***DEI Guidelines for Corwin Authors:***

***Considerations for Promoting Social Justice***

Language is ever evolving. There is no one right way to reflect the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This brief guide is not meant to be prescriptive. Instead, it is meant to help you ask probing questions about your writing. Many of you hold varied, deeply informed, and thoughtful convictions about the words you choose to convey your thoughts and ideas. You will find more questions than answers here because we trust you to seek out additional resources and make informed decisions. For you to understand Corwin’s stance regarding writing about issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we’d like to begin with our antiracism statement.

**Antiracism Statement**

Corwin acknowledges the presence and persistence of structural racism in our education system and our society at large. Through our publications, professional learning services, and our own organizational practices, we strive to actively dismantle injustice and bring attention to damages suffered by marginalized Americans over the course of many generations. This work includes centering the voices of BIPOC authors, thought leaders, and school partners, as well as white allies committed to antiracist actions. As professionals and as an organization committed to reframing deficit-laden mental models, we work toward embodying cultural humility, viewing our work through an anti-oppression lens, and identifying and challenging issues of race and their impact on our organization as well as on schools and other institutions. We affirm that the work of becoming anti-racist is a life-long endeavor, beginning with the learning that takes place in our schools and continuing through our professional lifespans. Through our words and deeds, we commit to the work of radical healing.

**Disrupting Social Injustice**

Jamila Lyiscott begins her TEDx talk, [*Why English Class Is Silencing Students of Color*](https://youtu.be/u4dc1axRwE4), with these words: “What if I told you that the way that you use language every day had the power to either uphold or disrupt social injustice? What if I told you that because language is saturated with history and culture and memory – the way that is policed within our classrooms and our communities is deeply connected to racism and colonialism?” Throughout the 22-minute talk Lyiscott asks you to consider the intersections of language, race, and power. Her definition of liberation literacies argues for the understanding of language from the perspective of the oppressed. Taking on this perspective allows us to “reimagine the way that we interpret the world.”

When you consider how to weave in equity and inclusion and diversity into your work, you might begin by taking a moment to try to reimagine the purpose of language using Lyiscott’s definition and then try applying that lens to your manuscript. How does your manuscript disrupt white supremacy? How does it uphold social justice?

For more concrete guidance, here are 6 Tips for incorporating Liberatory Language Practices from [Alex Kapitan (2021)](https://radicalcopyeditor.com/top-posts/):

1. Be appropriately specific but never make assumptions. The goal of this tip is to avoid making blanket statements about a group of people.
   * Instead of *Latino* > *Puerto Rican, Mexican, Cuban,* etc.
   * Instead of *Africa* > *Morocco, Egypt, Namibia,* etc.
   * Instead of *people of color* > *Black, Latinx,* etc.
   * Instead of *people with disabilities* > *wheelchair users, neurodivergent people, blind and/or deaf students*
2. Avoid euphemisms – for example, *at-risk* or *underrepresented* where *historically oppressed* or *Black youth* might be more accurate.
3. Avoid dehumanizing language – for example, pathologizing language such as *suffering from, victims, struggling with.* Despite the term *English learner* being used by the federal government, many educators prefer to focus on the strengths of students rather than deficits and instead use the term *emergent bilingual.*
4. Respect self-identity language – find out what terms the people you’re writing about use and follow their lead. For example, *Latinx* vs. *Mexican American* vs. *Chican@* vs. *Hispanic*.
5. Practice gender-inclusive language – use singular *they, their* rather than binary *he/she, his/her* language, as endorsed and encouraged by most style guides, including APA and CMS.
6. Challenge imperialism.
   * Instead of *America* > *United States*
   * Instead of *our culture* > *U.S. culture*, *mainstream culture*

**Additional Tips**

1. **Make Decisions Explicit**

* Explain why you capitalize “Black” but not “white”; or why you capitalize both “Black” and “White”.
* Explain why you use Latinx vs Hispanic or Latino.
* Explain why you use or do not use a hyphen in (for example) Asian American. Ask yourself how readers might interpret your choice. Did you familiarize yourself with the implications of each choice? Ensure that you are consistent with your choice throughout the entire manuscript.
* If needed, submit a style guide along with your manuscript, indicating how certain words should be capitalized, italicized, hyphenated, etc., for your editors to reference during production.

1. **Use Words Carefully**

For example, people of color are not “diverse.” All human beings bring diversity to a given group. When writers use language implying that straight white men are the norm, they may unintentionally perpetuate the othering of people outside of that group and promote white masculine heteronormative views of the world.

1. **Ask Yourself**

* Am I approaching the subject in a way that is actively antioppressive and liberatory?
* Have I considered the subject from a variety of perspectives?
* Have I sought out a sensitivity reader? Have I asked someone with expertise in this area to give me feedback on perspectives I might have excluded?

The editorial staff at Corwin is always more than happy to work with you to help you in this endeavor. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions!

**Suggested Resources**

[Diversity Style Guide](https://www.diversitystyleguide.com/)

[APA Style’s Bias-Free Language](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language)

[The Conscious Style Guide](https://consciousstyleguide.com/)

[Word List of Diversity and Contested Terms](https://www.the-efa.org/word-list-introduction/)

[A list of resources can be found on the Antiracist Writing Pedagogy page](https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/support/writingcenter/faculty/pedagogy/antiracist-writing-pedagogy)

[The Radical Copyeditor: Alex Kapitan](https://radicalcopyeditor.com/top-posts/)

[*Why English Class Is Silencing Students of Color* by Jamila Lyiscott](https://youtu.be/u4dc1axRwE4)