

The Biden Administration's Office of Civil Rights published their interpretation of the 2020 Supreme Court ruling *Bostock v Clayton*. The OCR says Title IX now covers sexual orientation and gender identity.

The following definitions were provided by Women's Liberation Front via their 2021 Media Style Guide:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f232ea74d8342386a7ebc52/t/5ff3510c0db4f45ccbffc3c1/1609781517494/Media+Style+Guide.pdf>.

These definitions represent the common use of the word specifically in reference to reporting on issues of sex and gender, sexual orientation, and women's rights. Some words may have alternate definitions for use in other realms. In most cases, we try to use an official dictionary definition. However, in some cases, especially when the dictionaries themselves have caved to the same pressures as outlined above¹, we have corrected some definitions for accuracy. We prioritize American English spellings and meanings. Additionally, we would like to thank Detrans Voices for their guidance on this section.

Female

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: of, relating to, or being the sex that typically has the capacity to bear young or produce eggs

Ex. Female inmates have experienced trauma at rates as high as 80 percent.

Male

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: of, relating to, or being the sex that typically has the capacity to produce relatively small, usually motile gametes which fertilize the eggs of a female

Ex. Police are searching for a male taxi driver accused of sexual assault in New York.

Woman

noun, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: an adult female person (plural: "women")

Ex. Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space in 1963.

Man

noun, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: an adult male person (plural: "men")

Ex. Florida man saves child from alligator at local swimming hole.

¹ <https://www.advocate.com/media/2020/9/23/merriam-webster-updates-definition-bisexual>

Intersex (preferred: “Disorders of Sexual Development”)

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: of or relating to the condition of either having both male and female gonadal tissue in one individual or of having the gonads of one sex and external genitalia that is of the other sex or is ambiguous

Ex. Individuals with intersex conditions/disorders of sexual development may face barriers when seeking medical treatment.

Sexual orientation

noun, definition by: Merriam-Webster (amended)

: a person's state of being bisexual, heterosexual, or homosexual

Ex. The Supreme Court ruled that it is unconstitutional for employers to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

Lesbian

noun or adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster (amended)

: a female person who is only sexually or romantically attracted to the same sex; of, relating to, or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to other women or between women

Ex. Angie Craig became the first out lesbian elected to Congress in 2018.

Gay

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster (amended)

: of, relating to, or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to people of one's same sex

Ex. Gerry Studds became the first openly gay member of Congress in 1983 when he was outed during a House ethics hearing.

Bisexual

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: of, relating to, or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction to people of one's same sex and of the opposite sex

Ex. Bisexual women face sexual violence at rates much higher than their lesbian or heterosexual counterparts.

Feminist

noun or adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: a person who supports or engages in the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes (also: "Feminism")
Ex. Feminists took to the streets to protest the the treatment of women in the workplace.

Radical Feminism

noun, definition by: Rad Fem Collective²

: a feminist theory analyzing the structures of power which oppress the female sex (adjective or noun: "Radical Feminist")
Ex. Radical feminists such as Andrea Dworkin have argued against pornography and the sex industry.

Gender Critical

adjective

: opposed to the societal imposition of gender roles in both traditional and modern forms (often used with "feminist," but not always)

Ex. Gender critical feminists opposed a bill that would allow boys to compete in girls' athletics.

: opposed to the ideology put forth by modern trans activists, especially the theory of gender identity or the medical affirmation model of treating gender dysphoria (common usage)

Ex. He doesn't support men competing in women's sports because he is gender critical.

Gender Dysphoria

noun, definition by: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5³

: a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender, of at least 6 months' duration, manifested by at least two out of five specific diagnostic criteria and associated with clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning

Ex. Susie was diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria in 2015

Detransition

verb, definition by: Detrans Voices⁴

: the act of returning to living as one's biological sex after a period of medical transition to the opposite sex/gender

² <http://www.radfemcollective.org/what-is-radical-feminism/>

³

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296700032_The_DSM-5_Diagnostic_Criteria_for_Gender_Dysphoria

⁴ <https://www.detransvoices.org/glossary/>

Ex. A growing number of young people are detransitioning.

