

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor's thesis explores lived experiences of individuals who identify as non-binary, both in personal spheres and social interactions. It defines the concept of gender and examines related concepts such as its development, roles, stereotypes, and its socially constructed nature, as well as its interaction with social and personal identity. It briefly touches on androgyny and gender-aschematicity and their potential positive impact on society through reducing the salience of gender stereotypes, by promoting more flexible notions of gender. In the empirical section, the thesis analyses the narratives of four non-binary informants (obtained through semi-structured interviews) using interpretive phenomenological analysis. It specifically focuses on self-presentation and gender expression in relation to authenticity, studying the interaction between the self and the social environment. The thesis highlights the variability in experiences among these four individuals and summarizes their experiences into emergent themes and subthemes. Through description and interpretation, it seeks to elucidate and explain the individual experiences of the informants. Various common themes arise, such as: (1) the relationship between pressure exerted on the individual and the perceived need to challenge stereotypes, (2) a label as a tool for self-understanding and argumentation in social interaction, (3) an accepting community, (4) being „true to oneself“ versus „blending in with the crowd“, (5) confidence in identity associated with the loosening of rigidity and freedom of self-presentation, (6) reactions of the social environment to self-presentation, and (7) the tendency to avoid hasty judgments.

## **KEYWORDS**

non-binary, gender, identity, self-presentation