

Mending the Rainbow: Working with Native LGBT/Two Spirit Community



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12th National Indian Nations Conference
December 9, 2010 ~ Palm Springs, CA

Two Spirit – Definition

- Two Spirit term refers to Native American/Alaska Native Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) individuals
- Came from the *Anishinabe* language.
- It means having both female and male spirits within one person.
- Has a different meaning in different communities.



History of Two Spirits

- Encompassing term used is "Two Spirit" adopted in 1990 at the 3rd International Native Gay & Lesbian Gathering in Winnipeg, Canada.
- The term is used in rural and urban communities to describe the re-claiming of their traditional identity and roles.
- The term refer to culturally prescribed spiritual and social roles; however, the term is not applicable to all tribes.



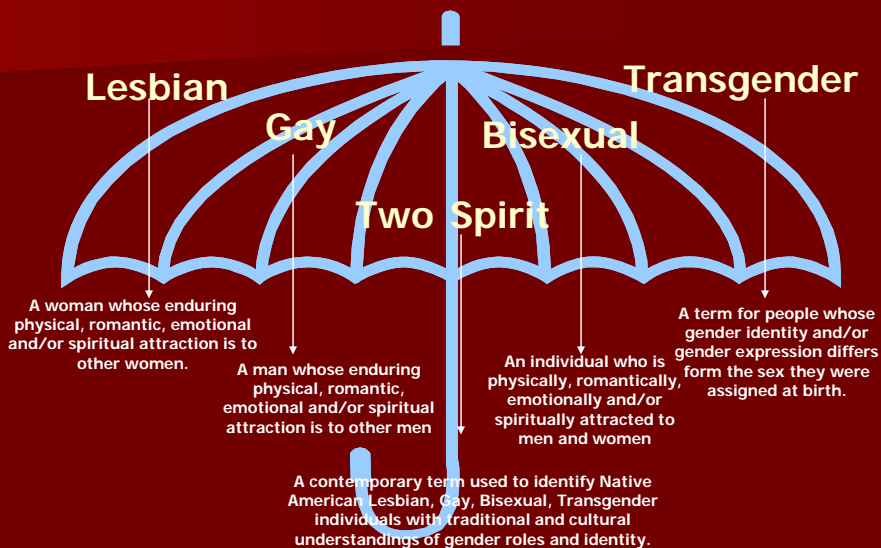
Tribal Language and Two Spirit Terminology

Tribe	Term	Gender
Crow	boté	male
Navajo	nádleehí	male and female
Lakota	winkte	male
Zuni	lhamana	male
Omaha	mexoga	male

Spirituality and Culture

- "Alternative gender roles were respected and honored and believed to part of the sacred web of life and society."
- Lakota view: Wintkes are sacred people whose androgynous nature is an inborn character trait or the result of a vision.
 - Example: Lakota Naming Ceremony
- For many tribes, myths revealed that two-spirit were decreed to exist by deities or were among the pantheon of gods."
 - Example: Navajo Creation Story – The Separation of Sexes

Two Spirit/LGBT Umbrella



Gay

Attraction to Same Sex: Men

Sissy, fag, queer, butch, fem, flaming, queen,

Lesbian

■ Attraction to same sex: Women

Butch, dyke, lipstick, fem, ...

Bisexual

- **Attraction to both Men and Women:**

What is “Transgender”?

“Individuals whose gender identity, expression, or behavior is not traditionally associated with their birth sex. Some transgender individuals experience gender identity as incongruent with their anatomical sex and may seek some degree of sex reassignment surgery, take hormones, or under go other cosmetic procedures, Others may pursue gender expression (masculine or feminine) through external self-presentation and behavior. ”

-The Leadership Campaign on AIDS

“Transgender” encompasses many different gender presentations and identities. From MTF and FTM to Femme Queen, Gender non-conforming, Boi, TRannyfag, Female-born man, Transwoman, Transman, Tomboy, Butch, Crossdresser, and many more.

