

LGBTQ Terminology

(coincides with PPT on Terms)

Sex: either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and many other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions.

Gender Identity - the internal perception of an individual's gender, and how they label themselves; Gender is who you are inside, how you naturally feel (boy/girl, man/woman, masculine/feminine, both, neither)

Gender Expression: the external display of gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity

Sexuality (Sexual Orientation): the type of sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to; often mistakenly referred to as "sexual preference"

- **Sexual Preference:** (1) generally when this term is used, it is being mistakenly interchanged with "sexual orientation," creating an illusion that one has a choice (or "preference") in who they are attracted to; (2) the types of sexual intercourse, stimulation, and gratification one likes to receive and participate in

Kinsey Scale: used in research to describe a person's [sexual orientation](#) based on their experience or response at a given time. The scale typically ranges from 0, meaning exclusively [heterosexual](#), to 6, meaning exclusively [homosexual](#). In both the Male and Female volumes of the [Kinsey Reports](#), an additional grade, listed as "X", was used to mean "[no socio-sexual contacts or reactions](#)". The reports were first published in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) by [Alfred Kinsey](#),

Gender Expression - refers to the ways in which we each manifest masculinity or femininity. It is usually an extension of our "gender identity," our innate sense of being male or female. Each of us expresses a particular **gender** every day – by the way we style our hair, select our clothing, or even the way we stand.

Gay: a term used to describe a man who is attracted to men, but often used and embraced by women to describe their same-sex relationships as well.

Homosexual (offensive, GLAAD): Please use gay or lesbian to describe people attracted to members of the same sex. Because of the clinical history of the word "homosexual," it is aggressively used by anti-gay extremists to suggest that gay people are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered – notions discredited by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in the 1970s.

Gender Performativity: a theory by Judith Butler; a stylized repetition of acts, an imitation or miming of the dominant conventions of gender.

Genderless: a person who does not identify with any gender

Genderqueer: (1) a blanket term used to describe people whose gender falls outside of the gender binary; (2) a person who identifies as both a man and a woman, or as neither a man nor a woman; often

used in exchange with “transgender”

Hermaphrodite: an outdated medical term used to describe someone who is intersex; not used today as it is considered to be medically stigmatizing, and also misleading as it means a person who is 100% male and female, a biological impossibility for humans

Heterosexism: behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing

Heterosexual: a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the other gender (or, literally, biological sex) than they have; often referred to as “straight”

Homophobia: fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, or discomfort with queer people, often focused inwardly as one begins to question their own sexuality

Homosexual: a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the same gender (or, literally, biological sex) they have, this is considered an offensive/stigmatizing term by many members of the queer community; often used incorrectly in place of “lesbian” or “gay”

Hypersex(uality): a sexual attraction with intensity bordering on insatiability or addiction; recently dismissed as a non-medical condition by the American Psychiatric Association when it was proposed to be included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders version 5.

Intersex: a person with a set of sexual anatomy that doesn’t fit within the labels of female or male (e.g., 47,XXY phenotype, uterus, and penis)

Outing [someone]: when someone reveals another person’s sexuality or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person’s consent or approval; not to be confused with “coming out”

Pansexual: a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions

Queer: (1) historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people; (2) a term that has been embraced and reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms”

Questioning: the process of exploring one’s own sexual orientation, investigating influences that may come from their family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations

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

Ally: a straight person who supports queer people

Androgyny: (1) a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity; (2) occasionally used in place of “intersex” to describe a person with both female and male anatomy.

Asexual: a person who generally does not experience sexual attraction (or very little) to any group of people

Bisexual: a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction to people of their own gender as well as another gender; often confused for and used in place of “pansexual”

Cisgender: a description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression, and biological sex all align (e.g., man, masculine, and male)

Cis-man: a person who identifies as a man, presents himself masculine, and has male biological sex, often referred to as simply “man”

Cis-woman: a person who identifies as a woman, presents herself femininely, and has female biological sex, often referred to as simply “woman”

Closeted: a person who is keeping their sexuality or gender identity a secret from many (or any) people, and has yet to “come out of the closet”

Coming Out: the process of revealing your sexuality or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process; not to be confused with “outing”

Cross-dressing: wearing clothing that conflicts with the traditional gender expression of your sex and

Drag King: a person who consciously performs “masculinity,” usually in a show or theatre setting, presenting an exaggerated form of masculine expression, often times done by a woman; often confused with “transsexual” or “transvestite”

Drag Queen: a person who consciously performs “femininity,” usually in a show or theatre setting, presenting an exaggerated form of feminine expression, often times done by a man; often confused with “transsexual” or “transvestite”

Dyke: a derogatory slang term used for lesbian women; reclaimed by many lesbian women as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term

Faggot: a derogatory slang term used for gay men; reclaimed by many gay men as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term

Fluid(ity): generally with another term attached, like gender-fluid or fluid-sexuality, fluid(ity) describes an identity that is a fluctuating mix of the options available (e.g., man and woman, gay and straight); not to be confused with “transitioning”

FTM/MTF: a person who has undergone medical treatments to change their biological sex (Female To Male, or Male To Female), often times to align it with their gender identity; often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”

Straight: a man or woman who is attracted to people of the other binary gender than themselves; often referred to as “heterosexual”

Third Gender:(1) a person who does not identify with the traditional genders of “man” or “woman,” but identifies with another gender; (2) the gender category available in societies that recognize three or more genders

Transgender: a blanket term used to describe all people who are not cisgender; occasionally used as “transgendered” but the “ed” is misleading, as it implies something happened to the person to make them transgender, which is not the case

Transitioning: a term used to describe the process of moving from one sex/gender to another, sometimes this is done by hormone or surgical treatments

Transsexual: a person whose gender identity is the binary opposite of their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may live their lives as the opposite sex; often confused with “trans-man”/”trans-woman”

Transvestite: a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression (“cross-dresses”) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; often called a “cross-dresser,” and often confused with “transsexual”

Two-Spirit: a term traditionally used by Native American people to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both genders