THE GENDERED NATURE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS:
ISSUES OF GENDER EQUITY IN STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

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ABSTRACT

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This study examined the gendered nature of the student affairs profession by investigating how three student affairs professional associations, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), ACPA: College Student Educators International, and the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I) handled issues of gender equity. The founding of each association was reviewed using archival information from the National Student Affairs Archives. After a review of the archival data, a profile was created for each of the three associations. Interviews were conducted with 13 participants who were members of one or more of the associations and had served in an elected or appointed leadership position. The participants provided insight into the current issues of gender equity faced in the associations. The study employed a constructivist epistemology featuring the co-construction of knowledge. Thus, the archival data for each of the associations and the participants’ interview data were considered in the process of data analysis and interpretation.

The following categories emerged from the analysis of the interview data: gender equity, the messages received about gender, delegation of roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures used within the organizations, and perceptions of the symbols, images and artifacts used within each association. Implications for practice related to the development of organizational culture, maintaining the history of student affairs associations, and role modeling for undergraduate students are presented.
Dedicated to my parents Reverend Bobby C. Ashley and Evelena Lady Ashley and to my Nana, I would not be here without her.
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Philippians 4:12-13 reads, “I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (New International Version). I give all the honor and glory to God for bringing me to and through the process of earning this degree. I have seen a lot of good times and a few difficult times throughout this process but God has always made is His presence known.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Gender within societies is socially constructed (Pelak, Taylor, & Whittier, 1999). The gender roles of men and women are not biologically inherited, but have been learned through socialization in families, schools, and popular culture. Through interactions with others in groups and organizations, individuals learn their appropriate roles. It is through these interactions that individuals develop an understanding that there are specific roles men and women should play.

The appropriate roles for men and women in society have been determined based upon a system of patriarchy. Patriarchy, as defined by Humm (1990), is “a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political, and economic institutions” (p. 159). The system of patriarchy provides men with opportunities that are not afforded to women. As Johnson (2005) stated,

A society is patriarchal to the degree that it promotes male privilege by being male dominated, male identified, and male centered. It is organized around an obsession with control and involves as one of its key aspects the oppression of women. (p. 5)

The patriarchy described by Johnson is evident in the manner in which early American society was organized to serve the needs of the country’s forefathers.

In the United States, patriarchy is manifested through a hierarchical structure that benefits White, heterosexual, middle class men (French, 1985; Johnson, 2006). Within this design only individuals who embody the aforementioned qualities are afforded privileges. Men of color, gay men, and women are not given the same opportunities. Elite men, who are most often White, with status, wealth, and power are granted the authority to rule and make decisions for
themselves, other less powerful men, and women. An example of this is the 43 White men who have served as President of the United States prior to the election of Barack Obama, a Black man. Despite not receiving privilege at the same level, men who are not a part of the elite group can still consider themselves superior to women simply because they are men (Johnson, 2005).

Within a patriarchal society, male characteristics such as, “control, strength, efficiency, competitiveness, toughness, coolness under pressure, logic, forcefulness, decisiveness, rationality, autonomy, self-sufficiency, and control over any emotion that interferes with other core values” are valued and determined to be necessary for achieving success (Johnson, 1997, p. 160). Feminine characteristics such as, “inefficiency, cooperation, mutuality, equality, sharing, compassion, caring, vulnerability, a readiness to negotiate and compromise, emotional expressiveness, and intuitive and other nonlinear ways of thinking” are not valued in society in the same manner (Johnson, 1997, p. 160). Displays of masculine characteristics are associated with strength and success, while female characteristics are diminished and not as highly valued.

Patriarchy can also be found in organizational structures (Acker, 1990). Organizational structures based on a patriarchal hierarchy perpetuate the socially constructed roles of men and women in ways that privilege men and subordinate women. In her definition of a gendered organization, Acker (1990) asserted,

To say that an organization, or any other analytic unit, is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. (p. 146)

Men and women working in organizations bring with them the social constructions of their gender identity. The patriarchal roles men and women learn are reproduced in the organizations
in which they participate. As a result, the patriarchal patterns found in society are mirrored in organizations, thus perpetuating and reinforcing a patriarchal hierarchy. As an organization, higher education has not been impervious to the socialized norms that govern the behavior of men and women in society. Thus, many of the practices within higher education mirror those of the patriarchal hierarchy found in the larger society.

**Higher Education in a Patriarchal Society**

Higher education is one of the oldest institutions in the United States, dating back to the seventeenth century (Perkin, 1991). The first institution of higher education, Harvard University, was founded in 1636 followed by colleges founded in eight of the original 13 colonies by the time of the Revolution (Thelin, 2004). The purpose of these early institutions was to educate the sons of the elite for the clergy and public service. Regarding the composition of their student bodies Thelin wrote,

> So the early collegians were sons of privilege who at the same time were expected to inherit grave responsibilities as leaders and men of influence in a new world where their religion was central and not subject to government or ecclesiastical constraints. (p. 24)

The education of young men was the priority of institutions in the early years of the country. The education of these young men was important because they would go on to create and shape the societies of the future.

The formal admittance of women into higher education came almost two hundred years after the founding of Harvard (Goodchild, 2002). Qualification for admittance to an institution of higher education did not mean women were admitted or allowed to attend. For example, Thelin (2004) described the story of Lucinda Foote; a young woman who was awarded a parchment in 1784 signifying she was qualified for admission to Yale University. Despite her
qualification for entrance she was not allowed to attend the university. Beyond the obstacle of just being admitted, when women arrived on campuses they were not treated equitably. Women were tracked into a curriculum thought suitable for women of the time, such as teaching or nursing. Women were not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities such as debate, school government, school publications, or sports (Gordon, 1990; Thelin 2004). Despite the creation of all women’s colleges, the women in attendance were still subject to patriarchal rules requiring curfews and chaperones, unlike their male counterparts.

As the number of women began to increase on college and university campuses, increased acceptance or ease did not follow. Another example of inequitable treatment came in the application of the GI Bill to veterans of World War II. The GI Bill of 1944 is acknowledged as a piece to legislation that led to one of the largest increases in enrollment in higher education in the United States (Thelin, 2004; Maher & Tetreault, 2007). However, women who served in World War II were not allowed to take advantage of the GI Bill in the same manner as their male counterparts. Maher and Tetreault (2007) observed, “Women who had served in the women’s Army and Air Force units were also dealt out of the GI bill as their army units had been organized as auxiliaries and did not become part of the military until July 1943” (p. 15). This is an example of the patriarchal system providing an advantage to men at the expense of women. The women who served during WWII were just as deserving of the benefits provided by the GI Bill but were denied access to these benefits. The exclusion of women in the use of the GI Bill to obtain higher education further illustrates the hold of patriarchy within American society.

Higher education’s patriarchal environment has been a contributing factor and direct cause of many of the obstacles faced by women in higher education. Understanding patriarchy can provide a better understanding of the many issues that confront women such as issues of bias.
(Collison, 1999; Lindsay, 1999; Sapiro, 2008), pay inequities (Engstrom, McIntosh, Ridzi & Kruger, 2006; Toutkoushian & Conley, 2005; Umbach, 2007), the need for affirmative action remedies (Evans & Breining Chun, 2007), and the intersection of sexism with racism (Patitu & Hinton, 2003). In patriarchal systems, men dominate and women are considered inferior to men. The oppression of women is the result of male dominance, “An inevitable consequence of patriarchy is the oppression of women, which takes several forms. Historically for example, women have been excluded from major institutions such as church, state, universities, and the professions” (Johnson, 2005, p. 15).

As a result of being organized as a patriarchal system, higher education caters to the men it was originally designed to serve. Within patriarchy there are exceptions to the rules; some women are allowed the opportunity to hold positions of power and authority, especially if they emulate the men in power (Bierema, 2003). Although women are allowed to participate in higher education, their participation came about because it created less friction to allow for an exception, than it did to rework an entire system. As Johnson (2005) stated, “It is easier to allow a few women to occupy positions of authority and dominance than to question whether social life should be organized around principles of hierarchy, control, and dominance at all” (p. 17). The function of patriarchy within higher education means there will be some women who are allowed to ascend to the ranks of president, chancellor, or provost. However, in order to gain these opportunities women in these positions must operate by the rules that have been established by men.

In the 1800s, when women entered the academy as faculty, staff, and students, they were often relegated to specific posts. Women typically were educated to be teachers and nurses who would teach these skills to other women. Oberlin was the first institution to freely admit women
and people of color as students, yet along with their studies the women were required to complete domestic chores such as washing the clothes of the male students and serving the men during meals (Freidan, 1963; Gordon, 1990). Although women are no longer required to complete such gender-related duties, they have not gained equal status with men in higher education.

As America progressed and grew stronger, higher education followed suit. The industrial age of the late 1800s brought agricultural and mechanical innovation and more students to college campuses. The period of 1890 to 1945 was a time of increase in all areas of higher education, including increases in the numbers of students, faculty, and administrative staff (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976; Thelin, 2004). Regarding the increase in student enrollment and its impact on administrative staff Thelin wrote, “The result at most colleges after 1900 was an expansion of the administrative bureaucracy to include a growing number of deans and assistant deans whose main responsibility was policing student conduct” (p. 198). Due to this growth in administrative bureaucracy, several professional organizations, such as the National Association for the Deans of Women (NADW) and the National Association of Deans and Advisors of Men (NADAM) were created during this era.

The appointments of deans of women and deans of men were necessary to address the needs of the growing student population outside the classroom and the increasing specialization of faculty duties to within the classroom. These deans were engaged in issues concerning student behavior and discipline, fraternity and sorority matters, student government, athletics, and housing among others. The early student affairs organizations were formed to allow the professionals dealing with student issues opportunities to share information to better serve their students.
Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore how professional associations within student affairs engage with and practice issues of gender equity. It will provide insight into the gendered nature of professional organizations within student affairs by using a feminist lens to analyze archival records and individual interviews. Specifically, it will document past and present policies and practices and whether they promote gender equity in three student affairs professional organizations.

Statement of the Issue

In the early part of the twentieth century, professional organizations within higher education were organized by gender (Nuss, 1996). For example, administrators who served as Deans of Women and Deans of Men were served by two separate professional organizations, the National Association for Deans of Women (NADW) and the National Association for Deans and Advisers of Men (NADAM) respectively. The NADW was founded in 1916 and served its constituents until 2000. Over the course of its existence the name of the NADW changed several times; the final name of the organization was the National Association of Women in Education (NAWE). The NADAM was founded in 1919 and served as an organization for men until 1951 when the organization evolved into what is known today as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). Today, participation in the existing student affairs professional organizations is open to all interested persons, regardless of gender. However, open access does not equate to gender equity within these organizations.

Acker (1990) advanced a theory of gendered organizations. The theory states that organizations are not gender neutral but rather they are defined in masculine and feminine terms. However, little is known about the gendered nature of professional student affairs associations
within higher education. Likewise, little is known about how the professional organizations selected for this study engage with and practice issues of gender equity. Considering this issue will illuminate the gendered nature of student affairs organizations and how issues of gender equity are currently handled within these organizations. As the leaders and members of both NASPA and ACPA consider the consolidation of the two organizations to speak with one voice; it is important to consider the impact a consolidated organization might have on gender equity. Therefore, implications for the unification of NASPA and ACPA will be explored.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the gendered nature of the student affairs profession as evidenced by the mission statements, values, purposes, policies and procedures, and organizational structures of three professional student affairs organizations?

2. How do professionals within the selected organizations perceive their organization’s performance in relation to issues of gender equity?

**Selected Organizations**

This study will focus on the following professional associations in student affairs: the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), ACPA: College Student Educators International (American College Personnel Association), and the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I). These organizations were selected based on the number of student affairs professionals they serve, opportunities the professionals within the organizations have to interact with undergraduate students, and the amount of archival information available about these associations. According to the most current annual report available, ACPA serves approximately 8,300 total members (ACPA, 2008a). NASPA serves 11,000 members (NASPA, 2008) and ACUHO-I serves 6,400 members
Lastly, each of these organizations was chosen because of the amount and depth of information available in the National Student Affairs Archives regarding these organizations’ beginnings, missions, values, and organizational structures. The archived collections for these organizations combined spans over 240 cubic feet of information.

**Defining Gender**

The focus of this study is on the experiences of women in student affairs professional associations. Most times when the term gender is used it is in reference to women. In the absence of a specific gender being mentioned it is assumed the gender is male (Acker, 1990; Johnson 2006). The absence of gender equals male; much like the absence of race being mentioned means White. Due to this fact, although I acknowledge that men have gender, when I refer to issues of gender equity I am referring to the struggles women have faced in these associations.

**Frameworks for This Study**

The frameworks I will use in this study are liberal feminist theory and the concept of gendered organizations developed by Acker (1990). Using a liberal feminist framework will call particular attention to the role of women in the selected organizations. The use of a feminist lens or framework in this study means the “research approaches center and make problematic women’s diverse situations and the institutions that frame those situations” (Creswell, 2005, p. 25). The advantage of liberal feminist theory is that it is not simply about reversing the tables and making men suffer at the hands of women. Liberal feminism does not seek to oppress men so that women can advance. The goal of liberal feminism is to eradicate the need for hierarchies based on gender and other differences altogether (hooks, 2003). Due to the centrality of gender issues in this study it is appropriate to include a feminist framework. The use of the gendered
organizations framework will provide guidelines for analyzing the role of gender in the structure of the selected professional student affairs organizations.

**Significance of This Study**

Much like the human body, organizations are complex and comprised of many parts. In the human body each part has an important and significant role to play. The hands cannot do what the eyes were designed to do and the feet cannot perform the functions for which the ears were intended. So it is in organizations; each member of the organization has a role to play. Gender equity is important to the proper functioning of organizations; it ensures that each person is provided the appropriate opportunities to perform their assigned tasks.

The fields of study related to gender and the gendered nature of organizations are relatively new, respectively dating back to the early 1970s and 1990s. There is a great deal of information in these fields in disciplines outside higher education such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. However, there has not been a significant amount of study in this area in the field of higher education. The completion of this study adds to the literature focused on gender in higher education, specifically student affairs.

Past studies of gender equity have been conducted on a regional and national level (Acker 1999). Studies conducted on such a large scale are often concentrated on the aggregate which are essential for providing a holistic overview. However, a better understanding of the whole can be provided by separating it into parts. This study was designed to provide greater insight into gender equity issues on a more local level within the field of student affairs. In her discussion of gender inequities Acker stated, “Organizations are the actual locations within which these patterns are created and re-created. Consequently, to understand the reproductions of these sorts of inequalities, it is necessary to look at organizations and their internal processes
This study has been designed to look at the internal processes of three professional student affairs organizations to better understand how issues of gender equity are or are not addressed.

By coupling the study of professional student affairs organizations in higher education with the issue of gendered organizations, this study seeks to provide insight into the gendered nature of student affairs as evidenced in these professional student affairs associations. Beyond exploring the gendered nature of professional student affairs organizations this study will explore how the professionals who participate in these organizations perceive their organizations’ performance regarding issues of gender equity.

Further, members of these organizations serve in a variety of functional areas within student affairs such as, orientation, student activities, Greek life, and housing which allows many of the members to interact with undergraduate students and their organizations on a daily basis. In addition, members in each of these organizations can serve as mentors to undergraduate students through formal mentoring programs such as the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP), the Next Generation program in ACPA, and STARS College in ACUHO-I. This study will provide insight into the ability of student affairs professionals who participate in these organizations to serve as role models for undergraduate students and student organizations in regards to gender equity issues.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The literature reviewed for this section relates to the need for organizations and their influence within society. I review the culture of organizations as well as organizations within higher education and the issues of gender within that context. Lastly information regarding the formation and structure of early organizations in higher education is examined.

Overview of Organizations

Organizations are the building blocks of modern society (Bedeian & Zammuto, 1991), providing order and structure to the many activities in which groups and individuals engage. Some organizations one might encounter in life include but are not limited to, “factories, offices, hospitals, prisons, churches, schools, armies, newspapers, health agencies, voluntary associations, labor unions, public agencies, farmers’ cooperatives and universities” (Bedeian & Zammuto, p. 6). Given the extensive list of organizations that exist in society it is difficult to escape their influence.

The use of organizations allows many individuals to accomplish what cannot be done effectively by one (Stevenson, 2001). Organizations provide a structure to prevent the duplication of services because tasks can be performed in a systematic manner. Bedeian & Zammuto (1991) observed, “that organizations generally develop as instruments for attaining specific goals, …they are likely to emerge in situations where people recognize a common or complementary advantage that can be best served through collective, as opposed to individual, action” (p. 9).

Within society, organizations serve multiple purposes. Organizations can be used to create and enforce public policies. For example there are local, state and national agencies to
create and enforce rules related to fair hiring. These organizations ensure no one is discriminated against in their efforts to secure employment. Organizations can also be used to create and distribute wealth; the list of the Fortune 500 companies contains numerous examples.

Organizations can also be used to create and disseminate knowledge; this is the purpose of schools, colleges, and universities across the United States.

Organizations have been designed to attend to the needs of the individual while simultaneously serving the needs of the larger social order. This is accomplished because organizations have been designed to function as open-systems (Bedeian & Zummuto, 1991; Owens, 2001; Sorge, 2002). Open system theory conceives of an organization as a set of interrelated parts that interact with the environment almost as a living creature does. Functioning as an open system requires an organization to obtain feedback from its environment, process the feedback or information that is received, and make any required changes if necessary. An open system encourages the leadership of an organization to constantly be aware of the environment and to respond to the various inputs received from said environment. This process ensures the sustained viability of organizations.

The impact organizations have on society is tremendous. In an effort to understand the impact of organizations and how such entities function, Bolman and Deal (2008) reviewed the inner workings of organizations. Bolman and Deal (2008) suggested key components that constitute organizations such as the structural make-up, human capital, political agendas, and traditions and rituals that must be understood. Bolman and Deal used the term *frames* to describe the lenses they used to better understand how the aforementioned components can be used to interpret and direct the functions of an organization. The frames they referenced were structural, human resource, political, and symbolic.
In their discussion, Bolman and Deal (2008) outlined six assumptions of the structural frame of organizations:

(a) Organizations exist to achieve established goals and objectives; (b) Organizations work best when rationality prevails over personal preferences and external pressures; (c) Structures must be designed to fit an organization’s circumstances (including its goals, technology, and environment); (d) Organizations increase efficiency and enhance performance through specialization and division of labor; (e) Appropriate forms of coordination and control are essential to ensuring that individuals and units work together in the service of organizational goals; (f) Problems and performance gaps arise from structural deficiencies and can be remedied through restructuring. (p. 40)

These assumptions provide insight and a rationale for the use of organizations. They offer criteria for the identification of what should be considered an organization. These assumptions serve as a roadmap for an in-depth study of how organizations should be structured to ensure effectiveness.

Although the structural make up of an organization is important, Bolman and Deal (2008) further emphasized that it is not appropriate to distinguish an organization through just one frame. To understand the workings of an organization it cannot be reduced to an analysis of just its separate units; it must be reviewed as a whole. The human resource, political, and symbolic frames provide the necessary tools to review the complete workings of organizations within society. The human resource frame considered the people within an organization and how the relationship between the organization and individual should be mutually beneficial. The political frame emphasized the manner in which power is used to make decisions regarding resources within an organization. Finally the symbolic frame focused on the use of symbols, rituals, and
organizational traditions within organizations to assist in the meaning making process. These frames lend
themselves to a more holistic understanding of organizations and how they function in society.

**Organizational Culture**

Meaning making within an organization is influenced by the values of its leaders. The
culture within an organization is the mechanism used to communicate what is valued and what is
there are several components to the creation of culture within an organization. The culture of an
organization is comprised of its values, beliefs, traditions, rituals, history, stories and myths, and
heroes and heroines. Each of these components contributes to the way the individuals within an
organization decide how it should operate and what is acceptable or unacceptable (Kuh & Whitt,
1988; Masland, 1985; Owens, 2001; Tierney, 2008). By understanding the aforementioned
components within an organization, its members are better able to function appropriately and
effectively.

Just as Pelak, Taylor, and Whittier (1999) suggested the gendered roles of men and
women are socially constructed, Tierney (2008) posited that organizations are socially
constructed as well. Tierney (2008) and Masland (1985) both argued that organizations do not
exist independent of the men and women who participate in them. In fact, organizations are a
product of these individuals. Tierney described organizational culture as the analysis of an
organization and the influence the people within the organization have on the organization and
vice versa. The culture of an organization is shaped by the individuals within the organization.
As individuals within an organization interact with internal and external influences decisions are
made that shape and restructure the organization. The interactions individuals have inside and
outside the organization assist in the creation of a fluid organizational culture (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

The fluidity of an organization’s culture allows for both dynamism and stability (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Masland, 1985). As new people come into an organization those who have been a part of the organization for an extended period of time socialize the new people regarding the organization’s norms and values. Culture is important because it provides members of an organization with insight into how the organization works. Owens (2001) defined organizational culture as, “the behavioral norms, assumptions, and beliefs of an organization” (p. 145). The organizational culture defines what is expected of the organization’s members.

Bolman and Deal’s (2008) symbolic frame focused on the use of symbols to create and point to traditions and rituals within an organization. Organizational members pass these traditions and rituals from person to person to create a sense of history and nostalgia within an organization. Along with providing stability, there are four additional purposes for culture in organizations: (a) identity; (b) commitment to something beyond self; (c) enhanced stability of a group’s social system; and (d) sense making device that guides and shapes behavior (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Masland, 1985).

Organizational cultures are unique and vary by organizations. The leadership of an organization might set the mission and vision for an organization, yet, how the mission and vision are carried out is contingent upon the culture within the organization. “Culture influences an organization through the people within it” (Masland, 1985, p. 145). In other words, it is the people within an organization who determine the culture. It is the people who decide how the mission, vision, and goals of the organization are to be enacted and achieved.
To gain greater insight into the culture of an organization Masland (1985) wrote, “To understand an organization’s culture one must pay close attention to the details of daily life” (p. 147). To understand the daily culture of an organization, Masland suggested observation in four areas or windows, “saga, heroes, symbols and rituals” (p. 147). These four areas provide helpful information about the history, important people, values, and traditions of an organization. Masland recommended qualitative research methods in the form of document analysis, interviews, and observations to collect data about these four areas of an organization.

Organizational Culture in Higher Education. All organizations create culture, including institutions of higher education. Colleges and universities have their own behavioral norms, assumptions, rituals, and traditions that create a campus culture. Within the context of higher education Kuh and Whitt (1988) defined culture as

The collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institute of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus. (p. 12)

The definition provided by Kuh and Whitt acknowledges the interactions of individuals within an organization on the development of culture while also taking into account the influence of external factors.

The culture within an organization is fluid (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). On a college or university campus this is seen as one class of students is graduated and another class is admitted. Outgoing students carry a bit of the institutional culture with them as they leave campus, while incoming students make their own contributions to the culture of the institution. Faculty and
staff members have the same ability to influence the culture as new members are recruited to the institution and older members leave.

As Kuh and Whitt (1988) described college and university cultures, they incorporated the concept of representing culture as a three-tiered hierarchy developed by Schein (1985). The tiers of the conceptual hierarchy included, “artifacts, values, and basic assumptions and beliefs” (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 16). The artifacts within a culture were described as the symbols used within the culture to communicate the meaning of the norms, beliefs, and values of the culture both internally and externally. Artifacts come in a variety of forms such as rituals like tailgating before a football game and ceremonies like convocation and graduation. Not only are the rituals important, but the individuals who participate and their level of participation also convey a message. Faculty and institutional dignitaries in their regalia, leading the way for new students during a convocation ceremony provide insight into who is deemed important to the institution along with their level of importance. Artifacts can also be the language used within an institution to describe processes and procedures that are unique to that culture. The acronyms used to describe departments and offices on a campus are examples of the use of language as an artifact.

The values of an organization are established in the mission statements, goals, and objectives determined by the leadership of the organization. The values of an organization provide insight into what is considered important. An organization’s espoused values assist those within the organization as they prioritize how they should spend their time within the organization. For example, in a liberal arts institution, faculty and staff will spend their time ensuring that students are well versed in a variety of areas such as the arts, humanities, and the hard and soft sciences.
Basic assumptions and beliefs are at the core of the culture of an organization or institution. Kuh and Whitt (1988) described the basic assumptions and beliefs of an institution as the guiding principles that are present but often unexplainable. It is doing something because it has always been done without questioning why. The basic assumptions and beliefs are used to unconsciously guide the way reality is perceived and acted upon within an organization. Challenges or questions about the beliefs or basic assumptions of an organization by a new or older member can create conflict. Conflict can arise because there is no explanation or rationale for the beliefs or assumptions, they just are.

To reiterate, individual members of an organization inform and create organizational culture. The culture is passed from one member to another just as DNA is passed from one generation to the next. Organizational culture is at the heart of the organization.

**Organizations Within Higher Education**

Throughout time, higher education has served an important role in societal development. “Contemporary Western culture itself originated in the centuries that followed the ‘dark ages,’ and the university has served as one of the major institutions by which this culture has been transmitted over the years” (Duryea, 1973, p. 3). Higher education in the United States predates the formal founding of this country by 140 years.

The oldest professional organizations and associations in higher education date back to the 1880s (Hawkins, 1992). The purposes of these organizations were to provide common places for the exchange of ideas. In the United States, the years from 1870 to 1920 were a time of growth for the country and for higher education. With the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862 the opportunities for the non-elite to obtain a college degree increased. As student enrollment in colleges across the country increased, the need for faculty and administrators also increased.
Hawkins (1992) reported enrollment in colleges and universities grew from 116,000 in 1880 to 589,000 by 1920. In conjunction with the rise in enrollment and the demand for more faculty and staff, there came a need for higher education professionals to share information with others in different institutions. One of the ways information was shared was through the creation of professional organizations.

There are a number of associations and organizations that were formed within higher education such as the National Association of State Universities (NASU) which was founded in 1895 to serve the needs of state-funded institutions. It was an organization that was based not on individual needs but on the collective needs of the universities. The chancellor or president of the university or his appointee served as the representative to the organization. Also the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations (AAACES) was formed in 1887. It was established to serve the collective needs of the land grant institutions that had been established by the Morrill Act of 1862.

