



ANDROGONOUS

The word androgynous refers to a person who does not display a distinctly male or distinctly female appearance.

BIPHOBIA

The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as bisexual.

BISEXUAL

Bisexual individuals are sexually and romantically attracted to people of the opposite gender and people of the same gender.

CIVIL UNION

A type of legal recognition given to non-married couples, particularly same-sex partners, so that they can have access to the benefits enjoyed by married heterosexuals. In the United States, civil unions are granted and recognized only in Vermont.

CLOSETED or IN THE CLOSET

Hiding one's sexual orientation.

COMING OUT

The process by which lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals recognize, acknowledge, accept, and typically appreciate their sexual identities.

CROSSDRESSER

A person (typically heterosexual) who wears clothes that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but not one's own (preferred term to "transvestite").

DISCRIMINATION

Differential treatment that favors one individual or group over another based on prejudice.

DOMESTIC PARTNERS OR DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS

Individuals who share a life together, but are not married or joined in a civil union. A number of jurisdictions and institutions recognize and grant rights to same-sex domestic partners. For example,



ten state governments, more than 200 colleges, and nearly half of Fortune 500 companies offer health benefits to the domestic partners of their GLBT employees.

DRAG or IN DRAG

Wearing clothes considered appropriate for someone of another gender.

FTM

A female-to-male transsexual, or a transsexual man. Some transsexuals reject this term, arguing that they have always been male or female and are only making that identity visible. Others feel that such language reinforces an either/or gender system.

GAY

Being gay refers to men who are romantically and/or physically attracted to other men.

GAY PRIDE

Gay Pride refers to feeling positively about being gay or celebrating the GLBT community. Many cities hold annual Gay Pride events.

GENDER

The social construction of masculinity and femininity in a specific culture. It involves gender assignment (the gender designation of someone at birth), gender roles (the expectations imposed on someone based on their gender), gender attribution (how others perceive someone's gender), and gender identity (how someone defines their own gender).

GENDER EXPRESSION

How one chooses to express one's gender identity.

GENDER IDENTITY

How one sees oneself as a gendered being. Gender identity refers to whether we feel strongly that we are either male, female or transgender. Some people feel they do not conform to any gender identity.



GENDER INDENTITY DISORDER

Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is a controversial psychological diagnosis that may be given to a transgender person.

GENDER QUEER

A term used by many trans youth who do not identify as either male or female and who often seek to blur gender lines. Genderqueer refers to people who do not adhere to strictly male or female identities and roles. A genderqueer person often chooses to present as neither clearly male, nor clearly female, but rather as a gender-free individual.

GENDER VARIANT

An alternative term for transgender, meaning someone who varies from traditional expressions of “masculine” and “feminine.”

HETEROSEXISM

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege heterosexuals and subordinate and denigrate LGB people. The critical element that differentiates heterosexism (or any other “ism”) from prejudice and discrimination is the use of institutional power and authority to support prejudices and enforce discriminatory behaviors in systematic ways with far-reaching outcomes and effects.

HETEROSEXUAL ALLY

Heterosexual people who confront homophobia and heterosexism in themselves and others.

HETEROSEXUAL PRIVILEGE

The benefits and advantages that heterosexuals receive in a heterosexist culture. Also, the benefits that lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals receive as a result of claiming a heterosexual identity and denying a lesbian, gay, or bisexual identity.

HIR

A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “her” and “him.”



HOMOPHOBIA

The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as lesbian or gay, including the fear of being seen as lesbian or gay yourself. Homophobic behavior can range from telling jokes about lesbians and gay men, to verbal abuse, to acts of physical violence. (Some people choose not to use the word “homophobia,” preferring instead to include anti-GLBT attitudes and behavior in how they define “heterosexism”).

INTERSEX

A person who is born with “sex chromosomes,” external genitalia, or an internal reproductive system that is not considered “standard” for either male or female (preferred term to “hermaphrodite”). About one in 2,000 children, or five children per day in the United States, are born visibly intersex.

LESBIAN

Being lesbian refers to women who are romantically and/or physically attracted to other women.

MSM (Men Who Have Sex with Men)

MSM stands for "men who have sex with men."

MTF

A male-to-female transsexual, or a transsexual woman. Some transsexuals reject this term, arguing that they have always been male or female and are only making that identity visible. Others feel that such language reinforces an either/or gender system.

OUTING

Outing is telling people that someone else is gay without their permission.

OPPRESSION

The systematic exploitation of one social group by another for its own benefit. It involves institutional control, ideological domination, and the promulgation of the dominant group’s culture on the oppressed. Oppression = Prejudice + Power.



PREJUDICE

A set of negative beliefs or feelings that are generalized to apply to a whole group of people and any member of that group. Anyone can be prejudiced toward another individual or group.

QUEER

A once exclusively derogatory term that some GLBT people, especially GLBT youth, have reclaimed as an inclusive and positive way to describe themselves and their community. The term is now also being used in popular culture, but it is still viewed as an insult, depending on who is saying it and in what context.

RACISM

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege white people and subordinate and denigrate people of color.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Same sex marriage is when two people of the same gender get married.

SEX

The biological assignment of “male” or “female” based upon the genitalia that an individual possesses at birth. The biological sexes are commonly seen as mutually exclusive, and it is often believed that a person’s sex should dictate their gender expression (those born with “male” genitalia should behave in a masculine way and those born with “female” genitalia should behave in a feminine way). However, many individuals are born with sexual characteristics that cannot be categorized as wholly “male” or “female.” The commonality of intersex births challenges the belief that there are only two categories of sex and they are mutually exclusive, and that individuals are innately programmed to behave in a manner dictated by the genitalia they possess at birth.

SEXISM

The cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege men and subordinate and denigrate women.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The desire for intimate emotional and sexual relationships with people of the same gender (lesbians and gay men), another gender (heterosexuals), or more than one gender (bisexuals).

SIE

A non-gender specific pronoun used instead of “she” and “he.”

TRANS or TRANSGENDER

An umbrella term for someone whose self-identification or expression challenges traditional notions of “male” and “female.” Transgender people include transsexuals, crossdressers, drag queens and kings, gender queers, and others who cross or transgress traditional gender categories.

TRANSPHOBIA

The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as transgendered.

TRANSSEXUAL

A person who identifies with a gender different from their biological gender. Transsexuals often undergo hormone treatments and sex reassignment surgeries to align their anatomy with their core identity, but not all desire or can afford to do so.

WSW - Women Who Have Sex with Women

WSW stands for "women who have sex with women."