

# Ungendering Language

**New Mexico GSA Network**

# Land Acknowledgement

As an uninvited guest on Indigenous land, I commit myself to working in partnership with Indigenous people as we heal the disruptions and harms of colonialism and live in reciprocal relationship with our natural environment and the people who inhabit it.

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# Funding Recognition

*NMGSA's trainings have been made available to New Mexico community members at no cost due to contracts from the New Mexico Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Services Division; and from the New Mexico Department of Health, Office of School and Adolescent Health.*

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# Who are we?



Karen Dugas (she/her),  
Program Director



Hendrix/Henny Olson  
(they/them), Program  
Coordinator

**Why do we have this  
training?**

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# Brief overview of tentacle monster/systems of oppression

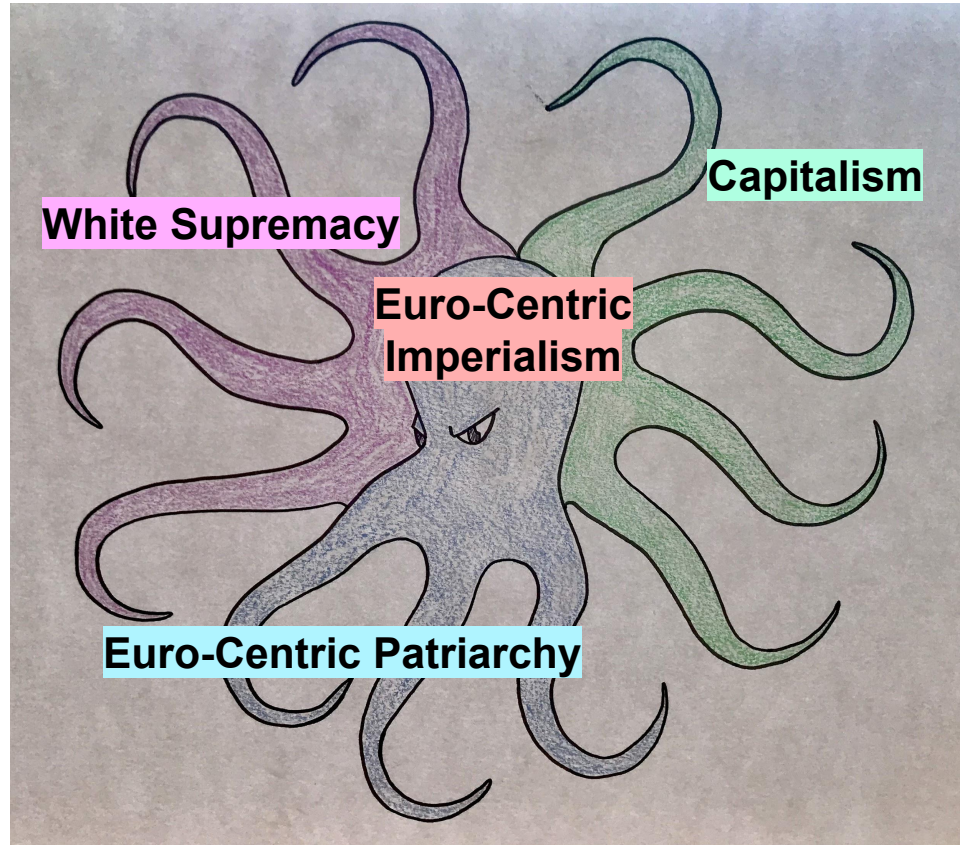
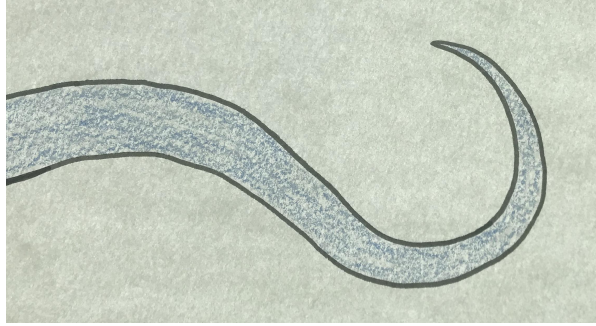
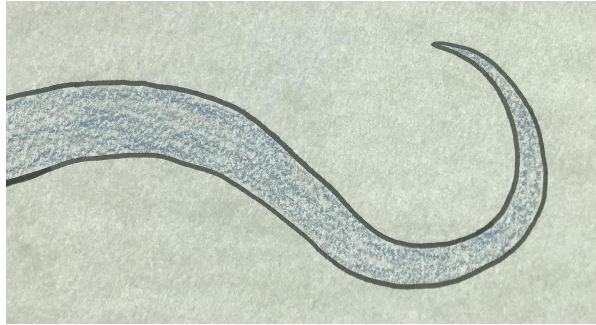


