LGBTIQ Terminology and Definitions

Gay Generally refers to a male who is physically, emotionally and/or spiritually

attracted to other males. May also refer to females who are attracted to other

females, as well as the gay community in general.

Lesbian A female who is physically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to other

females.

Bisexual A person who is physically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to persons

of the same or opposite sex.

Intersexual Person born with mixed sexual physiology; a sex is often "assigned" at birth,

though this practice is under attack as violating one's well-being.

Questioning An individual who is currently questioning his or her gender or sexual identity.

Gender Identity

vs.

Sexual Orientation

Many people equate being gay with being effeminate and being lesbian with being mannish and assume that gay men really want to be women and lesbians really want to be men, but that is a mistake. Gender identity is distinct from sexual orientation. Gender identity, the sense that one is a male or a female, is usually manifested by the age of 3 or 4 years.

Sexual orientation, the sense that one ought to claim a gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual identity, does not manifest itself until much later in life, usually after puberty and often not until full adulthood. People who insist that, for example, a man who wants a sexual relationship with another man actually wishes he were a woman are, in effect, denying the reality of same-sex desire and insisting that everyone really wants to be (and really is) heterosexual. This

is offensive.

Transgender While most people's gender identity matches the anatomical sex with which

they were born, some people's does not. A person whose gender identity is different from his or her anatomical sex may (or may not) elect to undergo chemical and/or surgical alteration. Many transgendered people have heterosexual identities. Since both the legal system and the general public tend to discriminate against them similarly to discrimination against other sexual minorities, organizations have enlarged their mission statements to include

transgender persons.

Transexual A person who not only has a transgendered identity, but who relates

themselves physically, emotionally, and mentally as a member of the opposite sex. Surgical procedures are sometimes undergone to physically accommodate this identity, and so transsexuals are often referred to as either "pre-op" or

"post-op."

Androgyne A person who relates strongly to neither the male or female gender.

Transvestite (Cross-dresser): Person who enjoys wearing clothes identified with the

opposite gender, which is not indicative of his or her sexual preference.

Coming Out This phrase has several different meanings. Generally, it denotes the act of

telling someone that one is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or whatever. Usually it means making a public or semi-public declaration of one's sexual

orientation.

Outing To "out" someone is to declare their sexual orientation publicly without their

permission.

Closeted The opposite of being "out," being closeted means that one's sexual orientation

is concealed or presumed to be heterosexual. Because of repressive laws, discrimination in employment and housing, violence and harassment, and other kinds of oppression and abuse, most non-heterosexual people elect to closet themselves at some points in their lives or with some groups of people all their

lives.

Homophobia Just as individual people can be racial, ethnic or religious bigots, individual

people can be homophobes or can suffer from homophobia. Homophobia is the fear of homosexuality and homosexual people and of all things associated with homosexuality. Some people who experience homophobia simply avoid gay and lesbian people, places, events and topics of conversation; others actively

abuse non-heterosexual people verbally and physically.

Heterosexism Sometimes, even if individual people are not bigots or homophobes,

institutions and cultural norms may be discriminatory or even oppressive by favoring heterosexual people at the expense of non-heterosexual people. Such institutions and norms are heterosexist, and people who do not protest against them or resist them also may be said to be heterosexist. Not all heterosexists

are homophobic, but all homophobes are heterosexist.

Hate Crime Assault, rape, arson and murder are crimes under any circumstance, but when

the victim of such a crime is chosen simply because of his or her affiliation with a minority group, the FBI considers the crime a "hate crime." In some states, hate crimes carry an additional penalty beyond the standard penalty for assault, murder, etc. Virginia law allows for stiffer penalties for violent crimes committed against people simply because of their affiliation with a religious, ethnic or racial group. However, it does not allow for stiffer penalties for violent crimes committed against people simply because of their affiliation

with a gender or sexual minority group.

Stonewall On June 28, 1969, New York City police attempted a routine raid on the

Stonewall Inn, a working-class gay and lesbian bar in Greenwich Village. Unexpectedly, the patrons resisted, and the incident escalated into a riot that continued for several days. Most people look to this event as the beginning of

the American Gay Liberation movement and all subsequent LGBT

movements.

Gay Pride

This is a common name for celebrations commemorating the Stonewall riots. In most cities Gay Pride is held in June (although in Richmond it is usually held in August or September). Activities usually include a parade, booths, speakers, workshops, picnics and musical entertainment.