

# The “T” in LGBT: Survey Results

## WHO WE SURVEYED -- ORGANIZATIONS

- Direct mail to 350+ Wisconsin LGBT organizations and businesses
- Rainbow picnic (handed out flyers) (attendees = 150?)
- Posted notice at the LGBT Community Center bulletin boards
- Court Street Block Party (table and handed out flyers) (attendees = 200?)
- Announcements to local non-LGBT press (Shepard Express, Onion, Journal Sentinel, Riverwest News, UWM and Marquette papers, etc.)
- Advertisement in the Pride Guide
- Two additional ads in Queer Life News
- One QLN article

## WHO WE SURVEYED -- TRANS/SOFFA INDIVIDUALS

- FORGE sponsored email lists (6, totaling 1,706 subscribers)
- Midwest trans email lists (12, totaling 2,277 subscribers)
- National email lists (51, totaling 20,432 subscribers)
- Gemini Gender Group (several announcements) (attendees = 15+)
- FORGE (multiple announcements) (attendees = 15 – 40)
- Packet of 10 surveys and flyer to SHEBA (African American trans group)
- Packet of 10 surveys and flyer to 16<sup>th</sup> Street Clinic’s Latino trans group

## NUMBER OF SURVEY RESPONSES

- 394 transgender and SOFFA individuals
- 54 organizations

## ORGANIZATIONS’ GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS

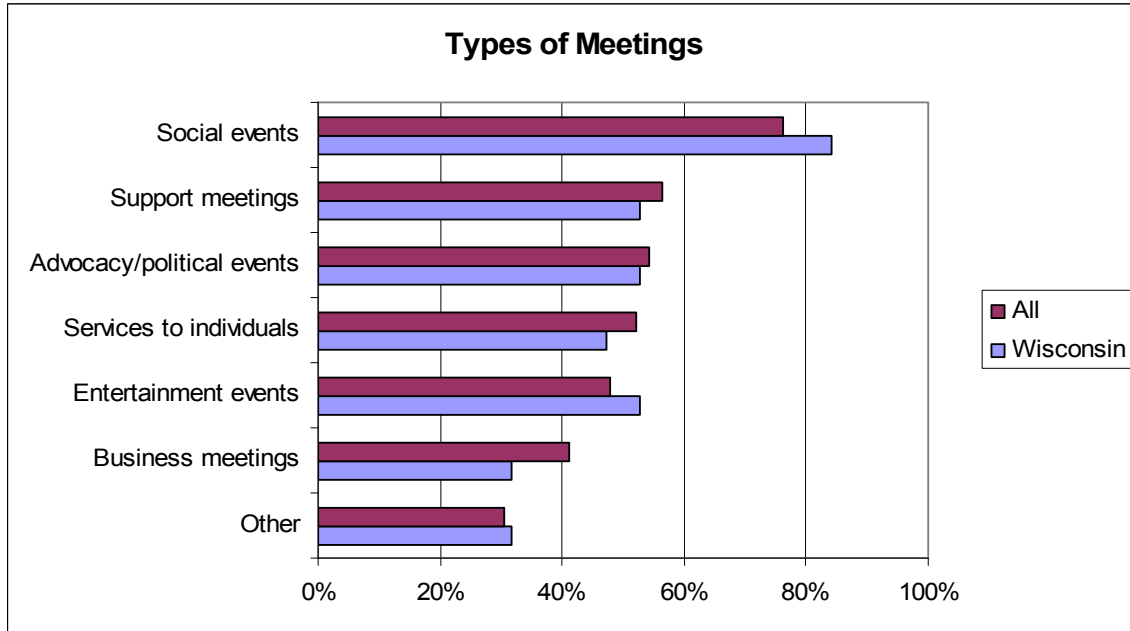
- 19 Wisconsin
- 27 Other states/countries

## TRANS/SOFFA RESPONDENTS’ GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS

- 47 Wisconsin
- 347 Other states/countries

**SS:** Answer: 3. Social was the most common type of meetings sponsored by Wisconsin LGBT organizations

**WHAT TYPES OF MEETINGS DO ORGANIZATIONS HOLD?**



We also had a number of businesses and professionals.

**GENDER OF ORGANIZATIONS' MEMBERSHIP**

**SS:** Answer: The Wisconsin mixed LGBT group with the largest proportion of trans members was Project Q, with 20%.

Overview, Gender of Membership			
	# of WI Orgs	# Total Orgs	% of Trans
Mostly Female	5 organizations	6 organizations	0 - 4%
Mostly Male	6 organizations	7 organizations	0 - 5%
"Evenly" Divided*	8 organizations	20 organizations	0 - 20%
Mostly Trans	0 organizations	5 organizations	--

\* Less than 20% difference between male and female attendees

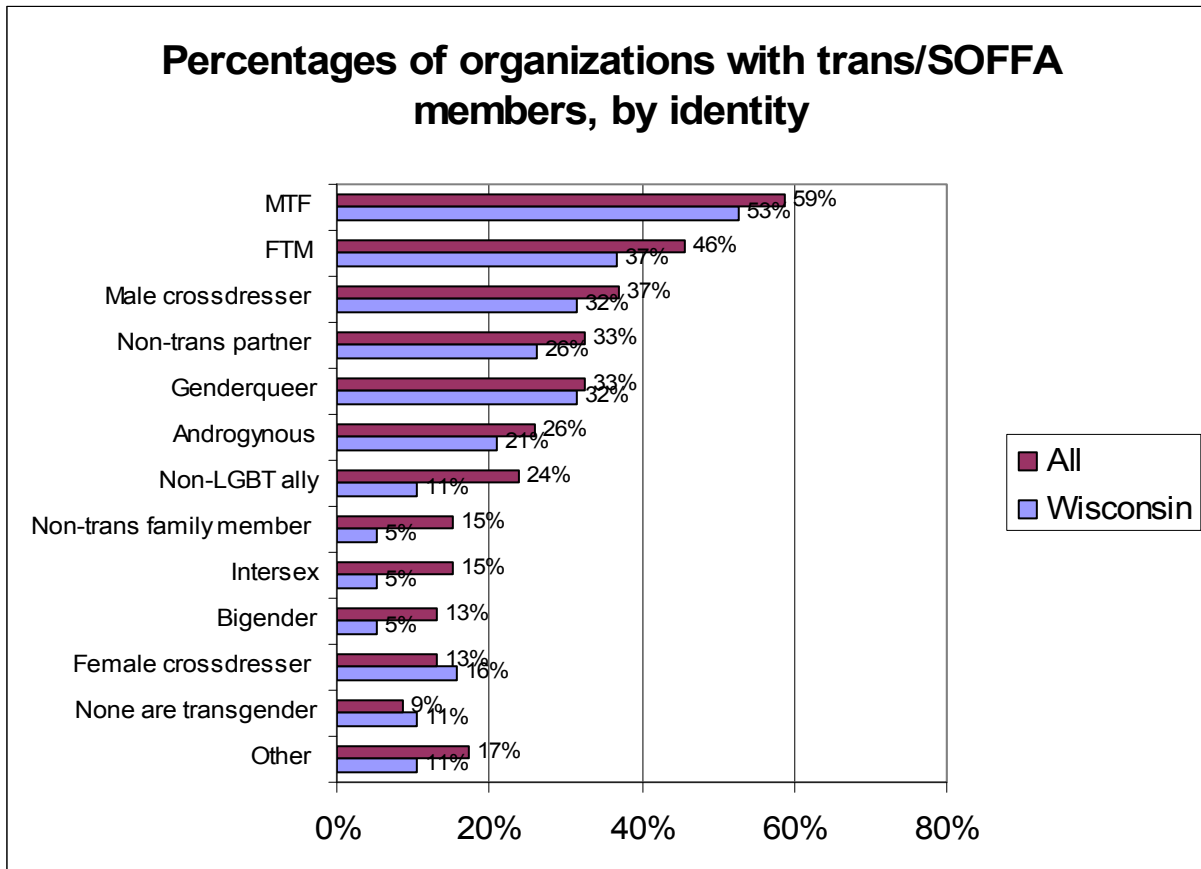
**Gender breakdown of mostly trans organizations**

Gender Breakdown of Mostly Trans Organizations		
MTF	FTM	Other
60% MTF	40% FTM	
85% MTF	10% FTM	5% Other
90% MTF	5% FTM	5% Other
70% m	20% f	
5% MTF	95% FTM	

Note that we don't actually know how to classify the "70% m and 20% f" answer.

**Percentage of organizations with trans/SOFFA members, by identity**

**SS:** Answer: 3. MTFs have attended 53% of responding Wisconsin LGBT groups



**What types of trans people are welcome?**

Most organizations marked that all types of trans people are welcome at their organizations:

	Wisconsin Organizations		All Organizations	
	#	%	#	%
All welcome	17	89%		76%
Other	2	11%	5	11%

Those who marked “other” included some of the following comments:

*“If I were to express my gender in any nonconforming way I would not feel welcome here”*  
(intern at national LGBT organization)

*“All are welcome for individual services; our challenge is around integration into group services”*  
(LGBT counseling program)

*“This question does not have an option for 'self-defined Lesbian' women. It's wording is also a bit biased, because the organization cannot control which people each member would 'welcome' or not”* (Lesbian organization)

*“MTFs with non-typical behavior have in the past been treated poorly”* (university housing program)

*“As long as they feel they have a place in the women's community, all past, present, and future women are welcome”* (women’s organization)

**Organizations’ policies on trans members**

SS: Answer: 1. 26% of Wisconsin LGBT organizations are currently writing a policy about trans inclusion.

Does your organization have a policy on trans inclusion?

	Wisconsin Organizations		All Organizations	
	#	%	#	%
Yes, written/formal policy		26%		35%
Yes, informal		32%		30%
No, we do not have a policy		32%		24%
No, we are in the process of writing one		26%		15%
I don’t know		11%		11%

The policies were prompted in several ways (the options were given by the survey writers):

	Wisconsin Organizations	All Organizations

	#	%	#	%
A trans person attended an event	0	0%	3	7%
A trans person asked to attend an event	0	0%	1	2%
A non-trans member asked for a policy	1	5%	3	7%
The community seemed to expect us to add "T"	1	5%	3	7%
I don't know	6	32%	9	20%
Other	6	32%	19	41%

"Other" responses:

*Because a now former coordinator and myself have started identifying along the trans spectrum it has encourage more conversation and confrontation of the CWC policies towards the trans community and how we can better meet the needs of this population.*

*We knew that we would have transfolk wanting to join our group; we discussed among ourselves who we would feel comfortable being around socially and in play spaces with one another.*

Some policy examples:

*We are in the works of creating a formal policy but informally we welcome anyone that wants to take part in any of our services. Because our name (Campus Women's Center) may by nature seem to not include certain individuals we are trying to get the word out that it's only a name.*

*Because we value sexual pleasure and health for all people, and because this is a sensitive, intimate topic for most, we do not make assumptions about our customers' sexual orientation, gender identity, or preferred sexual acts. This attitude is evident in the products we carry and, more importantly, in the way our staff interacts with customers.*

*All are welcome to come and participate, pray, advocate, and work without restriction.*

*Any past, present or future woman who is eighteen years of age or older and who feels s/he has a place in the women's community.*

The following organization wrote an inclusion policy for its local United Way that it has also adapted for itself:

*Inclusiveness Affirmation - OUTstanding Amarillo values collaborative and inclusive service to the entire community, without excluding anyone on the basis of any factor not relevant to a person's eligibility for service or ability to contribute.*

They commented about their approach:

*We opted to eliminate the 'short list' of people we don't discriminate against, i.e. age, sex, religion, gender, etc. and just make ours job related regardless of likenesses or differences.*

A housing cooperative noted:

*Trans people are explicitly included in our theme. It is unwritten policy that trans people are housed according to their gender of identity.*

However, this policy has not helped them with all dilemmas:

*There is still an issue with people who identify as neither male nor female, or both, as the larger organization of which we are a part requires members to declare a male or female gender identity so that our house conforms to a 50/50 'gender' ratio.*

It's important to note that policies do not necessarily translate into action. One respondent working for a legal program for LGBT people assumed there was a policy at hir office, but noted:

*Attorneys reviewing help desk calls will frequently dismiss transgender individuals seeking legal assistance because the issues and facts are 'too complicated.' I have experienced frustrating encounters with attorneys who insisted on knowing the surgery/genital status of callers who identify as trans, don't understand that a caller who identifies as a trans woman identifies as female, frequently use the wrong pronoun, etc.*

There are also people who believe that the process of even discussing whether to have a trans policy is divisive and could even lead to the organization "going under."

*I think this question is a bit biased in favor of having a policy. I don't think organizations should be forced to take a stand on the 'T' issue, because this polarizes people and divides the group. The Lesbian Alliance's mission speaks to Lesbian women and defines Lesbian as any 'self-defined' Lesbian. While this definition causes problems for some, it doesn't for others, and in this way, it cannot come under attack, and it should not come under attack from one side or the other. At the same time, people should respect the right of organizations. There is great pressure from the 'LGBT/Q' community for all groups to automatically include every letter in the acronym. Members of the Lesbian Alliance do not want to be put under this pressure and would like to be respected as a Lesbian organization for Lesbians. We don't want to have to define what 'Lesbian' means for people, even if some of us have different definitions. The best way to avoid conflict, attack, and going under is to be clear that this is a Lesbian organization and that we don't define Lesbian, our members do.*

**ORGANIZATIONS' NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WITH TRANS PEOPLE**

**SS:** Answer: Wisconsin organizations have had fewer negative experiences with trans people than LGBT organizations nationally: 11% to 17%

Question: Has the attendance of a trans person ever caused distress among members?

