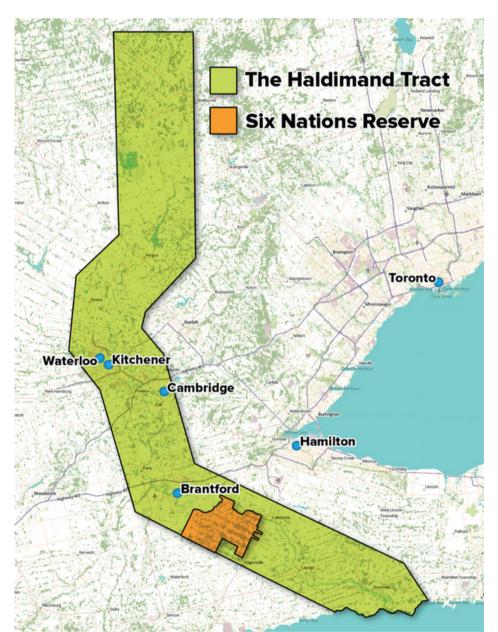
# 2SLGBTQIA+ Terminology Guide

### Media Reference Tool



# Territorial Acknowledgement

SPECTRUM acknowledges the truth that we are situated on the Haldimand Tract, which is the traditional land of Haudenosaunee and Mississauga Anishinaabe nations. We also recognize the Chinonton Peoples, who have come to be known as the Neutral Nations, a people entirely eliminated by the colonization of this land.



This territorial acknowledgement alone cannot accomplish justice. We are committed to working towards reconciliation and ensuring that our programs, services, and practices are culturally relevant and accessible to Indigenous peoples in our community.

Map used with permission of: Six Nations of Grand River sixnations.ca

### About Us

WHO are we?

Founded as Waterloo Region's first-ever 2SLGBTQIA+ community space, SPECTRUM is an organization that serves, affirms, and supports the well-being of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals in the Waterloo Region and broader community through peer support, resources, education and training, local partnerships, and events.

WHAT do we do?

SPECTRUM offers over 30 different groups and activities each month, including: transgender peer support groups, games nights, a book club, Rainbow Newcomers Connect, SPECTRUM Prime for 2SLGBTQIA+ adults age 55+, and multisport drop-ins.

Other services and support offered by SPECTRUM include: the Rainbow Pages directory of local 2SLGBTQIA+ friendly businesses, Rainbow Diversity Training, a gender-neutral washroom map for Waterloo Region, and more.

HOW do we do it?

As a registered charity, SPECTRUM depends on support from the community. To learn more about SPECTRUM and support the work that we do, visit ourspectrum.com/donate



### Introduction to this Tool

WHAT is the purpose?

- Assist people in learning about 2SLGBTQIA+ terminology.
- Act as a reference for writers looking to write about 2SLGBTQIA+ people and issues affecting the community.

#### HOW is it relevant?

- Created in North America and may not reflect the experiences and identities of 2SLGBTQIA+ people outside of this context.
- This guide is non-exhaustive and should not be used to police the language people use to describe themselves and their experiences.
- Terminology evolves over time as knowledge grows, making it essential for individuals to continue their learning process.

#### WHY is it necessary?

- Escalation of hateful rhetoric and "Don't Say Gay" legislation in the United States is a reminder that language, education, and media representation matter.
- 2SLGBTQIA+ people continue to face challenges in accessing health care, freedom of expression, safety, and security.
- It is important to write about 2SLGBTQIA+ people in ways that do not perpetuate harmful stereotypes and misconceptions.

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### 101: Introduction to 2SLGBTQIA+ Topics

WHAT is in this section?

• Initialism, gender, sex and sexuality, transgender identity, discrimination and diversity, specific terms and usage.



- Biological sex: related to an individuals' chromosomes, genitalia, and hormones.
  - Does **not** define someone's gender.
  - Eurocentric and colonial practice to assign gender to infants at birth, usually a binary gender: male or female.
  - This practice overlooks intersex people and dismisses the cultural significance of Indigenous Two-Spirit peoples.
- Gender identity: a person's internal sense of self and gender.
  - May or may not align with the gender they were assigned at birth.
  - A person is cisgender when their gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth.
- Sexuality: the types of people someone is attracted to.

