Related Identities and Concepts:

While the term is new, many of the identities lumped under the genderqueer umbrella are not. “Androgyne” was originally synonymous with hermaphrodite (now considered a derogatory term for intersex individuals). As defined by Oxford Online, androgyne arose “mid 16th century (as a noun): via Latin from Greek androgunos, from anēr, andr- ‘man’ + gunē ‘woman’.” “The Greeks possessed a really astonishing notion of the double sexual (hermaphrodite) nature of the human being in the embryonic condition and of the androgynous idea of life generally,” according to Sexual Life in Ancient Greece (1974), though this notion was not at all limited to the Greeks. Many Native American tribes have long had an understanding of two-spirited people. From The Mythology of Transgression (1997):

In English…ultimately our language calls on us to describe only a living creature by either male or female gender…For the Zuni, the connotations of maleness and femaleness are closely linked to spiritual powers and are not references to genitalia…The rich mosaic of male/female power possessed by the supreme Zuni deity Awonawilona is at once omnipotent and omniscient. It is, in Western terms, an androgynous energy that transcends identity...

Krafft-Ebing’s Psychopathia Sexualis (1965) details androgyne, describing it as a “mental hermaphroditism”, though focusing on the physical form as well as expression of sexual desire. The term “androgynous” in modern times, and outside of pathology, has often found its use in describing those who combine masculine and feminine attributes in their outward presentation (e.g. clothing), though the exploration of androgyne as an identity reawakened in the women’s movement. Feminist scholar Carolyn Heilbrun wrote in Toward a Recognition of Androgyny (1973): “Androgyne suggests a spirit of reconciliation between the sexes; it suggests, further, a full range of experience…it suggests a spectrum upon which human beings choose their places without regard to propriety or custom.”

Commonly recognized identities and concepts under the genderqueer umbrella include those listed below. Many definitions are quoted directly from The Heartland Trans* Wellness Group resource Trans and Queer Terms, originally compiled by JAC Stringer, in which case the quote will be followed by the acronym HTWG. If not from this source, the source of information will be given as a clickable [*]. The absence of quotation marks will indicate that I have written the description myself. If an identity is not listed here, that does not necessarily mean that the identity is not potentially genderqueer or non-binary. If you have a term and definition for something that should be here please let me know.

Identities:

Agender (non-gender): “not identifying with any gender, the feeling of having no gender.” (HTWG) “a term used to describe a person without gender. This person can be any physical sex, but their body does not necessarily correspond with their lack of gender identity” [*]

Androgyne: “1. A person whose biological sex is not readily apparent. 2. A person who is intermediate between the two traditional genders. 3. A person who rejects gender roles entirely.” (HTWG)

Bigender: Bigender people identify as two genders simultaneously, or move between them. This is not limited to
man/woman and can include other genders. [*]

(Nonbinary) Butch: “Holding a nonbinary gender identity and a butch gender expression, or claiming Butch as an identity outside of the gender binary” [*]

Ceterosexual/Ceteroromantic: “Ceterosexual/romantic is sexual/romantic attraction to individuals who’s genders fall under the nonbinary umbrella. This term used to be called skoliosexual/romantic but was renamed because the prefix “skolio-” means “bent or crooked” which implies nonbinary individuals are abnormal or broken. The new prefix “cetero” means “other” This term is exclusive to trans and/or nonbinary individuals. This is because many nonbinary individuals thought that this term could be seen as fetishistic.” It is unclear whether this terminology will stick — and some folks are still using skoliosexual — or if something new or more specific to certain GQ/NB identity attraction will arise. [*]

Crossdresser: “A person who, regardless of motivation, wears clothes, makeup, etc. that are considered by the culture to be appropriate for another gender but no one’s own (preferred term to “transvestite”). This gender non-conforming behavior should not be conflated with queer sexualities. Many cross-dressers are heterosexual and conduct their cross-dressing on a part-time basis. Cross-dressing might also be termed gender non-conforming behavior.” (HTWG)

Demigender: Demi- identities encompass those who identify partially as a given gender. Some common terms are demigirl, demiboy, demienby, and demiflux. [*] [*] Some related terms are nanogirl/nanoboy and magigirl/magiboy to refer to a small amount of a given gender mixed with more of another/other genders, and a large amount of a given gender mixed with more of another/other genders, respectively.

Enby: Derived from abbreviation NB for non-binary. Enbyfriend can be used as a neutral romantic or sexual partner term. [*] [*]

Epicene: “The term epicene literally means “common to both sexes.” It sometimes refers to individuals who have characteristics of both genders or someone who cannot be classified as one sex or the other. Most often, it refers to effeminate males.” [*]

(Nonbinary) Femme: “Holding a nonbinary gender identity and a femme gender expression, or claiming Femme as an identity outside of the gender binary.” [*]

Gender fluid: “Referring to a gender identity that changes with time and/or situation as opposed to a fix sex-role or gender queer expression” [10]

Genderflux: Similar to gender fluid, but involving a shift in gender “intensity”. [ *] [*]

GenderFuck: “The idea of playing with gender cues to purposely confuse, mix, or combine a culture’s standard or stereotypical gender expressions.” (HTWG)

Genderless: “Someone who does not have a gender at all. Some people just don’t “get” gender or feel like they have no gender, or a lack of gender, or an absence of gender.” [*]

Gender neutral: May refer to identities, clothing, or behavior that are not easily categorized as masculine or feminine or a blend of the two (androgyny). See also neuters.