Detransitioner

noun, definition by: Detrans Voices

: a person who has returned to living as one's biological sex after a period of medical transition to the opposite sex/gender

Ex. Detransitioners are speaking out about youth gender clinics.

Desistor (sometimes, 'Desister')

noun, definition by: Detrans Voices

: a person who previously identified as "transgender" (or "nonbinary") but no longer does, but who did not take medical steps to transition.

Ex. Support groups for desistors have been underfunded, leaving many teens to navigate the experience on their own.

Desist

verb, definition by: Detrans Voices

: the act of desistance; reidentifying with one's birth sex or ceasing to identify as "transgender" (or "nonbinary") by a person who identified as "transgender" (or "nonbinary") for a period of time, but who did not take medical steps to transition

Ex. She chose to desist in Spring of 2020, realizing that she no longer identified with the label of "transgender".

Gender-nonconforming

adjective, definition by: Merriam-Webster

: exhibiting behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits that do not correspond with the traits typically associated with one's sex (synonym: sex-stereotype nonconformity)

Ex. Gender-nonconforming men may be especially at risk of experiencing violence from other men.

Common terms to avoid

When it is relevant to discuss the sex or identity of a subject or source, do not use terms such as "gender identity," "transgender woman," "trans man," "cisgender woman," or "cis man". These terms are either too loosely defined to be meaningful in accurate reporting or are actively harmful due to perpetuating inaccurate

information. It may be appropriate to use these words when describing how a subject or source describes themselves; however, further clarity will probably be required.

“Gender identity”

The words “transgender,” “cisgender,” and “nonbinary” all rely on the poorly defined and unscientific notion of “gender identity”. Often described as an individual’s “internal sense of being male or female,” there is no verifiable evidence⁵ to defend the idea that such a sense exists for most people, making it an inaccurate or misleading term for journalists to use. If discussing the stated “gender identity” of a subject or source, simply stating either how they identify or that they are “gender nonconforming” is often more accurate. If someone has not explicitly claimed to have a “gender identity”, it is never appropriate to claim they do either directly or indirectly with the use of terms that rely on this concept (such as, for example, claiming someone is “cisgender” when they have never reported feeling a “gender identity”). The term “gender identity” has been used in some recent laws and court decisions, despite not being defined in law. It may be appropriate to use the term when reporting on these laws; however, it should be clarified that the term has no objective meaning or legal definition.

“Cisgender”

The term “cisgender” is commonly defined as, “of, relating to, or being a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex the person had or was identified as having at birth”. Since it depends on the unverifiable and poorly defined term “gender identity,” it is equally inaccurate and useless. Referring to an individual as a “cis woman,” “cis man,” or as “cisgender” perpetuates the idea that all people have a gender identity (there is no evidence of this) and that anyone who does not consider him or herself transgender identifies with all gender roles prescribed on the basis of sex. There is rarely a need to specify that someone does not identify as transgender; however, if that is the case, simply say so. Otherwise, the term should only be used if quoting a source directly.

“Transgender”

Likewise, the term “transgender” is defined as, “of, relating to, or being a person whose gender identity differs from the sex the person had or was identified as having at birth.” Once again, relying on the unproven premise of gender identity. Regardless, many individuals do identify as transgender. Acknowledge this identity by clearly stating it as such. For example, rather than saying “transgender teens” say “teens who identify as transgender.”

“Trans woman,” “Trans man,” etc.

