

Self-Report and Proxy Measurement of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: An Examination of 2023 American Housing Survey (AHS) Data

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Outline

- The American Housing Survey (AHS).
- Why were sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) questions added to the AHS?
- Research on SOGI and housing.
- 2023 AHS SOGI questions.
- Why test SOGI proxy questions?
- Gender identity write-in analysis.
- Sexual orientation write-in analysis.
- Other AHS SOGI research.
- Proposed changes to AHS SOGI questions for 2025.

The American Housing Survey (AHS)

- Most comprehensive national housing survey in the United States.
 - Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - Collected by the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Longitudinal survey of housing units:
 - Collected since 1973.
- Content:
 - Housing characteristics, costs, and quality.
 - Demographic characteristics of households.
- Uses:
 - Assessing housing needs of communities and the country.
 - National, regional, and metropolitan economic and housing market conditions.
 - Informing HUD's policy development in pursuit of its mission "to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all."

Why Were SOGI Questions Added to the AHS?

- Executive Order 14075 on Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals.
 - Section 9(a) - Identify and address barriers to housing faced by LGBTQI+ individuals, including youth, and families that place them at high risk of housing instability and homelessness.
- Fair Housing Act.
- 2012 Equal Access Rule.
- 2016 Equal Access Final Rule.
- HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research Learning Agenda.
- HUD's SOGI Data Action Plan.

Research on SOGI and Housing

- Same-sex married and cohabiting couples.
- Aging and housing needs over the life course.
- Housing discrimination.
- Housing insecurity:
 - Forced moves.
 - Homelessness:
 - Youth experiencing homelessness.
- Housing and health.
- Neighborhood quality.
- Subsidized housing:
 - Supportive services.

2023 AHS Question SOGI Questions

Sexual Orientation:

- Which of the following best represents how you think about yourself?
 - Gay or lesbian; Straight, that is, not gay or lesbian; Bisexual; Something else (specify); I don't know the answer.

Gender Identity:

- Two Step:
 - Was your sex recorded as male or female at birth?
 - Male; Female.
 - Do you describe yourself as male, female, or transgender, or do you use another term?
 - Male; Female; Transgender; Use another term (specify).
 - Verification.
- Proxy versions asked to half of 2023 AHS sample.

Why Test SOGI Proxy Questions?

- The AHS is a household survey:
 - One respondent answers demographic questions for entire household.
- Population of interest:
 - Adult (18 and over) household members.
- Item nonresponse:
 - First large-scale data collection for analysis of SOGI proxy item non-response. Previous small-scale research on the Current Population Survey (CPS).
 - Compare with other sensitive questions (i.e., income, disability).
- Accuracy:
 - Will be tested in 2024 ACS Content Test.
- Write-ins:
 - Do close-ended categories adequately cover all sexual orientations and gender identities?

