CELEBRATING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: THE EVOLUTION OF

GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

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Submitted to the Undergraduate Research Scholars program
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the designation as an

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLAR

Approved by
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May 2016

Major: Economics
English

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ABSTRACT

Celebrating Diversity & Inclusion: The Evolution of Gender-Neutral Pronouns

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When the Supreme Court of the United States guaranteed the right to marry for same-sex couples in *Obergefell v. Hodges* on June 26, 2015, the issue of integrating the LGBTQ community into society was propelled into the national spotlight. While many same-sex partners, many of whom identify as cisgender (those who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth), are able to enjoy the tangible and psychological benefits of the ruling, the transgender and genderqueer communities continue to wait on a Supreme Court ruling in which they are able to celebrate with as much fervor. Thus, the acceptance of gender-neutral pronouns has become an important stepping stone for achieving equality for the transgender and genderqueer communities. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to determine how to convince society of embracing the concept of pronoun introductions. Therefore, this thesis will be analyzing trends in the use of gender-neutral pronouns in the English language, since gender-neutral pronouns help break down systems inherent in language in order to form new ones. I will first discuss the histories and challenges of integrating gender-neutral pronouns into the English vernacular. Then, I will explore the physical and virtual spaces in which gender-neutral pronouns are used, especially as introductions. Finally, I will examine Internet slang in virtual spaces in order to suggest the Internet as a medium of linguistic transformation that can affect physical spaces as well.

DEDICATION

To the LGBTQ community, especially transgender and genderqueer communities, I would like to dedicate this thesis to you. Living in a world that denies you the freedom to express your gender identities in nonviolent ways is a burden I can never fully understand. We cisgenders have it easy, since we internalize our own biases of gender into forceful means of morality and stigma. Playing an important role in online strategy and social media with the Human Rights Campaign in the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision, I have personally experienced the struggles and successes of the LGBTQ community in 2015, as well as what it means to be an activist. What is possible depends on what we believe is possible, and the Internet has a lot to do with that. I now invite you to read the rest of my thesis, either in chapters or in its entirety.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NOMENCLATURE

LGBTQ   Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer

MTF   Male-to-Female (describing Transgender Women)

FTM   Female-to-Male (describing Transgender Men)

PGP   Preferred Gender Pronoun

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

When the Supreme Court of the United States guaranteed the right to marry for same-sex couples in *Obergefell v. Hodges* on June 26, 2015, the issue of integrating the LGBTQ community into society was propelled into the national spotlight. While many same-sex partners, many of whom identify as cisgender (those who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth), are able to enjoy the tangible and psychological benefits of the ruling, the transgender and genderqueer communities continue to wait on a Supreme Court ruling in which they are able to celebrate with as much fervor.

In his descriptions of microaggressions, Nadal explains how discrimination can manifest itself in subtle ways through language. One important stepping stone for achieving equality for the transgender and genderqueer communities is Preferred Gender Pronouns (PGPs), including gender-neutral pronouns and pronoun introductions. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to educate society about pronoun usage and to convince them to embrace pronoun introductions. Therefore, this thesis will present an analysis of xxxx on college websites to assess how effective these sites are in educating students and others about gender-neutral pronoun usage and pronoun introductions.

In the remainder of this chapter, I describe Nadal's eight microaggressions and provide an outline for the thesis. After describing my methodology in Chapter II, subsequent chapters

discuss the histories and challenges of integrating gender-neutral pronouns into the English vernacular, explore the physical and virtual spaces in which gender-neutral pronouns are used, especially as introductions; examine Internet slang in virtual spaces in order to suggest the Internet as a medium of linguistic transformation that can affect physical spaces as well; and present an analysis of LGBT-inclusivity by looking at data collected from college websites.

Microaggressions

It is first important to understand the main challenges that the LGBTQ community faces. In a society that favors the majority over the minority, many obstacles present themselves for the minority constituency. For example, many minority groups are often excluded from social circles because of differences in speaking, dressing, and even being. In the case of LGBTQ communities, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression serve as stigmas that prevent non-LGBTQ communities from fully appreciating intersectionality, or the intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination or discrimination. In fact, many people within the LGBTQ community already face scrutiny and disregard for how they are situated to the world. These offenses are what Kevin Nadal describes as "microaggressions."

Microaggressions help us understand how discrimination can manifest itself in subtle ways. Often times, microaggressions occur in commonplace settings, like school and work; the catch is that we often don't notice that we're discriminating because of our assumptions of what the LGBT experience is about. In Nadal's book, *That's So Gay: Microaggressions and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community*, he discusses the literature on discrimination and microaggressions toward the LGBT community, outlining several ways in which people

linguistically discriminate against LGBT people. Nadal's theoretical taxonomy[1] on sexual orientation and gender identity microaggressions "cited eight distinct categories of microaggressions that may target LGBT people" (Nadal 46). Furthermore, Nadal discusses each of the eight categories of microaggressions in two chapters, both of which discuss all eight microaggressions; however, he divides the chapters as such to discuss the unique circumstances that Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual people face versus those that Transgender people face. While Nadal recognizes the distinct experiences between gender identity and sexual orientation, amalgamating lesbians, gays, and bisexuals into one category can also be problematic in terms of what one considers to be the lesbian experience, the gay experience, or the bisexual experience; however, for the purposes of discussion, I will explain them as they are dichotomized by Nadal. Each theme will first present an overview of the microaggression. Then, each will explain two examples from the LGB community and one example from the Transgender community respectively.[2]

1. Use of heterosexist or transphobic terminology

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[1] Nadal provides the following disclaimer in the construction of his taxonomy: "We were consciously aware that we did not have any transgender people on this task force and that all three of us identified as cisgender. We also recognized that we did not represent a completely diverse group of racial and ethnic backgrounds because each of us was either Latino or Filipina/o. Thus, we consulted with our personal and professional networks—which included transgender people (both male-to-female, or MTF, transgender people and female-to-male, or FTM, transgender people), other LGBT people of color, LGBT White Americans, bisexuals, and others—to create a comprehensive list of microaggressions experienced by LGBT people" (Nadal 46).

[2] Because Nadal does not use three distinct examples to provide lesbians, gays, and bisexuals a proper lens for their unique situations, I will not be able to examine each microaggression as it relates to the every situation that the LGB community faces. However, one can use the other communities' experiences and apply the ideas to one's own situation.

This first theme is "characterized by experiences in which LGB people are called derogatory names or teased with cruel words. It also includes heterosexist remarks that are made directly to, or around, the LGB individual. Sometimes such language is used intentionally to berate or offend an LGB person; at other times people may not even realize they are using homophobic language because it is part of their everyday speech" (Nadal 54).

1.1. "That's so gay" [LGB]

Nadal uses the example of Vince Vaughn using the phrase, "that's so gay," in the movie, *The Dilemma*. Consequently, Vince Vaughn received criticisms for his remarks, but he did not send a formal apology to the LGBT community because he denied any intention of insulting gay people (Read 10 – Nadal 55). While Vaughn did not initially go out of the way to offend the LGBT community, this instance speaks largely of the misunderstanding between society and the LGBT community, like the misuse of the word "fag" or "dyke," since it often reflects biases of LGB people as "bad, weak, or inferior" (Nadal 55).

1.2. "Faggy" [LGB]

Nadal's next example references the heterosexist language used by Kurt against Finn in the hit television show, Glee (Murphy, Falchuk, & Brennan 2010 – Nadal 55). It is important to note that Kurt is a heterosexual, cisgender man and Finn is a homosexual, cisgender man. Finn proceeds to make remarks about the Kurt's redecoration as "faggy." After being called out on his language by his father, Finn contends that he was using the word, "faggy," to describe Kurt's blanket, not Kurt himself. However, Kurt's use of the word, "faggy," is still heterosexist, even if

it was unintentional, since the word has different associations for the LGBT community in contrast to the non-LGBT community.

1.3. "Shemale" [Transgender]

Nadal recounts the experience of one transgender woman: "I was walking one time to the post office and I had just recently had my lips done and a little five-year-old kid said, 'Daddy, daddy. Hey daddy, that's a shemale.' So he never referred to me as a man. He referred to me as . . . a shemale (Nadal, Skolnik et al., 2012, p. 65)" (Nadal 85). In this instance, the transgender woman, though we know little about her operational status (whether she is a transsexual), incurs shaming from even a young child. The text suggests that the transgender woman was comfortable being referred to as a man, rather than what seems like both a man and a woman.

2. Endorsement of heteronormative or gender normative culture and behaviors

This second type of microaggression "occurs when one conveys a message that heterosexuality is normal while homosexuality or bisexuality is abnormal, wrong, or unnatural" (Nadal 57).

2.1. "Normal" [LGB]

On The Microaggressions Project blog, Nadal discussed the example of a slide that normalized heterosexism. The creator of the PowerPoint was actually presenting at a suicide prevention workshop at a college campus, when the following text appeared on a slide: "LGBT people are six times more likely to attempt suicide than normal people" (Nadal 57). Although the slide attempts to be LGBT-inclusive, it really marginalizes the LGBT community because they are compared to "normal" people, which suggests that the LGBT community is "abnormal."

