



# Finding space: a photovoice study of gay students in higher education

Lindsey Gaston  
Liverpool John Moores University

*Proud/Loud/Heard... ?  
Exploring LGBT+ identity, being and experiences  
LGBT+ research conference 2023*

## ABSTRACT:

This paper contributes to both the current knowledge and mythological gap which documents the lived experiences of gay students in Higher Education. With the help of Photovoice, this paper adds to the needed qualitative understanding of the lived experiences of gay students studying at university in the United Kingdom.

The data will show that the participants experienced a sense of loneliness and isolation whilst at university and identified the classroom as a critically important environment to create a sense of belonging and mattering. Whilst the classroom is central to developing both, the data complicates this fact by identifying that gay student's battle with how to perform as themselves in the classroom thusly affecting their engagement and attendance. Additionally, the data will show that while participants did not experience overt hostility nor brazen acts of homophobia, they did recognize a degree of LGBTQAI+ inclusion 'lip service'.

Through Photovoice, this research provides greater level of qualitative data highlighting that gay students experience a different university journey and how the classroom space can create an inclusive educational spaces for gay students.

Key Words: Photovoice, Student Experience, Gay, Inclusion

## Introduction

It must be recognized that the student population in Higher Education is the most diverse it ever has been in England (Koutsouris, et al, 2021). Diverse in terms of not only socio-economic backgrounds but also race, ethnicity and expression of self-identity. As a result, the university can no longer rely on the 'traditional' student profile to be self-supportive, be that emotional, structural or financial (Scott, 1996). Because of this new make-up of the student body, institutions of Higher Education have had to assist in student retention, degree attainment and student welfare at greater levels. To develop a robust understanding of the current student experience, there has been a growing trend in the examination of 'belonging and mattering' (Gravett and Ajjawi 2022; Meehan and Howells, 2018; Connell-Smith and Hubble, 2018).

Much of the belonging and mattering research focuses on how institutions of higher education address marginalized populations (Meehan and Howells 2019; Bowles and Brindle 2017). This piece of research contributes to this area of scholarship by developing an impression of the lived experiences of students who identify as gay and how they are made to feel they belong within their university.

The discussion on belonging and mattering is not new as it has been a part of the wider conversation within education policy makers, university administration, and by those who research student experience (Gravett and Ajjawj 2022; Gravett and Winstone 2022; Strayhorn, 2012). Much of this research is concerned with impacts that belonging and mattering could have on a student's academic success, wellbeing, degree attainment, and retention (Baik et al. 2019; Tinto 2017; Groves and O'Shea 2019, Winstone et al. 2020,

Garvey, 2020). Belonging and mattering has been investigated in a general sense of an overall mattering (Elliott et al 2004), how one matters to a particular individual [i.e. a parent] (Marshall, 2001) or how one matters to and institution such as a university (Tovar and Simon 2009). Within the setting of Higher Education, belonging and mattering has been investigated to determine the potential socio-emotional effects from both a positive and negative perspective (Flett et al, 2018; Marshall et al, 2019). Schlossberg (1989) recognized the significant influences that belonging and mattering had on the experiences of university students; when students felt that they belonged and mattered, they also felt less marginalized.

Within the literature, belonging and mattering have been defined as the feeling of belonging, being connected to others and being important to other people (Marshall, 2021, Strayhorn, 2019, Flett, 2018; Tover, 2013). For this paper, belonging and mattering will be defined by Strayhorn (2019, 28-29) who provides a university student specific understanding of the terms as:

Students perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community

### **Belonging and Mattering for Marginalized Populations**

Strayhorn's understanding is particularly useful when examining the experience of students who occupy a marginalized classification (Mutakabbir and Nuriddin, 2016; Kodama, 2002; Huerta and Fishman, 2014; Cooper, 1997). Students, who occupy marginalized classification who feel they 'matter', experience less academic related stress (Rayle-Dixon and Chung 2007). This led to France and Finney (2010) that 'mattering' provided a positive contribution to a student's belief in their own capabilities thus resulting in greater levels of student retention (Tovar, 2013).

However, there must be the recognition that not all students want to belong as some students make the cognitive decision not to belong. Winestone et al (2020) states that engaging in environments designed to create belonging, such as club, societies, and sport, may make students feel uncomfortable and rather than attracting students, they push them further away from the intended goal. A possible explanation may be found in the work of Gravett and Winstone (2019 p 7), who suggest that if a student find themselves 'outside the bubble' they elect to stay removed from the dominant university community. Other external factors such as the need to work can affect a student ability to participate (Baik et al 2019). This need to work is becoming a growing trend, especially within first generation and historically marginalized student populations.

