

Xenophobia

Ableism

Racism

Ageism

Misogyny

Chauvinism

Homophobia

Trans phobia

Discrimination

Jingoism

Sexism

Anti- Semitism

Heterosexism

Classism

Oppression

Islamophobia

**cis / cisgender:** A term used to describe individuals who, for the most part, identify as the gender they were assigned at birth by their doctor and by society. Why do we say ‘cisgender’ instead of ‘non-trans’? Because referring to cisgender people as ‘non trans’ implies that cisgender people are the default and that being trans is abnormal.

**cisheteropatriarchy:** In its wider definition, patriarchy is the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over girls, women, and gender nonconforming people in society in general. Patriarchy is deeply connected with cissexism and heterosexism through the perpetuation and enforcement of the gender binary.

**cisism / cissexism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on one’s gender identity, specifically individuals who do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth and/or within the gender binary of (cis) man and (cis) woman. Cissexism also depends on a binary of cisgender and transgender, erasing and invalidating the vast spectrum of gender expression and gender identity.

Example: washrooms being gendered to exclude individuals who do not identify with/in the gender binary, and/or do not “pass” within the gender binary of man and woman.

**classism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on one’s real or perceived economic status or background. It is associated with but not mutually exclusive to capitalism. While we may describe classes as poor/low income/working class, middle class, and upper class, a binary also exists within classism. This binary exploits poor, low income, and working class people for the benefit of middle and upper class individuals. See also: ageism, ableism

**cultural appropriation:** Cultural appropriation is the adoption or the theft of icons, rituals, aesthetic standards, and behaviour from one culture or subculture by another. It generally is applied when the subject culture is a minority culture or somehow subordinate in social, political, economic, or military status to the appropriating culture. This “appropriation” often occurs without any real understanding of why the original culture took part in these activities or the meanings behind these activities, often converting culturally significant artefacts, practices, and beliefs into “meaningless” pop-culture or giving them a significance that is completely different than they would originally have had. It is important to acknowledge that there is a lot of grey area surrounding cultural appropriation resulting in the conflation of issues, i.e. indigenous peoples of turtle island willingly sharing their cultural heritage.

**dyadic:** A word used to refer to people who are not intersex. Like the term cisgender, it was created to avoid othering of intersex people by referring to non-intersex people as “normal.”

**ethnocentrism:** It is judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one’s own culture. The view of things in which one’s own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it. The ethnocentric individual will judge other groups relative to their own particular group, especially with concern to language, behaviour, customs, and religion. These ethnic distinctions and subdivisions serve to define each ethnicity’s unique cultural identity. Ethnocentrism may be overt or subtle, and while it is considered a natural tendency of human psychology, it has developed a generally negative connotation.

**dis/ableism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on one’s abilities (mental/intellectual, emotional, and/or physical) and one’s contributions to “productivity” within a capitalist and colonial framework. Dis/ableism depends on a binary, exploiting disabled individuals for the benefit of abled individuals. Disabilities are subject to social stigma, isolation, and systemic barriers to resources, and are targeted with violence and oppression.

**disability:** Any ability, impairment, or body that is (or is being perceived) outside what is “normal” or “able”. It includes bodies that move, think, sense, behave, communicate, and look “unacceptable” or “unproductive”. Disabilities are subject to social stigma, isolation, and systemic barriers to resources, and are targeted with violence and oppression.

**heterosexism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on one’s romantic and sexual orientation, specifically individuals who are questioning, lesbian, non-labeling, bisexual, queer, pansexual, gay, or identify in any other way that is not heterosexual/straight. Heterosexism depends on the binary of straight and gay, making invisible the vast spectrum and fluidity of romantic and sexual orientation. It also enforces, and is enforced by, the gender binary.

Example: questioning, lesbian, non-labeling, bisexual, queer, pansexual, gay, or identify in any other way that is not heterosexual/straight not receiving appropriate and relevant sexual education and therefore increasing their risk to negative health consequences.

**homonormativity:** A view that homosexuality (and by extension any alternative sexualities and/or genders) is preferable to heterosexuality. Gay and lesbian capitalists begin to enjoy their hard-won equality (i.e. “gay marriage”, adoptions, healthcare access, workplace and legal protections) within colonial, capitalist, and imperialist structures where ableism, classism, sexism, racism and many other forms of oppression intersect.

