

# **The University of Connecticut Rainbow Center's LGBTQIA+ Dictionary**

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*Compiled by Rainbow Center students and professional staff  
to serve the UConn community.*

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**UConn**  

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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## Note about the LGBTQIA+ Dictionary

The LGBTQIA+ Dictionary is created, maintained, and edited by the staff at the University of Connecticut Rainbow Center. This dictionary is meant to serve as a tool to learn more about language that is commonly used in the LGBTQIA+ community. Inclusion of a term in this dictionary is not an affirmation of that term by the RC – we are compiling terms that may fall in and out of practice and favor over time.

The Rainbow Center recognizes that the English language is an evolving and imperfect way to capture complex realities. We recognize that there are a great many terms in this dictionary, and some who approach this tool might consider it to be comprehensive. This dictionary will never capture the totality of language used to refer to members of the LGBTQIA+ community – if for no other reason, because it is published in English and the identities of the LGBTQIA+ community are vast and not sufficiently represented by the English language. Others might approach this tool and consider it to be too unabridged, in that it includes terms that are used less often. At the Rainbow Center, we know that many sub-communities in the LGBTQIA+ community have full and complex lexicons, and we could not capture those fully in this document. Rather, we have chosen a selection of terms. If you have a suggestion of a term or descriptor that you believe should be edited or added, please send your suggestion to [rainbowcenter@uconn.edu](mailto:rainbowcenter@uconn.edu). All suggestions will be taken under serious consideration for future updates.

The Rainbow Center also recognizes that individuals may have powerful relationships with certain words included in this tool, both positive and negative. This is reflective of Sedgwick's (2008) statement, "The relations implicit in *identifying with* are, as psychoanalysis suggests, in themselves quite sufficiently fraught with intensities of incorporation, diminishment, inflation, threat, loss, reparation, and disavowal" (pg. 61). We recognize that labels can be both harmful and helpful, depending on their use and intention, and we hope to clarify that this dictionary is not meant to serve as a guide for either "good" or "bad" language. This is meant to serve as just one tool that readers can use to educate themselves and learn more about the LGBTQIA+ community.

Thank you,

The University of Connecticut Rainbow Center

# Vocabulary

## A

**ace:** Shortened term for asexual<sup>1</sup>.

**ace-spectrum:** Refers to identities that are on the asexual spectrum, but not entirely asexual. Gray-asexuality and demisexuality are grouped under this term<sup>2</sup>.

**accomplice:** An individual whose actions are meant to directly challenge institutionalized discrimination by blocking or impeding discriminatory people, policies, and structures. In some communities, this concept is favored over behaviors typically associated with *ally*<sup>3</sup>.

**AFAB:** Acronym for Assigned Female at Birth. May also be noted as "CAFAB," or Coercively Assigned Female at Birth. Some feel that this term was created by/for only the intersex community. Others in the trans community use this term to clarify that they were not born as female -- rather, society assigned that label<sup>4</sup>.

**agender:** 1) Person identifies as not having a gender. 2) Person who doesn't experience gender.<sup>5</sup>

**AIS:** Acronym for androgen insensitivity syndrome. AIS is just one example of an intersex condition. AIS affects sexual development before birth and during puberty. People with this condition are genetically male, but their bodies do not respond to male sex hormones called androgens. Typically individuals will have external sex characteristics of females, but have internal testes where a uterus would be in a woman. Depending on the level of insensitivity to androgens individuals can have different combinations of internal and external sex organs<sup>6</sup>.

**alloromantic:** Someone who experiences romantic attraction. It is possible to be alloromantic but not allosexual<sup>7</sup>.

**allosexual:** Someone who experiences sexual attraction. It is possible to be allosexual but not alloromantic<sup>8</sup>.

**ally:** Typically considered a verb, one must act in allyship to be an ally. Allies disrupt and educate in oppressive spaces. Allies must constantly work to educate themselves about communities to which they are acting in allyship<sup>9</sup>.

**AMAB:** Acronym for assigned male at birth. May also be noted as "CAMAB," or Coercively Assigned Male At Birth. Some feel that this term was created by/for only the intersex community. Others in the trans community use this term to clarify that they were not born as male -- rather, society assigned that label<sup>10</sup>.

