

**Template for Letters to the Editor in Response to News Media Pieces  
Hostile to Transgender, Non-binary, and/or Intersex People or Communities**

This is a template for responding to scholarship or other publications hostile to trans, non-binary, and/or intersex people. We hope this guide will allow others to respond quickly and efficiently to stop the spread of research that is discriminatory against members of these groups.

The second page of this document includes a sample letter to the editor.

This template letter was created by The Advancing Trans, Non-Binary, and Intersex Scholarship Committee of the Sociologists for Trans Justice organization. (<https://www.s4tj.com>)

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**Template:**

1) In “Title of Article or Op-ed Piece” (date) Author name... describe main problem of article. Discuss in detail a main problem with the article. For example: In “When Your Daughter Defies Biology” (op-ed, Jan. 6) Abigail Shrier dismisses gender dysphoria as a “fashionable” condition, one which leads trans youth to pursue “voluntary disfigurement.” Shrier’s disturbing piece is based on a shoddy study which conflates the decision of trans youth to pursue gender reaffirming surgery and hormone therapy with a “social contagion.”

2) Illustrate why this argument/point/opinion is problematic or offer a counter-argument to the content provided in the article.

For example: If, according to Shrier’s tirade, transness is so “fashionable” why do trans people within the United States experience staggering rates of assault, homicide, depression, social exclusion, and poverty?

3) Demonstrate the implications of this problematic argument/opinion.

For example: Not only is Shrier’s piece misinformed in its representation of society as racing towards trans inclusivity - consider only the memo leaked from the Trump administration in October - but it is also misguided in its deployment of parental discomfort to elide the agony of youth living, day after day, in a stranger’s gender.

4) Offer several concluding thoughts.

For example: As sociologists of gender and trans scholars, we know that when trans youth receive support from their parents, they are significantly less likely to struggle with depression and suicidal ideation. What the parents of trans youth need are resources for learning how to support their children, not the pity party which Shrier passes off as research.

**Sample Letter, *Wall Street Journal*: January, 2019**

In “When Your Daughter Defies Biology” (op-ed, Jan. 6) Abigail Shrier dismisses gender dysphoria as a “fashionable” condition, one which leads trans youth to pursue “voluntary disfigurement.” Shrier’s disturbing piece is based on a shoddy study which conflates the decision of trans youth to pursue gender reaffirming surgery and hormone therapy with a “social contagion.”

If, according to Shrier’s tirade, transness is so “fashionable” why do trans people within the United States experience staggering rates of assault, homicide, depression, social exclusion, and poverty? Not only is Shrier’s piece misinformed in its representation of society as racing towards trans inclusivity - consider only the memo leaked from the Trump administration in October - but it is also misguided in its deployment of parental discomfort to elide the agony of youth living, day after day, in a stranger’s gender.

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As sociologists of gender and trans scholars, we know that when trans youth receive support from their parents, they are significantly less likely to struggle with depression and suicidal ideation. What the parents of trans youth need are resources for learning how to support their children, not the pity party which Shrier passes off as research.