

Sexism in Language

- Why avoid sexism in language?
 - Some people feel insulted by sexist language.
 - Sexist language creates an image of a society where women have lower social and economic status than men.
 - Using nonsexist language may change the way that users of English think about gender roles.

8

Sexism in Language

- Avoid ambiguity in gender identity or gender role by choosing nouns, pronouns, and adjectives that specifically describe people.
- Sexist bias can occur when pronouns are used carelessly, as when the masculine pronoun *he* is used to refer to both sexes or when the masculine or feminine pronoun is used exclusively to define roles by sex (e.g., "the nurse ... *she*").
- The use of *man* as a generic noun or as an ending for an occupational title (e.g., *policeman*) can be ambiguous and may imply incorrectly that all persons in the group are male.
- Be clear about whether you mean one gender or both genders.

9

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10

How Can You Avoid Gender Bias?

- Someone has left his briefcase behind.
- Man, mankind
- A fashion model is usually obsessive about her diet.
- To man a project
- The man-machine interface
- Manpower
- Man's search for knowledge
- Research scientists often neglect their wives and children.
- Woman doctor, lady lawyer, male nurse, woman driver
- Mothering
- Chairman of an academic department

11

How Can You Avoid Gender Bias?

- Foreman, mailman, salesmanship
- Cautious men and timid women
- Participants were 16 men and 4 women. The women were housewives.
- Freshman, penmanship
- Walt Whitman

12

Creative Writing

- In some languages, gender specific language is very difficult to avoid.
 - In Spanglish, **chicano** is grammatically masculine and unmarked, and **chicana** is grammatically feminine and markedly female.
 - In German, **Professoren** is grammatically masculine and unmarked, and **Professorinnen** is grammatically feminine and markedly female.

13

Creative Writing

- Gender-neutral Spanglish
 - **Chican@** in place of 'chicano' and 'chicana'
- Gender-neutral German
 - **ProfessorIn** in place of 'Professoren' and 'Professorinnen'

14

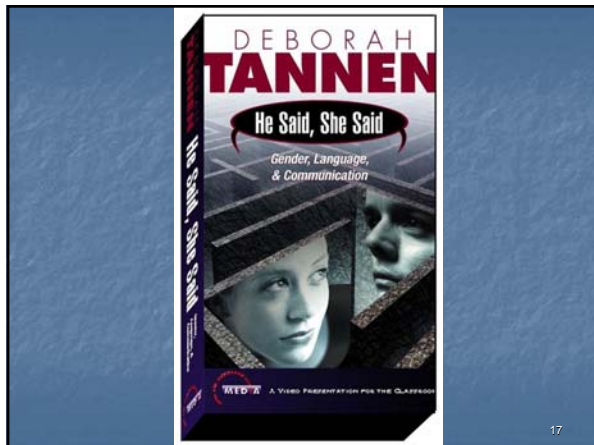
Who are these people and what do they do?



15

- A father and his son were both in a car accident. The father was killed, and the son was rushed to the hospital, where he needed an emergency operation to save his life. The surgeon examined the boy before the operation and said, "I can't operate on this child. He is my son."
- How can this be?

16



17

He Said, She Said

- Deborah Tannen on gender, language, and communication
- The ways in which men and women talk, and misunderstand each other
- A 50-minute video in seven parts

18

He Said, She Said

1. Boys and girls
2. Status and connection
3. Directness and indirectness
4. Public talk and private talk
5. Ritual opposition
6. Conversational style
7. Conclusion

19

Last Thoughts

- In all of this we have treated gender as binary: male or female.
- But we recognize different gender expressions in addition to these two: **LGBT** (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual) is one expression.

20
