A Mixed Methods Examination of Structural Bigenderism and the Consequences for Transgender and Gender Variant People

Kristie Lynn Seelman

University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd

Part of the Higher Education Commons, and the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation


This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu,dig-commons@du.edu.
A Mixed Methods Examination of Structural Bigenderism and the Consequences for Transgender and Gender Variant People

Abstract
For years, transgender activists and their allies have spoken out about the oppression that transgender and gender non-conforming people experience in relation to societal systems and institutions, due to policies and practices that do not acknowledge non-binary experiences of gender, that do not recognize that one's gender may change over time or may not match cultural expectations for gender expression, and that punish and discriminate against trans people (Gilbert, 2009; Lombardi & Davis, 2006; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; WWRC, 2010). Scholars have called for human services professionals and researchers to critique the failures of institutions in society (and the people within them) that continue to reproduce oppressive patterns related to gender (Davis, 2008; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; Wilchins, 2004). This dissertation examines the topic of structural bigenderism, using a mixed methods analysis of data based on the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people in two settings of interest to social workers—social welfare settings and higher education.

This study analyzes secondary data from two community-based projects: a qualitative participatory research project in Colorado of 30 transgender people's experiences in higher education, and a national survey conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force of transgender people's experiences of discrimination across a variety of settings (Grant et al., 2011). Qualitative themes provide detail about problematic institutional practices, interactions with people who embody the power of the institution, and suggestions for improving higher education settings. Quantitative findings (with sample sizes ranging from \( n = 296 \) to \( n = 3,480 \), depending on the model) indicate a general pattern that transgender people who held multiple marginalized identities were at greatest risk of unequal treatment in social welfare settings, being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters, being denied financial aid or scholarships, being denied access to gender-appropriate spaces at school, and being prohibited from changing their student records to reflect their gender. Joint data displays explore the role of intersectionality in transgender people's experiences in higher education. The study concludes with a discussion of implications for social work practitioners and educators.

Document Type
Dissertation

Degree Name
Ph.D.

Department
Social Work

First Advisor
Nelson E. Walls, Ph.D.

Second Advisor
Nicole Nicotera

Third Advisor
Walter LaMandola
Keywords
Higher education, Mixed methods, Social welfare settings, Social work, Structural bigenderism, Transgender

Subject Categories
Higher Education | Social Work

Publication Statement
Copyright is held by the author. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.
A MIXED METHODS EXAMINATION OF STRUCTURAL BIGENDERISM AND
THE CONSEQUENCES FOR TRANSGENDER AND GENDER VARIANT PEOPLE

A Dissertation Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School of Social Work
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Kristie L. Seelman
June 2013
Advisor: N. Eugene Walls, Ph.D.
Abstract

For years, transgender activists and their allies have spoken out about the oppression that transgender and gender non-conforming people experience in relation to societal systems and institutions, due to policies and practices that do not acknowledge non-binary experiences of gender, that do not recognize that one’s gender may change over time or may not match cultural expectations for gender expression, and that punish and discriminate against trans people (Gilbert, 2009; Lombardi & Davis, 2006; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; WWRC, 2010). Scholars have called for human services professionals and researchers to critique the failures of institutions in society (and the people within them) that continue to reproduce oppressive patterns related to gender (Davis, 2008; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; Wilchins, 2004). This dissertation examines the topic of structural bigenderism, using a mixed methods analysis of data based on the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people in two settings of interest to social workers—social welfare settings and higher education.

This study analyzes secondary data from two community-based projects: a qualitative participatory research project in Colorado of 30 transgender people’s experiences in higher education, and a national survey conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force of transgender people’s experiences of discrimination across a variety of settings (Grant et al., 2011).
Qualitative themes provide detail about problematic institutional practices, interactions with people who embody the power of the institution, and suggestions for improving higher education settings. Quantitative findings (with sample sizes ranging from $n = 296$ to $n = 3,480$, depending on the model) indicate a general pattern that transgender people who held multiple marginalized identities were at greatest risk of unequal treatment in social welfare settings, being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters, being denied financial aid or scholarships, being denied access to gender-appropriate spaces at school, and being prohibited from changing their student records to reflect their gender. Joint data displays explore the role of intersectionality in transgender people’s experiences in higher education. The study concludes with a discussion of implications for social work practitioners and educators.
Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to Colorado Trans on Campus, the National Center for Transgender Equality, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force for their efforts in carrying out the two studies that form the basis of this dissertation. I cannot express my level of appreciation for the 30 individuals in Colorado who shared their deeply personal narratives and the more than 6,000 people who participated in the national survey. I am also thankful to those who cleaned the national dataset and made the codebook, especially Jody Herman and Jack Harrison. Thank you to the three member check participants—your honesty and generosity truly helped me to make this work so much stronger. I am incredibly grateful for the financial support offered by the AAUW (American Fellowship), the DU Graduate School of Social Work, and the DU Office of Graduate Studies. Extraordinary thanks go to my committee, including Walter LaMendola (for encouraging me to stretch myself and for helping me to know the simple joy of being a scholar) and Nicole Nicotera (for your practical wisdom, methodological expertise, and continual words of encouragement). My successes would not have been possible without the support of my advisor and chair, Eugene Walls—thank you for always believing in me, and for your mentorship, commitment, and eager response to 1,000,000 e-mails. Sarah Nickels, thank you for being a great listener, loyal friend, and fellow traveler with me on this journey. Thanks go to many others, including Beth Suter, Deb Ortega, Mom and Dad, my sisters, and my friends and family. Finally, I give my appreciation to Shannon, who survived this process as much as I did, without flinching, without doubting, and forever keeping an eye on the future that lies beyond this project.
# Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction ................................................................. 1  
Relevant Terminology ................................................................... 3  
Statement of the Research Problem ............................................. 8  
Purpose of the Dissertation ............................................................ 15  
Organization of the Dissertation .................................................... 16  
Social Location of the Researcher .................................................... 16  

Chapter Two: Literature Review .................................................... 26  
Review of Empirical Research ......................................................... 26  
Gaps in the Knowledge Base ............................................................ 48  
Research Aims of this Dissertation .................................................. 51  
Research Questions ....................................................................... 52  

Chapter Three: Queer Theory and Structural Social Work Theory ........ 53  
Queer Theory ............................................................................. 53  
Structural Social Work Theory ....................................................... 69  

Chapter Four: Methodology ............................................................ 81  
The Mixed Methods Approach ....................................................... 81  
The Mixed Methods Design and Worldview of This Project .............. 85  
Data Sources and Instrumentation .................................................. 92  
Samples ....................................................................................... 96  
A Note on the Participatory Data Analysis Process Used by CTOC .... 107  
Methods of Data Analysis: Qualitative ............................................. 109  
Methods of Data Analysis: Quantitative ......................................... 114  
Procedures Impacting Reliability and Validity of the Project Data .... 123  

Chapter Five: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Results for Research Question One ................................................................. 134  
Descriptive Statistics .................................................................... 134  
Qualitative Results ........................................................................ 138  
Quantitative Results (Inferential Statistics) ..................................... 212  
Mixed Methods Results .................................................................. 240  

Chapter Six: Quantitative and Qualitative Results for Research Question Two ................................................................. 254  
Qualitative Results ....................................................................... 254  
Quantitative Results ...................................................................... 296  

Chapter Seven: Qualitative Results for Research Question Three ........ 325  
Theme One: Offer Education, Campus Programming, and Support for Trans Individuals ......................................................... 326
Theme Two: Improve University Systems and Procedures to Recognize More than Two Genders and Give People Permission to Make Changes to their Name, Gender Marker, and Campus Identification .......................................................... 341
Theme Three: Encourage Greater Inclusivity and Recruitment of Diverse Groups ... 346
Theme Four: Make Changes to Facilities .................................................................. 349
Theme Five: Hold People Accountable ........................................................................ 352

Chapter Eight: Discussion ............................................................................................ 356
Limitations ....................................................................................................................... 356
Implications for Practice ............................................................................................... 361
Implications for Policy .................................................................................................... 386
Suggestions for Future Research .................................................................................. 391

References ...................................................................................................................... 396
Appendix A ...................................................................................................................... 415
Appendix B ...................................................................................................................... 418
Appendix C ...................................................................................................................... 422
Appendix D ...................................................................................................................... 423
Appendix E ...................................................................................................................... 424
List of Tables

Table 2.1 ............................................................................................................. 32

Table 4.1 ............................................................................................................. 88
Table 4.2 ............................................................................................................. 107
Table 4.3 ............................................................................................................. 122
Table 4.4 ............................................................................................................. 131

Table 5.1 ............................................................................................................. 142
Table 5.2 ............................................................................................................. 145
Table 5.3 ............................................................................................................. 147
Table 5.4 ............................................................................................................. 149
Table 5.5 ............................................................................................................. 160
Table 5.6 ............................................................................................................. 161
Table 5.7 ............................................................................................................. 165
Table 5.8 ............................................................................................................. 170
Table 5.9 ............................................................................................................. 173
Table 5.10 ......................................................................................................... 176
Table 5.11 ......................................................................................................... 179
Table 5.12 ......................................................................................................... 182
Table 5.13 ......................................................................................................... 183
Table 5.14 ......................................................................................................... 185
Table 5.15 ......................................................................................................... 186
Table 5.16 ......................................................................................................... 191
Table 5.17 ......................................................................................................... 193
Table 5.18 ......................................................................................................... 203
Table 5.19 ......................................................................................................... 205
Table 5.20 ......................................................................................................... 206
Table 5.21 ......................................................................................................... 206
Table 5.22 ......................................................................................................... 209
Table 5.23 ......................................................................................................... 214
Table 5.24 ......................................................................................................... 215
Table 5.25 ......................................................................................................... 220
Table 5.26 ......................................................................................................... 221
Table 5.27 ......................................................................................................... 223
Table 5.28 ......................................................................................................... 224
Table 5.29 ......................................................................................................... 227
Table 5.30 ......................................................................................................... 228
Table 5.31 ......................................................................................................... 229
Table 5.32 ......................................................................................................... 229
Table 5.33 ......................................................................................................... 230
Table 5.34 ......................................................................................................... 231
Table 5.35 ......................................................................................................... 232
Table 6.29…………………………………………………………………………………………322
Table 6.30…………………………………………………………………………………………323
Table 6.31…………………………………………………………………………………………324
Table 7.1…………………………………………………………………………………………328
Table 7.2…………………………………………………………………………………………332
Table 7.3…………………………………………………………………………………………335
Table 7.4…………………………………………………………………………………………336
Table 7.5…………………………………………………………………………………………338
Table 7.6…………………………………………………………………………………………341
Table 7.7…………………………………………………………………………………………343
Table 7.8…………………………………………………………………………………………344
Table 7.9…………………………………………………………………………………………345
Table 7.10…………………………………………………………………………………………348
Table 7.11…………………………………………………………………………………………350
Table 8.1…………………………………………………………………………………………393
List of Figures

Figure 4.1. The transformative convergent design, as implemented in this dissertation. 89
Figure 4.2. CTOC participants’ descriptions of their gender identities when on campus. 97
Figure 4.3. CTOC participants’ preferred pronouns for use in research results. 98
Figure 4.4. Age distribution of CTOC sample, overlaid with normal distribution curve. 99
Figure 4.5. Racial/ethnic identities of CTOC participants. 99
Figure 4.6. Percentage of CTOC participants in different campus roles. 101
Figure 4.7. Gender identity distribution of NCTE/Task Force sample. 102
Figure 4.8. Age distribution of NCTE/Task Force sample, overlaid with normal distribution curve. 103
Figure 4.9. Distribution of annual household income among NCTE/Task Force sample. 105
Figure 4.10. Distribution of educational attainment among the NCTE/Task Force sample. 105

Figure 5.1. Curvilinear effect of age on risk of being denied access to gender-appropriate bathrooms in school settings. 219

Figure 6.1. Curvilinear effect of age on risk for unequal treatment in rape crisis or domestic violence shelters due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. 304
Figure 6.2. Curvilinear effect of age on risk for unequal treatment in interactions with a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. 304

Figure 7.1. Comparison of campus sizes represented among those who spoke about Theme One (present) and those who did not speak about Theme One (absent). 327
Chapter One: Introduction

As a transperson, my own memory and understanding of myself, is under constant threat of destruction by doctors, bureaucrats, and academics who label me as an other by saying my brain is defective or that I am otherwise diseased and in need of their salvation. I can be punished through the refusal of medical care and having my papers branded with a false sex category unless I allow them to surgically alter my genitals... I have been violated by every teacher, mentor, and authority figure who has chastised, ignored, or otherwise humiliated me for the way I understand and express myself... These people, this system, does not want me to exist and has consistently attempted to destroy my memory and love of myself. Therefore, I feel a larger part of my life has been the struggle to maintain these inner or psychic parts of my being, to protect what makes me whole and human. – Jesse Pack, a trans man and zine writer (Pack, 2003, pp. 7-8)

It is part of social and legal convention in the United States to discriminate against, ridicule, and abuse transgender and gender non-conforming people within foundational institutions such as the family, schools, the workplace and health care settings, every day. Instead of recognizing that the moral failure lies in society’s unwillingness to embrace different gender identities and expressions, society blames transgender and gender non-conforming people for bringing the discrimination and violence on themselves... Each of these systems and institutions is failing daily in its obligation to serve transgender and gender non-conforming people... The consequences of these widespread injustices are human and real, ranging from unemployment and homelessness to illness and death... We must accept nothing less than a complete elimination of this pervasive inhumanity; we must work continuously and strenuously together for justice.

–The National Center for Transgender Equality and The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (Grant et al., 2011, p.8)

How must we rethink the ideal morphological constraints upon the human such that those who fail to approximate the norm are not condemned to a death within life? – Judith Butler (Butler, 2002, pp. xix-xx)

Much of the historical scholarship examining gender non-conformity has placed transgender people under a microscope—examining individual cases of transsexual and intersex individuals as part of a medical discourse that largely treated gender
transgression as pathology and as an exotic occurrence meriting close inspection and analysis. While the knowledge base has been changing in positive ways in recent decades to emphasize that transgender people have existed across time and cultures, are valuable members of our society, and deserve equal treatment, scholars and activists have called for human services professionals and researchers to critique the failures of institutions and organizations in society (and the people within them) that continue to reproduce oppressive patterns related to gender (Davis, 2008; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; Wilchins, 2004). The three quotations shared at the start of this chapter all call for critical efforts to change the social systems and the underlying assumptions about gender that are reproduced through laws, diagnostic manuals, organizational policies, and institutional cultures that are not effectively serving transgender people and are instead leading to systematic violence and marginalization for this community.

While we know that there are people who identify outside of the man/woman dichotomy, whose sex assigned at birth does not “match” how they feel inside, whose gender changes over time, and/or who experience a disconnect between their bodies and society’s expectations of who they should be as a gendered person (see, for example, Davis, 2008, and Lev, 2004), the vast majority of our institutions operate as if such realities do not exist (Gilbert, 2009; Lombardi & Davis, 2006; Markman, 2011; Spade, 2006; Welfare Warriors Research Collaborative [WWRC], 2010). Instead, they assume society is a neatly ordered system of two permanent genders, where sex always corresponds with one’s gender and anyone who falls outside of this system cannot be healthy, normal, or good (Garfinkel, 1967; Gilbert, 2009). Such practices negatively
impact transgender and gender non-conforming individuals and contribute to the
continuance of structural oppression impacting this population.

This dissertation examines this topic in-depth using a mixed methods analysis of
data based in the lives and experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming people.
The focus of the analysis is on two particular types of settings that are of interest to social
work practitioners and social work educators—social welfare settings (such as homeless
shelters, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, mental health clinics, drug
treatment centers, and government agencies) and higher education (where future social
workers are educated). Within this chapter, I will provide an overview of the research
problem, offer a brief note about the order of chapters in this dissertation, and conclude
with some reflection on the identities that I hold as a researcher and how they impact the
way that I approach this research. First, though, I will begin with an overview of relevant
terminology and information about the estimated number of transgender people in the
U.S.

**Relevant Terminology**

Since the focus of this research is about challenging the dichotomies of sex and
gender, I want to first distinguish these two terms. *Sex* can be understood as the culturally
agreed-upon biological and/or physiological characteristics that are used to classify
individuals as male or female (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The procedures used to
determine sex often include an evaluation of genitals at birth or of chromosomal typing
before birth (West & Zimmerman, 1987), but can also include a consideration of
reproductive organs, reproductive capacity, and hormone levels before birth, during
adolescence, and in adulthood (Davis, 2008; Lorber, 1996). While the common assumption in Western societies is that everyone’s sex characteristics neatly align into either a male or female category, this is not accurate. As Davis (2008) notes:

Variations in our sex include chromosomal variations, changing hormones as we age, biological changes due to illness (such as hysterectomy, mastectomy), changes related to choice, and the varied anatomical differences faced by intersex1 individuals who are born with characteristics of both sexes (typically forced to undergo genital surgery at birth to make them ‘normal,’ long before they have the opportunity to confirm their own gender) (p. 85)

While some believe that sex is an essential biological trait that has had a consistent meaning throughout history, Wilchins (2004) notes that it wasn’t until the 18th Century that the term “sex” came to have its contemporary meaning. In fact, for the majority of human history, male and female genitals were simply considered to be two variations of the same organ (Alsop, Fitzsimons, & Lennon, 2002; Wilchins, 2004). Nonetheless, sex is upheld in modern society as one of the defining identities of a person (Gilbert, 2009).

People usually assume that each individual is only one sex—male or female—and that this is stable throughout one’s life (Lorber, 1996). Importantly, one’s sex is typically viewed as “the stable referential anchor” that determines and is reflected through one’s gender (Stryker, 2006, p. 9).

*Gender* is a broader term that may include many different aspects of one’s social being, such as one’s sex category assigned at birth (e.g., female), personality, gender display, gender identity, gendered attitudes and beliefs, and familial roles (Lorber, 1996).

---

1 *Intersex* is a term for individuals who are born with sex anatomy, chromosomes, and/or gonads that falls outside of what is usually associated with either male or female bodies, which are conditions sometimes called *disorders of sex development* (Accord Alliance, “Glossary of terms,” n.d.). These individuals have historically been referred to as hermaphrodites, but this word has generally fallen out of favor and is considered to be pejorative. While some scholars and activists incorporate people with intersex conditions within the transgender umbrella (i.e. Wilchins, 2004), this subgroup faces somewhat different challenges and is therefore not the focus of this dissertation.
West and Zimmerman (1987) state that gender is about how a person behaves and identifies “in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category” (p. 127). Davis (2008) writes about gender as being constructed of an individual’s sex, gender role (i.e., behavior and appearance), and gender identity. The dominant gender paradigm in American society assumes that there are only two genders—man and woman (Davis, 2008)—and that these identities stem from one’s sex assigned at birth: that people classified as males become men and those classified as females become women (Stryker, 2006). This paradigm is not universal, as is evident in the history of many Native communities that celebrate the existence of people whose behaviors, dress, and roles differ from others of their sex (Walters, Evans-Campbell, Simoni, Ronquillo, & Bhuyan, 2006).

Two other terms often used when discussing gender are gender identity and gender expression. Gender identity is one’s internal sense of gender, which may or may not relate to the physical manifestations of one’s sex (Davis, 2008, p. 85). One’s gender identity may be man, woman, both, neither, transgender, genderqueer, and/or two-spirit, among many other possible identities. Gender expression consists of how people communicate and display their gender identity “through clothing, behavior, grooming, etc.” (Wilchins, 2004, p. 8). Lucal (1999) notes that, due to the way that gender is socially constructed, there can be differences between one’s sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression (or what Lucal terms presented identity), and perceived identity (the gender that a person is read as by others). The latter is what often has the most consequence in social interactions (Lucal, 1999). For example, being read by others
as transgender, as a “woman impersonating a man” or a “man impersonating a woman,” or as someone who is neither man nor woman is what can place a person at higher risk for harassment and assault (Browne, 2004; Grant et al., 2011; Saffin, 2008; Seelman et al., 2012).

*Transgender* is a term that has been in existence for a few decades, although scholars disagree about whether its current meaning emerged in the 1970s (Davis, 2008), 1980s (Stryker, 2006), or 1990s (Wilchins, 2004). Leslie Feinberg’s political pamphlet, *Transgender liberation: A movement whose time has come*, which was published in the early 1990s, was an influential force in the growth in popularity of the term *transgender* that suggested it as a word for unifying all people on the outskirts of gender norms to form a political alliance (Stryker, 2006). Within this dissertation, transgender will reflect Hines’ (2010) definition of this word as:

> a range of gender experiences, subjectivities and presentations that fall across, between or beyond stable categories of “man” and “woman”… [It will include] gender identities that have, more traditionally, been described as “transsexual,” and a diversity of genders that call into question an assumed relationship between gender identity and presentation and the “sexed” body. (p. 1)

I will be using the word transgender (or simply *trans*) as an umbrella term that incorporates other gender-different identities such as cross-dresser, drag queen, drag king, sissy, tomboy, fa’aafine², gender bender, androgyne, trans man, two-spirit, gender liminal, third sex, trans woman, FTM, MTF, butch, femme, genderqueer, etc. (Burdge, 2007; Davis, 2008; Roen, 2001; Stryker, 2006; Walters, et al., 2006; Wilchins, 2004). Not all people who challenge binaries of sex and gender understand themselves as

---

² *Fa’aafine* is a Samoan term for anatomical males who do not inhabit a masculine gender role and instead take on feminine roles and characteristics. The term literally translates as “like a woman” (Roen, 2001).
transgender or feel welcomed by the trans community. This is particularly true of some people of color and those from indigenous communities (Roen, 2001; Wilchins, 2004). In using the word *transgender*, I acknowledge that this is not a term claimed by everyone who identifies as or is perceived by others as not conforming to a gender binary. In an attempt to address this reality, I will often partner my use of the term “transgender” with other phrases such as *gender variant* and *gender non-conforming* to acknowledge those who don’t fit into or agree with gender binaries but who may not use the word transgender to describe themselves.

There are significant challenges to estimating the number of transgender individuals in the U.S., since the vast majority of scientific and government surveys ask participants to classify themselves as either male or female, thereby ignoring and excluding the possibility of having a transgender identity (Burdge, 2007; Gates, 2011). Further, even if a survey allows respondents to designate a transgender identity, an individual might not be comfortable disclosing such information to surveyors and researchers (Burdge, 2007). Other problems with estimation include varying definitions of transgender across studies (such as whether identity, expression, and/or birth sex are taken into consideration), variations in research methods (sampling, data collection, and degree of anonymity), and a lack of consistency in questions over time to help assess the reliability of data (Gates, 2011). However, based on a population-based study in Massachusetts and an LGBT\(^3\) Tobacco Survey in California, Gates (2011) estimates that 0.3% of the U.S. population (about 700,000 people) is transgender.

\(^3\) In general, when referencing the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning population, I use the acronym LGBTQ in this dissertation. However, when discussing other scholars’ work, survey
Just as with the term *transgender*, activists who break gender norms also coined the word *cisgender*, which is an identity label for those who do not transgress gender rules (i.e., they are non-transgender; Koyama, 2003b). Cisgender (or *cissexual*) individuals are people whose “identity and presentation [match] their physical morphology” and who mirror “the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated” with their sex (Matthews, 1999, Cisgender, para. 1). This term, while relatively new to the scholarly literature (and rarely heard in the common lexicon⁴), is key to understanding the oppression of transgender people. Just as White people directly gain unearned privileges when people of color are oppressed, cisgender individuals benefit when our society continues to oppress trans and gender variant people. Therefore, putting a name on this privileged population is quite important. A list of additional terms relevant to the topic of this dissertation is included in Appendix A.

**Statement of the Research Problem**

This dissertation focuses on the problem of *bigenderism*. Gilbert (2009) defines bigenderism as the culturally dominant perspective that “accepts the rules of gender and does not permit or allow for variations, exceptions, and/or deviations from the norm” (p. 95). By “rules of gender,” Gilbert is referring indirectly to work done by sociologist

---

⁴ Even though the terms cisgender and cissexual are not often heard in mainstream settings, in predominantly queer settings, I have frequently heard LGBTQ youth use these words, or the abbreviated term *cis*. 

instruments, or findings, I generally try to use the same acronym that they used. When discussing participant quotations within this study’s results, I maintain the acronym that the participant used, as long as it does not identify a particular campus or college organization.
Harold Garfinkel\(^5\) (1967) in which he outlines a list of the properties of sex that are assumed to be “common sense” in our society. These properties include: (a) that there are only two sexes—male and female; (b) that this division is part of a moral order, rather than based in science; (c) that all people describe themselves as either male or female as a form of self-respect; (d) that no one changes sexes at any point; (e) that biology (specifically one’s genitals) is the essential sign of sex; (f) that one’s identity as male or female is permanent—it can be recognized even before or at birth, throughout life, and after death—and that we don’t change these identities for people after they die; and (g) that dichotomous sexing appears “natural” and is therefore the morally superior way, and scientific evidence suggesting otherwise is of little consequence (Garfinkel, 1967). While almost everyone is impacted by these beliefs, Gilbert (2009) argues that the transgender community and other gender-different people are among the people most negatively affected by bigenderism. This dissertation moves forward with the assumption that in order to gain the sharpest picture of how structural bigenderism negatively impacts people, one should listen to the voices of those most severely impacted by the problem—namely, transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Bigenderism isn’t isolated to individual opinions, but is constantly reproduced by people in all sorts of cultural systems—including schools, government, medicine, the law, academia, and mental health and criminal justice systems (Gilbert, 2009; McPhail, 2004; Pack, 2003). This dissertation focuses on these structural aspects of bigenderism—specifically, how it appears in social welfare systems and higher education settings and

\(^5\) While Garfinkel’s description of the rules of gender may be helpful in deconstructing the barriers that confront transgender and gender non-conforming people, his work is critiqued by Serano (2007) for objectifying a trans woman named Agnes to formulate his work on this topic.
the consequences for transgender and gender non-conforming people in these settings. In using the term structural, my intention is to reflect an understanding of oppression that builds from the work of Young (2000). She describes oppression as frequently neither dictated by one ruler nor the outcome of policies created by a few, but rather a structural issue ingrained in the “unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences following those rules” (p. 36). She goes on to say:

Oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes, and structural forms of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms—in short, the normal processes of everyday life. (Young, 2000, p. 36)

The “rules of gender” discussed earlier are reified through our society’s institutions and organizations, and these rules have a profound effect on the lives of gender variant people, creating the “vast and deep injustices” described by Young. Some examples of ways these rules are upheld include: media portrayals of transgender people as freaks, as mentally unstable, or as sexual deviants; bureaucratic systems that make it impossible for people to indicate an identity other than male or female on applications and other forms; and our society’s emphasis on classifying every person as either male or female on birth certificates and in schools, prisons, bathrooms, and homeless shelters.

Young (2000) goes on to describe five primary ways oppression impacts our society, and one of those ways is through what she calls cultural imperialism. As part of cultural imperialism, the dominant group’s experience is universalized and normalized,

---

6 The other four faces of oppression identified by Young (2000) are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and violence. Employment marginalization and violence in particular deeply impact transgender individuals; however, this dissertation will focus primarily on cultural imperialism.
while marginalized groups’ perspectives are made invisible and stereotyped as “Other.” The process of stereotyping, Young explains, marks these out-groups and confines them, often in ways connected to their people’s bodies and physicality. The stereotypes that are communicated about non-dominant groups (e.g., people of color, women, elders, people with disabilities) are so much a part of American society that we take them for granted and rarely question them (Young, 2000).

I would argue that bigenderism is an example of cultural imperialism that deeply affects transgender and other gender variant people. The normalization of dominant group culture is reflected in the “rules of gender” identified by Garfinkel (1967) that permeate our society and thereby treat gender variations and transgender identities as abnormal. As articulated by Burdge (2007), the very existence of transgender people directly challenges the binary gender model; yet, people in this society are socialized to take this model without question and to help uphold it by punishing those who violate these rules (Burdge, 2007). Our society continues to rely upon legal documents—birth certificates, social security cards, driver’s licenses, etc.—to determine both a person’s sex or gender and what form of sex-segregated services they should receive, rather than allowing the person to self-identify. Policies around the country are inconsistent about whether and how people can change their sex designation on identity documents. Some jurisdictions allow people to change the sex designation on a driver’s license without proof of a form of sex reassignment surgery, while others mandate such proof (Lambda Legal, n.d.; Lombardi & Davis, 2006). Transgender individuals can run into barriers in obtaining or keeping public assistance benefits (Social Security Income, Social Security
Disability, HIV benefits, etc.) when their Social Security records have an incorrect sex, and the federal government requires people to provide evidence of sex reassignment surgery to change this information (Spade, 2006; WWRC, 2010). Further, many services for low-income individuals and other highly vulnerable communities are sex-segregated, and there are numerous documented instances of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals being placed in programs and facilities that are inappropriate to their gender identity and/or lacking trans-positive services, including homeless shelters and other housing programs, workfare programs, mental health services, general medical care, foster care facilities, intimate partner violence shelters, and drug treatment facilities (Blum, Perina, & DeFilippis, 2000; Lombardi & Davis, 2006; National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs [NCAVP], 2009; Pack, 2003; Spade, 2006; WWRC, 2010). Being placed in a sex-segregated setting that does not match a transgender person’s identity can put the person at risk for harassment, abuse, not having their needs met, or preemptively dropping out of a program (Spade, 2006).

NCAVP (2009) discusses how transgender people frequently have few options for intimate partner violence shelters that will accept them, leaving some people to resort to homeless shelters that may not be equipped to deal with survivors of violence or provide increased safety for transgender individuals. While not typically included as “social welfare,” it should be noted that many transgender and gender variant people are often denied access to bathrooms and locker rooms (Browne, 2004; Spade, 2006), as well as prisons and juvenile justice facilities (Koyama, 2003a; Spade) that are congruent with their gender. All of this puts them at great risk for verbal, physical, and sexual
harassment and rape in such settings (Browne; Gilbert, 2009; Koyama, 2003a; Spade; WWRC, 2010).

Bigenderism could also be said to be a form of cultural imperialism in the way that it treats transgender people as invisible. For example, the vast majority of intake and screening forms for public benefits and social services do not include or acknowledge identities other than male and female (Davis, 2008). The invisibility of the trans population is further exacerbated by the severe lack of trans-competent service providers. As Davis (2008) notes, there is a:

near total absence of trans-positive providers offering medical and mental health care, substance abuse therapy, shelter from domestic violence, treatment for HIV/AIDS, hormone confirming therapy, trans-masculine specific, and social services (p. 96).

A web-based survey of 327 social work faculty in the U.S. and Canada found that faculty believed that content on gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals was significantly more important than content on transgender people, and fewer faculty were willing to use transgender-related resources than LGB resources, if made available to them (Fredriksen-Goldsen, Woodford, Luke, & Gutiérrez, 2011). These findings indicate that today’s social work educators place less priority on transgender competency than LGB competency, even though scholars such as Davis (2008) have pointed out the severe lack of competent providers.

Additionally, bigenderism is a form of cultural imperialism in the way that it stereotypes transgender and gender non-conforming people and marks them as “other.” Spade (2006) discusses how transgender and gender non-conforming people are too often treated as if their gender is a “problem” that needs to be rehabilitated simply because they
do not match gendered stereotypes. In some homeless shelters, trans people have been forced out by staff who believe the individual must not be serious about finding a job when the person’s gender expression differs from staff expectations (Spade, 2006). Blum et al. (2000) corroborate these findings, as they mention that welfare workers in New York City have been known to use homophobic and transphobic justifications for denying people their rights to monetary aid.

Finally, Young’s (2000) description of cultural imperialism also discusses how cultural products are made to express the dominant group’s interpretation of society, including their interpretation of the lives of marginalized groups. Perhaps one of the most obvious ways that cultural products mark and define transgender people is through mental health diagnoses that pathologize gender variance. The most recent publication\(^7\) of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) classifies both Gender Identity Disorder and Transvestic Fetishism as sexual paraphilia, which is based on the assumption or stereotype that people cross-dress or change genders to meet their sexual desires (Lombardi & Davis, 2006). While there is strong debate within the transgender community and among mental health professionals about the value of these diagnoses, particularly for those who need to receive health insurance coverage for hormone treatment and other medical care, a number of social work scholars say these diagnoses unfairly problematize individual variations in gender rather than push us to challenge the larger system of bigenderism that excludes transgender and gender variant people.

---

\(^7\) For some thoughts about the proposed changes for the DSM V in relation to transgender and gender variant people, see Markman, 2011.
people (Burdge, 2007; Davis, 2008; McPhail, 2004; Markman, 2011). As Markman (2011) asserts:

The fact that the societal definition of gender as binary leaves no space for transgender experience to be considered normal and does not reflect the lived experience of gender within society is problematic and oppressive. The result of the strict enforcement of the binary is that the individual who feels gender nonconforming and thus generates friction against the construct of gender is the one who is pathologized, instead of the critique being focused on the idea of gender in its current pervasive conception as being overly rigid. Too often the locus of the problem is seen as situated within the individual who does not conform to societal expectations, rather than with the societal expectations themselves. (pp. 317-318)

**Purpose of the Dissertation**

Structural bigenderism is a relatively unexplored topic in the scholarly literature. There are few peer-reviewed studies of how macro-level problems, such as structural oppression, impact transgender and gender non-conforming people. Further, due to the myriad difficulties in accurately sampling transgender, transsexual, and other gender non-conforming people, most empirical studies of trans people are qualitative and rely on small convenience samples, and therefore have limited generalizability.

Despite the progress that has been made in recent decades to research the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming, there is still a lot of work to be done to better understand the situations this population faces in settings of concern to social workers, including the systems in which we work and the systems in which we educate future professionals. The aims of the dissertation therefore are: (a) to analyze experiences of structural bigenderism among transgender and gender non-conforming people and how these experiences differ by various identities; (b) to use rigorous methods that are transparent, clearly communicated, and have participatory aspects; and (c) to examine the
way that people in positions of institutional power interact with transgender and gender non-conforming people.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

The following chapter (Chapter Two) offers a review of the empirical research related to structural bigenderism in social welfare settings and higher education and a discussion of gaps in the knowledge base and the three research questions to be addressed in this dissertation. Chapter Three details the two theories (queer theory and structural social work theory) used to frame this study, Chapter Four reviews the study’s methodology, and Chapters Five, Six, and Seven each present results for one of the three research questions. The final chapter (Chapter Eight) discusses the results, limitations, implications for practice and policy, and suggestions for future research. Before moving into the literature review, however, I want to first share information about my process of researcher reflexivity and my social location in relation to this study.

**Social Location of the Researcher**

In carrying out this mixed methods study, my philosophical approach partially draws from qualitative traditions, including the belief that *how* we conduct research—everything from selecting a topic to formulating research questions to deciding how to analyze data—reflects something about us as researchers. To ignore who the researcher is and how that person or group of people is situated in relation to the topic or problem being studied ignores the power inherent in this role and any vested interests that the researcher has in knowledge construction. Further, within qualitative traditions, data analysis and interpretation stem from the positioning of the researcher, and one should
therefore disclose how our interpretations are impacted by who we are as individuals and our place in society (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

With this in mind, I have found it important to engage in a process of reflexivity about my social location and the reasons I am drawn to the topic of structural bigenderism. Patton (2002) describes reflexivity as being about “what I know and how I know it” (p. 64). Researcher reflexivity is a process of self-awareness in which the researcher purposefully works to remain cognizant about “the cultural, political, social, linguistic, and ideological origins of one’s own perspective and voice as well as the perspective and voices of those one interviews and those to whom one reports” (Patton, 2002, p. 65). This approach is based in feminist and postmodern theories that posit that how knowledge is constructed is a political process and that an ethical approach to this process requires transparency, a commitment to articulating participant voices as accurately as possible, and self-reflection on the part of the researcher about biases, limitations and blind spots that may impact the way we give voice to our research (Patton, 2002, p. 65).

Therefore, I find it important to disclose information here about who I am and my general social location, how this has driven me to study structural bigenderism in the way that I do, and how these factors may impact my research process and interpretation of data. One of the first aspects of my identity that is important to name here is that I identify as cisgender—that is, I do not identify as either transgender or gender non-conforming. To put it another way, I was assigned a female sex at birth and continue to identify as a woman today, which matches predominant society’s assumptions about how
my gender identity should be formed. This is an important aspect of myself to name here, particularly because I am collecting data and attempting to accurately represent the voices of people who are members of a population to which I myself do not belong. Further, as part of my social location as a cisgender person, I am someone who experiences significant unearned privilege through structural bigenderism. For example, no one has ever challenged me about whether I am a “real” woman, denied me access to women-only spaces or groups, or asked me personal questions about my body, what genitals I have, or whether I have undergone surgeries to change my gender. I am addressed by strangers, acquaintances, and friends alike with female pronouns (she/her/hers) nearly all of the time. I have great ease in finding and purchasing clothes that match my gender identity without being questioned by others, I rarely experience any form of reprimand for dressing or acting in the way I do as a woman, and I am able to find and access restrooms in absolutely any location that match my gender identity without having anyone challenge me in that space. I have never had to hide my true gender from others out of fear of violence or rejection, and I have never had to fear that I would be unable to find housing or a job because of having a different body or different gender expression than what others expect for women. Every message I hear in our society tells me that the alignment between my sex, gender identity, and gender expression is normal, healthy, morally appropriate, and natural. Additionally, no one has ever told me that I need to seek psychological or medical treatment or therapy because of my gender identity or gender expression or simply in order to be myself.
All of these experiences reflect my standing as a cisgender person, and none of these occurrences are guaranteed for individuals who are transgender or gender non-conforming. In fact, these concrete benefits exist for me precisely because transgender people are treated as the “other,” as outcasts, and as targets for violence, shaming, unequal treatment, and inappropriate questioning. I acknowledge that I enter a complicated territory in studying this topic and highlighting the voices of trans people to do so—there is a long and troubled history of cisgender people studying the trans community in ways that further reify the ideas that trans people are pathological and cisgender people are “healthy” and that distort the voices of trans people (for a detailed history of transgender studies and historical research on “transgender phenomena” see works such as Hines, 2010, Namaste, 2000, and Stryker, 2006). Serano (2007) also challenges cissexual academics who study transsexual and intersex people not to exploit these voices for their own purposes or career gains or because we want to add something unique to dialogues about gender. Instead, Serano suggests:

If sociologists truly wanted to better understand transsexuality, rather than focus exclusively on the behaviors and etiology of transsexuals, they would study the irrational animosity, fear, and disrespect that many cissexuals express toward trans people (and others with exceptional gender and sexual traits). If sexologists were truly interested in transsexuals’ mental and physical well-being, they would not try to micro-manage our transitions, but rather focus their energies on correcting the huge disparity that exists between cissexual and transsexual access to gender-related healthcare (pp. 156-157)

My intention in this dissertation is to pay heed to such a suggestion and put attention on the problematic structural patterns, characteristics, and policies as they appear within specific types of institutions. Further, my focus is on the actions of powerful people—who are by and large cisgender—who control the direction of these organizations and
whose biases against transgender people are often deeply embedded in the culture of such systems. Thus, my intention is to call to task those who are cisgender for the work we have ahead of us in transforming our organizations so that they can better respond to and affirm the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Over the course of conducting this research, I have been asked the question of why I choose to study structural bigenderism, particularly since I do not experience systematic negative outcomes as a cisgender person and, in fact, materially benefit from the oppression of transgender people. This question is one that I have reflected on myself and one that was asked of me directly during an interview with a participant within the Colorado Trans on Campus study. I would like to share an excerpt of that interview here. This conversation also focused on whether I find that people assume things about who I am (i.e., that I am transgender) when they find out that I do research and advocacy related to the trans community:

**Participant:** Do you find that people assume things about you just because of what you do or who you are in your expression? Do you feel that?

**Kristie (Interviewer):** I think that when you were talking about…putting yourself out there and the way people read [me]…I think that’s something that is on my mind… “How do I communicate my position as an ally and be okay with however people interpret that?” It’s definitely something that, you have to get to a point where you’re ready to do that.

**Participant:** Yeah, because all of a sudden people are assuming things about you just by being an ally, or at least that’s what I would think. And I don’t know. It’s interesting to me. Why? Or well, I’m not interviewing you. I want to know, well, what kind of developed into that? Why do you feel like you’re such an ally? Why is it such an area of interest to you? I’m always curious about this because it’s like this is your area, this is your study, your research. Why? Why is it important to you that [college] campuses are more friendly?

The words of this participant aptly capture a key question related to my self-reflexivity as a researcher studying the experiences of trans and gender non-conforming people. As I
have thought about it, I have come to think that one reason I was drawn to this topic is because of how core gender feels to my life and because of my belief that people should be able to freely identify as the gender that best fits their sense of self without sanction or punishment from society. This ethical stance is similarly reflected in the social work profession’s commitment to addressing discrimination and oppression as they impact people based upon gender identity and gender expression (NASW, 2008); this is therefore also a principle that is very core to my professional sense of self. I also personally believe that people of all genders should be treated as equally healthy, real, moral, and good, and this is a belief that compels me to want to address the ways that society does not live up to this principle. Further, my perspective has also been shaped by the people in my life who have come out as transgender or gender non-conforming during the time that I have known them, which has prompted critical self-reflection on my part about the injustices these individuals experience for simply being themselves.

I do not subscribe to the belief that only people within a marginalized community are responsible for developing knowledge and creating positive social change to benefit that group. I instead take the position that some of the work needs to be done by people who are experiencing privilege and who—when they do not take a stance—only further the status quo. I have a desire to contribute to the discourse that puts the attention on the problematic structures and the cisgender actors within them. Transphobia and the many social problems that are directed at trans people (such as hate crimes, discrimination, and sexual assault) are occurring primarily at the hands of cisgender people, so I believe it therefore is the responsibility of those of us who are cisgender to challenge the
problematic behaviors that people like us are carrying out. I take guidance from the perspective of Elliot (2010) about the difficulties and yet importance of non-trans people in contributing to scholarly work in this area:

Despite the political difficulties involved in writing about groups to whom one does not belong, doing so is important for reasons I would describe as scholarly integrity, political commitment, and ethical responsibility…Anyone who teaches courses on gender (as I do) has an obligation to address what is happening at and what is being pushed into the margins of the socially prescribed, heteronormative gender order. Anti-oppressive approaches to teaching gender and sexuality need to address trans lives in non-transphobic ways…Second, because non-trans feminist and queer theorists are concerned with how power circulates in the meaning, experience, and performance of gendered bodies, we are obliged to pay attention to contemporary challenges to configurations of gender. Trans writers and activists invite us to rethink the negative perceptions, attitudes, and practices that affect their lives, not simply to admonish, but also to end the ongoing prejudicial and violent responses to gender diversity that persists. Embracing transpersons’ demands for recognition requires extending existing analyses of gender-based oppression to include the claims of marginalized others. Third, transpersons deserve to be taken seriously, especially by those whose work may have some bearing (directly or indirectly) on their lives. For non-trans feminist and queer theorists this means not only listening to and learning from transpersons. It also means thinking, writing, theorizing—all parts of a process of making sense of the challenges that trans experiences pose for the gender order as well as to other social, legal, medical, and state institutions (Elliot, 2010, p. 8)

Elliot’s (2010) statement helps to put in perspective an ethical frame for those, like myself, who are committed to doing teaching and research on topics related to gender and anti-oppressive practice.

