Summary of Data Search

Historical Framework for the Establishment of Single-Gender Organizations within the US

• The first wave of single-gender institutions founded during what’s considered the turn of the century, in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Known as the “Civil War, Reconstruction and Progressive Eras within US history. These institutions provided post-secondary educational opportunities for middle class white women, boarding residence from working class women leaving rural areas and moving to the large urban cities, as well as social, emotional development and well-being for women and girls. The institutions included the following:
  o Young Women’s Christian Association
  o Sister Seven Women’s Colleges and Universities
  o Girl Scouts of America; and
  o American Association of University Women

This is by no means an exhaustive list of organizations, for all women within the US at that time, but they provide an important framework for their emergence. An important note, is that all of these institutions were founded before the ratification of the 19th Amendment, prohibiting the federal government from denying white women the right to vote based on sex. Additionally, these institutions emerged during, and immediately after the abolition of slavery within the US.

Single-gender Policy

• Research across several databases on single-gender policies within intuitions produced no useable results related to the development and/or application based on this specific search term.

• Greater sources of data were found on either side of the debate related to single-gender organizations, largely educational experiences, social organizations within co-gendered educational institutions, focused on the exclusion and inclusion of individuals identified as women.

Gendered Organizations

• The remaining 33 historically women’s colleges and universities, down from their peak of more than 281 in the 1960s represent the complexities and shifting perspectives on economic, philosophical, social, political, and cultural realities and relevance to existence.

• Even as historically single-gender educational institutions struggle to adopt admission policies which meet changing social, political, and cultural changes, the institutions have gender-diverse and inclusive board of trustees.
Within the past 20 years, some gender justice organizations have expanded their philosophical or (mode) of achieving their social responsiveness based on expanding perspectives of the benefits of incorporating gender-diverse approaches to women and girl empowerment,

A growing body of data has emerged on effective approaches for “male-streaming” within traditionally single-gendered organizations.

Moving Beyond the Gender-Binary

- Exploration of the gender-identity spectrum (deeper conversations and recommendations for policy and practice alignment within organizational settings.
- Extensive implementation tools for creating gender-inclusive policies within organizational settings.
- Reviewed thought pieces on the complexities and opportunities of what it means to be a contemporary gendered organization.

Models of Gender-Inclusive Application for Further Exploration

- YWCA Association Members,
- Ms. Foundation for Women,
- Chicago Foundation for Women,
- Campaign School at Yale, and
- Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts of America

The Future of Gendered Organizations

- Data on reconciliation and resistance to these changes
- Data on the rise of interest in single-gender institutions in response to 2016 election and other gender-justice social movements

Contemporary gendered organizations are increasingly being asked to examine their existence through an expanding and diverse prism. Current social, political, and cultural changes require a much more nuanced and contoured approach to mission exploration and application.