Transgender Umbrella



Crossdresser/"Drag"



- Crossdressing for political/social activism, "Gay Pride", humor, entertainment

Transvestic Fetishist



- Wearing certain articles of clothing associated with the opposite sex for erotic purposes.

Transvestite



- Crossdressing for emotional comfort

Transgenderist(Transgender)



- Presenting self as a blend of masculine and feminine for emotional comfort and "wholeness".
- Cross living for emotional comfort and to resolve gender identity conflicts.
- Androgynes

Transsexual



Pre operative

Living in gender congruent with gender identity to resolve gender identity conflicts

Before SRS

Post operative

Living in gender congruent with gender identity to resolve gender identity conflicts

After SRS

Gender Identity Disorder

- GIDAANTT – Gender Identity Disorder Adolescent/Adult Non-Transsexual Type
- Desire to change gender: a condition in which somebody identifies strongly with the opposite sex and experiences discomfort with his or her birth gender.
- Significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning

Fluidity

- Being Transgender doesn't mean you are assigned/labeled under a category.
- When someone identifies as Transgender, we must be aware of the different variations and degrees of Transgenderism. (the pendulum effect)

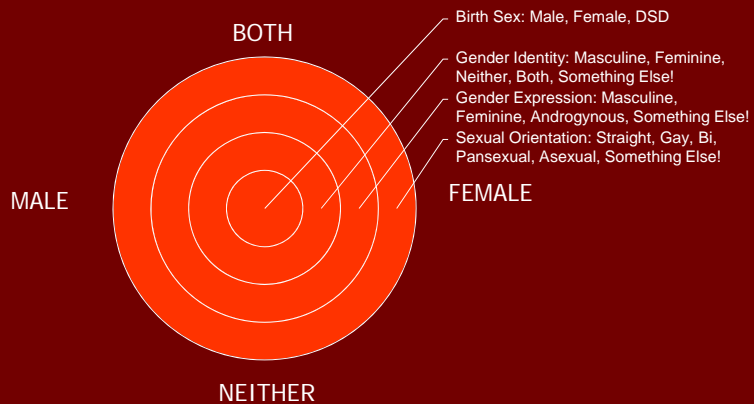
Things to remember:

- Transgender people have always been a part of the modern Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Civil Rights Movement!
- However, not all trans people identify as being part of the LGBT Community
- Trans people identify as queer, straight, bi, gay, lesbian, asexual, pansexual, etc., just as non-trans people do!

Basic Concepts:

- Sex (*assigned at birth*)
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Gender Expression

Where do I fit?



What to think about, hmmm

- **Person**
- Identity
- Expression
- **Comfort**
- **Names**
- Labels
- Stereotypes
- **Assumptions**
- Sexual Orientation
- Paperwork/Documents
- Inclusion
- Transgender Umbrella
- Hormones/Silicone MTF
- Testosterone FTM
- SRS
- Policies/Procedures
- Laws
- ?'s
- Data
- Safety-P, M, E, S

How can we "Mend the Rainbow"

- Create supportive systems
- Build Trust
- Honor Traditions and Culture
- Eliminate Homophobia/Transphobia
- Educate Services and Law Enforcement of Special Issues, i.e. same partner domestic violence,
- Identify appropriate Resources
- Reassess Protective Protocols, i.e. shelters, jails, hospitals, services
- Become knowledgeable in LGBT State and Federal Laws
- Creating Tribal ordinances and/or policies to protect Native LGBT/Two Spirit

Fred Martínez, Jr.



Fred Martínez Jr.

- She was a 16-year-old Navajo Transgender.
- Her friends adored her.
- "Had he been born a woman," one teacher said, "he'd have been the most popular girl in town."
- The 19-year-old killer assaulted Martínez and crushed her skull with a rock, sliced open her abdomen, and left her to die by the side of the road.

- Kelly Watson
- Tiger

Contact Information

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