

2SLGBTQIA+ Terminology

Ally is a term used to describe someone who is actively supportive of LGBTQ+ people. It encompasses straight and cisgender allies, as well as those within the LGBTQ+ community who support each other (e.g., a lesbian who is an ally to the bisexual community)

Asexual refers to a person who does not experience sexual attraction or desire. The person may or may not have spiritual and emotional attraction to others.

Bisexual refers to someone whose sexual and/or romantic attraction is to both males and females. A bisexual person may not be attracted equally to both sexes—people who are primarily attracted to one sex may still describe themselves as bisexual. Bisexuality is a description of sexual orientation and does not imply that the person engages in sexual behaviour with one or both sexes. Some people continue to use the term bisexual to describe themselves. Others are more comfortable with terms such as pansexual, omnisexual, or queer.

Cisgender refers to someone whose gender identity conforms with the one that they were assigned at birth.

Coming Out is the process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Cross Dresser is a person who wears clothing opposite of their gender for comfort, pleasure, or fun. It carries no implications of sexual orientation. Has replaced the term “Transvestite”

Drag is the act of dressing in gendered clothing and adopting gendered behaviors as part of a performance, most often clothing and behaviors typically not associated with your gender identity. Drag Queens perform femininity theatrically. Drag Kings perform masculinity theatrically. Drag may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody, or simply as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

Drag King is 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 may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody, or simply as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

Drag Queen is 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.” Drag may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody, or simply as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

Gay usually refers to men who have relationships with other men. It is sometimes used as a generic term for men and women; some women who love women call themselves gay while others prefer the term lesbian.

Gender is what a person lives or experiences themselves to be in society (woman, man, girl, boy, androgynous, etc.).

Genderfluid refers to those whose gender identity and expression are fluid and change depending on personal circumstance or desire.

Gender Identity is an individual's self-conception as being male, female, both or neither as distinguished from actual biological sex.

Gender Non-Conforming refers to those whose gender expression does not conform to prevailing gender norms.

Gender Pronoun is simply the pronoun or set of pronouns that an individual would like others to use when talking to or about that individual. In English, the singular pronouns that we use most frequently are: I, you, she, her, he, him, and it. "I", "you" and "it" are what we call "gender neutral" or "all gender", but "she", "her", "he" and "him" are gendered. This can create an issue for transgender and gender nonconforming people, because others may not use the pronouns they prefer when speaking to them or about them.

Heterosexual is 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 is the fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

Homosexual is used in a formal sense. Many people do not use the term to describe themselves, preferring words such as gay (men who love men) or lesbian (women who love women).

Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalise people – gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc.

Intersex refers to people who may have atypical combinations of physical features that usually distinguish female from male—for example, someone with an XY chromosome who appears physically female, XX-male, genital ambiguity, or sex developmental differences. An intersex individual may have biological characteristics of both the male and female sexes. Intersexuality is a medical term introduced in the 20th century to refer to people who cannot be classified as clearly male or female.

Lesbian is a woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

2SLGBTQIA+ is an acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual” with a “+” sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by members of our community.

Marginalized refers to people who are excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

Misogyny is the hatred or dislike of women and girls. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, belittling of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification of women

Non-binary is an umbrella term used by those who do not identify as a man or a woman. Non-binary genders can be understood in a variety of ways. For some, their gender may feel like a combination of man and woman. Others have a sense of their gender being beyond the categories of man or woman. Still others may feel as though they do not identify with any gender at all. Non-binary may also refer to gender categories that are specific to a culture that recognizes more than two genders.

Outing is exposing someone’s lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender or gender non-binary identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety or religious or family situations.

Pansexual is a term used to describe those who are sexually or romantically attracted to people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Pansexual people may perceive themselves as gender-blind, meaning that gender and sexuality are not factors that determine their attraction to others. Considered as a subset of bisexuality and sometimes as a sexual identity in its own right, pansexuality refuses the logic of the gender binary.

Queer used to be a derogatory term, but this word is used, often in academic settings, to refer to those who do not conform to traditional gender and sexual stereotypes, constructs, or roles—for example, —queer studies|| programs in universities, or —queer theology. Young LGBTQIA+ folk may often refer to themselves as queer. Queer can sometimes be an affectionate term between LGBTQIA+ people, although it can still be a derogatory term when directed against people.

Questioning is a word often used by youth who are in the process of coming out or are still discerning their sexuality, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Sex as an adjective (in reference to someone’s sex) usually refers to body and biology, as in male, female, intersex.

Sexuality or sexual orientation refers to a person's sexual desire, love interest, or affiliation—heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or asexual.

Social Justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

Trans and transgender are those whose assigned sex at birth is different from their gender identity or gender expression. Some cross-dressers and many intersex people identify as trans.

Transsexual that for many people in the transgender community, is seen as an outdated term, and primarily a medical term that pertains to gender- confirming surgery and/or hormone replacement therapy.

Transitioning is a series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition, such as changing name and pronouns, medical transition, which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries, and legal transition, which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents. Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all or none of these processes.

Transvestite is a person who dresses in clothes primarily associated with the opposite sex (typically used of a man).

Two-Spirit (2S) came from the 1990 Native American/First Nations gay and lesbian conference in Winnipeg, and refers to First Nations people who fulfill one of many mixed or cross-gender roles found traditionally among many Indigenous groups. A direct translation of the Ojibwe term Niizh manidoowag, —Two-Spirited or —Two-Spirit is usually used to indicate a person whose body simultaneously houses a masculine spirit and a feminine spirit. Many First Nations or Aboriginal people are not comfortable using this term, however. The term is not interchangeable with gay, lesbian, or other terms in the LGBTQIA+ initialism, nor is it appropriate for non-Indigenous people to use this word to describe themselves.