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Identities & Terms

An OUTSaskatoon Resource

About OUTSaskatoon

OUTSaskatoon builds community for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two spirit, intersex, and queer people. We provide peer support and counselling, queer-specific education and resources, outreach, social gatherings and events, community referrals, and sexual health services. We support body, mind and spirit within a growing and changing community.

A Note on language

People use many different words to self-identify. Some are more familiar such as lesbian or gay, while others are newer such as two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, or pansexual. The list also grows and changes every day, so in this pamphlet we use LGBTQ2S to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, asexual, genderqueer, transgender, intersex, two-spirit, queer, and questioning individuals.

Check out these great LGBTQ2S Organizations in Saskatchewan



USSU Pride Centre
306.966.6615
pridecentre@ussu.ca



Moose Jaw Pride
306.692.3388
info@moosejawpride.ca



TransSask
info@TransSask.org
www.transsask.org



Camp fyrefly and fyrefly in Schools
306-585-4816
fyrefly@outsaskatoon.ca

Biphobia/Panphobia/Polyphobia: refers to any aversion felt towards bisexuality and towards bisexuals individually and collectively. Based on beliefs and hatred that is directed towards those in the bi/poly/pan community. Biphobia is not limited to the heterosexual community; gays and lesbians have also been known to persecute people in the bi/pan/poly community.

Internalized Homo/Trans/Biphobia: When an individual in the LGBTQ2S community faces internal feelings of self-hate regarding their identity. This occurs for many individuals who have been taught and conditioned throughout childhood that being LGBTQ2S is a negative thing.

Homonegativity: negative behaviours and/or attitudes towards gender and sexually diverse people. Also includes biphobia and transphobia. The term homonegativity is increasingly being used in place of homophobia because negative behaviours and/or attitudes towards gender and sexually diverse people are understood as the result of ignorance rather than the result of fear (as the term "phobia" implies).

Gay-bashing: when a gay man, lesbian, or anyone who is perceived as gay or lesbian is assaulted by one or more people. The assault does not have to be physical; making someone fear for their well-being by making threats or chasing them is also considered gay bashing. (see *Queer Bashing* pamphlet for more)

Trans-bashing: the practice of victimizing a person because they are transsexual and/or transgender. Often includes physical violence, though making someone fear for their safety by vocalizing threats is also considered trans-bashing. Unlike gay-bashing, this type of violence is associated with the individual's gender expression and/or gender identity.

Transvestite: sometimes known as an individual who cross-dresses or is gender diverse, but more commonly used as a slur and is fairly offensive. There are some people in the trans community have reclaimed this word.

If you have any further questions, be sure to get in touch with us at OUTSaskatoon!

About Queer Terminology

We know that it can be hard to learn the many terms and identities that make up the terrain of gender and sexual diversity so we made a super handy guide so you can study up!

The greatest thing about the world of gender and sexuality it grows and changes as society grows and changes. Sometimes this means that words are abandoned because of the stigma attached to them, and other times it means that new words are created that better shed light on different facets people and their experiences.

Ally/Advocate: a person who actively and publicly works to support a cause and educate others in order to promote tolerance, understanding, and change. Allies believe that queer people should have the same rights as heterosexual and cisgender individuals. They are active in confronting and counteracting homo/bi/transphobic and heterosexist behaviours.

Queer: A term that is often used as an umbrella term to encompass the gender and sexually diverse community.

*Note: historically, the word queer was used as a slur and as a result, some people are not comfortable using it. Still others have reclaimed the term as a positive affirmation of their identity. If you are not sure which term to use, just ask!

Attraction

Sexual Orientation Spectrum: sexual orientation is fluid and exists on a spectrum. It can include exclusive attraction to the opposite gender and exclusive attraction to the same gender. Since sexual orientation is a spectrum it also includes identities between or outside of same and opposite gender attraction, such as pansexuality, bisexuality, and asexuality.

Sexual Attraction: attraction that evokes the want and desire (or lack of desire) to engage in sexual behavior with specific people. Who a person is sexually attracted to may vary. Some sexual orientations include heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, or asexual.