It is important to recognize that gender and sexuality are spectrums with a multitude of identities along each.

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- Two-Spirit: a culturally-specific
  - 2S people serve an integral role in Indigenous communities.
  - We place 2S at the beginning of initialism to recognize Indigenous people as the first to build gender diverse communities in Canada.
- Lesbian: a woman who is attracted to women.
- Gay: a person who is attracted to people of the same gender.
  - Can also refer generally to people who are not cisgender or straight.
- Bisexual: a person who is attracted to people of more than one gender.
- Transgender: a person whose gender identity and/or biological characteristics differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.
- Queer: historically a slur, reclaimed by some people that do not identify as cisgender and/or straight.
- Intersex: a person born with biological characteristics that are ambiguous, or correlate with both male and female medical definitions.
- Asexual: a person who does not experience sexual attraction to people of any gender.

### Gender, Sex and Sexuality

- Biological sex: related to an individuals' internal reproductive organs, chromosomes, genitalia, and hormones.
  - Does not define someone's gender.

#### Gender...

- Identity: a person's internal sense of self and gender.
- Expression: how a person expresses their gender identity outwardly.
- Binary: restrictive classification of people as exclusively male or female.
- Fluid: a person whose gender fluctuates through the spectrum over time.
- Roles: socially constructed role expectations based on person's assigned gender.

#### Sexual...

- Orientation (or Sexuality): the types of people that someone is attracted to.
- Attraction: five (5) types of attraction, people can experience multiple types simultaneously.
  - Sexual: desire to have sex with someone.
  - Sensual: desire for physical contact.
  - Romantic: desire to have a romantic relationship.
  - Platonic: desire to have a friendly, non-sexual relationship.
  - Aesthetic: desire for pleasure of someone's appearance.

# Gender Diversity

- Transgender: a person whose gender identity and/or biological characteristics differ from the sex they were assigned at birth.
  - An adjective to describe a person's gender.
  - Does not determine sexual orientation.
- Coming Out: to disclose one's sexual orientation or gender identity to others.
  - Also known as "Letting In" to validate vulnerability of being open with others.
  - Outing: disclosing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity without consent.
- Transition: process of changing one's gender expression over time.
  - May include medical treatment, hormones.



- Non-binary: umbrella term for people with a gender identity that is outside of the binary (male/female).
- Agender: someone that does not identify with any gender.
- Demiboy/Demigirl: someone that partially, but not entirely, identifies with a binary gender.
- Masc/Femme: short for masculine and feminine, not gender exclusive, may refer to appearance, mannerisms, or behaviour.

# Introduction to Human Rights

Definition: a right or freedom that is inherent to every human being, and is fundamental to basic human dignity.



WHO do they apply to? Everyone regardless of race, age, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, or any other human status.

WHAT are my rights? You have the right to life, freedom, and safety. The right to education, vote, own property, and peacefully protest. Among many others, you have the right to freedom of expression.

HOW do I respect these rights? We are all responsible for protecting and honouring the enjoyment of human rights for others. Support legislation that maintains and recognizes the rights of everyone.

Consider how marginalized communities have had to advocate for access to fundamental human rights throughout history, particularly 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and Indigenous people.



#### Sexuality Based:

- Homophobia: feelings of hatred, fear, and/or disdain for people that are not heterosexual.
- Heterosexism: acts of discrimination against people who are not heterosexual.

#### Intersectional Basis:

- Transmisogyny: the dual experience of misogyny (sexism) and transphobia.
  - Perpetrated toward transgender women.
- Transmisogynoir: the intersection of anti-Black racism and transmisogyny.
  - Perpetrated toward transgender women of colour.

Note: discrimination can be (un)intentional and has the capacity to impact anyone.

