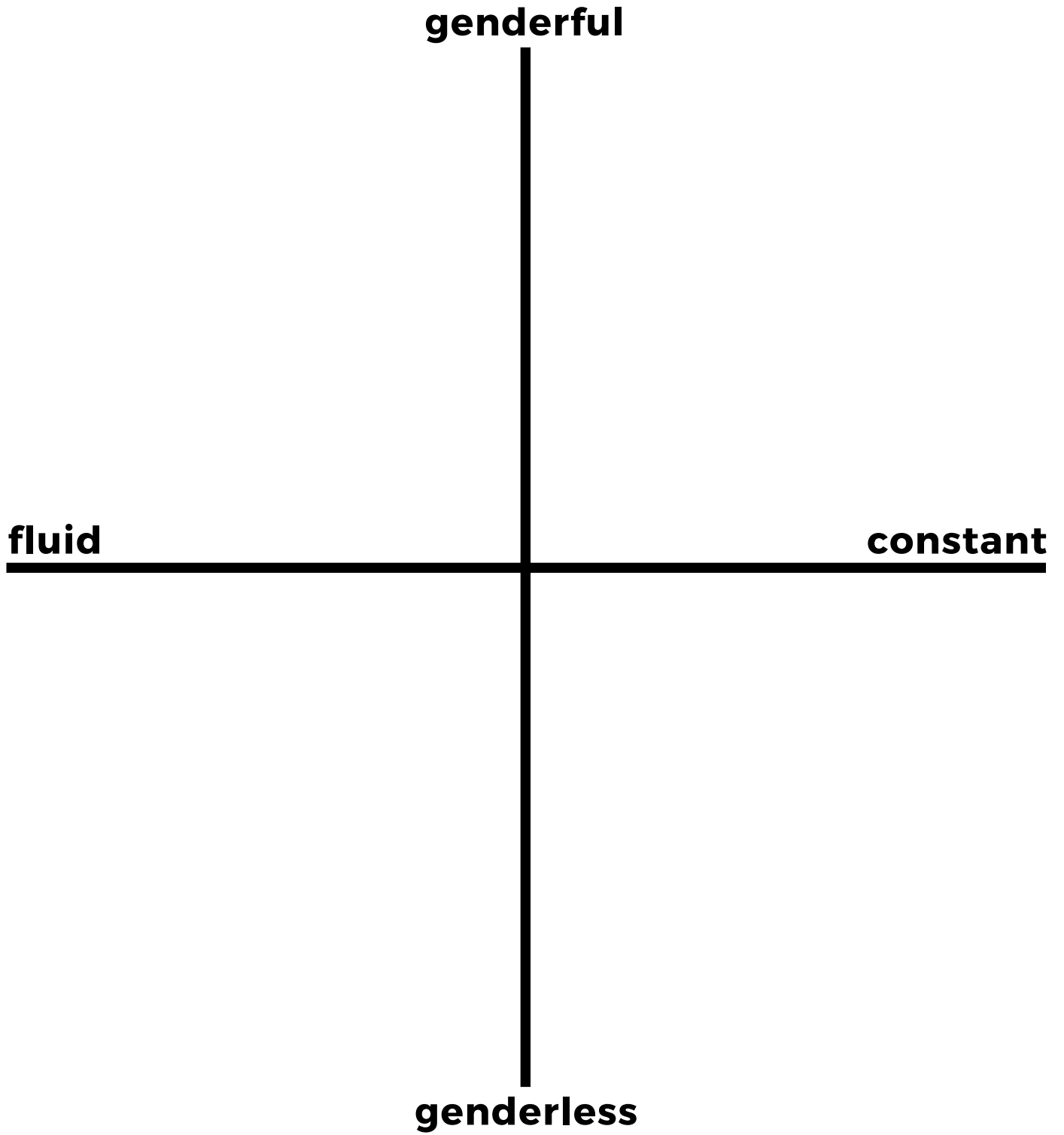
guidelines

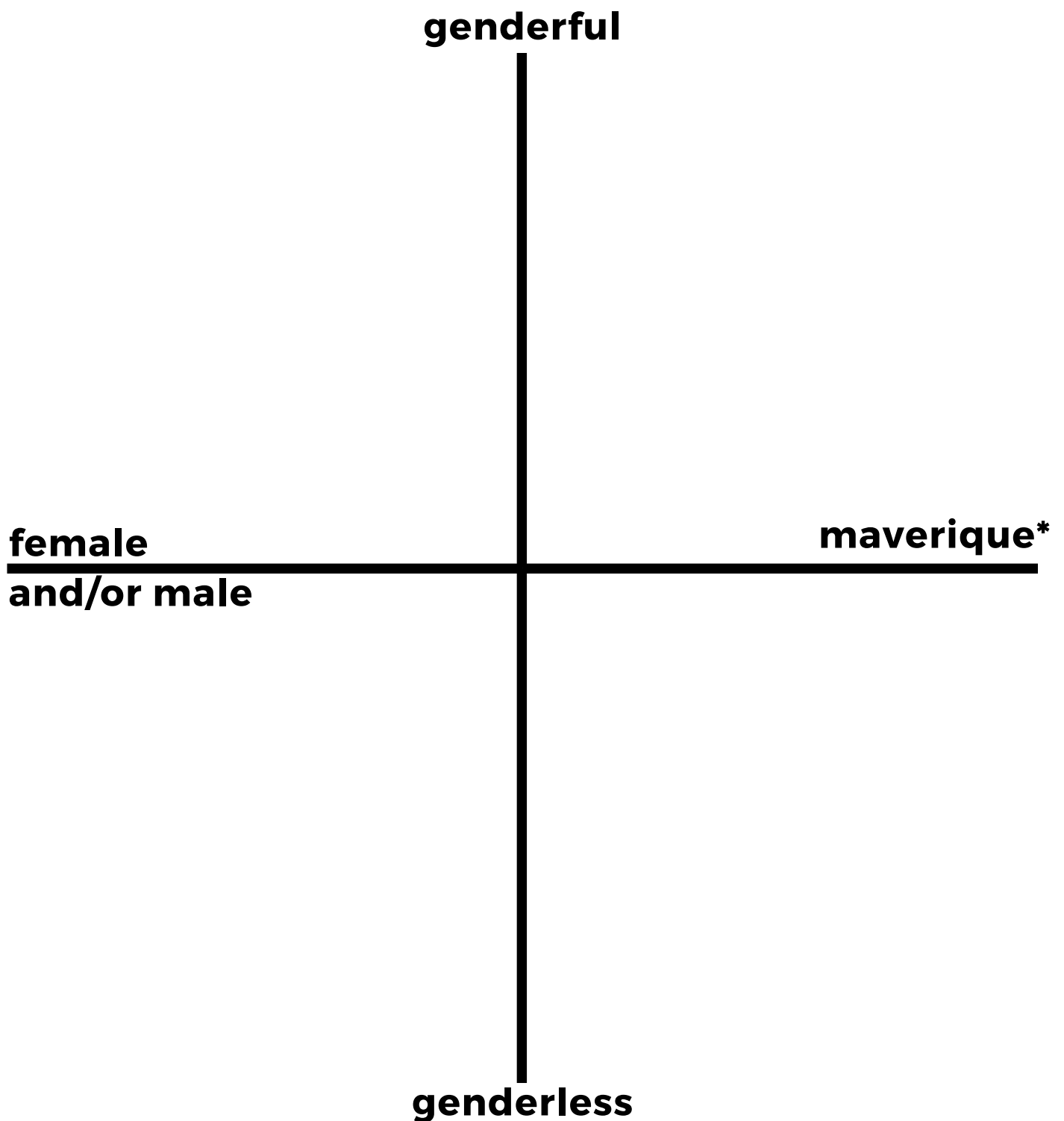
- anyone can use this zine. you don't have to be nonbinary.
- make a cross, a circle, mark an area or draw any other shape or symbol you find useful.
- make as many markings as you need.
- make modifications if you like.
- skip the ones you don't find useful.
- feel free to find your own words and descriptors.

