LGBTQ_{2}\text{IA}

Introduction:

A Foundational Understanding

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LGBTQIA Introduction: A foundational Understanding was created for the purposes of education. This manual provides the introductory information needed when learning about the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Ally community. All of this information has been collected and adapted by Angela Baxter in order to provide comprehensive, yet integrated information. There have been some terms with explanations that have been repeated in various places in this manual, please note that this provides varied understandings of these particular terms. If you are interested in obtaining the original materials, please contact the primary sources listed at the bottom of each section.
Diagram of Sex and Gender

“Traditional” Male  BIOLOGICAL SEX  “Traditional” Female
(anatomy, chromosomes, hormones)

male -------------------------------------- intersex ---------------------------------- female

GENDER IDENTITY
(psychological sense of self)

man ------------------------------- two spirit/third gender ------------------ woman

GENDER EXPRESSION
(communication of gender)

masculine ---------------------------- androgynous -------------------------- feminine

SEXUAL ORIENTATION
(romantic/erotic response)

attracted to women ------------------- bisexual/asexual ------------------- attracted to men

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Sexual activities with women ------------ sexual activities with men & women ------------ sexual activities with men

[See Reverse for a Fuller Explanation of Each Continuum]
An Explanation of the Continua in the Diagram of Sex and Gender

**Biological sex**, shown on the top scale, includes external genitalia, internal reproductive structures, chromosomes, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics such as breasts, facial and body hair, and fat distribution. These characteristics are objective in that they can be seen and measured (with appropriate technology). The scale consists not just of two categories (male and female) but is actually a continuum, with most people existing somewhere near one end or the other. The space more in the middle is occupied by intersex people (formerly, hermaphrodites), who have combinations of characteristics typical of males and those typical of females, such as both a testis and an ovary, or XY chromosomes (the usual male pattern) and a vagina, or they may have features that are not completely male or completely female, such as an organ that could be thought of as a small penis or a large clitoris, or an XXY chromosomal pattern.

**Gender identity** is how people think of themselves and identify in terms of sex (man, woman, boy, girl). Gender identity is a psychological quality; unlike biological sex, it can't be observed or measured (at least by current means), only reported by the individual. Like biological sex, it consists of more than two categories, and there's space in the middle for those who identify as a third gender, both (two-spirit), or neither. We lack language for this intermediate position because everyone in our culture is supposed to identify unequivocally with one of the two extreme categories. In fact, many people feel that they have masculine and feminine aspects of their psyches, and some people, fearing that they do, seek to purge themselves of one or the other by acting in exaggerated sex-stereotyped ways.

**Gender expression** is everything we do that communicates our sex/gender to others: clothing, hair styles, mannerisms, way of speaking, roles we take in interactions, etc. This communication may be purposeful or accidental. It could also be called social gender because it relates to interactions between people. Trappings of one gender or the other may be forced on us as children or by dress codes at school or work. Gender expression is a continuum, with feminine at one end and masculine at the other. In between are gender expressions that are androgynous (neither masculine nor feminine) and those that combine elements of the two (sometimes called gender bending). Gender expression can vary for an individual from day to day or in different situations, but most people can identify a range on the scale where they feel the most comfortable. Some people are comfortable with a wider range of gender expression than others.

**Sexual behavior** indicates who we are sexually active with. We tend to think only people who identify as heterosexual only have sexual activities with people of the opposite sex. New research has found that many individuals identify as heterosexual but still have sexual activities with people of the same gender/sex. This may not necessarily change their sexual orientation, they may simply have sexual behaviors with both men and women.
Sexual orientation indicates who we are erotically attracted to. The ends of this scale are labeled "attracted to women" and "attracted to men," rather than "homosexual" and "heterosexual," to avoid confusion as we discuss the concepts of sex and gender. In the mid-range is bisexuality; there are also people who are asexual (attracted to neither men nor women). We tend to think of most people as falling into one of the two extreme categories (attracted to women or attracted to men), whether they are straight or gay, with only a small minority clustering around the bisexual middle. However, Kinsey’s studies showed that most people are in fact not at one extreme of this continuum or the other, but occupy some position between.
Additional Thoughts on Sex and Gender

For each scale, the popular notion that there are two distinct categories, with everyone falling neatly into one or the other, is a social construction. The real world (Nature, if you will) does not observe these boundaries. If we look at what actually exists, we see that there is middle ground. To be sure, most people fall near one end of the scale or the other, but very few people are actually at the extreme ends, and there are people at every point along the continuum.

