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Changes to passport applications allowing US Citizens only two gender options based on their gender at conception is ill-advised, as it would necessitate that Americans undergo invasive chromosomal testing. Furthermore, the State Department has previously lost a lawsuit (Zzyym vs. Blinkin) wherein it was established that some intersex individuals cannot accurately choose a male or female gender marker. The X designation is a necessary resource for a portion of our population to accurately represent themselves on this legal identification.

When it comes down to real-world use of a U.S. passport, border control agents do not, and should not have to, strip-searching individuals at immigration checkpoints. However, this kind of invasive and degrading procedure would be necessary for these officials to confirm that many of my friends and family, who are transgender individuals whose outward appearance matches their chosen gender, are biological members of the sex designated on their documents. It is far more efficient and useful at an immigration checkpoint for officials to see a document that identifies the gender best aligning with how individuals present themselves and live their lives than a record of a scientific benchmark from before their genitals began to differentiate.

An imaginary point scored in a culture war cannot be allowed to outweigh the ability of border control agents the world over to effectively perform their duties.