

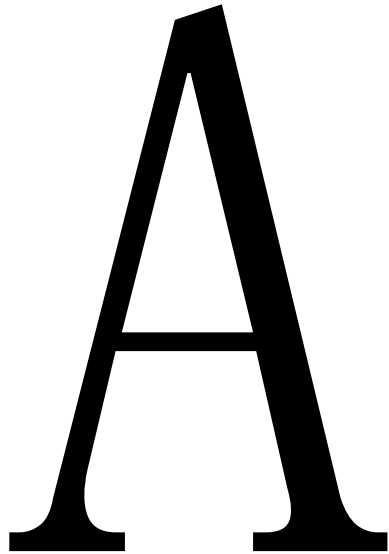


The ABCs of LGBTQ+

Your guide to various LGBTQ+-related
words and definitions

Disclaimers/Announcements!

- This list was compiled by me with the help of some of my lovely Instagram followers
 - I tried to pick terms that were less known and needed more visibility
- I used a lot of research for these definitions. If I quote anything directly, it is cited
 - Full works cited at the end of the slideshow
- And most importantly...
 - These words mean different things to everyone! If I define it one way, that does not make your definition any less valid.
 - Labels are good to help us describe our experience, but we should choose what we are most comfortable with (and that includes nothing at all)!



A

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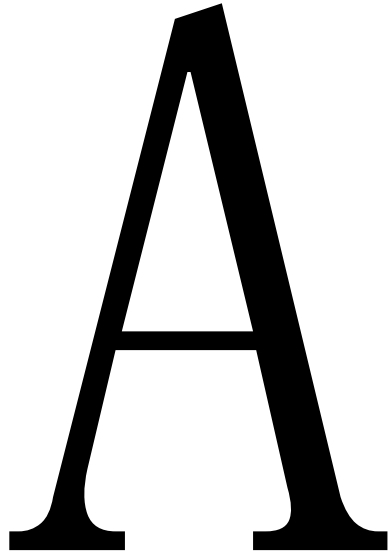
Asexual (Ace) → Someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

This does NOT mean someone who identifies as asexual never has sex. Many asexuals do partake in (and enjoy) sex.

This is also NOT the same as celibacy. That is a choice, asexuality is not.

Aromantic (Aro) → Someone who does not experience romantic attraction.

People who identify as aromantic can have successful relationships. They are often platonic.