Gender identity and sexual orientation are resistant to change. Although we don't yet have definitive answers to whether these are the result of biological influences, psychological ones, or both, we do know that they are established very early in life, possibly prenatally, and there are no methods that have been proven effective for changing either of these. Some factors that make up biological sex can be changed, with more or less difficulty. These changes are not limited to people who change their sex: many women undergo breast enlargement, which moves them toward the extreme female end of the scale, and men have penile enlargements to enhance their maleness, for example. Gender expression is quite flexible for some people and more rigid for others. Most people feel strongly about expressing themselves in a way that's consistent with their inner gender identity and experience discomfort when they're not allowed to do so.

The four scales are independent. Our cultural expectation is that men occupy the extreme left ends of all four scales (male, man, masculine, attracted to women) and women occupy the right ends. But a person with male anatomy could be attracted to men (gay man), or could have a gender identity of "woman" (transsexual), or could have a feminine gender expression on occasion (crossdresser). A person with female anatomy could identify as a woman, have a somewhat masculine gender expression, and be attracted to women (butch lesbian). It's a mix-and-match world, and there are as many combinations as there are people who think about their gender.

This schema is not necessarily "reality," but it's probably closer than the two-box system. Reality is undoubtedly more complex. Each of the four scales could be broken out into several scales. For instance, the sex scale could be expanded into separate scales for external genitalia, internal reproductive organs, hormone levels, chromosome patterns, and so forth. An individual would probably not fall on the same place on each of these. "Biological sex" is a summary of scores for several variables.

There are conditions that exist that don't fit anywhere on a continuum: some people have neither the XX (typical female) chromosomal pattern nor the XY pattern typical of males, but it is not clear that other patterns, such as just X, belong anywhere on the scale between XX and XY. Furthermore, the scales may not be entirely separate: if gender identity and sexual orientation are found to have a biological component, they may overlap with the biological sex scale.
Using the model presented here is something like using a spectrum of colors to view the world, instead of only black and white. It doesn't fully account for all the complex shadings that exist, but it gives us a richer, more interesting picture. Why look at the world in black and white (marred by a few troublesome shades of gray) when there's a whole rainbow out there?
**A Vocabulary of Sex and Gender**

*Androgyne* A person whose gender presentation is neither masculine nor feminine.

*Assigned sex* Sex recorded at birth, usually on the basis of external genitalia.

*Biological sex* Male, female or intersex according to anatomy, chromosomes and other physical features.

*Coming out* Revealing sexual orientation or gender difference.

*Cross-dresser (CD)* Man or woman who dresses in clothes of the other sex some of the time.

*Drag* Wearing the clothes of the other sex for theatrical or comedic purposes.

*Drag King* A female identified person wearing the clothing and attitude of a male.

*Drag Queen* A male identified person wearing the clothing and attitude of a female.

*Female-to-male (FTM)* Transgendered person who was assigned female sex at birth.

*Gender* Collection of traits thought by a culture to be associated with maleness or femaleness.

*Gender expression* Behavior through which one’s gender is communicated.

*Gender identity* Self-identification as man, woman or other.

*Gender identity disorder* Technical term for the diagnosis of transsexualism (aka “gender disphoria”).

*Gender presentation* Appearance in conformity with society's standards for women or men, or conformity to neither.

*Genital reconstructive surgery* Surgery that changes external genitalia from one sex to more closely approximate those of the other sex.

*Intersex* Conditions in which biological sex is not clearly male or female (e.g., hermaphrodite).

*Male-to-female (MTF)* Transgendered person who was assigned male sex at birth.

*Real-life test or experience (RLT)* Required period of cross-living before sex reassignment surgery.

*Sex* Categorization as male, female or intersex by the shape of genitalia or other biological features.
Sex reassignment surgery (SRS) Genital reconstructive surgery.

Sexual orientation Categorization based on the sameness or difference of an individual’s sex and that of the persons to which one is romantically attracted.

Target sex Sex that a person is transitioning toward.

Transgendered (TG) Differently gendered in any way (includes cross-dressers and transsexuals, as well as self-identified individuals who do not conform to gender stereotypes).

Transition The process of becoming a member of one’s target sex by making changes in appearance, behavior and body.

Transphobia The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.

Transsexual man (or transman) Female-to-male transsexual person.

Transsexual (TS or just T) Person whose gender identity is different from assigned sex and who lives, or wants to live, as a member of the other sex.

Transvestite (TV) Heterosexual man who sometimes enjoys dressing in women’s clothing, sometimes with an erotic component (many prefer the term cross-dresser).

