

a brief encyclopedia of

Gender & Sexuality

Terms

in English

a brief encyclopedia of

*Gender &
Sexuality
Terms*
in English



Copyright © 2016 by
Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests

PO Box 3600
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612.343.2060
kaleidoscope@bmclgbt.org
Content and research by Hayley Brooks

Fonts: Volkorn (body)
Raleway (headings)
Satisfy (cover and title page)

To cite this encyclopedia in MLA, please use the following citation:
Brooks, Hayley. "[Article Title]." *A Brief Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Terms in English*. Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests, Oct. 2016. Web. [Date accessed].

To support this encyclopedia and the work of BMC, please visit bmclgbt.org/donate.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
TERMS & PHRASES.....	8
SYMBOLS & FLAGS.....	139
NOTES: TERMS & PHRASES.....	149
NOTES: SYMBOLS & FLAGS.....	175

INTRODUCTION

Within the world of linguistics, there are two major perspectives from which linguists analyze and understand language. The first, linguistic prescription or prescriptivism, holds the belief that there is a certain set of rules speakers of a given language must follow. Edward Finegan articulates, “prescriptive grammarians ask ‘What *should* English be like—what forms should people use and what functions should they serve?’”¹ In contrast, linguistic description or descriptivism seeks to understand the way that language is used by its speakers in different contexts. Finegan states that descriptive grammarians ask “What *is* English (or another language) like—what are its forms and how do they function in various situations?”²

Many of the rules English prescriptive grammarians seek to uphold as normative are based on languages that have fallen into disuse, such as Latin. The practice of understanding English through Latin grammar dates back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the boundary between these two perspectives is not rigid, I have chosen to take a descriptive perspective for the purpose of this brief encyclopedia. Speaking in general terms, prescriptivism often fails to account for the vast diversity in language and the importance of dialect and nuance in the ways communities of people use language to communicate. Differences between dialects and pronunciations arise from the diversity of humanity itself—in the vast and varied ways we experience the world.

With the question of descriptive versus prescriptive linguistics comes a question of power: who has the authority to prescribe a language’s rules for a population of that language’s speakers? Who writes the dictionaries and

develops educational curriculum? While many view the dictionary as an unbiased view of a language, a dictionary is imbued with the same prejudices and biases as the people who wrote it. Historically, the dialects of the privileged (white, American, male, heterosexual, cisgender, middle and upper class, etc.) have been elevated at the expense of other dialects. This elevation is a result of linguistic prescription. On the other hand, some dictionaries, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, take a descriptive approach, in attempts to accurately give an image of how and where a specific word is being used. As I researched the words in this encyclopedia, I sought a wide variety of sources in order to understand the different ways these words have been used throughout the history of Modern English. As well as consulting the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, which take a nuanced, albeit not wholly accurate, approach to defining words and their uses, I consulted *Urban Dictionary*, *Wikipedia*, and online “gay slang” glossaries, among others. These sources offer a popular-based understanding of language, rather than reflecting that of an elite, prescriptive understanding. I also frequently turned to Phillip Herbst’s *Wimmin, Wimps & Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* and refer to his work throughout this encyclopedia. While the research I did is not exhaustive, nor is it a complete and total picture of these words and their relation to sexuality and gender in English, I have attempted to consider many of the different ways that different communities have used these terms.

Likely to the chagrin of prescriptive grammarians, those who use and speak a language *will* use it in a way that makes sense for their identities, communities, and experiences, without much attention to the ways these grammarians believe the language *should* be used. As such,

descriptive linguistics are rooted in the reality of language and its connection to experience, trauma, communities, and identity in a way that prescriptivism cannot be. Many dialects and terms have arisen out of resistance to the ways that the standard dialect failed to accurately represent a community or group of people, or as a means of communicating between members of a marginalized community. For example, the term “homophile” was coined as an alternative to the pathologized “homosexual,” and allowed those involved in the Homophile Movement to connect, communicate and more accurately represent who they believed themselves to be.

Within my research I noticed several patterns in the trajectory of words relating to sexuality and gender. First, there have been attempts throughout history to reclaim slurs or stigmatized words as a means of shifting who has the power to construct meaning. At the same time, other terms have been abandoned by members of a marginalized group as a result of their use by those in a privileged group. In this dynamic, reclaimed words have been highly contentious within marginalized communities while the abandoned terms were mostly regarded as irredeemable. I think both the reclamation and the abandonment of these words are rooted in a collective trauma, in the ways some of these words have been and continued to be hurled at marginalized groups as a means of striking them silent and taking from them the means by which to understand themselves. Different groups of people have reacted in different ways to reclaiming and abandoning slurs, but the reality of language and its power over our lives is constant.

This brings me to another pattern I noticed: the development of self-referential terms in response to terms created by psychologists, scientists, the state and others

with power to describe groups of people. For example, the terms “homophile” and “gay” were used as an alternative (and often as code words) to homosexual; the term “Two-Spirit” was created as an alternative to the anthropological term “berdache.” The difference between these self-referential terms and their counterparts is that they are imbued with a more accurate and nuanced understanding of gender or sexual identity and allow people to name themselves rather than be named.

The final pattern I noticed was the notion of “marked” and “unmarked” identities. The coining of the term “transgender” precedes its counterpart “cisgender” by several decades. In this instance, transgender people are “marked” or considered a deviation from the norm while the norm goes “unmarked” or unnamed. The coining of “cisgender” in 1999, about 25 years after “transgender” was coined³ and about 50 years after “transsexual” was coined⁴, acts as resistance to the normalization of cisgender identities at the expense of transgender identities. Other examples of this include the implicit biases the terms “masculine” and “manly” have held throughout history as being representative of “all mankind.” This dates back to Old English, where the term *mennisc*, now translated to “mannish,” was used to mean “human, human-like, natural.”⁵ In this case, masculine has been and in many ways continues to be considered the norm from which the feminine deviates. Finally, the terms “homosexual” and “heterosexual” (at the time being defined as attraction to “both” sexes) were coined around the same time to signal those “unnatural” inclinations scientists believed some people had towards their own sex. The term “heterosexual” was first coined in the late nineteenth century with the same modern definition as “bisexual,” and it wasn’t until the late 1920s and early 1930s that it

acquired its current definition and came to be viewed as the “dominant normative type of sex—sex between a man and woman.”⁶ Within this particular history, the concepts of homosexuality and bisexuality were named while heterosexuality went unnamed for several decades after the term “homosexuality” was first used in English in 1892. Throughout this encyclopedia, you’ll come to see the many ways that terms describing those considered part of the “norm” often have synonyms that describe their normality, such as “straight” for heterosexual. This stands in contrast to terms like “queer” and “gay,” among others. You’ll also notice that for many words, there is no counterpart, that what is “unmarked” continues to go unnamed. For example, there is no slang or shorthand term for a young feminine, heterosexual girl, like there is for a young masculine girl (tomboy, boi, etc.). What this phenomenon suggests is that language bears an immense power over the ways we understand ourselves in contrast, or often in opposition, to others. Of course, this changes based on our social locations and whether we are considered the norm or the deviation in the varied ways we identify ourselves. This is simultaneously present with voids of language to describe who we are and how we experience the world. Both are facets of a precarious power dynamic, where the agency and autonomy to name ourselves is taken from us.

Throughout my research, I was reminded again and again of the malleability of language and the ways its speakers shape and mold language to fit or expand their worldviews. As you read through this encyclopedia, I hope you come to understand this aspect of language and its relation to the way we understand sexuality and gender. In this, it’s also important to understand that this is a very small survey of the ways language affects this understanding, for a variety of reasons. The first is that English is only one

language in a world of thousands of languages, and that English is the tongue of colonizers. In many cases, English came to replace a native tongue that represented a vastly different way of understanding gender and sexuality. The second is that this encyclopedia is focused on U.S. English and on the history of terms relating to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities in the U.S. I chose this focus because this encyclopedia is intended for Mennonite and Church of the Brethren communities interested in challenging homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. The paradox here is that language is often used as a tool of liberation but as long as we continue to use this language, we are implicated in its history. In this, it is important to recognize this brief encyclopedia as merely a start to expanding and opening up our understanding of sexuality and gender. It's also important to place at the center of this analysis, the liberation of "all the oppressed," in the words of the Gay Liberation Front.⁷ This means prioritizing those who are multiply-marginalized and those whose language has been violently taken from them.

It is also important to note that many of the sources I consulted record dates for which a word or phrase was first used. These dates are helpful in placing the terms in a historical context, but are not a completely accurate picture of when these words first began to be used. Words are usually spoken before they are found in print and dictionaries are only capable of recording a word's first use in print, not speech. Furthermore, a dictionary will only record a word after it has been in use for a given amount of time. This cataloging and tracking of words has become easier with the advancement of technology and the internet, but still cannot account for a word's use in speech and conversation.

I hope you find the histories of all these words as fascinating as I did. Within each of these complicated and nuanced words is a rich history of power, struggle, liberation and oppression. The social contract we all enter when we use a language, is, at its core, about power. In many ways, we can take language back, to mold it to honor our truths. But before we commit to this complicated and contentious form of rebellion, we must first know how and where these words came into use.

ACTUP (acronym)

ACTUP stands for AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. ACTUP is an “international direct action advocacy group working to impact the lives of people with AIDS.”¹ The group formed in March 1987 at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center in New York. Their slogan, which can be seen in much of artist Keith Haring’s work, is “Silence=Death.” The group does not have leaders and is “effectively an anarchist network.”² Key players throughout the group’s history include Larry Kramer, Sarah Schulman, Marsha P. Johnson and Sean Strub. According to their website, ACTUP is a “diverse, non-partisan group of individuals united in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis.”³ Their website also states, “One of the reasons ACTUP was founded was because health officials, government researchers, medical bureaucrats, doctors and pharmaceutical company executives were believed to be the ‘AIDS experts’ and held all the power over people living with AIDS.”⁴ ACTUP took part in numerous ZAPS and other demonstrations to influence public opinion, AIDS/HIV research and legislation affecting those living with AIDS and HIV.

adhesive love (n.)

The phrase “adhesive love” is a phrase used in Walt Whitman’s “Calamus” poems in *Leaves of Grass*. The poems have historically been thought of as an indication of Whitman’s bisexuality or homosexuality. The term has been used in other contexts to describe male same-sex attraction.¹

ally (n. and v.)

Sometimes referred to as a social justice ally. Within

ALLY, CONTINUED

the context of the LGBTQ community, ally denotes someone who is not LGBTQ (i.e. HETEROSEXUAL and CIS-GENDER), but who supports the LGBTQ community. According to *WM People*, a social justice ally is “a person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically a member of a dominant group standing beside members of a group being discriminated against or treated unjustly.”¹ As a concept, allyship or allyhood was developed in *The Development of Social Justice Allies During College* by E.M. Broido in 2000, *Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development* by K.E. Edwards in 2006, *Developing Social Justice Allies* by Broido, et al. in 2005 and others.² The term is an important aspect of social justice theory, and is used in anti-racist, feminist, and LGBTQ theory and practice. Social justice educator Robbie Routenberg states that, “allyhood is a process and not an identity one can claim.”³

In *Keywords for Radicals*, Mab Segrest defines ally as, “People in historically dominant groups who align themselves politically with historically oppressed groups with the goal of dismantling oppressive systems.”⁴ Segrest argues that feminist intersectionality theory and praxis “led the way in making the multiple valences of power clear so that such alliances are—at best—complex negotiations of positionality and privilege.”⁵

androgynie (n.)

HISTORY

The term androgynie is derived from fourteenth century French *androgynie*, from Latin *androgynē*, from Greek *andro* and *gyno*, meaning male and female in one.¹ The

ANDROGYNE, CONTINUED

word was sometimes used in the seventeenth century Latin forms *androgynus* and *androgyna*. In 1552, the term meant “a being uniting physical characteristics of both sexes.”² In 1587, it was also used as a synonym for “an effeminate man, a EUNUCH.”³ In 1848, it was used as an adjective, as a synonym for androgynous.⁴ According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the term came from Medieval Latin and Greek and was a synonym for hermaphrodite. In this sense, it was often used pejoratively “to suggest hermaphroditism, effeminacy and sexual ambivalence, all of which have often had negative images in Western culture.”⁵ In his 2001 book, *Wimmin, Wimps & Wallflowers*, Phillip Herbst defines androgynie in this sense, “Androgynie has come into currency to describe lesbians or gay men who display both masculine and feminine traits and therefore are difficult to categorize by gender.”⁶

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the term is based on its historical definitions, but is used to describe a separate gender identity from male and female. *Nonbinary.org* defines androgynie as, “an identity under the nonbinary and transgender umbrellas.”⁷ In this way, it can be a blend of both or neither of the binary genders. In 2014, when Facebook made 56 different genders available for its users, androgynie and androgynous were included. *Androgynie Online* provides a helpful understanding of androgynie as a gender identity, “What differentiates androgynes from crossdressers and transsexuals is that they do not identify fully with either masculinity or femininity: they are either somewhere between the two, or they consider themselves to be something else entirely.”⁸

arsenokoite (n.)

Arsenokoite is a Greek portmanteau found in the New Testament, coming from *arsen* “man” and *koite* “bed.”¹ The word was very rare in ancient Greek and occurs “only 77 times in extant Greek manuscripts.”² It is likely that Paul coined the word, and because he did not define it when he used it, the meaning was clear to Paul’s first century readers. In the New Testament, the word appears in 1 Corinthians and is often translated to homosexual. Other scholars theorize that the “best historic possibility for its meaning is cult, shrine or temple prostitution.”³ Others suggest that it is the dominant partner in a homosexual encounter. *Gay Christian 101* argues that, “defining arsenokoites based on the meaning of arseno and koite tells us nothing about the meaning as Paul and his readers understood it.”⁴ There is not currently a corresponding translation of arsenokoite to English.

asexual (adj. and n.)

Asexual is a combination form, from the *a-* prefix and Latin *sexus*. In biology, the term is used to describe organisms without sex and was formerly applied to cryptograms. It was first used in this sense in 1830.¹ In general contexts, the term means “without sexuality,” and has been used in this sense from 1896.² The adverb “asexually” preceded the adjective in 1862 and the noun “asexuality” is attested from 1877.³ According to the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN), “An asexual person is a person who does not experience sexual attraction.”⁴ AVEN also articulates that asexuality is “an intrinsic part of who we are,” and not a choice like celibacy.⁵ In the acronym LGBTQIA, the ‘A’ usually stands for asexual. In the field of sexology and human sexuality research, asexuality has been

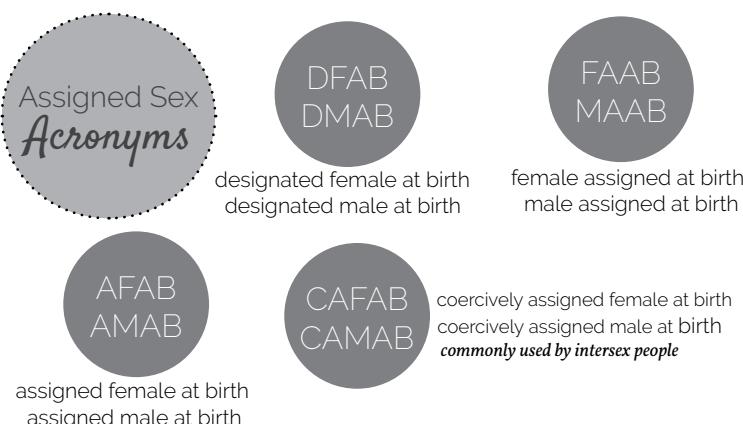
ASEXUAL, CONTINUED

known since at least the 1940s, but little research has been done about the sexual orientation.⁶

assigned sex (n.)

Assigned sex is “the sex one is labeled at birth, generally by a medical or birthing professional, based on a cursory examination of external and/or physical sex characteristics such as genitalia and cultural concepts of male and female sexed bodies.”¹ This designation is typically used to label a child’s gender. According to *Gender Wiki*, “this is a way to refer to the sex that was put on your birth certificate without making assumptions about your actual/current sex, body or identity.”² The concept of assigned sex can also be used to describe the ways children and people are socialized into the gender binary and the differences between male and female socialization. This is also an important distinction from terms such as “genetic,” biological” or “birth sex” because, “These phrases can be difficult for transgender people as it makes it sound as if their

DIAGRAM 1



ASSIGNED SEX, CONTINUED

identity is less ‘real’ than that of a cisgender person.”³ Other terms that accompany assigned sex are the acronyms: AFAB/AMAB, FAAB/MAAB, DFAB/DMAB and CAFAB/CAMAB. See DIAGRAM 1.

ball culture (n.)

The term “ball culture” is used to describe an LGBT subculture that first began in Harlem, New York in the mid-twentieth century. It was famously captured in the 1990 documentary, *Paris is Burning*. *Transriot* reports that ball culture began in the 1920s and 1930s in New York and that early balls reflected the “inter-racial nature of the Harlem Renaissance.”⁴ Also called the house system and the ballroom community, ball culture is centered on a system of different houses, where members of each house use the house name as their last name to compete in drag pageants.⁵ At drag balls or pageants, people “walk” or compete for trophies and prizes in different categories, including: realness, performance (vogue), sex siren, runway, bizarre, and others. Other categories include: Butch Queens, Femme Queens, Butch Queen Up in Drag, and Women, Men and House Parents.⁶ The term voguing, as popularized by Madonna in 1990, is derived from ball culture.⁴ According to the House of Nuance located in Toronto, Canada, ball culture is a “relatively new phenomenon” in Canada; the House of Monroe was established in 2008 in Toronto, followed by the Toronto Kiki Ballroom Alliance, which is a training ground for young participants.⁵ Houses also often take the names of fashion icons and “offer their ‘children’ a sense of belonging, as well as mentors.”⁶ Terms that arose in ball culture and later became popularized through mainstream media are: drag mother, fierce,

BALL CULTURE, CONTINUED

work it and fabulous/fabulousness.⁷ According to *Wikipedia*, ball culture is “rooted in necessity and defiance.”⁸

bear (n.)

In the context of the gay male community, a bear is “a large, hirsute homosexual or bisexual man.”¹ The *Oxford English Dictionary* records this usage from 1989. Other sources attest bear being used in this sense since the early 1980s.² Bears also form clubs modeled after biker clubs and have their own pride flag. Many of these groups participate in Pride parades around the world.³

beard (n.)

In the context of LGBTQ culture, the term beard denotes a “person who pretends to be publicly involved in a heterosexual relationship with a homosexual person in order to help conceal that person’s homosexuality.”¹ The first recorded use of the term in this sense was in 1972.² Another source states that the term began to be used in this manner in the mid-1960s and that “flinking” was used in a similar sense.³ The term is still in modern usage with a similar meaning. Herbst states that beard was also used as a slang term for female pubic hair from at least the eighteenth century.⁴

binder (n.)

In a general sense, the term binder has been used to mean “anything used to bind; a band, a bandage, etc.” from 1695.¹ In the context of gender and sexuality, binding means “flattening breasts by the use of constrictive materials.”² Binders are commonly worn by TRANS MEN, but also by ANDROGYNOUS, NONBINARY and GENDER FLUID people, as well as by CROSSDRESSERS and

BINDER, CONTINUED

performers. There are many motivations behind breast binding, which include, but are not limited to: “accelerated recovery by reducing movement after an injury or surgery, for cosplay, crossplay and costuming, concealment of breasts or breast development, beauty and aesthetics, less-feminine appearance, suppression of GENDER DYSPHORIA, lactation suppression, [and] athletics.”³ Today many companies create high quality binders that minimize injury and bodily damage. Ace bandages and uses of other material to bind the breast cause rib and lung damage, and should be avoided.

biphobia (n.)

The term biphobia is a portmanteau modeled after the term homophobia. The term is not included in most dictionaries, including the *Oxford English Dictionary*, so its origins are obscure. Its first appearance in print is likely in “Moving Beyond Binary Thinking” in *Homophobia: How we all pay the price* by Robyn Ochs and M. Diehl in 1992.¹ Ochs and Diehl define biphobia in several different ways, “Biphobia is fear of the other and fear of the space between our categories.”² In *Bi any other name: bisexual people speak out*, the term is defined as, “the fear of intimacy or closeness to people who don’t identify with either the hetero- or homosexual orientation.”³ The term was created and is used today to describe oppression that is unique to bisexual people, as well as the exclusion of bisexual people from both heterosexual and gay/lesbian communities.

bisexual (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

Bisexual is a combination form, combining the Lat-

BISEXUAL, CONTINUED

in word *sexus* with the prefix *bi-*. In 1824, the term came from botany, meaning a plant with functioning sex organs of both sexes.¹ In 1914, the word's meaning shifted to: "sexually attracted to individuals of both sexes."² The noun with the same definition is attested from 1922, but was not in general use until the 1950s.³ In 1892, in Charles Gilbert Chaddock's translation of Richard von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*, the term was used in the sense of the modern definition.⁴ The adjective was largely used in sexology studies of the nineteenth century. The term ambisexual was used in a similar manner. The humorous coinage based on ambidextrous, "ambisexual" is recorded from 1929.⁵ Before the 1920s, the term was used to describe a person who was both feminine and masculine in emotional and physical characteristics and wasn't yet used to describe sexuality.⁶

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the term bisexuality is defined in a variety of ways. According to the *Bisexual Resource Center*, the definition is "the potential to be attracted, romantically and/or sexually, to people of more than one sex, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree."⁷ There is a long history of bisexual activism in the United States. In 1972, Don Fass founded the National Bisexual Liberation Group, which issued *The Bisexual Expression*. In 1976, Harriet Levi and Maggi Rubenstein founded the San Francisco Bisexual Center, which is the longest surviving bisexual community center. In 1983, the Boston Bisexual Women's Network was founded and today is the oldest existing bisexual women's group. The oldest national organization in the U.S. today, BiNet USA, was founded in 1990. In September

BISEXUAL, CONTINUED

2012, Berkeley, California introduced a day recognizing bisexuals, declaring September 23 to be Bisexual Pride and Bi Visibility Day.⁸

There is also some contention about the term bisexual reifying the GENDER BINARY. Some bisexual activists use "Bi+" to signal all sexualities that include attraction to more than one sex or gender to address this. Some use the term because it is more widely known and accessible than other terms such as PANSEXUAL OR POLYSEXUAL. Many also define bisexuality as being attracted to their same gender and other genders, rather simply men and women.

bisexual erasure (n.)

Also called "bisexual invisibility." The *GLAAD Media Reference Guide* states that bisexual erasure is a "pervasive problem in which the existence or legitimacy of bisexuality (either in general or in regard to an individual) is questioned or denied outright."¹ The first entry defining the term in *Urban Dictionary* was published in 2011 as, "The tendency to ignore, remove, falsify, or reexplain evidence of bisexuality in history, academia, news, media and other primary sources. In its most extreme form, bisexual erasure can include denying that bisexuality exists."² In 2000, scholar Kenji Yoshino wrote "The epistemic contract of bisexual erasure" in *The Stanford Law Review*, which explored the motivations behind bisexual erasure. American psychologist Beth Firestein, who has written extensively about bisexuality, states, "bisexuality has gained visibility, although progress is uneven and awareness of bisexuality is still minimal or absent in many of the more remote regions of our country and internationally."³ Firestein wrote her first book on bisexuality in 1996.

BISEXUAL ERASURE, CONTINUED

Bisexual erasure is a component of BIPHOBIA.⁴

boi (n.)

The term boi was coined in black LGBTQ communities, and has been used to refer specifically to black gay people.¹ It was later used to describe gender and also found popularity in LATINX and Asian communities. According to a 2004 *Urban Dictionary* entry, the term has been used in lesbian communities to describe a “young, transgendered [sic] androgynous/masculine person and present themselves in a young, boyish way, often also identifies as genderqueer. In the gay community: a young gay man. An alternate spelling of boy often used by young teenage boys.”² Other definitions of the term include a submissive butch in BDSM, or a younger butch in BUTCH-FEMME culture. It has also been used for young TRANS MEN, or as a term of endearment for butches by femmes. According to *Wikipedia*, it “may also refer to someone assigned female at birth, who generally does not identify as, or only partially identifies as feminine, female, a girl or woman.”³ Some bois may be trans or intersex, while many identify as LESBIANS, DYKES or QUEER. *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves* articulates, “The term boi is sometimes used by young trans men or by cisgender lesbians who see themselves as somewhat masculine.”⁴

Boston marriage (n.)

The expression “Boston marriage” was originally coined by author Henry James in his 1886 novel *The Bostonians*.¹ In the novel, the term was used to describe two single women living together, independent of men. It was primarily used in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The term has not completely fallen

BOSTON MARRIAGE, CONTINUED

out of use; it was defined in a 2007 *Urban Dictionary* entry as, “A polite term to describe two women living in a household and sharing expenses, whether in a platonic or lesbian relationship.”² The expression also signals ambiguity in a sexual relationship between two women; several definitions include some iteration of “without necessarily having a sexual relationship,”³ “are sometimes sexually involved,”⁴ etc. This may be a result of the social stigma surrounding lesbian relationships at the time when the term was first coined.

bulldagger & bulldyke (n.)

The term “bulldagger” has primarily been black and Southern usage, to denote, “A masculine (butch) lesbian or one who takes an aggressive role in sexual activities.”¹ The term “bulldyke” was used first among heterosexuals, as a slang word meaning “a ‘masculine’ (butch) lesbian, sometimes any lesbian or any woman regarded as ‘mannish.’”² Bulldyke first appeared in writing in the early 1920s, as part of black American slang. Bulldagger is “said to have been vital in creating working-class lesbian communities in various ethnic groups in the U.S.”³ The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* and the *Online Etymology Dictionary* suggest the terms were first used in the late 1920s and early 1930s.⁴ The origins of the term are obscure, but some “romantic speculation links [bulldyke] to the name of the Celtic warrior-queen Boadicea, who organized an insurrection against the colonizing Romans. Relating the word to the office of the ancient bull-slayer priestess, Grahn suggests that Boadicea—whose name she claims was actually Boudica, pronounced ‘Boo-uh-dike-ay’—may have performed the ritual killing of the bull, which was viewed as a god.”⁵

BULLDAGGER, CONTINUED

Today, the terms are used in lesbian communities to connote an especially masculine or BUTCH lesbian. Outside of those contexts, the terms are often used pejoratively, especially by heterosexual people.

butch (adj. and n.)

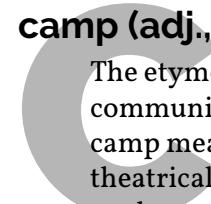
HISTORY

Butch has an unknown origin, but is thought to be short for butcher or coming from the nickname of U.S. outlaw George Cassidy in 1902.¹ The sense of “aggressive lesbian” is attested from the 1940s in the United States.² The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines butch as “a tough youth or man; a lesbian of masculine appearance and behavior.”³ The term was used in working-class lesbian bars from the 1930s up through the early 1970s, in the relational style butch/femme between lesbians.⁴ Herbst also articulates, “The butch-femme style is only one among a diverse array of relational styles in the lesbian community, but it was the first publicly visible one among lesbians in this country.”⁶ The term first appeared in the late nineteenth century, but first to refer to young boys and “tough” young men.⁵ It was also used to describe a type of short haircut first worn by men and then adopted by some lesbians in urban working-class culture. Starting in the 1930s, the term butch came to be thought of as a type of lesbian identity. This identity was generally conceptualized as masculine, especially in appearance, but also in behavior. For this reason in the 1970s and 1980s, some lesbian feminists challenged the butch/femme style, viewing it as a patriarchal way of relating to other lesbians.⁷

BUTCH, CONTINUED

CURRENT DEFINITION

Butch is still used in a similar sense to its historic definition, but has also expanded to include identities outside of lesbianism. The term is also used for masculine gay men, and bisexual women and men, as well as GENDERQUEER and NON-BINARY people. For the most part, the term describes GENDER EXPRESSION, not a stand-alone GENDER IDENTITY. Some lesbians argue that because of their historical definitions, the terms butch and femme should be used exclusively to refer to lesbians.

camp (adj., n. and v.)


The etymology of “camp” in the context of the LGBTQ community is obscure, but the first recorded use of camp meaning “ostentatious, exaggerated, affected, theatrical; effeminate or homosexual; pertaining to or characteristic of homosexuals” was in 1909.¹ The noun “campery” meaning “camp behavior or conduct” is recorded from 1966.² The *Online Etymology Dictionary* states that the term was homosexual slang, meaning “tasteless” and may have come from the mid-seventeenth century French word *camper* meaning to “portray, pose.”³ In *American Slang*, Robert Chapman relates the phrase “camp it up” to the French phrase *se camper*, meaning “put oneself in a bold, provocative posture.”⁴ The term was popularized by the 1964 Susan Sontag essay “Notes on Camp.” It was also used in London theatrical slang in the early twentieth century and was often used to describe men playing women’s parts in theater. Throughout its history, it has been linked to the arts. It may have also been used to describe a place where gay men gather. The adjective has been used to describe movies such as *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *The Gang’s All Here*, *Hairspray*, and others.

cisgender (adj.)

Cisgender is a combination form, combining the Latin prefix *cis*-, meaning “on this side” with the noun gender, after transgender. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines cisgender as, “Designating someone whose sense of personal identity corresponds to the sex and gender assigned to him or her at birth.”¹ This sense is attested from 1999. According to Paula Blank of *The Atlantic*, the term was coined in the 1990s and first appeared in academic journals, but is now widely used on the internet.²

There is some contention as to whether cisgender will have the same staying power as transgender, heterosexual and homosexual have had. Some linguists have pointed out that “trans” is a more common prefix in English than “cis” is, which may challenge the longevity of the term. Blank states that, “linguists agree that the survival of a neologism relies, above all, on whether it names a stable and coherent concept, an idea that will last.”³

The term’s definition has remained unchanged since its coinage, because it is a relatively new word. Cisgender is used in transgender and queer communities as an alternative to terms like “biological,” “birth” and “genetic” gender because these terms place cisgender identities at the center while marginalizing transgender identities. The term also acts to normalize transgender identities, so that cisgender identities do not go unnamed and therefore considered the norm while transgender identities are considered OTHER.

cissexism (n.)

Cissexism is a combination form, combining the Latin

CISSEXISM, CONTINUED

prefix *cis*- (after cisgender) with sexism. The related term cissexual privilege was coined by Julia Serano in her 2007 book, *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*.¹ Prior to that, the term “cisgender privilege” appeared in academic literature. Serano and other sources define the term as “the set of unearned advantages that individuals who identify with their biological sex accrue solely due to having a cisgender identity.”² A 2015 entry in *Urban Dictionary* defines cissexism as, “the prejudice and discrimination against people who are not cisgender.”³

Like HETEROSEXISM and HOMOPHOBIA, cissexism is often used as the term to describe institutional practices and policies that oppress trans people, while TRANSPHOBIA describes societal attitudes towards trans people. The *Queer Dictionary* defines the term as, “the belief that transgender people are inherently inferior to cisgender people.”⁴ It is also used to describe the essentialist notion that gender and sex are the same thing and that only two genders and/or sexes exist. The term allows activists, organizers, writers and others to specifically name the institutional biases that exist against trans people. *Non-binary.org* also notes that cissexism is “harmful to all kinds of transgender people, including non-binary people.”⁵

closet & come out (n. and v.)

HISTORY

The first recorded use of the phrase “to come out of the closet” in English is recorded in 1963, meaning “to admit (something) openly, to cease to conceal, especially one’s homosexuality.”¹ In a broader sense, to come out in the sense of “to show oneself publicly

CLOSET & COME OUT, CONTINUED

(in some character or fashion); to declare oneself (in some way); to make a public declaration of opinion" is attested from 1637.² The *Online Etymology Dictionary* states that "out" in the sense of "to expose as a closet homosexual" is first recorded in 1990 and to avow "one's homosexuality" is dated from the 1970s.³

In 1953, Marilyn Rieger of the Mattachine Society "proposed homosexuals must 'come out into the open.' The purpose of 'coming out,' she said was not to flaunt the homosexual's difference before the world but rather to upend misconceptions by showing homosexuals to be simply 'men and women whose homosexuality is irrelevant to our ideals, our principles, our hopes and aspirations.'"⁴ The phrase can also be found in the terms "OUT," "closet case," "closet queen," and "closet queer." The latter three words describe those who are not open about their gender identity or sexual orientation. These phrases emerged during the 1970s. The phrase "coming out" also "derives from the language of women's culture, referring to débutantes."⁵ Chauncey articulates, "Like much of campy gay terminology, 'coming out,' was an arch play on the language of women's culture, in this case the expression used to refer to the ritual of a débutante's being formally introduced to, or 'coming out' into the society of her cultural peers."⁶

Herbst articulates that in *Gay New York*, Chauncey argues that "the term does not appear in any records or literature of gay men or lesbians before [the 1960s], cautioning us against using it uncritically and ahistorically to refer to pre-1960s gay society."⁷ Chauncey also states that coming out in this sense was conceptualized not as "coming out of the closet," but "coming

CLOSET & COME OUT, CONTINUED

out into" gay society, as seen in the drag balls patterned after débutante and masquerade balls in many U.S. cities.⁸

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the phrases closet and come out (and their derivations: coming out, closeted, out, OUTING, etc.) are used to describe the self disclosure of one's gender identity or sexual orientation (if they are not cisgender and/or heterosexual), either publicly or to specific people or groups of people. The Gender Equity Resource Center of UC Berkeley defines coming out as "a lifelong process of understanding, accepting and acknowledging your identity as LGBTQ+ or a combination of these identities."⁹ The *TransWhat? Glossary* also defines coming out in trans-specific terms, "*From a non-transitioned person*: disclosing to someone that you are trans, and that your preferred gender is not the one that you were assigned at birth. *From a transitioned person*: disclosing to someone else that you have transitioned, and were not originally assigned as a member of the gender in which you currently live."¹⁰ The narratives surrounding coming out have become sort of a sub-genre of the popular video streaming service, YouTube. You can find hundreds of videos on YouTube of individuals sharing their coming out stories, which has increased visibility for the LGBTQ community.

The idea of coming out is often challenged as being the result of HETERONORMATIVITY. Phrases like "inviting in" as an alternative for "coming out" have been suggested by some members of the LGBTQ community. Other phrases such as DOWN LOW are used in African American communities in a similar manner to "closeted."

compulsory heterosexuality (n.)

The term “compulsory heterosexuality” was coined by lesbian writer, poet, and feminist Adrienne Rich in her 1980 essay “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence.” In the essay, Rich states, “I am concerned here with two other matters as well: first, how and why women’s choice of women as passionate comrades, life partners, co-workers, lovers, community has been crushed, invalidated, forced into hiding and disguise; and second, the virtual or total neglect of lesbian existence in a wide range of writings, including feminist scholarship.”¹ The term has also been defined as, “the idea that female heterosexuality is both assumed and enforced by a PATRIARCHAL society.”² The expression has been used to describe the ways HETEROPATRIARCHY enforces heterosexuality, especially for women.

cross-dressing & transvestite (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

Cross-dressing meaning “to dress in clothes of the opposite sex, as a transvestite” is attested from 1966 and the noun cross-dresser is attested from 1976.¹ The term is a translation of German *tranvestismus* and *transvestiten* by Edward Carpenter in 1911. The word transvestite comes from the Latin prefix *trans-* and *vestire* “to clothe.” The noun “transvestism” is recorded from 1911. In its original sense, transvestite meant “the action of dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex; the condition of deriving pleasure from dressing in clothes appropriate to the opposite sex,” from 1928.² The term travesty, now used in a different sense, “passed through French and Italian; it generally has a figurative use in English, but has been used in the literal sense of ‘wearing clothes of the opposite sex’

CROSS-DRESSING, CONTINUED

(often as a means of concealment or disguise) since at least 1823 and travestiment is recorded by 1832.”³ These terms were preceded by the clinical word *Eonism*, meaning “transvestism, especially of a man,” first recorded in 1913. *Eonism* is derived from Chevalier Charles d’Eon, a French adventurer and diplomat who lived from 1728 to 1810, who was assigned male at birth but later in life lived and dressed as a woman and may have also identified as a woman.⁴

The concept and its terms were popularized by German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld. In North American usage, the terms have been used to describe men who have “social and legal identities as men, who dress as women on certain occasions, who are usually sexually oriented toward women; and who do not consider themselves to be gay or drag queens.”⁵ In LGBTQ communities, the term cross-dresser is usually preferred to transvestite because “transvestite carries too heavy a load of psychological and medical pathologizing.”⁶ The term was introduced to English relatively recently, but the concept of cross-dressing is ancient. Herbst states that there is a “long history of women dressing as men to claim opportunities, jobs or liberties available only to men.”⁷ Cross-dressing has also been a religious ritual in many contexts (see DRAG). It wasn’t until the nineteenth century that cross-dressing came under medical consideration, and “it was also at this relatively recent time that it came to be regarded as a ‘mental illness.’”⁸ It is referred to in the Hebrew Bible, in Greek, Norse and Hindu mythology, in the Japanese theater Kabuki and Korean shamanism.

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the terms are used to describe those who wear

CROSS-DRESSING, CONTINUED

clothes considered appropriate for another gender. The terms have fallen out of use in many communities due to changing understandings of gender, sex, and gender identity and gender expression. The term also relies on the GENDER BINARY which activist, LGBTQ and queer communities often challenge.

deadname (n. and v.)

The term deadname has obscure origins, but is first recorded in *Urban Dictionary* in 2014, as “the birth name of somebody who has changed their name. Most commonly attributed to trans people, but can be attributed to any person who has changed their name... to call somebody by their deadname.”¹ The *GLAAD Media Reference Guide*, though not explicitly referring to deadnaming, articulates some of the conceptual framework behind the term, “When a transgender person’s birth name is used in a story, the implication is almost always that this is the person’s ‘real name.’ In fact, a transgender person’s chosen name is their real name—whether they are able to obtain a court-ordered name change or not. When writing about a transgender person’s chosen name, do not say ‘she wants to be called,’ ‘she calls herself,’ ‘she goes by Susan,’ or other phrases that cast doubt on the transgender person’s identity.”² The term deadnaming centers the trans person’s chosen name as their legitimate name, rather than their previous name. Deadname is also often referred to as “birth name” or “pre-transition name.”

down low (adj.)

The expression “down low” (often seen as down-low) originated in African American usage. It was first used

DOWN LOW, CONTINUED

as a synonym for “secret, low-profile,” and later came to refer “to men who secretly engage in homosexual activities” from 1991.¹ According to a study published in the *Journal of Bisexuality*, “the Down Low is a lifestyle predominately practiced by young, urban African American men who have sex with other men and women, yet do not identify as gay or bisexual.”² The term is often abbreviated DL, from 1992.³ The term is specific to African American communities.

drag (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

There are many different theories about how the term drag came to describe performative cross-dressing. The term “drag queen” meaning “a male homosexual transvestite” is attested from 1941.¹ The phrase “drag king,” modeled after drag queen, originated in gay and lesbian communities to describe a woman who dresses up as a man and is first recorded in 1972.² The general term, drag, in the sense of “feminine attire worn by a man; also, a party or dance attended by men wearing feminine attire,” preceded drag king and queen by several decades.³ It is believed that the term originated in 1870 theater slang, derived from the “sensation of long skirts trailing on the floor.”⁴ It is also possible the term came into English as a loan word from Yiddish *trogn* or German *tragen* meaning “to wear.”⁵

Other linguists theorize that there is a more spiritual history behind the word. In her book *Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds*, author Judy Grahn “describes medieval practices in which being ‘in drag’ referred to cross-dressing that took place during the Fool’s King New Year’s procession, when cross-

DRAG, CONTINUED

dressing men, playing the person of the female god or queen mother, or cross-dressing women, taking the part either of the male god or the god-king Puck, were pulled through the village in carts.”⁶ Grahn states, “Drag as a Gay term means cross-dressing, whether by a man or a woman, and in tribal/pagan realms cross-dressing often meant entering a magical state involving taking the persona or spirit of a god-being for public ceremonial purposes.”⁷ Another theory about the term’s origin has more violent implications, “Romans castrated a man by ‘dragging’ his testicles out. The EUNUCH that resulted from the cruel operation sometimes dressed in women’s clothes.”⁸ While the origin of the term is contested, the practice of drag itself has a long history. Herbst states, “Although the expression drag queen is as recent as the 1930s, modern drag queens are merely continuing an age-old theatrical tradition.”⁹

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the term drag is most often used in the context of drag shows, where drag queens and kings perform. The term is generally used to describe male and female cross-dressers, who are often gay, lesbian, bisexual, or non-heterosexual. Some consider drag kings and queens to be part of the transgender umbrella, but that is contested as well, because most drag kings and queens are only “in drag” during performances.

dyke (n.)

HISTORY

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, dyke is of obscure origin, but may come from Old English *dic*, meaning an excavation narrow in proportion to its

DYKE, CONTINUED

length or a wall or fence.¹ According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, it entered American English in 1931 and may be a shortening of “morphadike,” which is a “dialectal garbling of hermaphrodite.”² It was also found in a source from 1896 that lists it as slang for “vulva.”³ According to the *American Thesaurus of Slang*, since 1942, it has been used in the sense of a lesbian or masculine woman.⁴

Before that, it was used in the 1850s to mean a “prissy, well-dressed male.”⁵ Herbst states that it originally meant “any lesbian,” but has taken on a particular meaning of “a lesbian who takes an aggressive role and adopts ‘masculine’ behavior.”⁶ Herbst also states that it has been in use in the United States since at least the 1930s and was first used in the heterosexual community.⁷ It has largely been used as a slur or epithet, but in the 1970s it came to be used among lesbians as “a blunt, political and conscious self-designation.”⁸ It is also thought to have come from the term BULLDYKER, which first appeared in novels written during the Harlem Renaissance.⁹ It has also been used to refer to male clothing and as a verb, meaning to “behave like a lesbian is believed to act,” as well as in the adjective “dykey.”¹⁰ In the 1960s, the term “baby dyke” emerged to denote a young or inexperienced lesbian.

CURRENT DEFINITION

The term dyke is largely considered a LESBOPHOBIC slur or epithet but has been reclaimed by some lesbians as a self-designation. According to Herbst, “Some men find the ‘dyke’ label convenient for putting down women who are seen as unattractive, who do not act ‘feminine,’ or who show no interests in them. ‘No Means Dyke,’ a sign appearing in a men’s dorm

DYKE, CONTINUED

window in Canada, 1989, demonstrates a kind of self-serving distortion by male culture of ‘no means no.’”¹¹ Despite this troubling history, it has been used in lesbian communities to describe different types of lesbians (such as BULLDYKE, leather dyke, root dyke, lipstick dyke and granola dyke). It is also found in the name of popular comic *Dykes to Watch Out For* by Alison Bechdel.

eunuch (n.)

Eunuch comes from Latin *eunuchus* and Greek *eunouk-hos* (*eune* meaning “bed” and *-okhos* from the stem *ekhein* meaning “to have, hold”). In the literal sense, the term means “bedchamber guard or attendant.”¹ In 1430, the term meant “a castrated person of the male sex; also, such a person employed as a harem attendant, or in Oriental courts and under Roman emperors, charged with important affairs of the state.”² Several centuries later, in 1732, the word shifted meaning to “a male singer, castrated in boyhood, so as to retain an alto or soprano voice.”³ According to Kathryn M. Ringrose, eunuch was used in late antiquity and Byzantine society to “suggest someone who had chosen to withdraw from the world and refused to procreate.”⁴ In Italy, boys were made eunuchs to prepare them to be soprano singers. This practice was ended by Pope Leo XIII in 1878. Herbst states that the term was also used to describe “Christian men who castrated themselves as a way of showing their devotion to God, and the category of people, neither men nor women, of India known as *Hijras*.”⁵

faggot (n.)**HISTORY**

The term faggot is derived from French *fagot*, which is of unknown origin, and Italian *fangotto*. In 1398, it was used to denote “a bundle of sticks, twigs or small branches of trees bound together: for use as fuel.”¹ In 1563, the term was used “with special reference to the practice of burning heretics alive, [especially] in the phrase *fire and faggot*.”² Three decades after this usage, it came to be used as a term of abuse or contempt for a woman.³ It was not until 1914 that it was used derogatorily for a gay person, specifically a gay man; its use as a slur in this sense was originally and chiefly U.S. usage. It was first seen in print in a dictionary of criminal slang published in Portland, Oregon in 1914.⁴ Herbst states that the term may be linked with Old French, but many “lexicographers find this derivation untenable, if not historically impossible.”⁵

CURRENT DEFINITION

In U.S. English, the term faggot, often shortened to fag, is considered a derogatory slur for gay men. Herbst states that it was also used for butch lesbians beginning in the mid-twentieth century. He also states that it was in widespread use in the 1930s, but mostly among heterosexuals. Modern usage among teenagers that denotes “any disliked person or someone viewed as offensive.”⁶ Like many other slurs, it has been reclaimed by some members of the community. This reclamation is especially contentious as a result of the history of the word.

fairy (n.)

Fairy used in the sense of “an effeminate or homo-

FAIRY, CONTINUED

sexual man" was first recorded in U.S. usage in 1895 in the *American Journal of Psychology*; as an adjective in the same sense is first recorded in 1925.¹ The term first came into English around 1300, from Old French *faerie*, from *fae* or *fay*, from Latin *fata* "the Fates," the plural of *fatum* "that which is ordained; destiny, fate," and from Proto-Indo-European **bha*.² *Online Etymology Dictionary* records the first use of the term meaning "effeminate male homosexuals" by 1895. It also records the figurative use of the term to refer to "lightness, fineness [and] delicacy."³

Herbst records two different meanings of the word since the nineteenth century, "both reflecting on femininity and tending to degrade it."⁴ The first use was slang for woman and was likely American in origin. It was also used "to disparage a gay man," as Norman Mailer used it in his 1948 novel *The Naked and the Dead*. Herbst also records the use of "fairy lady" to describe a lesbian.⁵ In the mid-nineteenth century, the term came to be used to describe a young and pretty woman. In British slang it was used to mean "an ugly or debauched woman." In the twentieth century, the term was adopted by gay communities, and common usages included "fairy godmother," "screaming fairy," "hair fairy" and "twinkle-toes."⁶

Chauncey records that in the early twentieth century, "The determinative criterion in the identification of men as fairies was not the extent of their same-sex desire or activity (their 'sexuality'), but rather the gender persona and status they assumed."⁷ This "gender persona" was specific to class and culture, and was not always linked to cross-dressing. Chauncey explains some of the nuance of this identification, "Taking on

FAIRY, CONTINUED

the role of the fairy, that is, allowed them to reject the kind of masculinity prescribed for them by the dominant culture, but to do so without rejecting the hegemonic tenets of their culture concerning the gender order."⁸ In this, there were specific gender expressions or mannerisms that allowed a man to be identified as a fairy. Chauncey states, "In the right context, appropriating even a single feminine—or at least unconventional—style or article of clothing might signify a man's identity as a fairy."⁹

In psychology, the term was used to name an early study of homosexual men, "In 1953 [Evelyn Gentry Caldwell Hooker] applied to the National Institute of Mental Health for a grant to study homosexuals... Her putative heterosexuality helped her 'pass the test,' as she acknowledged. Eberhart approved her grant, but even at the National Institute of Mental Health, homosexuality was so derided that Hooker's proposal was dubbed the 'Fairy Project.'"¹⁰ The term was also used in the name of a gay rights organization, "In 1970, in the wake of a radical gay revolution, [Harry] Hay founded the Radical Faeries, which, to this day, embraces 'faerie culture' and resists the notion that homosexuals are 'no different from anyone else.'"¹¹ The founding of this organization was subsequent to Hay's leaving The Mattachine Society and his frustration with the politics of the group, which he believed were becoming "assimilationist."

family (adj. and n.)

In the early 1980s, the term family came to be used in gay and lesbian communities, to refer to people who were also gay.¹ In a *Pride* article about the documentary *Paris is Burning*, author Raquel Willis states, "House

FAMILY, CONTINUED

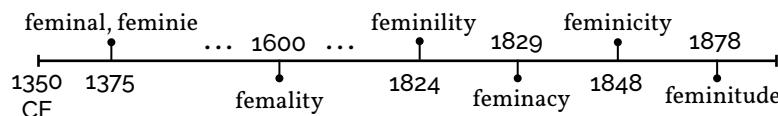
and ‘families,’ which are collections of like-minded and affirming queer people, regularly adopt each other and create their own support systems. Often LGBTQ people lose the support of their families when they come out, but that doesn’t mean they’re alone.”² In the documentary, a young person states, “They treat each other like sisters, or brothers, or mothers. You know like I say ‘That’s my sista,’ because she’s gay too and I’m gay.”³

Chauncey also records that in the early twentieth century, men in “fairy culture” called each other sisters. He describes this culture in New York in this time period as centered around clubs, social networks, dances, subcultural styles of dress, speech and behavior. He argues that these activities “strengthened the sense of kinship.”⁴ Today the term is often accompanied by “chosen” and is used to describe the people with which an LGBTQ person has built a support system of other LGBTQ people, whether or not they are blood-related.

feminine (adj. and n.)

The word feminine comes from Anglo-Norman *femenym*, Anglo-Norman and Middle French *feminine*, *femenin* and from Old French *femenin*.¹ In grammar, the term has been used to mean “designating the gender to which belong words classified as female on the basis of sex or some arbitrary distinction, such as form” since 1390.² Similarly to the term MASCULINE, it was also used as an adjective for “belonging to the female sex,” which

DIAGRAM 2



FEMININE, CONTINUED

has been superseded by female.³ In early use, it was often used to describe a celestial object or the sign of a zodiac. Beginning in 1425, the term came to be used as adjective describing “characteristic of, befitting, or regarded as appropriate to the female sex.”⁴ Later, in 1592, the term was also used to designate objects, especially clothing, that are designated for women. In 1451, the expression “the feminine,” was used to mean women collectively.⁵ In 1856, feminine was used in the sense of “having characteristics conventionally associated with the female sex, such as prettiness and delicacy.”⁶ In the same year, it was also used depreciatively, to describe “a man’s qualities, actions or appearance [as] characteristics of or befitting a woman.”⁷ The term has also been used with the adjective “eternal” to designate “the essential, idealized female nature, the ideal or typical woman” since 1860.⁸

The *Online Etymology Dictionary* records an interesting aspect of the history of the term, “The interplay of meanings now represented roughly in female ‘characteristic of the sex that bears children,’ feminine ‘having qualities considered appropriate to a woman,’ and effeminate ‘having female qualities in a bad sense, unmanly,’ and the attempt to keep them clear of each other, has lead to many coinages.”⁹ (See DIAGRAM 2).¹⁰ The same source also records that the use of feminine in the modern sense of the word is attested from the mid-fifteenth century.

feminism (n.)