	Wisconsin Organizations		All Organizations	
	#	%	#	%
Yes, we've had a distressful experience	2	11%	7	17%
No, we've not had a distressful experience	13	68%	25	61%
Unknown	4	21%	9	22%

Most of the reported problems were other clients or members having trouble with trans peers:

*One of our lesbian groups had to work on how to welcome a trans woman into the group.*

*There is prejudice in society - sometimes other clients are uncomfortable with the presence of trans people (or others eg homeless people). The trans person is not penalized for this.*

*A former member who was MTF seemed unwelcome. Some members express disapproval of feminine non-trans men.*

At least one of the groups directly addresses this problem:

*I'm sure it distresses some people. We actively address trans issues at [our program], including providing regular education programs, bringing in guests, viewing films, doing advocacy, posters on walls, etc.*

Another organization did not specify what prompted their "learning process," but discussed it under the question of whether they had had negative experiences:

*It was a serious learning process for most lesbian and gay persons within our group in March of '05. This prompted a learning process that we all have appreciated and carried throughout our mission.*

One trans-focused program has had problems with two members who had personality disorders; another organization's story may reflect a similar problem:

*Many of our members have left the group because of this trans person and his/her behavior at one time. Some of the women said that this person is not an MTF, but a male crossdresser and that in the past he/she has talked about his penis and how it is what Lesbians all want. This has offended many women, so they have left and not come back. I was not around at the time and cannot speak to the accuracy of the accounts, but I do know that women were upset, left, and aren't coming back.*

One program’s staff had to sort through whether they had a problem related to transness, or something else:

*A youth known to us as male came to an aftercare group as a woman in a VERY short dress. Staff needed to work out that the length of the skirt was something we needed to address but not the gender switch.*

**ORGANIZATIONS’ POSITIVE EXPERIENCES WITH TRANS PEOPLE**

**SS:** Answer: 4. 74% of Wisconsin LGBT organizations said they have had a positive experience with a trans person.

	Wisconsin Organizations		All Organizations	
	#	%	#	%
Yes, we’ve had a positive experience	14	74%	32	76%
No, we’ve not had a positive experience	0	0%	1	2%
Unknown	5	26%	9	21%

Retail examples of positive experiences:

*I helped out a young transgender man pick out an outfit. We sized him for a bustier, picked out stockings and a garter belt, and had a blast. It was truly a comfortable experience for both of us. (Wisconsin retail store)*

*I enjoy finding just the right lingerie/hosiery/accessories for these people. (Wisconsin retail store)*

*Male crossdressers frequently shop for lingerie here. There was one man, an ordinary-looking person in a Packers’ jacket, who tried on and purchased a corset. It was the first time he’d been able to be open about this in public, and to find a store where the staff wanted to help him and treated him graciously and professionally made him visibly happy. (Wisconsin retail store)*

Example of an organization’s members requesting information:

*These persons fit in nicely! (Wisconsin LGBT organization)*

*We are about to form a Transgender support group for[our members] because the need has arisen. We are also about to begin a four month workshop on “Our Sexuality,” with one month*



*each being devoted to discussion of Transgender, Bisexual, Lesbian and Gay Male. We feel this is positive because people have asked for these discussions to better understand other members. (Wisconsin LGBT organization)*

*We had an educational gender forum that allowed everyone to express their questions, etc.*

Example of consultation with a transgender organization:

*Meeting with [a transgender organization] to consult about how our agency could better serve trans people. (Wisconsin LGBT organization)*

But be careful of your language! Is this an MTF or an FTM? Is it's an MTF, the pronoun, unless otherwise directed, should be "she."

*We have successfully provided mental health services to a number of trans people. One MTF was getting abused by his sister who he lived with. We were able to connect him to resources for shelter, sustainable housing as well as mental health services. (Wisconsin LGBT organization)*

**ORGANIZATIONS' INTEREST IN TRAINING ON TRANS ISSUES**

**SS:** Answer: 3. 78% of Wisconsin LGBT organizations want more training on trans issues

Most of the people who filled out organizational surveys said their organization would be interested in more training on transgender issues:

	Wisconsin Organizations		All Organizations	
	#	%	#	%
Yes, we'd like to learn more	21	78%	39	83%
No thanks	6	22%	8	17%

**SS:** Answer: 1. General education on trans issues was the training topic most wanted by LGBT groups.

We asked those organizations that wanted to learn more what issues or questions they would like to see addressed. We categorized these answers as follows:

**Number of Organizations Interested in Training, By Topic/Interest**

Topic	# of Wisconsin orgs	# of All orgs
General education on trans issues	4	12
Integrating trans people into organization	5	10
Adapting existing services	2	6

SOFFA issues	3	3
Meeting specific trans needs	1	3
Trans inclusion policies	0	3
Educating the mainstream re: trans issues	0	3
General organizational help	1	2
Educating trans people	0	1

**General education on trans issues**

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Some of the questions people wanted addressed that we grouped under this category include:

*Information about the range of what trans people are.*

*Gender fluidity in youth.*

*Many lesbian and gay people do not understand why tg people don't just live as butch dykes and drag queens like the others in the past.*

*How to bring up the subject without offending anyone.*

*We are interested in lifestories or biographies or pathways.*

*Why do trans people exist? What is trans mechanism? How to accept & address them? Etc!*

*Younger members frequently ask basic trans 101 type questions.*

**Integrating trans people into organizations**

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Existing groups often suggested that they had already identified possible barriers to more trans inclusion, and wanted assistance in addressing those specific barriers. Other times, the questions were a little more generic.

*How can we as a Women's organization better serve the trans community? What kind of resources should we offer? How can we get more involved in trans activism and programming? How can we make an all women's work environment feel comfortable to those of us who don't identify as woman?*

*Best practice for group inclusion.*

*Ways to make our organization more trans-friendly and a place where transfolk would feel comfortable.*

*Mostly our staff want to know 'do's and don'ts'.*

*How can we better serve the 'T' population in our area? How can we reach/attract the 'T' population in our area?*

*Ways to reach out to the trans community.*

*Ongoing trans info and training for staff.*

*I would like to learn how my own biases may be blinding me to the needs of trans people who are different from myself, such as crossdressers.*

*We'd like to have more trans input on the issues we work on.*

### ***Adapting existing services to T-specific needs***

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One organization asked a generic “how services might be different delivered to a trans person,” but several others, particularly retail and professional respondents, had very tailored needs. A hairdresser wanted more information on hairstyles and grooming; a retail store wanted leads to trans-specific products; and a choir wanted more information on how hormones change singers’ voices. There was also a request from a healthcare organization for advice on changing medical forms to be trans inclusive and gender neutral.

### ***SOFFA issues***

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*Family and partner issues. What are some typical experiences of partners who identify as Lesbian, for example, and then their partner becomes FTM? Do straight partners who stick around by mutual design then need to identify as homosexual or bi? (I think this is where the 'pan' or 'omni' part comes in.) Is there specific support in the community for children of trans folks? (I know some who have not had an easy time of it.)*

*Working with families of LGBT youth, especially Trans youth.*

### ***Meeting specific trans needs***

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Several organizations wanted to provide services that are specific to trans populations, such as referral services.

*Qualified medical resources in Wisconsin, qualified mental health professionals for referral, and qualified resources for youth.*

*[Topics] specific to older adults - medical/health issues, negotiating aging issues as a trans person (social, housing, \$\$, medication, etc).*

*We would love to have a library of pamphlets and such on various topics. Of special interest to me: the Real ID Act and what it means for everyone with emphasis on trans and immigrant rights; So You Have A Trans Patient for doctors and nurses and midwives and such; a how-to for cops dealing with transfolk and a how-to for transfolk dealing with cops; a step-by-step booklet for changing one's name and gender on IDs and birth certificates and SS cards and passports and dealing with the Selective Service; So You Have a Trans kid/sibling/spouse/parent; How to Transition On the Job; etc.*

*I would like to know what can I do to help make the group more trans-friendly. Some of the people I think have transphobia (maybe an extension of internalized homophobia) and seem to distance themselves from transpeople in a negative way, e.g. 'I may be gay, but at least I'm not like \*that\*' (meaning trans). I wouldn't even want a transperson to come to our group because I think that s/he would not have a positive experience because of this. Any resources that would help with this would be appreciated.*

### ***Trans inclusion policies***

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The kind of guidance people wanted for developing trans inclusion policies ranged from the generic...

*Language for the policy.*

...to the explicit:

*Organizations trying to advocate gender issues within larger and political organizations need a consistent set of categories and definitions to aid in writing policy for their inclusion, acceptance, and appropriate treatment. Resources that attend to appropriate ways for organization to help trans feel normal, comfortable, and included would be of great help in formulating policy to advocate.*

A housing organization that assigns people based on gender said:

*It would be good to learn how third-gender or agender-identified people may be better included in the application process.*

### ***Educating the mainstream about trans issues***

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Two transgender-focused organizations and an LGBT organization wanted help in focusing outwards:

*How can we educate the public on the current scientific views of gender, and ways to educate our community about trans issues.*

*How to educate the general public about the fact that there is no fixed correlation between brain gender & anatomical sex which society in the past has locked in with brain gender in assigned roles & task capabilities!*

*Trans people and the workplace/educating employers.*

### **General organization help**

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As with all “minority culture” issues, it’s important to remember that many concerns people have are universal and, while not related to a given demographic group, nevertheless affect that subpopulation.

*How can we get our board members to show up to meetings and actually finish the bylaws, etc?*

*Cream City Foundation recognizes a gap in services and recognition of Trans people/issues in Southeastern Wisconsin. We want to find ways to encourage capacity building and support for organizations working to change this.*

### **Educating trans people**

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We weren’t sure exactly what this comment meant, but it was under training needs and from a group that sponsors “play parties,” so we guessed it was to help transwomen integrate more smoothly into their organization:

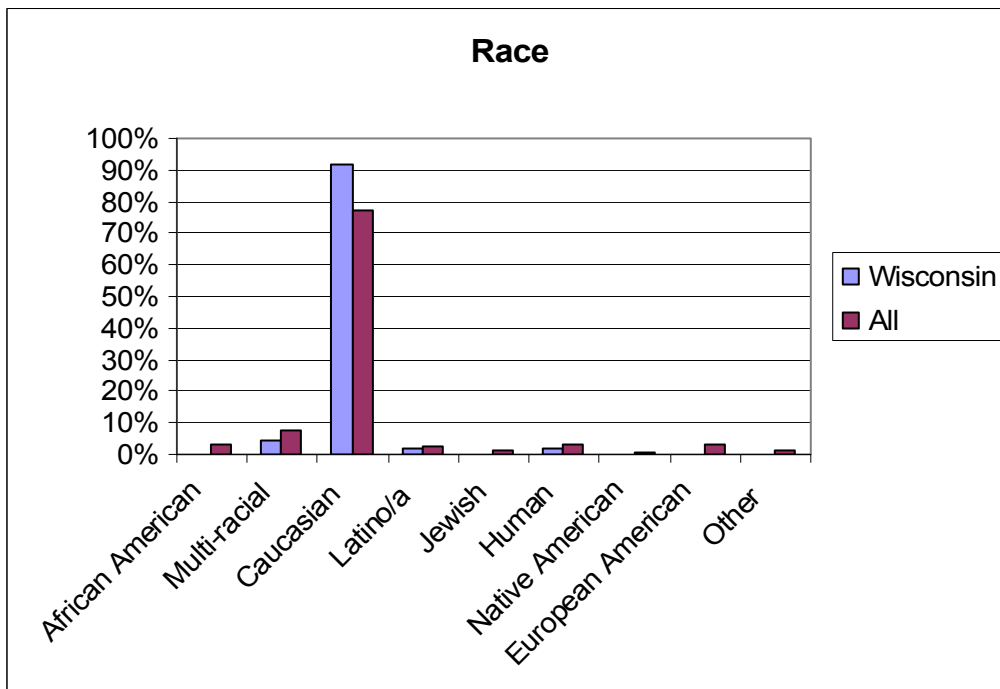
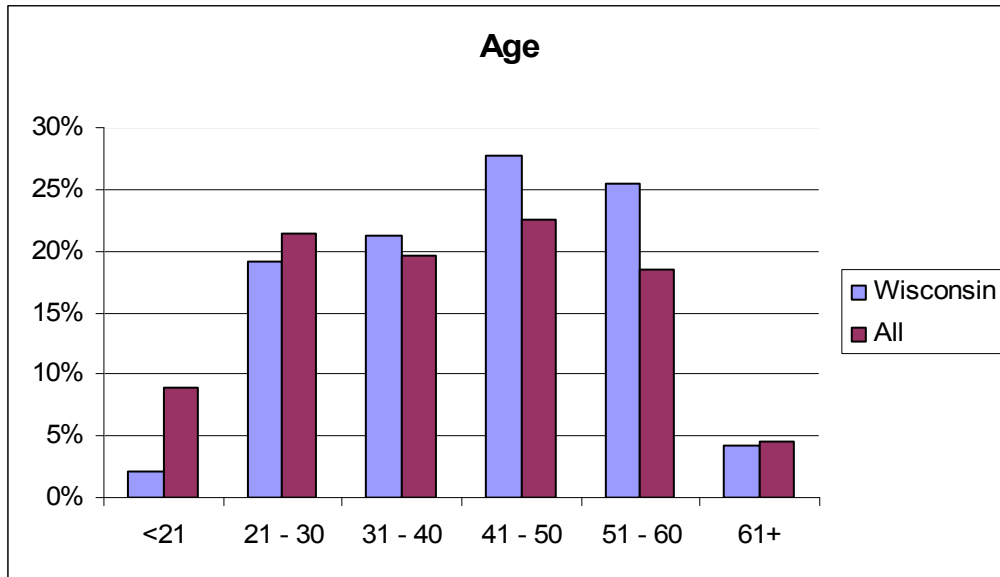
*Sexuality protocol and etiquette among nontrans women in intimate settings.*