Transsexual woman (or transwoman) Male-to-female transsexual person.
**D’Augelli’s Model of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Development**

D’Augelli identified six interactive processes (not stages) involved in lesbian, gay, and bisexual identity development.

**Exiting heterosexual identity**
Recognition that one’s feelings and attractions are not heterosexual as well as telling others that one is lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

**Developing a personal lesbian/gay/bisexual identity status**
A “sense of personal socio-affective stability that effectively summarizes thoughts, feelings, and desires” (D’Augelli 1994). One must also challenge internalized myths about what it means to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Developing a personal identity status must be done in relationship with others who can confirm ideas about what it means to be nonheterosexual.

**Developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual social identity**
Creating a support network of people who know and accept one’s sexual orientation. Determining people’s true reactions can take time. Reactions may also change over time and with changing circumstances.

**Becoming a lesbian/gay/bisexual offspring**
Disclosing one’s identity to parents and redefining one’s relationship after such disclosure. D’Augelli noted that establishing a positive relationship with one’s parents can take time but is possible with education and patience. This developmental process is particularly troublesome for many college students who depend on their parents for financial as well as emotional support.

**Developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual intimacy status**
This is a more complex process than achieving an intimate heterosexual relationship because of the invisibility of lesbian and gay couples in our society. “The lack of cultural scripts directly applicable to lesbian/gay/bisexual people leads to ambiguity and uncertainty, but it also forces the emergence of personal, couple-specific, and community norms, which should be more personally adaptive” (D’Augelli, 1994).

**Entering a lesbian/gay/bisexual community**
Making varying degrees of commitment to social and political action. Some individuals never take this step; others do so only at great personal risk, such as losing their jobs or housing.


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Key Concepts for Understanding
LGBT Identity Development

Please see the complete Terminology handout for more definitions.

**Ally** Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual and genderstraight privilege in themselves and others; a concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people; and a belief that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are social justice issues.

**Biphobia** The fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of bisexuals, which is often times related to the current binary standard. Biphobia can be seen within the LGBTQI community, as well as in general society.

**Coming Out** May refer to the process by which one accepts one’s own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersexed person (to “come out” to oneself). May also refer to the process by which one shares one’s sexuality, gender identity, or intersexed status with others (to “come out” to friends, etc.). This can be a continual, life-long process for homosexual, bisexual, transgendered, and intersexed individuals.

**Discrimination** Prejudice + power. It occurs when members of a more powerful social group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful social group. Discrimination can take many forms, including both individual acts of hatred or injustice and institutional denials of privileges normally accorded to other groups. Ongoing discrimination creates a climate of oppression for the affected group.

**Gender Identity** A person’s sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gendered.

**Heteronormativity** The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.

**Heterosexism** Prejudice against individuals and groups who display non-heterosexual behaviors or identities, combined with the majority power to impose such prejudice. Usually used to the advantage of the group in power. Any attitude, action, or practice – backed by institutional power – that subordinates people because of their sexual orientation.

**Heterosexual Privilege** Those benefits derived automatically by being heterosexual that are denied to homosexuals and bisexuals. Also, the benefits homosexuals and bisexuals receive as a result of claiming heterosexual identity or denying homosexual or bisexual identity.

**Homophobia** The irrational fear or hatred of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior or belief that does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes. It is this fear that enforces sexism as well as heterosexism.
In the Closet Refers to a homosexual, bisexual, transperson or intersex person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. An intersex person may be closeted due to ignorance about their status since standard medical practice is to “correct,” whenever possible, intersex conditions early in childhood and to hide the medical history from the patient. There are varying degrees of being “in the closet”; for example, a person can be out in their social life, but in the closet at work, or with their family. Also known as ‘Downlow” or ‘D/L.’

Institutional Oppression Arrangements of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media, education, religion, economics, etc.

Internalized Oppression The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Oppression The systematic subjugation of a group of people by another group with access to social power, the result of which benefits one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs and practices.

Outing Involuntary disclosure of one’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.

Prejudice A conscious or unconscious negative belief about a whole group of people and its individual members.

Sex A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances. Because usually subdivided into ‘male’ and ‘female’, this category does not recognize the existence of intersexed bodies.

Sex Identity How a person identifies physically: female, male, in between, beyond, or neither.

Sexual Orientation The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.

Sexuality A person’s exploration of sexual acts, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, and desire.