examples:

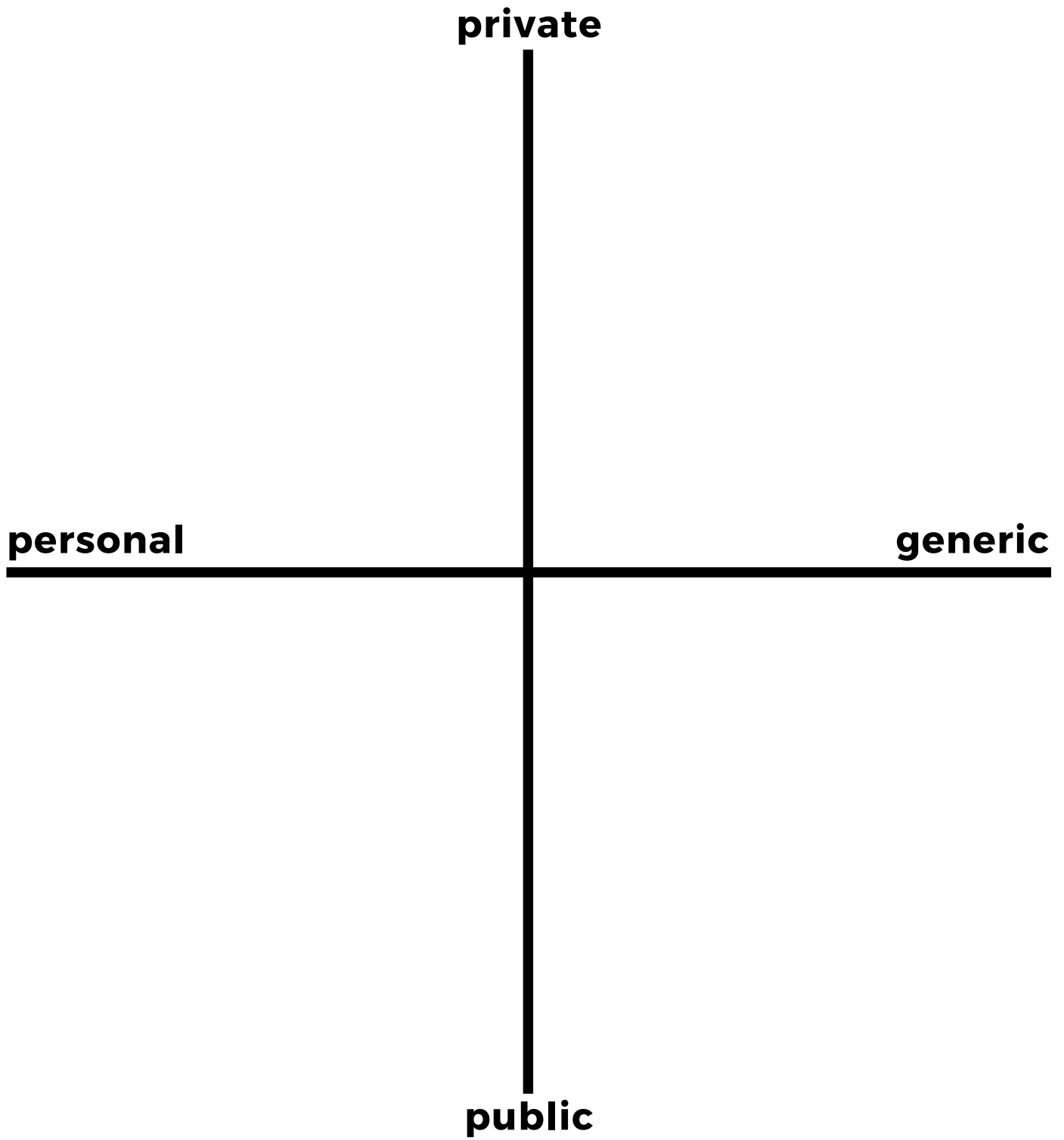


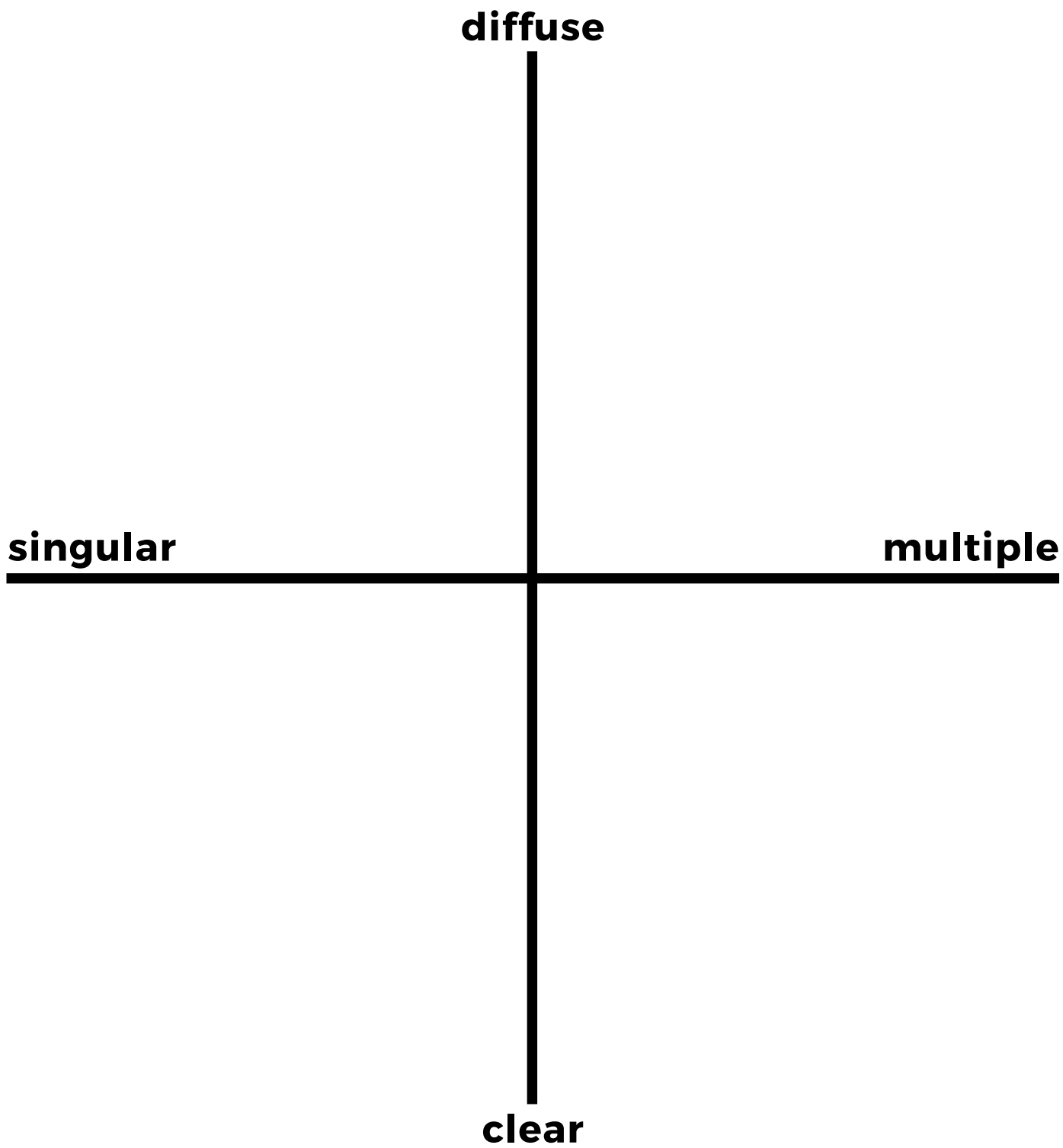
note: i've juxtaposed different words in opposition but that doesn't mean they have to be opposites.