A

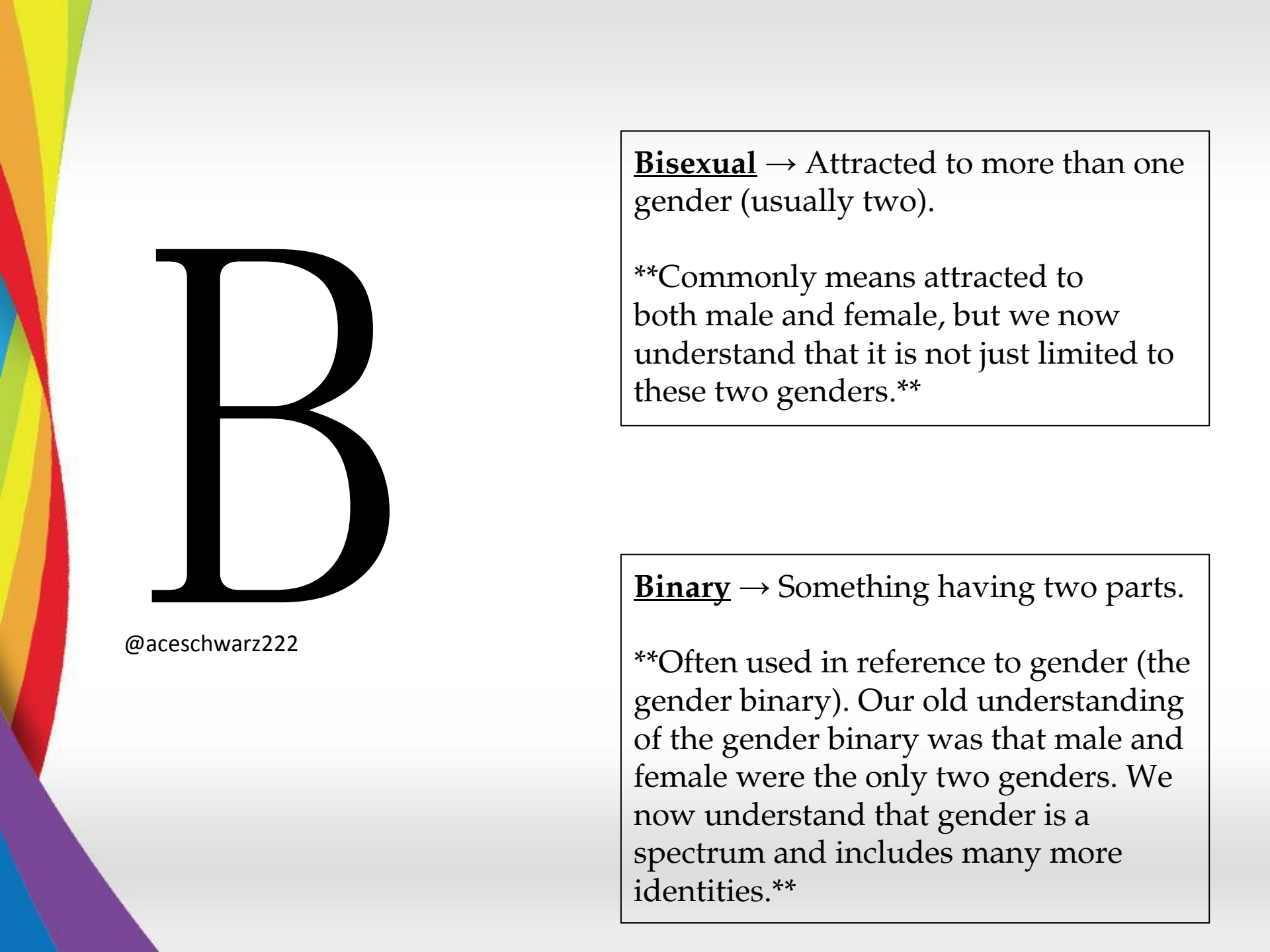
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Androgynous → Not specifically male or female.

****Can also be seen as having the characteristics of both male and female.****

Androsexual → Used to describe someone who has sexual feelings towards masculinity/masculine characteristics (AVEN, 2018).

****Example: Someone who identifies as androsexual may be attracted to someone (could be any gender) with broad shoulders, short hair, and who wears socially “male” clothing.****



B


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Bisexual → Attracted to more than one gender (usually two).

****Commonly means attracted to both male and female, but we now understand that it is not just limited to these two genders.****

Binary → Something having two parts.

****Often used in reference to gender (the gender binary). Our old understanding of the gender binary was that male and female were the only two genders. We now understand that gender is a spectrum and includes many more identities.****




C

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Cisgender → Used to describe a person whose assigned sex (at birth) matches their gender identity.

****Ex:** Individual born with a vulva would be assigned the sex “female”. If they are cisgender, then they identify as female as well.**

Coming out → The process where someone accepts their gender/sexual identity and/or shares this identity with others.



D

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Demisexual → Used to describe someone who experiences sexual attraction AFTER they've built a strong emotional bond with that person.

****Exists on the asexual spectrum.****

Drag Queen/Drag King → “Used by people who present socially in clothing, name, and/or pronouns that differ from their everyday gender. Usually for enjoyment, entertainment, and/or self-expression” (We are Family, 2018).

