



Call for Papers

The *Journal of Consumer Affairs* Announces a Special Issue on
Gender(S) and Consumer Well-Being

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The *Journal of Consumer Affairs* (JCA) invites papers for a special issue on Gender(S) and Consumer Well-being.

Our focus on genderS recognizes that all too often, the term “gender” becomes a misnomer for “women”. Yet gender is a complex and dynamic social relationship between groups of people (Harding 2015), invoking identities, expressions and experiences outside of the binary of male and female, hence our call for an appreciation of Gender(S).

Consumer behaviour and marketing literature has progressively contributed to understandings of enactments of gender identities and the way these shape and are shaped by consumers’ actions, media/ad portrayals, markets, and societal expectations and acculturation (e.g., Ferguson, Brace-Govan, and Welsh 2020; Hutton 2015; Molander, Kleppe, and Ostberg 2019; Murto 2020; Ostberg 2019; Rojas Gaviria et al. 2019; Steinfield, Coleman, et al. 2019; Thompson and Üstüner 2015). However, the plurality of *femininities* and *masculinities* remains in constant motion, opening up opportunities for extensions into these realms. We are thus open to papers that demonstrate a move away from the fixed model of a unitary masculinity/femininity, and towards an understanding of the complexity, fragmentation and differentiation which exists between the diverse consumer lives of men, women and genderqueers, as well as the continuities that unite them (Collier 2002; Connell 2005; Hearn and Hein 2015).

Imperatively, while the consumer behaviour and marketing literature has experienced a renaissance of gender-related scholarship in the past few years (see special issues in *Consumption Markets and Culture* (2019; vol 22 iss 4), the *Handbook of Research on Gender and Marketing* (Dobscha 2019), and forthcoming

issues in [*Journal of Marketing Management*](#), *Macromarketing*, and [*Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*](#)), a need to shed light on more invisible groups (non-binary, genderqueers, or intersectional dynamics) still exist (Steinfeld, Littlefield, et al. 2019). Indeed, as Coffin, Eichert and Nolke (2019) state in their reflection on LGBTQ+ studies, apart from gay men, perspectives of consumer well-being and the life-worlds of “lesbians, bisexual, trans*, gender questioning, and other non-heterosexual people” remain largely ignored (p. 274). We thus offer opportunities to correct for these oversights and to explore the multiple ways genderS are expressed in sexual orientations and/or lived in physical non-binary bodies.

As genderqueer theorists reminds us, non-binary gender identities, and gender fluid embodiments and performances are found across countries and throughout periods of history (Herdt 1996). They are increasingly being recognized in the legal, medical, psychological, and media arenas in line with the emerging recognition and advocacy of such groups (Richards et al. 2016; Spencer and Capuzza 2015), yet they also face backlash through forms of societal ‘moral panic’ (Herdt 2009) and misrepresentation (Abbott 2013). With this in mind, we invite scholarship that focuses on those consumers moving between genders (fluid) or those who disrupt the gender dichotomy through challenging, negotiating or politicising its very ontology and/or its veracity. We further encourage scholars to explore how performances of undoing gender (Seregina 2019) and (de)politicization efforts can magnify or resolve consumers’ well-being, and result in differing states of physical, mental, and emotional embodiments.

In recognition, however, that gender binaries and stereotypes continue to be reinforced through social policies and practices (Fausto-Sterling 2008), including market spaces (Takhar and Pemberton 2019), we call for scholarship that builds on our understanding of how these can lead to injustices, experiences of vulnerability, marginalizations and (in)visibilities, particularly those that are magnified due to intersectional sources of (dis)advantage and power imbalances (Steinfeld, Sanghvi, et al. 2019). We urge scholars to build on and update the extant research that has revealed a prevalence of gendered disadvantages in consumption realms, as made apparent in the link between societal gender inequality and lower levels of well-being (cf. Hill and Dhanda 1999), acts of violence (Gurrieri, Brace-Govan, and Cherrier 2016; Yeh et al. forthcoming), and studies on unequal social relations and gendered consumption strains (Hutton 2015), injustices (Hein et al. 2016), and experiences of discrimination in familial- and market-spaces (Hutton 2019; Steinfeld, Coleman, et al. 2019). Consumer research can continue to contribute to consumer wellbeing by examining more closely the interrelationship between intersectional marginalizations and genderS across multiple social and geographic contexts (Catterall, Maclaran, and Stevens 2005; Martin and Hill 2012; Steinfeld, Littlefield, et al. 2019).

Aligned to this is the stark realisation that the current global pandemic has amplified and heightened all existing inequalities, which in turn will shape which genders are impacted the most, particularly those already on the economic and social margins of

society (United Nations 2020). However, we also recognize that times have changed, and with it, the statistics and approaches to studying gender, and movements to support societal change. We thus ask for scholarship that can shed light on the degree to which progress, stagnation, or regression has occurred in efforts to resolve gender, particularly intersectional injustices, or to shift problematic, intersectional stereotypes (cf. Matich, Ashman, and Parsons 2019). Thus, to advance prior research, which has revealed a more agentic process in which consumers and other key actors are reacting or proactively navigating or challenging gender (read women) inequities and vulnerabilities (Steinfeld 2019; Zanette and Pereira Zamith Brito 2019), we emphasize the need for scholars to reveal more intersectional dynamics of various genderS, and how these shape and are shaped by consumer experiences, journeys and (re)action in/to market spaces.

Suggestions for topics include (but are not limited to):

- Masculinities and Femininities;
- GenderS rewind - re(examining) genders' stereotypes;
- Non-binary and genderqueer genders' consumption, marketplace experience, or (in)visibilities created across a range of landscapes (e.g., media, political laws/policies, physical environments, etc.);
- Physical, mental, and emotional embodiment of genders, including how these unfold in or relate to engagement, withdrawals and/or navigations of market-, social-, and/or familial-spaces, gender transition journeys, and consumption (in)vulnerabilities;
- Genders as negotiated, undone, and (de)politicized through consumption acts and consumption journeys;
- Marginalization of genders in developing/developed regions, including how intersectional sources of oppression may heighten these;
- Links of genders with updated statistics or work on material/life satisfaction, dimensions of wellbeing, and social isolation or inclusionary efforts;
- Pandemic intensification of consumption inequalities and injustices of genders and/or efforts to address these.

Researchers in *all* relevant fields and disciplines are encouraged to submit their work. Manuscripts may be submitted online through ScholarOne Manuscripts at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/joca>. Style guidelines and publishing requirements can be viewed online at wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/JOCA.

Please contact the special issue editors for further information about the issue or the Editorial office at joca@consumerinterests.org for questions about the submission system.

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