HISTORY

The term feminism comes from classical Latin *femina* “woman” and the *-ism* suffix. In 1841, the term was

FEMINISM, CONTINUED

used to describe “feminine quality or character, femininity.”¹ In medical language, it was used to describe “the appearance of female secondary sexual characteristics in a male individual: feminization” in 1875.² In 1895, it took on the meaning, “advocacy of equality of the sexes and the establishment of the political, social, and economic rights of the female sex; the movement associated with this.”³ The noun feminist is attested from 1892, from French *feministe* (1872) and the adjective is attested by 1894. The term was first used in the late nineteenth century by French women’s rights advocates. It first appeared in the U.S. in print in a book review published by *The Athenaeum* in 1895.⁴ The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that “the issues of rights for women first became prominent during the French and American revolutions in the late eighteenth century, with regard especially to property rights, the marriage relationship, and the right to vote. In Britain it was not until the emergence of the suffragette movement in the late nineteenth century that there was significant political change.”⁵ Most categorize feminism into three or four “waves,” placing the first wave in the U.S. and France in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the second wave in the U.S. in the 1960s and “a more diverse third wave is sometimes considered to have arisen in the 1980s and 1990s, as a reaction against the perceived lack of focus on class and race issues in earlier movements.”⁶ Other feminists, such as Andrea Smith, propose a different way of understanding feminist history, “If one were to develop feminist history centering Native women, feminist history in this country would start in 1492 with resistance to patriarchal colonization.”⁷

FEMINISM, CONTINUED

CURRENT DEFINITION

Today the term feminism has varying definitions and the movement has dozens of subcategories. Herbst argues that “dictionary definitions seldom do justice to feminism” and offers two broad definitions: “a perspective on social, economic, and political inequality between the sexes” and “an organized movement, also known as the women’s liberation movement, concerned with furthering the rights and interests of women and giving them equal status with men, if not a world better than that which there is mere social equality.”⁸ Some of the specific forms of feminism include, but are not limited to: liberal or mainstream, Marxist, radical, dual-system (combines Marxist and radical), cultural, LESBIAN, postmodern, Black, American Indian, Arab American, Asian American, Chicana, Latina, Puerto Rican, Jewish, international, ecofeminism, post-colonial, gender abolition, INTERSECTIONAL, queer, TRANSFEMINISM and sex-positive feminism. These different subsets of feminism propose differing definitions of the term, as well as advocate different methods for organizing and strategizing, and different end goals. Liberal feminism typically advocates for the equality of men and women, where other feminisms advocate for the liberation of women. Most of these different types of feminism are not mutually exclusive; for example, someone can be both an intersectional and Black feminist.

femme (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

Femme comes from the French word *femme* meaning woman, and its pronunciation in English is likely

FEMME, CONTINUED

derived from feminine. In 1814, the term was used to mean woman, wife, and young woman and was used in many compounds and phrases deriving from French.¹ In 1928 in the United States, femme was used as a slang word for a young woman.² In the sense of a passive and more feminine partner in a lesbian relationship is attested by 1961. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term was also used to describe an effeminate gay man by at least 1964.³ Herbst states that the term was used in lesbian communities starting in the 1930s, in addition to "Marge," "fluff," "femmie" or "femmy."⁴ He also states, "Among lesbians, the meanings of femme constitute a chosen identity but not one that corresponds in any simple way to the heterosexual wife role."⁵ Many sources describe femme as constituting a "passive" role, but this is often considered a misnomer. It has historically also been spelled "fem."

CURRENT DEFINITION

Femme is currently used in a similar sense, but its definition has expanded, even more so than BUTCH has. The term is largely used today to describe people of any gender identity who express their gender in a feminine manner, especially in regards to appearance. The term has also come to be used less in lesbian communities in the U.S. In the 1990s, research showed that 95% of American lesbians were familiar with the butch/femme codes and could rate themselves or others in that context, but the same percentage found that butch/femme was unimportant in their lives.⁶ The term has moved from denoting a role in a relationship to describing a type of gender expression in LGBTQ communities. Some lesbians argue that because of their historical definitions, the terms butch and femme should be used exclusively to refer to lesbians.

femme invisibility (n.)

The term "femme invisibility" has obscure origins, but the concept is present in Ivan Coyote's "Hats Off to Beautiful Femmes," written in 2009. Coyote articulates, "Sometimes, you are invisible. I have no idea what this must feel like, to pass right by your people and not be recognized, to not be seen."¹ A 2012 *Urban Dictionary* entry defines the term as, "When a lesbian dresses in a traditionally feminine way, many people may assume that she is straight. She may also be told that she is 'too pretty to be gay.' As a result, she may become invisible to other lesbians because she does not fit the stereotypical 'butch' role and/or does not date butch women."² Femme invisibility is a facet of HETERONORMATIVITY, or the assumption that everyone is heterosexual until proven otherwise. As a result of the gender expression of femme lesbians, the "proven otherwise" aspect is experienced differently than androgynous, BUTCH or STUD lesbians. Meg Ten Eyck, writing for *Dopes on the Road*, articulates some of the consequences of femme invisibility, "We're constantly being mistaken for straight women at queer events... Parents can be blindsided when femmes come out...We feel like we have to prove our gayness...Being eroticized by straight men and misogynistic butch women."³ Femme invisibility also has theoretical ties to the concept of PASSING.

flamer (n.) & flaming (adj.)

In U.S. slang, the term flamer came into use in 1948, meaning "a man whose homosexuality is conspicuous or apparent, especially because of his flamboyant mannerisms or clothing."¹ *Online Etymology* states that "flaming" in the sense of "glaringly homosexual" is attested from 1970.² However, flamer and flaming mean-

FLAMER, CONTINUED

ing “glaringly conspicuous” are from 1809 and 1781, respectively, and were both in reference to wenches.³ According to Chauncey, the terms were first used in early twentieth century urban gay communities. Today the term is usually used to describe “flamboyant” gay men.⁴ The term is not necessarily a slur, but it can be used derogatorily depending on the context.

flower (n.)

In slang, the term flower, and related words such as pansy, have been used as a metaphor to describe women and gay men. In this sense, flower has been used to invoke traditional notions of femininity. It has also been used as a euphemism for the vulva or hymen.¹ The term “bud” has also been used to refer to virgins and derivations such as “de-flowering” and others have been used to describe sex, virginity and women. According to Chauncey, in the 1920s and 1930s, “gay men were labeled so commonly after the names of flowers that they also became known as ‘horticultural lads.’”² Depending on the context, “flower” can be considered offensive or derogatory. In the early-to-mid twentieth century, “pansy” and other variants of flower were used to describe FAIRY culture. Chauncey records that in 1931, a headline in the *Baltimore Afro-American* read “1931 DEBUTANTES BOW AT LOCAL PANSY BALL.”³

gay (adj. and n.)**HISTORY**

The word gay came into English in the twelfth century through Anglo-Norm *gai* and *gaye*, and Old French and Middle French *gai*, meaning happy and cheerily.¹ The Old French word was derived from a Germanic word.

GAY, CONTINUED

The word took on many different meanings, both related and unrelated to its current sense of HOMOSEXUAL. In the sixteenth century, it meant “dedicated to social pleasures; dissolute, promiscuous, frivolous, hedonistic, inhibited.”² In *Another Mother Tongue*, Grahn argues that, “The other name, Gay, comes from the grand old Earth Goddess of Greece, the lady whose temple was guarded with a python and who reigned long before the patriarchal invasions overthrew and replaced her: the great Gaia.”³ It also acted as a euphemism, when describing a woman, of living in prostitution.⁴ For this reason, “early discomfiture among some homosexuals about the adoption of gay to describe themselves was based on the word’s associations both with prostitution and frivolity and promiscuousness.”⁵ The connotation of immorality dates back to least the 1630s.⁶ It was also used in the sixteenth century to describe young men or boys wearing the costume of a woman in England theatrical culture.⁷

In the United States, it began to mean homosexual in slang in 1922.⁸ It was first used among members of the gay and lesbian community as a code word. In 1938, the term was used in the movie “Bring Up Baby” by Cary Grant to refer to a cross-dresser. In the 1930s and 1940s, it gained prominence in gay and lesbian communities, especially among a younger generation of men who used it as an alternative to QUEER, pansy or FAIRY.⁹ From there it was attached to phrases such as “gay gene” (1986), “gay ghetto” (1970), “GAY ICON,” and “gay plague” (1982), among others.¹⁰

In *Gay New York*, Chauncey states that “the ascendancy of gay as the preeminent term (for gay men among gay men) in the 1940s reflected a major reconceptualiza-

GAY, CONTINUED

tion of homosexual behaviors and of ‘homosexuals’ and ‘heterosexuals.’”¹¹

In 1969, the activist group that formed after the Stonewall riots, the Gay Liberation Front, staged a prank that was covered by NBC Television News. The prank was termed the “Alpine plan” because the GLF threatened to take over Alpine County as “The New Gay Mecca.” This prank is significant to the history of the word gay because, “Gay became a household word as it never had before: NBC Television News sent a crew out to Alpine. A star reporter, bundled to the nose but still shivering in the snow announced, ‘We’re standing on the land bought by the Gay Liberation Front [untrue, of course], and here they’re going to build their homes.’”¹² It was also used in U.S. slang to mean foolish, stupid or socially inappropriate beginning in 1978, reminiscent of the 1889 use meaning “forward, impertinent, too free in conduct.”¹³

CURRENT DEFINITION

The term gay today is largely used to describe people who are romantically, sexually and exclusively attracted to their own sex or gender. It is generally used in reference to gay men, but is also used to describe women. According to “Today I Found Out,” the term gay officially “acquired the new added definition of homosexual and steadily drove out all other definitions” in 1952.¹⁴ The word is now widely used in French, Dutch, Danish, Japanese, Swedish and Catalan with the same sense as in English.¹⁵ The teen slang usage in the U.S. meaning “bad, inferior, undesirable” is attested from 2000.¹⁶

gay icon (n.)

The *Oxford English Dictionary* records the first use of the expression “gay icon” in print in 1984, by Michael Bronski in *Culture Clash*.¹ The term is defined as, “a public figure said to be particularly admired by homosexuals, especially for showing spirit, fortitude, flamboyance, or a disregard of convention.”² Other sources expand on the definition, stating that it is a public icon popular in LGBT communities, and that they are predominately female entertainers, and “commonly garner a large following within LGBT communities over the course of their careers.”³ Judy Garland is considered the quintessential gay icon. Bronski states, “Judy Garland was the quintessential pre-Stonewall gay icon. She made a legend out of her pain and oppression, and although she always managed to come back, she never fought back.”⁴ Some theorize that the death of Judy Garland, which happened the week of the Stonewall riots, was one of the causes of the riots. Some gay icons are tragic or martyred figures, such as Matthew Shepard, while others are pop culture icons, such as Cher, Madonna, Oprah or Cyndi Lauper.

gay marriage/same-sex marriage (n.)

The *Oxford English Dictionary* records the first use of the phrase “gay marriage” in 1971, describing, “A formal marriage bond contracted between two people of the same sex, often conferring legal rights.”¹ According to some historians, in the late twentieth century, “religious rites of marriage without legal recognition become increasingly common.”² Post-Stonewall gay rights activists reportedly did not put marriage equality as a priority. Legal historian Michael Klarman argued “that many people were initially not interested in marriage, deeming it a traditionalist institution,

GAY MARRIAGE, CONTINUED

and the search for legal recognition of same-sex relationships began in the late 1980s.³ In *The Guardian*, Faramerz Dabhoiwala argued that the modern movement began in the 1990s.⁴ As of November 2015, there are 21 countries that have legalized same-sex marriage.⁵ This has accompanied a change in public opinion about same-sex marriage in the United States. In 2001, the Pew Research Center reported that 57% of Americans opposed same-sex marriage to a 35% margin. In a 2015 poll, the research center reported that 55% supported it and 39% oppose it. It also reports that “younger generations express higher levels of support for same-sex marriage.”⁶ Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, written in 1948 states, “Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.”⁷

The semantics surrounding the expression are complicated. Some object to the name “gay marriage,” because they believe it is heteronormative or erases bisexuality. Some use the expression “same-gender marriage” rather than same-sex. Institutionally, most courts recognize same-sex marriage rather than same-gender marriage, but likely do not make a distinction between sex and gender.

gay power (n.)

The term “gay power” was modeled after “black power,” the motto of 1960s militant African Americans, in groups like the Black Panthers. “Gay power” first came to be used in the 1970s.¹ One of its first uses was among the resisters at the Stonewall riots in June 1969.

GAY POWER, CONTINUED

It was used among gay activists who “sought freedom from discrimination based on their sexual orientation and demanded the same rights that other U.S. citizens enjoy.”¹ The term first appeared in print in a 1969 *New York Times* article about the Stonewall riots.³ The *Oxford English Dictionary* states the term originated in U.S. English and defines the expression as, “the exertion of social, cultural or economic power by homosexuals.”⁴ Today, the term is still used among activists, but not as frequently as it was during the 1970s.

gay pride (n.)

The expression gay pride, often also seen as “LGBT pride,” is “the positive stance against discrimination and violence toward LGBT people to promote their self-affirmation, dignity, equal rights, increase their visibility as a social group, build community and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.”¹ LGBT activists Robert A. Martin and L. Craig Schoonmaker are credited with popularizing the expression. The term is also defined as “a sense of self-esteem engendered by a person’s (public) acknowledgment of his or her homosexuality; solidarity among homosexual men and women, especially as expressed publicly.”² Since 1970, the term also has been used to describe “any various public events intended to promote this feeling.”³ Following the Stonewall Riots, gay rights activists at the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations voted to move “Remembrance Day” on July 4 to June 28 and rename it “Christopher Street Liberation Day.” In 1966, prior to Stonewall and Christopher Street Liberation Day, Steve Ginsberg (a gardener and “early leather man”) started a gay group “called PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education). After a

GAY PRIDE, CONTINUED

dozen policemen burst into the Black Cat, a Silver Lake district gay bar, swinging billy clubs and brandishing guns at the stroke of midnight on January 1, 1967, PRIDE organized a protest...They marched and carried signs that said 'Abolish Arbitrary Arrests' and 'No More Abuse of Our Rights and Dignity.'⁴ Later, American bisexual rights activist and sex-positive feminist Brenda Howard would propose what is now known as "Pride," which included a "parade, parties and other activities for LGBT [people] to celebrate themselves and their communities. Howard later came to be known as the 'Mother of Pride.'⁵

gender affirmation surgery (n.)

Gender affirmation surgery is also known as sex reassignment surgery, gender reassignment surgery or gender confirming surgery. Gender affirmation surgery is a variety of surgical procedures that "change one's body to conform to one's gender identity."¹ This can also include HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT), which "introduces hormones associated with the gender that the patient identifies with (testosterone for trans men and estrogen for trans women)."² Wikipedia defines gender affirmation surgery as, "surgical procedure (or procedures) by which a transgender person's physical appearance and function of their existing sexual characteristics are altered to resemble that of their identified gender. It is part of a treatment for GENDER DYSPHORIA in transgender people."³ In Berlin, Germany in 1931, Dora R. became the first known trans woman to undergo gender affirmation surgery. During 1930-1931 in Berlin, Lili Elbe started the removal of her original sex organs and later had four other operations. An earlier known recipient of these

GENDER AFFIRMATION SURGERY, CONTINUED

procedures was Magnus Hirschfeld's housekeeper, but "their identity is unclear at this time."⁴

Sex reassignment surgery is also often performed on intersex people, mostly in infancy, without their consent. This is often called "normalization" surgery and was condemned as treatment for intersexuality by a 2013 United Nations statement.⁵ In this instance, sex reassignment surgery is the preferred terminology because the act is not consensual. The term gender or sex affirmation surgery (or gender confirmation, confirming, etc.) should be used to describe the surgery transgender or transsexual people undergo to treat gender dysphoria, because this terminology emphasizes the validity of the trans person's gender identity. See GENDER TRANSITION.

gender binary (n.)

The expression "gender binary" has obscure origins, but is often used in feminist and queer theory to describe "the classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine."¹ A 2010 *Urban Dictionary* entry defines the gender binary as, "The social construction of gender in most societies in the world where gender is a dichotomy between male and female. Male and female gender expectations, roles, and functions are generally very rigid and the presence of alternate gender constructions are usually denigrated, ignored or made oblivious."² Geek Feminism articulates that the use of phrases like "opposite sex or gender" uphold the gender binary.³ The gender binary is prominent in Western societies, and as a result of colonization and imperialism, has gained prominence elsewhere. Some societies do not have a concept of gender, sex or

GENDER BINARY, CONTINUED

sexuality in this dichotomy. Anne Fausto-Sterling, a professor of biology and women's studies at Brown University, has proposed a classification of five sexes, as an alternative to the traditional gender binary.⁴

gender dysphoria (n.)

Gender dysphoria is a formal diagnosis "used by psychologists and physicians to describe people who experience significant dysphoria (discontent) with the sex and gender they were assigned at birth."¹ It was first used in psychiatry in 1973.² The term replaced "gender identity disorder" in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-V* to "better categorize the experiences of affected children, adolescent and adults."³ The change is a result of transgender activism, calling for the APA to cease pathologizing transgender people and identities. Gender dysphoria largely still remains a part of the DSM in order for transgender people to access trans-specific health care, such as HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY and GENDER AFFIRMATION SURGERY.

gender expression (n.)

In 2008, the American Psychological Association defined gender expression as, "A way in which a person acts to communicate gender within a given culture; for example, in terms of clothing, communication, patterns and interests. A person's gender expression may or may not be consistent with socially prescribed gender roles, and may or may not reflect [their] gender identity."¹ The *GLAAD Media Reference Guide* defines it as, "external manifestation of one's gender identity, usually through 'masculine,' 'feminine,' or gender-variant behavior, clothing, haircut, voice or body

GENDER EXPRESSION, CONTINUED

characteristics."²

Gender expression is a separate concept from gender identity. Gender identity describes which gender a person identifies as, where gender expression describes the way they express their gender. *Gender Wiki* states, "A person of any gender identity can choose to express their personal experience of gender through any combination of traits, although some traits are stereotypically associated with certain identities."³ For example, a butch lesbian is a woman who expresses her gender in a masculine way.

gender fluid (adj.)

The term gender fluid (also seen as genderfluid) has obscure origins, but was first entered in *Urban Dictionary* in 2007, defined as "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 boy some days, and more girl other days. Being gender fluid has nothing to do with assigned sex, nor sexual orientation."¹ Genderfluid denotes a unique identity, rather than the broader term "gender fluidity," which describes gender expression and the range of gender identities. *Gender Wiki* defines genderfluid as, "a gender identity which refers to a gender which varies over time. A gender fluid person may at any time identify as male, female, neutrois, or any other non-binary identity, or some combination of these identities."²

gender identity (n.)

The phrase "gender identity" was first used in a 1964 edition of the *Valley News* in Van Nuys, California.¹ The term "gender" entered English through Anglo-Nor-

GENDER IDENTITY, CONTINUED

man and Old French *gendre* and *genre* circa 1300.² The Old French word came from the Latin stem *genus*. The grammatical sense of gender is attested in English from the late fourteenth century. The use of gender to describe “male or female sex” is attested from the early fifteenth century.³ During the twentieth century, the noun “sex” began to take on erotic qualities and gender came to be used to mean “sex of a human being.”⁴ In that sense, it was often considered colloquial or humorous. In the mid-twentieth century, feminist writings began to define gender as “social attributes as much as biological qualities.”⁵ The use of gender in this sense was first recorded in 1963. In the 1970s, gender came to be “commonly identified with the social division between men and women.”⁶

In the late twentieth century, theorists such as Michael Foucault and Thomas Laqueur argued that sex and the Euro-American model of sexes are a historically Western and relatively recent invention.⁷ According to Herbst, today “gender and sex remain central analytical categories in many social and psychological studies.”⁸ For the most part today, gender is used to denote the socially constructed attributes of male and female people, as well as “one’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither.”⁹ In the United States and Western culture, gender has largely been understood within a sexual dichotomy of male/man and female/woman. As a result of feminist, LGBTQ and queer activism and theory, there are many communities and individuals who reject the gender binary and understand gender identity to be a separate identity from one’s sex. See ASSIGNED SEX.

In *Transfeminist Perspectives*, author A. Finn Enke pro-

GENDER IDENTITY, CONTINUED

vides a helpful understanding of gender and gender identity. They state, “Gender results from cultural practices of ordering or organizing different types of people according to bodies and behaviors.”¹⁰ They further articulate, “Social gender mainly has to do with a combination of the expectations assigned to one’s sex and the role one plays in one’s society.”¹¹ This varies between societies and cultures, so Enke also notes that, “Gender conformity and gender-crossing are necessarily culturally specific.”¹²

In *Keywords for Radicals*, Tammy Kovich further articulates the many ways that gender was conceptualized during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She argues that gender “became an analytic tool to counter claims that presupposed natural or biological bases for either sex differences or the hierarchies they yielded.”¹³ She goes onto articulate that author Leslie Feinberg “defines ‘gender’ as a matter of ‘self-expression, not anatomy.’”¹⁴ Kovich argues that this has led to the “conceptualization of gender as something rooted primarily in individual choices and actions.”¹⁵ Kovich finds this a problematic understanding of gender and argues that “understanding ‘gender’ as a relation rooted in social and symbolic organization” and that “‘gender’ cannot be liberated without broader collective struggle.”¹⁶

gender transition (n.)

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the expression “gender transition” was first used in 1967 to describe “the process by which a person permanently adopts the physical characteristics of the gender he or she identifies with, as opposed to those of his or her assigned sex.”¹ The process of gender transition differs

GENDER TRANSITION, CONTINUED

from person to person, but some may include hormone therapy, sex reassignment (or GENDER AFFIRMATION) surgery, and changing their name on legal documents. The Human Rights Campaign states that gender transition is “the process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender, with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.”²

Transitioning is often a taxing and complicated process that doesn’t have a defined end. There are also many social consequences involved in transitioning, depending on the context in which someone transitions. It is important to remember that a person *is* the gender with which they identify, whether they are pre- or post-transition, or if they choose not to transition.

gender variance & non-conformity (n.)

The expressions “gender variance” or “non-conformity” have obscure origins, but are used by scholars of psychology, psychiatry, anthropology and gender studies, as well as advocacy groups. *Wikipedia* defines gender variance as, “behavior or gender expression by an individual that does not match masculine and feminine gender norms.”¹ Other terms that are used synonymously with gender non-conformity or variance are: gender diverse, variant, expansive or atypical. The *Sylvia Rivera Law Project* defines the expression as an umbrella term and to describe “people who don’t follow other people’s ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male

GENDER VARIANCE, CONTINUED

sex they were assigned at birth.”²

Therapists and psychiatrists are “currently divided on the proper response to childhood gender nonconformity.”³ Many studies have found that the majority of gay and lesbian people self-report gender non-conformity in childhood. *Gender Diversity* notes that, “gender nonconformity is a term not typically applied to children who have only a brief, passing curiosity in trying out these behaviors and interests.”⁴ The expression is often used in LGBTQ and activist communities to discuss the ways gender is constructed in society and the ways those who do not conform to patriarchal gender roles experience gender. Gender non-conformity or gender non-conforming is often abbreviated to GNC.

genderqueer (adj.)

The *Oxford English Dictionary* records the first use of genderqueer in English in a 1995 edition of *In Your Face* and defines it as, “designating a person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions, but identifies with neither, both or a combination of male and female gender.”¹ The term is a more specific umbrella term than transgender but also encompasses several different identities. *Gender Wiki* states that it has a similar meaning to NON-BINARY and can denote the following identities: “Both man and woman, neither man nor woman (genderless, agender, NEUTROIS), moving between genders, THIRD GENDER or other-gender, having an overlap of, or blurred lines between, gender identity and sexual orientation, may also identify as transgender and/or non-binary. Some may wish to transition, either medically or by changing their name and/or pronouns.”² The term is also generally used to denote a gender identity, not gender expres-

GENDERQUEER, CONTINUED

sion. It is also self-referential and is used “without regard to, or in implicit denial of, the original negative connotations of queer.”³

GRID (acronym)

GRID is an acronym standing for “gay-related immunodeficiency.” The name was first proposed in 1982 to “describe an ‘unexpected cluster of cases’ of what is now known as AIDS after public health scientists noticed clusters of Kaposi’s sarcoma and pneumocystis pneumonia among gay males in Southern California and New York City.”¹ A May 11, 1982 *New York Times* article used GRID and A.I.D. to describe what is now called AIDS, or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, “Researchers call it A.I.D., for acquired immunodeficiency disease, or GRID, for gay-related immunodeficiency. GRID is a ‘matter of urgent public health and scientific importance,’ Dr. James W. Curran, a Federal epidemiologist who coordinates the Center for Disease Control’s task force on Kaposi’s sarcoma and opportunistic infections, told the Congressional hearing.”² The term AIDS would be proposed later in 1982 by researchers concerned with the accuracy of the disease’s name. In 1986, the US Department of Health and Human Services Secretary announced that the probable cause of AIDS was HIV, human immunodeficiency virus.³

hegemonic masculinity (n.)

The concept of hegemonic masculinity was popularized by sociologist R.W. Connell in “Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity.”¹ Some trace the origin of the theory to “a convergence of ideas in the early 1980s.”² It is also derived from the theory of cul-

HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY, CONTINUED

tural hegemony, which was introduced by Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci in his prison notebooks. Gramsci’s theory “analyzes the power relations among the social classes of society.”³ Hegemonic masculinity more specifically includes the “gender hierarchy, the geography of configurations, the processes of social embodiment and the psycho-social dynamics of the varieties of masculinities (instead of as a fixed character-type).”⁴ The concept and term are also derived from the women’s liberation movement, feminism, psychology, sociology, literature and the gay liberation movements’ analyses of power and difference. Today the term is used in a similar manner, though in some contexts is also discussed with attention to sexuality, race and class differences. In a *Theory and Society* article, author Mike Donaldson states, “Heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity and any understanding of its nature and meaning is predicated on the feminist insight that in general the relationship of men to women is oppressive.”⁵ Like the terms PATRIARCHY, androcentric, male-dominated, TOXIC MASCULINITY and others, hegemonic masculinity is a theoretical tool to interrogate and understand the ways gender is constructed and the consequences of that construction.

heteronormativity (n.)

Heteronormativity is a combination form, combining the prefix *hetero-* (after heterosexual) with normativity. Its first recorded use in print was in 1991, defined as, “of, designating or based on a worldview which regards gender roles as fixed to biological sex and heterosexuality as the normal and preferred sexual orientation.”¹ The *Oxford English Dictionary* also defines

HETERONORMATIVITY, CONTINUED

heteronormativity as, “the privileging of biologically determined gender roles and heterosexuality.”² Heteronormativity is a helpful way to frame the ways that heterosexuality is placed at the center while other sexual orientations are marginalized. It is also often used to describe the ways institutions oppress LGBTQ people while HOMOPHOBIA is used to describe societal attitudes about LGBTQ people. Mary Queen, Kathleen Farrell and Nisha Gupta define heteronormativity as the “belief (or ideology) produces a correlative belief that those two sexes/genders exist in order to fulfil complementary roles, i.e., that all intimate relationships ought to exist only between males/men and females/women.”³

heteropatriarchy (n.)

The term “heteropatriarchy” is a combination form, combining the prefix *hetero-* (after HETEROSEXUAL) with PATRIARCHY. In the *Collins Dictionary*, heteropatriarchy is defined as “the combination of male (patriarchal) and heterosexual dominance essentially describing the severe sex and gender bias prevalent among the elite ruling classes of nation-states.”¹ It was most likely first used in print by Andrea Smith in “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy” in 2006. Smith states that heteropatriarchy is the “building block of U.S. empire.”² She argues that “in order to colonize peoples whose societies are not based on social hierarchy, colonizers must first naturalize hierarchy through instituting patriarchy...Colonial world order depends on heteronormativity.”³ In INTERSECTIONALITY theory, heteropatriarchy describes, “The dominant types of heteronormativity and patriarchy which support one another to devalue and subordinate feminin-

HETEROPATRIARCHY, CONTINUED

ity to masculinity.”⁴ The term is a more specific term than patriarchy, and allows activists, writers, organizers and others to specifically name oppression and the ways HETERONORMATIVITY is constructed.

heterosexism (n.)

Heterosexism is a combination form, combining the prefix *hetero-* (from heterosexual) with sexism. The term was first used in print in 1979 by J. Penelope in *Articulation of Bias*, meaning, “Prejudice and antagonism by heterosexual persons towards homosexuals; discrimination against homosexuals.”¹ The *Online Etymology Dictionary* attests the use of heterosexism by 1975, first found in feminist and lesbian writing. The adjective heterosexist is from 1977.² Herbst defines heterosexism as, “referring to biased views that favor heterosexual people and their sexual orientation and encourage prejudice against homosexual, bisexual and transgendered [sic] people.”³ The definitions by the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Online Etymology Dictionary*, while not incorrect, are limiting in their scope. Today the term is used to encompass more than just oppression against gay people, but against all non-heterosexual people, including bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc. people. Herbst further articulates its definition, “[Heterosexism] takes form in a number of assumptions that indicate that the ‘straight’ orientation is considered normal and is institutionalized in the traditional family and the larger patriarchal society.”⁴ The term is often used in the same way that HETERONORMATIVITY is used.

heterosexual (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

The term “heterosexual” first appeared in English in a medical journal by Dr. James Kiernan. At the time, it was defined as, “abnormally characterized by the expression of sexual interest in both sexes (*hetero-* here meant interest in two different sexes rather than in the ‘opposite’ sex).”¹ German neurologist Richard Von Krafft-Ebing popularized the term in the United States in his treatise *Psychopathia Sexualis* (translated by Chaddock). In his treatise, the term “referred to interest in one different sex and implied procreative desire.”² In 1915, sexologist Havelock Ellis deleted heterosexual from a list of sexual deviations.³ In the United States by the 1930s, largely due to social changes that occurred during the 1920s, heterosexuality was considered the “dominant normative type of sex—sex between a man and woman.”⁴ The coinage of the term is attributed Austro-Hungarian sex reformer Karl Maria Kerbeny, who “defined heterosexuality as a form of sexual gratification of the majority of people.”⁵ The use of heterosexual as a noun is recorded from 1920 but was not in regular use until the 1960s. The colloquial shortening to “hetero” is recorded from 1993.⁶

CURRENT DEFINITION

The term heterosexual has many definitions, but most commonly denote, “A person whose main emotional or romantic and sexual attraction is to people of the other sex.”⁷ The main shift in definition is early in its history, from attraction to two sexes to attraction to people of the other sex. Today the term is used to define exclusive attraction to people of a different sex or gender. It is often colloquially shortened to “hetero” or “het.” In LGBTQ communities, the term “cishet” is

HETEROSEXUAL, CONTINUED
shorthand for cisgender and heterosexual.

hijra (n.)

The term “hijra” appeared in English in 1838, from Hindi *hijrās*, which came from Marathi and Oriya languages.¹ The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines hijra as, “in South Asia, especially in India, a EUNUCH, especially one who dresses as a woman; (also) a male transvestite, an androgynous or transgender person. Hijras constitute a distinct cultural group, and are traditionally considered neither male nor female.”² This is a somewhat limiting definition, but not wholly incorrect. The origins of hijras go back thousands of years in India and have had different cultural, political and spiritual roles throughout history. In a *Refinery 29* article, author Connie Wang states that hijras are “a diverse range of people who consider themselves outside of the cis categorization of male or female, but largely describes those born male who transition to female through a combination of gender affirmation surgery, taking on India’s traditional feminine gender roles, and wearing women’s clothing.”³ In April 2014, “hijra” was officially recognized by the Indian Supreme Court. Other terms used to describe this identity are THIRD GENDER, Aravani, Aruvani and Jagappa.⁴

homophile (adj. and n.)

Homophile is a combination form from ancient Greek *homo*, meaning same, and *phile*, meaning loving or dear. The term was a synonym for HOMOSEXUAL, but “regarded as belonging to a particular social group rather than as having a particular sexual preference” during the 1960s and 1970s.¹ The term was coined as an attempt to create an alternative to homosexual

HOMOPHILE, CONTINUED

that did not carry the same pathological stigmas. It was also meant to extend to nonsexual, affectional and sexual relationships between two people of the same sex.² It was used in the Dutch homosexual movements following World War II and was adopted in the 1950s among U.S. activists.³ It was in wider use by the 1960s, especially by those in the Homophile Movement, which was active in the U.S. between 1951 and 1970.⁴ The Mattachine Society founded by Harry Hay in Los Angeles is often thought to mark the beginning of this social movement.

The term homophile fell out of usage with the rise of the gay liberation movement in the United States. For the most part, GAY replaced both homophile and HOMOSEXUAL.

homophobia (n.)

HISTORY

The term homophobia is a combination form derived from Latin *homo* from “homosexual” and post-classical Latin *phobia*, which was first recorded in the Latin loan “hydrophobia.”¹ A rare definition of the term used in 1920 and 1966 was the “fear of men, or aversion towards the male sex; also, fear of mankind, anthropophobia.”² The more current definition, “fear or hatred of homosexuals and homosexuality” is recorded from 1969.³ A 2011 *Urban Dictionary* definition states that homophobia is “the fear that gay men will treat you the way you treat women.”⁴ According to Herbst, the term was coined as early as the 1950s and “occurred as homoerotophobia in a 1967 study of attitudes toward homosexual people by Wainwright Churchill.”⁵ Psychotherapist George Weinberg popularized the term

HOMOPHOBIA, CONTINUED

in his 1972 book *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*.⁶

Homophobia was the first among many terms used to describe oppression against LGBTQ+ people. See BIPHOBIA, LESBOPHOBIA and TRANSPHOBIA.

CURRENT DEFINITION

Homophobia is often used as a catchall to describe oppression against LGBTQ people, but is also used in more specific terms. Herbst articulates, “Unlike heterosexism, a word that generally encompasses matters of social discrimination and politics, homophobia often signifies as psychological condition.”⁷ The term is also often used to describe the fear of being gay, in addition to the fear of gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Herbst states that it can be both “conscious or unconscious aversion to and fear of homosexual—also bisexual or transgendered [sic]—people, homosexuality and homosexual communities and culture.”⁸ The term is also often used to describe oppressive societal attitudes where HETEROSEXISM is used to describe institutional oppression.

homosexual (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

The word homosexual is an irregular combination of the ancient Greek word *homo*, meaning same, and the post-classical Latin *sexualis*.¹ It first appeared in German, coined by nineteenth-century Austro-Hungarian writer and journalist, Karl Maria Kertbeny. Kertbeny used the word in a letter written to his colleague, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and it later made its first public appearance in an 1869 petition against German law that criminalized “unnatural fornication.”² In 1867, Ulrichs

HOMOSEXUAL, CONTINUED

became the first homosexual to publicly defend homosexuality. At the time, Ulrichs used the term URNING to describe himself.³ Two years later, Kertbeny coined the word "homosexual." About twenty years later, German neurologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing distinguished between the terms homosexual and heterosexual in his treatise *Psychopathia Sexualis*. The first use of the word in English was in an 1892 article by Dr. James Kiernan in the *Chicago Medical Recorder*.⁴ The medical journal defined both homosexuality and heterosexuality as sexual perversions. It was not until the 1920s that heterosexuality began to be understood as the sexual standard. See HETEROSEXUAL.

The term did not appear in the Bible until 1946 in the Revised Standard Version.⁵ It is also important to note that the Greeks did not conceptualize or name sexuality in these terms, especially within the dichotomy of heterosexual and homosexual.⁶ Furthermore, Ulrichs used the term within the framework of then contemporary embryology and the idea that the "germ of the female sex could be retained in the fully developed male."⁷

The initial definition of the word was "involving, relating to, or characterized by a sexual propensity for one's own sex, of or involving sexual activity with a member of one's own sex or between individuals of the same sex."⁸

CURRENT DEFINITION

The current definition of homosexual varies depending on the source. Herbst defines it as, "A person who is emotionally or romantically and sexually attracted to people of the same sex."⁹ The term also carries a

HOMOSEXUAL, CONTINUED

long history of pathology because it was restricted primarily to the medical world before it came into public use. It was not until the 1940s that it began to appear in print in newspapers, on the radio or in movies.¹⁰ In 1987, the *New York Times* began to officially replace homosexual with the term GAY for men, a few decades after the word had been used in gay communities.¹¹ The term today is still largely pathologized and is often considered pejorative.

homosexual, gay & trans panic (n.)

Since 1986, the expression "gay panic" has been used to describe "anxiety or panic as a reaction to (one's own or more usually another's) homosexuality, especially that supposedly provoked in a heterosexual man by another man's homosexual advances, and sometimes claimed as the cause of violent conduct."¹ The term came to be used in North American legal contexts as a legal defense (gay panic defense). Prior to the term "gay panic," the term "homosexual panic" was used in psychology to describe "uncontrollable fear or anxiety as a reaction to one's own or another's homosexuality."² The expression homosexual panic was coined by psychiatrist Edward J. Kempf in 1920 and was considered an "acute pernicious dissociative disorder."³ It was included in Appendix C of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-I* as a supplementary term.⁴

Similarly to gay and homosexual panic, "trans panic" has been used as a legal defense, as a "similar defense applied towards cases where the victim is a transgender or intersex person."⁵ In 2014, California banned trans and gay panic defenses in murder trials, and it continues to be the only state where it is banned. The

HOMOSEXUAL PANIC, CONTINUED

American Bar Association recommends other states follow in California's steps.⁶

Horatian (adj.)

The term Horatian is typically used to denote, "of or relating to Horace," who was a first century poet in Italy.¹ In 1890, Lord Byron and his friends used the term as a code word for bisexual.² The term "Gillette blade," referred to a bisexual woman in similar contexts.³

hormone replacement therapy (n.)