**androgyny:** 1) gender identity that has elements of both masculinity and femininity, 2) gender identity with no feminine or masculine elements.

**androgynoromantic:** Romantic attraction to androgyny, regardless of one's gender<sup>11</sup>.

**androsexual:** Sexually attracted to men or masculinity<sup>12</sup>.

**aromantic:** Someone who experiences little to no romantic attraction. Sometimes shortened as "*aro*"<sup>13</sup>."

**asexual:** Person who experiences little to no sexual attraction<sup>14</sup>. Sometimes shortened as "*ace*."

## B

**bare-backing:** Practicing anal sex without using a condom<sup>15</sup>.

**BDSM:** (Bondage, Discipline/Domination, Submission/Sadism, and Masochism) The terms submission/sadism and masochism refer to deriving pleasure from inflicting or receiving pain, often in a sexual context. The terms bondage and domination refer to playing with various power roles, in both sexual and social context. BDSM is often misunderstood as abusive, but when practiced in a safe and consensual manner can be a part of a healthy sex life. Sometimes those who participate in BDSM may use the adjective "leather" to describe themselves.<sup>16</sup>

**bear:** A man who has facial/body hair, and a "cuddly" body. However, the word 'bear' means many things to different people, even within the bear movement. Many men who do not have one or all of these characteristics define themselves as bears, making the definition a very loose one. "Bear" is often defined as more of an attitude and a sense of comfort with masculinity and bodies<sup>17</sup>.

**Bi+:** an umbrella of identities, including anyone who is attracted romantically and/or sexually to more than one sex and/or gender. Encompasses identities such as *non-*

*monosexual* (which can include asexual identities), fluid, pansexual, bisexual, omnisexual, polysexual, hetero/homo flexible, and more.<sup>18</sup>

**bicurious:** A curiosity about having sexual relations with a person whose sex or gender differs from that of one's usual sexual partners : curious about exploring bisexuality<sup>19</sup>

**bigender:** relating to a person whose sense of personal identity encompasses two genders<sup>20</sup>

**biological sex:** See "*sex*."

**binary:** Consisting of, indicating, or involving two. The gender binary refers to a societal misconception that there are only two genders: men and women. The sex binary refers to a societal misconception that there are only two sexes: male and female<sup>21</sup>.

**binders:** A device worn around the chest of an individual, designed for minimizing the appearance of breasts<sup>22</sup>.

**binding:** The process of flattening one's breasts to have the appearance of a flatter chest<sup>23</sup>.

**biphobia:** The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals, which is often times related to the current binary standard for sexuality. Biphobia can be seen within and outside of the LGBTQIA+ community<sup>24</sup>.

**biromantic:** A person who is romantically attracted to two or more sexes or genders<sup>25</sup>.

**bisexual:** A person with the potential to be attracted – romantically and/or sexually – to people of more than one sex and/or gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree<sup>26</sup>.

**bottom:** A person who is said to take a more submissive role during sexual interactions<sup>27</sup>.

**bottom surgery:** Surgery on genitals designed to affirm a person's identity and expression<sup>28</sup>.

**burlesque:** theatrical entertainment of a broadly humorous often earthy character consisting of short turns, comic skits, and sometimes striptease acts<sup>29</sup>.

**butch:** A person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally. 'Butch' is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but it can also be claimed as an affirming identity label<sup>30</sup>.

## C

**catcher:** See '*bottom*.'

**Castro District:** A neighborhood in Eureka Valley in San Francisco, California. One of the first gay neighborhoods in the United States which really gained momentum in the 1970's. Named the Castro for the landmark Castro Theater in the neighborhood<sup>31</sup>.

**chapstick lesbian:** A lesbian whose gender expression falls somewhere between femme and butch<sup>32</sup>.

**cisgender (cis):** A person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex the person was assigned at birth<sup>33</sup>.

**cisgender privilege:** The set of privileges conferred to people who are believed to be cisgender. (E.g. having one's pronouns used, no harassment in public restrooms, no denial of expected access to health care, etc.)<sup>34</sup>

**cisnormativity:** the assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is cisgender, and that cisgender identities are superior to trans identities or people<sup>35</sup>.