## **INDIVIDUAL TRANS/SOFFA DEMOGRAPHICS**

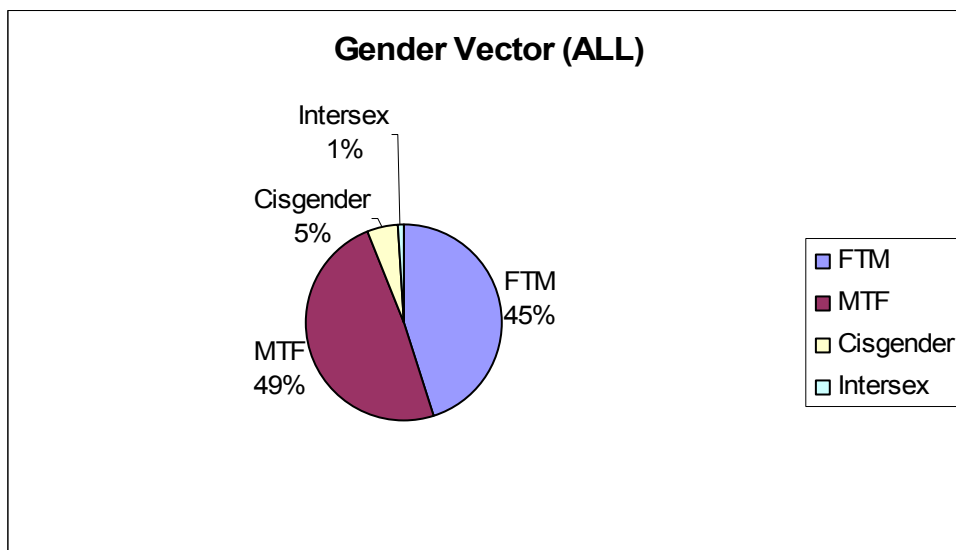
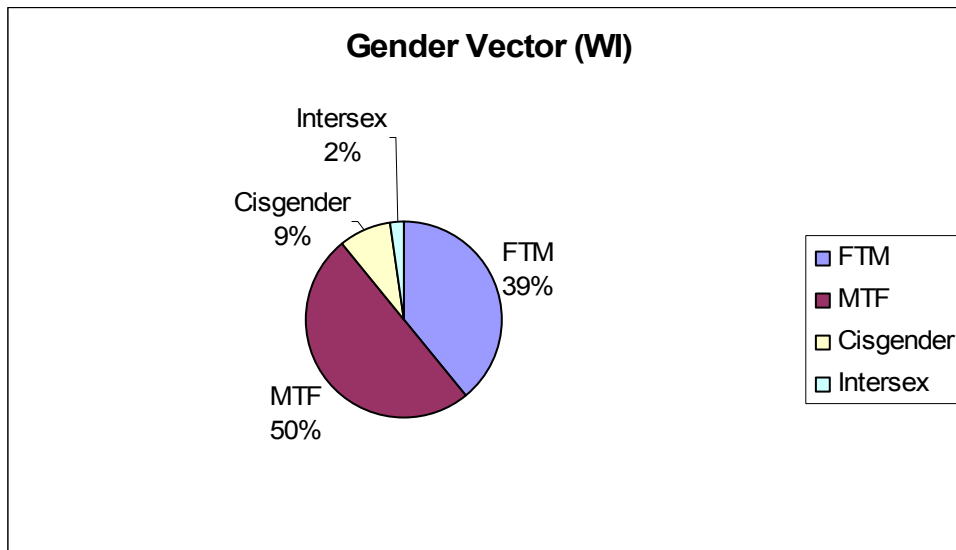
Number of respondents:

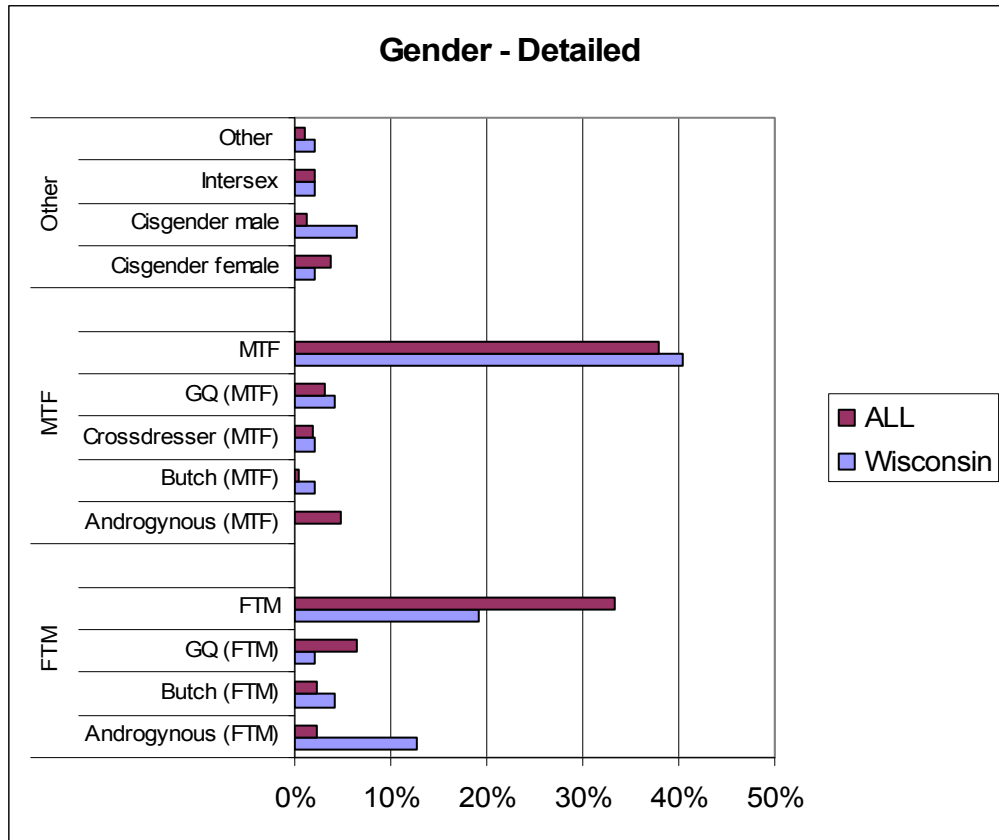
Wisconsin: 47  
Other states/countries: 347

**SS:** Answer: 3. 41-50 was the most common age range of respondents, but the age spread was remarkably even overall.



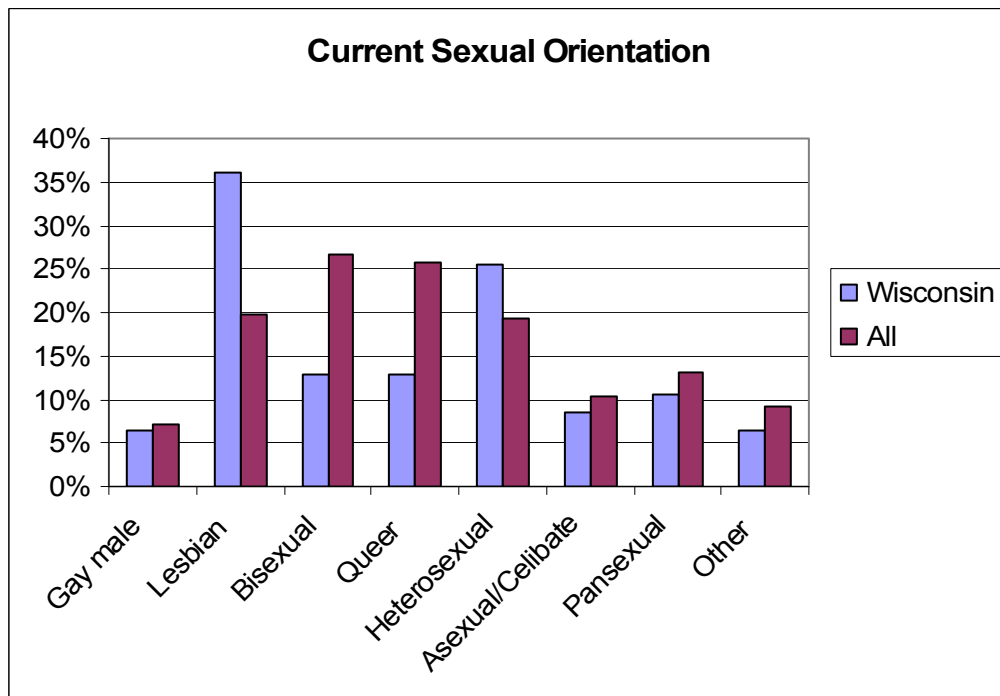
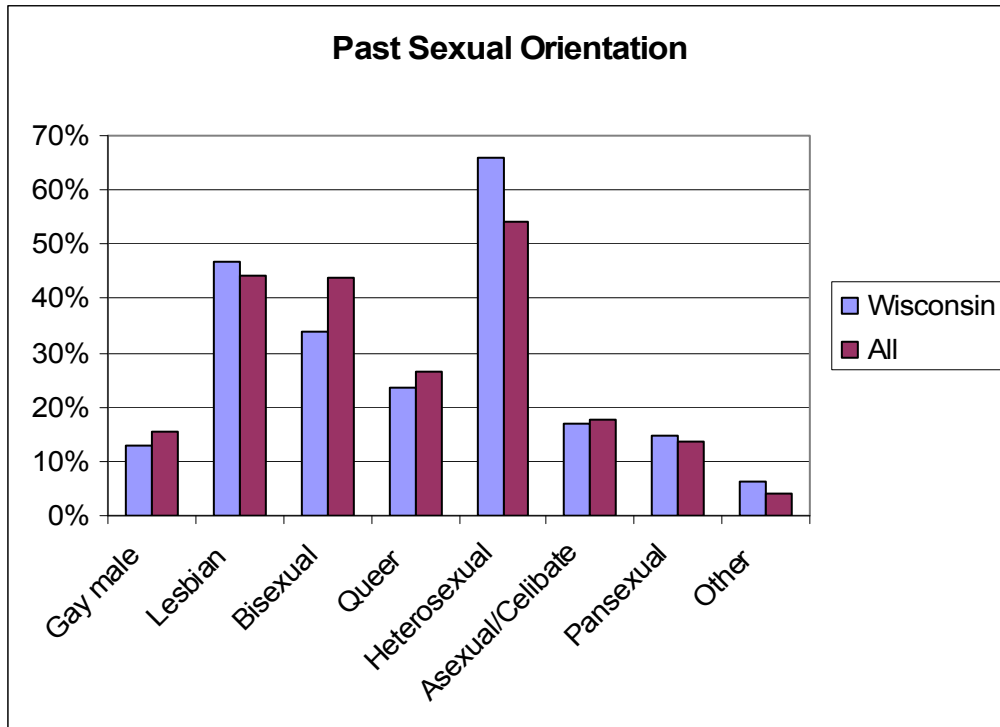
**SS:** Answer: 50% of trans/SOFFA respondents were on the MTF vector



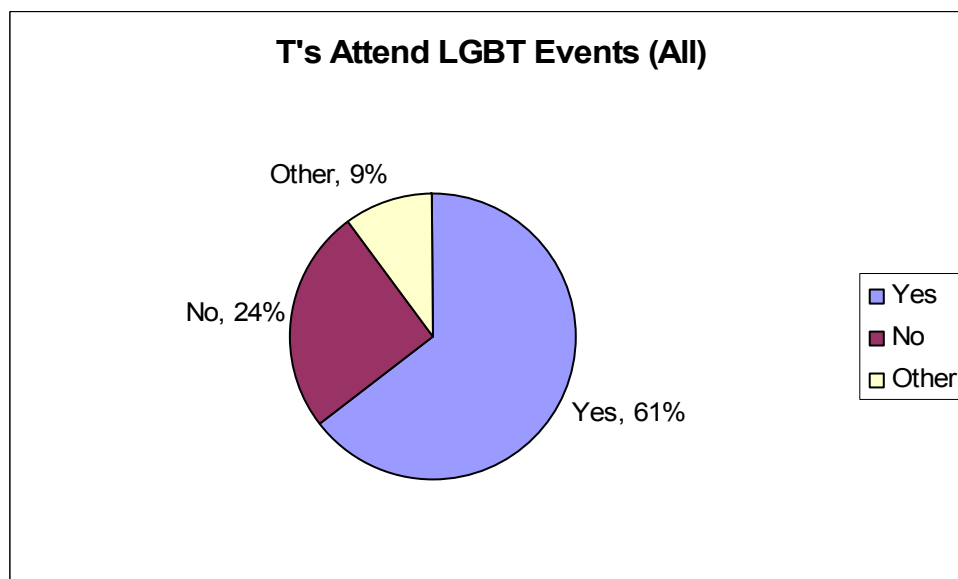
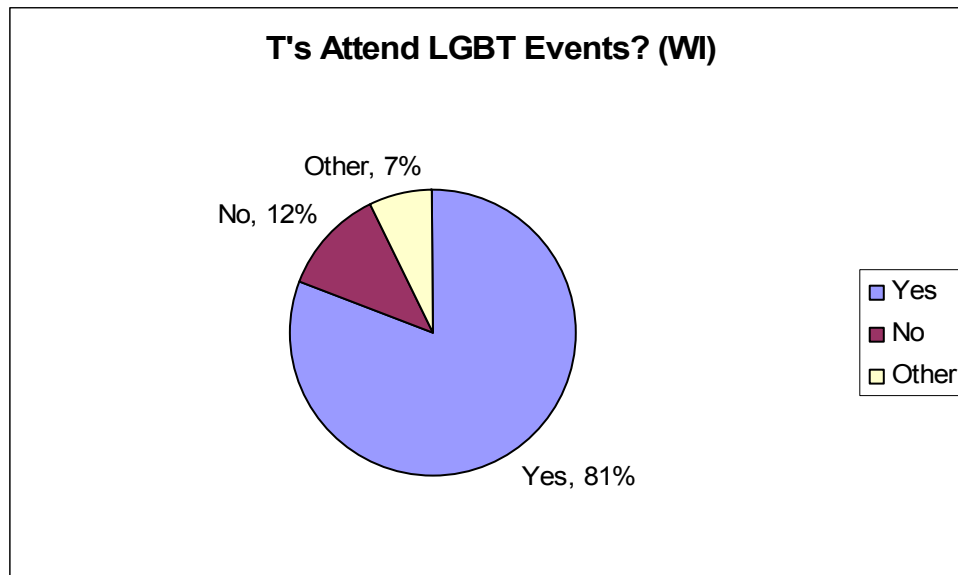