#### **Gender Based:**

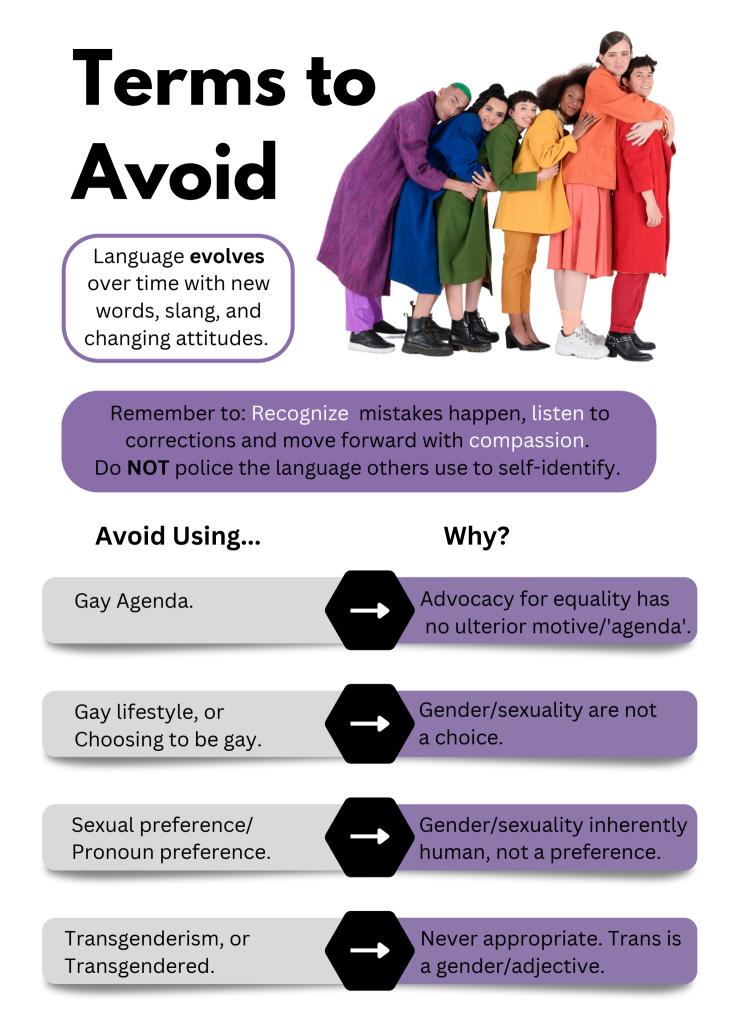
- Misgender: using incorrect pronouns or language to refer to someone's gender.
- Non-binaryphobia: feelings of hatred, fear, or disdain for gender identities that reject the binary (male/female).
- Transphobia: feeling hatred, fear, or disdain for transgender people.
- Deadname: using the birth name of someone who has chosen a new name as part of their gender transition.
- TERF: Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist, people that exclude transgender identity from feminist discourse.
  - Hate driven antitransgender 'activism'.
  - Disregard contradictory nature of excluding marginalized women from feminism.

