

INTRODUCTION

Genny Beemyn

DEPENDING ON ONE'S PERSPECTIVE, there has been either significant change or little change regarding the inclusion of and support for trans people in higher education over the past twenty years. On the positive side, many colleges and universities in the United States have taken at least some steps to address the needs of trans students, staff, and faculty and to create campus climates in which trans people can be out without having to face constant harassment and discrimination. Although there has not been any national research on the topic, it is safe to say that there are more out trans students, staff, and faculty on campuses now than ever before. On the negative side, there is not a single college or university that currently does enough to support their trans community members, and the majority of higher education institutions fail to ensure even the basic rights of trans people, such as by providing gender-inclusive housing options or a significant number of gender-inclusive restrooms. Many trans students, staff, and faculty are out today, but many more are not, or are open about their gender identity only to a select group of friends, because they do not feel safe or comfortable on campus. Thus, while the gains made by trans people at colleges in the last couple of decades are important and should be recognized, this progress is only the beginning of the changes that are needed for higher education to be a truly trans-welcoming and trans-supportive environment.

EDUCATING ABOUT TRANS PEOPLE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Works about the lives of trans students, staff, and faculty, especially by trans people themselves, can help create more trans-inclusive college environments by educating campus communities, and for this reason I accepted SUNY Press's invitation to edit this anthology. My hope is that the book will encourage cis students, staff, and faculty to learn more about the experiences of trans people in higher education and that the text will be used in undergraduate and graduate courses in LGBTQ+ studies, women's and gender studies, sociology, education, and other fields that have (or should have) the

lives of trans people as a critical part of their curriculum. By including personal narratives and the findings of research studies, the anthology is especially well suited for current and future student affairs practitioners, many of whom are taught little or nothing about trans students in higher education programs.

While I envision people in higher education to be the principal audience for the book, I also hope it will be read by those with no connection to college campuses, who simply want to learn more about the experiences of trans people, especially younger trans people, today. In seeking to make the book accessible to this wider audience, I have not presumed a certain level of knowledge about trans people on the part of the reader. I included a glossary of trans-related terms that are used by the authors and by me in this introduction, and have edited the chapters to limit academic jargon. In addition, I asked many of the authors of research studies not to follow the standard academic journal format (i.e., literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, discussion and implications, limitations, and future research needs) so as to make their work more readable to a general public. The minutia of research studies can be uninteresting (if not off-putting) to many general readers. Moreover, given the nearly total absence of articles about trans people in higher education until relatively recently, a literature review for every research-focused chapter would be highly redundant.

Some broader context is still needed. To enable readers to better understand the research-focused chapters, I review the history of studies of trans people in higher education in this introduction. The amount of material being published on trans college students, in particular, has grown phenomenally in the past few years, as demonstrated by this book. A decade ago, there would not have been enough new research for such a volume. I begin by providing a history of trans-inclusive campus policies. This history is important to review first because, without a more trans-supportive policy environment, fewer trans students would have felt comfortable coming out and been willing to participate in studies about their experiences. Thus campus policy changes made the current surge in research on trans students possible.

TRANS-INCLUSIVE POLICIES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The history of colleges recognizing and addressing the needs of trans people is relatively brief. In 1996, when I was a graduate student at the University of Iowa, I and a faculty member, Mickey Eliason, worked to add “gender identity” to the university’s nondiscrimination statement. As a result, the University of Iowa

became the first college in the country to have a trans-inclusive nondiscrimination policy and probably the first college to have any formal trans-inclusive policy. I had hoped that our success would lead other colleges to follow suit, but years went by before any other institution began to consider the needs of their trans students, staff, and faculty.

In retrospect, I should not have been surprised by the lack of immediate action elsewhere. In the mid-1990s, no college had an officially recognized trans student group and only a few dozen had lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) centers, most of which were newly established and focused primarily on sexual orientation issues (Beemyn 2002). As a result, there were not institutional organizations in place that could advocate for such changes. In addition, few trans students, staff, and faculty were then out on college campuses—I was just beginning to identify as genderqueer myself—and in a position to challenge the hostile climates they experienced at their institutions and advocate for trans-supportive policies. Of course, most trans students, staff, and faculty did not disclose their gender identities because the environment at most colleges was so negative. Moreover, most cis campus community members failed to recognize, much less address, institutional genderism (the rigid adherence to the gender binary in practices, policies, and norms) because they were not directly affected by it.