There are several different types of hormone replacement therapy (HRT), but this encyclopedia will discuss HRT as it relates to transgender people. Wikipedia states that hormone replacement therapy is used "either to supplement a lack of naturally occurring hormones or to substitute other hormones for naturally occurring hormones."¹ HRT for transgender people "introduces hormones associated with the gender that the patient identifies with (notably testosterone for trans men and estrogen for trans women). Some intersex people may also receive HRT."² This process causes the development of different secondary sex characteristics and "provides patients with a more satisfying body that is more congruent with their true psychological gender identity."³ In the United States, many doctors and health care facilities require that transgender patients go through a "Real Life Experience" (RLE) which is a "period of time in which transgender individuals live full time in their preferred gender role," before prescribing HRT.⁴ Most surgeons performing genital reassignment surgery also require the same process. Some LGBT health organizations "advocate for an informed consent

HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY, CONTINUED
model" rather than RLE.⁵**internalized homophobia, biphobia & transphobia (n.)**

Generally, the term internalized -*phobia*, refers to the negative perceptions, intolerance and stigmas toward LGBTQ people and the processes by which an LGBTQ person believes those are true about themselves.¹

According to Ilan Meyer and David Frost, internalized homophobia is "the gay person's direction of negative social attitudes toward the self, leading to a devaluation of the self and the resultant internal conflicts and poor self-regard."² Internalized homophobia or biphobia is also called "internalized sexual stigma."³ Gregory Herek defines this as "the personal acceptance and endorsement of sexual stigmas as part of the individual's value system and self-concept."⁴ In psychology, sociology and other social sciences, the term can be used to generally mean "a self-hatred that occurs as a result of being a socially stigmatized person."⁵ This concept can be applied to other forms of oppression, including misogyny, sexism, racism, and ableism, etc.

intersectionality (n.)

The term intersectionality was first used in 1963 in math to describe a family of sets.¹ In sociology, the term was first used in 1989, to describe, "the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such as premise."² The coinage of the term is credited to American critical legal race scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. The concept has historical and theoretical

INTERSECTIONALITY, CONTINUED

links to the idea of “simultaneity” proposed by members of the Combahee River Collective in the 1970s.³ This work was preceded by the multiracial feminist movement, where the concept began to gain traction in the late 1960s and early 1970s in sociological circles. Out of this movement came revisionist feminist theory, which was a response to radical feminism. Revisionist feminist theory challenged the idea that, “gender’ was the primary factor determining a woman’s fate.”⁴

In *Intersectionality 101*, Olena Havinsky, PhD, articulates, “The central ideas of intersectionality have long historic roots within and beyond the United States. Black activists and feminists, as well as Latina, post-colonial, queer and Indigenous scholars have all produced work that reveals the complex factors and processes that shape human lives.”⁵ The concept also became more prominent in the 1990s when “sociologist Patrick Hill Collins reintroduced the idea as part of her discussion of black feminism.”⁶

The concept of intersectionality has been adopted by many different organizations, activist groups and academics as a theoretical groundwork for understanding oppression. Intersectionality highlights the ways that people can be multiply marginalized (i.e. a black woman is oppressed both for being black and being a woman) and the ways a person can hold a position of privilege while also holding a marginalized position.

intersex (adj.)

Intersex came into English through the German term *intersexe*, coined by German-born U.S. geneticist Richard Benedict Goldschmidt in 1915.¹ The term is a

INTERSEX, CONTINUED

combination form, combining the prefix *inter-* with sex (n.). In biology, the term has been used to describe “A dioecious species, an abnormal form of individual having characteristics of both sexes.”² The term has risen in use as an alternative to the physiologically impossible phenomenon of hermaphroditism, which is a person that is fully male and female (in the sense of sex, not gender). According to the Intersex Society of North America (ISNA), intersex is a “general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn’t seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male.”³ There many variations within the label intersex, because humans have several different sexual and reproductive characteristics, including genetic or chromosomal sex, internal and external genitalia, hormones, brain sex and gonadal sex. ISNA states, “Intersex is a socially constructed category that reflects real biological variation. To better explain this, we can liken the sex spectrum to the color spectrum... nature presents us with sex anatomy spectrums.”⁴ In the LGBTQIA acronym, the ‘I’ stands for intersex.

invert, inversion (n.)

The expression “sexual inversion” was first used in 1883 and was defined as “a theory according to which homosexuality is the result of abnormally close identification in early life with role models of the opposite sex; the process described by this theory; (also more narrowly) homosexuality regarded as a pathology or perversion.”¹ The term inversion came into use later as an abbreviation of “sexual inversion,” starting in 1895. The noun “invert” was used first in 1897 by Havelock Ellis and was defined as “a person who exhibits in-

INVERT, CONTINUED

stincts or behavior of the opposite sex; a homosexual.”² In these definitions, it is clear that homosexuality is considered gender non-conforming or that gender non-conformity is an indication of homosexuality.

The terms, prior to this theory, come from Latin *invertere* (from the *in-* prefix and *vertere*), defined as “to turn upside down.”³ The term also had several other meanings, including “to overthrow, upset, subvert” from 1588.⁴ Herbst records that the concept of sexual inversion was developed by German psychiatrist Karl Friedrich Otto Westphal and was translated into English as “inverted sexual proclivity” in 1869 in a review of his work in a British journal.⁵ Herbst also states that the noun “invert” was first recorded in 1838, defined as “a gay man, especially an effeminate one, a lesbian or a transvestite.”⁶ He also articulates that the theory was developed as a result of heteronormativity, “With heterosexuality established as normative in society, the concept of homosexuality implies a standing of things on their head, a change in the normal order of things, a reversal in gender behavior or desires, a subversion of heterosexual people, or just being mixed up.”⁷

The concept gained traction in the 1928 novel, *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall. In the book, the protagonist is consistently referred to as an invert and bore a strong resemblance to one of sexologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s case studies. In *Gay New York*, Chauncey states that homosexual desire was “seen as simply one aspect of a much more comprehensive gender role inversion (or reversal), which they were also expected to manifest through the adoption of effeminate dress and mannerisms.”⁸ He argues that this is the result of “the centrality of gender inversion to the culture’s

INVERT, CONTINUED

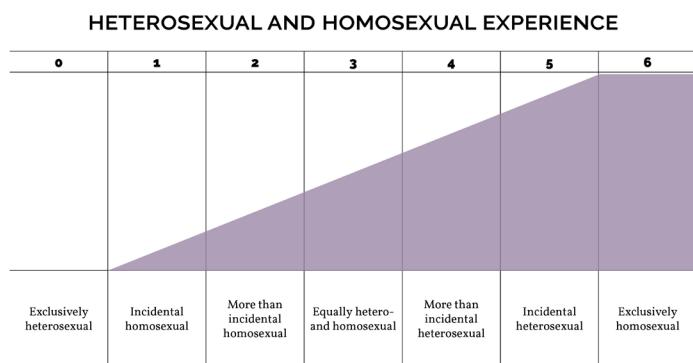
understanding of what we would now term homosexual desire.”¹⁰

The history of the terms invert and inversion still have implications for the development of the Western world’s understanding of gender and sexuality. The theory of inversion became prominent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it wasn’t until the mid-twentieth century gender and sexuality began to be understood as separate entities. Chauncey argues, “Most other doctors writing about inversion in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries adopted a related approach by conceptualizing fairies (as well as lesbians or ‘lady lovers’) as a ‘third sex’ or an ‘intermediate sex’ between men and women, rather than as men or women who were also ‘homosexuals.’”¹¹ What we now understand as separate spheres of identity, sexual orientation and gender identity, were conflated as being the same thing through the theory of inversion.

Kinsey scale (n.)

The Kinsey scale was developed by American zoologist and sexologist Alfred Kinsey in 1948 with his colleagues Wardell Pomeroy and Clyde Martin. The scale is a theory of sexual behavior and identity and featured prominently in Kinsey’s books *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953).¹ See DIAGRAM 3 for the six different points on the scale. There is a seventh point included in some models, which is X for ASEXUAL.² According to Wikipedia, “Today, many sexologists see the Kinsey scale as relevant to sexual orientation but not comprehensive enough to cover all sexual identity issues.”³ Other scales for sexual orientation include

DIAGRAM 3



KINSEY SCALE, CONTINUED

The Klein Sexual Orientation Grid, developed by Fritz Klein, which features seven different variables and three situations in time: past, present and ideal.⁴ Another scale, the Storms Scale, was developed by Michael D. Storms in 1980. This scale “plots eroticism on an X and Y axis which allows for much greater range of descriptions.”⁵ There are currently over 200 different scales used to measure sexual orientation.⁶

kyriarchy (n.)

The term “kyriarchy” has a similar definition to INTERSECTIONALITY. It was coined in 1992 by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. The term is derived from the Greek words *kyrios* (lord, master) and *archō* (to lead, rule, govern).¹ The term was first used in feminist theological contexts and in other areas of academia but has come to be used in some social justice, activist and feminist contexts, though it hasn’t gained as much prominence as intersectionality. Fiorenza described the term as, “a social system or set of connecting systems built around domination, oppression and submission.”²

Latin@ (adj. and n.)

The origins of the term Latin@ are obscure, but several sources point to the word’s origins in internet communities. According to the blog *Reclaiming the Latina Tag*, the term Latin@ can be used “to textually shorten writing in both ‘latina and latino.’ However, other people, particularly activists, may use the term for political reasons to promote gender equality/gender neutrality.”¹ Gene Demby reports that the University of Wisconsin uses this term for its Department of Latin@ and Chican@ Studies and that the “push toward gender neutrality in Spanish has been going on for decades.”² The term exists as a third option to the gendered terms Latina and Latino and avoids “all gender-specific reference.”³ Another option that has arisen online is LATINX.

Latinx (adj. and n.)

The term Latinx is an alternative to the gendered terms Latino/Latina and Latin@. María R. Scharrón del Río and Alan A. Aja of *Latino Rebels* state that Latinx was “born out of a collective aim to move beyond the masculine-centric ‘Latino’ and the gender inclusive but binary embedded Latin@.”¹ The term has been given increasing attention in scholarly and activist circles. Aja and Scharrón del Río also state, “In the same way that the state used and imposed the terms ‘Spanish,’ ‘Hispanic’ and ‘Latino’ as identifiers of peoples of Latin American descent, were challenged in succession and met with ‘Latino/a’ and ‘Latin@’ under concerted attempts toward inclusivity, we are now at a similar juncture with intersectionality-inclusive ‘Latinx.’”² The term is pronounced “La-teen-ex.”

Raquel Reichard states that the term “includes the

LATINX, CONTINUED

numerous people of Latin American descent whose gender identities fluctuate along different points of the spectrum, from agender, or nonbinary to gender non-conforming, genderqueer and genderfluid.”³ In 2014, a club at Columbia University changed their name from “Chicano Caucus” to “Chicanx Caucus” as part of a constitutional review. Literature professor Frances Negró-Muntaner said “that the decision to adopt ‘Latinx’ instead of ‘Latin’—a gender neutral term that already exists—draws more attention to the issue of intersectionality.”⁴

Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, PhD, articulates why they use the term, “While there have been different iterations of Latino/a or Latin@, the ‘x’ is a helpful reminder that I live on the border, I transgress the gender border at every turn. Latinx helps me remember my commitment to being disruptive in my gender expression. Identifying as a Trans*gressive genderqueer Latinx, I embrace living on the border of female and the constant crossing over and disruption of normative masculinity.”⁵

Lavender Menace (n.)

The phrase lavender menace, modeled after the Cold War reference to communism as the “red menace,” was first used by Betty Friedan in 1969 as an epithet for lesbians. The term expressed her view that lesbians were “an impediment to the goals of the women’s movements, especially, she thought, by endangering the image of feminism.”¹ Soon after Friedan stated this, lesbians reclaimed the expression and formed a lesbian activist group called “Lavender Menace.” In 1971, the group appeared at the Second Congress to Unite Women wearing shirts that said “Lavender

LAVENDER MENACE, CONTINUED

Menace.”² They later changed their name to Radicalesbians. The group’s aims to protest the “exclusion of lesbians and lesbian issues from the feminist movement.”³ The color lavender was historically associated with femininity and was once worn by men to signal their homosexuality. Since the nineteenth century, lavender has been linked with homosexuality.

lesbian (adj. and n.)

HISTORY

The term lesbian came into the English language in the 1590s from Latin *lesbius* and Greek *lesbios*. Lesbos was a Greek island in the northeastern Aegean Sea, home of Sappho, the lyric poet who wrote erotic and romantic verse about women and men in 600 BCE.¹ The word was first used to mean “of or pertaining to the island of Lesbos.” From 1601-1728, the term lesbian rule meant “a mason’s rule made of lead, which could be bent to fit the curves of a moulding.”² Eventually, the term came to change its primary meaning from “one who lives on Lesbos” to “a woman like Sappho and her followers.”³ By 1890, the term came to be defined as a homosexual woman or “characterized by being sexually attracted to women.”⁴ The *Online Etymology Dictionary* states that the term was used to denote erotic love between women from at least 1825.⁵ In 1833, in the U.S. medical journal *The Alienist and Neurologist*, lesbian was used to describe a woman who cross-dressed.⁶ Prior to that usage, it often referred to oral intercourse. From the seventeenth century until the late nineteenth century, the terms used for female homosexuals were generally TRIBADE and fricatrice.⁷ Historian Lillian Faderman used the term lesbian to describe women writers, activists, and thinkers in