

*Statement in support of trans children, LGBTQ+ people, and their allies*

The Department of History has long supported academic inclusion and diversity, offering minors in Black Studies, Jewish Studies, Mexican American Studies, and Asian Studies and housing what became the LGBTQ Studies minor at a time when that was an unheard-of role for a History Department. Our department's strength and broad success stem from the diverse fields, methods, ideas, and experience our faculty, staff, and students bring to advancing the study of history. We are committed to evidence-based understanding, which is why we train in evaluating the factual accuracy and representativeness of primary sources along with understanding societal context.

Over the past few years, a backlash has swelled against seeming gains in national equity for historically underrepresented groups. Recently, a student group invited a speaker to campus who reflects state political leaders' non-legally binding opinion that parents of transgender children should not support their children with age-appropriate social transition. Social transition for minors involves affirming a name, pronoun, and gender expression that matches the gender the child knows themselves to be. All the leading national professional associations that have researched medical and psychological care for trans children recommend social transition as best practice. The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (est. 1930), the [American Medical Association](#) (est. 1847), and the [American Psychological Association](#) (est. 1892) all oppose the flurry of bills in state legislatures that try to prevent trans children from living authentically and participating fully at school. Each organization has debunked the sensationalist misinformation anti-trans activists and politicians perpetuate that inaccurately describes social transition; these organizations warn that anti-LGBT legal maneuvers contribute to a hostile climate for LGBTQ+ people.

We speak out against the spread of misinformation to attack LGBTQ+ Americans that has resulted in online discord, including racist language. Our Department respects people's sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, which are protected categories in UNT's system-wide [policy against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation](#). We uphold our [university's ethical mission](#) to be a caring community where all students thrive and to contribute to our [national standing](#) as a university that demonstrates outstanding commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. As importantly, we bring historical context to President Smatresk's statement [embracing of all of our community members](#). There is a long-standing use of an imagination of abused children to justify the harassment and actual abuse of children and marginalized people.

Part of integrating diversity into a well-functioning academic environment is creating a caring climate while respecting that we hold varying views. The Department of History honors each person's inherent dignity and free, responsible search for meaning while upholding evidence-based accuracy in our use of sources to understand our past and present. We decry communication that devolves into name-calling or ostracizing and strive to be a community that holds myriad viewpoints while coexisting in harmony.

Jennifer Jensen Wallach, Chair, Department of History

Sandra Mendiola Garcia, Associate Chair, Department of History

Michael Wise, Director of Graduate Studies, Department of History

Kerry Goldmann, Associate Director of Graduate Studies, Department of History

Wesley Phelps, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of History