There are, of course, a number of other dimensions of my social location that impact my decision to study this topic, the way I have structured my research methodology, and my approach to analyzing and interpreting data. First, as a woman, I think that some of my interest in studying gender relates to my own experiences of
sexism and inhabiting a gender that continues to be viewed as “less than” that of men. My interest and perspective is therefore related to my commitment to be an advocate for gender equality based on my experiences as a woman. My positioning as a researcher is also related to my identity as queer—because I have felt the impact of homophobia and been told that my sexuality and choice of partner is “wrong” for my gender, this impacts my perspective and my stake in challenging cultural assumptions regarding the overlap of gender systems and sexual identities. Further, I am aware of the transphobia and discrimination against transgender people that have been and continue to be promulgated by some within the LGBQ community, and I want to contribute to efforts to confront these attitudes and actions.

I hold a number of privileged identities that also impact how I do research and create blind spots for me. These identities include being a White, highly educated, middle class, English-speaking, married, able-bodied U.S. citizen who was raised as a Catholic and is in a monogamous relationship. Each of these dimensions provides me with cultural credence in U.S. society and allows my voice as a scholar to be perceived as more valid, normal, and worthy of consideration than those who do not hold these privileges. Additionally, another privilege that I hold—body size privilege (as a relatively thin and petite person)—contributes to the ways in which others generally assume me to be a woman and regularly praise me for the way my body looks in relation to my gender. I mention this because I am aware that body size can complicate or facilitate trans people’s experiences and how often they are “read” correctly by others as their gender identity. With all of these dimensions of privilege in mind, one intention of my work in this
dissertation was to highlight the role of intersectionality and the impact of overlapping identities of the transgender participants and how this has measurable impacts on their experiences in social welfare and higher education settings. I do this partially out of recognition that no one is defined solely by gender; we are each made up of many different identities, histories, communities, and experiences. I also forefront intersectionality to help keep myself in check and do my best to avoid underemphasizing the differences in experiences on those dimensions in which I hold privilege, such as race, social class, age, and education level.

There are likely some ways in which my choices of how to construct this research, analyze my data, and interpret findings are limited by my blind spots regarding my social location and the privileges I experience. One assumption of mine in starting this research was that transgender people can be framed as one “community”—as if they share certain interests or experiences in common. This assumption was challenged in conversation with one trans woman related to the Colorado Trans on Campus research project—she expressed the perspective that trans people have few similarities and very little that unites them. Thus, while this research frequently speaks of transgender people as one “population” or “community,” this person offered a direct critique of this assumption. My hope is to be mindful of such critiques and to explore both differences and similarities in experiences throughout this study.

While I have worked to be transparent about my positioning and my role as a non-transgender person in collaborating with community agencies in doing this research, I am sure to have overlooked some aspects of how my identities and assumptions impact this
work and the conclusions drawn. I look forward to engaging in future conversations with colleagues, advocates, and others regarding this research and the growth I have yet before me in being an advocate for gender equality and contributing to this area of scholarship.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will review the literature on structural bigenderism, specifically empirical studies of transgender and gender variant people in both social welfare and higher education settings. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of gaps in the knowledge base and an overview of the aims and research questions for this dissertation.

Review of Empirical Research

Structural bigenderism is a relatively unexplored topic in the scholarly literature, and there is even disagreement about what terminology to use to describe the macro-level oppression of transgender people. For example, while Gilbert (2009) uses the term bigenderism, others use the term *genderism* (Bilodeau, 2007; Browne, 2004) *cissexism*\(^8\) or *oppositional sexism*\(^9\) (Serano, 2007). There are few peer-reviewed studies of how macro-level problems, such as structural oppression, impact transgender and gender non-conforming people. Further, due to the myriad difficulties in accurately sampling transgender, transsexual, and other gender non-conforming people, most empirical studies of trans people are qualitative and rely on small convenience samples, and therefore have limited generalizability.

---

\(^8\) Defined as “the belief that transsexuals’ identified genders are inferior to, or less authentic than, those of cissexuals” (Serano, 2007, p. 12).

\(^9\) Defined as “the belief that female and male are rigid, mutually exclusive categories, each possessing a unique and nonoverlapping set of attributes, aptitudes, abilities, and desires. Oppositional sexists attempt to punish or dismiss those of us who fall outside of gender or sexual norms because our existence threatens the idea that women and men are 'opposite' sexes” (Serano, 2070, p. 13)
However, two recent studies—one conducted in the US, and the other conducted in the UK—break this trend and attempt to sample much wider swaths of the transgender community about macro-level issues such as discrimination, harassment, and experiences accessing health care, education, and public spaces. The first study, carried out in the US by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (Grant et al., 2011), is one of the sources of data for this dissertation and has a sample size of 6,456, which is likely the largest known sample of transgender people in research. Findings from this study will be discussed later in this chapter. The second study, conducted by Whittle, Turner, and Al-Alami (2007), was a mixed methods project in the UK that aimed to provide insight into the concerns of trans people seeking help and “a deeper view of…the means and mechanisms behind the inequality and discrimination that [result] from prejudice about trans people” (p. 6). Whittle and colleagues (2007) collected qualitative data from an electronic database of 86,000 e-mails to Press for Change (a legal support organization for trans people) and 16,000 postings to the FtM Network e-mail listserv, and created and distributed a survey in 2006 with both quantitative and qualitative questions. While the sample recruited for the survey was not a probability sample, the authors assert that it was the largest sample of transgender people for study in the world to that point (N = 872) and roughly mirrored the UK population in terms of age distribution, disability status, and receipt of social security benefits (but not in terms of race, occupation class, or educational attainment; Whittle et al., 2007). The authors suggest that their findings can help people understand the experiences of inequality and discrimination faced by trans individuals, the trigger points
leading to the discrimination and inequality, action steps that can be taken to improve the situations faced by this population, and future research needs.

One of the major findings of the study by Whittle et al. (2007) regards the trigger points in a trans person’s life that lead to the most frequent appearance of discrimination and inequality. The most common trigger point was transitioning in the workplace; the rest of the “top nine” trigger points were: (a) dressing as another gender in public, (b) undergoing gender reassignment surgery, (c) the moment when one’s family at home learns of plans to cross-dress or live permanently in another gender, (d) changing one’s name on documents, (e) starting hormone therapy, (f) being known by the community, and (g) moving for a job (Whittle et al., 2007). This study also uncovered “sectors” in life where trans people most often felt the consequences of prejudice. The most prominent sectors were employment, healthcare, leisure, and education (Whittle et al., 2007). Time points in the life course when problems were most frequently experienced were at the point of transitioning, moving out of the family home to live on one’s own, and when one’s gender identity becomes a major issue within a marriage (Whittle et al., 2007). All of these moments of life change are issues that social workers may address with our clients.

While the Whittle et al. (2007) study offers findings about discrimination and inequality in a variety of settings, this literature review from here forward will focus on research about bigenderism affecting trans people within two settings: (a) social welfare settings, and (b) higher education. As suggested by the UK report by Whittle et al. (2007), transgender people seem to face particularly strong discrimination in some of the settings
where social workers are often employed (e.g., healthcare, education, public settings). In fact, more than half (54%) of all social work jobs in 2008 were in health care and social assistance industries (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). It is therefore of critical importance for social workers to know how transgender and gender variant people experience these settings. Further, people of color, low-income individuals, and those without access to employment, housing, and resources—i.e., those who are among the central client base of social workers—are more often forced into the most gender-regulating spaces in our society, such as shelters, public bathrooms, group homes, drug treatment facilities, the foster care system, and the justice system (Spade, 2006). It is important for us to know the degree of structural bigenderism within these social welfare systems in order to better serve transgender and gender variant clients.

As Whittle et al.’s (2007) study suggests, some of the points in time when trans people are at risk for discrimination and inequality include when one moves away from home and during transitions—both of which, for modern generations of youth, often occur when one begins schooling at a college or university. Further, colleges and universities are rich settings for understanding larger social practices because they are places where values, including bigenderism, are taught to students, who then take those values into the community. Social workers, of course, are located within these settings as well—as educators, students, and employees. Therefore, the second major setting that will be discussed in this literature review is that of the college/university environment. First, though, I will review what is known about bigenderism in social welfare settings.
Structural bigenderism in social welfare settings. In reviewing the empirical literature on transgender and gender variant people's experiences in social welfare, I identified several themes in research findings. These themes suggest that structural bigenderism in social welfare settings encompasses: (a) the social control and punishment of low-income transgender and gender non-conforming people, which often emerges as unequal and unfair treatment, refusal of services, and discrimination; (b) the invisibility and lack of acknowledgment of transgender people; (c) a lack of designated safe spaces for transgender and gender variant people; (d) a lack of competency/knowledge among social workers and other professional helpers; and (e) a lack of gender self-determination in placing clients in appropriate settings.

Social control and punishment of transgender and gender non-conforming people, including unequal treatment, refusal of services, and discrimination. Work has been done by feminist and anti-racist scholars over the past few decades to uncover the ways in which social welfare systems and policies strictly control many facets of the lives of the poor—from whether they should marry to how they should (or shouldn’t) use their bodies and whether they should have children. This scholarship can be used as a springboard to study the ways in which low-income transgender people are similarly bound to tight rules about how they should/shouldn’t look, identify, dress, and behave in order to receive needed help. Spade (2006), who has worked with numerous gender transgressive clients at the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, summarizes:

Navigating benefits systems, shelter systems, essential medical services, and entanglement with the criminal justice system that is now a central aspect of low-income existence in order to survive is increasingly tied to the ability of each person to meet highly gendered and raced behavioral and expression requirements."
While feminist analysis has exposed the hidden agendas of poverty policies to shape women's work and family structure and inhibit the ability of women to be economically independent and escape violent relationships, this analysis has not extended to examine the effects of this system on poor people who also transgress the coercive binary gender system that maintains sexism. (p. 224)

One of the ways that these gender regulations arise and affect low-income transgender people is in relation to homeless shelters. Spade notes (2006), based upon experience, that many clients at the Sylvia Rivera Law Project are often denied housing services because of their gender identity and/or gender expression; they often need additional advocacy in order to convince shelters to allow them to have access. Emerging research supports Spade’s experience. According to the survey conducted by NCTE and the Task Force of 6,456 transgender and gender non-conforming people (Grant et al., 2011), among those who tried to use homeless shelters, 42% said they were forced to stay in facilities for the wrong gender, 29% were denied service, 55% were harassed, 25% were physically assaulted, and 22% were sexually assaulted.

Unfortunately, discrimination, harassment, assault, and refusal of services carry into other settings as well. In a recent review of the literature regarding barriers to care for transgender individuals in social services (Stotzer, Silverschanz, & Wilson, 2013), one of the documented challenges in accessing services documented across studies is discrimination and rejection from service providers. Among Grant et al.’s (2011) sample, 22% reported unequal treatment, and 22% verbal harassment/disrespect by government agencies or officials. The survey collected data on participants’ experiences in other social service settings as well, including mental health clinics, domestic violence shelters/programs, rape crisis centers, and drug treatment programs. The prevalence of unequal treatment, harassment, and assault in these settings is displayed in Table 2.1.
Table 2.1
NCTE/Task Force Study’s Reported Prevalence of Unequal Treatment, Harassment, & Assault in Various Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unequal Treatment</th>
<th>Verbal Harassment / Disrespect</th>
<th>Physical Assault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Clinics</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Shelters/Programs</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape Crisis Centers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Treatment Programs</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, there were some differences in experiences based on a person’s gender identity and gender expression: trans men, as well as people who were gender non-conforming, reported higher rates of verbal harassment/disrespect and unequal service in public accommodations (including social services) compared to trans women. The authors hypothesize that transgender women may be underreporting their harassment and discrimination, and they call for more research to explore these differences (Grant et al., 2011).

The Welfare Warriors Research Collaborative (WWRC, 2010) carried out a participatory and mixed methods project in New York City led by the low-income LGBT and gender non-conforming people (LGBTGNC). Their project had the purpose of “document[ing] the many ways low-income LGBTGNC people constantly take action in [their] own lives and on behalf of [their] communities” (p. 5). Their sample ($N = 171$) was composed predominately of low-income people of color, and over 20% fell within

\[^{10}\text{These differences were not tested for statistical significance.}\]
the transgender umbrella. Nearly half (48%) of this sample reported any\textsuperscript{11} form of
discrimination in government or community agencies; over 1/3 (36%) had problems
receiving services from shelters, LGBT centers, hospitals, welfare agencies, police
stations, and similar settings. Of those who experienced discrimination, more than 40%
said they were refused services (WWRC, 2010). An important point of emphasis here is
that some of these experiences of discrimination were even occurring within programs
targeted to the LGBT community, indicating the barriers to service access that can occur
for transgender people in settings that one might initially assume would be more
welcoming and competent.

In another study, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and Lambda
Legal Defense and Education Fund (LLDEF) (2006) traveled to 13 cities in 22 states
during 2003-2004 and conducted listening forums with over 500 youth and adults
affiliated with the child welfare system. They were interested in learning about LGBTQ
youth’s experiences in the child welfare system. In each forum, one of the emerging
themes discussed was that the negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes held by child
welfare workers about LGBTQ people are a major barrier to effective service. The
CWLA and LLDEF (2006) found that trans youth, in particular, “commonly meet with
severe resistance within child welfare settings when they dress in accordance with their
gender identities” (p. 85). Finally, discrimination has been documented as occurring in
health services more broadly as well: in a study of 244 MTF transsexual individuals in
Los Angeles, Reback, Simon, Bemis, and Gatson (2001) reported that about 13% of

\textsuperscript{11} It is unclear if participants were asked to specify whether the discrimination was based upon gender
identity, gender expression, or other aspects of their identities.
participants said they had experienced difficulty accessing health or medical services because of their gender identity or presentation. In a needs assessment conducted with 252 gender variant individuals in Washington, D.C., Xavier (2000), found that 39% of participants did not have a doctor that they regularly visited for care, and one of the barriers to accessing regular medical care was provider insensitivity or hostility towards transgender patients, which was reported by 32% of respondents.

The invisibility and lack of acknowledgement of transgender people. Structural bigenderism also appears in social welfare systems in how transgender and gender non-conforming people are not acknowledged and are made invisible. The CWLA and LLDEF (2006) notes that many child welfare workers too often deny that there are any LGBTQ youth in their care. Yet, participants they met with estimated that anywhere from 20 to 60% of youth in foster care are LGBTQ. While there presently are not accurate estimates of how many LGBTQ youth are served by the child welfare system, the literature in this area indicates that such youth are likely disproportionately represented due to experiences of familial rejection and abuse related to their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (CWLA & LLDEF, 2006; LLDEF, 2001). Child welfare professionals need to acknowledge the presence of trans youth and be prepared to offer competent services and create spaces where these youth are supported, respected, and kept safe.

A lack of designated safe spaces for transgender and gender variant people. Earlier, I reviewed research findings from the WWRC (2010) and Grant et al. (2011) which highlighted the risks for harassment and discrimination in various social welfare
settings for transgender and gender non-conforming people. These findings are evidence that public accommodations—spaces that are intentionally supposed to be accessible and welcoming to all—are too frequently dangerous for trans people.

Stotzer et al.’s (2013) review of the literature regarding transgender individual’s access to social services indicated that the physical environment of such agencies matter and can be a barrier to care when transgender people are denied access to restrooms, showers, and sleeping facilities that match their gender identity or the agency does not have clear policies about ensuring access and safety within such spaces for all clients (Stotzer et al., 2013). Findings from the CWLA and LLDEF (2006) listening forums suggest that trans youth have a particular need for safe bathrooms and changing rooms within group homes, shelters, residential treatment centers, and child welfare agencies. One adult participant from Minneapolis also highlighted concerns with school settings, saying: "Restrooms and changing rooms in schools can be especially unsafe, particularly for transgender students.” (CWLA & LLDEF, 2006, p. 59). Similarly, Spade (2006) shares an anecdote about a trans woman client who, when using a job center as part of her work requirements to receive welfare benefits, was humiliated and outing by staff people when attempting to use the women’s restroom. She did not feel safe at this location and her benefits were consequently terminated; this client eventually turned to sex work to provide needed income (Spade, 2006).

A lack of competency/knowledge among social workers and other professional helpers. As previously noted, social work faculty tend to be less interested in providing content on transgender people and transphobia than on LGB people and homophobia
(Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2011). Further, a study of 173 MSW students at one university suggested that these students had statistically significantly higher phobia of transgender people compared to their phobia of lesbian or gay individuals (Logie, Bridge, & Bridge, 2007). In the WWRC’s (2010) research about low-income LGBTGNC people in New York City, participants reported both homophobia and transphobia in shelters, as well as social workers who were not good at providing them with access to needed resources. One of the trans youth participants in the CWLA and LLDEF (2006) listening forums expressed that, “My main concern with the social service system is the lack of understanding of transgender issues. As a transgender woman, my experiences and needs are different from gay and lesbian youth in care” (p. 80). The lack of cultural competence among social service workers is a barrier to care for transgender clients that Stotzer et al. (2013) indicate as another pattern across the literature in this area and something that should be of concern to social service providers.

A lack of gender self-determination in placing clients in appropriate settings.

Far too often, transgender and gender variant clients in social welfare systems are being placed in sex-segregated settings that are at odds with their gender identity. Many agencies continue to give more weight to what sex is listed on a person’s legal documents than to a person’s current gender identity. Spade (2006) shares the story of Bianca, a homeless transgender woman client, who had been thrown out of high school without documented reasoning when she started dressing in a way that reflected her gender identity. Several years later, Spade was helping her to leave a violent relationship and find a homeless shelter without documents reflecting her gender. All of the shelters they
approached offered to place her according to her birth sex, which would have put Bianca at greater risk for violence and have made her fear for her safety (Spade, 2006). Grant et al. ’s (2011) national survey of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals adds further evidence about issues with placement and acceptance in homeless shelters: among those who had tried to use homeless shelters, 42% reported having to use a space for the wrong gender.

Similar problems have been documented about trans youth in child welfare settings. The CWLA and LLDEF (2006) found that trans youth are often placed in residential and juvenile detention facilities according to sex assigned at birth rather than gender identity, which presents more severe consequences for both their well-being and safety. One youth participant shared:

I was placed in a co-ed group home. When I was shown to my room, I asked why I was being put on the boys’ floor. They said, “You’re not a boy? Well, we can’t put you on the girls’ floor looking like that.” So they made me sleep on a couch on a landing in between the two floors. (CWLA & LLDEF, 2006, p. 23)

**Structural bigenderism in higher education.** According to Beemyn (2005b), a growing number of transgender students in the U.S. are choosing to be “out” while in college. While some universities are taking proactive steps to welcome and include transgender individuals, the majority of institutions have not seriously considered the needs of this population or made changes that would improve the campus climate (Beemyn, 2005b). In order to effectively support this population, colleges and universities need to give thought to how their very structure—physical and social—upholds a binary conceptualization of gender (Beemyn, 2005a). Beemyn (2005b) argues that campus administrators and staff have the power to positively impact the lives of
transgender students, but in order to achieve that goal, “they will need to reconsider many of their assumptions about gender and the structure of higher education. Improving the campus climate for transgender students requires nothing less than changing the campus” (“The Diverse Identities,” para. 10).

There have been three primary strands of scholarship about LGBTQ people in higher education settings since the 1980s: LGBTQ visibility, campus climate, and student identities and experiences (Renn, 2010). *Campus climate* is the “cumulative attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential” (Rankin, 2005, p. 17). In reviewing the literature, I have found that the majority of studies on LGBTQ people in higher education focus on gay and/or lesbian individuals, or the LGBTQ community as a whole; trans people, if they are represented at all, tend to be a very small subset of the samples used within these studies. Still, what has emerged from research over the past 20 years is that LGBTQ people frequently face a lack of support in colleges and universities, including dealing with harassment and intolerant attitudes (Rankin, 2003). Among the areas of campus where transgender people face discrimination are in health care, housing, bathrooms and locker rooms, documentation and records, in policies, and in the lack of official training, support, and programming, as well as in classroom settings, academic advising, scholarship opportunities, employment, and campus LGBTQ groups (Beemyn, 2005a; Bilodeau, 2007).

The next part of this chapter will review the major findings from literature related to transgender and gender variant people in higher education. Many of these points mirror
those discussed earlier about bigenderism in social welfare settings, suggesting that bigenderism in higher education encompasses: (a) the social control and punishment of transgender and gender non-conforming people, including harassment, bullying, discrimination, and expulsion based on gender identity or gender expression; (b) the invisibility and lack of acknowledgement of transgender people; (c) a lack of gender self-determination on applications and other forms, student and employee records, campus identification, and social interactions; (d) the privileging of binary and cisgender identities; (e) a lack of designated safe spaces or safe housing accommodations for transgender people; (f) a lack of competency/knowledge among staff and faculty about transgender experiences; and (g) increased financial risks for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals compared to others. These points will be reviewed herein, followed by a discussion of some findings related to the intersection of identities for transgender individuals in higher education settings.

*The social control and punishment of transgender and gender non-conforming people, including harassment, bullying, discrimination, and expulsion.* One study that provides a conceptual framework for understanding the experiences of transgender individuals on college campuses is a qualitative dissertation that was conducted by Bilodeau (2007). This study used semi-structured interviews with 10 transgender students (both graduate students and undergraduates, all of whom were White) at two Midwest universities to study genderism, which Bilodeau defined as “the belief or assumption that there are two, and only two genders” (p. 71). Using grounded theory and the constant comparative method, Bilodeau found that genderism was institutionalized through these
universities and had four major characteristics. One of these characteristics was “social accountability for conforming to binary gender norms with related punishments. Individuals who failed to conform were viewed as deviant and/or having a disorder” (Bilodeau, 2007, p. 72). One way this “social accountability” shows up is in how transgender and gender variant people are subjected to undue punishments by others, including harassment, bullying, discrimination, and expulsion due to their gender identity or gender expression. While not conducting a study exclusively of transgender individuals, Rankin (2003) carried out a survey of LGBT people at 14 different colleges in the U.S. The sample included 1,000 students, 150 faculty, and 467 staff and administrators who were recruited using purposeful and snowball sampling. This survey included a subsample (4%, n = 68) of transgender people. Findings indicated that 71% of all respondents thought transgender people were likely to be harassed on their campuses based on their sexual orientation or gender identity, while 61% thought this was likely for lesbians and gay men (Rankin, 2003). There were also differences in self-reported harassment due to sexual orientation and/or gender identity: 41% of the transgender subgroup reported being harassed on campus, while only 28% of LGB people did12 (Rankin, 2003).

The Grant et al. (2011) survey, which sampled only transgender and gender non-conforming people, suggested that about 35% had experienced harassment or bullying by staff, teachers, and/or students in higher education settings, with 5% having been physically assaulted and 3% sexually assaulted in these settings. The authors noted that there did not appear to be great variation in harassment and assault victimization between

12 It does not appear that this difference was tested for statistical significance.
racial groups, different regions, or based upon gender identity and gender expression, although statistical tests were not run to look for significant differences (Grant et al., 2011). About 2% of those who had attended college or vocational or professional schools reported being expelled due to their gender identity or gender expression (Grant et al., 2011).

In terms of discrimination, Beemyn (2005b) notes that this population appears to face frequent discrimination both from the overall campus institution and from individual people affiliated with the university. This discrimination occurs despite the fact that, as of 2013, at least 623 colleges and universities in the U.S. have their own nondiscrimination policies that include gender identity and/or gender expression (Transgender Law & Policy Institute [TLPI], 2013d). However, McKinney (2005) carried out a qualitative study of transgender graduate and undergraduate students (N = 75) recruited through an LGBT listserv and reported that 0% of the sample said their campus had a nondiscrimination policy that included gender identity or gender expression. This suggests that many campuses may not be communicating to transgender students that such policy exists.

The invisibility and lack of acknowledgement of transgender people. A second characteristic of “genderism” as described by Bilodeau (2007) was the “invisibility of gender non-conforming identities and isolation of transgender persons, making transgender identities inaccessible” (p. 14). According to this theme, the lack of information and visibility of transgender people makes it even harder for transgender individuals to access and name their own identities, resulting in more academic and
emotional health issues (Bilodeau, 2007). One way this invisibility shows up on college campuses is in the utter lack of trans-specific organizations and programs. Rankin’s (2003) survey of LGBT people at 14 campuses found that 41% said their university or college did not address LGBT issues. Only 33% of the 75 transgender students in McKinney’s (2005) study said that their campus had an LGBT office. Further, most of the undergraduate students said there was little programming about the transgender community offered on campus, and very few resources related to being transgender were communicated to students or otherwise made available (McKinney, 2005). Among those students who wanted to get involved in transgender organizations, activities, and support groups on campus, there simply were not adequate opportunities to match their interests (McKinney, 2005). As part of a dissertation project, Mintz (2011) carried out a qualitative study with 3 FTM students at three campuses in California, and these students noted that LGBTIQ campus programming often included the “T” in name only. Only one of the three participants knew of a trans-focused organization on campus, although all three noted that there were some trans-friendly organizations, such as LGBT offices or women’s centers (Mintz, 2011).

A lack of gender self-determination on applications and other forms, student and employee records, campus identification, and social interactions. The third characteristic of “genderism” described by Bilodeau (2007) was the binary social labeling that permanently categorizes all people into either male or female groups, often without their consent and at an institutional level. One way that this characteristic shows up is at a social level—the ways that others refuse to use someone’s correct names and pronouns.
(even when being instructed otherwise), publicly “outing” a transgender person or speaking about their “real” sex, or being asked inappropriate personal questions (Bilodeau, 2007). Mintz (2011) similarly documented that incorrect pronoun use was a way that trans students experience exclusion on campus. Another way, though, that this theme shows up is through institutional practices and policies—the ways that the college systematizes bigenderism in its forms and applications, records, identification requirements, and class rosters. Many of these institutional practices allow for two and only two genders and make it extraordinarily difficult to change an individual’s gender marker or name on records. In the NCTE/Task Force study, less than ½ of current students sampled who have transitioned have updated their gender on their school records (Grant et al., 2011). Eighty-one percent of those who tried to change their records were successful, 11% attempted to update their records and were denied, and 38% had not tried (Grant et al., 2011). Transgender students have also noted that campus forms with only two options for sex or gender are exclusionary of their experiences (Mintz, 2011). One of the participants in Mintz’s (2011) study spoke of facing challenging situations when having to show a student ID that did not match his preferred name or current gender expression, which increased the likelihood that he would be “outed” as transgender. This student was told that the ID could not be changed until he had obtained a legal name change (Mintz, 2011). According to the TLPI (2013a), as of February 2013, only 70 colleges across the country have a process for name changes whereby individuals without legal name changes can still use a preferred name on campus records, and only 44 colleges have a process for students to change their gender on campus records without
documentation of medical treatment. An additional issue related to campus records is that many institutions do not have a record keeping system that is synchronized across all campus divisions. Consequently, as found by Mintz (2011), an individual who wants to change the name and/or gender listed on records may have to approach multiple staff people in different divisions (e.g., registrar, financial aid, payroll, etc.) in order to change records consistently across campus.

**The privileging of binary and cisgender identities.** The final characteristic of “genderism” detailed within Bilodeau’s (2007) dissertation was the privileging of binary and cisgender identities, resulting in the marginalization of transgender and genderqueer people. Bilodeau found that this characteristic was most often expressed by students in relation to classroom settings, employment/career issues, and within LGBT and other organizations. Some specific practices included professors relying on transgender students to “educate” cisgender faculty and students, ignoring transgender students waiting to be called on during class, or asking students to group themselves into males and females as part of classroom activities. Within campus LGBT groups, trans students felt the focus was often on gay or lesbian identities only, or that genderqueer and androgynous-presenting people did not fit as well into the agenda of more trans-focused groups. Several spoke of automatically being assumed to be lesbian or gay in these settings and read as the wrong gender or addressed with incorrect pronouns (Bilodeau, 2007).

**A lack of designated safe spaces or safe housing accommodations for transgender people.** Due to the increased risks of harassment and violence faced by
transgender and gender variant people, there is a need for ensuring that this population will be safe on campus, especially in using facilities that are typically gender segregated (bathrooms, locker rooms) and in campus housing. Unfortunately, existing research suggests that safety in such spaces is hard to come by for trans individuals. In the national survey conducted by NCTE and the Task Force, 19% of participants who attended college and were transgender or gender non-conforming in school were not allowed into gender-appropriate housing, and 5% were denied campus housing altogether (Grant et al., 2011). This report also found that, across educational settings ranging from K-12 to graduate school, about 26% of the sample was denied access to gender-appropriate bathrooms at school (Grant et al., 2011).

A lack of competency/knowledge among staff and faculty about transgender experiences. There is a large gap in expertise among staff and faculty on college campuses when it comes to gender identity and gender expression issues and transgender experiences. One of the themes from McKinney’s (2005) study of transgender students was that nearly all undergraduates noted that they were not satisfied with the knowledge that faculty and staff have about transgender people; they also noted that trans-sensitive counseling services were inadequate, insensitive, or non-existent, with 3 out of 50 undergrads reporting having a supportive, knowledgeable, or helpful counselor. Similar themes were found among grad students: there was an awareness that faculty and staff were not informed about transgender issues, counseling was substandard, and trans-specific health care for students was severely lacking (McKinney, 2005). The lack of competency/knowledge may also show up in the gap in curricular content related to
transgender people. This was found in Rankin’s (2003) survey, as 43% of the individuals surveyed said that curricula did not adequately represent the contributions of LGBT people.

**Increased financial risks for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals compared to others.** Finally, one last general theme in the literature related to structural bigenderism in higher education is the way that transgender and gender non-conforming individuals face increased financial risks. In the NCTE/Task Force survey, about 11% of individuals reported being unable to get scholarships or other financial aid at some point during their K-12 or college education due to gender identity or gender expression (Grant et al., 2011). These authors note that even though their sample was more college-educated than the general U.S. population, this higher level of education did not act as a buffer against poverty in the way that usually happens (Grant et al., 2011), indicating that education alone may not be a protective factor against economic hardship for transgender and gender non-conforming people. One particular increased cost faced by this population is in health care: many health insurance companies do not provide full coverage for hormones or gender reassignment surgery (Currah & Minter, 2005; Lombardi & Davis, 2006; McKinney, 2005; Mottet & Ohle, 2003); one participant in Mintz’s (2011) study noted that although 100% of hormone injections are supposed to be covered by his insurance, this only applies to on-site medications, and his are considered special order, requiring $50 payment for each order.

**Intersection of identities.** As is the case with many forms of oppression, the experiences of transgender and gender variant people will not all look the same and will
be impacted in some way by other identities that are held by each individual. Many of the studies reviewed here use small samples of transgender people that do not reflect much racial or ethnic diversity, and several authors do not provide much information about the demographics of the sample other than gender identity, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the role of other identities. However, there are some indications from the literature that overlapping identities make a difference. For example, Beemyn’s (2005b) article, while not presenting information from an empirical study, notes that trans men who “pass” after beginning hormone therapy will face different challenges on campus than trans women who do not pass, suggesting that how other’s read a person’s gender may impact experiences on campus. The survey from NCTE and the Task Force revealed some gender differences in education outcomes: 52% of trans men and 60% of gender non-conforming people had at least a college degree, while only 42% of trans women did (Grant et al., 2011); it’s unclear if these differences reflect something about experiences before getting to college and consequent educational aspirations, or the variable college experiences that these groups may have and how these experiences may dissuade trans women from finishing college.

Race and ethnicity are also likely to greatly impact a trans person’s experience on a college campus, considering that many people of color feel less welcome in such an environment than do White individuals. Rankin’s (2005) survey of LGBT students, staff, and faculty found that LGBT people of color were more likely than White LGBT people to conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity. More research is greatly needed to explore the overlap of bigenderism with race and ethnicity, as well as other individual
characteristics such as mental/physical abilities, citizenship, socioeconomic status, gender expression, and campus role (student, staff, or faculty).

**Gaps in the Knowledge Base**

Despite the progress that has been made in recent decades to research the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming, there is still a lot of work to be done to better understand the situations this population faces in settings of concern to social workers. Research on transgender people is generally scarce, and when exists, is often driven by funders’ wishes rather than the needs of the trans community (Davis, 2008). Most of what is known or published about transgender people is based upon people’s stories, anecdotes, or self-reports, many of which emanate from trans activists, performers, artists, biographers, and others who are speak directly to their own lives (Davis, 2008). These sources have been a critical means for drawing attention to this community and prompting action, activism, and change. Yet, transgender oppression has been ignored by most academic researchers, and there have not been many attempts to collect thorough data about this population using rigorous methodology. Without this research, we face greater difficulty in tackling discrimination and trying to change policies to better serve this population (Gates, 2011). Davis (2008), a trans-identified social worker, puts it in these terms: “A significant challenge for social workers is to participate in the collection of data necessary to assess the needs of the emerging trans communities” (p. 108).

There are relatively few studies that thoroughly examine the experiences of transgender and gender variant people in social welfare settings, especially in relation to the social work profession. Studies that do exist have focused on discrimination,
harassment and assault, or trans people’s experiences in child welfare settings, health care, and homeless shelters, rather than on the more nuanced forms of bigenderism (e.g., invisibility, unequal treatment, and lack of support), the role of different identities (e.g., race, gender expression, etc.), or other types of settings (e.g., domestic violence shelters, drug treatment centers, government agencies). Turning to higher education settings, while there is a substantial and growing amount of research about LGB individuals on college and university campuses, there is still a large gap in knowledge about trans individuals (Renn, 2010). Trans faculty, in particular, remain an understudied subgroup in higher education literature (Renn, 2010). Studies of trans people in higher education have focused primarily on harassment and bullying, perceptions of campus climate, classroom dynamics, LGBTQ groups/offices, and problems changing student records, rather than intersecting identities, people’s interactions with supervisors and administrators, non-classroom settings, campus policies, trans people’s recommendations for improvement, and the perspectives of trans staff and faculty.

Another issue with the existing knowledge base is that there is a lack of effort made to distinguish the unique situations and differing characteristics between the various subgroups within the transgender umbrella. Too often, researchers treat all trans people as the same without looking at how the concerns of a trans woman may differ from a genderqueer person (Davis, 2008). This issue is further exacerbated when researchers do not collect or report their sample’s demographics other than gender identity. For example, some studies reviewed in this chapter either did not collect or did
not present clear information about the race, age, or disability status of research participants.

In terms of methodology, many of the existing studies on transgender people’s experiences in social welfare and higher education settings tend to use qualitative approaches, although there are a few recent studies that have conducted quantitative cross-sectional surveys. As a consequence, most research on this topic presents exploratory knowledge that describes the problem, rather than looking at the differing experiences of subgroups or moving the knowledge base toward developing scales or hypotheses that can be tested with larger samples. There are very few studies that have used mixed methods or community-based participatory approaches, although the study by the WWRC (2010) is an exception.

Researchers who collect data from transgender and gender non-conforming people usually face significant hurdles in sampling: because federal surveys today generally do not include questions about gender identity (Gates, 2011), there are no secondary datasets available that used random sampling that can be used to effectively study this population. This situation makes it incredibly difficult for researchers to have an accurate understanding of the entire population of transgender and gender non-conforming in the U.S., as we have had to rely upon studies using less rigorous sampling methods to draw a picture of this population’s needs, challenges, and strengths. Further, many studies that use convenience samples may be less diverse than the general U.S. population, as evidenced by the number of samples of trans people in the literature that are composed solely of White trans people. Therefore, there is a need for studies that use
more rigorous sampling methods, including non-convenience sampling, that would allow for stronger generalizations to be made (Renn, 2010). In the absence of random samples, studies such as those conducted by NCTE and the Task Force (Grant et al., 2011) and Whittle et al. (2007), which collect large national samples (over 500 participants) based on the connections of transgender-led organizations, are a step in the right direction. Another point related to the lack of random samples is that quantitative studies generally have not gone beyond presenting descriptive statistics and therefore do not test the role of demographic characteristics or statistically analyze between-group differences.

In summary then, some specific areas of knowledge that remain rather unexplored are: (a) how experiences of structural bigenderism differ by race, age, social class, gender expression, gender identity, etc.; (b) the role of policies and those with official authority in maintaining or disrupting bigenderism; and (c) application of knowledge about structural bigenderism to the field of social work, specifically through analysis of multiple social welfare settings. Some methodological gaps include: (a) using participatory methods and member checks as means to represent transgender individuals’ voices in the research process; (b) applying mixed methods to study the problem; (c) using larger samples that are more closely representative of the general U.S. population; and (d) the inclusion of inferential statistics in quantitative data analysis procedures. This dissertation is meant to address these gaps in the literature.

**Research Aims of this Dissertation**

The aims of this dissertation are: (a) to analyze experiences of structural bigenderism among transgender and gender non-conforming people and how these
experiences differ by various identities; (b) to use rigorous methods that are transparent, clearly communicated, and have participatory aspects; and (c) to examine the way that people in positions of institutional power interact with transgender and gender non-conforming people.

**Research Questions**

Based on the gaps in the knowledge base and research aims, the following research questions will be addressed within this dissertation:

1) What institutional characteristics, policies, and practices contribute to structural bigenderism within higher education settings, as experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people affiliated with those settings?

2) How do transgender and gender variant people describe their interactions with people who represent the embodied power of an institution (e.g., supervisors, staff, administrators, faculty)?

3) What specific institutional actions and policy changes do transgender and gender non-conforming people say are most needed to address the oppression they experience in higher education settings? How do suggestions differ based upon a person’s identity (e.g., as more gender normative versus gender variant, by one’s campus role, by one’s departmental affiliation, etc.) or campus characteristics (such as size of the student population)?
Chapter Three: Queer Theory and Structural Social Work Theory

*I believe that taking the diversity of trans lives into account is necessary for the development of inclusive feminist and queer theories and practices.* – Dr. Patricia Elliot (Elliot, 2010, p. 6)

This chapter provides an overview of two theories of import to the problem of structural bigenderism—*queer theory* and *structural social work theory*. I will provide information about the basis for each theory and how it connects to other theoretical fields, and discuss how these theories inform an understanding of structural bigenderism and the actions that can be taken to address this problem. I will also describe a few relevant critiques of each theory.

**Queer Theory**

*What is queer theory and what are its historical and philosophical roots?*

Riki Wilchins, the founder of the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition, has written that, “Queer theory is at heart about politics—things like power and identity, language, and difference” (Wilchins, 2004, p.5). This statement introduces some of the central concepts of queer theory while also articulating its core utility: queer theory can be meaningful to social workers *because* it is about power, politics, identity, and difference. These are key concepts for social work practice—how we work within social systems to build, confront, and organize power; how we advocate on policy and help to make the personal political; how we understand, value and respect identities held by clients; and, ultimately, how we build knowledge and justice movements that reflect the diversity of our world. Broadly,
queer theory works to disentangle and deconstruct supposedly “common sense” notions about gender, sexuality, and other identities (Hines, 2010; Kirsch, 2000; Lovaas, Elia, & Yep, 2007). This theory asserts that LGBTQ and other people who fall into (or claim) the category of “queer” are not abnormal, deviant, unhealthy, or any of the other pejorative and morally-weighted terms that are often applied to this group without critique. Rather, LGBTQ people represent another aspect of the healthy diversity among human beings and should have the political rights equal to other humans (Kirsch, 2000). In the process of questioning the dominant narratives presented around identities, queer theory challenges the basis for these identity labels in the first place (often in direct contrast to neoliberal conceptualizations of diversity). Some of the major theorists in this realm, such as Judith Butler, repudiate the process of giving people superficial identity labels related to race, gender, and sexuality; instead, as Wilchins (2004) describes, the focus becomes “asking such ‘upstream’ questions as how [these identities] were created, what political ends they serve, what erasures have made them possible, and how they are able to present themselves as real, natural and universal” (pp. 123-124).

As stated in Appendix A, the word queer can encompass lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, people who are questioning their sexual orientation, transgender individuals, and anyone else who may not strictly identify as either heterosexual and/or gender normative (International+LGBT at the University of Michigan, n.d.). In relation to theory, Halle (2004) goes so far as to use the word “queer” for any instance of disruption to or exclusion from a social system—a description that goes far beyond including simply sex, gender, and sexuality. By doing so, Halle’s perspective allows us to more clearly see how
the philosophy of the “queer” extends across history and culture and how the ultimate focus is not on same-sex sexuality (or gender non-conformity), but on the “search for the historical mechanisms of abjection” in all its forms (Halle, 2004, p. 10). For example, the norms of gender conformity, heterosexuality, gender roles, and bigenderism are exposed as being incomplete when we take a cross-cultural perspective: numerous scholars have documented how indigenous and non-Western cultures have historically acknowledged and celebrated the possibilities of non-binaristic genders and sexualities and/or the lack of direct connection between gender and sexuality, including Native cultures in the Americas (Walters et al., 2006), groups in India (Kirsch, 2000), and the Maaori people indigenous to the South Pacific (Roen, 2001).

To better understand queer theory, it might be useful to put it in historical context. Since the time of the Enlightenment, Eurocentric philosophies have been influenced by both modernism and structuralism (Kirsch, 2000; Strega, 2005). Modernism privileges rationality, objectivity and reason in efforts to reveal truth; it suggests that the scientific method is the only way to gather and generate accurate knowledge (Mullaly, 2007; Strega). Modernist approaches often emphasize stability over time, make universalistic statements, uphold theories that human identities are coherent and fixed, and rely heavily upon dichotomous thinking (Mullaly). Many fields of science, including the social sciences, continue to be deeply influenced by modernism, and while some contemporary researchers have critiqued this approach, Strega (2005) argues that researchers have rarely directly challenged it. Structuralism also tends to characterize life in terms of dichotomies (and, consequently, is often conflated with modernism), but places particular
emphasis on the roles of language and social structures in connection to those dichotomies (Kirsch, 2000).

