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## Born or Lived: Forming Personal Identity

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# How do we become who we are and form our identity?

## Background

When entering university, most students are still young and determining who they are. Many students are unsure of what degree they want to pursue, and many others do not have a long term career and life plan. My research was inspired because this is a formative time in many students lives in determining who they are and where they fit into the world around them.

## Research Focus

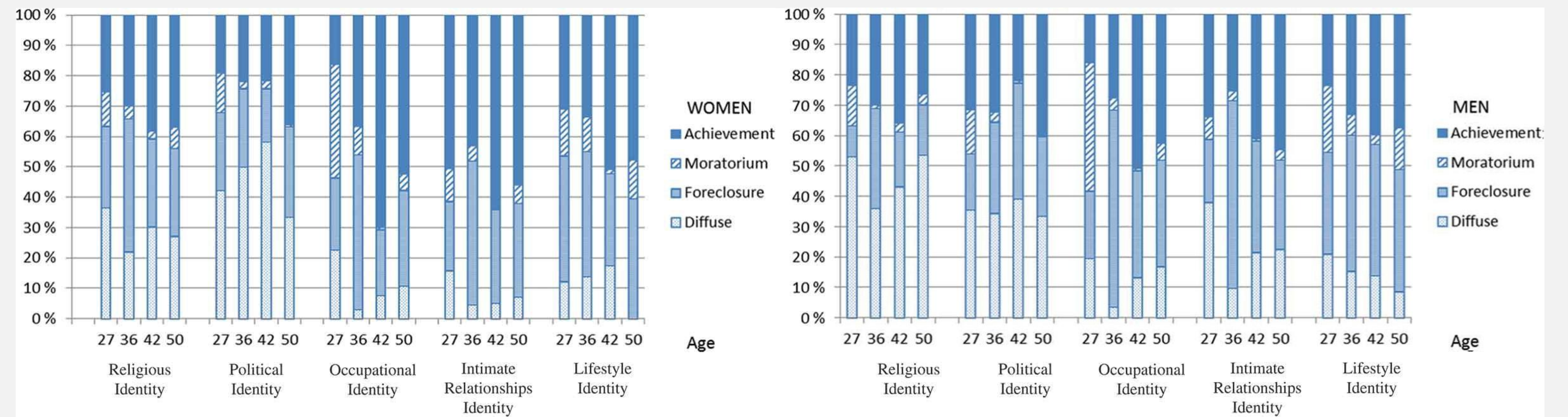
There are many different things that go into forming an individual's identity. All of those things and the role they play was beyond the scope of my research, but I settled on four distinct traits that I believe have a significant effect on identity:

- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Personal Circumstance
- Lived Experience

## Conclusions

- Sexual orientation affects the way that you view and interact with others. Gay and straight individuals may feel comfortable in different communities and have different friends. (1)
- Gender identity can affect the way you view yourself and others view you. A lack of gender affirming care can negatively impact non-cisgendered individuals. They can be treated negatively by some because they are not cis-gendered. (4)
- Personal circumstance are the facts about you that you cannot help, such as disability or where you are born. While you did not decide these things, they shape who you are. (5)
- Lived experience is your history that affects the way that you see the world. The decisions you make and those around you will affect the way your personality develops. (3)