**cissexism:** behavior that privileges cisgender people and oppresses transgender people, which is rooted in *cisnormativity*<sup>36</sup>.

**closeted/in the closet:** Adjectives for LGBTQIA+ people who have not disclosed aspects of their LGBTQIA+ identity to people around them<sup>37</sup>. Ideology around being "in the closet" is rooted in heteronormativity/cisnormativity.

**coming out:** The process by which an LGBTQIA+ person discloses their LGBTQIA+ identity to themselves or others<sup>38</sup>.

**consent:** A freely given, reversible, enthusiastic, specific positive affirmation to engage in an activity of any kind<sup>39</sup>.

**constellation** – a way to describe the arrangement or structure of a polyamorous relationship<sup>40</sup>.

**cross-dressing:** The act of wearing items of clothing and other accoutrements not commonly associated one's gender within a particular society<sup>41</sup>.

**cub:** A younger hairy gay man. Similar to a bear<sup>42</sup>.

## D

**DADT:** "Don't ask, don't tell," a U.S. military policy prohibiting gay and bisexual persons from disclosing their sexuality. It was repealed by Barack Obama in September of 2011<sup>43</sup>.

**demi man/woman:** 1) Someone whose gender identity is aligned with men/women but not fully. 2) Someone who identifies only partially as man/woman. Can also be stated as *demi girl/boy/guy*<sup>44</sup>.

**demiflux:** a gender identity where one part is static, and the other(s) fluxuate(s) in intensity.<sup>45</sup>

**demigender:** Someone who experiences gender but only to a certain extent<sup>48</sup>.

**demiromantic** – adj. : little or no capacity to experience romantic attraction until a strong sexual or emotional connection is formed with another individual, often within a sexual relationship.<sup>46</sup>

**demisexual:** A person who does not experience sexual attraction until they have a strong romantic bond with a person<sup>47</sup>.

**discrimination:** It occurs when a member of a more powerful social group behaves unjustly or cruelly to someone who is, or is perceived to be, a member of a less powerful social group. Discrimination can take many forms, including individual acts of hatred or injustice and institutional denials of privileges normally accorded to other groups. Ongoing discrimination creates a climate of oppression for the affected group<sup>48</sup>.

**domestic partnership:** Title for those in an interpersonal relationship and living together, but who have not been legally married or cannot legally get married. Historically in the United States, domestic partnerships were a way for those who could not legally marry due to LGBTQ+ identity to seek legal rights<sup>49</sup>.

**dominatrix:** A person who takes a dominant role in sexual interactions, usually with the connotation of being a woman-identifying individual<sup>50</sup>.

**"dom":** A person who takes a dominant role in sexual interactions<sup>51</sup>.

**DOMA:** Acronym for the "defense of marriage act." A United States federal law enacted in 1996 that allowed states to refuse to recognize marriage equality. This law banned same-gender married couples from being recognized as "spouses" for purposes of federal laws, effectively barring them from receiving federal marriage benefits. In 2013 section 3 was ruled unconstitutional<sup>52</sup>.

**drag:** The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically. Drag can trace roots as far back as ancient Greece, and in recent history (c. 1920s, United States) refers to the underground balls where gender and sexuality were closely linked. Today, drag and ball culture have different meanings for different people, but is often thought to best be summarized as a temporary form of gender expression<sup>53</sup>.

**drag king:** A person who performs masculinity or man-ness in drag<sup>56</sup>.

**drag queen:** A person who performs femininity or woman-ness in drag<sup>56</sup>.

**drag show:** A performance (often including multiple drag performers) of drag<sup>54</sup>.

## E

**erasure:** The removal of a person or groups identity from history, especially those who identify as belonging to an underrepresented group. Examples include race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender, amongst others.<sup>55</sup>

**equality:** An ideal where all entities are treated equally regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.<sup>56</sup>

**equity:** An ideal where all entities are treated according to their needs related to oppression/discrimination regarding race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.<sup>57</sup>

## F

**family:** A way for someone in LGBTQIA community to refer to someone else who is LGBTQIA+. Sometimes called "*chosen family*."<sup>58</sup>



**female:** One of the binary sexes in Western culture. Typically, people of this sex are socialized as women, starting at birth. See "*sex*" to learn about how sex is not a binary.