**SS:** Answer: 1. Heterosexual was the most common past sexual orientation of trans/SOFFA respondents.

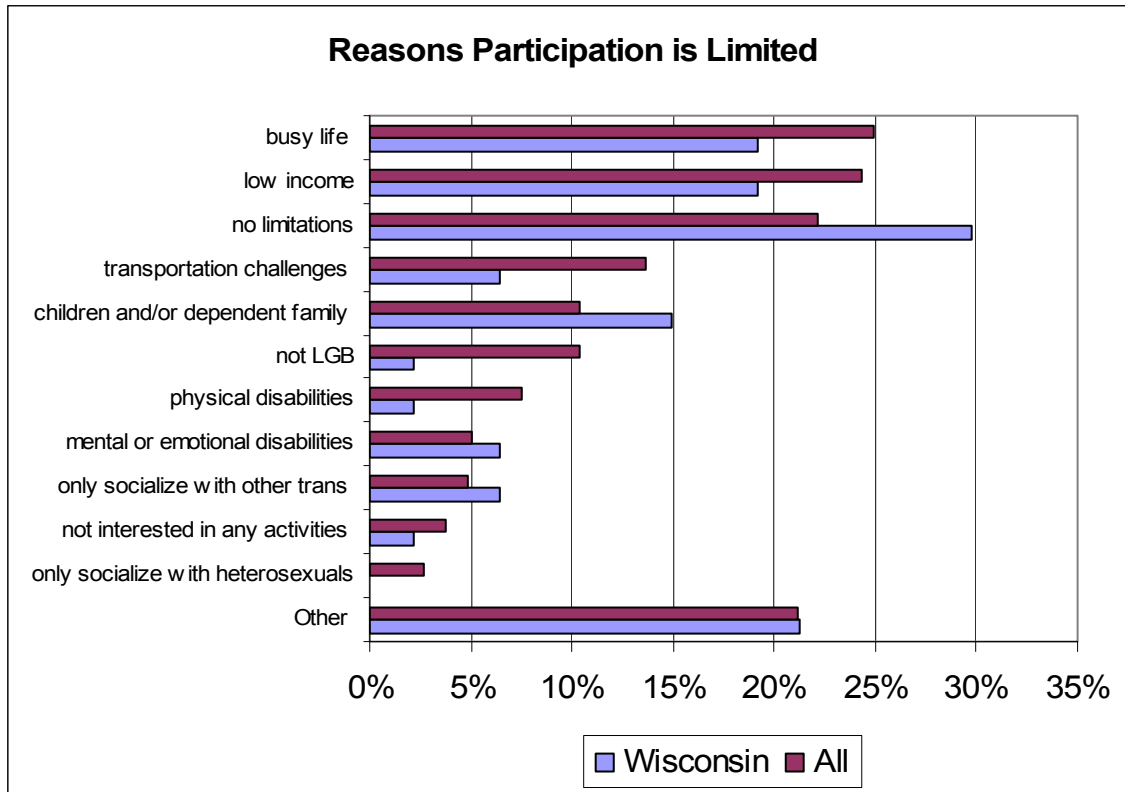




**SS:** Answer: 4. 81% of WISCONSIN trans/SOFFAs attend LGBT events; the % is 61 for national



**SS:** Answer: 1. Busy life 2. Low income were tied as reasons T/SOFFA people did NOT attend LGBT groups



## WHO WE ARE NOW

**SS:** Answer: 2. 28% of Wisconsin trans/SOFFA respondents said that currently “LGBT” includes non-LGBT partners of trans people

**SS:** Answer: 4. 58% of organizational representatives – more than twice as many T/SOFFA respondents – thought non-trans partners of trans people would be welcome.

## Who Does “LGBT” Include?

	Trans individuals’ answers				Organizations’ answers			
	Wisconsin		All		Wisconsin		All	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Other	10	21%	58	15%	1	5%	11	24%
Non-LGBT allies	13	28%	109	28%	11	58%	24	52%
Non-LGBT family	13	28%	117	30%	11	58%	24	52%
Non-LGBT partners	13	28%	124	31%	11	58%	25	54%
Crossdressers	31	66%	204	52%	13	68%	29	63%
Trans (heterosexual)	36	77%	277	70%	17	89%	39	85%
Trans (LGB)	36	77%	306	78%	18	95%	39	85%

Trans (any orientation)	37	79%	296	75%	18	95%	41	89%
Androgynous/GQ	35	74%	258	65%	18	95%	40	87%
Bisexuals (opposite-sex partner)	34	72%	289	73%	19	100%	41	89%
Bisexuals (same-sex partner)	39	83%	326	83%	19	100%	41	89%
Gay men	40	85%	360	91%	19	100%	41	89%
Lesbians	40	85%	359	91%	19	100%	41	89%

Those who answered an organizational survey were, overall, far more generous in terms of whom they felt “LGBT” included. With the notable exception of cross-dressers, transgender individuals felt there was far less welcome for anyone other than lesbians and gay men under the “LGBT” umbrella than did those filling out surveys in an organization’s name. Especially noteworthy is the finding that more than half of organizations’ representatives felt that non-LGBT SOFFAs (Significant Others, Friends, Family, and Allies) were welcome, whereas just half as many trans people felt non-LGBT SOFFAs were welcome under the LGBT umbrella.

It is also interesting to note the extent to which being a heterosexual trans person or a bisexual with an opposite-sex partner made someone less welcome than their peers in same-sex relationships: representatives of organizations maintained bisexuals and transgender people were basically equally welcome regardless of the gender of their partner. While the overwhelming majority of transgender respondents felt bisexuals and transgender persons of any orientation were generally welcomed, a few did feel that those with same-sex partners were more welcome than those with opposite-sex partners.

## WHO WE SHOULD BE

### Should There Be a “T” At the End of “LGB”?

**SS:** Answer: 1. 2% of Wisconsin trans/SOFFA respondents said T should NOT be included under the LGBT umbrella

#### Yes, Link Ts with LGBs

Nearly two-thirds or more of our transgender respondents said that transgender definitely belongs under a united LGBT umbrella: 237 people, 63%, said “yes” to the question. (Wisconsin respondents were even more positive: 79% said “yes” (N = 33).) Very few gave a flat-out no: only 34 people, or 9% of our respondents, said no, with only one Wisconsinite saying no. Hefty minorities said they were unsure how to answer, or had a mixed response: 103 of all respondents (28%) nationally, and 8 (19%) of Wisconsin respondents. Fifty-six respondents skipped giving an answer and are not reflected in the above percentages.

After we asked respondents to pick just one of three set responses, we asked them to tell us why transgender should be thought of in conjunction with LGB, or not. These narratives were coded

separately, and many answers were given multiple codes, either because the person gave multiple reasons or because sie had a mixed opinion and expressed drawbacks as well as advantages. Therefore, it is not possible to say what *percentage* of respondents answered in a given way.

**SS:** Answer: 1. We all face similar discrimination was the most-cited reason why T should be included under “LGBT”

The most common reasons people gave for why Ts should be included under a unified LGBT umbrella follow.

### **Similar discrimination**

Eighty people said the umbrella should be LGB AND T at least in part because we face similar discrimination and/or our enemies don’t distinguish between us. A Wisconsin respondent said Ts should make common cause with LGBs

*because transgender persons face similar issues – discrimination, lack of understanding by society, hate crimes, etc. (ID 43)*

One 30-year-old FTM genderqueer said:

*I think politically [a unified front] is important. All religious right folks and homophobes link us together. We need to acknowledge our liberations are deeply linked: homophobia, transphobia, misogyny are very interconnected. One can’t be undone without the other. (ID 124)*

### **Overlapping identities**

Fifty-one respondents said LGBT belongs together because so many transgender persons are or were also identified as LGB. A 29-year-old cisgendered man who had partnered both MTFs and FTMs noted,

*Most transgender people’s relationships could legitimately be categorized as homosexual (or queer), meaning that they are partnered with/attracted to people of their same gender – the same as either the gender they were born with or the gender they identify with. (ID 334)*

A 36-year-old FTM noted many LGBs are also trans:

*We’re all sexual minorities. Many transsexuals identify as gay or lesbian before realizing that they’re trans and discovering that they’re straight. Many gays and lesbians are transgendered in the broader sense, and some are transsexual. (ID 20)*

A 22-year-old genderqueer (born female) brought up partners and chosen family:

*Many trans folks once identified as lesbians or gays and have strong support networks of friends and chosen families within the ‘LGB(T)’ community. Also, many trans folks date lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, and deserve a space where they and their partner(s) are equally welcomed and supported. (ID 57)*

### **Strength in numbers**

Forty-seven respondents said LGBs and Ts should join together because there is strength in numbers. A 59-year-old androgyne (assigned male at birth) said:

*Our boat's mighty small as it is – yet we are often the 'face' of the LGB community. People 'see' us and identify us with the LGB community, so it behooves us to align ourselves with those individuals that experience, know, and understand the same rejection and discrimination we face. (ID 246)*

A 55-year-old FTM echoed that sentiment:

*Although there are some issues and difficulties being so inclusive, numbers count. Splintering the community diminishes its effectiveness. We are already a minority. (ID 63)*

### **The root of both oppressions is gender**

A relatively large number of respondents – 43 – said the root problem facing both LGB and T people is gender-based social expectations.

A 45-year-old genderqueer (assigned male at birth) was the most succinct:

*Ultimately, it all comes down to gender. LGB people struggle for their own place in our culture for precisely the same reason that Trans people do: others perceive that they do not behave as expected for someone of their gender. (ID 45)*

Others pointed out that when there are hate crimes against LGB people, they are usually targeted not because of their sexuality, but because of their gender expression: A 39-year-old cisgender man said:

*A lot of LGB people are attacked because of their gender expression, not their sexual orientation. When you consider transgender in its broadest context, LGB people are exhibiting behavior that society does not generally associate with their biological sex. (ID 81)*

A 43-year-old FTM was even more explicit:

*A gay man is not attacked because the attacker KNOWS he is gay, but rather because he appears too effeminate, for example. Likewise, a butch lesbian is harassed because of her masculine appearance. (ID 119)*

### **Similar goals**

Twenty-nine respondents said LGBTs belong together because we have similar goals.

A 64-year-old MTF put it this way:

*We are all considered by the dominant heterosexual society to be deviant and are by them lumped together in their thinking. We are in fact a minority group, a sexual minority. We have common desires, to be accepted, respected and treated equally under the law by the dominant society. We are human beings who for reasons beyond our control differ from the majority of human beings on this Earth. We should recognize and accept the differences within the LGBTIQ community and come together as one community. If we do not we will continue to be ineffective in achieving our goal of equal treatment. We need not let the heterosexual society to maneuver us into oppressed group behaviors (fighting among ourselves). (ID 82)*

Some people pointed out the differences while simultaneously endorsing the joint goal. A 47-year-old transsexual said:

*Trans is about identity. LBG is about attraction. Trans people can also be LBG but are not required to be. Two different issues with common enemies and a common fix: education. (ID 103)*

A 36-year-old MTF put it this way:

[We belong together] because it is a struggle that we all face to try and just be free and live our lives as they were meant to be - not how narrow minded people dictate we should. It's hard enough to get people out of the closet to help out when it comes to trying to change opinion. (ID 170)

### **Common history**

Eighteen people pointed out that the gay rights and trans movements sprang from the same source, often specified as the Stonewall Riots:

*If you look at the history of the gay movement – the Stonewall riots were all about gender issues – how many articles of female clothing a butch was wearing, etc. (44-year-old FTM, ID 4)*

*Not only was it trans-identified women who started the modern gay rights movement at Stonewall, but the issues of sexual and gender minorities are very much the same. (64-year-old MTF, ID 82)*

*We have been there from the beginning and we will be there to the end. (27-year-old genderqueer (assigned male at birth), ID 99)*

### **Other reasons**

A half-dozen respondents turned the “they’re all gender issues” argument around, saying that what Ts have in common with LGBs is being a sexual minority.