Image created by Hendrix Olson, 2020



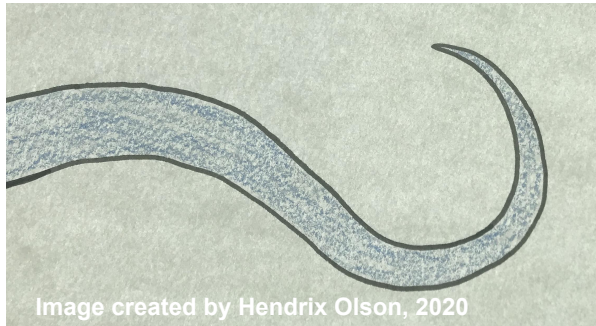
### **Sexism:**

- ★ Misogyny
- ★ Gender Binary
- ★ Sexual Violence
- ★ Reproductive Violence
- ★ Intimate Partner Violence
- ★ Transmisogyny
- ★ Transformative Masculinity\*



### **Cisgenderism:**

- ★ Transphobia
- ★ Gender Binary
- ★ Intersex Discrimination
- ★ Transmisogyny
- ★ Physical & Sexual Violence



### **Heterosexism:**

- ★ Homophobia
- ★ Queerphobia
- ★ Biphobia
- ★ Heteronormativity
- ★ Gender Binary

# Turns out, we have lots of habits that aren't inclusive!

- ★ Addressing Individuals
- ★ Addressing groups
- ★ Gendering everyday items



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## Addressing Individuals

- ★ Titles: Mrs./Ms., Mr., Sir, Ma'am
- ★ Professions: actor/actress, chairman, steward/stewardess
- ★ Casual titles and/or Terms of Endearment: dude, girl/gurl/gorl, bro, lady, sis
- ★ Accidentally or Intentionally assuming someone's pronouns

## Addressing Groups

- ★ Ladies and Gentlemen, or variations on the phrase
- ★ Guys
- ★ For the Good of All Mankind
- ★ Brothers and Sisters
- ★ Professions: mailmen, salesmen, Congressmen

## Gendering Everyday Items/Characteristics

- ★ Clothing: being categorized by gender rather than size/fit (sections – boy's/girl's, men's/women's)
- ★ Characteristics/tasks being attached to masculinity/femininity: Gossip (femme), Sports (masc), Power (masc), Being Emotional (femme)



