

A branch of JEDI work at CIVHC, the Inclusive Language subcommittee distributes educational materials on topics related to monthly heritage and community observances. The words we use to describe and communicate with our communities hold great importance. Using inclusive language that reflects our values as an organization helps historically excluded communities feel included and safe in showing up as themselves, as well as illustrates our dedication to greater equity by fostering mutual understanding. The use of inclusive language also equips us to better understand and communicate with our teammates, and helps foster belonging in our workplace by breaking down barriers and building trust.

Starting as a local California celebration in 1978, and passed into public law by Congress in 1987, Women’s History Month is a time to reflect on women past and present who have championed equal rights, and celebrate their contributions. The 2024 theme is “Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.”

Women’s History, Close to Home:

- **Leading Suffrage in the Nation**
 - Colorado voters were the first in the nation to [secure women’s voting rights through popular referendum](#). The success of the 1893 state referendum led to over 150 statutes enacted by women throughout the years, including establishing the Columbine as the state flower in 1899
- **Colorado Women’s History**
 - [Dr. Justina Ford](#): Colorado’s first Black doctor, delivered 7,000 babies
 - [Amache Prowers](#): known as a cultural mediator who shaped Colorado

Inclusive Language Adjustments:

- ‘Hysterical’
- ‘Ladylike’
- ‘Catfight’

Conversation starters:

- Expressing discomfort
 - See flowcharts on page 2

Consulting Coworkers:

We would love to hear from you! In coming months, the subcommittee will send outreach emails to collect input from staff on Heritage months. Stay tuned for more!

CO APCD Numbers

- Data Dive: [Breast Cancer Screenings](#)
- Data Dive: [Cost of Labor and Delivery](#)
- Data Dive: [Cervical Cancer](#)

Terms to Reconsider

'hysterical'

'ladylike'

'catfight'

Suggested Alternative

'hilarious'

'considerate'

'debate'

Throughout history (as recently as 1980) hysteria has been classified as a sex-selective disorder, affecting only people with a uterus.

Reflects praise for women who are not distributing traits interpreted as threatening to patriarchal expectations.

When two men or groups of men are debating, it’s called debating or discussion. If they yell, it’s called robust or heated.

➔ A great practice, [as said by Gloria Steinem](#): “Don’t mention her young children unless you would also mention his, or describe her clothes unless you would describe his, or say she’s shrill or attractive unless the same adjectives would be applied to a man.”

Women's History Month Toolkit: Additional Resources

CIVHC is proud to be embedded in community. Here are some local women-owned, operated, and organized options. Please feel free to share your personal recommendations in the General Slack channel!

Visit: Self-led Public Art Tour by Women Artists	Listen: Rosetta Tharpe (a Black queer woman known as the 'godmother of rock n' roll)
Women Business Owners	
Volunteer/Donate: Women with Hattitude (Event benefits the Colorado Women's Voice Fund)	Read: Muscogee Poet and Author Joy Harjo (the 23rd United States Poet Laureate)

Further Reading:

- [MSU Denver's article](#) looking at how the offers for women to vote were often intended exclusively for white women
- [Harvard Business Review's article](#) on gender bias in the workplace, which contains a book list for recommended reading
- [CU Anschutz's article](#) about the intersections of women's health and workplaces
- ["The Influence of Black Lesbian Transgender Blues Women of the Harlem Renaissance"](#)

References:

- Hysterical: The Daily Cardinal's Opinion piece '[The History of Hysteria](#)'
- [Colorado Women Who Shaped History](#)
- [UNLADYLIKE2020](#)

Resources:

What to do when you HEAR non-inclusive language

Consider taking these three steps when you hear language that is not inclusive. Remember, be intentional and do not overreact or shame others. Mistakes happen and can be teaching moments.

Inquire

INQUIRE: Seek to understand where the individual is coming from.
"I noticed you used the phrase...What does that mean to you?"

Inform

INFORM: Help educate the individual on the historical context or negative connotations associated with the word(s) or phrase(s) they used.
"I see, thank you for explaining. To me that word/phrase means..."

Empathize

EMPATHIZE: Focus on how it made you feel, not anyone else.
"It made me feel uncomfortable because..."

What to do if you SAY a non-inclusive word or phrase

Forgive

FORGIVE: Acknowledge what you said and forgive yourself. Apologize to an individual(s), if appropriate.

Start Over

START OVER: Recognize that you used a word or phrase that you are trying to remove from your vocabulary. Consider saying, "Let me start that sentence or thought over."

Understand

UNDERSTAND: Reflect on why you said it. Was it the first thing that came to mind or were you in an environment where it was being used?

Share

SHARE: Tell someone what you said. Consider identifying an accountability buddy to help you remove non-inclusive language from your vocabulary.

Practice

PRACTICE: Make a list of words or phrases you want to remove from your vocabulary and alternative words or phrases you can use instead. Actively practice changing your language.

Flowcharts via Deloitte's [Inclusive Language Resource Blog](#)