

The EIC Herald

EQUITY INCLUSION DIVERSITY



THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

The LGBT/LGBTQIA/LGBTQQIAAP/LGBT2SQIA+ acronym is ever evolving, and one simple acronym will never fully encapsulate the diverse array of gender and sexual identities. In this newsletter, we've compiled information about some of the gender and sexual identities that people identify with, but there are many, many more. We're now only starting to uncover names that appropriately represent peoples' every day lived experiences. Because gender and sexuality are so personal, and so important, the most important and most respectful thing is to use the name, pronoun, and sexual identity that a person has chosen, regardless of what the technical definitions are. If you have any questions about how to address names, pronouns, and sexual identities with clients, please reach out to the Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Below is an infographic defining the terms within the LGBT2SQIA+ acronym. As a reminder, many identities are missing from this acronym, and the listed identities may be defined differently by different people. Cont to p 5.

CURIOSITY CORNER

ASK THE EIC?

Have a question? We may be able to answer it!

Email us or drop your question in any EIC box (coming soon)! We'll do our best to respond to all queries while honoring your privacy!

At UBC, we strive to build an inclusive community that welcomes people of all genders and sexual identities.

LGBT2SQIA+ EXPLAINED

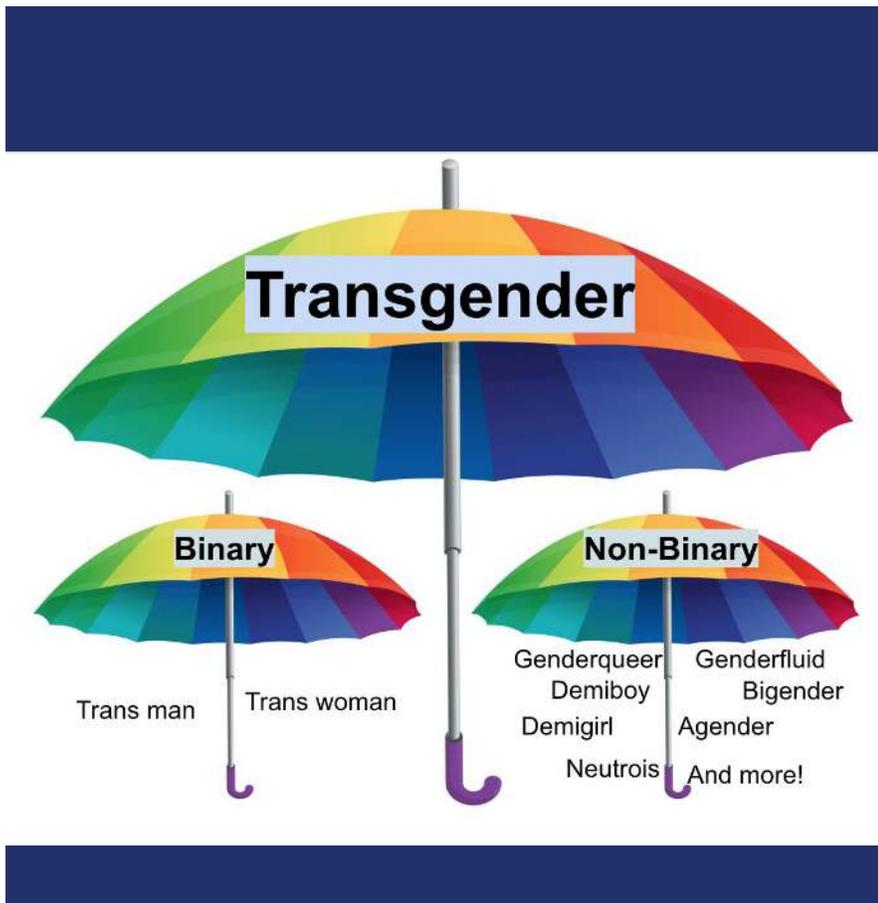
LEARN MORE ABOUT UBC'S POSITIVE SPACE CAMPAIGN.

The Positive Space Campaign is a campus-wide awareness and visibility initiative to make UBC more welcoming to gender and sexual diverse students, staff, faculty, alumni, and allies in all our working, learning, and living environments.

