

The Rock Of Hope Eswatini



# Newsletter

April 2021



## Gender Queer

Argentina adds gender non-binary on passports and Identity cards



Co-funded by the European Union

# Gender QUEER

**L**esbian, gay, bisexual people may all identify with the word queer. Queer is sometimes used to express that sexuality and gender can be complicated, change over time, and might not fit neatly into either/or identities, like male or female, gay or straight. Non-binary & Gender-queer – These terms are actively debated within the LGBTIQ+ community. Both terms are similar in scope. Non-binary refers to people whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary (i.e. either male/man or female/woman) and was coined as a descriptive term, used to describe experiences that fall outside of the binary gender model which undergirds much of society. Gender-queer refers to people who have a non-normative or queer gender. Gender-queer is often used to refer to people who reject labels and conformity to specific gender norms. Non-binary tends to be more of an umbrella term, which encompasses gender-queer people, along with other non-binary genders.

### Defining Queer

Queer is a multi-faceted word that is used in different ways and means different things to different people. Here are some ways that queer is used today:

1. Queer (adj.): attracted to people of many genders

Although dominant culture tends to dictate that there are only two genders, gender is actually far more complex. Queer can be a label claimed by a person who is attracted to men, women, gender-queer people, and/or other gender nonconforming people.

2. Queer (adj.): not fitting cultural norms around sexuality and/or gender identity/expression

Similarly to the above, queer can be a label claimed by a person who feels that they personally don't fit into dominant norms, due to their own gender identity/expression, their sexual practices, their relationship style, etc.

3. Queer (adj.): non-heterosexual

Queer is sometimes used as an umbrella term to refer to all people with non-heterosexual sexual orientations or all people who are marginalized on the basis of sexual orientation.

4. Queer (adj.): transgressive, revolutionary, anti-assimilation, challenging of the status quo

Many people claim the label queer as a badge of honor that has a radical, political edge. UU seminarian Elizabeth Nguyen has preached: "Queer, for many folks, is about resistance—resisting dominant culture's ideas of 'normal,' rejoicing in transgression, celebrating the margins, reveling in difference, blessing ourselves."

5. Queer (n.): an epithet or slur for someone perceived to be gay or lesbian

Queer is still sometimes used as a derogatory term. Many people who have had the word queer used against them are understandably very uncomfortable with the word.

### 10 Ways to be More Welcoming and Inclusive of Queer People

1. Respect queer as a valid sexual orientation and identity label.

2. If you personally have negative associations with the word queer, find ways to open yourself to new understandings of the word. Do personal, gentle, deep work in order to honor and respect those who use queer to describe themselves.

3. Include the word queer in the language you use to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity: "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer" or "LGBTQ."

4. Avoid making assumptions based on your perceptions of a person's gender or the gender of the people they partner with—open yourself to the possibility that any person, of any age, might identify as queer. 5. Learn more about queer identity on your own. You might start by reading at least two articles or books that increase your understanding of queer identity.

6. Depend on dualisms; challenge yourself to eradicate dualisms from your language and your understanding of the world. Gay and straight, masculine and feminine, black and white: all dualisms obscure so many shades of grey, shades of queer, shades of androgyny and fluidity. Open yourself to this infinite variety.

7. Use terms that encompass all genders rather than only two (e.g., "children" instead of "boys and girls"; "people" instead of "women and men"; "siblings.")

8. Expand the ways that sexual orientation is understood and discussed in your congregation beyond the idea that sexual orientation is a born-in, static trait. Although many people believe themselves to have been born lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or straight, others experience sexuality as fluid and changing throughout their lifetime. Honor this diversity of experience through the ways you talk and teach about sexual orientation.

9. Do continuing education for your congregation at large on bisexual and queer issues. See below for resource suggestions.

10. Queerness is often located at the margins. Consider how your congregation's welcome, advocacy, witness, and/or service around LGBTQ issues can be more grounded in the experiences and needs of those who are most marginalized, such as queer and trans youth, queer and trans people of color, and undocumented queer and trans immigrants

# The International Outlook



## Argentina adds gender non-binary on passports and Identity cards

In a huge step for LGBTQ+ rights, Argentina has become the first Latin American country to add a non-binary option on passports and IDs. Under the new legislation, non-binary people are now able to select X for their gender.

The President, Alberto Fernandez, announced the inclusive news on Tuesday (21 July) during a press conference in Buenos Aires. "There are other identities man and woman that must be respected," he said. The Minister of Women, Gender and Diversity, Elizabeth Gomez Alcorta, described the new law as an "action focused on the construction of more equal but also more inclusive society." During the press conference, Fernandez revealed the new format of the ID cards that featured the new X option. He and Gomez also delivered the first three ID's.

Argentina joins a growing list of countries – like New Zealand, Canada and India – that have added a non-binary option to legal documents. Taking to Twitter, Fernandez elaborated on his decree and new policy in a powerful statement. "There are identities that always existed, but were hidden. We must respect them because when we deny them, we deprive many people of the possibility of being happy," he said. "I hope that this advance ends the day in which nobody in the DNI asks what gender is perceived."

Over the years, Argentina has introduced numerous progressive LGBTQ+ friendly laws. In 2010, the country legalised same-sex marriage, becoming the first in Latin America to do so. Back in 2012, the government passed the Gender Identity Law, which allows trans people to transition without being "diagnosed" with a psychological abnormality. The country also created new legislation that reserves 1% of public sector jobs for transgender people. Under the new law, tax incentives and soft loans are also available for businesses that hire trans people.

Source: Jordan Robledo



## Entertainment

### LGBTI Entertainment/ Iasted LGBTI Movies/ Series

#### Everybody's talking about Jamie

Based on the award-winning musical, Jamie New is a 16 year old and doesn't quite fit in. Instead of pursuing a "real" career, he dreams of becoming a Drag Queen. Uncertain about his future, Jamie knows one thing for sure: he is going to be a sensation. Supported by his loving mom and his amazing friends, Jamie overcomes prejudice, beats the bullies and steps out of the darkness into the spotlight. This film is all about not needing permission to be you.

