Beyond Words: A Guide to Inclusive Language

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Here's a truth: Language is powerful.

Language has such an impact on human beings that it can actually change our brains. (It's true.)

It's a way to honor our differences, forge authentic conversations, and continue to cultivate diversity. Inclusive language is not about politics; it's about people. We want to make sure more communities are seen, heard, respected, and represented in the words we choose.

Starting with this guide, we can change the way we think and communicate, inside our work and beyond — because being even a modicum more conscious of the way we use words can have a meaningful impact.

Perceptions
are never fixed and context matters.

Language is an ever–evolving medium.

New phrases enter the lexicon; others become outdated. The context of language matters. The tone matters. The speaker matters.

And all of these things triangulate to make people feel different ways. Language also has origins, and they're not always commonly known. This guide is a place to help us stay up to date and keep learning.

Two key themes throughout this guide.

#1 Follow how a person identifies themselves first and foremost

If it's relevant to the conversation and possible to respectfully ask someone how they identify, do that first. Don't rely on assumptions or things you've heard about a community. Use the terms the individual you're talking to or talking about prefers you to use. If it's not possible to ask, follow the recommendations in the guide and be willing to make changes if asked.

#2 Use person–first language, unless told otherwise

Person-first language emphasizes people as individuals over any other attributes about them including a disability, race, religion, etc. It's important to use it **unless a person identifies themselves differently**, that should always take priority. Some people feel an attribute is core to their identity and prefer that. Examples include:

- 'People with disabilities' (person -first) not 'disabled people'
- 'A person with an addiction' (person -first) not 'an addict' or 'someone suffering from addiction'

Why does
inclusive language matter at Code and Theory?

Our company spans the globe, representing countless cultures, experiences, preferences, intersections, and identities.

Becoming more inclusive across the agency starts with the highest ranks of leadership and goes all the way down to the words we put on a page.

The way we write and communicate should feel true to our values. Consider this guide a constant work in progress. It's open to contributions, never finished, and always evolving.

We have a responsibility.

We're frequently tasked with being concise. But in that effort, we cannot take shortcuts or use language that is harmful.

We need to push ourselves against character limits, SEO needs, design mandates, and more to prioritize inclusion in our work.

What we are …

Trying to do

- Encourage language that honors inclusion
- Create a place to learn together and stay in the know
- Cultivate an environment where it's OK to ask questions
- Use language that leaves all people feeling included and celebrated
- Write from a place that embraces differences as an asset
- Create content that is sensitive to the history and cultures of all people
- Avoid stereotypes in our choice of words and phrases
- Honor the fluidity of identity

Not doing

- Shaming! No one gets everything right all time; this is about language and learning
- Policing people's language
- Defining what is acceptable from a legal or HR perspective*
- Creating hard and fast rules for the way we think and speak
- Speaking for individuals or communities or ignoring their preferences
- Assuming communities all share the same set of experiences
- Treating any communities as 'other' or not the default
- Setting rules in stone

*Although, we'd like to think that the guidance given here will help you avoid some issues

Getting real: Categories of inclusion

Topics we'll cover

Under each category, you'll find an introduction, advertising examples, language to adopt and avoid, and where future opportunities for inclusion lie.

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Ability and disability	Addiction	Age	Appearance	Gender	Nationality and ethnicity
7	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
Race	Religion	Sexuality	Socioeconomic status	Words to walk away from	Glossary

1

Introduction:
Ability
and disability

One in four Americans lives with a disability, according to the CDC. That's 61 million people.

Each one of those people has their own preference for referring to their disability, which might be physical, visual, audial, mental, visible, invisible, intellectual, learning, etc. And each of those has a particular language.

This guide advocates for person-first language ("person with a disability"), while some may argue for identity-first language ("disabled person"). But the best course of action is always to let the individual you are referring to decide what type of language they prefer.

When speaking about ability and disability:

Adopt

- Person-centered language — 'person living with schizophrenia,' not identity-centered language, like 'schizophrenic'
- 'People with disabilities' instead of 'disabled people'
- Whatever the individual person prefers to use, follow their lead (e.g., some prefer 'autistic' rather than 'person with autism')
- It's OK to acknowledge disabilities — pretending they don't exist is unnecessary and unhelpful

Avoid

- 'Normal' to categorize people without a disability
- Using broad, dated terms (e.g., 'handicapped')
- Terms that emphasize or stigmatize limitations (e.g., 'wheelchair-bound' or 'confined to a wheelchair')
- Identifying people as their support (e.g., 'wheely' for someone who uses a wheelchair)
- Presumptive terms that define a person's experience with their condition (e.g., 'struggling with bipolar disorder, battling depression')
- Assuming you can always see disabilities (it's none of your business)

Target, 2020

Photo: Facebook/Ollie's World

abc
#AMERICASTRONG

Virgin Mobile, 2021

Advertising examples
Ability and disability

26% of Americans live with a disability, but they are seen in only 1% of prime time TV ads (CDC+Nielsen).

- '[People with disabilities] make up the biggest minority group in the world, but they are the most underrepresented in advertising.' (Campaign)
- When including people with a range of abilities in advertising content:
  - Avoid tokenism
  - Eliminate savior relationships
  - Promote parity between those with differing abilities (i.e., you could switch casting roles without altering the content meaning)
  - Don't be self-congratulatory — the disability community has been waiting to be included for decades
- Follow the lead of creators, advocates, and members of the community:
  - Molly Burke
  - lettereleven

Opportunities
Ability and disability
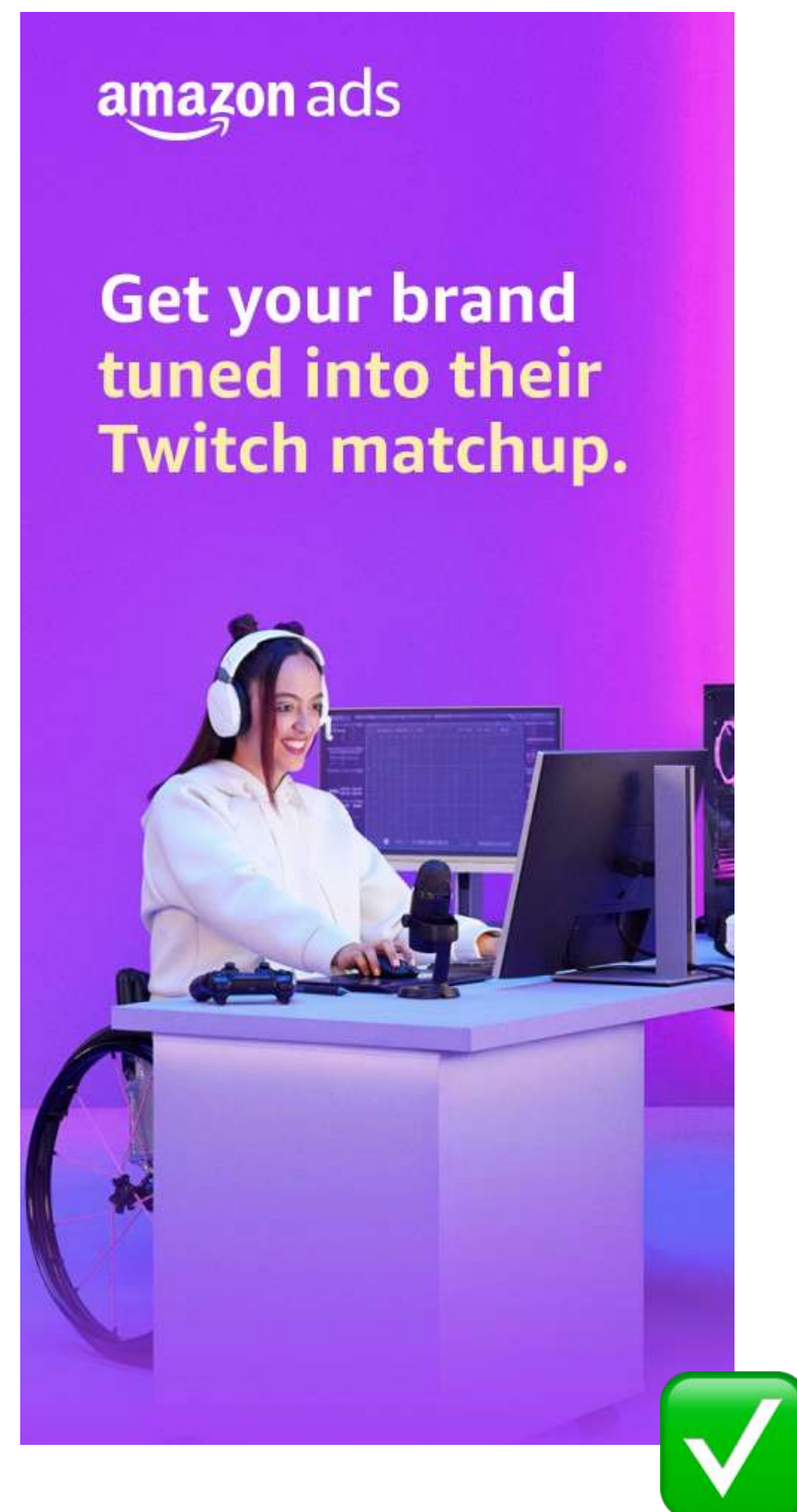
Code and Theory goals

- Increase representation of people with differing abilities in creative content, casting, and concepting
- Include people with a range of abilities in our work in ways that do not depend on their physical conditions
- Create opportunities for people with disabilities to see themselves represented in the brand outputs we create

Ableist language that's got to go

Drop this …	Why?!	Way better …
Blind spot	Creates the false idea that people who are blind lack knowledge or understanding.	Gaps in the data, or 'missing piece,' unconscious bias
Tone-deaf	Tone-deafness is a real medical condition called congenital amusia, which is a lifelong impairment of music perception.	Missing the mark
Crazy/ insane/insanity	Using these terms to refer to people stigmatizes mental health issues and/or psychiatric disabilities.	Wild, confusing, unpredictable, impulsive, reckless, fearless, out of control, buckwild, chaotic
Lame	Equates people with physical or mobility disabilities with negativity. It's also not an acceptable term to call someone with disabilities.	Uncool, boring, uninteresting, monotonous, out of style, dull
Delusional	Conflates a term that should refer to a symptom of mental illness with someone who is out of touch.	Out of touch, totally disconnected, unrealistic expectations, pie-in-the-sky fantasies

Find more terms to avoid <u>here</u>.

2

Introduction:
Addiction

Approximately 20 million people live with an addiction to at least one substance.

Addiction, or substance use disorder (SUD), is a common, chronic, and treatable health problem. What sets addiction apart from other illnesses is the stigmas associated with it. Substance use Disorder is often seen as a moral failing, and people managing an addiction are often treated like they're at fault for their disease. That stigma leads to shame and isolation, which can prevent a person from seeking help.

The language we use to talk about these issues can reinforce those stigmas, even if we don't mean any harm.

What to know
Addiction

Substance use disorder is common. Chances are, you know someone who has experience with addiction.

- Approximately 21 million people live with an addiction to at least one substance (Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). That means, it's very likely that your life or the lives of people close to you have been affected by substance use disorder
- An estimated 140,000 people (approximately 97,000 men and 43,000 women) die from alcohol-related causes each year (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2023)
- In 2021, over 106,000 people died from drug overdoses, including illegal drugs and prescription opioids (NIDA)

What to know
Addiction

Addiction isn't limited to tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Often referred to as "behavioral" or "process" addictions, a person can receive a calming or euphoric effect from an action rather than a substance. These behavioral addictions can hinge on activities like gambling, shopping, sex, eating, exercising, and more.

Behavioral addictions can be just as unmanageable and destructive as SUD, causing immense physical, emotional, or financial harm.

What to know
Addiction

Naming products after crack or incorporating the term in copy is especially egregious given how the crack cocaine epidemic of the '80s-90s disproportionately harmed and continues to harm Black communities:

- Murder rates among Black men aged 15-24 doubled

- The Reagan administration's drug war policies fostered mass incarceration and harsh federal prison terms for drug-based offenders, including low-level dealers and non-violent offenders, that disproportionately targeted Black people

- The National Bureau of Economic Research: "Murder and suicide rates among young Black males remain elevated years after crack cocaine-related violence swept America's cities, likely because of the increase in guns during the crack era"

When speaking about addiction:

Adopt

- Substance use disorder (SUD), alcohol use disorder
- "In recovery" when referring to the people undergoing treatment
- "Use" when referring to illegal drugs and "misuse" when referring to prescription drugs, and "in active use" when the person with SUD is using drugs or alcohol

Avoid

- "Addict," "junkie," "crackhead," etc. In addition to being cruel and insensitive, these terms stigmatize the person experiencing addiction rather than SUD
- "Habit" — it makes addiction sound like a choice rather than a disease
- "Clean" to reference drug test results or a person's recovery. Referring to SUD in terms of "clean" and "dirty" reinforces existing stigmas
- Using "addicted," "junkie," and associated terms to describe food, snacks, beauty products, etc. It trivializes SUD. It's in bad taste to name a product line "Addict," like Dior did for this perfume
- Making the blanket assumption that everyone consumes alcohol or asking "why?" if someone tells you that they don't drink

Opportunities
Addiction

Code and Theory goals

- Use our outputs to help expand the way people understand addiction and its impact
- Avoid content that leverages the theme of addiction unnecessarily
- When creating content about addiction:
  - Practice sensitivity and consider the impact on those managing addiction
  - Include important context of addiction's impact on communities
  - Examine content for common stereotypes that are harmful to marginalized communities
  - Look for opportunities to elevate the voices of those impacted by addiction and highlight stories of recovery

3

Introduction:
Age

People aged 50 and over are seven times more likely than younger adults to be portrayed negatively in online media images.*

Ageism is prejudice based on age. It often refers to a tendency to imply that older generations are weak or inept, but it can also apply to younger people and the biases we hold against them.

When speaking about age:

Adopt

Older Generation

- Older people/persons
- An elder (imbues a sense of respect and wisdom that develops over time)
- Aging adult
- Mature
- Wise
- Seasoned
- Experienced

Younger Generation

- Confident
- Learning
- Ambitious
- Aware

Avoid

Older Generation

- Senile (It's ableist)
- Old person (According to the World Health Organization, "old" is stigmatizing and connotes lower competency)
- Over the hill (Reinforces stereotypes of older people being past their prime)
- Elderly ("Terms like elderly ... are not preferred because they are othering" - American Psychological Association)

Younger Generation

- Entitled
- Lazy
- Inexperienced
- Juvenile

Advertising examples

Age

The Disrupt Aging® Collection

To remedy the lack of positive imagery used in creative work, Getty and AARP collaborated on The Disrupt Aging® Collection, a set of thousands of stock images marketers can use to incorporate adults over 50 in more authentic ways.

Airbnb 'Bonnie & Clyde'

In a category that typically focuses on young people, this Airbnb ad subverts the usual and features a fresh portrayal of an older couple having fun and living life on vacation.

Progressive 'Dr. Rick'

Progressive's 'Dr. Rick' campaign pokes fun at behaviors anyone can do without specifying anyone's age.

Opportunities
Age

Code and Theory goals

- Expand representation of people of different ages in creative content
  - Ask ourselves if the younger audiences are actually the aspirational ones
  - With casting, consider whether an age range is actually necessary and if the role can be explored without age as a factor
  - Include older people in ways that don't hinge on their maturity or are dominated only by greying hair
- Create an opportunity for people of older ages to see themselves accurately represented in our brand outputs
- Recognize and understand the intersections that older people exist in and how that may impact their identity, from race to sexuality and gender

4

Introduction:
Appearance

Just one in nine (11%) Americans surveyed in a YouGov image study said that fashion companies have had a positive impact on the perception of body image.

But humans come in all shapes, sizes, and colors — and we all have the right to feel comfortable and accepted in our bodies.

Even with the uptick in body diversity in media, the change needed to better reflect our reality is staggering.

What to know Appearance

Appearance terms:

Body positivity

is a social movement and mindset focused on the positive perception of all bodies, regardless of size, shape, skin tone, gender, and physical abilities. E.g.,

'My body is beautiful no matter what.'

Note: This movement, while well-intended, has been scrutinized for 'toxic positivity' and a lack of inclusion for trans people or those who seek to make changes to their bodies. It can also run the risk of telling people how they should feel about their own bodies.

Body acceptance

acknowledges that loving your body or feeling beautiful every minute of every day may not be realistic. Instead, it promotes treating and viewing your body (and insecurities) with respect and care and finding peace with your body without needing to change it. E.g.,

"I accept and respect my body as it is."

Body neutrality

is a philosophy that acknowledges your body is only one part of who you are and emphasizes that bodies are neither good nor bad. E.g.,

"My happiness and sense of self are not tied to my size, shape, or appearance."

These mentalities and movements are not mutually exclusive:

You can love your body (body positivity), accept, and respect it (body acceptance) and acknowledge that your appearance does not dictate your self-worth (body neutrality) simultaneously.

The Origins
of Body
Movements

Johnnie **Tillmon**
(American Activist)

Today, cultural body autonomy movements tend to center white women and identity. However, many of these concepts and movements were started by activists of color to help marginalized bodies be seen as human.

"I'm a woman. I'm a Black woman. I'm a poor woman. I'm a fat woman. I'm a middle-aged woman. In this country, if you're any one of those things you count less as a human being." (1972)

What to know
Appearance

Shame and humiliation are 'social' emotions tied to societal expectations and opinions of others. People are not born thinking their body is right or wrong. This perception is taught, learned, and reinforced by our culture.

- **Body-shaming** includes comments, criticisms, or jokes about a person's body shape, size, or other physical characteristics
- **Fat-shaming or size-shaming** are forms of body-shaming that involve criticizing or harassing a person about their weight, body type, and/or eating or exercise habits
  - Body-shaming or fat-shaming can occur even if a comment was intended as a compliment, e.g., saying 'You look so great ever since you lost weight!' can imply that this person only 'looks great' when their body is a certain size or shape
- In creative work, **think about who we describe as 'fearless,' 'confident,' or 'brave'** based on their appearance

When speaking about appearance:

Adopt

- While phrases like 'plus-sized,' 'curvy,' or 'extended-sized' may help users find the right product, we should be thoughtful in how we use these terms when describing people's bodies

- Inclusive-minded, positive phrases, like 'Fashion that fits your body,' as opposed to 'Fashion that hides your flaws'

- Before describing people's bodies, ask: do we need to 'label' bodies at all?

Avoid

- Referring to any particular body type as 'real' or 'ideal' vs. another

- Phrases that imply that people's bodies need to change, e.g., 'Get beach-body ready,' 'Shed your winter body,' 'Cut your gut,' etc.

- Terms like 'thick,' 'thin,' 'man-boobs,' 'dad-bod,' 'mom-bod,' 'hot-bod,' 'pandemic-bod,' etc.

- 'Confident' or 'brave,' in reference to how a person's body looks

- "Different," "atypical," or "unusual" to describe a person's appearance

- Tokenizing body types or being self-congratulatory for including different types of bodies in campaigns
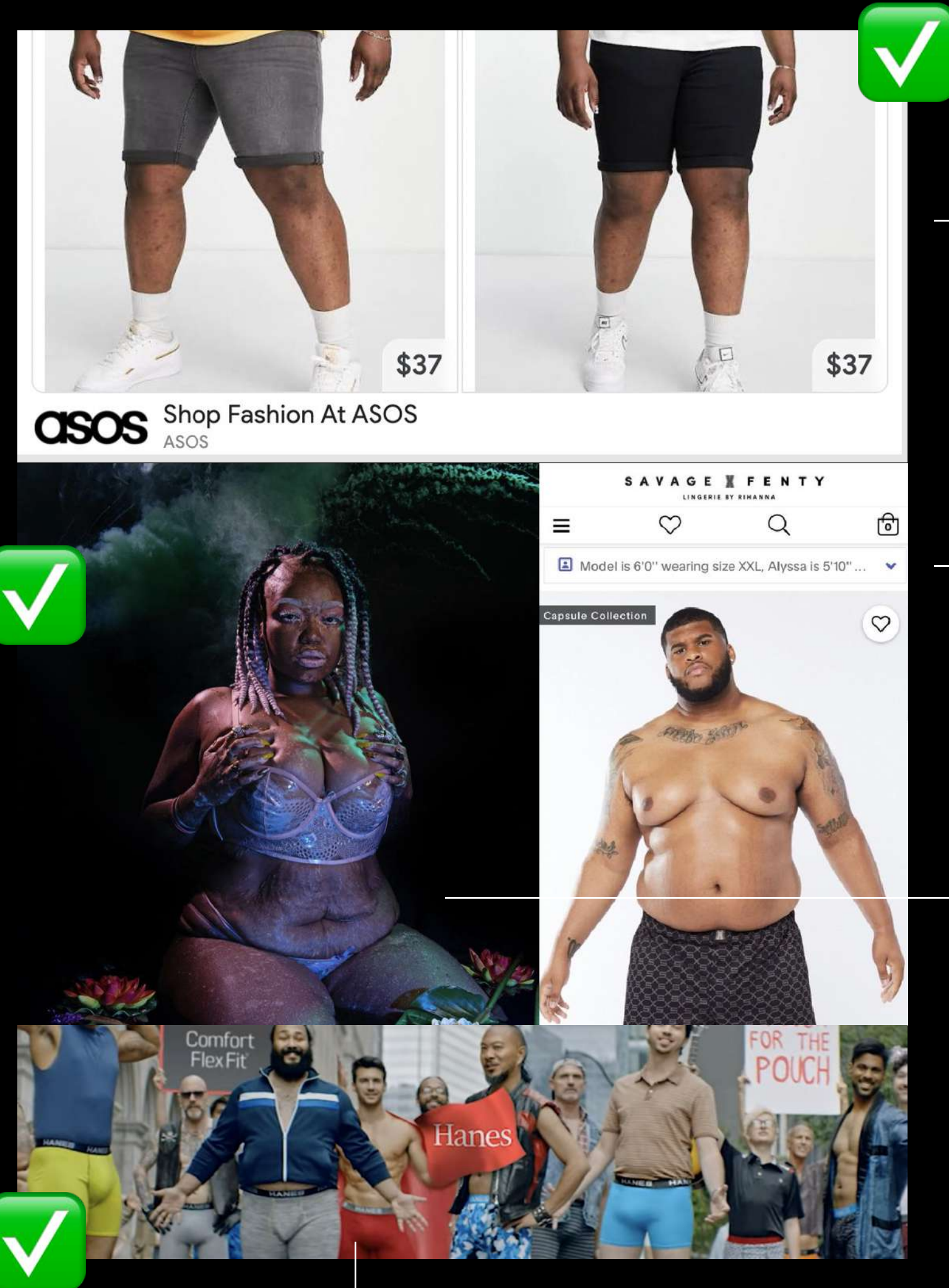
ASOS