2.2. "Proper" [LGB]

The second example refers to instances in the movie, *But I'm a Cheerleader*. In the movie, teenage boys and girls, suspected of being homosexual, are sent to a camp in order to be taught the "proper" way of acting as heterosexuals (Peterson & Babbit, 1999 – Nadal 57). Much like the previous example, the use of the word "proper" suggests that homosexuality is "improper."

2.3. "My son isn't putting on dresses!" [Transgender]

The example given refers to an episode on ABC's *The View* in 2007, in which one of the co-hosts, Sherri Shepherd, bursts out: "Not in my house! Not in my house! Not in my house! My son isn't putting on dresses! Girls wear dresses! When he's 18, he can do what he wants, but not in my house!" (Nadal 87). Besides the repetitive declarations of authority, Shepherd is actually encouraging transgender people to remain with their genders assigned at birth.

3. Assumption of universal LGBT experience

This third category occurs "when one assumes that all LGB individuals are the same. One way that this may manifest is through the presumption that all lesbians have identical experiences, all gay men have identical experiences, or all bisexuals have identical experiences" (Nadal 60).

3.1. "Come on, you're gay! You can't play football!" [LGB]

This statement was made by someone popular on the football team. After approaching a friend about trying out for the football team, the victim received the following response: "Come on, you're gay! You can't play football" (Nadal 60). The person on the football team assumes that

all gay men like feminine activities and that football is masculine. This suggests there are certain gender roles that people should fulfill based on their sexual orientation and biological sex.

3.2. "[Bisexual people] will have sex with anyone who is available to them" [LGB]

This example is cited as a stereotype from gays, lesbians, and heterosexuals. The following stereotype was brought to light by a bisexual woman, the author of *Bi Lives: Bisexual Women Tell Their Stories*: "[Bisexual people] will have sex with anyone who is available to them" (Nadal 60). Not only does the stereotype assume a universal experience for bisexuals, but it also characterizes bisexuals as promiscuous.

3.3. "against God's will" [Transgender]

Often it is assumed that LGBT people could not possibly be religious or spiritual because they are "choosing" something that others believe to be "against God's will." In the movie *Transamerica*, one of the characters, Toby, alludes to "the notion that transgender people could not be Christian. In response, Bree (the protagonist) replies, "My body may be a work-in-progress, but there is nothing wrong with my soul," thus affirming that "transgender people are just as moral and good as anyone else" (Nadal 90).

4. Exoticization

The fourth topic is "evident when LGB individuals are viewed as a form of entertainment or objectified because of their sexual orientation or identity" (Nadal 61).

4.1. "[you're living a] fantastic and fabulous [lifestyle]" [LGB]

In Nadal's studies, one gay male discussed the discomfort that he experienced from being objectified as a fantasy projection. Friends in his life assumed "[you're living a] fantastic and fabulous [lifestyle]" if you're gay (Nadal 62). What this suggests is two-fold: a universal experience for gay people and objectification for being gay. The former was discussed in the previous section, but the latter perpetuates a dehumanization of gay people.

4.2. "I'm more wary of being objectified by men than by women" [LGB]

In Nadal's reference to *Bi Lives*, many participants presented frustrations with the way many people, especially heterosexual men, see bisexual women as sexual objects. In fact, one participant confessed that "I'm more wary of being objectified by men than by women" (Nadal 62). Thus, bisexual women face the constant pressure to conform to the idea that they are a form of entertainment for people, particularly for heterosexual men.

4.3. "tokens" [Transgender]

Transgender people may be "viewed as 'tokens' : token girlfriends, token boyfriends, or even token friends." As one participant reported, "Even if they don't even like you, just because you're a tranny, they want you in their collection" (Nadal 91).

5. *Discomfort with/disapproval of LGBT experience*

Fifth is the microaggression that "consists of instances in which a heterosexual person, whether aware or unaware, shows her or his displeasure of or apprehension toward nonheterosexual people" (Nadal 63).

5.1. "Save Our Children" [LGB]

In the 1970s, Anita Bryant created a Christian group called "Save Our Children" to combat gay rights laws; in fact, she "publically campaigned against any state legislation that protected the rights of gay and lesbian people, stating that LGB people were immoral and would corrupt or abuse children" (Nadal 63).

5.2. "Whoa" [LGB]

One lesbian participant from Nadal's studies experienced disapproval from passengers on a train from her girlfriend kissing her. This type of disapproval stemmed from a shocked face, which the participant describes as kind of like "Whoa" (Nadal 63).

5.3. "Hi [said avoidantly]" [Transgender]

Nadal explains that avoidant behaviors may demonstrate discomfort or lack of acceptance even without hurtful or discriminatory language. One participant described this experience:

> I was in school and was getting to know this gentleman. I didn't feel comfortable in telling him that I was transgender because I wasn't too sure how I [felt] with him yet. There was this girl in my class who I had thought she knew I was transgender because we go to the gym together. She tried to question my gender and she [also] found out I was talking to that gentleman. One day,
> I happened to walk down the same block as he was and he moved to the left and I kept moving forward. He waved 'hi' but it was like he was ashamed, like I was a disease. I was definitely hurt. In the end, I found out she told him that I was a man. (Nadal 92)" (92).

6. Denial of the reality of heterosexism or transphobia

The sixth microaggression occurs when "individuals deny the occurrence of heterosexism; sometimes this can occur when someone denies that she or he is homophobic, whereas at other times people can deny that heterosexism exists at all. For example, when LGB people confront perpetrators on their microaggressive behavior, the perpetrator can sometimes react defensively and assert that his or her intention was not to be offensive. Some LGB people may appreciate an explanation, but others may believe that the individual is merely creating excuses instead of admitting fault" (Nadal 68).

6.1. "No, no, I was saying you're funny, and you're cute, and you dress nice" [LGB]

Another participant from Nadal's studies, a gay male, received a comment from a woman one night about his looks and likened him to the character, Jack, from *Will and Grace*. The participant responded, "Ma'am, no offense, but that's actually not a compliment," to which the woman contended, "No, no, I was saying you're funny, and you're cute and you dress nice" (Nadal 69). Instead of apologizing for offending or stereotyping him, the woman exacerbated the situation. In this instance, the woman did not recognize her own biases towards gay men.

6.2. "Oh, it's usually his fault" [LGB]

Because many marginalized groups, such as LGB people do not report discrimination out of fear for how others react, LGB people can continue to be discriminated against. For example, Lisa Rivero, the mother of a gay son, reached out to school officials about other children bullying her

child. However, school officials have dismissed her son's problem as "oh, it's usually his fault" (Nadal 69).

6.3. "You should really be more tolerant of people who don't get it" [Transgender]

"'I don't know why you're so upset about this. You should really be more tolerant of people who don't get it.' This type of statement can be invalidating to the transgender person who experiences such bias and discrimination on a regular basis. A cisgender person does not know what it is like to be transgender; neither does she or he know what transphobic discrimination feels like. Thus, when invalidating a trans person's experiences, cisgender people communicate that trans people's perceptions are unworthy or irrational" (Nadal 95).

7. Assumption of sexual pathology/abnormality

This seventh theme pertains to a microaggression that is evident when "heterosexuals believe that LGB individuals are sexually promiscuous or sexually deviant. Sometimes these can take the form of comments and statements that are meant to be hurtful and demeaning" (Nadal 66).

7.1. "AIDS Kills Fags" [LGB]

"When Christian fundamentalist protestors hold up signs at LGB events, like 'AIDS Kills Fags,' it is clear that they are intending to offend the LGB people who see them or hear them" (Nadal 66).

7.2. "Oh, since you're bisexual and you might try to come on to me" [LGB]

One bisexual study participant shared that she lost some friends because of her sexuality, stating

something along the lines of, "Oh, since you're bisexual and you might try to come on to me"

(qtd. in Nadal 68). This stereotype—that a lesbian or bisexual woman would automatically hit on

or sexually assault a heterosexual person—implies a bias that LGB women do not have any

control of their sexual urges or desires, but it also is insulting because it suggests that these

women would be attracted to any other woman, regardless of physical attractiveness level,

personality, or other characteristics" (Nadal 68).

7.3. "I touched that person!" [Transgender]

"Another transgender woman shared an encounter in which an emergency medical technician

(EMT) accidentally came in contact with her blood: 'She said, 'I have kids, I can't believe this.

Oh my God. I touched that person! I touched that person's blood. I touched that person's blood'"

(qtd. in Nadal 94). Although this EMT encounters blood on a regular basis, her strongly negative

reaction to this transgendered woman's blood "may exemplify her bias toward transgender

people or her specific stereotype that transgender people would have HIV/AIDS" (Nadal 94).

8. Denial of individual heterosexism

The eighth and final theme alludes to microaggressions that occur through the various

institutions that are created by society.

