

Appendix A

Glossary

"I'm very sensitive to the English Language. I studied the dictionary obsessively when I was a kid and collect old dictionaries. Words, I think, are very powerful and they convey an intention." – *Drew Barrymore*

This list is neither comprehensive nor inviolable, but it's a work in progress toward those goals. With identity terms, trust the person who is using the term and their definition of it above any dictionary. These definitions are the creation of a cultural commons: emails, on-line discussions, and in-person chats, with the initial curation done by me, then growing into a collaboration between Meg Bolger and me at TheSafeZoneProject.com.

advocate – **1 noun** : a person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a marginalized group. **2 verb** : to actively support/plea in favor of a particular cause, the action of working to end intolerance, educating others, etc.

agender – *adj.* : a person with no (or very little) connection to the traditional system of gender, no personal alignment with the concepts of either man or woman, and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender. Sometimes called gender neutrois, gender neutral, or genderless.

ally /"al-lie"/ – *noun* : a (typically straight and/or cisgender) person who supports and respects members of the LGBTQ community. We consider people to be active allies who take action in support and respect.

"Coming out" as an ally is when you reveal (or take an action that reveals) your support of the LGBTQ community. Being an active supporter can, at times, be stigmatizing, though it is not usually recognized, many allies go through a "coming out process" of their own.

androgyny; androgynous /"an-jrah-jun-ee"; "an-jrah-jun-uss"/ – *adj.* : a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity.

androsexual; androphilic – *adj.* : being primarily sexually, romantically and/or emotionally attracted to some men, males, and/or masculinity.

aromantic – *adj.* : experiencing little or no romantic attraction to others and/or has a lack of interest in romantic relationships/ behavior. Aromanticism exists on a continuum from people who experience no romantic attraction nor have any desire for romantic activities, to those who experience low levels, or romantic attraction only under specific conditions; and many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (see *demiromantic*). Sometimes abbreviated to “aro” (pronounced like “arrow”).

asexual – *adj.* : experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relationships/behavior. Asexuality exists on a continuum from people who experience no sexual attraction nor have any desire for sex, to those who experience low levels, or sexual attraction only under specific conditions; and many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (see *demisexual*). Sometimes abbreviated to “ace.”

Asexuality is different from celibacy in that it is a sexual orientation whereas celibacy is an abstaining from a certain action.

Not all asexual people are aromantic.

bigender – *adj.* : a person who fluctuates between traditionally “woman” and “man” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (or sometimes a third gender in place of man or woman).

bicurious – *adj.* : a curiosity about experiencing attraction to some people of the same gender (similar to questioning), in addition to attraction to those of a different gender.

biological sex – *noun* : a medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth.”

Often seen as a binary but as there are many combinations of chromosomes, hormones, and primary/secondary sex characteristics, it’s more accurate to view this as a spectrum (which is more inclusive of intersex people as well as trans*-identified people).

Is commonly conflated with gender.

biphobia – *noun* : a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, invisibility, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have or express towards bisexual individuals. Biphobia can come from and be seen within the LGBTQ community as well as straight society. **Biphobic** – *adj.* : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes towards bisexual people. Example of bi-invisibility and bi-erasure would be the assumption that any man in a relationship with a woman is straight or anyone dating someone of the same gender means you’re gay. In neither case do we assume anyone could be bisexual.

Important to recognize that many of our “stereotypes” of bisexual people (e.g., they’re overly sexual, greedy, it’s just a phase) have harmful and stigmatizing effects (and that not only straight people but also many queer individuals harbor these beliefs too).

bisexual – *adj.* : **1** having the capacity to be emotionally, physically,

and/or sexually attracted to some men and women. **2** having the capacity to be emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to some people of one’s gender and another gender. This attraction does not have to be equally split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders an individual may be attracted to.

Can simply be shortened to “bi.”

Many people who recognize the limitations of a binary understanding of gender may still use the word bisexual as their sexual orientation label, this is often because many people are familiar with the term bisexual (while less are familiar to the term pansexual).

butch – *noun & adj.* : a person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally, or emotionally. ‘Butch’ is sometimes used as a derogatory term for lesbians, but is also be claimed as an affirmative identity label.

cisgender /“siss-jendur”/ – *adj.* : a person whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity align (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a man). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not transgender, they are cisgender. The word cisgender can also be shortened to “cis.”