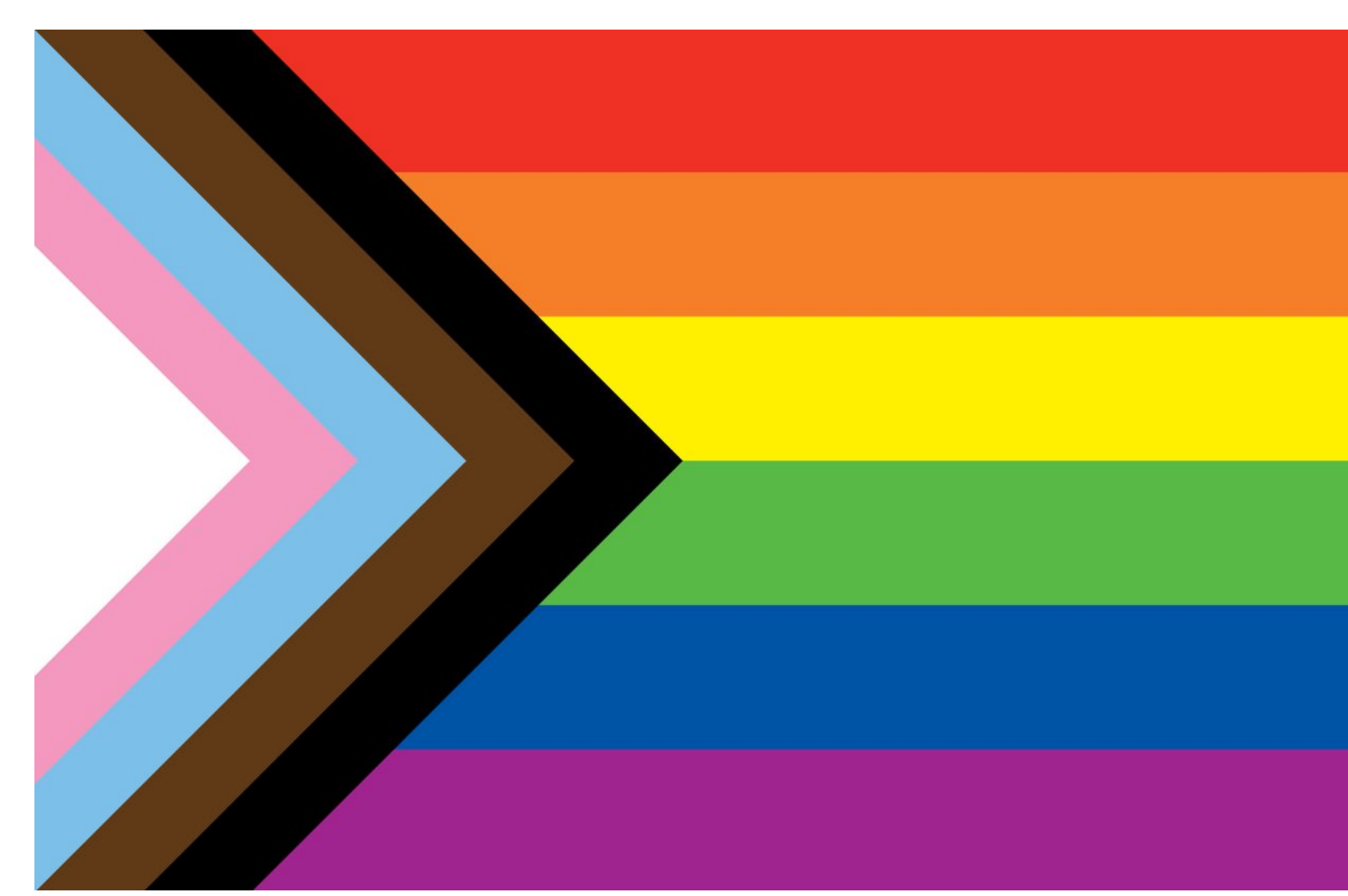
Some of these things we are born with and some we develop over time. Our identity is unique and built off of many factors and its development is a process that lasts long into adulthood.



Identity Formation is different for everyone, and can often take place well into adulthood. It can vary depending on age, gender, and culture. (2)

There are many things about you that help shape who you are. These can be things you are born with, such as sexuality and family. They can also be things that are developed over time, such as lived experiences. These and other factors together help build your identity.

## What about you shapes your identity?

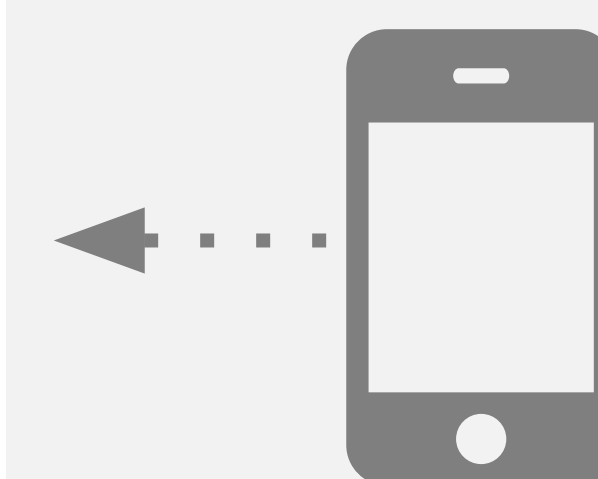


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