8.1. "[Schools]" [LGB]

Nadal includes one student's comment about physical affection in schools:

I remember I had a guy friend—he kissed another guy, he just kissed a guy and they gave him detention, they would give detention at any moment like doing anything with the person of the same sex and then they would say, "You know, you should keep that to yourself because parents will complain, students will complain" and I'm like "Why would they complain[,] it's not like I'm doing anything to them" and they're like, "No, it's wrong, you shouldn't do it because it makes other people uncomfortable." It actually bothered me because why can't I be myself, you know, it shouldn't be a problem. If other people can have boyfriends you know . . . really promiscuous people making out in the hallway, you're trying to get to class and . . . they just keep doing whatever they're doing on the lockers and everything but if I was to hold hands with my girlfriend it would be like "What are you doing?" (qtd. in Nadal 71)

8.2. "[Government]" [LGB]

Microaggressions also occur within the military:

I was in the Army and they have the . . . "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" rule. Well, you're there and you feel like freakin' terrified if anybody found out that you were that way. So that really pissed me the hell off. So, I just kind of kept to myself, you know. I mean, if at some point I develop a close knit relationship with one of my battle buddies, then I'm pretty much need to shut up and keep your mouth like this [gesture of zipping lip] and just don't let it get out there (qtd. in Nadal 71).

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8.3. "[Public Restrooms]" [Transgender]

One transgender male participant shared this dilemma: "When I use the bathroom, I tend to withdraw and use the handicap bathroom. People are always looking at me like . . . Their perception of me is like 'Just use the male bathroom.' And I'm thinking . . . do I wanna engage with my male co-workers who might freak out? Or if I want to use the women's bathroom . . . what that brings up for women and seeing my presence in there" (qtd. in Nadal 98).

Description of the chapters

Because these microaggressions are rooted in power and privilege, I recommend an approach to equalizing the distribution of power by extending privileges to the LGBT community. One such way is by adopting **pronoun introductions**, which are the gender pronouns people prefer to be called by and established when introducing themselves. For example, a transgender woman may introduce her pronouns as she/her/hers despite being biologically male. While this may shock some people, pronoun introductions are used in order to create safe spaces for those who don't feel that the labels society gives them are adequate.

Used almost exclusively by the LGBT community in the past century, pronoun introductions are now becoming increasingly used and accepted. However, the merits of pronoun introductions are criticized largely on the grounds that they are impractical in the sense that language doesn't change overnight. It takes years for new words to enter into the English vernacular; furthermore, it takes even longer to introduce new pronouns—take, for example, the longstanding history of the perpetually sexist 'he' pronoun. In order to understand this concept, I will provide a review

of the history of gendered pronouns and gender-neutral pronouns in Chapter III: A Survey of English Pronouns, the Internet, and Spaces.

Next, it will also be useful to discuss a couple of other Internet dialects of English. Due to the overwhelming popularity of Internet phenomena, such as cat memes and communication between video-gamers, discussing two of Internet's most popular dialects will provide a good foundation for understanding the capacity of digital spaces to create change. Therefore, I will discuss LOLSpeak and LeetSpeak in Chapter III: A Survey of English Pronouns, the Internet, and Spaces.

After these two sections, it will be easier to evaluate the effectiveness of using pronoun introductions in digital spaces. Since physical spaces and digital spaces are simply different environments where communication takes place, examples will be discussed in order to ensure an effective understanding of the similarities and differences between them. Ultimately, however, I stress the importance of utilizing digital spaces to create change in physical spaces. These topics will be discussed in Chapter III: A Survey of English Pronouns, the Internet, and Spaces.

Once those three chapters have been discussed, it is necessary to analyze the data I collected in Chapter IV: Analysis.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

For my research, I collected data from thirty schools' LGBT or diversity resource pages on the topic of pronoun introductions in order to identify trends on various aspects of Preferred Gender Pronouns (PGPs). Specifically, I am interested in how rhetorically effective these pages are in communicating the concept to users. Thus, I designed five questions to score universities from a scale of 0 to 5 and each question being worth 0 or 1 point. They are as follows:

1) Importance: "Did the page explain how PGPs help genderqueer and transgender communities feel comfortable?"

2) Pronouns Binary: "Did the page draw a distinction between gendered pronouns and non-gendered pronouns?"

3) Examples: "Did the page provide examples of gendered pronouns, non-gendered pronouns, or both?"

4) Misgendering: "Did the page explain what to do if you or someone else ascribed the wrong gender pronoun to an individual, otherwise known as 'misgendering?'"

5) More Information: "Did the page provide further information about getting involved or showing support for pronoun introductions, whether it be providing a link to the school's LGBT resource center website or a downloadable PDF resource from nonprofit organization working to achieve this end?"

Drawing from Kevin Nadal's *Microaggressions and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community*, I approached the creation for these questions with the end goal for users to create change in digital spaces and physical spaces. What I mean by change is affecting society by increasing support for PGPs and fostering more gender-fluid, LGBT-inclusive spaces

Rationale for question 1: Any resource promoting a culture's customs needs to explain why it exists; therefore, this question serves to imbue the user with a sense of motivation for understanding genderqueer and transgenderqueer communities.

Rationale for question 2: In discussing PGPs, it is necessary for users to understand the difference between gendered pronouns and non-gendered pronouns. Doing so will reduce confusion as to why some people identify with a certain gender, thus validating the experience for everyone. If people understand the differences between gendered pronouns and non-gendered pronouns, then they will be more likely to recognize how people want to identify, thereby mitigating the oppression of gender-strict roles.

Rationale for question 3: In learning a new concept, it helps to have examples. Recognizing what they look like in text is helpful for recognizing them when they are actually used, whether in physical spaces or digital spaces.

Rationale for question 4: People make mistakes; that's why it's important to encourage growth and mitigate stigma. Simply explaining what to do in a misgendering situation will help users become accustomed to using PGPs as a sign of respect and help those reading about such situations recognize when they need to ask about PGPs.

Rationale for question 5: Because information about a concept does not necessarily put it into practice, it is necessary to provide further information for people to get involved. This way, the learning never stops, and general tolerance for PGPs will gain traction.

As for the selection of schools in higher education, I selected thirty different colleges in the U.S by searching for "Preferred Gender Pronouns Colleges" as keywords in Google's Search Engine. I selected the first sixteen Public Universities, the first seven Liberal Arts Colleges, and the first seven Private Universities that provided information about PGPs.

All the websites and their contents were accessed on Friday, January 15, 2016. Schools may have changed the content of their websites after this date. The list of schools and the URLs that I used to access each website appear in Appendix A. Some URLs lead to separate pages on PGPs, whereas others lead to pages that provide information about PGPs within the schools' online LGBT Resource Centers.

I hypothesize, first, that Private Universities and Liberal Arts Colleges would have higher overall scores than Public Universities, since Private Universities and Liberal Arts Colleges generally pay more attention to students' learning and well-being. Second, I also expect that all three categories would do well in two questions: Question 1) Importance: "Did the page explain how PGPs help genderqueer and transgender communities feel comfortable?" and Question 3) Examples: "Did the page provide examples of gendered pronouns, non-gendered pronouns, or both?" This is because significance and examples are common sense in the U.S. If you want to

prove a point, explain your position and why it matters to your audience; then, provide and elaborate on examples to further your argument.

Third, since Public Universities have generally large student populations and promote a "system-like" approach to interacting with students, I feel that scores will be relatively lower than their counterparts, due largely in part to Public Universities overlooking the details of PGPs. I speculate that Public Universities would want to show some sort of acknowledgement for transgender and genderqueer communities, but I do not believe most will go through the effort of making PGPs something that other students should go out of their way to learn. Specifically, I feel that Public Universities wouldn't focus as much on Question 2) Pronouns Binary: "Did the page draw a distinction between gendered pronouns and non-gendered pronouns?"; Question 4) Misgendering: "Did the page explain what to do if you or someone else ascribed the wrong gender pronoun to an individual, otherwise known as 'misgendering?'"; and Question 5) More Information: "Did the page provide further information about getting involved or showing support for pronoun introductions, whether it be providing a link to the school's LGBT resource center website or a downloadable PDF resource from a nonprofit organization working to achieve this end?" This is because there isn't really an incentive for Public Universities to go above and beyond for promoting a small subculture that is the LGBT community. I believe that students who enroll in Liberal Arts Colleges and Private Universities are more likely to have liberal views, which would encourage them to support the LGBT community.

This analysis does not necessarily comment on how diverse and inclusive the college is towards the LGBTQ community; rather, it seeks to analyze the rhetorical effectiveness of each college's PGPs approach.

Each answer is worth 1 point if the answer is yes, and 0 points if the answer is no to the five questions. Therefore, the scores can range from 0 to 5. The higher the score, the more effectively PGPs should impact the immediate communities in creating a more diverse and inclusive environment for transgender and genderqueer communities.

