

From the book “All Boys Aren’t Blue”

Your name is one of the most important pieces of your identity. It is the thing that you own. It is attached to every piece of work that you put into the world. Your name holds power when you walk into a room. No two people with the same name are the same person. It’s important that, like everything else you grow to love in life, your name is something you appreciate as well.

Should you not like your name, change it. It is yours, and it will stay with you forever, so do with it what you wish. As we continue to grow through sex and gender, many people will take back their power and change their names—choosing one that fits the person they are, not the one society pushed them to be. Keep your name if you like it. But know that you don’t have to.

The most important thing to realize is that you have the agency to make decisions that are in your best interest. The power to push back against society and even those in your own home. It is unfortunate that we live in a world where owning your agency could be met with rejection, disrespect, or even violence— especially for those owning their queer identity from a young age.

Suffice it to say, respect people for their names, and for how they choose to identify. This also goes for respecting people and their choice of pronouns— he/him, she/her, they/them, god, goddess, or whatever. We are conditioned to think these things should be the exception. People being allowed to be called by their chosen names and their gender pronouns *is the rule*.

Let yourself unlearn everything you thought you knew about yourself and listen to what you need to know about those who navigate life outside the margins of a heterosexual box. I bet most of you never thought to ever question if you even like your name. Or question if that was something you had the power to change if you didn’t. I hope you will now . . .