

Transcript from the Freelance Friday #EFAChat, December 18, 2015

Topic: Inclusive and Bias-free Language

- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) Welcome to the Freelance Friday tweet chat! Use hashtag [#EFAchat](#) to be included in today's transcript.
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) Today's [#EFAchat](#) is being moderated by Lucy Spencer, a copyeditor from Northwest Indiana.
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) This [#EFAchat](#) will cover editorial issues surrounding inclusive and bias-free language.
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) We'll use Q1, Q2, etc. for questions; please use A1, A2, etc. for your answers to each question.
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Let's introduce ourselves. Where are you from, and what do you do?
- [Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) [@EFAFreelancers #EFAchat](#) I'm from the Boston area. I recently switched to freelance after 6+ years of working as an in-house non-fiction ed
- [Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#) [#EFAchat](#) Intro: Translator & medical writer, Germany, very interested in inclusive language, often find it challenging
- [Crystal Holdefer @CrystalHoldefer](#) I'm from NC and I'm a writer, editor, and social media manager. [#EFAchat](#)
- [Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#) I'm Julia from New York and I'm new to freelance editing. Hoping to learn some things from this chat! [#efachat](#)
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q1: Why be concerned about inclusive or bias-free language? Educate us.
- [Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) [#EFAChat](#) A1: Worst-case scenario you eliminate an audience by insulting them.
- [Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#) [#EFAchat](#) A1: You don't want to alienate or exclude any readers.
- [EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q2: Singular "they": acceptable inclusive usage, necessary compromise, or bad grammar?
- [Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#) [#EFAchat](#) A2: I wish there was as simple a solution in German :-)) I say: use it, and people will get used

to it.

[Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#)

A2: I've recently come over to the singular "they."
Language changes, and we use it when speaking all the
time. [#efachat](#)

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#)

[#EFAChat](#) A2: I prefer to rephrase rather than use "they"
as the non-gendered singular pronoun, but I'm fine w/ it as
a necessary compromise.

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[#EFAChat](#) Usage seems to trump grammar on singular
"they".

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[#EFAChat](#) Q3: Pronouns: publisher's, author's, editor's, or
subject's preference?

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#)

A3: Subject first! Then probably the publisher's. Interested
in others' answers to this...[#efachat](#)

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[#EFAChat](#) Q4: Is it always unhelpful to use "woman" as an
adjective (e.g., woman doctor)?

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[#EFAChat](#) Google "ask me about my pronouns" to see
what was behind Q3.

[Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#)

[#EFAChat](#) A4. Not a native speaker, but I would use
female rather than woman as an adjective.

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[#EFAChat](#) Q5: How much effort do you put into gender
neutrality when editing fiction?

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#)

A4: I'd only use "woman doctor" if her gender is relevant to
the greater meaning of the piece, e.g., women in STEM
[#efachat](#)

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[#EFAChat @UWLipow](#) Personally, I like "female" rather
than "woman" as an adjective too - most of the time.
("Woman suffrage" comes to mind.)

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If you're just joining the [#EFAChat](#), welcome! Jump in at
any time!

[Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#)

[@JuliaJOC15 #EFAChat](#) A4: But that's different, bc it's
not a male purse, but a purse for/used by men, right?

[Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#)

A4: But to respond to the sentiment, not the grammar--
specify gender when relevant. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) Don't forget to use the hashtag [#EFAChat](#) in your tweets to be included in the conversation, in case people are searching for only [#EFAChat](#).

[Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#) [@EFAFreelancers @UWLipow](#) I would say "women's suffrage" but maybe that's just me? [#efachat](#)

[Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#) [@JuliaJOC15 @EFAFreelancers](#) No, me too. [#EFAchat](#)

[Crystal Holdefer @CrystalHoldefer](#) [@UWLipow](#) Yeah, woman feels like an old way of saying it. [#EFAchat](#)

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q6: Describe the first people to live in a country: native, indigenous, aboriginal, or ---?