The earliest organizations, although varied by institutional type and interest, reflected their national environments and social norms; institutional representatives were White middle-class men. Women were segregated from men in colleges and universities, both within the institution by housing, activities, and classes and by institution in the creation of women’s colleges. Women’s needs and interest as students, faculty, or administrators were not attended to by existing professional associations. The founding of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, which would later become the American Association of University Women, was the first higher education professional association to fill this gap (Thelin, 2004).
Gender Issues in Organizations

The study of gender and organizations provides insight into and an understanding of the ongoing inequality that occurred in the workplace and economy between women and men (Acker, 1990). The separation and inequitable treatment of women based on gender is not a new concept. Society is responsible for the construction of gender; society teaches and reinforces the appropriate roles for women and men to play (Pelak, Taylor, & Whittier, 1999). The socially constructed roles which men and women are taught do not disappear when they choose to participate in organizations. The roles taught by society are transported along with the talents and skills men and women possess to the organizations in which they choose to participate. Just as men and women are asked to do tasks based on their skill sets and abilities, they are also asked to do gender (West & Zimmerman, 1991). Doing “gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine ‘natures’” (West & Zimmerman, 1991, p. 14). In other words, in completing the tasks that seem merely to best suit their abilities, men and women are often performing gendered roles as defined by the dominant culture.

Beyond providing an understanding of the roles men and women play within society and organizations, the study of gender can provide insight into the structure of an organization (Acker, 1999). The connection between organizations and gender equity is the organizational culture. As previously stated, the culture within an organization is determined by the people within the organization. Men and women within an organization determine what the culture of the organization will be. The culture determined by the men and women in an organization is influenced by the ways in which men and women do gender in their organization.
Organizational Politics

Along with considering the culture of an organization it is also important to take into account the politics of an organization. Davey (2008) wrote, “Organizational politics is the daily process through which the abstractions of power and organizations are experienced” (p. 651). The politics of an organization can perpetuate the gendered or male nature of the organization. Organizations are structured to serve the likeness of those who created them. Hence, higher education was created by White men to serve White men and structured to maintain this order. Women in higher education must learn to navigate the political scene of an organization in order to take full part in how the organization operates.

Often women are cast into specific roles that do not allow a complete exploration of organizational politics (Davey, 2008). Farrell and Finklestein (2007) discussed the expectations of organizational citizenship behavior and how the expectations for an individual differed based upon gender. Organizational citizenship behavior was defined as the small tasks or little things people within an organization do without formal recognition or compensation to ensure the ongoing viability of the organization. Farrell and Finklestein identified two categories, helping and civic virtue. Helping entailed behaviors by a person that were concentrated on other people, and was attributed to women. The civic virtue category included “behaviors that reflect responsible participation in, involvement with, and concern about the life of the employing organization” (Farrell & Finklestein, 2007, p. 82); this category was attributed to men.

Although it was an expectation that women would serve in a helping role to others in the organization, the role of men was to handle the ongoing business of the organization. In other words, men were to take on productive tasks and women reproductive tasks (Gherardi & Poggio, 2007). Men and women who did not perform their tasks according to their gender were not
rewarded. For example, the female hall director who does not have an open door policy allowing students 24 hour access is seen as cold and distant; whereas the male hall director who practices the same policy is seen as keeping a professional distance. Expectations described as organizational citizenship behavior make it difficult for women to position themselves within an organization so they might have an opportunity to successfully engage in politics with the decision makers of the organization.

The politics of an organization are covert; the way the political environment of an organization works is not widely publicized to those within the organization and especially to external observers (Davey, 2008). Women are not often positioned within an organization to successfully play political games. Davey (2008) wrote, “Women are positioned as doubly excluded, both from the pleasures of play and from the associated rewards” (p. 667). In other words, as a result of being ill positioned women are denied the joy of participation and the reward of a game well played. More women are found in the entry-level and mid-level ranks of student affairs; while men are in senior leadership roles (Jones & Komives, 2001). This positioning does not allow women a seat at the table where decisions that affect how they conduct their work are made.

**Gendered Organizations**

Organizations developed in patriarchal systems provide advantages to men and the masculine form that are not afforded to women and the feminine form (Johnson, 2006). Organizations developed within patriarchy recognize the masculine form as the norm, or standard by which everything else should be measured, and the feminine as the other (Acker, 1990; Johnson, 2006). Acker (1990) explained, “gender is difficult to see when only the masculine is present. Since men in organizations take their behavior and perspectives to
represent the human, organizational structures and processes are theorized as gender neutral” (p. 142). Organizations, however, are not gender neutral. Within patriarchy, organizations provide gender privilege to men through such organizational dynamics as power (Johnson, 2006).

According to Johnson (2006),

   Power is culturally gendered in that it is associated with men. To the people living in such a society, power looks ‘natural’ on a man but unusual and even problematic on a woman, marking her as an exception that calls for special scrutiny and some kind of explanation. (p. 91)

The gendered nature of organizations deems certain characteristics as masculine and normative, like exercising power, while defining those same characteristics as problematic and deviant when they are associated with or exhibited by women.

   To study the gendered nature of an organization in the context of patriarchy requires an investigation into how men and women within an organization are treated regarding the advantages given one over the other, how the workload is divided, who is given power over the other, and other issues related to equity and equality (Acker, 1990). Acker (1990) accounted for the need to study and develop a theory regarding the connection between organizations and gender with the following five reasons: (a) practices within an organization that contributed to separation by gender; (b) organizational practices which led to inequity in income and status; (c) The creation and dissemination of cultural images regarding gender that occur within organizations; (d) certain aspects of individual gender identity are byproducts of organizational processes and pressures; and finally (e) one of the goals of feminism is to support equity between the genders. With these reasons in mind, Acker fashioned a theory to provide insight into the inner workings of the interactions between men and women in organizations. The overarching
goal of the theory was to provide a means for identifying gendered organizations and then analyzing organizations so they might be reconfigured to better serve both men and women.

Britton (2000) challenged Acker’s (1990) theory of gendered organizations by asking why it is important to identify an organization as gendered. Britton argued that the implications for the importance of the question had not been made clear and further stated it is problematic to simply identify an organization as gendered. While an organization may be male identified at one level that does not mean the entire organization is therefore male identified. Britton suggested it is important to clearly identify and define the unit(s) of analysis when considering the gendered nature of an organization. Departments and committees within a organization can be gendered differently. The implications at one level may not be the same at all levels of the organization. Britton also emphasized the importance of the context of the organization.

Although Britton (2000) provided a compelling argument for not simply labeling an organization as gendered, the stated goals are similar to those stated in Acker’s (1990) gendered organization theory. Britton’s goal is for organizations to be analyzed in a manner that provides equal opportunities to men and women, “The goal of meaningful organizational change might be better served, at least in the short term, by trying to identify and understand the factors that give rise not to ungendered organizations but to less oppressively gendered forms” (p. 430). Both Acker and Britton suggested that it is important to rid organizations of policies, practices, and processes that oppress one gender while favoring another.

Summary

Organizations are in important part of American society. It is within organizations that individuals learn what is expected of them within various areas of society. The culture within an organization is determined by the people within the organization. As new people join the
organization, it is established members that socialize newcomers to what is and is not acceptable and appropriate behavior. The culture and politics of an organization influence the experience the members of an organization have. Further, organizations mirror society just as society mirrors organizations. Organizations are gendered and it is important to understand how gendered norms operate to ensure gender equity.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter will provide an explanation of the methodology and methods used in this study. I will begin with a declaration of my epistemological perspective and the theoretical frameworks to be employed. Next, I will detail the methodology used to guide the method of data collection. Additionally, I will provide an overview of how the collected data was analyzed and interpreted. Lastly, my background as the researcher is presented.

Epistemological Perspective

This study used a constructivist epistemology. According to Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2006), “Constructivism seeks to understand individual social action through interpretation or translation” (p. 18). Constructivist epistemology sees knowledge as co-constructed by members within community and sees that knowledge as dynamic and sensitive to time and context (Creswell, 2005). Within this research perspective, meaning and truth are not independent of the study’s participants. The participant’s perspectives and their settings and/or context must be considered in the meaning making process (Creswell, 2005). The aim of this study was not to generate information that could be used to make generalizations about a population. Rather, the goal was to provide thick and rich description that could be transferred to others where they deem it appropriate and applicable.

Theoretical Frameworks

The frameworks used in this study were feminist theory and the concept of gendered organizations developed by Acker (1990). Feminist theories provided lenses to analyze the conditions of women within society, and specifically within the selected student affairs professional associations. According to Rubin (1975), “the analysis of the causes of women’s
oppression forms the basis for an assessment of just what would have to be changed in order to achieve a society without gender hierarchy” (p. 228). Liberal feminism was the specific feminist lens used in this study. Dating back to the 1800s, liberal feminism is one of the oldest forms of feminist thought (Humm, 1990). The major premise of liberal feminism is that men and women are created equal and as such, women should receive the same treatment within society accorded to men. Individual and political rights for all people, within the current structure of society, are at the forefront of the causes undertaken by liberal feminists.

The best demonstration of early liberal feminism occurred in 1848 at the Seneca Falls Conference held in Seneca Falls, New York. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, two women who were active in the fight to abolish slavery, organized the conference to discuss women’s rights. During the conference the women created the Declaration of Sentiments using the Declaration of Independence as a model to declare, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal” (Stanton, Anthony, & Gage, 1881, p. 70). The declaration closed with the following words, “…because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States” (Stanton, Anthony, & Gage, 1881, p. 71).

It was important to the early liberal feminists that the men who dominated society not overlook the individual and political rights of women. The same was true of the women who would continue to carry the mantle of equal rights for all into the twenty-first century. With the understanding that men are the center of society, de Beauvoir (1952) wrote, “She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other”
This sense of otherness is a driving force in the liberal feminist quest for equity and equality. An understanding of women as the other is an acknowledgment that men are seen as the standard to which women are constantly held. When women are recognized as being equal to men in our society, liberal feminists believe the sense of otherness will cease to exist (de Beauvoir, 1952).

Liberal feminist theory provided a framework that allowed the obstacles women faced to be illuminated and it also provided suggestions for overcoming such obstacles. Naples (2003) posited,

Feminist theoretical perspectives were developed in the context of diverse struggles for social justice inside and outside the academy. In their various formulations, feminist theories emphasize the need to challenge sexism, racism, colonialism, class and other forms of inequities in the research process. (p. 13)

Liberal feminism provided the tools necessary to challenge the plight of women in society. With a focus on individual rights for women and men liberal feminism provide the appropriate guide to determine if women have be provided equal rights in the selection organizations. More specifically, in this study, this framework provided the necessary tools to challenge the plight of women student affairs professionals within three professional organizations within higher education.

This study was also conducted using the gendered nature of organizations framework established by Acker (1990). Within this framework, Acker described five processes used to identify the gendered nature of an organization: (a) developing the division of labor according to gender, (b) the creation of symbols and images which reinforce or oppose our ideas of appropriate gender behavior, (c) the interactions of those involved in the organization in relation...
to dominance and submission, (d) the consciousness of those involved in the organization to the
gendering of the organization, and finally (e) the use of gender in the “on going process of
creating and conceptualizing social structures” (p. 147). The use of the gendered organization
framework allowed the professional organizations to be analyzed in a manner that revealed how
the structures, values, and missions of the organizations did or did not support gender equity.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into the gendered nature of professional
organizations within student affairs using a feminist lens to analyze historical information,
documents, and individual interviews. Specifically, this study was designed to answer the
following research questions:

• What is the gendered nature of the student affairs profession as evidenced by the
  mission statements, values, purposes, policies and procedures, and organizational
  structures of three professional student affairs organizations?

• How do professionals within the selected organizations perceive their organization’s
  performance regarding issues of gender equity?

Method

This exploratory study was designed to provide insight into the gendered nature of
student affairs by investigating how gender equity was handled in the past and how this issue
was addressed within the selected professional associations at the time of the study. Qualitative
methods were used to complete this study and student affairs professional associations were my
unit of analysis. Specifically, a collective case study (Creswell, 2005, 2007) was used as the
research design. The defining feature of a collective case study as described by Creswell (2007)
is that the researcher examines several cases within the unit of analysis. The cases I have examined are three professional student affairs organizations: ACPA, ACUHO-I, and NASPA.

The use of a case study is best employed when the goal is to provide information on how a specific issue is addressed (Stake, 1995). This study involved three students affairs professional associations in higher education in relation to a specific issue—gender equity. Creswell (2007) stated, “case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)” (p. 73). Further, Berg (2007) explained, “case study is an approach capable of examining simple or complex phenomenon, with units of analysis varying from single individuals to large corporations and businesses; it entails using a variety of lines of action in its data-gathering segments” (p. 283). Patton (1990) also commented regarding the utility of case study analysis:

Case studies, on the other hand, become particularly useful when one needs to understand some special people, particular problem, or unique situations in great depth, and when one can identify cases rich in information—rich in the sense that a great deal can be learned from a few exemplars of the phenomenon in question. (p. 54)

In this study, the use of a collective case study provided the best possibility for achieving the desired outcome of an in-depth understanding from a small sample regarding a specific issue.

**Unit of Analysis**

Three student affairs professional organizations represented the unit of analysis for this study:

- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA),
- ACPA: College Student Educators International (American College Personnel Association),
• Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I).

Each of the organizations was selected based on the volume and depth of information available in the National Student Affairs Archives housed at Bowling Green State University, along with the total number of members served by the organizations, and lastly due to the functional areas within student affairs represented by the associations.

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. The history of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) began with a meeting held in January 1919 at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. At the initial gathering there were six men in attendance, three who held the formal title of Dean of Men and three faculty members who had an interest in the issues men faced on their campuses (NASPA, 2008b). This group of men determined the meeting was helpful and should be held on an annual basis. To that end, invitations were extended to men working on college and university campuses with an interest in the work being done by the deans of men. The group referred to themselves as the Conference of Deans and Advisers of Men. In 1929 the group modified their name to the National Association of Deans and Advisers of Men (NADAM). Although the organization had an executive committee, the structure of the organization was very informal. It was not until 1932, thirteen years after the initial meeting, that the group would adopt its first constitution. According to that document, the purpose of the organization was, “to correlate and study the most effective methods of service in the field of student welfare for men” (NASPA, 1949). The organization remained under the NADAM moniker until 1951 when it became the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.
The present mission of the organization is, “To provide professional development and advocacy for student affairs educators and administrators who share the responsibility for a campus-wide focus on the student experience” (NASPA, 2008a). The organization serves a membership of over 11,000 members regardless of gender identity. Members are placed in the following categories; professional, associate, faculty, graduate student, undergraduate, emeritus, and non-profit or for-profit members. Officers within the association are elected. Each member institution is allowed one voting delegate.

ACPA: College Student Educators International. ACPA: College Student Educators International or the organization commonly known as ACPA (American College Personnel Association) was founded as the National Association of Appointment Secretaries (NAAS) in 1924 (Nuss, 1996). Individuals who assisted students at colleges and universities in finding placements as teachers or appointments in other professions at the completion of their degree or course of study comprised the organization. Gender was never a determinant of membership in the organization. When the organization was first established, “According to the constitution adopted at Cleveland in 1924, the purpose of NAAS was to promote and develop the work of appointment officers throughout the United States, emphasizing cooperation, research and service” (Sheeley, 1975, p. 1). The first meeting of the organization was held in conjunction with the National Association of Deans of Women. For the next several years the two organizations would meet jointly. Within the first seven years, the organization underwent several name changes. Starting as the National Association of Appointment Secretaries in 1924, it later adopted the moniker the National Association of Placement and Personnel Officers in 1929, finally settling on the American College Personnel Association in 1931 (Johnson, 1985; Nuss, 1996). In 2003 the organization adopted a new brand and logo. This moved the
organization from being known as the “Comprehensive Student Affairs Association” to the current logo of ACPA: College Student Educators International. Today the organization serves a total membership of 7,451. The membership is made up of general, student, international, transitional, life, associate, emeritus and organizational members. The mission of the association as stated in the bylaws is, “to support and foster college student learning through the generation and dissemination of knowledge, which informs policies, practices, and programs, for student affairs professionals and the higher education community” (ACPA, 2008). Elected officers representing various constituency groups with the membership constitute the governing board. All members within the association are eligible to vote and hold offices.

The Association of College and University Housing Officers International. The previous two organizations are focused on serving the student affairs profession as a whole, however, the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I) is functional area specific. The organization is focused on serving student affairs professionals working within housing and residence life. Currently ACUHO-I “serves more than 6,400 housing professionals from more than 900 colleges and universities in 22 different countries, who serve approximately 1.8 million students worldwide” (ACUHO-I, n.d.).

The Association of College and University Housing Officers International was founded in 1949. According to the history of the organization published in 1961, the need for a national meeting of college and university housing officers was first identified by Dr. Earl Thompson, the Director of Housing at the University of Illinois. The need for the meeting came in large part due to the increased need for housing after World War II (ACUHO-I, History, 1961). The first meeting was held in July 1949 on the University of Illinois campus with 63 delegates
representing 33 colleges and universities. This first meeting was referred to as the National Housing Conference.

During the first meeting delegates raised the question of whether or not a permanent organization was needed. A committee was formed to further explore that question. In 1951 at the third National Housing Conference held at Michigan State University, the delegates voted to accept the recommendation that an organization be formed. Officers were elected and charged with developing a constitution. In 1952, the members of the organization voted that the official name of the organization would be the National Association of College and University Housing Officers. The first constitution was adopted during the 1953 annual meeting held at the University of Minnesota. The attendance at that meeting was 128 official delegates representing 67 colleges. This was a significant increase over the initial meeting in 1949. At this meeting the name of the organization was changed to the Association of College and University Housing Officers. The international or “I” was added in 1981 to the organization name in recognition of its international membership (ACUHO-I, n.d.b.).

**Data Collection**

One of the characteristics of a case study is the depth and richness of the information gathered (Berg, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). Yin (2003) stated there are six sources of evidence most commonly used when conducting a case study, “documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts” (p. 85). Toward that end, this study was completed using several data collection methods, including a review of archival records, a review of current documents, and individual interviews with current members. Archival records were reviewed to provide a context for the founding of the three associations and to provide insight into the gendered nature of the organizations along
with the role gender played in the beginning of each of the organizations. The archival records for each of the organizations were found and reviewed in the National Student Affairs Archives housed at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). Document analysis was used to gather information on the past and current practices of each organization. The past and current constitutions, by-laws, missions and values statements of each organization were reviewed and analyzed. Access to these documents was gained via the Web sites of each organization, as well as archival records.

Individual interviews using a semi-structured format (Berg, 2007) were conducted with key information holders, such as past-presidents, executive board officers, committee leaders, and staff members. Berg (2007) defined interviews, “as a conversation with a purpose” (p. 89). For a semi-standardized interview, Berg suggested that a list of questions be used. Semi-standardized or semi-structured (Kvale, 1996) interviews provide a flexible guideline that can be adapted over the course of the interview. The use of a semi-standardized guide (Appendix A) allowed for flexibility in the order in which questions were asked and the way follow up questions were used to elicit more in-depth information and clarification (Berg, 2007).

To ease transcription, each interview was digitally recorded. When possible, I conducted interviews in person. Four interviews (with Jodie, Kathryn, Jim, and Becky) were conducted face-to-face. The remaining nine interviews were conducted via the telephone. All telephone interviews were audio recorded using the services of FreeConferenceCall.com. In accordance with the BGSU Human Subject Review Board, prior to conducting each individual interview, informed consent was secured from each participant and properly documented.
Sampling

The identification of participants with in-depth experience in the field of student affairs along with significant participation in one or more of the selected associations was integral to this study. Participants with in-depth student affairs experience were sought for their ability to draw on their personal experiences in the field. Voluntary or paid service in one or more of the associations added to the experiences and information participants could reflect upon and share.

Participants for one-on-one interviews were recruited through purposive sampling (Berg, 2007; Creswell, 2007) along with network or snowball sampling (Berg 2007; Lee, 1993). According to Berg, “When developing a purposive sample, researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population” (p. 44). Network (Lee, 1993) or snowball sampling was used to identify key information holders. Lee defined network sampling as a process where, “the researcher starts from an initial set of contacts and is then passed on by them to others, who in turn refer others and so on” (p. 65). Key informants or gate keepers within each organization were identified and asked to provide the names of individuals who they believed would provide information that would lead to maximum variation. The gatekeepers were asked to use the following criteria to guide their recommendation of participants: a) individuals who had served in a leadership position within their association and b) individuals who through their leadership had the opportunity to influence policies and procedures within their respective associations. I hoped I would be able to speak with former presidents, executive directors, and standing committee or knowledge community chairpersons. Once potential participants had been identified they were emailed a message inviting them to participate (see Appendix B).
Confidentiality

The topic of confidentiality was negotiated between me and each of the 13 participants. Confidentiality was defined as the expectation that information shared within the context of this study would not be disclosed without the proper consent from the participant (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). Prior to the beginning of each interview all participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form in accordance with the Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board’s requirements for informed consent (Appendix C).

Guba and Lincoln (1981) reminded the naturalistic evaluator that the smaller sample size used in comparison to other types of socio-behavioral studies made it easier to identify the sources used to gain information. Based on the small sample size used in this study, it might be easy for a reader to identify a participant based on their statements. To that end, it was important to clearly explain to each participant the risks associated with their identity being used throughout this study.

During the informed consent process participants were notified that their names and information shared during our interview would be reported as a part of this study. It was explained to the participants that the level of credibility would be increased for the study if readers were able to associate the information shared with an identifiable member of one of the associations. Given the small number of participants in the study it was important to acknowledge that a reader might be able to identify a participant based on their remarks.

At the same time, to respect the privacy of the participants, they were given the option to have their identity and information protected. Initially, three participants elected to have their identities protected. After reviewing the interview transcript, one of those participants decided it would be easy to be identified by a reader and agreed to be identified in the study. Those who
chose to have their identities remain confidential were allowed to select their own pseudonym.

The thirteen participants are listed in Table 1 along with their organization affiliation(s) and roles within the association(s). Unless otherwise indicated, actual names are used.

Table 1
Participant Names and Organization Affiliations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization Affiliation</th>
<th>Leadership Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth*</td>
<td>NASPA</td>
<td>Active in the leadership of a Knowledge Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jodie Castanza</td>
<td>ACPA</td>
<td>Chair of the Standing Committee for Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen Dungy</td>
<td>NASPA and ACPA</td>
<td>Executive Director of NASPA; Maryland CPA President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill Eckardt</td>
<td>ACUHO-I</td>
<td>Vice President and President Elect for 2010-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Engel*</td>
<td>ACPA</td>
<td>Various leadership roles on the national and state level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca (Becky) Figura</td>
<td>ACUHO-I</td>
<td>Secretary and Central District Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Howard-Hamilton</td>
<td>ACPA and NASPA</td>
<td>Journal reviewer for both associations; ACPA Diamond Honoree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Komives</td>
<td>ACPA, NASPA, ACUHO-I</td>
<td>ACPA Past President (1981-82); ACPA Diamond Honoree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Rhatigan</td>
<td>NASPA</td>
<td>Past President (1975-76); Region IV West Vice President; Historian(1978 – 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck Rhodes</td>
<td>ACUHO-I</td>
<td>Inclusion and Equity Director; Various committees and subcommittees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Roberts</td>
<td>ACPA and NASPA</td>
<td>ACPA Past President (1999-2000); Executive director (2003-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

The process of analyzing the data began with description (Patton, 1990) contained in organizational profiles. Description consists of, “a detailed rendering of people, places, or events” (Creswell, 2005, p. 241). The process of creating the profiles and collecting data coincided. The analysis of the data did not have a specific start and stop date, but was instead iterative (Stake, 1995). It was important for me to remain open to the process by collecting and analyzing data simultaneously.

Although the time frame for data analysis was fluid, I followed a process. The process began with a preliminary exploration of the data. As stated by Creswell (2005), “A preliminary exploratory analysis in qualitative research consists of exploring the data to obtain a general sense of the data, memoing ideas, thinking about the organization of the data, and considering whether you need more data” (p. 237). The exploratory analysis consisted of listening to the digital recordings, reading and rereading the transcripts from interviews, and reviewing field notes along with documents and archival records.

Once the exploratory analysis was completed the next step was to code the data. “Coding is the process of segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data” (Creswell, 2005, p. 237). Through the act of coding I was able to dissect the data to begin making meaning. The first step was open coding; the data were separated into smaller segments and labeled according to the content. Axial coding was the next step; in this phase of analysis
general codes were assigned to the data. During this phase I looked for general themes to emerge. The codes were reviewed for patterns and redundancy. Once general coding was completed, selective coding was used to organize the data according to themes, categories, or larger patterns (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006).

Categorizing the data allowed for a more in depth examination of how the data related to each other and the issue of gender equity. Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2006) stated, “In examining the relationships between concepts, categories are generated that reflect greater complexity and level of abstraction” (p. 44). Once larger categories had been created for each transcript these categories were compared across transcripts to reveal how the organizations may or may not relate to one another. Upon the completion of the coding and categorization process a narrative was created for each category along with an overview of the three organizations and how they relate to the larger field of student affairs.

**Measures of Quality**

It is the researcher’s responsibility to incorporate measures of quality or trustworthiness into the research design. Establishing trustworthiness supports the rigor and validity of the study. To that end, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the incorporation of the following concepts: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

**Credibility.** As defined in Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993), credibility is the capacity of a study, “to communicate the various constructions of reality in a setting back to the persons who hold them in a form that will be affirmed by them” (p. 40). Essentially, when the case study was given back to the representatives of each organization they should be able to recognize the story as that of their organization; they were able to see the organization through
my words. To encourage credibility Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggested the incorporation of the following steps: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation.

**Prolonged engagement.** Prolonged engagement allowed me as the researcher to establish a relationship with the participants over an extended period of time so distortions within the context of the research might be detected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Erlandson et al., 1993). Although prolonged engagement was desired, due to the time constraints within the design of this study prolonged engagement was not achieved. This will be discussed in the limitation section of this chapter.