### **Current Challenges to Belonging and Mattering**

Aronowotiz (2000) argues that a key role of the university is to be that of a 'Thought Factory', whereas the university highlights the links between materials delivered in the classroom to the wider socio, political, economic realities of the 'real world'. However, institutions of Higher Education have a tendency to be conservative and slow in their

evolution. As a result, universities have an established history of embedded racism (Evatt-Young and Bryson, 2021), sexism (Neto, et al 2021), heterosexist, homophobia and transphobia (Epstein et al 2003; Hefferman, 2021; Catalano and Griffin, 2016; Jourian, Simmons, and Devaney, 2015). This hesitancy / resistance to reflect changes in social attitudes provides a challenge in fulfilling the 'Thought Factory' remit. The impact is perpetuating a system that does not reflect the images of the wider world can impact how one feels that they belong and or matter.

Denton (2020, p 594), makes an insightful statement about the creation of institutional environment in terms of 'mattering' specific to gay students,

In terms of retention theory and practice, those wishing to retain students must ask what kind of institutional environment they seek to retain queer students in. If campus heteronormative culture remains intact, queer students may depart or struggle because they do not see their desires, relationships, or sex and gender practices valued and supported.

Denton (2020) and Garvey (2020) both contend that many of the existing Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) approaches fail to correctly consider a queer perspective (students who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, agender or anything considered outside of the conventional definitions of CIS gender and heteronormative culture. These concerns are also reflected in traditional student retention literature. Braxton (2000), Tinto (2012) and Zepke and Leach (2005) identify the significance of building a welcoming atmosphere that allows students to be engaged in their academic social development. Yet, Braxton et al (2000) and Tinto (2012) are critical on how universities go about constructing tolerant surroundings. Halperin, (2003) provides a queer specific critique and suggests that universities will operative queer policy, only if it convenient or can "be folded back into the standard practice of [the university]" and "without impeding academic business as usual".

### **Queering the Literature:**

Literature calling for an examination to address issues faced by LGBTQ+ students face is not a unique plea (Pritchard and Simmons, 2020; Legg et al 2020; Garvey, 2020; Salno, 2004; Cobian and Stolzenberg, 2018; McLennan and Jacobo, 2018; BrckaLorenz et al , 2018). Yet literature that focuses on students who identify as lesbian, gay or bi-sexual in Higher Education is limited and virtually non-existent when it comes to exploring the experiences of transgender students (Pritchard and Simmons, 2020; Legg et al 2020; Garvey, 2020; Salno, 2004). Legg, Confino and Sanlo (2020, p240) specifically recognizes the lack of LGBTQAI+ scholarship in this area;

Even with heightened visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students on college campuses, the literature still does not capture the specific and unique experiences of health, scholarship, and persistence of this population.

This is particularly true, when attempting to capture the voice of the transgender student. The transgender student voice has only been heard if they also identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Rather than placing focus on their gender identify their voice is rolled into sexual identity, which is a distinctly different discussion.

Additionally, little information exists about the day-to-day challenges faced by LGBTQAI+ university students as they attempt to navigate an under graduate or postgraduate qualification. Their invisibility, both on campus and in the literature allows for many unexamined questions regarding LGBT university students to persist. There is still no work found in the literature that specifically explores resilience, positive survival skills, and academic success of LGBT university students.

### Problems Gays Face in Higher Education

As a consequence of the added emotional stress along with possible discrimination, LGBTQ+ students are more vulnerable to suspend their studies or prematurely terminate their university career before completing their degree programme (Agnich and Morgan, 2020; Notaro, 2020; Okanlawon, 2020; Phipps, 2020 Schmalzbauer, 2020; Strauss et al, 2020). The peril for dropping out rises when a student occupy several minority classifications such as being both a sexual and racial minority. (Hong, Woodford, Long, and Renn, 2015). This fact is troubled even further by the fact that many LGBT youth are bullied in school and as result do not entertain continuing their education and those that do expect a repeat of what they have previously experienced.

The 2020 Student Academic Experience Survey (Neves and Hewitt, 2020) acknowledged a distressing movement regarding the LGB+ student experience. Neves and Hewitt (2020, p. 47) noted within the data that,

We saw that levels [of wellbeing] among the general population have fallen but the declines among the LGB+ population are even more striking. Low anxiety is a slight exception to this, showing a slight increase (as was the case with the total sample) but notwithstanding this increase, these results highlight a clear cause for concern.

Additionally in 2021, the Student Academic Experience Survey provides a possible guide to help in the creation of a more inclusive university experience increasing the sense of belonging for the LGB student. Fifty percent of those included in there study indicated that “Approachable / Accessible Academic Staff” contributed to their sense of belonging (Neves and Hewitt, 2021). While only 24% identified that “interaction with academic staff outside the classroom” contributed to their sense of belonging (Neves and Hewitt, 2021). This is an important designation as it indicates a much greater level of importance on the interaction that occurs in the classroom than outside of the classroom for the gay student. It is because of the recognition that we know that classroom is an important space for gay students to feel they belong and matter. However as identified by Pritcher and Simmons (2020) along with Patel (2015) contend that students who identify as a member of the LGBT community are not supported consistently across the university landscape. This variant on treatment

can cause an unequal student experience resulting in feelings of marginalisation causing lower rates of retention and degree attainment for LGBT students (Patel, 2015).