SAVAGE X FENTY

@boitumelo_spotted

Hanes

Advertising examples
Appearance

- ASOS offers a range of sizes, shown on models that reflect a variety of body types. Note how this ASOS ad says 'shop fashion' instead of 'shop plus-sized fashion'

- This 2022 Feel Your Power campaign from Fitbit respectfully depicts people of diverse body types as athletes

- Savage x Fenty ambassador @boitumelo_spotted is a body-positive model who lives with vitiligo. This brand also features size-inclusive models and notes their height and item size so that users can get a better sense of the fit of their products

- Hanes' Every Bod Is Happy in Hanes campaign features a variety of male body types, but it still applies labels, which can be problematic

Opportunities
Body inclusion

Code and Theory goals

- Represent people with a range of body types but not because of a focus on their body type
- Be intentional about casting specs and expand opportunities for people of all shapes and sizes to see themselves represented in the brand content we create
- Avoid stigmatizing language, phrases, or imagery that reinforce stereotypes about people's physical appearance — even if it is intended to be funny or complimentary
- Rethink what society sees as 'aspirational' or 'ideal' body types
- Educate our clients and partners on the importance of showing an inclusive range of body types, from a business and a social-awareness POV

5

Introduction:
Gender

An estimated 11% of LGBTQ+ adults in the U.S.—approximately 1.2 million people—identify as nonbinary.

Gender exists beyond the binary; it's a spectrum. It's time our language starts reflecting that.

There are endless ways that a person can identify — from transgender to agender and more. Speaking about gender inclusion doesn't just include the ways we identify — it also includes the ways those groups are perceived.

Let's dive into it.

Some things you might need to know about gender:

1

Pronouns

You should always refer to someone using the pronouns they request. If you don't know them, you should ask. This includes everyone, not just those you suspect to be nonbinary.

2

It's innate

Gender is an innate part of identity, not a choice they've made. Saying that someone 'changed genders' is not right. Instead, say that they "transitioned.'

3

It's fluid

Gender is fluid, not fixed. A person's identity and gender can evolve throughout their life. It is never set in stone.

4

Expression ≠ identity

The way that someone presents their gender to others is not always the way they identify.

5

It's not biological sex

Gender and sex are not the same.

Tip: Introducing yourself with your pronouns (or including them in your email signature, etc.) helps others ensure they refer to you correctly and vice versa.

What to know
Gender

Gender–neutral language has always existed.

- According to MIT, the first recorded use of 'they' as a gender neutral pronoun dates back to a 14th century poem called 'William the Werewolf'
- Prominent and respected authors, like Shakespeare, Chaucer, Jane Austen, etc., used 'they' as a gender-neutral pronoun
- According to the Boston Globe, many non-Western and Indigenous communities speak languages that are inherently gender-neutral, including Tagalog and Persian
- From the 17th to the 20th century, medical texts and newspapers used various gender neutral pronouns to describe people they did not know the gender of or who were nonbinary
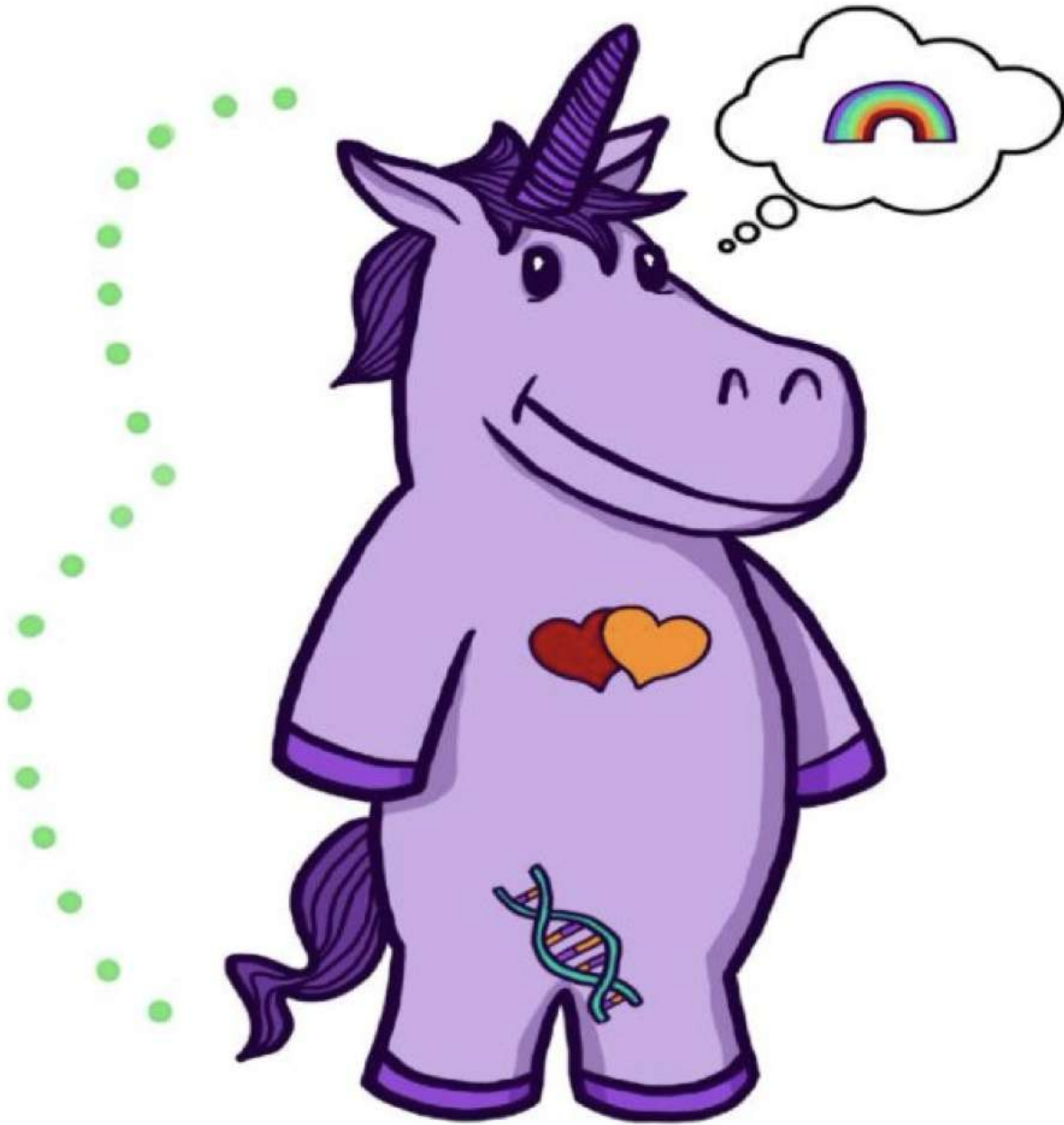
When speaking about gender:

Adopt

- Terms that don't include gendered words, e.g., 'folks,' 'y'all,' 'team,' 'crew,' 'everyone,' 'party people,' etc. rather than 'guys,' 'ladies and gentlemen,' or other terms that assume gender
    - 'Hey, theydies and gentlethems!' works too
- A gender-inclusive term to talk about different people — especially if you don't know someone's pronouns, e.g., use 'their' instead of 'his/her'

Avoid

- Assigning gender to milestones or events in a person's life. A sentence like 'women give birth to babies all the time' alienates people like trans men and nonbinary people who can also give birth
- Language that perpetuates gender stereotypes
- Language that discriminates against any gender

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources

🌈 Gender Identity

→ Female/Woman/Girl
→ Male/Man/Boy
→ Other Gender(s)

🟢 Gender Expression

→ Feminine
→ Masculine
→ Other

🧬 Sex Assigned at Birth

Female   Male   Other/Intersex
🟠   🟢   🟣

🧡 Physically Attracted to

→ Women
→ Men
→ Other Gender(s)

❤️ Emotionally Attracted to

→ Women
→ Men
→ Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore
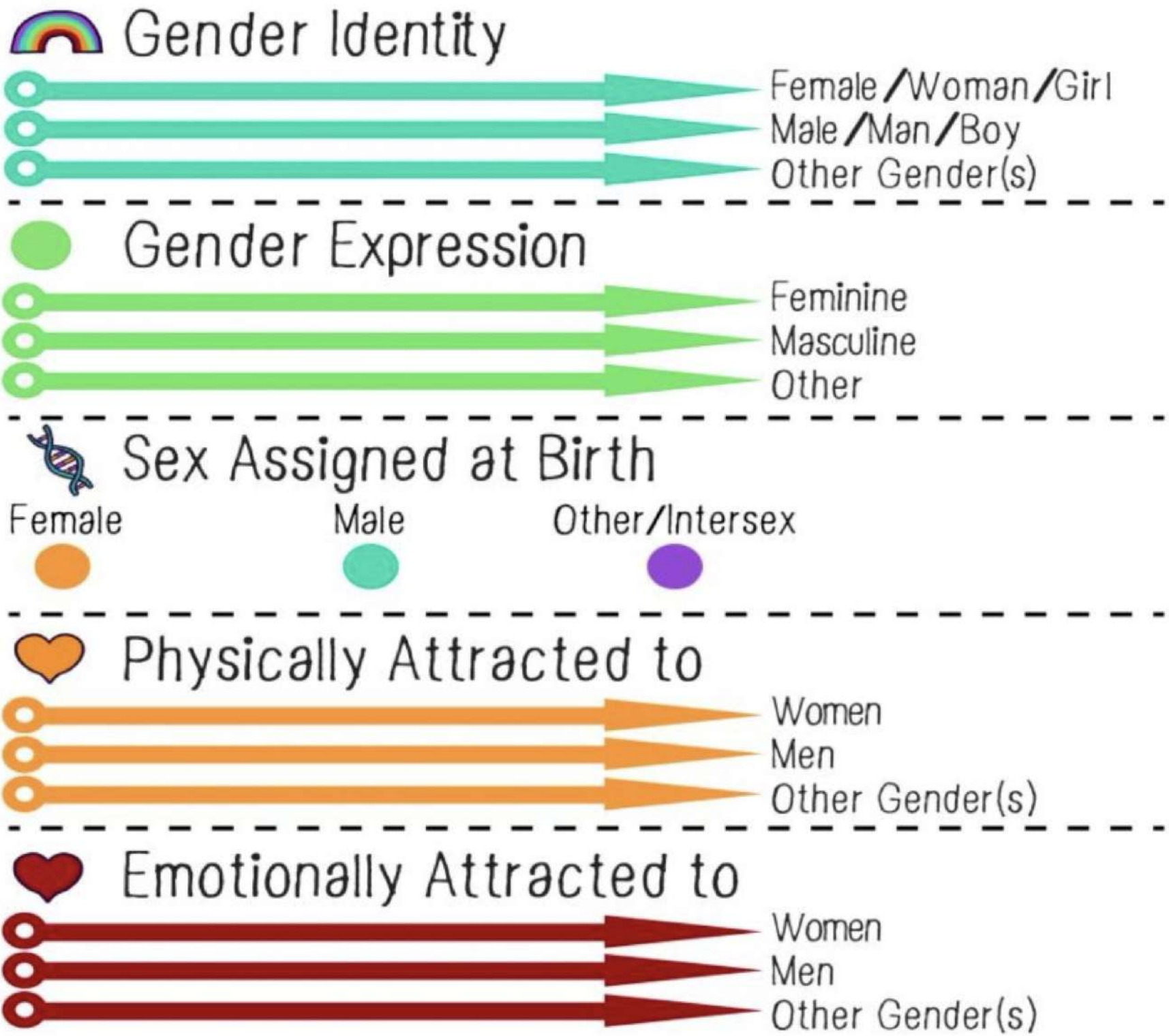
Gender Unicorn Definitions

Gender Identity: *How I identify*.
One's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or another gender(s). For transgender people, their own internal sense of gender identity and their sex assigned at birth are not the same.

