

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

GENERAL LGBTQQIA • SEXUAL ORIENTATION GENDER • BIAS • SOCIAL JUSTICE

GENERAL LGBTQQIA

Coming Out: 1. The process of accepting one's own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersex person (to "come out" to oneself). **2.** The process of sharing one's sexual identity, gender identity, or intersex status with others (to "come out to friends, etc). **3.** The life-long process for individuals in the LGBTQ community.

Family: Colloquial term used to identify other LGBTQQIA community members. For example, an LGBTQQIA person saying, "that person is family" often means that the person they are referring to is LGBTQQIA as well.

Family of choice (chosen family): Persons or group of people an individual sees as significant in his or her life. It may include none, all, or some members of his or her family of origin. In addition, it may include individuals such as significant others, domestic partners, friends, and coworkers.

Family of origin: The family into which a person is born. Family of origin often refers to biological or adoptive parents, siblings, and extended family.

Gender-neutral: Nondiscriminatory language to describe relationships—e.g. "spouse" and "partner" are gender-neutral alternatives to the gender-specific words "husband," "wife," "boyfriend" and "girlfriend."

GSRM: Gender, Sexual, and Romantic Minorities

In the closet: Keeping one's sexual orientation and/or gender or sex identity a secret, or choosing not to disclose this information to others.

Lambda: λ The Gay Activist Alliance originally chose the lambda, the Greek letter "L", as a symbol in 1970. Organizers chose the letter "L" to signify liberation. The word has become a way of expressing the concept "lesbian and gay male" in a minimum of syllables and has been adopted by such organizations as Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund.

LGBTQ: A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and community. The acronym is used as an umbrella term when talking about non heterosexual and non-cisgender identities, and does not always reflect members of the community. The acronym may be expanded to LGBTQIA to include intersex individuals, allies, and/or asexual people, or shortened to LGBQ when discussing only sexual orientation.

Out or Out of the closet: Refers to varying degrees of being open about one's sexual orientation and/or sex identity or gender identity.

Queer: 1) An umbrella term which includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons, radical sex communities, and many other sexually transgressive communities. 2. This term is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label or gender identity label used to denote a non-heterosexual or cisgender identity without have to define specifics. 3. A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been reclaimed by some folds in the LGBTQ community. Nevertheless, a sizable percentage of people to whom this term might apply still hold 'queer' to be a hateful insult, and its use by heterosexual people is often considered offensive.

Questioning: An individual who is unsure of and/or exploring their gender identity and/or sexual orientation

Rainbow Flag: The Rainbow Freedom Flag was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker to designate the great diversity of the community. It has been recognized by the International Flag Makers Association as the official flag of the LGBTQQIA civil rights movement.

Stonewall Riots: On June 28th, 1969, New York City Police attempted a routine raid on the Stonewall Inn, a working-class gay and lesbian bar in New York's Greenwich Village. Unexpectedly, the patrons resisted, and the incident escalated into a riot that continued for several days. Many people attribute this event as the catalyst for the American Gay Liberation Movement. It is often left out that the more frequent patrons of this bar were transwomen, drag queens, and butch lesbians.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Affectional Orientation: The deep-seated direction of one's emotional, intellectual, and social affinity. It is on a continuum and not a set of absolute categories. Some aspects of affectional orientation tend to change over time, while other aspects remain relatively consistent. Affectional orientation can be fluid.

Aromantic: Person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others.

Asexual: A person who does not experience sexual attraction. They may or may not experience emotional, physical, or romantic attraction. Asexuality differs from celibacy in that it is a sexual orientation, not a choice. People who are asexual may call themselves "ace."

Bicurious: A person who identifies as gay or straight while showing some curiosity for a relationship or sexual activity with a person of a sex they do not usually engage with. Can also be referred to as heteroflexible or homoflexible.

Bisexual: A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men and females/women. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders and there may be a preference for one gender over others.

Demisexual: A person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone. It's more commonly seen in but by no means confined to romantic relationships.

