Respectful Transgender Terms for Media Use

PROBLEMATIC: "transgenders," "a transgender"
PREFERRED: "transgender people," "a transgender person"
Transgender should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. Do not say, "Tony is a transgender," or "The parade included many transgenders." Instead say, "Tony is a transgender person," or "The parade included many transgender people."

PROBLEMATIC: "transgendered"
PREFERRED: "transgender"
The word transgender never needs the extraneous "ed" at the end of the word. In fact, such a construction is grammatically incorrect. Only verbs can be transformed into participles by adding "-ed" to the end of the word, and transgender is an adjective, not a verb.

PROBLEMATIC: "sex change," "pre-operative," "post-operative"
PREFERRED: "transition"
Referring to a sex change operation, or using terms such as pre- or post-operative, inaccurately suggests that one must have surgery in order to truly change one's sex.

PROBLEMATIC: "hermaphrodite"
PREFERRED: "intersex person"
The word "hermaphrodite" is an outdated, stigmatizing and misleading word, usually used to sensationalize intersex people.

DEFAMATORY TERMINOLOGY

Defamatory: "deceptive," "fooling," "pretending," "posing," or "masquerading"
Gender identity is an integral part of a person's identity. Please do not characterize transgender people as "deceptive," as "fooling" other people, or as "pretending" to be, "posing" or "masquerading" as a man or a woman. Such descriptions are extremely insulting.

Defamatory: "she-male," "he-she," "it," "trannie," "tranny," "gender-bender"
These words only serve to dehumanize transgender people and should not be used (*See [Defamatory Language](#)*).

NAME & PRONOUN USAGE

We encourage you to use a transgender person's chosen name. Often transgender people cannot afford a legal name change or are not yet old enough to change their name legally. They should be afforded the same respect for their chosen name as anyone else who lives by a name other than their birth name (e.g., celebrities).

We also encourage you to ask transgender people which pronoun they would like you to use. A person who identifies as a certain gender, whether or not they have taken hormones or had surgery, should be referred to using the pronouns appropriate for that gender.

If it is not possible to ask the person which pronoun he or she prefers, use the pronoun that is consistent with the person's appearance and gender expression. For example, if the person wears a dress and uses the name "Susan," feminine pronouns are appropriate.

It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around either the transgender person's chosen name or the pronoun that reflects their gender identity.

When describing transgender people, use the correct term or terms to describe their gender identity. A person who is assigned male at birth and identifies female is a transgender woman, whereas a person who is assigned female at birth and identifies as male is a transgender man. **However, it is always important to question the relevance of identifying someone as transgender at all, rather than just a woman or a man.**

Avoid pronoun confusion when examining the stories and backgrounds of transgender people prior to their transition. It is usually best to report on transgender people's stories from the present day instead of narrating them from some point or multiple points in the past, thus avoiding confusion and potentially disrespectful use of incorrect pronouns.

Adapted from GLAAD Media Reference Guide - http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender