

Heteronormativity

This word describes the concept of heterosexuality being seen as 'normal' and 'correct' in society. It is commonly assumed that everyone is heterosexual, cisgendered, and cissexed. If someone is not, they are subject to being punished through legal and/or social means. This concept is reinforced by social norms that can be noted anywhere from romantic greeting cards, to the way that we asked about someone's significant other.

Heteronormativity does not just assume heterosexuality, but also that there are only two sexes, and that men and women are essentially different from one another. Those people who openly prefer partners of the same sex, who alter their physical sex, or who disrupt heterosocial norms in any way, are often marginalized and oppressed.

This marginalization ranges from an individual telling a homo/poly/bisexual individual to stop being obnoxious about their sexuality/gender when they are simply talking about relationships, significant others, or LGBTQ+ topics, to death threats or hate crimes to attempt to silence transgender or non-heterosexual individuals and their self-expressions.

- What are some ways that we may knowingly or unknowingly encourage heterosexuality, cissexism on campus?
- What are some ways that we may knowingly or unknowingly put down transgender or non-heterosexual individuals?
- How can we change our behavior to not assume heterosexuality, cissexed, cisgender identity?