

[THANKS FOR READING!]

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? CONCERNS?
(I'd love your feedback!)

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[ABOUT THE AUTHOR]

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[PRONOUNS MATTER!]

A GUIDE TO CREATING
SAFER CLASSROOMS FOR
TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

(and hopefully fun!)

an educational v zine
by

[OLIVER SCHMINKEY]

[GLOSSARY: continued]

- ⊕ heterosexism - a term that applies to a system of negative attitudes, bias, + discrimination in favor of heterosexual sexuality + relationships
- ⊕ gender dysphoria - distress / discomfort with one's assigned sex / gender. This is a psychiatric term, + many trans people feel differently about it. Basically, dysphoria = discomfort.
- ⊕ coming out - the process of disclosing your identity to sexual orientation or gender to some or all people
- ⊕ gender binary - the notion that only two (male + female / man + woman)
- ⊕ cissexism - prejudice + discrimination against people who are not cisgender. (Privileges cisgender experiences over trans ones)
- ⊕ all-gender restrooms - restrooms that do not restrict use by gender. Anyone can use these restrooms.
- ⊕ transphobia - intense dislike or prejudice against transsexual or transgender people.

[ADDITIONAL RESOURCES]

- For further reading, check out these websites!
- ⊕ www.glad.org / transgender/allies
- ⊕ transequality.org
- ⊕ transequality.org / PDFs / Executive - Summary.pdf

[GLOSSARY]

TERMS and DEFINITIONS

- ⊕ transgender - a term for people whose gender identity, expression or behaviour is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad term & is good for non-transgender people to use. (not cisgender)
 - ⊕ Gender identity - An individual's internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.
 - ⊕ genderqueer - A term used by some individuals who identify as neither entirely male nor female.
+ Note: Many non-binary trans people use this.
 - ⊕ gender non-conforming - a term for individuals whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender
 - ⊕ cisgender - referring to an individual who gender they were assigned at birth & the roles & behaviours considered by society to be appropriate to their particular sex. (not trans)
- [SOURCE: www.revelandriot.com/resources/lgbtq-and-trans-definitions/]

[SOURCE: transequality.org/Resources/TransTerminology-2014.pdf]

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[PREFACE]

PURPOSE

The purpose of this zine is to help professors create safer classrooms for transgender students. Often, knowing how to do so (or even that a conscious effort needs to be made to do so) isn't super intuitive, so here's a zine!

INSPIRATION

This project is based off my (and some fellow transgender students!) experiences in the classroom. This zine is meant to be a basic starting guide, & it is not all-encompassing. Keep in mind that although most transgender people share at least some common experience, our experiences vary widely. These are the first steps to creating safer classrooms, not the only steps.

THANKS FOR READING!

Olivia Schminky

[PRONOUN CHART]

SOME SINGULAR PRONOUN OPTIONS

he/him/his	He took his own bag for himself.
She/her/hers	She took her own bag for herself.
They/Them/Theirs	They took their own bag for themselves.
Ze/zir/zirs (zee, zeer, zeers)	Ze took zir own bag for zirsself.
Ze/hir/hirs (zee, heer, heers)	Ze took hir own bag for hirsself.
Ey/Em/Es	Ey took er own bag for emself.
(Name)	Ollie took Ollie's bag for Ollie.

⊕ Some people may use different pronouns in different situations or use different pronouns day-to-day. Just try to be aware & respectful!

⊕ Note: This chart is not all-inclusive!

Your student may use a pronoun not on this chart. Respect them; use 'it'!

WE'RE NOT ALL THE SAME: RESPONDING TO DIFFERENCE

⊕ We, like all people, have different individual preferences & needs. If a transgender student tells you they prefer something different than another transgender student (or this booklet), respect their wishes and adapt!

REMEMBER

Do not prioritize your comfort over our safety!

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SO, YOU'VE GOT A TRANSGENDER STUDENT

ODDS ARE, YOU WILL

According to transgenderlaw.org, an estimated 2-5% of the population is transgender. Stats are hard to come by, but it's likely you have had or will have at least 1 trans student in your classroom.

Hint: for definitions, check out the glossary.

HOW CAN I TELL?

You can't tell based off of appearance if you have a transgender student. This means you should try to make ALL spaces safer for transgender people.

WHY DO I NEED TO READ THIS?

