Trans Inclusion for Libraries

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Pronouns: he/him or they/them
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Introductions: Why are you here?
Perspective and Limitations
Workshop Goals

- Discuss how trans and gender variant identities intersect with library work
- Ask questions without judgment
- Provide resources for further learning
- Enable continued discussion
Do

- Respect names, pronouns, labels
- Use gender inclusive language
- Eliminate forced outing
- Keep learning!

Do not

- Out people
- Make assumptions about gender
- Demand information
- Decide you know everything
Resource:
Trans Allyship Workbook
“Diversity is a number; inclusion is a process; equity is an outcome.”

-Barbara Chow
Who are the trans and gender variant people in your library?
Patrons

- Children
- Student workers
- Housekeepers
- Librarians
- Faculty
- Board members
- Volunteers
- Guests
- Teens

Employees

- Security
- Presenters
- Students
- Staff
- Adults
Who are the trans and gender variant people not in your library?
Patrons

- Students
- Adults
- Children
- Volunteers
- Staff

Employees

- Board members
- Faculty
- Students
- Adults
- Volunteers
- Staff

Support Staff

- Security
- Housekeepers
- Librarians
- Volunteers
- Student workers
- Housekeepers
- Librarians

Other Categories

- Presenters
- Guests
- Teens
“Educating yourself is allyship.” - Erin White
Learning language: What to look for

- Authority
- Currency
- Accuracy
- Relevance
Cisgender

Normal. A term that is used as derogatory by the LGBT community who thinks everyone who is normal is the antichrist. People who like their genitalia how it came

Jacob is cisgender, he was born with a penis and he still has one.

#sjw #transgender

by Larry-cable guy September 08, 2016
CISGENDER

(adj) 

Someone who is not transgender. Cisgender people identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. It is often shortened to cis, which comes from the Latin prefix meaning “on the same side of.” Cisgender should be used instead of inaccurate terms like ‘bio/logical,’ ‘genetic,’ ‘natal,’ ‘real,’ or ‘born’ when referring to people’s genders. e.g. Brenda, a cisgender person, never witnessed how her work treated transgender people and was surprised to hear her trans coworker’s stories.

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Resource:
The Trans Language Primer
Self-identification

- Respect what individuals call themselves
- Do not assign terms to people without their consent
- Identities may change over time
- Indigenous genders: Tied to culture and/or location
Terms

- Trans and gender variant
- Out
- Gender-inclusive
- Nonbinary
- Misgender
- Others?
Restrooms

- All-gender restrooms (for patrons and employees)
- Wastebaskets in all stalls
- Inclusive directions
“Where is the restroom?”
Restroom signage
Pronoun sharing must be...

1. **Equitable** (not only if you think there are trans or gender variant people present)

2. **Open-ended** (not multiple choice)

3. **Optional** (never explicitly or implicitly require someone to share their pronouns)
Sharing your own pronouns lets people know that they can share theirs if they want or need to.
Pronoun practice

“I’m Stephen, the Access & Outreach Services Librarian. I use he/him or they/them pronouns.”

“My pronouns are he/him or they/them.”

“Please use he/him or they/them pronouns for me.”

“I’m Stephen, the Access & Outreach Services Librarian.”
Resource:
https://www.mypronouns.org
If you misgender a person

- Apologize, briefly
- Correct yourself
- Move on
- Improve
"Person A misgendered Person B. What should I do?"

Are you sure it was a mistake?

- No. They may use a variety of pronouns or be closeted to Person A, or I may be the one misgendering them.
  - I don’t know.
    - Say nothing and check in with Person B in private, then do what they ask in future.
  - Yes. Person B has told me what name and pronouns they use in every situation.
    - Does Person B want you to correct others on their behalf?
      - No. I have offered and they say that they will feel uncomfortable, want to handle it themselves, or otherwise prefer that I not say anything.
        - Say nothing.
      - Yes. They have explicitly asked me to correct people who misgender them in situations like this.
        - Politely correct person A in the manner requested by Person B.
Personal information

- What you are asking?
- Why are you asking?
- Who sees the information?
- How will the information be used?
- Is the question optional?
Example: Job application

Name of use __________________________
Legal name __________________________

“Name of use” is what you would like people to call you. This is what the search committee will see. Your legal name will be seen only by HR; it will be used for your background check if necessary.

Pronouns (optional) _________________

Gender identity (optional) ______________
Legal gender (optional) _________________

This information will be anonymized and sent to the EEOC. It will not be seen by anyone on the search committee.
Example: Event registration

Name of use ________________________
Legal name _________________________
“Name of use” is what you would like printed on your nametag. Your legal name will be used only for billing.

Pronouns (optional) ________________________
If you choose to enter pronouns, they will be printed on your nametag.
Example: Patron application

Name of use ________________________

“Name of use” is what you would like people to call you; it will be the name on your library account. It does not need to match your legal name.
ASK GENDER AND LEGAL NAME ONLY IF ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. ALWAYS EXPLAIN WHY YOU ARE ASKING AND WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION.
Gender-inclusive language does two things:
1. Does not assume gender
2. Includes nonbinary people
“That woman needs a book renewed.”

“Boys, go with the children’s librarian; girls, come with me.”

“The selected candidate will start when he or she is available.”

“Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the library.”

“The man over there has a reference question.”
Possible solutions

“That patron needs a book renewed.”

“Group A, go with the children’s librarian; Group B, come with me.”

“The selected candidate will start when they are available.”

“Everyone, welcome to the library.”

“The person in the striped shirt has a reference question.”
Resource:
The Radical Copyeditor’s Style Guide for Writing About Transgender People
Collection Development

- Resources by and about people of different genders
- Intersectionality!
- Reviews by trans and gender variant people
- Incorporate into non-LGBTQ+ displays
Additional topics

- LIS schools
- Hold shelves
- Library instruction
- Interlibrary loan
- Research support
- Self checkout machines
- Conference locations
- Space reservations
- Cataloging
- Supporting coworkers
- Complaints
- Prefixes
- Nondiscrimination statements
- Dress codes
- Others?
Questions?

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Conclusion: What will you do?
Suggested readings

- *Gender Diversity and Transgender Inclusivity in Libraries* (presentation slides by Kalani Adolpho, 2018)
- *Improve your Customer Service Skills: Go Gender Neutral!* (post by Micah Kehrein, 2016)
- *Reimagining Transgender “Inclusion” for Libraries* and *Transgender Inclusion for Libraries Resources* (webinar and readings by Sunny Kim, Bean Yogi, Micah Kehrein, and Reed Garber-Pearson, 2018)
- *Gender-neutral Bathrooms in Libraries* (pamphlet by Jane Sandberg, 2014)