

LEARNING QUEER LANGUAGE QUEER 101

Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center

By Ebo Barton

Pronouns

What's a Pronoun?

A pronoun is a word that refers to either the people talking (like I or you) or someone or something that is being talked about (like she, it, them, and this). Gender pronouns (like he, hers, they, ze) specifically refer to people that you are talking about.

Introduce yourself to the people on both sides of you and give them your name and gender pronoun. Ask them what pronouns they use.

Why does it matter?

A simple and basic way of showing respect for someone's gender identity is by asking what pronouns they may use. When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, alienated, or dysphoric (or, often, all of the above.) It is a privilege to not have to worry about which pronoun someone is going to use for you based on how they perceive your gender. If you have this privilege, yet fail to respect someone else's gender identity, it is not only disrespectful and hurtful, but also oppressive.

“The Alphabet Community”

Basic LGBT

L- Lesbian G-Gay B-Bisexual T-Transgender

The (Mostly) Complete Alphabet - LGBTIQQAAP

L-Lesbian G-Gay B-Bisexual T-Transgender I-Intersex

Q-Queer Q-Questioning A-Asexual A-Ally* P-Pansexual

Queer: 1) An umbrella term sometimes used by LGBTQ people to refer to the entire LGBTQ community. It is important to note that the word queer is an in-group term, and a word that can be considered offensive to some people, depending on their generation, geographic location, and relationship with the word.

Questioning (verb or adj) For some, the process of exploring and discovering one's own sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Intersex (noun or adj) -A person whose sexual anatomy or chromosomes do not fit with the traditional markers of "female" and "male." For example: people born with both "female" and "male" anatomy (penis, testicles, vagina, uterus); people born with XXY.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation – (noun) the type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to

Lesbian – (noun) a term used to describe women attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other women.

Gay – (adj) 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 ppl who are attracted to males/men-identified people, but can be applied to females/women-identified people as well.

Bisexual – (adj) a person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to male/men and females/women. Other individuals may use this to indicate an attraction to individuals who identify outside of the gender binary as well and may use bisexual as a way to indicate an interest in more than one gender or sex (i.e. men and genderqueer people). This attraction does not have to be equally split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders or sexes an individual may be attracted to. Many bisexual identified folks have updated to “Queer” in identity in solidarity with smashing the gender binary.

Pansexual – (adj) a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions

MSM / WSW – (noun) initialisms for “men who have sex with men” and “women who have sex with women,” to distinguish sexual behaviors from sexual identities (e.g., because a man is straight, it doesn’t mean he’s not having sex with men). Often used in the field of HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and treatment.

Gender Identity

Gender Identity – (noun) the internal perception of an one’s gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don’t align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans, and more.

Cisgender – (adj; pronounced “siss-jendur”) a person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (e.g., man and male-assigned). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not trans*, they are cisgender. Often shortened to “Cis”

Transgender – (adj; also known as Trans) (1) An umbrella term covering a range of identities that transgress socially defined gender norms. (2) A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on sex assigned at birth.

FtM / F2M; MtF / M2F – (adj) abbreviation for female-to-male transgender or transsexual person; abbreviation for male-to-female transgender or transsexual person. This can be considered offensive to some people due to the emphasis on birth assigned sex and the history of degendering use in medical literature.

Transsexual –(adj) A person whose gender identity is different from their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may live their lives as another sex.

Non-Binary Gender Terms

The **gender binary** refers to the societal concept that all gender can be expressed in one of two forms. It's important to recognize that this is not everyone's experience. For those who feel their experience of gender cannot be wholly comprised of "man" or "woman" they may use terms like genderqueer, agender, gender fluid, and more. The specific distinctions of these terms may vary from person to person. It's important to remember that some trans people may see their gender as non-binary, and others will see gender as binary.

Gender Variant– (adj) someone who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society

Genderqueer – (adj) 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

Third Gender – (noun) a term 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 recognize 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.

*Note- this is a more Western Anthropological term.

Gender Fluid – (adj) gender fluid is a gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of male and female. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days.

Agender- (adj) a term which can be literally translated as 'without gender'

Two Spirit (adj) culturally distinct gender that describes Indigenous North Americans who fulfill one of many mixed gender roles found traditionally among many Native Americans and Canadian First Nations indigenous groups. The mixed gender roles encompassed by the term historically included wearing the clothing and performing the work associated with both men and women.

Expression

Gender Expression – (noun) the external display of one’s gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as “gender presentation.”

Masculine of Center-the breadth and depth of identity for people who tilt toward the masculine side of the gender scale and includes a wide range of identities such as butch, stud, aggressive/AG, dom, macha, tomboi, trans-masculine etc.

Feminine of Center-the breadth and depth of identity for people who tilt toward the feminine side of the gender scale and includes a wide range of identities such as trans-feminine, Femme, hard-femme, lipstick lesbian etc.

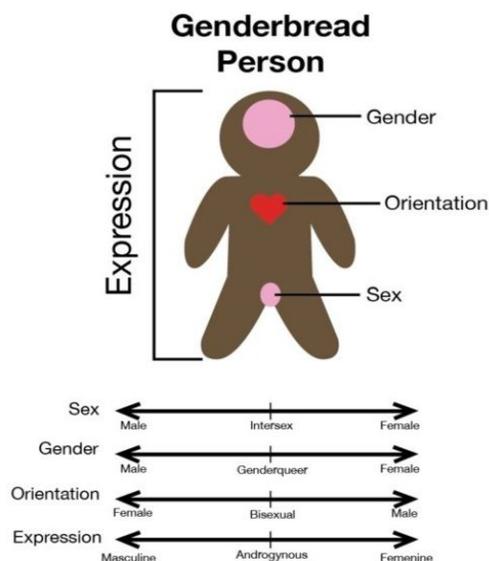
Drag King – (noun) someone who performs masculinity theatrically.

Drag Queen – (noun) someone who performs femininity theatrically.

Cross-dresser – (noun) someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex.

Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) – (adj) someone whose gender presentation, whether by nature or by choice, does not align in a predicted fashion with gender-based expectations.

Androgyny/ous – (adj) (1) a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity



The **genderbread** person is a type of infographic about gender, using it as an umbrella term to encompass gender expression, orientation, sexuality, genitals, and other identities.

The **genderbread** person is a way of conceptualizing, and a learning tool for, gender and orientation. This image is an over simplification and meant to be used for primarily a cisgendered, straight audience. Many of these concepts are written about at length and the field is constantly expanding.