

Nina Here Nor There

by Nick Krieger

Beacon Press, Boston, MA

This is a wonderful window into the mind of an “in between” transgender person.

As an activist ally in the transgender community, I have discussed the “gender continuum” many times during educational presentations. While realizing academically that the majority of us are not at either end of the male – female continuum, I have not fully understood the complexity of those whose transitional “end point” is somewhere in the middle. “Nina Here Nor There” provides a great deal more awareness and understanding of this position and those who occupy it.

There have been a great many transition memoirs written and published. Most imply that the only “real” trans person wants to change completely from the persona they were assigned at birth to the persona they feel they are. Some leave room for others to feel differently, and a few express themselves as being neither – nor.

Nina Here Nor There does this very well. Nick Krieger welcomes the reader into his most private thoughts and actions during several years of his life. He takes us along as he moves along the continuum from a not-quite-comfortable butch lesbian who hates her breasts toward a not-quite-male guy without them. He tells his story honestly and with good humor as he questions everything he has experienced and observed in the Castro neighborhood of San Francisco during this period in his life.

This story brings to mind a different definition of transgender than most people are accustomed to. To me, the prefix “trans” can also mean past or beyond; with this interpretation, “transgender” can also mean “beyond gender” as we know it.