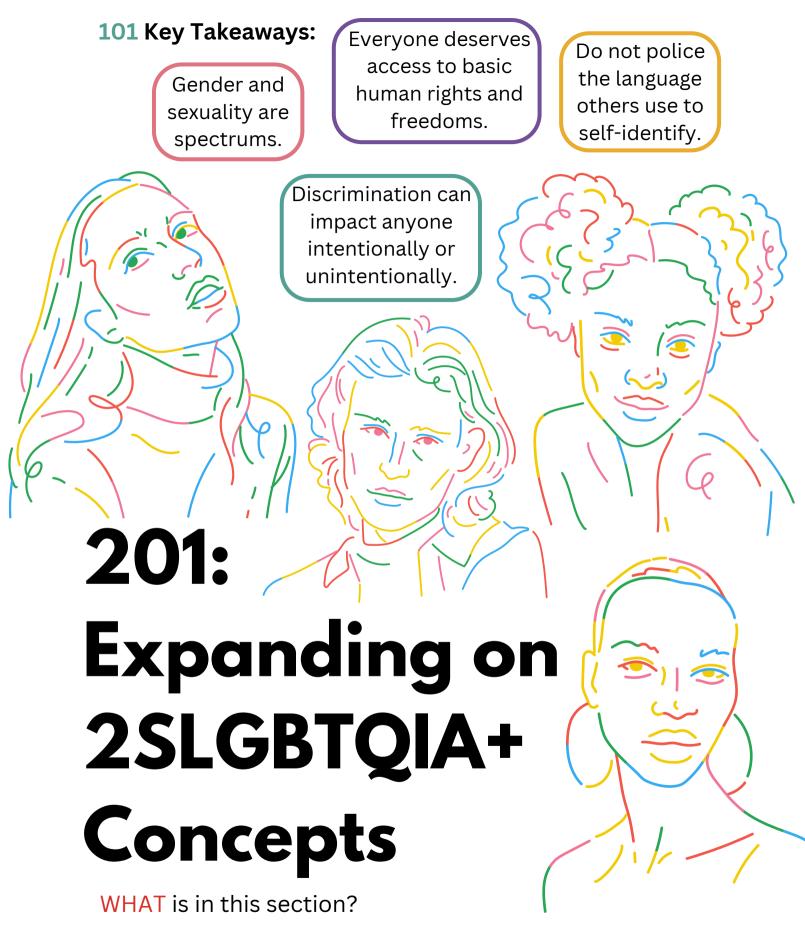
### Terms and Usage

It is important to recognize that mistakes happen. Listen to how a person correctly identifies and move forward respectfully and compassionately.

Do **NOT** police the language others use to self-identify.

Instead of	Try to
Biologically male/female, or born a man/woman.	View gender as a spectrum, recognize gender identity.
Closeted (referring to someone that is not 'out').	Recognize experience as someone 'letting in' others.
Hermaphrodite or Transsexual.	Use relevant gender term (intersex or transgender).
Opposite gender/the other sex.	See gender as spectrum, no opposites or comparison.
Sex change operation/ reassignment.	See gender confirming transition as life-saving.
Pre-operative/ Post-operative.	Learn how gender transition is not always medical.

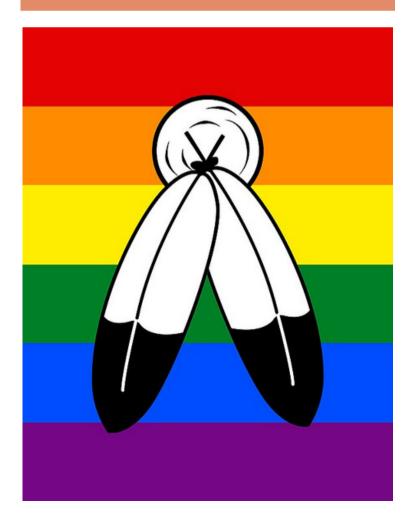




• Two-Spirit, and other gender identities, pronouns, queer history, intersectionality, gender critical theories and TERFs, dogwhistle terminology.

### **Two-Spirit Identity**

- **Turtle Island:** in oral histories Indigenous people refer to 'North America' as Turtle Island.
- Indigenous: original inhabitants of Turtle Island including Metis, Inuit and First Nations people.
  - First to build gender diverse communities and political systems on Turtle Island.
  - Colonization: displacement of a group of people from their home, eradicating culture/identity.



- Two-Spirit: a culturallyspecific gender identity, can refer to a diverse range of nation-specific, traditional beliefs.
  - Indigiqueer: used to acknowledge that not all 2SLGBTQIA+ Indigenous people feel "Two-Spirit" describes their identity.
  - Unique gender roles, sexuality, spiritual importance.
- **Collectivism:** all Indigenous community members have a role and place, all life is considered sacred/worthy of **acceptance**.
  - Perspective not valued or shared by European settlers.
- Truth and Reconciliation: start with educating people about Indigenous history, and modern applications of traditional spiritual teachings.