**Persistent observation.** Achieving persistent observation required that I consider the issues presented by the participants in great depth, going beyond the surface of the information shared (Ely et al., 1991). The incorporation of persistent observation in the study meant identifying the major issues with the study and revisiting them often (Ely et al., 1991). Holding gender as the focus of this study, persistent observation meant this topic was always at the forefront of the collection and analysis process.

**Triangulation.** Triangulation (Berg, 2007) or the use of multiple data sources to verify and confirm information was the backbone of creating an accurate case study. The triangulation of information in the research design was accomplished though the multiple venues used to collect information—archival records, document analysis, and interviews. An initial observation of ACUHO-I was made during the organization’s annual convention and exposition held June 26-30, 2009 in Baltimore, Maryland. A visit to their central office in Columbus, Ohio was made on November 30, 2009. As a member of both ACPA and NASPA observations were also made at these organizations’ annual conventions.
**Dependability and confirmability.** Dependability refers to the ability of another researcher to replicate this study in a similar context using participants with similar backgrounds and gaining similar results (Erlandson et al., 1993). Erlandson et al. defined confirmability as the effort of a researcher to obtain objectivity within a study. It is the effort made to disassociate the research from the biases of the researcher (Erlandson et al., 1993). For this study, dependability and confirmability were achieved by employing a peer debriefer to review the codes and relevant interpretations developed from each transcript. The peer debriefer provided the perspective of an individual who was not associated with the study and therefore had the ability to provide unbiased feedback (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Erlandson et al., 1993). The peer debriefer was used to challenge the codes and conclusions drawn from the information gained from the participants to ensure my biases were removed or accounted for throughout the research process. Member checks were used to strengthen the study’s dependability as well. Each participant was offered the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview along with my construction of the patterns and themes retrieved from the data during the interview.

Establishing trustworthiness is essential in constructivist and feminist research. As stated by Ely, Ansul, Friedman, Garner, and Steinmetz (1991), “Being trustworthy as a qualitative researcher means at the least that the processes of the research are carried out fairly, that the products represent as closely as possible the experiences of the people who are studied” (p. 93). My goal in establishing trustworthiness was to ensure the selected professional organizations and their practices and interactions within the topic area of gender equity have been accurately depicted.
Researcher’s Background

As I considered the task of completing this study, it was important for me to describe myself as a researcher and to clarify my standpoint and qualifications for conducting this study. I identify as a Black woman. When I think of my life experiences, it is nearly impossible for me separate my race from my gender. Both of these characteristics inform my perception of the world around me. Providing my personal standpoint is important because it provides a context for how I view the world, and reflects how I believe the world views me. Regarding the articulation of standpoints Collins (1990) stated, “Black women’s ability to forge these individual, unarticulated, yet powerful expressions of everyday consciousness into an articulated, self-defined, collective standpoint is key to Black women’s survival” (p. 26). A conscious understanding of who I am enables me to survive in the world in which I live. It also allows those who participate in this study and who will review the completed project to better understand the context in which I operated as the researcher.

History is also important to me. Understanding the past can provide insight into the present and the future. It was during a project in one of my courses HIED 780: Foundations of Higher Education that I came to understand and appreciate the rich history of higher education in the United States. One of my goals in endeavoring to complete this project was to better understand the history of student affairs and particularly student affairs professional associations.

When describing the desired skills of a researcher, Yin (1994) identified the following basic skills: (a) the ability to ask questions and interpret answers, (b) being a good listener, (c) possessing the ability to be adaptable and flexible, (d) a good understanding of the issue being researched, and (e) an objective perspective of the issue. The courses I have completed in the
Higher Education Administration program have helped me to develop the skills necessary to complete this study.

The disclosure of my membership in the organizations being studied is an important piece of my positionality. I have been a member of ACPA since 2001 and NASPA since 2009. In ACUHO-I, individual membership is based on institutional membership. Bowling Green State University is an institutional member of the association thereby extending individual membership to me. My involvement with NASPA and ACUHO-I has been minimal. Within ACPA, I serve on the directorate (i.e., executive committee) for the Standing Committee for Women (SCW). As a member of the SCW directorate I am charged with upholding the mission of the committee which is to “work to create an environment that supports the lifelong holistic development of women” (SCW, n.d.). Because the mission of the SCW aligns with my personal goals I have found my service to this committee important. My involvement has allowed me opportunities to play a role in shaping the experiences of women within ACPA.

My goal in disclosing this information is to provide my personal context. Sharing information about my membership and involvement, or lack thereof, within each of these organizations provides insight into the connections I had with individuals while conducting this study. By clarifying my standpoint as the researcher my aim is to provide transparency in regard to my personal motivation for conducting this study. My disclosure of this information is important due to the influence my positionality had on the perspective used in the analysis and interpretation of the data from the archives and the data shared with me by the participants (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). Understanding my own position, biases, and assumptions and disclosing them within the research process helps to ensure the integrity and quality of this study.
Limitations of the Research Design

Given the research design used for this study there are limitations that must be acknowledged. These limitations were precipitated by monetary restrictions, limitations for certain interview formats, and availability of comparable information for each association. These limitations are discussed further below.

It was my preference to conduct all interviews face-to-face. However, the participants for this study were situated all across the country, from the west coast in California to the east coast in Washington D.C. Budget and time restraints prevented me for traveling to meet with each participant. Four interviews were conducted face to face and nine were conducted via conference calls.

Phone interviews have certain limitations. According to Berg (2007), “From a symbolic interactionist perspective, an important disadvantage is that current telephone technology lacks the ability for the interviewer and interviewee to use full channels of communication” (p. 110). Full channels of communication refer to both verbal and non-verbal messages. This disadvantage was manifested particularly in one of the interviews conducted for the study. I was unable to receive non-verbal cues from the participant that may have assisted me in eliciting more information in response to my questions. Without being able to witness and interpret the participant’s non-verbal communication, it was difficult to engage the participant in a more in-depth conversation. In addition, 10 minutes into the interview the participant had to disconnect from the call to continue the interview on a cell phone while driving. In a face-to-face interview it is very unlikely a participant would interrupt to leave for another meeting and invite the researcher along.
Variance in the extent and type of records retained by each association in the archives was also a limitation of this study. By incorporating historical research into the design of this study I was able to develop an outline for the context in which each of the organizations was founded. While the three organizations selected for this project were selected because of the amount of information available in the National Student Affairs Archives, all three associations did not have complete records. For example, information on ACPA from 1925 to 1932 was not available. The information I gleaned about the organization during this time period, I discovered in the files of another association.

**Summary**

The goal of this study was to provide a greater understanding of the gendered nature of student affairs. This goal was accomplished by exploring how gender equity issues were addressed or not addressed, by three student affairs professional organizations. Constructivist epistemology and feminist methodology informed my research design, including data collection and analysis methods. Student affairs professional associations (NASPA, ACPA, and ACUHO-I) were the focus of my analysis, I incorporated ethnographic observations and insights from key actors who were members of one or more of these three associations to triangulate the materials found in the associations’ archival data. The next chapter reviews in greater detail the historical development of student affairs professional associations and the ways in which this history intersects with issues of gender and gender equity. The chapter also reports how each association engaged issues of gender and gender equity as revealed by the archival data as well as the participants’ interview data.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Context

History when used properly serves not only as a chronicle of previous events but also as a roadmap for the future. Appleton, Briggs, and Rhatigan (1978) stated,

History provides perspective and without an understanding of the role our predecessors played, the circumstances in which they worked, and the contributions they may have made to higher education in the United States, we have a truncated knowledge of our profession…the present is a dominant preoccupation. The price of this preoccupation is the diminution not only of our predecessors but also of ourselves. (p. 9)

The field of student affairs has a rich history within higher education in the United States. Historians and scholars (Appleton, Briggs, and Rhatigan 1978, Gerda, 2006, and Schwartz 1997) trace the origins of the field and profession back to the late nineteenth century. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the context in which student affairs professional organizations evolved. The main focus of this chapter will be on three organizations: the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), ACPA: College Student Educators International or the organization commonly known as ACPA (American College Personnel Association), and the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I). I begin with a brief discussion of the beginnings of the field of student affairs and the organizations that served as precursors to the creation of the three aforementioned associations. The aim of providing an overview of the context is to assist in answering the research question: What is the gendered nature of the student affairs profession as evidenced by the mission statements, values, purposes, policies and procedures, and organizational structures of three professional student affairs organizations?
Deans of Women, Deans of Men, and the Personnel Worker

During the latter portion of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, higher education experienced a significant increase in the number of students. There are several factors that led to this increase such as, the creation of land-grant institutions through the two Morrill Acts passed in 1862 and 1890, an increase in the number of public institutions, and a growing acceptance of coeducation (Nidiffer, 2000; Thelin, 2004). The acceptance of coeducation led to an increase in the number of women students on campuses across the country. The rapid growth in the number of students on college and university campuses required special attention from faculty and most often college and university presidents. With the increase of women on college and university campuses there was a requirement that the administration at an institution provide for the well-being of these female students (Niddifer, 2007). The men and women appointed to oversee the well being of students were charged with creating environments outside their students’ academic realm that were conducive to the students’ academic and social success. They were also expected to assist students in obtaining employment upon the completion of their academic career. It was these women and men who would come to be known as deans of women and men.

The start of the profession or field of student affairs is often credited to the appointment of deans of women and deans of men in the last part of the nineteenth century. The first Dean of Women, Alice Freeman Palmer, was appointed in 1892 at the University of Chicago by the president of the institution William Rainy Harper (Nidiffer, 2007; Schwartz, 1997). At the time of her appointment Palmer was serving as the president of Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Palmer accepted the position of Dean of Women at the University of Chicago under two conditions. First, she would only reside in Chicago for 12 weeks out of the year; her
husband a Harvard professor would not relocate to Illinois. Her second condition was that she be able to hire as her deputy Marion Talbot (Gangone, 2008; Gerda, 2006; Nidiffer, 2007). Talbot was also a professor at Wellesley and would go on to play a significant role in establishing the profession of student affairs and two influential professional organizations (Gerda, 2006; Talbot, 1931).

The initial role of the dean of women was to ensure the upstanding behavior of the women students on college and university campuses. During the progressive era the housing of women on campus was a new phenomenon. It was important that the women in housing be supervised by an older and mature woman (Nidiffer, 2007). Allowing women students to have a presence on campus meant the administration was willing to take on the duties of ensuring the safety and well-being of these women. It was important to the families of the women being sent to live on campus that they be protected in the same manner they would have been had they remained at home (Nidiffer, 2007).

The first Dean of Men was Thomas Arkle Clark, who was appointed at the University of Illinois in 1901 but began using the official title, Dean of Men in 1909 (Appleton, Briggs, & Rhatigan 1978; Nuss, 1996; Schwartz, 1997). It was the responsibility of the dean to observe student behavior and appropriately respond to the needs of their students. Rhatigan (2009) described the responsibilities of the deans of men as, “an emphasis on the welfare of the whole student, responsibility for student discipline, and genuine care for offering students advice and support” (p. 5). Often the dean of men was unclear on his actual duties and responsibilities. Rhatigan (2009) recounted a story of one man who after his appointment wrote to the board of trustees to ask what he should do as the dean. The response he received from the board was to please let them know once he had figured out his responsibilities. Despite the lack of clarity
about their exact duties, deans provided guidance in many areas outside the classroom for the students they served during an important time of growth for American colleges and universities. The men and women who accepted these positions as deans were pioneers in their efforts; completing their daily tasks without the luxury of the resources available to current student affairs professionals.

Along with the work done by the deans of men and women, the personnel worker also played a pivotal role in the establishment of student affairs as a profession. Lloyd-Jones (1929) defined personnel work as, “the systematic consideration of the individual, for the sake of the individual, and by the specialists in that field” (p. v). The role of the student personnel worker was to be concerned about the holistic education of each student. The job of the personnel worker was to ensure the institution found the best means possible to serve each student as an individual (Lloyd-Jones, 1929).

The role of the personnel worker grew from a need to guide students into their “proper” profession. In a review of the beginning of the field of student affairs and the role of the personnel worker, Nuss (2003) stated, “Their primary functions were associated with vocational guidance, including obtaining accurate data on each student, codifying the requirements of different professions, and supervising the use of ability and interest inventories” (p. 69).

Rhatigan (2009) credits Walter Dill Scott as a pioneer in the development of personnel work. Scott was trained in psychology; he obtained his doctorate in psychology and educational administration from the University of Leipzig in Germany (Northwestern University, n.d.). During World War I, Scott developed instruments that were utilized to assist the United States Army in selecting officers according to a scientific method. The method developed by Scott was “so successful in selecting good officers that it was later used to determine promotion of officers
and, most important of all, to determine effective use of the vast pool of talents and skills among enlisted men” (Northwestern University, n.d., p. 2). As the president of Northwestern University, from 1920 to 1939, Scott was one of the first presidents to create a department dedicated to the coordination of personnel work on a college or university campus.

In the beginning there were differing opinions about what constituted personnel work and personnel administration. In a chapter on personnel administration in *Student affairs: A profession’s heritage*, Esther Lloyd-Jones (1943), the first person to receive a doctorate in the field of student personnel stated,

> Student-personnel administration and student-personnel work are not synonymous. Any of the ‘personnel services’ included in student-personnel administration are ‘personnel work,’ but the co-ordination of student-personnel services into a total program and the supplementing of the existent personnel services by other necessary series is student-personnel administration (p. 22)

Lloyd-Jones’ definition provided a clear distinction between the work done by personnel workers and the coordination of personnel services into a comprehensive program. No matter the definition, the work done by these individuals was essential to the success of the students they served and to the establishment of student affairs as a profession.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the study of the personnel movement was important to legitimizing the work being done by personnel workers at colleges and universities across the United States. In 1926 the American Council on Education (ACE) sponsored a study about the personnel services available at colleges and universities (Saddlemire & Rentz, 1986). This initial study was the impetus for the formation of a committee to review personnel methods. The creation of that committee resulted in tools such as, “cumulative record cards, personality
rating scales, and comparable achievement tests” which were all used in the work done by personnel workers (Saddlemire & Rentz, 1986, p. 74). In 1936 the Committee on Personnel Methods was disbanded and ACE appointed a group of 19 individuals to gather for the “further investigation of certain fundamental problems related to the clarification of so-called personnel work, the intelligent use of available tools, and the development of additional techniques and processes” (Saddlemire & Rentz, 1986, p. 75). The report submitted by the members of this group, which included Esther Lloyd-Jones, was referred to as *The Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV)*.

The *SPPV* which was authored in 1937 advised those in higher education of the importance of the consideration of the student as a whole individual. The document also communicated the message that in-class instruction received by students was not sufficient for the complete development of the student as a whole individual. The document emphasized the need to provide assistance to students in areas such as their transition from high school to college, the clarification of their educational and occupational goals, the supervision of students’ religious life and well being, along with 20 other aims and objectives. The *SPPV* clarified the philosophy of the personnel worker and served as a seminal document in the field of student affairs.

**Precursor Organizations**

While they are not as old as the institution of higher education in the United States the organizations to serve the needs of those working with students outside the classroom existed early in the establishment of positions in personnel services. As the work done by the deans of women, the deans of men, and the student personnel worker increased on campuses across the United States, there arose a need for the professionals doing student affairs work to come
together to exchange ideas and discuss their various and diverse experiences. Gerda (2006) wrote, “This action moves the work from the individual, specialized, local story of an institution to the larger scope of a group of professionals within American higher education” (p. 151). Evans and Ranero (2009) reviewed the function, history, benefits, and involvement opportunities provided by modern student affairs associations in their chapter in The Handbook of Student Affairs Administration. In their review they cited the benefits of associations found on the Web site of the American Society of Association Executives. The benefits associations provide to their members were summarized as: (a) Opportunities for continued educational and professional development; (b) Insight into research and common developments within the field; (c) Standardization within the field or area of interest; (d) An environment conducive to the exchange of ideas related to current issues and events; (e) Opportunities to further the identified mission or purpose through volunteer or service engagements; (f) Providing a network of individuals with common interests and goals (Evans & Ranero, 2009). These benefits can also be applied to the organizations that served as the precursors to modern student affairs organizations.

Two organizations that were established during the latter portion of the nineteenth century that affected the development of modern organizations were the Association of Collegiate Alumnae and the National Association of Deans of Women. Both organizations were instrumental in providing their members with opportunities to gather for the exchange of information and ideas.

**Association of Collegiate Alumnae.** In 1881, prior to her appointment as deputy to Alice Freeman Palmer, and eventual appointment as dean of women, Marion Talbot and her friend and teacher Ellen H. Richards founded the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (ACA).
The purpose of this organization was to allow college educated women, who were often ostracized by their uneducated peers, an opportunity to interact with each other. In their account of the founding of the organization Talbot and Rosenberry (1931) pondered “what would come of such association where trained young women learned to work together in a common interest, with unity of thought along with diversity of method, the whole in a spirit of self-sacrifice and loving service” (p. 9). When it was founded it was difficult for college educated women to identify settings where their education was truly valued. The ACA provided its members with opportunities to gather for the exchange of ideas and experiences. Naturally, many of the women deans belonged to this organization because it was one of the few places where they could comfortably interact with women of like minds and similar educational backgrounds. This organization would later become the American Association of University Women.

**National Association of Deans of Women.** Although the Association of Collegiate Alumnae spoke to the needs of many women in higher education, it did not directly address the needs of the deans of women. In November 1903, 18 deans, each representing a different campus from the mid-western states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin along with women from Colorado and New York gathered in Evanston and Chicago, Illinois. This first meeting of these deans of women was called the Conference of Deans of Women of the Middle West. Both public and private institutions were represented in this initial meeting. According to the meeting’s minutes the following topics were discussed: the creation of a permanent organization, residential life, self government vs. direct government, appropriate interactions with students, and several resolutions including one to condemn women’s participation in intercollegiate athletics (Minutes, 1903). During their initial
conference, the women decided it was important for them to continue meeting. Officers were
elected and it was determined they would meet again in the fall of 1905.

From 1903 to 1916, several different groups of deans of women would meet across the
United States to discuss the work being done on their campuses. The deans of women at state
funded institutions met as a separate group to discuss issues they believed to be unique to their
institutional settings. Other groups representing women at private and religious institutions also
gathered together to share information about the work being done on their campuses. To address
geographic needs and travel limitations, regional meetings were also held to support the work of
the women deans in the south (Gerda, 2006).

In 1916, the National Association of Deans of Women (NADW) was formally organized.
The organization was focused on providing an arena where the deans of women could formally
come together to discuss the work they were doing on their respective campuses. As the
organization grew, membership was extended beyond the deans of women to women who
worked with girls in elementary and secondary schools (Evans & Ranero, 2009). The
organization became known as the National Association of Women Deans and Counselors
(NAWDC) in 1956.

In the early 1950s, the leadership of the organization considered a consolidation with the
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). It was decided by the
leadership of the organization that it was important to maintain a separate organization focused
on the needs of women in higher education. Between 1957 and 1973, NAWDC’s leaders were
aware of the social and political environment in the United States. It was important during this
time period for the women in the organization to be involved in the changes that were happening
such as the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights act of 1964.
Simultaneously, the organization would undergo its third name change from National Association of Women Deans and Counselors to the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors. In 1991 the name of the organization was changed to the National Association for Women in Education (NAWE). Despite the value many women found in the organization, due to dwindling membership and low numbers at the annual meeting it was determined the organization would cease its operations in 2000. Although the organization no longer exists, portions of the association remain. The AAUW and NASPA continue to host the annual Conference for Collegiate Women Leaders during the summer. NASPA established the Center for Scholarship, Research, and Professional Development for Women to focus on, “issues of concern to women in education, matters of policy development, and the design and implementation of relevant programs, services, advocacy and mentoring opportunities for women professionals and students” (NASPA Center for Women, n.d., ¶ 1). Also, in 2008 NASPA began publishing *The Journal About Women in Higher Education* to continue the legacy of NAWE’s journal, *Initiatives*.

The Deans of Women were the first to acknowledge a need for gathering together to exchange information and experiences and to gain inspiration from each other (Gangone, 2008; Gerda, 2006; Schwartz, 1997). Although women had been accepted in higher education as students, faculty members, and administrators, they were not always warmly welcomed. By gathering together they were able to understand the steps others had taken to overcome the various obstacles each woman faced on her campus. Women were also first in the field to recognize the need for professional training. The deans of women recognized the importance of an academic grounding to legitimize the work being done in student affairs as a profession. In 1916, at Teachers College of Columbia University a graduate program was established to meet
the needs of the deans of women in their quest to gain knowledge and training specific to their profession (Schwartz, 1997). The women of that time also saw the importance of sharing information through formal publications: Lois Matthews authored the book *The Dean of Women* in 1915.

**National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)**

The women of the National Association of Deans of Women began meeting out of a need to be able to connect with other deans of women for the purpose of encouragement, inspiration, and the exchange of ideas. Likewise, the Conference of the Deans and Advisors of Men (CDAM) began meeting for similar reasons. The fallout of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) may have been what spurred the meeting of six men on January 24 and 25, 1919.

The Student Army Training Corps was established during World War I to educate and train young men for military service, similar to today’s Reserved Officers Training Corps (Oxford, 2001). The SATC was started in the spring of 1918. Colleges and universities across the United States were to provide instruction and training and the Army would reimburse the institutions for the cost of the instruction and the use of their facilities for military use. However, the life of the program was short lived. On November 11, 1918, WWI ended, thus ending the need for the men who had enrolled in colleges and universities around the country. The end of the SATC left campuses saturated with men that administrators had not originally planned to enroll or to provide services to. This sudden influx of male students could be what prompted the need for the deans of men to come together. About the first meeting of the deans of men, S. H. Goodnight wrote to the librarian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, “It was a hastily called conference in a time of emergency, but was so profitable that it resulted in a formal organization which has met annually since that time” (Goodnight, 1927).
The six men in attendance at the first meeting of the CDAM represented the following institutions: University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, State University of Iowa, Iowa State Teachers college, Syracuse University, and the University of Wisconsin. Three of the men held the official title “Dean of Men” and the others simply had an interest in the work being done by the deans of men. Thomas Arkle Clark, Dean of Men at the University of Illinois was to be in attendance but was detained due to an illness in his family. During the initial meeting, S. H. Goodnight, Dean of Men at the University of Wisconsin and host of the conference was elected the chairman and L. A. Strauss a professor at the University of Michigan was elected as the secretary. The first meeting was a very informal gathering. There was no set agenda, the men were asked to propose topics for discussion they thought pertinent to the gathering. The list of issues discussed during the course of the conference included: “attitudes toward major activities, fraternity initiations, fraternity finances, the Warmer System of fraternity management, relations of student and landlords, classroom attendance and scholarship, credit for military work, and student self-government” (Strauss, 1919, p. 1). In the minutes of the first meeting Strauss wrote, “There was no attempt or discussion to confine the discussion to a definite [theme] at a particular time. The delegates felt that the exchange of opinions and experiences was all the more valuable because of this freedom from restraint” (p. 2).

During the second annual meeting it was decided the administrative work of the association would be conducted by three officers; a chairman elected annually, a secretary to serve a three year term, and another undescribed member to be elected annually. Those present empowered the executive committee to decide the date and location of the next conference, based on the institutions that had volunteered to host. The committee selected from a list of institutions that included the University of Iowa, the University of Kentucky, and Purdue. The
University of Iowa was the recommended location by the committee for the next meeting and the informal timeframe they established was late April or early May of the following year.

Although the Deans of Women began the process of sharing information in a published format, there was at least one call for the Deans of Men to publish the work they were doing to benefit others in higher education. One of the members of the association wrote,

From my brief experience among the eastern institutions, I can say frankly that the middle west institutions are far in the lead in this kind of work. I find also that the trustees and presidents of most eastern institutions are looking to the West and its work along this line. Many of them have plans to introduce this kind of work into their institutions. I think it would be extremely helpful to the whole education world if the members of your conference would publish as much about their work as they can in the various educational journals. (Warnock to S.H. Goodnight, 1921)

Sharing the information received during the association meetings was important to the members as the exchange provided them with guidance and reinforcement for the work they were doing on their campuses.

After ten years, in 1929, the name of the organization was changed to the National Association of Deans and Advisors of Men (NADAM). Having met informally for 14 years the members decided to make the association more official. During the 14th meeting of the annual conference in 1933, the membership decided to add structure to the association. Until that time the organization functioned without formal rules, policies or procedures. After a discussion by the members, the organization adopted a constitution with seven articles. The document stated the purpose of the association was, “to correlate and study the most effective methods of service in the field of student welfare for men.” The structure set forth in the constitution called for
institutions to seek membership in the association and to be represented by one voting delegate from each institution.

1951 was a gateway to change for NADAM. During the annual meeting, a name change was approved to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. During that time the membership also voted to formally accept women as members. Although there was no explicit ban on women’s membership, they had not played a role in the association, in large part due to the presence of the National Association of Deans of Women. The entrance of women into NASPA was slow. After seven years as an open association, the first woman institutional delegate, Mary Ethel Ball of the University of Colorado, Boulder would be listed on the membership roster. She is identified as the first female member of NASPA (Keough, 1976). In 1975, Alice Manicur, Dean of Students at Frostburg State University, in Maryland was elected president of the association. She was the first woman to be elected president of the association 24 years after women were formally invited to participate in the association.

The current mission of NASPA is “to provide professional development and advocacy for student affairs educators and administrators who share the responsibility for a campus-wide focus on the student experience” (NASPA, 2008a). The organization serves a membership of over 11,000 members. The association’s governance structure has changed. In the early days the business of the association was conducted by three officers. Today it takes an executive director and national office staff of 19, a Board of Directors, and a team of volunteers to conduct the business of the association. Membership and voting eligibility, though, have not changed. Institutions must purchase membership in the association and are represented by one voting delegate; however they may have as many non-voting delegates as they like.
ACPA: College Student Educators International (American College Personnel Association)

ACPA was founded as the National Association of Appointment Secretaries. During a meeting of the National Association of Deans of Women (NADW) held in Chicago, Illinois, in 1924, May L. Cheney, an appointment secretary from the University of California, Berkley, posed the question, “Shall we have a national association of appointment secretaries?” This simple question was the necessary impetus for the beginning of the organization that would come to be known as ACPA. To justify the question Cheney (1924) wrote,

Though the work of the Appointment Secretary is distributed to many officers known by many different names…It deals with the same problems East and West…We must be prepared to do more and better work and prove that it can be done economically. A National organization should have a research committee and study such subjects as How to Reduce the Office Force. (p. 28)

Of the 12 placement secretaries/officers present when the association was established, 11 women and one man made up the group (Student Affairs History Project, n.d.).