You may not be openly transphobic. You may not use slurs or want to exclude us, but the fact is that visibility & awareness of transgender people (especially non-binary trans people) is still pretty low. Most people are not taught how to respect us (or even that we exist).

⊕ BUT YOU CAN HELP! ⊕

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PRONOUNS AND WHY THEY MATTER

- ⊕ Many transgender people suffer from dysphoria, & using the wrong pronouns can ruin a person's day.
- ⊕ Prolonged use of incorrect pronouns can ruin your entire relationship with a student.



DYSPHORIA SUCKS

- ⊕ Being consistently IDed incorrectly is something that most cisgender people don't have to worry about. Many transgender people don't have that luxury.

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SO, SOMEONE USED GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS IN AN ASSIGNMENT

APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

Grading the assignment normally.

INAPPROPRIATE RESPONSE

"These pronouns are too distracting and obscure. You should change them."

- When you say this, you are telling us non-binary people that we should not exist because we are too inconvenient.

REMEMBER

Do not prioritize your convenience over our safety.

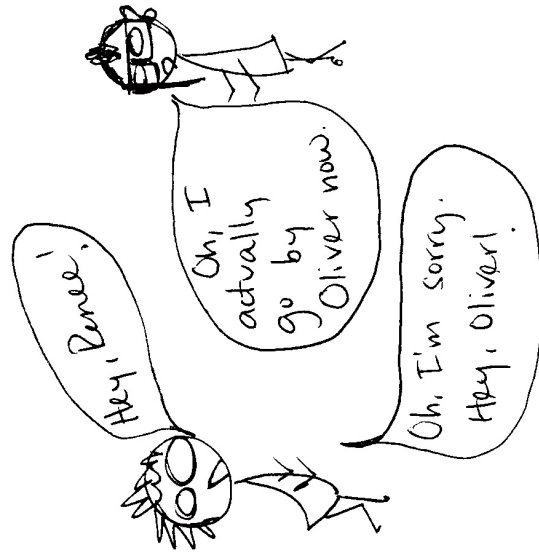
- ⊕ PRO-TIP: Avoid assigning work that divides students into "boys" & "girls." It puts non-binary people in a sticky spot.

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[FLUIDITY + NAME CHANGES]

PEOPLE CHANGE. IT HAPPENS.

⊕ If a student comes to you with a name or pronoun change, respect them + switch. Ask them if there's anything more you can do to support them.



☐ PRO-TIP: Never ask us what our "real names" are. Our real name is the name we gave you to use.

she zix he them hers ze }
his they her him theirs }

⊕ Respecting our genders is the first step to respecting us as people.

⊕ Using correct self-given pronouns can help make students feel safer in classrooms.

FLIP TO pg 21
for a chart of
some common pronouns!



← the newest t-shirt revolution

⊕ Note: A lot of transgender students can't be out due to various factors (it's often unsafe for us), which is why it's so important to ask pronouns + use whatever we give you.

41%

OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE TRY TO COMMIT SUICIDE AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES.
(Source: transgenderity.org comprehensive survey)

[AS COMPARED TO] the **1.6%** national average

⊕ Fight that number by making your classroom a safer space!



SHIT I FORGOT SOMEONE'S PRONOUNS

IT HAPPENS. WE ALL MESS UP.

OPTION #1: Just ask again, politely.

Oh, I'm sorry. Do you mind if I ask your pronouns one more time?



OPTION #2: Address them directly (like you would if you forgot someone's name)

Jumping off of that great point that you made...



[SHIT I MESSED UP SOMEONE'S PRONOUNS]

#1. STAY CALM.

#2. APOLOGIZE. Some people (like myself) prefer that this apology is in public, otherwise we'll worry that other students will follow your mistake & mess up our pronouns. However, some people prefer a private apology. Ask.

⊕ Note: Since there's a huge power dynamic between professors and students (you control our chances of graduation), it's **REALLY** difficult to interrupt you to correct you. This means you should be aware & police yourself. We may not be able to speak up.

#3. FIX IT. Correct yourself. Like any good apology, this one should result in a change of behaviour.

#4. MOVE ON. We probably already feel awkward for taking up so much class time. Apologize to the student again after class if needed, & prevent the slip-up from happening again.

