

Professor Kristen Schilt, University of Chicago

## **“From ‘So What’ to ‘What If:’ Doing Sociology in Unsettled and Unsettling Times”**



**Description:** Political attacks on higher education are upending the academy to an unprecedented degree. Researchers who work on topics that have become conservative targets, such as abortion access and transgender communities, are increasingly vulnerable to what I call “data seizure”: a legal request for the disclosure of confidential research materials via subpoenas and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Through an analysis of published data seizure cases and informal interviews with social scientists who faced FOIA requests, I offer starting points for a broader conversation about how to do sociological research with human subjects in unsettled and unsettling times.

**Kristen Schilt** is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago. She is the author of *Just One of the Guys: Transgender Men and the Persistence of Inequality* and the co-editor of *Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology*. She has co-directed a short film and feature film, “Framing Agnes,” with Chase Joynt. She recently edited a symposium on the history of gender scholarship in sociology in the *American Journal of Sociology*.

**Thursday**  
**October 23, 2025**  
12:30-1:50pm

**Parkes 222**  
1870 Sheridan Road  
Evanston, IL 60208

**IN PERSON  
ONLY**