Gender Expression/Presentation: *How I look and express myself*.
The physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. Most transgender people seek to make their gender expression (how they look) match their gender identity (who they are), rather than their sex assigned at birth.
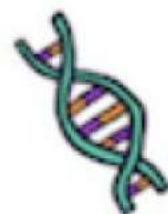
Sex Assigned at Birth: *The sex classification that I was assigned at birth*.
The assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes. This is usually decided at birth or in utero, and is usually based on genitalia.

Sexually Attracted To: *Whom I am sexually attracted to*.
The group of people or genders to which a person can become sexually attracted to, if at all.

Romantically/Emotionally Attracted To: *Whom I am romantically/emotionally attracted to*.
The group of people or genders to which a person can become romantically, emotionally, or spiritually attracted to, if at all.

_____

Examples of Genders: We included "other genders" to indicate the many genders that other people might identify as, express themselves as, and be attracted to. Examples of these genders include: Agender, Bigender, Genderfluid, Genderqueer, Transgender, Non-binary, Gender Non-Conforming and Two-Spirit.

Gender
Inclusion

## **Alok** Vaid-Menon

@alokvmenon

"Gender-neutral language isn't about replacing an old norm with a new one.

People have the right to self-determine their gender whether it be a man, woman, or a nonbinary gender. The goal of gender-neutral language is to get rid of gender normativity, not everyone's gender... This is actually the purpose of language — to give meaning to concepts as they evolve."
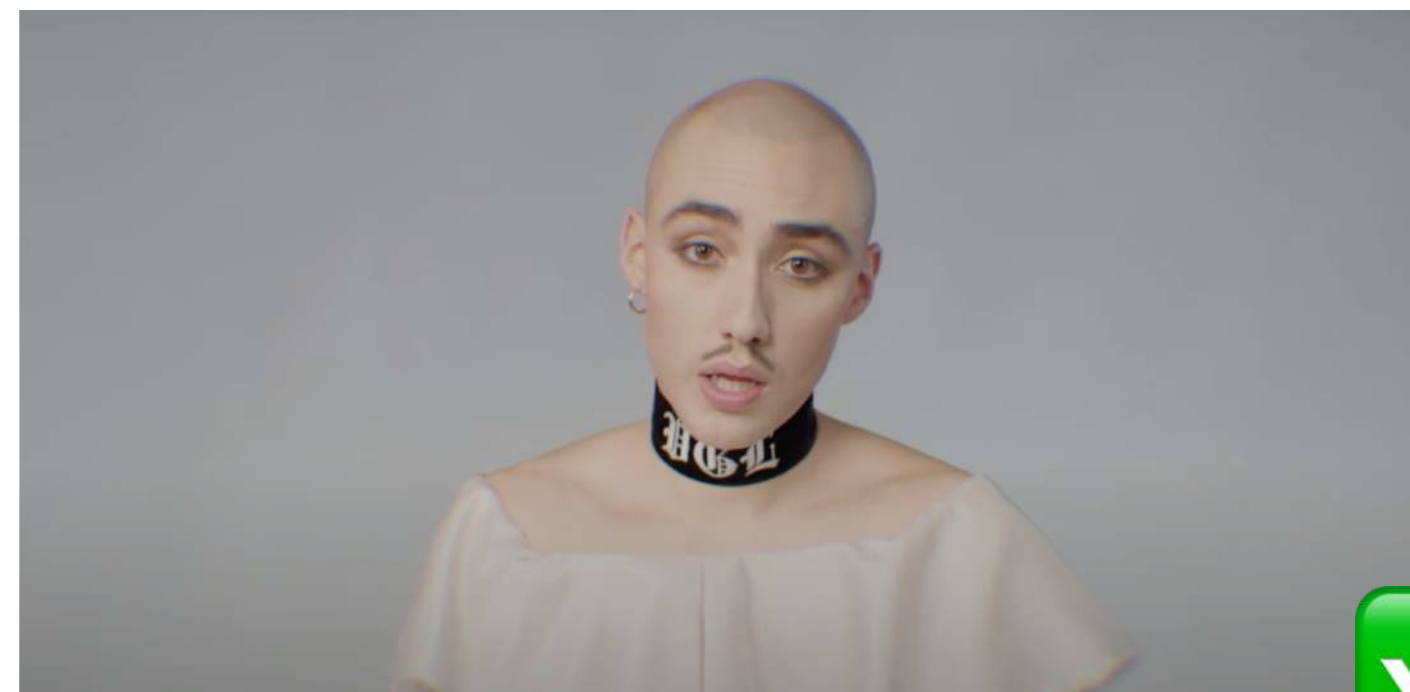
Advertising examples
Gender
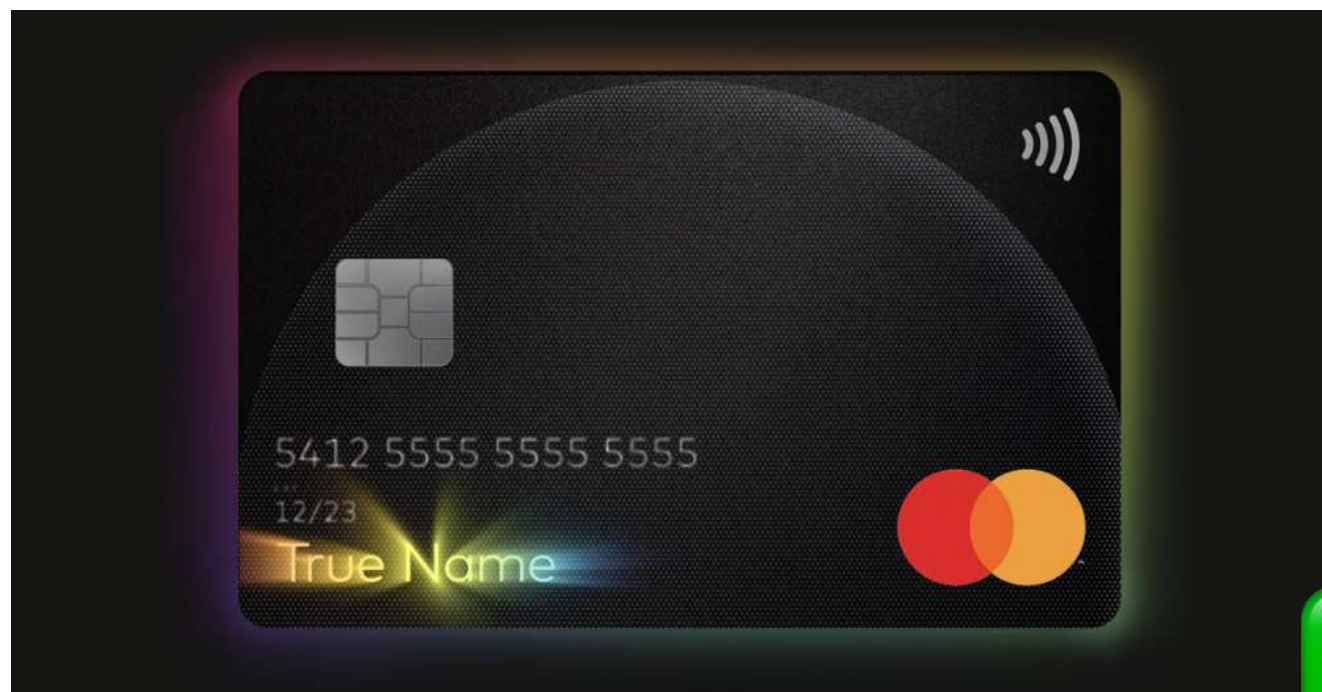
Mastercard True Name

For many, the name on their payment card does not reflect the name they identify with. This can be an invalidating experience and a potential safety concern. To bridge this gap, Mastercard created True Name, a feature that allows people to display their chosen name on their cards.

Blur the Lines (Milk Makeup)

Only recently has makeup started to be seen as gender neutral by brands. Milk Makeup was one of the early adopters of this, launching the 'Blur the Lines' ad in 2017. They started a conversation about gender and expression through makeup: "'He' and 'she' is literally only two or three words, and they only have as much power as you give them."

There's a Coke for him and her and them

The ad includes the pronouns 'they' and 'them' and emphasizes that people of all genders belong. It does a good job of promoting inclusion across the gender spectrum and not singling out any one kind of person.

Advertising examples
Gender

Starbucks 'Every Name's a Story'

This ad is about gender and identity through the lens of something many of us take for granted: our name. It depicts the sense of affirmation and validation that a queer person gets from being called the name that they prefer.

Benefit 'Love Archually'