****Motivation for dragging is entertainment, not sexual****

****This is NOT the same as identifying as transgender****

E

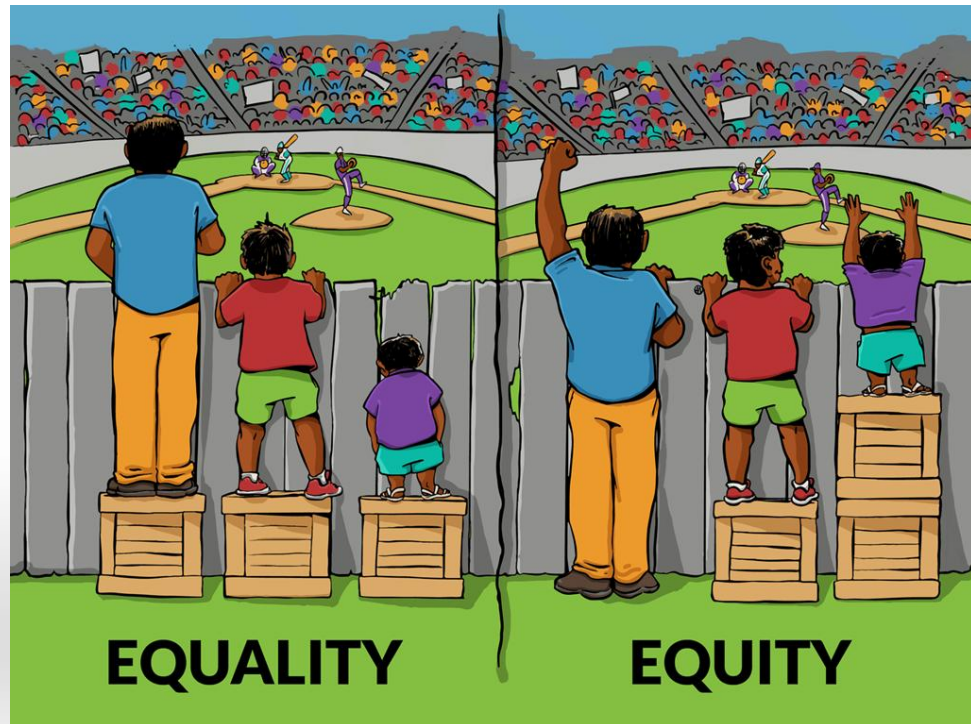