Queer theory has emerged in relation to the rise of postmodernism and post-structuralism that began in the 1970s and 1980s (Kirsch, 2000; Lovaas et al., 2007), although “queer theory” as a phrase and distinct field emerged in the early 1990s (Berlant & Warner, 1995; Namaste, 2000). Postmodernism and post-structuralism were reactions against the precepts driving modernism and structuralism, respectively. The term postmodernism stemmed from a talk given by Jacques Derrida in 1965 in which he declared an end to the era of modernism’s lack of attention to the role of power in language and meaning and its reifying of “reason” (Wilchins, 2004). Such critiques have specific consequence to gender and sex because of the ways that they are essentially about our use of language, symbols, rules, and power (Wilchins). Derrida’s work pushed for a de-centering of knowledge—that is, a challenge to and deconstruction of the ways we “know”—which led to revealing more about the lives of people who are not captured by dominant ways of knowing. As Wilchins describes, “In this sense, postmodernism is a philosophy of the dispossessed, perfect for bodies and genders that are unspeakable, marginalized, or simply erased” (p. 44). Postmodernism, then, fundamentally disrupted the claim that science could be objective (Kirsch, 2000; Mullaly, 2007), instead pushing for an acknowledgement of the ways that dominant knowledge was systematically erasing and/or distorting the lives of people at the margins of modernist epistemology. As Strega (2005) points out:

13 Although Wilchins uses Derrida as an example of a crucial figure of postmodernism, he has been pointed to by others (e.g., Kirsch, 2000) as a central figure of post-structuralism, only adding to the confusion between these two movements.
The claim that only rational, objective, and abstract thought can lead to truth is a specifically White, masculine claim. It rests on a hierarchical system of dualisms between White male and coloured [sic] (classed) female, in which the White male element is privileged. (p. 203)

Post-structuralism added a slightly different layer of critique of predominant philosophies of the Twentieth century, particularly in terms of re-inserting the possibility that people can have agency in the world and are not completely dependent upon existing structures (Boyne, 2000; Namaste, 2000). Post-structuralism also has more of an emphasis on using deconstruction as a tool to question language, including identity labels like gay and lesbian (Kirsch, 2000). Post-structuralism also challenges predominant Western philosophies’ overemphasis on oppositional binaries, such as man/woman and reason/emotion (Mullaly, 2007). One individual often associated with post-structural thought is Michel Foucault (Namaste, 2000). In his book, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, Foucault presents the argument that societal discourse about sexuality has not been repressed, but rather it has been monitored and prescribed by societal institutions such as the Catholic Church and medicine (Foucault, 1990). One could make a similar case about gender—that it, too, is frequently subject to monitoring and punishment for nonconformity by institutions such as schools, government, medicine, religion, and social service agencies (Davis, 2008; Serano, 2007; Spade, 2006; Wilchins, 2004).

Queer theory relates to postmodern and post-structural thought in multiple ways. First, queer theory takes a page from post-structuralism by deconstructing essentialist understandings of sex, gender, and sexuality (Lovaas et al., 2007), including challenging the idea that people can never change their sexes. Queer theorists generally reject boundary-drawing—such as the boundaries between heterosexual and same-sex
relationships—and binaristic thinking (Namaste, 2000), and may advocate for having more than two simplistic ways (man/woman, male/female) for describing gender and sex (Kirsch, 2000). Butler (2002) acknowledges that she builds from the work of French post-structuralism for her book *Gender Trouble* to advocate for a feminist reformulation of gender that challenged narrow, naturalized conceptualizations of what it means to be a woman. This is critical to work in relation to transgender people because of the history of exclusion of trans women within feminist gatherings. Butler says:

> It was and remains my view that any feminist theory that restricts the meaning of gender in the presuppositions of its own practice sets up exclusionary gender norms within feminism, often with homophobic consequences. It seemed to me, and continues to seem, that feminism ought to be careful not to idealize certain expressions of gender that, in turn, produce new forms of hierarchy and exclusion. In particular, I opposed those regimes of truth that stipulated that certain kinds of gendered expressions were found to be false or derivative, and others, true and original.” (pp. vii-viii)

Queer theory thereby critiques assumptions that some genders (such as those inhabited by cisgender people) are more real than others, which is a perspective that undergirds structural bigenderism and actions that attempt to punish transgender individuals.

One last connection between post-structuralism, postmodernism, and queer theory is the idea that there is a direct relationship between who has power and who is marginalized. Halle (2004) states that “queer in itself cannot be conceptualized apart from norms, forms of governance, principles of communication, and economics” (p. 10). From this perspective, our predominant cultural understanding of sex and gender as being split into male/female and man/woman, with a “natural” connection between the two, is exposed as manufactured: there is nothing about bigenderism that is more “natural” or “true” than any other understanding of sex and gender. We only perceive bigenderism to
have such force *because* of the way that people and systems that hold the most power in our society do what they can to maintain it by deciding what is moral or immoral, what is deviant or normal, and what is rational or irrational (Wilchins, 2004). Butler (2002) points out that gender policing (i.e., people watching out for and punishing others who “break” gender rules) is sometimes a means for maintaining heteronormativity. Power is shown, also, by the fact that American society has very little language to begin to describe non-binary experiences of gender, and the words that we do have tend to be pejorative (Wilchins). Because language is so central to the naturalization of gender in our culture, this means that some of the fundamental challenges to gender then will happen by confronting and changing grammatical rules related to gender (Butler, 2002).

**Queer theory & how it illuminates the problem of structural bigenderism.** A number of scholars have noted that transgender people—their lives, relationships, strengths, and challenges—bring to light the deep harm caused by structural bigenderism and can inform the work done within queer theory to tackle this problem. McPhail (2004), a social work scholar, writes:

> Although much of the criticism of gender and sexual binaries comes from postmodern theorists, it is also brought to the forefront by people whose bodies and experiences challenge the very notion of stable, concrete identities and sexualities. Transgendered [sic] persons illustrate the limitations of such binary systems, and their experiences provide some of the basis for postmodern and queer theory. (p. 9)

By listening to and learning about the lives of trans people and others who do not conform to binary norms, we can better understand the gender assumptions that are often treated as “common sense” and the social, political, and personal consequences of these assumptions (Sanger, 2010). Elliot (2010) asserts that, although there are political
challenges to writing about a group to which one does not belong, there are important scholarly, political, and ethical reasons for non-trans people to engage in theoretical work in this area. For example, Elliot calls for non-trans queer and feminist theorists to recognize transgender people and broaden “existing analyses of gender-based oppression to include the claims of marginalized others,” as well as to listen, learn, think, write, and theorize in ways that are based in the lived experiences of trans communities. This theory, then, calls for increased efforts on the part of scholars to study societal bounds and limitations of gender by learning about, respecting, and prioritizing the voices of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Secondly, while queer theory in many ways emerged primarily in relation to topics of sexuality and heteronormativity, Wiegman (2006) notes that the field has shifted towards an interest in gender (often in relation to sexuality), and specifically queer and transitive genders. As noted earlier, queer theorists often reject binary gender rules and other limitations and boundaries that are typically accepted without question in our society (Kirsch, 2000). Martin (1994) notes that queer theorists have made important contributions to critiquing feminist thought that maintains there are only two genders, and that Judith Butler’s work on a performative theory of gender may be the most prominent example of such a critique of feminism’s reliance on the gender binary. Butler (2002) articulates that societal discourse places limits on what kinds of gender are realizable and that:

these limits are always set within the terms of a hegemonic cultural discourse predicated on binary structures that appear as the language of universal rationality. Constraint is thus built into what that language constitutes as the imaginable domain of gender. (p. 13)
Queer theory, then, presents a framework for exposing the ways that binaristic models of gender are constructed by society and have limitations, particularly in terms of reflecting the lives of those who self-identify outside of the binary.

Queer theory also challenges other limits to gender that are often encompassed within societal “gender rules” – such as that one’s sex/gender never changes, that a person can’t embody multiple genders, and that some genders are more “real” or “true” for an individual than other options (Hines, 2010). Butler (2002) argues that much of these expectations about consistent and coherent gendered individuals are not reflective of human experience, but rather reflect regulatory practices instituted in our social world that try to form gender into something perpetually stable, logical, and simple. These regulatory practices in our cultural matrix consequently create our understandings of “intelligible” genders—such as those that “maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire” (Butler, 2002, p. 23). Because of these assumptions of what constitutes “intelligible” gender, these regulatory practices affirm the belief that other identities cannot be real, such as those in which gender does not align with sex assigned at birth. When people articulate genders that do not fit the cultural matrix, Butler (2002) argues, these individuals “appear only as developmental failures or logical impossibilities from within that domain” (p. 24). However, she points out that the continued proliferation of gender experiences, identities, expressions, and articulations that fall outside of the predominant cultural matrix offer key opportunities for challenging the ways our society limits and regulates gender with harmful consequences and for presenting alternative models for understanding and living gender.
Another way that queer theory contributes to an understanding of the problem of structural bigenderism is through its critique of essentialist conceptualizations of sex. The onset of bigenderism in social welfare, according to queer theoretical approaches, is likely connected to the modernist philosophies that permeate many aspects of social welfare systems. As mentioned earlier, concepts such as sex did not exist in Western society until the 1700s (Wilchins, 2004), which coincidentally or not, was during the Enlightenment—the period that brought about modernism. The types of structural bigenderism that appear in social welfare systems and that marginalize transgender and gender variant people still often reflect ideas of that time period—ideas that stemmed from burgeoning sciences that treated the division of all living creatures into “male” and “female” as the natural order of life (Kirsch, 2000). Further, Kirsch claims that essentialism—whether related to differences between Blacks and Whites, men and women, or Americans and non-Americans—has been used throughout history as a means for justifying predominant ways of governing society. Essentialist formulations of identities are thereby used to support systems of domination and group inequality. In the case of sex and gender, these systems thereby privilege men over women and cisgender people over those who are transgender.

While feminist theorists and others have espoused the viewpoint that gender is a social construction, queer theory presents the argument that sex is as well. Butler (2002) contests understandings of gender as construction that simply treat bodies as the passive canvasses upon which gender is placed. She argues that bodies themselves are constructions—they do not have an “essence” before being assigned a sex marker.
(male/female), but are rather constructed into meaning through what our society makes of the sex marker. Further, she explains that while feminists began speaking to gender as construction as a way to confront arguments that “biology is destiny” for women, this opened up the possibility for the argument that sex does not cause gender. This framework thereby provides a way to foresee that people can have other/multiple genders than those that society assumes align with a particular body or sex marker. It also presents questions about why society relies upon essentialist understandings of sex, such as that asked by Butler (2002): “Are the ostensibly natural facts of sex discursively produced by various scientific discourses in the service of other political and social interests?” (p. 10).

Queer theory can also provide an analysis of why structural bigenderism continues to persist. Wilchins (2004) argues that the gender binary remains dominant because we as a society continue to pathologize gender nonconforming people. The authority and power of professional discourses are used to disparage gender transgression through professional jargon, procedures (such as unnecessary physical and mental examinations), and our methods for recording information (clinical charts inaccessible to clients, journal articles unintelligible to the average person, etc.). This preoccupation with focusing on the supposed falseness, pathology, or exoticism of gender variant people only further propagates the gender binary and keeps us from turning to the larger problem of structural bigenderism (Wilchins). These actions could be understood as an example of the consequences of a disciplinary form of power, like that discussed by Foucault (1995), which involves dividing society into binary divisions of normal/abnormal and attempting
to control the lives of the “abnormal.” These are precisely the kinds of messages that queer theory aims to counter, since it “seeks to dissolve the naturalisation of dominant identities and to challenge the pathologisation of minority identities” (Hines, 2010, p. 5). In this way, queer theory can incorporate transgender voices and experiences as part of an effort to deconstruct the categories of sex and gender and present evidence of resilience and self-actualization through actions that involve challenge the “gender rules” of society.

The problem of structural bigenderism also exists because of the ways we continue to monitor gender and punish those who do not conform (Butler, 2002)—whether by challenging gender non-conforming people in bathrooms, requiring people in homeless shelters to express their gender according to their sex assigned at birth, or isolating, excluding, and bullying boys who appear too feminine. If we wish to tackle bigenderism, part of our efforts need to be directed at institutionalized norms that regulate gender and sex and punish (intentionally or not) those who identify as or are perceived by others to be transgender or gender non-conforming.

**Critiques of queer theory.** Queer theory is by no means a perfect solution to addressing bigenderism. One critique of queer theory is that it is too esoteric and disconnected from lived experiences (Sanger, 2010). Kirsch (2000) attacks the ways that many aspects of queer theory, particularly the works of Judith Butler, are very obscure and do not recognize the power of organizing people in relation to the material reality of social class or other shared experiences. Others, such as Namaste (2000) suggest that, although queer theory focuses a great deal on sex and gender, the knowledge base does
not adequately explore the very real consequences of confronting, opposing, and living outside of the norms of gender and sex, particularly for those who are transgender:

The presentation of transgendered \[sic\] issues within queer theory does not account for the quotidian living conditions of transgendered \[sic\] people. The political objections to this field are clear: queer theory begins its analysis with little thought of the individuals designated as the objects of study... at worst, it belies a kind of academic inquiry that is contemptuous and dismissive of the social world. (Namaste, 2000, p. 16)

Further, Namaste makes the case that, while Foucault and Derrida explored the ways that social institutions impact people, some of the predominant theorists in queer theory like Butler do not discuss the role of context (historical, social, economic, and institutional) of how gender and sex are regulated, observed, lived, and expressed for drag queens and transgender people of color. Kirsch (2000) also asks where queer theory leads in relation to creating political movements to actually change lived reality: while queer theory can help us understand how to deconstruct identities, how do we engage in a political movement without such unifying categories? Furthermore, if everything is a construction, we might begin to believe that we’re being led down an uncontrollable spiral of anti-essentialism (McPhail, 2004; Sanchez, 2006), and this does not adequately recognize the ways that people are constantly subjected to others’ assumptions and labels about their gender, sex, and sexuality (Serano, 2007). What does this never-ending destabilization promoted by queer theory mean in relation to the fact that people of particular identities continue to experience the real consequences of oppression (Mullaly, 2007)? As Whittle (2006) writes:

It is all very well having no theoretical place within the current gendered world, but that is not the daily lived experience. Real life affords trans people constant stigma and oppression based on the apparently unreal concept of gender. This is
one of the most significant issues that trans people have brought to feminist and queer theory. (p. xii)

While this is a definite weakness of queer theory, it is one of the strengths of structural social work theory (which will be subsequently discussed).

A number of scholars have responded to such a critique. For example, Berlant and Warner (1995) note that queer theory, like feminist, African American, and Latino-centered theories, faced increased pressure from its start to offer methods of personal survival and alternative ways of living. When something is called “theory,” they add, there is often an expectation that a program is produced; however, the disciplines within which queer theory has developed and the outcomes it has brought about do not mean it is too abstract or irrelevant to daily life:

Queer theory has flourished in the disciplines where expert service to the state has been least familiar and where theory has consequently meant unsettlement rather than systematization. This failure to systematize the world in queer theory does not mean a commitment to irrelevance; it means resistance to being an apparatus for falsely translating systematic and random violence into normal states, administrative problems, or minor constituencies. (Berlant & Warner, 1995, p. 348)

Much of the critique discussed in regards to the obtuseness of queer theory is directed at Judith Butler’s work. Yet, she has noted that her contributions to theory are built from her own relationship to the violent ways that gender is regulated—through her own coming out process (and the negative consequences that resulted), seeing gay cousins thrown out of their homes, and watching an uncle be incarcerated for having an “anatomically anomalous body” (Butler, 2002, p. xix). Additionally, she says that the writing of Gender Trouble did not stem only from academia, but from her experience in social movements, in the gay and lesbian community, and reflections on her encounters with myriad genders
and sexualities. While some claim her work is too obtuse, community-based groups such as Queer Nation and Act Up have used her work to inform their activism, and Butler’s work has also helped press bodies like the American Psychological Association to examine their beliefs about same-sex attraction (Butler, 2002, pp. xvi-xvii).

A second critique of queer theory is that it does not fully include or reflect transgender experiences, or that, when it does, they are distorted, tokenized, and minimized. While acknowledging the potential for queer to be an inclusive term, Lovaas et al. (2007) point out that the vast majority of literature on queer theory reflects middle income White gay males—not people of color, immigrants, females, or gender variant people. Queer theorists have been called to task both for ignoring the realities of transgender people and for being ethnocentric (Roen, 2001). Queer theory often foregrounds sexuality and gender, but is not an accurate reflection of how many low-income people of color have to prioritize their needs (Roen). Elliot (2010) explains that queer theory inspired a number of feminists to study transsexuality as part of a desire to question norms of gender and sexuality. Yet, theorists such as Butler, Foucault, and Garber have been critiqued because of perceived un-gendering (Serano, 2007) and tokenization (Elliot, 2010) of transsexuals for these aims without consequent knowledge built about the day-to-day lives of transgender people and the particular challenges they face. Some of these critiques come from within the transsexual community: Namaste (2000), a transsexual researcher and activist, is deeply critical of the way Butler both excludes transgender people and draws problematic conclusions about the differences between drag queens and transsexuals:
Clearly, as scholars and activists, we need to challenge Butler's negation of transgendered identity. Moreover, we must account for the boundaries that are implicitly drawn by her research: drag queens expose compulsory sex/gender relations, while transsexuals can only offer 'an uncritical miming of the hegemonic [sex/gender system].' This framework is questionable for three overlapping reasons: (1) it can be deployed in a violently anti-transsexual manner; (2) it forces a separation of drag queens from transsexuals (a division that is already quite strong within transgendered communities); and (3) it prevents the elaboration of a broad-based transgendered politics. (p. 14)

Butler (2002) has responded to such critiques in the preface of a later edition of Gender Trouble, indicating that if she were going to rewrite this book, she would incorporate more discussion of transgender and intersex lives and how societal rules about gender impact both groups. She has also worked to clarify her argument about drag—that she is not saying that drag is the expression of a model gender, but is aiming to show how our assumptions about what is essential or natural about gender work to obstruct reality in violent ways. She is making the case that the norms of gender, including binaristic conceptualizations, heteronormativity, and the “rules” of femininity and masculinity, create our understandings of “intelligible” genders. She adds:

If there is a positive normative task in Gender Trouble, it is to insist upon the extension of this legitimacy to bodies that have been regarded as false, unreal, and unintelligible. Drag is an example that is meant to establish that 'reality' is not as fixed as we generally assume it to be. The purpose of the example is to expose the tenuousness of gender ‘reality’ in order to counter the violence performed by gender norms. (Butler, 2002, pp. xxiii-xxiv)

While the critiques of her work should not be easily dismissed, Butler’s work does offer insight about gender in ways that inform an understanding of structural bigenderism and ways to tackle this problem.

**Final notes on the use of queer theory in this dissertation.** In conclusion, queer theory provides insight into the limitations of strict binary and essentialist interpretations
of sex and gender, how this paradigm excludes and harms gender non-conforming people, and why the problem of structural bigenderism continues to exist. It calls for efforts to deeply listen to people who experience gender in ways that fall outside of our society’s gender “rules” as a method for challenging these rules and providing evidence of alternative ways of understanding and living gender. Queer theory also has the ability to inform social work interventions at a macro level to better meet the needs of transgender and gender variant people. This dissertation aims to utilize this theory to uncover the problem of structural bigenderism within settings of concern to social work, such as social services and education, and proceeds with the goal of transforming the systems of sex and gender critiqued by queer theory to better reflect, affirm, and support people of all genders.

**Structural Social Work Theory**

Structural social work theory is based within the larger field of radical social work and is closely affiliated with critical social work theories, including Marxist, feminist, and anti-oppressive practice theories (Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Mullaly, 2007). As part of this section, I will: (a) provide an overview of structural social work theory and discuss in brief its theoretical relationships to radical social work, Marxist social work, and critical social theory; (b) introduce how this theory can be used to understand structural bigenderism; (c) share some relevant critiques of this theory; and (d) discuss final points about how structural social work theory drives this dissertation.

**What is structural social work theory, and what are its theoretical relationships to radical social work, Marxist social work, and critical social theory?**
To understand structural social work theory, one may benefit from understanding what scholars mean in using the word “structural” to describe this theory. Mullaly (2007) says that the use of the word “structural” is both descriptive and prescriptive. First, it describes the belief that our society’s major social problems are embedded within our institutions (medical systems, government, schools, etc.). These institutions generally work in a manner that reproduces prejudice and discriminates against people by race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, age, etc. (Mullaly, 2007). While some of the predominant theories in social work, including ecological theories, often do not account for the roles of power and oppression (Carniol, 1992) or conflict and change (Mullaly, 2007), structural social work looks at the ways that patriarchy, racism, classism, capitalism, and other “isms” systematically disadvantage particular groups in society (Baskin, 2003). “Rather than blaming the victim for his or her situation,” Baskin notes, “this approach examines the structures that create barriers to accessing resources, services, and social goods” (p. 66). Second, structural social work prescribes that social workers need to act in specific ways to address these problems that are embedded in our institutions—namely, that we should aim to create change in social structures, not just in individual people (Moosa-Mitha, 2005, Mullaly, 2007). These activities for change can be done either within or outside of the social welfare system, and with individual clients, family systems, groups, or communities (Mullaly, 2007).

One of the notable pioneers of structural social work theory was Maurice Moreau (Carniol, 1992). Carniol’s article, which was developed based upon conversations with Moreau before Moreau’s death and from Moreau’s own draft manuscript, discusses how
a central goal of this theory is to understand the overlapping and interlocked forms of oppression, including racism, heterosexism, ageism, patriarchy, and others. Moreau said that these are the “primary structures” of oppression that perpetuate inequality; these structures, in turn, have a great impact on what he termed “secondary structures,” including family, bureaucracy (governments, the media, schools), community, and individual personalities. Moreau argued that the secondary structures communicate and contribute to the primary structures of oppression; however, they can be also used to confront the primary structures and challenge the status quo. Nonetheless, structural social work theory emphasizes the overall power of the primary structures of oppression and asserts that it is not enough to only focus on the secondary structures in attempting to bring about greater equality (Carniol, 1992).

Structural social work can be understood as falling within the field of radical social work, and it shares much of the same historical foundation (Mullaly, 2007). Although it could be argued that social work has always had some radical aspects stretching back to the Settlement House movement (Mullaly, 2007), Payne (2005) suggests that these radical approaches, which are based on Marxist social theories, have been most influential in social work during the most economically challenging times (e.g., the Great Depression) and periods of social reform (e.g., the 1960s and 1970s). Mullaly contends that radical social work has only been building a sizeable scholarship and group of adherents since about 1975. Radical and structural approaches to social work articulate that inequality is a fundamental, self-perpetuating aspect of capitalism that occurs along the identity divisions of race, social class, gender, ability, sexual orientation, etc., thereby
keeping specific groups of people from fully realizing their potential or accessing basic needs (Mullaly, 2007).

Payne (2005) outlines a few specific ways that radical social work theory has been influenced by socialist thought, including: (a) viewing social structures, rather than solely individual agency, as deeply influencing our social relations and opportunities; (b) promoting the idea that our practices need to target the inequality and injustice that are disproportionately experienced by people in certain groups; (c) calling for significant social change and political action, including an overthrow of capitalism, rather than only individual help, to achieve a more just world; and (d) critiquing the social control functions that many social work agencies mindlessly perform and the way that critical practice is often smothered in such settings. Further, radical social work challenges the way that our profession neglects to encourage critical reflection among practitioners and too frequently treats individuals as the source of their own problems (Mullaly, 2007).

While structural social work is sometimes classified as being very similar to Marxist social work, one of the differences is that Marxism focuses almost exclusively on the inequalities due to socioeconomic class, whereas structural social work has a more nuanced appreciation for the multiplicity and overlapping natures of identities—i.e., that one person can be multiply privileged (e.g., White, able-bodied) while also being multiply disadvantaged (e.g., transgender, impoverished)—and does not privilege one form of oppression over another (Carniol, 1992; Moosa-Mitha, 2005).

Structural social work theory can also be understood as falling within the realm of critical theory (Mullaly, 2007; Payne, 2005). Originating in the work of Karl Marx as
well as scholars such as Horkheimer, Marcuse, Habermas, and Gramsci of the Frankfurt School (Mullaly, 2007; Payne, 2005), critical theory is about “moving from a society characterized by exploitation, inequality, and oppression to one that is emancipatory and free from domination” (Mullaly, 2007, pp. 214-215). Like radical social work, critical theory aims to transform society and rejects capitalist and economically liberal approaches to social problems (Payne, 2005). Further, the infusion of critical theory into radical social work has brought a greater emphasis on critical reflection as a part of social work practice and has introduced the field to theorists beyond Marx, particularly those from the Frankfurt school. These scholars, according to Payne (2005), have brought a greater focus on how cultural, political and moral beliefs and structures are essential aspects of the way social orders are maintained through hegemony. This is important for social workers since…much of their work is concerned with trying to influence people’s beliefs and perceptions about society. (p. 232)

This approach, then, helps social work to examine how belief systems around gender, race, class, and other identities combine with social structures to maintain the inequality and oppression of the status quo. By incorporating a recognition of power into this analysis, critical theory offers new insights into combating “isms” that have not been offered by other theories in the field of social work (Payne, 2005).

As a critical theory, structural social work has been described by Mullaly (2007) as containing both modernist and post-modernist elements. Structural social work is modernist in the sense that it promotes the idea that knowledge (theory) and social action (practice) cannot be treated as separate: our actions are fundamentally related to our assumptions and theories and are always political. Further, structural social work theory
does suggest that there is an underlying truth about the existence of oppression—that there are some groups who undoubtedly benefit from the way our social systems are constructed, while others face great hardship because of these circumstances. The modernist aspects of structural social work and critical theories “[recognize] commonalities among all forms of oppression, such as the nature of dominant/subordinate relations, the dynamics and consequences of oppression, and the hegemony of the view of the dominant group and how it is reinforced by social institutions” (Mullaly, 2007, p. 223). In this sense, structural social work pushes for recognition of the commonalities of different forms of oppression, even when it occurs differently for different groups, and calls for people to work in solidarity across their differences of identities to combat injustice. In this way, it promotes a particular meta-narrative, thus reflecting a modernist lens. At the same time, the post-modernist aspect of critical theory and structural social work theory suggests that, while oppression is universal and happens to all disadvantaged groups, it will look and feel very differently for people who are transgender compared to people who are immigrants or who are female (Mullaly, 2007). Thus, structural theory both recognizes a universal truth (oppression as a consequence of capitalism affects people according to their identities and/or group memberships) and troubles universalistic assumptions (oppression is not experienced the same way by each person or across identities).

**Structural social work theory and how it illuminates the problem of structural bigenderism.** Unlike queer theory, structural social work does not have a primary focus on gender or sex. Rather than prioritizing one identity or form of
oppression, it is more broadly concerned with addressing all facets of oppression through large-scale systemic change. While there are some writers, such as Coates and Sullivan (2005), who write of the usefulness of structural social work in practice with sexual minorities (specifically same-sex couples), there seem to be few if any people who write about structural social work in relation to either the problems of the sex and gender binaries or transgender and gender variant people. One notable exception is a recent article by Mulé (2008) that offers a detailed analysis of how “gender and sexually diverse populations” (including transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer, and intersex individuals, as well as lesbian, gay, and bisexual people) should be better articulated in relation to structural social work theory. Other than the work by Mulé (2008), structural social work theory’s contribution to addressing structural bigenderism to date has been more related to understanding how this social problem fits into broader patterns of oppression and how social workers can and should address it, rather than an analysis of the specific details of gendered dichotomies, privilege, and oppression.

Structural social work theory incorporates an acknowledgment of power, and unlike queer theory, finds that critical use of the binaries of privilege/oppression can be constructive. As noted earlier, Wilchins (2004) points out how professional discourses (clinical notes, journal articles, etc.) treat transgender people as suspect, rather than question how our social welfare systems maintain the oppression of trans people. In discussing how to meld structural theories and postmodern theories, Carniol (2005) says that social workers should consider keeping the aspect of structural theories that emphasize dichotomies of privilege and oppression. He questions how people would be
able to organize for social change if they do not take into account the binary realities of power (Carniol). Part of this lesson from structural social work could be usefully applied to the problem of structural bigenderism—namely, exploring how cisgender people benefit from the maintenance of social welfare systems that regulate gender and oppress transgender people. Mullaly (2007) says that structural theory encourages us to analyze the state’s role in upholding various “isms,” including “assumptions about traditional family forms and gender systems that underpin much public policy and most welfare models” (p. 209). While he is making this statement in relation to patriarchy and heterosexism, it could just as easily be applied to bigenderism as it appears in social welfare settings.

Mulé (2008) asserts that non-normative genders should be incorporated into structural social work theory because of the marginalization and oppression that gender non-conforming people experience. He calls on theorists to acknowledge that “gender and sexually diverse populations” are a group with unique needs and a distinct culture, and that recognizing their existence within structural social work theory can help forward their abilities to contribute something to societal development. Further, by acknowledging this group’s oppression, Mulé (2008) argues, we can locate their experiences in relation to ideology and better work toward social change empowerment in practice.

Mulé (2008) offers thoughts on some of the conflict within gender and sexually diverse populations in terms of goals for social change between groups he terms *assimilationists* and *liberationists*. Assimilationists are those who emphasize a social
change framework that prioritizes equal rights through the law, including issues such as same-sex marriage and nondiscrimination laws. An issue with the assimilationist approach is that changing the law can become treated as the end goal, rather than actually ending prejudice (Smith, as cited in Mulé, 2008). Liberationists, on the other hand, aim to offer a more fundamental challenge to oppressive social norms and controls that exist within society, welcome and acknowledge diversity, and place an emphasis on values such as social justice, emancipation, and self-determination that are so near to the heart of social work. Mulé cautions social workers from too easily settling for social changes that may seem progressive on the surface, but are actually more assimilationist in nature.

Structural social work theory from a liberationist perspective offers a particular strength that can be used to improve such efforts by focusing on critically appraising dominant narratives (such as bigenderism), looking at groups in that are excluded in services, and transforming the service structures that perpetuate oppression (Mulé, 2008).

**Critiques of structural social work theory.** One critique of this theory is that it does not account enough for the fluidity and nuances of identity and instead makes blanket statements that treat identities as fixed and as easily categorized as “privileged” or “oppressed.” Moosa-Mitha (2005) argues that Marxist and structural theories are not thoroughly integrating critical thought into their analyses of identity and of the way that one individual may have overlapping experiences of oppression—e.g., being Black and having a disability. While she acknowledges that Mullaly’s work on structural social...
work\textsuperscript{14} recognizes how social class, race, gender, and other identities affect one’s privilege, she claims that he does not treat his analysis of identity with enough fluidity: “The concept of ‘difference’ is not complicated as it is in social identity and postmodern theories… This results in an analysis where the ontological assumptions of structuralist theories continues to be centered on material and structural inequalities” (p. 48). Moosa-Mitha’s critique is echoed by Baskin (2003), who believes that structural social work theory overlooks the unique differences of oppression as experienced by First Nations peoples and how “decolonization” can be used as an educational strategy to inform people about First Nations history, the roots of oppression, and how to dismantle it. Baskin’s (2003) conclusion is that “structural social work can be effective when working with First Nations peoples as long as it is applied in conjunction with an Aboriginal perspective” (p. 77).

These critiques relate to the social problem of interest because not every person who identifies as transgender (or is perceived as gender variant by others) shares the other same identities—for example, the experience of a White, heterosexual, wealthy trans woman will differ from someone who is two-spirit, homeless, and a sex worker. Further, Baskin’s critique of structural social work theory for its lack of acknowledgment of Aboriginal perspectives suggests that an analysis of the oppression of transgender individuals in American social welfare must also be accompanied by an analysis of the ways that the cultures and traditions of American Indians and other indigenous groups

\textsuperscript{14} Moosa-Mitha is referring to Mullaly’s 1997 and 2002 editions of his book on structural social work. It is unclear whether Moosa-Mitha would make the same critique of the third edition of Mullaly’s book (2007), which the author claims has substantial revisions.
(who have often provided a place for non-binary genders in their culture) have been smothered by White imperialism.

Additionally, as noted earlier, structural social work theory’s analysis of gender and sexual diversity, including analysis of the transgender community, has been quite limited and underdeveloped (Mulé, 2008). This has meant limited advancement on social work policy issues, funding opportunities, and relevant programs and services for this population (Mulé, 2008). As Mulé (2008) states:

Although the important and powerful effects of structural social work’s inclusion of lesbians, gays and to some extent bisexuals is acknowledged…structural social work theory tends not to discuss transsexual, transgender, two-spirit, intersex or queer individuals replicating the lack of human rights protections they have and overlooking the diversity they bring to gender and sexually diverse communities. While structural social work theory will identify binaries, such as that of heterosexual/homosexual, this presents a reductionist approach that excludes the expansive possibilities that arise from examining other sexualities, the male/female binary and those that are questioning the need for gender and sexual labels at all. (“Critical Queer Perspective,” para 1)

An existing weakness within the field of structural social work theory, then, is reliance upon dichotomies that exclude transgender and gender non-conforming people. Mulé appears to be calling for an integration of more complex perspectives of sexual and gender diversity.

Some of Mulé’s recommendations for addressing these weaknesses include: (a) acknowledging and affirming the diversity of and unique needs within transgender, two-spirit, intersex, transsexual, and queer communities and how they confront the power hierarchy in society; (b) recognizing the intersectionality experienced by people within this community and the consequent richness of strengths; and (c) taking on a multi-
Final notes on the use of structural social work theory in this dissertation.

Structural social work theory, in sum, is able to supplement queer theory by bringing in greater emphasis on power, privilege, and oppression. It looks at how inequality is embedded in and reinforced by our capitalist social system—which allows for us to move from pathologizing individual transgender people to thinking about how and why our social welfare institutions spend more time regulating gender than liberating people. Structural social work theory offers a perspective of how to change systems to better reach oppressed populations through naming hegemonic discourses, confronting the patterns of oppression that exist in our lives, advocating for greater client self-determination, and acknowledging the ways in which privilege and oppression can intersect and overlap within one person’s experience. Together, structural social work theory and queer theory offer important critiques of the basis for structural bigenderism in our society, its impact on vulnerable people, and how social workers can begin to confront this problem.
Chapter Four: Methodology

This chapter will start with a brief review of the social science literature on mixed methods research approaches, followed by a description of the present study’s design, data sources, samples, methods of data analysis, and how the project method impacts the validity and reliability of the data.

The Mixed Methods Approach

Definitions of mixed methods. A growing number of scholars in the social and behavioral sciences have come to see mixed methods as the third primary research paradigm in addition to quantitative and qualitative methods (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). Yet, there are still a number of unanswered questions and areas of disagreement about this paradigm, including how to precisely define mixed methods research, how to go about conducting it, whether one should rely upon one or multiple philosophies when using these methods, and when and how to mix the quantitative and qualitative strands within a study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

In soliciting articles for the first issue of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research (JMMR), Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) discovered that scholars had varying understandings of mixed methods; some saw it as any study that collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data, while others understood it as being a characteristic of an overall methodology that involves “the integration of two approaches to research (quantitative and qualitative)” (p. 3). Within their editorial in that first issue of JMMR,
Tashakkori and Creswell suggested a definition of mixed methods as “research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry” (p. 4). They emphasized that “integration” was a key term within this definition (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). In other words, it would not be enough to simply have both quantitative and qualitative data collection streams; rather, those forms of data would need to be presented and interpreted in an integrated way, with both types of data informing one another, to classify as a mixed methods study.

Around the same time, Johnson et al. (2007) surveyed leading mixed methods experts to gather their definitions of this approach, resulting in 19 different definitions. Johnson et al. used Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) method of constant comparison to analyze these definitions and identify themes. Their analysis produced the following definition of mixed methods:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. (p. 123)

This definition directly acknowledges that a mixed methods approach can tap into the strengths of both quantitative research (e.g., breadth) and qualitative research (e.g., depth).

More recently, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 5) offered a list of the major components of mixed methods research, including: (a) rigorous collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data driven by research questions; (b) integrating, mixing, or linking both types of data by either merging them at the same time, collecting one type followed by the other, or embedding them; (c) having a research design that
prioritizes either the quantitative data, qualitative data, or both; (d) incorporating these methods into one study or across several phases of a research program; (e) being informed by overarching paradigms and theoretical standpoints; and (f) bringing these procedures together within a design that then guides how the study will be carried out. Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) list provides general guidance about choices to be made (e.g., how to sequence data collection) that can influence the specific approach of a mixed methods design.

Building from these definitions, this dissertation aims to integrate both qualitative and quantitative data as part of an analysis of structural bigenderism. Before discussing the precise details of the mixed methods design used in this study, I will first review information about the philosophy of mixed methods research.

**Epistemology and ontology of mixed methods.** While the phrase “mixed methods” and the definitions previously mentioned are recent developments, the underlying philosophy of mixed methods approaches could be seen as having much older roots. Scholars in ancient Greece, for example, had differing perspectives about truth that could be argued to mirror present day differences between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research paradigms: some Greek philosophers (Socrates and Plato) spoke to the idea of single or universal truths, while Sophists like Protagoras argued that there were multiple truths, and yet others emphasized a balance between these perspectives (e.g., Aristotle’s golden mean; Johnson et al., 2007). Mixed methods research in today’s context could be thought to stem philosophically from that balanced approach of valuing
both singular and multiple truths by integrating quantitative and qualitative data as part of the research enterprise (Johnson et al., 2007).

Some mixed methods researchers (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Fries, 2009) have emphasized the importance of understanding and considering the philosophies that are the foundation for research, including the underlying epistemology (methods used to gather knowledge) and ontology (beliefs about the “nature of reality”; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 41). These philosophical assumptions, or what Creswell and Plano Clark call *worldviews*, guide the way a researcher sets out to study a problem. Creswell and Plano Clark propose that there are four primary worldviews that guide mixed methods research today, including: (a) post positivism, which has the basic characteristics of determination, reductionism, empirical observation and measurement, and theory verification; (b) constructivism, which is distinguished through its emphasis on understanding, multiple participant meanings, social and historical construction, and theory generation; (c) the participatory worldview, which tends to be political, empowerment- and issue-oriented, collaborative, and focused on producing change; and (d) pragmatism, which emphasizes the consequences of actions, is aimed at addressing specific problems and real-world practice issues, and is pluralistic. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) believe that these worldviews are not necessarily exclusive and that more than one can be combined within a single study. Additionally, the worldview may change while conducting a study and different phases of the research may emphasize opposing worldviews. Each of these worldviews, however, are distinguished by a particular epistemology and ontology, as well as perspectives on the role of values in research,
preferred research methodology, and rhetoric/voice (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This dissertation is guided by the participatory and pragmatic worldviews; this will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter when reviewing this project’s research design.

**Types of mixed methods designs.** Mixed methods designs come in many forms, and there are a myriad of typologies for classifying these designs (for a review of different typologies from the literature, see Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 56-59). I have found Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) typology to be the most clear and thorough, as well as based upon the most current review of the literature. According to these authors, the most recognized and utilized typologies in mixed methods research are: (a) the convergent parallel design (or simply “convergent design”), (b) the explanatory sequential design, (c) the exploratory sequential design, (d) the embedded design, (e) the transformative design, and (f) the multiphase design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These terms designate information about various design features, such as the timing of quantitative and qualitative methods, which strand is prioritized, and the worldview or purpose of the study. The decision to label this dissertation as a *transformative convergent design* is rooted in Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) typology. Later in this chapter, I will discuss the meaning of this design when reviewing the specifics of this dissertation’s methodology.

**The Mixed Methods Design and Worldview of This Project**

**Justification for using mixed methods to study structural bigenderism.** As with any research method, mixed methods are useful in some situations, with some
philosophies, and to study particular problems, but not in other cases. As mixed methods research has grown in popularity, it is perhaps even more important that researchers who utilize this method offer clear reasoning for why they choose this approach, how it will contribute to the knowledge base, and the benefits and drawbacks of such methodology. In considering how a mixed methods approach offers benefits to the study of structural bigenderism, I was drawn to a quotation from Fries (2009), who emphasizes the importance of knowing and thinking about the epistemological and ontological concerns of using mixed methods. While the topic of Fries’ research differs from that used within this dissertation, I found his words insightful in relation to justifying the use of mixed methods:

There are objective social structural factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, and educational attainment that pattern behavior in ways that are discernible through quantitative inquiry. Yet there is also an important subjective dimension to behavior in that social phenomena are produced and reproduced through the actions of individuals. Understanding this subjective dimension of behavior warrants qualitative methods. (p. 329)

These words reflect some key concepts and points of study within this project—namely, the interest in examining both the overarching structural factors that influence the reality of discrimination for transgender people (social class, race, ethnicity, age, level of education, and the many aspects of gender identity and expression) and the particular stories of individuals that demonstrate how the actions of people around them can make a difference. While Fries (2009) shares these thoughts in relation to how his theory base can help resolve the structure-agency dilemma, this perspective can also speak to the push-pull of the two theories influencing this dissertation: while queer theory may be thought to emphasize agency, individualism, and the deconstruction of norms, structural
social work theory calls attention back to the patterned reality of oppression and privilege. The mixed methods approach, then, can reflect these differing perspectives by honoring both the idea that people have agency and unique narratives (qualitative) and that there are broad, structural realities to oppression in this world that influence and shape lived experiences (quantitative). This is a key rationale for this study’s methodology.

Additional rationales for using mixed methods in this dissertation are based upon Bryman’s (2008) schema, which was based upon a review of the mixed methods literature that studied how scholars justify the use of this approach. These additional rationales for using mixed methods to study structural bigenderism are: (a) triangulation, (b) completeness, (c) process, (d) illustration, (e) utility, and (f) diversity of views. These are further described in Table 4.1.

**Project design.** This mixed methods dissertation involves secondary data analysis from two community-based projects. The first dataset comes from a qualitative participatory research project coordinated by the Colorado Trans on Campus (CTOC) coalition of which I have been a member for several years. This project has been designed and carried out by transgender individuals and allies with the purpose of documenting the experiences of transgender and gender variant staff, students, and faculty at institutions of higher education in Colorado. The second dataset comes from the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (the Task Force) (Grant et al., 2011). These two organizations wanted to document the discrimination faced by transgender people across a variety of settings. The
NCTE/Task Force study consisted of a cross-sectional survey distributed to over 800 organizations either serving or led by transgender people.

Table 4.1
Justifications for Using a Mixed Methods Approach in this Dissertation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification Type (Bryman, 2008)</th>
<th>Relevance to Dissertation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Quantitative data can be used to support qualitative findings, and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>Because of the lack of research on structural bigenderism of transgender people, both qualitative and quantitative approaches can add important insights and will, in combination, create a more complete picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Integrating qualitative data, which reflect the process of structural bigenderism, greatly adds to quantitative findings about these topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration</td>
<td>Qualitative data can be used to provide specific narratives and case examples that add dimension to quantitative results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
<td>Findings are likely to be more useful for community practitioners by integrating quantitative data from a large sample with qualitative data about particular experiences or suggestions for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity of Views</td>
<td>There is a need to explore the relationships between variables as well as participant descriptions of meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This project uses a *transformative convergent design* (see *Figure 4.1*), as it combines elements of both *transformative designs* and *convergent parallel designs*.

Transformative designs incorporate theories that emphasize using research to achieve change and push for greater social justice and empowerment for a marginalized community (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Further, the theoretical foundation of this research paradigm treats identity differences as social constructions rather than problems to be fixed (Mertens, 2008). Mertens adds that transformative-emancipatory research “explicitly recognize[s] that certain voices have been absent, misrepresented, or
marginalized and that inclusion of these voices is necessary for a rigorous research study” (p. 76). Thus, the emphasis of the transformative design explicitly highlights the purpose or ultimate goals of the research—creating better outcomes, not only for particular marginalized groups, but also for society as a whole. The present study builds precisely from this design approach, operating with the assumption that researchers need to more fully integrate and accurately share and interpret the experiences of transgender and gender nonconforming people in order to achieve greater justice for this population.

Figure 4.1. The transformative convergent design (based on Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), as implemented in this dissertation.

As Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) note, the procedures within transformative designs are not predetermined and can pull from any of the other mixed methods design typologies (convergent, sequential, embedded, etc.). They recommend using this method when research procedures will not further silence the oppressed community being studied (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). One way to address this concern is to integrate participatory components within the research—in other words, to directly involve the
community being studied in the process of designing the study, recruiting participants, collecting and analyzing data, and interpreting and summarizing results. Mertens (2008) points out that participatory elements are a key feature of transformative-emancipatory research. This dissertation integrates a number of participatory elements, including partnerships with transgender-led community organizations, a collaborative data analysis process within the CTOC project, and the use of member checks during the analysis stage of the design. Member checking is a procedure used to assess the validity of qualitative data in which the researcher presents tentative findings to key participants to gain feedback about whether the results are an accurate portrayal of their experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 211). Due to the use of secondary data analysis in the present study, the member check process involved presenting findings to three individuals recommended to me by Colorado Trans on Campus as people who currently identified or were perceived as transgender or gender non-conforming by others and who have been affiliated with a college or university at some point in their lives.

The *convergent parallel* aspect of this project’s design refers to how this dissertation analyzes both the quantitative and qualitative data concurrently, treats both methods equally, and analyzes the data types separately before integrating the results during interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Of note, this project involves secondary data analysis only; the data collection processes were conducted independently by CTOC and NCTE/The Task Force. Data collection for both projects occurred during similar timeframes (September 2008-March 2009 for NCTE/Task Force study, and June 2009-April 2010 for CTOC) and are therefore treated essentially as fitting the *convergent*
parallel design mold. Further details about the two samples are included later in this chapter.

**Project worldview.** This dissertation is built on a combination of the participatory and pragmatic worldviews. The project takes a participatory perspective in that it focused on the political nature of knowledge that subjugates transgender people, aimed to prioritize this community’s needs, was concerned with social issues (bigenderism, discrimination) rather than a narrow hypothesis, and had the goal of creating greater social justice. Additionally, the dissertation involved multiple participatory components, as previously described. This project also utilizes the pragmatist worldview because it is ultimately concerned with what is happening in the real world for transgender people—such as their experiences in higher education settings, mental health clinics, homeless shelters, government offices, and other social welfare settings. Further, this dissertation aims to compare differences between subgroups and people in different roles; as such, the project emphasizes plurality while also assuming that bigenderism is an overarching reality for gender variant and transgender people of all backgrounds and constrains the gender expression of cisgender people. In this way, this project mirrors a statement that Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) offer about the pragmatist worldview: “The pragmatist views reality as both singular (e.g., there may be a theory that operates to explain the phenomenon of study) as well as multiple (e.g., it is important to assess varied individual input into the nature of the phenomenon as well)” (p. 41).
Data Sources and Instrumentation

As described earlier, the secondary data used for this dissertation came from two separate projects: (a) a qualitative project of CTOC, and (b) a large-scale national survey conducted by the NCTE and the Task Force.

The CTOC project, which was a community-based project carried out by transgender and cisgender individuals from various Colorado colleges and from the local community, was designed to examine the lived experiences of transgender and gender variant students, staff, and faculty in college/university settings in Colorado. The purpose of this project was to understand the barriers to full participation faced by transgender community members in these settings. The project’s research design was developed by a core group of the coalition’s members (including myself) and approved by the University of Denver (DU) IRB on May 12, 2009. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 students, staff, and faculty between June 8, 2009 and April 1, 2010. All participants were over age 18, either currently working or studying at a Colorado institution of higher education or had done so in the previous 12 months, and either identified or were perceived by others as being transgender or gender variant. Announcements of this study were distributed to offices of student services, LGBTQ centers, relevant listservs, and other contacts at college campuses in Colorado.

I conducted 16 of the 30 total CTOC interviews, with the remainder completed by another coalition member. All interviews were face-to-face and took place in a location chosen by the participant that allowed for private conversation. Participants chose whether or not they would be audio-taped. The interviewers discussed the consent form
with participants, presented them with a copy, and asked if the participant understood the consent form and had any questions before signing. Everyone who began an interview was subsequently offered a $25 gift card as a token of appreciation. The interview protocol consisted of questions about perceptions of the campus environment related to inclusivity of trans and gender variant people, use of various campus resources and settings, interpersonal violence on campus, among other topics (see Appendix B and Appendix C for the interview protocol and “flash cards” used to prompt responses by providing comprehensive lists of types of interpersonal violence and a variety of campus settings). After the first few interviews were conducted, the interviewers met with the project’s Principal Investigator and recommended adding a question about intersectionality of participants’ identities, since this issue emerged in an early interview.

Twenty-eight of the 30 participants agreed to have their interviews recorded using a digital recorder. For one of these interviews, both digital recorders stopped working before the end of the interview, so the final portion of that conversation was documented through the interviewer’s notes (later appended to the rest of the transcript). The digital recordings were transcribed by either the original interviewer or a graduate student and then audio checked by a second student; transcriptionists were instructed not to record extraneous “filler” words, such as “ums” and “likes.” The two interviews that were not audio recorded were documented through note taking by the interviewer. The interviewers were instructed to take notes verbatim as much as feasible without detracting from the conversational flow of the interview. Quotation marks were used to denote direct quotations of the participant within interviewer notes, while notes without
quotation marks were treated as paraphrases of the participant’s words. Notes from these two conversations were then typed into a computer document by the interviewer and uploaded into Atlas.ti alongside the other 28 transcripts. This dissertation analyzes the de-identified transcripts (or interviewer notes) collected from these 30 interviews, which were shared with the researcher in the summer of 2011. As part of the analysis process, the researcher reviewed each of the major themes to see whether there was equitable representation of the two non-recorded interviews across the findings; any discrepancy is reported within the results chapters. The researcher was also given a copy of demographic information about the 30 participants; these data did not contain identifiers such as specific university names or departmental affiliations. Data about participants’ department affiliations and campus size were captured as broad categories rather than precise measures (e.g., a person’s department was noted as “Social Sciences” rather than “Psychology”) in order to protect participant identities.

The second dataset used in this dissertation came from NCTE and the Task Force. Due to the lack of national data about discrimination affecting transgender and gender non-conforming people, these two national organizations formed a collaboration beginning in 2008 to conduct the first nationwide, comprehensive survey of this population (Grant et al., 2011). By collecting data through a well-designed, national project, the hope was that findings could be shared with service providers, policymakers, the media and broader society in an effort to better advocate for the rights of transgender people. The survey instrument (see the report by Grant et al., 2011 for a copy of the survey) was designed over a period of eight months by a team that consisted of
statisticians, health and social science researchers, transgender rights advocates, lawyers, and others involved in the LGBTQ movement and was based on the group’s knowledge of the general literacy levels and terminology used by transgender individuals. The vast majority of survey questions were close-ended, and the survey did not include any composite measures. The project was approved by the IRB at Pennsylvania State University. The NCTE and the Task Force distributed the online survey through contact with over 800 transgender-led and/or transgender-serving organizations across the country and through 150 active listservs. The research team also made over 2,000 paper surveys available to community-based organizations that had contact with hard-to-reach populations, including low-income, homeless, and rural transgender and gender non-conforming people. The instrument was available in both English and Spanish. The survey was translated\(^\text{15}\) into Spanish by trained volunteers and a company that offered its services pro bono. The vast majority of returned surveys were in the online format (Grant et al., 2011). The survey was available for a six-month period from September 2008 through March 2009 (NCTE and the Task Force, 2011). The researcher received an electronic copy of the de-identified and cleaned dataset in SPSS format and a codebook from NCTE and the Task Force on October 4, 2011.

**IRB approval.** This dissertation was approved by the University of Denver IRB on April 29, 2011 as an Exempt project involving secondary data analysis of the two de-identified datasets from CTOC and NCTE/The Task Force.

\(^{15}\) Grant et al. (2011) note that gendered terms in the survey were particularly difficult to translate because such words are often culturally specific.
Samples

An important aspect of this project’s design is recognition that two separate samples were used. While they were both meant to capture a segment of the transgender and gender variant/gender nonconforming population, the samples were recruited in different ways, by different organizations, and for different purposes. There is no way of knowing whether any one person was represented in both samples. In this section, I will review demographics for each of the two samples and then conclude by showing information about these samples side-by-side for comparative purposes.

CTOC sample. Between June, 8, 2009 and April 1, 2010, the Colorado Trans on Campus coalition recruited a purposive sample of 30 adults (18 years of age and older) who identified as transgender, gender variant, or who were perceived as gender variant by others. Most demographic variables were collected by having participants fill out a demographics survey before or after the interview; data about gender identity, gender expression, and preferred pronouns were gathered from the interview data. The largest number of participants (40%, \( n = 12 \)) identified their gender when on campus\(^\text{16}\) as being either genderqueer, gender variant, trans/transgender, gender fluid, androgynous, or another non-binary term (i.e., not related to being man or woman, masculine or feminine, etc.); 23.3% (\( n = 7 \)) identified as a man, trans guy, FTM, or another identity on a trans masculine spectrum; 13.3% (\( n = 4 \)) identified as a woman, MTF, or another identity on a trans feminine spectrum; and 23.3% (\( n = 7 \)) used a combination of identity terms that

\(^{16}\)Because the CTOC study is particularly focused on how campuses can better support transgender people, the focus is on participants’ gender identities on campus. Some participants described how their gender differed when not on campus; such information is not analyzed in this study.
spanned these different categories—such as identifying as both genderqueer and as a trans guy (see Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2.** CTOC participants’ descriptions of their gender identities when on campus.

In terms of preferred gender pronouns (asked in the context of how participants would like to be referred to within research reports/products), 46.7% (n = 14) preferred masculine pronouns (he/him), 30% (n = 9) preferred feminine pronouns (she/her), 10% (n = 3) had no preference, 6.7% (n = 2) preferred gender neutral pronouns (e.g., ze/zir), 3.3% (n = 1) preferred a combination of pronouns, and 3.3% (n = 1) try to steer clear of pronoun preferences (see Figure 4.3).
This sample ranged in age from 18 to 45 years old, with an average age of 29.8 (SD = 8.42) and a median age of 29.5 years old (see Figure 4.4). The most common age was 20. Two-thirds (70%, n = 21) of participants identified as White, 16.7% (n = 5) identified as Latino/a (including those who identified as both White and Latino/a), 6.7% (n = 2) selected “Other” and wrote in Jewish, and 6.7% (n = 2) identified with some other race/ethnic identity or with multiple identities (see Figure 4.5).
Figure 4.4. Age distribution of CTOC sample, overlaid with normal distribution curve.

Figure 4.5. Racial/ethnic identities of CTOC participants.
Interviewers did not collect information about participants’ physical/mental abilities, socioeconomic status, current housing situation, employment status, or education levels (although there was a lot of indirect discussion during the interviews of current and previous education). Ten different college/university campuses in Colorado were represented in this sample. To determine information about participants’ urbanicity, campuses were classified into the four categories of Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA 2.0) designations used by the Census based on their location—urban, large rural town, small rural town, and isolated small rural town17. All 30 (100%) of participants were affiliated with campuses classified as urban using the RUCA designations (Rural Health Research Center, n.d.). The represented campuses ranged in size from having fewer than 2,000 students to over 20,000 students. Thirty percent (n = 3) of the campuses were private colleges and universities, while the other 70% (n = 7) were public institutions. Eighty percent (n = 8) of these campuses were four-year institutions, while 20% (n = 2) were two-year institutions.

Over half of the sample (63.3%, n = 19) were students, 10% (n = 3) were faculty, 10% (n = 3) were staff, and 16.7% (n = 5) were in multiple roles on campus (see Figure 4.6). Two-thirds of participants (n = 20) were on campus full-time, 20% (n = 6) were part-time, and 13.3% (n = 4) were in a combination of full-time and part-time campus roles. Length of time affiliated with a campus ranged from only one month to more than

---

17 Some accuracy is lost by classifying participants’ by their campuses rather than the zip code of their home residence. Home residence information was not collected in this study.
eight years. Participants represented a multitude of on-campus departments\(^{18}\) and offices: 33.3\% \((n = 10)\) were affiliated with social sciences, 30\% \((n = 9)\) in administration (registrar’s office, student services, multicultural office, etc.), 26.7\% \((n = 8)\) in professions and applied sciences (which would include social work), 13.3\% \((n = 4)\) in humanities departments and 10\% \((n = 3)\) in the natural sciences or other/unknown departments. One-third \((n = 10)\) of participants were affiliated with multiple departments or offices on campus.

\[\text{Role (n = 30)}\]

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{role_n_30.png}
\caption{Percentage of CTOC participants in different campus roles.}
\end{figure}

\textbf{NCTE/Task Force Sample.} The NCTE/Task Force research team conducted an initial data cleaning process that resulted in a final sample size of \(N = 6,456\) transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. The sample includes people from all 50 states, Washington D.C., Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico (Grant et al., 2011).

\(^{18}\) Department classification was determined by referencing this website as of July, 2011: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_academic_disciplines
Based on an analysis of participants’ reported sex assigned at birth, current gender, and how much they said various gender terms (transgender, MTF, etc.) applied to them, participants were grouped into six possible gender identity categories by these two organizations as part of the data cleaning process. Almost half (46.7%, \(n = 3,005\)) of the sample was MTF transgender, 27.6% \(n = 1,776\) were FTM transgender, 10.9% \(n = 702\) were male to cross dress female, 9.3% \(n = 597\) were female to other/gender non-conforming/part time, 3.0% \(n = 192\) were female to cross dress male, and 2.6% \(n = 169\) were male to other/gender non-conforming/part time. See Figure 4.7.

**Figure 4.7.** Gender identity distribution of NCTE/Task Force sample.
Participants ranged in age from 18 to 83, with an average age of 36.73 \(SD = 13.05\), a median age of 33, and a mode of 27. See Figure 4.8.

Just over three-fourths (76%, \(n = 4,872\)) of this sample were White, 12.6% \(n = 806\) were multiracial or mixed race, 4.5% \(n = 290\) were Black or African American,
3.4% \((n = 217)\) were Hispanic or Latino, 2.1% \((n = 137)\) were Asian or Pacific Islander, 1.3% \((n = 82)\) were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.1% \((n = 5)\) were Arab or Middle Eastern. Using the RUCA 2.0 designations of the Census, 90.2% \((n = 5,554)\) lived in urban areas, 5.6% \((n = 347)\) lived in large rural towns, 2.2% \((n = 138)\) lived in small rural towns, and 1.9% \((n = 117)\) lived in isolated small rural towns. Almost one-third \((29.5%, n = 1,886)\) of the sample reported having a physical, learning, or mental disability (not including gender-related mental health diagnoses). In terms of sexual orientation, 23.7% \((n = 1,492)\) identified as bisexual, 23.5% \((n = 1,477)\)

![Age Distribution of NCTE/Task Force Sample](image)

*Figure 4.8.* Age distribution of NCTE/Task Force sample, overlaid with normal distribution curve.
identified as queer, pansexual, or otherwise other non-binary attracted, 23.1% \((n = 1,453)\) identified as heterosexual, 23.1% \((n = 1,452)\) identified as gay, lesbian, or same-gender attracted, 4.5% \((n = 283)\) identified as asexual, and 2.1% \((n = 132)\) identified as having some other sexual orientation.

Participants were asked about their current gross annual household income before taxes; answers covered the full range of 14 options given—from “Less than $10,000” to “More than $250,000.” The most common answer was “Less than $10,000” \((15.1\%, n = 944)\), the average response was approximately “$40,000-$49,999,” and the median response was “$30,000-$39,999” per year. See Figure 4.9 for a display of the sample’s income distribution. The unemployment rate for this sample was 13.6%\(^{19}\). Level of education ranged from “Elementary and/or Junior High” to “Doctorate Degree.” The most common level of educational attainment in the sample was a bachelor’s degree \((27.2\%, n = 1,745)\), followed by more than one year of college but no degree \((19.7\%, n = 1,263)\), a master’s degree \((13.4\%, n = 859)\), and a high school diploma/GED \((8.4\%, n = 540)\). The distribution of responses for educational attainment is displayed in Figure 4.10.

---

\(^{19}\) This rate was calculated to based upon those who were (a) in the workforce or (b) were unemployed but looking for work \((n = 5,208)\).
Figure 4.9. Distribution of annual household income among NCTE/Task Force sample.

Figure 4.10. Distribution of educational attainment among the NCTE/Task Force sample.
In terms of living arrangement, 42.4% \((n = 2,726)\) lived in a house, apartment, or condo that they rented, 32.3% \((n = 2,075)\) lived in a house, apartment, or condo that they owned, 7.9% \((n = 510)\) lived with a partner, spouse, or someone else who pays for housing, 7.4% \((n = 477)\) were still living with parents or family they grew up with, 4.1% \((n = 266)\) were temporarily staying with friends or family, 3.5% \((n = 226)\) were in campus/university housing, 1.7% \((n = 110)\) were homeless or living in a shelter, and less than 1% \((n = 35)\) were living in other settings (e.g., group home, nursing home). In terms of citizenship status, 95.7% \((n = 6,106)\) were U.S. citizens, 2.4% \((n = 156)\) were documented non-citizens, and 1.8% \((n = 117)\) were undocumented non-citizens.

**Comparing the two samples.** In this section, I compare the CTOC and NCTE/Task Force samples across shared variables (gender identity, age, race/ethnicity, and urbanicity) to help provide a clear understanding of the similarities and differences between these groups. Race/ethnicity was slightly reclassified for the CTOC sample to more closely mirror the categories of the NCTE/Task Force data (see Table 4.2).

As shown by this table, the CTOC sample tended to have a smaller proportion of MTF/transgender women, more gender non-conforming/gender variant people, more Latinos, and fewer people of other non-White racial and ethnic groups compared to the NCTE/Task Force sample. The CTOC sample tended to be younger (average age of 29.8 compared to 36.73 in the NCTE/Task Force sample), with no one over the age of 45, while the other sample included a much wider age range (from 18-83). The CTOC sample also drew from only urban areas in Colorado, while the NCTE/Task Force was a national sample with about 10% of participants living in rural areas.
Table 4.2  
*Comparison of the Two Samples Across Gender Identity, Age, Race/Ethnicity, & Urbanicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CTOC (N = 30)</th>
<th>NCTE/Task Force (N = 6,456)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Identity</strong></td>
<td>• 13.3% woman, MTF, or other trans feminine identity</td>
<td>• 46.7% MTF transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 23.3% man, trans guy, FTM, or other trans masculine identity</td>
<td>• 27.6% FTM transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 40% genderqueer, gender variant, transgender, androgynous, or other non-binary term</td>
<td>• 10.9% male to cross dress female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 23.3% combination of identities</td>
<td>• 3.0% female to cross dress male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>• Age range: 18 – 45</td>
<td>• Age range: 18 - 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mean age: 29.8</td>
<td>• Mean age: 36.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Median age: 29.5</td>
<td>• Median age: 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td>• 70% White</td>
<td>• 76% White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 13.3% Latino/a only</td>
<td>• 3.4% Hispanic/Latino only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 16.7% Other/Multiracial</td>
<td>• 12.6% multiracial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 4.5% Black or African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 2.1% Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1.3% American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 0.1% Arab or Middle Eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanicity</strong></td>
<td>• 100% urban campuses</td>
<td>• 90.2% urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 5.6% large rural town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 2.2% small rural town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1.9% isolated rural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Note on the Participatory Data Analysis Process Used by CTOC

Before going into the details of the data analysis process used for the dissertation, I wanted to provide an overview of the participatory data analysis process that was
designed and used by CTOC, particularly since the codebook resulting from that process was merged with my own codebook for this dissertation. Between April and June of 2010 (prior to the start of this dissertation), six CTOC members, including myself, engaged in a participatory data analysis (PDA) process over the course of four meetings in order to conduct initial content analysis of the 28 transcribed interviews and two interviewer note documents. Our goal was to use this PDA process to organize findings into a report about how campuses can become more inclusive with the transgender population. The report’s intended audience included campus administrators, staff, LGBTQ offices, multicultural offices, faculty, students, and anyone looking to change their university to better include transgender and gender non-conforming people. During these four meetings, I trained the group on qualitative data analysis; our first meeting included an overview of the characteristics of the qualitative research process, a review of some of the literature on qualitative data analysis (specifically content analysis), and group activities for practicing content analysis together using our project’s data. Between meetings, group members were given “homework” of analyzing one or more of our transcripts, which they then brought to the next meeting for the group to review and use to develop and define the themes seen across the interviews. Participants were reminded on a regular basis that this data analysis process was meant to produce a report with an overarching focus on macro-level issues (what we initially termed “institutional neglect”) on Colorado campuses, rather than micro-level issues (such as physical assault, or microaggressions). This process resulted in a codebook that outlined all of our resulting codes and definitions; as part of my dissertation’s data analysis, I chose to merge this codebook with my own

---

20 For example: Patton, 2002; Spencer, Ritchie, & O’Connor, 2003.
when analyzing the CTOC data for the first research question (further detail about this is provided on p. 110).

**Methods of Data Analysis: Qualitative**

At a broad level, analysis of the qualitative data in this project took an orientational approach based in both critical theory and queer theory. Patton (2002) says that orientational approaches begin with an explicit perspective. For example, with critical theory, the emphasis would be on systems change. This focus was well-matched with the purpose of the CTOC project, which was described on the informed consent as being “social change for the purpose of greater inclusion and participation of gender-variant students, staff, and faculty in institutions of higher education.” This dissertation used content analysis as the primary method for making sense of the qualitative data from the CTOC project. Content analysis is “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002, p. 453). The focus is on the *meaning* of the data, rather than how a story was constructed or narrated by the speaker (Spencer, Ritchie, & O’Connor, 2003).

The interview transcripts and interviewer notes were uploaded to Atlas.ti 6. The transcripts and interviewer notes had each been assigned a participant number (1-30); these files were then analyzed in random order. Provisional coding—which Saldana (2009) describes as a process in which codes are developed ahead of time based upon previous research, literature reviews, researcher knowledge, and hypotheses—was applied in relation to the first research question. Specifically, I developed provisional
codes regarding the dimensions of genderism and the settings in which it appears in higher education based on Bilodeau’s (2007) study of genderism in higher education. The dimensions of genderism included: (a) binary social labeling, (b) invisibility and isolation of transgender and gender non-conforming people, (c) overt and covert privileging of binary systems of gender, and (d) social accountability (through systems of punishment) for conforming to binary gender norms. The contexts of genderism included: (a) academic settings, (b) campus facilities, (c) employment settings, and (d) LGBTQ organizations. Bilodeau’s (2007) codes were expanded upon as necessary during the process of coding. In particular, I added additional campus settings based on the accounts of the 30 participants in the CTOC study, including on-campus health care settings, non-LGBTQ campus groups, policy communication and implementation, and the general campus environment. I also expanded the “LGBTQ organizations” setting to include LGBTQ offices and administrative task forces.

In an effort to balance the need to demonstrate my individual research skills as part of the dissertation with a desire to respect the work completed through the participatory process and to incorporate the voices of transgender co-researchers, Research Question One was addressed through an analysis process that integrated the PDA results (see Table 4.3 on page 122 for a description of the dissertation’s data analysis plan). The first cycle of coding consisted primarily of applying the provisional codes, as well as attribute codes (participant demographics, pronoun preferences, tenure and role on campus, etc.) and structural codes (coding based upon the research questions of interest) (Saldana, 2009) to the first 15 documents; in many cases, multiple codes were
applied to the same segment of text (what Saldana refers to as “simultaneous coding”) because more than one point of interest was being made. In vivo coding (using participant language to label a unit of data) was utilized when the words of a participant were particularly provocative and indicated a broader theme of interest. After conducting this first round of analysis with 15 of the 30 documents, I compared my codebook developed thus far with the PDA codebook. I found that my codebook contained a number of unique codes and themes that were not in the CTOC codebook, so I decided to merge the two codebooks for use with the subsequent 15 documents in coding for Research Question One.

Research Questions Two and Three were not as clearly related to the direction the PDA group analysis process, and therefore data analyses for these questions proceeded without reference to the PDA codebook. The first round of data analysis for Research Questions Two and Three consisted of structural coding and in vivo coding (Saldana, 2009). Upon completing the first round of data analysis for all three research questions, I reviewed all of the codes that were created up to this point and their associated quotations, merged duplicative codes, and did not further analyze codes that were deemed tangential or contained very little data. At this point in the second round of analysis, there were about 240 total codes. Similar codes were then grouped into broader themes for each of the three research questions (with Bilodeau’s (2007) four dimensions of genderism used as the overarching themes for Research Question One) to make the number of codes more manageable and to prepare for the inter-rater reliability process. I reviewed all of the data attached to each theme, recoded data that did not seem to demonstrate the themes to
which they had originally been linked, and developed initial definitions for all 22 themes. Two themes were dropped at this point due to inadequate data.

I then proceeded to develop a coding instruction document (for the upcoming member check process and calculation of inter-rater reliability) that listed each research question, the current themes and their definitions, and between 1-3 sample quotations for each theme. I contacted key leaders within Colorado Trans on Campus to ask their suggestions of trans-identified individuals who might be willing to participate in a member check process. To be eligible to conduct member checks, individuals must have: (a) been affiliated with a college or university at some point in their lives, either as a student, staff person, or faculty member; and (b) currently identified as transgender or gender non-conforming or been perceived as gender non-conforming by others. Using the list of recommendations offered by leaders within CTOC, five individuals were e-mailed to solicit their interest in conducting member checks; all potential member check participants were instructed that a $100 payment would be offered to them as a thank you for their contributions. Three of these five individuals responded within a few days of initial contact by expressing interest and indicating that they met the qualifications. Each individual returned a signed confidentiality agreement before they were given data excerpts.

Of these three individuals who agreed to contribute to the member check process, one person was currently a staff member at a college in Colorado, a second was in multiple roles on a campus, and the third was a recent graduate. None of these individuals came from the same campus. Two had either a graduate degree or some graduate-level
education, while the third had a bachelor’s degree. Of this group, 67% \( (n = 2) \) were White and 33% \( (n = 1) \) were multiracial. Two of the three individuals described their gender identity using a non-binary term (e.g., trans, genderqueer, androgynous, etc.), while one person was on the trans masculine spectrum.

Each person conducting member checks was given a list of themes, their definitions, and sample quotations for two of the three research questions for this dissertation. Thus, themes for each research question were reviewed by two individuals from within the transgender community. Participants were instructed to return their feedback within three weeks (21 days) either via e-mail or through postal mail. Feedback from the member check process was used to clarify themes and their definitions, revise terminology, correct mistakes in transcription, and otherwise improve the tentative themes and definitions. (For a list of guiding questions that were asked of member check participants, see Appendix D). No themes were added or removed as a result of this process; however, one suggestion for improvement was to ensure that themes were not conflating sex/gender—i.e., if the focus is on gender, then one should be speaking of a binary that privileges “men” and “women,” rather than “males” and “females.” Another point of feedback was an expressed desire to ensure that there was discussion of the importance of intersectionality in relation to trans people’s experiences—that is, that experience might differ between individuals of different ages, races, ethnicities, or roles on campus.

Following the member check process, I conducted an assessment of inter-rater reliability (further described start on page 125). Upon receiving feedback during the
inter-rater reliability process about themes that seemed to overlap, and as a result of beginning to draft the results chapters, I arrived at a final total of 15 qualitative themes—four themes for Research Question One, six for Research Question Two, and five for Research Question Three.

**Methods of Data Analysis: Quantitative**

Research Questions One and Two included components that were addressed using the quantitative data from the NCTE/Task Force survey. I reviewed the codebook from this survey to choose variables that seemed most closely related to structural bigenderism in social welfare and higher education settings and that would allow for exploration of within-group differences that have been rarely explored in studies of transgender people’s experiences in these settings. I also selected variables that would provide information about multiple dimensions of gender related to trans people’s experiences, including gender identity, frequency being perceived as transgender, and information about transitions (whether an individual had ever sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming). Variable selection was driven by the theoretical frameworks of this dissertation—in particular, the perspective of structural social work theory and other modernist frameworks that would indicate that experiences of oppression likely differ according to one’s social location and identities within marginalized and privileged groups.

**Measures.**

**Independent variables.** Predictor variables of three types were chosen for use in the logistic regression models: socio-demographic variables, psychosocial risk variables,
and gender-related variables. Each of these groups of variables was tested in separate logistic regression models for each of the eight outcome variables.

The socio-demographic variables used in the models included: (a) annual household income (recoded into $10,000 intervals, starting with less than $10,000, with the highest category being $100,000 or more); (b) race (recoded to be a White/non-White dummy variable for model parsimony); (c) age (in years); (d) age squared (to test for a curvilinear relationship between age and the outcome variables); (e) disability status (a recoded dummy variable indicating whether participants had a physical, learning, or mental health disability other than a gender-related mental health diagnosis); (f) U.S. citizenship status (a citizen/non-citizen dummy variable); (g) education level (recoded for model parsimony to be a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not one’s level of education was a college degree or above); and (h) urbanicity (a dichotomous variable indicating whether one’s current zip code was urban, based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) designations).

The psychosocial risk variables included in the logistic regression models were: (a) homelessness (a dichotomous variable indicating whether one is either currently homeless or living in a shelter); (b) suicidality (a dichotomous variable indicating whether had ever attempted suicide), (c) sex work history (a dichotomous variable indicating whether someone reported having engaged in sex work or the sex industry for pay), and (d) two dummy variables regarding family loss—i.e., whether people have children, parents, or family members who will not speak to or spend time with them due to their transgender or gender non-conforming identity. One of these family loss variables
indicated whether someone responded “yes” to having experienced this type of family loss and the other indicated if someone answered “not applicable,” while those who answered “no” were used as the comparison group.

Gender-related predictor variables included: (a) a variable indicating whether people can tell that one is transgender or gender non-conforming (an interval variable where 1 = Never, 2 = Occasionally, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Most of the Time, and 5 = Always); (b) medical transition history (a dichotomous variable indicating whether one had ever sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming or had reported paying a dollar amount for such treatments, including: chest reduction, enlargement, or reconstruction; removal of the testes; removal of the penis and creation of a vagina, labia, etc.; removal of the uterus and/or ovaries; clitoral release/metoidioplasty/creation of testes; or creation of a penis); and (c) three dummy variables related to gender identity: one indicating FTM identity, a second indicating cross-dresser identity (MTF cross-dresser or FTM cross-dresser), and a third indicating gender non-conforming identity (male-to-other, female-to-other, a part-time gender identity, gender non-conforming, androgynous, genderqueer, and all other terms not listed). For these gender identity variables, MTF individuals acted as the comparison group, and each participant was grouped into only one of these four possible gender identity groupings.

**Dependent variables.** Four dichotomous dependent variables were examined as part of the logistic regression models answering Research Question One, all of which focus exclusively on education settings. These consisted of: (a) whether an individual lost
or could not get financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = lost or could not get scholarships; 0 = did not occur); (b) whether an individual was not allowed gender-appropriate housing on campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = not allowed gender-appropriate housing, 0 = allowed housing); (c) whether an individual was not allowed to use the appropriate bathrooms or other facilities on campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = not allowed appropriate bathroom use, 0 = allowed bathroom use); and (d) whether an individual had been able (allowed) to change student records to reflect current gender, if requested (1 = record change denied, 0 = changes allowed). For the logistic regression models exploring experiences in education settings, only those who indicated that they had at least some college education were included in the analyses.

For Research Question Two, a different set of dependent variables were examined, and these variables dealt with interactions in social services settings. These variables consisted of: (a) whether one has been denied access OR thrown out of a homeless shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = yes, 0 = no); (b) whether one has been denied equal treatment at either a rape crisis center OR domestic violence shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = yes, 0 = no); (c) whether one has been denied equal treatment at a mental health clinic OR drug treatment center due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = yes, 0 = no); and (d) whether one has been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming (1 = yes, 0 = no). For each logistic regression model, only
those who have accessed the service represented by the dependent variable are included in the analysis for that model.

**Statistical Analyses.** The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20, was used to test the hypotheses of interest for Research Questions One and Three through logistic regression.

Prior to analyses, the assumptions of logistic regression were reviewed for this dataset, including issues with missing data, the ratio of cases to predictor variables, adequacy of expected frequencies and power, linearity in the logit of each dependent variable, absence of multicollinearity, absence of outliers in the solution, and independence of errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, pp. 62-72, pp. 442-444). Patterns of missing data were examined by creating dummy variables representing missingness on each independent variable and testing for statistically significant relationships between these dummy variables and the eight dependent variables. Using this procedure and adjusting for familywise type 1 error, the age variable was flagged as being Missing Not at Random (MNAR) for multiple dependent variables, including whether one had access to gender-appropriate housing and school bathrooms (for Research Question 1) and whether one was denied equal treatment by a government agency or official (for Research Question 3). Further, 8.9% of cases were missing data related to age. Only one other independent variable, urbanicity, was found to be MNAR, and it was only MNAR for the mental health/drug treatment center dependent variable. Because of these issues with MNAR, there was a need to consider methods other than pairwise deletion for addressing missing data in order to preserve as many cases as possible for the analyses.
Multiple imputation is currently one of the strongest approaches in practice for dealing with missing data, and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) note that this procedure does not require missingness completely at random, and may not even require missingness at random; thus, multiple imputation was chosen as the most reasonable method for dealing with the missing data in this dataset due to some variables being MNAR.

Multiple imputation was conducted in SPSS using the missing values add-on. All of the predictor variables, other than sex work history (which had no missing data), were imputed as part of this process. The age squared variable was calculated prior to imputation, as recommended by Kenward and Carpenter (2007). The dependent variables were included as predictors in the imputation models, as well as a number of variables believed to help predict this missingness. Five imputations were calculated, which is thought to be an adequate number as long as there are not large patterns of missing data that need to be imputed (Rubin, 1996). The results of all logistic regression models using imputed data were compared to the models with only the original data; any notable discrepancies in the role of predictor variables before and after multiple imputation are discussed at the ends of Chapters Five and Six.

Another assumption of logistic regression is that there are not too few cases compared to the number of predictor variables, which is often indicated by extremely high parameter estimates and standard errors within the regression models (Tabachnick &

---

21 The following additional variables were included, unaltered, from the NCTE dataset as predictors in the multiple imputation process: q25g, q67c, q67g, q67h, q39a1, q39a9, q39b1, q39b9, q39c1, q39c9, q39d1, q39d9, q39e1, q39e9, q39f1, and q39f9.
Fidell, 2007). In the initial trial runs of possible logistic regression models, there was indication of such a problem, which prompted the researcher to drop some variables (such as a dummy variable indicating whether people were undocumented non-citizens\(^{22}\)) and combine the response options for other variables (such as gender identity, which was simplified from 6 to 4 categories). After taking these steps, there appeared to be adequate cases for the number of predictor variables.

A third assumption of logistic regression, especially when planning to use goodness-of-fit tests to evaluate the logistic regression models, is whether there are adequate expected cell frequencies for each pair of discrete variables, including the dependent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). For each pair of discrete variables, it is ideal to have all expected cell frequencies be greater than one, and no more than 20% with expected frequencies less than five (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). For this study, all expected cell frequencies for pairs of discrete variables were examined, the vast majority of which suggested no problems in meeting this assumption because of the large sample size. However, the homelessness predictor variable, when compared to the financial aid, gender-appropriate housing, and rape crisis/domestic violence dependent variables, had over 20% of expected cell frequencies < 5, and the cross-dressing gender identity variable had the same problem in relation to the record change dependent variable. For these particular models, there is a possibility that there may be less power for any goodness-of-fit tests that are conducted; however, I chose to proceed without making alterations to these variables because these represent a small minority of all pairs of variables examined.

\(^{22}\) Although this dummy variable was dropped, I chose to keep another variable that more broadly categorized people as either citizens or non-citizens of the U.S.
In using logistic regression, there is also an assumption of a linear relationship between any continuous predictor variables and the logit transform of the dependent variable(s) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). This is tested by including an interaction of the continuous predictor variable and its natural logarithm within the logistic regression model(s) and seeing if this term is statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Age and age squared were the only continuous predictors used in the models, so these variables were transformed and analyzed for linearity in relationship to all eight dependent variables. Findings indicated that there was a linear relationship in all cases analyzed.

Finally, there was no indication of issues with multicollinearity or outliers in the solution, and because each case in the NCTE dataset was assumed to come from a different individual whose responses are unrelated to others’ responses, these data met the assumption of independence of errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Methods of data analysis: Mixed methods. As part of Research Question One, my results include an analysis of mixed data. In particular, I use several joint displays (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011) in which I compare quantitative results for particular identity-related variables in the logistic regression models with qualitative data related to that concept. This type of analysis was chosen to compare and validate some thematic findings across the types of data for higher education settings. I chose not to use mixed analyses for Research Questions Two or Three because Research Question Two had data from disparate settings (the qualitative data was for higher education, and the quantitative was for social welfare settings), and Research Question Three only utilized qualitative
data. A summary of the complete methods of data analysis for all three research questions is provided in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Analysis Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. What institutional characteristics, policies, and practices contribute to structural bigenderism within higher education settings, as experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people affiliated with those settings? | **QUAL:** Content Analysis that referenced previous participatory data analysis (PDA):  
- Conducted content analysis with a random sample of half of the data (15 interviews) and identified themes without referencing the PDA process; included provisional, attribute, structural and in vivo coding (Saldana, 2009).  
- Using those same data, compared/contrasted my own analysis with the PDA group’s work and decided whether to move forward with the PDA codebook (if there is significant convergence of analysis) or merge the two codebooks.  
- Because there were a number of unique codes and themes in my own analysis process, I merged the two processes into a new codebook.  
- Conducted remaining qualitative analyses with merged codebook.  

**QUAN:** Ran logistic regression to examine whether demographic, psychosocial, and gender-related variables predicted discrimination in financial aid/scholarships, access to gender-appropriate campus housing and bathrooms, and being able to change school records to reflect one’s correct name and gender.  

**Mixed:** Drew meta-inferences through the use of joint displays comparing QUAN and QUAL data. |
| 2. How do transgender and gender variant people describe their interactions with people who represent the embodied power of an institution (e.g., supervisors, staff, administrators, faculty)? | **QUAL data:** used content analysis process:  
  a. Structural and in vivo coding (Saldana, 2009) of data from all 30 interviews  
  b. Defined, differentiated, and related themes;  
  c. Deductively searched for themes across cases (Spencer et al., 2003), including doing a negative case analysis to search for cases that do not fit established themes (Patton, 2002).  
  d. Discussed themes and offered explanatory |
accounts of findings (Spencer et al., 2003).

- QUAN data: Ran logistic regression to examine whether demographic, psychosocial, and gender-related variables predict being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters, or being denied equal treatment at a rape crisis/domestic violence shelter, mental health/drug treatment program, or by a government agency or official.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. What specific institutional actions and policy changes do transgender and gender non-conforming people say are most needed to address the oppression they experience in higher education settings? How do suggestions differ based upon a person’s identity (e.g., as more gender normative versus gender variant, by one’s campus role, by one’s departmental affiliation, etc.) or campus characteristics (such as size of the student population)?</th>
<th>Content Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Used same content analysis process as that described for the qualitative data in Question Two above.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures Impacting Reliability and Validity of the Project Data

**Colorado Trans on Campus Research Project.**

*Reliability.* Based on work by Silverman (2006), who details some considerations for establishing reliability in qualitative research, I have identified several aspects of the CTOC design that have bearing on the credibility and consistency of the qualitative data and consequent findings. These aspects include: (a) how CTOC designed and made amendments to the interview protocol, (b) the methods used to record the interviews, and (c) the transcription procedures used to ensure accurate translation of the interview recordings into textual data.
In regards to (a), the interview protocol was developed over the course of several CTOC meetings based on the knowledge and experiences of transgender and ally individuals within the coalition about issues that frequently appear for transgender and other marginalized populations on college campuses. The terminology used within the interview protocol reflected the coalition’s understanding of words that are frequently used and understood by the community being studied. Tentative drafts of the protocol were shared with the larger CTOC group for input. Two doctoral students were trained on how to conduct interviews with participants. The interviewers were instructed to ask each question of all participants (unless already discussed by the individual), with some liberty to change question order or wording to fit the flow of the conversation. After the first few interviews were conducted, the interviewers met with the project’s Principal Investigator (Dr. Walls) and recommended adding a question about intersectionality of participants’ identities, since this issue emerged in an early interview; other than the addition of this one question, the protocol was the same for all 30 interviews.

Twenty-eight of the interviews were recorded using digital recorders, which was meant to create a reliable way of recording the interview data. Interviewers used two recorders simultaneously in case one of the recorders stopped working mid-interview. In one instance, both recorders ceased functioning, and the remainder of that discussion was documented through notes by the interviewer. For two interviews, participants did not consent to be audio recorded. In these cases, participants’ words were documented through interviewer notes. As mentioned earlier, the interviewers were instructed to take
notes verbatim as much as feasible without detracting from the conversational flow of the interview; this procedure was utilized to help promote reliability of the data.

Finally, in relation to the transcription procedures, the digital recordings were transcribed by either the original interviewer or a graduate student, and then an audibility check was conducted by a second student based on the recording. Transcriptionists were instructed not to record extraneous “filler” words, such as “ums” and “likes.” However, when I reviewed the transcripts to prepare for data analysis, I noted that the transcripts were somewhat inconsistent in terms of the degree to which filler words, long pauses in the conversations, and words of encouragement (such as “Mmm-hmm”) were documented. This indicated some variation in the methods of transcription.

Following the member check process (as discussed previously) and subsequent revision of themes and their definitions, data were prepared for calculating inter-rater reliability. Two faculty members on the dissertation committee who were not already familiar with the qualitative data were invited to participate in the inter-rater reliability process. Each rater was given roughly 10 pages of double-spaced transcript text (one person received data for two research questions, the other received data for one research question). Data excerpts were randomly selected from among all of the interviews that I had denoted as representing the themes being analyzed. In selecting data excerpts, I included at least one quotation that I had coded as belonging to each theme. Both raters were given the current list of themes, definitions, and a few sample quotations for each theme to instruct their coding process. Each rater’s coding was used to calculate Cohen’s Kappa using SPSS version 20. Results of the inter-rater reliability calculations for each
research question are presented within the Results of this dissertation (Chapters Five, Six, and Seven).

**Validity.** My approach to validity with the qualitative data utilized specific procedures of validity that Creswell and Miller (2000) discuss as often being suited to a critical perspective to qualitative research, including collaboration (involving participants as researchers—which has been an integral part of the CTOC project process prior to the dissertation), member checking, and researcher reflexivity (being upfront about my positioning, biases, and assumptions that may impact the study, and bracketing those to the extent possible). Further, in presenting my qualitative results in this dissertation, I include sample quotations, known as *exemplars*, that represent each theme. In doing so, I am providing readers with an opportunity to evaluate the accuracy of my coding process (Suter, 2010). Data were also assessed for accuracy using *audibility* (Suter, 2010): after a student transcribed each interview, a second student listened to the recording and made edits to the draft transcription based on their listening. The accuracy of the data were strengthened by having this additional step of transcription review. Finally, as part of my qualitative data analysis procedures, I have maintained thorough records about data coding and analysis and related decision-making. By having detailed records, I have created an *audit trail* that can be accessed by future researchers upon request to help provide evidence of the validity of these data and the analysis procedures that I have used (Suter, 2010).
NCTE/Task Force Survey.