* a sense of self that is independent from the male-female binary while being neither without gender nor gender neutral



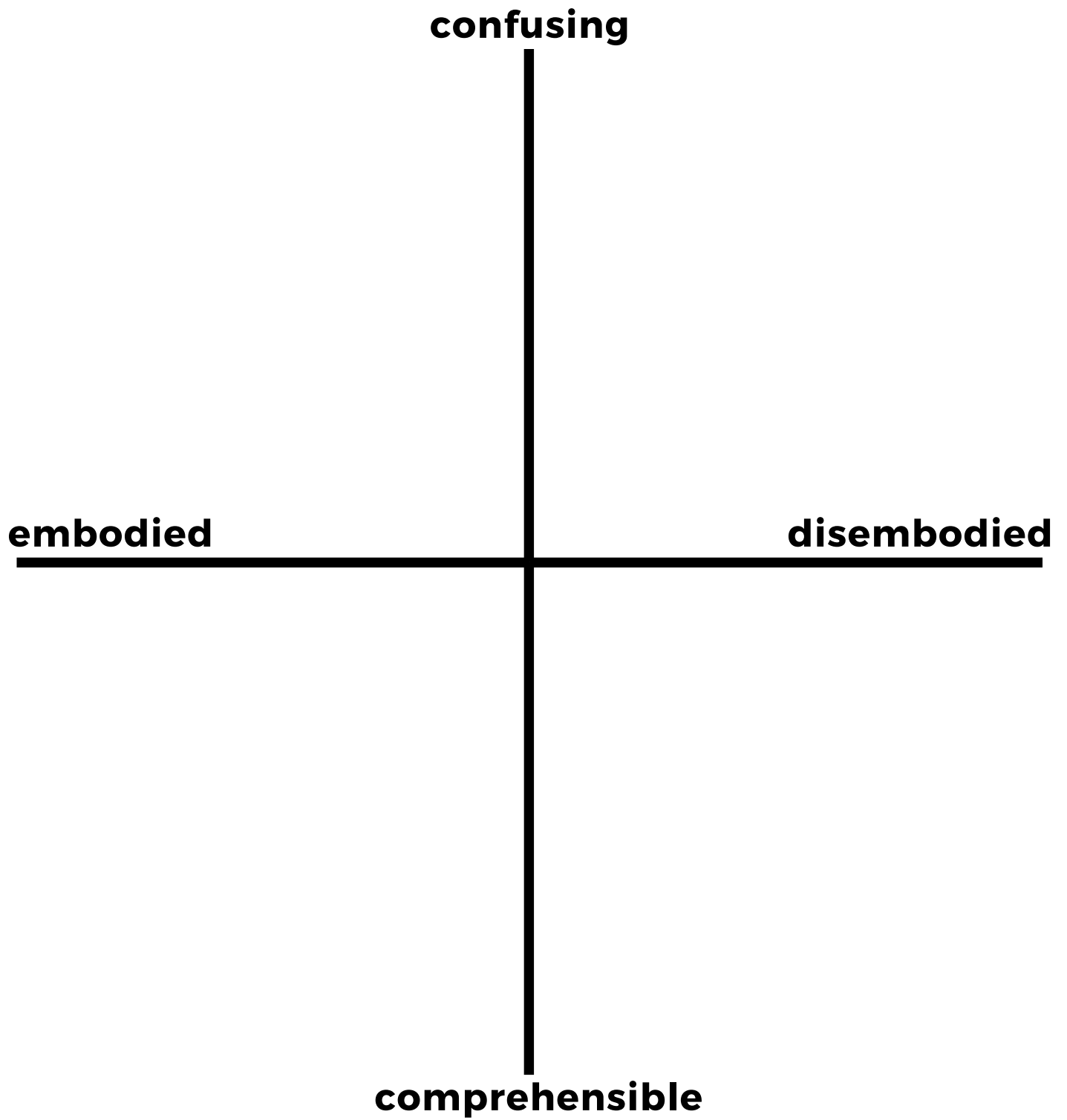


present

vague

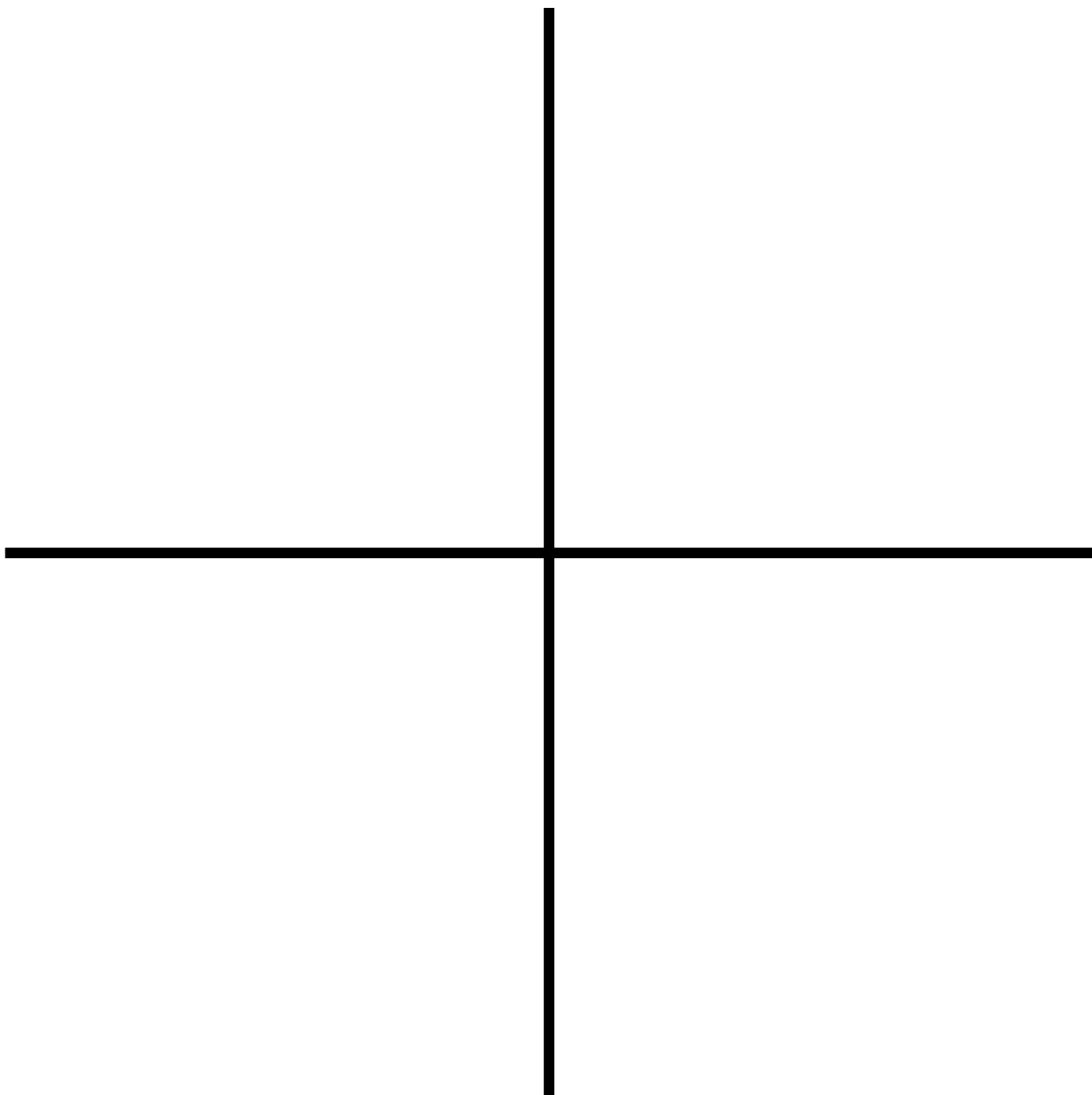