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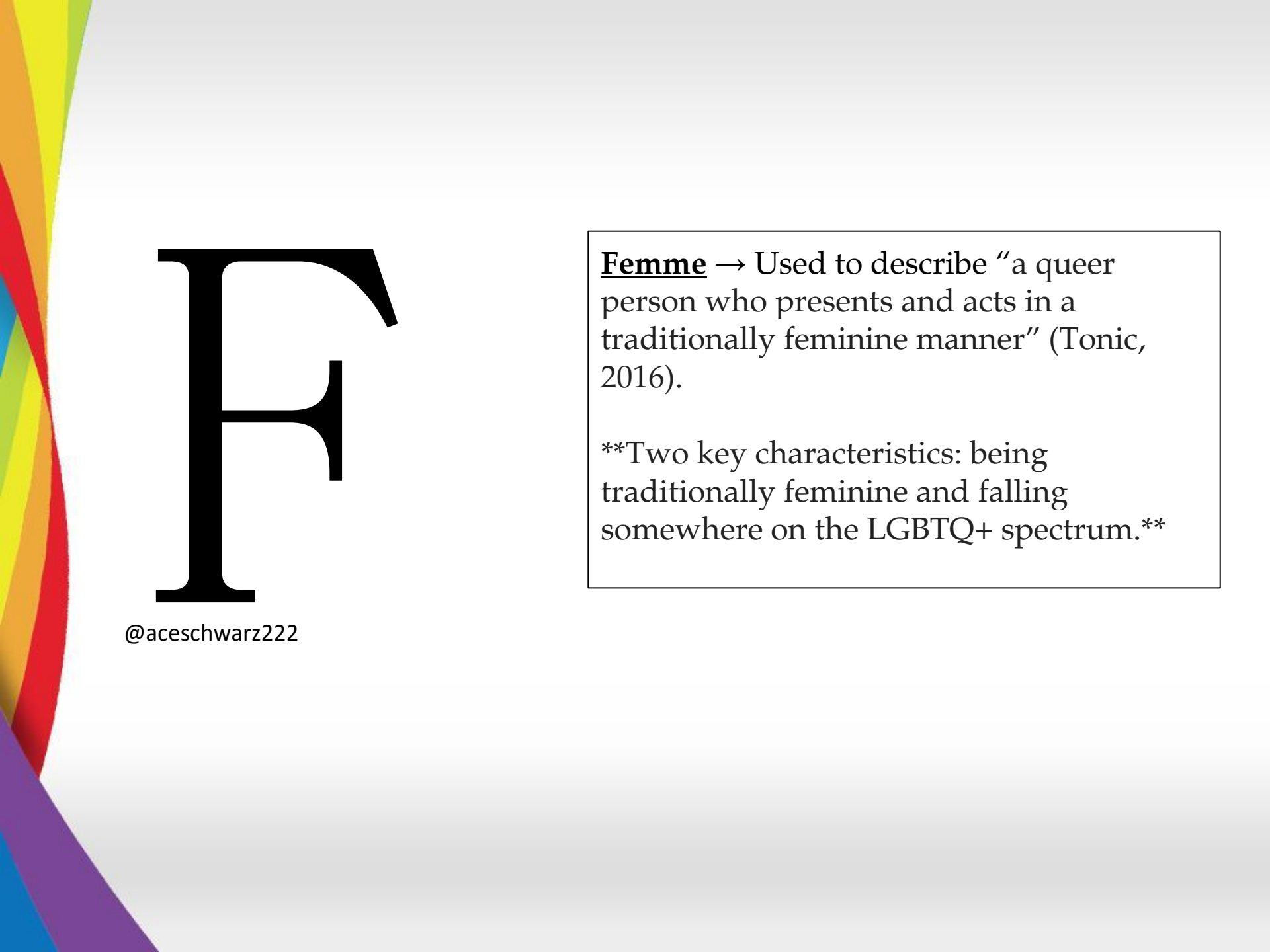
This isn't necessarily directly related to LGBTQ+, BUT it is still really important to understand.

