

OutReach
LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER

*"To promote equality and quality of life for LGBTQ people through
community building and human services."*

**Transgender and
Gender Non-Conforming
Information Packet**

2019 Update

Distinction Between Sex and Gender

Sex Assigned at Birth: A person's physical or biological assignment of male, female, intersex at birth by medical professionals, based on chromosomes, genitalia, gonads.

Gender: A social construct fabricated by society and culture traditionally defined as man/masculine or woman/feminine (only) that we are socialized to accept and consider ideal.

The Gender Binary

Our society has traditionally classified all people into two distinct gender categories and assumes those two categories are opposite of each other: male/masculine or female/feminine only. The gender binary is everywhere in product placement, commercials, colors, bathrooms, etc. Living life completely and wholly would be much easier if society recognized more than two possible genders fitting only two possible stereotypical ideals. Feeling that your body does not reflect your true gender can cause severe distress, anxiety, and depression. "Dysphoria" is a feeling of dissatisfaction, anxiety, and restlessness. With gender dysphoria, the discomfort can be so intense that it can interfere with the way you function in normal life, for instance at school or work or during social activities.

Forcing people into societally (and stereotypically) built boxes is incredibly damaging, not only to people who are transgender. What if you do not fit completely in that box? Trying to rectify that part of you that doesn't fit in this world (the box) can create many barriers and challenges. Human beings are much more complex and shouldn't be required to dress, act, or be a certain way. We know that just isn't possible.

Sex Assigned at Birth	Gender Identity	Gender Expression	Attraction/Sexual Orientation	Pronouns
Male Female Intersex	Cisgender☐ Man Woman Transgender Genderqueer Non binary Agender Bigender Gender non-conforming	Feminine Masculine Androgynous Butch Femme Femme queen Aggressive	Gay Lesbian Straight Queer Bisexual Asexual Same Gender Loving Pansexual	He, him, his, himself She, her, hers, herself They, them, their, themselves Ze, hir, hirs, hirself Xe, xem, xyrs, xyrself
<i>* Assigned to each of us at birth based on external and internal physical genitalia</i>	<i>* Internal private sense of our gender</i>	<i>* External expression of our gender and how we interact with the world</i>	<i>* Our emotional, physical, intellectual, sexual, sensual, aesthetic attraction or connection with other people</i>	<i>* The pronoun a person uses for themself. EX: They went to the store to buy themself shoes.</i>

***Created by OutReach LGBTQ Community Center*

- Each one of us have all of these characteristics.
- They are completely independent of one another; your sex assigned at birth will not determine your gender identity, who you are attracted to, your pronouns, etc.
- Aspects of gender, sexuality, and pronouns are a social construct; a social construct fabricated by society and culture that we are socialized to accept and consider ideal.
- Our society places emphasis on sex as the main connector between people. There are other ways to (i.e., emotional, romantic, intellectual) have a connection with other people that are no less important than a sexual one.

- *Note: The terms listed in the categories are not a complete and full list. They are examples for instructional purpose.*

Often gender identity, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation get mixed up among the general public. A person can express any of these, in a variety of combinations.

Sex Assigned at Birth:

A person's physical or biological assignment of male, female, intersex at birth by medical professionals, based on chromosomes, genitalia, gonads.

Gender:

A social construct fabricated by society and culture traditionally defined as man or woman (only) that we are socialized to accept and consider ideal. Gender Identity is how one defines or sees their own gender. This is how a person sees themselves; they may identify within the male/female gender binary or they may not. It is very subjective and varies from person to person.

Transgender: An identity with the Latin-root "the other side of" used to describe people whose personal identity and gender is different from their sex assigned at birth. A person. The word "transgender" is also an umbrella term for all kinds of different identifications.

For example: Transsexual, Bigender, Male-to-Female, Female-to-Male, Crossdresser, Two-Spirit, Agender, et al.

Cisgender: An identity with the Latin-root "this side of" used to describe people who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Nonbinary/Gender Non-Conforming: A term used to describe people who do not necessarily identify within the gender binary. Their identity could be a mix of multiple genders or they may reject all genders entirely.

Gender Expression:

Gender expression refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of expression.

Sexuality/Sexual Orientation/Attraction:

This is which one finds sexually, emotionally, physically attractive. Attraction is beginning to replace the term Sexual Orientation.

