

**Sociologists for Trans Justice**  
Statement on Sex and Gender within Survey Methodology

As sociologists, we are deeply disappointed that a member of our discipline has published an article asserting that trans women should not be counted as women.<sup>i</sup> Particularly since the article does not engage the wealth of work by trans and other scholars on the topic of how best to measure sex, gender, and gender identity in surveys.<sup>ii</sup> Or the reams of work showing that trans people, especially young people, are profoundly harmed by the repetition of the narrative that our genders are not “real.”<sup>iii</sup> Or all the research documenting the fact that advantage and disadvantage are largely distributed on the basis of how others perceive our gender.<sup>iv,v</sup> Moreover, we are saddened, angry, frustrated, and annoyed that we yet again need to explain that trans people are people, and can be relied upon to accurately report who we are.

*For those interested, here are some other readings<sup>vi</sup> on this and related topics; see also our full bibliography at <https://s4tj.com/s4tj-syllabus/>.*

<sup>i</sup> The responses to the article are worth reading:

Fugard, Andi. 2020. “Should trans people be postmodernist in the streets but positivist in the spreadsheets? A reply to Sullivan.” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2020.1768343>

Hines, Sally. 2020. “Counting the cost of difference: a reply to Sullivan.” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2020.1768344>

<sup>ii</sup> A partial list of suggestions:

Geist, C., M.M. Reynolds, and M.S. Gaytán. 2017. “Unfinished Business: Disentangling Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in Sociological Research on Gender Stratification.” *Sociology Compass* 11(4): 1–16.

Magliozzi, Devon, Aliya Saperstein, and Laurel Westbrook. 2016. “Scaling Up Representing Gender Diversity in Survey Research.” *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*.

Westbrook, Laurel, and Aliya Saperstein. 2015. “New Categories Are Not Enough Rethinking the Measurement of Sex and Gender in Social Surveys.” *Gender & Society* 29(4):534–60.

<sup>iii</sup> Another partial list:

Garrison, Spencer. 2018. “On the Limits of ‘Trans Enough’: Authenticating Trans Identity Narratives.” *Gender & Society* 32(5):613–37.

Grossman, Arnold H., and Anthony R. D’Augelli. 2007. “Transgender Youth and Life- Threatening Behaviors.” *Suicide and Life -Threatening Behavior* 37 (5): 527 – 537.

Sumerau, J.E. and Lain A. B. Mathers. 2019. *America through Transgender Eyes*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>iv</sup> Again, a partial list of suggestions:

Johnson, Austin H. 2016. “Transnormativity: A New Concept and Its Validation through Documentary Film About Transgender Men.” *Sociological Inquiry* 86(4):465-91.

Noble, Bobby. 2012. “Trans. Panic. Some Thoughts toward a Theory of Feminist Fundamentalism.” Pp. 45-59 in *Transfeminist Perspectives in and Beyond Transgender and Gender Studies*, edited by A. F. Enke. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Schilt, Kristen. 2010. *Just One of the Guys? Transgender Men and the Persistence of Gender Inequality*. IL: University of Chicago Press.

v It is important to point out here that gender perceptions and the attendant operation of sexism and patriarchy are always coupled with perceptions of race and other axes of social division, and that it is therefore generally trans women of color who are the most disadvantaged. See, for example:

Bey, Marquis. 2017. "The Trans\*-ness of Blackness, The Blackness of Trans\*-ness." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 4(2):275-295.

Graham, Louis F. 2014. "Navigating Community Institutions: Black Transgender Women's Experiences in Schools, the Criminal Justice System, and Churches." *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 11: 274-287.

Hayward, Eva. 2017. "Don't Exist." *TSQ* 4(2):191-194.

Krell, Elias Cosenza. 2017. "Is Transmisogyny Killing Trans Women of Color?: Black Trans Feminisms and the Exigencies of White Femininity." *TSQ* 4(2):226-242.

Snorton, C. Riley. 2017. *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

vi A final, yet never complete, list of more recommended literature to consider:

Balarajan, M., M. Gray, and M. Mitchell. 2011. *Monitoring Equality: Developing a Gender Identity Question*. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Bauer, G.R., J. Braimoh, A.I. Scheim, and C. Dharma. 2017. "Transgender-Inclusive Measures of Sex/Gender for Population Surveys: Mixed-methods Evaluation and Recommendations." *PLoS ONE* 12(5):1-28.

Bettcher, Talia. 2014. "Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-trans/>>

Bey, Marquis. 2016. "The Shape of Angels' Teeth: Toward a Blacktransfeminist Thought through the Mattering of Black(Trans)Lives." *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research* 5(3):33-54.

Brown, T.N.T., and J.L. Herman. 2020. *Exploring International Priorities and Best Practices for the Collection of Data about Gender Minorities: A Focus on South America*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute.

Carian, Emily K. 2019. "More Inclusive Gender Questions Added to the General Social Survey." *The Clayman Institute of Gender Research*. (<https://gender.stanford.edu/news-publications/gender-news/more-inclusive-gender-questions-added-general-social-survey>)

Compton, D'Lane, Tey Meadow, and Kristen Schilt. 2018. *Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Conference of European Statisticians. 2019. *In-depth Review of Measuring Gender Identity*. United Nations Economic and Social Council, revised April 9.