Image credit: Kumar, 2017

Equality → Treating everyone the same.

Equity → Giving everyone what they need to be successful.






F

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Femme → Used to describe “a queer person who presents and acts in a traditionally feminine manner” (Tonic, 2016).

Two key characteristics: being traditionally feminine and falling somewhere on the LGBTQ+ spectrum.



G


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Gender → Complex interrelationship between three dimensions: our body (physical body), our identity (how we view ourselves), and our expression (how we present ourselves).

****Gender and sex are NOT the same.****

****Gender is a spectrum NOT a binary.****

Gender blind → Used to describe when gender does not play a role in who someone is/is not attracted to (Hardell, 2014).

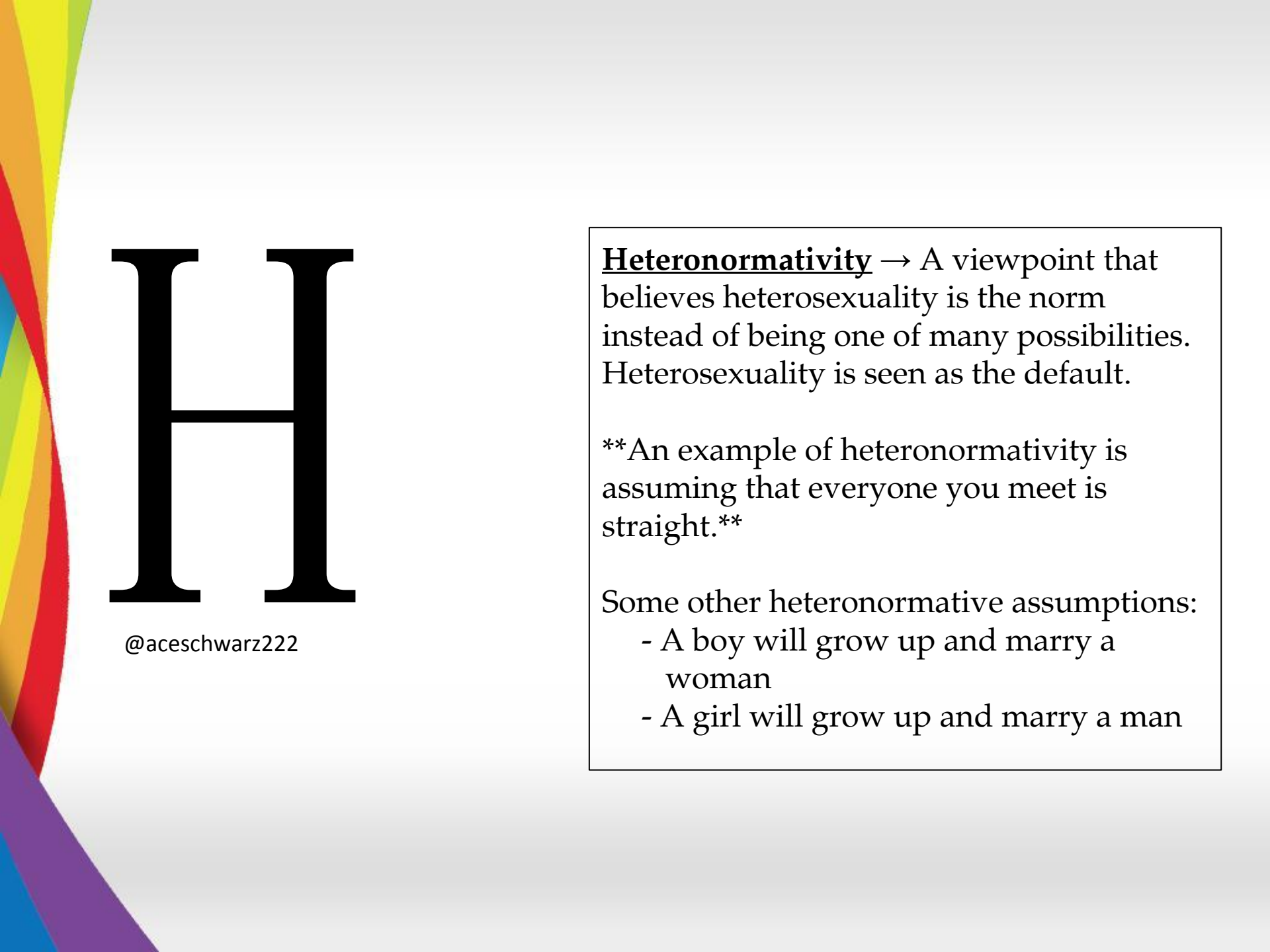


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Gender identity → “A person’s innermost core concept of self which can include boy/man, girl/woman, a blend of both, neither, and many more” (Gender Spectrum, 2018).

Genderqueer → Someone whose gender identity doesn’t fit with the socially constructed norms of their biological sex.

For example, someone who identifies as genderqueer may “have a gender which is neither male nor female and may identify as both male and female at one time, as different genders at different times, as no gender at all, or dispute the very idea of only two genders” (Savin-Williams, 2018).



H

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Heteronormativity → A viewpoint that believes heterosexuality is the norm instead of being one of many possibilities. Heterosexuality is seen as the default.

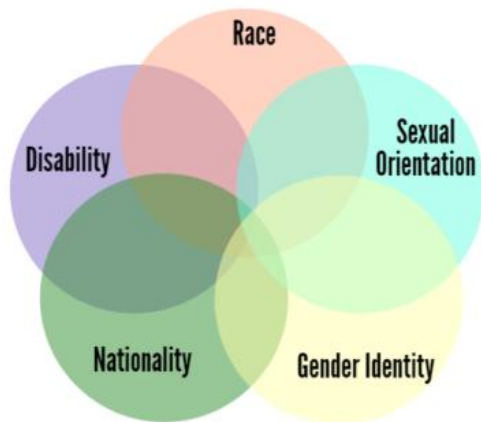
An example of heteronormativity is assuming that everyone you meet is straight.

Some other heteronormative assumptions:

- A boy will grow up and marry a woman
- A girl will grow up and marry a man

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I



Intersex → Used to describe someone who is born with “a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn’t seem to fit the typical definition of male or female” (Intersex Society of North America, 2008).

Some people who are intersex have both male and female reproductive organs (ovarian and testicular tissue).