**Reliability.** According to the report by Grant et al. (2011), the research team at NCTE and the Task Force informally piloted the survey instrument to help address any issues with questions prior to distribution. However, there is no indication in the Grant et al. report that the reliability of the instrument was examined through procedures such as calculations of test-rest reliability. Additionally, the survey does not utilize composite measures, making it difficult to assess internal consistency (Grant et al., 2011). Consequently, a great deal is unknown about the reliability of the questions utilized within the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS), and this is a significant weakness in the measurement of constructs of interest. There is little evidence as to whether a respondent’s answers would be consistent over time regarding their identities, psychosocial history, and experiences of discrimination across settings.

**Validity.** The survey instrument used for the NTDS was designed over a period of eight months by a team that consisted of statisticians, health and social science researchers, transgender rights advocates, lawyers, and others involved in the LGBTQ movement. This team developed survey questions based on their knowledge of the general literacy levels and terminology used by transgender individuals. Because this group was primarily interested in thoroughly documenting experiences of discrimination among transgender people to help with advocacy and policy making efforts, rather than trying to validate an instrument or explore specific topics in-depth, the survey instrument was primarily developed by this research team and did not use questions or measures with thoroughly documented validity or reliability.
The majority of the constructs analyzed in relation to the NTDS, including all of the independent variables within the logistic regression models, were based upon single-item measurements within the survey; that is, most of these variables were assessed based upon respondents’ answer to only one question on the survey. While some of the dependent variables (e.g., denied equal treatment in either a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter) were a compilation of responses to two questions, they are still based on the underlying assumption that a respondent’s answer to one question per setting would offer an accurate assessment of discrimination. While many researchers commonly assess individual sociodemographic data using single-item, self-reported measures (Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997), there has also been some evidence that single-item measurements can be valid for assessing some of the most straight-forward psychological constructs, such as quality-of-life for cancer patients (Sloan et al., 1998), self-esteem (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001), and job satisfaction (Wanous et al., 1997). Such single-item measurement options are practical when there simply is not the time or space to distribute a multiple-item scale, such as within a long survey like the NTDS. However, one may find it debatable whether the constructs of interest for this study—such as unfair treatment due to being transgender in various settings—is simple and straight-forward enough to be accurately captured through one question.

Since the quantitative analysis in this study used secondary data and the survey did not present an easy way to assess either content or criterion-related validity, one option for assessing validity was to examine construct validity for the questions of interest. In particular, an analysis was conducted to see whether theoretically-related
constructs captured by the survey instrument were positively correlated with the measures of interest (Singleton & Straits, 2005). This works best when the comparison measures have been well-validated (Singleton & Straits, 2005); unfortunately, this is not the case for most of the measures on the NTDS survey. However, to be able to speak to construct validity, I have analyzed the dependent variables of interest and their correlations to potential related constructs. While there has not been a lot of research, particularly from a quantitative framework, that analyzes transgender discrimination, I looked at previous research on short self-reports instruments of racial discrimination and indicators of construct validity to develop ideas of variables within the NTDS survey that may be theoretically linked to self-reports of unfair treatment and denial of access to services due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. In particular, a study by Krieger, Smith, Naishadham, Hartman, and Barbeau (2005) indicated that a multiple-item measure of self-reported racial discrimination had convergent validity with measures of psychological distress, and a somewhat weaker but still present relationship to whether people had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lives (particularly among Blacks and Latinos). This study adds to a body of literature indicating that experiences of discrimination may have a detrimental impact on mental and physical health.

As a rough approximation of a measure of psychological distress, I used respondents’ indications of whether they had ever attempted suicide. Additionally, the NTDS included the same measure of smoking behavior (whether participants have ever smoked 100 cigarettes) as analyzed in the Krieger et al. (2005) study, so the eight dependent variables were also studied in relation to this smoking variable. Because of the
suggested connection between experiences of discrimination and substance use habits, I also included an analysis of the relationship between the dependent variables and whether respondents said they had ever drank or misused drugs to cope with the mistreatment they have faced as a transgender or gender non-conforming person. Finally, for the school-related dependent variables, I theorized that those who had experienced discrimination in financial aid, housing, bathroom access, or ability to change their student records may have been more likely to leave school because of the harassment. Table 4.4 displays the correlations between the dependent variables of interest with these other constructs.

Generally, these results indicate that there are only negligible to weak correlations between the dependent variables and the other constructs analyzed. All of the dependent variables (except being denied or thrown out of a homeless shelter) had statistically significant but weak positive correlations with suicidality. While several dependent variables had statistically significant correlations with smoking behavior, these relationships were very weak. All dependent variables had statistically significant positive relationships with drinking or misusing drugs to deal with mistreatment due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; however, the strength of these relationships ranged from negligible (< .20) to weak (just above .20). The four school-related dependent variables had statistically significant positive relationships to having to leave school due to bad harassment; again, the strength of these relationships varied from negligible (< .20) to weak (between .20 to .40).

These results indicate some evidence that the survey items used to measure the dependent variables relate as expected to other constructs captured by the survey.
Table 4.4

**Correlation Table for Dependent Variables of Interest and Other Variables from NTDS to Examine Construct Validity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholastic Setting</th>
<th>Suicidality</th>
<th>Smoking</th>
<th>Drink/Drug Misuse to Cope</th>
<th>Had to Leave School b/c Harassment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools: Financial Aid/Scholarships</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
<td>0.04***</td>
<td>0.11***</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools: Gender-Appropriate Housing</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools: Gender-Appropriate Bathrooms</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools: Changing Student Records</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.11***</td>
<td>0.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Shelters: Denied Access or Thrown Out</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>Not tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence: Denied Equal Treatment</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td>0.19***</td>
<td>Not tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health or Drug Treatment: Denied Equal Treatment</td>
<td>0.18***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>Not tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Agency or Official: Denied Equal Treatment</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
<td>0.19***</td>
<td>Not tested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01. *** p < .001.**

although these relationships were not as strong as one might expect. These results provide some evidence (albeit relatively weak) of basic content validity of the dependent measures. The survey questions used in the NTDS thus may need to be improved in future studies through more comprehensive pilot testing and perhaps the construction of multiple-item scales that more accurately capture discrimination in each type of setting.

**Reliability and validity of the mixed data.** As part of an assessment of validity and reliability of the mixed data, one needs to first be familiar with the procedures of ensuring validity and reliability in each of the separate strands of data (Creswell & Plano...
Clark, 2011), which have been previously discussed in-depth. Since Research Question One utilizes mixed data displays, I also want to speak to issues of reliability and validity in relation to this form of analysis.

The reliability of the data contained in joint data displays and interpreted together is generally related to the degree to which the two types of data meet the standards of reliability according to general practice within quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Therefore, the reliability of the data within the joint data displays that I use in answering Research Question One are going to demonstrate the same strengths and weaknesses in reliability discussed above for each of the types of data.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), in mixed methods research, validity involves:

- employing strategies that address potential issues in data collection, data analysis, and the interpretations that might compromise the merging or connecting of the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study and the conclusions drawn from the combination (p. 239).

Some threats to validity within the current study involve the use of disparate sample sizes across the qualitative and quantitative data, drawing samples from different populations (i.e., the CTOC study only sampled transgender adults affiliated with higher education institutions in one state, while the NTDS sampled from among all transgender and gender non-conforming adults across the country), and some differences in focus and purpose of the two original research projects. Each of these factors may have lessened the accuracy of the data. At the same time, some constructive methodological characteristics that likely contribute to validity of the mixed data included using joint displays to help analyze qualitative data alongside of quantitative results, giving equal weight to both forms of
data in analysis and interpretation procedures, and interpreting the mixed data in a way that reflects the study’s transformational intention and calls for social change based on the findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).
Chapter Five: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Results for Research

Question One

Findings are organized according to the three primary research questions of this dissertation. In the cases of Research Questions One (current chapter), I review three types of results: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods results. For Research Question Two (Chapter Six), I will discuss both qualitative and quantitative results. Research Question Three (Chapter Seven) is exclusively a review of qualitative findings from the CTOC project.

The first research question is: What institutional characteristics, policies, and practices contribute to structural bigenderism within higher education settings, as experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people affiliated with those settings? Before moving into the results for Research Question One, this chapter will present the descriptive statistics from the NTDS quantitative data.

Descriptive Statistics

For basic sample descriptive statistics, see Chapter Four (Methodology). In the following section, I detail descriptive statistics for predictor variables not yet discussed, as well as the dependent variables for Research Question One.
Independent variables.

*Sociodemographic variables.* For descriptive statistics on the sociodemographic predictor variables used in the logistic regression models, see Chapter Four (Methodology).

*Psychosocial risk variables.* The first psychosocial risk variable used within the statistical models was current homelessness. Descriptive statistics about this variable can be found within Chapter Four (Methodology). Other psychosocial risk variables analyzed in this study include suicidality, history of engaging in sex work, and connection to family members after beginning to identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.

Within the NCTE/Task Force survey, participants were asked whether they had ever attempted suicide. Just over 40% ($n = 2,583$) said that they had previously attempted suicide, while 59.5% ($n = 3,793$) indicated that they had not. Participants were also asked about the types of activities they have engaged in for pay in the street economy; 10.7% ($n = 694$) checked the box for “sex work/sex industry” and/or provided a write-in response related to sex work. The survey also included a series of questions about family, including questions about family members’ reactions and other changes to family related to the respondent identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming. Nearly one-third of the sample (31.7%, $n = 2,003$) had children, parents or family who chose not to speak with or spend time with them because they were transgender or gender non-conforming. More than one-third of the sample (39.5%, $n = 2,497$) did not have family members act in this manner, and another 28.8% ($n = 1,821$) said these situations were “not applicable” (presumably because they did not have such family members or were already not in
contact with them prior to coming out). A small number of respondents \((n = 135, 2.1\% \text{ of the total sample})\) had missing data (they were missing a response on at least one of the two questions used to develop these variables AND did not respond “Yes” to either question).

**Gender-related variables.** The third variable group examined within the logistic regression models focused on characteristics related to gender. One variable was the frequency at which one was perceived by others as transgender or gender non-conforming, even if the person did not tell others. The mode response to this question was “Occasionally,” (29.4\%, \(n = 1,883\)), followed by “Sometimes,” (26.8\%, \(n = 1,720\)), “Never,” (21.4\%, \(n = 1,376\)), “Most of the time,” (16.0\%, \(n = 1,026\)), and “Always” (6.4\%, \(n = 410\)). Participants were also queried about whether they had ever sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming (including: chest reduction, enlargement, or reconstruction; removal of the testes; removal of the penis and creation of a vagina, labia, etc.; removal of the uterus and/or ovaries; clitoral release/metoidioplasty/creation of testes; or creation of a penis); or, had reported paying a dollar amount for such treatments. Among the sample, 61.1\% (\(n = 3,870\)) indicated that they had sought one of these forms of health care related to being transgender or gender non-conforming, while 38.9\% (\(n = 2,466\)) had not sought such treatment. The other variables related to gender concerned a respondent’s gender identity; descriptive statistics about these gender identity variables were provided in Chapter Four (Methodology).
**Dependent variables: Research Question One.** The first dependent variable of interest was whether an individual lost or could not get financial aid or scholarships for school (at any level) due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. This situation had occurred for 11.0% \((n = 246)\) of those who had attended school as a transgender or gender non-conforming person and had not occurred for 89.0% \((n = 1,996)\) of the respondents. Of note, 4,214 cases were missing data on this question, either because: (a) the respondent was not transgender or gender non-conforming while in school \((n = 3,262)\) and was therefore instructed to skip this question; (b) the respondent indicated that the question was “not applicable” \((n = 853)\); or (c) the respondent’s data was truly missing \((n = 99, \text{ or } 1.5\% \text{ of the total sample})\).

The second dependent variable concerned whether an individual was prohibited (not allowed) from utilizing gender-appropriate housing on a school campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Nearly one in five respondents \((19.5\%, n = 321)\) were denied such housing, while 80.5% \((n = 1,328)\) were not. Of the 4,807 individuals who did not answer this question, 3,262 \(67.9\%\) had not attended school as a transgender or gender non-conforming person, 1,441 \(30.0\%\) answered “not applicable,” and 104 \(1.6\% \text{ of the total sample}\) were truly missing a response to this question.

The third dependent variable focused on whether an individual was not allowed to use the appropriate bathrooms or other facilities at school due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. This situation was experienced by 25.9% of respondents \((n = 570)\), while 74.1% \((n = 1,628)\) had not experienced this situation. Of the 4,258 cases that were missing data on this question, 3,262 \(76.6\%\) had not attended school as a
transgender or gender non-conforming person, 898 (21.1%) answered “not applicable” to the question, and 98 cases (1.5% of the total sample) were truly missing data.

Finally, the last dependent variable focused on whether a participant had been able (allowed) to change student records at school to reflect current gender. Over three-fourths of respondents (76.6%, \( n = 1,154 \)) who answered this question had been allowed to change their records, while 23.4% (\( n = 352 \)) had not. Of the 4,950 participants who were missing data on this question, 3,268 (66.0%) indicated that they had not tried to change student records to reflect their current gender, 1,557 (31.5%) responded “not applicable” to this question, and 125 (1.9% of the total sample) were truly missing data.

**Qualitative Results**

As a reminder, the first research question was: What institutional characteristics, policies, and practices contribute to structural bigenderism within a setting, as experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people affiliated with that setting? Four primary themes were identified in connection to Research Question One. As mentioned in the Methods chapter, these broad themes were developed based upon provisional coding that referenced previous research carried out by Bilodeau (2007). The four major themes answering Research Question 1 include: (a) each person’s gender is labeled as either man or woman and treated as permanent; (b) gender non-conformity is punished; (c) the gender binary is privileged; and (d) transgender and gender non-conforming people experience invisibility and isolation. Each of the four themes will be defined here, and I will provide exemplar quotations for each theme. I will also spend some time examining each of these themes by identity groups and/or other demographic
or campus information, including one’s role on campus, gender identity, the degree to which one passes and holds other visible privileged identities, the type of campus setting in which experiences occurred, etc. First, however, I will discuss inter-rater reliability calculations for these themes.

As discussed in the Methods chapter, I calculated inter-rater reliability separately for each research question using Cohen’s κ to compare my own coding of themes with a random sample of coding completed by a member of my dissertation committee. For the themes for Research Question One, Cohen’s κ = 0.28, which Landis and Koch (1977) suggest indicates fair reliability. Because this reliability score was somewhat lower than desirable, I examined κ values for each of the 4 major themes on this research question to see if one or more themes in particular had extremely low reliability; this closer analysis indicated that the themes of Privileging of the Gender Binary and Invisibility and Isolation had κ values classified as Slight (between 0.00 – 0.20), therefore needing more attention and clarification in discussion between the coders.

The two coders met to discuss the coding disagreements for the subset of data used for the inter-rater reliability calculations. Through this discussion, we came to agreement on how to more clearly define some themes (noted later in this chapter when discussing each theme), while in other cases our discussion helped us to agree upon how certain quotations could fit into themes that one coder identified but the other had not. It should be noted that in the random sample of quotations analyzed, the two coders had at least partial agreement on coding for the majority of quotations reviewed; further, some of the disagreement related to variations between coders in how frequently quotations
were coded into more than one theme, known as simultaneous coding (Saldana, 2009). Additionally, the low \( \kappa \) value was related to how Cohen’s \( \kappa \) places more emphasis on whether reviewers agree on the presence, rather than absence, of a particular theme; because of limitations in time, the second coder was only given a small subset of data (five double-spaced pages) to review for all of the four themes at once, which required the coder to recognize the absence of themes even more often than their presence.

**Theme One: Each person’s gender is labeled as either man or woman and treated as permanent.** The experiences of the 30 participants in the CTOC study indicated that, within institutions of higher education, there were systematic attempts to label each individual as either a man or a woman. This was indicated in both institutional practices and policies, as well as in social interactions that reflected larger institutional patterns. Once someone was labeled a man or a woman, the usual assumption was that this identity (and that person’s name and pronouns) was fixed and will not change; consequently, institutional practices made it difficult to change names and pronouns. This labeling frequently occurred without a person’s consent. It created an institutional disconnect between an individual’s gender identity and the one imposed by the institution. There was a related assumption that people will express their gender as either a man or a woman, according to how they have previously been labeled. These institutional patterns were not often explicitly communicated or transparent to campus members, leaving transgender people (among others) feeling lost about what will happen and what the "true" policy was. This pattern of labeling occurred across campus settings, but was particularly notable in academic settings (including classrooms, advising, and student
orientations), general campus settings (including as part of attempts to change one’s campus records), and on-campus health care settings. These three settings will be the primary focus for the presentation of results on this theme.

First, though, it is worth brief mention that this theme had the highest level of inter-rater reliability of all four themes for Research Question One. Therefore, no alterations were made to this definition during the conversation between coders.

**Binary, permanent labeling in academic settings.** One of the most common scenarios that exemplified binary, permanent labeling of gender was in relation to the classroom environment. In particular, participants noted that it could be particularly harrowing to have previous names and genders “outed” to others in the classroom when professors read through the class roster. In some cases, faculty just assumed that names appearing on these rosters were correct, ignoring the possibility that some students may have changed their names and could be placed in danger by having previous names (and gender identities) “outed” to their peers. In other cases, students said they were unclear about whether preferred names or legal names were appearing on class rosters. Table 5.1 includes several quotations on issues in the classroom involving rosters with incorrect names. The first two quotes come from students, while the third comes from a faculty member.
Table 5.1

**Binary Labeling in Academic Settings: Classrooms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role on Campus</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>P: I had forgotten to send out emails [to professors before classes began telling them my preferred name and pronouns], so when [this one professor] went down [through the roll call in class], I didn’t answer my name. I told [him]...“My name’s [preferred name],” and I think I made up a last name...so that people in the room wouldn’t make the connection. And then after class, I went up and said, “Actually, yes this is my first name, this is my name. I actually am enrolled on your roster.” So he emailed me that afternoon saying, “Hey, thank you for telling me. I’m really sorry that.”...But he apologized and said, “If this is an issue, do you want to let the class know?”...I was like, “Thank you for offering, but I’d rather do it through my work or something like that,” I don’t want to be all like “Hi, I’m special, listen to me”...It’s the kind of thing where...I personally don’t feel like getting up in front of the class to address it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>P: The registrar has my name still listed as [initial], the first initial of my legal name, and some professors were getting a roster that said [initial] and some professors were getting a roster that said my legal name, and we’re not sure why some got one version and some got the other. And so now that I’m going by [preferred name], either way I just end up saying, “Call me [preferred name].” So there certainly hasn’t been any blow-ups over it or anything, but the campus clearly doesn’t have a way of making sure that all the information is standard across the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td>P: Well the one thing that comes to mind is...I had one student that went by one name and...had asked [in department] to go by a different name, a male name, and when I got the list of students for the class, I called [the student] by the female name and... I’m like, “I wish somebody would have told me that they prefer to go by this name,” and why it was never changed on record I don’t know. And so it’s that kind of thing where it wasn’t necessarily me, but then I kind of felt bad because the class heard me say it, and the class now knows this, and I’m like, “Great...What if I just outed this person and just ruined their life?” And like all it would have taken is [university] to put on there “goes by” or change it in the system...So I think that’s something definitely that would be good for people to think about...I don’t know if there’s even a question that’s asked—do you go by a different name? How would you prefer us to list you on say the campus directories or whatever... But then it quickly opened my eyes to like, “Okay, next time I’m going to maybe just ask students to tell me what they go by first before I call out the name.” ‘Cause you call out the name because you want to see who’s there. Maybe we could try that a different way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This last quote includes a few suggestions for ways that universities can think about changing systems to account for differences between a person’s legal name and what is
documented in campus records, such as having a way to designate a “preferred name” in such records that will be printed out as part of a class roster. Another suggestion is for faculty to have students introduce themselves at the start of class, rather than calling out the names on a roster. As indicated in the second quote above, an instructor should not assume that transgender students will want to publicly discuss their transgender status or name change with classmates. This choice should ultimately be up to the individual student.

Similar situations were reported in other academic-related environments. For example, another student shared an experience of binary labeling during pre-admission interviews. He shared:

**P**: At the [pre-admission] interview… I was actually sitting at a table with a group of…students that were interviewing as well, and they all perceived me as [legal name], a guy, and then the guy comes in, and he announces my [previous] name, and I had to go, and that was like the walk of shame… And then…at the orientation…they announced names at the front of the room, and they’re, they said my full name, middle name included…in front of an entire room of people.

This experience mirrored those reported in classroom settings in that university officials likely assumed that the student’s name on university records was both a legal name and a currently preferred name. Unfortunately, this unchecked assumption put the student in a situation of having both his previous name and previous gender “outed” in front of other applicants.

In many of the cases shared above, these instances of binary labeling occurred due to faculty and staff relying on student records or class rosters to label a student’s name and gender. These processes of labeling can occur even without reference to an individual’s gender expression and without an intention of harassing or embarrassing the
individual. However, participants also shared examples of times when others made assumptions about their gender identity, names, or pronouns based on snap judgments about physical appearance or hearing how others referred to that person. A student at a large university shared a description of a professor and a peer using incorrect pronouns for the individual without checking-in with her about what she preferred:

**P:** There was another student that came into [the professor’s] office while I was in there, and he kept insisting that, he kept using male pronouns for me and…referring to me in talking to [the professor]. And [the professor], she looked at me and nodded, “Is this okay?” I don’t really know what she was getting at, and in the end she went along with it. The two of them sat there and talked about me using male pronouns and referring to me. I don’t know what happened for her. I don’t know if in her mind she just decided that it was the easiest thing to do… But she would be… the one professor that stands out as I didn’t outright have any incredibly traumatizing and negative experiences with her. And it feels at this point like that’s the best I can hope for—is just to not have any over-the-top negative experiences.

Although the interaction with this faculty member mirrored the typical pattern in which this student was assumed to be a different gender, the student concludes by noting that this is the one faculty member with whom she didn’t “have any incredibly traumatizing and negative experiences” and that this is likely “the best [she] can hope for… just to not have any over-the-top negative experiences.” This statement affirms just how harrowing the campus environment can be for gender non-conforming people and how low their expectations are for finding affirmation and respect on campus.

For another student, instances of being addressed incorrectly in the classroom were something she attributed to where she was in her transition:

[Interviewer: Well you had shared with me that in your diversity class the professor has called you sir. In that context, is that something that happens often?]

**P:** It happens too often. But keep in mind, even once in my opinion is too often. I guess it’s probably because I’m more sensitive to it, because of the fact that I want to be seen as who I am, and I don’t want to be called mis-gendered because
I’ve had to work, fight tooth and nail to be recognized for who I am. And it’s still, I mean my voice still sucks ass, and I still need to finish up my electrolysis\(^\text{23}\), which is horribly expensive.

This individual’s experiences in classroom settings indicate that the process of binary labeling, especially at an individual level, is connected to how others read one’s gender based upon physical cues like voice, body hair, mannerisms, and dress. More detail about interpersonal interactions related to name and pronoun usage is provided in Chapter Six in relation to Research Question Two.

There were also some examples provided by the 30 participants in this study about instances where campus systems and individual people on campus were very responsive, respectful, and knowledgeable about how to address them with the correct names and pronouns. These quotations were considered “negative cases” – examples of when the theme of binary labeling was not present or was not described as a problem on campus (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2
*Examples of When Campus Systems and Individuals Correctly Labeled a Person: Academic Settings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role on Campus</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff          | P: Also, there’s been work with professors about putting a statement, it’s gone out to professors… Language…that professors could put on their syllabi to say that if you…want to be known by a different name or a different gender than what appears on the roster, the class roll, then you can let me know… So, some of them have put it on, and a lot of them didn’t, but at least it was out there as a resource that they could go, “Oh ok, I can put this on the syllabus.” …So that was done. There’s been some work with the registrar about name changing and making that easier. Could they make a space in their computer file for each student so there would be a blank for a preferred name? Or what about gender designation changes with the university—does there have to be a court-ordered change or does the

\(^{23}\) Electrolysis is a type of hair removal treatment that may be used to remove hair from the chest, face, and other parts of the body.
driver’s license have to be changed before the university would change it…? So, there’s been a lot of debate about ID issues with university changing names, changing sex designations, preferred names, all that kind of thing.

| Student | P: The first woman, she was my lab partner, and she said, “So, can I ask you something?” And I said, “Sure!” And she said, “So, I don’t know how to ask this, but your name is [participant’s first name], and I hear people saying “he,” but I thought I just would ask you and see if that’s right, or what you want.” And I said, “Yeah, actually, I really appreciate you asking. My name is [first name] and I’m a woman, and I identify as a woman, and I prefer female pronouns, but things don’t usually work out the way I prefer. So, I just kind of go with it.”…I walked out of there feeling like, “Whoa! That was really great. That was so thoughtful of her.” I had a great interaction, great follow-up after that, great conversation, tied it up, everything had gone well, but then my anxiety with her was, “So I have to be on the look-out for her because she knows—she knows I’m a woman now, and if she sees me walk into a men’s restroom, that’s going to be really confusing for her.” So even then, it just, it’s not a perfect world. It felt good, and it felt like a step in the right direction, and then there’s still all this added anxiety around what did she do with it and who did she tell.

The last quote in this table indicates an additional dilemma for some people within the transgender community—that even if some people know of one’s preferred name and pronouns, the individual may still be navigating a difficult balance of being perceived as different genders in different campus settings. Further, sharing preferred names and pronouns with others opens the door to the possibility that this information could be shared with others on campus without one’s permission.

Binary, permanent labeling in general campus settings. Many of the experiences discussed around problems with permanent, binary labeling within the general campus were in reference to efforts to change one’s name or gender being used in campus systems and records (whether employment records, student records, or records at a campus health center or mental health clinic). Participants described problems with changing such records, including confusion about who to approach for assistance, what documents are required for a name or gender change request, and how to consistently
change records across *all* campus systems. Examples of participants’ challenges with changing their records are provided in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3  
Problems with Binary Labeling in General Campus Settings: Changing Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **P:** I know getting any name or gender changed on the university documents is incredibly difficult. Just by working with our IT department and the policies that they have in place, I know that is incredibly difficult…[The student information system]… is very, very difficult, because they’ve registered that name with a student ID number, and it has to match to social security number. And what they’re trying to do with the new student ID system is have…something similar to an alias, so that they can fulfill something where if somebody does have a name change, that they would be able to have an “aka” relative to a name change. But currently they do not have that, so they, it’s very, very difficult if somebody does have a name change. It’s nearly impossible.  

P: So bureaucracy…you have to know the person to talk to…My email, the, my name on the [university online classroom management system]…I got those changed my freshman year, I think sometime during my second [term]. But I had to, I ended up having to track down this one [staff] person that I’ve worked with…And they managed to change the name that shows up and change my outgoing email… So I managed to get that changed. But when they changed that, it didn’t carry over to my major and stuff, so for a year I wasn’t getting the emails from my department or like my advisor and stuff…  

P: For the bureaucracy piece, I haven’t changed my gender on university documents yet, and have only recently changed my license. To move forward with changing my name, it went smoothly after I shared a court document with the school. My boss was willing to accompany me to do that and he’s friends with the [administrator of student services], so that made the process happen more smooth and quickly than it might have otherwise. Then, for my e-mail, that took a long time. IT lost the request for awhile, did nothing… and then the [administrator of student services] asked if I wanted to change it, and that person helped make it happen. My connections with administrators have helped. It makes me wonder-what do students without those connections do? I think things with bureaucracy likely went more smoothly for me because of those connections.  

P: So the bureaucracy has been very complicated…Somebody, I think it was a guy who works in the orientation department… he was like, “Okay, here’s the name of someone at the registrar, here’s the name of someone at all the different places who is either queer or an ally.” So, I would find this one person, I would go and I would say, “Okay, so my name,” and it wasn’t legally changed yet, so the woman at the registrar’s office was like, “Okay, we can use your initials. That’s all we can do. We can use your initials and then you can say, ‘Hey, there’s a mix-up. This is my name.’” So that was easy, but there’s not a list or anything of those people, so I have no idea who to tell other people they were … I found out that the reason that every [term] those little stickers at the health center would print out actually had to do with the registrar. And I called the registrar’s office recently,  

---

24 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
and then they called the bursar, and I had to, like, send in forms to both of them because every academic term roll-over, it would roll-over and reset to “F” [for female]. So I had to fax in all these documents proving…you have to say “sex change” and use all that kind of language that you don’t want to use with people, and I asked for confirmation of the fax, and I never got it…I absolutely refused to walk into that office and take the papers. There was no way I was going to that…[and] they didn’t ever get back to me, so I don’t really know [if they changed my records]. But I know that somewhere a fax machine spit out a copy of my letter from my surgeon and driver’s license with the “M” circled, and that makes me feel uncomfortable, too.

P: None of the [campus] systems are tied together, so a change anywhere doesn’t mean anything…You have to know the right person to talk to because if you just go in with a legal name change, that won’t carry over to your email or anything, and I think you have to do it within a certain timeframe for it to carry over to your transcripts and diploma. So I have to figure that out this summer because otherwise I’ll graduate with the wrong name on my certificate… On top of that, I mentioned earlier that my name from student employment, housing is also on its own system… I went in to get my name card for employment and found out that the housing department had just changed my name and gender marker without even telling me. So I went in to get the card, and was like, “So my name will say this on the records,” and they were like, “Actually it already says [preferred name]. Is that not your legal name?” And I was like, “No, no, no, it’s fine, it’s fine that’s the name that needs to be on there!” And they’re like, “Well, it needs to be your legal name.” And I’m like, “Just print the card, please just print the card.” And it was a whole mess. I don’t even know what name I am in some of the systems… it’s way more complicated than it needs to be.

P: The woman who worked for [the IT department] was really great with the e-mail. And she erased my other name and made it all switch to just my initials, and so I thought everything was fine and great… But then I started getting, I have all my e-mails forward to my gmail, and somebody who I haven’t talked to in several years I think got a spam e-mail and it sent to a bunch of people, and it sent to my first, my old first name dot my last name… And I was like, “What the fuck?! You’re not supposed to exist as an e-mail address.”…I’m at this point where I’m trying to figure out who to talk and all the emotional energy it takes to talk to someone, and it’s such a crapshoot who you’re going to talk to. I was just like, “Okay, I guess that e-mail address is going to be floating around out there.” So, it’s, they make it really difficult: it’s a big bureaucracy. I was lucky that somebody had a lot of connections for me to go to…

One common pattern that appears in the quotations above is a sense that one “needs to know the right people” to be able to best navigate campus bureaucracies to change one’s records. Another pattern is that, while the quotations above do not encompass all quotations about difficulties changing records, all of these narratives came from individuals affiliated with very large universities that had over 20,000 students. It may be
that larger universities tend to present greater hurdles for changing names and genders consistently across all campus information systems than do smaller colleges.

There were also some examples given by participants of times when changing their campus records was relatively easy (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4
Examples of When Individuals Did Not Have Problems with Binary Labeling in General Campus Settings: Changing Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Campus (Student Pop.)</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Less than 10,000             | **P:** I’m sure it’d be absolutely no problem to change your name.  
[Interviewer: In terms of student forms?] Yeah, I mean, because people are changing their names all the time. In our school, they’re coming in with like [the name] Jennifer or something like that and they’re like, changing it to Satia, which means, like, The Life of Truthfulness in Sanskrit. And so, people are just changing their name all the time, so it’s like, doesn’t really seem like a big deal to change your name at all. |
|                              | **P:** Students here, if they need to come change their name because they’re transitioning, it’s just a non-issue. In fact, I’ve been working with some other schools to help them get their policies sort of up-to-speed on name changes trying to do a little education there. |
|                              | **P:** And then in terms of bureaucracy, I haven’t had too many problems. I just told the registrar what my preferred name was and then they pretty much fixed it. They changed it right away. I really haven’t had any problems with that or with my email, so I’ve been pretty fortunate in that regard… I think that’s because of the size of our campus and the relationships that the students have to staff in general is that everything here is really truly one on one. Everyone knows your name here. And, so because staff and faculty tend to know students so well, I think that it’s easier for them… they know me as [name] and they know that I haven’t changed my name legally, so they just know to go find it without asking me. |
| Between 10,000 – 20,000      | **P:** Bureaucracy: I did change my name since starting at the [university], so there was a little name change bureaucracy. I haven't found it to be too hard. |

Again, these quotes indicate that campus size may have some impact on ease in changing records, as a number of the participants represented above as having positive experiences
in changing their records were affiliated with some of the smaller institutions, some with less than 10,000 students. The last quote indicates this possible dynamic that “the relationships that the students have to staff” and “everyone [knowing] your name]” may lead to easier communication across offices to change one’s name and gender across campus.

Institutional struggles with appropriately “labeling” a person’s name and gender also relate to pronoun usage. This particular issue will be further explored in this chapter as part of the theme Gender Non-conformity is Punished, as well as in Chapter Six’s coverage of findings related to one-to-one interactions between trans people and campus faculty and staff. However, there was a particularly striking description of one individual’s difficulties in being addressed with gender-neutral pronouns in general campus settings that reflects this broader institutional pattern of reluctance to allow non-binary labeling. This participant shared:

P: When I first got to campus, I sort of told people like, “Oh yeah, I want to use gender-neutral pronouns,” but then people didn’t get how to use them, and so then I started asking people to use male pronouns because it was easier, and so I spent almost two whole [terms] just going by male pronouns ‘cause no one could wrap their heads around gender-neutral pronouns…When I came back this year, it changed in that I started to really put my foot down about gender-neutral pronouns…Navigating that has been interesting…Last year…[I started] just going by my first initial of my birth name… and switching to the name that I intend to at some point change legally, which is [preferred name]. So people have sort of had to deal with the name shift and…I don’t feel like that’s been that challenging to anyone, but in a lot of ways the pronoun [request] has been. And that that has affected the words that other people use to describe me, like when people are using male pronouns, very well-meaning people would say things like, “Young man,” or something like that. And they think that it’s kind of an ally step, like, “I’m acknowledging your masculine identity by calling you a young man,” and so I have to really squish that. “I don’t identify as a man, and this is why gender-

---

25 See definition in Appendix A.
neutral pronouns are important because this trans identity isn’t being lost in like your vision of male identity and all this other stuff.”

This participant reflects on how there can be significant resistance, whether intentional or not, to referring to a person with gender-neutral pronouns in a higher education environment, and that this may be even more difficult for individuals to respect than a name change.

To conclude this section on binary labeling in general campus settings, I will share a quote from one research participant who emphasizes the practical importance of respecting people’s identities and changing records and other campus systems to reflect a person’s identity:

**P:** Most stuff around issues of diversity…really come down to just being practical about stuff. No, don’t give people a hard time about their name change; think about what that means when they go to hang their diploma up on the wall, and they’re a psychotherapist and it has to say “Susan” instead of “Stan,” or whatever. Just think about that for a second, it’s very practical.

**Binary, permanent labeling in on-campus health care settings.** Some of the issues related to binary labeling in on-campus health care settings are similar to situations that have been detailed for other campus settings—such as systems that do not accurately change or update names or gender labels for patients and staff not using correct pronouns. A student who identified as male stated:

**P:** [The student health center] is really fucked up…I got the insurance. I had to switch to the insurance in 2006, so I had started transitioning. I had this really great [general practitioner] in [city of university] who’s wonderful, and my legal name hadn’t changed yet… and I had been on hormones for like, I don’t know, six months maybe. So, it kind of is this thing where you call [the student health center] and you’re like, “Okay, I have to see a doctor.” So, they send you to this one doctor…and…it still said “F” on everything. And, for some reason that doesn’t make any sense, they have labels that print out for everything that they do, and they all have their gender on them, and they don’t need to. I can understand the lab work needs to…but [they have those gender labels] on everything. And
I’ve asked people before, like “Why does that even need to be on there?” They’re like, “I don’t know. It doesn’t.”

In this case, this student ran up against institutional expectations that once someone is assigned a “female” label that this will never change; this put the student in a situation of having to constantly out himself and correct health center staff’s assumptions. This student also described an interaction where he noticed that his medical record notes still were using the incorrect pronouns for him, even after staff were informed that he was transgender:

**P:** I was looking over my physical therapist’s shoulder, and the paragraph [in my record] said something that I hadn’t even said. It said that I had had a really rough [academic term], and I actually hadn’t said that. And… the whole paragraph said “she.” This was a couple of months ago. “She, she, she, she.” And I said to my physical therapist, I was like, “You have got to be fucking kidding me!”

This is another example of resistance to appropriately documenting a trans person’s identity in official records. Besides incorrectly using pronouns, this medical staff person also created a narrative for what the patient was going through that did not align with what the patient had actually said.

Another student expressed concern with how medical providers serve trans people, particularly when some health services are targeted to one gender or another. He voiced that, even when someone is undergoing transition from a female to male identity, they may still need to seek medical care that is directed towards women:

**P:** If we don’t let F to M’s come in [to a women’s clinic]…for their pap smears and all that, that they need to have and breast exams and all that. I understand it’s uncomfortable to have someone like me, full beard, in a waiting room, I could understand that. You think I’m a freak, you think I’m a perv. I can respect that. But at the same time, if you really got to know me, you’d understand that I’m no different than anyone else. I just want to live life, just like anyone else. It’s not my fault that the plumbing was not assigned properly. So that’s a problem.
On-campus health care providers that primarily serve one gender group should anticipate the possibility that they may have some patients who either do not “look” to be that gender or do not identify as that gender, but still will need medical care from them.

There were also some stories shared of how on-campus health care systems and settings were responsive to the lives of transgender and gender non-conforming people, were willing to change names and gender labels in patient files and in one-to-one interactions, and were committed to respecting and honoring a person’s gender identity. Some participants noted examples of health providers, including mental health services, who had intake forms that allowed patients to specify gender identities other than man and woman. One student talked about a particularly supportive person at the campus health center who both checked in with the student about finding an appropriate waiting room and was an advocate for making sure the rest of the staff know how to address him and to note his gender identity on his medical records:

P: I went in [to the campus health center]… and [this doctor] even said she still is having a little bit of issue with gendered words like “You go girl!” or something like that. But she, as soon as she says anything like that [to me], she’s like, “Oh sorry, I work at the [women’s health center], I don’t have male patients, it’s just my habit.” And I’m like, “Don’t worry about it, I know.” But other than that, totally awesome…she even went through logistics. “If you don’t want to wait in the women’s waiting room, we’ll find another room for you…We will work with you on this.” She’s very respectful about everything…And she’s been working on other things in my file. Like she put on a specific flag and stuff that says I’m trans, so extra care with my file. And I don’t know if this is her working with the desk or not, but the reception desk and the nurse…all of them just kind of know [about my gender identity]… They just wrote in pencil my name on my file because they can’t change it legally and it has to be my name, which is tied to the [registrar] which has to be my legal name. But they have it written in pencil, so they know who I am when I call, when they check me in they know… they know how to code it [for billing purposes] … They, in person can talk about what [my identity] is, but they also know how to code it so it’s not gonna affect me in the future or anything like that.
This is an instance of where the medical provider was aware of limitations within the institution with recognizing non-binary and changing gender identities (such as a waiting room that is typically gender-segregated and an inability to permanently change patient names without a legal name change), but she is willing to advocate for the patient and work around these barriers to ensure that he receives competent, respectful medical care as a transgender patient.

**Theme Two: Gender non-conformity is punished.** This theme incorporates the ways in which campus systems used different forms of punishment to enforce the unstated, taken-for-granted gender "rules" that operate within most institutional settings—specifically, that everyone should fit into either man or woman categories and that everyone should express themselves in a way that matches cultural expectations for those categories. When people do not follow these gender rules, they were punished in various ways. These punishments may be: (a) social (public shaming, outing someone, questioning someone's name or pronouns, forcing a person to present as the wrong gender, repeatedly using the wrong pronouns); (b) academic (grading trans students more severely, refusing academic support, requiring trans students to produce IDs to "prove" their identity); (c) employment-related (not hiring or promoting someone, firing them, denying tenure, forcing a worker to present as the wrong gender, saying that discussions of transgender topics are "inappropriate" for the workplace); (d) financial (cutting funding or removing scholarships); (e) or denial of safe space and use of facilities appropriate to one's gender (not having access to bathrooms, locker rooms, residence halls, and athletic facilities or feeling unsafe in such existing spaces; being challenged in
these spaces by others). These punishments may or may not have been formally endorsed by a college (e.g., listed in policy), but they were still widespread. This theme included trans persons' genuine fears of punishment, even when this punishment did not occur.

In meeting to discuss the low Cohen’s κ value for this theme, the other coder and I discussed how to clarify the theme definition offered above. One issue that merited change was how I was defining negative cases—specifically, through this discussion, I realized that I had not explicitly stated that negative cases include instances when a participant discussed a lack of punishment on campus related to gender identity or gender expression, especially when an individual either frequently passed as cisgender or experienced little punishment for being transgender after coming out. Therefore, I added these components to the theme definition. After making this change, and through our discussion, the other coder and I came to agreement about which of the randomly selected quotations fit into this theme.

I will next review some examples of punishment of gender non-conformity in each of the areas of campus life identified in the definition above.

**Social punishments.** As indicated by the CTOC research participants, within a college environment, a transgender person’s sense of well-being was deeply connected to whether daily interactions with peers, staff, supervisors, students, faculty, and administrators were respectful, affirming, and welcoming. In many cases, the 30 individuals interviewed by CTOC discussed moments in which they had experienced public shaming, being outed, having their names or pronouns questioned by others, or interacting with people on campus who repeatedly kept using the wrong pronouns to
address them. These one-to-one interactions reflected something of the larger culture of the college or university and institutional policies about whether people who are transgender or gender non-conforming were valued members of the campus.

Public shaming was evidenced by stories of when others on campus would either verbally harass a transgender person due to their gender identity and gender expression or make public pronouncements indicating that transgender people as a group were immoral, perverse, pathological, or otherwise deserving of scorn, ridicule, social exclusion, and violence. One participant described such an incident within a classroom, where the professor was the initiator of social shaming:

**P:** So beforehand, [the professor] was talking about testosterone and its connection to sex drive. Then I spoke up and said, “As a transsexual, I think I have something to important to offer on this.” The professor responded with, “We always seem to have weird people in here.” Then, later in another class session, trans [issues] got brought up again. And the professor asked “Wouldn’t you feel like beating up your wife if she was once a man?” Students started agreeing and just expressing disgust about trans people, and the professor didn’t challenge it. I had to leave that space because it was so uncomfortable for me.26

Another individual described an interaction with a medical provider in the on-campus health center that indicated reactions of disgust after he came out:

**P:** So, I remember, I think I had bronchitis or something, so I had to go in [to the on-campus health center], and…[the health provider said], “So, you’re on testosterone and you have had a double mastectomy?” And I was like, “I’m transgender.” She’s like, “What’s that?” So I had to explain that…and she just kept making all these expressions of kind of shock and disgust and making me repeat things, and saying, “Well, I don’t really understand.”… And I was like, I finally got through it, and was like, “Okay, can you listen to my lungs now?”