The purpose of the organization as stated in the constitution passed during the first meeting was, “to promote and develop the work of appointment officers throughout the United States emphasizing cooperation, research, and service” (Sheeley, 1975, p. 1). The leadership of the organization from the beginning was seemingly balanced between men and women. Within the first 20 years of the organization’s existence it had 10 presidents, four women and six men (Student Affairs History Project, n.d.).

The first official meeting of the National Association of Appointment Secretaries (NAAS) was held in 1925 in Cincinnati, Ohio in conjunction with the annual meeting of the NADW. Although the organization was officially founded in 1923, the proceedings for the first
eight annual meetings, along with all other files associated with the organization during this time period were not available in the records kept in the National Student Affairs Archives. Records of the annual meetings are available beginning in 1932.

The early governing board structure consisted initially of a president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer. In 1931-32, the executive committee was expanded to include five vice presidents and a chairman of the editorial committee. The vice presidents were responsible for the oversight of the following areas: (a) records and research, (b) educational counseling and administration, (c) general placement, (d) teacher placement, and (e) personnel counseling.

Women were integral to the founding and operations of ACPA during its early years and have been throughout the existence of the organization. Recognizing their foundation in guidance and counseling, the membership decided to affiliate with the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) as a membership subgroup in 1951 (Sheeley, 1991). This provided a connection between guidance counselors in elementary and secondary education to those in higher education. As ACPA grew, the connection with APGA was no longer deemed ideal and in 1992, ACPA, once again, became a free standing organization with its own international office to handle the operations of the association in Washington D.C.

Within ACPA, a subgroup or commission structure was established to address the needs of the various members within the association. The commissions were designed to address the functional and profession-specific needs of ACPA members. Initially twelve commissions were established. The current structure of the commission includes 20 commissions and one task force becoming a commission. In an effort to better serve the needs of the various identity groups found within the association standing committees also were created.

The mission of ACPA as published in the bylaws approved in April 2008 reads,
The mission of the Association is to support and foster college student learning through the generation and dissemination of knowledge, which informs policies, practices, and programs, for student affairs professionals and the higher education community. Although the wording of the mission has changed the purpose of the organization remains consistent with its founding: to improve the work done by student affairs professionals for the sake of the students they serve.

Membership in the association is recognized on several different levels. The organization provides membership on an institutional level allowing individuals at member institutions to purchase general memberships at a reduced cost. All members in good standing are eligible to vote on matters of association business. This process provides each member in the association the opportunity to vote on issues brought to the membership body during the business meeting held during the annual convention.

Along with changes to the wording of the mission, the governance structure of the organization has also changed. The first executive councils were relatively small in comparison to the structure used to manage the current operations of the association. The complete operating structure of ACPA includes a governing board of 16 individuals, a committee of Assembly leaders that represent the chairs of the commissions, standing committees, and state divisions, an Executive Director and an international office staff of 17.

**Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I)**

As the scope of the services provided by professionals in the field of student affairs grew, a necessity to provide resources for specialized areas also grew (Evans & Ranero, 2009). NASPA and ACPA were established as umbrella associations within the field of student affairs. Both organizations catered to the needs of professionals working with students in a variety of
capacities. Prior to 1949 there was not an official organization for individuals working in housing or residence life. Developments within the United States during the 1940s and 1950s necessitated an increased focus on housing for college students (Thelin, 1990). After World War II, higher education in the United States experienced another significant increase in the number of students on college and university campuses (Thelin, 1990). According to Thelin (1990), the increase in student enrollment also triggered an increased demand for campus housing. During this time, there was also a push for corporations and organizations to be more efficient in their use of resources through the advancement and popularization of classical management theory and scientific management (Morgan, 2006, pp. 18-26). It was during these decades that many deans of women were replaced by deans of students in the name of administrative efficiency (Tuttle, 1996).

Given the state of campus housing across the country, the first meeting of housing officers was proposed by Dr. Earl Thompson, Director of Housing at the University of Illinois. Prior to calling for a meeting, Dr. Thompson conducted a survey of housing officers asking, “whether or not they would like to send their housing and residence halls officers to discuss various aspects of college and university housing” (ACUHO-I, 1950, ¶ 1). In response to the call there were 62 representatives from 33 different institutions in attendance. According to the Purpose and History of the Association of College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO-I, 1961) the first meeting of the National Housing Conference was held July 28-30, 1949 on the campus of the University of Illinois, in Urbana.

During the first meeting, Lee Burns, Director of Residence Halls at the University of Wisconsin, served as the general chairman. The conference topics included trends in residence hall construction, housing standards, residence hall maintenance, housekeeping and janitor
services, organization practices, residence hall advisory systems, and the financial aspects of residence hall operations (ACUHO-I, 1949). A committee was established to coordinate the next meeting of the group which would occur the following April in Lafayette, Indiana at Purdue University. The group would continue to meet informally until 1951.

Attendance at the second meeting of the NHC grew to 86 delegates representing 60 different colleges and universities. The topics covered during this conference were housing implications in enrollment trends; educational philosophy in residence halls; residence hall planning; residence hall food service; and residence hall financing. During the business meeting of the 1950 conference, the chairman purposed the establishment of a permanent organization devoted to the needs of housing officers across the United States. The minutes of the 1950 business meeting read,

The Committee for the 1950 Conference was authorized to appoint a committee of five for the 1951 Conference. After a ten-minute recess the following committee was announced: The Committee on Permanent Organization: Robert C. Koehler, Director of Housing, Oregon State College; Thomas A McGoey, Director of Residence Halls, Columbia University; Joseph E. Gould, Director of Men’s Counseling, Syracuse University; Ruth N. Donnelly, Housing Supervisor, University of California; and J. C. Schilleter, Director of Residence, Iowa State College.

It was left to these five individuals to determine the structure of the permanent organization and make a report at the next conference to be held at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. During the committee report at the 1951 meeting it was shared that two of the members of the committee resigned their positions due to changes in their job responsibilities. This left two men and one woman to decide the future of the organization.
During the third and final informal meeting of the National Housing Conference, recommendations regarding the founding of a permanent organization for housing officers were presented. The recommendations were (a) the organization should be established as non-dues paying; (b) the officers to be elected were to consist of a president, vice president, and secretary; and (c) the elected officers would be charged with convening committees as necessary, writing a constitution, and coming up with a name for the formal organization. The first officers elected to the official organization were Dr. Earl Thompson, President, Kenneth Lawson, Vice President, and Ruth E. Connelly, Secretary (ACUHO-I Purpose, 1961). The official name selected for the organization was the National Association of College and University Housing Officers. Although it was recommended that the association not collect dues, it was later decided that dues not exceeding $20 per year, per institution would be collected. In 1953, the association voted to change the name to the Association of College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO). In 1981, the association leadership added the “I” to the title of the association name to reflect the increasingly international composition of member institutions.

Additional highlights in the history of the association should be noted. In 1977, 28 years after its founding, the first woman was elected as the president of the association. In 1984, the association hired its first paid employee as it began the process of establishing a central office. The first Executive Director was hired in 1992. In 2003, Sally Traxler became the first woman to serve in the Executive Director role. Currently seven of the 13 elected officers on the Executive Committee are women.

Women played a large role as both members and leaders from the beginning of the association. According to the first available delegate listing from the second annual meeting held in 1950, there were 23 women present representing 14 different institutions from across the
country (ACUHO-I, 1950). An important woman to the founding of the association was Ruth Donnelly. She was one of the members charged with making recommendations on whether to establish a permanent organization. Once the permanent organization was established, Ruth was one of the first elected officers, serving as the Secretary-Treasurer from 1951 to 1956. She also served on the membership committee, and on an advisory committee to the American Institute of Architects which was made up of members from NASPA, NAWE, and ACUHO-I. She was often asked to serve on panels or to moderate sessions during the annual meetings. During the eighth annual meeting of ACUHO, held in 1956, Ruth was not nominated to continue as the Secretary-Treasurer. In his acknowledgements of the work she had done, the outgoing president stated he would not have been able to do his work without the guidance and assistance Ruth provided (ACUHO-I, 1956).

Changes in staff and student demographics along with changes in technology have required the ACUHO-I to remain current with evolving trends. While keeping pace with changes in society, the association has not wavered in the purpose for which it was founded. The current purpose and principles of ACUHO-I as stated in the association’s constitution are to be the pre-eminent professional Association dedicated to supporting and promoting the collegiate residential experience by: (1) Creating value through services, information, and collegial relations that are indispensable to its members; and (2) Continually changing and adapting in ways that assist members in meeting the needs of dynamic campus environments. (ACUHO-I, 2007, p. 3)

The eight principles used to guide the association are (a) Volunteer leadership and governance in partnership with professional staff; (b) a world view; (c) commitment to diversity; (d) fiscal responsibility; (e) provision of opportunities of learning and networking; (f) increase in value to
members; (g) ethical decision making; (h) collaboration and participation. Using these principles
the association is able to meet the needs of its membership and the constituent groups served by
its members.

Membership in ACUHO-I is based on institutional membership. Institution dues are
assessed on a sliding scale based on the number of students the institutions serves. Individuals of
member institutions are not required to pay dues. Similar to NASPA, only one voting delegate
represents each institutional member. This individual is usually the chief housing officer or their
selected designee.

The Gendered Nature of the Field of Student Affairs

In an effort to determine the gendered nature of the student affairs profession the mission
statements, values, policies and procedures, and organizational structure of the three
organizations were reviewed and analyzed. The beginning of the profession of student affairs
and the professional associations within the field can be credited to women. It was the deans of
women who began meeting in 1903 and would go on to create a permanent organization for
themselves in 1916; three years prior to the first meeting of the deans and advisors of men in
1919. It was also the women in the field who determined the need for the academic grounding of
the profession. The first classes to provide instruction to women deans were taught during 1915
at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and Teachers College, Columbia (Nidiffer, 2007). The
first book about the deans of women was authored and published in 1915 as well. In 1929 Esther
Lloyd-Jones was the first person to earn a doctorate in personal work at Teacher College,
Columbia (Sheeley, 1991). Her achievement was not just significant because it was the first of
its kind at Teachers College but because it was the first doctorate awarded in this field of study.
The early women deans and women personnel workers played important roles in establishing their work as a legitimate profession.

The deans of men of the early twentieth century were not as scholarly inclined as their deans of women counterparts but there seemed to be equity between the positions. Each had their population of students to oversee and advise. According to Tuttle (1996), it was during the 1940s and 1950s when there was a noticeable shift in the gendered nature of the field. Prior to this time, the deans of women and deans of men played equally important roles. It was customary for both positions to report directly to the president of the college or university, and they were responsible for policy creation and implementation. It was after this time period that the position of the dean of students became more popular. The reason most often cited for the change from a separate deans for men and women was administrative efficiency (Tuttle, 1996). Most often the dean of men was promoted as the dean of students and the dean of women was either fired or demoted to an associate or assistant dean that reported to the dean of students (Schwartz, 1997).

**Organizational Comparison and Analysis**

In the late nineteenth century, responsibility for student welfare in higher education shifted from the faculty being concerned with all aspects of students’ well-being to faculty being focused solely on imparting academic knowledge. Sandeen and Barr (2006) credit this separation to the appointment of LeBaron Russell Briggs as the Dean of Harvard College in 1890 by then President Charles Eliot. As the Dean of Harvard College, Briggs was specifically charged with the well-being of students outside the classroom. During this time, higher education in the United States began to model itself after the Germanic model of higher education, emphasizing faculty research and specialization within academic disciplines. The
duties for which faculty had once been responsible such as, “personal counseling, academic
advising, recreation, vocational guidance, and student discipline” were now delegated to student
affairs professionals (Kuh, Shedd, & Whitt, 1987, p. 253). Within colleges and universities,
these duties were often seen as separate from the academic mission of the institution and
therefore less important than the work done by the faculty within the classroom (Kuh et al.,
1987; Sandeen & Barr, 2006). The emphasis was placed on faculty and empirical knowledge,
while the perceived non-intellectual work done by student affairs professionals was devalued.

Following Acker’s (1990) and Johnson’s (1997, 2006) characterization of patriarchy and
the privileging of characteristics of strength, efficiency, and rationality with masculinity, this
delegation of student nurturing, support, and caretaking feminized the student affairs profession
subordinating it to the dominance of the now masculinized work of faculty. Yet, patriarchy and
the privileging of masculinity also differentiated work and functions within and among student
affairs professionals as illustrated by the later subordination of the deans of women to the deans
of men (Tuttle, 1996).

As the field of student affairs continues to grow, it is important to understand the work
that has been done to promote equity in NASPA, ACPA, and ACUHO-I to ensure the negative
gender issues of the past are not repeated and equity for the future is achieved. The gendered
nature of student affairs can be seen and assessed in the professional associations within the
profession. Comparing and analyzing these three associations provides a glimpse into the
gendered nature of the field of student affairs.

As the profession of student affairs developed in the early 1900s a necessity to share
information and provide support for the work being done on college and university campuses
across the United States was necessary (Nuss, 2003, Evans & Ranero, 2009). NASPA, ACPA,
and ACUHO-I have served important roles and purposes within the profession of student affairs. Each of these associations has provided student affairs professionals with connections to other professionals for the purposes of sharing information, conducting research, and developing networks. In addition they have also provided opportunities for their members to develop leadership skills while serving in elected and appointed positions.

**Organizational Structure.** The organizational structures of the associations were analyzed to gain a better understanding of whether gender played a role in the way the organizations were governed. It was important to explore whether the patriarchal systems employed during the founding of the organizations were still influencing the current structures.

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators was established to serve men who oversaw the out of classroom experience for the male students on their campuses. The deans of men had oversight and authority on their campuses. ACPA was established to serve the needs of placement secretaries and officers. In the reasoning presented for a permanent organization May Cheney (1924) stated,

> Though the work of the Appointment Secretary is distributed to many officers known by many different names, such as recorder at Teachers’ College, Columbia, Adviser of Graduate Women and Registrar at Harvard University, the work of recommending graduates for positions goes on everywhere. (p. 24)

Placement officers operated under a variety of names and titles and were located in a number of different offices across their campuses. The nature of their positions required them to serve the needs of all students not just one group determined by the gender of the students.

The ACUHO-I was established to serve housing officers across the United States. At the time of its founding most directors of housing were men. The organization was founded at a
time when higher education in the United States was experiencing a great deal of expansion in large part due to the GI Bill. It was men on college campuses who were generally in charge of or responsible for making decisions regarding housing; the organization was established to serve these men. There were women involved in the founding of the organization and the early operations. Ruth Donnelly’s professional title, the only woman on the 1950 committee to determine whether or not a permanent organization should be established, is noteworthy. The four men on the committee were all housing directors. Ruth’s title was Housing Supervisor. In comparison to her male counterparts on the permanent organization committee, Ruth did not hold as much power on her campus as the men did on their respective campuses. Many of the women who attended the second annual meeting of the housing association were in similar situations as Ruth, they were dorm directors or housing managers or supervisors. There were no women housing directors in attendance.

As previously illustrated, the histories of how each of these organizations came to be are different however their purposes are similar. They were all founded to serve the needs of professionals within the field of student affairs. Although the organizations share similar purposes, the structures used to achieve their purposes are different.

Within NASPA the organization is run by an executive director and a small staff in the national office located in Washington D.C. The organization is governed by a board of directors comprised of the following elected officers and appointed individuals: “president, president-elect, past-president, secretary, treasurer, seven regional vice-presidents, at least four Division Directors, and two Members At-Large, each of whom have one vote” (NASPA Bylaws, 2007, Article V, Section 2). The president, president-elect, and immediate past-president, who are the only nationally elected officers, make up the executive committee of the board of directors. The
current divisions represented on the board of directors are annual conference, community colleges, foundation, knowledge communities, professional standards, public policy, research, and small colleges and universities. The executive director serves as an ex-officio member on the board of directors. According to the bylaws of the association, the board of directors is responsible for financial matters such as, oversight of the budget, investments, and approval of the annual finance audit. Along with copyright approval, developing publication policy and quality control for current publications. The board of directors is also responsible for the maintenance of a roster of active members, program approval for the annual meeting, and addressing policy recommendation from the divisions as well as changes to the bylaws and articles of incorporation for the association.

An executive director and a small staff located in Columbus, Ohio conduct the day to day operations of ACUHO-I. The association is governed by an executive board made up of the following elected officers: president, president elect, vice president and finance and corporate records officer. The elected officers make up the executive committee. The executive board is made up of the elected officers and directors of the following areas: workforce development, globalization, knowledge enhancement, residence education, facilities and physical environments, regional affiliations, business practices and enhancements, and inclusion and equity. The appointed directors serve for a two to three year term. Upon the completion of a one year term as the vice president the individual in the position progresses to president elect for a one year term, and then serves the following year as the association president. According to the ACUHO-I bylaws (2007) the executive board is responsible for “conducting the affairs of the Association in carrying out its directives” (p. 5).
Like NASPA, the international office for ACPA is located in Washington D.C. The daily operations of the association are conducted by an executive director and a small staff. The association is governed by a body of elected officers referred to as the governing board. The governing board is comprised of the president, vice president, past president, and directors of equity and inclusion, external relations, and membership development, along with members at large for faculty, entry-level professionals, mid-level professionals, and senior level professionals. The Director of Professional Development along with the Director of Research and Scholarship are also voting members of the governing board but they are appointed by majority vote of the board. The executive director of the association serves as the secretary and treasurer for the board and as an ex-officio member. According to the bylaws of the association, the governing board is charged with the management of “the property, business and affairs of the association” (ACPA, 2007, p. 7). The governing board is responsible for determining policies and should also “endeavor to review, formulate, and promote the mission, vision, core values, and any strategic plan of the Association. It shall engage in advocacy and otherwise seek to advance the interest of the association” (ACPA, 2007, p. 7).

The governing board of ACPA is assisted by an advisory group known as The Assembly. This group is made up of representatives from the four divisions of ACPA that represent member involvement on the local level, the state and international divisions, commissions which serve the specific professional interests of members, and the standing committees developed to provide support to members based on their identity needs. The purpose of the assembly is to serve as a link from the membership of the association to the governing board. The assembly is charged with promoting communication about “ideas, issues and priorities” and to encourage
collaboration between the state and international divisions, commissions, and standing committees, between members and the governing board.

My review of the governance structures of the three selected organizations revealed the continuing presence of patriarchal systems as previously described (Johnson, 2005). The use of hierarchies to govern the associations promoted patriarchy by providing a higher status to the president of the association than to other elected officers. Although ACPA had made an effort to ensure more voices were included in the association’s decisions, a hierarchical system was still used to give higher priority and greater importance to certain voices and groups within the association over others.

**Membership and Voting.** Membership within the organizations and the rights bestowed on members are different. Within NASPA and ACUHO-I, an institution is first required to seek membership. Once membership has been established by an institution, individuals associated with the institution seek individual membership. The difference between the two organizations is the way individual member dues are collected. In ACUHO-I, once institutional membership dues are paid, individual dues are not collected. NASPA, however, does collect individual membership dues. The cost of institutional membership in ACUHO-I is based on a sliding scale according to the number of students attending an institution.

Within NASPA and ACUHO-I the voting delegate system functions in a manner similar to the Electoral College used in the United States presidential elections. Within the Electoral College, delegates are chosen to represent a particular section of the popular vote. Both NASPA and ACUHO-I grant voting privileges on an institutional basis. Only one vote per institution is allowed. The individual who votes in NASPA is generally the vice president of student affairs or their designee. In ACUHO-I, the voting delegate is usually the chief housing officer for the
institution or their designee. Although the voting structure of the two associations resembles the Electoral College, there are significant differences. The number and proportion of a political party’s Electoral College delegates are selected based on the popular vote within their state. Some delegates are required by their state or political party to vote according to the results of the popular vote. NASPA and ACUHO-I do not provide a means for accountability among the voting delegates and those they represent. NASPA does provide non-delegates access to information shared with delegates by paying for an upgraded membership. However, having access to information is not the same as being allowed to express your opinion via the right to vote.

The voting systems in place in NASPA and ACUHO-I do not allow for all voices within these associations to be heard during elections. Such structures encourage and promote a patriarchal system where the delegates are selected to act in a manner they believe is best for the rest of the associations. It places the power of the association in the hands of a select group of individuals. From a liberal feminist perspective, such voting structures are problematic because the individuals who hold the position of vice president of student affairs or serve as the chief housing officer have historically been and continue to be dominated by White men. A structure that ensures the individuals these organizations were designed to serve remains and allows these individuals to make decisions about the associations which perpetuates the status quo.

On the other hand, membership and enfranchisement in ACPA is granted on an individual basis. An institution is not required to be a member prior to individuals from the institution joining the association. ACPA does offer institutional memberships which allow individuals from member institutions to receive discounts on their membership fees. For voting, unlike NASPA and ACUHO-I, ACPA grants voting privileges to each of its individual members.
Each member within the association is allowed to voice their opinion in regard to the leadership selection within the association and other governing matters. ACPA’s voting structure is more egalitarian in that it allows all members to take part in the decision making process of the association and places the control of the association in the hands of the members.

**Awards as Symbols.** Within each of the three organizations, awards are presented to recognize individuals who have provided noteworthy service to the organization or the larger field of student affairs. Awards are also presented to practitioners and scholars who have conducted research that contributes to the field of student affairs. Theses awards are named after individuals who are recognized as major contributors to the profession. Each association confers awards on behalf of the association as a whole, as well as awards presented by the communities within the associations (knowledge communities, commissions, standing committees, or task forces). The awards reviewed for this section were only the awards presented from the whole association.

Annually, NASPA presents eight awards. Four of the awards are named for individuals and four are not. Of the four named awards, three are named for men and one for a woman. ACPA presents 10 association-wide awards each year. Only one of the awards is named and it is named for a woman. Six of the 11 ACUHO-I awards are named; three are named for women and three for men.

Awards are cultural symbols within an organization (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The awards presented by each of these associations serve as a representation of the work that is valued and believed to be worthy of celebrating. The awards that bear the name of an individual state the value of the individual within the association. The awards, as symbols, are also indicative of the gendered nature of these associations. Only one association, ACUHO-I, reflects gender balance
in the naming of their awards. NASPA’s named awards celebrate mostly men, while ACPA’s one named award is for a woman. The naming of awards itself reflects prioritization of individuals over groups or values, another characteristic associated with masculinity and privileged in patriarchal societies (Johnson, 2006). As such, ACPA stands out as much more reticent seemingly to single out individuals for recognition by naming an award after them. Either half or just over half of the awards in NASPA and ACUHO-I, respectively, recognize individuals, which is indicative of a greater willingness to embrace a patriarchal emphasis on individual achievement.

Summary

The field of student affairs and the three associations selected for this study are rich in history. Each of the organizations selected for this study were founded to serve the needs of a specific population with the field of student affairs. The histories of NASPA, ACPA, and ACUHO-I provide an important foundation for understanding the gendered nature of the field of student affairs. The histories of these associations provide context for the modern issues of gender equity discussed by the 13 participants interviewed for this study.
CHAPTER FIVE

Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the 13 interviews conducted to complete this study. A brief biography of each participant provides information about their current employment along with their involvement history in the organization(s) to which they belong. The results are presented by themes developed based on the questions asked during the interviews and their relation to the research questions.

Participant Profiles

The 13 participants in this study represent a variety of experiences in student affairs and the three organizations selected for this study, NASPA, ACPA and ACUHO-I. The participants in the study are not newcomers to their associations; they have over 350 combined years of student affairs experience. The individual with the most experience in the student affairs profession began attending NASPA conferences in 1962; while those with the shortest amount of experience began attending conferences in the mid to late 1990s. These 13 individuals have provided service in a variety of capacities on the local, state, regional, and national level. Five have served as the national president of their associations and the others have served as leaders of a committee, commission, network, task force, or knowledge community. They have varied stories about why they chose student affairs as a profession and how they came to be involved in one or more of the three professional associations. Given the nature of this study, all participants were asked to share their gender identifications. In their responses, some participants chose to include other portions of their identity alongside their gender. Of the 13 participants, nine identified themselves simply as a woman or female, one identified as a Black or African
American woman, two as Black men, and one as a male. Of those who did not share their racial background one appeared to be Black and the others all appeared to be White or Caucasian.

Each individual provided insight into how they perceived their organization(s) handled issues of gender equity which lent insight into the gendered nature of student affairs as a profession. As discussed in Chapter 3, participants were allowed to choose whether or not their personal information would be kept confidential. Two participants preferred to keep their identities and personal information confidential and selected their own pseudonyms. Brief profiles of the 13 participants follow.

**Beth** (pseudonym). Beth identified as “a woman”. The professional work she currently does centers around the needs of women. Beth has held membership in both NASPA and ACPA. As a graduate student she became a member in both organizations primarily for the benefit of job searching. She shared,

> Well, originally I joined NASPA and ACPA both because I was job searching. At the end of my two years [of graduate school], you know, you kind of hit the conference circuit and start looking for a job, and so in order to do that you have to join, so that was my initial reason for joining both organizations.

For a brief time Beth was employed outside higher education. When she returned to higher education in 2004 she rejoined NASPA and has maintained her membership since then. Within NASPA she has participated in various knowledge communities and has also held a leadership position within a knowledge community. Gender issues are very important to Beth as seen in this comment:

> Gender is very important to me, and it’s a big part of my work, and it’s been a big part of my path in student affairs. So I’ve always been involved in women’s issues, and so for
me, being a member of those organizations has always had to do for me with wanting to connect and network more with other professional women and at the same time to try to advance women’s and gender issues in the dialog in student affairs.

Beth is a second generation student affairs professional. As a child she was exposed to the profession through the work of one of her parents.