*Being LGBT is, in essence, being a sexual minority. Transgendered persons are just as much a sexual minority as LGB. (25-year-old femme, born female, ID 107)*

The possibility of learning from each other was a goal of several people. A 50-year-old cisgendered woman said:

*Absolutely the T portion should be left together with LGBT. Together we are stronger and can build bridges. Transgendered people can be so in the closet- we need the rest of the rainbow spectrum in order to be stronger and learn from them. They can help us with our rights, support, and so forth. Which color of the rainbow would you delete? (ID 309)*

Another argument for inclusion is that it models exactly what the LGBT community is asking for:

*Exclusivity is the primary problem with 'mainstream'. 'Non-mainstream' that promotes exclusivity categorizes themselves as just one more closed-minded elitist community. The pot calls the kettle black syndrome. Categorization and pigeonholing has gotten humanity into nothing but grief. (61-year-old MTF, ID 341)*

*Transgender should be included because the LGB community needs to show everyone that it accepts people regardless of labels that others put up on them. (37-year-old FTM, ID 21)*

Finally, a 49-year-old MTF explained why she thinks transgender acceptance is actually what will signal human evolution:

*Transgender individuals are the 'bridge' between the 'homosexual' and 'heterosexual' parts of society. Most homophobia is actually transphobia because transgendered individuals, especially those who transition full time in gender roles, can not 'hide' from other people. Many people do not wish to deal with their internal beliefs about the true diversity of the human sexual experience. Transgender is what will ultimately tell whether the human race is truly ready to further evolve as a species both incarnate and spiritually. (ID 377)*

<b>SS:</b> 3. Sexual orientation and gender identity are different things was the most common reason T/SOFFA respondents said T should be kept separate from LGB
--

### ***No, Keep Ts Separate from LGBs***

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Many respondents who checked the “yes” box to including transgender issues under the LGB umbrella nevertheless expressed some reservations when they more fully described their thoughts.

#### **We’re not the same**



By far the most commonly-cited reason why transgender issues should remain separate is that LGB is a sexual orientation, and transgender is a gender identity/expression. At least 50 respondents thought that mixing the two provoked confusion and might even be politically dangerous.

*Transgender is at its core about who we are. LGB is about whom we sleep with. Therefore the two groups have different agendas. Although those agendas do overlap in many ways and that overlap is the point at which we need to base our relationship with the LGB community. We all just need to be aware that none of us have identical goals. (49-year-old MTF, ID 55)*

*I feel that gender identity and/or gender expression are completely separate issues from sexual orientation. While I support gay rights, as a transitioning MtF TS I think that being associated with the gay community causes a lot of confusion among the general public and resentment in both the gay and TG communities. Being TS has its own issues that are much different from gay issues and even other TG issues and I think everyone would benefit by being able to promote their own agendas without having them lumped in with mostly unrelated ones. It's really frightening to helplessly watch as people who don't fully understand your issues and needs speak on your behalf and sometimes push for policies and laws on your behalf that are much different than what you actually want or need. Again, I do support gay rights. I am simply saying that we're talking apples and oranges here and it does a lot of harm to everyone when people with mostly unrelated issues get lumped together and promoted as if being gay, TG, or TS are one and the same. I think lumping everything together confuses society and causes a lot of backlash. Sometimes the best way to reach your goal is to quietly sneak in under the radar instead of launching an all-out frontal assault that results in a massive counterattack. (42-year-old MTF, ID 369)*

A primary concern of many respondents is that the confusion leads to people misunderstanding the nature of transgenderism. A 16-year-old FTM put it most clearly:

*I think that this union can, all too often, lead to misconceptions about the nature of transgenderism--to make it into a sexuality issue, instead of a gender one. (ID 394)*

### **LG(B)s don't want transpeople**

The second mostly commonly-cited reason why transgender people and issues should not be joined with lesbian, gay and bisexual issues is that LGB individuals don't want or "get" transgender people. Sometimes the language was frank:

*I feel that they don't understand us, sometimes even less so than straight people. I feel many of them don't want us around. I feel that the more accepted they become, the quicker they are to ditch us, the freaks, so they can be accepted even more. (36-year-old FTM, ID 174)*

*Many LGB individuals seem to feel disassociated from or hostile toward the T in LGBT, or think that transitioning is a cop out. I, as a transperson, don't feel welcomed or understood by the rest of the community... In matters of political activism LGB individuals appear to view us as an embarrassment. Former gay or lesbian people who*

*transition are often rejected by their communities. (53-year-old FTM, ID 111)  
(Wisconsin)*

*While it's true that T and GLB folks share common enemies and have a few problems in common, it appears to be impossible for non-T persons to objectively deal with T-specific issues and personalities. The misunderstandings are too numerous to mention and more might be gained by distinguishing trans activism from GLB activism, at least on some issues and in some contexts. It would also remove the common misperception that transsexualism is related to sexual orientation or that a 'sex change' can cure homosexuality. (46-year-old FTM, ID 199)*

*I feel most LGBT organizations are not doing a good job of really addressing their own transphobia and working well on trans issues. Trans people for the most part are not on boards and staffs. If so there are only one or 2 people who are trans. Any time there is a campaign for lgb issues, trans issues are often forgotten or tokenized. Many time lgb people do not want to publicly associate with transpeople because they fear the repercussions of more transphobic people. (30-year-old genderqueer/FTM, ID 124)*

### **It doesn't help transpeople politically**

A significant number of trans respondents went a step beyond saying LG(B)s didn't "get" trans issues or people, and accused LG(B)s of selling out trans people when it helped gay rights:

*They don't want us, work against us, sell us out on a regular basis. (57-year-old MTF, ID 139)*

*I am dismayed at the lesbian and gay communities' attitude towards us. Only recently have they seemed to cease selling us out to try to get local or state human rights laws passed. (52-year-old MTF, ID 113)*

*It is the history of this association that is a two edged sword. We gain some benefits from the wider exposure, but as soon as any issue looks as if it will slow the progress of the GLB population, the t gets tossed under the bus. (60-year-old MTF, ID 3)*

At least one respondent felt transgender people would be further along in terms of rights and acceptance had transpeople NOT aligned with LG(B)s:

*I believe we would have gotten farther in our quest for equal rights [had we stayed separate from LG(B)s], and I feel like the transgendered community was just taken along for a 'ride'. (50-year-old MTF, ID 11)*

### **LG(B)s more transphobic than heterosexuals**

At least five respondents felt that LG(B)s were actually more transphobic and harder to educate about transgender people than cisgendered heterosexuals:

*In my experience, non-trans straight people have been more accepting of trans people than the majority of lg people I know. (26-year-old FTM, ID 289)*

*Over ten years of experience shows me that among my age peers at least, gay men and lesbian women have a harder time actually understanding transgender and transsexual individuals and are harder to educate than mundanes. (57-year-old MTF, ID 44)*

### **Transgender hostility toward LGBs**

It seems important to note that some transgender people recognize homophobia in trans peers, and cited it as a reason for not addressing T issues under an LGBT umbrella. A 33-year-old, cisgendered queer femme said:

*Some Ts are not comfortable with the GLB, since they identify as straight. (ID 229)*

A 19-year-old genderqueer (born female) echoed her:

*Many trans people do not wish to associate with gay people, and some trans people are actually homophobic themselves. (ID 318)*

### **Other reasons for opposing inclusion**

Some of the reasons why trans people opposed uniting under an LGBT umbrella were difficult to categorize. A 48-year-old, newly-transitioning MTF described the difference between the two agendas this way:

*A primary goal of the transgender community is to blend in to and with as much as possible the rest of society. LGBs in my opinion wants the same rights and privileges as the rest of society but does not want to blend in with them. (ID 167)*

*Glomming onto post-sex reassignment men and women to make your case is rank vile exploitation and colonization of lives of people who removed themselves from being part of your community. (59-year-old MTF, ID 14)*

### **Mixed Opinion**

As noted above, many respondents actually had a mixed opinion about the wisdom of mixing trans people and issues with LG(B) people and issues; we classified ideas separately as appropriate. The responses we formally classified as “mixed” usually boiled down to: inclusion works for some trans people or issues, and doesn’t for others. The primary distinction was between heterosexual transgender people and trans people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

*Transgendered as a group should not be in LGB. If one is a gay, lesbian or b, man or woman that happens to have an transgendered experience, one should be included in the LGB as a man or woman, not as an transgendered. (32-year-old FTM, ID 122)*

Several people, however, distinguished between transsexuals and those who self-identify as transgender, saying one should be under the LGBT umbrella and the other not:

*Transgender should be included in the community for the benefit of those transgendered people living as 'transgendered'. However, transsexual people or people who are living a life that does not overlap the LGBQ community should not be assumed to be a part of the community. (25-year-old FTM, ID 18)*

*It depends on the transgender person. If one has a sex change and identifies as heterosexual, then they are a heterosexual male or female. If one identifies as being 'transgender' as a gender, then they should be included. (47-year-old MTF, ID 160)*

*There is a definite distinction between primary transsexuality and being transgendered. I do not feel transsexuality should even be under the umbrella of being transgendered. I think I have been to only one LGBT meeting in my life. I do not fit in since I define myself as a female with the medical condition of transsexuality. I am also only attracted to men (heterosexual). Hence, I feel all transgendered conditions should be included in the LGBT. Those that are transgender need to have support in a group environment. There also should be referrals to a qualified therapist if their situation is destroying their life. (49-year-old MTF, ID 9)*

In direct contrast, another respondent felt that heterosexual trans people might actually feel more comfortable in an LGBT environment:

*If a transgender person is heterosexual, it may be difficult to 'fit in' with people who have identified as heterosexual their whole lives and it could in some instances even be dangerous to risk being 'found out'. The heterosexual transgender person may feel and/or be safer in a community of people who are more used to diversity, the LGB community. This could be true of a heterosexual transgender's mate as well. (49-year-old cisgendered female, ID 127)*

## DEFINE "TRANSGENDER"

If anyone thought there was a consensus definition of the term transgender, our survey conclusively proves them wrong. There *might* be one or two word-for-word matches among the more than 300 definitions our respondents gave us, but if there were, we didn't notice them. (Note that many people – 89 out of 394 -- declined to answer this question.)

Not surprisingly, then, it was incredibly difficult to group the definitions into meaningful categories. At least two coding schemas were tried and thrown out, and the one we settled on grew more and more problematic the longer we used it. Nevertheless, we can draw some conclusions.

**Is gender binary?**

We first made an attempt to categorize every definition based on whether it explicitly assumed two genders, explicitly assumed there are more than two genders, or didn't explicitly address the question. This deceptively simple division is at the crux of much confusion and even hostility about transgender people and issues. Our society teaches a two-part "truth" about gender: people come in only two genders (male or female), and you can tell which is which by a quick glance at the person's genitals. Our language, our bathrooms, most personal information forms, and much, much more all make literally inconceivable (or at least invisible) anyone who does not fit into one of the two gender boxes. People who say their birth genitals don't match their gender therefore present a grave challenge to the social structure. Many people, including some who are themselves transgender, minimize the social threat by agreeing that there are only two genders and arguing that all we need do is realize that some people were mistakenly assigned to one box but can successfully be surgically re-assigned to the other box.

People who want to preserve the gender binary are often confused by or even threatened by those who argue that "gender" is better conceptualized as a continuum or a ball, with people capable of choosing an infinite number of "genders," including some that are changeable at a moment's notice and many that have no relationship to genital configuration.

Although the vast majority (61% of all responses, 71% of Wisconsin responses) of the definitions of "transgender" were worded in such a way that it wasn't possible for us to say whether people ascribed to the gender binary or not, a significant minority were explicit. Of the 119 definitions that were explicit, most (24% overall) acknowledged there are more than two genders. That leaves a significant minority – 15% of all of our transgender respondents – stating that there are only two genders. This belief can – and does – divide some trans people (oftentimes, transsexuals who have had or are planning to have surgery on their genitals) from others (especially those who are "genderqueer" or "genderfluid").<sup>1</sup>

We also asked those who filled out organizational surveys to define transgender. These results were not terribly different from what transgender people themselves said (of course, some of the organizational surveys were filled out by trans people, too).

**Is Gender Binary?**

	Trans individuals' definitions		Organizations' definitions	
	Wisconsin	National	Wisconsin	National
Definition doesn't address	71%	61%	57%	65%
More than 2 genders	17%	24%	18%	18%
Only 2 genders	14%	15%	25%	18%

<sup>1</sup> Although the numbers are small, nearly as many Wisconsin trans people said there were only two genders as said there are more than two (45% vs. 55%, N = 11).

**Expression, identity, both or neither?**

Another common fault line within the transgender community is whether people can be classified as “trans” if they make no visible changes, “only” having an internal identity that differs from what an observer would presume, based on their genitals. The largest category of responses – 115, or 40% – used an “umbrella” definition that seemed to include both those who expressed their gender difference(s) and those who had an internal gender identity different from what they were assigned at birth. The next largest categories are in opposition to each other: 17% (N = 50) of respondents defined “transgender” in a way that required the trans person to at least dress part-time in clothing typically thought to belong to an “opposite” or “other” gender, while 21% (N = 62) said all that was necessary was for someone to claim a trans identity. A significant number of respondents – 20% (N = 58) – gave a definition that said or implied that being transgender was a birth defect, a difference between “brain sex” and genitals, or some other type of psychological/biological mismatch.

Wisconsin responses were comparable to the national responses: 43% (N = 16) defined transgender as an umbrella covering a wide range of identities and behaviors; 22% (N = 8) said to be trans, one had to make changes visible to others; 16% (N = 6) said internal identity is all that is necessary to be trans; and 19% (N = 7) defined trans as being some sort of mismatch between psychological and biological statuses.

**SS:** Answer: 2. The most common type of trans/SOFFA definition for “transgender” was an umbrella term for many types of people.

**Expression, identity, both or neither?**

	Trans individuals’ definitions		Organizations’ definitions	
	Wisconsin	National	Wisconsin	National
Umbrella term	43%	40%	38%	50%
Must show it	22%	17%	12%	7%
Identity is enough	16%	21%	42%	36%
Psych/biology mismatch	19%	20%	8%	17%

**Who is excluded?**

It is critical for LGB organizations seeking to include “T” people to recognize that not all “Ts” agree on the parameters of their own common identity. This is most clearly shown by the small minority of definitions that explicitly excluded one or more identities from under the “transgender” umbrella. Of the 17 people who wrote exclusions into their definitions, 65% of the time they excluded transsexuals, or people who had publicly changed their gender from one binary box to the other. (Some definitions said excluded transsexuals were those who had had genital reassignment surgery; others used less stringent definitions or didn’t define what a transsexual is.) Two people said it was important to exclude those who cross-dress (“*simply as a hobby or experiment or fetish*”), and one excluded “*people who are psychotic.*” Intersexed people were also excluded by one respondent. (Those who excluded fetishists, psychotics, and intersexed individuals all were from Wisconsin; no Wisconsinite explicitly excluded transsexuals from hir definition of transgender.)