---

26 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
In this instance, the health care provider was not only responding with shock and disgust, but also repeatedly questioning the student to gain more information instead of focusing on the medical issue for which the student was actually seeking help—bronchitis.

Another pattern of social punishment impacting participants was being “outed” on campus without their permission. The decision to be “out” in any setting is a highly personal decision; being “out” as transgender is something that should not be taken lightly due to the propensity for victimization and shaming as described above, as well as the likelihood of tokenization (being seen as “the transgender person” on campus) and inappropriate questioning from others. Despite this reality, the 30 participants interviewed described numerous circumstances where other people—colleagues, students, supervisors, faculty, etc.—regularly “outed” them on campus without their permission.

One such example was provided by a faculty participant:

**P:** I found out through a basic conversation that the human resources person in the [department] had been outing me to employees…This is before I started hormones and [was] …kind of ambiguous, and people would ask her if I was a he or a she. And she would tell them, but then she would explain why…So I was very upset when I heard about that…I went and told my boss, who said that this person was just trying to be helpful and she didn’t mean anything by it. And I’m like, “I don’t care if she didn’t mean anything by it, it’s still violating my confidentiality and my privacy.” And, so, I went to [multicultural student services office] ..and we wound up having a conversation with [human resources staff person] from…University Human Resources. This co-worker of mine, [staff of multicultural campus organization], and me were there and we made it really clear that if people ask me if I’m male or female, she can say male, but she should really end, she should end her response at that. And she felt very bad. It was ironic because she really wants, she said she really wanted to be an ally for me on campus. And I was like, “Well, look, you’re kind of not going about this the right way.”

In this example, the person who was publicly outing the faculty member did not mean to cause harm, and, in fact, wanted to be an ally to trans people. However, she was causing
distress for this individual by publicly disclosing his transgender status to his work colleagues without his permission.

Another common form of social punishment that was described by participants was when individuals on campus would question a person’s name or pronouns—in essence, challenging whether the transgender person was telling people their “true” name and identity. Such actions both communicate a sense of distrust of transgender people and indicate that they are in some way trying to be gender imposters by changing their gender and/or name in contradiction to their original sex and name assigned at birth. Questioning a person’s name and pronouns also occurred when others “misread” a person’s gender based upon their appearance—for example, if a masculine-appearing person used a feminine-sounding name. One example of such a circumstance was provided by a student:

P: So, my professor…she’s handing tests back at the end of class, and she calls names out, which is my absolute worst nightmare: instructors who like to stand at the front of the stadium and call each individual person’s name out and have them walk down the stadium stairs and take your paper and walk back to your desk. So she, it’s our first test, she decides she wants to call out names. And I’m ready…so that I can just grab my paper and just get out, not deal with it. Totally feeling anxious. She calls my name, I walk up…and I reach for my paper, and she says, “No, [participant’s first name].” And I say, “Yeah, that’s me.”…And she says, “No, you’re not, you’re not [participant’s first name]”…And at that point, I rip my paper out of her hand, and I just walked out of the room. And…she’s calling after me, she’s trying to stop me because…I’m some nut case who’s running off with somebody’s paper…And then she gives up and she says…“Oh, pffft! Whatever!” And then you hear students laughing, which is usually how interactions like that go down—they’re very public interactions in front of the entire classroom, all of my classmates, and then I’m just a big joke to everybody—just that weirdo that nobody can figure out. That guy named [female-sounding first name]…I’m just that weird guy named [first name].

Another student spoke to how people will rarely believe zir when ze tells them zir name, particularly because zir name is gender-neutral:
P: Whenever I introduce myself… there have been very few [cases] where people just…accept the fact that my name is [preferred name] because I said so…People will always kind of say like, “Oh, is that short for something?” or you know like, “How do you spell that?” or “What’s the deal with that?”… I’m always afraid that people are going to think that I’m just trying to be like, like, “My name is [preferred name],” like I just am [a neo-hippie saying], “Man, you know like, names are so blasé, and I just I’m going to be a letter.” I think that’s part of it. I think that’s fun, but that’s not why I’m doing it…I also don’t want to have to explain every time it’s a gender-neutral name and this is why I’m doing it because I don’t feel that I should have to.

Other participants described circumstances where they felt pressure to present as a certain gender on campus in order to stay safe, be respected, or be taken seriously by others:

P: I mean, after a while, it became that I was just not comfortable presenting as female … A lot of it is just reacting to kind of the institutional [responses to who I am]. It’s bullshit. I don’t know, but never specifically being forced by anyone in particular. [Interviewer: But like you were saying, it sounds like the way you were treated and they way the institution responded to you really has resulted in this?] Yeah. So, yeah….I don’t really feel safe presenting [as female].

Another participant noted:

P: I don’t know that I am forced to present as the wrong gender, but certainly I feel like if I presented as a binary gender that I would have more credibility on campus. And so, for me that often feels like being forced to choose…For me, it's amazing when I [wear] dress pants and a shirt and tie how I get treated in contrast to wearing jeans or dress pants and my black sweater Lane Bryant. Like, I get more airtime if I wear the sweater than I do if I wear a shirt and tie. So I don't know I, I don't know about forced, I think, I don't know.

Finally, another form of social punishment was when people repeatedly used the wrong pronouns in addressing transgender and gender non-conforming people on campus, even when they had been repeatedly instructed to do otherwise. Participants sometimes attributed this to the learning curve necessary for others to use new pronouns for them, while at other times they believed these actions were done purposefully, with the intent to offend the transgender person. Some examples are provided in Table 5.5, compared
alongside information about the person’s gender identity and preferred pronouns. Further
detail about pronoun misuse is provided in Chapter Six.

Table 5.5
Punishment of Gender Non-conformity: Social Punishments – Repeatedly Using
Incorrect Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Identity (Pronouns)</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTM / trans masculine (he/him)</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> What matters is the fact that when they’re talking about my [art product in class] they need to say <em>his</em> [art product], not <em>her</em> [art product]. And in fact, when I did come out through [artwork] in one of my classes, and my teacher kept calling me <em>she</em> even after this [art product], I had the word ‘he’ in huge letters on the screen and they still didn’t get it. But everyone else in the class got it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-binary identity (ze/zir or mixed pronouns)</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I think refusal to use pronouns, preferred pronouns is also very true in my life here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A special note to make here is that multiple participants discussed instances where their other identities played a role in whether and how they were subjected to social punishments for gender non-conformity. Some participants shared examples of situations where, as part of people’s negative reactions to their gender identity and gender expression, they were subjected to teasing or harassment based on the assumption that they were gay or lesbian. Examples of the way that intersectionality of identities played into social punishments are detailed in Table 5.6
Table 5.6  
*Punishment of Gender Non-Conformity: Social Punishments – The Role of Intersectionality*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes about Intersectionality</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of White privilege in the overall campus culture</td>
<td>P: I think there’s just kind of a culture of kind of being afraid to express that one is trans outside of the GLBT community because of how hostile this campus is… I mean it’s not exactly saying it’s all bad or that it’s terrible. It’s just seeing this campus is majority white and kind of relatively privileged and most of the comments that I have heard are from white people that I would code as White jock types… Yeah, it makes for being really tentative [about being out].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflation of gender expression and sexual orientation</td>
<td>P: When I first started going to school there, I had a Mohawk and looked way more, I guess, androgynous or what not… I only had maybe two incidences where people… said rude things, like one time a dude just walked past me and said, just was like “Lesbian”… And then I had, another situation where there was there’s a pretty high military presence on the campus… [and a group of military people walked] past me and this guy kept turning around and staring at me and staring at me and then he was whispering to one of his colleagues or whatever and was like, “That girl’s definitely a lesbian” and you could just tell he had this energy towards me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of privilege – male privilege, White privilege Targeting “visibly queer women”</td>
<td>P: And then I would just say that it progressively got worse, depending on the classes that I was taking, because when you start taking classes that are the core requirement classes, like the science ones or sort of the 500-people lecture ones or even some of the smaller classes, basically you end up, there’s… a lot of privilege around class, ethnicity, everything on this campus, and a lot a lot of male privilege and men taking up space in the classroom, both physically and verbally. So… I ended up in classes where … I felt like a visibly queer woman, I always felt kind of uncomfortable because particularly the frat boys would always give me those looks and whisper and nudge because I think that they find queer women or butch-looking women threatening. And then, as I started to transition, it kind of got worse because it would be more confusing for people and I was looking even more androgynous. And… with the frat guys there’s just this major culture of taking over the classroom, taking up all the space, making fun of people, not paying attention, and just being really disruptive to the learning environment as well. And they totally get away with it, and they get away with saying homophobic, a couple of times transphobic, sexist, they just, they get away with saying whatever they want, and it’s really fucked up. And sometimes it’s even been in [gender-focused] classes or [department] classes where you would expect someone to call them on it, and they don’t. And even just plain old sexist stuff that has nothing to do with queer stuff, so. Just, I would say, every [term] I got more and more uncomfortable, ‘cause it’s just</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of where someone is in gender transition process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the more and more that you are stuck in new groups of people, the more you meet more assholes, basically.

Transphobia within the LGBTQ community

P: And actually sometimes I don’t come out to very visible lesbians because sometimes, particularly on the college campus, there's sort of this...butch-dyke pride, and there’s so much resistance against trans guys that I’m like, “I’m just going to let you think I’m gay or bi or something because I don’t want to get into this, like, that thing of ‘Why’d you transition? You’re a traitor!’ That kind of thing, so. So it’s mostly a situational, people-to-people, but... I don’t out myself, like when people...they’re not usually grown-up enough to say, “Is it okay for me to ask how you identify?” They’re just more like, “So, are you GAY?” kind of thing. And I’m usually just like, “No, I’m bi.” Because people will usually hear in some conversation that I have a girlfriend, and that always brings them to question legitimacy, and I’d rather take the heat you take for being bi than being trans.

[Interviewer: Do you identify as bi? Or is that what you just tell people?]

P: I didn’t when this all started. It was just like this is what I’ll tell people...And so, at first, that was kind of a bit of a lie, which is not something that I do, but definitely felt like...an emotional safety thing that I had to do.

Role of educational / class privilege in refusal to use gender neutral pronouns

P: There’s a lot of people who just don’t use the right pronouns after being asked repeatedly, and I think it’s just because it’s hard, not because in their head they’re saying they refuse...I think it comes from a belief that, in using gender-neutral pronouns, I think everyone should use gender-neutral pronouns, and I don’t believe that at all. The example that was actually given to me by a professor was, “If you say he raped her, you know that there’s a power relationship there. That’s something that we can work with in society to challenge gender-based oppression, right? But if you say ze raped ze, you have no idea what that power relationship is, and you destroy any chance of challenging sex- or gender-based oppression, harassment, discrimination, all these sorts of things.” And so basically that I was making the category of gender null...And therefore [this professor refused] to use gender-neutral pronouns... I think that she sees that as a way of also challenging me in the same way that I’m challenging her. And then at some point are you really discriminating against me? Well, yeah, you kind of are, but you’re doing it in this really academic way...I mean there’s a lot of class privilege tied into that, too, like, fine, tell me because I’m sitting in your classroom and you want to challenge me academically, but don’t tell my friend that’s a trans sex worker, “Ahhh, you can’t do that.” That’s wrapped in this privilege.

Academic punishments. Another form of punishment experienced by those interviewed was sanctions related to academics. This issue is particularly of concern for
students, since their success on campus is tied to evaluations by their professors and academic advisors. The most common types of academic punishments reported included being graded more severely due to identifying as transgender and/or appearing to be gender non-conforming, and being required to produce an ID card to “prove” one’s identity in order to turn in tests and papers or receive support from staff and faculty, even though IDs were not required of cisgender students.

For example, one student, who identified as a genderqueer woman but was frequently read by others as a man, discussed a particular instance of having her identity questioned and being required to produce an ID card to take an exam:

**P:** And so I show up to take my test [at the professor’s office] and he’s got a student in his office… I walk in, and sit there to take my exam…And, [the professor] looks at me and he’s like, “Who are you?” and I said, “I’m [first name], we had e-mailed, you said I could come in and take my exam.” He said, “You’re not [first name].” And I said, “Yes, I am, actually. Here’s my ID,” right? Nip this in a bud, here’s my ID, it’s over. And he looks to the student and he says, “[First name]’s a girl’s name, isn’t it?...He’s not a woman…do you know him?” And the student’s like, “What?”…It was just a lot of back-and-forth, and me trying to, “Yes, I have my driver’s license as well as my student ID. I can call up my schedule on your computer.” And it just was this bargaining, bargaining to the point where I started to feel really frustrated and angry. I was already feeling really anxious about the exam… He finally gave in, but he made me sit in his office while he was talking to the student, and then afterwards he asked me to see my IDs again, actually made a copy of my student ID and stapled it to my test. I don’t know what he was trying to do, right, but in his mind, he still wasn’t convinced, and so he’s trying to accumulate a body of evidence, I guess, to come back to after the fact…But…that’s pretty typical—having interactions with professors who assume I’m a guy. I’m not. They’re flustered, frustrated, shocked, any number of emotions, and for some reason it comes out as negative stuff towards me.

Later on in her interview, this student pointed out that such an experience is the norm rather than the exception for her and reflects broader institutional patterns in which her identity is contested in a way that other students’ identities are not:
**P:** I pretty regularly have to show an ID to get things done, whether it’s accept an exam or turn in an exam or get back an exam, any number of things in places where other students…don’t have to prove their identity, which is really bizarre because it just seems to me that it would be a lot easier for somebody to pull something over on the system than a girl posing as a guy named [female-sounding first name]. I mean, it just seems so absurd! If you’re going look for somebody who’s cheating the system, why are you going to look to the person you think is a guy named [female-sounding first name] who’s trying to convince you that this is who they are, this is where they belong. So that’s something that I’m really, that I’ve been really aware of and feel a lot of resentment around—that I’m significantly more often put into a position having to prove myself just to gain access to the basics, where other students don’t. They don’t have to go through all that. You say you are who you are, and you get to take your exam or collect your exam.

Among the 30 participants interviewed for the CTOC study, there was a pattern that those who were frequently perceived by others on campus as transgender or gender non-conforming (regardless of how they actually identified) were the ones who tended to be at greatest risk for unequal treatment by professors and other academic staff. The important role played by the frequency of being perceived as transgender by others is discussed further later in this chapter in the section on mixed methods results. Another specific example of academic punishment was offered by a trans student who was studying the social sciences:

**P:** I had a [social sciences] class…and I was in the early stages of transitioning—I had had surgery… I was on hormones, but…I looked too androgynous. And I had the initials on the name, so I went up to the teacher and I said, “There’s a glitch in the registrar thing, so I’m just supposed to tell you that this is my first name, and here’s my last name, and it matches with my student number.” And… I don’t know what it was, I don’t know if … I seemed androgynous or I seemed gay, I’m not sure, but I think it was definitely related to gender presentation—he gave me really bad grades, and when I tried to talk to him about anything, office hours, whatever… I would show up to his office hours about a test, and he’d be helping all these other people, and then he’d be like, “Actually, I have to end my office hours early.” And, he was really strict about being late to class, which lots of professors are, but one time I was late to class by one minute and there was a test, and he was like, “Stand right there, and be an example for your classmates!” And sometimes professors do that, but not usually. And another person came in late,
and he let that guy go sit and take the test, and then he kicked me out…At the
time, some people were like, “You should really go forward with this. He was
singling you out either because how he perceived your gender or how he
perceived your sexual orientation.” And, I didn’t want to do it because… I am
afraid of ever saying anything about the things that go on here because I feel like
it will always come back to the student, like my name will be circulated around
and then I’ll be known as this troublemaker student who got a professor in trouble.

In this example, the student noticed ways that the professor was treating him differently,
and other students encouraged action to address the problem, yet the student faced a
tough decision about whether to bring forward claims of unfair treatment, with the
potential of being branded as a “troublemaker student” if he did so.

**Employment-related punishments.** Among the participants who were employed
on campus either full-time or part-time (some of whom were also students), there were
reports of employment-related punishment and mistreatment due to gender identity and
gender expression. Experiences ranged from being forced to present as more “masculine”
or “feminine” on the job and being fearful of retributions for a non-conforming gender
expression to being fired or not hired for a position. Examples of these different
experiences are provided in Table 5.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Punishment</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fired from employment</td>
<td>P: I was employed pre-transition and…never really had an issue…And then, the following year… I got a job at the little [location] in one of the halls. And I only worked there for two days before I was fired. And, I really should have reported it or something…And so this job that I got…I told the employer like, “One of my friends was employed by you for a very short time. They’ve probably told you that they’re transgender, I’m transgender as well, and I just need you to know that…this is what my application says, but this is what I’ll go by, please use this pronoun” …One day I’d had problems with my birth control, and I started my period at work and I was like, I need to go home, because this is not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
good, and I don’t have any supplies on me and I had twenty minutes left on my shift. So I’d been there six hours, had twenty minutes left on my shift, asked the manager, “Hey can I leave early? I need to, it’s a medical thing.” And they were just like, “Yeah, of course that’s fine.” …And then like a few days later…the head manager called me in and was like, “Okay, so there’s some issues with like your commitment to the job…You just up and left early one day.” And I was like, “It was twenty minutes early, I asked the manager.” She was like, “I don’t have record of that”…Instead of just saying, “It seems that you don’t have a good fit with the job,” she framed it as, “You know this [thing] that you’re going through with your life, it’s probably really stressful,” and she never outright said because you are a transgender…She’s a very nice person, but then when she was firing me, it was just, to me it sounded like her misperception of transition had given her the impression that I was just too stressed by it all. I mean, to me it seems like firing a woman because she’s like full of estrogen or something like that. It’s that same exact thing where, “Oh, well, you have this thing that just makes you stressed,” I mean, that’s the way it was phrased…She even said later on, “When you’re a little farther along, a little more well adjusted, we can talk about you coming back”…I feel like I could have done better as an employee, but at the same time, that reasoning [for being fired] was pretty plain, it was pretty obvious that it was because I was trans.

P: I had applied for a position here that I didn’t get, and in processing [with others]…I can’t rule out that my gender presentation wasn’t part of the reason I didn’t get the position. I think that the…lead decision maker was really uncomfortable with my gender and it was my understanding after the process that I was close to the unanimous choice of the search committee, but the [administrator] didn’t hire me, and so I remember having that thought in the interview because I definitely didn’t connect with him. It was just a one-on-one. We really met for about half an hour. I remember thinking like, “We’re not, we’re not connecting and I don’t know what’s going on here.” And so when I didn’t get it, in the processing…there’s a piece of it where I had that thought like, “Maybe he’s not ready to have someone be that visibly queer in his department and all that came with that.” …Someone who was on the search committee who I ended up staying in touch with followed back up with me and said, “I can’t rule out that it wasn’t around your gender.” When they said it, it was like, “Yeah, I can’t either”…and so that was affirming on the one hand because…I’ve never really sort of structurally thought how I look, it’s like the end-all thing…We often talk about people getting protection around not getting fired, but there’s also a piece within to where it would be protection around people not getting hired…When that person on the committee said that to me, I remember having a moment. I was like, “Well, do I fight this? Like do I bring it up? Do I push it?” You know, at this point Colorado had [an Employment Non-Discrimination Act], it’s like, “Do I raise a stink around it?”…But then it’s that crazy…there’s certainly no way to prove someone’s general discomfort
with someone else’s gender presentation…It just didn’t feel worth it to
me, but in hindsight I wish there was a way to have that conversation.

P: I was on the search committee for the [administrative position]…It
came down to two people. A gender conforming…White [man] and then
a gender non-conforming or genderqueer, White woman-identified
person… So, the search committee chose the genderqueer candidate and
the university went with the other person. It was perceived to a lot of
people on campus who were involved in the queer organizations that it
was very much a transphobic kind of decision, being like, “We don’t
want a gender queer person doing this and we’re not comfortable working
with her, we don’t want to do that.” …And even though gender identity
and gender expression is under the nondiscrimination policy, it’s very
much like, “We don’t really want to go there”. It just perpetuates the
White man in charge on the high levels of the University.

Feared reprimands on
the job for
having a non-
conforming
gender
expression

P: Well, I’ll be honest. When I first started [my faculty position], I was
really nervous about how I was gonna be perceived and so I let my hair
grow out a little bit because I was like, “Okay I don’t wanna do any shock
value.” And again this is my naïveté going into thinking… “Okay, I’m
sure long hair is gonna make me look so different.” [laughs]… I
definitely was trying to not be as butch as I felt comfortable with, or, I
hate that word, not as comfortable as who I am, and then as time went on
and I started to feel more comfortable with teaching. I was like, “I’m
doing myself an injustice and…the people an injustice,” so I was like,
“Well I’m going to dress the way I want to dress and I’m going to do my
hair how I want to do it and hopefully I don’t get fired.” I don’t know
why that was my mentality. Don’t know why, but I was kind of like,
okay, hopefully people aren’t like, “Oh, we liked it better when you were
kind of hidden.”…Like, “You still look like a big ol’ dyke, but you were
more hidden than now.” Because definitely now I want to feel more
comfortable. The only thing I haven’t done is like the binding? piece
at work, but I definitely wear what I am comfortable in now, which is
definitely more male-oriented in a sense. I cut my hair. Just feeling more
comfortable.

Gender identity
and gender
expression
invalidated by
work colleagues

P: On many days I feel like what I experience I get told is invalid.
“Well…we just aren't used to, you don't look like a guy…” There are
only so many times that I feel like I can say, “I need you really not to say,
‘Oh, you look like a girl today.’ Can you just not refer to me as a lady or
as a woman because that's not correct?” I don't have that much energy.
Because I'm still trying, I have my own job to do, and for me, that's a very
tenuous balancing act because if I get caught up in all this other stuff, I
won't be able to do my job… I feel like on most days I can't think about
my stuff around gender…at least not at work.

27 “Binding” here refers to the process of binding one’s chest, usually with some form of clothing or
bandages, to make the chest flatter and more masculine in appearance.
Told not to discuss topics related to trans awareness and sensitivity

P: [Another staff person and I] started working on [a Trans 101 workshop for my department], and it met with a lot of resistance from the [one administrator] and [other administrator] because they thought some of the topics that could come up were inappropriate for work. There was a handout about cisgender privilege and I think the first thing on it is, “People do not ask me what my genitals look like or how I have sex.” And the [one administrator] was like, “You can’t say that! No, we don’t talk about that here at work!”

These quotations demonstrate that there were many ways in which transgender and gender non-conforming people were punished on the job due to their gender not fitting into culturally dominant gender norms.

One faculty member noted how low his expectations are—that simply finding a job where the employer states a basic commitment to nondiscrimination and where he is not actively discriminated against is seen as very good, even though these are such basic expectations:

P: But [I] kept thinking that there are plenty of places that I couldn’t transition on the job. So, to be able to do so without any real reprisal is a good thing, is positive. And it kills me that I have to regard not being actively discriminated against at my job as a positive thing. “Thanks for not hating me. Thanks for not firing me this year.”…I mean the thing I want to emphasize again is that I feel fortunate to work at a university where there is at least lip service to the concept of not being discriminatory. And, so, of course I’m angry about the fact that I should feel grateful for that, because…it’s not much…For me, that’s one of the worst thing about being trans…that if someone treats you like a human being, it’s a pleasant surprise.

This final quote regarding employment drives home the point that transgender people can experience such regular disregard for their well-being that it becomes a “pleasant surprise” when others treat them as human beings.

Financial punishments. The interview protocol used within the CTOC study did not include specific structured questions about financial punishments that individuals may have experienced, such as reduction or denial of financial aid or scholarships or a
lower budget for organizations that included transgender-related programming.

Consequently, this theme was not as thoroughly discussed by participants as the other forms of punishments had been. However, this issue is explored more within the quantitative results in this chapter (logistic regression models on access to financial aid/scholarships). However, there was one participant who mentioned some concerns about how funding for the LGBTQ office on campus was controlled by the board of the university and could be withdrawn or reduced if those stakeholders viewed LGBTQ people on campus as being too outspoken:

P: I think with our [LGBTQ services] office...[there is] a double message: “Be visible, but don’t be too visible or else you’ll go away,” because the deal is...if the [board of the university] finds out about us, as if we don’t exist already, then they can potentially take us away because they’re governed by the state, which is governed by the governor, and I think part of the task group or the workgroup would be really soliciting board support and creating this strategic plan for state funding, of which there is no desire and no plan to create a strategic plan for state funding for [the LGBTQ] office because it would be contingent on the [board of the university] finding out, and I’m just sort of, like, “Really? If you got to do it with that so much secrecy, maybe you shouldn’t have it at all,” which is about the point I’m at right about now, which my students would probably have my head if they heard me say because I think it’s a catch twenty-two. Do you survive and be visible on campus and in really localized way, or do you become more public, potentially threatening your source of income, or your existence, and yet at the same time decidedly refuse to essentially live in the closet and perpetuate that kind of message to your students, staff, and faculty?

This person indicates that, even when LGBTQ offices and organizations on campus had funding, there was consistent pressure to “live in the closet” in order to maintain that funding, which kept such organizations more quiet and deferential to the university status quo rather than being public in a way that could potentially reach more people in need on campus.
Denial of safe space and use of gender-appropriate restrooms and other facilities on campus. Another way that transgender individuals were regularly punished for their gender non-conformity was by having a lack of safe spaces on campus, including being denied access to gender-appropriate restrooms, locker rooms, housing, and other facilities. This experience was reported across campuses of all sizes and by people in all campus roles (student, staff, faculty, or multiple roles). For some individuals, even if they tried to use on-campus gender-segregated facilities, they were challenged by colleagues, staff, campus police, security staff, or others who claimed the individual is in the “wrong” space for their gender. A number of the research participants said that they experienced extreme stress and anxiety in trying to locate and use gender-appropriate spaces on campus (or single-occupancy restrooms and changing rooms), leading some to avoid using restrooms or locker rooms while on campus or feeling that they have to go off-campus to find a safe space.

Table 5.8 includes quotations from participants about punishments related to accessing spaces on campus. Quotes are broken down by the individual’s gender identity and specific issues that are being noted in the quotations related to accessing space.

Table 5.8
Punishment of Gender Non-Conformity: Denial of Safe Space & Use of Gender-Appropriate Facilities on Campus According to Gender Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue of Note</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity: Genderqueer, trans, or otherwise non-binary</td>
<td>P: The main problem I have is…using the women’s bathroom because I always, have always been assumed as a male. When people first look at me and they don’t hear me talk, they assume I’m a male. And so it has always been awkward using the women’s bathroom. So now it’s just more awkward… I’ve been walking behind females into the restroom, and they’ll turn around and say,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioned or challenged by others about access to space</td>
<td>P: The main problem I have is…using the women’s bathroom because I always, have always been assumed as a male. When people first look at me and they don’t hear me talk, they assume I’m a male. And so it has always been awkward using the women’s bathroom. So now it’s just more awkward… I’ve been walking behind females into the restroom, and they’ll turn around and say,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“This is the women’s restroom.” And I’ll be like, “I know,” and as soon as they hear my voice, they’re like, “Oh I’m so sorry. Blah, blah, blah, blah,” and then it’s awkward for us all and so...

P: Another thing that happened was at the gym on campus, I wanted to get the locker room code so I could change and go to class not sweaty. And the guy I asked for the women’s code and he gave me the men’s code…I’m not comfortable going into the men’s room. I feel like that’s just someplace I don’t feel safe at all... So I went back there, and he was all, “Oh, you want the women’s code?” and he hesitated to give it to me. And I was like, “Okay, great”. Finally, I just walked away and got someone else at the gym to let me into the women’s locker room. That was like, “Great, I’m not going to come back here anymore.”

P: I think being challenged in restrooms definitely occurred a lot and definitely being looked at and being looked up and down being like, “You’re in the wrong bathroom”. Gender policing in the bathroom was a big one. Luckily, [department], in that building had one stall bathrooms and then my second year had the gender-neutral bathroom, which is always an easy way to not have to deal with that at all. I sought out the one-stall bathrooms on campus if I was in a building that had them.

Stress/anxiety in using gender-segregated spaces and finding safe space

[Interviewer: Have you had any concerns or problems in using restrooms on campus?]

P: Yeah… Every single time I go into a restroom, it’s like, "Damn it. Stupid, stupid. Damn it, damn it, damn it. Stupid.” But then, problems-wise, like no big problems. Like, often, I get the double-take… But I was, like, sweating bullets. I mean, it was just excruciating. Really excruciating...I was just trying not to look at anybody…I was trying to get out of there as soon as I could.

P: I didn’t feel safe because I was outings in the hall. I didn’t have safe restrooms… I just didn’t feel safe anywhere.

Gender Identity: Woman, trans feminine, or MTF

Confronting the message that trans women using women’s bathrooms are sexual predators

P: It’s an ongoing thing, especially when you get right-wing people involved that wanna like spread the fear, spread the lies— “Those trans women are sexual predators!”... And it always seem to be about, “Well, what about women’s safety?” It’s like, “The people that are really in danger are the trans people, not the non-trans people, okay?! They’re the ones that are really open for harassment and physical violence.” We always have to work to turn what they say on its head, which is what’s really going on, right? They wanna present the lies and twisted half truths. And we wanna go, “No, turn it over because that’s what’s really go on.” …It always feels like you gotta fight that rear-guard battle
Stress/anxiety in using gender-segregated spaces and finding safe space

P: If there weren’t gender-neutral bathrooms in the building where I teach, I think my level of anxiety coming into teach would be higher because it is a place, I would likely drink less knowing that I wouldn’t have access to a bathroom that I didn’t have to deal with, if that makes sense… I mean it’s definitely a consideration I often make in picking my battles, and it’s like, “How badly do I have to pee?” and if I don’t have to pee that bad, then I won’t go in because it often, unless I have a bathroom buddy or someone that I can go in with or talk to as I walk in. And there’s even been the experience sometimes of, even after I talk, I’m still gendered as male, so that’s always, I think that’s just how strong people need to see cues of what feminine is… Typically my strategy is like: in the door, into the bathroom, don’t look up, wash my hands, leave, but if someone’s there, I make eye contact, and I’m like the friendliest person ever. So indicate “I’m safe. I’m a woman. I’m not going to hurt you.”

Gender Identity: Man, trans masculine, or FTM

P: I mean sometimes the [recreation center] is s big one. I don’t feel, it’s nothing personal, it’s just the way it’s set up. Luckily I did find the [gender] neutral locker room, but before that, if I ever went swimming or anything like that, I wouldn’t even use the locker room because I didn’t want anyone to stare at me or ask me to leave because I would, I just wouldn’t even be able to go in the other one. So I would have had to just leave the center in general.

Gender Identity: Combination of other identity categories

P: I go to the gym to work it out, and I’m also paying for it through my student fees, I should be able to use it. [laughs] But I know that I could never get away with going into a girls’ locker room without just all kinds of messes, and I can only anticipate, based on previous experiences— everything from just other women feeling uncomfortable and annoyed, sometimes angry, to reporting me and having management or staff [laughs] come in, and then, and sometimes even security or law enforcement. So just thinking about all of that is just too much, and I decided to default to the men’s’ locker room… It was an incredibly scary experience the very first time I went in there… I remember being really intimidated walking into the locker room and at the same time realizing that I had to play it cool if I’m going to pull off the whole “guy thing.” …So I walk in, and it’s your standard locker room: it’s a big open shower room with individual heads, and so I use the men’s locker room, and I shower. It was an experience early on, trying to orchestrate the whole thing and figure out how I was
going to pull it off, but I’ve done it… I still always have this incredible fear that somebody’s going to catch on, or somebody’s going to notice something, and all I’ve got is my towel wrapped around my waist… If somebody gets upset or tries to do something, what am I going to do? [laughs]… So not only do I have individual people to contend with if something happens, but then, just more of the fallout, I can just imagine—people, staff running in, the police getting called, and all kinds of messes to sort out… But at the end of the day, I don’t feel like I should have to do any of that. I almost always feel a little bit scared, I’m always anxious, I’m always nervous as I’m walking around through the locker room with my little towel on to the shower. That’s… a really basic example, but it feels really big.

Actively removed from spaces based upon gender

P: And then other things like I have been pulled out of restrooms by security at campus events.

The degree to which one is “read” as one’s gender identity and holds other visible privileged identities. Two important factors in relation to experiences of punishment are the degree to which a person is perceived to be their gender identity (or as cisgender) and/or holds other visible privileges, such as being perceived as White, middle or upper-middle class, or able-bodied. Table 5.9 includes example quotes that indicate that these aspects of identity can often protect someone from the more severe forms of interpersonal and structural punishments on campus. These quotes are organized according to the types of punishment (e.g., social, academic, etc.). More results related to the intersectionality of identities are presented later in this chapter in the section on mixed data results.

Table 5.9
Punishment of Gender Non-Conformity: The Role of Being “Read” as One’s Gender & Holding Visible Privileged Identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Punishment</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>P: I always see it as maybe I’m still not passing yet, which is probably a problem…Just because the fact that I’m in, since [university] is so big, it’s…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

173
mostly big lectures, big lectures I can disappear in... But my [humanities discipline] classes are where it’s a big issue, and it’s becoming an even bigger issue, where it’s just not paying attention to pronouns at all. And like, I lean over and tell someone two times today, I said, “For future reference, it’s he, not she.” And they were like, “Oh I know, I’m sorry.” And they still mess it up…. Because last [term] when there was a kid, I told him several times, “I’m a guy, call me he.” He ended up, he kept calling me she, he kept referring to the fact that we were two girls and a guy in this group...Then one week he ended up calling me ‘it’. Yeah. I was just like, it was to the point where I’m like, “It’s the end of the [term], you are just that much of a bigot that you can’t you can’t get that through your head that a guy might be a guy, sorry that I don’t look like one, but there’s probably plenty of cisgendered guys that don’t quite look like guys.”

P: I think it’s very respectful. People in class think I’m a guy. Only the teacher knows my real name, so I don’t think they really discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity... Right now I’m just really comfortable with my campus. If I wasn’t on testosterone, it would probably be a lot different-people might use “she,” so it would be a lot worse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment-related</th>
<th>P: I’ve never really had any serious problems with anybody messing with me, harassing me, I’ve made a couple of complaints but they haven’t been a big deal, really. So, and maybe that’s because I work at [department] and [professionals in this department] tend to be sort of open-minded people, I think. So, I don’t know. And part of it too is that I pass really well. If I did my voice up here [speaks in higher voice], nobody knows the difference, they just think I’m a girl. So, I pass like 99% of the time. It’s just not really a problem for me. If I was more visibly trans, as we say, it might be a bigger problem. But because I’m not outwardly marked as trans, they just don’t even know. That’s going to cut down, I would think, on the pool of unpleasantness.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>P: I was able to get a job on campus, but I’m not sure if other people, particularly those who are visibly trans, what their chances are, what the outlook for people looking for employment on campus is. I just don’t really know. With trans men, it’s probably easier because they just pass so well. You get a beard and you’re just a guy. After a few months, they’ve got a beard after they’ve started testosterone. I think with trans men, because they pass so incredibly well that, within the interview situations, the interviewer probably wouldn’t even know. But with... trans women, it’s a dicey-er proposition, the whole passing thing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
because I speak well, I think it's because I look… I think it's because I have some sort of an aesthetic zone that people find nice or right or good or whatever. Definitely light skin… I'm sure it has to do with all those things…. I can pull off signaling enough middle, upper-middle class cues so that my queerness isn't also a class out of sync. So, I'm just… managing to capitalize on all these other privileged things to just counterbalance the queerness. And…I think it's all of them. I think it takes the weight of all those other things to balance it out. And any, if any one of them, if I spoke English less well, that would make it much more troublesome. If I was, if I was bigger. If I was, I actually even think if I was less feminine in a man's suit, it would be problematic. It's just a bizarre, a bizarre matrix, but… And I, being in the position of wielding those privileges, I think, but also not being entirely privileged helps me see how the wielding of them… And it is, it's for real, and it's serious powerful shit for real.

Denial of safe space & use of appropriate facilities

P: Part of it is that I pass really well so that nobody bats an eye at me when I go into the women’s bathroom. It’s just like, I mean it doesn’t even register with them. It doesn’t set off their radar at all. It’s just another woman coming in to take a pee.

P: Before I had really been transitioning, on hormones or living full-time as trans, I once had a barrette in my hair and I went into a men’s restroom. A guy in there laughed at me. That was really the one harassment experience in bathrooms… but I also “hit the genetic lottery” in a lot of ways and no one typically challenges me. 29

P: Safety is something that I really haven’t been too worried about. Earlier in my transition I was, but at this point I’m not going to get beat up in a men’s room. It’s just not going to happen, because no guy is going to notice that I don’t have a penis unless he’s looking…

Punishment of gender non-conformity: Negative case examples. Not every individual interviewed said that they experienced punishment for gender non-conformity. Further, other participants said they experienced punishments some of the time, in some campus settings, but also discussed instances where people on campus took it upon themselves to welcome and affirm them, to challenge bigenderism and transphobia, to hire and support trans employees, and to create facilities that reflect non-binary systems.

29 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes. Verbatim quotes are noted with quotation marks.

175
of gender, such as gender-neutral (open to people of any gender) bathrooms and locker rooms. Examples of such negative case examples are provided in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10
Punishment of Gender Non-Conformity: Negative Case Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Campus Life</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>P: Really to my surprise and delight…this was a, more than just an accepting campus. People really went out of their way to, they, people called me and talked to me about it and have just been amazingly supportive, and in fact have I think as a result sort of sought me out around certain issues to help advise about different issues with gender, gender expression on campus. So, yeah, the experience has been amazing. It’s been really, really wonderful, actually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>P: And I worked with [student health organization]…They actually had a form to check off transgender, and my boss already knew [I was trans], but so I checked off transgender, and I didn’t even realize that two of the people that I’d been working with and would continue to work with read that. So they didn’t say anything for awhile, and they were totally, of course they were girls, they were totally fine, and at some point I just, I said something about it to them, and they were like, “It doesn’t matter at all! You’re awesome and we love you and it’s great.” And they never even think about it and they didn’t have any trouble with pronouns. And, I would only, I would talk to them once I felt comfortable, and then they were always very supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: I interviewed with the person who was my supervisor. He was the one that made the call on who to hire, and he hired me. And it was pretty clear…I was still sort of visibly trans at the time, but that didn’t really matter to him. He just thought I was competent, had the competencies for this position…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: The student that I had working for me… He wasn’t taking hormones, and he wasn’t always read by people as male. He was actually frequently read that he was female. He was pretty comfortable with that. He would just sort of brush it off…The other student employees, they at first were very puzzled by this because they perceived that there was a different gender than the pronoun that was being used and they couldn’t make sense of it. …So, what I observed was that, without me ever having to do much, they started taking on the sort of pronoun defense. They would correct visitors to our office if they used the wrong pronoun or whatever. Kind of on their own, they sort of worked all of that out themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Academic            | P: I took a [gender-related class in the social sciences] last [term] and one of the assignments… [was] basically like a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation...
presentation, and [the professor] gave a list of questions about your own personal gender—so how were you raised, what religious traditions were you raised in, how do you express, how do you identify, things like that, and I ended up going on for like about 40 or 45 minutes and I was a little concerned. I already had a good relationship with the teacher, but I was concerned that she was going to deduct me for going over [the time limit]…People were just popping up with questions left and right. I was very frank with my presentation and talking about like my sexual orientation and my gender and my whole history, and I shared a montage of pictures of how my facial hair and my body has changed over the years and had a great round of applause and a bunch of people just had incredibly overwhelmingly positive comments. People wouldn’t even be asking questions, they’d just be raising their hand to say like, “I just learned so much, thank you so much for sharing.” I had one woman, who’s in her 40s…who came up to me afterwards and she said, “I’ve learned more in your 40 minutes than I have out of all the lectures that [the professor has] done so far.” I mean that was so valuable, and it made me really happy… I’ve really had positive experiences at [college].

[Interviewer: Are there any other groups or organizations that you know of that really foster that inclusiveness in terms of gender?]

P: …I think they all do, I mean…I think all departments do… I think the entire [university] does that… For an example, if …somebody who like looks like a female were to look like a male…another day, there wouldn’t be any, I fully believe there would be no effect on that change, on the way that they’re treated…on their grade, on sitting in class, there’s a lot of self-expression in all sorts or way and so there can be a day that somebody comes to class and they’re dressed all in blue cause they’re really trying to explore their blue energy. Then they can come the next day like all in green. And they’re not looked upon any different than somebody who just wears purple clothing. So there’s a lot of self-expression in the school…and then I don’t think gender is separate from that.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to Gender-Appropriate Facilities / Creation of Gender-Inclusive Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P: The [recreation center], they are the only recreation center that I know who has put for every pair of gendered bathrooms a gender inclusive restroom, as well as gender-inclusive locker rooms -- and not at my behest, but at the [administrator’s]… And so I think that that kind of leadership and I would say that actually [administrator] is actually part of my support network, like, I could pretty much go to her I think with anything… She’s amazing because she was just like, “This is the right thing to do,” and I’m like… “I’m right there with you”…I’ve never heard of another recreation center in the country having both gender-inclusive locker rooms and restrooms, and so that makes me extraordinarily happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: So I went into the housing office, and got a name of someone to speak to, it was [housing office staff]. And I said, “Here’s the deal, I’m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
transgender I’m wondering if there’s a way I can get a single in this building?” And he was like, “Of course!” “You don’t even need a letter from a therapist? You don’t need to prove this?” He was like, “No, no, no, I totally trust you. I totally understand, we’re here to help you.” So he let me do paper application to get it in first priority...he had all the floor plans because they were redoing it. And he even laid it on his desk and was like, “Here are all the singles, you get to pick whichever one you want,” really awesome with it... All the other floors were single sex, but they put me on the coed one, I had my own bathroom, I didn’t have any worries. It was the most stress-free living situation I could have imagined.

P: At our campus...generally, regardless of how a person presents, that person can go to any bathroom. Security could say something, but they can’t give you a ticket.

Theme Three: The gender binary is privileged. The third qualitative theme that responds to Research Question One reflects the ways that beliefs in a binary gender system (man/woman, no fluidity or change in a person’s gender) are normalized, unquestioned, and privileged within a college institution, including how policies and procedures support the oppression of transgender and gender non-conforming people. This privilege is reflected in: (a) the ways that LGBTQ and other campus organizations that focus on the LGBTQ community privilege the "LGB" and give less time and attention to transgender topics and people; (b) the lack of expertise on gender fluidity/variance among faculty, staff, and health care providers; (c) practices that "blame" an individual’s problems on that person’s transgender identity; (d) practices that rely on trans people to "educate" cisgender people on trans experience (tokenization), particularly in terms of being asked to speak for all trans people or about highly personal questions about one’s body, transitions, or medical/surgical treatments; (e) expectations that trans people must "out" themselves in order to get trans content discussed or for transphobia to be confronted; (f) practices and curricula that focus on only two genders or
don't sensitively acknowledge identity differences; and (h) practices that give cisgender people the opportunity to "opt out" of transgender-related trainings.

Of note, following the discussion among coders about inter-rater reliability for this theme, I edited the above definition to include mention of what tokenization looks like in practice. This content was added because the coders initially interpreted tokenization differently and a more precise explication was needed.

