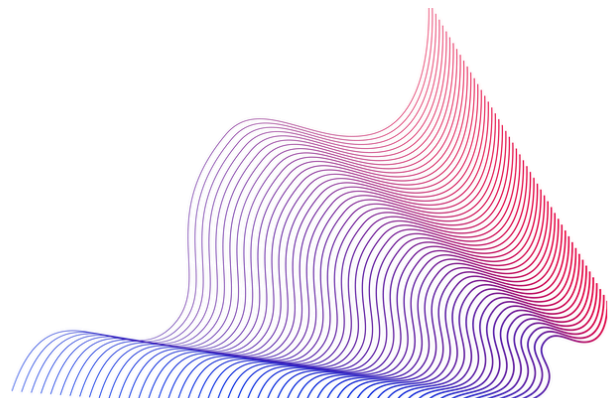


## Definitions - Key Terms

### *Gender & Sexuality*



#### ***Asexual***

An individual that has little or no interest in sex or romance. It is a broad and diverse spectrum of people, including individuals who have romantic interests but no sexual interest, or only experience sexual attraction with a strong emotional component (e.g. demisexual).

#### ***Bisexual***

Someone who is attracted to people who are the same gender as them as well as people who are a different gender. It can also be used to refer generally to an attraction to more than one gender.

#### ***Cisgender***

When a person's gender matches the one assumed or assigned at birth.

#### ***Conversion therapy***

Another term for ***reparative therapy***.

#### ***Crossdressing***

When an individual dresses in clothing that is typically associated (by the dominant culture) with another gender. People who crossdress, or crossdressers, are not to be conflated with transgender people. Crossdressers can be any gender or sexuality (e.g. cisgender or transgender, queer or straight, etc).

#### ***Gay***

Someone who is attracted to people who are the same gender as they are.

#### ***Gender dysphoria***

A physical and embodied distress regarding one's gender and body. Note this term is used both as a descriptor of a lived experience of distress, as well as a (problematic) psychiatric diagnosis. It is advisable to state explicitly how you are using the term.

#### ***Genderfluid***

A person with more than one gender that can be experienced concurrently and can change overtime.

#### ***Genderqueer***

When someone's gender exists outside of the male/female binary and heterosexual/straight 'norms'.

#### ***Intersex***

Intersex individuals exist outside of the narrow medical gender binary of male/female. For example, they can have chromosomes other than XX and XY (such as XXY). They are a part of the natural variation and diversity of human bodies.

#### ***Lesbian***

Women who are attracted to other women.

#### ***Nonbinary***

When someone's gender exists outside of a male/female binary. This can include those who are both male and female, as well as other genders (e.g. genderqueer, demiwoman) and no genders (e.g. agender).

***Pansexual***

A person who is attracted to all genders, or gender is irrelevant to their experience of sexual or romantic attraction.

***Queer***

A person who is not heterosexual/straight. This can include gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and more. Some also use it to refer to their gender, such as ***genderqueer***.

***Reparative therapy***

A form of therapeutic abuse that encourages individuals to act as if they are straight and/or cisgender, and tells them that there is something 'wrong' with them if they do not. Recognised by most official therapeutic organisations as harmful.

***Straight***

Typically used to describe attraction between cisgender men and cisgender women. It is when someone is attracted to one gender that is different from theirs.

***Transgender***

When someone's gender is not the same as what was assumed or assigned at their birth. They may or may not pursue body modification treatments, and they may or may not experience gender dysphoria. (Note that the terms 'transgendered' and 'transgenderism' are no longer used).

***Transsexual***

A term that is used by some to describe their gender when it is not the same as that assigned or assumed at birth. Some use it only to refer to ***transgender*** people who have had surgical interventions, but most do not. It is also a term used to describe a problematic and outdated psychiatric diagnosis. Only use when an individual uses it as a self descriptor.

***Two spirit***

An umbrella term to denote the wide range of Indigenous genders that exist outside of colonial gender binaries. Note that it is not a universally accepted term in Indigenous communities.

**Additional notes:**

1. Some terms regarding gender and sexuality can overlap, and therefore some people can be a part of more than one category simultaneously (e.g. nonbinary and genderqueer, queer and gay, asexual and straight, etc). When writing about or working with people, it is best to use the language they use to describe themselves and to acknowledge that people may use multiple words to describe their gender and sexuality.
2. Also note that 'he/she' or 'he or she' excludes nonbinary people and the singular or plural 'they' is a more inclusive term.
3. Not all people use the terms 'penis' and 'vagina' to describe their genitalia. For some, these highly gendered terms are problematic and are incongruent with their gender. It is best to use the words the individual uses to describe themselves and their body.

Tosh, J. (2020). *The Body and Consent in Psychology, Psychiatry, and Medicine: A Therapeutic Rape Culture*. London: Routledge.