**Jodie Castanza.** Jodie currently serves as the Assistant Director of Residence Life at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. She identified as a “woman” and has been a member of ACPA for 15 years, joining while she was in graduate school. When asked why she chose to become a member of ACPA she replied,

> It just didn’t even seem like a choice. I actually didn’t even really know about ACPA until January of that year when people were talking about going to the conference. And then it was just, kind of a, find some money and go.

As an active member of the organization she has served on the directorate or executive committee for the Standing Committee for Women as its Chair for two consecutive three-year terms. Gender issues are very important to Jodie. She is very conscious of gender issues in ACPA. She said, “I am always conscious of my gender at ACPA. And some of that is connected to sexual orientation. Some of that is connected to leadership. I’m very conscious of who’s in the room and who’s at the table.” At the time Jodie’s interview was conducted, she was in the midst of a contentious disagreement with the leadership of ACPA regarding the tag line and advertisements used to promote the theme of the 2010 annual convention to be held in Boston and its implications for gender equity and social justice issues.

**Gwen J. Dungy.** Gwen reported her gender identity to be “female.” She currently serves as the Executive Director for NASPA. Gwen has been the executive director, a full-time
paid position since 1993. Prior to her service with NASPA, Gwen’s professional affiliations were with ACPA and the now defunct National Association of Women in Education (NAWE). Her affiliation with ACPA began in the 1970s. She stated, “When I became a counselor I was a member of American Personnel and Guidance Association, and as you know from the history that’s where ACPA began [sic].” Reflecting on her time in ACPA, Gwen shared that gender was not something she often thought about as a new professional because she was concerned about her career. She was impressed by the women she saw in ACPA. She commented,

The women who became president of ACPA did impress me: Marvalene Hughes, Phyllis Mable, just on and on all the women, Peggy Barr, all the women who were presidents of ACPA. It was very impressive to me. I was encouraged in seeing them in those leadership roles, but as I said I didn’t aspire to those roles. I just was happy to see them there.

Impressed as she was with the women presidents in ACPA, it was in NAWE that Gwen found the network of women of color she felt she needed. During her time as a member of ACPA, she served as the president of the Maryland College Personnel Association. Gwen became active in NASPA when she accepted the position as Executive Director.

Jill Eckardt. Jill identified as a “woman.” She is currently the Director of Housing at Florida Atlantic University. She is the 2010-2011 President Elect of ACUHO-I and is currently serving as its Vice President. It was during her first professional job that she became involved with the organization on a regional level. Although she had attended ACPA conferences as a graduate student and new professional, it was after attending her first ACUHO-I conference at the University of Southern California that she realized, “ACUHO-I is my professional association.” She went on to say, “I could find all of my professional development, my
networking, my mentoring, opportunities to get involved, there at ACUHO-I.” Her involvement in ACUHO-I began with her serving as a trustee on the foundation board. She served on the foundation board for seven years including a term as the secretary of the board and then decided to become involved in the elected leadership of the association.

**Virginia Engel** (pseudonym). Virginia identified as a “woman.” She has “been a member of ACPA for probably the better part of 25 years.” She joined the organization, “because of the diversity and because of the welcome that it had for graduate students and new professionals, and because of the welcome I felt when I came to the conferences.” As a member of ACPA, she has been involved in various commissions and has served the organization in various leadership roles on the governing boards. Virginia currently serves as the chief student affairs officer at a mid-sized private college in the north eastern section of the country.

**Rebecca (Becky) Figura.** Becky is currently the Director of Housing at Eastern Michigan University, and she identified as a “woman.” Like many student affairs professionals, as an undergraduate student Becky did not realize student affairs was an option as a profession. She was set on joining the FBI, however she did not meet the height requirement. She worked as a resident assistant and her supervisor suggested student affairs when she was ineligible for the FBI. Although she attended graduate school and worked as a hall director, she still had dreams of working in the field of criminal justice. Becky explained why she stayed in student affairs rather than pursuing a career in criminal justice in this way:

Instead of me going back and thinking about probation work or whatever, [there] were some professionals that were involved in our field that kind of connected me to members at ACPA and NASPA and ACUHO that kind of hooked me in to the involvement piece
of these associations, and so the networking and the collegiality, you know, it just has really been a fun profession and a very rewarding one.

Becky attended her first ACUHO-I conference in the 1980s at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has held positions on the regional level of the organization, as well as on the national level. Becky’s involvement started with her service as the Ohio state delegate to the Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (GLACUHO). She later served as the national secretary and as the central district representative, along with serving on various other committees.

Mary Howard-Hamilton. Mary is a Professor of Educational Leadership, Administration and Foundations at Indiana State University. She identified as a “Black or African American woman.” Like many in the field of student affairs, this was not Mary’s first choice as a career. Initially she said, “I wanted to produce Black documentaries, and it just wasn’t something I could wrap my arms around and get – and really feel like I was welcome in the field.” As a student at the University of Iowa she was influenced by her advisor there to obtain her master’s degree. She went on to share,

So I still went ahead, got my degree in broadcasting, went and talked to my Special Support Services advisor. She said to me, ‘Well, you know, you're very active in student affairs. Would you like to do what you're doing for the rest of your life?’ And I didn't know that was a career. And I said, ‘Yeah.’

Her advisor influenced her to complete her master’s degree studies at the University of Iowa.

Mary maintains memberships in both NASPA and ACPA. Her service to these organizations includes being a member of various commissions, standing committees, and knowledge communities. In ACPA, she has served as a reviewer for the Journal of College
Student Development and was recognized as a Diamond Honoree. In NASPA, she has served as a reviewer for the Melvene D. Hardee Dissertation of the Year award committee and is currently on the editorial board for NASPA’s new publication, the *Journal for Student Affairs Research and Practice* (JSARP).

**Susan Komives.** Susan is Professor in the Counseling and Personnel Services department at the University of Maryland. She identified as a “woman.” In the fall of 2009, she celebrated her 40th year as a professional in student affairs. Susan has been affiliated with all three organizations, however, most of her comments reflected her experiences with ACPA. She became a member of ACPA during her master’s program. When asked why she chose to become a member of ACPA she responded,

ACPA was the primary association of interest partly because Mel Hardee had been president of it, so being at Florida State with her as my major professor and her being aligned with ACPA, I’m sure; as I look back on it, led me to that.

Susan served as the President of ACPA from 1981 to 1982. She noted that she has been the only president to give birth while in office.

**Jim Rhatigan.** Jim, who identified as a “man,” began his career in student affairs in 1962. In 1965, he was appointed the Dean of Students at Wichita State University (WSU) in Wichita, Kansas. At that time, he was the youngest man in the nation serving as a dean of students. In 2002, Jim retired from WSU as the Senior Vice President of Student Affairs. Jim characterized his career at WSU in the following manner:

And then as a matter of good luck, I got the job of Dean of Students at Wichita State University, which I thought would be an interesting first job. Here we are now, 40-some
years later; I'm still here. It was not in my plan, but I was well treated here, and I've had an excellent career here.

He describes himself as semi-retired because he currently serves WSU as a consultant for their foundation. Jim has served as a very active member of NASPA on both the regional and national levels. He served as a regional vice president for Region IV-West, as the national president for 1975-1976, and as the NASPA historian for 1978-1996.

**Chuck Rhodes.** Chuck serves as the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at Sonoma State University. Chuck identified as a “Black gay male.” He has a long history of service within college and university housing and ACUHO-I. His career in housing began when he was hired as the first “Negro [sic],” Resident Advisor at Virginia Tech in 1969. Chuck has been a very active member of ACUHO-I on both the regional and national level. He currently holds the position of Inclusion and Equity Director on the 2009-2010 Executive Board.

**Greg Roberts.** Greg identified himself as an “African American male.” He has been the Executive Director of ACPA since 2003, a full-time paid position. Prior to serving the association as a full-time staff member, he was the Vice President of Student Affairs at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. As an undergraduate student has was very involved as a resident assistant and member over student government. His involvement allowed him to interact with the faculty member in the student personnel graduate program at the Indiana University. It was those faculty members who influenced his decision to pursue a career in student affairs. About career choice Greg shared,

> I had a job opportunity with Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals when I finished my undergraduate, but I had the graduate faculty pulling, saying, you know, why don't you come on to grad
school, come on to grad school. So, I deferred to the business incentive and decided to go into the master's program.

Greg has been a member of both ACPA and NASPA since 1974. It was during his time as a master’s student at the Indiana University that he became a member of both organizations. When asked why he sought membership in both organizations his response was, “Well, it really wasn’t an option. Again, the faculty was extremely involved and national leaders in both associations and including NAWDAC.” As a member of ACPA, Greg served as the president of ACPA for the 1999-2000 association year.

**Sallie Traxler.** Sallie is the Executive Director of ACUHO-I, a full-time paid employee for the association. Sallie identified herself as a “woman.” Although Sallie did not begin her career as a student affairs professional, she had worked in professional association management before joining ACUHO-I in 2004. Sallie’s awareness of ACUHO-I was accidental.

I was posting a job on the American Society of Association Executives Web site and was looking to see comparable salaries to see if we were in the right ball park with a group that I used to work for and found ACUHO-I, and I was like, “What is that? And what are they doing in Columbus, Ohio?” And kind of went from there. Found some people who were members at Ohio University to tell me more about the organization. And then looked at what the organization was looking for. And saw that the skill set that I had was fitting the skill set I thought that they needed. And then contacted the national search firm and then went from there. I never in a million years thought that I would be ACUHO-I's next executive director. It wasn't on my radar screen. It was a professional association that had interest to me. Like I couldn't just go be the Executive Directive of
the Widget Association or whatever. It had to be in line with my goals and then my skills.

Prior to ACUHO-I, Sallie was the Executive Director of the Council of Development Finance Agencies.

**Kathryn Tuttle.** Kathryn is currently the Vice Provost for Student Success at the University of Kansas. She identified as a “woman” and has been a member of NASPA for over 20 years. Her membership in NASPA at that time was strongly influenced by her chief student affairs officer. Gender issues have long been important to Kathryn:

I was here [KU] as a student from ’68 to ’72, which were the ripest years in terms of student protest. So I had a look first hand and participated myself in anti-war protests and all of that. So I also saw that side of higher education, where students were activists and involved and challenging the norm and creating problems. And sort of all of that combined. … and it’s kind of given me a lifelong commitment to issues of race and gender and multiculturalism and difference.

Reflecting her concern for gender issues, Kathryn’s dissertation research was on the work done by deans of women and how they were replaced by mostly male deans of students. Kathryn has served NASPA on both the regional and national levels. Part of her service on the national level included being the historian.

**Summary.** There was a great deal of diversity within the student affairs professionals selected for this study. Each of the 13 participants shared information from an individual and unique perspective. Although there are similarities in how some of them were introduced to the field of student affairs and the associations they chose to participate in, there are many differences in their experiences within these professional organizations.
Analytic Themes

From the analysis of the data presented, the following categories emerged: gender, messages, roles and responsibilities, symbols, images and artifacts, and policies and procedures. Subcategories within gender were also noted. Each theme along with exemplars from the participants is presented.

Gender. The participants shared many thoughts on gender and the three organizations serving as the foci of this project. The following subcategories emerged from the information shared by the participants regarding their experiences within their chosen organization(s) as it relates to gender: consciousness of gender, the value of gender within the organization, the meaning of their gender within the organization, living out their gender identity, marginalization and privilege based on gender, gender equity, and the gender they would ascribe to the organization(s) to which they belong.

Consciousness of gender. My understanding of how gender operated within NASPA, ACPA, and ACUHO-I began with each of the participants discussing their level of consciousness of the gender issues they perceived existed within their organization(s). Each participant was asked to share information about how conscious of gender issues they felt the leadership of the organizations they participated in was. They were also asked to reflect and share their perceptions of the gender consciousness among smaller subgroups and committees with which they had involvement or other knowledge. The participants discussed the level of gender consciousness they experienced in their organizations along with what they perceived as a lack of consciousness. Two participants moved beyond gender consciousness to discuss the actions they believed should result from it.
In Jill Eckardt’s description of gender-consciousness within ACUHO-I’s leadership she felt these issues were certainly considered by the leadership of the organization. She believed gender issues were considered in areas such as who was being nominated for positions and who was elected.

I believe we're probably moderately to – I don't know. I think we consider it. I do. I mean, I think about people running for positions. And, ‘Okay, we've had a woman in the presidential cycle. Will they elect two women in a row?’ You know? So I do believe it's still part of our consciousness.

Chuck Rhodes, also reflecting on ACUHO-I, shared his sentiments. It was his belief that the organization had not yet achieved all it could in the area of gender consciousness but there was progress being made. He remarked, “I think we're striving as best conscious – not as best possible; as best conscious – I think we still have some work to do around consciousness – that we're trying to be neutral.” Chuck described ACUHO-I as striving toward “best conscious” in their efforts in the area of gender. By this he meant given the environment in which the organization functioned, they were doing the best they could to call attention to gender issues. Their efforts might not be what others might consider to be the best, but as an organization they were making a good-faith effort. Jill seemed to be satisfied with the efforts being made by the leadership of the organization to address gender issues. She began her comments by stating “we” but her statement was centered around her own consciousness of gender issues. Chuck believed there was work yet to be done within ACUHO-I to create a greater consciousness of gender issues. Although there was agreement across these two individuals that issues of gender were considered within the organization, they did not agree on the amount of work yet to be done or whether there was room for improvement.
When Mary Howard-Hamilton discussed ACPA and NASPA, she felt it was not enough for the organizations to just be conscious of the issues regarding gender faced by the membership. She believed there needed to be movement beyond consciousness that would lead to action. Mary stated,

In terms of the organizations, I think that they have been conscious of gender issues, but there's a difference between walking the walk and talking the talk. The consciousness, the awareness, is there, but the action has been lacking for a number of years. I think that there needs – you know, they're conscious. They talk about it; they understand; they know. They know that there's a need to have more women in the pipeline to take on leadership positions and things like that, but the problem – it's a – again, this is a systemic issue in terms of the organizations.

According to Mary, a heightened level of consciousness within the leadership of the organizations was not enough. The consciousness of gender and gender issues in each of the organizations should lead to action. For Mary, knowing there is a problem and addressing the problem are two very different concepts.

Action on gender consciousness was key for Beth as well. When she responded to the question about gender consciousness within NASPA, she shared a story about her efforts along with other individuals in leadership roles within knowledge committees to address what they thought was missing in the “Enough is Enough” campaign. The initiative was designed as a campaign to address violence on college and university campuses after the campus shootings at Northern Illinois and Virginia Tech. Beth shared,

And the three of us had a phone call and a discussion about this campaign because the thing that we’re all really, really aware of is the fact that campus shootings are an
incredibly gendered phenomenon. Men are shooting people. It’s not students are shooting people. It’s young men are acting out on their rage violently in these ways. There’s never been a campus shooting involving a female perpetrator. And we felt when we looked through the materials for this campaign, we felt like, gosh, that’s not even being acknowledged. That’s really weird. Nobody is saying like there’s a gendered component to this, and one of the things that we need to do on our campus is attend to how gender is at play in these shootings. And so we wrote a letter to [NASPA’s President] expressing concern about that. I think we also talked about this whole, the bigger picture of we’d like NASPA to be more committed to anti-oppression, and we sent it off and I don’t think we’ve gotten a response. [Laughter] I have to check. And that to me is indicative of a whole lot of things about gender.

To Beth and the individuals she was working with, it was not enough for the leadership of NASPA to be conscious of gender issues in the operations of the organization. An awareness of gender needed to be carried over into all aspects of the organization including the initiatives backed by the organization and put forth to the general body. It was important to Beth that the general membership was made aware of the gendered phenomenon of violence on college and university campuses. Beyond the specific issue of the “Enough is Enough” campaign, Beth discussed anti-oppression activities within the organization as a whole. This specific issue represented the need for overall action in the area of oppression and was also important to her.

Generally, the participants agreed that the organizations they belonged to were conscious of issues related to gender. Given the awareness the participants expressed they saw in their organizations they also stated some type of action needed to accompany the awareness.
Awareness plus action prompted by that awareness was necessary for the participants to know gender issues were relevant and important within the organization.

**Living Out Gender Identity.** The ability of the membership in an organization to express themselves authentically in terms of their gender identity is important. Members should not feel they are unable to be their complete selves. To that end each of the participants was asked to reflect on their own gender identity and how they lived it out in their respective organizations. The ability to live out their gender identity was not dependent upon the group the participant was associated with. Within each of the organizations, the ability to live out his/her gender identity was salient for some participants but not for others.

In Chuck’s efforts to live out his gender identity he tries to make sure he is aware of gender issues and then tries to make sure those working around him are aware of gender issues as well. As a minority by both his racial and sexual identity, he believed he was more aware of gender issues.

Because I consider myself both non-majority on [sexual] orientation and on race, I try to be really much more sensitive to the needs of creating an inclusive environment. How I play it out is – my staff knows that, as a Director of Inclusion, both on campus and elsewhere – is continuously trying to raise, first of all, my own consciousness, my own awareness, and check my own behavior, and then in leadership roles I'm involved with – is to then challenge others and educate others.

Living out his gender identity as a Black gay man was important to Chuck. Yet, it also was important to him that those around him have the same opportunity. Chuck felt he had a responsibility to make sure he was conscious of inclusion and equity issues but he also felt it was
important to ensure that the individuals around him were conscious of these issues as well. As
he challenged himself to have a greater awareness he also challenged those around him.

Action was important to Mary in living out her gender identity. It is not enough for her
to talk about her identity. It is not enough for her to say she cares about issues related to gender.
She feels compelled to follow up her words with action. She responded,

Well, I live it by literally walking the walk and talking the talk. I think that one of the
things I try to do is – I don't try to be everything for everyone. I have a deep and abiding
love for my African American sisters in the profession, and I can't be everything for
everybody, and I won't be, because I think that there are enough White males to be
mentors for White males, and so I don't need to be there for them, to teach them what the
needs of African American women are. But my goal and my purpose is to empower my
sisters so that they can – so that I don't always have to be coming to the rescue when

By actively living out her gender identity, Mary hoped to empower other African American
women to be able to live out their gender identities as well. Rather than always solving the
problems of others, Mary would like to provide African American women with the tools they
need to resolve their own issues. Much like the action Mary expects from the organizations she
is involved with around gender consciousness she works to incorporate action into living out her
own gender identity.

Virginia Engel did not give much thought to living out her gender identity. Rather, she
thought of living out her identity in terms of her professional identity. She remarked,

You know what; it’s interesting because I really don’t think about it. I think I live out my
identity as a professional, as a college student educator, and I utilize feminist theories of
leadership to enact what I think are innate characteristics in me, how I see myself as a leader. So I’m not sure if they’re gender-specific but there’s definitely a feminist leadership perspective that looks at inviting all to the table and that it looks like making sure that everybody is represented. So I’m not sure if there’s a specific gender identity; it’s more done in the feminist leadership perspective.

As Virginia considered living out her gender identity within ACPA, gender was not as salient as being a college student educator or a student affairs professional. Although living out her gender identity as a woman was not important to Virginia, incorporating a feminist perspective into her leadership style was necessary. Despite her reluctance to provide in-depth information on how she lived out her gender identity, her declaration of using a feminist perspective in her leadership styles led me to believe gender identity was important to Virginia.

When Beth and Greg Roberts were asked about how they lived out their gender identity they commented that it is just a part of who they are. They did not really have to think too long or hard about how they lived out their gender identity in their respective organizations. It just seemed to be something that happened. As they went about their activities within NASPA and ACPA, their gender was simply just a part of them. Beth commented, “I just kind of, I sort of bring it with me to everything. I don’t think that there’s a particular way that I do gender differently within NASPA than I do anywhere else.” How she enacted her gender was simply a part of her that does not always warrant a conscious effort. When asked how he lived out his gender in ACPA, Greg shared,

I am who I am. As a Black male, in my daily routine, I'm aware that there are not many of me, if I put it that way. I mean, as a member of the Washington Higher Ed Secretariat, for instance, which are the larger higher ed organizations and ACPA is a member of that
as is NASPA, there aren't many people who look like me, nor are there many who look like Gwen in terms of gender. In terms of my living mine out daily, I'm aware, clearly, because of the crowd that I run with in terms of executive directors. There are not a lot of 'em.

Greg’s gender and race seemed to be unconsciously intersected. By simply stating, “I am who I am,” Greg makes no apologies for his gender or race but he is consciously aware of his gender and race.

Some of the participants were very conscious of how they lived out their gender within their organization. For others, it was simply a part of them. What is important to note is none of the participants felt they were unable to live out their gender identity within their organization.

**Gender Marginalization.** Each participant was asked to consider whether they had experienced or witnessed the marginalization of association members based on their gender. They were asked to reflect on their experience and note whether or not they had experienced being marginalized in their chosen organization(s). If they had not seen others being marginalized or felt the sting of marginalization themselves, they were asked to share how they felt their organization(s) had gone about preventing the marginalization of their members regarding gender. There was no continuity in the answers provided about gender marginalization. While one member of an organization stated she felt marginalized, another woman from the same organization stated the opposite and in fact asserted that White men were at greater risk to be marginalized.

Speaking about her experiences in ACPA, Mary said, “Yeah, I feel marginalized. I feel marginalized. I feel my voice is marginalized, but that's okay. That doesn't mean I'm gonna stop presenting these ideas. I've got a bunch of them.” Mary shared that she feels marginalized when
the scholarly work she does is not acknowledged as such. Being marginalized, or feeling that her voice is not being heard or valued was not enough to keep Mary silent. She felt marginalized but she was determined to continue to share the ideas she has within the organization.

Although she is a member of ACPA like Mary, Susan Komives shared a different sentiment. She commented that White men needed to understand the importance of inclusion and how to handle issues of social justice. Susan stated White men who did not understand these issues might have a difficult time in the organization, but she would not go as far as to say they have been marginalized. When asked if she believes a group of people have been marginalized within ACPA based on their gender Susan stated,

I would say no. I don’t think people have been marginalized. Like no one has pushed White men out of the life of the organization or not let White men run for office, or whatever. Of course not. We have elected many White men and we continue to. So I think there’s an embracing, still. I don’t think there’s a marginalization.

In her discussion of groups that might be marginalized, Susan, believes there have been more efforts to include individuals in the organization and marginalization has not occurred. What is notable was the group she considered most at risk of being marginalized consisted of White men. Her concern seemed to be that White men who did not value social justice might feel excluded or marginalized.

When asked the question about marginalization, Beth chose to move beyond the binary of masculine-feminine gender constructs. Her concern was for individuals within NASPA who identified as transgender. Beth shared,

I don’t think women have been marginalized. I do think trans people are marginalized, and that’s troubling to me. And I know that’s not the focus of your study, but if you truly
want or if you're truly interested in gender as a whole picture, I would have to say I don’t think the trans people are being given full inclusion and attention. Women, though, there’s this curious space in my mind between being promoted and prioritized and being marginalized, and it’s sort of this middle ground of kind of holding steady, not really moving forward, not being actively marginalized, but just kind of hanging out. And I feel like women and women’s issues in student affairs as NASPA sees them, I think we’re there but I don’t think – we’re in the middle of it, but we’re not the center and likewise we’re not being actively or hostilely marginalized.

Beth expressed concern that transgender individuals were marginalized within NASPA, that they were not being allowed the opportunity to fully participate in the organization. Additionally, while she did not feel women had been marginalized she seemed to convey concern that women were in limbo. Although women were not being marginalized, she did not feel women were being prioritized either.

Student affairs is a profession based on caring for others. It may be difficult for professionals in such a field to admit when others are not being cared for properly. Labeling one group as marginalized might seem counterintuitive to individuals who pride themselves on being attentive to the needs of others. Nonetheless, the participants in this study were willing to voice their opinions and feelings in regards to marginalization and how it may or may not occur within these three organizations.

**Gender Privilege.** As Beth expressed, the absence of marginalization does not always equate to privilege. Privilege for one group does not always have to accompany the marginalization of another, theoretically. If the basic needs of all individuals within an association are being met, one group might find that they also are provided for beyond their
needs. In this scenario, everyone has what they need but one group has some of what they desire as well. This would be similar to the differences between providing for necessities and splurging on luxuries in a budget. Striking such a delicate balance can be difficult. Each participant was asked to share their perceptions of privilege within the organization(s) in which they hold membership. They were asked to reflect on their experiences and share whether they believed privilege was granted to members in the organization(s) based on their gender. According to their insights, gender was not the only criterion used to grant privilege. They observed that privilege had been granted based on willingness to volunteer, to embrace a certain mindset, and on the size of an institution’s housing program.

Beth shared that she believed privilege was granted to men in NASPA. Her observation was based on the fact that men were granted privilege within the larger society.

Well, yeah, I do and I guess why is because I think men are privileged everywhere in society. [Laughter] And I don’t think that NASPA has done enough advance work or anti-oppression work to say, “We can confidently say that men are not privileged in our organization.” I mean, I think student affairs as a field is, you know, a lot of the awards and the recognition and the kudos go to men, particularly male faculty and males who have gained a great deal of achievement in the field who are vice presidents for student affairs and chancellors and things like that.

In Beth’s experiences, men receive many of the awards and accolades that are presented within the field of student affairs. Much of what she believed about the way men are privileged within NASPA is based on the fact that men are privileged within the larger society. Additionally she believed there has not been enough work on the part of NASPA to ensure that men are not the only individuals being recognized for their contribution to the field.
In her reflection on privilege and whether or not it is granted based on gender, Gwen felt privilege was granted based on an individual’s willingness to volunteer within NASPA. She believed privilege was granted to those who were willing to do the work of the association.

I think the members who volunteer are privileged. NASPA has over 20 knowledge communities, and it’s because there are people who say, “This is an issue that we want to form an interest group around, and we want to generate knowledge, and share this knowledge, and disseminate it to people.” And so if it’s male or if it’s female, it doesn’t matter what gender, if they come forward and they show an interest in that and a passion and they follow all the steps to organize a knowledge community they can. We’re always looking for good people to do something, so it’s not privileged in any way that I see, not at all as far as gender. It’s like, “Who has the willing hands and heart, and who’s going to follow through?”

Gwen did not believe privilege in NASPA was awarded according to gender. Privilege was granted to the individual who raised his or her hand to volunteer and followed through on the assignments they were given.