Girlfag: “A woman who is very attracted to gay/bi men. She may (or may not) also feel she is (fully or partly) a “gay man in a woman’s body”. Girlfags may identify primarily as bi or straight or lesbian, and are often attracted to more types of people than just gay/bi men.” [11]

Graygender: “A person who identifies as (at least partially) outside the gender binary and has a strong natural ambivalence about their gender identity or gender expression. They feel they have a gender(s), as well as a natural
inclination or desire to express it, but it’s weak and/or somewhat indeterminate/indefinable, or they don’t feel it most of the time, or they’re just not that invested in it.” [*]

**Guydyke:** “A man who is very attracted to lesbian/bi women. He may (or may not) also feel he is (fully or partly) a “lesbian in a man’s body”. Guydykes may identify primarily as bi or straight or gay, and are often attracted to more types of people than just lesbian/bi women.” [11]

**Intergender:** “A person whose gender identity is between genders or a combination of genders.” (HTWG)

**Neutrois:** “There is no one definition of Neutrois, since each person that self-identifies as such experiences their gender differently. The most common ones are: neutral-gender, null-gender, neither male nor female, genderless, agender.” [12]

**Pangender:** “A person whose gender identity is comprised of many gender expressions.” (HTWG)

**Pomosexual:** “The queer erotic reality beyond the boundaries of gender, separatism, and essentialist notions of sexual orientation”. Generally used conceptually rather than a stand-alone identity term. See also PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality (1997).

**Transmasculine:** “Transmasculine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned female at birth, but identify with masculinity to a greater extent than with femininity. This includes trans men, but transmasculine can also describe someone with a non-binary gender who views themselves as significantly masculine, such as demiguys. Transmasculine can also be used as a gender identity in its own right. Although they have masculine gender identities, transmasculine people may prefer not to conform to stereotypical masculine gender expression or gender roles.” [*]

**Transfeminine:** “Transfeminine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned male at birth, but identify with femininity to a greater extent than with masculinity. This includes trans women, but transfeminine can also describe someone with a non-binary gender who views themselves as significantly feminine, such as demigirls. Transfeminine can also be used as a gender identity in its own right. Although they have feminine gender identities, transfeminine people may prefer not to conform to stereotypical feminine gender expression or gender roles.” [*]

**Transmedicalist/“Truscum” and Tucute/“Tupuke”/“Transtrender”**: There is an ongoing debate between people who believe that dysphoria and desire to medical transition are essential to identifying as transgender, and those who do not find these aspects to be requirements for transgender identity, associated with the above words and corresponding slang. Some people who do not experience dysphoria are thought to be trying on a gender identity as a “trend”. See here for a good run-down of the history behind this debate.

**Concepts:**

**Gender Identity:** Gender can refer to sense of self (gender identity), perception of self by others (including gender recognition or misgendering), behavior, expression, and role. There are both psychological (arising in the mind) and socio-cultural (determined by others, ideas about what is masculine and feminine, and role expectation) aspects of
gender.

**Pronouns:** “There are several non-gender specific pronouns that some people opt to use to describe themselves. “Hir” is used to replace “her” and “him.” “S/he” or “ze” is used instead of “he” and “she.” If you are unsure of how a person identifies or what pronouns to use, it never hurts to ask politely.” (HTWG)

**Queer:** “Originally a synonym for “odd,” this term—as both noun and adjective—became a derogatory epithet for gay men and lesbians in the twentieth century, especially in the United States, where it emphasized the alleged “unnaturalness” of homosexuality. Although many people still use “queer” as an anti-gay slur, there emerged a movement in the 1980s that sought to reclaim the term and rob it of its negative meaning. In this usage, “queer” is an inclusive umbrella term that designates all those who are sexually dissident, even if they are not strictly homosexual, and all “transgressive” forms of sexuality. Many lesbians and gay men, transsexuals, bisexuals, and even heterosexuals whose sexuality does not fit into the cultural standard of monogamous heterosexual marriage have adopted the “queer” label. Some gay men and lesbians, however, remembering the hurt caused by its pejorative meaning, dislike the term, even in its “reclaimed” usage, and feel that it has the effect of diluting the specificity of the narrower categories. The term is sometimes used as a verb. To queer something is to replace normative, heterosexual values with values of minority sexualities, in effect, to make non-normative values the norm.” [13]

**Questioning:** “Being uncertain of one’s sexual orientation or gender identity.” [*]

**Romantic Orientation:** “An individual’s pattern of romantic attraction to men, women, neither gender, either gender, or another gender. For many sexuals, their romantic orientation and their sexual orientation are in alignment, so the gender(s) of the people they fall in love with are also the gender(s) they are sexually attracted to. For an asexual, who does not experience sexual attraction, it is their romantic orientation that determines which gender(s), if any, they are inclined to form romantic relationships with. A person may be asexual or romantic, or somewhere in between.” [*]

**Sexual Orientation:** “Sexual orientation” is a term frequently used to describe a person’s romantic, emotional or sexual attraction to another person.” [*] Increasingly, sexual orientation is being differentiated from romantic orientation - see also AVENWiki: Attraction.

**Transgender:** As defined by Practical Androgyny: “‘Transgender’ is an umbrella term that can potentially cover all people who transgress or transcend (go beyond the limits of) society’s rules and concepts of gender. People may be transgender due to their self expression, identity or personal history.”

Previous section: Defining genderqueer ← OR Genderqueer History ←

Notes:


Please also see the Trans and Queer Terms page at Heartland Trans* Wellness Group for more identities and information.