



“ If we agree to use zie/hir or singular they, soon we'll have to memorize a different pronoun for everybody! ”

actually...

Respecting a few peoples' gender-neutral pronouns isn't the same thing as agreeing to use a different pronoun for everyone you know. That doesn't make any sense.

EXPLANATION

It's true that there is more than one gender-neutral pronoun, like singular they/them, or zie/hir (instead of she/her). But agreeing to use someone's gender-neutral pronoun today doesn't mean agreeing to memorize an endless list of pronouns down the road. This is what philosophers call a 'slippery slope' argument. In a slippery slope argument, there's no evidence for the big bad outcome people fear, just like there's no evidence that people everywhere are beginning to make up their own pronouns. Without evidence, people try to prevent the first step by making the outcome sound as scary as possible. But a major problem with slippery slope arguments is that most situations aren't slippery. They're more like staircases, where each 'stair' is a different decision, and each decision is made separately based on its own unique issues and evidence. The slippery slope just isn't a good reason not to use someone's preferred pronoun.