Susan acknowledged that privilege was given within ACPA but she did not believe privilege was awarded based solely on gender. In her description of the culture of ACPA, Susan used words such as liberal and inclusive. In her mind, privilege within the association was granted on the basis of whether or not someone subscribed to liberal ideas and the premises of social justice.

I think the ACPA culture of – which is very liberal and very open and inclusive, as I have said – privileges then people who are liberal and who hold socially just perspectives to the degree that some stereotype White men as perhaps not holding some of those
perspectives, I think it is perhaps more difficult – I might not want to say “difficult,” – but I think a White male professional has to very publicly be demonstrating and showing how he is committed to social justice for people to then go oh, yeah, he gets it. I don’t think there’s a judging of that. But I think in our [ACPA] culture in general, White men allies are welcomed and embraced and encouraged, and some White men certainly would still exhibit characteristics – or just men in general – exhibit characteristics of their gender and be seen as not being as committed to social justice. I don’t see people sitting around and talking about people, but [it’s] this idea of you’ve gotta show you get it.

The notion of whether or not someone “gets it” was very important in relation to privilege for Susan. Privilege was granted to the individuals in the association who have the ability to demonstrate they understand how to be an ally for social justice. Susan stated it may be harder for the stereotypical White man to demonstrate that he “gets it” but it is possible. Privilege then was granted to those individuals who showed a capacity to embrace more liberal ideas and understand social justice premises regardless of their gender.

As Jill thought about privilege and its presence in ACUHO-I she referenced the size of the residence life and housing program an individual represented as playing a role in whether or not they were granted privilege within the association. The size of the programs was not always dependent upon the size of the institution but rather referred to the housing capacity on the campus. Jill commented, “In ACUHO, the privilege tends to be granted to directors of large housing operations, male or female. And so those are the folks who tend to get a lot of recognition.” Being from a larger housing and residence life program might bring privilege in ACUHO-I. According to Jill privilege was not given based on gender. Being from a large
school with a large housing operation was what brought privilege to both men and women with
the organization.

Within the three associations in this study, receiving privilege depended upon a number
of factors. Not all participants agreed on how the benefits of privilege were distributed, if at all.
For some, privilege was dependant upon gender while others stated privilege was dependant on
member’s volunteerism or the values they held regarding social justice. There was no consensus
on the existence of privilege and what groups or individuals within the organization received
privilege.

Meaning of Gender. Beyond sharing how they identified in terms of their gender, the
participants were asked what it has meant for them to be a person of their gender within their
selected organizations. This was an opportunity for each participant to reflect on what their
gender meant within their organization(s). One of the male participants stated that he had not
been required to think about the meaning of his gender within his association. For two of the
women, reflecting on the meaning of their gender provided connections with those believed to
share their gender identity along with affirmations of their gender identity.

When asked what it has meant to be a man in NASPA, Jim Rhatigan’s reply was, “I’ve
never thought of it that way.” In his experience, he had not been required to think about his
gender or what it meant to be a man within his association. As a White man who began
attending NASPA in the early 1960s, Jim had not been required to reflect on his gender.
Although he had not considered what it meant to be a man in NASPA, Jim’s later comments
reflected his consideration for what it meant to be a woman within the association.

Jill asserted that being a woman in ACUHO-I has never been a hindrance. In fact being a
woman has provided her with the opportunity to be mentored by women she considered strong
role models. It has also allowed her the opportunity to be a mentor to younger women in the housing field.

A couple of things. One, I don't believe that I've ever been stopped from doing anything because of my gender. I've made some incredible connections with other strong women, so it's certainly created some lasting friendships, given me an opportunity to see role models and see strong women and women in leadership positions – how they do it. So I think it's given me an opportunity to network, to role model – both for folks to role model to me, but also, as I stay in the profession, for me to role model to others. I've been a mentee as well as a mentor. And ACUHO has certainly provided me information and knowledge, exposure, job opportunities. It's done a lot for me. And through my housing profession, I found my husband. So it's done all kinds of things.

Beyond providing her with mentors and mentees, being a woman in ACUHO-I has exposed Jill to networking and job opportunities. She has been able to see other women in leadership roles and to gain knowledge to assist in her career endeavors. Her experience in ACUHO-I also benefitted her personally by serving as the place where she found her life partner.

Susan felt that being a woman in ACPA had been a very affirming experience for her. She had been made to feel welcome and a part of the association. Her gender had never been a barrier for her.

It’s been affirming; it’s been rewarding; it’s been informative. I always felt readily welcomed at ACPA. I felt engaged – I think that there have – there was *never* a gender issue of any kind in ACPA. I felt sought out for my abilities and gender was absolutely no barrier.
Her gender was never an issue that stalled her participation in ACPA. The skills that she possessed as a student affairs professional and scholar have allowed her to participate without consideration of her gender.

In his experience, Jim also had not been required to think about what his gender has meant to his experiences in NASPA. Jill and Susan both shared their gender had not been an issue in their experiences. Womanhood, in their opinions, had not hampered their involvement.

Value of Gender. Each interviewee was asked whether or not they felt their gender was valued in their association. The answers provided to this question varied widely. Although the majority of the participants stated they felt valued, two added qualifiers to their statements regarding times they did not feel valued or they questioned their value. One participant stated flatly that she did not feel her gender was valued. Each, without prompting, was able to support their response with specific examples.

Beth stated that she felt her gender was valued in NASPA. She said, “No, I would say I feel very valued in NASPA, which is one of the reasons I’ve stayed.” Despite this she shared a story about an experience she had while attending a NASPA annual meeting in Seattle, Washington. As she passed by one reception on her way to another she stuck her head in to see who was present. She was disappointed to see the individuals in the room did not represent a great deal of diversity in regard to gender and/or race and were mostly White men.

I think that NASPA still feels to me like an older White male professional organization in a lot of ways. I think it was founded to be that, and I think in some ways it still feels like that. And specifically I think that it’s not necessarily the leadership per se because Gwen is obviously a female, and recently we’ve had a few national presidents who are female and they're very prominent and visible and all of that. But it’s more just that I feel like
there’s a subtle message that happens at conferences that certain people are valued and certain people are less valued.

Although Beth stated she felt she was valued as a woman within NASPA, she also recognized how the organizational legacy of patriarchy and male privilege was still visible at times within the association.

Jill generally felt her gender as a woman was valued in ACUHO-I. However, she shared one instance in her experience when she felt she had cause to wonder if she was being treated differently due to her gender.

Well, I think when I was secretary – I was secretary, and as secretary, I am one of the officers that must sign off on incorporation papers. And there was some issue as far as who was invited to an officers' meeting or not. And to some degree, I really believe that I was not included because of my gender.

Jill had not been invited to a meeting for all officers, despite being the secretary at the time. Although she felt her gender was valued within ACUHO-I generally, this incident prompted her to question if her gender was the underlying reason she was treated differently, since she was the only female officer at the time.

Jodie Castanza’s response about whether she felt her gender was valued in ACPA was not just for herself, but for women in a general sense. She felt women were not valued in the association based on her interactions with the current president at the time.

Absolutely, I’ve felt women weren’t valued. When I asked the president for 10 minutes of his time and he wouldn’t give it to me. And I asked for it as the representative of the Standing Committee for Women. And to have a male president say, ‘I don’t have time for that,’ to me, sends a clear message of y’all aren’t valued. And there’s been other
times that we’ve linked things to identity and, of course, it is explained away. Me? I don’t know about for myself. I kept trying to think about it. Have I ever felt like myself, as a woman – are we okay?

It was clear Jodie was frustrated by not having access to the ear of the president for just a few moments to discuss an issue she thought was important on behalf of the Standing Committee for Women and the women of ACPA. Although she was frustrated by the exchange, she did not declare that as an individual her gender was not valued. Instead, her response was based on her concerns regarding women as a whole within the association and her duties to the Standing Committee for Women.

Susan, also speaking about ACPA, expressed a very different experience in regard to her feelings of whether or not her gender was valued. She has not had the same experiences as Jodie.

No. You know, even early on when gender was more of an issue, I probably would have said, tended to say no to that. Like I don’t let things get to me like that too much. I work to fight them if they do. I have had several discriminatory things occur in my life, and I’m sure you’ve had many you could describe, too, even though things are better than when you were even little. But – and I could mention them back to grad school days and all of that, but I’ve never had an experience where I felt my gender was a disadvantage in ACPA.

As a member of the association for almost four decades, Susan had not questioned whether or not her gender was valued. In her experience, Susan stated she has not had to handle issues of her gender not being valued within ACPA despite having to deal with those issues in other areas of her life.
Most of the participants felt their gender within their association was valued. Despite feeling valued, many of the women were able to share examples of when it might have been appropriate to question the value of their gender in the association. This question was deeply personal and subjective. What might make one individual feel valued might offend or make another feel slighted. Yet, it is important to understand the actions within an organization that cause members to feel their gender identity was valued and important or was not.

**Gender Equity.** The interview guide for this study contained no direct questions about gender equity within NASPA, ACPA, or ACUHO-I. However, gender equity issues were consistently reiterated by the participants regarding their experiences as members of these organizations. The participants shared very different perspectives regarding issues of gender equity. Many of the participants stated their organization had made the appropriate steps to eliminate gender inequity. One participant felt that one association had addressed gender and needed to move on to other issues of inequity. However, speaking about the same association, one participant felt strongly that gender inequity was still an issue of concern. In an effort to organize the participants’ comments about gender equity in their associations, the results for this subcategory are presented by association.

**ACPA.** In her reflection on her experiences, Virginia did not describe gender as a problem she had to deal with in ACPA. In the leadership positions she held, she tried to look at the skills and talents of each individual when making assignments or asking someone to take on a task, while also ensuring there was gender balance.

Mostly I don’t think gender has played a role, but what we’ve tried to do is look at gender equity in what those available individuals are. In other words, when we look to specific assignments in things we want to make sure that there is appropriate representation by
both genders. So I never felt like I got (or didn’t get) a position because of my gender, but as we look like from the 30,000 foot view, we want to make sure in those individual places where I’ve served, or I have delegated individuals to serve, that we are mindful of gender in that there is equity in the process.

For Virginia, the larger picture related to gender was what was important. Looking at the association from afar, it was important to her that she was mindful of gender equity in the process but that was not the only issue to be considered. In her personal experience, she never felt her gender was an issue in what she did or did not receive within the association.

Susan shared a similar message about her experiences with gender equity in ACPA, reinforcing her earlier comments highlighted above. For her the issue of equity went beyond gender, and encompassed many more identity issues related to diversity.

I think there still is an effort to recruit diverse slates for all of the organizational positions. For example, I don’t think you’d ever see the elections for a directorate body or a standing committee to be all of one gender or all of one race. And it’s beyond gender. I would keep saying that; ACPA has gone way beyond that in terms of its equity message.

Susan described ACPA as an association that has tried to ensure gender equity as well as to focus on other identity issues. In Susan’s experiences, it was uncommon to see homogeneous slates for elections. In her opinion, ACPA as an association, was trying to ensure equity on multiple levels.

Jodie’s experiences with gender equity were very different than Virginia’s and Susan’s. Jodie expressed frustration that issues of gender were not always verbalized and discussed within the association. She was also frustrated by the treatment she believed individuals who tried to discuss issues of gender equity received. As an illustration, Jodie referenced the fact that the
current ACPA president continually referred to all veterans with male pronouns. When asked how she felt gender equity might be achieved within the association Jodie stated,

Yeah, it’s how we do it anywhere. We talk about it. We talk about it with authenticity. We name things that go unnamed. We don’t ostracize people who name things. We don’t tell them that their experience is wrong. Which is what we do in ACPA. If we don’t like the message, if the president isn’t into the issue, then people are labeled. So we don’t talk about the key issues. And if we did then we’d name it. We’d be able to talk about, “Hey, this is what is not supposed to happen, that this president is really into veteran’s issues and made it all about men.” We would have broadly talked about it as an association before he made his grand speech [the president’s speech at the annual convention].

In Jodie’s experience, talking about issues of gender equity with authenticity was the way to begin the process of obtaining gender equity within the association. It was important to her that individuals who brought gender equity issues to the attention of the leadership of the organization not be punished for doing so.

ACUHO-I. Chuck’s description of ACUHO-I highlighted areas that needed work. Yet, in the larger picture, there seemed to be a balance occurring within the association. He described the association as being aware of the need for gender equity to exist. The example he used was about STARS College; a program designed to expose sophomore and junior undergraduate students to the field of student affairs, specifically in the area of residence life. He stated, “That was the first criticism we had of the first year when we had STARS College – that we were not very gender balanced in terms of the instructors, or the faculty members.” There was not a great deal of racial and gender diversity among the faculty in the program. The following year that
was remedied by inviting more women and people of color to participate in STARS College as institute faculty. As Chuck continued to talk about gender equity he stated, “So I'm beginning to see more that we're pretty blended in a way where, if you're talented, your gender's playing less of a role.” During his time in ACUHO-I, Chuck had seen the association become more aware of gender issues and seek a balance. Now he believes gender plays less of a role. Whether or not an individual has the talent necessary to complete the tasks at hand has become more important.

Becky had a similar perspective about ACUHO-I. She has seen gender become less of an issue within the association. She was concerned about gender equity shifting to the opposite end of the spectrum. Now she worries that the balance between men and women may have tipped more towards women than to men.

I think as an organization it’s probably becoming more of a female voice because I think the ranks that are feeding the organization are becoming more female. As a profession it’s hard to recruit males into our hall director roles, which is sort of where you start. So I sort of think that the point may come where men may not feel as welcome or included because of the female roles that have – it’s kind of the glass ceiling kind of in higher ed and in housing, all the director of housing folks that I knew when I first started the career were all men. And it was just slowly in time that you met women that were in the leadership roles and it was like oh, you could do that.

As women enter the housing field at a greater rate than men, Becky was worried the gender balance she believed currently existed in the association would change. Men would become less visible in the field and may not feel welcomed in the association.
NASPA. Jim provided a historical perspective in regard to gender equity in NASPA. Jim attended his first conference in 1962; he shared what has occurred in the association regarding gender since that time.

I think it would be like this. In gender, we had to hold women up for a while. Elevate them, because we – as White men, we were so far behind that we had to be more overt in our support of women, early on, because it would – it took some convincing. In NASPA, women did require attention. Their numbers were small. Certainly they received encouragement. This was not simply good behavior, it also was good politics. NASPA was looking for women members; what better publicity could there be than to have women say that they were welcome and well-treated.

Jim further remarked on the number of women who were currently affiliated with NASPA in comparison to the number of women who were involved when he attended his first meeting. He believed that NASPA had made a great deal of progress in regard to gender equity. In his opinion, the efforts NASPA made to ensure women felt welcomed and a part of the association were successful: “It worked. No knowledgeable person today would call NASPA an ‘old boy’s club.’ I am told that today there are more women in NASPA than men.”

In her time as the executive director of NASPA, Gwen also had seen women make progress within the organization. Women had come to wield a great deal of power within the association serving in various positions such as president of the association and president of the NASPA Foundation.

I have seen women become very strong in NASPA since the first woman was elected president. NASPA has a reputation of being an organization that’s pretty male dominant, but if you think about it now how things have changed, and of course it’s not the same.
And we’ve had a whole string of women presidents in NASPA, women on the NASPA board. One of the things people say is, “If you want to run for president of NASPA and you are a male do not run against a female, that a male cannot win a presidency of NASPA if running against a female.” And we just had that happen. [A man] ran, and he’s one of the first men to win running against a female in I don’t know how long. It’s like once women became leaders in NASPA the association put a – what should I say – it was almost more than equity in a way. Women began to rule in a lot of ways, and I see that happening now. Men are afraid to run for office against a woman in NASPA because they just usually don’t win. I just see that there’s kind of a tacit understanding that women wield a lot of power in this association. I see it as a pretty balanced association when it comes to gender. So it just seems like it’s balancing out very well.

The way gender equity played out in NASPA has changed for Gwen over the years. The scales of gender equity seem to be leveling out. Since Gwen has been the executive director, she has seen gender balance come to the organization. She described women’s parity with men as almost an obstacle to men’s leadership participation due to men’s anxiety about being able to compete successfully against a woman. Overall, Gwen believed the changes she had seen take place within the organization have brought about greater gender equity within the association.

In Kathryn’s experiences, like those of Jim and Gwen, NASPA had continued to make progress toward being an organization that embraced gender equity. Kathryn had seen the organization strive to become a more welcoming and inclusive association for women.

I mean, again I’m speaking as a woman – having a woman who’s executive director. I mean, I saw Gwen adroitly bring issues to the floor. But I do think that, my perception of
NASPA, anyway, is that they have worked toward creating a more inclusive environment that women feel comfortable in.

In her own experiences in NASPA, Kathryn has felt the association embrace issues that concern the needs of women. Having a woman as the executive director of the association is one of the examples Kathryn provided to illustrate NASPA’s attempts to embrace women and gender equity within the association. In Kathryn’s reflection on the association she commented on the efforts of the organization to ensure that women felt welcome and included.

For each association, participants commented on the progress being made to achieve gender equity. For some, gender equity was achieved by not just considering the gender of members but by focusing on the talents and abilities of the members. Some participants articulated that while their association might be moving toward gender equity, it was important that action not stop at issues of gender equity but move to other equity issues. It was important to other participants that the associations move beyond gender to the multiple identities members bring with them. The members of NASPA and ACUHO-I, the two associations that were historically male dominated, provided examples that supported these two organizations’ greater progress toward achieving gender equity than ACPA’s. There was not a consensus that all the organizations were making progress toward gender equity, however. Some participants felt there was still work to be done.

**Gender Ascribed to Their Organization(s).** It has been established that gender is a social construction and the purpose of this study was to explore the gendered nature of the student affairs profession. It was my belief the organizational culture of each of the associations would align more with the traits of one gender over the other. To test that assumption, each participant was asked to ascribe a gender to their organization(s). The participants provided a variety of
answers that did not always fit the binary of man and woman that is often used in discussions of gender. Some participants felt it an impossible task to ascribe a gender to their organization, while others were very imaginative in their descriptions.

Gwen spoke about both NASPA and ACPA. The gender she ascribed to ACPA was based on the individuals she identified as role models in the organization.

When I was a member of ACPA, how did I feel about gender? I felt more – I would describe it more as female, and the reason I would is because the people I identified with were the women presidents of ACPA.

As a former member of NAWE, Gwen shared her thoughts on the gender she would have ascribed to that organization as well. Although it was an organization intended to serve the needs of women, Gwen described NAWE as an androgynous organization, having both masculine and feminine characteristics in organizational structure, leadership style, and culture. Gwen’s description of NASPA’s gender also was embodied in the women she had witnessed being active in the organization.

NASPA I would see as androgynous as well, and the reason I see it that way is because there are a lot of women in NASPA, but a lot of the women have the senior student affairs officer role, and because they have a role that is usually – had usually been ascribed to males they are sometimes a lot more – what should I say – commanding in their leadership, very assertive.

The women she observed in ACPA and NASPA helped her to define the gender she ascribed to these organizations. Gwen seemed to be using the same criterion to describe both ACPA and NASPA, but the outcomes for the two organizations were different. Her criterion was the role women played in the organizations. She described ACPA as female because of the leadership
roles women had in the organization. She described NASPA as androgynous for the same reasons. She asserted that women had become very powerful within NASPA. Many of the women in NASPA’s leadership were senior student affairs officers; positions historically occupied by men and still dominated by men currently. Gwen seemed to relate the assertiveness of women leaders in NASPA to the fact that they held professional positions that were typically held by men and therefore they needed to demonstrate a more masculine leadership style, “commanding, assertive.” Due to this phenomenon, and the history of NASPA as a male organization, she considered NASPA to be androgynous. This was in sharp contrast to the description of ACPA as female because of the women leaders she saw in that organization and how they operated.

In Jill’s description of the gender she would ascribe to ACUHO-I, she expressed that she saw the organization as “unfortunately male”. When asked to explain why she used the word “unfortunately,” she shared that many of the members may be displeased by some of the processes used to conduct business.

Unfortunately, I believe it's male. Right now, we're being incredibly aggressive in regards to the world market. We're very cost conscious in this time of economies. We're trying to be very strategic. And I know this all sounds so incredibly old-fashioned and stereotypical, but I would say ACUHO-I is male. Well, on one hand, you would – well, because for some of our members, that will turn them off. Two, I guess when you put people – or even organizations – into boxes, does that limit them? So that's, I guess, part of why. And I guess being a female – although, quite honestly, I have some really strong masculine traits – you kind of would hope that maybe there's a soft side. And I believe there is a soft side. I think the networking, the mentoring are all feminine traits. And so I
wouldn't say it's 90 percent male and 10 percent female, but I think as we kind of look immediately, as far as what we're trying to do, maybe we're 60-40.

Although she chose to describe the organization as masculine she was not willing to describe the whole organization as such. There were processes and ways of operating within the organization that were stereotypically masculine in nature such as being frugal in difficult economic times or the strategic way in which the association operated. At the same time there were stereotypically feminine processes at play; Jill identified them as networking and mentoring. By using percentages to assist in her description of the organization, she shared her belief that there is a feminine side to the organization. Jill was able to acknowledge both the masculine and feminine aspects of ACUHO-I.

Jodie was one of the participants who chose not to be limited to the binary often used to describe gender. Her description of ACPA’s gendered nature centered on her perceptions of the individuals in leadership positions within the organization.

I would probably ascribe it as “gender queer”. Because my first reaction was to say it depends on who’s president. But then I thought, well, when [a certain woman] was president I would have identified this as male because of her leadership style. So I really, actually think that it is kind of gender queer and it is based on the gender and/or way of being in the world of the current leader. …If we go too far into this women’s way of being and leading and thinking and emoting and all this stuff that people get all, like, laa. And then we swing back to some other place. And then people protest that. And then we go to somewhere – it’s like we can’t quite figure out how to integrate multiple ways of being. And so we’re kind of queer and questioning. (Laughter) Because we’re not really trans. We’re not one gender and wanting to be the other.
The gender of the organization was more than an extension of the gender of the president at the time. For Jodie, the gender she ascribed to the organization had to do with the feeling of the organization and the leadership style of the president. Therefore the organization might have a woman president and yet be seen as a masculine organization. Jodie’s description of the organization as queer meant there was more to consider than just what were commonly considered masculine and feminine traits. ACPA was a mix of many characteristics that did not easily fit into a category of masculine or feminine, thus she described it as gender queer.

Kathryn also chose to depart from the traditional gender binary when she ascribed a gender to NASPA. She considered more than the leadership of the organization in her ascription; the tone and focus of the organization were important regarding her gender assignment.

Intersex – So I’d say – I still say despite higher numbers of women, I’d still say by tone and by focus, I’d still say about 60 percent male. So it’s very close to the balance to me. But I think there’s still maybe – or maybe it’s not so much men – I’m not talking about men. I’m talking about male.

Kathryn distinguished between the biological terms of male and female and the socially constructed ways in which we are taught men and women in society should behave. In her description of NASPA as a masculine organization, Kathryn was very careful to emphasize there was a difference between men being in the organization and the organization being characteristically masculine. The presence of men in the organization did not automatically equate to the organization being masculine.

Each participant used a different gauge to determine the gender of the organization(s) in which they participated. For some, the gender of the organization was determined by the gender
of the leadership of the organization. Other participants cited the processes used in the operation of the organization. The one constant in their responses was that men’s presence in an association did not make it a masculine association, just as women’s presence did not make it feminine. There was more to characterizing the gender of the organization than just the number of men or women in the membership. Knowingly or unknowingly, the participants took into consideration the difference between identifying the associations using biological traits and identifying the associations using the socially constructed ideas of gender identification.

Messages. Each participant was asked to share their thoughts regarding the messages they had received from their chosen organization(s) about being a person of their gender. They were also asked about the messages they believed new members received about being a man or woman. The participants believed both men and women received messages about what was or was not appropriate for men and women within their organizations. The messages received were about being a successful man or woman, choices that needed to be made regarding being a certain type of woman, along with the intersection of race and gender.

Chuck Rhodes described the importance of being a man in order to be successful as part of the messages he received about manhood in ACUHO-I. In addition to his manhood, he received messages about the importance of being a heterosexual man with a family.

And in the early days, there was a lot of male bonding. And for some of the male members, they had been, God, friends at this point for 30 years. So it was a real kind of a closed circle. So I kind of got the message that I would – in order to be successful, I needed to, at some point, hitch my wagon to one of the good guys, the big guys, and be mentored by one of those or supported by one of those. It happened to be that I had worked for one of those people, but being – had already come out on his campus, so I
never saw him as a – he was a professional mentor, but not one of the buddies who would get me far in the organization. But there were some real clear messages, I think, in the organization about ‘this is a male-dominated profession in terms of leadership.’ And I also took that the way – ‘heterosexual’ and it was also ‘White.’ And all the committees' chairs and so forth were very much male. I mean, it was a very male organization.

Along with the messages he received about being a man he also received messages about women in the organization.

I was on the program committee, for '84 – '84 or '85, and by this time, I was chair of the group, of a subgroup of the program committee that was called Needs of Special Groups. And in that, underneath that, was programming particularly for women housing officers. So then there's another message: women were special – programming for women was a special group.

When Chuck began his affiliation with ACUHO-I, messages about manhood equated success with being a White, heterosexual man with a family and being a women meant you were a member of a group with special programming needs. The patriarchal definition of success as White, heterosexual, and male was something Chuck encountered early on in his involvement with ACUHO-I. He recognized that he was not the only person working against this system. His account of working on the program committee in the mid-eighties suggested that women in the association then were seen as not equal to men. While the creation of the subgroup acknowledged that women had different programming needs than men, it implied women’s needs and experiences as housing officers would not be addressed in the regular programs targeted to the general membership. Men’s experiences and needs were centered and normalized for ACUHO-I’s conference programming during this time.
While Chuck recounted messages of women’s marginalization, another participant perceived messages existed that sought to define acceptable womanhood. These messages constrained the range of gender expression similar to the ones Chuck received about acceptable or successful manhood. In ACPA, Jodie stated there were messages about choices she needed to make regarding the type of woman she was going to be in the association.

