

PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUNS: A HE/HE/HE PERSPECTIVE

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With greater acceptance and support on campus today for the diverse (and sometimes ambiguous) ways that gender may be defined and expressed, the practice of identifying Preferred Gender Pronouns (PGP's) has become increasingly popular at colleges and universities across the country. It is not uncommon to see student and faculty email signatures that include curious-looking word chains such as, "he/him/his," "she/her/hers," "they/their/theirs," or even "ze/zir/zirs."¹ While this is a serious and important sociocultural issue that warrants further discussion, I will leave that task to the true scholars amongst us. As for me, a lifelong punster and logophile, I can not resist the temptation to play around with the way PGP's *sound* when read aloud. This experimentation led me to create a list of celebrities, characters, and miscellaneous classifications of people, paired with the PGP's that would be "appropriate" for them. With apologies to any readers who find this work to be objectionable, I wish to state my conviction that a deep respect for the subject matter and the ability to engage in related wordplay can easily co-exist. In fact, I believe, in the words of author G.K. Chesterton, that, "Angels fly because they take themselves lightly."

Notes

- ¹. Amongst many options available, these are the most frequently used gender-neutral pronouns. (see Table 1)

Table 1.

Getting to Know Gender-Neutral Pronouns!

Traditional Masculine	He laughed	I called him	His eyes gleam	That is his	He likes himself
Traditional Feminine	She laughed	I called her	Her eyes gleam	That is hers	She likes herself
Gender Neutral (Singular They)	They laughed	I called them	Their eyes gleam	That is theirs	They like themselves
Gender Neutral (Ze)	Ze laughed (pronounced: "zee" as in the letter "z")	I called hir (pronounced: "here")	Hir eyes gleam (pronounced: "here")	That is hirs (pronounced: "here's")	Ze likes hirsself (pronounced: "here-self")

Source: Nordlinger, Jay. "What Are Your Pronouns? The Latest Craze on Campus." National Review, no. 20, 2015, p. 26.

Marcel Marceau
(my/me)

Paris Hilton
(she/she)

Female Lead in La Boheme or RENT
(me/me)

Mrs. Goldberg
(you/who)

Southern Manure Farmer
(she/it)

Subtraction Expert
(mine/us)

Chocolate Lover
(her/she)

Bitsy's Predecessor
(its/he)

Political Candidate
(who/we)

Poison Ivy Sufferer
(it/she)

Asthma Sufferer
(we/ze)

French Yes-Man
(we/we)

Spanish "Walk the Dog" Champion
(yo/yo)

The Fifth Little Piggie
(we/we/we)
All the way home!

Works Cited

Leff, Lisa - Associated, Press. 'Preferred' Pronouns Gain Traction at US Colleges.

AP Top News Package, Associated Press DBA Press Association, 11/30/2013.

Nordlinger, Jay. "What Are Your Pronouns? The Latest Craze on Campus."

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