L	LESBIAN A self-identified woman who is romantically/sexually attracted to other self-identified women.
G	GAY A self-identified man who is romantically/sexually attracted to or involved with other self-identified men. 'Gay' can also be used to talk about both men and women or, more generally, the "gay community", but it commonly refers to men.
B	BISEXUAL A person who is romantically/sexually attracted to or involved with people of the same gender or another gender, "both"/all genders, or is open to such attraction. Note: the word "both" appears in quotation marks to reference the root of bi as meaning two, but also to challenge the binary notion that there are only two genders.
T	TRANS, TRANSGENDER OR TRANS-IDENTIFIED A term for people whose gender identity, expression, or behaviour is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad term and "Trans" is shorthand for "transgender." (Note: Transgender is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun, thus "transgender people" is appropriate but "transgenders" is often viewed as disrespectful).
2S	TWO-SPIRIT A contemporary term that refers to the historical and current First Nations people whose individual spirits were or are blend of male and female spirits. This term has been reclaimed by some in Indigenous Native American LGBT communities in order to honor their heritage and provide an alternative to the Western labels of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.
Q	QUEER An umbrella term for a social, intellectual, and/or political movement that seeks to encompass a broad range of sexual identities, behaviours, and expressions. It is also a personal identity that has been "re-claimed" because "queer" has been historically used as a vicious insult. The letter "Q" added to the end of the acronym LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) can refer to either queer or questioning.
Q	QUESTIONING The questioning of one's gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, or all three is a process of exploration by people who may be unsure, still exploring, and concerned about applying a social label to themselves for various reasons.
I	INTERSEX A term to describe people who are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit typical definitions of male or female. The terms 'intersex' and 'trans' are distinct and should not be used interchangeably.
A	ASEXUAL A newer term used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction. Asexuality is not the same as celibacy, which is the willful decision to not act on sexual feelings. Asexual people are quite capable of loving, affectionate, romantic ties to others. In fact there is a lot of diversity in how asexual people experience things like relationships, attraction, and arousal.
+	PLUS SIGN A plus sign (+) is added to represent the infinite variety of identities outside of, or not represented, by this acronym.

positivespace.ubc.ca

Some of the terms in the LGBT2SQIA+ acronym are umbrella terms, meaning they encapsulate many more identities. Transgender is one of those terms. As shown in the infographic below, some transgender identities are based within the gender binary, whereas some encompass multiple genders, while others reject the concept of gender altogether. It's a beautiful spectrum!



Geo Neptune explores the history of the term

"Two-Spirit" and who it pertains to. Does it mean two genders? Can anyone use it to

describe themselves?

TAKING ACTION

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

There are many ways to engage with Allyship material. You can click through the links on this newsletter. You can attend a training. You can join a group that supports Allyship and Advocacy work. At the end of this newsletter, we have listed multiple training and continuing education options for broadening your understanding of anti-oppression work!

For additional information, you are invited to click any or all the links attached to articles and photos!



SERVICE IN ACTION:

“It’s helpful for me to have an awareness of individual experiences while also noting how systems - small and large - might have influence over, or impact my clients.”



See more tips below! Find out how to share your own anti-oppression strategies in action, too.

Being and doing. *Defining an ally.*

Being an Ally is simple, but not always easy. Understanding your personal & professional power, acknowledging your privilege and being aware of your social status are going to be useful key components. It's the application of this personal and professional knowledge that will assist our support for those with less. It's sometimes clunky and confusing. Allyship is using your unearned privilege to support folks who are marginalized, oppressed and/or discriminated against - with special focus on LGBTQAI folks - but the principle applies to all encounters where there is a power dynamic in which we hold more than someone we work with, support or treat.

Advocacy is sometimes a quiet, internal job. Sometimes, it takes a deep examination of our own biases and understanding of cultural influences on how we think, feel and behave. Things that we've not seen, read about or heard about - are sometimes met with fear or apprehension.

The word Ally is a relatively 'new' term that is often misunderstood. Merriam-Webster tells us an ally "provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle:

—often now used specifically of a person who is not a member of a marginalized or mistreated group but who expresses or gives support to that group

The storyline on "Glee" captures something larger that we are seeing with a new generation of allies (allies are people who support LGBT rights but aren't LGBT themselves).— David M. Hall"

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ally>

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Another umbrella term is **Asexual/Aromantic**, meaning a lack of sexual attraction or romantic attraction to others. The infographic below lists a few of the identities under this umbrella, but there are many more. The Asexual/Aromantic orientation is often treated as a disability or mental illness within the medical field, and many advocates argue that this is harmful. The best way to support Asexual and Aromantic clients is to educate ourselves on what healthy Asexuality and Aromanticism looks like. In the TedxTalk below, Danika Vrtar describes her experience as an asexual person. ([See TedxTalk](#))

The I in LGBT2SQIA+ stands for **Intersex!** Intersex people are born with sexual and/or reproductive anatomy that doesn't fit squarely into male and female boxes. It's estimated that about 1% of the worldwide population is intersex, although mainstream culture hardly ever talks about this identity. Below is a wonderful documentary about intersex people, made by intersex people. As a heads up: this documentary refers frequently to genitalia. ([See Video](#))

The word [queer](#) has been reclaimed by many in the LGBT2SQIA+, and means something different to everyone who uses it. **Queer** can be used as an umbrella term to encapsulate the entire LGBT2SQIA+ community, or as a powerful political statement, or as a state of mind. It should be noted that some still find the word queer very offensive. Below is Nadia Cho's written account of what the queer identity means to them.