Well, to be honest, I guess some of the messages I’ve received are you’re either a hard ass, push the edge, get things done woman or you’re a join the club, be apart of the in-crowd and you’ll move up in the association woman. It seems like you’re kind of either or. And at some point it felt like I kind of had to choose. Either I was going to play nice and do what I knew would make the current leadership like me, and therefore, some day I could maybe be the current leadership or that future leadership.

Jodie felt she was given two choices, (a) accept the status quo and chose actions that would allow the status quo to be perpetuated or (b) she could go against the grain of the association and ask questions that might challenge or make those in leadership positions uncomfortable. Agreeing with those in leadership positions, or choosing the status quo, meant playing the socially acceptable role of women as being docile or meek. The choice to agree might mean she could one day hold a leadership position. Choosing to follow her own path could mean she would find herself alone in fighting for what she thought was right.

Although Jodie felt it was necessary to decide what kind of woman she wanted to be in ACPA, Virginia was clear that she was never made to feel being a woman was an issue in the organization.

As a woman in the organization I never felt like I was one step down; in other words that I had to overcome being a woman to be a leader in the association. I’ve always been –
felt like I’m a fully represented individual based upon my age and stage of my career and my gender.

For Virginia, being woman in ACPA did not create any type of deficit in her ability to be a part of the organization or to express interest in serving in a leadership role. The organization was not only open to her as a woman, but when she joined she felt it was open to her as a young professional.

When Jill spoke about the messages she received about being a woman in ACUHO-I, she referred to individuals in leadership roles. She felt the gender identity of people in key leadership roles sent a message to the membership.

I would hope that all women would see themselves at the table of ACUHO-I. And as we look at our executive board, certainly it's been a good blend. I think that perhaps professionals of color may not necessarily see themselves at the table as frequently, whether that's men or women, but probably more men of color are seen at the table than women of color. I think when you talk about who you see, that definitely sends a message about what it means to be a woman in a particular organization.

Jill acknowledged there was a balance in the number of White men and women seen in leadership roles in the organization, however representation from people of color particularly women of color was lacking. The messages Jill received were about more than just issues of gender, intersections of race and gender were also an important factor in the messages she received.

There were many messages received by the participants about being a man or woman in ACPA, NASPA and ACUHO-I. Although participants received messages about their gender within the organizations, they also received messages related to their age, race, sexual
orientation, and stage in career. Some of the participants felt the messages they received were affirming of who they were and what they brought to their associations. Their complete identity was accepted. Others felt the messages they received were that portions of their identity could be accepted but parts of them were not acceptable. For some, they received a message about the formula for being successful within their chosen association such as being a heterosexual White male or being a docile and meek woman.

New members in the associations can bring a different perspective to gender issues. Their opinions and impressions of the association have not yet been influenced by the culture of the association. Along with the messages they received about being men and women, each participant was asked to reflect on the messages they believed new members received about being a man or women in their associations.

Regarding the messages new members of NASPA received about gender, Gwen felt NASPA was at a bit of a disadvantage. She thought the messages new individuals received might be skewed by their perceptions or what they might have heard others say about the organization.

I think NASPA is at a disadvantage in a lot of ways when it comes to how messages are received. It’s one of those things that people have a – they have their own way of looking at the world, and a lot of people look at NASPA’s origins and how it started out as the deans of men, and they make assumptions about the association. So it’s one of those things where when NASPA – it’s very careful, as I said, about making sure that one group is not favored over another. It still doesn’t seem to make a difference to some people. Even to this day people will say to me things like, ‘Well, you know, NASPA is an old boy’s club,’ and nothing could be further from the truth.
For Gwen, the messages new members of NASPA received may not come directly from the organization but from the perceptions others have of the organizations that are shared with them. There is a perception of the organization being an “old boys club” that new members must overcome to be able to see the organization for what it is and how they can contribute to it.

Susan believed new members of ACPA received a message of inclusion. No matter how one identified regarding gender, anyone was welcome to be a part of the organization.

I think ACPA’s message is that you are all welcomed with all of your social identities and all of your multiple identities. So there is an open, affirming, welcoming for whoever and however you may be. And that’s way beyond just gender. And, of course, by gender now we would also include transgender or some other expression, but ACPA for many years for example has, [as] convention policy, has designated gender neutral bathrooms in the convention – even at – like when we take over a convention hotel you will see a sign in front of several what otherwise would be a women’s bathroom that says “gender neutral,” so anyone can feel free to go in there. And that – I mean that kind of responsiveness is pretty unusual. So I think the message is everyone’s welcome whatever social identity you have, you can more freely express that as professionals here and explore issues about the dimensions of that social identity and research and scholarship.

Susan was convinced that new members of ACPA should feel free to bring all of their identities with them when they joined the organization. She believed they should not feel they have to leave any part of their identities behind.

Virginia shared similar sentiments. For her, the messages sent to new members of ACPA were those of inclusion and acceptance for everyone. If someone would like to be a part of ACPA, it did not matter who the person was. Anyone should feel welcomed in the organization.
I think the messages are anybody can be involved in the leadership. Everybody is welcome to be involved in the leadership and what you need to do to be involved in the leadership is just put your hand up and come forward.

For Virginia, the message of inclusion was more than just being a part of the organization. The message of inclusion was extended to those who choose to become a part of the leadership of the organization. It does not matter who you are, if you are interested in serving the organization in a leadership role the only requirement is that you step forward.

When Becky discussed the messages new members in ACUHO-I received, she emphasized that there are a number of female role models available for new members to observe.

I think they see a lot of female role models. And so I think that that message is that there’s a place for everyone. Our leadership has been a lot of females, you know, in the last few years and I think, so those messages are there.

The presence of women role models for new members in the organization sent a message that the organization was open to everyone.

The messages each of the participants received varied greatly from the messages they believed new members of the organization received. As established members of the associations, the participants received messages about the required actions to be successful men or women in their associations. In contrast, the messages they believed new members received were about inclusion and acceptance.

**Roles and Responsibilities.** Within an organization, the assignment of roles and responsibilities can be indicative of who is valued and what work is valued. As leaders within their respective associations, each of the participants had been responsible for assigning tasks or having a task assigned to them. Each of the participants were asked to describe how roles and
responsibilities were assigned during their time in a leadership position. The participants shared
that roles and responsibilities were not assigned based on gender in their associations. Instead,
other factors, such as an individual’s skills and abilities or a member’s willingness to volunteer,
were critical factors in making assignments.

In Becky’s reflection on how her gender might or might not have influenced the tasks
that she was assigned, she stated, “I feel like that, that happened more in a particular work
situation than it ever did in the professional association.” Within ACUHO-I she did not
experience being asked to complete a task or not complete a task based on her gender. She felt
that was an issue more in her life as a professional on a college and university campus rather than
as a volunteer within her chosen professional association.

Sallie Traxler was asked to reflect on her experiences with assigning tasks as the
executive director of ACUHO-I. When she spoke about her experiences she explained how
ACUHO-I headquarters, or the central office as it is known, was structured in regard to assigning
the various tasks that needed to be completed.

Yeah, we call it central office. Kind of like a housing office. We don't usually assign.
It's usually we may suggest a staff, but our boards also will come up with people that
they've known, have worked with in the region. If it's an open call, let's say, and we do
an open call for a high-level leadership position with qualifications -- if there's someone
who is incredibly seasoned that puts their name in the hat, let's say, they may be chosen,
but they're being chosen because of their respect within the profession, their years of
service and those kind of things.

Within the ACUHO-I central office, responsibilities are not normally simply assigned. Instead,
the association seeks volunteers. The standard procedure is to hold nominations to fill positions.
The gender of the nominees is not as important as the qualifications they bring. Sallie went on to explain that when filling roles within the association, it was important to ensure the knowledge gained by one person does not leave when they have completed their term. She discussed the tactics used to provide less experienced professionals with the experience necessary to help them move to the next level.

But what we've been doing is then pairing either a co-chair or an incoming chair-elect with somebody who might be at that next step down in the profession. And then a lot of times that happens to be a female.

Pairing more experienced professionals with less experienced professionals allows the association to ensure an exchange of information and develop new leaders. It allows professionals with less experience an opportunity to gain the experience necessary to take on larger roles and gain more responsibility within the association no matter their gender.

Regarding NASPA, Gwen stated that roles and responsibilities were not assigned, similar to ACUHO-I. NASPA depends a great deal on the men and women who volunteer to ensure the operation of the organization.

So the roles are not delegated as much as people volunteer for them, and it’s a matter of stepping up. The same thing occurred in NAWE. The same thing occurred in ACPA. Women who really want to make a difference in the profession, who want to serve, who want to give back, who step up end up having leadership roles. Men who step up have leadership roles, and as far as delegating and selecting they’re very, very careful in NASPA this way, and I kind of play the police on it. When there are some appointments to be made, whether it’s an appointment to be a faculty member for a workshop or an appointment on the board we look at it. We look at it for gender equity. We look at it for
the racial composition. We look at it as far as geography, age, sexual orientation. We
look at all of it. We try to make sure that we don’t inadvertently favor one group and
have another group feel as if it’s the out-group.

Gwen feels very strongly about how volunteers are placed within NASPA. She is personally
invested in ensuring that there is equity in the way volunteers are used within the organization.
In fact she stated she plays “police” on the issue. Policing implies the necessity for someone to
watch over the process to guarantee fairness and equity; without their presence and oversight the
operation might go awry. Gender equity is important to her along with ensuring there is equity
in the racial, geographic, and age composition of the volunteers.

In their comments about the way roles and responsibilities were delegated or assigned;
the participants stated gender was not a major factor. They agreed it was important to assign
tasks to individuals who had the talent and skills necessary to complete the work required.
Although gender was not a primary factor, it was important. Each participant affirmed the
importance of considering gender to ensure balanced representation.

**Policies and Procedures.** An organization’s policies and procedures can have
implications for gender equity if they are designed to favor one gender over another. The
participants in this study were asked to consider the policies and procedures used to govern their
respective organizations. They were asked to share their insights into whether or not the policies
and/or procedures favored one gender over the other. Most participants reported they were
unfamiliar with the policies of their organizations but many described practices they felt were
advancing or placing their organization at a disadvantage in terms of achieving gender equity.

As Mary reflected on her time in both NASPA and ACPA she was able to name several
practices and initiatives she believed promoted gender equity in both organizations. Mary also
described practices that were used within the organization to promote increased membership of people of color.

Well, I think the current practices that promote gender equity are the establishment of – in both organizations – the task force, the commissions, the committees that provide awards and incentives for women and – for women to be active participants in the organization. And I think that the – for example, the NUFP program with NASPA, which encourages not only students of color, but also women, to be active in the field. And then you’ve got the Wise Woman Award, through ACPA, where they recognize women professionals and practitioners and scholars in the field that – and even students who write about gender and focus on that in their dissertations – provide awards to people, to encourage that type of scholarship.

Both organizations were perceived by Mary to be promoting gender equity through the establishment of various task forces, the commissions, and knowledge communities designed to address the needs of women. She also believed the practices of acknowledging the work done by women through the presentation of awards recognizing women’s contributions through service and scholarship promoted gender equity. Mary’s comments highlighted the norms for organizational structure and symbols as evidence of policies and procedures that promoted gender equity. Her statements broaden the definition of policies and procedures beyond what might be written and referenced in the by-laws or a procedural manual.

Sallie’s description of current policies and practices to encourage or discourage gender equity included the restructuring of the executive board that was designed to promote equity on many levels not just gender. The board was restructured to emphasize the expertise of the members rather than the identities they represented. Sallie stated, "What we need present at the
The leadership of ACUHO-I recognized the importance of inviting individuals who represented a variety of populations and brought expertise to the table. The restructuring of the executive board and a nomination process that considers the expertise of a nominee along with acknowledging their respective identities were the practices ACUHO-I used to promote gender equity within the association.

Gwen’s reflection brought to mind one particular practice within NASPA. She discussed the Alice Manicur Symposia, one of the association’s signature programs, named after the first woman elected to serve as association president.

The first thing that comes to mind is the Alice Manicur Symposium for women aspiring to be senior student affairs administrators. This is something that has been around a long time, and NASPA has – I guess it’s seen as a signature program in NASPA. And in order to bring more equity there, there was a way for women to come together and help one another in moving down that path of senior student affairs administrators. So that’s one practice.

The Alice Manicur Symposium is used to provide women in student affairs, who have a desire to serve as the chief student affairs officer, the opportunity to gather together to gain knowledge and refine their skills. Most senior student affairs officers are men. The existence of the symposium is an important part of NASPA’s acknowledgement that women need assistance in achieving parity at the senior level. The symposium provides women with the opportunity to network and to learn from one another. Chief student affairs officers play a critical role in defining NASPA and attention to the needs and concerns of that group is a central factor in its
governance structure. As such, offering this symposium demonstrates NASPA’s recognition of the need for more balanced gender representation at the senior level and support of women’s efforts to achieve that level of career advancement.

Contrary to the specific examples of established norms and symbolic gestures that the previous participants recounted, Jodie’s comments focused on the existence of formal policies. She commented that there was a lack of policies and procedures to inform the day-to-day practices of the association. For example, she expressed discontent with the procedures that were used to hire an assistant in the international office.

I think it’s actually lack of policies that then inform practices. So it’s things like, apparently our international office is in the process of hiring an assistant to one of our international office staff. And right now it’s all men who are being interviewed. And the scuttle butt is that that person hand selected and shoulder tapped a bunch of people and said, “Hey, apply for this job. I’d love for you to be my assistant.” And they all happen to be gay men. That’s interesting. We just lost a primary woman in a major position in the international office and we’re hiring an assistant to this other person, who’s a man. The lack of policies and procedures was frustrating for Jodie. It was her feeling that having specific policies and procedures in place might promote gender equity in the hiring practices used within the international office. She believed the lack of polices and procedures allowed those in power to hire-at-will rather than making sure the hiring practice was conducted with attention to gender equity.

Most of the participants were unable to identify policies within their organization(s) they felt were discouraging gender equity. Jodie stated it was a lack of policy that concerned her the most. As far as procedures and practices, the participants quickly and with ease, identified
practices in place to promote gender equity, but these were not formal policies found in the associations’ by-laws or other operating documents. Instead, certain practices had become norms or traditions for how things were done. They were a part of the basic assumptions and beliefs in an organization that often go unquestioned.

**Symbols, Images, and Artifacts.** The symbols, images or artifacts used within an association can be a visual expression of an association’s stance on issues of gender equity. Each participant was asked to identify the symbols, images, and artifacts within their association that might promote or discourage gender equity. Some of the participants were not able to identify a symbol, image, or artifact. However, several of the participants identified a practice, certain individuals, or program they believed to be symbolic of gender equity within their organization.

Sallie immediately referred to a symbol and artifact within ACUHO-I that has been somewhat controversial. Sallie referred to the “Talking Stick”, an artifact given to the association by its Canadian members.

We have the symbol the Talking Stick. It's very tribal, and it's very male-oriented because it would have been the men of the tribe that came together to gather. And then whoever has the talking stick is the one that has the floor. There's actually a talking stick in the front [of the office headquarters]. The actual thing that was given to us by our Canadian colleagues. It has a lovely symbolism. We don't use it in the way that a tribe would use it. It means to us that everybody -- if the talking stick is present, everybody can speak their mind, the floor is open, and that they have the floor. But it is from a male ceremony -- you know, a male-dominated ceremony, I would say.
Although Sallie described the Talking Stick as a very masculine symbol, she went on to explain how the symbol has been repurposed within the organization. Although the Talking Stick was intended to serve as a symbol that a man had the floor during an all-male gathering the association has decided to use the Talking Stick to symbolize a freedom for everyone in a gathering where the stick is present to feel they can speak their mind. The *Talking Stick* is also the name of one of the association’s publications.

Kathryn discussed one of the newest publications NASPA produces in her response to the question about symbols, images and artifacts that promote or discourage gender equity. She referenced the *Journal About Women in Higher Education* that NASPA began publishing in 2008. The publication is designed to focus on issues that affect women in higher education and student affairs.

Oh, that’s another thing that we didn’t talk about that – another place that NASPA did move ahead and represent that more is with this new journal. Trying to kind of pick up the slack for some of the NAWE initiatives in the past. Kathryn also discussed the establishment of the Women’s Center, a center focused on researching the needs of women in higher education and assisting women who are conducting research. In addition Kathryn mentioned the themes of the annual conference, and the executive director as symbols within the association. As she explained further,

So I think to me, symbolically and programmatically, there’s been a lot of good things done. I think they have had to pay attention more to individual members, members who are not the senior student affairs officers, members from different types of institutions, and the role that women play in that.
For Kathryn the new publication is a symbol of NASPA’s continuing comment to women within the association. The publication provides an avenue for women to receive opportunities to showcase their scholarship. The publication is important to the association because it filled the gap left when NAWE dissolved and discontinued the publication of their journal, *Initiatives*. Kathryn felt NASPA has moved beyond its original focus on the senior student affairs officer to understand the importance of addressing the individual needs all members of the association may have.

Beth also identified the center for women as a symbol of NASPA’s commitment to gender equity. As a member of the board for the center she was excited about the ways women’s research and scholarship have been acknowledged.

I’m on the Center for Women Board. We also do some research and we give out research grants and things like that. So those are two explicit ways that if you dig deeper beneath the homepage of NASPA, you would see, okay, well, this organization is really – it cares about women and it cares about promoting women.

Providing avenues for women to conduct research and showcase the research they have done is the purpose of the Center for Women. Beth expressed that the presence of the Center for Women and the work done by those who participate in the activities conducted by the center are symbols that NASPA is concerned with issues of gender equity. The center serves as a symbol to let NASPA members know the scholarly work done by and about women is important.

Mary saw both NASPA and ACPA as symbols in and of themselves. Each of the organizations represented something different for her.

Resistance has been the symbol of NASPA: resistance to change. And ACPA has been the symbol of transition and cutting edge. And ACPA is the symbol of connectedness
with new members and young people and the young people in the field. ACPA – or – so ACPA is more of your young, entry, mid-manager, up-and-comings, and NASPA is your sage old – usually leaning towards male – status quo type of organization.

In Mary’s opinion, NASPA was a symbol of what has been in the field of student affairs. For her, NASPA has been reluctant to keep up with the changes being seen in the field of student affairs. ACPA on the hand, has symbolized for Mary a willingness to remain abreast of contemporary issues within the field. NASPA was willing to remain stagnant, willing to continue serving the members is was designed to serve; while ACPA was moving forward and embracing the younger, less established professionals in the field of student affairs.

There was no consensus in the symbols identified by the participants in their associations. Within the same associations, there was a wide variety of what served as symbol, image, or artifact. For instance, for NASPA, the Center for Women, the *Journal About Women in Higher Education*, and the organization itself were each identified by different participants as symbols of gender equity. Some cited programs and practices within their association as symbols, while one participant saw the entire organization as a symbol. For some, the symbols they cited were indications that their organization was making progress towards achieving greater gender equity. Other participants cited symbols that were reminders of the work that remains to be done to achieve gender equity in their organizations.

**Consolidation.** In 2008 NASPA and ACPA began the process to consider the possibility of consolidating the two organizations into one umbrella organization for student affairs. The conversations regarding consolidation have elicited a myriad of responses from the membership of each of the organizations. There are some who feel the consolidation efforts are long overdue while, others are a bit more reluctant to let go of the organization they have known and
participated in for something unknown. Regarding gender, those participants who identified as members of ACPA and NASPA were asked how they felt the consolidation of the two organizations might affect gender equity.

Jim was concerned about the consolidation and what it would mean for the future of the organizations and for the future of the student affairs profession. In his comments, he expressed apprehension about how the merger of the two organizations would affect the ability of members to publish their scholarly work.

I wrote in my open letter to the association – you'll find it up on NASPA's website, "About Us." You can find my piece there. I'm asking how many journals are we going to have in this new organization. We seem to be worried about duplication so I assume the answer will be “less”. We are not going to have as many journals as we have now. All of us will have less chances to publish because there will be less journals in which to write. I mean not only will there be less articles, the percentage of those able to write will go down because our member numbers will go up. So both the percentage of people who will be able to publish and the actual number of people who will be able to publish are going to be affected, downward. Am I just being negative or is this the truth? The answer is very clear in my mind.

To Jim, combining these organizations will not have a positive effect on the number of scholarship opportunities available. His concern is more than a notion; he felt strongly enough to write a letter to the leadership of NASPA to let them know his opinion regarding the proposed consolidation. Although Jim expressed a sincere concern about the lack of opportunities for scholarly publication, he did not directly address the question asked about whether or not the consolidation of the two associations would impact gender equity.
Mary hoped the consolidation of the two organizations would bring a sense of balance to the newly established organization. She was hopeful that the consolidation efforts would allow the best of the two organizations to come together.

I'm hoping that it would make the organization androgynous, in that that will give the masculine and feminine sides an opportunity to find that nice little – that nice blend of how an organization can be successful if you didn't oppress one or the other. So – androgynous, right down the middle. All I ask for is equity. All I ask for is equity, and equity in terms of the way that the structure, the gender structure, is designed – men and women, on both sides of the field; collaborative; and representing who the members are in each group.

Equity within the structure of the new organization was paramount to Mary. She viewed the unification efforts as an opportunity for equity to be incorporated in the founding structure of a new organization.

In the new consolidated organization, Susan did not believe gender would be an issue. Since she believed that issues of gender equity had been addressed in the profession of student affairs, Susan did not foresee gender being negatively affected in the new organization.

I don’t think gender equity will be an issue. I think gender equity is already well established across professional roles in our field from newest professionals all the way up to senior student affairs officers. So gender equity is not an issue. So I think there are differences but they are not around gender equity.

Since Susan perceived gender inequity to be a historical artifact for the student affairs profession, she felt there was no need to be concerned about ensuring gender equity in the future in a
consolidated organization. For Susan, gender equity had been achieved and was no longer threatened.

Beth was excited by the possibilities the consolidation might bring. She viewed the step as an opportunity for dialog.

I think it could be an opportunity to reengage in dialog about what are we trying to do in terms of advancing women in higher ed and are we doing it? Are we accomplishing it? So I think the unification is an opportunity to do that, and I’m actually kind of excited about it.

Unlike Susan, Beth saw a need for continued attention to the status of women and issues of gender equity in the field. The opportunity to engage in conversations and dialogs about how women in higher education are advancing was what had Beth excited. These were conversations that would occur with a larger number of people if the consolidation is approved.

Those participants who answered the question about unification expressed a mix of feelings about the issue and how it might impact issues of gender equity within ACPA and NASPA. Jim was concerned that opportunities to present scholarly work in a published format would be reduced but did not express direct concern for the achievement of gender equity. Other participants seemed to be very excited about the possibilities of bringing the two organizations together. Most of the participants who answered the question, saw the consolidation efforts as having no effect on the issues of gender equity that have been resolved or remain in either organization. Those in favor of the consolidation shared their belief that it would create opportunities for the organizations’ strengths to balance each other.
Summary

The 13 participants selected to represent NASPA, ACPA, and ACHUO-I shared information that provided avenues for me to better understand how each of these organizations handles issues of gender equity. Due to the length of their memberships and the various leadership roles and positions they have held they were able to share in-depth information about their experiences.

The participants all agreed the associations were aware of gender equity issues, but for certain participants it was important that the organizations move from awareness to action to ensure gender equity. Along with sharing how they were able to live out their gender identity within their selected organization(s), the participants discussed issues of privilege and marginalization as they related to gender.

Most participants shared their gender had not been an issue when asked to consider what it had meant to them to be a person of their gender in their organization. Most did not feel they had been advantaged or disadvantaged because they were a man or woman. When the participants discussed gender equity, there was no consensus. Some participants expressed concern that due to the increased number of women in the field of student affairs and in their associations, issues of gender equity as they related to men were going to become more important as they strived to achieve gender balance and equity. Some stated issues of gender equity had been resolved and were no longer an issue.

Overall, there was not a consensus among the 13 participants related to how gender equity issues are handled in each organization; or the issues that have been overcome. There was no one way to describe the organizations in relation to how they handled issues of gender equity. For some of the participants there was still a great deal of work to be done. For others, gender
issues have been overcome and going forward it is important to focus on the intersectionality of identities within the membership of their associations. This need to recognize the intersectionality of identities was evidenced in the way participants who identified themselves as Black, as well as participants who appeared to be Caucasian, linked gender and race as issues that coalesced and should be acknowledged and handled simultaneously due to their intersection in the lives of association members.
CHAPTER SIX

Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine the gendered nature of student affairs by exploring issues of gender equity in professional student affairs associations. Two approaches were used to gather the pertinent information. To gain an understanding of how the three organizations selected were founded and handled issues of gender equity in their early years, I analyzed the records available in the National Student Affairs Archives at Bowling Green State University along with information on the association Web sites. Secondly, I interviewed 13 participants who held or currently hold leadership positions within the organizations. The research conducted in the archives provided a context for each of the three organizations and the 13 participants I interviewed helped me to better understand how the organizations considered modern issues related to gender equity. This concluding chapter contains a discussion of my findings, implications as they relate to practice in the field of student affairs, and suggestions for future research.

Discussion

Each of the organizations researched and selected for this study was founded to fulfill a need for the sharing of information between individuals within the student affairs profession. The deans of women came together because there were no other venues where they could gather to discuss the work they were doing on their campuses. The deans of men were drawn together to support each other after the collapse of an initiative that brought throngs of young men to college and university campuses but left the young men with little direction upon its collapse. The appointment secretaries began meeting to share information as well as they were responsible for various and sundry efforts on their respective campuses. The housing directors began
meeting after the implementation of the G.I. Bill brought more students requiring housing accommodations to their college and university campuses than had ever before been experienced.

Initially, the organizations to support the deans of women and the deans of men were segregated as a result of the time in which they were founded. Women on college and university campuses in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth were an unusual phenomenon. Women were to be kept separate from the men on campus. The women deans were brought in to oversee the well being of these women.

Higher education and the profession of student affairs in the United States have gendered histories due to the prevailing social conditions of the time. As previously established, higher education in America was originally founded to serve the needs of young, wealthy, White men. As women entered into higher education they were required to reside in all women dorms, to have their own clubs and auxiliary organizations, or to attend an institution only for women. Within the student affairs profession the separation of the genders was inevitable given the gender separation of the students in higher education. Over the last century the culture within higher education and within student affairs professional organizations has changed. Separation based on gender is no longer the norm. The organizations selected for this study are exemplars of how higher education and the profession of student affairs have evolved in the area of gender equity.