Benefit beauty brand teamed up with popular trans YouTuber and beauty influencer Nikita Dragun in a new rom-com-inspired ad for their brow products. This ad doesn't center around Nikita's identity. Instead, she is simply the star — making this a perfect example for ads that represent trans people just living their lives.
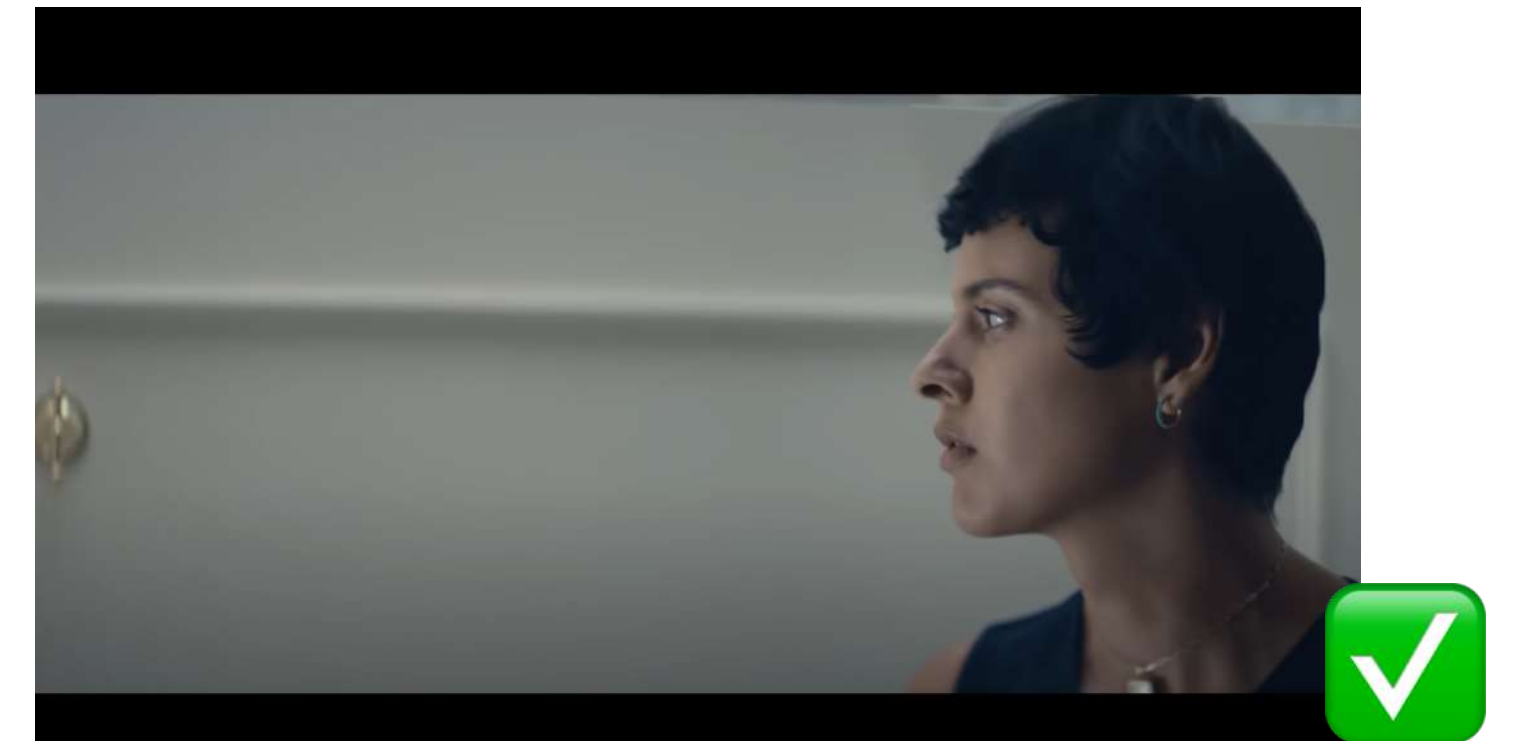
Secret 'Ladies Room'

This ad brings a very real anxiety for trans people to life: access to appropriate public restrooms. In the spot, a trans woman works up the courage to leave her stall and face the other women who have come into the restroom. It does a great job of respectfully depicting the realities of daily life for trans people.

Case Study
Virgin Airlines

Company employee policies often focus solely on traditional gender identities. Virgin Airlines sought to change this norm by updating its gender identity policy. This policy not only advised their employees to choose uniforms that best align with their identity and gender expression, but they even enacted an optional pronoun tag.

Case Study
Cycle x Freda

This <u>video spot</u> from London-based startup Freda features a great example of intersectional gender inclusion. Freda's "Cycle" line is positioned as "an inclusive range designed to provide sustainable and reliable period care with no presumptions and no inhibitions." The director's cut video depicts three menstruating people of different genders, ethnicities, and backgrounds to illustrate that Cycle products are for everyone.

Opportunities
Gender

Code and Theory goals

- Represent people across gender identities with respect and dignity
- Include people across gender identities in our work in ways that are not solely focused on that identity
- Create an opportunity for people across gender identities to see themselves included and celebrated by the brands they love
- Make space for people across the gender spectrum while casting
  - Learn more about the complexities of queer casting <u>here</u>

6

Introduction:
Nationality and ethnicity

Although nationality and ethnicity are often confused and used interchangeably, they are different things:

Nationality refers to one's country of origin or the country where they hold citizenship; it's essentially a legal or geographic designation.

Ethnicity refers to racial descent or affiliation with a racial, cultural, or religious group, e.g., Al Pacino's nationality is American; his ethnicity is Italian.

What to know
Nationality and ethnicity

Nationality and ethnicity can be deeply personal.

- For some, their ethnicity and nationality align, while others can identify with multiple ethnicities and nationalities
- People typically self-identify their nationality and ethnicity
- While ethnicity and race are often used interchangeably, they are also distinct
- Some identities are pan-ethnic, meaning they group people of various ethnicities based on similarities in culture, language, and heritage
- Immigration can also play in important role in how we think about ethnicity and nationality. Only refer to someone's immigration status when it's relevant or necessary
  - Think about the context in which you are writing about a person's immigration status, e.g., Don't refer only to educated, white-collar workers as "expats," while describing people who work in non-office or service jobs only as "immigrants"
  - Remember: There is no single place of origin, race, or ethnicity that makes someone an immigrant or an undocumented immigrant

When speaking about people of Latin American descent:

How people of Latin American/Hispanic descent identify themselves is as complex as the history of Latin America itself. Many people primarily identify with the country or community they're from, others use multiple terms to identify themselves. The terms below are pan-ethnic and used to broadly group people. And while a single word is probably not going to work perfectly for everyone, it doesn't hurt to have options.

Use:

Latine (pronounced <u>La-tihn-eh</u>)
Example: There's a large Latine community in New York.

Latinx (pronounced <u>Lah-tihn-ehks</u>)
Example: Here's a list of the top Latinx creators on TikTok.

Latino/ Latina
Example: She's a Latina illustrator.

Hispanic
Example: Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?

To refer to:

the community in an increasingly popular, gender-neutral way that Spanish speakers typically appreciate

the largely US-based, English-speaking community and not worry about being consistent with Spanish

the community in a widely used and accepted way

the community with terms typically used in government collection of demographic information

Who uses Latine and Latinx?

Spanish can be a very gendered language. Latine and Latinx are newer terms that describe people in a more gender neutral way. And while they may not be the most used at the moment, they are gaining traction.

Most Latino adults have not heard of the term Latinx; few use it

% who ...

Have heard of Latinx

Use Latinx
3%

Do not use Latinx
20%

Have not heard of Latinx
76%

Note: No answer responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. Latino adults conducted Dec. 3-23, 2019. "About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% Use It"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
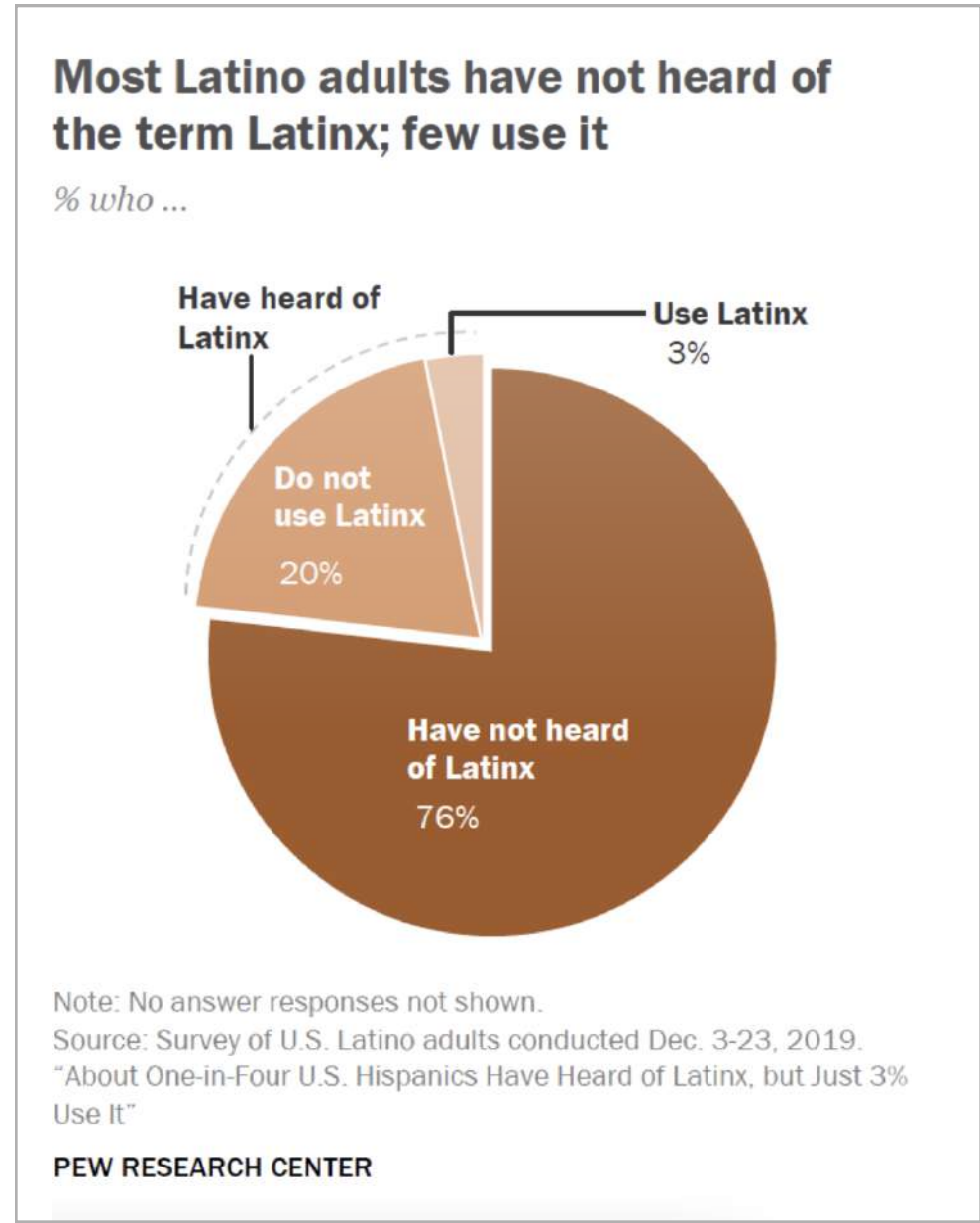
A 2019 study showed that **3% of people who identify as Latino use "Latinx."**
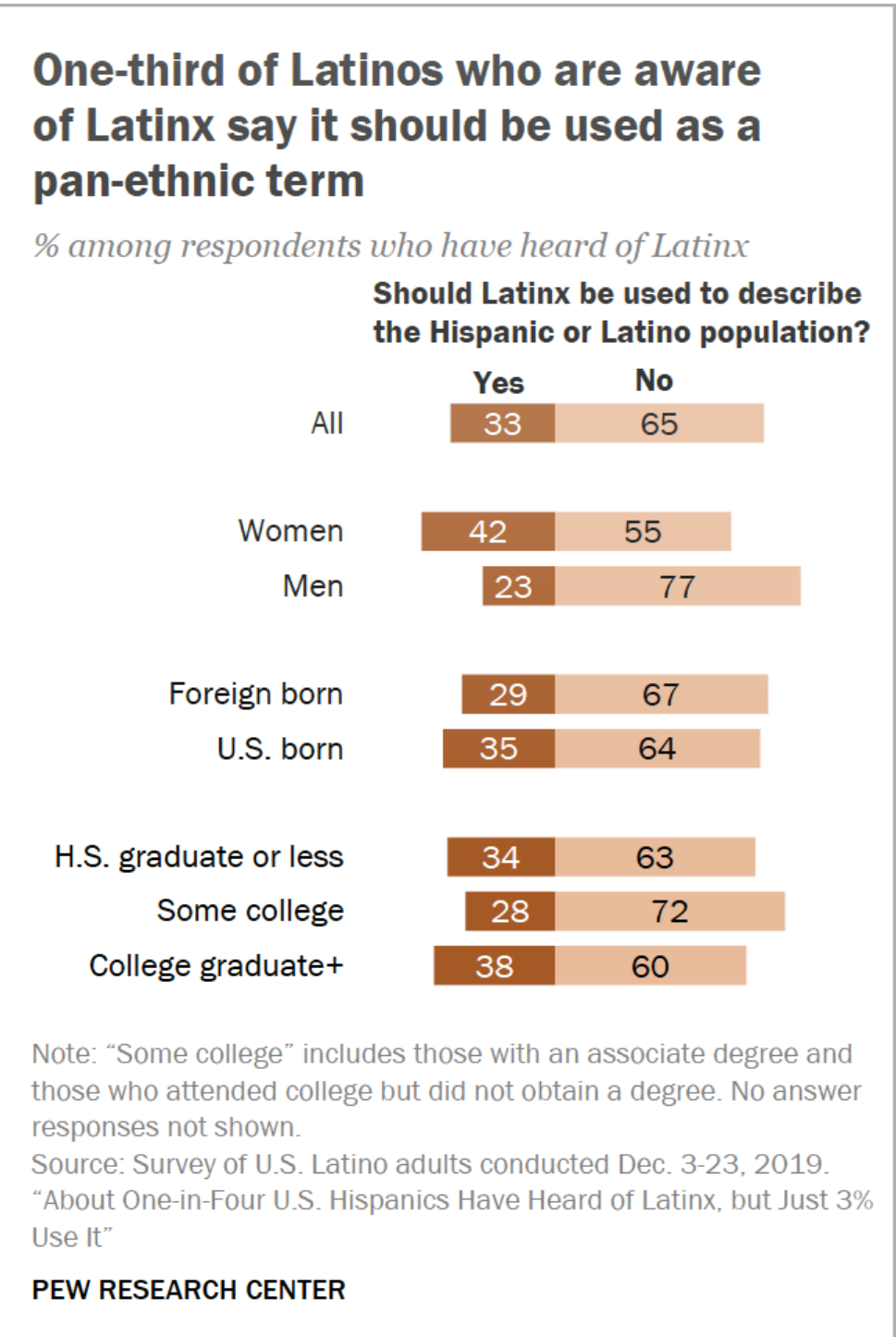
Young Hispanic women stand out among Latinx users