### **Methodology:**

The research is informed by data collected through the use of Photovoice, which is a research approach where the participants document their feelings, thoughts and/or issues affecting their community through the taking of photographs and then discussing their photos ([Wang et al., 2000](#), p. 82). The aim of the process is to 1) To enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, 2) To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and 3) To reach policymakers. (Wang and Burris 1997).

The origins of Photovoice can be found within the context of public health (Castleden and Garvin, 2008) and early childhood education (Schiller and Einarsdottir, 2009). However, Photovoice has established itself as an effective tool in exploring the lived experiences of marginalized populations (Budig, et al 2018). In particular when exploring topics such as Ethnicity (Miranda, et al 2021), Race (Vaishnav; 2021; Davis and Mitchell, 2021; Willett et al, 2021), Gender Identity (Miranda, et al 2021; Christensen, et al 2020) and Sexuality (Kessi, 2018; Capous-Desyllas and Mountz, 2019; Bardhoshi, et al 2018; Wagner, et al 2016; Christensen, et al 2020).

The goal of the approach is to create a 'critical dialogue' (Wang and Burris, 1997, p. 370) and give voice to the feelings of populations who are typically marginalised (Evans-Agnew and Rosemberg, 2016).

### **Sample:**

The recruitment for participants occurred in two distinct yet related actions. The first action occurred as direct appeals (Van Haute, 2021) to LGBTQAI+ student networks for participation. The second action was a snowball approach (Van Haute, 2021) from those who responded to the direct appeal. This resulted in a sample of 16 participants who completed the Photovoice process. The data presented in this piece is a reflection of 15 students, 10 males and 5 females who all self-identify as gay, for the purpose of this study gay has been defined as having a sexual or romantic attraction to the same sex. One participant identified as transgendered, as their experience provided a unique perspective, I felt that their voice would have been lost if included in the LGB data. Their participation will be the start of a complimentary project based on an exclusive transgender sample.

It is not the intent of this sample to provide a universal understanding, but provide a perspective of belonging within Higher Education. Thus it is important to note that this paper provides a qualitative insight into the lived experiences of how gay students have navigated their sense of belonging within their institution of Higher Education and how that experience may inform future initiatives to develop belonging within Higher Education.

## Process

Once a potential participant expressed interest, they attended a preliminary online meeting that provided the participant with detailed information about the project and the application of Photovoice (Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Cooper et al., 2017). Participants are instructed to use the camera on their smart phones to document their experiences (Irby et al., 2018). This prevented the project from needing to source cameras as well as the participant did not need to carry around a piece of specialty equipment. As they were using their own camera on their phone, they were already familiar and as their mobile phone and typically with them at all times. This allowed the participants to take photos that are more organic and document an emotion when it was happening in real time. Finally, the participants were informed about potential ethics issues, specifically in relation to participants taking photos of others or others in background of photos (Ha and Whittaker, 2016; Lucke et al., 2019; Maratos et al., 2016).

Once participants consented to participate, they were instructed to take as many photos they wanted ([Cooper et al., 2017](#); Musoke et al., 2016), but need to provide a minimum of 10 photos focusing on their lived experiences (Musoke et al., 2016) of being a member of the LGBTQAI+ community in higher education.

Once the photos have been taken, the participants were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews ([Lucke et al., 2019](#)) driven by ‘SHOWeD’ questions specifically adopted and modified for Photovoice by Wang et al (1998) from the work of Wallerstein and Bernstein’s (1988):

- 1) ‘What is seen here?’
- 2) ‘What is really happening?’
- 3) ‘How does this relate to your experience?’
- 4) ‘Why are things this way?’
- 5) ‘How could this image be used to educate people?’
- 6) ‘What else can we do about it?’

The participants were given additional three (3) weeks to take an additional ten (10) photos and the same process would occur. After the last set of photos were submitted and interview was completed, the participants would be invited to participate in a final interview to reflect on their photographic journey one week later.

## **ETHICS:**

This study was conducted in accordance with Liverpool John Moore University ethical procedure and granted ethical approval via the School of Education.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings are presented as two major arcs that emerged from the discussion and analysis of the photos. The first arc will focus on 'belonging in the classroom' and the second arc focuses on 'belonging outside of the classroom'.

### **Theme 1: 'Belonging' in the Classroom:**

Amongst the photos provided by the participants, there was a visual expression of isolation in the classroom setting. However, how that isolation was expressed varied based on if the participant identified as 'out' versus those that were still 'closeted'. For those who were not 'out' consistently spoke about how they would 'butch' themselves up in order to 'act straight' reflecting the ideas of Butler (2020) and Frazer (1999) about the performance of gender/sexuality. There was a feeling that they needed to perform as 'straight' as possible in order to fit in with their heterosexual peers. This should not be interpreted as the classroom is inherently homophobic, nor an act of internalized homophobia but simply highlighting the performative nature of self and how the classroom is seen as a performative environment. Additionally, these photos reaffirms the stress that sexuality can place on a student (Denton, 2020, Sanlo, 2004).

