

**Jessica Karen Taft**  
*Curriculum Vitae*

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Davidson College  
Davidson, NC 28035

704-894-2141  
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**Education**

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Ph.D. in Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara, 2008

Certificate in Women's Studies

Dissertation: *Growing Up and Rising Up: Teenage Girl Activists and Social Movements in the Americas*

Advisor: Dr. Avery Gordon

Committee: Dr. Verta Taylor, Dr. Richard Flacks

M.A. in Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara, 2003

Received Honors Pass

Master's Thesis: "I'm Not a Politics Person': Teenage Girls' Critical Rejection of Governmental Politics"

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, 2000

Minors in Philosophy and Sociology

Graduated Magna Cum Laude

Honor's Thesis: "Girl Power Politics: The Relationship Between Girls and Feminism"

**Research and Teaching Interests**

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Social Movements, Girls' Studies, Globalization, Feminist Theory, Race/Class/Gender, Youth Cultures, Political Consciousness, Qualitative and Participatory Research Methods

**Publications and Research Under Review**

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**Books**

Taft, Jessica Karen. *Rebel Girls: Teenage Activists and Social Movements in the Americas*. Under contract with NYU Press.

**Peer-Reviewed Articles**

Taft, Jessica K. 2006. "I'm Not a Politics Person: Teenage Girls, Oppositional Consciousness, and the Meaning of Politics." *Politics & Gender* 2: 329-352.

Gordon, Hava and Jessica Karen Taft. "Rethinking Youth Political Socialization: Teenage Activists Talk Back." Under review with *Youth & Society*.

**Book Chapters**

Taft, Jessica Karen. 2007. "Racing Age: Reflections on Anti-Racist Research with Teenage Girls." Pp. 203-225 in *Representing Youth: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Youth Studies*, edited by Amy Best. New York: New York University Press.

Taft, Jessica K. 2004. "Girl Power Politics: Pop-Culture Barriers and Organizational Resistance." Pp 69-78 in *All About the Girl: Culture, Power and Identity*, edited by Anita Harris. New York: Routledge.

### **Review Essays**

Taft, Jessica K. 2007. "Girlhood, Identity and Power." *Feminist Collections* 28 (3): 7-10.

Taft, Jessica K. 2004. Review of *Choosing a Self: Young Women and the Individualization of Identity* by Shelley Budgeon. *Contemporary Sociology* 33: 194-195.

### **Research Reports**

Women's Economic Justice Project Research Team. 2006. *Enough Injustice: Voices of Central Coast Working Women*. Ventura, CA: Coastal Alliance United for A Sustainable Economy.

### **Manuscripts In Preparation**

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Taft, Jessica Karen and Hava Gordon. "Youth Civic Engagement and Constrained Democracy."

Taft, Jessica Karen. "Capitalism Doesn't Empower Me: Teenage Girl Activists Discuss Globalization."

### **Teaching Experience**

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Sonoma State University, Department of Sociology

Lecturer (2006-2009)

- Social Movements and Collective Behavior (4 semesters)
- Social Change: Development and Globalization
- Political Sociology
- Cinema & Society (2 semesters)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Labor Education Program

Online Instructor (Fall 2008)

- Globalization and Workers

University of California-Santa Barbara, Department of Sociology

Teaching Associate (2004)

- Special Topics in Research Methods - Participatory Action Research

Teaching Assistant (2002-2003)

- Girls' Culture
- Research Methods

The Young Women's Project, a multicultural community organization for teen women

Project Assistant (2000-2001)

- Designed lesson plans and trained under-resourced teen women on issues of violence, problem-solving, communication, reproductive health and gender bias.

Macalester College, Department of Sociology

Co-designer and Teaching Assistant (1999-2000)

- Feminist Research Methodologies

### **Fellowships, Grants and Awards**

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National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2003-2006  
UC-Santa Barbara Regent's Fellowship, 2001-2007  
UC-Santa Barbara Sociology Department Fee Fellowship, 2007  
UC-Santa Barbara Humanities and Social Science Research Grant, 2006  
UC-Santa Barbara Sociology Department Travel Grant, 2005, 2006, and 2007  
UC-Santa Barbara Sociology Department Research Grant, 2003  
UC-Santa Barbara Graduate Division Special Travel Grant, 2001  
Macalester College Women's and Gender Studies Senior Award, 2000

### **Invited Presentations**

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"Girls' Studies." Conversations for Change Discussion Series, Department of Women's Studies, UC-Santa Barbara, February 2007.