None of the definitions offered by those filling out organizational surveys addressed exclusions.

### What else did the definitions say?

A few other trends caught our eye. Sixteen respondents gave their own gender identity as the definition of transgender. Sometimes these were illustrative of the person's larger definition, such as:

Transgender is the sexual gender one feels. I was born into a woman's body, yet I know I am male. (ID 258, Wisconsin)

Other times it was less clear why the person answered the definition question with an answer like,

I am female. (ID 210)

Eight people defined trans as "between genders," "not-male, not-female; not-man, not-woman; neither and both," or "anyone who doesn't define themselves as male or female."

One person insisted that everyone is, in essence, trans:

*Since absolutes exist only in the unreal ideals of human minds and since no human can live at the ends of the spectrum of the absolute male/female dichotomy, all humans have a transgendered personality to some degree.* (ID 90)

Seven people resisted defining the term at all: "I don't, they do," was all one respondent said (ID 209).

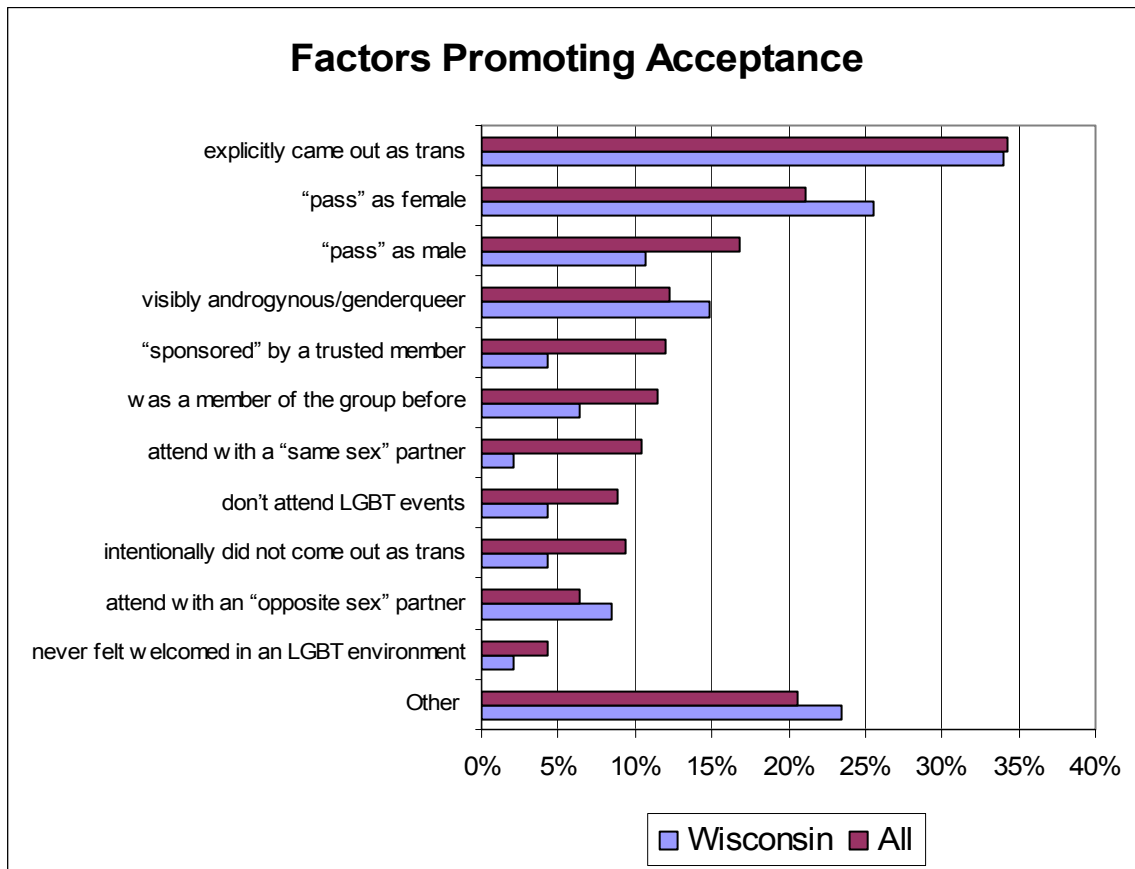
Three of the definitions we classified under "hostile":

*A scam. A social construct that is a political identity forced upon people who are often unwilling to accept the part of the Stalinistic umbrella.* (ID 14)

*As a political umbrella term that has confused the distinction between who we see ourselves as either TS TV CD DK DQ GB SM. It has confused the terms of sex, one's physical body and gender, a social construct.* (ID 295)

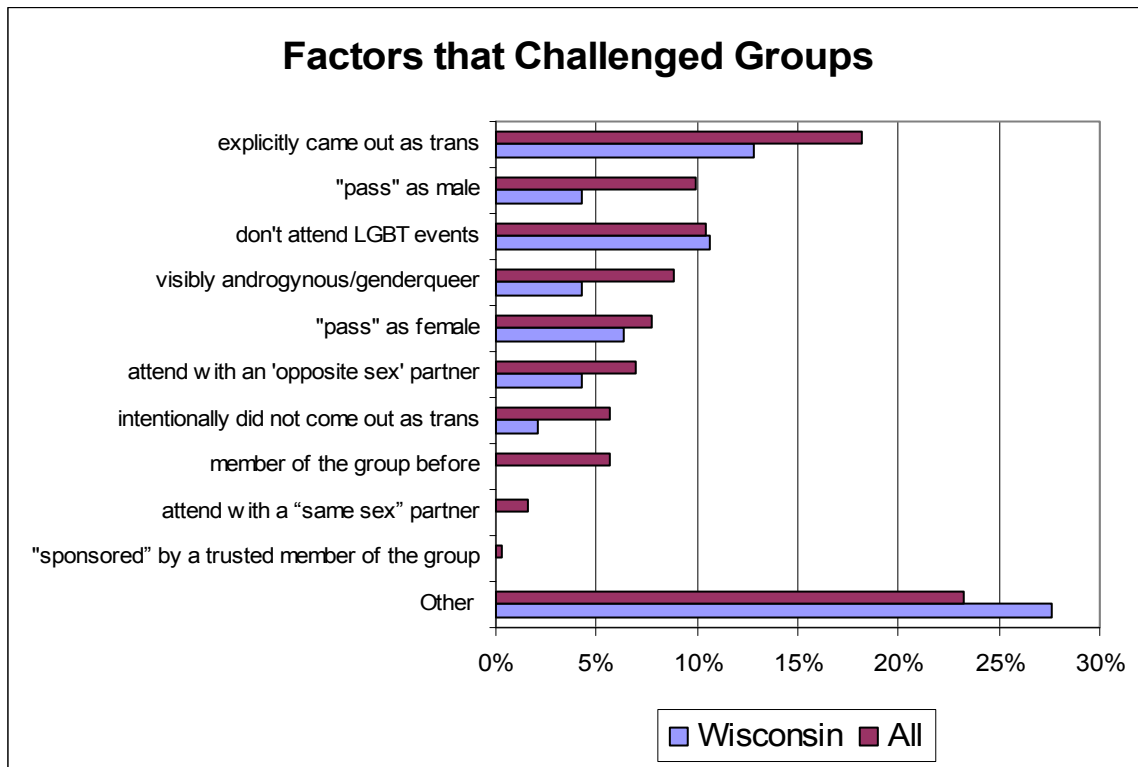
*A confusing, nonspecific catchall term that encompasses many unrelated conditions and lifestyles involving gender identity or gender expression.* (ID 369)

**SS:** Answer: 4. Explicitly came out as trans was the characteristic that trans people most often cited as HELPING them be accepted in an LGBT group



**SS:** Answer: 4. Explicitly came out as trans was ALSO the characteristic that most CHALLENGED LGBT groups in accepting trans members, so being out cuts both ways.





## WHAT HURTS

### -- Wisconsin responses

Interestingly, more than half of the negative experiences Wisconsin trans people reported having either took place within a trans-specific group or at an event held outside of Wisconsin. An MTF complained that the facilitator of one transgender group

*imitates people's mannerisms during meetings, makes sarcastic comments to individuals, and has no compassion.* (ID 111)

A second MTF said that when she visited that group, she

*felt unwanted and as if I were intruding on their private little club."* (ID 108)

At a different trans group, an MTF reported being nonplussed by an attendee's behavior:

*One of the group members asked me about physical issues regarding my breasts and then actually showed me her underwear - it was very disconcerting."* (ID 213)

It wasn't clear where the Tri-Ess group was that a Wisconsin MTF attended eight years ago, but she didn't feel welcome there:

*I was made uncomfortable at the only Tri-Ess meeting I attended where all of the commentary was about membership restriction to 'heterosexual male crossdressers' because I felt I leaned more towards MTF at the time when I was still questioning. (ID 235)*

Some Wisconsin trans people's negative experiences actually took place in other states. One MTF reported that a security person at a Southern Comfort Conference (held annually in Atlanta)

*was purposely calling all the girls 'he'." (ID 302)*

An FTM/genderqueer reported that his most hostile receptions have been at the Midwest Women's Music Festival and the Society for Women in Philosophy Conference. At the latter,

*the lesbian separatist faction left the room at one point over the issues of trans/male inclusion. (ID 73)*

One person reported hir negative experiences in global terms. A 48-year-old cross-dresser (MTF) said simply,

*There is alot of ugliness in alot of LGBT organizations towards Transgender. Some gays hate you and some lesbians despise you because they feel you are stealing their thunder and would much rather that you were not around (ID 259)*

Another trans person, this one a 55-year-old MTF, said she was the cause of her negative experiences:

*The only negatives are those that I give to myself. E.g., 'I'm too damn male,' as in I somehow can not measure up to a standard that I could not define and which does not exist anyway. Nevertheless, I still feel that way all-too-often (although it is better now). (ID 379)*

Wisconsin respondents had only two other negative experiences to report. A 45-year-old MTF said she had been referred to as "he" at an OutReach event, and a 43-year-old butch (born female) said,

*A couple of years ago I was at a bar in Madison---don't recall the name, but it was the multiple bars in one bar. There was a trans there (who seemed very popular incidently) and I overheard one lesbian refer to the trans as a possible 'trannyboi' and then refer to he/she as 'it' which I think reflects more of a lack of respect, kindness, and understanding on the part of an individual than anything else. (ID 357)*

A 36-year-old FTM from out of state, however, reported a negative experience while visiting a Wisconsin LGBT group:

*The worse group I ever met is [a Wisconsin LGBT group]. Rude and snobbish. They told me I don't deserve to be tg and that my tg friends don't belong even though some of the people in the group is tg.... I stopped visiting the state because of [the group]. (ID 375)*

**SS:** Answer: 3. Inappropriate questions were the most common negative experiences reported by trans people in LGBT space

## -- National responses

### Inappropriate questions

Nationally, the largest category of negative experiences reported by trans people in LGBT space related to being asked inappropriate or uncomfortable questions. A 25-year-old FTM characterized the questions he got as the

*what's in your pants questions* (ID 117)

and a second 25-year-old FTM reported that a volunteer at an LGBT program

*asked about my genitalia.* (ID 271)

A 20-year-old FTM transfag said he had been asked

*why I don't just live as a hetero.* (ID 56)

A 25-year-old FTM reported that,

*At a transhealth conference in Philadelphia two years ago, a self-identified cross dressing woman followed me around for the better part of an hour asking me questions about what my body looks like when I am undressed. I tried everything to sever the conversation, including physically walking away and engaging in other things, and she persisted. Sometimes we can be our own worst enemy.* (ID 117)

Most of the 15 respondents who reported inappropriate or uncomfortable questions did not give details about what was asked.