Intersectionality → “The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise” (Oxford Dictionary).

Picture credit: YW Boston

J


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Justice → Ensuring that all civil and human rights are preserved regardless of one's race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc. Every person receives the same rights.

****Remember the Equality vs. Equity slide? In both pictures, there was a fence blocking the view of the game. Justice removes the systematic barrier of oppression completely.****



Image credit: Kumar, 2017



K

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Kinsey Scale → Alfred Kinsey created a scale to describe the spectrum of human sexuality (Kinsey Institute, 1948).

Rating | *Description*

0 | *Exclusively heterosexual*

1 | *Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual*

2 | *Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual*

3 | *Equally heterosexual and homosexual*


4 | *Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual*

5 | *Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual*

6 | *Exclusively homosexual*

X | *No socio-sexual contacts or reactions*

******This scale was created after interviewing thousands of people about their sexual history. However, it is important to note that sexual identity can change. Plus, we now recognize there is more to sexuality than homo- and hetero-******



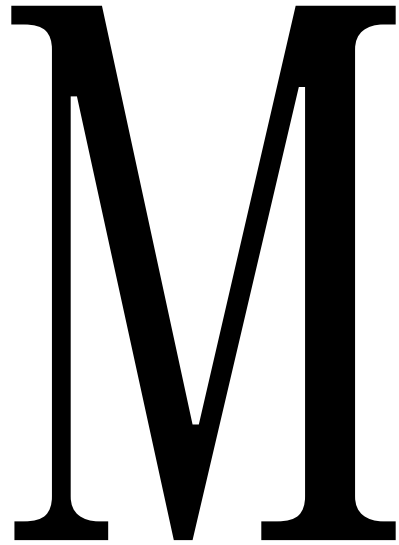
L

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Lesbian → Females who are attracted to other females.

LGBTQ+ → Shorthand term/acronym to describe those who do not identify as straight.


****Other common acronyms include: LGBT and LGBTQIA.****

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Mx. → An honorific (Ms., Mr., etc.)
that is gender-neutral.

****Pronounced “mix”.****




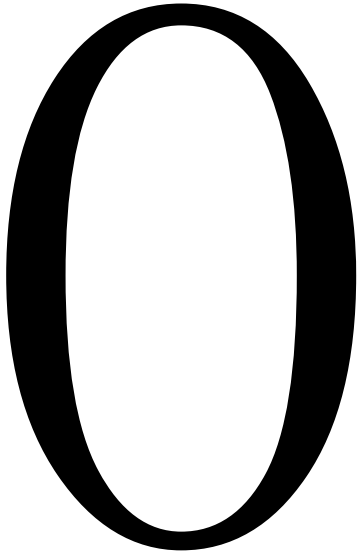
N

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Non-binary → Used to describe any gender that does not fit in the male/female system.


Someone who uses non-binary may identify as “having no gender, fall between male/female, or as something totally outside binary identities” (Dictionary.com, 2018).

Generally considered part of the transgender identity spectrum.



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Omnisexual → Someone who is attracted to all genders and orientations.



P

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Pansexual → Used to describe someone who is attracted to an individual, regardless of gender.

But wait! Isn't this similar to omnisexual? Yes and no.

An omnisexual person might say "I like people of every gender," while a pansexual person would answer, "I don't care about your gender. I like you anyway" (Dictionary.com).

What about bisexuality?

Those who identify as pansexual prefer the term to bisexual because it includes individuals outside the heteronormative gender binary.




P

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Polysexual → Someone who is attracted to multiple genders (not the same as pansexual or omnisexual).

For example, a polysexual person might be attracted to women, genderqueer and nonbinary people, but not to men (Dictionary.com).




Q

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Queer → All-inclusive umbrella term to describe a wide range of identities.

This is a **reclaimed term. This means “queer” used to be considered a slur (and was used as such) from approximately 1960-1980. However, LGBTQ+ activists took the term back in the 1980’s and began writing it on their pride signs during marches (Minus 18, 2017).**

Questioning → Process of exploration by people who may be unsure of which social label applies to them.



