

Oxford Univ. Tells Students to Stop Saying 'He' and 'She'

[Via the Daily Mail](#):

Oxford University is encouraging students to use the gender-neutral pronoun 'ze' instead of 'she and 'he'.

The students' union wrote in a leaflet that the move was intended to reduce the risk of transgender students being offended.

Students hope that the use of 'ze' will continue into university lectures and seminars, reported [The Sunday Times](#).

According to Oxford University's behaviour code, using the wrong pronoun to define a transgender person is an offence.

It's a troubling development. An LGBT spokesman told MailOnline that, "this issue isn't about being politically correct or censoring anyone. It's about acknowledging the fact of changing gender identities **and respecting people's right to not define themselves as male or female.**"

I respect one's right to not define themselves as male or female; that means nothing to me and asks nothing of me. But that's not the situation. They are telling students what they must say. This is a problem.

If telling people that they cannot say certain words is an intrusive act, selecting words they must use is doubly so, particularly when the words are "[non-standard elements of the English language](#)" created by a small group of ideologically motivated people. The fact that the edict is issued in the name of tolerance and diversity doesn't change the fact that it's intrusive.

Jordan Peterson, a University of Toronto psychology professor, understands this better than most. His university allegedly is [laying the groundwork](#) to sack him for his refusal to use genderless pronouns and for speaking out against legislation that stands to make refusal to use genderless pronouns a criminal offense.

Unlike most college faculty, Peterson is not taking this bit of Orwellian Newspeak lying down. It's apparently a principles thing.

"There's a big difference between being required to not say something, and being required to say something. It's a different category of law," he [said](#). "One is closing your mouth. The other one is putting a hand inside you and forcing you to be a puppet."

So far, most action on the genderless pronouns front has taken place in Europe and Canada.

Will similar speech codes be making their way to the U.S. Or does the First Amendment make such a thing a non-starter here in the states? My hunch is that we'll soon know.

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Jon Miltimore is senior editor of Intellectual Takeout. [Follow him on Facebook](#).