- *The term heterosexuality* describes people who are attracted someone of a differing gender than their own.
- *The terms gay and lesbian* describes people who are attracted someone of the same gender than their own.
- *The term bisexuality, omnisexuality, and pansexuality* are used to describe people who are attracted to both genders or genders that are not their own.

** Note that "sexual preference" is often considered a derogatory term as it implies choosing the gender/sex one is attracted.

** Identities can also be fluid, shifting across a spectrum unique to the person.

** Terms are subjective; one person may use bisexual and another person may use omnisequal to describe their attraction to people.

Pronouns

Our society sees gender as a binary concept; therefore largely recognizes only two pronouns. For some people, they do not feel binary pronouns accurately describe their own identities. In such cases, they may use some of the pronouns listed below to refer to themselves. The list below is not exhaustive; there are many more pronouns than are listed on this chart. Use

of pronouns is a personal choice; one person's choice of pronoun may not be the same as another person.

For some people, trying to understand the grammar and pronunciation of unfamiliar pronouns is difficult. You may not completely understand everything and that is okay. In our experience, it is best to take this list and other pronouns you may hear and try your best to incorporate them into your speech. Practice and become familiar with them as much as you can. Sincerely and briefly apologize if/when you make a mistake. Mistakes will happen! However, those mistakes do not allow us to be complacent in using correct pronouns. Mistakes do allow us a crucial moment for learning. Honoring and affirming someone's pronoun is a huge step in respecting people.

** Note that "preferred" and "gender" pronoun is often considered a derogatory term as it implies a person "prefers" a pronoun. Transgender and gender non-conforming people's pronouns are not preferred, just as cisgender people's pronouns aren't.

Pronouns	Example
She, her, hers, herself	She went to the store to buy herself shoes. I saw her wearing her shoes last night.
He, him, his, himself	He went to the store to buy himself shoes. I saw him wearing his shoes last night.
They, their, them, themselves (singular pronoun)	They went to the store to buy themselves shoes. I saw them wearing their shoes last night.
Ze, hir, hir, hereself (Pronunciation: zee, here, hereself)	Ze went to the store to buy hirself shoes. I saw hir wearing hir shoes last night.
Ze, zem, zir, zirself (Pronunciation: zee, zem, zear, zearself)	Ze went to the store to buy zirself shoes. I saw zem wearing zir shoes last night.
Ey, eir, em, emself (Pronunciation: A, ear, M, emself)	Ey went to the store to buy emself shoes. I saw ey wearing eir shoes last night.

Things to remember about pronouns:

- Some people use their name in place of pronouns.
- If you are unsure of a person's pronouns (and you need to know), ask politely.
- If you make a mistake, correct yourself.
- If you see someone else make a mistake, correct them.
- When discussing issues about gender and sex, it is important to keep in mind that people have the right to self-determination.
- Leave room for people to identify themselves!

Be respectful of all identities

- Use the name the person would like you to use.
- Use the pronouns the person would like you to use.
- If you are unsure of a person's name or pronouns (and you need to know), politely ask.

- Apologize for any mistakes. Do not dwell on any mistake.
- Do not assume someone's gender and/or pronouns based on their appearance. Avoid
□using sir, madam, or other gender binary pleasantries.
- Do not expect transgender and gender non-conforming people to educate you. Do your own research.
- NEVER out someone who is transgender, unless you have their permission.
- Always respect the way someone identifies, even if you do not understand it.
- Refrain from asking about a trans person's personal, family, life or medical history out of curiosity. There are some things in this world that are none of anyone else's business.
- Remember that transgender people are just trying to use the restroom like everyone else. It is not alright to question anyone if they are using a restroom you think is not the right one.
- One person's experiences does not reflect all transgender experiences. Each of us have our own story and path in this life.
- Recognize you may not understand all concepts, pronouns, or identities completely.
- Allow yourself some room for active learning and growth. Remember, it is never alright to ask a person to explain their pronouns or identities.

Sex Assigned at Birth

Male
Female
Intersex

** Assigned to each of us at birth based on external and internal physical genitalia*

Gender Identity

Man
Woman
Transgender
Genderqueer
Nonbinary
Agender
Bigender
Gender non-conforming

** Internal private sense of our gender*

Gender Expression

Feminine
Masculine
Androgynous
Butch
Femme
Femme queen
Aggressive

** External expression of our gender and how we interact with the world*

Attraction/ Sexuality

Gay
Lesbian
Straight
Queer
Bisexual
Asexual
Same Gender Loving
Pansexual

** Our emotional, physical, intellectual, sexual, sensual, aesthetic attraction or connection with other people*

Personal Gender Pronouns

He, him, his, himself
She, her, hers, herself
They, them, their, themselves
Ze, hir, hirs, hirself
Xe, xem, xyrs, xyrsel

** The pronoun a person uses for themselves.*

EX: They went to the store to buy themselves shoes.