Fluidity: A notion or understanding that sexual orientation, sexuality, and gender are dynamic identities that may change over time as individuals discover more about themselves. Fluidity can be an identity, such as sexually fluid or gender fluid.

Gay: 1. Used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who engage in "homosexual behavior" identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution. 2. An umbrella term for the LGBTQ.

Heterosexuality: Sexual, emotional, and/or romantic attraction to a sex other than your own. Commonly thought of as "attraction to the opposite sex" but since there are not only two sexes (see intersex and transsexual), this definition is inaccurate.

Homoromantic: Someone who has romantic feelings for members of the same sex or gender.

Homosexual: An out of date term for a person who is primarily emotionally, physically, and /or sexually attracted to members of the same sex. Many people view this term as offensive in that it is excessively clinical and sexualizes members of the LGBTQ community.

Lesbian: A term used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female-identified people.

Men who have sex with men (MSM): Men who engage in same-sex behavior but who may not necessarily self-identify as gay.

Monosexual: Attracted to one gender. May be used for individuals who identify as straight, heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.

Nonmonosexual (NM): Attracted to more than one gender. May be used for individuals who identify as fluid, bisexual, pansexual, omniseual, ambiseual, etc.

Onmiseual: A person who is attracted to one or more genders regardless of the other person's sexual orientation.

Pansexual: A person who has the potential to be attracted to all or many gender identities and expressions.

Panromantic: Someone who has romantic feelings for a person regardless of their sex or gender.

Polyamory: Refers to having honest, non-monogamous relationships with multiple partners and can include: open relationships, polyfidelity (which involves multiple romantic relationships with sexual contact restricted to those), and sub relationships (which denote distinguishing between a 'primary' relationship or relationships and various 'secondary' relationships).

Same Gender Loving: A term used by members of the African-American/Black community to express same-sex/gender attraction. Note that it is often used as an alternative to words that do not culturally affirm the history of people of African descent.

Sexual Orientation: The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes

Sexuality: Refers to a person's exploration of sexual behaviors, practices, and identities in the social world.

Straight: Another term for heterosexual.

Straight-Acting: A term usually applied to gay men who readily pass as heterosexual. The term implies that there is a certain way that gay men should act that is significantly different from heterosexual men. Straight-acting gay men may be critiqued by members of the LGBTQ community for seemingly accessing heterosexual privilege.

GENDER

Agender: A person without gender. An agender individual's body does not necessarily correspond with their lack of gender identity. Often, agender individuals are not concerned with their physical sex, but some may seek to look androgynous.

Androgyne: Person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman. Some androgyne individuals may present in a gender neutral or androgynous way.

Assigned at birth: Commonly utilized by Trans individuals, the term illustrates that the individual's sex (and subsequent gender in early life) was assigned without involving the person whose sex was being assigned. Commonly seen as "Female Assigned at Birth"(FAAB or AFAB) and "Male Assigned at Birth"(MAAB or AMAB).

Bigender: A person whose gender identity is a combination of male/man and female/woman. They may consciously or unconsciously change their gender-role behavior from masculine to feminine, or vice versa.

Binding: The process of flattening one's breasts to have a more masculine or flat appearing chest.

Boi (pronounced boy): 1. A female-bodied person who expresses or presents themselves in a culturally/stereotypically masculine, particularly boyish way. 2. One who enjoys being perceived as a young male and intentionally identifies with "boy" rather than "man."

Bottom Surgery: Surgery on the genitals designed to create a body in harmony with a person's preferred gender expression. [Related terms: Gender Confirming Surgery, Sexual Reassignment Surgery]

Butch: 1. A person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally, or emotionally. 2. Sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but can also be claimed as an affirmative identity model.

Cisgender: Someone who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based on their physical sex. Also known as "cissexual."

Cissexual: People who are not transsexual and who have only ever experienced their subconscious and physical sexes as being aligned.

Drag: The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically. A **drag king** is a person who performs masculinity theatrically. A **drag queen** is a person who performs femininity theatrically.