It was not until the late 2000s and early 2010s that more than a handful of colleges started taking steps to support their trans populations, primarily in response to a growing number of students beginning to identify and be out as trans and requesting that their institutions become more trans inclusive. Since 2004, I have tracked trans-supportive policies at colleges, first for the Transgender Law and Policy Institute and then for Campus Pride as part of its Trans Policy Clearinghouse. When I began this work, fewer than twenty colleges had “gender identity” in their nondiscrimination policy; only one, Wesleyan University, provided a gender-inclusive housing option; and no college allowed trans students to use a name other than their legal name on campus records and documents or covered hormones and gender-affirming surgeries under student health insurance.

More than a dozen years later, the policy landscape has shifted significantly. For example, more than one thousand colleges now specifically include “gender identity” in their nondiscrimination policy; more than 250 have some form of gender-inclusive housing; about the same number enable students to use a chosen name, instead of their dead name (i.e., the name they were given at birth), on campus records and documents; and at least 75

cover hormone replacement therapy and gender-affirming surgeries under student health insurance (Campus Pride Trans Policy Clearinghouse 2017). A number of colleges have also created gender-inclusive restrooms across their campuses and stated publicly that trans people have the right to use facilities in keeping with their gender identity (e.g., Baker 2016; DesVergnes 2017; June 2017; Robles 2017), despite the federal executive branch allowing discrimination against trans students in access to school restrooms and some state governments seeking to require this mistreatment (National Conference of State Legislatures 2017).

Considering that there are more than 4,700 postsecondary institutions in the United States (US Department of Education 2016), this means that the vast majority of colleges still provide no institutional support to their trans students, much less to trans staff and faculty. Moreover, with the executive branch's withdrawal of the federal guidance on the inclusion of trans students under Title IX in 2017, it is unlikely that the colleges that have long failed to address harassment and discrimination against trans people will become motivated to do so without other pressures. Hopefully, as trans students continue to come out and advocate for themselves and are joined by trans staff and faculty, all colleges will be compelled to do much more to improve their campus climates for trans people.

RESEARCH ON TRANS PEOPLE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

As recently as the early 2000s, there was almost no research on the experiences of trans people at colleges. Susan Rankin (2003) included trans people in a larger work on the campus climate for LGBT people; however, she did not separate trans individuals from cis LGB individuals in most of her analysis. Notably, she did include trans staff and faculty members. Since then, only one large research study (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, and Frazer 2010) has similarly surveyed trans staff and faculty, and only the work of Erich Pitcher (2017, 2018) has addressed faculty members.

A handful of articles on trans students were published prior to the mid-2000s (Beemyn 2003; Carter 2000; Lees 1998; Nakamura 1998), but these articles relied largely on anecdotal evidence in suggesting ways that colleges could become more trans inclusive, such as by eliminating the gender binary in activities and facilities, providing services and resources for trans students, and educating the campus about gender identity. Subsequent articles that I wrote individually and in collaboration with others (Beemyn 2005a, 2005b; Beemyn,

Curtis, Davis, and Tubbs 2005; Beemyn, Domingue, Pettitt, and Smith 2005) provided more specific recommendations about the policies and practices that colleges need in place to support trans students.

The first published research studies on trans students were included in an issue of the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education* (Beemyn 2005c), now named the *Journal of LGBT Youth*. These studies included Rob S. Pusch (2005) on how trans students characterized the reactions of their family and friends when they disclosed their gender identity to them; Jeffrey S. McKinney (2005) on the campus experiences of trans undergraduate and graduate students; and Brent Bilodeau (2005) on the identity development processes of two trans students. Bilodeau's work was expanded into his dissertation, which became the first published book on trans people in higher education (2009).

In the 2010s, there has been a quickly expanding body of published work on trans students, which has been made possible by the growing number of college students identifying as trans and by a growing number of trans researchers, who bring an insider's knowledge and perspective to their work. Research on trans students has also been boosted by national surveys of college students adding questions that ask about gender identity, such as the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership in 2006 (with expanded options in 2009, 2015, and 2018), the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA) in 2008 (with expanded options in 2016), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2014, and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey in 2015. As a result of these changes, we now have large-scale data sets that can be used to consider the diversity of trans student experiences and make extensive comparisons between trans and cis students.