*** Each and every one of us has all of these characteristics.**

*** They are completely independent of one another; your sex assigned at birth will not determine your gender identity, who you are attracted to, your pronouns, etc.**

*** Aspects of gender, sexuality, and pronouns are a social construct; a social construct fabricated by society and culture that we are socialized to accept and consider ideal.**

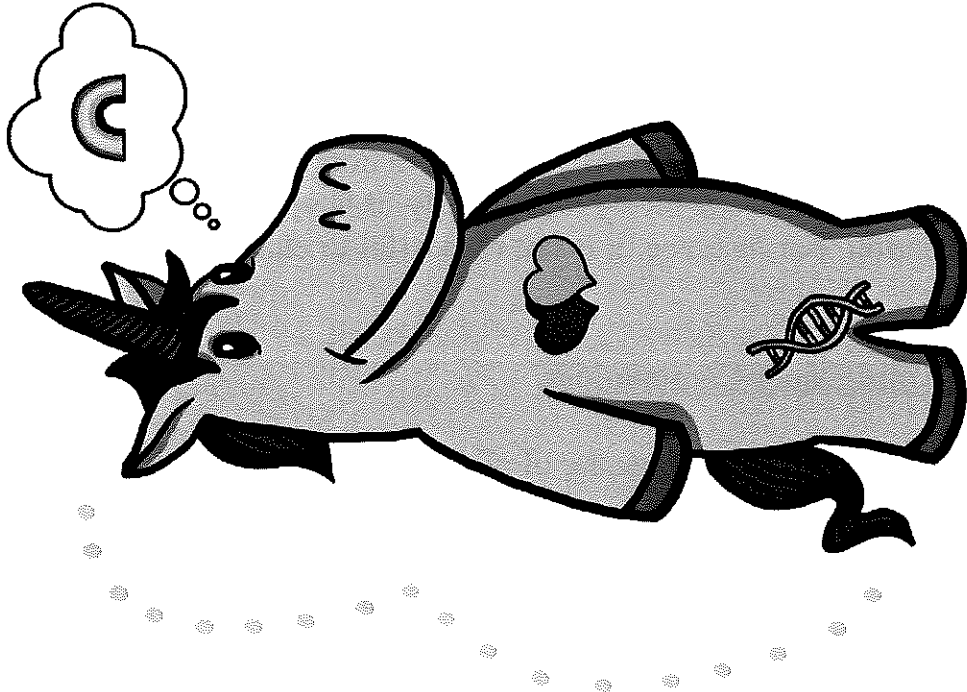
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*** The terms listed in the categories are not a complete and full list. They are examples for instructional purpose**

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:

TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



Gender Identity

Female/Woman/Girl
Male/Man/Boy
Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression/Presentation

Feminine
Masculine
Other

Sex Assigned at Birth

Female
Male
Other/Intersex

Sexually Attracted To

Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

Romantically/Emotionally Attracted To

Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan

Trans 101: The Sylvia Rivera Law Project, <http://srlp.org/resources/trans-101/>

Prepared by Jody Marksamer and Dylan Vade

Gender Identity

Our gender identity is how we see ourselves. Some of us see ourselves as women, some as men, some as a combination of both, some as neither. Some of us have complex identities that may even be fluid and change over time. For instance, some of us see ourselves as female to male trans people who also identify as butch women and genderqueer and some days as drag queens.

Everyone has a gender identity. And, everyone expresses their gender identity. We all make choices about how to cut or not cut the hair on our head, the hair on our legs, what clothes to wear, whether or not and what type of make-up to wear, what body parts to accentuate or not, etc. We all make hundreds of conscious decisions every day about how we are going to express our gender. We all have a gender.

Transgender People

Transgender people (very broadly conceived) are those of us whose gender identity and/or expression that does not or is perceived to not match stereotypical gender norms associated with our assigned gender at birth. In other words, people think that we should be more masculine, more feminine, not have facial hair, have facial hair, not have wombs, have wombs, identify differently, etc., etc.