Privileging the gender binary: LGBTQ campus organizations, offices and programs privilege the “LGB” and give less time and attention to transgender topics and people. One way in which participants expressed a privileging of the gender binary was within the LGBTQ community on campus. Numerous participants spoke of circumstances where transgender people were made to feel unwelcome or put on the spot in such settings, where transgender topics were not discussed (or, if they were, were done in an insensitive and stigmatizing manner), and where there was a general lack of knowledge about issues confronting trans and gender non-conforming people. Example quotations are detailed in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11
Privileging the Gender Binary: LGBTQ Campus Organizations, Offices, and Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> There’s not a lot of support from the [LGBTQ student services office] [for trans students]. Last year they-- or last [term], they did have a support group…but this [term] it’s rolled into their lesbian/gay coming out support group… I haven’t heard of any speakers in the last three years that have dealt with [trans issues]… It’s not that [the LGBTQ services office] would be unwelcoming, it’s just that their lack of focus on trans issues is what I find disappointing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **P:** One of my initial experiences actually with [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] was really negative…We had our introductions, and we kind of introduced ourselves and who we were, and I said something about being trans, and at the end of the meeting someone comes up and I think they were well intentioned, but [they said] something like, “We’ve never had to deal with any trans issues. We don’t know anything about it, and we’re glad you’re here so you
can teach us,” or something like that…so I was immediately stepping into space of educator even in queer-identified spaces.

P: The fact that there’s some transphobia in the [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] on campus. It doesn’t really surprise me, it just sort of disappoints me or saddens me. It doesn’t surprise me because I know there’s lots of transphobia in the GLBT community as a whole. Look at the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, where trans women are excluded by policy. I just get really tired of people that ought to know better and not act so stupid…I don’t need someone telling me who I am. I’m a woman. Yes, I’m a trans woman, but I am a woman, and I don’t appreciate other people telling me who I am or who I’m not. It feels to me like it’s an issue of self-determination for trans people. We’ll decide who we are, thank you very much. It’s more like disappointment than it is shock or surprise.

P: Being excluded, yeah, felt kind of excluded from I don’t know just the [LGBTQ student organization] at times. Just from getting support from all sorts of campus-related groups.

P: I went to some [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] events, but I’m not really involved with it… I’m sort of like an inactive member. I will attend events, but not really plan them or go to meetings. I don’t go because I don’t like the feeling “like I’m talking against a wall to people who won’t really listen.” There are lots of trans people in the group, but they don’t go to meetings. They tend to fall out quickly. Especially if they’re a straight trans person, like me… I almost feel alien to this kind of organization because it doesn’t deal with my identities.

P: We’re very far along on GLB issues in general, and trans issues have been also getting a lot of attention and a lot of work, but I don’t think that the GLBT community necessarily has focused in as much as it could on the trans issues even…though I actually think [staff of LGBTQ student services office] is very intentional about it, she works very hard on that. But, there’s a ways to go. And understanding the issues as separate from those of the GLB community makes a difference, and I think we have a lot to go in terms of getting people to understand the difference in sets of issues.

P: We have a [LGBTQ-specific campus organization]. It isn’t really trans-inclusive, though. Our office has been trying to help them address it, and even reconsidering their name, since [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] is already not sounding like it includes trans people…They focus mostly on sexual orientation… which is fine, but if that’s the case they should advertise clearly about that.

[Interviewer: Do you feel like they acknowledge that they focus mainly on sexual orientation and exclude trans issues?]

P: They seem to acknowledge it, but the students don’t really seem to care about trans issues. We have been trying to involve them in the Trans Day of Remembrance… well, in all honesty, the [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] did only form a year and a half ago, so it’s fairly new to our campus. Their officers do come to our [LGBTQ student services office], and there also has been some movement among trans individuals, maybe one or two people, who do go

30 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes. Verbatim quotes are noted with quotation marks.
to the group to try to improve it. But I think the trans folks who do try to get involved pretty soon drop away because the group doesn’t really cover relevant stuff for us.\(^{31}\)

As one of the participants quoted above noted, the patterns of transphobia, lack of knowledge, and lack of trans-related content within campus LGBTQ programs and organizations reflects similar patterns that have occurred historically and currently in the LGBTQ community-at-large. Another participant spoke specifically to the tension within the LGBTQ community in terms of desiring to demonstrate joint advocacy across the community with an acknowledgement that sometimes work for transgender people may need to happen separately from that of gay men and lesbians:

P: We’ve been using the acronym LGBT for a long time. The B and the T are oftentimes silent in that acronym, and so I think one of the questions for campuses to consider is do we need to do our trans work with our gay and lesbian communities or is it time to start doing some separate work? And if we do have to do separate work, how can we be transparent, but also maintain those bridges? And I think I see it on this campus too…people think because they’re very much on board with gay and lesbian issues, for example, that they automatically understand trans issues. And a lot of times gay and lesbian communities themselves have become pretty invested in the process of trans exclusion. That’s not an across the board statement, but it’s happening in some places, right?... And so I think we need to be a little more intentional about making a decision…We just need to be transparent about it and we need to stop using that acronym if we don’t mean it. And if we don’t mean it, I think that that can actually be okay, but we just have to be transparent about it and we have to stop pretending.

This person’s thoughts prompt a broader consideration of when and where it makes sense to offer joint programming for LGB and transgender people on campus and when it makes sense to do separate work.

*Privileging the gender binary: The lack of expertise on gender fluidity and gender variance among faculty, staff, and health care providers.* A second general pattern was the sheer lack of people on university campuses in Colorado who had

\(^{31}\) This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
expertise in working with, supporting, and advocating for the transgender community.

This lack of expertise spanned faculty across all divisions, student affairs staff, people working in offices related to diversity, and others who regularly field questions about campus resources. Participants noted that this was sometimes in contrast to their expectations when they first arrived on campus; others expressed shock that there was not just ignorance but actually resistance to further education among campus staff who were supposed to be committed to diversity. Sample quotes are provided in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12
Privileging the Gender Binary: Lack of Transgender Expertise Across Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I think I actually expected it to be more open. I mean, I guess my perception is you’re going to a major university and here are people who are part of the academy, and hopefully intelligent and well-rounded people, and so I guess the level of…ignorance about trans issues and LGBT issues in general always amazes me. I mean I try to remember the context, it is still [particular region of Colorado that tends to be more politically conservative].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Interviewer: Were there instances or places of resistance that surprised you?]
**P:** Again, at the [multicultural student services office]… from the staff that wasn’t directly involved with the [LGBTQ-specific position]…[who were] resistant to going to the [LGBTQ and allies] training and to explore that and do that kind of work. And they would talk the talk, but then, in practice, I never really saw it, which is very frustrating to be like, “Uh, just go to a training and learn and do something about it!” So that was disappointing to see that at again one of the progressive places to be like, “Hey, you don’t know gender identity issues, and that’s not okay.”

**P:** Nobody really deals with like specifically or knows enough to really call them an expert or anybody that you’d really want to talk to. I mean I think most the people on the campus know enough about gender identity to get confused. So, but nothing beyond that.

**P:** Some of my initial interactions over the phone with [university] were not good. I called to inquire, for example, about gender-neutral housing, and I just got the main switchboard number and asked about gender-neutral housing and they said, “Just a second. Let me give you to disability services,” which is obviously problematic for a lot of different reasons. And the person was nice, they just like genuinely thought I needed to talk to disability services. And so, like, based on some of those initial interactions over the phone, before arriving on campus, my expectations were not really that high, and I was a little bit worried about what were people going to know, what weren’t they going to know and then how was it going to play out in terms of doing just normal things like finding housing.
While the quotations in Table 5.12 reflect general experiences on campus with a lack of expertise on transgender-related topics, one of the most common areas where participants expressed frustration with this lack of expertise was in relation to on-campus health care services (and, to a lesser extent, on-campus mental health and counseling services). Many people living, studying, and working on a university campus—including those who are transgender—are likely to turn to on-campus health centers for medical care. Participants in this study reported trying to access on-campus health care, but had great difficulty finding a medical provider on-campus who had at least basic knowledge about working with transgender patients, let alone more advanced expertise in treating this population. Participants reported feeling frustrated and disappointed by this lack of culturally competent medical care.

Being put in a situation of seeking service from individuals who were not competent produced feelings of fear, uncertainty, anger, and discomfort. Participants relayed numerous stories about the lack of transgender expertise and competence in on-campus health care, and some examples are detailed in Table 5.13. Each participant represented in this table was in a process of transitioning at some point while affiliated with the campus.

Table 5.13
*Privileging the Gender Binary: Lack of Transgender Expertise and Competence among On-Campus Health Providers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P: I think it would be [helpful] to have more… doctors that…know more about [transgender people] so that when a student comes in and says “I really feel like I need to be this person,” or “I really am not comfortable this way and I want to kill myself”…the doctors need to be competent to know, “Okay we need to get you to someone that is able to help you mentally.” Because this is, after 18 years of suppressing it, you’re going to need someone to talk to about it. And going to need someone that’s trained and knows how to deal with the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
stresses and all those things. So I think that our medical community in general would benefit from a lot of, not only queer knowledge about gay males and lesbians, but also about trans because it would just help thousands of people with their medical [concerns].

**P:** The health center, until they had a training last year, they didn’t even know… the head gynecologist there didn’t even know how hormones worked. It’s like, “How did you even get through med school if you don’t even know how this works?” And you know, she’d been working there for years and years and years…And so there’s been different things around campus [that have] been transphobic, but nothing extreme. But I still kind of consider that… more out of ignorance and not knowing than anything malicious. I’ve almost never had anything malicious… I went in [to the health center] because I was trying to figure out the birth control stuff. I was like, “I want something that will help me, but I don’t know when I’m starting testosterone, so I don’t know what options are available.” I went in just to try to get my birth control changed, and the first person I saw was like the head, lead gynecologist or whatever in the [women’s health center]. This person, she flat out told me, “Well, testosterone doesn’t stop periods.”…I was like…“Yes it does.” And she was like, “No it doesn’t, that’s not how it works.” And I was like, “Yes it does, do you need me to prove it to you? There’s so much literature on that out there,” and she just kept saying that it didn’t… The lady didn’t know, she didn’t even know testosterone stops periods. And then on top of that, so I was now crying at this point because she was so insistent on things that weren’t true and just not being really sensitive about it. And then I was just like, “Look, I’ve been having these issues, and I just need it figured out,” and finally she was like “Well,” and then she, just the way that she said it, she offered to give me an exam at that point. I just looked at her like, “I’m sorry, I’m not comfortable with my body. I’m trans-identified, I’m male-identified, don’t do this to me.” So I just left.

**P:** The [health center]… has been somewhat problematic, but I think it’s more an issue of they just don’t have the competency or a lot of the people don’t really have the competency. It’s not so much that they’re prejudiced against trans people, it’s just they don’t know trans people and they haven’t been trained how to work with trans people and what are some of the common trans medical issues about transition and all of that with hormones and all that stuff… There was a training about not quite a year ago, [the health center]…brought in [trainer on trans issues] whose a trans man himself and does a lot of work with doing trans trainings for different organizations, so I think that was kind of a boost to [health center]’s competency in dealing with trans students that come in, that they had someone specifically training them on trans issues.

---

**Privileging the gender binary: Practices that “blame” an individual’s problems on that person’s transgender or gender non-conforming identity or gender expression.**

Another indication of privileging of the gender binary and of cisgender identities is reflected in how people on campus communicated the message that being transgender or gender non-conforming, including undergoing transitions, is the “cause” of certain
problems. Such messages promoted the belief that trans identities are pathological and that people who expressed themselves in gender non-conforming ways were inviting further difficulty into their lives. Participants indicated that such encounters occurred particularly when accessing on-campus health and mental health services. Table 5.14 includes some exemplar quotes on this topic.

Table 5.14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **P:** This doctor… the biggest problem was she blamed every problem I ever had on testosterone. It was unbelievable. I had a [urinary tract infection], which I’ve had them since I was a kid—“Testosterone!” She got really obsessed on wanting me to get topical estrogen cream to put… down there because it was irritated, and she thought that would keep me from getting [urinary tract infections]. And I was like, “I don’t want to put estrogen cream, and I don’t, that doesn’t make any sense. What are you talking about?” So, she’d always talk about blaming the things on the testosterone… She just, everything! I mean, the only thing she would not be like, if I had a cold, she would not blame it on testosterone. Anything else, she could stretch it to be about testosterone. So, I hated going there, and I hated being like, “Okay, so I have a sore throat. Check me for strep throat.” And then, no matter what, hearing some rant about the estrogen cream or going off testosterone or how unhealthy it was.

| **P:** My experience with counseling services is that they either tend to think that all problems are trans-related when you go in and talk to them or they completely disengage the problems from your trans identity because they’re not sure how to deal with it. So it’s like sort of polarized things happening there.

| **P:** This year last fall, I went in [to the on-campus health center] for a [urinary tract infection], which was probably related to not using public restrooms because I hate choosing between men and women’s restrooms, and I brought that up to the doctor. And she was like, “Is there anything that this could be related to?” I’m like, “Well, you know,” insert whatever health reasons, but then I was also, I can’t remember why I told her I was trans, I think I told her because I was like it might be the bathroom thing. And then she immediately picked up on that as possibly being the cause, and was like, “I want you to seek out those bathrooms. I want you to do this, I want you to do that.” And it wasn’t until I left that I was like, “I think she thinks it’s only because of that,” which yeah, it’s related, but it’s not the only thing. I thought it was kind of weird, as soon as I told her that she was like, “Yep, that was the cause.” It’s better than most people would say in that she took it into consideration, at the same time she took it as the only consideration. And that wasn’t too nice.
Privileging the gender binary: Practices that rely on transgender people to “educate” cisgender people on trans experience (aka tokenization). A number of the participants interviewed said that they were frequently expected to “educate” cisgender people on campus about trans issues, especially when they chose to disclose their transgender identity. Others noted that cisgender people on campus took a passive approach and regularly excused themselves from doing their own research or taking action to advocate for trans people, instead relying on transgender people to do such work for them. The examples in Table 5.15 flesh out this theme and display how such experiences occurred across various campus departments.

Table 5.15
Privileging the Gender Binary: Tokenization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settings/Departments Where Tokenization Occurred</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Campus</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I haven’t had any, for the most part, haven’t had extremely negative interactions or experiences. The biggest thing is just encountering people acknowledging pretty quickly that they don’t know anything about it and that they’d like me to teach them something about it. So, in almost every interaction, what would be a normal interaction between maybe cisgender people, for example, becomes sort of this interaction of being an educator, constantly, every single day. And so I think that that’s one of the more frustrating aspects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Professions & Applied Sciences**
P: I feel like there are certain people who are more knowledgeable about certain topics than others and that, if you found those people, you’re good. But then there’s a lot of educating your professors about certain, especially gender identity and that kind of stuff. Whereas, we have like 15 minutes of the class talking about what gender identity is, what transgender is, what cisgender means, and what privilege looks like. And I was always like, “You don’t know this and you’re my professor?” It was awkward… When I was presenting my research capstone project in a class, I evaluated the [LGBTQ and ally training] at [university]. So, I went through the learning objectives, and one of the learning objectives is increasing awareness about cisgender privilege. So, we had to stop, and I had to talk about what cisgender means. And we had to go through the whole topic of what gender identity and expression means. It just was a waste of time. Of course I got an A in the class. But the professor had no clue what it meant. I was like “Excellent, awesome”… I did have all these trainings for this project that I told everyone to go to, and no one went to [them]… It was pretty frustrating. And it tokenizes you and that’s always awkward and uncomfortable… It’s like, “I need an ally!”

**Social Sciences**
P: And then in other classes too, especially within my department… [I’m] always deferred to to [explain] trans related topics. I was in a class…and we did talk a lot about trans issues, and the teacher would continually say, “I’m not sure if I’m explaining this right. [Name] can you explain it for us?”… And then like I said, it’s oftentimes with good intent. Like I said, it never comes with malicious intent because one of the things that has often been said is, “I’m so glad that you’re here to tell us about these things.” And it’s like, “Well thanks, but, I don’t know. Go read a book.”

**Health Center**
P: I wasn’t optimistic about [student health center], but I think it turned out to be more appalling and shocking than I thought it would be… They’ve seen [trans-identified trainer on trans issues], and they still can’t do it. And the doctor, the doctor that I had for a long time, she kept telling me that I, it was good for me to be in a position where I could educate people… That’s not my job!
| Student Affairs – LGBTQ Leadership Retreat | **P:** I went on was this leadership retreat through the [LGBTQ student services office]...The night after all the activities were over, and we were all just hanging out, and we decided to play Hot Seat, which I had never really played before. But so, it’s like...you ask five questions and then one person kind of sitting in front of the row of everyone has to answer. And you get one question you don’t have to answer. And most people were being asked all these really sexual questions or just fun things... But then one person was like, “How did you know you were [preferred name]?” And I was just like, “Well, I don’t mind telling you at some point, but that doesn’t seem like the type of question to ask during this game.” And so we got into a bit of a discussion about that. But it’s just the fact that, and we didn’t talk about minorities because she’s from [LGBTQ students of color campus organization], and we’d been talking about all these things about things you do not say about race, and then she goes and does the same thing to me about gender. And just completely over her head, she doesn’t get why it’s wrong. I was a little upset about that, and that happens a lot too. |
| Sexual Assault Services | **P:** I had an experience of a sexual assault on campus that I think was probably trans-related, and I went to talk to our [sexual assault services staff], and I didn’t know if she was already trans aware or not, so I went actually just as the [leader] of [trans-specific organization] instead of as myself to say, “Do you have information on this if a student were to approach you?” And the kind of bottom like answer was, “Well, I’m really open to it, but no, I don’t really know anything yet.” And so I decided to...not disclose my own issue because I didn’t want to first have to be the educator and then bring up my issue, so I decided to just drop it. |

*Privileging the gender binary: Expecting that trans people must “out” themselves in order to get trans content discussed or for transphobia to be confronted.*

Building from the previous issue related to tokenization, this subtheme relates to how participants noted that they frequently have to disclose their transgender identity (or be regularly perceived by others as trans/gender non-conforming) for transgender-related issues and classroom content to be brought up and meaningfully addressed. One participant—a student who is rarely perceived by others as transgender—spoke of how he struggled with the lack of curricular content acknowledging gender fluidity and trans
identities in the health sciences, yet feeling uncomfortable about being the one to bring it up:

**P:** We have this one class that’s…a lab… We’ll be tested on our counseling skills where they’ll bring in… actors to come and pretend to be a patient… And, we had this one case where we had to counsel on Plan B…the emergency contraception… And so, beforehand, during class, when we’re going over Plan B and the major counseling points that you should go over, one of the things that…the instructor mentioned is that you might get a male actor or a female actor…You might have a Plan B case or you might have [an] eye drops [case], so you didn’t know specifically which case you had, to make sure you sort of prepared for both. So if you have a male, if you go into your role room, and there’s a male patient there, don’t automatically assume you have eye drops. You might have Plan B. They might be coming to pick it up for their girlfriend or something… And then, the professor started joking around… “They’re actors, so we can tell them to act like women if you want them to.” And there’s all this giggling… And I was just like, “Well, what if they look male but they need Plan B for themselves?” and you know, “There are situations like that.” But I didn’t bring that up because I didn’t feel really comfortable bringing it up.

This student also discussed how he would like to be able to bring up his own life experiences in class discussion to help enrich other students’ learning, but he worries about no longer being seen “as a guy” and having other students treat him as weird:

**P:** I want to ask questions about, “I do it this way, and is that okay?” Put in my own personal experiences into it. And we learn a lot from each other. I’ve learned a lot from other students about experiences that they’ve personally had or someone in their family has had. And I think it would be neat if I had some sort of outlet to share my experiences as well, and I’m sure that some of the other students could benefit from it. But I just don’t know how to do that while still feeling safe and respected and being able to know that people will still see me as a guy… There’s a certain little part of me that really wished I could be at least out to one person in my school, especially like a faculty member or something. Just to be able to ask questions about different…things that are related to our curriculum, like patient care that relates to trans people. And being able to talk about it without like, “[Participant’s first name], why are you so interested in trans people?” Like I’m the weird guy who keeps asking questions about testosterone.

Another individual, who was in both student and staff roles on a campus, expressed similar struggles. In this case, an LGBTQ student organization would bring up things
related to transgender people, but he felt he had to “out” himself as trans in order to be heard by the group when speaking about these issues:

[Interviewer: Were you involved with [LGBTQ student organization] last year?]  
P: Yeah, quite a bit, I was part of it…By the end of the year, I stopped going because I kept getting triggered by the stupid stuff that was being said…Oftentimes trans stuff would come up, and…I felt like I had to “out” myself to speak about it so folks would hear, because I like to speak from personal experience so it’s not triggered.

Privileging the gender binary: Practices and curricula that focus on only two genders or don’t sensitively acknowledge identity differences. Across departments and in many different classroom settings, participants found that most curricula and educational practices reflected cisgender norms and biases—for example, assuming that there are only two “opposing” genders, only studying works produced by cisgender people (even in courses focused on gender and/or diversity), and promoting educational techniques that ignore the varying risks among students in the classroom about disclosing their identities and connecting with each other. When transgender content was included within a course, participants noted that it was frequently rushed over in an ineffective manner. Again, these experiences were reported in a variety of classroom and departmental settings, as detailed in Table 5.16.
Table 5.16

Privileging the Gender Binary: Practices and Curricula that Focus on Only Two Genders or Don’t Sensitively Acknowledge Identity Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Courses</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ Studies Course</td>
<td>P: I would love for the [LGBTQ-focused academic program] to start including trans issues, trans books, trans anything. My [LGBT studies] professor, I asked her why there was nothing trans, and she said, “Well, there’s just nothing out there”… And that was in 2006… I even actually stretched to the point where I was like, “Well, couldn’t we read Stone Butch Blues, then?” …and [the professor said]… “No.” 2006 and she says there’s nothing there, and I sense all this resistance to me being able to give suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professions &amp; Applied Sciences Course</td>
<td>P: In the classroom, there was maybe one class that we discussed gender and gender identity. But, for the most part, it was very much not there, I felt at least…it was like the 15 minutes at the end of the class. We actually watched a 20/20 special on gender identity and trans kids and we talked about it for 15 minutes. It was just like quickly rushed over. [Interviewer: How did that feel to have it presented that way?] P: It was really annoying. But that’s kind of how, we’re on the [term] system. We have [number] weeks to teach a course on privilege and oppression and multiple identities and intersections of identities. It’s hard to focus more than 15 minutes on one particular identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown (Student primarily affiliated with Social Sciences &amp; Humanities)</td>
<td>P: And I’m like, “What if this [certain] technique [used by the professor to encourage ‘deep contact’ between people] is just fucked up for, across diversity issues?”… Even if you are the teacher of a certain technique… do you have a way of opening to see that this might actually cause harm for certain kinds of people in certain circumstances where like, “Oh, I feel like nobody gets me in this room, and now I should make deep contact with them. [sarcastically]: Oh, that feels great”… [Interviewer: What could have gone differently in that situation or in that class?] P: …Having a lot of respect for where people do have defenses or a need to not engage in a certain way because that is really a form of protection for people who experience a lot of oppression in the world is that there’s times when we need to disengage and say, “You know what… that mainstream culture for a lot of trans people…is not a place where we can all engage full-time and feel happy and safe.” We don’t. So, when we disengage, it’s because we don’t feel safe… Yeah, those are the places that I need to heal, but it’s not going to happen in this setting right now. So I think just having a lot of respect for… the places where people have boundaries and defenses, and saying, “Wow! You’ve really used this to save your own life, to stay sane in a crazy world that doesn’t treat you right.” I think that that’s probably the biggest, the biggest thing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender Studies Course

P: I took a class on [gender studies] and I wasn’t happy with the language the professor used. She referred to the “other gender”. In that class, we did an activity where the professor asked the class what we would do if we spent the day as the “other gender”… I would like to see things that help people realize that “everyone is a little gender variant.”

Diversity-related Course

P: I was in a diversity class, and in the syllabi, there was nothing about trans history or the trans equality movement.

[Interviewer: Was there content on GLB?]

P: No. Then again, I was taking the class with [faculty member], who decided to call me sir, so, yeah it was more race and gender-oriented. When I say gender-oriented, I mean sex, like the binary.

Privileging the gender binary: Practices that give cisgender people the opportunity to “opt out” of transgender-related trainings. One final aspect related to privileging the gender binary on campuses showed up in an experience noted by one participant where cisgender employees in his department were given the choice to “opt out” of a mandatory Trans 101 training for “religious reasons”:

P: And, so [staff person] suggested that [she and I]… lead a Trans 101 in [campus department] workshop. It was supposed to be mandatory for all the [department] employees, well, I don’t think students, but faculty and staff… And, even though it was supposed to be mandatory, I found out… that there were people in my department…who told the [administrator] they wouldn’t go to that because of religious reasons, and so they didn’t have to go. I was a little put out.

Giving cisgender employees this option to forgo a mandatory training on transgender sensitivity communicates the message that it’s okay if some campus employees espouse beliefs of cisgender supremacism when such beliefs are justified by their religion; this message is at odds with a university’s commitment to sensitively and competently serving all populations of students, staff, and faculty on campus, especially when a

32 In this interview, the digital recorders’ batteries died midway through the discussion; this portion of the interview was therefore not audio-recorded, and so this quote is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
campus has a stated policy regarding non-discrimination based upon gender identity and gender expression.

Privileging the gender binary: Negative case examples. As part of the analysis of this theme, I also identified negative cases--examples of when classroom curricula or LGBTQ and other campus organizations give time, space, attention, and priority to transgender people, topics, and programming, or when faculty/health providers demonstrate solid knowledge ahead of time about transgender issues and/or are willing to make reasonable accommodations for a trans individual. Examples of such instances are provided in Table 5.17, grouped by the type of campus experience/setting.

Table 5.17
Privileging the Gender Binary: Negative Case Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Setting</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Services and Particular Coalitions and Offices</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I think the [student career services] office is another surprising place of support...And I found [student career services] to be surprisingly supportive as well. I didn’t expect them to be aware of trans issues or think they could help trans people with employment issues. And actually, they’ve shown that they’re aware of things they confront, they present information to trans people about some challenges around job hunting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I think really effective allies have come from the [multicultural student services office] and from the [student services office] because they’ve been really open to not only doing the trainings but also in changing things quickly. After they had done the [transgender sensitivity] training, they had sent out a survey that used to ask, “Do you identify as a male or female?” Now they put, “Do you identify as male, female, transgender, or other?” So they made those shifts really carefully. They sent out an email that normally would have said, “he or she,” they wrote “he slash she slash ze.” And so they’ve been willing to… make changes without huge explanations, and in some ways I think that that’s good. They didn’t have to define gender-neutral pronouns in their email when they started using them. They just kind of used them, and I think it puts the expectation on other people to learn about it. It doesn’t have to be like fed to you. You have some responsibility here,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

33 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
too, and so they started to make the changes... So they've shown a real individual willingness, and that's starting to translate into an institutional willingness.

P: I had, after having a mediocre experience with the [career center] in the [department], I recently had this amazing experience, because, again, this is more broadly queer than just gender, but my resume's got all this sort of queer stuff on it. It's kind of like, "What can I put on my resume?" Again, not because I'm, I'm not trying to "de-queer" my resume or anything. I can't even do that. But just, should I put some of the super-queer stuff?... And this one person [in career center] just, she was just like, "You have amazing experience, this is really interesting, it's very rich. You should just leave it all on." I was like, "Are you kidding me? Leave it all on? Are you crazy?" But, and maybe partly I think it is a little bit that she's crazy. She's straight, so I think partly, it's just a little bit, she doesn't, doesn't know. But, in terms of what's working, just having people who affirm the value of my life experience. 'Cause...fundamentally she was just saying, "This is compelling experience. Clearly you have interesting stuff on your resume. It should be there." It's just deeply affirming. And...again, completely opposite of what I expected to find in [department]. Opposite. I'm still in shock.

Curricula & Classroom Settings

P: So I would say that the multicultural curriculum has been good and that it’s got gender and trans stuff in it and freedom to expand on it, so like we brought [local trans speaker] in to speak and that was really powerful and provided opportunity for conversation, so I would say the curriculum... Yeah, that there’s articles about gender in there from Kate Bornstein, I mean. Good, see. That’s good. So yeah, there’s a platform to have the discussions and to have those be within a larger understanding of multicultural, so that’s good, because if it wasn’t and you had to force it in, that doesn’t... feel institutionally supported...I would say again knowing that my identity is sort of part of the active work of the [department] feels good.

P: Well, definitely in the [LGBT sexuality] class having...the instructor who is willing to embrace all of the gender identities out there and gender orientations and all of it. It’s not, the instructor’s not, "If you’re this, you need to get out." It’s the instructor that challenges the mind, and so that’s definitely an area in one of the places I find a great deal of good, positive space to be able to talk about these things and get more people involved ad give ten more people in my class more information about, real information and not just...creepy guys on Jerry Springer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGBTQ Community &amp; LGBTQ Campus Organizations</th>
<th>P: The GLBT community here, people keep saying it’s not trans-inclusive, and I find it that we are always focusing on trans issues and we’re almost never focusing on GLB issues. So it’s very accepting and very wonderful there… And every GLBT group…that I’ve been to, which is most of them, will…be like, “What’s your preferred pronoun?” Or… “Let’s be inclusive of gender variant folks,” and stuff like that.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Health Centers</td>
<td>P: But the health center staff has been good. I do my testosterone injections there sometimes. They’ve been willing to refill those prescriptions. I think it’s important that they’re willing to refill the testosterone prescriptions without my having been diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder so they’re not relying on that diagnosis, which is good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: My sophomore year I think, before their training or after it, there was a nurse that was working there that is actually still working there…that one of my friends who worked at [health center] had found out was pretty okay with trans issues. And I guess she had been doing injections for different trans people for awhile and was just starting to really learn about it more. And I talked to her, and she was really awesome about it… I told her I was trans, this is what’s going on, and she was really kind about it, didn’t really ask any personal question about it, was really sensitive, and like even with a few things was like, “Here’s a birth control that can even help you in perhaps masculinizing a little bit.” And was really awesome about working with me on what I was comfortable with…my body, maybe suggesting things. But in a respectful manner. So that was a huge improvement over the “doesn’t-even-know-how-it-works-and-not-being-respectful-at-all” [health providers].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Organizations, Offices, and Departments Focused on Women | P: I think the surprising place of support is the [university institute on women] because, as trans women, we can be unsure about whether such spaces are typically for you or not. When I found at this space was supportive to me, it was truly surprising and made me happy. 

P: Well, none of them are specifically trans organizations but, last year [feminist campus organization]…they did an [trans-specific event] and as a group they invested tons of time and energy and even money into that project. And [feminist campus organization] is also looking at doing several specific trans events this year as well, so that was encouraging. |
| On-Campus Mental Health Services | P: Well, I already talked about [mental health services]… In my experience, [they] have been mostly very accepting. I went in one time to ask questions about insomnia or anxiety or something like that, and I made it clear that I’m trans, and yeah, that feeds into it, but she, the person I was talking to, she never once tried to combine the two issues. She was just like, “Okay.” [And]… on their form you can check different trans identities for gender. |

---

This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
**P:** My sense is that the [on-campus] counseling center is really pretty good about trans issues ‘cause I’ve used them a couple of times. It’s been a few years, but I have used them a couple of times. Once about an old girlfriend that I’d had who was really problematic and that I needed help with how to deal with her. And then about coming out to someone as trans as an intimate partner and how should I handle that. And they were both really good experiences, so I think the counseling services at the counseling center on campus is really good.

**P:** But nothing negative, yeah it was at the [on-campus mental health services]. I did see a counselor there for like the ten times you got to, and that was really an awesome experience. She was really very supportive, very nice identity-wise and gender-wise. She was very supportive of everything. It was a positive experience, I’d say for sure.

In addition to these positive experiences reported above, a number of the 30 people interviewed spoke of cases where they themselves actively shared their knowledge about being transgender or gender non-conforming on campus, made themselves a resource to others, or actively participated in efforts to change the campus climate to make it more affirming and welcoming of transgender people. One staff person shared:

**P:** I’m very open. I talk about my partner, I’ve had discussions with students about gender issues and they’re taking classes, and I said, “If you need any help with it…” they’re talking about something in their class, and I’ll say, “You know, that’s an interesting subject. I know a little bit about that—if you want to talk about it, feel free to ask about that.” Some do, some don’t…But, we’re very open, my door is very, very open.

This individual also spoke about experiences leading workshops and answering attendees’ questions:

**P:** I put myself out there to have personal questions asked. I said, “If somebody asks me a personal question that is too personal or inappropriate, I will say it’s too personal or inappropriate”…But kind of my guideline is that if, if they have the balls to ask it, I have the balls to answer it. So, that was my general guideline when I would put on that workshop was, “If you ask it, I can answer it.” And I’ve done a couple of other [events] when professors ask me to go speak and things like that. I said, “If you ask it respectfully, and you really want to know, that’s the difference between me answering it and not answering it. If you ask it
disrespectfully, I won’t answer it. If you ask it honestly, and you really want to know, I’ll answer it. So, you think about how you want to ask it.”

Another individual was actively involved in training various campus departments on being more trans-inclusive:

**P:** I am the director of a project called [trans-specific organization]…So I do workshops and trainings on queer and trans issues and specifically how to build queer and trans initiatives that are actively anti-racist, anti-classist, anti-ableist. And so…the [staff in student services office] has basically purchased those workshops and trainings to be given to sort of everyone under his division so then what has also happened is that [housing office], our healthcare center, our sexual assault coordinator, they’ve all also received [trainings] so that they can start to sort of make an institutional shift around trans issues as well. So in the past year, a lot of stuff has happened.

**Theme Four: Transgender and gender non-conforming people experience invisibility and isolation on campus.** When identifying this theme in his dissertation research, Bilodeau (2007) framed this particular theme as being an “outcome” of the privileging of binary systems of gender. In this research, I am treating this theme as an outcome of the more general structural oppression of transgender and gender non-conforming people in campus settings. This theme reflects the ways that transgender and gender non-conforming people (and related educational topics and campus programming) were treated as invisible, non-existent, not credible, irrelevant, and not important, resulting in a lack of action taken on campus to support, recognize, affirm, and welcome this community and create designated safe spaces on campus for this population. Sometimes this invisibility and isolation were a result of poor communication on campus about relevant programming, policies, and support systems for trans and gender non-conforming people, while at other times they reflected the sheer lack of trans-related programs, curricula, spaces, and organizations on campus. This outcome further
perpetuates the stereotype that there were no transgender people on a particular campus, which made trans people feel more isolated and without a community.

This theme had one of the lower levels of inter-rater reliability. Through a discussion between the two coders, one aspect of this theme that was clarified was that the focus of this theme is on macro-level patterns of invisibility and isolation, including evidence of repeated patterns of one-to-one interactions that thereby affected these larger systems. The primary focus of this theme was not on interpersonal interactions; evidence of the ways that transgender people are ignored and treated as invisible at a more interpersonal level is explored within the results related to Research Question Two in Chapter 6. The coders also clarified that instances where some trans-identified people were not read by others as transgender (i.e., they “passed” as cisgender) was a different issue than how transgender people in general are ignored and made invisible by institutions. The focus here was on how institutional actions recreated the invisibility and isolation of this population, not on occasions where people read transgender people as cisgender. However, the role of “passing” was highlighted by participants as being important to their experiences on campus, and is therefore discussed at length throughout this dissertation. Finally, the coders also noted that after clarifying some of the issues with defining negative cases for the theme Gender Non-Conformity is Punished, this helped to distinguish between data that indicated a lack of punishment and data that were more closely related to the current theme of Invisibility and Isolation.

The data related to this theme will now be explored, organized by the type of campus setting in which invisibility and isolation occurred.
Invisibility and isolation: Academic settings. When it came to academic settings, such as classrooms, the invisibility of trans people was reflected in both the frequent lack of curricular content related to transgender communities and the lack of “visible” trans people in classroom settings. The lack of curricular content has already been covered in-depth within the results related to privileging of the gender binary; numerous participants expressed a desire to see more transgender-related content in their education. Participants even noted that in some departments or majors where one might expect readings, discussions, and other content related to transgender identities, there was often very little. For example, when asked how visible trans issues are on his campus, one student at a large university said:

P: [These issues are] hardly [visible] at all…I think it’s important to note that we have a [LGBT-specific academic program], but…the very few classes that are actually offered don’t really include anything about trans folks. So, it’s that not visible.

Beyond the curricula, participants noted that they also experienced a sense that there were few “visible” transgender or gender non-conforming people within their classrooms, whether faculty or students. One student was trying to figure out what type of clothing would be appropriate to wear for classroom-related presentations, but had difficulty identifying a faculty member to ask for advice:

P: When I was really wrestling with the question of my professional attire… I didn't know who to ask…I didn't ask anybody ultimately anything. Because I figured, "Well… if the professor wants to tell me something when I show up in a suit, then we'll see what happens”… That was a moment that it would have been like, “Advice? Professional advice?” I just didn't see any professional advice [or] cues…I wasn't aware of any genderqueer [professional department] professors, just from appearances.
When campus members had trouble identifying “visible” allies, this often led to feelings of uncertainty and isolation.

**Invisibility and isolation: Campus facilities.** One student in a Profession/Applied Science department shared how difficult it has been to find a place on campus where he can feel safe to talk with others about his life: “I can’t think of a campus space where I could go to and just whatever. And feel safe talking and telling my story.” Another individual said she has not seen a “unisex” (single-stall, all-gender) bathroom on campus: “Well, I would say mostly my experience is pretty much limited to the [department] and even just the evening program…So, with that caveat, I don't think I’ve seen one unisex bathroom.” This student partially justifies her lack of knowledge as being related to her status in an evening program and being primarily limited to one department on campus, but one should consider whether such information should not be shared with *all* students, regardless of part-time or full-time status or departmental affiliation.

Another student discussed how even though zir campus has gender-neutral housing (open to people of any gender), no one knows about it:

**P:** They say they have gender-neutral housing. If you go to their website, it says, “We have gender-neutral housing,” but they have this policy where they can’t implement gender-neutral housing unless a set number of students express interest. But no one knows about it. There’s a handful of queer students who know about it, but I think there’s a lot of confusion on the student body about what gender-neutral housing is for. And so, no one expresses interest because…I think they think that they have to identify as trans, which isn’t necessarily the case, I think, as it should be…I think [the campus] need[s] to be a little bit more intentional about making gender-neutral housing known and not advertising that they have it if they really don’t in practice. I think that’s a real problem.
In this instance, the campus has taken the positive step of creating a gender-neutral housing option; however, the lack of clear communication about this option and the requirements to access it make it essentially an “invisible” thing to non-queer students.

**Invisibility and isolation: Employment settings.** A few of the 30 participants spoke about issues of invisibility and isolation in on-campus employment settings, specifically ways in which their trans identities and the unique challenges they face are sometimes ignored. For example, one college staff person discussed how there was a lack of acknowledgment on-the-job about how the recent murder of trans woman Angie Zapata in Colorado might have impacted zir work and well-being:

**P:** I think even just taking Angie Zapata's murder last year…For me, the support that I expected to come from my supervisor to hold a space where we could talk about, “Wow, you're the [position] of this office, and you personally identify as this, and wow, I wonder how this is really going for you?” That conversation never happened, and I think for me that makes it harder because it means that I have to make sure that I keep all my shit together for my students, come at it from a theoretically and unbiased place, which I don't think, I think not only is a ludicrous, but detrimental place to come from, even if you're in higher education…It kicked up all kinds of PTSD stuff for me…But what I got from my supervisor was so “How are you?,” not “Hey, you should go to [disability services]” and say, “Put a letter on file, and do accommodation stuff.” I didn't get that. I didn't get, “Hey, you know, this must be really hard. What do you need?”

This staff person’s feelings of being isolated and unsupported as a trans person were exacerbated in these circumstances.

Another participant also spoke of the impact of the Angie Zapata murder on his experience in campus employment. In this case, however, some of this person’s colleagues were publicly and visibly communicating messages of support Angie Zapata and in favor of prosecuting the person who killed her, which this participant found
supportive. At the same time, he struggled with whether or not to make himself more “visible” as a trans faculty member:

P: That’s why I found it so interesting when I got that Angie Zapata email, but it was from [faculty member], so immediately when I didn’t know [faculty member], I was like, “Okay this person must be friendly,” and you’d walk by [faculty member]’s office and he’d have the picture up and he’d have the friendly zone or whatever you call it, and then I was like, “Okay there are some supportive people here,” but it never made me want to go talk about it. It was more of like, “Okay.” A little bit of that anxiety kind of subsided a little bit, but I still have a lot of anxiety as far as I want people to see me for me and the type of work I do and that I’m good at what I do. I don’t want it to be seen as, “Oh, that’s that trans instructor,” and I don’t know. Maybe that’s just the beginning of the process. I don’t know if that’s naïveté or what, but…

This quote demonstrates the importance of allies regularly and openly communicating their support for trans people and advocating for social change that benefits this population, while at the same time realizing that not all trans colleagues in the work place will be able to or desire to be “out” in the workplace. This emphasizes the importance for allies in making support for transgender people “visible,” instead of only relying on trans people to do so.

Invisibility and isolation: General campus. When it comes to the general campus environment, issues of invisibility and isolation primarily showed up in terms of whether one knew of any other “visible” transgender or gender non-conforming people on campus or other “safe” people that one could approach for support, and whether there were any known efforts at trying to improve the campus culture and campus policies for or provide education about transgender people. A sizeable number of the 30 participants indicated that they knew few if any transgender or gender non-conforming people on campus, regardless of the size of their campus. Example quotes are provided in Table 5.18, organized by campus student population size.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Student Population</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10,000</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> At some point, someone had called and asked how many trans-identified students did we have on campus last year, and we called everyone we could think of to ask that question, and basically we decided that I was the only one that we know of on campus. And so, some of the student groups decided, “Well, there is a reason that there is only one trans person here, and why isn’t it more visible and why aren’t there more trans people on campus and why is the last trans person we can remember being here five years ago?”…And so I think that in some ways it had fallen off the radar because there weren’t out trans people. I mean, there might have been people who weren’t out, but then sort of having a very out and visible trans person on campus sort of forced it to but it back on people’s radar… I think it’s also on people’s radar in a different way because I don’t identify as a man or a woman and that that’s kind of a real mind fuck for people in a lot of ways here… They’ve kind of had to put it on their radar because of an insistence on things like gender-neutral pronouns and because I use multiple bathrooms and all these sorts of things that don’t fit into sort of the male/female boxes that we have on campus that would in some ways make it easier for them to for it to not be on the radar in the same way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 10,000 – 20,000</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I don’t see any others [like me], I don’t, I don't have another genderqueer colleague [in my department]…I don't know why. But we should wonder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20,000</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I was really concerned that…as much as it was already that my femininity was going to be like way more obvious red flags in peoples’ eyes everywhere, and the physical campus itself is not very big… and so I thought, “I’m just going to stand out like a sore thumb. Everybody’s going to know me as that guy,” and I looked around and there was very, very, very few [gender non-conforming] people. I mean I could probably count on one hand the whole time I was there who were you know sort of expressing non-traditional genders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20,000</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I never met any trans people [on campus]. I never, it didn’t seem visible at all to me… It seemed like the-, the lesbian population was higher, than even the gay population, the gay [male] population. And I even went to the [LGBTQ student services office] one time, just to kinda get a feel of things, and…it seemed kinda underutilized or maybe they didn’t have as much funding as they would like… It just seemed like…everybody looked the same and it was one kind of person…[Trans issues] didn’t seem visible to me at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over 20,000

**P:** I hold lots of secrets for staff and faculty. There are a lot of closeted faculty and staff on campus. Folks who don't feel like they are safe or free and that they can come out as gay or bi, let alone queer or trans. Actually, I don't know anybody, I still don't know anyone who identifies as trans or genderqueer for staff or faculty.