CHAPTER III

A SURVEY OF ENGLISH PRONOUNS, THE INTERNET, AND SPACES

Introduction

The Internet plays a large role in shaping language. The dissemination of information allows ideas to gain traction quicker and deeper. While it is a place for people to become educated about pronouns, it is also a place where people can learn to use the Internet to promote minority status (e.g. a transgender woman may not feel as comfortable telling people in person, but the Internet allows them (through video, written text, etc.) to express themselves more easily and safely). In this chapter, I first explain the history and use of pronouns in the English language. Then, I discuss two examples of Internet slang: LOLSpeak and LeetSpeak.

Gendered pronouns

The English language has become increasingly scrutinized for its bias of gender. That's why many people cite inherently biased pronoun use as a source of inequality. The source of this inequality stems from what scholars call "gender performativity.": "the performance and interpretation of gender identity" (Mooney 109). Mooney explains,

> [T]here are certain expectations of people according to biological sex. Very often, however, in reality people don't always conform to those expectations. The gender norms in a society generate conventions that people are judged against. It is of course possible not to conform to these gender expectations, but there are often consequences for the individuals who do this." (Mooney 109)

Thus, the complex differences between masculine pronouns and female pronouns relating to the way they are used and how they are associated do, in fact, bear strong implications on how sexes treat themselves and each other. Therefore, this section will explore the history of gendered pronoun use in the English language in order to demonstrate how language evolves over time.

Third person singular pronouns in English have been an issue for decades. Feminist linguists and others brought attention to the sexism of the masculine generic during the women's movement of the 1960's and 1970's (e.g. Bodine; Kramer, Thorne, and Henley). According to Martyna, the generic masculine is problematic because it encourages a male rather than neutral interpretation, which excludes females (487). It may also be ambiguous and misleading. For example, a sociology text reported, "The more education an individual attains, the better his occupation is likely to be, and the more money he is likely to earn"; however, the statement was accurate only for males (488).

Linguists and others have also examined pronoun use amongst transgendered individuals in English and other languages, such as Hindi (Hall); however, this topic has received much less attention than the masculine generic even though the selection of third person singular pronouns is a fundamental issue for many transgender and genderqueer individuals. In her analysis of female-to-male, or "transmasculine," individuals, Saltzburg identifies pronouns as playing an important role in transgendered individuals' formation and presentation of their identities as they transition from female to male, along with clothing and their choice of a personal name (72).

Another issue is that "each episode of LGBT victimization, such as physical or verbal harassment or abuse, increases the likelihood of self-harming behavior by 2.5 times on average" (IMPACT). Furthermore, "LGB youth are 4 times more likely, and questioning youth are 3 times more likely, to attempt suicide as their straight peers" (CDC). Thus, relatively high suicide rates, especially for LGB youth are another reason that PGPs deserve more attention, since they help promote a safe space for expression and exploration.

In general, people should use the individual's preferred gender pronoun (PGP). This is a good idea because it validates that person's experiences and it shows respect for difference. This is akin to the idea of not judging people based on their weight, age, ethnicity, and disabilities. Because society gives us these labels, it often times can mold us to have a negative perception of ourselves; therefore, by using an individual's PGP, one can help people define themselves more positively.

There are four cases that are relevant in our discussion of English pronouns, which include: nominative, accusative, genitive, and dative respectively. I will list examples in the conventional order : 1st person singular, 2nd person singular, 3rd person masculine, 3rd person feminine, 3rd person neuter, 1st person plural, 2nd person plural, and 3rd person plural.

The nominative case refers to subject words; in other words, the word in the nominative case is the one doing the action (e.g. I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they). In Old English, the nominatives were ic, þu, he, heo, hit, we, ge, hie. As you can see in the 3rd person masculine and 3rd person feminine, there is one extra letter added from the 3rd person masculine in order to create the 3rd

person feminine. Can this minute addition, which probably served a practical function in terms of communication, be attributed to sexist ideology that was perpetuated into the language? Before we can find out, we should explore the other three cases.

Second, the accusative case refers to object words. The most common use emerges from what a verb confers action to. Take, for example, the sentence: *We ate the food*—in this instance, food would be accusative. Thus, our accusative pronouns list includes: me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them. In Old English, the accusatives were me, þe, hine, hie, hit, us, eow, hie.[3] In contrast to the aforementioned suspicion that adding an extra letter from the masculine form to the feminine form was an attempt to institute patriarchy, it does not seem so likely now that we can see that the masculine form in this instance actually takes on an additional letter from the feminine form.

The third case to be discussed is the genitive, or what we call the "possessive." This case, as you may expect, denotes possession. For example, *She broke his bones, Mike's feet smell, The girl's dress was pretty*, *Their game was fun*. The genitives in these sentences respectively follow: his, Mike's, girl's, their. Therefore, genitive pronouns include: my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their. In Old English, the genitives were min, þin, his, hire, his, ure, eower, hira.

The fourth and final case to be discussed is the dative case, which generally indicates the noun to which something is given. If we assume the object of the sentence is 'ball', then the sentence, *I passed the ball to Sally*, makes 'Sally' dative; I took the ball from Sally also makes 'Sally' dative. While the dative case has other uses as well, they're less common, and will not be

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[3] The pronouns þec and mec were used in poetry.

discussed further. In Old English, dative pronouns included: me, þe, him, hire, him, us, eow, him; whereas, in modern English, the datives are the same as the accusatives: me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them.

Third Personal Singular Pronouns

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
she	*her*	*her*
he	*him*	*his*

Some pronouns introduced for transgender and genderqueer individuals are 'ze' and 'hir'. 'Ze' replaces 'she' and 'he' and is pronounced like "zee". It is sometimes spelled as 'zie' or 'xe'. 'Hir' replaces 'her', 'him', and 'his' and is pronounced like "here." Another set of gender-neutral pronouns include 'e', 'em', and 'eir' as nominative, accusative, and genitive respectively.

Other Suggested Forms for Third Person Singular

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
they	*them*	*their*
ze	*hir*	*hir*
e	*em*	*eir*

You should avoid using 'it' or 'he-she' to refer to any human.

As explained by Bodine, the use of "singular 'they'" is considered to be a new phenomenon in

English and has been labeled as grammatically incorrect. However, 'they' has been used as a singular by great writers and in spoken English since the 1300s. For example, Shakespeare wrote in *Much Ado About Nothing*, "God send everyone their heart's desire!" (III.1). Grammarians began prohibiting this construction in the late nineteenth century when they created many arbitrary prescriptive rules based on Latin, which has nothing to do with English, and without accurate knowledge about the structure of language (Pinker). Prescriptivists may argue that singular 'they' doesn't agree in number with an antecedent, but if the masculine generic is used when referring to females, it doesn't agree in gender.

Pauwels and Winter find that Australian classroom teachers are increasingly adopting gender-inclusive alternatives to generic 'he' "with a clear preference for and tolerance of singular 'they' in their own and their students' writing" (128).

There is a great deal of resistance against the use of singular 'they'; however, there is even more resistance to the introduction of new pronouns. For example, last year, University of Tennessee President Joe DiPietro removed a newsletter article advocating the use of gender neutral pronouns such as "ze" for "he" and "she" from the Diversity and Inclusion's website. The issue was scheduled for a senate hearing (Sher). The result was that the University of Tennessee at Knoxville had to reassign $8 million from the University of Tennessee budget to its extension schools in Martin and Chattanooga (Sher). Consequently, the University of Tennessee's Office of Diversity and Inclusion already receives no federal funding, so this is a huge setback.

Internet slang

The internet has provided a space for transgendered people from disparate parts of the world to come together. As web inventor, Tim Berners-Lee, observes in his biographical account, *Weaving the Web*, "The Web is more a social creation than a technical one . . . to help people work together" (qtd. in Cystal). Crystal states, "The Web is no longer only a purveyor of information. It has become a communicative tool" (204).

The internet has proven itself to be a site in which new forms of language may rapidly develop and take hold. Internet slang is a primary example; I want to specifically discuss LOLSpeak and LeetSpeak.

With the growth and use of the Internet in recent years, Internet slang is being increasingly accepted as an extension of the English language. Often, the linguistic properties of these new Internet trends develop in online communities; in fact, this phenomenon does not only limit itself to the English language: "The linguistic consequences of evolving a medium in which the whole world participates – at least in principle, once their countries' infrastructure and internal economy allow them to gain access – are also bound to be far-reaching" (Crystal 5). While the subject of discussion is on the English language, I just wanted to point out that it could have happened with any language; however, English happened to be the primary language of users, and, as Crystal points out, "it is still largely in the hands of the better-off citizens of the developed countries" (5).[4]

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[4] It is important to note that Crystal's *Language and the Internet* was written in 2001, and there have been many changes from then to 2015. Smart phones, for instance, have enabled people from less developed countries to utilize the Internet, decreasing the percentage of users whose primary language is English.

The medium of the internet itself promotes language change due to the evolution of technological developments, which puts "users under constant pressure to adapt their language to the demands of new contexts, and giving them fresh opportunities to interact in novel ways" because "people "adapt language to meet the needs of new situations, which is at the heart of linguistic evolution (Crystal 224). One reason that new forms of language may develop is because "much of the native-speaker usage in chatgroups and virtual worlds is non-standard, often ludic and highly deviant…. The bending and breaking of rules… is a hallmark of ludic linguistic behavior" (224).