Doan, P.L. 2016. "To Count or Not to Count: Queering Measurement and the Transgender Community." *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 44(3/4): 89-110

Ellis, R., M. Virgile, J.L. Holzberg, D.V. Nelson, J. Edgar, P. Phipps, and R. Kaplan. 2018. "Assessing the Feasibility of Asking About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the Current Population Survey: Results from Cognitive Interviews' Research and Methodology Directorate." *Center for Survey Measurement Study Series (Survey Methodology #2018-06)*. U.S. Census Bureau.

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2012. *Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World*. New York: Routledge.

\_\_. 1993. "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough." *The Sciences* p. 20-24. <<http://www.mtsu.edu/~phollowa/5sexes.html>>

\_\_. 2000. "The Five Sexes, Revisited." *The Sciences* p. 19-23. <[http://www2.kobe-u.ac.jp/~alexroni/IPD%202015%20readings/IPD%202015\\_4/FAUSTO\\_STERLING-2000-The\\_Sciences%205%20sexes%20revisited.pdf](http://www2.kobe-u.ac.jp/~alexroni/IPD%202015%20readings/IPD%202015_4/FAUSTO_STERLING-2000-The_Sciences%205%20sexes%20revisited.pdf)>

Federal Interagency Working Group on Improving Measurement of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Surveys. 2016a. *Current Measures of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Survey*. Washington, D.C.

- \_\_ 2016b. Evaluation of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Survey Measures: What Have We Learned? Washington, D.C.
- \_\_ 2016c. Toward A Research Agenda for Measuring Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Surveys: Findings, Recommendations, and Next Steps. Washington, D.C.
- Fine, Cordelia. 2010. *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- \_\_2017. *Testosterone Rex: Myths of Sex, Science and Society*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- GenIUSS Group. 2014. *Best Practices for Asking Questions to Identify Transgender and Other Gender Minority Respondents on Population-Based Surveys*. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute.
- Glasser, Howard M., and John P. Smith III. 2008. "On the Vague Meaning of 'Gender' in Education Research: The Problem, Its Sources, and Recommendations for Practice." *Educational Researcher* 37:343-50.
- Greene, Joss T. 2018. "Categorical Exclusions: How Racialized Gender Regulation Reproduces Reentry Hardship." *Social Problems* 66(4):548-563.
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- Harrison-Quintana, Jack, Jaime M. Grant, and Ignacio G. Rivera. 2015. "Boxes of our Own Creation: A Trans Data Collection Wo/Manifesto." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 2(1):166-174.
- Labuski, Christine, and Colton Keo-Meier. 2015. "The (Mis)Measure of Trans." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 2(1):13-33.
- Lagos, Danya. 2019. "Hearing Gender: Voice-Based Gender Classification Processes and Transgender Health Inequality." *American Sociological Review* 84(5): 801-827.
- Lagos, Danya. 2018. "Looking at Population Health Beyond 'Male' and 'Female': Implications of Transgender Identity and Gender Nonconformity for Population Health." *Demography* 55(6): 2097-2117
- Lombardi, Emilia, and Swagata Banik. 2016. "The Utility of the Two-Step Gender Measure within Trans and Cis Populations." *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 13(3):288–96.
- Johnson, Austin H. 2015. "Beyond Inclusion: Thinking toward a Transfeminist Methodology." Pp. 21-41 in *At the Center: Feminism, Social Science and Knowledge (Advances in Gender Research, Volume 20)*, edited by V. Demos and M. T. Segal: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Jordan-Young, Rebecca. 2010. *Brain Storm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Namaste, Viviane. 2009. "Undoing Theory: The 'Transgender Question' and the Epistemic Violence of Angle-American Feminist Theory." *Hypatia* 24(3):11-32.
- Nowakowski, Alexandra C. H., J.E. Sumerau, and Lain A.B. Mathers. 2016. "None of the Above: Strategies for Inclusive Teaching with 'Representative' Data." *Teaching Sociology* 44:96–105. <<https://jsumerau.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Teaching-Sociology-2016-Nowakowski-0092055X15622669.pdf>>
- Richardson, Sarah S. 2015. *Sex Itself: The Search for Male and Female in the Human Genome*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Rosario, Vernon. 2004. "The Biology of Gender and the Construction of Sex?" *GLQ: Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* 10(2):280-287. (<http://vrosario.bol.ucla.edu/CV/BiologyofGender.pdf>)
- Schilt, Kristen, and Jenifer Bratter. 2015. "From Multiracial to Transgender? Assessing Attitudes toward a Transgender Category on the U.S. Census." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 2:77–100.
- Schmid, Eric. 2020. "The 2020 Census is Underway, but Nonbinary and Gender-Nonconforming Respondents Feel Counted Out." *NPR St. Louis Public Radio*. (<https://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/2020-census-underway-nonbinary-and-gender-nonconforming-respondents-feel-counted-out#stream/0>)

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<https://www.advocate.com/commentary/2020/5/28/black-trans-men-face-constant-threat-police-violence>
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<[http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/NCTE\\_Blueprint\\_June2015.pdf](http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/NCTE_Blueprint_June2015.pdf)>
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