

Glossary of LGBTQ+ Terms

Adapted from UC Davis's LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary
<http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary.html>

Ally: A person who confronts heterosexism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and heterosexual privilege in themselves and others out of self-interest and a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people and believes that dismantling heterosexism, biphobia, transphobia and genderism/cis-sexism is a social justice issue.

Advocate: a person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a marginalized group

Allosexism: The system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses asexual people.

Androgyne: A person with physical traits of male and female

Aromantic: is a person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in forming romantic relationships

Asexuality: A sexual orientation generally characterized by not feeling sexual attraction or a desire for partnered sexuality. Asexuality is distinct from celibacy, which is the deliberate abstention from sexual activity. Some asexual people do have sex. There are many diverse ways of being asexual.

Bathroom Solidarity: a supportive action that may be desired by some trans individuals in which a cisgender individual accompanies or escorts a trans individual to a public bathroom. Don't assume this is required or desired, but feel free to ask.

Bigender: Having two genders, exhibiting cultural characteristics of masculine and feminine roles

Biphobia: fear or hatred of people who are bisexual, pansexual, omniseual, or nonmonosexual. Biphobia is closely linked with transphobia and homophobia.

Bisexual: A person whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same and other genders, or towards people regardless of their gender.

BlaQ/BlaQueer: Folks of Black/African descent and/or from the African diaspora who recognize their queerness/LGBTQIA+ identity as a salient identity attached to their Blackness and vice versa. (T. Porter)

Coming Out: "Coming out" describes voluntarily making public one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It has also been broadened to include other pieces of potentially stigmatized personal information. Terms also used that correlate with this action are: "Being out" which means not concealing one's sexual orientation or gender identity, and "Outing," a term used for making public the sexual orientation or gender identity of another without permission. **Cisgender:** a gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means "on this side of" or "not across." This term is used to avoid "othering" trans people. For example, "Trans" versus "Normal" people.

Cissexism/Genderism: Is the belief that there are, and should be, only two genders & that one's gender or most aspects of it, are inevitably tied to assigned sex. In a genderist/cissexist construct, cisgender people are the dominant/agent group and trans/ gender non-conforming people are the oppressed/target group.

Cross Dresser (CD): A word to describe a person who dresses, at least partially, as a member of a gender other than their assigned sex; carries no implications of sexual orientation. Has replaced "Transvestite"

Demisexual: an individual who does not experience sexual attraction unless they have formed a strong emotional connection with another individual. Often within a romantic relationship.

Dominant/Privileged/Agent group: Members are privileged by birth or acquisition, who knowingly or unknowingly exploit and reap unfair advantage over members.

Drag King: A person (often a woman) who appears as a man. Generally in reference to an act or performance. This has no implications regarding gender identity.

Drag Queen: A person (often a man) who appears as a woman. Generally in reference to an act or performance. This has no implications regarding gender identity.

Empowerment: When target group members refuse to accept the dominant ideology and their subordinate status and take actions to redistribute social power more equitably.

FTM (F2M): Female-to-male transsexual/transgender person.

Femme: Historically used in the lesbian community, it is being increasingly used by other LGBTQIA people to describe gender expressions that reclaim/claim and/or disrupt traditional constructs of femininity.

Gay: A sexual and affectional orientation toward people of the same gender; can be used as an umbrella term for men and women.

Gender: An individual's basic self-conviction of being a woman, man, or another gender. This conviction is not contingent upon the individual's biological sex. This also has no bearing on the individual's sexual orientation. Since gender is socially constructed, concepts of what gender is vary greatly across cultures and across time.

Gender Expressions: How one expresses oneself, in terms of dress and/or behaviors that society characterizes as "masculine" or "feminine."

Gender Fluid: A person whose gender identification and presentation shifts, whether within or outside of societal, gender-based expectations. Being fluid in motion between two or more genders.

Genderism: Is the belief that there are, and should be, only two genders & that one's gender or most aspects of it, are inevitably tied to assigned sex. In a genderist construct, cisgender people are the dominant/agent group and trans*/ gender nonconforming people are the oppressed/target group.

Gender Outlaw: A person who refuses to be defined by conventional definitions of male and female.