FTM: Abbreviation for a female-to-male transgender person. This term reflects the direction of gender transition. Some prefer the term MTM (male to male) to underscore the fact that though they were biologically female, they never gender identity.

Femme: An individual of any assigned sex who identifies with femininity as dictated by traditional gender roles. A femme identity may be intimately connected to assigned sex such as the case of cisgender female femmes who may be read simply as straight or gender normative. A femme gender identity may also be constructed independently of assigned sex.

Gender: 1) A socially constructed system of classification that ascribes qualities of masculinity and femininity to people. Gender characteristics can change over time and are different between cultures. Words that refer to gender include: man, woman, transgender, masculine, feminine, and gender queer. 2) One's sense of self as being male or female.

Gender Binary: The idea that there are only two genders-male/female or man/woman and that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or.

Gender Conformity: When your gender identity, gender expression, and sex "match" (i.e. fit social norms). For example, a male who is masculine and identifies as a man.

Gender Conforming Surgery: Medical surgeries used to modify one's body to be more congruent with one's gender identity. Also known as 'Sex Reassignment Surgery,' 'Gender Reassignment Surgery.'

Gender Dysphoria: Discomfort or distress caused by one's assigned sex and the desire to change the characteristics that are the source.

Gender Expression: How one presents oneself and one's gender to the world via dress, mannerisms, hairstyle, facial hair etc. This may or may not coincide with or indicate one's gender identity. Many utilize gender expression in an attempt to determine the gender/sex of another individual. However, a person's gender expression may not always match their gender identity.

Gender Identity: A person's sense of self as masculine, feminine, both, or neither regardless of external genitalia.

Gender Identity Disorder: The term used for a condition defined in the DSM4 by the American Psychiatric Association.

Gender-neutral Pronouns: The following pronouns offer alternatives to those people who identify outside of the gender binary of man and woman and prefer pronouns that are not masculine or feminine:

Gender Binary	Gender Neutral
He/She	Ze (zee)
Him/Her	Hir (hear), Zir (zeer)
His/Her	Hir (hear)
Himself/Herself	Hirself (hear-self)

Genderqueer: An individual whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Sometimes this includes a political agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system. Genderqueer individuals may or may not pursue any physical changes, such as hormonal or surgical intervention, and may not identify as trans.

Gender-variant / Gender Expansive: Displaying gender traits that are not normatively associated with a person's biological sex. "Feminine" behavior or appearance in a male is gender-variant as is "masculine" behavior or appearance in a female. Gender-variant behavior is culturally specific.

Intersex Person(s): Individual(s) born with the condition of having physical sex markers (genitals, hormones, gonads, or chromosomes) that are neither clearly male nor female. Intersex people are sometimes defined as having "ambiguous" genitalia.

In The Closet: Refers to a homosexual, bisexual, trans person or intersex person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. An intersex person may be closeted due to ignorance about their status since standard medical practice is to "correct," whenever

possible, intersex conditions early in childhood and to hide the medical history from the patient. There are varying degrees of being "in the closet." For example, a person can be out in their social life, but in the closet at work, or with their family.

Legal Sex: The sex assigned on an individual's legal documentation.

MTF: Abbreviation for a male-to-female transgender person. This term reflects the direction of gender transition. Some people prefer the term FTF (female to female) to underscore the fact that though they were biologically male, they never had a male gender identity. **[Related terms:** transgender woman, trans* woman]

Neutrois: A person who identifies as being neither male nor female. This differs from androgyne, in that androgynes see themselves as a mix of two genders and neutrois individuals see themselves as not having a gender. **[Similar terms:** genderless, agender, or non-gendered.]

Omnigender: Possessing all genders; exhibiting cultural characteristics of male and female. The term is specifically used to refute the concept of only two genders.

On E: When a MTF takes the hormone estrogen.

On T: When a FTM takes the hormone testosterone.