### **Queer Identity**

### History:

- 1500s: queer used to refer to something "strange" or "odd."
- 19th Century: term becomes more synonymous with "sexual deviance."
  - Used as a slur against gay men and lesbians.

### **Reclamation:**

- 1980s: activists began to reclaim queer as a radical and provocative label for 2SLGBTQIA+ people.
- 1990s: gay rights activist groups coin "we're here, we're queer, get used to it."
- 2000s: queer shifts into an umbrella term for a diverse range of gender identities and sexual orientations.
- 2010s: queer becomes increasingly popular identity among transgender, gender fluid and non-binary people.
- 2016: GLAAD, a global advocacy organization, adds 'Q' to the LGBT initialism.

### Is **QUEER** a slur?

- Many 2SLGBTQIA+ people identify as queer.
  - This term can describe a range of gender identities and sexual orientations.
- Some 2SLGBTQIA+ elders associate the term with trauma of historical homophobic violence.
  - Important to actively listen to history told by 2SLGBTQIA+ elders.



### Pansexual and Bisexual Identity

### Bisexual

- 1980s and 90s: bisexual gains popularity as sexual orientation term for people who are attracted to men and women.
- More Recently: definition expanded to include attraction to some but not all genders.
  - Growing recognition of non-binary people and multiple genders.
- Bisexual Erasure: some people reject the validity of bisexual identity.
  - Subjecting some bisexual relationships to heteronormative expectations/roles.
- Biromantic: used by some asexual people to describe non-sexual attraction to some but not all genders.

- 2SLGBTQIA+ Stigma: some consider bisexuality to be non-inclusive of gender diversity and/or transphobic.
  - Some feel the bisexual definition of 1980s pushes gender binary.
  - Some view pansexuality as more inclusive.

### Pansexual



- Origins: pansexual refers to sexual orientation of people whose attraction is not dependent on gender binary.
- Recently: has grown to describe attraction to people of all genders.
  - Emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction regardless of gender.
- Panromantic: used by some asexual people to describe non-sexual attraction to people of multiple genders.

### Transgender and Non-Binary Identity

- Gender Expression: nonbinary gender expression does **not** have to look like androgyny or fixed roles.
- Transgender expression does **not** have to look feminine **or** masculine.
  - Expression is fluid.

### Transgender

- Culturally significant depictions of transgender bodies and identities date back as far 7000 BCE.
  - Mediterranean Enaree
  - X gender in Japan
  - Kathoey of Thailand
- Early 1970s: growth of transgender rights activism, movements, and visibility.
  - Raised awareness of antitrans discrimination and legislation, HIV stigma.
  - 2023: Still significant barriers to healthcare access for trans people.

### **Non-Binary**

- Culturally specific examples of non-binary gender identity date back as far as 2000 BCE.
  - Sekhet in Egypt
  - Hijra of South Asia
  - Māhū of Polynesia
- Many cultures outside of a Western colonial context divest from the notion of gender binary.
- 2010s: non-binary gender identity gains popularity among people who do not identify/conform with binary.

#### **Overlapping Experiences**

- Non-binary and transgender are not genders assigned at birth in Western societies.
- Some non-binary people also identify as transgender.
- 'Coming out' as non-binary can involve some degree of social transitioning.

### Introduction to Pronouns

- Pronouns: words used to refer to a person without naming them.
- Used by everyone of any gender.
  - Familiarity with only he/him/his and she/her/hers pronouns aligns with the concept of cisnormativity.

Rather than assuming a person's pronouns, use their name when referring to them. Or **ask** them their correct pronouns.

• Gender expression and identity do not determine someone's pronouns.

#### **Etiquette:**

- Always use a person's correct pronouns even when they are not around. Correct others using incorrect pronouns for a person.
  - Grammar: understand that "they" is a correct singular pronoun in the same way as "she" or "he".
- Continue to use the correct pronouns of a transgender person when telling stories of before they began to transition.
  - Recognize who a person is, not how you perceive them.
- Addressing Groups: instead of using gendered terms such as "ladies", "gentleman" or "sir", "ma'am" try:
  - Use general addressing terms such as "folks" or "friends".