**femme:** a person who is in identifies with concepts of femininity<sup>59</sup>.

**feminine:** Having qualities or characteristics traditionally ascribed to women, which will depend on a person's socially constructed understanding of womanhood.<sup>60</sup>

**feminism:** A doctrine/movement advocating social, political and economic rights for women.<sup>61</sup>

**fluid(ity):** Pertaining to something that can easily change; not fixed.<sup>62</sup>

**FTM:** Abbreviation for female-to-male transgender person. This term is generally falling out of practice due to the term's use of the sex binary and/or its combination of concepts of sex/gender<sup>63</sup>

**Frayromantic:** one who experiences romantic attraction towards strangers or those they are unfamiliar with, to which fades once they get to know the person.<sup>64</sup>

## G

**gay:** 1) Term used in some cultural settings to represent men who are attracted to men in a sexual or romantic way. 2) Term used in some cultural settings to represent women who are attracted to women in a sexual or romantic way. 3) Term used to refer to the LGBTQIA community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.<sup>65</sup>

**gender:** see "*gender identity*"<sup>66</sup>

**gender binary:** The idea that there are only two genders, man and woman, and that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or.<sup>67</sup>

**gender cues:** What people use to communicate their gender to another person. Examples include hairstyle, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.<sup>68</sup>

**gender dysphoria:** 1) An official diagnosis for someone who experiences strong and persistent cross-gender identification. 2) A conflict between one's physical body and the gender with which they identify.<sup>69</sup>

**gender expression:** How one represents or expresses one's gender identity to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, body features and voice characteristics.<sup>70</sup>

**gender identity:** A person's internal sense of gender, or a lack thereof. This is information that each person can identify for themselves, and it is likely to be based on gender in their society.<sup>71</sup>

**gender inclusive:** Suitable for, applicable to, or common to all genders.<sup>72</sup>

**gender non-conforming:** Gender identities that exist outside of the gender binary.<sup>73</sup>

**gender pronouns:** See "*pronouns*."

**gender variant:** A person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.<sup>74</sup>

**genderfluid:** 1) Someone who experiences gender in different ways at different times. 2) Someone whose experience of gender changes over short periods of time.<sup>75</sup>

**genderflux:** 1) Someone who experiences gender to different degrees at different times. 2) Someone whose experience of gender changes over long periods of time.<sup>76</sup>

**genderfuck:** The idea of playing with 'gender cues' to purposely confuse stereotypical gender expressions, usually through clothing.<sup>77</sup>

**genderqueer:** A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither man nor woman, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders.<sup>78</sup>

**gray-asexual:** A person who identifies in the "gray area" between asexuality and sexuality (alternately: *Gray-A*, *semisexual*)<sup>79</sup>

## H

**hankie code:** A system that uses colored handkerchiefs and placement to symbolize preferences in sexual behavior and practices. Used primarily in the gay male 'leather'

community, this system is designed to help quickly locate potential sex partners with compatible interests.<sup>80</sup>

**hate crime:** A hate crime occurs when a person commits an act such as assault, battery, criminal damage to property or mob action because of the victim's real or perceived identity/identities. Hate crime laws vary from state to state.<sup>81</sup>

**hate speech:** Speech that attacks, threatens, or insults a person or group on the basis of national origin, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.<sup>82</sup>

**heteroflexible:** Identifying as mostly heterosexual, but may have situational attraction(s) that fall(s) outside of that experience.<sup>83</sup>

**heteronormativity:** The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities.<sup>84</sup>

**heteroromantic:** Men who are romantically attracted to women, or women who are romantically attracted to men.<sup>85</sup>

**heterosexism:** Prejudice against individuals and groups who are not, or are not perceived to be, heterosexual, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice. Any attitude, action, or practice – backed by institutional power- that subordinates people because of their sexual orientation.<sup>86</sup>

