

SELF-GUIDED LEARNING

YOUR GUIDE TO PRONOUNS

BOOK REVIEW:

In the Time of the Butterflies

By Julia Alvarez

In this historical fiction piece based on a true story, Julia Alvarez captures the voices of the 4 Mirabal sisters, Dedé, Patria, Mariá Teresa, and Minerva who resisted oppression under the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo in the mid to late 20th century Dominican Republic. Minerva, described as the ringleader of "the butterflies" opposes Trujillo by attending secret meetings with revolutionaries, while Dedé and the rest of her family attempt to keep her resistance a secret.

At the request of Trujillo, the Mirabal family attends a party that goes awry, ending with Papá in prison, and Mamá and Minerva desperately trying to secure his release. The book takes its audience on a journey through the sisters' leadership in the revolution, their time in prison, letters, journal entries, family secrets, and love affairs.

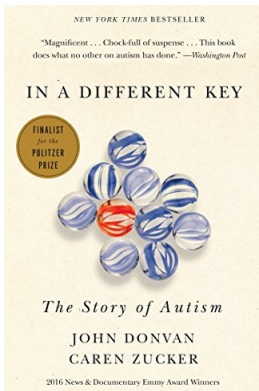
Revealing the beauty in the desolate, and the importance of storytelling, Alvarez captures the complexity of sisterhood, the violence of authoritarianism, and the deadly, imperative work of fighting for justice.

[Want to read more, find the book here.](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS

In a Different Key



Centering on the story of the first child diagnosed with autism, ***In a Different Key*** explores the history of autism, through the milestones of progress towards understanding and accepting it. Read about speakers, scientists, lawyers, and families who changed the perception of this disorder. [Find it here.](#)

The Good Immigrant



This book contains a collection of 21 essays written by self-identified British authors who are women of color, sharing their experiences. They explore topics on "otherness"

and identity as well as racism and immigration. [Read it here.](#)

PODCASTS



Profess-Hers Podcast

Described as "women + lit, history, and culture" the ***Profess-Hers Podcast*** highlights women's participation in everything from the suffragette movement to WW2, as well as their professional journeys in fields such as investigative journalism and sports. If you're seeking education on a variety of topics centering on women, this is the podcast for you.

By definition, a pronoun is a word that refers either to the participants in the discourse (e.g., I, you) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse. In recent years, sharing gender pronouns has become more common as a way to inform those we interact with on how to identify us correctly. Using people's correct pronouns decreases suicide and depression risks.

Often pronouns are she/her, he/him, or the gender-neutral, they/them. However, pronouns are not limited to those three options. Using and respecting the chosen pronouns of the people around you ensures that others feel valued, validated, and included. It is important to note that someone's pronouns do not correlate to gender or gender expression.

Biological sex is not a gender either. Sex refers to physical differences between male, female, or intersex people based on physiological characteristics, including chromosomes. At the same time, gender is a social construct "that reflects the social and cultural role of sex within a community." Gender identity is determined by each individual but is often shaped by upbringing and environment. Gender is not limited to the concepts of man or woman; it is a broad spectrum. "People may identify with genders that are different from the sex assigned at birth, some people do not identify with any gender, while others identify with multiple genders. These identities may include transgender, nonbinary, or gender-neutral. Only the person themselves can determine what their gender identity is, and this can change over time." according to Senior Lecturer in Psychology and Clinical Psychologist at Victoria University, Glen Hosking.

Hosking offers seven tips for respecting people's pronouns:

- 1) Don't assume another person's gender or pronouns
- 2) Just ask! Ask what pronouns people use
- 3) Share your pronouns- in-person, virtually, in your Zoom or Social Media bios can open the conversation too
- 4) If you get someone's pronouns wrong, apologize, move on quickly, and try not to make a mistake again
- 5) Avoid gendered language to address a group
- 6) Correct other people if they use someone's incorrect pronouns
- 7) And practice. Practice people's pronouns in your head before saying them out loud

[Read Professor Hosking's article here.](#) And read more about gender-neutral pronouns here.