

Glossary

AFAB (Assigned Female at Birth): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Agender: 1) Not identifying with any gender; 2) The feeling of having no gender. Also known as Non-Gender(ed).

All-Gender: Descriptive phrase denoting inclusiveness of all gender expressions and identities.

All-Gender Pronouns: See Gender Neutral Pronouns

Ally: 1) Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual, and cisgender privilege in themselves and others; 2) Someone with a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people.

AMAB (Assigned Male at Birth): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Androgynous: A person who may appear as and exhibit traits traditionally associated with both male and female, or as neither male nor female, or as in between male and female. See also: Gender Non-Conforming

Antiandrogens: A class of drugs which prevent androgens like testosterone from mediating their biological effects in the body. Also known as testosterone blockers. See also: Blockers

Antiestrogen: A substance that can prevent the full expression of estrogen. Also known as estrogen blockers. See also: Blockers

Asexual: 1) A sexual orientation where a person does not experience sexual attraction or desire to a partner for the purposes of sexual stimulation; 2) A spectrum of sexual orientations where a person may be disinclined towards sexual behavior or sexual partnering. Sometimes shortened to “ace.”

Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth): The sex one is labeled at birth, generally by a medical or birthing professional, based on a cursory examination of external and/or physical sex characteristics such as genitalia and cultural concepts of male and female sexed bodies. Sometimes known as Designated Sex at Birth, or more specifically, AFAB (Assigned Female at Birth), AMAB (Assigned Male at Birth), DFAB (Designated Female at Birth), DMAB (Designated Female at Birth), FAAB (Female Assigned at Birth), or MAAB (Male Assigned at Birth.)

Atypical Gender Role: A role exhibited by a person which is at odds with the norm for their assigned gender and social position.

Bigender: 1) To identify as both genders and/or to have a tendency to move between masculine and feminine gender-typed behavior depending on context; 2) Expressing a distinctly male persona and a distinctly female persona; 3) Two separate genders in one body. See also: Gender Non-Conforming

Binder: The name of the garment worn to help achieve binding.

Binding: The act of flattening breasts by the use of constricting materials.

Bisexual: A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to men and women. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders, and there may be a preference for one gender over others. Sometimes shortened to “bi.”

Bi-phobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as bisexual.

Blockers: Drugs used to suppress the release of hormones in the body. Blockers are sometimes used with prepubescent children to suppress or delay the onset of puberty until consent can be given for cross gender hormones. Also known as hormone blockers. See also: Antiandrogens, Antiestrogen

Body Contouring: Surgical procedures to alter the body to appear more masculine or feminine.

Bottom Surgery: Term used to describe medical genital surgery for the purpose of better aligning a person's physical body to their gender identity and expression. Types include hysterectomy, labiaplasty, metoidioplasty, oophorectomy, penectomy, phalloplasty, scrotoplasty and vaginectomy. See also: Sex Reassignment Surgery

Breast Augmentation: Surgical construction or reconstruction of the breast.

Chest Surgery / Chest Contouring: Surgical procedures including bilateral mastectomy (removal of breasts) or breast augmentation.

Cisgender: 1) A person whose gender identity is aligned to what they were designated at birth, based on their physical sex; 2) A non-trans person. Sometimes shortened to "cis."

Closeted (In the Closet): Refers to a homosexual, bisexual, queer, transgender, or intersex person who does not or can not disclose their identity or identities to others.

Coming Out: 1) The process by which one accepts one's own sexuality, gender identity, or intersex status (to come out to oneself); 2) The process by which one shares one's sexuality, gender identity, or intersex status with others (to come out to friends, etc.) This can be a continual, life-long process for homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people.

Crossdresser (CD): A person who wears clothes, makeup, etc. that is considered to be appropriate for another gender but not one's own. Some, but not all, people consider it a part of the greater transgender umbrella community. Cross-dressing may be considered "full time" or "part time."

Dead Name: The name a trans person was known by before changing their name during transition. Sometimes called birth name.

Designated Female at Birth (DFAB): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Designated Male at Birth (DMAB): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Designated Sex (Designated Sex at Birth): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Dilator: A device used to maintain depth and width of the vagina after vaginoplasty. Also known as vaginal stent.

Disorders of Sex Development (DSDs): A medical classification for intersex people within both the medical community and some intersex communities. See also: Intersex

Drag or In Drag: Wearing clothes considered symbolic for someone of a different gender. Most often used in performance contexts.