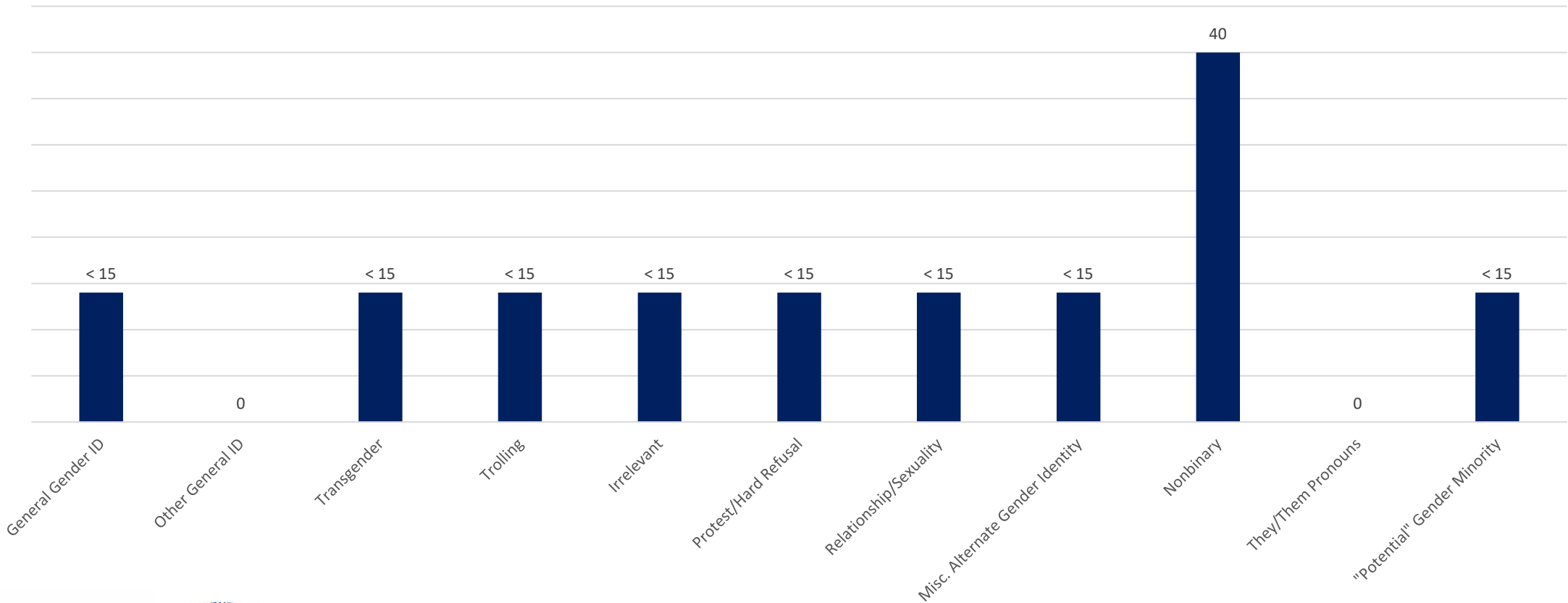
SOGI Write-In Coding

- Methodology: dual-coded, a third party arbitrated disagreements.
- Categories:
 - 11 gender identity write-in categories.
 - 14 sexual orientation write-in categories.

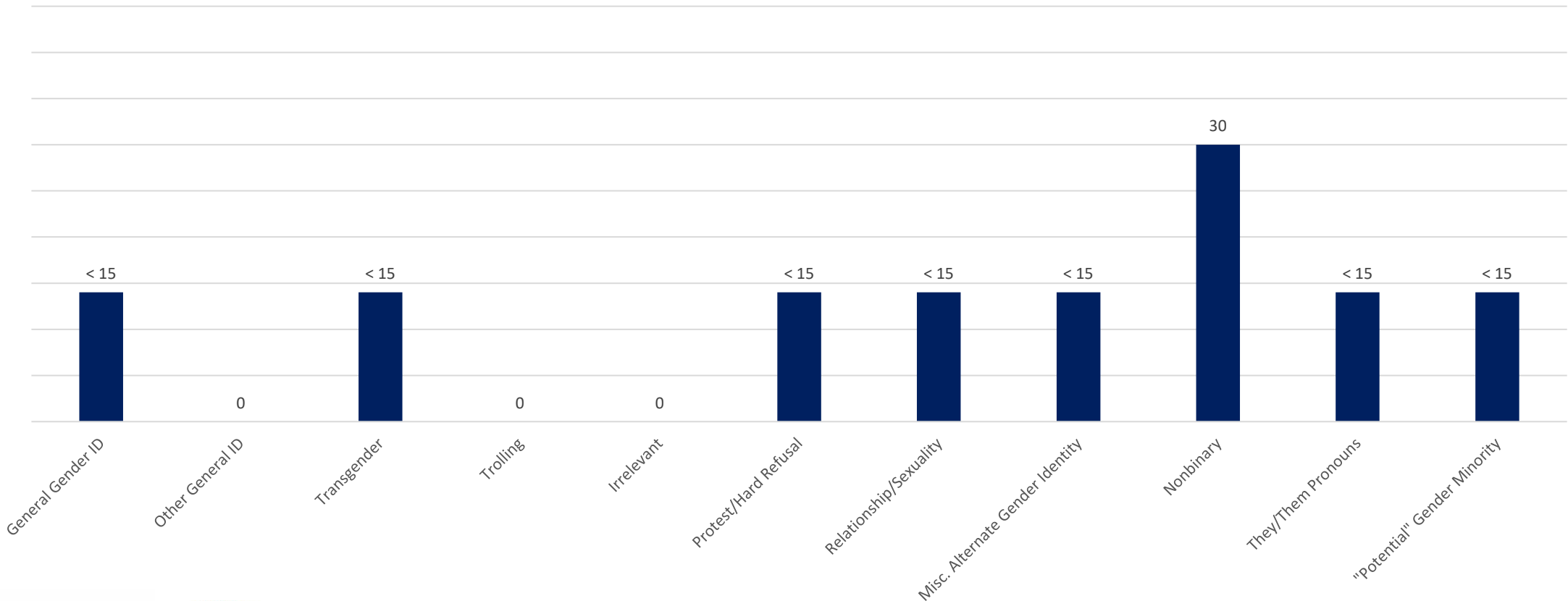
Gender Identity Write-Ins

Category Description	Examples
General Gender ID: Man	“MAN”
General Gender ID: Woman	“female”
Other General ID	“Normal” “Regular”
Transgender	“Transgender” “Trans”
Trolling	“cosmic being”
Irrelevant	“Caribbean” “Human”
Protest/Hard Refusal	“9999999” “R”
Relationship/Sexuality	“GAY” “Bi sexual” “Lesbian”
Misc. alternate gender identity	“genderfluid” “two sprit” “agender”
Nonbinary	“nonbinary” “bio”
They/Them Pronouns	“they/them” “they”
“Potential” gender minority	“None of these” “something else” “figuring it out”