[THE 1ST DAY OF ~~HELL~~ CLASS]

⊕ The first day of a new class is ultra-stressful for a lot of transgender students. Since most of the world is unsafe for us, we have to assume that your classroom will be unsafe too.



I'm afraid my new profs won't respect my gender. I'm so stressed. What if my prof is transphobic? Can't I just skip class?

BUT THERE'S STUFF YOU CAN DO TO HELP! (keep reading)

[D] [D]

⊕ Ask EVERYONE their pronouns on the 1st day of class. This way, we're less likely to feel isolated, & we'll know you're trying to respect us.

⊕ Use whatever pronouns we give you, regardless of whether you've heard them before or think they sound funny.

⊕ Ask for preferred names/names that are different from the roster BEFORE roll call. Do it discreetly. Let students come up + point to their incorrect name on the roster.

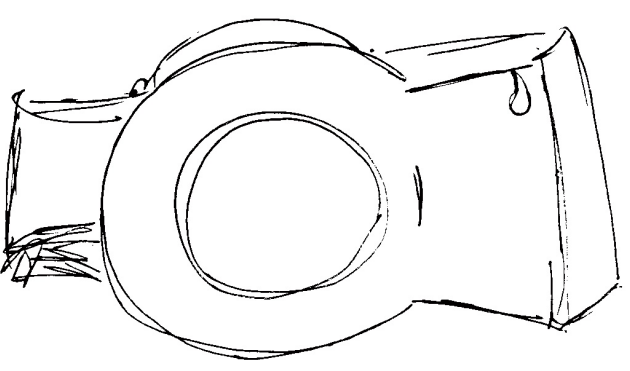
⊕ Note: It can be really upsetting to have your birth name leaked to an entire classroom of peers. We have a hard enough time trying to get people to use our new names.

⊕ Always use preferred names unless they specify otherwise. They are the correct names.

⊕ Note: keep in mind that this applies only to your classroom. Do NOT do a transgender person in public settings (or to their parents, etc.) Ask them which name is appropriate.

⊕ Research story on top of terms. Know which terms are for general use + which terms are reclaimed + only for use by trans* people.

⊕ Many transgender people develop health issues like bladder infections from lack of access to safe bathrooms.



⊕ Over 50% of participants in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey reported experiencing HARASSMENT in public accommodations like restrooms.

⊕ 10% reported being PHYSICALLY ATTACKED.

BATHROOMS: GIVE US A BREAK!

⊕ Gendered (designated "men's" + "women's") bathrooms are still much more common than all-gender restrooms.

⊕ All-gender restrooms are essential because transgender people are often unsafe and/or uncomfortable in gendered bathrooms.

⊕ It may take us a few more minutes to walk to a bathroom we can safely use.

GIVE US A BREAK

[DON'T]

- ⊕ Single out transgender people.
- ⊕ Assume we are all the same.
- ⊕ Assume we want to educate you.
- ⊕ Assume you can tell we are transgender from our appearances.
- ⊕ Use phrases like "ladies + gentlemen," "men + women," + "boys + girls," etc. These phrases instantly exclude non-binary people in the room. Note: When you say "welcome, boys + girls!" you are literally not welcoming us into the space. Use "everyone," "j'all," or "students," instead.
- ⊕ Force us to explain ourselves.
- ⊕ Ask a student if they are transgender.
- ⊕ Ask us to speak for all transgender people.
- ⊕ Leave transphobic, cissexist, and binary-centric course material unchallenged.
- It's everywhere. I need to know that you are looking out for me in your classroom. Otherwise, I will not feel safe there. -
- ⊕ Silence us when we do decide to speak up. Take our experiences + viewpoints seriously.

BUT "THEY" IS PLURAL

⊕ Many transgender people choose "they, them, theirs" as pronouns.

"THEY" AS A SINGULAR PRONOUN

Hint: Yo, AUREAD! use the singular "they" for people whose genders you don't know. It sounds natural, & it works well.



PIZZA IS RAD.
SO IS THE SINGULAR "THEY."

⊕ Also, Shakespeare used it, & that's pretty cool.

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ALSO

Language exists to best serve us, the people who use it! So, use it!

REMEMBER

Do not prioritize prescriptivist grammar over respecting me!

Hint: for a sassier & more detailed explanation, go to this website: motivatedgrammar.wordpress.com

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