Gender Nonconforming (GNC): people who do not subscribe to gender expressions or roles expected of them by society.

Genderqueer: A person whose gender identity and/or gender expression falls outside of the dominant societal norm for their assigned sex, is beyond genders, or is some combination of them.

Gender Variant: A person who varies from the expected characteristics of the assigned gender.

Heteronormativity: The messages in our culture that suggest that traditional sexual orientation, gender identity, and family structure are more “normal” than other identities. That is, messages that say that heterosexuality is more normal than any other sexual orientation, being cisgender is more normal than being transgender, and that a family with both a mom and a dad is more normal than any other family structure

Heterosexism: The assumption that all people are or should be heterosexual. Heterosexism excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer people while it gives advantages to heterosexual people. It is often a subtle form of oppression, which reinforces realities of silence and invisibility.

Heterosexuality: The sexual orientation that is generally presumed or expected of a person. When a man is only attracted to women, or a woman is only attracted to men.

Homophobia: The irrational hatred and fear of LGBTQIA people. In a broader sense, any disapproval of LGBTQIA people at all, regardless of motive. Homophobia includes prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and acts of violence brought on by fear and hatred. It occurs on personal, institutional, and societal levels. Homophobia is closely linked with transphobia and biphobia.

Homosexual/Homosexuality: An outdated term to describe a sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of the same gender. Historically, it was a term used to pathologize gay and lesbian people.

Internalized homophobia: The fear and self-hate of one’s own lgbtqia identity, that occurs for many individuals who have learned negative ideas about LGBT people throughout childhood. One form of internalized oppression is the acceptance of the myths and stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Intersectionality: A term coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to describe the way that multiple systems of oppression interact in the lives of those with multiple marginalized identities. Intersectionality looks at the relationships between multiple marginalized identities and allows us to analyze social problems more fully, shape more effective interventions, and promote more inclusive advocacy amongst communities.

Intersex: People who naturally (that is, without any medical intervention) develop primary or secondary sex characteristics that do not fit neatly into society's definitions of male or female. Many visibly Intersex people receive surgeries in infancy and early childhood to make the individual’s sex characteristics conform to society’s idea of what normal bodies should look like. Doctors often place pressure on the parents to give the child these surgeries, and sometimes the surgeries are performed without the consent of the parents. Intersex people are relatively common, although the society's denial of their existence has allowed very little room for intersex issues to be discussed publicly. Hermaphrodite is an outdated and inaccurate term that has been used to describe intersex people in the past.

Latinx: [pronounced “La-TEEN-ex”] a non-gender specific way of referring to people of Latin American descent. Other commonly known ways of referring to people of Latin American descent

are Latinos, Latina, Latin@, Latino. The “x” at the end replaces “o” and “a” which have been gendered suffixes, it moves beyond terms like Latino/a & Latin@, which still reinforce a gender binary.

Lesbian: A woman whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same gender.

LGBT: Abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. An umbrella term that is used to refer to the community as a whole. Our center uses LGBTQIA to intentionally include and visibilize the Queer, Intersex and Asexual communities under our umbrella.

MSM: an abbreviation for men who have sex with men; they may or may not identify as gay.

MTF (M2F): Male-to-Female transsexual/transgendered person.

Microaggressions: Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults about one’s marginalized identity/identities. (D.W. Sue)

Misgendering: Attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect/does not align with their gender identity. Can occur when using pronouns, gendered language (i.e. “Hello ladies!” “Hey guys”), or assigning genders to people without knowing how they identify (i.e. “Well, since we’re all women in this room, we understand...”).

MOGAI: An acronym that stands for “marginalized orientations, gender alignments, and intersex.” Is used by some in a similar way to the umbrella acronym: LGBTQIA.

Monosexism: The belief in and systematic privileging of monosexuality as superior, and the systematic oppression of non-monosexuality.

Monosexual: People who have romantic, sexual, or affectional desire for one gender only. Heterosexuality and homosexuality are the most well-known forms of monosexuality.