And, a note on the word transgender: Some of us who fit the above definition do self-identify as transgender, and some of us don't. We are a community with an evolving language. What is key is that everyone has the right to SELF-IDENTIFY. When in doubt about how a person identifies or what pronouns a person prefers – ask nicely and politely. It is very important to respect each person's self-identification. For instance, it is not respectful to challenge someone's gender identity.

Diversity within the Transgender Communities

Transgender people span all communities, are of all backgrounds, ethnicities, ages, and abilities.

Transgender people have all sexual orientations. Gender identity is about who one is. Sexual orientation is about who one is attracted to. Some transgender people are straight, some are gay, some are bi, and some are queer.

Transgender people have an enormous and beautiful gender diversity. Among transgender as among non-transgender people, there are feminine women, masculine women, androgynous women, feminine men, androgynous men, masculine men, to name just a few. There are infinitely different ways to be male and infinitely different ways to be female.

And there are infinite ways to be neither. One term to describe those who do not identify as completely male or female is genderqueer. (But, not all people who do not identify as female or male self-identify as genderqueer – and some people who do identify as female or male do self-identify as genderqueer. Again, it is important to respect each person's self-identification.)

Options other than female or male: There are transgender people who identify as trans, tranny, trannyboy, trannygirl, transsexual, transgender, shinjuku boy, boi, grrl, boy-girl, girl-boy-girl, papi, third gender, fourth gender, no gender, bi-spirit, butch, dyke-fag, fairy, elf girl, glitterboy, transman, transwoman – just to name a few. Some of us see ourselves as combining aspects of male and female. Some of us see ourselves as falling between male and female. Some of us fall completely outside of the binary gender system. Some of us have the same gender always and everywhere; some of us are fluid, and of us change situationally or over time.

And, a little note on spectrums and lines. There are women and there are men. These are two options among a million. Female and male are not two endpoints on a line. There is no line, no spectrum. If there were a line, where would a sissy ftm fall compared to a butch dyke? Where would a butch mtf fall? Where would a fierce femme fall? Gender is much, much bigger than a line. We cannot order people on a scale of masculinity/femininity. Gender is (at least!) a 3 dimensional space that allows motion. One way to picture gender is as a gender galaxy – a space with an infinite number of gender points that can move and that are not hierarchically ordered.

Bodies

In addition to the enormous variety of identifications, there is an equally impressive variety of bodies. We all have bodies. We all alter our bodies in some way. Some women have wombs, some do not. Some men have facial hair, some do not. Some male to female transgender people identify as one-hundred percent female and never take hormones or have any surgeries. Transgender women define for themselves what it means to be female and to have a female body. Some female to male transgender people take male hormones and have mastectomies and yet do not identify as men. Some do. Some mix and match to best express their very own fabulous gender. Some take hormones but have no surgery or vice versa. Some take low-doses of hormones or go on and off. For some trans people, altering genitalia is important. For others, it is not. Some transsexual men identify as 100% male and choose to become pregnant and bear and raise children.

There is no prototypical transgender experience. There is an endless variety of transgender bodies, an endless variety of transgender identities, and an endless combination of the two. It is not necessarily those who take low doses of hormones who identify between male and female. It is not necessarily those who take hormones who identify as transsexual. It is not necessarily those who have genital surgery who identify as 100% male or 100% female.

Further, there are endless ways to arrive at being transgender and of being transgender. Some transgender people are assigned female at birth, know from day one they are male, describe their experience as being a man trapped in a woman's body, and live their life as a heterosexual man. This narrative is perpetuated, reinforced, and rewarded by the medical and psychological

establishment. Many transgender people share only some part or no part of this narrative. Many transgender people live happy lives prior to transition. Not all transgender people feel uncomfortable in their bodies and want to alter bodies. Not all transgender people have the same identification throughout their lives. Endless narratives exist.

And, a quick note on sex vs. gender: In our society, sex is usually seen as the more objective, natural backdrop to a more socially constructed gender. In the transgender communities, there are many different views about sex and gender, their definition and their interrelation. Some transgender people see themselves as having one sex and a different gender. Some transgender people do not see themselves in this way. I do not want to offer a definition here. But, I do want to remind us that BOTH sex and gender are socially constructed and that BOTH sex and gender are socially real.

And, the bottom line: There are many, many different ways to be in this world. There are many, many different ways to be transgender or gender non-conforming in this world. And, in the end, what counts is a person's self-identification.