Romantic Attraction: attraction that evokes a want and desire (or lack of desire) to engage in intimate romantic behavior (e.g., flirting, dating, marriage) with specific people. Who a person is romantically attracted to may vary. Any sexual orientation can also be a romantic orientation. Some romantic orientations include heteroromantic, homoromantic, biromantic, panromantic, or aromantic. (See *Types of Relationships* pamphlet for more)

Heterosexual/Heteroromantic: refers to individuals whose intimate relationships (sexual and/or romantic) are with members of the opposite gender.

Homosexual/Homoromantic: refers to individuals whose intimate relationships (sexual and/or romantic) are with members of the same gender.

Gay: gay is typically defined as men who have relationships (mental, emotional, physical & spiritual) with other men. Can also be used as a non-gender specific term or umbrella term.

Lesbian: a gender specific term that refers to women who have relationships (mental, emotional, physical & spiritual) with other women.

Bisexual/Biromantic: refers to individuals whose intimate relationships (mental, emotional, physical & spiritual) with individuals from two genders or with individuals of the same and opposite gender.

Pansexual/Panromantic: from the root word meaning "all." Pansexuality is similar to bisexuality except that bisexuals are attracted to individuals of two genders, whereas pansexuals are attracted to individuals regardless of gender and open to having relationships with people who do not identify within the gender binary. Pansexuality can also mean an attraction to a person's personality rather than their gender.

positive environments for transgender people. Cisnormativity also refers to discrimination or prejudice against transgender people on the assumption that cisgender is the norm. An example of cisnormativity is assuming someone's pronouns, or that someone you presume as a woman has a vagina.

Cissexism: the belief that transgender people are inherently inferior to cisgender people. Examples of cissexist behaviors include viewing being transgender as a phase, or excluding transwomen/men from spaces because they are "not real men/women."

Heterosexism: the belief that all people should fall into two genders: male and female. It also includes discrimination or prejudice against queers on the assumption that heterosexuality is the norm. An example of heterosexism is when you ask a man if he has a girlfriend, rather than a partner and therefore make an assumption about their sexual orientation.

Heteronormativity: the assumption that everyone you come into contact with is heterosexual. Heteronormativity includes a set of lifestyle norms, practices, and institutions that promote heterosexual relationships, binary gender roles, and promote reproductive sex above all other sexual practices.

Closeted: someone who has not publicly or privately disclosed their true sexual, romantic, or gender identity.

Outing: revealing someone's gender or sexual identity or desire, often against their knowledge or consent.

Homophobia: hatred that is directed towards gays, lesbians, and anyone perceived as being gay or lesbian. Homophobia has also come to include a collection of beliefs that being gay or lesbian is unnatural and abnormal and that this justifies discrimination and/or acts of hate and violence.

Transphobia: hatred that is directed towards transgender people based on the expression of their internal gender identity. Transphobia relies on beliefs that being transgender is unnatural and abnormal and that this justifies discrimination and/or acts of hate and violence towards trans people.

statement, as a way to play with gender norms, as an art form (an important part of queer culture), as a means of self-expression, or as a way to have fun.

Drag King: predominantly (but not limited to) women who dress in "masculine attire" for a variety of reasons including but not limited to: as a socio-political statement, as a way to play with gender norms, as an art form (an important part of queer culture), as a means of self-expression, or as a way to have fun.

Butch: an individual who presents more typically masculine characteristics, mannerisms, expressions, behaviours or appearance.

Femme: an individual whose gender expression is typically more feminine.

Metrosexual: a heterosexual male who is very conscientious of his appearance and enjoys putting effort into his aesthetic presentation.

Intersectional Identities

Two Spirit: used by Indigenous People who assume cross or multiple gender roles, attributes, dress and attitudes for personal, spiritual, cultural, ceremonial or social reasons. These roles are defined by each cultural group and can be fluid over a person's lifetime. Being Two Spirit is a gift from Creator. (See *Two Spirit* pamphlet for more info)

Intersex: a person whose sex characteristics are ambiguous. There are many genetic, hormonal, or biological factors that can make a person's sex characteristics ambiguous. The term intersex is different than the term transgender, and the two terms are not interchangeable. Intersex has replaced the historically loaded slur hermaphrodite. (See *Intersex* pamphlet for more info)

Discrimination

Cisnormativity: the assumption that everyone you come into contact with is cisgender. Cisnormative assumptions prevent the creation of respectful and

Polysexual/Polyromantic: derived from the root that means "many but not all." Polysexuality is an orientation that depends on the person—they are attracted to different characteristics of different genders. A polysexual person may be attracted to some genders but not all; for instance, they could be attracted to men, agender and masculine presenting people, but not very feminine presenting people. Polysexuality can also include non-monogamous relationships or polyamory, though not all polysexual individuals are polyamorous.

