LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency
Pronouns & Gendered Language

NOAA Pride Employee Resource Group
A little about me...

- Lucas Johansen (he/him/his)
- Transgender Man
- NOAA Fisheries Office of Science & Technology
- NOAA Pride Executive Committee Member
**Key definitions**

**Sex**
Physical/biological characteristics.

**Gender**
Socially ascribed attributes, roles, activities, responsibilities, and other expressions.

**Sexual Orientation**
An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.
Terminology: Biological Sex Diversity

Intersex

Intersex is an umbrella term for differences in sex traits or reproductive anatomy. People are born with these differences or develop them at a young age.

1.7% of people are born intersex

For more information visit www.interactadvocates.org
Terminology: Gender Diversity

**Identity**
Your internal knowledge of your gender – for example, your knowledge that you’re a woman, a man, or another gender.

**Expression**
How a person presents their gender on the outside, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice or body characteristics.
Terminology: Gender Diversity

- **Transgender**: gender identity different from gender assigned at birth
- **Cisgender**: gender identity matches gender assigned at birth
- **Non-binary, Genderfluid, Gender Nonconforming, Genderqueer**: do not identify as either man or woman, or identify with multiple genders

- Trans
- Cis
- Enby
- GNC
### Terminology: Sexual Orientation Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gay</th>
<th>Lesbian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender</td>
<td>A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terminology: Sexual Orientation Diversity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bisexual</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pansexual</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree</td>
<td>Someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Terminology: Queer

Queer

A term people use to express fluid gender identities and sexual orientations. Sometimes used interchangeably with "LGBTQ+."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of Diversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transgender / Trans</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas is a transgender man (adj)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas is trans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cisgender / Cis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas is not a cis man (adj)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas is not cis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language of Diversity

- Tranny
- Transexual
- Crossdresser
Language of Diversity

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Choice

Sexual Preference

Gay Lifestyle
Pronouns & Gendered Language
Why is this important?

- Gendered Language
  - Pronouns
  - Titles
  - Groupings

- Assumptions

- Inclusive and respectful
Assumptions → **Harmful message** that people have to look a certain way to demonstrate the gender that they are or are not.

Guessing pronouns can be **offensive and harassing**

Ignoring stated pronouns → **Implies oppressive notion** that intersex, transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming people do not or should not exist.

Using correct personal pronouns → **Conveys respect**

Using correct personal pronouns → **Creates inclusive environment**
Due to their gender identity or expression:
- Fired
- Denied Promotion
- Other workplace mistreatment

Respondents who had a job in past year took steps to avoid mistreatment in the workplace such as:
- hiding or delaying their gender transition
- quitting their job.
46% of LGBTQ workers say they are closeted at work

31% of LGBTQ workers say they have felt unhappy or depressed at work

1-in-5 LGBTQ workers report having been told or had coworkers imply that they should dress in a more feminine or masculine manner

53% of LGBTQ workers report hearing jokes about lesbian or gay people at least once in a while

http://hrc.im/WorkplaceDivided
What can you do?

Creating inclusive space & Respecting others

Educate yourself

Recognize gendered language

Don’t make assumptions

Incorporate non-gendered language into daily life with everyone
## Recognize Gendered Language

### Gendered Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Groupings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He/Him/His</td>
<td>Mr/Ms/Mrs</td>
<td>“Man or Woman” or “guys”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/Her/Hers</td>
<td>Sir/Ma’am</td>
<td>“Ladies and Gentlemen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“S/he” or “He or she”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Non-Gendered Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Groupings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They/Them/Their</td>
<td>Mx</td>
<td>Everyone, y’all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ze/Hir</td>
<td>Teacher/Doctor/Nurse/Professor</td>
<td>People, folks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Colleagues, team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Singular “They”

1375

1500s - 1600s

2014

2015

2017

2019

Merriam-Webster

APA Style
Singular “They”

Examples

• Jane uses the pronouns “they/them/theirs.” They are an employee at NOAA. They wrote that report.

• Jack uses the pronouns “they/them/theirs.” Jack and I have been friends for a long time. I met them when we worked together at NOAA. Those books you borrowed were originally theirs.

• Instead of saying “Each of you should enjoy his or her vacation”, say “Each of you should enjoy their vacation”.
Recognize Gendered Language

Gendered Language → Non-Gendered Language

Fisherman → Fisher or Angler
Stewardess/Steward → Flight Attendant
Waitress/Waiter → Server
Husband/Wife → Spouse or Partner
Hostess → Host
Mailman → Mail Carrier
What Can We Do?

- Is the use of a pronoun or title necessary?
- If someone tells you their personal pronouns, use them!  
- Normalize sharing your pronouns -
  
  Give your pronouns when introducing yourself if comfortable doing so
  
  - My name is Lucas, I use he/him pronouns
  - My name is Lucas, I use he/him or they/them pronouns

Add pronouns to your email signature and business cards

  - Sam Smith (They/Them/Theirs)
  - Lucas Johansen
    Pronouns: He-Him-His (Why is this important?)
How To Ask Pronouns?

Always remember to start with your own pronouns!

**TO INDIVIDUALS/SMALL GROUPS**

“Hi, I’m Lucas, and I use he/him pronouns. How should I refer to you?”

**IN MEETINGS/LARGE GROUPS**

“Before we begin, we’d like to go around and share our names and personal pronouns for those who would like to. I’m Lucas and I use he/him pronouns <look to next person>.”

*Do not call out any individual in a group setting*
What if I mess up someone’s’s pronouns?

Make the correction

Don’t make a big deal out of it

Jane is up next, it is her turn to speak.

I use they/them pronouns.

Sorry, Jane is up next. It is their turn to speak.

*KEEP TRYING*
What Can We do?

Be an example and educate others!

- Resource about personal pronouns:
  MyPronouns.org

- Resource about transgender/non-binary/genderqueer/other people:
  Transequality.org
Things to Remember

Avoid making assumptions about gender and sexuality

Normalize sharing pronouns

Remove gendered language and use non-gendered language
Thank you!

Lucas Johansen
Lucas.Johansen@noaa.gov

NOAA Pride
NOAAPrideExCom@noaa.gov