Most studies involving trans students over the past decade can be classified into five categories, based on their research methodology: single-campus studies of trans students, multiple-campus/national studies of trans students, national studies of LGBTQ students that separately address trans students, national studies of trans people that separately address college students, and national studies of college students that separately address trans students. All of these approaches can provide valuable insights into the lives of trans students and contribute to our small but growing body of knowledge about trans students who identify in different ways (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, race, class, religion) and who attend different types of institutions (e.g., public universities, liberal arts colleges, religiously affiliated colleges, women's colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, community colleges).

Studies of a single campus (e.g., Duran and Nicolazzo 2017; Pryor 2015) allow for an in-depth exploration of the experiences of trans individuals and the particular obstacles they encounter in a specific environment. Z Nicolazzo (2016b, 2017a) found that the nine trans students from one university whom ze interviewed over the course of one or more semesters practiced resilience as a strategy to cope with institutional and individual instances of genderism. Their use of resilience varied, depending on the context and their needs for self-care and self-protection. Some disclosed their gender identity in classes and other campus settings to affirm themselves, avoid being misgendered, and educate cis people, while others chose not to indicate that they were trans to avoid harassment and discrimination.

Studies of trans students on multiple campuses (e.g., Catalano 2015; Jourian 2017; Krum, Davis, and Galupo 2013; Seelman et al. 2012; Singh, Meng, and Hansen 2013; Wentling 2015) range in scope from research involving a few colleges to online projects that may include trans students from dozens to more than a hundred institutions. Building on his work on resilience, Nicolazzo and colleagues (2017) focus on kinship as a framework for understanding trans college students' persistence and success. In interviewing eighteen trans students who attended a large, Midwestern LGBTQ student conference, they found that by establishing on- and off-campus kinship networks with other trans people and sometimes with supportive cis individuals, the students developed a sense of belonging that they often did not experience otherwise at their institutions. Kinship was developed in physical spaces, such as in LGBTQ and trans-specific student groups, the campus LGBTQ center, and LGBTQ student conferences; in virtual spaces, particularly social media sites; and through the emotional support systems the students had established for themselves. This study demonstrates that in seeking to create trans-inclusive and -welcoming campuses, college administrators must not only work to change policies and practices that exclude and marginalize trans students but also recognize the importance of peer networks.

Abbie Goldberg, Genny Beemyn, and JuliAnna Smith (2018) examine the trans-supportive policies and practices that are desired by trans students and provided by colleges. They surveyed more than five hundred undergraduate and graduate trans students and asked them to rank the importance of seventeen different trans-supportive policies and practices. The students rated gender-inclusive restrooms in most campus buildings as the most important policy, followed closely by a nondiscrimination policy that includes gender identity/expression, a college-recognized LGBTQ student organization, and

the ability to change one's name on campus records without a legal name change. All seventeen policies and practices were viewed as at least somewhat important, but most of the students indicated that their colleges had few of them, especially if they were attending two-year or religiously affiliated institutions.

The trans-supportive policies and practices at women's colleges have come under particular scrutiny in recent years (e.g., Hart and Lester 2011; Nannay and Brunnsma 2017; Weber 2016), as a growing number of their students do not identify as women (i.e., identifying as trans men or as nonbinary) and as trans women have sought admittance. In an especially insightful approach to this issue, Susan Marine (2011) conducted in-depth interviews with thirty-one student affairs administrators at five women's colleges to understand their reactions to how male-identified trans students are changing the nature of what it means to be a "women's" institution. Marine placed the participants into three categories: ambivalent toward, supportive of, or advocates for trans students. Some of the actions taken by the people in the latter two groups included using inclusive language, being accommodating to trans students and sensitive to their needs, equipping trans students for life outside of the college, and demonstrating departmental leadership on trans inclusion.