Drag King: 1) A person who identifies as a woman or female who dresses in masculine or gender-marked clothing and makeup, and uses masculine mannerisms for the purpose of performance. Many drag kings perform by singing, dancing or lip-synching.

Drag Queen: 1) A person who identifies as a man or male who dresses in feminine or gender-marked clothing and makeup, and uses feminine mannerisms for the purpose of performance. Many drag queens perform by singing, dancing or lip-synching.

Endocrinologist: A doctor who specializes in the endocrine system, which controls hormones.

Estrogen: Any of a group of steroid hormones that promote the development and maintenance of female characteristics of the body.

Facial Feminization Surgery: Reconstructive surgical procedures that alter typically male facial features to bring them closer in shape and size to typical female facial features.

Female Assigned at Birth (FAAB): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Female-Bodied: 1) A term used to recognize a person who was designated female sex at birth; 2) A person who identifies themselves as having had or currently having a female body.

Femme: 1) A person who expresses and/or identifies with femininity; 2) A community label for people who identify with femininity specifically through a queer and/or politically radical and/or subversive context; 3) A feminine-identified person of any gender/sex.

FTM or F2M (Female-to-Male): Term used to identify a person who was designated a female sex at birth and currently identifies as male, lives as a man, or identifies predominantly as masculine. This includes a broad range of experiences, from those who identify as men or male to those who identify as transsexual, transgender men, transmen, or FTM. Some reject this terminology, arguing that they have always been male internally and are now making that identity visible, where others feel that such language reinforces an either/or gender system. Some individuals prefer the term MTM (male-to-male) to underscore the fact that although they were assigned female at birth, they never had a female gender identity.

Gaff: A garment used to conceal a penis so that no “bulge” is visible.

Gatekeepers (Gatekeeper System): 1) Term used by gender communities to refer to the medical and psychiatric system that controls trans people’s access to transition-related resources and health care; 2) Refers to health providers (doctors, counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and related providers) who can effectively block or limit trans people’s ability to obtain transition resources such as hormones, surgery, or related services needed for physical gender affirming transition; 3) Process in which individuals or subcommunities are excluded from or policed by the broader community in which they belong.

Gay: 1) Term used to refer to homosexual / same gender loving communities as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual; 2) Term used in some cultural settings to specifically represent male identified people who are attracted to other male identified people in a romantic, erotic, and/or emotional sense.

Gender: A social combination of identity, expression, and social elements related to masculinity and femininity. Includes gender identity (self-identification), gender expression (self-expression), social gender (social expectations), gender roles (socialized actions), and gender attribution (social perception.)

Gender Affirming Surgery: See Sex Reassignment Surgery

Gender Bender: An individual who bends, changes, mixes, or combines society’s gender conventions by expressing elements of masculinity and femininity together. See also: GenderFuck

Gender Binary: 1) The cultural insistence of two diametrically opposed, traditionally recognized genders - male and female; 2) The idea that there are only two genders: male and female. May include a sensed requirement that a person must be strictly gendered as either/or.

Gender Confirming Surgery: See Sex Reassignment Surgery

Gender Creative: See Gender Non-Conforming

Gender Cues: Socially agreed upon traits used to identify the gender or sex of another person. i.e. hairstyle, clothing, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

Gender Diverse: See Gender Non-Conforming

Gender Dysphoria: 1) Description of emotional or mental dissonance between one's desired concept of their body and what their body actually is, especially in reference to body parts/features that do not align to one's gender identity; 2) A term used in psychiatry to refer to the incongruence between an individual's designated birth sex and their gender identity, with marked dissociation from one's physical body. See also: Trans Pathologization

Gender Expansive: See Gender Non-Conforming

Gender Expression: How one chooses to express one's gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, body characteristics, etc. Gender expression may change over time and from day to day, and may or may not conform to an individual's gender identity.

Genderfluid: Denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender. See also: Gender Non-Conforming, Genderqueer, Non-Binary

GenderFuck: The idea of playing with gender cues to purposely confuse, mix, or combine a culture's standard or stereotypical gender expressions. See also: Gender Bender

Gender Identity: An individual's internal sense of being male, female, both, neither, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Identity and Expression: The most common phrase used in law and policy addressing gender-based needs, often in reference to violence and/or discrimination; encompasses both the inner sense (gender identity) and outer appearance (gender expression.)

