

Current Terminology 2019 LGBTQI+

Allyship: The action of working to end oppression through support of, and as an advocate with and for, a group other than one's own.

Androgyne: A person with masculine and feminine physical traits.

Aromantic: A romantic orientation generally characterized by not feeling romantic attraction or a desire for romance. Aromantic people can be satisfied by friendship and other non-romantic relationships.

Asexual: 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.

Bear Community: a part of the queer community composed of queer men similar in looks and interests, most of them big, hairy, friendly and affectionate. The community aims to provide spaces where one feels wanted, desired, and liked. It nourishes and values an individual's process of making friends, of learning self-care and self-love through the unity and support of the community.

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

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.

Butch: A gender expression that fits societal definitions of masculinity. Usually used by queer women and trans people, particularly by lesbians. Some consider "butch" to be its own gender identity.

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." A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgender.

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 who would prefer to keep this information secret.

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: Demisexuality is a sexual orientation in which someone feels sexual attraction only to people with whom they have an emotional bond. Most demisexuals feel sexual attraction rarely compared to the general population, and some have little to no interest in sexual activity. Demisexuals are considered to be on the asexual spectrum, meaning they are closely aligned with asexuality

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.

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.

Gender: A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, or some other identity. Fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth.

Gender Expansive: An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden their own culture’s commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender expansive individuals include those who identify as transgender, as well as anyone else whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching the surrounding society’s notion of gender.

Gender Expression: How one expresses oneself, in terms of dress and/or behaviors. Society, and people that make up society characterize these expressions as “masculine,” “feminine,” or “androgynous.” Individuals may embody their gender in a multitude of ways and have terms beyond these to name their gender expression(s).

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.

Gender Identity: A sense of one’s self as trans*, genderqueer, woman, man, or some other identity, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth.

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

Gender Queer: 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: A set of lifestyle norms, practices, and institutions that promote binary alignment of biological sex, gender identity, and gender roles; assume heterosexuality as a fundamental and natural norm; and privilege monogamous, committed relationships and reproductive sex above all other sexual practices.

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 erasure.

Heterosexuality: A sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of a gender other than their own.

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.

Intersex: Adjective used to describe the experience of naturally (that is, without any medical intervention) developing primary or secondary sex characteristics that do not fit neatly into society's definitions of male or female. Intersex is an umbrella term and there are around 20 variations of intersex that are included in this umbrella term. Many visibly Intersex people are mutilated in infancy and early childhood by doctors to make the individual's sex characteristics conform to society's idea of what normal bodies should look like. Intersex people are relatively common, although 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.

Leather community: A community, which encompasses those who are into leather, sado-masochism, bondage and domination, uniform, cowboys, rubber, and other fetishes. Although the leather community is often associated with the queer community, it is not a "gay-only" community.

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 often used to refer to the community as a whole. Our center uses LGBTQIA to intentionally include and raise awareness of Queer, Intersex and Asexual as well as myriad other communities under our umbrella.

LGBTQIA Allyship: The practice of confronting heterosexism, sexism, genderism, allosexism, and monosexism in oneself and others out of self-interest and a concern for the well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people. Is founded on the belief and believes that dismantling heterosexism, monosexism, trans oppression/trans misogyny/cissexism and allosexism is a social justice issue.

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.

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.

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

Orientation: Orientation is one's attraction or non-attraction to other people. An individual's orientation can be fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their orientation. Some, but not all, types of attraction or orientation include: romantic, sexual, sensual, aesthetic, intellectual and platonic.

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

Polyamory: Denotes consensually being in/open to multiple loving relationships at the same time. Some polyamorists (polyamorous people) consider “polyam” to be a relationship orientation. Sometimes used as an umbrella term for all forms of ethical, consensual, and loving non-monogamy.

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

Pronouns: Linguistic tools used to refer to someone in the third person. Examples are they/them/theirs, ze/hir/hirs, she/her/hers, he/him/his. In English and some other languages, pronouns have been tied to gender and are a common site of misgendering (attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect.)

Queer: One definition of queer is abnormal or strange. Historically, queer has been used as an epithet/slur against people whose gender, gender expression and/or sexuality do not conform to dominant expectations. Some people have reclaimed the word queer and self identify as such. For some, this reclamation is a celebration of not fitting into norms/being “abnormal.” Manifestations of oppression within gay and lesbian movements such as racism, sizeism, ableism, cissexism, transmisogyny as well as assimilation politics, resulted in many people being marginalized, thus, for some, queer is a radical and anti-assimilationist stance that captures multiple aspects of identities.

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

Trans*: The asterisk placed after Trans has been used in many different ways. Some folks think of it as being more inclusive towards gender non-conforming and non-binary folks. But others have offered critique that it feels exclusionary towards GNC and non-binary folks for enforcing a binary expectation to “fill in the blank” for trans man or trans woman. There have also been discussions/critique regarding the origin of the asterisk.

Trans man: A person may choose to identify this way to capture their gender identity as well as their lived experience as a transgender person. Some trans men may also use the term FTM or F2M to describe their identity.

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 trans women may also use MTF or M2F to describe their identity.

Transgender: Adjective used most often as an umbrella term, and frequently abbreviated to “trans.” This adjective describes a wide range of identities and experiences of people whose gender identity and/or expression differs from conventional expectations based on their assigned sex at birth. Not all trans

people undergo medical transition (surgery or hormones). Some commonly held definitions:

1. Someone whose determination of their sex and/or gender is not validated by dominant societal expectations; someone whose behavior or expression does not “match” their assigned sex according to society.
2. A gender outside of the man/woman binary.
3. Having no gender or multiple genders.

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.

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 gender or sex confirmation.

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.