

LGBTIQ Community

LGBTIQ—stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer or Questioning.

Sexual Orientation—a person's emotional, spiritual, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to others

Lesbian— a woman who is predominately or exclusively attracted to women.

Gay— a man who is predominately or exclusively attracted to men. Sometimes used as an umbrella term to include all LGBTIQ people.

Bisexual (Bi)— describes a person who is attracted to the same gender as well as another gender.

Pansexual— describes a person who is attracted to all genders and/or sexes. As a word, bisexual only recognizes two genders. Pansexual is a more inclusive term.

Asexual— describes a person who is not sexually attracted to others or does not desire sexual activity. A person might be gray-asexual, meaning there might be a person with whom they would engage in some sexual interaction, but rarely or reserved for specific activities. Similarly, a person might be Aromantic, meaning they might have sex, but prefer not to have romantic relationships.

Heterosexual— describes a man who is attracted to a woman or a woman attracted to a man.

Queer— complex term that can describe attraction for people of any/all genders & recognizes the non-binary or sexual identity that rejects hetero-normativity (desire to get married, have children, settle down, etc.), or indicates engagement in non-normative sex/relationships (like BDSM and polyamory.) It has a more explicitly political meaning. Historically it is an offensive term that has been reclaimed by some but not all in the community. With caution, it can also be used as an umbrella term referring to all LGBTIQ people.

Gender Identity—describes the gender with which a person identifies, not to be confused with sex which relates to a person's biological sex through their anatomy (ex: testicles, penis, ovaries, vagina, etc.), chromosomes, and/or hormones. E.g., someone assigned female at birth (sex) may identify as a man (gender identity).

Man—the social and/or legal status of a person who identifies with the male sex.

Woman—the social and/or legal status of a person who identifies with the female sex.

Transgender—a broad term used to describe a range of individuals whose gender identity and expression, to varying degrees, does not correspond to their biological sex or the sex they were assigned at birth. Can be shortened to trans or trans* (the star tends to be most broadly inclusive.)

Transgender Woman (trans woman, Male to Female, MtoF, MtF, M2F)—a transgender person assigned male at birth who identifies as a woman. She may have transitioned or be in the process of transitioning hormonally and/or surgically to female OR may never go through surgery or hormonal reassignment.

Transgender Man (trans man, Female to Male, FtoM, FtM, F2M)—a transgender person assigned female at birth who identifies as a man. He may have transitioned or be in the process of transitioning hormonally and/or surgically to male OR may never go through surgery or hormonal reassignment.

Genderqueer—a term describing a person whose gender is not binary (one of the two commonly recognized genders—man or woman), has more than one gender at the same time, has fluid gender that fluctuates at different times, or refuses gender labels and/or roles altogether. It may also describe someone who is gender-non-conforming. Other related terms include neutrois, bigender, trigender, non-binary transgender, two-spirit (specifically Native communities), genderfluid, androgyne, gender-neutral, and gender-variant.

Agender—a person who has no internal sense of gender identity. Another term is genderless.

Cisgender—a person who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Intersex—refers to people whose sex, on a genetic, hormonal, or anatomic level, are neither male nor female. Their sex chromosomes may not be xx or xy, or they may be born with ambiguous genitalia (hermaphrodite is an outdated term) or variations in internal reproductive organs. Surgery performed in infancy, without consent, leaves some individuals feeling incomplete or altered. Intersex people may or may not identify as transgender or genderqueer.

This list of sexual orientations and gender identity is not all inclusive, and the definitions are not set in stone. It's important to remember that only the person can know what their sexual orientation and gender identity are and the only way for us to know how they identify is to hear it from that person.

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Coming Out—Coming out is a complex, difficult, and life-long process of telling others about one's sexuality and/or gender identity. Coming out and disclosing gender identity is a different experience from coming out about sexual orientation.

Transition: The complex process of leaving behind one's assigned birth sex/gender. Transition can include: coming out to one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgery.

Ally—Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own, reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals. Allies look to the marginalized community for direction about what actions to take. Allies to the LGBTIQ community might correct others' pronoun mistakes, vote in support of equal marriage, use neutral language like "partner", challenge the assumptions others make about bisexuality being a "phase", etc.

Homophobia—the fear or disgust of same-sex love and/or sexual attraction. The fear, prejudice, and/or hatred of those not heterosexual. Homophobia can be internal (personal belief that homosexuality is wrong or repulsive) or external (supporting societal and institutional heterosexism like the prohibition of same-sex marriage).

Biphobia—the fear or disgust of love and/or sexual attraction between members of all genders. This can be perpetrated by gay and lesbian people, as well as heterosexuals. It can include thinking bisexuality is a phase, that it isn't real, that a person must decide on one gender to love, that a gay or lesbian who has sex with a bisexual person is taking a risk, erasing or making bisexual people invisible within the community by assuming they are either straight or gay/lesbian, etc.

Transphobia—the fear or disgust of people who transgress social expectations of gender conformity. This can come from cisgender people who are straight as well as those who are LGBTQI. It can include thinking that trans people are deceitful if they do not disclose their transition history, creating or supporting restrictions on people's ability to medically, socially, or legally transition, policing people's choice in use of public accommodations like bathrooms and locker rooms, believing that a person is no longer truly gay if he has sex with a trans man, lesbian if she has sex with a trans woman, or straight if they have sex with any trans people, using incorrect names and pronouns, asking what a person's "real" name is, or dehumanizing trans people with words like tranny, she-male, it, he-she.

Heterosexism—the belief that male and female sexuality and male/female relationships are the only natural or moral mode of sexual behavior. It is also the assumption, intentional or unintentional, that every person is heterosexual. This might include asking a lesbian what her boyfriend's name is, thinking all women survivors were assaulted by men, etc.

Cissexism—the belief that cisgender people are more normal or natural, or the assumption that every person is cisgender. Binarism is the belief or assumption that male and female are the only sexes, and that there are only two genders (man and woman.)

Thank you to the Gender Equality Resource Center from the department in the Division of Equity and Inclusion and The Center in Northern Colorado for their help with terms.
- http://geneq.berkeley.edu/lgbt_resources_definition_of_terms and www.glbtcolorado.org