Gender Identity Disorder (GID): Series of three diagnoses published in the American Psychological Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), originally called "transsexualism" (1980), referring to gender non-conforming identities such as transgender identities. Includes: Gender Identity Disorders in Adolescents and Adults, Gender Identity Disorders in Children, and Transvestic Fetishism (TF.) In 2013, the diagnosis was renamed Gender Dysphoria. See also: Trans Pathologization

Gender Non-Conforming (or Nonconforming): 1) Gender expression or identity that is outside or beyond a specific culture or society's gender expectations; 2) A term used to refer to individuals or communities who may or may not identify as transgender, but who do not conform to traditional gender norms. May be used in tandem with other identities. Encompasses other identities such as androgynous, bigender, gender creative, gender diverse, gender expansive, genderfluid, genderqueer, and gender variant.

Gender Neutral: Used to denote a unisex or all-gender inclusive space, language, etc.

Gender Neutral Pronouns: Any of the multiple sets of pronouns which create gendered space beyond the he, him, and his/she, her, and hers binary. Examples: ze, hir, and hirs; ey, em, eirs; ze, zir, and zirs, or singular they. Also known as All-Gender Pronouns, Spivakian Pronouns, or Third Gender Pronouns.

Genderqueer: 1) An umbrella term for people whose gender identity is outside of, not included within, or beyond the binary of female and male; 2) Gender non-conformity through expression, behavior, social roles, and/or identity. See also: Gender Non-Conforming, Genderfluid, Non-Binary

Gender Role: The behaviors, attitudes, values, beliefs etc. that a cultural group considers appropriate for males and females on the basis of their biological sex.

Gender Therapist: A professional with the education and training to assist those who are questioning and to guide a transgender person through the process of transitioning.

Gender Variant: 1) People whose gender identity and/or expressions are different from the societal norms; 2) Broad term used to describe or denote people who are outside or beyond culturally expected or required identities or expressions. See also: Gender Non-Conforming

Genitoplasty: Surgical alteration of external genitals.

Harry Benjamin Standards of Care: See Standards of Care

Heteronormativity: Lifestyle norm that insists that people fall into distinct genders (male and female), and naturalizes heterosexual coupling as the norm.

Heterosexual: A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to people of different sex or gender.

Homosexual: A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to the people of their same sex or gender. Some people consider this term outdated and offensive and would prefer the terms “gay” and “lesbian.”

Hormones: 1) A regulatory substance produced in the body, some which are feminine or masculine specific; 2) A synthetic substance with an effect similar to that of a hormone. These are sometimes needed and prescribed during a gender transition to promote the development of secondary sex characteristics (such as breasts or facial hair.)

Hormone Blockers: See Blockers

Hormone Therapy: Administration of hormones to affect the development of one’s secondary sex characteristics.

Hysterectomy: Surgery to remove the uterus. Oftentimes the surgery also removes the ovaries and fallopian tubes.

Intergender: A person whose gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.

Intersectionality: The different parts of whole identity and the impact they have on your life.

Intersex: One who is born with sex chromosomes, external genitalia, and/or an internal reproductive system that is not considered “standard” or normative for either the male or female sex.

Labiaplasty: Surgical procedure for altering the inner labia and outer labia, the folds of skin surrounding the human vulva.

Lesbian: Term used to describe female identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female identified people.

LGBTQPIA: Acronym representing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Pansexual, Intersex, Asexual. Often seen as LGBT or LGBTQ.

Male Assigned at Birth (MAAB): See Assigned Sex (Assigned Sex at Birth)

Male-Bodied: 1) A term used to recognize a person who was designated or assigned male sex at birth; 2) A person who identifies themselves as having had or currently having a male body.

Mastectomy: Surgical removal of the breast.

Metoidioplasty: A form of female-to-male sex reassignment surgery in which testosterone is used to enlarge the clitoris into a substitute penis.

Metrosexual: A heterosexual male or masculine person who has a strong aesthetic sense or interest in personal fashion and appearance.

MTF or M2F (Male-to-Female): Term used to identify a person who was designated a male sex at birth and currently identifies as female, lives as a woman, or identifies as feminine. This includes a broad range of experiences, from those

who identify as women or female to those who identify as transsexual, transgender women, transwomen, or as MTF as their gender identity. Some reject this terminology, arguing that they have always been female where others feel that such language reinforces an either/or gender system. Some individuals prefer the term FTF (female-to-female) to underscore the fact that though they were assigned male at birth, they never had a masculine gender identity.

Multigender: See Pangender, Polygender

Natal-sex: The assigned sex of a person at birth (male, female, or intersex.) Also called Natal-Male or Natal-Female.