Gender Identity: Respondents



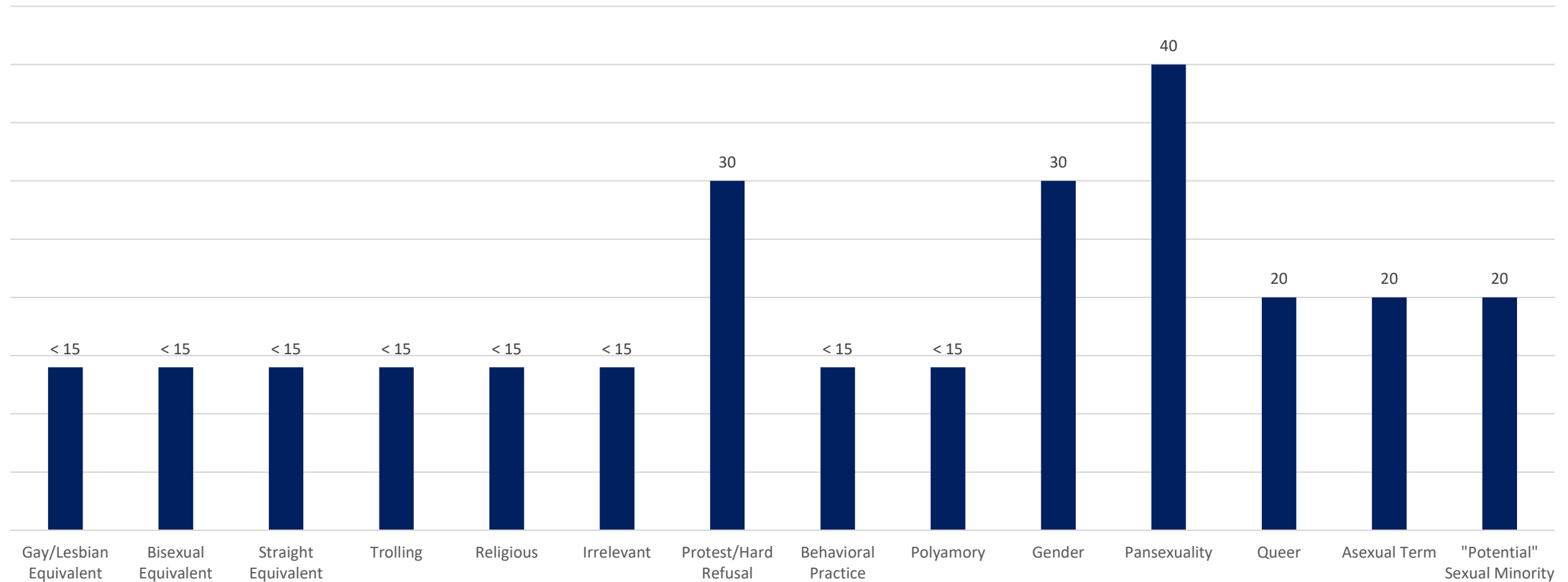
Gender Identity: Other Household Members