“THE MASTER’S TOOLS  
WILL NEVER DISMANTLE  
THE MASTER’S HOUSE.” –  
Audre Lorde

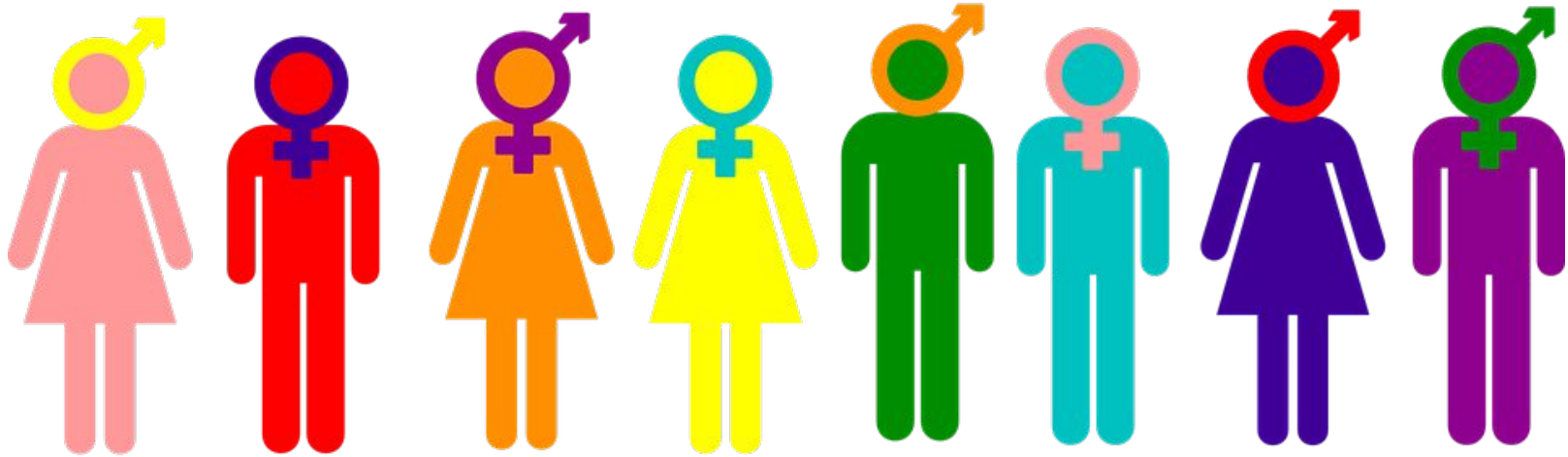
Overt and Covert Oppression

# Microaggression

A statement, action, or incident that delivers indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group.

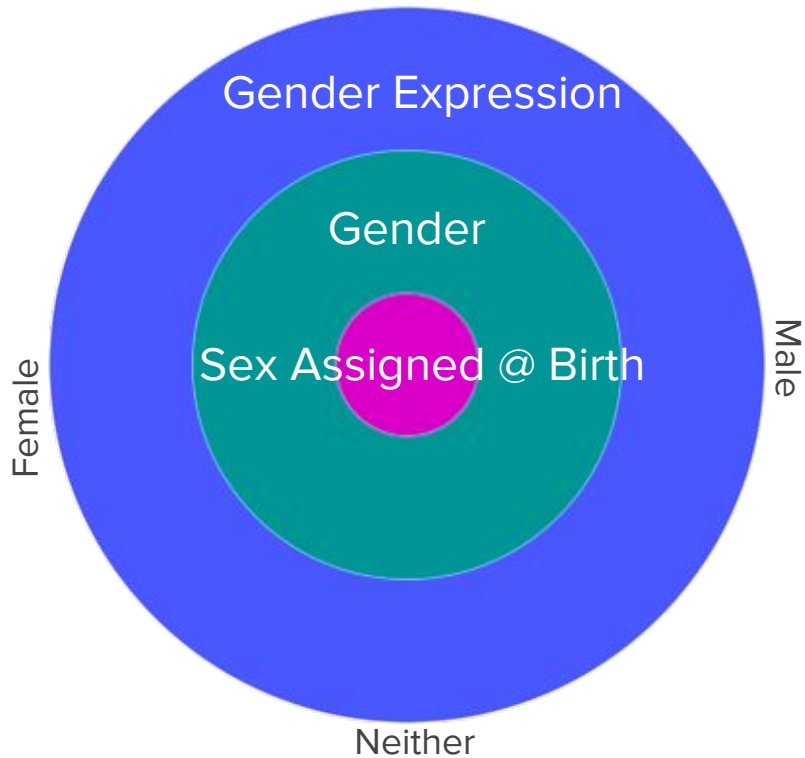
\* Microaggressions have a macro affect. Regardless of the name, discrimination is still discrimination.

# Shifting from a Binary Mindset to an Expansive Mindset

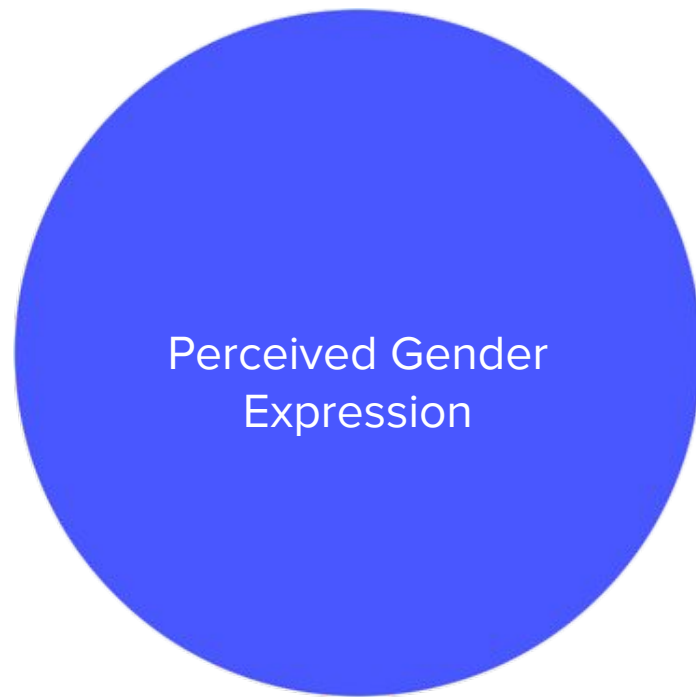


## How we can perceive our Gender

Both



## How our gender could be perceived by strangers



# *Some* Terms for Genders, Expressions, and Community Roles

- Non-Binary
- Transgender
- Muxe
- Cisgender
- Hijra/Kinnar
- Agender
- Gender Fluid
- Gender Non-Conforming
- Femme
- Butch
- Kathoey/Phuying
- Androgynous
- Two-Spirit



Female



Male



Intersex



Transgender



Genderless



Non-binary  
transgender



Other gender



Transgender



Hetero



Lesbian



Gay



Bisexual

**When did this all start?**



**What important context!**  
**Where do I start the work?**

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# Good news, you already started it! Spoiler alert, it's a never-ending cycle of learning and unlearning.