Non-Binary: 1) Describes a gender identity that is neither female nor male; 2) Gender identities that are outside of or beyond two traditional concepts of male or female. See also: Gender Non-Conforming, Genderfluid, Genderqueer

Non-Gender(ed): See Agender

Orchiectomy: Surgical removal of testicles.

Oophorectomy: Surgical procedure to remove one or both ovaries.

Outing (To Be Outed): The process where someone discloses a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status without the concerned person's permission. Directly associated with personal safety and consent.

Packer: The name of the device used to help achieve packing.

Packing: The act of simulating the presence of a penis with the use of a prosthetic or other device.

Pangender: A person whose gender identity is comprised of many gender identities and/or expressions. See also: Polygender

Pansexual: 1) A sexual orientation where a person desires sexual partners based on personalized attraction to specific physical traits, bodies, identities, and/or personality features which may or may not be aligned to the gender and sex binary; 2) A sexual orientation signifying a person who has potential emotional, physical, and/or sexual attraction to any sex, gender identity or gender expression; 3) Sexual orientation associated with desiring/loving a person's personality primarily, and specific bodily features secondarily.

Passing: 1) The ability to present oneself as their chosen gender identity rather than one's assigned gender; 2) Being normatively accepted as one's promoted identity, as part of specific cultural expectations; 3) An individual's desire or ability to be perceived as a member of a particular gender, race, or cultural group. See also: Read/Being Read

Penectomy: Surgical removal of the penis.

Phalloplasty: Plastic surgery performed to construct, repair, or enlarge the penis.

Polygender: Identifying as more than one gender or a combination of genders. See also: Pangender

Primary Sex Characteristics: Reproductive organs and genitalia.

Pronouns: Grammatical element used to reference a person on the basis of gender. Traditionally he, him, his, himself and she, her, hers, herself.

Queer: An umbrella term representative of the vast matrix of identities outside of the gender normative and heterosexual or monogamous majority. Many people have reclaimed this term after a history of pejorative use, starting in the 1980s. Others still view this as a derogatory term.

Questioning: A person who is in the process of questioning or analyzing their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Read (Getting/Being Read): 1) How a person's gender is perceived by a casual observer, based on gender cues or expression; 2) A trans person being perceived as transgender, another gender than what they wish to be perceived, or as their designated sex. See also: Passing

Real Life Test: A tactic used by healthcare providers where trans people are required to prove or demonstrate their chosen gender identity by living as their true gender for a year before being allowed to access medical transition resources such as hormones or gender affirming surgeries. Considered a controversial practice, it was changed from a requirement to a recommendation in the Standards of Care in 2011. See also: Standards of Care, Trans Pathologization

Same Gender Loving: A term 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 life. (Sometimes abbreviated as SGL.)

Scrotoplasty: Surgical procedure to construct, reconstruct, or alter the scrotum.

Secondary Sex Characteristics: Any physical characteristic developing at puberty which distinguishes between the sexes but is not directly involved in reproduction.

Sex Identity (Sex): 1) The physical, biological, chromosomal, genetic, and anatomical makeup of a body, classified as male, female, intersex, or (in some schools of thought) transsexual; 2) The categorization of a person's physiological status based on physical characteristics; 3) Label of bodies based on a socio-cultural concept of physiology (e.g. what is a male vs. what is female.)

Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS): Surgical procedures that alter or change physical sex characteristics in order to better express a person's inner gender identity. May include removal of the breasts, augmentation of the chest, or alteration or reconstruction of genitals. Also called Gender Affirming Surgery or Gender Confirming Surgery.

Sexual Orientation: An individual's physical and/or emotional attraction to and desire to sexually or emotionally partner with specific genders and/or sexes. e.g., homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, pansexual, asexual.

Sexual Orientation Identity: How a person self-identifies in regard to their sexual orientation. (i.e. identifying as straight, queer, lesbian, gay, etc.) Just like sexual orientation, sexual orientation identity is not necessarily aligned to the sex or gender a person is attracted to or to whom they are partnered.

Single Gender: Descriptive of a person whose gender consists of one identity, usually either male or female.

Social Gender: The construction of masculinity and femininity in a specific culture, denoted by norms and expectations on behavior and appearance. See also: Gender

SOFFA: Acronym for **s**ignificant **o**thers, **f**riends, **f**amily and **a**llies. Used to indicate those persons' supportive relationship to a queer, trans, and/or gender non-conforming person.