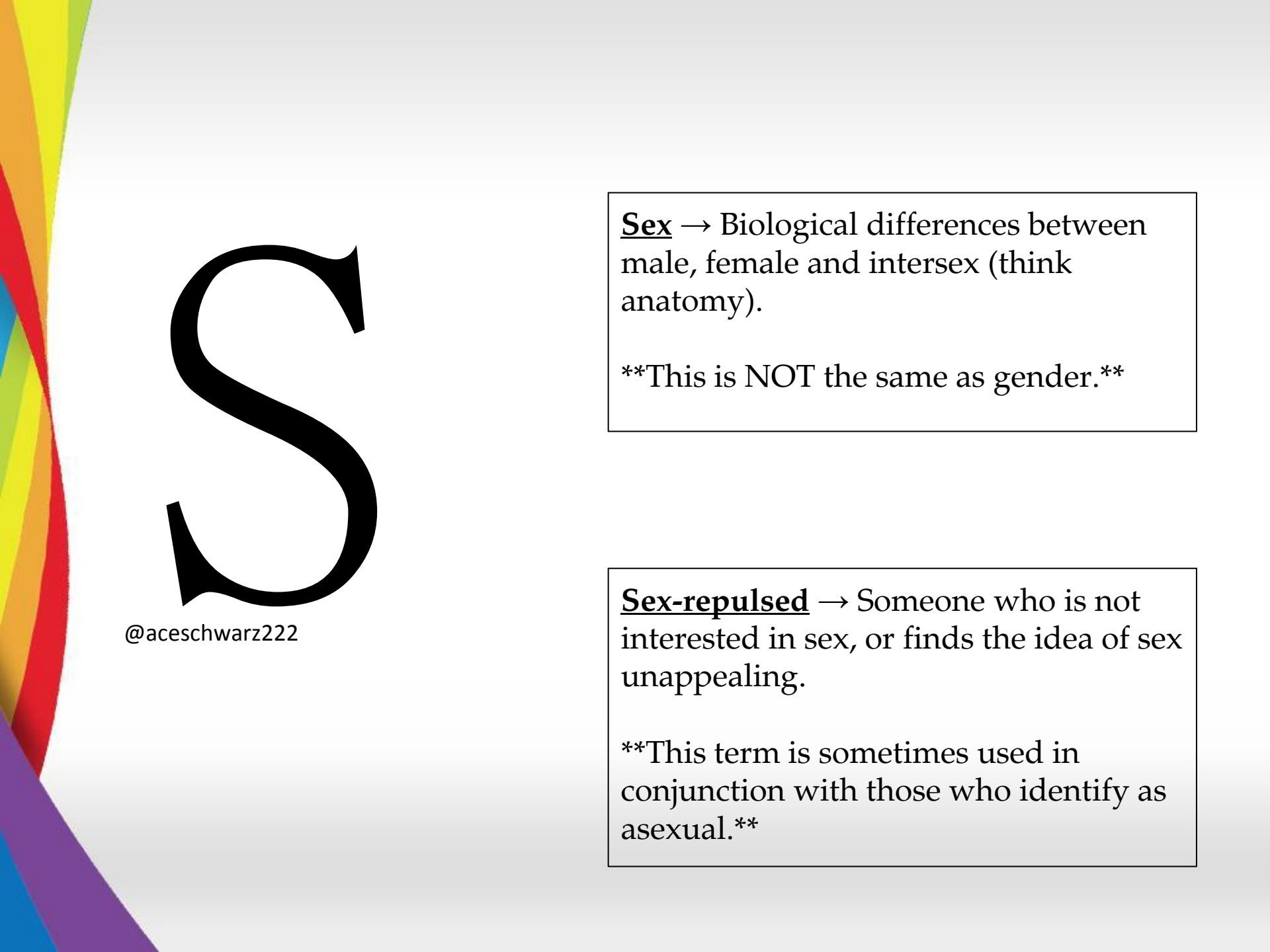
R

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Romantic attraction → Emotional response that results in the desire for a romantic relationship. It is “more about who the person is than what they look like” (Luce, 2017).