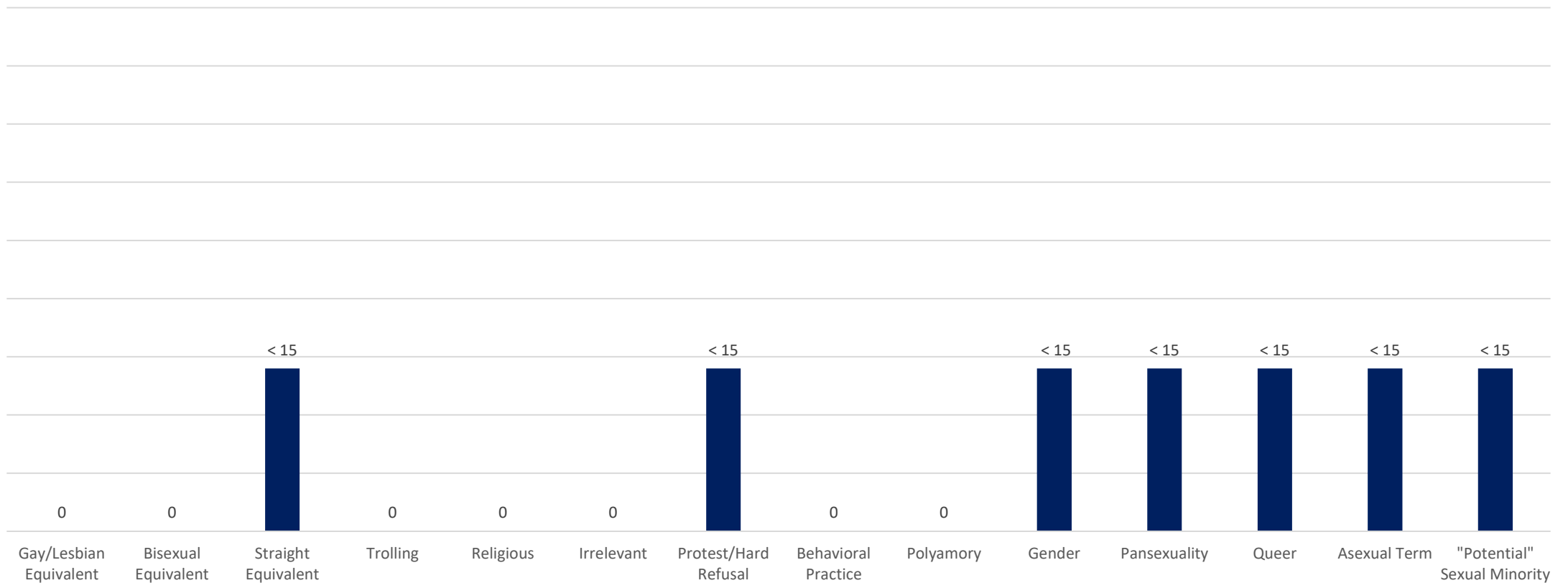
Sexual Orientation Write-Ins

Description	Examples
Gay/Lesbian	“Homosexual” “lesbian”
Bisexual	“Male or female” “biromantic”
Straight	“Normal” “Heterosexual”
Trolling	“Perverted” “Pretty cool”
Religious	“blessed” “Spiritual”
Irrelevant	“Human” “Old lady” “a person”
Protest/Hard Refusal	“Leave it at that” “not to say” “R”
Behavioral practice	“Celibate” “Strictly Single”
Polyamory	“poly”
Gender	“Trans”
Pansexuality	“pansexual” “pan”
Queer	“Queer”
Asexuality term	“Demisexual” “Ace”
“Potential” sexual minority	“When she figures it out” “None of the above” “No term”

Sexual Orientation: Respondents



Sexual Orientation: Other Household Members



Write-In Data Analysis

- Comparisons between respondents and proxies:
 - What might be attributed to other demographic differences between the groups?
- Comparisons between AHS and other surveys:
 - What might be attributed to methodological differences?

AHS SOGI Research

- SOGI sex and gender variables vs. core demographic sex question.
- Respondent self data vs. proxy data.
- Paradata analysis (time per question, breakoff, etc.).
- Item nonresponse (comparisons to other modules).
- Field representative debriefing.

Proposed Changes to AHS SOGI for 2025

- Proxy questions added to full sample.
- “Nonbinary” added as response option for gender identity question.
- Split-sample design used to test mark-all-that-apply for gender identity question in half of sample.

Thank You!

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2023
Sex
Recorded at
Birth

Respondent: “Was your sex recorded as male or female at birth?”

Proxy*: “To the best of your knowledge, was [household member’s] sex recorded as male or female at birth?”

1. Male

*Split-sample

2. Female

2023 Gender Identity

Respondent: “Do you describe yourself as male, female, or transgender, or do you use another term?”

Proxy*: “To the best of your knowledge, does [household member] describe themselves as male, female, or transgender, or do they use another term?”

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender
4. Use another term; specify

*Split-sample

2023 Sexual Orientation

Respondent: “Which of the following best represents how you think about yourself?”

Proxy*: “To the best of your knowledge, which of the following best represents how [household member] thinks of themselves?”

1. Gay or lesbian
2. Straight, that is, not gay or lesbian
3. Bisexual
4. Something else; specify
5. I don’t know the answer

*Split-sample

2025 Sexual Orientation

Respondent: “Which of the following best represents how you think about yourself?”

Proxy: “Which of the following best represents how [household member] thinks of themselves?”

1. Gay or lesbian
2. Straight, that is, not gay or lesbian
3. Bisexual
4. Uses a different term; specify
5. I don't know the answer

2025
Sex
Assigned at
Birth

Respondent: “What sex were you assigned at birth?”

Proxy: “What sex was [household member] assigned at birth?”

1. Male
2. Female

2025 Gender Identity

Respondent: “What is your current gender?”

Proxy: “What is [household member’s] current gender?”

Split-sample:

Group 1: select one answer

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender
4. Nonbinary
5. Use a different term; specify

Group 2: mark all that apply

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender
4. Nonbinary
5. Use a different term; specify