“Cis” is a latin prefix that means “on the same side [as]” or “on this side [of].”

cissexism – *noun* : behavior that grants preferential treatment to cisgender people, reinforces the idea that being cisgender is somehow better or more “right” than being transgender, and/or makes other genders invisible.

cisnormativity – *noun* : the assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is cisgender, and that cisgender identities are superior to trans* identities or people. Leads to invisibility of non-cisgender identities.

closeted – *adj.* : an individual who is not open to themselves or others about their (queer) sexuality or gender identity. This may be by choice and/or for other reasons such as fear for one’s safety, peer or family rejection, or disapproval and/or loss of housing, job, etc. Also known as being “in the closet.” When someone chooses to break this silence they “come out” of the closet. See *coming out*.

coming out – **1** the process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify one’s own sexuality or gender identity (to “come out” to oneself). **2** The process by which one shares one’s sexuality or gender identity with others (to “come out” to friends, etc.).

This is a continual, life-long process. Every day, all the time, one has to evaluate and re-evaluate who they are comfortable coming out to, if it is safe, and what the consequences might be.

constellation – *noun* : a way to describe the arrangement or structure of a polyamorous relationship. Also called a *polycule*.

cross-dresser – *noun* : someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex.

demioromantic – *adj.* : little or no capacity to experience romantic attraction until a strong sexual or emotional connection is formed with another individual, often within a sexual relationship.

demisexual – *adj.* : little or no capacity to experience sexual attraction until a strong romantic or emotional connection is formed with another individual, often within a romantic relationship.

down low – *adj.* : typically referring to men who identify as straight but who secretly have sex with men. Down low (or DL) originated in, and is most commonly used by communities of color.

drag king – *noun* : someone who performs masculinity.

drag queen – *noun* : someone who performs femininity.

dyke – *noun* : referring to a masculine presenting lesbian. While often used derogatorily, it can be adopted affirmatively by many lesbians (both more masculine and more feminine presenting lesbians) as a positive self-identity term.

emotional attraction – *noun* : a capacity that evokes the want to engage in emotional intimate behavior (e.g., sharing, confiding, trusting, interdepending), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction, romantic attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.

fag(got) – *noun* : derogatory term referring to a gay person, or someone perceived as queer. Occasionally used as an self-identifying affirming term by some gay men, at times in the shortened form 'fag'.

feminine-of-center; masculine-of-center – *adj.* : a word that indicates a range of terms of gender identity and gender presentation for folks who present, understand themselves, and/or relate to others in a more feminine/masculine way, but don't necessarily identify as women/men. Feminine-of-center individuals may also identify as femme, submissive, transfeminine, etc.; masculine-of-center individuals may also often identify as butch, stud, aggressive, boi, transmasculine, etc.

feminine-presenting; masculine-presenting – *adj.* : a way to describe someone who expresses gender in a more feminine/masculine way. Often confused with feminine-of-center/masculine-of-center, which generally include a focus on identity as well as expression.

femme – *noun & adj.* : someone who identifies themselves as feminine, whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally. Often used to refer to a feminine-presenting queer woman.

fluid(ity) – *adj.* : generally with another term attached, like gender-fluid or fluid-

sexuality, fluid(ity) describes an identity that may change or shift over time between or within the mix of the options available (e.g., man and woman, bi and straight).

FtM; MtF – abbreviation : female-to-male transgender or trans- sexual person; male-to-female transgender or transsexual person. Sometimes abbreviated F2M and M2F.

gay – *adj.* : 1 individuals who are primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. Can be used to refer to men who are attracted to other men, and can be applied to women as well. 2 An umbrella term used to refer to the queer community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

“Gay” is a word that’s had many different meanings throughout time. In the 12th century is meant “happy,” in the 17th century it was more commonly used to mean “immoral” (describing a loose and pleasure-seeking person), and by the 19th it meant a female prostitute (and a “gay man” was a guy who had sex with female prostitutes a lot). It wasn’t until the 20th century that it started to mean what it means today. Interesting, right?

gender binary – *noun* : the idea that there are only two genders and that every person is one of those two.

gender expression – *noun* : the external display of one’s gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally made sense of on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as “gender presentation.”

genderfluid– *adj.* : a gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of boy and girl. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days.

gender identity – *noun* : the internal perception of an one’s gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don’t align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans*, and more. Often confused with biological sex, or sex assigned at birth.

gender neutrois – *adj.* : see *agender*.

gender non-conforming – *adj.* : 1 a gender expression descriptor that indicates a non-traditional gender presentation (masculine woman or feminine man). 2 a gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary. Often abbreviated as “GNC.”

gender normative; gender straight – *adj.* : someone whose gender presentation, whether by nature or by choice, conforms with society’s gender-based expectations.