"Language being such a sensitive index of social change, it would be surprising indeed if such a radically innovative phenomenon did not have a corresponding impact on the way we communicate. And so it can be argued. Language is at the heart of the Internet, for Net activity is interactivity" (Crystal 237). As Naughton observes in his history of the internet, "The Net is really a system which links together a vast number of computers and the people who use them" (qtd. in Crystal 237).

"I view each of the Netspeak situations as an area of huge potential enrichment for individual languages. The English experience… is one of remarkable diversity and creativity. There is no indication, in any of the areas I have examined, of Netspeak replacing or threatening already existing varieties. On the contrary, the arrival of new, informal, even bizarre forms of language extends the range of our sensitivity to linguistic contrasts. Formal language, and other kinds of informal language, are seen in a new light, by virtue of the existence of Netspeak. An analogy

with clothing helps make this point. I remember once owning a very formal shirt and another I used for informal occasions. Then I was given a grotesque creation that I was assured was the latest cool trend in informality; and certainly, the effect was to make my previously informal shirt look really somewhat staid. The new shirt had not destroyed my sense of the value of a formal vs. informal contrast in dress behaviour; it simply extended it. I was sartorially enriched, with more options available to me. I see the arrival of Netspeak as similarly enriching the range of communicative options available to us. And the Internet is going to record this linguistic diversity more fully and accurately than was ever possible before" (Crystal 241-242).

1 LOLSpeak

The relationship between language malleability and the Internet is exemplified by the creation of a new Internet slang that has emerged in the online cat-loving community: LOLSpeak. Lefler characterizes LOLSpeak as "an internet dialect of English that is used in conjunction with images of cats, [and] exhibits distinctive variations and patterns which differ from those of standard English" vii). Indeed, this dialect is interesting in that it serves to anthropomorphize (think Winnie the Pooh, Peter the Rabbit, and so on) such mischievous animals as cats. Thus, the human traits ascribed to cats, helps create the impression of intelligibility, through which humans can understand and enjoy the humor.

In order to discuss the relationship between language malleability and the Internet, it is important to start, "The first three letters of the word Lolspeak represent of the acronym L.O.L, for "laugh out loud." Thus, the name characterizes the contents as humorous. Lolspeak began with images (also known as macros) of cats accompanied by text, usually referred to as captions. The cats

displayed in this online forum are known as Lolcats, the feline creatures who use or are talked about in Lolspeak, in a small section of the internet, but recognition has extended far beyond the internet and into the pop culture world. The Lolcat phenomenon is interesting because of the innovative language play (with the text superimposed onto the cat macros) created mostly by native English speakers whose intentions, it seems, were to make amusing text for funny cat pictures to evoke positive reactions in others. However, in the process of doing so, they also created a unique form of English, that I analyze here as a distinctive dialect of English, whose development shows how dialects are formed. The Lolcat phenomenon has become a full-blown internet community that has sculpted the rules of this new dialect of English, and is influencing spoken language by its growing popularity" (Lefler 1).

Lefler argues against the prescriptivist belief that "nonstandard English degrades the language and language skills," citing Crystal and Baron, who "frequently mention that Netspeak, textspeak, and other variations of English are positive influences on language," and other researchers (Baron "Digital Media"; Baron "Alphabet to Email"; Bolaños and Posteguillo; Labov) (Lefler 6). Baron's article, "Are Digital Media Changing Language?" is "designed to neutralize such statements (2009:42-46). In this article, she acknowledges that digital media are playing a role in changing language. She explains why this is, and how language change is a good thing" (Lefler 6).

"Yet, while Lolspeak is widely recognized and available, it is important to remember there is a specific culture that goes along with it, as articulated by my colleague: "Even though we're in a global society, we still communicate in isolated cultural communities of our choosing. We

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choose to evolve language to create our own community. It's a bonding technique, in my

opinion" (Harrington-Burns "Cultural Anthropology" 2011)." (Lefler 59).

2 LeetSpeak

Another Internet slang that has become popular, especially in gaming communities, is

LeetSpeak, or 13375p34k (in LeetSpeak terms), which originally arose from hackers. This type

of slang uses ASCII characters in place of Latinate characters, so that the ASCII characters

quasi-resemble what the characters should look like if it were written in the Latin script. "The

internet is often referred to as ―the information superhighway. Information can be spread

among a large group of people in only a matter of seconds. This allowed the slang to be spread

very quickly among internet communities" (Flamand 1).

The ability of the Internet to disseminate info can be demonstrated by "the use of Leetspeak on

message boards and IRC channels, caused the slang to spread to a larger group of people. As the

original purpose of the slang was to hide messages, Leetspeak is often with good reason

considered to be incomprehensible by outsiders. Because of the increasing popularity of the

slang, this group of outsiders is becoming smaller and smaller. Ironically, this could become the

slang's death. Some original leetspeakers do not like the spreading of the slang, which was

supposed to be part of their private subculture. Other leetspeakers, however, continue to play

with language and keep on pushing the limits of legibility. The term ―Leet can either refer to

the language or the subculture. The increasing popularity of Leetspeak also caused some

resentment among Internet users" (Flamand 19).

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Spaces

1 Physical safe spaces

A "safe space" is a place where anyone is allowed to fully express themselves without the fear of feeling unsafe on account of race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, cultural background, religious affiliation, age, or disability. Thus, "physical safe spaces" refer to safe spaces that are physical in nature; in other words, what we encounter in reality, rather than virtually via technology.[5]

The exact origin of the term, "safe space," is not unanimous; however, most attribute it to the women's movement, where it implies "a certain license to speak and act freely, form collective strength, and generate strategies for resistance...a means rather than an end and not only a physical space but also a space created by the coming together of women searching for community" (Kenney 24). The first safe spaces were gay bars and consciousness raising groups.

In 1989 Gay & Lesbian Urban Explorers (GLUE) developed a safe spaces program. During their events including diversity-training sessions and antihomophobia workshops, they passed out magnets with an inverted pink triangle, "ACT UP's...symbol", surrounded by a green circle to, "symbolize universal acceptance," and asked, "allies to display the magnets to show support for gay rights and to designate their work spaces free from homophobia" (Raeburn 209).

Over the years, physical safe spaces have become increasingly popular and effective. At the University of Missouri, for instance, "A drunken white student disrupts an African American

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[5] Virtual safe spaces will be discussed in a later section of this chapter.

student group, the Legion of Black Collegians, preparing for homecoming activities and uses a racial slur when they asked him to leave." Not only did this individual disrupt our rehearsal, but we were also made victims of blatant racism in a space that we should be made to feel safe" (Pearson).

Even at the prestigious Yale University, there is conflict over which spaces should be kept safe and not transgressed: "The Yale lecturer whose email about Halloween costumes exposed long-simmering racial tensions on this Ivy League campus has decided to stop teaching at the university" (Stanley-Becker).

Many LGBT organizations and progress organizations of the like tend to promote the use of PGPs.

2 Virtual safe spaces

Virtual spaces are often criticized for being echo chambers. South Park actually lampooned this idea of forced consensus by having Cartman sing about having a "safe space" free from criticism, which inadvertently destroys a man named Reality who threatens the space.

Chat rooms, like those at the TrevorProject, for example, allow anonymous users to enter a virtual safe space through synchronous messaging. Online communities often create a space for their interests through media like forums and Youtube channels.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

Introduction

In Chapter II: Methodology, I mentioned that I wanted to collect data from LGBT resource centers at institutions of higher learning to determine how well they support the transgendered and genderqueer communities, specifically in terms of Preferred Gender Pronouns (PGPs). Now that we have gone through the chapters necessary to understand the research's context and significance, it is now time to analyze the data and draw conclusions. I accessed each of the schools' LGBT or diversity resource pages that pertain to the topic of pronouns either through a URL to a page devoted to PGPs or tied with schools' LGBT Resource Centers somehow. Also, it is important to note that because I accessed these URLs on one given day, some of the information that was made available to me may not have been readily available to someone who accessed it before or after that given date. Nevertheless, the data is still useful in measuring effectiveness at a given point in time.

In order to measure the effectiveness of each resource, I used five questions to evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of each school's resource. Using Boolean values of '0' and '1' for 'no' and 'yes' to the questions respectively, I summed the five inputs (each is valued at 0 or 1) in order to reach a score of 0 to 5 for each school. These scores represent a spectrum from not very effective to very effective. The questions follow:

1) Importance: "Did the page explain how PGPs help genderqueer and transgender communities feel comfortable?"

2) Pronouns Binary: "Did the page draw a distinction between gendered pronouns and non-gendered pronouns?"

3) Examples: "Did the page provide examples of gendered pronouns, non-gendered pronouns, or both?"

4) Misgendering: "Did the page explain what to do if you or someone else ascribed the wrong gender pronoun to an individual, otherwise known as 'misgendering?'"

