

Quare?

What is “Quare”? Quare is a blackqueer or Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer person (or entity) embodying womanist principles (including a of love of Black culture and community) in struggles against all forms of oppression. More generally, quare can simply be one who is “committed to struggle against all forms of oppression.” Quare is a noun and an adjective.

And What are “Quare Prayers”? Quare prayers are prayers of, for, by, and with quare people.

E. Patrick Johnson, a Black queer man with family roots in the southern region of the United States, coined the term “quare” as a written reflection of the way his grandmother would pronounce the word “queer” in her own dialect. Below is Johnson’s definition of Quare.

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Quare: Quare (Kwâr)

n. 1. Meaning queer; also, opp. of straight; odd or slightly off kilter; from the African American vernacular for queer; sometimes homophobic in usage, but always denotes excess incapable of being contained within conventional categories of being; curiously equivalent to the Anglo-Irish (and sometimes “Black” Irish) variant of queer, as in Brendan Behan’s famous play, *The Quare Fellow*.

-- adj. 2. a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered person of color who loves other men or women, sexually or nonsexually, and appreciates black culture and community.

-- n. 3. one who thinks and feels and acts (and, sometimes, “acts up”); committed to struggle against all forms of oppression – racial, sexual, gender, class, religious, etc.

-- n. 4. one for whom sexual and gender identities always already intersect with racial subjectivity.

5. quare is to queer as “reading” is to “throwing shade.”

Johnson, E. Patrick. “‘Quare’ Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know About Queer Studies I Learned from My Grandmother.” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2001): 1–25. doi:10.1080/10462930128119.