

Trans Access Through Praxis: Working with Students to Create Community Resources

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ABSTRACT

In 2024, Drs. Jones and Miller – trans studies scholars in Gender Studies and Sociology, respectively– began working with two California undergraduates developing an informational zine (self-published magazine) for trans, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming people seeking gender-affirming care through Medi-Cal, California’s version of Medicaid, the United States’ federally and state-funded healthcare program for low-income residents. Against the backdrop of the Trump administration’s decimation of United States social programs that primarily benefit marginalized communities, we developed a zine that: demystifies the bureaucracy of Medi-Cal; that users could access via a stable URL; and that we could easily revise to address continued shifts in anti-trans law and policy. In this paper, we reflect on lessons learned throughout the project by asking three important questions about trans resistance in the face of growing national and international fascist modes of government: 1) How is transgender embodiment conceived by and through the state vis-a-vis healthcare services? 2) In a context of increasingly defunded and/or decentralized social programs, what are horizontal and non-hierarchical strategies for resource and skill-sharing? 3) How can we share these skills and resources intersectionally, or in a manner not necessarily exclusively aligned with one identity but rather across multiple identities? The authors share the potential significance of the zine for incarcerated folks, reentering folks, indigenous resource networks, and housing/shelter programs. In this session, we hope to promote dialogue about the importance of community collaborations as a sustainable resource for those targeted under variable levels of state tyranny and repression.

Keywords: trans, healthcare, gender-affirming care, zine, skill-sharing