### Wrong pronouns

After inappropriate questions, the second most common negative experience trans people reported was being mis-gendered, usually through pronoun use. Some pronoun errors were judged accidental, but others were clearly purposeful. A 22-year-old FTM said,

*I have been purposely and accidentally mispronounced and have been called 'it' in various LGBT events.* (ID 27)

Another reported hearing an individual at an LGBT event exclaim,

*Well, what is it? A he or a she?* (ID 299)

Several reported that people refused to use the pronouns they had asked for:

*After 3-4 years of maintaining a leadership position in this organization and having been out as trans for 2 years, I still have the president and other board members occasionally use the wrong pronouns for me. (23-year-old MTF, ID 351)*

A possible example of deliberate mis-pronouncing came in a survey response we got from a member of an organization that is open only to self-identified lesbians:

*We assume that s/he is there because s/he identifies as a Lesbian, so we all leave it alone.... Many of our members have left the group because of this trans person and his/her behavior at one time. Some of the women said that this person is not an MTF, but a male crossdresser and that in the past he/she has talked about his penis and how it is what Lesbians all want. This has offended many women, so they have left and not come back. I was not around at the time and cannot speak to the accuracy of the accounts, but I do know that women were upset, left, and aren't coming back. (Org. survey 14)*

### Intra-T conflicts

The third largest category of negative experiences were at the hands of other transgender people. A 55-year-old MTF sums up one problem this way:

*We have a problem within the transgender community, where some people create 'class levels.' Some will not only refuse to work with people outside of their 'class,' but vilify them in a vicious and hateful way. Some post-ops women think they are better than pre-ops and don't believe that non-ops should be considered transsexuals. Some transsexuals say that crossdressers are perverts and some crossdressers think transsexuals are mentally ill. (ID 144)*

A 51-year-old transwoman said,

*The only people who've ever given me the slightest guff have been drag queens. (ID 152)*

Sometimes people reported intra-T problems second-hand. A 42-year-old "MtF in early transition" has not gone to transgender events because she dreads being misunderstood by other trans people:

*Again, this is what has been passed on to me by TS's who have attended TG meetings and why I have reluctantly chosen not to attend them. TS's who are trying to transition and live stealth, that is, blend into society as a mainstream male or female, are often criticized for that by other TG persons. As for me, I was born with a birth defect that resulted in my body's sex not matching my brain's sex and I simply want to be allowed to fix that mismatch and be a part of mainstream society as a woman, not be forever forced to identify as a TG person, hyphenated-woman, third gender, or anything like that. Many attendees of TG meetings do not really understand what a TS is, what causes it, and that we really do want and need to transition and then rejoin mainstream society as an unhyphenated male or female because our gender identity is not ambiguous or in-between the way it is for many TG persons. We can't seem to get other TG persons to understand and accept that about us. (ID 369)*

Illustrating yet again that the biases flow both ways are two more examples:

*At a gender clinic advisory committee meeting last year: explicit disavowal of non-heteronormative middle class privileged T people -- e.g. those doing sex work, those with substance abuse problems, those who are out as queer, those who aren't shamefully closeted and killing themselves in order to pass. (33-year-old femme (born female) (ID 229)*

*At [a gender center] a few months ago, I was stating that the more homophobic members of the trans community were in most need of support, as they had a great deal of self-hate as well. I was told they can simply go f\*\*\* off by a board member. (37-year-old MTF, ID 125)*

An 38-year-old FTM reported,

*I have had so many Trans woman approach my girlfriend, another trans woman, and ask why she is dating a transman (me) and why not date a real man. (ID 164)*

Some biases were expressed by survey respondents themselves:

*I really don't like how a lot of trans people believe and don't want to be associated with other trans individuals. I also find my transition a really boring topic of conversation, so I tend not to mention I'm trans. (31-year-old FTM, ID 54)*

*I do have problems with lack of commitment relative to CD DQ FI GQ SM TG TV not transitioning fully as TS do so it causes more transphobia by their presence! (65-year-old MTF, ID 190)*

Two FTMs reported leaving their FTM support groups because the groups had become too inclusive:

*Early on, [my FTM group] was a good group. But then the lesbian partners of FTMs just took over and I no longer felt comfortable to talk. Or the guys were too pussy to talk about real issues of concern from sex to family planning.... I think when partners are involved the purpose of the group gets muddied. Because then the various sexual identities of partners impacts the ability of those truly living the life in transition. (ID 71)*

*I had belonged to [an FTM support group] many years ago. I left because it was no longer a group of transmen; they had opened the group to include drag kings, gender blenders etc. (ID 383)*

### “Straight ally” assumptions

The fourth most common negative experience trans people reported having in LGBT groups was being assumed to be heterosexual and/or “an ally,” not “one of us.”

*I would feel more welcome if folks didn't assume they knew 'who I was' just upon first glance. My partner and my life both as a couple and as individuals are far more complicated than we present in public. I personally have been involved politically with the GLBT movement for over 15 years and that all gets erased when I am perceived as not-queer. (28-year-old transman/genderqueer, ID 73)*

*The most difficult obstacle in attending LGBT meetings/events where I am unknown is having a femme partner. There is the assumption that we are a straight couple and a barrier is invisibly constructed. This especially happens in settings which are predominantly lesbian. Unless we out ourselves, it can remain an uncomfortable place to be. Usually the outing makes us 'acceptable' to the group, sometimes it does not. (29-year-old transman, ID 251)*

*[My partner and I were] asked to leave a lesbian leather group because partner is a TG hetero man. When we go to gay men's bars, I don't feel welcome because I am with a man and I'm a hetero woman. Neither one of us felt comfortable in the lesbian club and are uncomfortable going to a hetero club until he gets his driver's license changed. (49-year-old cisgendered woman, ID 127)*

Although most of the non-queer assumptions seem to be made about couples, some individuals reported being challenged about their identity. Two FTMs in their 30s reported the following experiences:

*I was at [an LGBT group] and made a comment at a discussion I attended that there might be some transgender people who are not comfortable with the idea of 'destroying the gender binary' altogether. I was accosted after by a young woman (a college student) who lectured me that just because I was an \*ally\* of the trans-community I should not feel like I had the right to 'co-opt the transgender voice'. Again... it was more of a learning experience, but I think it is reflective of a subtle expectation or idea that you will 'know a tranny' if you see one so you can assume that people who 'look normal' aren't trans. (ID 23)*

*Many people, rather than groups, can be unfriendly. I've been asked why I was attending something (because I'm a straight man--could I be an ally, or a spy for the right wing?) at the pride parade and other queer events. (ID 387)*

At the same time, at least two trans individuals said when they attended LGBT organizations, they didn't want to be assumed gay or lesbian, either.

### What you really are/want is...

About a dozen respondents reported negative experiences with LG(B) people telling them or treating them like they weren't "real" men or women, telling them why they were transgender, or reciting to them as truth a myth about transgender people. A 57-year-old MTF reported that at one meeting, a lesbian called her

*just a man in a dress. (ID 171)*

A 35-year-old FTM said,

*I have found that lesbians find trans men to be sell outs...not all lesbians think this of course...but many have accused me of selling out to the patriarchy and signing up for male privledge. So not the case at all. (ID 142)*

*I had a gay man tell me 'I always knew so and so was trans, there was always something wrong with him. I think his facial hair isn't as thick as most men. In fact transmen can't get regular facial hair.' (35-year-old FTM, ID 129)*

*I have attended the local LGB'T' meetings on several volunteer nights. I did not feel particularly welcome. As a matter of fact, when expressing interest in becoming more involved on my last visit I was told by the chairperson I was sitting with while filling the application that she too had a friend that was trangender and that she could not understand why 'She' (her friend) could think she could become a man. I was so floored by the comment that I did not think to 'educate' the chairperson in question that if her friend was indeed a transexual, that her friend had in all probability been a man all her life, and that such a fact would be independent of said chairperson's likes or (obvious) dislikes. (46-year-old MTF, ID 328)*

*I was helping organize [a 2004 pride] parade... one of the organizers (a not so tolerant gay man) at an organizing dinner referred to a transwoman as a 'man who thinks he's a woman.' He didn't realize that I was trans. Ouch... however, as a silver lining - before I could even get a word out, another person at the event (a really cool lesbian) called him out on it. She ripped him a new one. And he was mortified when I came out to him as a \*trans\* gay man. So it was good for him in the long run. (36-year-old FTM, ID 23)*

## General rudeness

Trans people reported being harassed, ignored, and hearing rude comments.

*I still hear laughing and joking about individuals who do not adhere to the strict gender-normative standards that the larger society uses,*

a 27-year-old butch (born female) reports about “inclusive” events sie attends (ID 299). An 18-year-old genderqueer (born female) says:

*I've seen other [trans] people met with rude comments, rude questions, being laughed at and basically treated as lesser people. (ID 318)*

One transperson says there is a “Wall of Silence” that trans people often experience at predominately gay and lesbian events. A 57-year-old MTF described such an example of silence at an LGBT luncheon:

*Upon announcing that I was trans, and not a lesbian, all conversation at the lunch table halted until the main program speaker began talking (about 3-5 minutes). (ID 60)*

**A 49-year-old MTF described her experience this way:**

*At a party no one would slide over to allow me to sit on the U shaped sofa (although they did so for GG lesbians)... the only other place to sit was ONE CHAIR all the way on the OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM. Message received, loud and clear. And when someone asked a question about 'Who here has been married?', one nasty woman glared at me and said 'Married to a man or to a woman?' (ID 24)*

One FTM reported that a volunteer at an LGBT group

*kept calling me a 'she'. Later they asked me, 'Well, you are a man, aren't you?' when I refused to carry some heavy things upstairs because I was busy doing other work. (ID 270)*

### Outright exclusion

Trans people reported both blatant and less obvious methods of exclusion. A 28-year-old FTM reports that one gay and lesbian community center

*has kicked out trans people from using the building, calling them 'unsafe.' (ID 215)*

LGBT community centers on opposite coasts told transgender volunteers they weren't wanted; one said

*it was not necessary to have a trans person on the Board of Directors as they knew our [trans] needs. (ID 223)*

The other

*already had enough transsexuals and did not need any more. (ID 59)*

One group cancelled their event when a 65-year-old MTF RSVP'd. Eventually she was

*Told I was unwelcome and subsequent invitations specified women-born-female only to exclude transwomen.*

Interestingly, this group apparently "allowed FTMs because of anatomy." (ID 190)

The former president of a national women's organization was "disowned" when she announced her gender transition, even though historically

*membership and events were and are open to men. (ID 193)*

A 50-year-old MTF said,

*The last time I attended [a political convention] TWO TGs were ignored by the Chair of the LGBT caucus when they raised their hands to comment. (ID 232)*

Trans exclusion can also come at the hands of other trans people. A 41-year-old MTF reported:



*One of the biggest ironies I have come across is bisexual women's groups that exclude pre-op transsexual women. More than once it has been post-op transsexual women pushing hardest to exclude pre-op women, where other non-transsexual women don't care! (ID 286)*

### Exclusion of trans issues

One 20-year-old MTF succinctly explained the difference between exclusion of trans people and exclusion of trans issues:

*It's not that we were unwelcome, just that nothing we went to the meetings for got addressed." (ID 51)*

Sometimes events that were advertised as "LGBT" turned out otherwise:

*My wife and I went to a panel on ways to have a child within the LGBT community wherein one of the speakers talked about being a foster parent. When my wife asked about the possibility of being a trans foster parent the 'expert' made us feel that we basically shouldn't even consider it because of the scrutiny we'd receive. The speaker seemed completely unprepared, unwilling to even imagine a trans person pursuing a child in the foster care system - very enraging, and frankly a complete disservice to trans people. (42-year-old FTM, ID 324)*

*[An art gallery was] promoting an art show that was supposed to showcase art from the GLBT community. I had a friend...that lived in the local area of the art gallery...call to find out if there were any trans art or artists in the show. The gallery had no clue what the T portion even meant. So I didn't attend. (38-year-old FTM, ID 164)*

### Bathroom struggles

Four transpeople reported confrontations over bathrooms. A 40-year-old MTF reported an incident at her trans group:

*We...had a (hard to get ahold of) F2M boardmember leave, never to be seen again, when a relatively new support group member told him he was using the wrong bathroom. And on later discussion of the incident no one could decide whether the attendee knew whether the boardmember was a natural male attending as M2F or if they knew he was F2M. But he left anyway. (ID 90)*

A 55-year-old MTF reported that leaders of one LGBT group asked her to use the men's room

*because the lesbians were complaining of us using their toilet.*

She refused and was asked to leave. (ID 157) Another MTF reported going to a club that had posted a sign on its women's room door:

*No CDs, DQs, TGs, or TSs.* (ID 152)

### Other problems

Two people said they had been “groped” or “handled” by both LGB and trans people in bathrooms or bars, and two people reported being sexually assaulted at LGBT events.

## WHAT HELPS

We collected thoughts on what would help LGBT groups be more inclusive of and/or comfortable for transgender individuals not only via question 22 on the transgender survey – “If you wanted to be involved in LGBT organizations, what would make you feel more welcome there?” – but also as they were embedded in answers about positive and negative experiences with LGBT groups.

### -- Wisconsin responses

The most frequent type of response that **Wisconsin** trans people mentioned was creating an environment that was, simply, respectful of participants' identities. Sometimes what respondents wanted was succinct:

*being accepted for who I am.* (ID 43)

An MTF said she wanted to be

*recognized as being a lesbian.* (ID 53)

Another respondent may have been reflecting a similar uncomfortable seen/unseen dilemma when she said she wanted

*recognition of who I am and not what I am.* (ID 282)

People with more complicated identities sometimes gave more complicated answers. A MTF said,

*People...[sh]ould not treat you as someone who is masquerading as someone she is not. Often I have been asked am I real or is this just a put on? I assure them my feelings are neither show nor a put on. I am (as I describe it) a lady in waiting, meaning that I identify as female.* (ID 108)

A 28-year-old transman/genderqueer said,

*I would feel more welcome if folks didn't assume they knew 'who I was' just upon first glance. My partner and my life both as a couple and as individuals are far more complicated than we present in public. I personally have been involved politically in the GLBT movement for over 15 years and that all gets erased when I am perceived as not-queer.* (ID 73)

Wisconsin trans people also wanted to see more trans people at LGBT events. One said she only saw drag queens in the community (ID 85); another didn't want to be the "token" trans person. (ID 53) One respondent said

*there are so few of us at the few LGBT events I've attended such as film festivals with trans themes" that she had concluded, "TG people are tolerated but not really welcome. (ID 378)*

LGBT organizations could take concrete steps to welcome Wisconsin trans people. One respondent gave several ideas:

*Trans-inclusive language, including the use of gender inclusive language for those trans people who identify outside of the male/female spectrum. Asking how a person identifies/what pronouns to use prior to use of pronouns or introduction of the person as a certain gender. Trans-inclusive policies explicitly written out. Trans-specific programming, especially when male-specific and female-specific is offered. Education of other participants in trans issues and identities. (ID 92)*

That "education of other participants" might also have addressed the desire of another respondent, who wanted

*more understanding from the LGB community about what being T is. (ID 302)*

Explicit trans inclusion policies also appealed to another Wisconsinite, who asked that organizations

*say more explicitly if they are Trans/Intersex inclusive. (ID 180)*

Some Wisconsin respondents wanted a change in organizations' focus. One wanted a clearer goal:

