

Suggestions for Inclusive Language

Recognizing the ways in which oppression and exclusion, as well as power and privilege, operate through language; and acknowledging that using the self-chosen labels of marginalized groups is an important step to recognizing the diversity of identities, bodies, and relationships in our communities and in our scholarship, the DEI Committee of the Austrian Studies Association has compiled the following document with suggestions for inclusive language. The purpose of this document is to share information about best practices we have noted among our fellow academics and to help those who are looking for guidance about how to make their scholarship and teaching more affirming of the lived experiences of individuals and groups that have been historically marginalized. It is not intended to be exhaustive nor prescriptive. We see this document as the beginning of a conversation and invite you to send questions, comments, or suggestions to asa.essay.prize@gmail.com.

The Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Austrian Studies Association

Antisemitism, spelling: We follow the recommendation of the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#) to use the unhyphenated spelling of ‘antisemitism’

Black and white / Schwarz und weiß, spelling: When referring to groups in ethnic, racial, or cultural terms, ‘Black’ should be capitalized, while white remain lowercase in order to express that ‘Black’ is understood ‘as a heritage, an experience, a cultural and personal identity’ (Catherine MacKinnon) that ‘has historically been denied.’ (Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw). We recommend capitalizing ‘Schwarz’ (and not ‘weiß’) for the same reasons, as suggested by the [Initiative Schwarzer Deutscher e.V.](#)

LGBTIQ+ Inclusive language:

Where the gender identity of a group or person is not confirmed, gender neutral terms and pronouns should be used (e.g. ‘people’ instead of ‘men and women’, ‘they’ instead of ‘he/she’). In German, non-binary gender inclusive endings should be used instead of the ‘generische Maskulinum’ (i.e. ‘der Leser’) or the female and masculine forms (i.e. ‘Leserinnen und Leser’ or ‘LeserInnen’). There are a range of conventions in German designated to include non-binary gender identities, such as the star, colon, or underscore (Leser*innen, Leser:innen, Leser_innen). The colon (Leser:innen) appears to be the most accessible option for readers with visual impairments. When addressing a person, use first names (or even first name + last name), rather than using Mr., Ms., etc. unless the person indicates otherwise.

Be aware of the correct terms when writing about LGTBIQ themes, such as:

- Transgender/ trans (instead of ‘transsexual’)
- Sexuality/sexual orientation (instead of ‘preference’ etc.)

- Cross-dressing (instead of 'transvestite')
- Intersex (instead of 'hermaphrodite')
- Same-sex relationship (instead of 'gay' or 'lesbian' relationship, unless the couple indicates otherwise).

Inclusive language with regard to disability:

To make clear that disabilities do not characterize a person, formulations like 'person/people with disabilities' should be used (instead of 'the disabled', 'handicapped' etc., in German: 'Menschen mit Behinderungen'). Some disability activists prefer the spelling 'dis_ability'/'dis_abled' (Be_hinderung / be_hindert) to highlight that it is external societal structures that create barriers and lack of accessibility rather than physical or mental impairments themselves.

Discriminatory language in (historical) sources: As students and scholars of Austrian history and culture, we are committed to the objective and truthful representation of (historical and contemporary) source texts. At the same time, in order to minimize the reproduction of discriminatory and racist language, we caution against the view that the citation of racial (and other) slurs is unproblematic as long as it is marked as a quotation. We urge careful contextualization of such language in every case, and, where there exist conventions to flag a specific slur without typing it out, we encourage the use of these solutions.