### Introduction to Intersectionality

Definition: framework for understanding the multitude of components that interact to compose a person's identity.

- How components influence their experience of the world.
- Kimberlé Crenshaw, a race and gender advocate, coined this term in 1989.
  - She recognized the multiple 'lanes' of oppression and discrimination that marginalized women experience in social and political systems.

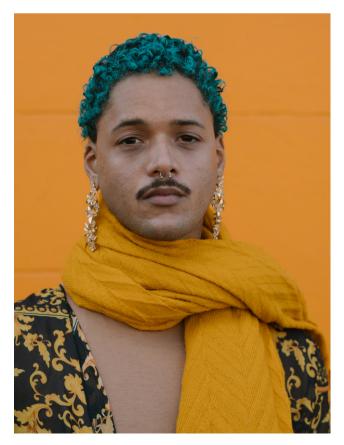
Individual identity consists of age, gender, disability, genetics, race, sex, and many other attributes which influence power, privilege, politics and accessibility.

HOW to apply concept: Consider attributes of your identity that contribute to your experiences of privilege. Continue to learn about systemic barriers, compound discrimination, and diversity. For more context on the political and social systems that brought Crenshaw to coin the term look up the case of: DeGraffenreid v. General Motors (1976) <sup>1</sup>

You

# Gender Critical Theories

- TERF: Trans Exclusive Radical Feminism/Feminists
  - Claim that feminist advocacy requires the exclusion of women who are transgender.
  - Promote the exclusion of transgender women from public spaces, and human rights legislation.
  - Dismiss contradiction of excluding some women from gender equity.





- Gender Critical Ideologies: focus is to intentionally exclude trans people.
  - Believe in only two biological sexes and binary gender identities.
  - Believe that affirming transgender rights is harmful to women.
  - Oppose trans activism.
- Dismissive of the multitude of factors that contribute to biological sex and gender.

### **TERF 'Activism'**

#### **TERF Core Principles:**

- There are only two biological sexes and genders (M/F).
- Transgender people are sexual predators, grooming children, and dangerous.
- There is no crisis of violence perpetrated against transgender women.

#### Transphobic Legislation:

- Florida 'Parental Rights in Education' House Bill 1557.<sup>2</sup>
  - Cloaked as bill about parental input in content of children's education.
  - Prohibits discussion of sexual orientation or gender until after grade 3.
- Wyoming 'Student Eligibility in Interscholastic Activities'.
  - Only validates binary genders, labelled as 'sex'.
  - Restricts trans children's capacity to participate.

- A 2018 Waterloo Region study found transgender people feel unsafe:
  - 92% in places of worship (i.e., church, mosque).
  - 81% in public washrooms/bathrooms.
    - 57% avoided public washrooms.
  - 77% restaurants or bars.<sup>3</sup>

#### Hate-based Campaigns:

- Canadian Women's Sex-Based Rights (caWsbar).<sup>4</sup>
  - Spread misinformation about how equality rights apply to transgender women.
  - Seek to revoke rights and protections for transgender women.
  - Reduce gender to a "subjective opinion".
- Ronald DeSantis: Florida Governor backing anti-trans and 'Don't Say Gay' bills.

## Dogwhistle Aggressions

- Dogwhistle: a **coded** message communicated through phrases only understood by a particular group.
  - How political and radical groups disguise 2SLGBTQIA+ discrimination.
  - Intended to sound non-threatening.



sexual diversity as deviance.

Dogwhistle Term		True Meaning	
Natal Woman or Biological Woman.		Only cisgender/biological sex defines womanhood.	
Trans-identified or Trans-identifying.		Transgender is a preference/ choice not a gender identity.	
Protect single-gender spaces.		Only promote hetero-, and cis- normative spaces.	
LGB or GLB.		Erase Trans and Queer identity from initialism.	
Queer (as a slur).		Revert to treating gender/	

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### 201 Key Takeaways:

TERFs focus on excluding trans people from all aspects of life and human rights. Culturally specific gender identities exist worldwide.

