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Beyond the Binary: Gender Image and Experiences of Marginalization on Campus

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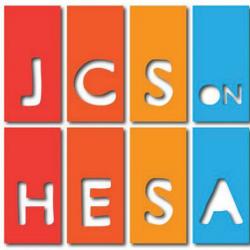
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Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs

Beyond the Binary

Gender Image and Experiences of Marginalization on Campus

RESEARCH-IN-BRIEF

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Q What inspired you to engage the research in this manuscript?

A Dr. Geist and I started this research project back in the spring semester of 2016 while I was doctoral student at the University of Utah and doing an independent study on gender research with Dr. Geist to fulfill my remaining credits toward my graduate certificate in gender studies. Currently, I am in my third third year as an assistant professor at Colorado State University, where she now teaches quantitative research methods, to students in our Higher Education Leadership program. Dr. Geist still reside at the University of Utah, where she has since earned tenure and am currently the Associate Dean for Research in the School for Cultural and Social Transformation. (Kari J. Dockendorff)

In so many ways the world has changed dramatically since we first started this research project, but I think what has stayed the same for both of us is just how important critical quantitative scholarship, and better approaches to measuring identity, specifically gender, is not only to higher education, but beyond. (Claudia Geist)

This project more or less started because of our shared frustrations with survey instruments not adequately measuring gender or sex. I was in the process of working on my dissertation proposal and was determined to use quantitative methods and survey research in my study on exploring how student affairs staff make meaning of gender in their work and help trans* students navigate institutional policies and practices related to name and gender changes on campus records. I was having a difficult time trying to justify doing quantitative methods in my dissertation when even the basic measures of gender and sex caused harm to trans* students. (Kari J. Dockendorff)

Q What were some challenges you faced in publishing your article?

A Ultimately, the review process for this manuscript was difficult and took a few years to get accepted. We tried both student affairs/higher education journals as well as a couple journals outside of the field of higher education which focused on gender and sexuality. We received feedback that made good points, and helped us think through how exactly we wanted to situate this study, and we also received feedback that was not helpful and seemed to not understand why we were attempting to reimagine gender and sex in survey research. This process also was slowed down by the pandemic slowing response times for the peer review process. (Kari J. Dockendorff)

Q Why did you choose the *Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs* for this article?

A After the last rejection, I was feeling discouraged that our manuscript would find a home in a journal. I reached out to a couple mentors and colleagues to get advice about the review process and if they had any suggestions on what do with this manuscript. The advice and encouragement from my colleagues motivated us to submit to the *Journal of the Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs*. To our excitement, the feedback we received was positive and situated to help us make this piece better. For me, the feedback from this journal, helped push my thinking in how to talk about the scales. Several reviewers gave quite thoughtful feedback that encouraged us to think more critically about what the scales offer, and ways to expand and improve upon the discussion and implications section.

It felt like we found a home for the manuscript where we didn't have to argue why we would even attempt something like this, and instead found ways to make the manuscript better. (Kari J. Dockendorff)

Q What is one big takeaway you have from the process?

A The one big takeaway is that gender marginalization goes beyond members of the LGBTQI+ community, and narrow expectations about how we are supposed to look and act are constraints that do not only hinder full human expression but also, especially in the context of higher education, limits the full capabilities of the people with teach and learn with. (Kari J. Dockendorff)

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