Demisexual/Demiromantic: an orientation where someone's sexual or romantic attraction is dependent on creating a strong emotional bond. Most demi individuals feel rare instances of sexual/romantic attraction compared to the general population. This means that they often need to have a strong friendship or emotional connection before wanting to engage in sexual/romantic behaviors.

Asexual: when someone does not experience sexual attraction towards people. An asexual individual can physically have sex and even enjoy it, but they do not experience being attracted to any one individual sexually. (see *Asexual* pamphlet for more)

Aromantic: someone who feels little or no romantic attraction to others, instead they feel satisfied in platonic, familial friendly relationships. Can also have strong platonic bonds with a specific person/people (queer-platonic/quasi-platonic).

Gray-Asexual/Aromantic: someone who experiences some sexual/romantic attraction from time to time. How frequently and how intensely varies from person to person.

Questioning: refers to individuals who are in the process of figuring out where they might fit along the sexual orientation and/or gender spectrums.

Dyke: historically a derogatory term used in reference to a lesbian that has been reclaimed by some.

Fag: historically a derogatory term used in reference to a gay man that has been reclaimed by some.

Bottom: someone who typically plays a submissive role in sexual interactions.

Top: someone who is typically the more dominant partner in a sexual interaction.

Gender Identity and Expression

Gender Identity: the way a person identifies themselves and experiences gender internally. It is the sense of being a man, woman, or anywhere in between on the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity impacts their interaction with the social world.

Gender Expression: the way a person outwardly expresses their gender (whether it be feminine, masculine, both or neither) through clothing, makeup, hair, and body language.

Gender Binary: the concept that only there are two genders (male and female). Identities that are not strictly male and female exist outside of this gender binary. This concept can sometimes exclude people who are gender non-conforming and/or intersex.

Assigned Birth Gender: the gender you are assigned at birth which is based off of sex characteristics such as physical, reproductive characteristics of an individual including chromosomes, hormones and genitalia.

Cisgender: when someone identifies with and expresses themselves as the gender identity they were assigned at birth. For example, a woman who was born and assigned the gender "female" by a doctor and grew up always identifying as female is a cisgender woman.

Transgender: often used as an umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity and gender expression/behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the gender they were assigned at birth. For example, a woman who was born and assigned the gender "male" at birth, but grew up

identifying as a woman, might identify as a transgender woman.

Transsexual: sometimes known as an individual who has undergone surgeries in order to transition, but more commonly used as a slur and is fairly offensive. Some trans people have reclaimed the term and others are not comfortable using it.

Gender Fluid: a gender identity that changes with time, circumstances and/or situations. Gender fluid is different from Genderqueer expression, or fixed gender, in that genderfluid expressions can change both gradually or quickly.

Non-Binary: an umbrella term for all genders completely outside of the roles of man or woman, or someone who simply identifies as outside of the gender binary.

Genderqueer: an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities often used by people who do not identify within the gender binary.

Androgynous: an individual who expresses their gender as a mix of masculine and feminine characteristics; someone who does not fit neatly into the typical binary gender roles.

Agender: "without gender"; someone who does not identify with any gender on the gender spectrum.

Neutrois: used by individuals who feel they fall outside the gender binary. Someone who identifies as neutrois may have a desire to eliminate all physical traits of their assigned gender.

Bigender: an individual who identifies with two gender identities. Any combination of genders is possible. These genders may be present simultaneously, they may fluctuate, or both.

Pronouns: The words that are used to refer to a person or persons (such as "I," "you," "we," and so on). Familiar pronouns include he/him, she/her, and they/them. There are many more pronouns that people use outside of these three. Anyone, regardless of their gender identity can use whichever pronouns they feel most comfortable using.

Drag Queen: predominantly (but not limited to) men who dress in "feminine attire" for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, as a socio-political