Instead of assuming someone's correct pronouns, just ask. Multiple attributes influence individual experiences of power and privilege.

### 301: Engaging with 2SLGBTQIA+ Concepts



WHAT is in this section?

• Polyamory, drag, applications of 2SLGBTQIA+ concepts when styling media, current 2SLGBTQIA+ legislative and political discourse, resources for continued learning.



# Polyamory



- Polyamory: engaging in the practice of **ethical** non-monogamy where all parties involved are consenting.
  - Commonly abbreviated to polyam, or poly.
  - Ethics: mutually agreed upon expectations and parameters for polyam relationships.

- Non-monogamy: the practice of having multiple sexual and/or romantic partners at the same time.
  - An inextricable aspect of some people's sexual orientation and/or relationship preferences.
  - Practiced by straight and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.
- Many variations of polyam.
  - Such as: hierarchical, solo, triad, parallel, and more.
- Ethical nature of polyamory requires communication.
  - All parties involved need to communicate needs, concerns, and emotions.

- Stigma: polyamory challenges the limits of traditional monogamy and intimacy.
  - Seen as taboo and adulterous/sinful.
  - Discrimination can result in the loss of one's job, family, security/safety.



# Drag

- Drag: a queer **art form** expressing creativity, gender diversity, and liberation.
  - Challenges racial and gender stereotypes.
  - Drag queens and kings do not inherently identify as transgender or experience gender dysphoria.
- Drag **is** political activism (directly and indirectly.)
  - The heart of 1970s gay liberation movements and HIV/AIDS activism.
  - Consider drag activists throughout history such as Marsha P. Johnson.





- Growing popularity of TV shows such as 'RuPaul's Drag Race' and HBO's 'We're Here'.
  - Drag has become a social and political focus for supporters and critics.
- Growing protest and legislative reform for antidrag restrictions in the US.
  - Aim to reclassify drag as 'obscene adult entertainment'.
  - Rooted in anti-trans rhetoric, and a disregard for 2SLGBTQIA+ children.

Images by: Andy Wright (2022)

### **Author's Guide**



#### Writing Ethical Content:

- Do not disclose someone's birth or government names when writing.
  - Respect how people self-identify presently.
- Avoid use of imagery that promotes binary gender roles or stereotypes.
  - Include diversity.
- Do not disclose the gender or sexuality of content sources without consent.

#### Writing Inclusive Content:

- Avoid gendering people in writing if you are unsure of their correct gender identity and/or pronouns.
  - Use non-gendered descriptors, and inclusive language.
  - "The *eldest* person in the family..." or "Their friend with *red hair*..."

#### Singular "they"

- We use singular "they" regularly and naturally.
  - "I wasn't sure of their name when we met."
  - "So, I went to ask them."
- This grammar dates back to English literature of 1300s.
  - Used by writers Chaucer and Shakespeare.

#### **Sourcing Stories:**

- Do not use direct quotes if a person's deadname is used.
- Seek out 2SLGBTQIA+ experts and community members with lived experience for information.

### Authoring Meaningful Stories



#### • Choose stories with Care.

- The stories you choose to tell are just as important as the language you use.
- Where you choose to source your information is equally important.
- Seek to share **new** stories, and fresh perspectives.
  - Generate diverse stories about 2SLGBTQIA+ people at all stages of life.
  - Share stories about
     2SLGBTQIA+ happiness,
     joy, family building, love.
  - Aim to inspire readers.



- Highlighting Trans and Non-Binary Stories:
  - Access to healthcare, medical discrimination.
  - Gender affirming and transition-related care.
  - Fiscal barriers to secure, adequate **housing**.
  - **Homelessness** and non-inclusive shelters.
  - Experiences of violence, harassment, sexual assault, and self-harm.
  - Barriers to **employment**, workplace discrimination.