5) More Information: "Did the page provide further information about getting involved or showing support for pronoun introductions, whether it be providing a link to the school's LGBT resource center website or a downloadable PDF resource from nonprofit organization working to achieve this end?"

In order to reflect the diversity of school systems, my sample consists of three categories: Liberal Arts Colleges (7), Public Universities (16), and Private Universities (7). What I expected to find was that Liberal Arts Colleges and Private Universities would score higher overall than Public Universities. Also, I hypothesized that all three categories of schools would score well on questions 1 and 3; however, I felt that Liberal Arts Colleges and Private Universities would score higher than Public Universities for questions 2, 4, and 5.

Analysis

1. All Schools

Table 1 lists all 30 schools with their respective scores:

Table 1: All Universities by Scores Received

College Name	Importance	Binary	Examples	Misgendering	More Info	Totals
*(1) Carleton	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
*(2) Sarah Lawrence	N	N	N	N	N	*0
*(3) Grand Valley State	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*3
*(4) Middlebury	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
*(5) Williams	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
*(6) Pomona	Y (+1)	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*2
*(7) Bates	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
**(8) UW--Milwaukee	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(9) TAMU--College Station	N	N	N	N	N	*0
**(10) UT--Knoxville	N	N	N	N	N	*0
**(11) UNC--Chapel Hill	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*4
**(12) UW--Madison	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(13) CCSU	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(14) University of Oregon	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
**(15) Ohio University	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(16) SJSU	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
**(17) University of Utah	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(18) UC--Berkeley	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*3
**(19) UC--Davis	N	N	Y (+1)	N	N	*1
**(20) Penn State University	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(21) UC--San Diego	N	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*1
**(22) Michigan State	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
**(23) University of Vermont	N	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*1
***(24) MIT	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*2
***(25) Harvard	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*3
***(26) American	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*4
***(27) Cornell	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
***(28) Tufts	N	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*2
***(29) Vanderbilt	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*4
***(30) Northwestern	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
Averages	0.667	0.6	0.667	0.533	0.633	0.62

* = indicates school is a Liberal Arts College

** = indicates school is a Public University

*** = indicates school is a Private University

1.1 Overall Scores

With such a large data set, it can be useful to categorize total scores as such: high (4-5), middle (3), and low (0-2). In decimal form, this would translate as follows: high (0.8 –1.0), middle (0.6), and low (0 – 0.4). There were twelve schools that scored high (63%), nine schools that scored in the middle (30%), and nine schools that scored low (30%).

1.2 Questions 1 & 3

Quantitatively, the averages demonstrate that questions 1 and 3 received the highest scores (0.667), which suggests that my hypothesis was correct that all three categories of schools together would score well on these two questions, and my reasoning could therefore be justified: that U.S. institutions of higher learning stress explaining why something is important and supplying that point with examples in order to communicate effectively.

1.3 Question 2

For question 2, the average of 0.6 means that 3 out of every 5 schools listed distinguished between gendered pronouns and gender-neutral pronouns on their web pages. Furthermore, the average of .5625 for Public Universities confirms that my hypothesis was also correct in saying that there would be less of a focus on describing the differences between gendered pronouns and gender-neutral pronouns.

1.4 Question 4

Question 4 had the lowest overall average, tallying at 0.533; that's just a little more than 1 out of every 2 colleges addressing the "misgendering" dilemma.

1.5 Question 5

Question 5's overall average was 0.633, which was the third highest overall average score among the five questions. This suggests that after questions 1 and 3, question 5 was recorded the most. In terms of providing more resources for users, I think that schools in general are doing a good job with accessibility; however, it can certainly be better, as discussed later.

Although only one link is necessary for receiving a point for this answer, Cornell University went above and beyond by listing six different sources, including: http://nonbinary.org/wiki/Gender_neutral_language and http://genderqueerid.com/post/46526429887/selected-links-on-non-binary-gender-in-japan.

Overall, there were no patterns in which one point on a question would lead to another point on a different question except for questions 1 and 3. What this suggests is that my methodology of scoring schools was effective because it was comprehensive (i.e. one question wasn't related to the other question insofar as basically answering the same question).

2 Results by School Type

Table 2: Liberal Arts Colleges by Scores Received

College Name	Importance	Binary	Examples	Misgendering	More Info	Totals
*(1) Carleton	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
*(2) Sarah Lawrence	N	N	N	N	N	*0
*(3) Grand Valley State	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*3
*(4) Middlebury	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
*(5) Williams	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
*(6) Pomona	Y (+1)	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*2
*(7) Bates	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
Average	0.714	0.571	0.571	0.571	0.571	0.6

In Table 2, we see that the averages for questions 1 & 4 were higher than those in the pool of All Universities: .714 compared to 0.667 for question 1 on importance, .571 compared to 0.533 for question 4 on misgendering; as a result, averages for questions 2, 3, & 5 were lower than those in the pool of All Universities. Even more interesting is that the total average for Liberal Arts Colleges is actually lower than the total average for all schools combined (0.6 vs. 0.62).

Table 3: Public Universities by Scores Received

College Name	Significance	Binary	Examples	Misgendering	More Info	Totals
**(8) UW--Milwaukee	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(9) TAMU--College Station	N	N	N	N	N	*0
**(10) UT--Knoxville	N	N	N	N	N	*0
**(11) UNC--Chapel Hill	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*4
**(12) UW--Madison	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(13) CCSU	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(14) University of Oregon	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
**(15) Ohio University	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(16) SJSU	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*3
**(17) University of Utah	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(18) UC--Berkeley	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*3
**(19) UC--Davis	N	N	Y (+1)	N	N	*1
**(20) Penn State University	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(21) UC--San Diego	N	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*1
**(22) Michigan State	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
**(23) University of Vermont	N	N	N	N	Y (+1)	*1
Averages	0.6875	0.5625	0.6875	0.5	0.625	0.613

In Table 3, we find that the averages for questions 1 & 3 were higher than those in the pool of All Universities; consequently, averages for questions 2, 4, & 5 were lower than those in the pool of All Universities. Indeed, the total averages for Public Universities is still lower than those of All Universities (0.613 vs. 0.62); however, the total averages for Public Universities was higher than those of Liberal Arts Colleges (0.613 v. 0.6). What this suggests it that the total averages for Private Universities should be higher than those of All Universities, since this is the last category left. Furthermore, the data collected from Public Universities surprised me in that I thought Public Universities would fare the worst in terms of scores. While it is significant that the total averages of Public Universities was higher than those of Liberal Arts Colleges, it is important to consider that the averages were essentially the same at about 61% versus 60% for Public Universities and Liberal Arts Colleges respectively.

Table 4: Private Universities by Scores Received

College Name	Significance	Pronouns Binary	Examples	Misgendering	More Info	Totals
**(24) MIT	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	N	*2
**(25) Harvard	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*3
**(26) American	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	*4
**(27) Cornell	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*5
**(28) Tufts	N	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*2
**(29) Vanderbilt	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	N	Y (+1)	*4
**(30) Northwestern	Y (+1)	N	N	Y (+1)	Y (+1)	*3
Averages	0.5714	0.7143	0.7143	0.5714	0.7143	0.657

In Table 4, we discover that the Private University averages for questions 2, 3, 4, and 5 were higher than those in the pool of All Universities; as a result, averages for question 1 were lower than those in the pool of All Universities. As expected, Private Universities had higher total averages than those of All Universities (0.657 vs. 62). In terms of understanding why question 1 scored lower in Private Universities, I think that Private Universities, which are generally more prestigious, assume that their student bodies don't need to be explained why PGPs are significant, since most of those student bodies are more culturally sensitive anyway.

Discussion

Overall, 63% of these thirty institutions of higher education received high scores for rhetorical effectiveness, 30% received low scores, with the other 30% in the middle. This is not to say that schools that received a low score (0-2) did not have other useful LGBT resources; however, their resources on PGPs were not very effective or useful

As I hypothesized, the schools as a whole were most successful in explaining how PGPs help genderqueer and transgender communities feel comfortable (question 1) and providing examples

of pronouns to support their explanations (question 3). The motivations they provide for using

PGPs also warrant them including information about PGPs in the first place, so this is not too

surprising; and the use of examples make their explanations more effective.

The University of Oregon, for example, offers the following explanation: "We offer a chance for

everyone to state their pronouns because UO is a place of respect, and doing this is just one of

the ways that we try to create spaces that are welcoming and safe for all of our Ducks (or

everyone). We try not to make any assumptions about the people that are here." The University

of Oregon clearly explains that PGPs help create spaces for respect. This university offers the

following examples (question 3): "What are pronouns? (He, him, his/ She, her, hers/ they, them,

theirs/ ze, hir, hirs/ cos, cos, cos, etc.) Why don't we say 'masculine pronouns' or 'feminine

pronouns?' (or boy or girl pronouns?) Because it forces people into a prescribed gender identity

that they may not fit into."