concrete

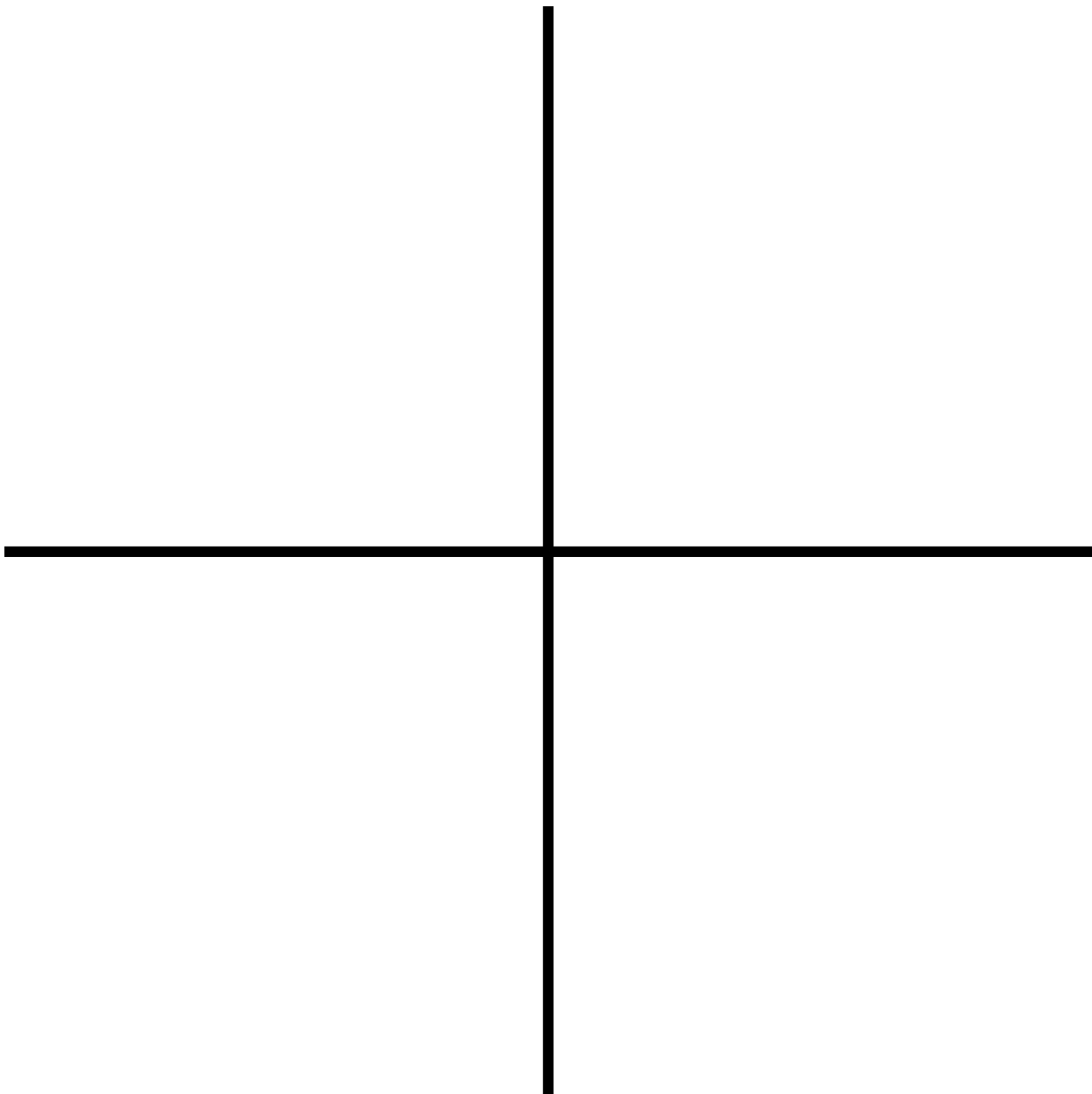
absent



find your own descriptors:

13





DESCRIBING GENDER BEYOND THE BINARY

this zine is a small tool for
deconstructing the gender binary. it
contains ideas to describe gender
that don't rely on the juxtaposition
of male and female as opposites on
an axis that all other genders must
be positioned around.

it's an invitation to be creative and
imaginative with the language
around gender.