The last identity we'll cover in this newsletter is **Ally**. Everyone has the opportunity to be an ally, whether a part of the LGBT2SQIA+ community or not. We hope this newsletter demonstrates that there are many subcommunities within the LGBT2SQIA+ community, and each needs our care and support. Below are some ideas of how to be an ally, written by LGBTQ Center of the University of North Carolina.

There are so many more identities to cover, but we could not possibly cover all in one newsletter! If you would like further resources to continue learning more, please reach out to the Equity and Inclusion Committee. Thank you!

SERVICE IN ACTION

This week, I had the privilege of chatting with a couple of my friends about using correct pronouns. I will keep their names anonymous and refer to them by first initials only. R identifies as transmasculine nonbinary, and J identifies as a trans woman. They were kind enough to share their perspectives about why correct pronouns are important and how pronoun use impacts them on a daily basis. I was impressed by their willingness to discuss some vulnerable and sensitive subjects, and felt like their viewpoints shed light on how impactful and important using correct pronouns is. Myself and each of them hope their answers to my questions will help educate people about why using correct pronouns is key to supporting all individuals, particularly those in the LGBTQ+ community.

First of all, what are your pronouns?

R: They/them, xe/xem/xer, and he/him.

J: She/Her/Hers.

Where do you see yourself on the gender spectrum?

R: I'm nonbinary, and I identify as gender fluid and transmasculine nonbinary, so it's a changing identity. I consider myself more on the masculine end with some feminine expression.

J: Personally, I am a woman and I present "femininely". But the answer's not always that simple for everybody. It's hard to for some people to place themselves exactly on the spectrum since it's not just a line between "Man-Other-Woman"; it's a multi-dimensional amorphous shape. Everyone's personal presentation/expression and identity could be anything and go beyond the line that most people think of.

Why is using people's correct pronouns important to you, both from a personal and societal standpoint?

R: It's important to honor how people's identity comes out in their expression. Using correct pronouns acknowledges someone's true self and the diversity of how people choose to express their gender identity. It's saying, "I see you, I respect you, and you are a human being."

J: It's just basic respect. You wouldn't use a name or title for someone if they've expressed that name or title makes them uncomfortable. It's the same with pronouns: refusing to use the correct pronouns for someone is hurtful and reflects poorly on you. From a societal standpoint, it saves lives. Many studies have shown that using people's correct pronouns makes them feel safer, more comfortable, and reduces rates of self-harm and suicide. In general, it leads to overall better mental health.

Do you feel comfortable sharing any experiences you've had with being misgendered? What happened, how did you react, what were your feelings surrounding it, etc.

R: It happens pretty much every day and I hate it every time. It's frustrating and invalidating. Most of the people I'm around on a daily basis get it right, but it happens more often with strangers. It's very frustrating to experience this where I currently live because I've only ever been "they" in the city I moved to for college, because people here didn't know me as female in my hometown. When someone I don't know misgenders me, it triggers my gender dysphoria and causes me to evaluate how I am fitting into the world right now. I ask myself, "What am I doing wrong?" When someone I do know misgenders me, it's annoying but easier to understand. I know they have trained themselves to use the right pronouns and I understand the occasional slip up. Being accidentally misgendered matters a little bit less to me if it's the people I care about versus being out in the world.

J: I'm not going to share any specific instances, but I can share the effects. Every single time I've been misgendered, it's stuck in my mind, and become an eternal source of self-doubt and self-deprecation. I could be having a perfect day and one instance of misgendering could ruin the week. I'll go to sleep at night crying and wonder what I was doing wrong. I never forget about the times I've been misgendered.

How can the people close to you best support and affirm your identity?

R: Thankfully, I have a lot of people close to me who affirm my identity. I like it when people ask questions about it; I enjoy reflecting on it with them and it makes me think about my identity, too. It also connects me to my community when I share my identity with other people. Also, if you hear someone misgender a queer person, you should correct them. If you see it happen, call people out, especially when that person is not in the room. It's also helpful to make space for people to talk about their gender identity, and if they do choose to talk about it, *really* listen and try to understand.

J: Just respect me. Respect my name, my pronouns, and my expression. Don't treat me differently than any other person just because of my identity.

TAKING ACTION

CONTINUED

February was Black History Month

[Click here for a list of books & readings](#)

Articles to consider

[OPRAH: Be a better ally](#)

Additional Information and Resources:

[CE's For Less](#)

[Clearly Clinical Podcast](#)

[Eventbrite](#)