Only three out of five schools (0.6) addressed the gender binary even though gender is

fundamental to the issue of PGPs. Private Universities were most successful in addressing this

distinction (.7143) with Public Universities (.5625) and Liberal Arts Colleges (.571) lagging

behind.

As an example, Carleton College offers the following explanation about the gender binary:

"Many other individuals, however, do not identify within the gender binary, causing traditional

assumptions about gender to be irrelevant or incorrect." What makes awarding this point easier is

if the word, "binary," is actually used; this is good because it goes a step further, rather than

undercutting the message.

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I speculate that this might be the case because students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to attend private universities and are also more likely to have more liberal views.

My hypothesis was correct for question 4 about the sites including ways of handling misgendering situations because Public Universities had an average of 0.5 for this question, which is lower than the overall average. This would point to the fact that Public Universities don't have to deal with these social justice issues to the point that "misgendered" students would demand action to be taken to improve the gender culture.

Take, for example, American University's explanation on "misgendering": "If you make a mistake: Mistakes happen! If you use the wrong pronoun, apologize and correct it, and then move on." There was more explanation, but this is really all that is necessary to receive credit for question 4. The important thing was to emphasize apologizing and learning from that mistake.

Most of the schools (0.633) provided ways to get more information either by providing information through, for example, links to the school's LGBT resource center website or to resources from nonprofit organizations (question 5). Although I hypothesized that Public Universities would fare poorest, it was the Liberal Arts Colleges who came in last with scores of 0.625 and 0.571, respectively. Private Universities outshone the others at 0.7143 Perhaps Private Universities have more of an incentive to support the transgendered community or perhaps their students are more liberal in general.

Typically, most schools would answer question 3 by using "he, him, his, she, her, hers" as gendered pronouns and "they, them, theirs, ze, hir, hirs" as gender-neutral pronouns. There was not much debate over what constituted gendered pronouns; instead, many schools differed in what they put for gender-neutral pronouns outside of "they, them, theirs, ze, hir, hirs," including "ey, em, eirs, xe, xem, xers."

Tables 2, 3, and 4 show that Liberal Arts Colleges scored lower at (.6) than Private Universities (0.657) and Public Universities (0.613).This could suggest a contradiction to my hypothesis, which predicted that Liberal Arts Colleges and Private Universities would score higher than Public Universities; however, the fact that Liberal Arts Colleges scored lower in total average than All Universities suggests that at least one of the two other pools should have scored higher in total averages than the pool with All Universities. Therefore, my hypothesis was not supported.

In terms of overall progress, 70% of schools scored in the middle or high range (12 schools scored high and 9 schools scored middle for a total of 21 schools out of the 30 total schools). The data from these thirty schools suggests that, if an LGBT resource center includes information about PGPs, which means they are aware of the issue, then they are effectively communicating the importance of PGPs.

Qualitatively, the schools answered or did not answer the questions in the same way. Therefore, it was necessary for me to make evaluations as I went along. For example, I had to make a lot of judgments for question 5) More Information: "Did the page provide further information about

getting involved or showing support for pronoun introductions, whether it be providing a link to the school's LGBT resource center website or a downloadable PDF resource from nonprofit organization working to achieve this end?" What I was looking for was a digital way that pages demonstrated a need for further learning. In many cases, this could be easily achieved by simply having a link to more LGBT resources. However, in some cases, a link to the school's home website or other non-related articles did not tell me that the school understood the importance continuing the education of inclusive genderqueer and transgender community.

In terms of accessibility, therefore, many schools need to make their resources more user-friendly. Some schools could have easily gotten a point for question 5; however, I made the assumption that users don't have time to look through various pages. Instead, they prefer one page with content and links. One really effective way schools could have made resources more accessible was by having their LGBT resource centers release them to the public. This way, the LGBT resource center addresses would allow users to know where to inquire further. The University of Wisconsin—Madison, for example, placed its address at the bottom left-hand corner of the PGPs pamphlet online. One less effective way schools attempted to make their information accessible was by having only certain departments of the school release the information. This way is ineffective because it does not reach the whole university, as would an LGBT resource center; in other words, the information distributed in those classrooms is only exclusive to those taking the class. In fact, the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill did this by having only their Writing Center release information on PGPs. Had this school also released information on PGPs through the LGBT Resource Center, then students would be able to find its address and obtain more opportunities to learn. While good, the Writing Center alone

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will not help students access information; the information about PGPs is limited and therefore finite. Students won't bother learning about transgender and genderqueer communities more than what they read from the Writing Center's page. Thus, this may increase stereotypes and deter keeping up with changes in PGPs and the LGBTQ community.

Upon further analysis, my study is certainly helpful in understanding quantitatively the rhetorical effectiveness of web pages from various school websites; however, there may been a few flaws in my research methodology.

First, my use of web pages doesn't necessarily allow other researchers to see the same information as I. This lack of continuity speaks largely about the difficulty in analyzing information that is constantly changing (i.e. the Web). However, that is the nature of this medium.

Second, my randomized sample may have been influenced by my previous queries using Google's Search Engine. Since Google's Search Engine algorithm is constantly changing to meet users' needs, the validity of "randomness" is called into question.

Third, my sample size of 16 for Public Universities may not have been appropriate relative to the sample sizes of 7 for both Liberal Arts Colleges and Private Universities. Future studies could conduct research with a more equitable distribution that don't necessarily limit themselves to types of colleges, but expand to include other significant factors, such as geography, student population, and religious affiliation.

Fourthly, the scoring aspect of my methods was highly subjective. Since, web pages are constantly changing, it is important to conduct future studies with the user's comprehension and call to action in mind. Additionally, my understanding of rhetorical effectiveness is influenced by academia and my own perceptions of what is effective. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate questions that reduce as much bias as possible.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Although many people believe that the LGBTQ community is a homogenous group, intersectionality may affect the cohesion of the group: "there is discrimination between the men and the women, the cisgender and the transgender, the monosexuals and the bisexuals, the White people and the people of color, the able-bodied and people with disabilities, the older and the younger, and the list goes on" (Nadal 189). Therefore, as Nadal alludes to, the LGBTQ community needs to recognize its individual powers and privileges in order to avoid acting as an oppressor or microaggressor. One way to maintain cohesion is for cisgenders and transgenders alike to utilize pronoun introductions in order to establish respect for people's preferred gender pronouns, both in physical spaces and virtual spaces. Because the places where we are socialized are becoming increasingly diverse, it is important to keep in mind the different avenues we have today at our disposal, both physical and virtual.

While young LGBTQ communities today may take for granted the blood, sweat, and tears of previous trailblazers, it is important to not overlook the impact that various activists have had in shaping the increasingly tolerant society that America is pushing towards today. In fact, Nadal mentions, "Because we now live in a world in which many of us have much more privilege and equality and in which many of us feel safe going out at night and loving whomever we choose, it can be easy to be complacent" (189-190). This thesis responds to Nadal's admonition not to be complacent by advocating for the inclusion of transgender and genderqueer communities post-

Obergefell v. Hodges. Because this decision was considered a victory for same-sex couples, many constituents in the LGB community were able to sit on their laurels; however, the transgender community is still calling out for help, and we, as the LGBTQ community, need to answer the call. The power of validating a transgender person's gender identity is often overlooked as a simple custom in the LGBTQ community; but in reality, the respect we show the transgender community helps us foster respect for those that are different from us, many of whom comprise other minority communities. If all of society were to adopt this behavior, we may be able to eradicate wars, hate crimes, and other atrocities and injustices that stem from prejudice.

My analysis of Preferred Gender Pronoun (PGP) resources on college websites demonstrated that higher education in the United States is headed in the right direction. While the scores weren't perfect, I expect that schools will begin to take PGPs more seriously in the future. This is due to the increasing pressure being placed on privileged groups of creating safe spaces for minority groups.

The various multimedia channels that are emerging on the Internet are a crucial site for educating the public about PGPs to aid in eliminating prejudice against the transgender and genderqueer communities. With the rapid transformation of the Internet and its applications, users are still increasing in number, especially in the United States, where the population using the Internet increased by 7% over the course of only one year, from 2013 to 2014. As a result, the total number of Internet users in the U.S. in 2014 totaled 279,834,232, whereas the total population numbered at 322,583,006; thus, the total percentage of Americans using the Internet in 2014 hit

about 87% ("Internet Users"). That represents roughly six out of seven Americans who are using the Internet, and are thereby exposed to the landscape that has the potential to fully embrace the idea of pronoun introductions.

Recommendations for non-LGBTQ communities

In this section, I build upon Nadal's recommendations for alleviating microagressesions by suggesting recommendations for how to address PGPs in the five non-LGBTQ audiences that Nadal identifies: families, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods and communities, and government.

First, families need to understand their role in promoting PGPs. "Families are where children first learn about their values and where they initially start to develop their personalities. Families are also where they receive their first messages about anything that is different (e.g., race, religion, gender, sexual orientation), and these messages may in turn have an impact on their values and personalities" (Nadal 177). Therefore, it is important for parents to communicate with their children the complex issues of diversity and difference, especially at an early age. This early childhood development is crucial in shaping the children when they become adults.