% who say they have used Latinx to describe themselves, by age

■ Women ■ Men

	All	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
Women	5	14	2	2	<0.5
Men	1	1	2	1	<0.5

Note: No answer responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. Latino adults conducted Dec. 3-23, 2019. "About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% Use It"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
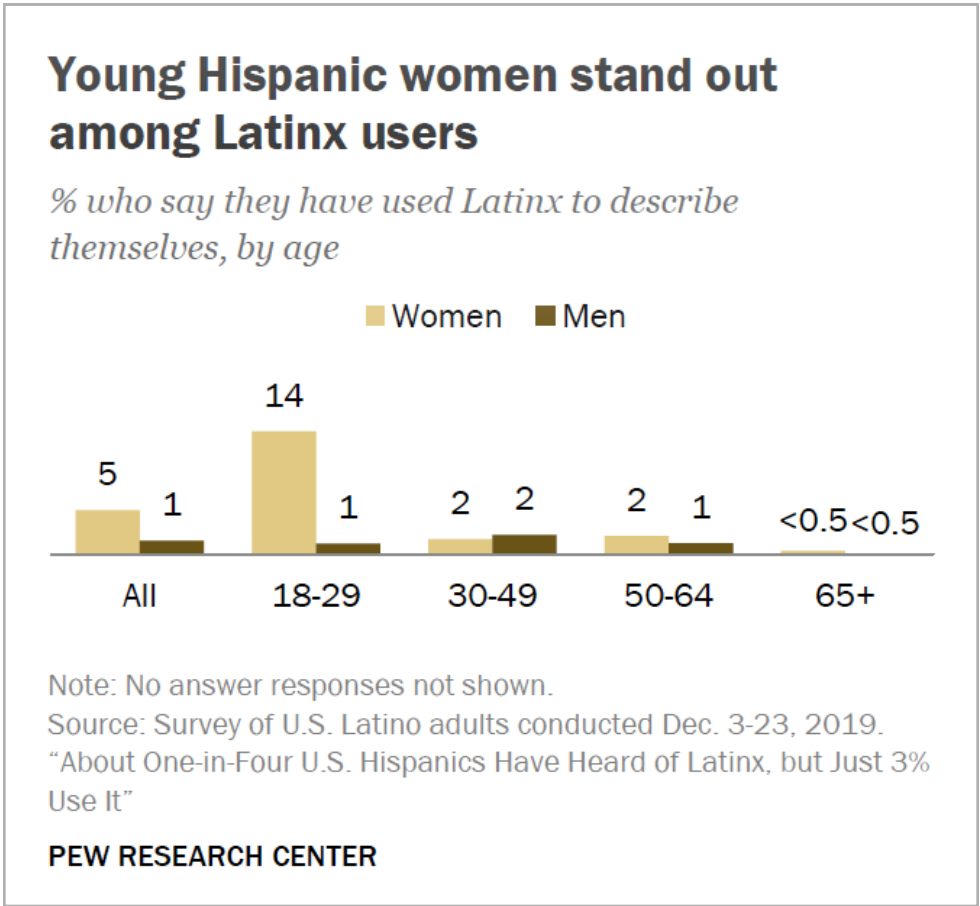
Women under 30 were **most likely** to use Latinx.

One-third of Latinos who are aware of Latinx say it should be used as a pan-ethnic term

% among respondents who have heard of Latinx

Should Latinx be used to describe the Hispanic or Latino population?

	Yes	No
All	33	65
Women	42	55
Men	23	77
Foreign born	29	67
U.S. born	35	64
H.S. graduate or less	34	63
Some college	28	72
College graduate+	38	60

Note: "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. No answer responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. Latino adults conducted Dec. 3-23, 2019. "About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% Use It"

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1/3 of Latino people in the U.S **believe Latinx should be used.**

What's the difference between Latine, Hispanic, and Spanish?

Often confused or used interchangeably, Latino/Latine/Latinx, Hispanic, and Spanish have different definitions. It's important to know who you're talking about when referencing these identities. Identities are also fluid, and being from a country that's considered in one of these categories does not automatically mean everyone from there identifies with the term. Some may identify with these terms and not be from the countries listed below.

Latino/Latine/Latinx

Describes someone with ethnic or cultural origins in Latin America.*

Argentina	Bolivia	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Cuba
Dominican Republic	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Mexico	Nicaragua
Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Puerto Rico	Uruguay	Venezuela	

*Latin America most commonly refers to countries and territories that are culturally similar and speak Spanish or Portuguese in the Americas. Other definitions include all of South America, places colonized by France, and some additional islands in the Caribbean. Often countries in this area are grouped as 'Latin America and the Caribbean'.

Hispanic

Describes someone with roots from a Spanish-speaking country or territory.*

Argentina	Bolivia	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Cuba	Dominican Republic
Ecuador	El Salvador	Equatorial Guinea	Guatemala	Honduras	Mexico	Nicaragua
Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Puerto Rico	Spain	Uruguay	Venezuela

*Belize is sometimes considered based on having a large Spanish-speaking population, but the official language is English

Spanish

Describes someone who comes from Spain. Spanish is an ethnicity, nationality, and a language.

Spain

More ways
to incorporate 'Latine'

While it's not the most popular way to identify, more people are starting to use "Latine" as the need for gender neutral language expands. Below are a few ways you can incorporate "Latine" more frequently.

- If you have the space, you can try to use slashes to include more terms
  - Hispanic/Latino/Latinx/Latine
  - Latino/Latinx/Latine
  - Hispanic/Latine

When speaking about citizenship:

Understand that our culture incorrectly uses terms like "undocumented" to describe a wide range of circumstances. It's important to be as specific as possible to recognize the nuances in residency and citizenship.

Adopt

- Undocumented* immigrant
- Person seeking legal citizenship
- Unauthorized immigrant
- Undocumented* worker
- Unnaturalized
- Asylum seeker

Avoid

- Illegal immigrant
- Illegal alien
- Alien
- Illegals — the term "illegal" describes an action, not a human being

Opportunities
Nationality and ethnicity

Code and Theory goals

- Honor people of different nationalities and ethnicities by speaking clearly and accurately about their origins
- Create an opportunity for people to see their countries and cultures accurately celebrated by the brands they love
- Feature quotes/voices from people to reflect lived experiences, where applicable
- Cast people who are from the nationality or ethnicity we're representing for creative content for more authentic representation and performances

7

Introduction:
Race

"There is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of 'racist' isn't 'not racist.' It is 'antiracist'.

– Ibram X. Kendi
Author, Professor, and anti–racist activist

The founders of the United States held racist beliefs and as a result, our country's systems, infrastructure, and language have racist foundations. Those systems were created to favor white people and whiteness, and will continue to discriminate if they operate as they are.

Antiracism includes beliefs, actions, movements, and policies adopted or developed to actively oppose racism by interrupting its presence in our society.

By examining our language and removing patterns and terms rooted in racism, we can drive equality and equity with our words.

What to know
Race

Drop the stereotypes.

Stereotypes are oversimplified images or ideas of a particular type of person or thing.

Avoid them, even if you think these stereotypes are positive. When you believe stereotypes about people based on the color of their skin, where they come from, or whom they pray to, you're grouping people together based on what you think you know. At the end of the day, we're all unique individuals.

Just because someone looks, dresses, or lives a certain way, doesn't mean they are what you think. Believe it or not, race, ethnicity, and religion come in all shapes and sizes.

What to know
Race

Different people have different lived experiences based on the color of their skin.

Each individual is so much more than their heritage, race, or appearance, but these factors play an enormous role in the way many people experience the world.

Describing race appropriately and with sensitivity acknowledges and respects those lived experiences.

Let's celebrate our differences and learn from each other.

What to know
"Indigenous," "Native," and "Indian"

When referring to Indigenous communities, you should be as specific as possible — and if you're not sure, use "Indigenous."

The term "indigenous" is defined as "the earliest known inhabitants of a place."1 UCLA says that "Indigenous" is the most inclusive and can refer to Indigenous people on any continent, not just in North America.

"Native American" refers exclusively to Indigenous people in the United States. This term is appropriate to use when referencing a tribe within the U.S.

"American Indian" is a term used for legal purposes and for the U.S. Census. "Indian" were terms given to Indigenous communities by colonizers who mistakenly believed they had landed in India

Whenever possible, you should refer to someone using their particular Indigenous community, like "Lakota" or "Algonquin"

What to know
Race and alt text

Currently, there isn't a universal recommendation for describing race while transcribing online images into alt text to aid people living with visual impairments.