Spivakian Pronouns: See Gender Neutral Pronouns

Standards of Care: A set of guidelines published by The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) (formerly Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association) concerning the care of people labeled with gender identity disorders. Despite some updates in 2011, The Standards of Care are still considered controversial and seen as part of the gatekeeper system. Also known as the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care. See also: Gatekeepers, Trans Pathologization

Stealth: 1) Describes the process of a trans person interacting with others without disclosing their trans identity or status; 2) Purposefully not disclosing trans identity or status in order to aid in identity empowerment, promote privacy, or to increase personal safety.

T: Meaning any testosterone regimen.

TERF: Acronym for Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist, and is used to describe radical feminists who oppose inclusion of transgender women in spaces they reserve exclusively for women assigned female at birth.

Testosterone: A steroid hormone that stimulates development of male secondary sexual characteristics, produced mainly in the testes, but also in the ovaries and adrenal cortex.

TGNC: Acronym which stands for trans and gender non-conforming. Often used to describe communities with diverse gender identities.

Third-Gender: 1) A gender identity where a person is neither male nor female, nor androgynous; 2) Term used in cultures where it is recognized that there is another gender in addition to male and female; 3) Term used to denote people who are not considered men or women for the purpose of social categorization or documentation.

Third Gender Pronouns: See Gender Neutral Pronouns

Top Surgery: Term used to describe medical surgery on the chest for the purpose of better aligning a person's physical body to their gender identity and expression. May be referring to a bilateral mastectomy (removal of breasts) or breast augmentation. See also Sex Reassignment Surgery

Trachea Shave: A procedure for removing cartilage from the Adam's apple in order to diminish its appearance.

Trans*: Used to denote the increasingly wide spectrum of identities within the gender variant spectrum. The asterisk is representative of the widest notation of possible trans identities. However, some argue the asterisk is not needed as transgender already includes all gender variant communities.

Trans Pathologization: The process in which multiple institutions (medical, psychiatric, governmental) deem gender variance and trans identities to be caused by mental illness and/or delusion, and that trans populations are in need of continual professional intervention and guardianship in order to live healthy, happy lives. See also: Gatekeepers, Gender Dysphoria, Gender Identity Disorder, Standards of Care

Transfeminine: 1) A spectrum of identities where female identity or femininity is prominent; 2) Descriptive term representative of DMAB, trans female, and/or MTF people; 3) A gender-variant gender expression that has a prominent feminine component.

Transgender (TG): 1) An umbrella term describing a diverse community of people whose gender identity differs from that which they were designated at birth.

Transgender Man (Transman): A transgender individual who identifies as a man. See also: FTM

Transgender Woman (Transwoman): A transgender individual who identifies as a woman. See also: MTF

Transition: 1) The coming out process of a trans person; may be continual or deemed to be a set period of time or series of events; 2) To physically change one's appearance, body, self-describing language, and/or behaviors in accordance with their gender identity. May be broken down in parts: social transition (language, clothing, behavior, legal documents) and physical transition (medical care such as hormones, and/or surgery.)

Transmasculine: 1) A spectrum of identities where male identity or masculinity is prominent; 2) Descriptive term representative of DFAB, trans male, and/or FTM people; 3) A gender-variant gender expression that has a prominent masculine component.

Transphobia: 1) The fear, hatred, or intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as transgender; 2) Fear and hatred of all those individuals who transgress, violate or blur the dominant gender categories in a given society.

Transsexual (also Transexual) (TS): A person whose gender identity is different from their designated sex at birth and has taken steps of physical transition so that their body is congruent to both their gender identity and the conventional concept of sexually male and female bodies. Some feel that this is an outdated term with many negative connotations, however, many people self-identify as transsexual and find it is an accurate representation of their status. Take care not to use this term to describe anyone who has not self-identified as transsexual, as it may be considered a slur.

Tuck: To conceal male genitals by tucking them between the legs.

Two-Spirit(ed): Native American term to describe a person who embodies attributes of both masculine and feminine genders, have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes, and are often involved with rituals. Their dress is usually a mixture of male and female articles and they are seen as a separate or third gender. The term two-spirit is sometimes considered specific to the Zuni tribe. Similar identity labels vary by tribe such as Wintke (Lakota), Hee-man-eh (Cheyenne), and Nedleeh (Navajo); 2) Native Americans who are queer or transgender.

Vaginal Stent: See Dilator

Vaginectomy: Surgical procedure to remove all or part of the vagina.

Vaginoplasty: Plastic surgery performed to create or repair a vagina.