Do not use the phrase “transgender woman,” or its variants. By using the term “trans” or “transgender” as an adjective describing the noun woman, the phrasing implies that “trans women” are a subset of “women.” This is inaccurate since these individuals are a subset of men. Rather, simply say “men who identify as women,” “trans-identifying males,” “girls who identify as boys,” etc. Instead of saying, “Susie, a

⁵ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/20502877.2020.1720429>

transgender woman," say "Susie, a man who identifies as a woman". This more accurately reports on the reality of the situation and provides clear information to the reader, and should be equally applied regardless of any medical or legal intervention an individual has undergone in an attempt to resemble the opposite sex.

“Nonbinary”

Likewise, “nonbinary” should never be used itself as an adjective but rather clearly stated as an identity. For example, “Susie, a man who identifies as nonbinary.”

“Sex assigned at birth”

Do not use the phrase “sex assigned at birth”. This is a phrase that was co-opted from the intersex community who may experience forced genital mutilation as infants to more closely align their external genitalia with either male or female genitalia. No person who does not have a disorder of sexual development is ever “assigned” a sex a birth. Rather, say, “sex observed at birth,” if necessary at all.

“TERF”

Do not use the term “trans-exclusionary radical feminist” (or “TERF”). This is also a nonsense phrase that is inherently contradictory since radical feminists, by definition, include all female people regardless of identity. The term is widely considered derogatory and is often used in conjunction with misogynistic abuse and threats. It is more accurate to specifically describe the individual’s actual political position, likely either as a “radical feminist,” “gender critical feminist,” or simply “gender critical” if they are not otherwise aligned with feminism.

Additional Definitions Not Included in WOLF’s Media Style Guide:

Preferred pronouns: part of trans ideology that requires everyone to use an individual's demanded terms to refer to said individual contrary to the rules of many languages, regardless of the obvious sex of the individual.

Misgender: to identify someone's correct sex and refuse to use their ideologically driven language; correctly sexing people.

Great Resources on the Issue

Women's Liberation Front: <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/wolf-media-style-guide>

Women's Human Rights Campaign:

<https://www.womensdeclaration.com/en/resources/>

Denver Public Schools Toolkit:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Jx_cvGAFsdYUP6FgTMZKeCFSjnx4Ic_01nIV7a19kL4/edit

Save Women's Sports:

<https://savewomenssports.com/>

June 2021 Title IX Interpretation Release from the Office of Civil Rights:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/blog/index.html>

The 11th Hour Blog:

<https://www.the11thhourblog.com/>

LGB Alliance:

<https://lgballiance.org.uk/>

Dr. Emma Hilton:

<https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/emma.hilton.html>

Keira Bell's Story:

<https://www.persuasion.community/p/keira-bell-my-story>

Partners for Ethical Care:

<https://www.partnersforethicalcare.com/>

The Gender Mapping Project:

<https://www.gendermapper.org/>

Boys v Women:

<https://boysvswomen.com/#/>

Abigail Shrier, Author of *Irreversible Damage*:

<https://www.abigailshrier.com/>

Kathleen Stock, *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism*

https://smile.amazon.com/dp/B091969ZJN/ref=cm_sw_r_u_apa_glt_SP9WRWESYW2Q1R3SF6BY

Feminist Current: <https://www.feministcurrent.com/>

Relevant Articles:

<https://www.chimamanda.com/>

https://4w.pub/non-binary-is-the-new-not-like-other-girls-and-its-deeply-rooted-in-misogyny/amp/?_twitter_impression=true

https://www.newsweek.com/reversal-trump-era-stance-biden-says-transgender-students-protected-under-title-ix-1601336?amp=1&_twitter_impression=true

https://nypost.com/2021/06/11/virginia-girl-slams-school-board-for-trans-locker-room-policy/amp/?_twitter_impression=true

<https://youtu.be/wNslpF7g2IQ>

https://www.altoonamirror.com/opinion/2021/05/in-trans-debate-stand-up-for-girls/?fbclid=IwAR3jWgGHRWEVPzPHs0oqC6VmtabPpEQ2_IVRCTNoxiD627Nw4CVINMbHdH8

www.terfisaslur.com