*[I would prefer it] if we were working together toward achieving a specific and beneficial goal as a 'community.' Such as, working toward changing the image that mainstream society has of trans people. (ID 10)*

Another respondent felt that the reigning biologically-based explanation given by LGBT political leaders actually undermines the community's ability to attract and hold some members:

*I wish that the GLBT political movement was more open to different identity communities, that the leaders of various communities would not insist that sexual orientation and gender identity is 'not a choice' and stop catering to the normative politics for civil rights. I think those ideologies underpin the mainstream GLBT political movement, leech into the GLBT community and engender a myopic view of genderqueer/fluid/trans, non-white, differently-abled, etc...people. (genderqueer/FTM, ID 73)*

This respondent also suggested both a structure for new members and different types of events to appeal to trans individuals:

*Maybe a pre-orientation thesis. So one knows what to expect. Possibly a liaison person (limited role or rotating contact person role). Also organizing some outside events such as picnic/football party/day at the races/and shopping sprees once or twice a year. Inexpensive events since many TGs don't seem to have much money. (ID 159)*

## -- National responses

Nationally, there were enough responses to the “what would help” question that we were able to group them into 10 categories, all of which had subcategories beneath them. The primary categories were:

- Changes in TRANS people’s behavior
- Including trans PEOPLE
- Including trans ISSUES
- Having inclusive trans POLICIES
- Including trans-focused EVENTS or discussions
- Doing trans OUTREACH
- Having an accepting environment overall
- Having common goals
- Trans education for non-T people
- Not otherwise categorized

### Including trans people in an accepting environment

Including trans people and having an accepting environment overall were the categories into which more than half the codeable responses fell. Variations of “accept me for who I am” were the largest subcategory, and ranged from

*Acceptance of my preferred/presented gender (ID 310)*

to

*Being able to attend as a female. Being permitted to be a member of the female sub groups. (ID 69)*

Similar thoughts were categorized under “include Trans people”:

*Authentic inclusion of trans (and bi) people without surprise when I arrive. (ID 97); and*

*Seriously, not feeling like my presence is being questioned. (ID 254)*

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**-- All identities welcome**

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Treating trans participants like everyone else was a subtheme that ran through many suggestions:

*No insistence on a specific identity – welcoming of all people without making them declare why they are there. (ID 287)*

*Treating transpeople like any other members of the community (instead of outsiders that may need special or delicate treatment.) (ID 351)*

At the same time, many trans people warned against forgetting trans people are present:

*Consistently including all members of the organization – L, G, B and T – in whatever the group is doing. Many groups focus on L & G, and forget that B & T are also part of their membership and mission. (ID 8)*

One respondent suggested that one way to demonstrate inclusion is to focus on the overall goal:

*[What would help is] some kind of lessening of the hierarchies of importance. Like, gay men and lesbians are more important than bisexual or transgender people. Bisexuals in same-sex relationships are more important than bisexuals in opposite sex relationships. If organizations could stick to a more social justice agenda, then they would be grateful for anyone, queer, trans or ally who wanted to help out. (ID 387)*

Knowledge of and acceptance of a wide range of gender identities and individuals' rights to self-identify were important to many respondents.

*More inclusive ideas of gender; not male/female only. (ID 265)*

*Recognition by people leading those organizations that they do not get to define who is a man or who is a woman, just as they do not get to define who is gay and who is lesbian. The only persons who know what and who they are are the persons themselves. (ID 328)*

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**-- Visible trans leaders**

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Some respondents had very concrete suggestions for how to make trans people more welcome. Having visible (or out) trans people in leadership was one:

*Having trans people in leadership positions in organizations definitely makes me feel more welcome and supported. (ID 117)*

Others concurred that what would help was having

*more openly trans people involved in planning and running events (ID 38) and*

*more transpeople in active or leadership roles, which you [currently] just don't see. (ID 199)*

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**-- Trans-inclusive materials**

Including trans people in written and visual materials was the second widely-discussed concrete strategy:

*[What would help is] visibility of gender and sexual diversity (posters, photos, print materials, etc.) (ID 41);*

*Something on the wall or in advertising that lets it be known that all genders are welcome or trans men/women (ID 121);*

*inclusive literature that depicts images of trans and gender variant folks. (ID 336)*

Sometimes one small inclusion gesture works wonders:

*Toronto Pride, as part of their fundraiser, was selling stickers with various labels on them (i.e., fag, dyke, queen, butch, etc.) and they actually had a trans sticker. It was nice to both be included, and to have a way of showing I really was a part of the tribe, not just a straight man gawking. (ID 219)*

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**-- Big sister/mentor**

At least four respondents suggested a big sibling/mentor program to help bring trans people into organizations. One person gave a lengthy explanation of why this might be necessary:

*LGBT leaders must actively mentor transfolk, and not just youth. Many of us postponed our adulthood, postponed our lives while waiting to die. I spent 4 decades waiting until it was over. Well somehow I managed to transition instead, despite the ignorance and fear the world kept me in. So at nearly 50 I am just starting to live. I am no longer a 'youth' but I have not got the resume of an adult person my age either. I do have a*

*complexity of thinking and a life experience that comes with age. I just wish our organizations knew how to tap into that. (ID 367)*

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**-- *Confronting transphobia***

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Another concrete suggestion came from someone who said that having

*staff call people out on anti-trans statements*

was one of the reasons sie gave a college LGBTQA group “welcoming” marks. (ID 29)

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**-- *More who are like me***

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It is important to note that a significant number of transpeople want to see other participants who share more characteristics with them than just transness. Eight people said they needed not just other transpeople, but transpeople who were FTM, young, butch/femme, or TwoSpirit (which this respondent described as

*a culturally specific identity which is very important to me as an indigenous person.) (ID 257)*

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**-- *Other***

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Some of the suggestions for what would help fell under having an overall accepting environment. These included: providing food, having good facilitation, participants listening to each other, and positive feedback. One simple trans-inclusion tactic that is nevertheless oftentimes overlooked is universal:

*I believe that sometimes people want to be asked to join/help in organizations. Often people don't know if they can be of any help. (ID 102)*

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**Policy changes**

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**-- *Name, mission, non-discrimination policy***

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The third largest category for what would promote trans inclusion involves changes in policies. These “policies” included adding “T” to a group’s name and/or mission and establishing formal trans inclusion policies, such as this suggestion:

*An open published policy that the organization will not discriminate on the basis of gender orientation or gender presentation and that those attending will be allowed to participate fully, and to the extent of anyone else of the same gender identity however they choose to identify at the time they attend. (ID 128)*

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**-- Pronouns and bathrooms**

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Routinely asking all participants to state their preferred pronoun when they introduce themselves was a clear message of trans-inclusion to at least six respondents. Gender neutral bathrooms similarly broadcast a loud pro-trans signal.

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**-- Include all sexual orientations**

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The category of “policy” change that reflected the largest number of responses involved expanding the range of sexual orientations under the LGBT umbrella to include bisexuals (particularly those in heterosexual relationships), trans people and partners who are or appear to be heterosexual, and polyamorous relationships. As one respondent succinctly put it:

*[What would help is] when non-trans LGB people realize that transpeople can ALSO be LGB or straight or all and none of the above. (ID 367)*

One respondent said the large LGBT organizations were sending a clear anti-trans message through their employment policies:

*Our LGBT orgs must start providing trans-inclusive benefits. Transgender transition must be FULLY covered, electrolysis, FFS, everything we need. And partner benefits must be structured so that trans partnerships are recognized no matter what our legal documents say about our sex/gender status or ability to get married. It is unconscionable that LGBT orgs expect trans employees (or employees with trans partners or kids) to accept benefits packages that openly discriminate against trans people. It is time that our LGBT orgs pool together and seek ways, including funding, to ensure that insurance benefits are free from discriminatory exclusions. San Francisco did it. AFSC did it. Why can't HRC? The Task Force? Lambda Legal? ARCUS? Triangle Foundation? GLAD? GLAAD? Our regional and local community centers? Why aren't OUR organizations seeking grant monies to fund initiatives for self-coverage? When trans employees are treated as second class employees, it sends a clear message to the rest of us who are volunteering or seeking services. (ID 367)*

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**Transgender education of non-Ts**

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The fourth most common category of “what would help trans people feel included” responses fell into transgender education of non-trans LGB people. Many of these suggestions were simple,

*[We need] more understanding from the LGB community about what being T is. (ID 302)*

However, a few people said what was needed was for LGB people to confront their own internal feelings about gender and trans issues:

*[It would help if] LGB people (who usually run the orgs) vocalized their fears, issues and thoughts in the open with a group of transpeople who are there to talk with them and work through it. (ID 270)*

*[It would help] if non-trans people reflect their own gender stuff more instead of (mis)using trans people for their analysis of the gender binary. (ID 34)*

It was particularly important for LGB people to become educated enough to not ask inappropriate questions of transpeople:

*Having people be relatively educated about where I am coming from and what I am helps. I don't want to deal with 'what's in your pants?' questions when I'm trying to relax, or do political work, or watch a show, or work, or really ever, really! (ID 117)*

Using preferred pronouns was a marker of properly educated LGBs, a number of respondents implied. One noted that this was important even when trans people aren't present:

*[What would make me feel more welcome is] knowing that I am always referred to with the correct pronouns, even outside of my presence. (ID 16)*

### Trans issues, events, and outreach

LGBT groups can signal their welcome of trans members by sponsoring events that are trans-focused (including trans 101 educational events), supporting trans issues, and doing outreach specifically to trans people. One person suggested holding

*trans-specific events that still manage a wider audience (trans night at a gay club would be fun). (ID 38)*

Another concrete suggestion was for LGBT groups to offer

*a place and time to hold support meetings for transgendered people and their SOFFAs. (ID 37)*

Health screenings for trans people or trainings for health care providers were other suggested options. One person noted:

*[I was] so positively surprised when, after we worked to align Gender Alliance of the South Sound with Rainbow Center of Tacoma, that a few months later they had a PowerPoint presentation created called, "When a Man Needs a Pap Smear: Transgender Friendly Training for Medical Professionals." (ID 90)*

Another way for LGBT groups to include trans issues is simply to look at each topic with an eye to how it may differentially affect trans people:

*[There needs to be] a visible awareness of trans issues. That means talking about trans issues as they relate to the discussion, integrating trans issues into the organizing (a safe schools campaign must address the needs of trans youth). (ID 351)*

Breaking language habits can help. A simple measure of inclusion is to *not* refer to the organization informally as a "gay group" and to make sure that issues are described as involving "sexual orientation AND gender identity," "homophobia AND transphobia (and biphobia)." Other simple inclusion efforts involve making sure transgender groups are included in your email and snail mail publicity efforts, and making sure calls for workshop proposals and the like are advertised in trans-oriented venues.

### Common goals

Having well-articulated common goals is universally advocated for organizations, and our respondents were no different in prescribing this tactic as a way of including trans people. However, it's important to remember that there is no universal common goal. One respondent, for instance, suggested working together to change the image that mainstream society has of LGBT people (ID 10), while another wanted meeting agendas

*that relate to daily life, not just big world causes. (ID 71)*

If another respondent got his wish –

*Non-alcoholic, non-smoking socials; drop-in to use internet access; drop-in to watch large screen TV; library; nibbles, candy, chips, etc.; book club; themed groups meetings, e.g., couples with kids, senior groups, spiritual groups, coming out groups, (ID 173)*

the person who wanted

*a positive focus on overcoming our oppressors (fear, hate and ignorance) (ID 20)*

might not be attracted.

### Changes in trans people

It is important to note that many people understand that trans inclusion is a two-way street: trans people as well as LGB people may need to make accommodations. Several respondents noted that trans people need to accept themselves first before they will find acceptance from others. Others felt that certain types of trans people or their behaviors make trans inclusion more difficult for the majority. A 56-year-old MTF answered the question about what would make trans people feel more welcome in LGBT space with this:

*If people whose sex has not been reassigned wouldn't try to impose themselves into women's or men's space. (ID 17)*

Another 56-year-old, born male but currently living as a “soft butch,” said,

*Most lesbians of my acquaintance (including myself) feel somewhat uncomfortable around stereotypical het femme looks and behavior. Wearing Merrills rather than Prada and little to no makeup seems to work well. (ID 120)*

A 65-year-old MTF felt that inclusion of non-transsexual transgender people is problematic:

*I do have problems with lack of commitment relative to CD DQ FI GQ SM TG TV not transitioning fully as TS do so it causes more transphobia by their presence! (ID 190)*

### General accessibility

Finally, it is critical to remember that in addition to coming in all sexual orientations, transgender people come in the full range of physical configurations and abilities. At least five of our respondents said a primary barrier to their participating in LGBT organizations was not their transness, but other accessibility issues. One 38-year-old, genderqueer person summed up many of the concerns:

*My current barriers to involvement with LGBT organizations (local and national) have a lot more to do with their lack of inclusion of people with disabilities and/or low income than my being transgender. If I can't get in the door and/or pay for the ticket (or conference fee), it's pretty difficult to make my presence known on other levels. Granted, my access issues are more complicated than making sure the venue is (truly) wheelchair accessible (an accommodation which many organizations have difficulty with), but meetings and events can be made accessible to me and other people with MCS [multiple chemical sensitivities], asthma, scent allergies and other sensitivities. It just takes commitment and understanding*

*on the part of the organizations and a willingness to be part of educating their community.*  
(ID 247)

Money concerns may also affect trans people's ability to access programs for other reasons. A 45-year-old FTM-identified person said this about what kept hir from attending LGBT events:

*If I had the money and could at least make myself look male, I would be more interested in attending LGBT activities... I get tired of saying I'm a guy when everyone looks at me and sees this body." (ID 253)*