Conversely, those students, who were publically 'out', did not have the performative stress to 'butch up' in order to pass as straight; however, the classroom was still identified as a difficult space to perform 'self'. If the student was 'out', they stated that they were less willing to ask and or answer questions as they feared of being branded as the 'silly gay' if they got the question wrong as phrased by one participant. Being gay made many feel that they needed to be better than their straight peers to be seen as equal. Many spoke that they felt they had to provide an official role, for example being a class representative, to justify their existence in the classroom. Others took a different tact and receded further into the background with the desire to make themselves invisible. While there was a consistent feeling of not belonging, there was also a consistent expression about the role of the staff member and a desire to be recognized by the academic team. Many of the participants included photos of specific members of staff. These type of photos also created the largest amount of discussion during the interviews. The tone of these discussions centred on how the identified member of staff recognised their gay existence and allowed them to be gay without fear. As a result, their attendance and engagement with that particular staff member's modules was greater regardless of the content of the module. In addition, they spoke of the importance of these relationships, be it known or unknown to the member of staff. Many wished they could express how much they appreciated that member of staff but felt awkward in expressing their appreciation. This expression of the participants is consistent and supports Nevis and Hewitt's (2021) findings that the "Approachable /



Accessible Academic Staff” contributed to their sense of belonging. Further highlighting the importance of recognizing and celebrating difference in the classroom.

Academic staff who included queer material in their curriculum or queer pop culture references within the lecture in the form of photos, mems or gifs allowed gay students to see a reflection of themselves within the classroom setting. These small but significant acts made participants feel ‘seen’ and thusly that they ‘mattered’...

While queer participants actively sought to see themselves in the lecture material, they also looked for opportunities to reflect their queer identities within their assessments. If the assessment allowed for the freedom to self-select a topic they used the opportunity to explore an LGBTQAI+ related topic. One participant spoke about experiencing resistance when wanting to focus an assessment on LGBTQAI+ themes. While the participant acknowledged that the act was most likely not homo-phobic, they did feel a level of rejection and became guarded as a result engaged less whilst in the teaching space. For one participant the assessment allowed a closeted student to explore and learn about LGBTQAI+ culture while disguising his personal interest as ‘coursework’. This student eventually came out to his module leader.

For many institutions, inclusion is seen as a responsibility for extra-curricular sports and societies. Thus, less emphasis is placed on the classroom, however this research is signalling that the classroom creates the greatest levels of belonging and mattering for the gay student.

## **Theme 2 ‘Belonging’ Outside of the Classroom**

Just like in the first arch, all of the participants expressed feelings of isolation and exclusion outside classroom setting because of their sexuality. Many Universities use extracurricular actives such as sport and societies as a tool to create opportunities of belonging; however, it was expressed by the participants that extracurricular groups, be that sport or social, were not seen as the ‘go to’ place to find belonging. The dominate sentiment amongst the participants was one of non-engagement when it came to find belonging outside of their host academic programme. This choosing not to belong is highlight in the work of Winestone et al (2020), Gravett and Winstone (2019), (Baik et al 2019). A potential impact of this decision not to engage in extracurricular actives makes the time in lecture the lone point for an inclusive environment to be experienced.

When asked about joining and or participating with LGBTQAI+ student groups, there was a recognition of community whilst engaging with the LGBTQAI+ society, but once away from the group, it did not translate into a feeling of ‘belonging’ to the university. For some, it highlighted the exclusion they experienced from the wider university community, sending the message they are being warehoused in the ‘LGBTQAI+ group’. For those that did enjoy the LGBTQAI+ group, they felt even further adrift, as it felt for them this was the only space allowed for them to perform their true self.

At the time that many participants where engaging in the project two separate occurrence took taking place in their community; 1) the rise of drink spiking [when drugs are added

without the knowledge of the drink consumer] (Peck, 2021) and 2) the rise of homophobic motivated attacks (BBCNew, 2021). A majority of the participants commented on the discrepancy between the actions taken by the University in terms of warning and supporting students. Many commented that the language and tone of the warnings given to students from the university was only focused on 'straight girls' and failed to acknowledge that gay men and women were also susceptible of becoming a victim. The concern of mattering continued when they felt completely ignored by the University communications when there was an increase of violence directed towards the gay community. Unlike the spiking announcement that provided information on how to report an occurrence as well as how to seek help if victimized, the same level of support was not provided if a student had fallen victim to a homophobic attack. However, there is some question as to the quality of service a gay student would receive if they had looked to the University for supported.