Non-binary: A gender identity and experience that embraces a full universe of expressions and ways of being that resonate for an individual. It may be an active resistance to binary gender expectations and/or an intentional creation of new unbounded ideas of self within the world. For some people who identify as non-binary there may be overlap with other concepts and identities like gender expansive and gender non-conforming.

Nonmonosexual: people who are attracted to more than one gender.

Omniender: Possessing all genders. The term is used specifically to refute the concept of only two genders.

Outing: a term used for making public the sexual orientation or gender identity of another without permission. (Don’t do this!)

Pansexual, Omnisexual: Terms used to describe people who have romantic, sexual or affectional desire for people of all genders and sexes.

Polygender, Pangender: Exhibiting characteristics of multiple genders, deliberately refuting the concept of only two genders.

Polysexual: Someone who experiences attraction to multiple, but not all, genders

Pronouns: (In this context) words that are used as replacements or substitutes for a person's name, and reference that person. An example of some commonly used pronouns: She/Her/Hers, They/Them/Theirs, He/Him/His, Zie/Hir/Hirs.

QPOC: Abbreviation for Queer People of color

Queer: Anyone who chooses to identify as such. This can include, but is not limited to, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and asexual people. Not all the people in the above subcategories I.D. as queer, and many people NOT in the above groups DO. This term has different meanings to different people. Some still find it offensive, while others reclaim it to encompass the broader sense of history of the gay rights movement. Can also be used as an umbrella term like LGBT, as in "the queer community." Some transgender people express concern that "queer" only applies to sexual orientation.

Questioning: The process of exploring one's own gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. Some folks may also use this term to name their identity within the LGBTQIA community.

Same Gender Loving: a term used by some African American folks who love, date, have attraction to people of the same gender.

Sex: a categorization based on the appearance of the genitalia at birth.

Sexuality: The components of a person that include their biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual practices, etc.

Sexual Orientation: Sexual Orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction or non-attraction to other people. Sexual orientation is fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their sexual orientation.

Skoliosexual: attracted to genderqueer and transsexual people and expressions (people who do not identify as cisgender)

Stressors: Commonly referred to as a trigger

Trans man: Also referred to as FTM. A person may choose to identify this way to capture their gender identity as well as their lived experience as a transgender person.

Trans woman: A person may choose to identify this way to capture their gender identity as well as their lived experience as a transgender person. Some transwomen may also use MTF or M2F to describe their identity.

Transition: An individualized process by which transsexual and transgender people "switch" from one gender presentation to another. There are three general aspects to transitioning: social (i.e. name, pronouns, interactions, etc.), medical (i.e. hormones, surgery, etc.), and legal (i.e. gender marker and name change, etc.). A trans individual may transition in any combination, or none, of these aspects.

Transphobia: the fear or hatred of transgender people or people who do not meet society's gender role expectations. Transphobia is closely linked with homophobia and biphobia.

Transgender: used most often as an umbrella term, some commonly held definitions 1. Someone whose gender identity or expression does not fit within dominant-group social constructs of assigned sex and gender. 2. A gender outside of the man/woman binary. 3. Having no gender or multiple genders.

Transsexual (TS):A person who lives full-time in a gender different than their assigned birth sex and gender. Many pursue hormones and/or surgery. Sometimes used to specifically refer to trans people pursuing or desiring gender or sex confirmation. This term is not appropriate as a substitute for transgender.

Transvestite: This is an outdated and problematic term due to its historical use as a diagnosis for medical/mental health disorders. Cross Dresser has replaced transvestite, see above definition.

Triggers: See stressors. Words, phrases, or stimuli that create an emotional response because they tap into anger or pain about oppression issues or previous trauma.

Two Spirit: Many Native American Tribes have three, five or even seven genders. These dual-gendered people, or “two-spirited” are viewed differently in different Native communities. Sometimes they are seen without stigma and considered emissaries from the creator, treated with the deference and respect, or even considered sacred – but this is not always the case. “Two-Spirit” is the closest thing to an appropriate umbrella term of referring to these gender traditions among Native peoples. However, there are a variety of definitions and feelings about the term “two spirit.”

Womyn/Womxn: some womyn spell the word with a “y” or an “x” as a form of empowerment to move away from the “men” in the “traditional” spelling of women

