

LGBTIQ DEFINITIONS

Lesbian

Term used to describe women attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other women. The term lesbian is derived from the name of the Greek Islands of Lesbos and as such is sometimes considered a Eurocentric category that does not necessarily represent the identities of Māori, Pacific Island, African and other Non-European ethnic groups. This being said, individual female-identified people from diverse ethnic groups, embrace the term 'lesbian' as an identity label.

Gay

1. Term used in some cultural settings to represent males who are attracted to males in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Not all men who in "homosexual behavior" identify as gay, and as such this label should be used with caution.
2. Term used to refer to the LGBTIQ community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual. Very rarely used nowadays.

Bisexual

Currently being redefined by bisexual rights activists to mean that one is attracted to both their own gender, as well as other genders, or to genders similar to one's own and different from one's own. This better reflects the common experience of many bisexual people (rather than simply attracted to binary men and binary women). In common use, most bisexual people identify as being attracted to men and women.

Some bisexual rights activists say this interpretation is '*biphobia*', based in stigma against bisexuals, and erasing bisexual attraction to non-binary people, however as it is bisexuals themselves who commonly identify as being attracted to men and women, this is an ongoing topic of debate.

Bisexuality is believed by some to be the most common sexual orientation, more common than heterosexuality. This is due to pervasive instances of people identifying as heterosexual at times but bisexual when safe to do so.

Transgender

A person whose gender differs from their sex assigned at birth. The sexual orientation of transgender people is not dependent on gender identity and is as diverse as non-transgender people.

Trans is used as an abbreviation of either transgender or transsexual, or as an umbrella in the same way that *transgender* is used

Trans man refers to a man who was assigned female at birth. He may or may not be identified by others as trans, and may or may not identify himself as trans. It is grammatically and definitionally correct to include a space between *trans* and *man*.

Trans woman refers to a woman who was assigned male at birth. She may or may not be identified by others as trans, and may or may not identify herself as trans. It is grammatically and definitionally correct to include a space between *trans* and *woman*.

Intersex

Describes a person whose sex characteristics (including chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormones, and other reproductive anatomy) are more diverse than narrow medical definitions of male and female. A person may receive an intersex diagnosis at a range of times in their life, including before birth (pre-natal), at birth, at puberty, when trying to conceive, post-mortem, or by chance. When an intersex infant is born with atypical external genitalia, parents and medical professionals typically assign them a binary sex and may perform surgical or medical interventions to conform the infant's body to that assignment.

These practices amount to torture and are a grave violation of human rights. They are increasingly recognised as unethical and abusive as intersex adults are speaking out against medical procedures which they did not consent to. Being intersex does not imply anything regarding one's gender or sexual orientation.

Queer

Broadly used to indicate that one rejects heteronormativity and is not heterosexual – though sometimes queer is also used by heterosexual transgender people. Queer is inherently political; rejecting enforced heterosexual narratives, and rejecting assimilationist homonormative respectability politics that reinforce them. In more simple terms, queer rejects "we're just like you" as the reason LGBTI+ people should have rights.

The term "*Queer*" was originally a slur reclaimed by Black, trans, disabled, HIV+, and other more marginalised rainbow people (particularly people of colour) who could not and did not assimilate into mainstream white gay culture that heterosexuals found palatable.

'Queer' was a response to white gay, lesbian, and bisexual people who didn't respect them, and were happy to throw their rights under the bus to distance themselves from "*the radical queers*" as "*the respectable ones*" and "*normal*", or "*we're just like you*". Queer is sometimes used as an umbrella term to mean LGBTI+, though many queer people reject this. It is also sometimes used as an umbrella for '*not heterosexual and/or not cisgender*'. Because of the non-heterosexual connotation, many heterosexual trans people do not like to be called queer and may see this as being misgendered and called homosexual.

The word *queer* has long been used as a slur, so although it is commonly reclaimed, be a little cautious with its use.