One participant shared his experience of seeking guidance from the university when he became a victim of sexual assault. Following advice he received from friends and academic tutors he went to the provided services to receive sexual assault support. He felt that the support staff worker was not prepared or equipped to handle male-to-male sexual assault and felt that if he were female he would have received a better level of care than he received. As a result, he did not return to seek further assistance. This student's experience supports the earlier evidence of Pritchard and Simmons (2020) and Patel (2015) that LGBTQAI+ students are not supported in the same capacity thus creating an unequal student experiencing leading to a student to feel unvalued thus they do not belong or matter. This is in direct contradiction of Strayhorn's (2019,) definition of belonging / mattering from a student perspective.

The take away point is the language and actions of the university is important and seen by the students. There was a consistent feeling of 'lip service' or as expressed by a participant, "They say we matter, but when there are issues that specifically affect us [gay] we do not get the same level of attention as other students".

## Recommendations

The data presented by Hewitt and Neves (2020, 2021) along with the data collected for this research highlights that gay students require additional levels of support to help them feel that they belong to the wider university community. Additionally the data presented by Hewitt and Neves (2020, 2021) along with the data collected for this project highlights the important role that gay students place on "approachable / accessible academic staff", even more so than other marginalized student populations.

These findings highlight the need to create inclusive classroom space for gay students. A blue print to create such a result has already been developed with the Ward-Gale Model for LGBT Inclusivity in Higher Education as shown in Table 1 (Ward and Gale, 2016). Which provides an easy to apply actions to create greater level of mattering in the classroom through presentation of material (Language) and representation in course materials (Curriculum Content).

**Table 1: Ward-Gale Model for LGBT Inclusivity in Higher Education**

	Language	Role Models	Curriculum Content
Increasing Awareness	Avoid abusive and discriminatory language	Signposting to LGBTQAI+ organizations and events	Basic acknowledgement of gender and sexual diversity
Additive Approaches	Avoid hetero-normative and cis-normative language	Access to mentors for LGBTQAI+ identified students	Inclusion of topics themes and readings about LGBTQAI+ identities.
Transformative Practice	Critical engagement with queer/trans inclusive language	Role models and allies in the teaching and learning environment	Critical approaches to pedagogy, supporting social engagement and action/ inclusive professional practice

Outside of the classroom, Ward and Gale (2016) recommend further support with the use of role models and mentors. There is also a need for greater work be done by Student Unions to promote extracurricular activities to the LGBTQAI+ student community outside of the LGBTQAI+ student networks. There is already a barrier for queer students to join societies, specifically sports that historically has been a hostile environment for queer people (Gaston and Dixon, 2020). Just as the university is making an organised effort to reflect an inclusive curriculum, the student union and societies need to work in addressing Baik's (et al, 2019) 'outside the bubble' concerns. By establishing pathways for those who want to engage with the wider university community both the student and institution benefits from the academic and social good that extracurricular activities bring (McCabe et al., 2020)

### CONCLUSION:

At the end of the day, most all want to feel like we are valued and matter. However, 'belonging' is the product of a much bigger process of making people feel that they matter. This work has provided several recommendations to kick-start the belonging process. Nevertheless, before any items are actioned and discussion about policy begins, we must answer the three challenging questions asked by Guetta et al (2019, p 14),

1. What are we wanting students to belong to?
2. Why?
3. And when might belonging be undesirable?

The participants of this project have started to provide a level of guidance to the above questions. However, this article is just the start, there is a desperate need to expand and explore the lived experiences of gay students in Higher Education. The key take away from the Photovoice data is 1) recognition of space: the role the classroom and 2) Agency: the active role educators have in the shaping an inclusive and inviting experience.

## References

Agnich, L., and Morgan, L. C. (2020). The Impact of Social Climate on Self-Identity, Substance Use, and Mental Health among LGBTQ+ College Students.

Aronowitz, S., and Giroux, H. A. (2000, December). The corporate university and the politics of education. In *The educational forum* (Vol. 64, No. 4, pp. 332-339). Taylor and Francis Group.

Baik, C., Naylor, R., Arkoudis, S., and Dabrowski, A. (2019). Examining the experiences of first-year students with low tertiary admission scores in Australian universities. *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(3), 526-538.

Bardhoshi, G., Grieve, K., Swanston, J., Suing, M., and Booth, J. (2018). Illuminating the on-campus experience of LGBTQ students through Photovoice. *Journal of College Counselling*, 21(3), 194-209.

Bowles, T. V., and Brindle, K. A. (2017). Identifying facilitating factors and barriers to improving student retention rates in tertiary teaching courses: A systematic review. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 36(5), 903-919.

Braxton, J. M., Doyle, W. R., Hartley III, H. V., Hirschy, A. S., Jones, W. A., and

Braxton, J. M. (Ed.). (2000). *Reworking the student departure puzzle*. Vanderbilt University Press.