****This is NOT the same as sexual attraction.****

****While some people’s romantic and sexual attractions are congruent, it is also possible for someone’s romantic attraction to differ from their sexual attraction.****



S


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Sex → Biological differences between male, female and intersex (think anatomy).

****This is NOT the same as gender.****

Sex-repulsed → Someone who is not interested in sex, or finds the idea of sex unappealing.

****This term is sometimes used in conjunction with those who identify as asexual.****




S

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Skoliosexuality → Someone who is attracted to non-cisgendered or non-binary individuals.

Sexual attraction → The desire for a sexual/physically intimate relationship. Sexual attraction is typically felt right away, although it can build over time (think demisexuality).

This is NOT the same as romantic attraction.



T


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Transgender → Used to describe a person whose assigned sex (at birth) does not match their gender identity.

Some people who identify as transgender undergo hormone therapy and/or gender reassignment surgeries. However, it is important to note that this is NOT the case for everyone. Many people who identify as transgender choose to only transition socially (name/pronoun change).

Two-Spirit → A term often used within Native American communities to describe someone who has both a male and female spirit within them. They are “blessed by their Creator to see life through the eyes of both genders” (Enos, 2017).

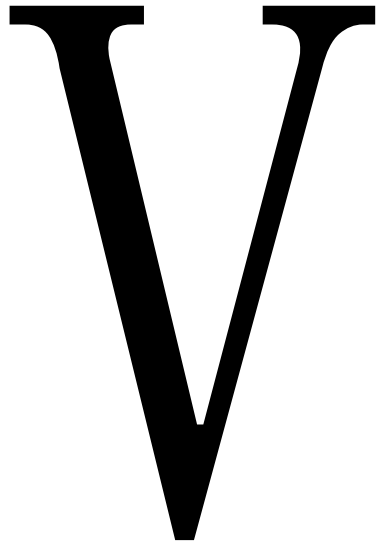
This term is ONLY appropriate for Native people as it is steeped in Native culture and tradition.



U

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Unisex → Typically describes hair and clothing that is designed for all genders and/or sexes.



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Ve → Alternative, gender-neutral pronoun that replaces he/she/they and him/her/them respectively.

****Pronounced “vee”.****


Ve = he/she

Ver = him/her

Vis = his/hers

Verself =him/herself

(Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog, 2010)



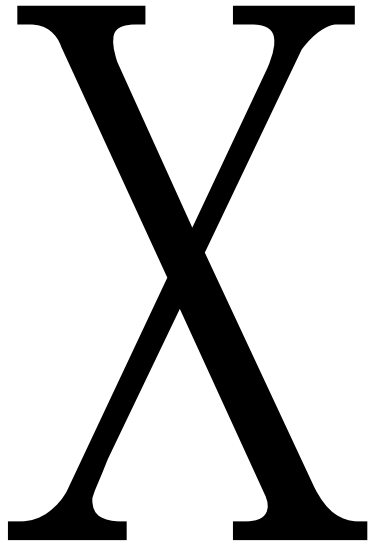
W

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Womxn → Alternative spelling of “woman” or “women” that aims to promote intersectionality.

Resulted from exclusionary second-wave feminist movements that did not recognize everyone who identified as female (especially those who were not born female).

Using the “x” recognizes that “gender is non-binary and independent of assigned sex at birth” (UNC, 2019).



X

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Xe → Alternative, gender-neutral pronoun that replaces he/she/they and him/her/them respectively.

****Pronounced “zee”.****


Xe = he/she

Xem = him/her

Xyr = his/hers

Xemself =him/herself

(Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog, 2010)




Y

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Yet → A word used that hints at the future to come.

****This is a really important concept when it comes to all forms of identity. You may not know who you are/how you identify YET, but that is all part of the journey. And the best part is, it's your journey, so it can take as long as you need it to.****



Z

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Zie → Alternative, gender-neutral pronoun that replaces he/she/they and him/her/them respectively.

****Pronounced “zee”.****

Zie = he/she

Zir = him/her

Zir/Zis = his/hers

Zieself =him/herself

(Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog, 2010)

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