

Definitions

This glossary varies from existing LGBT+ glossaries as it presents definitions within three categories: sexualities, romantic orientations, and gender identity and expression. This approach aims to explicitly show how sexualities, romantic attraction and gender can exist as separate elements of an individual's identity. This list is not exhaustive. There will be overlap between the three areas.



Sexualities

Sexual attraction

“a capacity that evokes the want to engage in physical intimate behavior (e.g., kissing, touching, intercourse), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with romantic attraction, emotional attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.”

Sexual orientation

“the type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for some others, generally labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to. Often confused with sexual preference.”

Sexual preference

“the types of sexual intercourse, stimulation, and gratification one likes to receive and participate in. 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.”

Lesbian

“Term used to describe female-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female-identified people. The term lesbian is derived from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos and as such is sometimes considered a Eurocentric category that does not necessarily represent the identities of African-Americans and other non-European ethnic groups....While many women use the term lesbian, many women also will describe themselves as gay, this is a personal choice. Many prefer the term gay because of its use in adjective form.”

Gay

“A term used to describe individuals who are primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. More commonly used when referring to males/men – identified people who are attracted to males/men – identified people, but can be applied to females/women – identified people as well. ‘Gay’ can also be used as an umbrella term for the queer community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does

not identify as heterosexual.”

Bisexual

“A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to males/men-identifying people and females/ women-identifying people. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders and there may be a preference for one gender over others.” It can be often used synonymously with pansexual, though bisexual is the older/traditional term.

Asexual

“having a lack of (or low level of) sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest or desire for sex or sexual partners. Asexuality exists on a spectrum from people who experience no sexual attraction or have any desire for sex to those who experience low levels and only after significant amounts of time, many of these different places on the spectrum have their own identity labels. Another term used within the asexual community is “ace,” meaning someone who is asexual. Asexuality is different than celibacy in that it is a sexual orientation whereas celibacy is an abstaining from a certain action. Asexuals may still experience romantic/spiritual attraction.”

Gray-A, Gray- asexual, Gray- sexual

“ are terms used to describe individuals who feel as though their sexuality falls somewhere on the spectrum of sexuality between asexuality and sexuality.”

Demisexual

“ little or no capacity to experience sexual attraction until a strong romantic or emotional connection is formed with another individual, often within a romantic relationship.”

Pansexual

“ a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions. Often shortened to “pan.”” This term can be used synonymously with bisexual, though some people prefer it as it does not imply a gender binary.

Heterosexual

“ a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the opposite gender. Also known as straight.”

Questioning

“(verb) When a person is curious about being attracted to the same and opposite sexes they may refer to themselves as Bi curious .

Queer

“An umbrella term that includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons, and radical sex communities. This term is sometimes used instead of ‘bisexual’ as a way of acknowledging that there are more than two genders to be attracted to. For decades ‘queer’ was used solely as a slur for gays and lesbians, but was reclaimed by activists as a term of self-identification. However, some still hold ‘queer’ to have a negative connotation, and its use by heterosexuals is often considered offensive”

Romantic Orientations

Romantic attraction

“attraction that makes people desire romantic contact or interaction with another person or persons.”

Romantic orientation

“ Describes an individual’s pattern of romantic attraction based on a person’s gender(s) regardless of one’s sexual orientation.”

Aromantic

“experiencing little or no romantic attraction to others and/or has a lack of interest in romantic relationships/behavior. Aromanticism exists on a continuum from people who experience no romantic attraction or have any desire for romantic activities, to those who experience low levels, or romantic attraction only under specific conditions, and many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (see demiromantic). Sometimes abbreviated to “aro” (pronounced like “arrow”).”

Heteroromantic

“Romantic attraction towards person(s) of the opposite gender.”

Homoromantic

“Romantic attraction towards person(s) of the same gender (homoromanticism).”

Biromantic

“Romantic attraction towards person(s) of either or any gender (biromanticism).”

Panromantic

“Panromantic: Romantic attraction towards person(s) of any and all genders (panromanticism).”

Demiromantic

“Romantic attraction towards any of the above but only after forming a deep emotional bond with the person(s) (demiromanticism).”

Gender identity and expression

Gender expression

“the external display of one’s gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally made sense of on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as “gender presentation.””

Androgynous

“ gender expression that has elements of both masculinity, femininity or neither”

Gender identity

“ A person’s internal sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gendered, which may or may

not be visible to others....Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans, and more. Often confused with biological sex, or sex assigned at birth."

Cisgender

" a person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (e.g., man and assigned male at birth). Cisgender can be shorted to "cis""

Intersex

"someone whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals differs from the binary patterns of male or female. Formerly known as hermaphrodite (or hermaphroditic), but these terms are now considered outdated and derogatory."

Bigender

" a person who fluctuates between traditionally "woman" and "man" gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (and sometimes a third gender)."

Transgender

" A person whose gender is other than that assigned at birth based on anatomical sex."

Agender

"a person with no (or very little) connection to any gender, someone who sees themselves as existing without gender. Sometimes called gender neutrois, gender neutral, or genderless."

Non binary/Gender non conforming

" 1 a gender expression descriptor that indicates a non-traditional gender presentation (masculine woman or feminine man) 2 a gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary. Often abbreviated as "GNC." 3 an umbrella term for any and all genders that do not fit within the gender binary of man/woman

Gender Fluid

" gender fluid is a gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of genders. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days and agender on yet others."

Gender Queer

"a gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the binary of man/woman ; or as an umbrella term for many gender non conforming or non binary identities (e.g., agender, bigender, genderfluid). Genderqueer people may think of themselves as one or more of the following, and they may define these terms differently:

- *may combine aspects man and woman and other identities (bigender, pangender);*
- *not having a gender or identifying with a gender (genderless, agender);*
- *moving between genders (genderfluid);*
- *third gender or other – gendered; includes those who do not place a name to their gender having an overlap of, or blurred lines between, gender identity and sexual and romantic orientation."*

Third gender

“ noun : for a person who does not identify with either man or woman, but identifies with another gender. This gender category is used by societies that recognise three or more genders, both contemporary and historic, and is also a conceptual term meaning different things to different people who use it, as a way to move beyond the gender binary.”

Miscellaneous

Ally

“ Typically any non-LGBT person who supports and stands up for the rights of LGBT people, though LGBT people can be allies, such as a lesbian who is an ally to a transgender person....Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual and genderstraight privilege in themselves and others; a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people; and a belief that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are social justice issues.”

Biphobia

“range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, invisibility, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have or express towards bisexual individuals. Biphobia can come from and be seen within the LGBTQ community as well as straight society. Biphobic – adj. : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes towards bisexual people.”

Constellations

“a way to describe the arrangement or structure of a polyamorous relationship.”

FMT/MTF

“female-to-male transgender or transsexual person; male-to-female transgender or transsexual person.” As these terms are rooted in a binary view of gender they are falling out of use.

Heteronormativity

“Heteronormativity – (noun) the assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. Leads to invisibility and stigmatizing of other sexualities. Often included in this concept is a level of gender normativity and gender roles, the assumption that individuals should identify as men and women, and be masculine men and feminine women, and finally that men and women are a complimentary pair.”

Homophobia

“Homophobia – (noun) a term describing a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have towards homosexual people. It is sometimes extended to be an umbrella term for this range of attitudes towards all members of LGBTQ community. The term can also connote a fear, disgust, or dislike of being perceived as LGBTQ. The term is extended to bisexual and transgender people as well; however, the terms biphobia and transphobia are used to emphasize the specific biases against individuals of bisexual and transgender communities. May be experienced inwardly as an individual begins to question their own sexuality”

Monogamy