"High School Youth Movements in Low-Income Communities: The Importance of Student Activism for Educational Justice." Shining a Light on Poverty, Keene State College, April 2006.

"Does This Really Count? Teaching PAR and Defining the Discipline as a Graduate Student." Building Capacity for Effective Participatory Action Research. Center for Labor Research and Education, UCLA, February 2004.

### **Conference Presentations**

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"Youth Civic Engagement and Constrained Democracy." With Hava Gordon. American Sociological Association, August 2009.

"We're Not Special: Teenage Girl Activists and the 'Exceptionalism' of Youth Engagement." Pacific Sociological Association Annual Meeting, April 2008.

"We Are the Present, Not Just the Future: Teenage Girl Activists' Discourses of Political Agency." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, August 2007.

"So That the Youth Aren't Sleeping': Teenage Girl Activists' Use of Political Education as a Social Movement Strategy." ASA Collective Behavior and Social Movements Section Workshop, August 2007.

"We Are the Present: Girl Activists Claiming Political Authority in the Americas." National Women's Studies Association Annual Meeting, June 2007.

"Open Your Eyes and See the Reality: Teenage Girl Activists' Practices for Building Oppositional Consciousness." Pacific Sociological Association Annual Meeting, April 2007.

"Capitalism Doesn't Empower Me: Teenage Girl Activists Discuss Globalization." Berkeley Journal of Sociology Annual Conference, UC-Berkeley, March 2007.

"Another Girlhood Is Possible: Teenage Girls at the World Social Forum." Midwest Popular Culture/American Culture Association Annual Meeting, November 2007.

"Research With Girls: A Girls' Studies Workshop." National Women's Studies Association Annual Meeting, June 2005.

“Growing Up and Rising Up: Notes on U.S. Girl Politics.” Pacific Sociological Association Annual Meeting, April 2005.

“Youth Civic Engagement and Democratic Political Practice.” Democracy and its Development Graduate Student Conference. Center for the Study of Democracy, UC-Irvine, February 2005.

“Scouts and Activists: A Comparative Analysis of Girls’ Organizations.” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, August 2004.

“Supporting Girl Activism: Ageism, Power and Coalitions.” National Women’s Studies Association Annual Meeting, June 2004.

“Focus Groups, the Sociological Imagination and Political Education.” Pacific Sociological Association Annual Meeting, April 2003.

“Defining Girl Power: The Culture Machine vs. The Girl Activist.” A New Girl Order: Young Women and the Future of Feminist Inquiry. London, November 2001.

### **Other Scholarly Professional Experience**

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Research Assistant, 2002-2004

- UC-Santa Barbara, Women’s Economic Justice Project
- Worked with Professor Eileen Boris, Hull Chair in Women’s Studies, to conduct participatory, community-based action research on the status of low-income women in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

Assistant Conference Organizer, 2002-2003

- “Towards a Critical Globalization Studies: Continued Debates, New Directions and Neglected Topics,” jointly sponsored by UC-Santa Barbara and the Global Studies Association.

Research Assistant, 1999

- Change, an international women’s human rights organization
- Assisted Dr. Purna Sen of the London School of Economics in research for “Non-consensual Sex in Marriage: A Worldwide Report”.

Student Intern, 1999

- Minnesota Campus Compact, a statewide organization devoted to increasing campus-community collaboration.
- Organized a student conference on action-research, participatory research methods and service-learning.

### **Professional Service**

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Chair, Girls’ Studies Interest Group, National Women’s Studies Association, 2007-present  
Session Organizer, “Girls’ Studies and Resisting Hegemonies,” at the National Women’s Studies Association, 2008

Session Organizer, “Girls Studies” at the Pacific Sociological Association, 2005

Co-founder, East Bay Women’s Dissertation Support Group, 2004-2008

Colloquium Committee, Department of Sociology, UC-Santa Barbara, 2003-2004

Women’s and Gender Studies Steering Committee, Macalester College, 1998-1999

**Languages**

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Spanish – Advanced Intermediate

**Professional Memberships**

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American Sociological Association

National Women's Studies Association

American Studies Association

Society for the History of Childhood and Youth

Sociologists for Women in Society

Pacific Sociological Association

Society for the Study of Social Problems