**heterosexual:** Men who are attracted to women; women who are attracted to men.<sup>87</sup>

**heterosexual privilege:** Those benefits derived automatically by being heterosexual that are denied to people of other sexualities.<sup>88</sup>

**HIV/AIDS:** A disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). As the infection progresses it affects the immune system making the carrier more susceptible to common infections. Late symptoms are referred to as AIDS. HIV is transmitted primarily through unprotected sexual intercourse (oral and anal included), contaminated blood transfusions, hypodermic needles, and from mother to child during pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding. Tears and saliva do not transmit HIV.<sup>89</sup>

**HIV-phobia:** The irrational fear or hatred of persons living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>90</sup>

**homoflexible:** Identifying as mostly gay, but may have situational attraction(s) that fall(s) outside of that experience.<sup>91</sup>

**homophobia:** This word refers to an irrational fear of those who are, or who are perceived to be, not heterosexual. Any attitude, action, or practice – backed by institutional power- that subordinates people because of their sexual orientation. This fear is indicative of discriminatory thoughts, so *heterosexism* might be a better word to use.

**homosexual:** A person physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Most often used to refer to men who are attracted to men or women who are attracted to women. This word is falling out of practice in favor of words like *gay* or *queer*.<sup>92</sup>

**HRT:** Acronym for “hormone replacement therapy.” For trans individuals, this is a process through which hormones are prescribed to treat gender dysphoria.<sup>93</sup>

**identity sphere:** The idea that gender identities and expressions do not fit on a linear scale, but rather on a sphere that allows room for all expression without weighing any on expression as better than another.<sup>94</sup>

**institutional oppression:** Arrangements of a society (like laws, policies, social norms) used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media, education, religion, economics, etc.<sup>95</sup>

**intergender:** A person whose gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.<sup>96</sup>

**internalized oppression:** The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.<sup>97</sup>

**intersectionality:** Intersecting patterns of oppression over multiple areas of identity, and how those experiences tend not to be represented in discourses around oppression in any singular identity. This concept was developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989.

**in the closet:** Refers to a someone who identifies as LGBTQIA+ who does not disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society.<sup>98</sup>

**intersex:** A person whose combination of primary and secondary sex characteristics, hormones, and chromosomes differs from one of the binary expectations.<sup>99</sup>

## K

**kink:** A sexual activity, fetish, or interest that falls outside of socially normative behavior.<sup>100</sup>

**Kinsey scale:** A scale designed by Alfred Kinsey in the 1940s. The scale attempts to describe a person's sexual experience or response at a given time rating sexuality on a spectrum between 0-6, 0 being exclusively heterosexual, and 6 being exclusively homosexual. This scale is considered outdated today.<sup>101</sup>

## L

**labrys:** Axe with double sides. Used as a lesbian power emblem. Also used during times when homosexuality was illegal to indicate sexuality to other lesbians.<sup>102</sup>

**leather:** See *BDSM*.

**lesbian:** A woman who is attracted to women. Term derives from Greek isle of Lesbos where Sappho, who wrote poetry about love between women<sup>103</sup>

**LGBTQIA:** A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual communities. When combined, this term is often meant to refer to a full community of queer- and trans-spectrum identities, not just those that are listed. Some people add a "+" to the end of the term to indicate this.<sup>104</sup>

**lipstick lesbian:** Term for a lesbian with a feminine/femme gender expression. Can be used in a positive or a derogatory way.<sup>105</sup>

**lithromantic:** A romantic orientation on the asexual spectrum which describes an individual who feels romantic attraction towards others, but who does not desire reciprocation of that attraction or does not wish to enter a romantic relationship.<sup>106</sup>

## M

**male:** One of the binary sexes in Western culture. Typically, people of this sex are socialized as men, starting at birth. See "*sex*" to learn about how sex is not a binary.