Other studies about trans college students over the past decade include them as part of larger research projects. The most extensive study to date of LGBTQ people in higher education, the *2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People* (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, and Frazer 2010), involved more than 5,100 students, staff, and faculty, 8 percent of whom identified as gender nonconforming, 3 percent as transmasculine, and 2 percent as transfeminine. The study found that the trans-identified participants reported higher rates of harassment, a greater fear for their physical safety, and more negative perceptions of the climate on their campuses than did the cis participants. For example, more than a third of the transmasculine and transfeminine students indicated that they had been harassed, and a majority did not disclose their gender identity for fear of being mistreated. Taken together, these figures suggest that students who are known or thought to be trans will likely experience harassment at some point at their institutions. The data from Rankin et al. has served as the basis for studies that consider the level of outness among LGBTQ students (Garvey and Rankin 2015a), the classroom experiences of LGBTQ students (Garvey and Rankin 2015b), and the campus climate for LGBTQ community college students (Beemyn 2012; Garvey, Taylor, and Rankin 2015).

The largest studies of trans people in the United States have been conducted in the past decade, and each of these works considers the experiences of trans college students. Recognizing that there had not been a national study that examined the identity development processes of both binary and non-binary trans individuals, Sue Rankin and I (Beemyn and Rankin 2011; Rankin and Beemyn 2012) undertook this research to better understand the lives of trans people, particularly those who were traditionally college-aged. As I describe in my chapter in this book, we found similarities in experiences across various gender identities and significant generational differences.

Although not specifically focused on college students, the 2011 National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS; Grant et al. 2011) and the 2015 US Transgender Survey (James et al. 2016) can offer insights into student experiences because of their large sample sizes (6,456 and 27,715 participants, respectively) and the ability to do cross-tabulations across a range of variables. For example, using data from the NTDS about the individuals who had attended college, Kristie Seelman (2014) found that trans women, trans people of color, younger trans people, trans people with a disability, and people who are more frequently perceived as trans are more likely than other trans individuals to be denied access to gender-appropriate campus restrooms due to being trans or gender nonconforming. The trans female participants were also much more likely than the other trans participants to have been denied access to gender-appropriate campus housing.

In another study, Seelman (2016) used the NTDS to consider the relationship between campus discrimination and suicidality. She discovered that individuals who had been denied access to gender-appropriate campus restrooms or housing or who had experienced harassment or assault from other students because of being trans were much more likely to have attempted suicide at some point in their lives than trans people who had not had these experiences. The NTDS did not ask when the participants had attempted suicide, so discrimination cannot be said to have caused suicidality, but these findings should still give pause to college administrators. Institutions that do not have written trans-supportive policies and do not actively ensure that these measures are followed risk causing irreparable harm to their trans students.

Arguably the most important development in research on trans students in the past decade has been the addition of gender identity questions to national surveys of college students. This change has made it possible to consider differences between trans and cis students on instruments like the ACHA's National College Health Assessment (Diemer et al. 2015; Griner et al. 2017; Oswalt and

Lederer 2017), the CIRP Freshman Survey (Eagan et al. 2017; Stolzenberg and Hughes 2017), the National Survey of Student Engagement (BrckaLorenz, Garvey, Hurtado, and Latopolski 2017), and the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (Dugan, Kusel, and Simounet 2012). The results of these studies demonstrate that, compared with their cis peers, trans students experience higher rates of verbal, physical, and sexual assault and have more negative physical, mental, and emotional health outcomes. But they are also more socially, civically, and politically engaged on campuses.

Using data from the ACHA-NCHA, Stacey Griner and colleagues (2017) discovered that the trans survey respondents were more likely than the cis female and male respondents to have experienced physical violence (physical assault and being verbally threatened), sexual violence (sexual touching without consent, attempted sexual penetration, and sexual penetration), and intimate partner violence (physical abuse, sexual abuse, and stalking). Another national study (Cantor et al. 2015) similarly found that trans students indicated the highest rates of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. At the same time, they were the least likely group to state that they would report an incident of sexual harassment or sexual assault to campus authorities because few had faith in the system at their colleges to support and protect the rights of trans people.