Packing: Wearing a phallic device on the groin and under clothing for any purposes including: (for someone without a biological penis) the validation or confirmation of one's masculine gender identity; seduction; and/or sexual readiness (for one who likes to penetrate another during sexual intercourse).

Passing: Describes a person's ability to be accepted as their preferred gender/sex or to be seen as heterosexual.

Sex: A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads and chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances. Because 'sex' is usually subdivided into 'male' and 'female' this category does not recognize the existence of intersex bodies.

Sex Identity: The sex that a person sees themselves as. This can include refusing to label oneself with a sex.

Stealth: This term refers to when a person chooses to be secretive in the public sphere about their gender history, either after transitioning or while successfully passing. Also referred to as 'going stealth' or 'living in stealth mode.'

Stem: A person whose gender expression falls somewhere between a stud and a femme **[See also:** Femme and Stud]

Stud: A term used by people of color to describe a masculine lesbian. Also known as 'aggressive.'

Top Surgery: This term usually refers to surgery for the construction of a male-type chest, but may also refer to breast augmentation.

Masculine of Center: a term used by people of color to describe lesbian/queer/women who tilt toward the masculine side of the gender scale and includes a wide range of identities such as butch, stud, aggressive/AG, dom, macha, tomboy, trans masculine, etc.

SRS: Acronym for Sexual Reassignment Surgery, the surgery done by transsexuals to make their bodies and their sex identity match. This is also referred to as Gender Confirmation Surgery.

Trans*: An abbreviation that is used to refer to a transgender/gender queer/gender non-conforming person. This use allows a person to state a gender variant identity without having to disclose hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the whole gender non-conforming community that might include (but is not limited to) transgender, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, genderf*ck, transsexual, agender, third gender, two-spirit, bigender, trans man, trans woman, gender non-conforming, masculine of center, and gender questioning.

Transfeminine: 1) A term used to describe those who were assigned male at birth, but identify as more female than male. 2) Those who identify as trans-feminine, as opposed to simply as MTF or a woman, trans or otherwise, often place themselves feminine of center. That is, they identify more closely with femaleness than maleness, and generally desire a physical appearance that reflects this identification, but do not identify as wholly female or as a woman. It should be noted that trans-feminine is not a descriptor of gender expression but of identity. Trans-feminine people do not necessarily have to be stereotypically feminine in their interests or even presentation.

Transgender: A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on sex or gender assigned at birth. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity.

Transition: This term is primarily used to refer to the process a gender variant person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex with which they identify and/or to be more in harmony with their preferred gender expression.

Trans Man: An identity label sometimes adopted by female to male trans people to signify that they are men while still affirming their transgender history

Transmasculine: 1) A term used to describe those who were assigned female at birth, but identify as more male

than female. 2) Those who identify as transmasculine, as opposed to simply as FTM or a man, identify more closely with maleness than femaleness, and generally desire a physical appearance that reflects this identification, but do not identify as wholly male or as a man. It should be noted that transmasculine is not a descriptor of gender expression but of identity. Transmasculine people do not necessarily have to be stereotypically masculine in their interests or even in presentation.

Transsexual: A person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth. Transsexuals often wish to transform their bodies hormonally and surgically to match their inner sense of gender/sex.

Trans Woman: An identity label sometimes adopted by male to female trans people to signify that they are women while still affirming their transgender history.

Two Spirit: A Native American term for people who blend the masculine and the feminine. It is commonly used to describe individuals who historically crossed gender. It is often used by contemporary LGBTQ Native American people to describe themselves.

BIAS

Bias: An inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

Biphobia: The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals, which is often times related to the current binary standard. Biphobia can be seen within the LGBTQ community as well as in general society.

Cissexism: A pervasive and institutionalized system that others transgender people and treats their needs and identities as less important than those of Cisgender people.

Discrimination: Prejudice + power. It occurs when members of a more powerful social group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful social group. Discrimination can take many forms, including both individual acts of hatred or injustice and institutional denials of privileges normally accorded to other groups. Ongoing discrimination creates a climate of oppression of the affected group.