**male chauvinist:** A male who patronizes, disparages, or discriminates against females in the belief that they are inferior to males.<sup>107</sup>

**marriage equality:** A movement advocating for legal recognition of all marriages, and equal treatment of benefits of marriage regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of partners. This term is better than *same-sex marriage*, as marriage equality allowed more than just people in same-sex relationships to marry, like non-binary folks.<sup>108</sup>

**masculine:** Having qualities or characteristics traditionally ascribed to men, which will depend on a person's socially constructed understanding of manhood.<sup>109</sup>

**microaggression:** The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.<sup>110</sup>

**monosexual:** Romantic or sexual attraction to members of one sex or gender only. In discussions of sexual orientation, the term is chiefly used in contrast to non-monosexuality.<sup>111</sup>

**MTF:** Abbreviation for female-to-male transgender person. This term is generally falling out of practice due to the term's use of the sex binary and/or its combination of concepts of sex/gender<sup>112</sup>

## N

**non-binary:** Not identifying as either of the binary genders. Can sometimes be spelled without the hyphen: *nonbinary*.<sup>113</sup>

**non-labeling:** One who chooses not to use a label to identify themselves.<sup>114</sup>

**non-monosexual:** A person who experiences sexual attraction to more or less than one sex or gender. Terms that might fall under the non-monosexual definition could include, but are not limited to: *bisexual*, *asexual*, *pansexual*, and *omnisexual*.

## O

**omnisexual:** Someone who is attracted to people of all genders.<sup>115</sup>

**oppression:** The systematic subjugation of a group of people by another group with access to social power, the result of which benefits one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs and practices.<sup>116</sup>

**outing:** The harmful and discriminatory practice of revealing an LGBTQIA person's identity without their permission.<sup>117</sup>

## **P**

**packing:** Wearing a phallic device on the groin and under clothing for any purposes including: (for someone without a penis) the validation or confirmation of one's gender identity; seduction; and/or sexual readiness (for one who likes to penetrate another during sexual intercourse).<sup>118</sup>

**pangender:** A person whose gender identity is comprised of all or many gender expressions.<sup>119</sup>

**panromantic:** A person who is romantically attracted to people of all or many genders, or regardless of gender.

**pansexual:** A person who is sexually attracted to people of all or many genders, or regardless of gender.<sup>120</sup>

**passing:** Describes when a person has their identities regularly affirmed and recognized by others.<sup>121</sup>

**patriarchy:** A form of social organization in which power is held by and transferred through men/males.<sup>122</sup>

**polyamorous:** Refers to honest, usually non-possessive, relationships with multiple partners and can include: open relationships, polyfidelity (which involves multiple romantic relationships with sexual contact restricted to those), and sub relationships (which denote distinguishing between a "primary" relationship or relationships and various "secondary" relationships). This is different from polygamy, which usually involved possessive structures based on power.<sup>123</sup>

**polysexual:** An attraction to multiple genders and/or sexes.<sup>124</sup>

**pomosexual:** One who chooses not to subscribe to a label for their gender or sexuality.<sup>125</sup>

**prejudice:** A conscious or unconscious negative belief about a whole group of people and its individual members.<sup>126</sup>

**pride:** The feeling of gratification arising from association with something good or laudable. Typically associated with the LGBTQIA community in association with pride marches, and pride flags.<sup>127</sup>

**pride flag:** Each community within the LGBTQIA community has a pride flag which acts as a symbol to support and empower members of the community. The rainbow flag is the best known which represents the community as a whole.<sup>128</sup>

**privilege:** A advantage or benefit enjoyed by a particular person or a restricted group of persons.<sup>129</sup>

**pronouns:** Historically, gender pronouns have existed in a binary in the English language: he/him/his or she/her/hers. Today, pronouns/gender pronouns also include, but are not limited to, ey, ae, per, ze, thon, they, zhe, and fae. A person can choose any pronoun that makes them feel comfortable for any reason.<sup>130</sup>

## Q

**queer:** A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. It is an umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the non-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons, asexual people, and other communities.<sup>131</sup>

**queerspawn:** A person with one or more LGBTQIA+ parent or caregiver.<sup>132</sup>

**questioning:** Someone who is unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>133</sup>

**quoiromantic:** Term to describe a person on the aromantic spectrum who does not see the lines between romance and friendship.<sup>134</sup>



**quoirsexual:** Describes a person on the aromantic spectrum who cannot differentiate between sexual and sensual desire.<sup>135</sup>