BrckaLorenz, A., Greathouse, M., Kinzie, J., and Stolzenberg, E. (2018, March). Queer and gender variant students: Exploring civic engagement for increasingly diverse populations. AAC and U Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Democracy 2018 Conference.

Budig, K., Diez, J., Conde, P., Sastre, M., Hernán, M., and Franco, M. (2018). Photovoice and empowerment: evaluating the transformative potential of a participatory action research project. *BMC public health*, 18(1), 1-9.

Butler, J. (2020). Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. In *Feminist theory reader* (pp. 353-361). Routledge.

Capous-Desyllas, M., and Mountz, S. (2019). Using Photovoice methodology to illuminate the experiences of LGBTQ former foster youth. *Child and Youth Services*, 40(3), 267-307.

Castleden, H., and Garvin, T. (2008). Modifying Photovoice for community-based participatory indigenous research. *Social Science and Medicine*, 66(6), 1393-1405. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.11.030

Catalani, C., and Minkler, M. (2010). Photovoice: A review of the literature in health and public health. *Health education and behavior*, 37(3), 424-451.

Catalano, D. C. J., and Griffin, P. (2016). Sexism, heterosexism, and trans\* oppression: An integrated perspective. In *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 201-230). Routledge.

- Christensen, M. C., Capous-Desyllas, M., and Arczynski, A. V. (2020). Photovoice as a multilevel tool for gender and sexual identity exploration. *Families in Society*, 101(2), 219-231.
- Cobian, K. P., and Stolzenberg, E. B. (2018). Vulnerable populations at public research universities: Centering sexual violence prevalence and perceptions of campus climate. In *Evaluating Campus Climate at US Research Universities* (pp. 277-305). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Connell-Smith, A., and Hubble, S. (2018). Widening participation strategy in higher education in England.
- Cooper, C., Sorensen, W., and Yarbrough, S. (2017). Visualising the health of communities: Using Photovoice as a pedagogical tool in the college classroom. *Health Education Journal*, 76(4), 454-466.
- Cooper, J. (1997). Marginality, Mattering, and the African American Student: Creating an Inclusive College Environment. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 16(2), 15-20.
- Davis, J. F., and Mitchell, T. A. (2021). Understanding Racial Capitalism using the Photovoice method: Black tourism in France. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1-36.
- Denton, J. M. (2020). Queering college student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 21(4), 544-566.
- Elliott, G., Kao, S., and Grant, A. M. (2004). Mattering: Empirical validation of a social-psychological concept. *Self and Identity*, 3(4), 339-354.
- Epstein, D., OFlynn, S., and Telford, D. (2003). *Silenced sexualities in schools and universities*. Trentham Books.
- Evans-Agnew, R. A., and Rosemberg, M.-A. S. (2016). Questioning Photovoice research whose voice? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(8), 1019-1030.
- Evatt-Young, D., and Bryson, B. (2021). White Higher Education Leaders on the Complexities of Whiteness and Anti-Racist Leadership. *JCSCORE*, 7(1), 46-82.
- Flett, G. (2018). *The psychology of mattering: Understanding the human need to be significant*. Academic Press.
- France, M. K., and Finney, S. J. (2010). Conceptualization and utility of university mattering: A construct validity study. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 43(1), 48-65.
- Frazer, M. (1999). Classing queer: Politics in competition. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 16(2), 107-131.
- Garvey, J. C. (2020). Critical imperatives for studying queer and trans undergraduate student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 21(4), 431-454.

- Gaston, L., & Dixon, L. (2020). A want or a need? Exploring the role of grassroots gay rugby teams in the context of inclusive masculinity. *Journal of gender studies*, 29(5), 508-520.
- Gravett, K and Ajjawi, R (2022) Belonging as situated practice, *Studies in Higher Education*, 47:7, 1386-1396
- Gravett, K., and Winstone, N. E. (2022). Making connections: authenticity and alienation within students' relationships in higher education. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 41(2), 360-374.
- Gravett, K., and Winstone, N. E. (2021). Storying students' becomings into and through higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 46(8), 1578-1589.
- Groves, O., and O'Shea, S. (2019). Learning to 'be' a university student: First in family students negotiating membership of the university community. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 98, 48-54.
- Guyotte, K. W., Flint, M. A., and Latopolski, K. S. (2021). Cartographies of belonging: Mapping nomadic narratives of first-year students. *Critical Studies in Education*, 62(5), 543-558.
- Ha, V. S., and Whittaker, A. (2016). 'Closer to my world': Children with autism spectrum disorder tell their stories through Photovoice. *Global public health*, 11(5-6), 546-563.
- Halperin, D. M. (2003). The normalization of queer theory. *Journal of homosexuality*, 45(2-4), 339-343.
- Heffernan, T. (2021). Sexism, racism, prejudice, and bias: a literature review and synthesis of research surrounding student evaluations of courses and teaching. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1-11.
- Hong, J. S., Woodford, M. R., Long, L. D., and Renn, K. A. (2016). Ecological covariates of subtle and blatant heterosexist discrimination among LGBTQ college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 45(1), 117-131.
- Huerta, A., and Fishman, S. (2014). Marginality and mattering: Urban Latino male undergraduates in higher education. *Journal of The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*, 26(1), 85-100.
- Irby, M. B., Hamlin, D., Rhoades, L., Freeman, N. R., Summers, P., Rhodes, S. D., and Daniel, S. (2018). Violence as a health disparity: Adolescents' perceptions of violence depicted through photovoice. *Journal of community psychology*, 46(8), 1026-1044.
- Jourian, T. J., Simmons, S. L., and Devaney, K. C. (2015). "We Are Not Expected" Trans\* Educators (Re) Claiming Space and Voice in Higher Education and Student Affairs. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 2(3), 431-446.
- Kessi, S. (2018). Photovoice as a narrative tool for decolonization: Black women and LGBT student experiences at UCT. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(3), 101-117.
- Kodama, C. M. (2002). Marginality of transfer commuter students. *nasPa Journal*, 39(3), 233-250.