- Alt text plays an important role in shaping the realities of people who use a screen reader —meaning the writers of alt text have a lot of power in controlling perceptions
- Some people believe that it's important to describe the race of people because leaving it vague reinforces the idea that white is "normal"
  - Product designer Tolu Adegbite says, "When we don't describe the race of someone in an image, we push the narrative that what our society deems as the default (usually a white person), is the default"
- Some disagree, like the University of South Carolina, which says that adding too much context about someone's identity can quickly become subjective when based only in assumptions we're making based on visuals

When speaking about race:

Adopt

- Whenever possible, ask how someone wants to be identified and use their preferred language

- Be specific rather than using a blanket term like "BIPOC," as some feel that this term lumps all non-white communities together, ignoring their cultural nuances, but others feel it brings Indigenous communities to the forefront of conversations about race

- Use adjectives instead of nouns when referring to the race or ethnicity of other people (e.g., "a Latino person", not "a Latino")

- Capitalize when referring to race, but not "white" — why?

  - References to race and ethnic groups share cultures and experiences (foods, languages, music, religious traditions, etc.)

  - "White" is used as a physical description of people whose backgrounds may spring from many different cultures. The word "brown" in the phrase "Black and brown" is lowercase for the same reason

  - Those who identify as white do not have the experience of being discriminated against because of their skin color, and capitalization of the word was used by white supremacists to establish superiority through language (AP)

- Use the term "multiracial" when speaking about those who identify as more than one race

Avoid

- Stereotypes (e.g., cliched dialect, vernacular)

- "Non-white" — being white is not the automatic default, and the rest of us deserve some held space, too

- Leaning on multiracial communities or representation in order to satisfy inclusion without featuring specific communities of color

- "Racially ambiguous," "ethnically ambiguous," "exotic," "mixed," "mulatto"

- Abbreviations that the community itself doesn't use

- Asking "what are you?" when inquiring about someone's race or ethnicity; if you must, ask someone how they identify instead

- Coded language, or using seemingly neutral words to disguise racism (e.g., using "inner city" to reference people of color who are experiencing poverty)

- Talking about race as if it is a scientific, biological distinction. While socially defined notions of "race" have shaped human lives around the world, race is societal and has no basis in biology

Coded Language
Race

What is coded language?

This is the practice of using terms that are seemingly neutral but actually disguise explicit and/or unconscious racial bias. You may see instances of coded language in otherwise reputable news sources, advertising, etc. They are ostensibly benign terms that become harmful and play into stereotypes when used to describe people of color.

Examples include:

- The term "thug" as it seems to be used predominantly in reference to Black people. Same with "at-risk youth" and "inner city"
- College basketball announcers referring to white players as "crafty" and Black players as "sneaky"
- Referring to Latinx people as "fiery" or "spicy"

Opportunities
Race

Code and Theory goals

- Use our outputs to help evolve the way people see race in this country
- Honor the race and ethnicities of all people, allowing them to feel recognized and seen by brands and advertising
- Help clients prepare for a future where people of color represent almost half of the population and a present where consumers are demanding that brands speak responsibly about race
- Understand how race impacts the context of the work being produced

8

Introduction:
Religion

Muslims are 25% of the world population, but only make up 1% of television speaking roles.*

Religion provides communities and families with beliefs and traditions that play an important role in identity.

But religion has also been a hot-button topic that can fuel prejudice and division. Knowing this, it's important to use language that embraces various religious communities while avoiding stigma or stereotypes.

What to know
Religion

According to the Pew Research Center, there are five major religions

- The majority of religious people follow a form of Christianity (31.2% of the world's population), Islam (24.1%), Buddhism (6.9%), Hinduism (15.1%), and Judaism (0.2%)
- There are two other main categories: folk/traditional religions (5.7%) and an unaffiliated group (16%)

Some religions form ethnoreligious groups

- This is a subcategory of ethnicity that is defined a 'grouping of people unified by a common religious and ethnic background'
- Some common ethnoreligions are: Judaism, Hinduism, and Shinto
- Not every person who identifies with an ethnoreligion practices that religion — but they still identify with that ethnicity

What to know
Religion

Religious stereotypes are harmful

Stereotypes based on religion are prevalent and insidious. It's important to remember that every single person is unique and that there is no singular belief that an entire religion shares. Keep in mind:

- A shared belief in religion does not mean a shared interpretation of that religion
- Some people who wear clothes stemming from a religion are not necessarily religious—it could be part of their culture
- There are many different subsections of the key religions and not every group has the same beliefs or traditions

Coded Language
Religion

Coded language is a way that people express biases without saying them explicitly.

For example:

- "International bankers," a term commonly used by politicians and even other figureheads, is coded language that stereotypes Jewish people and encourages antisemitism
- "Extremist" is a coded term commonly used to refer to Muslim people and plays on the Islamophobic idea that all Muslims are complicit in any religion-based act of violence

Christian–centric language and tradition

Whether we realize it or not, a lot of the language and traditions ingrained in Western society come from the Judeo–Christian faith.

We should be aware of the phrases and expectations that stem from Christianity and work to challenge them so that we never exclude any religion or person. Some examples:

- Giving breaks from work and school that center around Christian holidays
- Moral expectations that have roots in the Bible being applied to people who don't follow the Christian religion

When speaking about religion:

Adopt

- When referencing the hatred or prejudice against Jewish people, use the unhyphenated 'antisemitism,' which stands as a united representation of the bigotry directed toward Jewish people
- Only reference someone's religion when it's relevant to the context of the conversation or text
- Non-religious words, instead of words or phrases that have religious contexts. For example:
  - B.C.E (Before Common Era) instead of B.C. (Before Christ)
  - 'Happy holidays' instead of 'Merry Christmas' in December

Avoid

- The hyphenated term 'Anti-Semitism.' The hyphen divides the word and unconsciously validates the existence of the term "Semitism," a pseudoscientific classification of the Jewish people created by the Nazis
- Assuming that all people who identify with the same religion hold the exact same religious beliefs. There are many different sectors and interpretations of all religions
- Conflating someone's religion with their political beliefs
- Assuming that if someone practices a religion, that they follow all parts of it
- Assuming that someone's ethnicity or background correlates to their religion, or vice versa

Opportunities
Religion

Code and Theory goals

- Be mindful of the religious connotations in our work and commit to religious inclusion for underrepresented groups
- Think more deeply about who our audiences are through the lens of religion

9

Introduction:
Sexuality

The percentage of U.S. adults who self–identify as LGBTQ+ has increased to 7.1% in 2022—up from 3.5% in 2012.

Sexuality refers to the gender or genders that a person is typically attracted to. Some examples of sexuality are gay, lesbian, pansexual, bisexual, asexual, and heterosexual.

We exist in a culture that drives us to think, believe, and uphold the assumption that heterosexuality is the preferred norm.

This reinforces a gender binary and perpetuates homophobia.

What to know
Sexuality

Representation matters

- The narratives we create matter, so be intentional when including different sexualities
- The LGBTQIA+ community is more than just 'the gay community,' so representation should be inclusive to represent many sexual orientations and identities

Sexuality exists on a spectrum

- People are not defined by their sexuality — it is fluid and can change at any time
- Sexuality is only one way in which a person's identity is dynamic and multifaceted

What to know
Sexuality

Celebrate all kinds of partnerships

- When referencing marriages or weddings, try to keep terms gender neutral
- Refer to people as a 'couple' instead of 'bride and groom'
- Reference one half of a couple with terms like 'partner,' 'betrothed,' or 'spouse'
- Weddings can also be described as celebrations of partnership or celebrations of commitment

What to know
Sexuality

Heteronormativity & Comphet (Compulsory + Heterosexuality)

- A modern definition of comphet is the idea that heterosexuality is the norm and that straight sexual identity is our default setting
- That idea's pervasiveness drives perceptions of sexuality at an institutional, interpersonal, and individual level. Deconstructing it often requires questioning and introspection
- With tangible roots in misogyny, homophobia, and the patriarchy, comphet affects people of all genders, but historically, studies have focused on the way comphet affects women (particularly lesbians)

Comphet & Heteronormativity IRL

- Joking that a boy will be 'a real ladies' man when he's older
- Women in queer relationships referred to as 'roommates' or 'just really good friends'
- The 'Prince Charming'/'Damsel in Distress' trope in media

When speaking about sexuality:

Adopt

- 'LGBTQIA' or 'LGBTQIA+': While this term groups people identifying with a wide range of sexual identities together, its longevity may be due to its origin within the community, rather than outside of it
- 'Sexual orientation' or 'orientation'
- 'Gay,' 'lesbian,' 'bisexual,' 'pansexual,' or 'queer' to describe people attracted to the same gender or multiple genders
- Neutral language where possible and appropriate (e.g., using 'couple' instead of 'same-sex couple')
- Overall, the appropriate use of these terms may vary because individual people may self-identify in different ways

Avoid

- Heterosexual bias that frames heterosexuality as the status quo or norm, like 'gay agenda', 'homosexual agenda', 'gay lifestyle' and 'homosexual lifestyle'
- Gendered words that perpetuate a gender norm or stereotype, like 'sissy,' 'tomboy,' 'girly-girl,' etc.
- Demeaning terms like 'effeminate' or 'emasculating' to talk about gay men and masculine-centered people
- 'Sexual preference' as it suggests that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc. is a choice
- 'Gay' as a descriptor for any and everyone who is a part of the LGBTQIA+ community, as there are more sexual orientations beyond gay
- Phrases like 'That's so gay' that position the word 'gay' as a negative

Advertising examples
Sexuality

Most LGBTQIA+ focused ads center around gay and lesbian sexualities and experiences, unintentionally excluding the bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and other sexuality identities and experiences — a form of erasure as these groups are not well-represented in mainstream media and pop culture.

OREO 'Proud Parent'

This ad tells the story of a parent who is uncomfortable with their child's queer relationship but eventually accepts it. The ad demonstrates this by painting their home's fence the colors of the pride flag.

DORITOS 'The Best Gift'

This ad tells the story of a father who suspects that his son's 'best friend' is his actually his boyfriend, but doesn't know how to express his love and support. Eventually, Dad tells his son that he loves him for who he is.

Wells Fargo 'Learning Sign Language'

This ad centers two mothers as they prepare to adopt their hard-of-hearing child. The ad stars a lesbian couple without making their sexuality the main purpose of the ad and instead, we see them living their lives as a couple and preparing for a big moment together.

Advertising examples

Sexuality

Most LGBTQIA+ focused ads center around gay and lesbian sexualities and experiences, unintentionally excluding the bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and other sexuality identities and experiences — a form of erasure as these groups are not well-represented in mainstream media and pop culture.

The Lesbian Bar Project

Did you know that in 1980 there were 200 lesbian bars across the U.S.? In 2023, there are fewer than 25. The Lesbian Bar Project partnered with Jäegermeister to address a real issue and create new queer spaces through a docuseries, podcast, and metaverse pop-up.

Campbell's Soup

A desire for acceptance, feelings of isolation, and ostracization are often themes associated with LGBTQIA+ representation in media. However, this Campbell's Soup ad refreshingly shows a gay married couple simply living happily with their child.

Smirnoff 'Voguing'

This ad highlights a popular LGBTQ+ subculture: voguing. This style of dance, described by Sarah Schijen of Vogue as a "liberating form of self-expression and identity for the queer community," was created by the queer Latine and Black communities of Harlem during the 1980s. This ad pays homage to this important piece of LGBTQ+ history and helps bring the tradition into the mainstream.

Opportunities
Sexuality

Code and Theory goals

- Challenge heteronormativity by including people across sexualities in client work
- Create opportunities for people across sexual identities to see themselves and their families celebrated by the brands they love
- In casting, if sexuality is important for a role, select people who identify with a given orientation to create more authentic representation

10

Introduction:
Socioeconomic status

Language that describes education, occupation, status, and economic status often contains underlying biases.