## R

**rainbow:** The rainbow has become a symbol of the LGBT community. The original gay pride flag flew in the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade in 1978. It is disputed where the inspiration for the use of the rainbow came from.<sup>136</sup>

**romantic attraction:** An attraction or feeling related to the desire of a romantic relationship with a specific person.<sup>137</sup>

## S

**same gender loving (SGL):** A term sometimes used by members of the African-American/Black community to express an alternative sexual orientation without relying on terms and symbols of European descent. The term emerged in the early 1990's with the intention of offering Black women who love women and Black men who love men a voice, a way of identifying and being that resonated with the uniqueness of Black culture in live.<sup>138</sup>

**same-sex loving:** Another term for homoromantic, but often used to mean homosexual as well.

**Sappho:** Meaning lesbian, from the Greek poetess of the same name, born on the Isle of Lesbos.<sup>139</sup>

**second-gen:** A person with one or more LGBTQIA+ parent or caregiver that also identifies as LGBTQIA+<sup>140</sup>

**sex:** A medical term designating a certain combination of primary and secondary sex characteristics, hormones, and chromosomes. The categories include intersex, female, and male; these are considered to be socially constructed categories<sup>141</sup>.

**sex averse:** Someone who is not inclined to engage in sexual activities.<sup>142</sup>

**sex enthusiastic:** Someone who is willing to engage in sexual activities. Typically associated with someone asexual willing to engage in sexual activities for the pleasure for their partner.

**sex positivity:** A social movement which embraces sex with few limits beyond safe sex, and consent. Sex positivity regards sex as healthy, and pleasurable, and discourages any shaming associated with sexual activity.<sup>143</sup>

**sex repulsed:** Someone who has an adverse reaction to engaging in sexual activities.<sup>144</sup>

**sexuality:** A person's exploration of sexual acts, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, and desire.<sup>145</sup>

**sexual orientation:** The desire or lack of desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes<sup>146</sup>

**skoliosexual:** Someone who is sexually attracted to non-binary identifying individuals.<sup>147</sup>

**stem:** A person whose gender expression falls somewhere between a stud and a femme.<sup>148</sup>

**stereotype:** A preconceived or oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for their individual differences. Though often negative, can also be complimentary. Even positive stereotypes can have a negative impact, however, simply because they involve broad generalizations that ignore individual realities.<sup>149</sup>

**stone butch/femme:** A person who is unlikely to desire sexual penetration and or contact with the genitals or breasts.<sup>150</sup>

**Stonewall riots:** A series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the LGBTQIA+ community against a police raid on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. Many trans and gender non-conforming individuals were essential to these riots. The riots are widely considered the most important event leading into the LGBTQIA+ liberation movement.<sup>151</sup>

**straight:** See *heterosexual*.

**straight acting:** A term usually applied to gay men who readily pass as a heterosexual. The term implies that there is a certain way that gay men should act that is significantly different from heterosexual men and can therefore be considered offensive.<sup>152</sup>

**stud:** An African-American and/or Latina masculine lesbian. See also, *butch*.<sup>153</sup>

**sub:** A person who takes a submissive role in a sexual encounter<sup>154</sup>.

**switch:** A person who is both a *top* and a *bottom*; there may or may not be a preference for one or the other.<sup>155</sup>

## T

**third-gender:** The concept that individuals are categorized (by their will or by social consensus) as neither man nor woman, as well as the social category present in those societies who recognize three or more genders. The term *third* is usually understood to mean "other".<sup>156</sup>

**tolerance:** A permissive attitude toward those whose race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender etc., differ from one's own.<sup>157</sup>

**top:** A person who is said to take a more dominant role during sexual interactions.<sup>158</sup>

**top surgery:** This term usually refers to the surgery for the construction of a flatter chest, but may also refer to breast augmentation.<sup>159</sup>

**trans:** An abbreviation for *transgender*.<sup>160</sup>

**trans\*:** Trans with the asterisk makes an intentional effort to refer to all identities within the gender identity spectrum. (At this time the asterisk is considered outdated by many in the community.)<sup>161</sup>

**transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including transgender. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.<sup>162</sup>

**transition:** Primarily used to refer to the process a gender variant person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their gender expression.