Nadal also advocates for families to familiarize themselves with this subculture in order to mitigate fears. He states, "One last recommendation for families is to normalize the experiences of LGBT people. Instead of treating them as an outside group, perhaps getting to know more about LGBT history, LGBT communities, and LGBT experiences can help someone to feel more comfortable with LGBT people instead of viewing them as the 'other'" (Nadal 179-180). Nadal

also draws on a study that found that "the more educated heterosexual people were and the more exposure they had to LGBT people (e.g., having friends who are gay and lesbian), the more likely they were to be allies" (179-180). Thus, it helps to socialize with the perspective of learning more about the LGBTQ community.

Nadal's comments on both the influence of parents and the normalization of LGBT experiences suggest that people should be proactive in organically creating relationships with the LGBT community in order to form a genuine view, rather than a contrived view stemming from exoticization in the media. It follows, then, that asking people what their PGPs are, whether they are part of the LGBTQ community or not, will go a long way in fostering a positive environment for the LGBTQ community, especially transgender and genderqueer communities. For example, when a parent inquires a child's friend, James—assuming James is old enough to have a working knowledge of PGPs—about PGPs, James is freed from the stress of conforming to gender roles, or is at least aware that this is an issue.

Second, in schools, educators need to consider the "programs and pedagogies they're teaching and promoting" to ensure that LGBT students feel included (Nadal 181). Drawing on Fine and McClelland, Nadal observes that programs such as the federal education campaign, "Abstinence Only Until Marriage," may enforce heteronormativity when interpreted as sexuality being acceptable only in the context of heterosexual marriage, resulting in "heterosexual and cisgender students feeling normalized, while LGBT students learn that they are different or inferior." These perceptions may lead to "heterosexist bullying and harassment that occurs in hallways and classrooms" (Nadal 181).

Nadal recommends a website called *Understanding Prejudice* for its helpful list of "Tips for

Elementary School Teachers" to help them "create a safe environment to promote diversity and

minimize microaggressions" (181). His abbreviated list includes the following:

> 1. Creating an inclusive environment (e.g., ensuring that classroom posters,
>
> pictures, books, music, toys, dolls, and other materials are diverse in terms of
>
> race, ethnicity, gender, age, family situations, disabilities, and so on);
>
> 2. Integrating children's own experiences (e.g., avoiding a 'tourist approach' to
>
> multiculturalism that limits diversity to holidays, special events, and history
>
> months);
>
> 3. Addressing children's questions and concerns (e.g., directly answering
>
> diversity-related questions rather than side-stepping the question or changing the
>
> topic); and
>
> 4. dealing with discriminatory behavior (e.g., explicitly stating that you will not
>
> tolerate racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, or other offensive jokes, slurs, or
>
> behaviors, and explain why. (Nadal 181-182)

The aforementioned recommendations by *Understanding Prejudice* seem like they would be

effective, but I want to address the issue of being too broad. I pose the situation where the school

is located in a very homogenous area of town, where the whole population happens to be

cisgender heterosexuals. The teacher who is to adopt these four principles may inadvertently not

be creating an authentically multicultural environment, since many students may not understand

their discriminatory behavior because everyone's worldview is situated so similarly. In this case,

I think it would be important to introduce the idea of PGPs, even if no one identifies as

transgender or genderqueer because it serves as a constant reminder of the cultural limitations

within that geographic area.

Third, the workplace needs to have better policies to promote a safe environment for the LGBTQ

community. Nadal states, "Workplaces are sites where microaggressions occur frequently. One

of the difficulties here is that many factors may influence the ways in which microaggressions

manifest and the ways in which people react" (183). There two main reasons as to why this could

be the case. "First, because of the power dynamics between employers and employees and

coworkers, it may be difficult to confront microaggressions…Second, because microaggressions

are so subtle and innocuous, it can be difficult for an individual to "prove" that they were

exposed to a microaggression" (183).

Thus, Nadal offers some correctives for employers. He asserts, "Perhaps the most important

thing is to integrate education about microaggressions into multicultural competence training

models in all workplace settings and other institutions (183). Nadal also brings up the issue of

diversity trainings, which often exclude sexual orientation and gender identity. Thus, he offers

the training modules instead.

At work, PGPs should be used on the first day of an employee's job, or at least when coworkers

can get to meet the employee. This should establish a person's PGPs before microaggressions

occur. It is also necessary to periodically ask if that person's PGPs have changed, as sometimes

this may occur due to various circumstances (e.g. sex change operation).

Finally, neighborhoods and communities are an important places to create an LGBTQ-inclusive environment. These can include public spaces (e.g., shopping malls, restaurants, public parks), religious institutions (e.g., mosques, temples, churches), and other organizations (e.g., sports leagues, community centers)" (Nadal 185). Nadal continues, "Many of the microaggressions that occur in these settings may be those types of incidents that are spontaneous and that people do not know how to react to immediately" (185). Thus, this highlights the different circumstances for reacting as compared to that of families and workplaces.

It is therefore necessary to set rules about PGPs as soon as possible. The sooner that a neighborhood or community recognizes its diverse population, the sooner it can change its behavior to accommodate the new community. Furthermore, it increases the respect people in these communities have for each other. If 'misgendering' does occur, Nadal suggests acknowledging the microaggression as soon as possible and then comforting the victim.

Finally, the government can help by promoting active citizenship. Nadal states, "My final set of recommendations is for changes in government and policies" (186). He mentions four main recommendations: emphasizing common ground; describing concrete harms; telling your personal stories; and providing a historical context.

In regards to PGPs, the government should focus on Nadal's third recommendation of telling your personal stories. This way, citizens can connect emotionally to the cause, which makes the use of PGPs an even nobler act of courage.

Future research

Because stigma is hard to measure at any point in time, it is difficult to predict how tolerant people will be of the LGBTQ community at any point in the future. However, I recommend that studies both outside and inside the discipline of English examine what is taking place in the various multimedia channels that are emerging. By focusing on the user experience, both scholars and practitioners may be able to find trends in the changing English language, particularly with respect to gender-neutral pronouns. Therefore, the more awareness and practicability that studies of this nature will receive, the more society will erase the stigma associated with the LGBTQ community. The transgender community, especially, deserves our utmost respect and action at this juncture in time.

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APPENDIX A

College	URL
Carleton	https://apps.carleton.edu/student/orgs/saga/pronouns/
Sarah Lawrence	https://www.sarahlawrence.edu/style-guide/gender.html
Grand Valley State	https://www.gvsu.edu/lgbtrc/classroom-best-practices-182.htm
Middlebury	http://www.middlebury.edu/studentlife/diversity/preferredname/pronouns faq
Williams	http://lgbt.williams.edu/resources/trans-resources/pronouns/
Pomona	http://tlc.pomona.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Transgender-Ally-Training_TLC.pdf
Bates	http://www.bates.edu/oie/files/2015/08/Guide-for-the-Faculty-SPARQ1.pdf
UW—Milwaukee	https://uwm.edu/lgbtrc/support/gender-pronouns/
TAMU—College Station	http://studentlife.tamu.edu/node/365
UT—Knoxville	http://pridecenter.utk.edu/2015/08/27/gender-neutral-pronouns/

UNC—Chapel Hill	http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/gender-inclusive-language/
UW—Madison	https://lgbt.wisc.edu/documents/LGBTCC-Gender_pronoun_guide.pdf
CCSU	https://www.ccsu.edu/lgbt/files/PreferredGenderPronounsForFaculty.pdf
University of Oregon	http://lgbt.uoregon.edu/Portals/0/Appropriate%20Gender%20Pronoun%20Script.pdf
Ohio University	https://www.ohio.edu/lgbt/pronouns.cfm
SJSU	http://www.sjsu.edu/pride/training-workshops/pronouns/
University of Utah	http://lgbt.utah.edu/campus/resources.php
UC—Berekeley	http://geneq.berkeley.edu/lgbt_workshops
UC—Davis	http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/pronouns.html
Penn State University	http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/uploads/listWidget/25137/promising-practices.pdf
UC—San Diego	https://lgbt.ucsd.edu/education/transgender.html
Michigan State	http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/resources/educational-resources/pronouns/pronouns-faq/
University of Vermont	http://www.uvm.edu/~lgbtqa/?Page=transinfo.html&SM=programsmenu.html

MIT	http://web.mit.edu/trans/GenderNeutralPronouns.pdf
Harvard	http://bgltq.fas.harvard.edu/bgltq-terminology
American	https://www.american.edu/ocl/cdi/upload/Pronouns-Explained.pdf
Cornell	http://dos.cornell.edu/lgbt-resource-center/trans-inclusion-cornell/gender-inclusive-pronouns
Tufts	http://ase.tufts.edu/lgbt/workshops/index.asp
Vanderbilt	http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/transvu/trans-educational-resources
Northwestern	http://tlcp.depaultla.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/10/Creating-Trans-Inclusive-Classrooms-and-Group-Spaces_Spring-2014.compressed.pdf