- Kortegast, C. A., Jaekel, K. S., and Nicolazzo, Z. (2021). Thirty years of LGBTQ pre-publication knowledge production in higher education research: A critical summative content analysis of ASHE conference sessions. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68(10), 1639-1663.
- Koutsouris, G., Mountford-Zimdars, A., and Dingwall, K. (2021). The 'ideal' higher education student: understanding the hidden curriculum to enable institutional change. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 26(2), 131-147.
- Legg, K., Cofino, A., and Sanlo, R. (2020). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender College Students: Revisiting Retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 21(4), 417-430.
- Lucke, S., Mamo, E., and Koenigstorfer, J. (2019). Exploring the meaning of growing food in community gardens to South African township residents: A Photovoice study. *Health and place*, 55, 165-176.
- Maratos, M., Huynh, L., Tan, J., Lui, J., and Jarus, T. (2016). Picture this: Exploring the lived experience of high-functioning stroke survivors using Photovoice. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(8), 1055-1066.
- Marshall, S. K. (2001). Do I matter? Construct validation of adolescents' perceived mattering to parents and friends. *Journal of adolescence*, 24(4), 473-490.
- McCabe, J., Dupéré, V., Dion, E., Thouin, É., Archambault, I., Dufour, S., ... and Crosnoe, R. (2020). Why do extracurricular activities prevent dropout more effectively in some high schools than in others? A mixed-method examination of organizational dynamics. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(4), 323-338.
- McLennan, D., and Jacobo, S. (2018). Findings from the 2017 administration of the diverse learning environments (DLE) survey. Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA 3005 Moore Hall, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Meehan, C., and Howells, K. (2019). In search of the feeling of 'belonging' in higher education: undergraduate students transition into higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43(10), 1376-1390.
- Miranda, D. E., Zhelyazkova, L., and Sladkova, J. (2021). A Photovoice Project for Ethnic Health Justice: Reflections from Roma Communities in Seville, Spain. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 12(2).
- Musoke, D., Ndejjo, R., Ekirapa-Kiracho, E., and George, A. S. (2016). Supporting youth and community capacity through Photovoice: Reflections on participatory research on maternal health in Wakiso district, Uganda. *Global Public Health*, 11(5-6), 683-698.
- Mutakabbir, Y. T., and Nuriddin, T. A. (2016). *Religious minority students in higher education*. Routledge.
- Neto, M. N. F., de Carvalho Castro, J. L., and de Araújo Pitombeira, R. T. (2021). Measurement of ambivalent sexist attitudes in relation to women in higher education institutions. *Cadernos de Educação Tecnologia e Sociedade*, 14(1), 89-96.



Neves, J. and Hewitt, R., 2020. Student Academic Experience Survey 2020. Advanced HE and Higher Education Policy Institute.

Neves, J., and Hewitt, R. (2021). Student Academic Experience Survey, 2021. Higher Education Policy Institute.

Notaro, S. R. (2020). Substance Use and Abuse. In *Marginality and Global LGBT Communities* (pp. 111-137). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Okanlawon, K. (2020). Homophobia in Nigerian schools and universities: Victimization, Mental Health Issues, Resilience of the LGBT Students and support from Straight Allies. A Literature review. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 1-33.

Patel, L. (2015). *Decolonizing educational research: From ownership to answerability*. London, England: Routledge.

Phipps, C. (2020). "We Already Do Enough Around Equality and Diversity": Action Taken by Student Union Officers to Promote LGBT+ Inclusion in University Sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1(aop), 1-9.

Pidgeon, M. (2008). Pushing against the margins: Indigenous theorizing of "success" and retention in higher education. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 10(3), 339-360.

Pitcher, E. N., and Simmons, S. L. (2020). Connectivity, community, and kinship as strategies to foster queer and trans college student retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 21(4), 476-496.