This language can influence how a person or their community is viewed, as well as how they view themselves. Evolutions in language are creating ways to better protect the dignity of all people, regardless of social standing.

What to know about socioeconomic status

Adopt	Avoid
Downtown	Inner City
Under-resourced	Disadvantaged
Unhoused, people experiencing homelessness	Homeless
People who receive financial assistance or benefits	Welfare reliant

See It in Practice:

From the NYT:

"On a sweltering July afternoon, a homeless man named Melvin Douglas biked up to his sleeping spot beneath the High Line, ...

Revised:

"On a sweltering July afternoon, Melvin Douglas, a **man experiencing homelessness**, biked up to his sleeping spot beneath the High Line, ...

Systems of oppression

Words that we use to describe systems of oppression tend to strip people of their humanity and stigmatize those impacted by a particular circumstance.

Adopt	Avoid
Enslaved person	Slave
Person without documentation	Illegal immigrant, illegal alien
Person who is incarcerated	Inmate, prisoner
Person who was formerly incarcerated	Ex-convict, felon
System-impacted (people who are impacted by carceral systems, like police and incarceration)	Product of their environment
Criminal punishment system, carceral system, prison industrial complex	Criminal just system or reform
Juvenile system, foster care system	Child welfare system

Referencing communities

Nora Rahimian

@norarahimian

" It's not 'underrepresented.' It is 'systematically excluded.' It is 'institutionally oppressed.' Accountability starts with language."

Referencing communities

Adopt	Here's Why	Avoid
Historically excluded, marginalized or oppressed	• Makes a lack of representation seem accidental or unfortunate when the true cause is oppression	Underrepresented
Global minority	• Suggests inferiority; focuses on a person's difference • Becoming less and less statistically correct in the United States • Consider the context; being in the minority is very different than being called a minority	Minority
Inclusive, representative	• Centers whiteness by assuming that white is the norm (What are we diverting from?)	Diverse
Name the group(s) you're referencing in particular (e.g., Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx/Latine, or Native American/Indigenous American)	• Aims to use a blanket term to describe groups with unique needs and histories	BIPOC

11

The More You Know
Words to walk
away from

Everyday language that's got to go

Drop this….	Why?!	Way better…
Master Bedroom	The exact origin of the term is unclear, but the word "master" carries a strong association with slavery.	Primary bedroom
Blacklist	This term refers to a list of people deemed undesirable and reinforces negativity around the word 'black.'	Banned
Peanut Gallery	A term used to describe a group of people who heckle or criticize, usually by focusing on insignificant details, but it originally referred to seats reserved for Black people during the Jim Crow era in the balconies and rear parts of spaces.	Chuckleheads
Cakewalk or "Takes the cake"	This term originated in the Antebellum South and refers to a dance performed by enslaved Black people on plantations.	Easy, Wins
Spirit animal	Animals play an important symbolic role in the cultural lives of North America's Indigenous peoples, but the term misrepresents and trivializes a great diversity of practices.	Familiar, guide
Sell down the river	Originated in the Antebellum South, it refers to transporting enslaved people to plantations via the Mississippi river.	Betray
Gyp or gip	'Gyp' is short for 'gypsy,' a slur that means to swindle or trick used to justify discriminating against the Romani people, a nomadic group which originated in India and now lives mostly in Europe.	Ripped off
Grandfathered in, Grandfather Clause	A "grandfather clause" typically used to refer to businesses that are allowed to operate under previous laws— its roots lie in Jim Crow-era legislation adopted in six Southern states to disenfranchise Black voters.	Pre-existing

Everyday language that's got to go

Drop this….	Why?!	Way better…
Powwow	Powwows are celebrations among Indigenous peoples in many communities, and referring to a business meeting as one is demeaning.	Regroup, meet, meetup, connect
3rd-World Country	Cold War-era geo-political designations identifying which countries were aligned with the West/NATO (First World), which nations are aligned with former Eastern bloc countries (Second World), and countries that were aligned with neither (Third World) Nations in the so-called third world were usually countries once ruled by oppressive colonial regimes installed by European superpowers — the verbiage implies a hierarchy among nations.	Developing countries (though not the best), Majority world, Countries that are growing, LMICs (low- and lower-middle-income countries)
Off the reservation	Comes from a time when Indigenous people were restricted to reservations, and their movement and activities were strictly controlled by the federal government.	Gone rogue
Open kimono/open the kimono	This sexualizes the process of sharing information while also disrespecting Japanese culture and traditional dress.	Reveal, share
Long time no see/No can do	"No can do" first appeared in the 19th century to mock Chinese immigrants speaking English as a second language "Long time no see" first appeared in the late 19th century as a phrase mocking Indigenous people.	It's been a while Nope, That doesn't work for me

Everyday language that's got to go

Drop this….	Why?!	Way better…
Guru	This Sanskrit word originally refers to an 'elder' or 'teacher' in Hindi and Punjabi culture.	Expert
Ninja	In an office setting, using 'ninja' to refer to someone who is an expert in something strips the term of its cultural context. As 'ninja' specifically refers to a highly skilled mercenary in feudal Japan.	An expert, a whiz, a virtuoso
Chief	"Chief" was used by Europeans to describe Native American leaders and did not originally come from within indigenous communities. Many see the term as pejorative, with phrases like "Hey, chief" used in everyday language. Some organizations are even beginning to remove the term from senior titles, like 'chief executive officer,' while others believe its original meaning in Old French ('leader, ruler, or head of something') is still relevant.	Head of, leader, senior

12

A glossary
of terms to turn to

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
AAPI	**A**sian **A**merican and **P**acific **I**slander. Sometimes also referred to as **A**sian/**P**acific **A**merican (APA) or **A**sian **P**acific **I**slander (API).
Ableism	Discrimination against people living with disabilities or treating people without disabilities as the norm or standard. In reality, one in four Americans lives with disabilities.
Agender	Refers to a person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender.
Asexuality	Asexuality is a sexual orientation referring to a person who experiences little, conditional, or no sexual attraction. It is not a choice, nor is it the same as celibacy. People in the community often refer to themselves as 'ace' for short. Learn more <u>here</u>.
Binary	The classification of gender as two rigid, polarized camps (men/women) rather than as a fluid spectrum.

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
BIPOC	**Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.** Some people use this term in preference to "people of color" to highlight the unique oppression experienced by Black and Indigenous Americans, including slavery and genocide. We encourage use of terms that accurately describe the groups you're referring to.
Bisexual/Bi	Someone who is attracted to people of both the same genders and different genders from their own. "Bi" does not reinforce the idea of a gender binary.

*A note on body-based movements: these mentalities and movements are not mutually exclusive; you can love your body (body positivity), accept and respect it (body acceptance), and acknowledge that your appearance does not dictate your self-worth (body neutrality).

Term	Definition
Body Acceptance	Acknowledges that loving one's body or feeling beautiful every minute of every day may not be realistic, and instead promotes treating and viewing one's body with respect and care, including insecurities, and finding peace with one's body without needing to change it.
Body Autonomy	A philosophical mindset where an individual takes ownership of their perception of their body. This can be in the form of body positivity, body neutrality, body acceptance, ect.
Body Neutrality	Acknowledges that the body is only one part of a person is, and emphasizes that bodies are neither good nor bad.

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
Body Positivity	A social movement and mindset focused on the positive perception of all bodies, regardless of size, shape, skin tone, gender, and physical abilities, e.g., "My body is beautiful no matter what" It's important to note that this movement, while well-intended, has also been scrutinized for "toxic positivity" and a lack of inclusion for trans people or those who seek to make changes to their bodies, and can also run the risk of telling people how they should feel about their own bodies
Cisgender	Refers to when a person's identity or gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth.
Gay	Refers to a someone's romantic and/or sexual preference for someone of their own gender. Used usually to refer to a man's attraction to another man. Sometimes used as an umbrella term for queer people.
Gender Expression	The physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. Most transgender people seek to make their gender expression (how they look) match their gender identity (who they are), rather than their sex assigned at birth.
Gender Identity	Refers to one's internal sense of being a man, a woman, neither of these, both, or another gender(s). For transgender people, their own internal sense of gender identity and their sex assigned at birth are not the same.

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
Gender transition	The process by which a transgender person permanently adopts the outward or physical characteristics that match their gender identity, as opposed to those associated with the sex registered for them at birth. The process may or may not involve measures such as hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery.
Heteronormative	Treating heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships as preferred, the standard, or the norm. The traditional (and in many cases, continuing) lack of representation of gay couples or transgender people in advertising is an example of heteronormativity.
Hispanic	This is a term developed to broadly summarize people who come from Spanish-speaking countries, especially Central and Latin America. It has declined in popularity in recent years as many feel that it centers the history of the region around the Spanish. However, many people in the community do still use this term, and it is often used when gathering demographic information.
Intersectionality	The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.
Intersex	This is an umbrella term used to describe people with differences in reproductive anatomy, chromosomes, or hormones that don't fit typical definitions of male and female. Intersex can refer to a number of natural variations, some of them laid out by InterAct. Being intersex is not the same as being nonbinary or transgender, which are terms typically related to gender identity.

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
Latine (La-tihn-eh)	Latine is a newer alternative, gender-neutral way to identify those of Latin American origin that is more consistent with pronunciation in Spanish. Although it's gaining acceptance, especially with younger generations, it's not currently the most widely-used term.
Latino/Latina	This refers to people of Latin American origin or descent from an ethnic and cultural perspective.
Latinx (Lah-tihn-ehks)	In recent years, Latinx has emerged as a way to describe people of Latin American origin or descent in a more inclusive way, outside of the gender binary. Though there's criticism of the term, as many feel that it's English speakers imposing on the Spanish language because there is no proper pronunciation of an "x" at the end of a word in the Spanish language. It's more common to see "Latinx" identified within the US. To some, it does have a corporate feel.
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual +. The '+' sign leaves room for other orientations and identities that don't conform to a heterosexual, cisgender standard.
Lesbian	Refers to a woman's romantic and/or sexual preference for someone of their own gender.
Misgendering	Referring to a person in a way not aligned with their gender identity. For example, calling someone a woman who identifies as non- binary, or using he/him pronouns when referring to someone whose pronouns are they/them. Misgendering can be unintentional, but it's almost always hurtful.

A glossary of terms to turn to

Term	Definition
Neurodiverse	Displaying autistic or other neurologically atypical patterns of thought or behavior.
Pansexual	Sometimes just 'pan' for short, pansexual describes a person who has the capacity to form attractions to any person, regardless of gender identity.
Queer	A broad term encompassing orientations and identities that don't conform to a heterosexual, cisgender standard. Once a slur, it has been reclaimed for use by and about the queer community.
Sex	The assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes. This is usually decided at birth or in utero, and is usually based on genitalia.
Stereotype	An oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.
TERF	Stands for trans-exclusionary radical feminist. A TERF describes someone who is hostile to the inclusion of trans and gender-diverse people in women's spaces and the feminist movement, especially trans women.
Transgender	Refers to a person whose gender and identity do not match the sex they were assigned at birth.

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Thank You.

Have thoughts, examples to add or questions about Beyond Words: A Guide to Inclusive Language?

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