- Self-Reflect on our current habits:
  - Recognizing folks outside of the binary
  - Normalize asking/stating pronouns
  - Familiarizing ourselves with more terms to explain/describe gender
- Become comfortable with change:
  - What is true for us may not be the same in the future
  - What is true for ourselves may not be true for others



**Remember these examples? Let's be more intentional with our wording**

- ★ Addressing Individuals
- ★ Addressing groups
- ★ Everyday items



# Uninclusive wording

English: dude, girl/gurl/gorl, guys, ladies, mom, dad, sister, brother, niece, nephew

Spanish: “-o, -os, -a, -as,”  
Latino/a, amigo/a, “a todos,”  
el/la, hermano/a, esposo/a,  
madre, padre, “Estoy  
cansado/a”

\*Avoid gendering objects altogether

## Let's try these instead!

English: Mx., friend, sibling,  
nibling, person, everyone, friends,  
icons, scholars, my community,  
people, folks, y'all, loved ones,  
parent

Spanish: “-e/es, -x, -i/is, -@,  
-u/us,” Latinx, amigue, les/lues,  
espose, abuel@, niñx, hermane, les  
padres, “Estoy cansadx”

# English Pronouns\*

They/them/their

Ey/em/eir

Xe/xem/xers

Zhe or Ze/hir/hirs

Fae/Faer Faers

# Spanish Pronouns\*

Ele

Ellx

Elle

Ol/olles

Elli

**Non-Verbal:**

Ellæ

Ell\_

Ellu

Ell\*

Ell@

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\* This is by no means a complete list, and language expands/adjusts all the time!

## How to sign 'they'

in American Sign Language:



## How to sign 'she'

in American Sign Language:



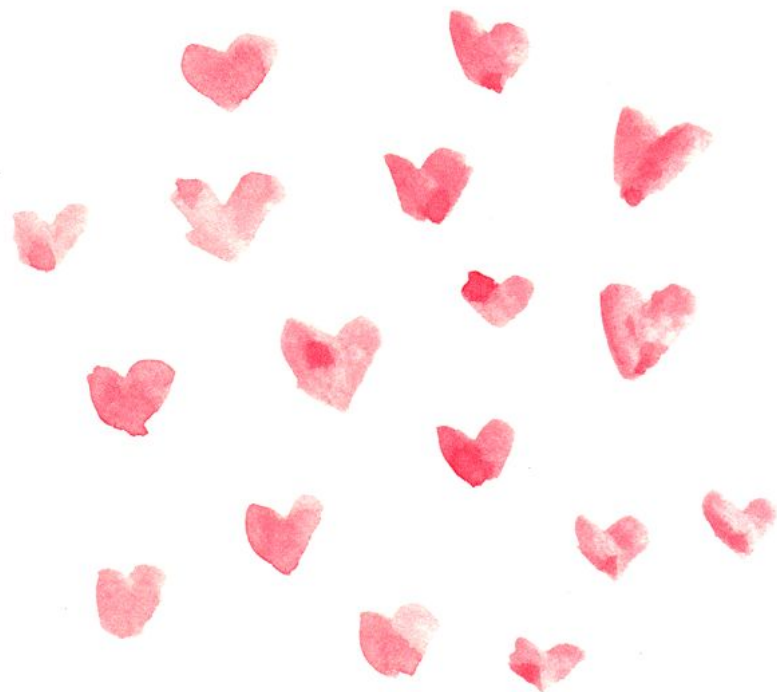
## How to sign 'he'

in American Sign Language:



A highlight on American Sign Language (ASL)!

# A bit of wholesomeness to end on



## THEY

This person I know  
Wants to be called they.  
It could bring us much closer  
To see them that way.

It's a strange thing to think  
And harder to say,  
But they are so happy  
When the effort is made.

For all the theys and thems  
It is this that I pray,  
We be kind and accepting  
And just let them be they.

# Thank you!



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