[Crystal Holdefer @CrystalHoldefer](#) [@ melsroom](#) Good response! [#EFAchat](#)

[Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#) A6: I feel like different areas have different preferred words. For example, I most often hear "aboriginal" wrt Australia [#efachat](#)

[Ulrike Walter-Lipow @UWLipow](#) [#EFAchat](#) Gotta go, but will read up tomorrow, thanks for this!

[Crystal Holdefer @CrystalHoldefer](#) [@JuliaJOC15](#) Oh, really? I didn't know that. [#efachat](#)

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) A6: What I do: 1) Research how broadly inclusive I need to be as defined by a timeline, e.g., native back to Paleoindian? [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q6 This comes from the flak surrounding "Indigenous Peoples Day" and the "Native American vs. Indian" question.

[Crystal Holdefer @CrystalHoldefer](#) [@CherylStephens](#) Oh, wow, surprising. [#efachat](#)

[Julia O'Connell @JuliaJOC15](#) A6: Whereas I've always seen "native" and never "aboriginal" with regard to America 2/2 [#efachat](#)

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) A6: 2) Determine what the preferred term is. If it's a sweeping statement, I'd use "native" in the US, but (1/2) [#efachat](#)

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) A6 (2/2):...but be as specific as possible if I can determine a specific tribe, nation, or other identifying group. [#efachat](#)

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAChat @vsandbrook](#) Interesting question, since new evidence of "who was here first" keeps popping up every so often!

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q7: Is the transition from form-identified to self-identified race, gender, and ethnicity problematic? For whom?

[Mel @ melsroom](#) [@CherylStephens](#) could be when a name can be either male or female. [#EFAChat](#)

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#) Oh, I thought I would miss today's [#efachat](#). So pleased you're still going!

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q8: What's the difference between "he is a diabetic" and "he has diabetes"?

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#) A7: Really torn about my answer for this. 140 characters doesn't cut it for me. [#efachat](#)

[Louann Pope Edit @PopeEditing](#) A8: It's not respectful to define someone solely by an illness. [#EFAchat](#)

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q4 (using 'woman') as an adjective - Only when you must identify the gender of the subject and would do so whether male or female

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) Q9: Chicago 5.221-230 and AMA 11.10 offer guidance on inclusive language. Where else can we find current standards?

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q5 (how much effort to be gender-neutral) - If you haven't lived it, people have no idea this is a HUGE issue and so important.

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAChat](#) Do you have a favorite resource for bias-free language conventions?

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#) [#EFAChat](#) Q3 - Pronouns should always be the subject's choice, without exception. It's rude not to accept how people identify

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#) [#EFAchat](#) tip: Avoid implying helplessness by describing people as victims of a condition or suffering from a disease.

[Louann Pope Edit @PopeEditing](#) Q9: I recommend [@consciousstyles](#) which gathers together many resources [#EFAchat](#)

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#)

[#EFAChat](#) A9 GLAAD has an excellent online resource for respectful LGBTQ terminology:
<http://www.glaad.org/reference>

[EFA International @EFAFreelancers](#)

[#EFAChat](#) Takeaway: People first, traditions second. Consider how it feels to be defined by something you can't control.

[Louann Pope Edit @PopeEditing](#)

Q9: I also pulled together some LGBT language tips in a blog post a while ago <http://ow.ly/W5VGp> [#EFAchat](#)

[Sonnet Fitzgerald @Sonnet_Fitz](#)

[#EFAChat](#) Otherwise ASK your author / subject / reader! People generally appreciate their preferences being known and respected

[Victoria Sandbrook @vsandbrook](#)

A9: I've turned to group style guides, including [@NABJ](#)'s <http://www.nabj.org/?styleguide> [#EFAChat](#)

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[#EFAChat](#) Keep the discussion going. Editorial professionals should discuss changing usage and whether it should change style.

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It's time to end today's [#EFAchat](#). The written transcript will end here. Thanks for a great discussion! See you next time.