Sara Oswald and Alyssa Lederer (2017) also used data from the ACHA-NCHA. They focused on the questions related to mental health conditions and found that the trans participants were more likely to indicate that they had been diagnosed or were under treatment in the previous year for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anorexia, anxiety, bipolar disorder, bulimia, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic attacks, phobia, schizophrenia, and substance abuse/addiction. Anxiety and depression were especially widespread among trans students, with more than a third indicating they had been diagnosed or treated for each, which was about three times the rate of the cis students. This study points to the difficulties that trans students often face in trying to cope with the rejection and marginalization they commonly experience in college.

The results of the CIRP Freshman Survey (Stolzenberg and Hughes 2017) likewise show the psychological distress that many trans students experience when they are unable to find means to cope with the strains of discrimination, harassment, and violence. Compared with the survey participants overall, the trans students rated themselves as having poorer emotional and mental health, felt depressed more frequently, and were much more likely to state that they

felt overwhelmed in the year prior to college. But on the positive side, the trans students were more frequently connected with others through socializing with friends and online social networks, were much more likely to be politically and socially involved, and more frequently stated that it was “very important” or “essential” to influence the political structure and social values, keep up to date with political affairs, and help promote racial understanding. Thus, while many trans students struggle with the emotional and psychological effects of mistreatment, they remain engaged with society, seeking to bring about change to improve their lives and the lives of others.

ABOUT THE CHAPTERS

The essays in *Trans People in Higher Education* further existing research and take it in new, original directions. In compiling this book, I chose to include both personal narratives and research studies, recognizing that each approach offers different insights into the lives of trans people in higher education. Narratives can provide an up-close view of someone’s reality and give the reader a glimpse of how that person sees the world, whereas research studies can present the big picture, considering trends and common themes in the experiences of a larger group. Both methods are particularly valuable in relation to trans people in higher education not only because of the limited amount of material that has been published to date but also because what has been published is limited in whom it covers. For example, there are few works by or about nonbinary trans undergraduates, trans graduate students, and trans faculty and staff—groups that are all discussed in this anthology.

I also wanted to bring together personal narratives and research studies because these approaches can inform each other. The narratives reinforce the findings of the research and ensure that the lives of individual trans people and the struggles they face at many colleges are not obscured by a lot of numbers. At the same time, the studies show that the negative campus climates experienced by the individual narrators are not an aberration; if you are a trans person in higher education today, you can expect to be frequently invalidated, marginalized, and made invisible because campuses were built on and still often reinforce a gender binary. The research articles, several of which involve large-scale, national studies, are also able to consider the diversity of trans people’s lives in ways that a limited number of individual narratives cannot.

Because the literature on trans college students has too often relied on very small, nonrepresentative samples (e.g., Bilodeau 2009; Goodrich 2012;

Nicolazzo 2016a, 2017a; Pryor 2015) and thus could reach only tentative or limited conclusions, I wanted to include research that had relatively more participants and could “say” more. I also sought to include articles that address the experiences of nonbinary trans people and individuals who are just beginning to transition, as many personal narratives and studies of trans people involve trans women and men, especially binary trans people who have long since medically transitioned (for a recent example, see Cutler-Seeber 2018).

To provide different vantage points about being trans in higher education, I wanted the book to include works by and about trans people at various types of colleges and in various institutional roles: undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, and faculty members. At the same time, I wanted the majority of chapters in both the narrative and research sections to focus on the experiences of students, because they are the largest group of trans people in higher education, and many face relatively more difficult struggles to find personal and institutional support than do staff and faculty. I had sought to include more research articles on trans staff and faculty, only to be disappointed by the seeming lack of studies involving these groups, particularly examinations of the lives of trans staff members. I hope that this anthology inspires others to undertake a wide variety of research studies on trans people on college campuses; research involving trans faculty and staff is one area where such work is greatly needed.

Among the narratives in *Trans People in Higher Education*, four chapters are by students. Caden Campbell, with the help of Lisa Johnston, recounts his experiences as the first out trans man at his Southern women’s college. Despite some difficulties with administrators and other students, Caden¹ found that he benefited from attending the school and was glad he went there. At the same time, the school benefited from him, as he argues that for women’s colleges to remain relevant today, they must fully embrace trans students.

Three contributors discuss different aspects of being graduate students: taking classes, researching, and teaching. Annabelle Talia Bruno compares her experiences as a trans woman student in two different master’s programs. In the first, she was misgendered and otherwise mistreated because of her gender, which caused her to question herself and her abilities. With more support and less need to have to defend herself, she was more academically successful in the second program.