Gender Oppression: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender and subordinate and disparage transgender or gender nonconforming people.

Genderism: Holding people to traditional expectations based on gender or punishing or excluding those who do not conform to traditional gender expectations.

Hate crime: Hate crime legislation often defines a hate crime as a crime motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person.

Heteronormativity: The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality, bisexuality, and other sexual orientations.

Heterosexism: Prejudice against individuals and groups who display non-heterosexual behaviors or identities, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice. Usually used to the advantage of the group in power. Any attitude, action, or practice-backed by institutional power-that subordinates people because of their sexual orientation.

Homophobia: The irrational fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as non-heterosexual, including the fear of being read as part of the LGBTQ community. Homophobic behavior can range from telling gay jokes, to verbal abuse, to acts of physical violence.

Marginalized: Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

Outing: When someone discloses information about another's sexual orientation or gender identity without their knowledge and/or consent.

Stereotype: A preconceived or oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for their individual differences. Some stereotypes can be positive. However, they can have a negative impact, simply because they involve broad generalizations that ignore individual realities.

Transphobia: The irrational hatred of those who are transgender or gender non-conforming, sometimes expressed through violent and sometimes deadly means.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Ally: 1. Someone who confronts heterosexism, anti-LGBTQ biases, heterosexual and cisgender privilege in themselves and others 2. Has concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, and other similarly identified people. 3. Believes that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are social justice issues.

Cisgender Privilege: The set of privileges conferred to people who are believed to be Cisgender.

Domestic Partner: One who lives with their beloved and/or is at least emotionally and financially connected in a supportive manner with another; another word for spouse, lover, significant other, etc.

Gender Role: 1) Socially defined expectations regarding behavior, mannerisms, dress, etc. as related to socially assigned gender. 2) How "masculine" or "feminine" an individual acts. Societies commonly have norms regarding how males and females should behave, expecting people to have personality characteristics and/or act a certain way based on their biological sex.

Heterosexism: Assuming every person to be heterosexual therefore marginalizing persons who do not identify as heterosexual. It involves a belief that heterosexuality is superior to any different form of sexuality and all other sexual orientations.

Heterosexual Privilege: Those benefits derived automatically by being heterosexual or being perceived as heterosexual that are denied to homosexual and bisexual people. Also, the benefits homosexual and bisexual people receive as a result of claiming heterosexual identity or denying homosexual or bisexual identity.

Institutional Oppression: Arrangement of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media education, religion, economics, etc.

Internalized Oppression: The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept, and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Invisible minority: A group whose minority status is not always immediately visible, such as some people with disabilities and LGBTQIA people. This lack of visibility may make organizing for rights difficult.

Oppression: The systematic subjugation of a group of people by another group with access to social power, the result of which benefits one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs and practices.

Prejudice: A conscious or unconscious negative belief about a whole group of people and its individual members. Anyone can be prejudiced toward another individual or group.

Sexual minority: Refers to people whose sexual orientations are not heterosexual or people who engage in sexual activities that are not part of the mainstream notions of sexuality.

CHALLENGING WORDS TO CONSIDER:

Choice: When an individual refers to another person's non-heterosexual identity as a choice. This is often used by opponents of the LGBT community who think that being LGBT is a choice and, consequently, think LGBT people should choose to be straight or cisgender.

Homosexual: This word is often used by opponents of the LGBT community. This word is used to emphasize the word "sex" to devalue the emotional and mental attractions that may occur between two same-sex/gender people.

Lifestyle: This word is often used to indicate that an LGBT person is **choosing** a way of living as opposed to simply living.

Preference: This word is often used to indicate that being LGBT is an inclination as opposed to an identity.

Cross Dressing: An often misused term to describe a person who occasionally wears clothes traditionally associated with people of the other sex. Cross-dressing is a form of gender expression, is not necessarily tied to erotic activity, and is not indicative of sexual orientation.

Transvestite: A dated term for someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. The preferred term is cross dressing.

Hermaphrodite: An outdated term used to describe intersex individuals.