Prihadi, K. D., and Wong, C. (2020). Suicidal Thoughts among University Students: The Role of Mattering, State Self-Esteem and Depression Level. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 9(3), 494-502.

Pluckrose, H., and Lindsay, J. A. (2020). *Cynical theories: How activist scholarship made everything about race, gender, and identity—and why this harms everybody*. Pitchstone Publishing (USandCA).

Rayle, A. D., and Chung, K. Y. (2007). Revisiting first-year college students' mattering: Social support, academic stress, and the mattering experience. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 9(1), 21-37.

Rayle, A. D., and Chung, K. Y. (2007). Revisiting first-year college students' mattering: Social support, academic stress, and the mattering experience. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 9(1), 21-37.

Sanlo, R. (2004). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual college students: Risk, resiliency, and retention. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 6(1), 97-110.

Schiller, W., and Einarsdottir, J. (2009). Special issue: Listening to young children's voices in research – changing perspectives/changing relationships. *Early Child Development and Care*, 179(2), 125–130.

- Schlossberg, N. K. (1989). Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community. *New directions for student services*, 48(1), 5-15.
- Schmalzbauer, J. (2020). *Gay on God's Campus: Mobilizing for LGBT Equality at Christian Colleges and Universities*.
- Scott, S. S. 1996. Understanding colleges: An overview of college support services and programs available from transition planning through graduation. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation.*, 6: 217–230
- Shahjahan, R. A., Estera, A. L., Surla, K. L., and Edwards, K. T. (2021). "Decolonizing" Curriculum and Pedagogy: A Comparative Review Across Disciplines and Global Higher Education Contexts. *Review of Educational Research*, 00346543211042423.
- Stone, C., and O'Shea, S. (2019). Older, online and first: Recommendations for retention and success. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 35(1).
- Strauss, P., Cook, A., Winter, S., Watson, V., Wright Toussaint, D., and Lin, A. (2020). Mental Health Issues and Complex Experiences of Abuse Among Trans and Gender Diverse Young People: Findings from Trans Pathways. *LGBT health*, 7(3), 128-136.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2019). Sense of belonging and student success at historically black colleges and universities: A key to strategic enrolment management and institutional transformation. Examining student retention and engagement strategies at historically black colleges and universities, 32-52.
- Tinto, V. (2017). Through the eyes of students. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, 19(3), 254-269.
- Tinto, V. 2012. *Completing College: Rethinking Institutional Action*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tovar, E. (2013). A conceptual model on the impact of mattering, sense of belonging, Engagement/Involvement, and socio-academic integrative experiences on community college students' intent to persist. The Claremont Graduate University.
- Tovar, E., Simon, M. A., and Lee, H. B. (2009). Development and validation of the college mattering inventory with diverse urban college students. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 42(3), 154-178.
- Vaishnav, S. (2021). Using Photovoice to Explore Racial Microaggressions Experienced by Doctoral Students of Color. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 14(2), 6.
- Van Haute, E. (2021). SAMPLING TECHNIQUES. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences: an AZ of Key Concepts*, 247.
- Wagner, P. E., Ellingson, L. L., and Kunkel, A. (2016). Pictures, patience, and practicalities: Lessons learned from using Photovoice in applied communication contexts. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 44(3), 336-342.

- Ward, N., Gale, N. (2016) LGBTQ-inclusivity in the Higher Education Curriculum: a best practice guide. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
- Wallerstein, N., and Bernstein, E. (1988). Empowerment education: Freire's ideas adapted to health education. *Health education quarterly*, 15(4), 379-394.
- Wang C, Burris MA. (1997) Photovoice: concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Heal Educ Behav*. 1997;24:369–87.
- Wang, C. C., Cash, J. L., and Powers, L. S. (2000). Who knows the streets as well as the homeless? Promoting personal and community action through Photovoice. *Health promotion practice*, 1(1), 81-89.
- Wang, C. C., Yi, W. K., Tao, Z. W., and Carovano, K. (1998). Photovoice as a participatory health promotion strategy. *Health promotion international*, 13(1), 75-86.
- Willett, J., Tamayo, A., and Rayo, A. (2021). Making the invisible visible: documenting slow violence through Photovoice with youth in Nevada. *Journal of Community Practice*, 29(2), 112-132.
- Winstone, N., Balloo, K., Gravett, K., Jacobs, D., and Keen, H. (2020). Who stands to benefit? Wellbeing, belonging and challenges to equity in engagement in extra-curricular activities at university. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 1469787420908209.
- Wright, H. K., and Xiao, Y. (2021). Decolonisation and higher education: theory, politics and global praxis.
- Zembylas, M. (2021). Refusal as affective and pedagogical practice in higher education decolonization: a modest proposal. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1-16.
- Zepke, N., and Leach, L. (2005). Integration and adaptation: Approaches to the student retention and achievement puzzle. *Active Learning in higher education*, 6(1), 46-59.