While Annabelle recounts how her first graduate program failed her, Alandis Johnson considers how reconceptualizing failure as a positive outcome can be used to educate about gender inclusion in the classroom. As a nonbinary

trans person, Alandis notes that they are disparaged for failing to adhere to the dominant gender system. By being what they describe as a “gender failure,” they feel that they can better connect with the students they teach, many of whom also see themselves as failures in different ways and struggle to be understood. Moreover, Alandis argues that the “unintelligibility” of their gender broadens possibilities for others on their campus to see themselves in nonbinary terms and helps create a community of people who fail in their gender.

S. Simmons discusses their research on trans educators from the perspective of their own life as a Black trans person and an educator. Like Alandis, S. is able to relate to others by examining and being open about their experiences. In their case, they connected with their research participants, many of whom identified with S. because they saw themselves reflected in them. This affirmation from other trans educators, in turn, helped S. better understand themselves and the value of their work.

The remaining personal narratives are written by faculty and staff members. Although higher education is presumed to be a more welcoming environment in which to be trans than many other workplaces, both C. Ray Borck and Kei Graves describe mixed responses from co-workers when they came out to them as trans. Medically transitioning as a faculty member at a New York City community college, C. Ray encountered ignorant questions and stereotypes, particularly from colleagues, but as he increasingly fit others’ perceptions of what a man should look like, he gained greater acceptance and began to be treated by other heterosexual male faculty members as “one of the guys.” In contrast, Kei, a staff adviser and adjunct faculty member who identifies as agender and often presents in ways that are typically read as queer, embodies an ongoing challenge to dominant expectations for gender and sexuality. As a result, Kei found that many of their colleagues at the relatively conservative community college where they work were noticeably uncomfortable when they came out to them. But they did receive outward support from two staff members, one gay and one bisexual, and were surprised when a student whom they were advising reacted favorably to learning that they are trans, because the student’s partner is trans.

Jackson Wright Shultz’s narrative focuses on a particular advising experience. Like Kei, he worried when a student whom he had taught asked him if he is trans, fearing that the student would react harshly and file a complaint against him. But the student was looking for support in coming out as trans herself and seeking advice on how that might affect her future and career plans. The interaction led Jackson to think about his experiences as a queer

undergraduate student and his struggles with how visible he should be as a trans person. The stories shared by Kei and Jackson demonstrate the importance of out trans staff and faculty.

The second section of the book consists of research on trans people, especially trans students, in higher education. These articles are groundbreaking for the populations they consider, the scale or scope of the studies discussed, or their methodologies. Together, the research chapters show the diversity of trans experiences and the commonality of discrimination and marginalization.

The chapters by Kasey Ashton and Tre Wentling consider trans students more generally. Kasey interviews trans students about how they developed, experienced, and made meaning of their gender identity. She garners further insights into their lives through the unique approach of having them bring in and talk about a visual or textual representation of how they perceive and understand their gender. Tre examines how trans students' experiences vary across campus spaces and how they respond to instances of institutional and personal discrimination. Contrary to the common depiction of trans students as victimized and defeated, he finds that many of the students are resilient and effectively advocate for themselves.

Three of the chapters consider particular groups of trans students. Abbie Goldberg addresses the experiences of trans and gender-nonconforming graduate students in the United States and a few other countries; I present the findings of a national study I conducted of nonbinary trans students; and Shannon Weber explores how two Western Massachusetts women's colleges have a "complicated relationship" toward the inclusion and support of trans students. The articles by Abbie and me are based on the first large-scale research projects involving trans graduate students and nonbinary trans undergraduates, respectively, and each work shows that group members face unique challenges in relation to other students and their institutions. Shannon undertook the largest study to date of trans students at women's colleges for her article, and her discussion of the struggles of trans men at these institutions speaks to Caden Campbell's experiences at his women's college.

While the other studies of trans students included here rely on trans-specific surveys and interviews done by the researchers, James DeVita and Katrin Wesner use a large, general data set on college student health to provide the first detailed analysis of the sexual health of trans students. They find that trans students have more negative sexual health outcomes than their cis peers, and that these sexual health disparities vary among trans students based on sexual orientation. James and Katrin call for more research to be conducted on

the sexual behaviors and identities of trans students, but they argue that based on their findings, institutions should be providing trans support services now and not wait for additional studies.