### Authoring Meaningful Stories



#### • Considerations for Authors:

- Illustrate 2SLGBTQIA+ life
   beyond coming out.
- Focus on appropriate details of someone's transition, **not** necessarily medical or procedural.
- Respect the language people use to identify.
- Maintain use of correct pronouns when referring to someone pre-transition.
- Avoid using before/pretransition and posttransition comparisons.



- Highlighting Bisexual and Pansexual Stories:
  - Experiences of erasure.
  - Marginalization and underrepresentation in 2SLGBTQIA+ spaces.
  - Stereotypes of "straight passing/appearing".
  - Misconceptions that relationship status changes identity.
  - Lack of family or social support/acceptance.
  - Feeling unsafe to come out, even to partners.

### Current News



### Anti-Drag Legislation: <sup>6</sup>

- Restricting drag performers from hosting events in venues accessible to youth.
  - Even family-centered story time at libraries.
- Venues that rely on income generated by these events have had to close.
- Violence, harassment, and threats targeting drag performers in public places.
  - Especially trans people.

- Racist, and queerphobic candidate Donald Trump has declared intent to run in 2024 presidential election.
- Rise of **radical** conservative politics in US congress.
  - Aim to shift focus off of issues such as racial violence or gun control and onto opinion-based social 'issues/crisis'.
- Tennessee House voted to expel two elected officials.<sup>5</sup>
  - Both young Black men,
     punished for supporting activism they believe in.

#### Reproductive Health Care

- 2022 overturn of Roe v.
   Wade has intensified divide on whether abortion should be legal and in what cases.
  - Access to abortion is no longer a guaranteed right in all states.
- Religious affiliation, gender and race are some of the factors that influence individual bias on topic.
- Activists are protesting the ruling with slogans such as:
  - 'My body is not up for debate.'
  - 'My body, my choice.'



### Additional Readings

Media Reference Guide 11th Edition Source: GLAAD

The OutLook Study and Reports Source: Rainbow Community Council

Glossary of Terms Source: The 519

For more low-barrier 2SLGBTQIA+ literature, go to OutOnTheShelf.com



**Citation 1:** Intersectionality and Kimberlé Crenshaw – University of Ottawa Association of Women and the Law (uoawl.org)

**Citation 2:** Bill Text: FL H1557 (2022) – Regular Session Legislation (LegiScan.com) Bill Detail: SF 0133 (2023)– The State of Wyoming Legislature (wyoleg.gov)

**Citation 3:** OutLook Study: Experiences of Trans People in Waterloo Region – Rainbow Community Council (yourwrrc.ca)

Citation 4: Position Statement - Canadian Women's Sex-based Rights (caWsbar.ca)

**Citation 5:** Tennessee Democratic Lawmakers Expelled Over Gun Control Protest Hope to Reclaim Seats (2023) – U.S. News (usnews.com)

**Citation 6:** Tennessee law restricting drag is the 1st of many such proposed bills in the U.S. (2023) – CBC Radio (cbc.ca)

**Citation 7:** Abortion banned in multiple US states just hours after Roe v Wade overturned (2022) – The Guardian (theguardian.com)





Spectrum provides **Rainbow Diversity Training** on 2SLGBTQIA+ cultural competency, available by request.

• Help your organization along the path towards becoming more welcoming and inclusive to 2SLGBTQIA+ employees, clients, and other partners or stakeholders.

We have the following **two-hour workshops** available:

- Rainbow Diversity Training 101
- Rainbow Diversity Training 201
- Rainbow Diversity Training 301
- Rainbow Diversity Training for Leaders
- Aging with Pride (for senior-serving organizations)
- We also have a one-hour **lunch and learn** that provides a condensed version of the 101 workshop.

In addition to our Rainbow Diversity Training workshops, we have a series of **Online Learning Modules** available to the public.

- Designed for individuals to use at their own pace.
- **Certificates** are generated upon completion of each module.



For more information please visit https://www.ourspectrum.com/services/rdt

If you have questions or would like to book a workshop please contact Scott Williams execdirector@ourspectrum.com