
**PRIMARY ARGUMENT:** There has been debate about the topic of transgender and transracial. Both of these topics involve “picking” one’s own gender and race. It has been widely accepted by society that people should be able to pick their own gender and there have even been laws passed that allow people to allow their offspring too decide their gender. This focuses on the transgender personality Caitlyn Jenner and the transracial personality Rachel Dolezal. Brubaker argues that much debate around this topic is “expressly partisan” making it difficult to get to any real truth about these concepts. Attacks from the right claiming hypocrisy (i.e., why Jenner can be transgender but Dolezal can’t be transracial) brings out defensiveness on the left.

**IMPORTANT DEFINED CONCEPTS:**
- **Transgender:** denoting or relating to a person whose sense of their gender identity does not correspond with their birth sex
- **Essentialism:** stances include both the view that gender and/or racial identities are grounded in nature and the view that they are grounded in history
- **Voluntarism:** a stance which asserts that gender and/or racial identities can be chosen, as well as the assertion (particularly with respect to gender) that public, socially validated identities can be changed even if—on some level—the core personal identity is understood as unchosen

**PRIMARY FINDINGS:**
1. There is major conflict between what people can choose and what they are given, and this can continue to go back and forth. Meaning that some people will say that people cannot choose gender because it is given, and some people might say that race cannot be chosen because it is given.
2. This situation comes about as concepts surrounding identity expand and become less and less binary, more fluid, and more personal. As people intermarry and mixed racial identities become more complex, people also police the identities of others in an attempt to maintain legitimacy within their ingroups and prevent appropriation and fraud.
3. Among academic debates about transgender and transracial identities, people tend to fall into one of four beliefs. Essentialists believe that racial and gender identities are fixed and objective, voluntarists believe that anyone can identify as they choose. Some people believe that gender identity is personal and subjective while racial identity is objective and natural. These people seem to fall into a pitfall of arguing that transgender people are their preferred gender while transracial people pretend to be their preferred race, which circles back to fixed immutable categories.

**KEY QUOTE:** “As Stryker (2015) suggested, reflecting on the initial round of commentary, it is important for scholars to “hold open a space for real intellectual curiosity, for investigations that deepen our understanding of how identity claims and process’s function, rather than rushing to offer well-formed opinions based on what we already think we know.”

**QUESTION:** Does it seem like people will become more welcoming of transracial or do you believe that race is too complex for people to pick and choose? Can race be broken down to its simplest form?