**trans-man:** An identity label sometimes adopted by transgender men.

**transphobia:** This word refers to an irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity. This fear is indicative of discriminatory thoughts, so *cissexism* might be a better word to use.

**trans-woman:** An identity label sometimes adopted by transgender women.

**two-spirit:** Native persons who have attributes of both genders, have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes, and are often involved with mystical rituals. Their dress is usually mixture of male and female articles and they are seen as a separate or third gender. The term is usually considered to be specific to the Zuni tribe. Similar identity labels vary by tribe and include 'one spirit' and 'wintke'.

## V

**versatile:** Someone who may like either a dominant, submissive or balanced role in a sexual encounter.<sup>163</sup>

# Terms to Avoid:

Please refrain from using these words. Although some people may choose to reclaim some of these terms, they are widely considered offensive to the LGBTQIA+ community.

**beard:** a slang term, sometimes seen as problematic, to refer to a person who poses as a false date or partner to mislead others about a person's sexual orientation<sup>164</sup>

**berdache:** A generic term used to refer to a third gender person. The term is generally rejected as inappropriate and offensive by Native Peoples because it is a term that was assigned by European settlers to differently gendered Native Peoples. Appropriate terms vary by tribe and include: 'one-spirit', 'two-spirit', 'wintke'<sup>165</sup>.

**dyke:** derogatory term for a lesbian<sup>166</sup>

**fag(got):** Derogatory term referring to someone perceived as non-heteronormative.<sup>167</sup>

**fag hag:** A term primarily used to describe women who prefer the social company of gay men. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some, it is largely regarded as derogatory.<sup>168</sup>

**hermaphrodite:** 1) An out-of-date and offensive term for an intersex person. 2) A scientific term for an animal with both sets of functioning sex organs.

**lesbian baiting:** The heterosexist notion that any woman who prefers the company of woman, or who does not have a male partner, is a lesbian.<sup>169</sup>

**lezbo:** slang and sometimes derogatory for lesbian.

**lezzie:** another derogatory term for lesbian.

**metrosexual:** First used in 1994 by British journalist Mark Simpson, who coined the term to refer to an urban, heterosexual male with a strong aesthetic sense who spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle. This term can be perceived as derogatory because it reinforces stereotypes that all gay men are fashion conscious and materialistic.<sup>170</sup>

**preferred:** The concept of components of identity being “preferred” insinuates that identity as an optional thing for others to affirm, which can lead to discriminatory practices. Therefore, avoid phrases like: preferred pronouns, preferred gender, preferred name, etc. These can be referred to as “chosen,” if the clarification is necessary, pronouns, gender, and name.

**sexual preference:** term utilized prior to sexual orientation<sup>171</sup>

**she-male:** Derogatory term referring to a transgender or gender variant person, typically male to female.<sup>172</sup>

**SRS (sexual reassignment surgery):** A term used by some medical professionals to refer to a group of surgical options that alter a person’s “sex”. In most states, one or multiple surgeries are required to achieve legal recognition of gender variance. The better term is *gender affirmation surgery*.<sup>173</sup>

**stealth:** This term refers to when a person chooses to be secretive in the public sphere about their gender history, either after transitioning or while successfully passing.<sup>174</sup>

**tranny:** Highly offensive slur for a transgender or transsexual individual.<sup>175</sup>

**tranny chaser:** A term primarily used to describe people who prefer or actively seek trans people for sexual or romantic relations. While this term is claimed in an affirmative manner by some, it is largely regarded as derogatory.<sup>176</sup>

**transsexual:** A person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth. Transsexuals often wish to transform their bodies hormonally and surgically to match their inner sense of gender/sex. This term is outdated in most communities, although some people may still choose to use it.

**transvestite:** Someone who dresses in clothing generally identified with the opposite gender/sex. The majority of transvestities are heterosexual males who derive pleasure from dressing in “women’s clothing”. The preferred term is ‘cross-dresser’ but ‘transvestite’ is still used positively in England.

**turkey baster baby:** child conceived by a female couple through at – home artificial insemination. Sometimes using an actual turkey baster, but usually not.

**twink:** A typically younger, thinner gay man with little or no body hair.

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