The last three chapters cover a range of campus populations and themes. Erich Pitcher describes the experiences of trans academics, many of whom reported being misgendered, having to contend with institutional gender binaries, and needing to perform the extra labor of educating others. Similar to Shannon Weber's findings about trans men at women's colleges, many of the academics also described feeling hypervisible or invisible, depending on the situation. Erich's work here and in their recent book (2018) constitutes the first extensive research on trans faculty members and graduate student instructors.

While other studies have examined the treatment of trans students by staff, faculty, and other students (e.g., Garvey and Rankin 2015a, 2015b; Pryor 2015), Kristie Seelman takes a broader, more innovative approach by considering the interactions that trans students, staff, and faculty have with individuals who hold institutional power, such as supervisors, administrators, senior staff, and professors (in relation to students). She finds that these college leaders were largely a negative force in the lives of trans individuals and on the campus climate for trans people. In contrast, Matthew Antonio Bosch and Dana Carnes show how those with institutional power can make a positive difference on a campus. They discuss how their university became more LGBTQIA-inclusive, particularly more trans-supportive, through administrative leadership, institutional strategic planning, and providing resources to improve services and programs for LGBTQIA students. Their article can serve as a guide for other colleges that are looking to develop more welcoming campus climates for trans students, staff, and faculty.

A NOTE ON "TRANS" TERMINOLOGY

Throughout the anthology, the term *trans* refers to individuals with both binary and nonbinary transgender identities. Although *trans** is sometimes used today, especially in academia, to signal the inclusion of all non-cis gender identities and to challenge the conflation of *trans* with "transsexual" (e.g., Nicolazzo 2017a, 2017b; Nicolazzo, Marine, and Galarte 2015), I believe the asterisk is unnecessary, inaccurate, and actually contributes to noninclusivity. In Latin, *trans* means both "across, on the other side of" and "beyond," so the term fits both binary and nonbinary transgender individuals, making the asterisk superfluous. Admittedly, many cis people and some members of

the trans community ignore this fact and consider *trans* to be shorthand for “transsexual,” applying the term only to individuals who are medically transitioning. But the use of the asterisk only encourages *trans* to be equated with “transsexual” and concedes the exclusion of nonbinary people from *trans*.

The asterisk also does not work from an operational perspective. When and how *trans** began to be used is not well documented, but it seems to have been inspired by computing, where an asterisk is used as a wildcard in computer searches, producing results that begin with the letters before the asterisk (Ryan 2014). Thus a search for *trans** would return “transgender” and “transsexual.” But it would also yield words that have nothing to do with trans identities, like “translucent,” “transcript,” and “transfer.” At the same time, most of the language that has been developed to describe nonbinary individuals, such as genderqueer, gender fluid, and agender, do not begin with *trans*, so would not be returned in a “*trans**” computer search. Therefore, ironically, the identities meant to be forefronted in *trans** are not even included. Supporters of *trans** would presumably argue that their use of the asterisk is metaphorical, but the fact that it literally does not work undermines the concept and makes explaining what the asterisk means problematic.

Finally, I do not use the asterisk because it is often understood as having the opposite meaning to what was seemingly intended—that it was coined as a means to exclude nonbinary people as well as trans women (Diamond and Erlick 2016). The source of this interpretation is unclear, but like the advent of the asterisk, its supposedly exclusionary history was widely spread through social media, such that this narrative has often supplanted the original, inclusionary one. When, as director of the Stonewall Center at UMass Amherst, I began to use the asterisk in some of our online posts, I received immediate pushback from students who believed that its usage was furthering the cause of “trans exclusionary radical feminists” (TERFs). While TERFs apparently had nothing to do with creating *trans**, I did not want anyone to misread our intentions, so I immediately stopped using the term. Similarly, I want to make it clear with the language of this book that nonbinary individuals and trans women are integral to the “trans” community, both literally and linguistically.

NOTES

1. I refer to contributors by their first names here and in the list of contributors because I find the standard academic practice of using only last names to be clinical and distancing.

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