Stereotype A preconceived or oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for their individual differences. Though often negative, can also be complimentary. Even positive stereotypes can have a negative impact, however, simply because they involve broad generalizations that ignore individual realities.
Transition This term is primarily used to refer to the process a gender variant person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their preferred gender expression.

Transphobia The irrational fear of those who are gender variant and/or the inability to deal with gender ambiguity.
Cass Model of Coming Out

**Identity Confusion**
See self as member of mainstream group.
Denial of inner feelings.

*Who am I?*
*Am I different?*

**Identity Comparison**
Begin to come out of the “fog.”

*Maybe I am gay.*
*I’m alone.*
*What are gay people like?*

**Identity Tolerance**
Encounter someone or something that breaks through the denial system.

*I accept the possibility that I may be gay.*
*Looking for gay contacts.*

**Identity Acceptance**
Exploring subculture activities, readings, etc.

*I am gay. Am I okay?*
*Come out to some people with care.*

**Identity Pride**
Feel arrogance/pride in new identity and deep rage toward majority culture.
May adopt/heighten stereotypical behaviors or characteristics.
(i.e. “I’m different and proud of it!”)
May isolate self from mainstream values and activities.

*I am proud to be gay.*
*I don’t (and won’t) pass for straight.*

**Identity Synthesis**
Acceptance and integration of new identity.
May go through five stages of grief to let go of old identity and all advantages of heterosexual privilege.
Internalize pride/positive feelings about identity.
Typically is “out” (with friends, family, at work).
More at peace with self.

*I am an okay person who happens to be gay*

Adapted by Angela Baxter, 2011
Riddle Homophobia Scale

1. Repulsion
Homosexuality is seen as a crime against nature. Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, violence, etc.

2. Pity
Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of becoming "straight" should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born that way should be pitied.

3. Tolerance
Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people grow out of. Thus, gays/lesbians are less mature than heterosexuals and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays and lesbians should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.

4. Acceptance
Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as "you're not a lesbian, you're a person" or "what you do is your own business" or "it's fine with me, just don't flaunt it".

5. Support
Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the homophobic climate and irrational unfairness.

6. Admiration
Acknowledges that being gay/lesbian in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values, and behaviors.

7. Appreciation
Value the diversity of people and see gays/lesbians as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

8. Nurturance
Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view gays/lesbians with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.

The Qualities of an Oregon State University LGBT Ally

- An Ally is a person who...has worked to develop an understanding of different sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, along with the needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.
- Chooses to align with LGBT people and responds to their needs.
- Believes that it is in her or his self-interest to be an ally.
- Is committed to the personal growth required to be an ally.
- Is quick to take pride and appreciate success.
- Expects support from other allies.
- Is able to acknowledge and articulate how patterns of oppression have operated in their lives.
- Expects to make some mistakes but does not use it as an excuse for non-action.
- Knows that both sides of an ally relationship have a clear responsibility for their own change whether or not persons on the other side choose to respond.
- Knows that in the most empowered ally relationship, the persons in the non-homosexual role initiate the change toward personal, institutional, and societal justice and equality.
- Knows that he or she is responsible for humanizing or empowering their role in society, particularly as their role relates to responding to gays and lesbians.
- Promotes a sense of community with the gay community and teaches others about the importance of outreach.
- Has a good sense of humor.

Things that discourage people from becoming allies

- Being labeled gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender by the heterosexual population (“by association”). The label is not negative in itself, but can cause difficulties for the heterosexual when looking for a significant other.
- Allies are often mocked and ridiculed by heterossexuals that view the issue as unimportant or unpopular.
- Friends and colleagues that are not comfortable with the topic may alienate Allies. These people may noticeably distance themselves from the ally in order to avoid conflict or labels.
- Allies may become victim of overt or subtle discrimination such as getting appointed to a committee, a negative reaction on an evaluation, or needing to look for a position that is more supportive of their views.
- The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community may not accept the ally, and believe that the person is just not ready to admit that they are really a member of the homosexual community.
• Learning the culture and language may be difficult if not impossible without the assistance of a member of the oppressed group.
• Due to some past experiences with heterosexuals, the GLBT population may question an ally’s motivation.

Benefits of Being an Ally

• You open yourself up to the possibility of close relationships with an additional portion (some studies indicate at much as 10%) of the world.
• You may become less likely to stereotype according to sex roles.
• You may increase your ability to have close and loving relationships with same-sex friends.
• You have opportunities to learn from, teach, and have an impact on a population with whom you might not otherwise interact.
• You may be the reason an individual finally decides that his or her life is worth something.