

Ace Celebrities and Characters

By Rebecca from the LGBTQ+ Network

While there isn't much ace representation in the media as a whole, there are many public figures who identify as ace, both fictional and real. Have a read below to learn more about some incredible ace people. Being ace is not a new thing, we just have a term now which is more widely understood and acknowledged. There are many people throughout history who likely identified as ace, but existed in a time of fear and discrimination, along with a lack of understanding.

Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale, the English social reformer, statistician, and founder of modern nursing has been widely considered ace by many historians. There are records of Nightingale stating that she felt disconnected from sexual attraction and there is no evidence of her ever pursuing a sexual relationship.

Emilie Autumn

Emilie Autumn Liddell, better known under her stage name Emilie Autumn, is an American singer-songwriter, poet, author, and violinist. She identifies as asexual, and stated that she never "disliked sex" which is interesting as it highlights that being asexual doesn't mean you can't enjoy sex.

David Jay

David Jay is an American ace activist. He is the founder of the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN). AVEN is the most prolific and well-known of the various ace communities. Jay stated in an interview that "Everyone was telling me sex was going to be a really essential part of my evolution into adulthood. Sex was supposed to be the beginning of how I would connect with people. And so I assumed that because I wasn't experiencing a great sexual awakening, that I too was broken."

Pavarti Holcomb (character)

The Outer Worlds was one of my favourite games of 2019, and is still up there. Outer Worlds is an action role-playing video game with a first-person perspective.



The game is set in 2355 in an alternate future, and one of the many characters who stood out for me was Pavarti Holcomb, who is ace. When you meet her, you don't know much beyond her fascination with engineering, but as you carry on and see her interactions with others it begins to shed more light on who she is beyond her timid veil.

Throughout the game, trying to help Pavarti to learn more about herself and grow her confidence is really reflective of being ace, hence why I really look up to her.

Resources

If you would like to learn more about asexuality or anything that we've covered here, please check out the organisations and resources below by clicking the link or googling the titles:

- [Ace Wikia](#)
- [Good Therapy– Understanding the Asexual Spectrum](#)
- [Stonewall UK- How to be an ally to ace people](#)
- [Stonewall UK- Ace Week](#)
- [AVEN- Asexuality Visibility and Education Network](#)
- [The Trevor Project– Understanding Asexuality](#)
- [Equality Network– Ace Resources](#)
- 'Loveless' (novel) by Alice Oseman

ACE WEEK 2021



OCTOBER 24TH-30TH

Ace Week is an international campaign aimed at raising awareness and encouraging education of what it means to be 'ace'. Ace is a term that people use to mean asexual or aromantic, and encompasses all ace subcategories which we will explore here. There are lots of things people might not know about what it means to be asexual, so we've put together this booklet full of information and resources to help grow your knowledge, and celebrate our ace friends, family, and community.

We hope you enjoy reading this and find it interesting. If you would like to contribute to future LGBTQ+ Network newsletters or get involved in the Network in any way then we would love to hear from you. Our email address is LGBTQ.Network@creativesupport.co.uk and anything you send will be treated with the utmost privacy and respect.

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What is asexuality?

Someone who is asexual will likely experience little to no sexual attraction or desire to other people. This really does vary between each person who is ace, so while some will experience no sexual attraction, some people might have a romantic attraction, and some people might only be attracted to some people. Everyone is different, so it makes sense that someone who is ace will have their own expression of their sexuality and it will mean something different to each person.

One common misconception about asexuality is that it's a choice. There is a big difference between choosing celibacy or being abstinent, and being ace. People who are ace don't choose their sexuality, whereas being celibate or abstinent is a choice that people can make for a number of reasons not related to their sexuality.

Another thing you might not know is that ace is an umbrella term that covers lots of different sexualities. Some people also choose not to label themselves under these specific terms and prefer to say asexual, which is equally valid.

Demisexual

If someone is **demisexual**, this means that they tend to only feel sexual attraction after forming a strong emotional bond or connection, such as platonic friendship. Some people who are demisexual won't develop a sexual attraction but will have a romantic attraction to a person, and others will experience a sexual attraction but won't feel a strong urge to act on it.

Greysexual

Someone who is **greysexual**, or **grey ace**, relates to the asexuality label. It might be that they sometimes experience sexual attraction, or that if they do it's only a weak attraction or in specific circumstances. Greysexuality can be an orientation in its own right, but it can also be combined with other orientations.

For example, someone could be greysexual and a lesbian, meaning that they experience attraction sometimes, but only for women.

There are also other sexualities that fall under the asexuality umbrella, such as **ace flux**, **lithromantic**, **alloromantic**, and **fraysexual** amongst lots of others.

What is important to know about asexuality is that everyone's ace identity is valid and that there isn't one exact definition. Sexuality is very personal and individual, and everyone has their own understanding and definition of it and what it means to them- each are as valid as the other, there is no right or wrong way to be ace.



Singlism

Singlism is defined as unfair attitudes or behaviours towards people who aren't married or in a couple. Because of this, singlism is something that many ace people who don't pursue a romantic relationship can experience.

For ace people, the discrimination which they face as a result of their 'single' status may exacerbate misconceptions and attitudes that they are in some way deficient, or just haven't met the "right" person.

Singlism can manifest as unwanted remarks like "so when are you going to settle down with someone?" or in larger disadvantages such as additional barriers to securing a mortgage or adopt.

There are many facets of our society that are easier if you are in a relationship, and while all single people are not necessarily ace, and all ace people are not necessarily single, singlism may play into the discrimination faced by ace individuals.

The term 'Singlism' first appeared in 2005 when social psychologist Bella DePaolo wrote the book 'Singlism- What is it, Why it Matters and How to Stop it'. In this book, DePaolo argues that widespread stereotyping and discrimination against people who are single has long gone unrecognised, and that it is ingrained within society.

Like all forms of discrimination, singlism is particularly harmful to people who experience multiple forms of social disadvantage, such as racism, sexism or homophobia. Single women are often presented as desperate spinsters (take Bridget Jones, for example), whereas single men are seen as suave bachelors. In her song 'The Man', Taylor Swift sings: "They'd say I played the field before I found someone to commit to," referencing how her public persona as somebody who can't hold down a long-term relationship would be perceived much differently if she was a man.

DePaolo argued that in order to counteract singlism, it is important to embrace being single as a valid status and shed light on the ways that society disadvantages single people. In order to do this, we all need to remember that a person's singleness doesn't define them, that being in a relationship doesn't automatically make you an asset to society, and that life is just as fulfilling if you're single.