**Organizational Culture.** According to Owens (2001), “It is widely accepted that the single most critical factor in improving the performance of an organization is to change its culture” (p 122). Changes within the organizational cultures of NASPA, ACPA, and ACUHO-I, have allowed the organizations to address some of the cultural norms that allowed advantages to
be given to one gender over another. Tierney (2008) demonstrated that just as gender is socially constructed, organizations are also socially constructed. In the same manner an object can be constructed it can also be deconstructed. Just like in the roles of men and women over time have changed and evolved, the culture of organizations have the potential to change and evolve. For example, NASPA was founded as an organization to support the deans and advisors of men. As the culture of higher education changed, along with the work being done by student affairs professionals, the leadership acknowledged the importance of inviting women to join the association. Women are now not only members of the association but have held significant leadership positions such as executive director, national president, foundation president, and regional vice president.

Organizational culture is influenced and developed by many factors such as the rituals, symbols, heroes and heroines, and traditions of an organization (Kuh and Whitt, 1988; Masland, 1985; Owens, 2001). In these professional organizations, the heroes and heroines are the men and women who have worked in the field of student affairs for a considerable amount of time and have been influential as scholars, practitioners, or a combination of both. They are the men and women within the organization others believe to be integral to the continuation of the field of student affairs. They are the individuals, like many of the participants in this study, who have volunteered, been hired, or have been elected to serve in influential leadership roles and capacities. The executive directors of each of the organizations have the opportunity to influence the rituals and traditions that are used to define their organizations. The participants in this study who serve as faculty members in the study of higher education have the opportunity to shape what is taught about the history of the student affairs profession and the student affairs
professional organizations. Each of these individuals has the power to influence change within the culture of the organization(s) in which they participate.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the awards that are presented to practitioners and scholars for the work they have done within the field are also organizational symbols. In each organization, the named awards serve as symbols of what is valued, as well as the individuals and the work believed to be worthy of recognition. Beth commented that she believed men within the field were granted more accolades than women. Although the individuals recognized by NASPA’s association-wide awards over the last two decades have been balanced between men and women, it is important to consider what has influenced Beth’s perception. Despite NASPA’s efforts to support gender equity within the association, it apparently struggles, even among its leadership, to effectively communicate its advances.

Gendered Nature of the Associations. From my initial review of information and my personal experiences with the organizations selected for this study, I believed each of the associations aligned more with the traits of one gender than the other. NASPA seemed a more masculine association and ACPA and ACUHO-I were more feminine; not in regard to the number of men or women members but in regard to the manner in which each of the organizations conducts business. My thoughts that NASPA would reflect a masculine organization were based on the history of NASPA’s founding as the association for the deans and advisors of men. My perception of ACPA being a feminine organization was based on the history of ACPA as the association started by the personnel workers at a meeting of the National Association for Dean of Women. Lastly, my thoughts about ACUHO-I centered on personal experiences with housing officers as caring and nurturing individuals, characteristics often associated with femininity. Upon the completion of this study, my beliefs regarding the
gendered nature of each of the organizations have changed. My beliefs were influenced by the information gathered from the historical contexts of the associations and by what the 13 participants shared.

NASPA’s founding as the association of deans and advisors of men influenced my initial thoughts that the gendered nature of this association would be masculine. Additionally, the governing structure of the association further influenced my perceptions of its masculine nature. Lastly, my idea of NASPA as a masculine organization was based on its exclusivist voting system. However, my perceptions about the association were changed by the information I gained regarding the efforts NASPA had made to encourage the participation of women within the association, along with the support provided to assist women in achieving the rank of chief student affairs officers. Further, a change in my perceptions was influenced by the information shared by the women in this study who were members of the association. The women acknowledged the masculine and patriarchal history of the association, but also pointed out its feminine presence. The number of women in the association is not what created the feminine presence, but rather the roles that women have come to play in the association. This is what has moved NASPA from being more masculine to a more balanced incorporation of masculine and feminine styles.

My perception of ACPA as a feminine association was confirmed after studying the archival data regarding the history of the association, but changed after speaking with the participants who were members of the association. ACPA has a feminine history: from the beginning, women and men worked together in the association evidenced by the mixture of men and women who led the organization within the first 10 years. This substantiated my perceptions of ACPA as a feminine organization. However, my review of the current governance structure
of the association, as well as the voices of the participants who are members of the association has led me to believe the association’s character and organizational culture cannot be genuinely reflected within the gender binary.

ACPA has been an association to provide support to professionals in many areas of the field of student affairs. From the start of the association, there was a struggle to define exactly what was meant by personnel work. The struggle was noted by the verbiage used to describe the work done by personnel workers, guidance, vocation guidance, educational guidance, counseling, placement, personnel work, personnel point of view, personnel research, all referring to work done mostly by professionals in student affairs (Lloyd-Jones & Smith, 1938). The inability to clearly define what was and was not personnel work added a layer of complexity to the organization. The governing structure of the association also served to confirm my belief that the association did not fit the masculine-feminine gender binary. As Jodie Castanza remarked, ACPA does seem to be more appropriately described as perhaps intersexed, carrying both masculine and feminine traits. Although having hierarchal components associated with patriarchy, the governance structure also seeks to include the voices of all of its members, which is more inclusive and feminist.

The most significant shift in my thoughts about the gendered nature of the associations was in regard to ACUHO-I. Initially I perceived the association as feminine based on my personal experiences with housing officers. At the conclusion of this study, my thoughts on the gendered nature of the association are that it is a more masculine organization. This assessment is based on the nature of its founding, its governing structure, and the manner used to elect officers within the association. Also, I was influenced by the way the participants from the association described their experiences. Becca’s comments in particular were insightful as she
related her feelings about the masculine nature of the association. Becca based her assessment of the association on the male characteristics of efficiency and frugality (discussed also in the context of the development of ACUHO-I earlier in Chapter 4). Chuck’s comments regarding the message he received that he needed to be a White heterosexual male in order to be successful in the association were also persuasive. The intersection of race, sexuality, and gender to support patriarchy is also discussed by Johnson (2005).

**Gendered Nature of Student Affairs.** The overarching goal of Acker’s (1990) concept of gendered organizations was to provide a manner to assess gendered organizational structures so they could be restructured outside the constraints of patriarchy. Although Britton (2000) asserted it was important to indentify units of analysis prior to organizational restructuring, the overarching goal remained the restructure of organizations without an emphasis on hierarchy found in organizations within patriarchal systems. The issues raised both by Acker (1990) and Britton (2000) are important in the effort to restructure and create organizations that better serve women and men.

Acker (1990) based the concept of the gendered organization on the exploration of how men and women within an organization were advantaged or disadvantaged, how the workload was assigned, and who was given power based on gender. The goal of this study was to provide an understanding of the gendered nature of the student affairs profession by focusing on three organizations which represented a cross section of the student affairs profession. Overall it was difficult to determine the gendered nature of the profession of student affairs. There are gendered aspects to the profession but one gender can not be used to describe the entire profession. Britton (2000) in contrast to Acker (1990) cautioned against referring to an organization as gendered. Britton found it problematic to assign one gender to an entire
organization without considering all the various components of the organization. In Britton’s opinion, it was important to clearly define units within an organization before determining the gendered nature of the organization. Britton’s concern was the possibility of one unit of an organization to be gendered in one way while another unit is gendered in a different manner. The participants’ comments in this study certainly reflect Britton’s cautions and concerns.

A portion of the difficulty in determining the gendered nature of the profession of student affairs is trying to take into consideration all of the possible influences. As Tierney (2008) suggested, organizations are socially constructed.

Institutions certainly are influenced by powerful, external factors such as demographic, economic, and political conditions, yet they are also shaped by strong forces that emanate from within. This internal dynamic has its roots in the history of the organization and derives its force from the values, processes, and goals held by those most intimately involved in the organization’s workings. (p. 24)

In trying to determine the gendered nature of student affairs, it was important to consider internal factors such as the history of the associations, the mission statements and values, along with the processes used to accomplish the stated missions. The statements each of the participants made about how their association assigned responsibilities, and whether or not women or men were advantaged or disadvantaged were considered. External factors such as the time period the organizations were established and the socio-political environment were also important.

**Privilege and Marginalization**. Within this study privilege and marginalization were not always defined along gender lines. The profession of student affairs was built on the concept of helping others. The deans and personnel workers were responsible for assisting students in their transition to and through college to the world beyond the completion of a bachelor’s degree.
With a mindset of assistance it can be hard to contemplate one student affairs professional stifling the progress of another. Unfortunately, the unintentional marginalization of professionals in the field does happen. Many professionals in student affairs may be unaware of the privilege they have based on the master’s or doctoral program they attended or the institution in which they work. Throughout the study the participants commented on privilege being granted to them without acknowledging they were privileged or addressing where the privilege might have originated from. Acknowledging White privilege, McIntosh (1988) wrote, “White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks” (p.278). There is privilege that is granted to some student affairs professionals but not to all. In the same way it was important for McIntosh to acknowledge the privilege she received, it is also important for student affairs professionals to acknowledge the privilege they receive. Being a part of a certain program or being the student or protégé of a particularly well respected scholar or practitioner brings privilege within these three organizations that is not always acknowledged.

Susan discussed the “privilege” she believed White men who “get it” received within ACPA. Susan equated privilege with choosing to identify with certain values, therefore, she believed that a White man who embraced social justice values and behaviors would be advantaged in ACPA. To her, this behavior provided him credibility. This definition of privilege and advantage is not consistent with how privilege is defined in the extant literature. According to McIntosh (1988) and Johnson (2006), privilege is defined as “conferred dominance” or “unearned advantages” (p. 23) and therefore privilege is assigned to individuals on the basis of their actual or presumed identification with dominant social groups. Therefore, societal privilege is granted to White men simply because they are White men because
Whiteness and manhood are dominant social identities, not because they choose to hold social justice values. The view of privilege reflected in Susan’s comments may hinder the authentic conversations about privilege based on the dominate group identities that Jodie called for in her interview. Susan’s language slippage is concerning given her status as a former president of ACPA and as a highly regarded professional within the field.

**Implications for Practice**

The knowledge gained from this study has several implications for practice in student affairs. The first implication is considering the role organizational culture plays in how organizations develop and implement policies, practices, and procedures. Next, the implication for using historical context to provide insight into current issues is considered. Lastly, this study has implications for mentoring and role modeling for the students served by student affairs professionals.

**Organizational Culture.** Organizational culture is used to define the values of an organization and communicate them to its membership. The culture of an organization determines the influence the organization will have on its members and likewise the influence the members will have on the organization (Tierney, 2008). As NASPA and ACPA consider consolidation to create one comprehensive student affairs organization, it will be important for the leadership of both organizations to evaluate how the cultures of the organizations will be synthesized to make one culture.

Although these organizations support professionals in the same field, different means and methodologies are used to provide that support. To create a new organization, it will be imperative for the leaders of NASPA and ACPA to move beyond the consideration of the logistics (financial matters, publications and scholarship, and knowledge communities,
commissions and standing committees) to the consideration of the necessary steps to create a new culture for the new organization. The leadership of these two organizations has mapped out what a new association will resemble but it is difficult to map a new organizational culture. The cultures the members of NASPA and ACPA have created for their associations will have to be laid aside and a new culture developed around the new association.

**Historical Context.** The historical context used in this study provided a foundation for the information shared by the 13 participants. Appleton, Briggs, and Rhatigan (1978) emphasized the importance of not being so attached to the present that history is neglected. History can serve as a road map to the future; by understanding where the profession of student affairs has been indicators are provided for how the profession can move forward.

A review of the three associations’ histories outlined the issues of gender equity dealt with at the outset. Understanding these initial issues allowed me to form a better understanding of present day gender equity issues. History cannot be forgotten as we seek to make improvements in the way gender equity issues are handled in the present and future.

An important aspect of history is the historian; the one who records and interprets history. Both NASPA and ACUHO-I have appointed individuals to be responsible for the collection and maintenance of the history of their associations. ACPA has not made such an appointment. Without a designated person to collect the history of the association, I fear it will be lost. As NASPA and ACPA move toward consolidation, it will be important to appoint someone or a committee to oversee the maintenance of the history of the new student affairs association.

**Mentoring Role of Higher Education.** Many of the participants in this study were introduced to the professional organization(s) they participate in during their undergraduate or graduate school education. They often referenced a professor or administrator who encouraged
them to get involved and gently shepherded them into the field. For the participants, these professors and administrators served as mentors and guides. Within American society, colleges and universities provide an atmosphere where the social norms of society are learned and practiced. Parks (2000) wrote, “Higher education is intended to serve as a primary site of inquiry, reflection, and cultivation of knowledge and understanding on behalf of the wider culture” (p. 10). The experiences students have during their years in higher education should prepare them for what they might encounter in the “real world.” Ortega y Gasset (2005/1944) described the purpose of the university as “The usage of the expression ‘general culture’ shows an underlying notion that the student ought to be given some ornamental knowledge, which in some way is to educate his moral character or his intellect” (p. 26). Ortega y Gasset was emphasizing the importance of an education that teaches students how to live. Providing students with knowledge of how the world around them operates and how they should operate within this world is not a notion new to Ortega y Gasset. Plato (trans. 1992) in his book *The Republic*, offered a discussion about the education necessary to make a good guardian of the city he was planning. The purpose of education to him was to transmit the appropriate values of the city. He wanted the guardians to understand the importance of justice within the city. Colleges and universities of the modern age are no different. The goal in providing higher education is to make students aware of appropriate behavior, both in and out of the academic setting. Professionals in higher education specifically, those in student affairs who work with students outside the classroom are in positions to assist students in their understanding of social norms and expectations. To this end it is important for professionals in higher education to role model the behavior expected from students.
Student affairs professionals have the potential to greatly impact the lives of undergraduate students through mentoring relationships and other forms of engaging with students. Professionals in student affairs connect with students through their work in a variety of functional areas such as, orientation, student life or campus activities, Greek life, multicultural affairs, and residence life. Through interactions on an individual level or through advising student organizations, student affairs professionals are presented with opportunities to act as mentors. Parks (2000) described a mentor as an individual who provides, “authoritative guidance at the time of the development of critical thought and the formation of an informed adult, and committed faith” (p. 128). Due to their positions of authority on college and university campuses, and the way they challenge students in their thinking processes many student affairs professionals can be considered mentors. In their contact with students, professionals in student affairs are often seen as authority figures and the information conveyed to students is weighted heavily in the student’s decision making process. Given the potential impact student affairs professionals can have on students, it is important the information conveyed regarding gender does not continue to perpetuate gender oppression.

**Role Modeling/Mentoring for Undergraduate Students.** The literature regarding career development and the academic achievements of students stated role models and mentors play an important role for students (Sharf, 1997; Zirkel, 2002; and Karunanayake and Nauta, 2004). Students look to their mentors and role models to provide advice and guidance as they make their way through academic endeavors and the process of selecting a career to pursue. Along with looking to these individuals for guidance, students observe their behaviors for cues on what is and is not appropriate within their specific social setting and context.
In a study of adolescents, Zirkel (2002) found that students with mentors of the same gender and racial identity were more motivated to succeed academically. The motivation was attributed to the fact that the students could see themselves in their mentors. It did not take a lot of imagination for the students to see themselves achieving the same levels of success as their mentors.

The findings in a study conducted by Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) regarding the relationship between race and the career role models students suggested similar results as the Zirkel (2002) study. Responding to the hypothesis, “a role model will be inspirational only to the degree that a person is able to identify with that model” (p. 226), the researchers found that those who participated in their study were more likely to have a role model of their same race. Despite the finding of their study Karunanayake and Nauta (2004), suggested that it is also important for students to have role models outside their race, “Role models who are different from oneself may help to challenge and dispel myths and stereotypes and may promote greater appreciation of diversity” (p. 231). For a student to have a mentor or role model outside of their race has the potential to change the students perspective on all individual who share the race of their mentor. Many of the participants in this study referenced faculty and role models who were not the same gender or race as being influential in their pursuit of student affairs as a profession.

Mentoring can take place in both formal and informal settings (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005). Effective mentoring relationships, according to Jacobi (as cited in Girves et al., 2005) contain the following five elements: 1) the relationship is focused on the achievement or acquiring knowledge; 2) it consists of support, direct assistance, and role modeling; 3) it has reciprocal benefits; 4) relations are personal in nature; and 5) mentors have greater experience, influence, and achievement within the mentoring setting. (p. 451)
Professionals in student affairs are afforded many opportunities to serve in mentoring roles for undergraduate students. By serving as mentors, student affairs professionals have the opportunity to influence how students treat other students and individuals they come in contact with. Additionally, mentoring relationships can be used to help students understand gender issues and how they operate in organizational contexts.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

The individuals representing the three student affairs associations in this study were selected because of their past and current involvement in leadership positions in one or more of these professional associations. As leaders within their organization they had knowledge of the organizational culture and structure, along with the policies and procedures used to govern the associations. Future studies of this nature should focus on a different level of participants within the associations, such as members who are not leaders or have been involved with the associations for less than five years.

Going forward it is important to understand what students are gaining in regard to gender equity from the professionals with whom they interact. To this end it would be beneficial to conduct a study with the undergraduate students who participate in STARS college in ACUHO-I, Next Generation in ACPA and the NUFP program in NASPA.

The focus of this study was on gender equity. From the responses of the participants, equity involved more than just gender. Future studies should focus on various types of privilege and marginalization and how they intersect to affect individuals’ experiences in and with organizations.
Personal Summary

As a woman working in higher education and participating in student affairs professional organizations, this study helped me to understand the importance of considering history in preparation for the future. By understanding the historical context of each of these organizations’ founding, I gained insight into the gender equity issues members experienced during the beginning of each of these associations. Understanding the beginning of the associations provided perspective on the modern issues of gender equity the associations must manage.

The evolution of each of the organizations regarding gender equity issues was the most interesting aspect of this study. The selected organizations have each evolved in the manner in which issues of gender equity are acknowledged and handled. In my reflection on the historical data reviewed and the information I collected from the 13 participants, these three professional associations have served multiple purposes. In the beginning the organizations were founded to provide a space for professionals to come together to gain information and share their professional practices. Although this is still one of the purposes of the organizations, they have also become arenas where societal issues such as gender equity are handled. Through this study, I learned the importance of organizational culture in shaping the experiences of the organizations’ participants. How each of the participants experienced their organization is subjective. It is not possible for an organization to dictate the type of experience each of its members will have. For some of the participants in this study, their participation in the organization has been a place where they did not have to worry about how their gender was influencing the work they did or how they did it. They felt they were judged by the skills and abilities they possessed and the contributions they have made. For others, their gender and other intersections of their identities
did influence their experiences in their associations. The wide differences in how participants who were members of the same associations points to the uneven experiences people have in the same association depending on their subgroup affiliations (Strange & Banning, 2001), as well as the importance of effectively communicating the organization’s efforts and progress toward issues like gender equity.

As a Black woman working in higher education, I have found it impossible to separate my race and gender, yet I assume it is possible for others. Conducting this study illuminated the importance of not separating the identities of others. Some of the participants in this study provided descriptions of themselves that included their race and gender or another aspect of their identity such as their sexual orientation. It is important to allow individuals who participate in student affairs professional organizations to bring and express all of their identities. It should be an expectation that the intersections of individuals’ identities will be recognized in the course of research and in the context of associations.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the gendered nature of the student affairs profession by investigating how ACPA, ACUHO-I, and NASPA handled issues of gender equity. I have reviewed the associations’ histories along with information from 13 participants, who held leadership roles within one or more of the associations. The information gained from this study illuminated the need for continued consideration of issues of gender equity within student affairs professional associations. The need to incorporate the intersectionality of member identities into how they experience these organizations was also important.
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Appendix A

Issues of Gender Equity in Student Affairs Professional Organizations
Interview Guide

The following questions will be used to guide interviews with the participants selected for this study.

- How long have you been a member of [name organization]?
- What caused you to seek membership in this particular organization?
- What has it meant for you to be a person of your gender in this organization?
- What messages have you received about what it means to be a person of your gender within this organization?
- Please think about the roles and responsibilities that are delegated within your subcommittee or knowledge community and who has customarily or traditionally assumed those roles and responsibilities. Would you say that you perceive gender to play a role in who is selected, assigned, or volunteers for those roles or responsibilities? Please explain.
- Please think about the roles and responsibilities that are delegated within the larger organization and who has customarily or traditionally assumed or been assigned those roles and responsibilities. Would you say that you perceive gender to play a role in who is selected, assigned, or volunteers for those roles or responsibilities? Please explain.
- What messages about being a man or woman do you think new member of this organization receive? How are those messages communicated?
- What symbols, images, or artifacts within the organization may or may not reinforce appropriate gender behavior?
- Describe the current policies and practices that are in place to promote or discourage gender equity within the organization.
- Do you believe members of a particular gender are privileged in this organization? If yes, in what ways? If no, how do you think the organization has kept that from happening?
- Do you believe members of a particular gender have been marginalized in this organization? If yes, in what ways? If no, how do you think the organization has kept that from happening?
- How conscious of gender and gender issues would you say this organization is as a whole? How conscious of gender and gender issues is your subcommittee or knowledge community?
- How do you live out your gender identity within the organization?
• Have you ever felt like your gender identity was not as valued in this organization?
• If you had to ascribe a gender to this organization what gender would you ascribe?

For participants identified as key informants:

• Who would you recommend that I talk to who may have a different perspective or experiences regarding gender equity within [name organization] than you?
Appendix B

Issues of Gender Equity in Student Affairs Professional Organizations
Participant Invitation

Dear [Name],

As a student in the Bowling Green State University Higher Education Administration doctoral program, I am conducting my dissertation study entitled “Issues of Gender Equity in Student Affairs Professional Organizations” to learn more about how issues of gender equity are handled within three specific student affairs professional organizations. Those three organizations are ACPA: College Student Educator International (American College Personnel Association), the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I), and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). As a student affairs professional who has been involved with one of these organizations in a leadership position, I am writing to invite your participation in my research.

An exploration into how student affairs professional organizations engage with and practice issues of gender equity will provide insight into which practices promote gender equity and should be replicated and which practices do not and should be discontinued. Through your participation in this study you may gain insight into the gender equity issues facing the organization(s) in which you participate.

I plan to conduct 9-12 interviews with individuals who have served these organizations in various leadership positions. I am asking you to participate in one, one-on-one interview that will last approximately 60-90 minutes in length. This interview will be conducted at a location that is convenient for you. I am also asking that you participate in 1-2 follow up phone calls and emails as necessary for clarification or to gain additional information. To ensure that I have correctly captured your thoughts and sentiments you will be provided with opportunities to read the transcript of your interview, to review and revise your statements and my interpretations of your responses.

All interviews will be digitally recorded for ease of transcription. All recordings, transcripts, forms, and other documents will be coded to protect your identity and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or explanation.

Should you have questions about this study or need further information or clarification, please contact me at 440-263-9523 (mobile), 419-372-6016 (office), or eashley@bgsu.edu. You can also contact the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Dafina Lazarus Stewart at 419-372-7382 or dafinas@bgsu.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will decide to contribute your experiences to my dissertation research.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Ashley
Doctoral Candidate
Bowling Green State University

P.S. Please note that e-mail is not 100% secure, so it is possible that someone intercepting your e-mail will gain knowledge of your interest in this study.
Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study regarding the gendered nature of the student affairs profession and gender equity within student affairs professional organizations. As part of the requirements for my doctorate in Higher Education Administration in the Higher Education and Student Affairs department at Bowling Green State University I am conducting a study entitled, “Issues of Gender Equity in Student Affairs Professional Organizations.”

This study is being conducted for my dissertation. The purpose of this study is to explore how professional associations within student affairs engage with and practice issues of gender equity. It will provide insight into the gendered nature of professional organizations within student affairs by using a feminist lens to analyze archival records and individual interviews. Specifically, it will document past and present policies and practices that do or do not promote gender equity in three student affairs professional organizations, ACPA: College Student Educator International (American College Personnel Association), the American College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I), and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

As a participant in this study you will be asked to participate in one in person interview to be held at a location convenient to you. The interview will be 60 to 90 minutes in length. After the initial interview you will be asked to participate in 1-2 follow up telephone calls and/or emails as necessary for clarification or to seek additional information. Upon the completion of your interview I will provide you with a copy of your interview transcript and a preliminary analysis which I will write for your review, feedback, and approval. Your interview will be digitally recorded for ease of transcription. All recordings, transcripts, forms, and other documents will be coded with a pseudonym to protect your identity and will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

The anticipated risks to you for participating in this study are no greater than those normally encountered in daily life. Your name and brief biographical information may be used in the text of my dissertation. Should you choose for your information to remain confidential please check the box at the bottom of this form. If you prefer for the information you provide to remain confidential I will protect your confidentiality as a respondent and your responses throughout the study and any publication of study results. Please be aware that due to the limited number of participants, it may be possible for someone to identify you based on your responses. Your participation in this project is completely voluntary and you can refrain from answering any questions without penalty or explanation. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the project at any time. If you decide to participate and later change your mind,
you may withdraw your consent and stop your participation without penalty or explanation. Your decision to participate or not participate will not impact any future relationship you may have with Bowling Green State University.

Should you have questions about this study or need further information or clarification, please contact me at 440-263-9523 (mobile), 419-372-6016 (office), or cashley@bgsu.edu. You can also contact the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Dafina Lazarus Stewart at 419-372-7382 or dafinas@bgsu.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board, Bowling Green State University at 419-372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu if any problems or concerns arise during the course of the study.

Completing and returning this consent form indicates that you have read the form and consent to participate in the study. A copy of the signed or unsigned consent form is available upon request.

_____________________________________  ___________________________________
Participant Signature     Date

_____________________________________
Participant Name - Printed

_____________________________________ _____________________________________
Researcher’s Signature    Date

☐ If the box is checked, it is my desire to have the information I have provided kept in confidence. I am requesting that no identifying information be included in the products of this research.

Please initial here____.