



DREXEL UNIVERSITY
College of
Computing &
Informatics



DIVERSITY,
EQUITY *and*
INCLUSION
COUNCIL



what is



what is **a pronoun?**

what is **international pronouns day?**

what is **some history on pronouns?**

swipe





what is a pronoun? ✕

In English, a pronoun is a word used to replace a noun when the context has already been defined.


Ex:

I got a new shirt. **It** has a hole!

I saw Alice at the store and got **his** autograph.

Where are **you** going?



what is international pronouns
day? 

"International Pronouns Day happens each year on the third Wednesday of October. Referring to people by the pronouns they determine for themselves is basic to human dignity. International Pronouns Day seeks to make respecting, sharing, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace."

www.glsen.org

1375

what is some history on
pronouns?



In 1375, the singular "they" is first used in the medieval romance novel *William and the Werewolf*.

They is a pronoun that can refer to one person or many people:

Alex sent me an email. I need to respond to **them**.

The students looked stressed during **their** exam today.

1660

what is some history on
pronouns?



In 1660, George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, wrote a book labeling anyone who used singular "you" an idiot or a fool

Singular (one person):

He **is** a fool

She **is** a fool

You **are** a fool

Plural (many people):

He and she **are** fools

We **are** fools

1858

what is some history on
pronouns?

In 1858, Charles Crozat Converse
proposes "thon", the contracted form
of "that one"

Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary
recognizes "thon" in 1903. Merriam
Webster follows in 1934.

Brit. physicist.] See ATOMIC THEORY.
thon (thŏn), *pron. sing. & pl.; nom. THON; poss. THON's*
(thŏnz); *obj. THON.* [Contr. of *that one.*] A proposed
genderless pronoun of the third person.
thon (thŏn), *pron. & adj.* That yonder. *Scot., N. of Eng.,*
& Ir.
thon (thŏn). Var. of **THEN.** *Obs. exc. Dial.*
thon'der (thŏn'dĕr), *adv. & adj.* Yonder. *Chiefly Scot.*
& N. of Eng.

1955

what is some history on
pronouns?



In 1955, New York Times releases an
article *He, She, and Thon* calling
the phrase "he or she" clumsy

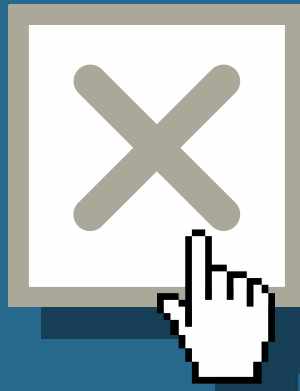
1994

what is some history on
pronouns?



"We must remember that the English pronoun system is not fixed. Several centuries ago the objective plural you drove the nominative and objective singulars thou and thee and the nominative plural ye out of general use. It appears to have happened for social reasons, not linguistic reasons. They, their, them have been used continuously for six centuries, and have been disparaged in such use for about two centuries."

Merriam Webster's Dictionary of English Usage



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