**homo antagonism:** A tool used by heterosexism to police and enforce heterosexuality and make invisible the diversity of romantic and sexual orientations, despite sexual diversity being as natural as it is in many other animal species. It directs concentrated violence and involves active hostility and/or opposition towards those who identify or are perceived as queer, bisexual, lesbian, gay or any romantic/sexual identity that is not heterosexual. While some progress has been made, in many parts of the world this historically results in a disproportionate rate of verbal/emotional/sexual/physical harassment, homelessness, poverty, suicide and death by murder. This can be attributed by a number of factors, one of the main factors being religious fundamentalism.

**human centrism / anthropocentrism:** The position that human beings are the central or most significant species in the multiverse, or interpreting reality separately and exclusively in terms of human values and experience. It is often considered to be the root cause of problems created by human interaction with the environment; however, it is profoundly embedded in many modern human cultures and conscious acts.

**intellectualism:** The principle that reason and logic are the ultimate criteria of knowledge, and that deliberate action is a result of a process of conscious or subconscious reasoning. It is the excessive emphasis on abstract or intellectual matters, especially with a lack of proper consideration for emotions. Intellectualism is a major component of the academic industrial complex, and promotes professional knowledge and status over lived experiences. See also: patriarchy

Example: through the system of patriarchy, women are often subjugated and discriminated against because of their perceived emotional processes.

**interdependent:** A way of saying that the various forms and systems of oppression are not separate, and can’t be isolated into distinct categories, to be addressed on their own. Oppression is a network of intersecting and related forms of domination and the oppression of one group must be resisted alongside the oppression of others.

**kyriarchy:** The structures of domination working together as a network—not just one group dominating another. Its branches include, but are not limited to, racism, sexism, cissexism, heterosexism, ageism, and ableism. In a kyriarchy, different forms of supremacy on different axes are independent and interdependent. The word considers all parts of the oppressive structure we live in evenly—no one oppression is worse or better or more important than another. We are all subject to kyriarchy, and we all benefit from it; we all share the burden and the blame in different measures and proportions.

**misogyny / trans misogyny:** A tool used by cis/sexism and cisheteropatriarchy to enforce strict gender roles and expectations on girls and women, both cis and trans. It directs concentrated violence and involves active hostility and/or opposition towards those who do not identify, present, or express themselves as masculine and/or men. While some progress has been made, in many parts of the world this historically results in a disproportionate rate of verbal/emotional/sexual/physical harassment, homelessness, poverty, suicide and death by murder.

**mononormative:** The assumption that human beings are naturally monogamous creatures, and that monogamy is required. It is in actual fact a social construct. Polyamory is defined in various ways by various people, but the kernel of it is that it is “living by the principle that it is possible to love more than one person at a time without deception or betrayal.” We should not necessarily conflate queer and polyamorous communities. And although mainstream media visibility of polyamory is growing, it is selective in what it portrays. Mononormativity and polynormativity intersect with individualism, capitalism, feminism, queer/GSM/LGBT activism, politics, law, and also personal accounts of discrimination and privilege.

**objectification:** Used to describe the treatment of a being as a thing, disregarding their personality or sentience. Objectification occurs if any of the following factors are present:

* instrumentality – if the being is treated as a tool for another’s purposes
* denial of autonomy, inertness – if the being is treated as if lacking in agency or self-determination
* ownership – if the being is treated as if owned by another
* fungibility – if the being is treated as if interchangeable or replaceable
* violability – if the being is treated as if permissible to damage or destroy
* denial of subjectivity – if the being is treated as if there is no need to show concern for the ‘object’s’ feelings and experiences

**privilege:** Unearned access to power enjoyed by a dominant group, giving them economic, political, social and cultural advantages at the expense of members of a marginalized group. It reduces the likelihood of someone from said dominant group to face various forms of violence that would otherwise be guaranteed.

**racism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on ethnicity and ethnic heritage, real or perceived, specifically by an ethnic group who dominates in all levels of society. Racism depends on a binary of a superior ethnic group, usually lighter in skin colour, over another, minimizing the reality that ethnicity, language, and culture are complex and that many people are also mixed ethnicities.

**sexism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on gender, specifically for girls and women. Sexism historically conflates one’s sex (our genitalia, anatomy, chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs) with our gender (our gender expression and gender identity) and depends on the gender binary of women and men. This binary also erases intersex and trans girls and women. See also: patriarchy, cisgender, cissexism, trans antagonism

Example: in comparison to men, nowhere in the world today do women make equal pay for equal work; looking in levels of government, positions of power are more often than not either entirely made up of men or are male-dominated.

**sex work:** A term that is used by current or former sex workers and social justice advocates to validate sex work as a trade that requires appropriate workplace rights and protections. It is used to reduce stigmatism that is often attached to words such as prostitution or whoring. Such words are frequently used by abolitionists who, at times, do not acknowledge their privilege (whether it be through academic work or their lack of personal experience with sex work, etc.), which tends to distract them from complex realities and has been used to conflate the issue of sex work with trafficking. There is a tendency to focus only on women when discussing sex work, but it is important to recognize that it is an issue that cuts across all genders and cultures. It is important to understand that creating laws that reduce the harm affecting communities involved in sex work is part of the foundation of anti-oppression work.

**sizeism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on the size of one’s body, specifically weight, height, or both. Different cultures have internalized attitudes towards certain sizes, and depending on where one is in the world, someone may be considered especially tall, short, or fat. Specifically in Western culture, sizeism depends on the binary of thin and fat; “average” height and dwarf. The manifestation of these forms of oppression have been linked to eating disorders, depression and anxiety. Sizeism intersects with the medical industrial complex. See also: fat oppression, patriarchy, ableism, sexism

Example: fat people having to pay for two plane tickets in order to fit in their seat; doctors diagnosing a fat person’s sickness as being too fat, rather than diagnosing the actual illness, leading to more complicated health problems; assuming all fat people are lazy.

**speciesism:** A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on one’s species membership, specifically other animal species who are not human. It usually refers to human supremacism, the exclusion of all marginalized animals from the protections afforded to the most privileged animals (humans). It can also refer to the more general idea of assigning value to a being on the basis of species membership alone.

Examples: in different ethnic cultures, valuing the well-being of cats and dogs over cows and pigs; holding other animal species in captivity for human entertainment.

**trans antagonism:** A tool used by cissexism to police and enforce strict gender roles on trans and gender nonconforming individuals. It directs concentrated violence and involves active hostility and/or opposition towards trans people resulting in a disproportionate rate of verbal/emotional/sexual/physical harassment, homelessness, poverty, suicide and death by murder. Like bi antagonism, this term was created to call attention to the ways that prejudice against trans people differs from prejudice against sexual minorities. There is often trans antagonism in gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities, as well as heterosexual communities.

**trans:** An umbrella term used to more easily refer to more than one gender identity within the gender identity spectrum including, but not limited to: transgender, transsexual, transvestite, genderqueer, genderfluid, non binary, genderfuck, genderless, agender, non-gendered, gender nonconforming, third gender, two-spirit, bigender, multi-gender, pangender, trans woman, and trans man.

For Western English-centric people, we often describe these individuals as trans, transgender, nonbinary and/or gender nonconforming. It is important to understand that ethnic cultures around the world historically have their own languages in describing their diverse understandings of gender identity and gender roles.

**liberation:** A state of being grounded in one’s evolving identity, free movement, free from bias, imposed expectations, control, and violence towards one’s place in the world, including the policing of it. Liberation is an ongoing process and practice of self-governance, accountability, responsibility, and transparency with oneself. It requires ongoing acknowledgement of oppression in all its forms and on all levels of society, reparations, meaningful reconciliation directed by those targeted by oppression, and transformational changes on personal, positional, institutional and systemic levels of society.

[insert your definitions here! (in the comments below!)]

this list was created on unceded and occupied Coast Salish territory – xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), & Səl̓ílwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations respectively – and has grown and evolved throughout many nations across the colony of canada. it is by no means exhaustive or complete. feel free to critique and edit. please share widely and link back to us!