Over 20,000

**P:** I mean, we have one out and visible staff member who’s trans on this campus, and that’s it…Yeah. Unless there’s somebody, I don’t know. One [person] that’s visible and out.

Besides knowing other people who are transgender or gender non-conforming, some participants spoke to whether there were even “visible” safe people on campus who one could approach to talk about questions or issues related to being transgender. A student who was interviewed gave this account:

**P:** I think, at [university], there [are] pockets of people who are kind of safe, in quotations, to go to and you feel comfortable with. Generally, though, I feel like it’s really not a place to explore gender and gender identity. Even in a liberal department like [this one]. I think gender is kind of iffy and the unspoken, “Let’s not go there yet.”

This student goes on to express that one thing that would have made time on campus better was knowing who one could approach with questions:

**P:** I think having, for myself, having more people that I knew I could go to talk to about gender issues would have been really helpful. Because my gender identity, definitely, I explored it a lot more throughout my [number] years at [university] and not knowing who I could go to and having that, it would have been really helpful to have that instead of relying on my two genderqueer friends to be like, “What’s this process like? What do I do?”

Other participants spoke about whether they knew of any programming, activism, or advocacy on the overall campus related to transgender issues or reflective of the general visibility of this community and of transgender awareness on campus. Examples of quotes on this topic are offered in Table 5.19.
Table 5.19
Invisibility and Isolation: General Campus – Knowledge of Trans-Related Programming, Activities, or General Awareness of Trans Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role on Campus</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Student        | [Interviewer: And, how visible would you say trans issues are on your campus?]  
                 P: Barely at all. I know that there’s one [department student organization] that, last year, brought in someone from the [community-based trans organization] to talk about sort of trans health care issues, just do a little workshop, but it was just one thing that was sort of an extra-curricular thing that I didn’t even get the chance to go to it because I was busy studying for something. But that’s like the only thing I can think of… related to trans issues going on campus.  
                 [Interviewer: So, how visible in general would you say that trans issues or issues of gender variant folks are on campus?]  
                 P: Uh, not very visible… But I also have to say because of my study, I don’t spend a lot of time… I have the place that I go to and the crowds that I keep. But in general, as I’m walking through campus, I would say “Not very.” |

| Multiple Roles | P: But I know it seems to be kind of behind the scenes hush-hush, at least until this year. We started working on getting the non-discrimination policy at [university], this system like nondiscrimination policy to include gender identity and gender expression. So I mean, it’s started to shift rapidly within the last year, but [in] previous years, it just sucked.  
                 P: I think, well, behind the scenes—at the administrative level-[trans issues are]… visible. Not so much at the student level, students don’t really bring it up as much. Our [administrator], though, is always bringing it up… but it’s behind the scenes. Students never talk about trans stuff really. |

**Invisibility and isolation: LGBTQ campus organizations and offices.** When it comes to LGBTQ campus organizations and offices, participants reported feeling that trans-related programming and resources were not well-advertised and/or that transgender people were not adequately discussed, included, or addressed through programming. These realities contributed to making the transgender community invisible and isolated in these organizations. Table 5.20 includes some example quotations about a lack of adequate advertisement and communication about trans-related programming.

---

35 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
from LGBTQ organizations, while Table 5.21 includes quotations about the ways in
which the programming offered by these organizations excluded or further contributed to
the isolation and invisibility of transgender people on campus.

Table 5.20
Invisibility and Isolation: LGBTQ Campus Organizations & Offices – Lack of Adequate
Advertisement and Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| P: Well I think that [university] is absolutely horrendous when it comes to posting their groups
and what’s going on in the [student union]. The only reason why I know about [LGBTQ-
specific campus organization] was because I Googled it for months prior to coming here,
and…even then they didn’t have the updated days and times on there, so I had to kind of
troubleshoot…Most of it, I mean no matter how much I look on the Internet, I can’t find it…
Most of them I found out through other people. So I know of one that specifically works to get
gender-neutral bathrooms put on campus, I think, and I just found out about that one yesterday,
so.

P: I know the…[LGBTQ student services office] is trying to do a lot and they’re trying to build
a community of support, which I was part of that. Just knowing that it’s there…is really
helpful…But a lot of people don’t know that. I guess kind of getting the word out would be
really helpful for a lot of students who just didn’t tap into that right away.

P: There's not one centralized trans guide on campus, in part…because I don't have time
and…I don't know how to teach my student staff [at LGBTQ student services office] all the
stuff I think they should know because there's never time enough to play catch up.

Table 5.21
Invisibility and Isolation: LGBTQ Campus Organizations & Offices - Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| P: Being excluded, yeah, felt kind of excluded from I don’t know just the [LGBTQ student
organization] at times. Just from getting support from all sorts of campus-related groups.

[Interviewer: So, how visible would you say in general trans issues are on your campus?]

P: In general? Hardly at all. It’s really just localized to the [LGBTQ student services office]…I
mean, we have the [LGBTQ-specific campus organization]. I don’t go, so it’s second-hand
information, but I’ve been told about the very few instances they’ve tried to include trans
people in the group and that that’s gone very badly, so they don’t really talk about trans
issues… And there’s no, to my knowledge, there’s not even an LGBT faculty group at all.
P: There’s not a lot of support from the [LGBTQ student services office]. Last year they-- or last [term], they did have a support group, and I’m not sure why… it’s not happening this [term], but this [term] it’s rolled into their lesbian/gay coming out support group. So, actually I doubt that there’s any other trans people coming out this [term]…other than myself…
[Interviewer: How visible would you say in general trans issues are here?]

P: Almost invisible… I would say they’re only [visible in] the inclusion of the word trans in the [LGBTQ student services office], really. I mean, I haven’t heard of any speakers in the last three years that have dealt with that issue. I haven’t even heard of anything… So, yeah, invisible, I would say.

P: Invisible. Yep, I was saying, we, the [LGBTQ student organization] that they had there… Queer issues aren’t even really acknowledged there, and so gender is just on the furthest backburner. I think that you know there’s potential there, but it just, you know, hasn’t been taken up yet.

P: I used to work on organizing trans discussion groups. The purpose of those was to really get people into our [LGBTQ student services] office and get them to have personal conversations… I’ve noticed that people don’t talk about trans issues unless they’re forced to; the conversations just don’t occur spontaneously. Most people in our groups will end up talking about their gay or lesbian relationships. I think, especially among students, trans issues just aren’t brought up… even among trans people… So, sometimes in our office or in these discussion groups, I just feel out-of-place. People talk about their sexual identities, and about sexual variance. The only thing I can connect to in the [LGBTQ student services office] is transsexuality, and that just seems to fall by the wayside. Most people don’t know what to talk about or say when you bring up transgender. “I’d like it if conversations existed spontaneously, instead of having to be started.”

A separate dynamic that was noted in relation to perceptions of invisibility and isolation in LGBTQ campus organizations connected to each participant’s other identities beyond gender. Some participants noted that LGBTQ organizations also had a difficult time adequately including people of color, which meant that trans people of color were more likely to feel invisible or isolated in such settings. One participant discussed her struggles with feeling “out-of-place” as a straight, femme trans woman, when the majority of students active in LGBTQ campus organizations tend to have non-normative sexual orientations and gender expressions. She shared:

36 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes. Verbatim notes are designated with quotation marks.
**P:** I can also feel alienated even from my trans group of friends, too. Many of them are pansexual and genderqueer, so to be straight and femme, I almost feel out-of-place. I don’t consider myself queer; I don’t even like to consider myself transgender, or use that word. I see transgender as different from transsexual, and [the latter is] more of my experience. There just aren’t many straight trans people on campus. Our [LGBTQ] office tries to reach them, but I fear that they don’t feel welcome.

This participant notes that it can be particularly difficult for the LGBTQ office on her campus to effectively reach out to straight trans people on campus and help them to feel welcome.

*Invisibility and isolation: Negative case examples.* A number of negative cases were identified in the process of coding data related to invisibility and isolation—that is, examples of when transgender people and related topics, curricula, and programming were made visible, given attention, and treated as important on campus, or examples of when trans people feel connected to a community or support network on campus and are aware of other trans people on campus. Visibility and community were built through purposeful efforts to incorporate trans-related content into classrooms (frequently by involving trans or genderqueer instructors or guest speakers), initiating trans-related educational programming and widely advertising it, having more staff and faculty who are “out” as trans or gender non-conforming as well as people who are “out” as allies, and making concrete efforts to improve trans people’s everyday experience on campus through policy change and advocacy. Table 5.22 includes quotations that are negative case examples of invisibility and isolation, organized by specific aspects of campus life.
Table 5.22
Invisibility and Isolation: Negative Case Examples By Aspects of Campus Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Campus Life</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>P: There’s a class I’m in. It’s [LGBT sexuality class], and we’re discussing all sorts of different queer issues—bisexual, transgender, pansexual, all of them, because as it says [LGBT sexuality] in the class…But that group, as a class, seems to be addressing it more head-on with “Okay, we understand the power dynamics to an extent and the labeling dynamics. Now what do we want to do with it?” So I see that group as more of a class that’s working towards addressing the issue in a much more cohesive manner than in some ways our [LGBTQ student services office].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Campus</td>
<td>P: Again, I can only speak to the department… so I’d say within that it’s pretty strong. Yeah. I know that it’s, I think each of us handled it differently within the [multicultural] class. I don’t know if it’s addressed in any of the other classes. I mean I tend to bring trans issues in and gender issues because it’s where professionally I have the most experience so as examples so they’re definitely getting it from me, but beyond that I don’t know.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Interviewer: And how visible would you say in general trans issues are on the campus?]

P: When I first started there late in [year], it was basically not even on the radar. That’s the way I perceived it…And I think that, since then, particularly in the last few years, it’s gotten a much bigger visibility, at least within the campus GLBT community. And there’s been some inroads with the registrar and organizations and offices on campus to consider trans people more. So I think that there’s more recognition that we’re there and there’s more willingness to make accommodations for trans people that wasn’t there [number range] years ago when I started…But I think it’s something that’s kind of raised its head above the water, and people, some people have noticed it. But there is still a long way to go because there’s still some harassment and things like that.

P: We’ve had three trans-themed [events], which we call [trans event name]… Last year, there seemed to be, there had been some sort of critical mass that had built. It just felt like there was more people attended, there was a little bigger buzz about it. It just felt like we’d moved up a level or two higher. Something had happened… and it’s starting to become part of the campus culture that, “Oh yeah, they do these trans [events] here and I should go, or whatever, I hear they bring cool people in.” … So, we’re trying to take the first bit of stuff, with all the committees and task forces and the [LGBTQ student services office], trying to make every day existence as a trans person on campus better, and the second prong is the [trans event] where we’re trying to make the everyday reality better, but we all want to have a special day or two that’s just about trans people [bangs
We’re trying to build a higher level of awareness of trans people on campus and trans issues, and then once of year, so there’s this spike, that’s just about trans people. So that it sends, both things send a message that we value you here as part of the community and we value you enough to set aside [time]… to talk about being trans and what that means and having our allies there… A special [time] plus working really hard to make every day better.

P: And I think that the trans-issues are visible because I’m out [as a staff person]. I think it would be very different and was very different when the folks when there weren’t any out trans staff and faculty voices.

P: I just found that people were very willing to, not just be an ally, but, not just be an ally like "I’m supposed to be this certain way or do this certain thing," but to ask me how I wanted them to be an ally, which was really significant to me, and actually was one of the great healing experiences around trans issues for me of my life, so… that, you know, people of all ages and sexual orientations and genders just were really, been really supportive and have gone out of their way to be supportive, so I really, it helped me feel a reconnection with a bigger community outside of the queer community, and that was really a big deal for me.

Employment

P: When the whole Angie Zapata trials were going on and the murder and that kind of thing, I was actually really impressed that I got an email about it. There were actually some faculty members that had posters of Angie Zapata in support of trying the person who did it and that kind of thing. So to me, that was already immediately visible. I was like, “Wow. Okay. That means that somewhere around here there are people that are safe with gender identity issues, with the transgender, queer issues” … So I thought that was really positive.

P: When I first came to campus… my expectations were probably pretty slim-to-none. The [specific work department on campus] typically was very male-oriented and masculine and very “Good Old Boy” network, which I fit into really well, oddly enough…So I got put at the [clerical position]. Got relocated basically. And that was what actually changed my entire outlook here because, at the [previous work department], it was very much a job of “You come in, you do your job, you get your stuff done, you go home.” …Here, there was very much more interaction with the rest of campus, number one. A lot more students, which opened up a whole lot more doors, a whole bunch of different kinds of people… All of a sudden, I was like, “Whoa, there’s a whole campus. There’s a whole community here.” And that really changed my expectations of what this campus was about. And then probably about a year and a half later, the [position] opened up, and I applied for that, and I got that. And then all the walls came down. I was like, all the walls came down. “Oh, shhhhhhh!”… I mean, everything just opened up and all of the other [student services department] and, holy cow! That’s when… I realized there were so many opportunities, and my expectations changed. And I thought, “Wow, there was a whole lot
more to this campus, to be able to do here, than I ever thought possible.”

P: The visibility of the…one staff member, even though interpersonally we don’t really jive as people, the fact that she’s able to be so visible makes me feel somewhat comforted, or maybe even inspired just because so far she’s very outspoken, very visible, and so far nothing bad has happened to her. And so, there’s something to be said for that.

**Campus Facilities**

P: On this particular campus, I think…[trans issues are] becoming more visible…A couple years back…[trans-specific administrative task force] that I was involved with that actually formulated the multi-stalled gender-neutral bathrooms that went into a residence hall that now house the [LGBTQ housing], which is the gender-queer floor of [university building] that has some transgendered students, genderqueer, gay, lesbian, bisexual…So that was, at the time, that was the first time that that subject was approached of having bathroom, the bathroom issue. That was kind of a big deal…I think that was, looking back and historically speaking, that was one of the things that changed on campus in my mind that was one of the things that kind of popped the lid off the visibility issue.

P: Oh! And there’s [LGBTQ-specific housing], which is, it’s kind of like, it’s just a physical hallway, but I mean they do specific diversity programming as [LGBTQ-specific housing], and they have the gender neutral bathrooms and showers there.

**LGBTQ Organizations & Offices**

P: Last year, when Angie Zapata was murdered…[the LGBTQ student services] office along with the [community-based LGBTQ organization] and the [community-based anti-violence program] took a leadership role and a visible role in terms of being at the vigils, in terms of making sure that our Facebook group posted stuff about it and things of that sort. I think that the trans issues are visible in those ways as well.

P: There’s also something called the [LGBTQ-specific administrative task force], which I’m a part of and have been for a number of years. So, in that committee…there’s been a real recognition of trans issues as being important, that’s something the committee should work on. But the [trans-specific administrative task force] has been the group that that’s what they do, that’s all they do, is trans issues and gender variant issues. There’s a number of things: [LGBTQ student services office], the [trans-specific administrative task force], and the [LGBTQ-specific administrative task force]. The three of them have made a push to make the campus more welcoming and make trans issues more visible and push trans rights on campus further. So, those are the three main groups slash organizations slash committees that have been behind that what I see as forward progress. Yet, forward progress still to be made in the future.

P: Well, I think almost, if not a majority of the [LGBTQ student services office] staff members are trans, so it’s…a really accommodating environment, and most like trans students just hang out there…
P: Definitely the [LGBTQ student services office is a place of support on campus]… A lot of the queer staff here in the building… we have a bond here, we have family here. We have a lot of family here, actually…We do have a lot of allies here. And I think the student groups, also, that get involved, they, they're supportive in a different way. They're, they're kind of… hmmm, they're like the cheerleaders… Not direct support, but the fringe. They’re like [whispers]: “Yeah!!” They’re like, [whispers]: “Go get ‘em!!! Yeah!!!!”

Non-LGBTQ Specific Campus Organizations

P: Our student government…They’re really powerful. And even they have been working on gender-neutral bathrooms, they understand the need for renovation in the rec center to accommodate trans students.

P: The partnerships that our [LGBTQ student services] office has with folks around campus, like [student services office and housing services] and [another student services office] in the [student union], and some faculty across campus. I think for me as somebody who was out and trans… well, they make my day because those are spaces where I don't have to fight and we can just do our work.

Policy

[Interviewer: How do trans issues become visible?]

P: In many ways, they might not become visible like they would at another campus. Students here, if they need to come change their name because they’re transitioning, it’s just a non-issue…A couple of years ago we had… someone sort of come through and indicate that it would be really helpful if we just changed all of the single stall bathrooms to all-gender, which did happen, and because it’s a fairly small school, it’s not that hard to get those things done… They also come up… I’m occasionally invited to talk at different [department] classes about trans issues and gender issues, and so it comes up in that way… Otherwise, yeah, I would guess that those are the major ways that, that it would come up, and I think there’s some discussion about inclusion in our anti-discrimination policy about how to include wording around gender expression.

Quantitative Results (Inferential Statistics)

The analysis of the quantitative data from the national survey conducted by NCTE and the Task Force was driven by the specific query: Which demographic variables, psychosocial risks, and gender-related individual characteristics predict an increased risk for experiencing structural bigenderism in higher education settings?

This question was answered by analyzing data using SPSS, version 20. Logistic regression was used to predict four different dichotomous dependent variables: (a)
whether an individual lost or could not get financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; (b) whether an individual was not allowed gender-appropriate housing on campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; (c) whether an individual was not allowed to use the appropriate bathrooms or other facilities on campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; and (d) whether an individual had been able (allowed) to change student records to reflect current gender, if requested. For each of the outcome variables, three different logistic regression models were tested: one with socio-demographic predictor variables, a second with psychosocial risks as the predictor variables, and a third with gender-related predictor variables. All models using these three different types of predictor variables are presented alongside each other here to allow for more direct comparison of the role of the predictor variables across the four different outcomes tested. The data used for these questions included only those who had attended college; respondents who reported having a high school education or less OR who said that they did not attend college were dropped from the analysis.

**Sociodemographic predictor variables models.** Four direct\(^{37}\) binary\(^{38}\) logistic regression models were calculated to predict each of the dependent variables of interest. The predictor variables included annual household income, race, age, age squared, disability status, U.S. citizenship status, education level, and urbanicity. Further detail

\(^{37}\)“Direct” logistic regression (aka “standard” logistic regression) means that all of the predictor variables are entered simultaneously into the regression equation (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007).

\(^{38}\)The word “binary” here indicates that the variable being predicted has two possible categorical outcomes; in contrast, multinomial logistic regression is used when the dependent variable has more than two possible outcomes.
about the response options and coding of these variables was provided in Chapter 4 (Methodology). A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple imputation was statistically significant for all four models (see Table 5.23). This table also includes information about model fit\(^{39}\) and Nagelkerke \(R^2\).

Table 5.23
**Model Fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) for the Four Education Settings Models Before Multiple Imputation: Sociodemographic Predictor Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (N before imputation)</th>
<th>Model Fit ((\chi^2))</th>
<th>Nagelkerke (R^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships (N = 1,850)</td>
<td>64.20***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,344)</td>
<td>50.16***</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Bathrooms &amp; Other Facilities (N = 1,787)</td>
<td>72.25***</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to Change Student Records to Reflect Current Gender (N = 1,298)</td>
<td>44.02***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** \(p < .001\).

All four of the full models were statistically significantly different from the constant-only models (\(p < .001\)), which suggests that this group of sociodemographic predictors was useful in distinguishing those who experienced discrimination in each of the four dimensions from those who did not. The role of each sociodemographic predictor variable in predicting the four outcomes is more closely examined in Table 5.24. These models used the pooled data following multiple imputation.

\(^{39}\) Data for model fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) are all for the original data before multiple imputation; generally, these results are very similar if not identical to those obtained for the five imputed datasets (see later in this chapter for a detailed comparison of models before and after imputation). SPSS does not produce pooled results for model fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) for imputed data.
Table 5.24
Logistic Regression Models Predicting the Four Dependent Variables in Education Settings as a Function of Sociodemographic Variables (Pooled Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Financial Aid/Scholarships (N = 2,076)</th>
<th>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,525)</th>
<th>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities (N = 2,001)</th>
<th>Allowed to Change Student Records (N = 1,400)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B) (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
<td>(B) (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.09** (0.03)</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-0.09*** (0.02)</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.65*** (0.15)</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.21 (0.15)</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.10* (0.05)</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.02 (0.06)</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.16 x 10^{-3} (0.63 x 10^{-3})</td>
<td>9.99 x 10^{-1}</td>
<td>-9.75 x 10^{-4} (8.15 x 10^{-4})</td>
<td>9.99 x 10^{-1}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.35* (0.15)</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.26a (0.14)</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.72* (0.33)</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>0.18 (0.35)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-4.27</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-2.15</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.85)</td>
<td>(0.90)</td>
<td>(0.64)</td>
<td>(0.72)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.
Annual household income and having a college degree were statistically significant across the most models. For every $10,000 increase in annual household income, an individual was 8% less likely to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming, 8% less likely to have been denied access to gender-appropriate housing on campus, and 8% less likely to have been prohibited from changing student records to reflect current gender identity. Having a college degree was a statistically significant predictor across all four models: those with less than a college degree were 1.53 times as likely to have been denied financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming, 1.38 times as likely to have been denied gender-appropriate housing on a school campus at some point due to being transgender or gender non-conforming, 1.41 times as likely to have been denied appropriate bathrooms or other facilities on a school campus, and 1.39 times as likely to have been prohibited from changing student records to reflect their current gender compared to those who had a college degree or higher.

Race and disability status were each statistically significant for two models: people of color were 1.91 times as likely as non-Hispanic Whites to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships and 1.39 times as likely to have been denied access to appropriate bathrooms or other facilities on campus due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Compared to those without a disability (other than a gender-related mental health diagnosis), those who had a physical, learning or mental health disability were 1.42 times as likely to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships due to
being transgender or gender non-conforming and 1.59 times as likely to have been denied access to appropriate bathrooms or other facilities.

Age, age squared, urbanicity, and citizenship status were each statistically significant predictors in only one of the four models. For every year increase in a person’s age, the odds that that person would have experienced denial of financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming increased by 1.11. The statistical significance of the age squared variable in the bathrooms model indicates a curvilinear relationship (see Figure 5.1) between age and risk of being denied access to an appropriate bathroom on campus due to being transgender. Through approximately age 28, there is an increase in the likelihood that people experienced such discrimination, while after age 28 this risk begins to exponentially decrease. Those who lived in rural areas were 1.48 times as likely as those in urban areas to have been denied access to bathrooms or other facilities at school due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Finally, non-citizens were 2.06 times as likely as U.S. citizens to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.
Figure 5.1. Curvilinear relationship between age and risk of being denied access to gender-appropriate bathrooms in school settings, where a Y score closer to one indicates a greater likelihood of denial of access.

**Psychosocial predictor variables models.** Four more regression models were calculated to predict each of the dependent variables as a function of several psychosocial variables, including (a) being currently homeless or living in a shelter; (b) having at least one previous suicide attempt; (c) having a history of engaging in sex work or working in the sex industry for pay; and (d) having children, parents, or family members who will not speak to or spend time with oneself due to one’s identity as transgender or gender non-conforming. A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple imputation was statistically significant for all four models (see Table 5.25).
Table 5.25
Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the Four Education Settings Models Before Multiple Imputation: Psychosocial Risk Predictor Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (N before imputation)</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$) df = 5</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships (N = 2,047)</td>
<td>105.23***</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,506)</td>
<td>59.93***</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Bathrooms &amp; Other Facilities (N = 1,975)</td>
<td>92.45***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to Change Student Records to Reflect Current Gender (N = 1,371)</td>
<td>41.17***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

All four of the full models were statistically significantly different from the constant-only models ($p < .001$), which suggests that this group of psychosocial risks was useful in distinguishing those who experienced discrimination in each of the four dimensions of experience at school from those who did not.

The role of each psychosocial risk predictor variables in predicting the four types of outcomes is more closely examined in Table 5.26.

Across all four models, current homelessness and a history of a suicide attempt predicted lack of access to financial aid or scholarships, appropriate housing, bathrooms, and other facilities, and being denied the ability to change student records to reflect current gender. Those who were currently homeless were 4.40 times as likely to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender or gender non-conforming, 2.99 times as likely to have been denied gender-appropriate housing at school, 3.17 times as likely to have been denied access to bathrooms, and 3.68 times
Table 5.26
Logistic Regression Model Predicting the Four Dependent Variables in Education Settings as a Function of Psychosocial Risk Predictor Variables (Pooled Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Financial Aid/Scholarships $(N = 2,076)$</th>
<th>Gender-Appropriate Housing $(N = 1,525)$</th>
<th>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities $(N = 2,001)$</th>
<th>Allowed to Change Student Records $(N = 1,400)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$ (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
<td>$B$ (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>1.48** (0.45)</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.10* (0.55)</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.67*** (0.16)</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.69*** (0.14)</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.71*** (0.19)</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.42* (0.19)</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.99*** (0.18)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.46** (0.15)</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - N/A</td>
<td>0.15 (0.23)</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.02 (0.18)</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-3.15 (0.17)</td>
<td>-2.04 (0.13)</td>
<td>-1.76 (0.10)</td>
<td>-1.73 (0.13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

as likely to have been prohibited from changing student records compared to those who were not homeless. Those who had a history of a suicide attempt were 1.96 times as likely to have lost or been denied financial or scholarships, almost twice as likely to have been denied access to gender-appropriate housing, 1.84 times as likely to have been denied access to appropriate bathrooms, and 1.78 times as likely to have been prohibited from changing their student records.

A history of engaging in sex work was statistically significant in three of the four models: those who had ever engaged in sex work were 2.04 times as likely to have lost or
been denied financial aid or scholarships, 1.53 times as likely to have been denied gender-appropriate housing, and 1.75 times as likely to have been denied access to bathrooms at school compared to those who had never engaged in sex work. Finally, the family loss variable was statistically significant in predicting denial of access to financial aid and scholarships, housing, and bathrooms: controlling for those who answered “not applicable” to the family loss question, those who had a family member who broke off contact with them because of their gender identity were 2.69 times as likely to have lost or been denied financial aid or scholarships, 1.59 times as likely to have been denied access to gender-appropriate housing, and 1.63 times as likely to have been denied access to appropriate bathrooms and other facilities on campus compared to those who had not experienced family members breaking off contact with them due to being transgender.

**Gender-related predictor variables models.** Finally, the last four regression models were calculated to predict each of the dependent variables as a function of several gender-related variables, including (a) whether people could tell that one is transgender or gender non-conforming (referred to as *frequency perceived as transgender*); (b) medical transition history; and (c) three dummy variables related to gender identity: one indicating FTM identity, a second indicating cross-dresser identity, and a third indicating gender non-conforming identity. For these gender identity variables, MTF individuals acted as the comparison group because there tends to be slightly more information in the literature about the experiences of MTF transgender individuals compared to other gender identity groups. Therefore, I thought it would be valuable to compare the experiences of the other gender identity groups to those whom we tend to know a bit
more about. A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple
imputation was statistically significant for all four models (see Table 5.27).

Table 5.27
*Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the Four Education Settings Models Before Multiple
Imputation: Gender-related Predictor Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (N before imputation)</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$) df = 5</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships (N = 2,061)</td>
<td>42.22***</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,510)</td>
<td>32.53***</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Bathrooms &amp; Other Facilities (N = 1,986)</td>
<td>56.75***</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed to Change Student Records to Reflect Current Gender (N = 1,390)</td>
<td>67.24***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001.

All four of the full models were statistically significantly different from the
constant-only models (p < .001), which suggests that this group of gender-related
variables was more useful than the constant-only model in distinguishing those who
experienced discrimination in each of these four dimensions of school experience from
those who did not. The role of each of the gender-related variables in predicting the four
outcomes is more closely examined in Table 5.28.
Table 5.28
*Logistic Regression Model Predicting the Four Dependent Variables in Education Settings as a Function of Gender-Related Predictor Variables (Pooled Data)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Financial Aid/Scholarships (N = 2,076)</th>
<th>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,525)</th>
<th>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities (N = 2,001)</th>
<th>Allowed to Change Student Records (N = 1,400)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>B</em> (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
<td><em>B</em> (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.05       (0.07)</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.04       (0.06)</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.66       ** (0.22)</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>-0.20      (0.17)</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.55       *** (0.16)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.07       (0.16)</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.24       (0.36)</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-0.13      (0.30)</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.81       ** (0.31)</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-1.14       *** (0.26)</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.39       (0.32)</td>
<td>-1.29      (0.28)</td>
<td>-1.55      (0.23)</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. *** *p* < .001.
Frequency of being perceived as transgender was statistically significant in two of the four models: for every step increase in the frequency that one was perceived as transgender without telling others (e.g., an increase from Never to Occasionally, or from Sometimes to Most of the Time), the odds of being denied access to appropriate bathrooms or other facilities at school increased by 1.28 and the odds of being prohibited from changing student records to reflect current gender increased by 1.29. The medical transition variable was statistically significant in two of the models: those who had sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming were 1.94 times more likely to have been denied access to financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender, but 65% less likely to have been prohibited from changing student records to reflect current gender compared to those who had never sought such medical treatments. Finally, gender identity played a statistically significant role in each of the models, albeit somewhat differently in each of the models. Those who identified as male-to-female were 1.72\(^{40}\) times as likely as those who identified as female-to-male and 2.22 times as likely as those who identified as gender non-conforming to have been denied access to financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender. Compared to those who were gender-nonconforming, male-to-female individuals were also 3.13 times as likely to have been denied access to gender-appropriate housing and 2.86 times as likely to have been denied access to bathrooms and other facilities on campus. Meanwhile, those who identified as cross-dressers were over

\(^{40}\)This statistic is calculated using the inverse odds ratio: \(\frac{1}{0.5} = 1.72\). It is equally correct to interpret either odds ratios or inverse odds ratios; generally, whichever leads to clearer communication is preferred (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007, p. 462). In this case, presenting which group is at the greater risk for discrimination is of most interest, so I used the inverse odds ratios. Throughout this dissertation, I use whichever statistic leads to the clearest communication of results.
five times as likely as those who were male-to-female to have been prohibited from changing student records to reflect their current gender.

**Comparison of original data models and imputed data models.** Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest that, when using a method of imputation, one should run analyses both with and without missing data, particularly when the proportion of data that are missing is high and the dataset is small. While the NCTE/Task Force dataset did not have a large amount of missing data and the dataset itself has a rather large sample, I provide a comparison of these data here so that there is full disclosure about any differences in the logistic regression analyses before and after multiple imputation.

**Access to financial aid or scholarships.** First, a comparison is made between the models predicting access to financial aid or scholarships before and after multiple imputation was completed. Results for model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ are provided in Table 5.29. Generally, other than the slight increase in chi-square values following multiple imputation, there were not notable changes in model fits or the Nagelkerke $R^2$ between the original data models and the models using imputed data that predicted access to financial aid or scholarships.

A similar comparison is made in Table 5.30, this time examining the regression coefficients across the original sociodemographic data model, imputed data model (pooled across five imputations), and the range of values in the five imputed datasets themselves.
Table 5.29
Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 8$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data $(N = 1,850)$</td>
<td>64.20***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data $(N = 2,076)$</td>
<td>64.97 to 68.00***</td>
<td>.06 to .07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data $(N = 2,047)$</td>
<td>105.23***</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data $(N = 2,076)$</td>
<td>106.79 to 109.93***</td>
<td>.10 to .11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data $(N = 2,061)$</td>
<td>42.22***</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data $(N = 2,076)$</td>
<td>44.01 to 44.71***</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

After imputation, although some of the imputed data models demonstrate a statistical significance of annual household income at the < .001 level, the final calculation of the pooled data coefficient was at the same level of statistical significance ($p < .01$) as the original data before imputation. Disability status moved from non-significance before imputation to being statistically significant at the $p < .05$ significance level following imputation. These results may indicate that the imputed data were slightly overestimating the impact of disability status in predicting access to financial aid or scholarships, or perhaps that the original data did not adequately account for the impact of this variable due to missing data. After imputation, citizenship status drops from being statistically significant at the .01 level to the .05 level. This indicates that the imputed data models were more conservative about estimating the impact of this variable. Other differences in the models are minor.
Table 5.30
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.08**</td>
<td>-0.09**</td>
<td>-0.08 to -0.09</td>
<td>&lt; .001 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.59***</td>
<td>0.65***</td>
<td>0.63 to 0.65</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.09 to 0.11</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.31 x 10^{-3a}</td>
<td>-1.16 x 10^{-3a}</td>
<td>-1.06 x 10^{-3} to -1.30 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.35*</td>
<td>0.34 to 0.36</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>1.20**</td>
<td>0.72*</td>
<td>0.70 to 0.74</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.42 to 0.43</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.07 to -0.22</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-4.46</td>
<td>-4.27</td>
<td>-4.16 to -4.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a p < .10. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 5.31 offers the same type of comparison, this time for the psychosocial risk predictors models predicting access to financial aid or scholarships. After imputation, current homelessness dropped from being statistically significant at the .001 level to the .01 level. This indicates that the imputed data models were more conservative about estimating the impact of current homelessness in predicting denial of access to financial aid or scholarships. There was otherwise very little difference in the regression coefficients and their level of statistical significance before and after multiple imputation.

Finally, Table 5.32 compares regression coefficients for the gender-related predictor models predicting access to financial aid or scholarships.
Table 5.31
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>1.58***</td>
<td>1.48**</td>
<td>1.45 to 1.49</td>
<td>&lt; .01 to &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.66***</td>
<td>0.67***</td>
<td>0.67 to 0.72</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.64***</td>
<td>0.71***</td>
<td>0.71 to 0.72</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>1.01***</td>
<td>0.99***</td>
<td>0.97 to 1.02</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.11 to 0.20</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-3.15</td>
<td>-3.15</td>
<td>-3.12 to -3.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001.

Table 5.32
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Access to Financial Aid or Scholarships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.65**</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.65 to 0.67</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.53**</td>
<td>-0.55***</td>
<td>-0.54 to -0.55</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.22 to -0.26</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.79*</td>
<td>-0.81**</td>
<td>-0.80 to -0.82</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.39</td>
<td>-2.39</td>
<td>-2.38 to -2.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01.  * p < .001.

After imputation, the FTM dummy variable went from being statistically significant at the .01 level to being significant at the .001 level, and the gender non-conforming dummy variable increased in its level of statistical significance following imputation, from 0.05 to 0.01. These results may indicate that the imputed data may have been slightly
overestimating the impact of the FTM and gender non-conformity dummy variables in predicting access to financial aid or scholarships, or perhaps that the original data did not adequately account for the impact of these variables due to missing data. There was otherwise very little difference in the models before and after multiple imputation.

**Access to gender-appropriate housing.** Another series of comparisons are made here, this time between the models predicting access to gender-appropriate housing before and after multiple imputation. Results for model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ are provided in Table 5.33.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.33</th>
<th>Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Access to Gender-Appropriate Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>Nagelkerke $R^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 8$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,344$)</td>
<td>50.16***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,525$)</td>
<td>67.99 to 74.26***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,506$)</td>
<td>59.93***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,525$)</td>
<td>58.82 to 61.01***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,510$)</td>
<td>32.53***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,525$)</td>
<td>32.16 to 34.42***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

For these models predicting access to gender-appropriate housing, other than some increases in $\chi^2$ and Nagelkerke $R^2$ following multiple imputation in the sociodemographic
predictors models, there were not notable differences in these values before and after multiple imputation.

A comparison was also made between these models’ regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation (see Table 5.34, Table 5.35, and Table 5.36).

Table 5.34
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Access to Gender-Appropriate Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.08**</td>
<td>-0.09***</td>
<td>-0.08 to -0.09</td>
<td>&lt;.001 to &lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.18 to 0.25</td>
<td>Not significant to Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.01 to 0.05</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-8.00 x 10^-4</td>
<td>-9.75 x 10^-4</td>
<td>-5.66 x 10^-4 to -1.30 x 10^-3</td>
<td>Not significant to Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.25 to 0.27</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.13 to 0.22</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.33*</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>0.30 to 0.33</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.11 to 0.02</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-0.72 to -1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

The only notable difference after multiple imputation in the above model was that annual household income has reaches statistical significance at the .001 level, rather than .01 as in the original dataset. Again, this may indicate that the imputed data were slightly overestimating the impact of annual household income in predicting access to gender-appropriate housing or that the original data did not adequately account for the impact of this variable due to missing data. Although some of the coefficient values for urbanicity
were positive in the imputed datasets and the result in the original dataset was negative, all results were statistically non-significant and the final pooled result for this coefficient was in the same negative direction as found in the original dataset.

Table 5.35
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Access to Gender-Appropriate Housing*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>1.24*</td>
<td>1.10*</td>
<td>1.07 to 1.10</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.55)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.69***</td>
<td>0.69***</td>
<td>0.68 to 0.70</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.41*</td>
<td>0.42*</td>
<td>0.42 to 0.43</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – Yes</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>0.42 to 0.48</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.02 to 0.05</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.03</td>
<td>-2.04</td>
<td>-2.02 to -2.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p < .05. *** p < .001.
In the latter two logistic regression models, there were no notable changes in regression coefficients or significance values after multiple imputation.

Access to appropriate bathrooms and other facilities at school. Comparisons of model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the three logistic regression models predicting access to appropriate bathrooms and facilities are detailed in Table 5.37. Other than the higher $\chi^2$ value for the sociodemographic predictors model following multiple imputation, these statistics were generally very similar with results prior to imputation.

A comparison was also made between these models’ regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation for the sociodemographic model predicting access to bathrooms and other facilities is detailed in Table 5.38. One difference that appears in the sociodemographic predictor models after multiple imputation was that the significance level of the college degree dummy variable changes from $p < .05$ to $p < .01$. This indicates that the imputed data models may have overestimated the role of
The next comparison looks at the psychosocial risk predictors model for the bathrooms/facilities dependent variable (see Table 5.39). There were no differences of note between these regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation.
Table 5.38
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Access to Bathrooms and Facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.03**</td>
<td>-0.03**</td>
<td>-0.03 to -0.04</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.31 to 0.36</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05 to 0.07</td>
<td>Not significant to marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.17 x 10^-3*</td>
<td>-1.11 x 10^-3*</td>
<td>-9.81 x 10^-4 to -1.25 x 10^-3</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.46***</td>
<td>0.47***</td>
<td>0.45 to 0.48</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.47*</td>
<td>0.45 to 0.53</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.30*</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>0.40*</td>
<td>0.39*</td>
<td>0.36 to 0.44</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.26</td>
<td>-2.15</td>
<td>-1.98 to -2.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10. ** p < .05. *** p < .01. **** p< .001.

Table 5.39
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Access to Bathrooms and Facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>1.20**</td>
<td>1.15**</td>
<td>1.13 to 1.16</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.62***</td>
<td>0.61***</td>
<td>0.60 to 0.62</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.57***</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
<td>0.56 to 0.57</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.49***</td>
<td>0.49***</td>
<td>0.46 to 0.51</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.05 to 0.10</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.79</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-1.75 to -1.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** ** p < .01. *** p < .001.
The third comparison examines the regression coefficients for the gender-related predictors models predicting access to bathrooms and facilities (see Table 5.40).

Table 5.40
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Access to Bathrooms and Facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td>0.24***</td>
<td>0.24 to 0.25</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.08 to -0.14</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.06 to -0.09</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.14 to -0.26</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-1.10***</td>
<td>-1.06***</td>
<td>-1.00 to -1.10</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.53</td>
<td>-1.55</td>
<td>-1.54 to -1.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** \(p < .001\).

There were no differences of note between these regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation.

*Changing student records to reflect current gender.* The final group of models examined were those predicting whether one was allowed to change student records to reflect current gender. Model fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) statistics for the three different logistic regression models are provided in Table 5.41.

Generally, other than the slight increase in chi-square values following multiple imputation (particularly for the sociodemographic model), there were not notable changes in model fits or Nagelkerke \(R^2\) values between the original data models and the models using imputed data that predicted ability to change student records.
Table 5.41
*Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Ability to Change Student Records to Reflect Current Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Models</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong> $df = 8$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,298$)</td>
<td>44.02***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,400$)</td>
<td>51.08 to 56.15***</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong> $df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,371$)</td>
<td>41.17***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,400$)</td>
<td>41.61 to 43.51***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong> $df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 1,390$)</td>
<td>67.24***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 1,400$)</td>
<td>65.44 to 67.96***</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

A comparison was also made between these models’ regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation (see Table 5.42). While the coefficients for race/ethnicity in some of the imputed dataset models were negative and some were positive, the result for the pooled data, like the original data, remained a positive, non-significant value. Thus, there did not appear to be any notable changes in these models following multiple imputation.
Table 5.42
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Ability to Change Student Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>$p$-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.08***</td>
<td>-0.09***</td>
<td>-0.08 to -0.09</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.01 to 0.03</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01 to 0.02</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-5.65 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>-4.41 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>-3.40 x 10^{-4} to -5.01 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.16 to 0.19</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.20 to -0.24</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.34*</td>
<td>0.33*</td>
<td>0.32 to 0.44</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>0.40*</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.34 to 0.43</td>
<td>Not significant to Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>-0.97 to -1.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. 

In Table 5.43, while the statistical significance of the family loss variable mirrored that found in the original dataset ($p < .05$), the pooled data result reflected the more conservative estimate of marginal significance ($p < .10$). The models were otherwise very similar before and after multiple imputation.

Finally, this same comparison is made for the gender-related predictors models in Table 5.44. There were not any notable differences in these models between the original and imputed datasets.
Table 5.43  
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Ability to Change Student Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>1.31*</td>
<td>1.30*</td>
<td>1.30 to 1.31</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.59***</td>
<td>0.58***</td>
<td>0.57 to 0.59</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.28 to 0.29</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.28^a</td>
<td>0.27 to 0.31</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.09 to -0.17</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.74</td>
<td>-1.73</td>
<td>-1.72 to -1.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 5.44  
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Ability to Change Student Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.26***</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td>0.25 to 0.26</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>-1.00***</td>
<td>-1.05***</td>
<td>-1.02 to -1.10</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.10 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>-0.01 to 0.01</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>1.90*</td>
<td>1.63*</td>
<td>1.40 to 1.90</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-0.43 to -0.63</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>-0.81 to -0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. *** p < .001.

Thus, as a whole, comparisons for all of the logistic regression models for Research Question One indicate very few differences before and after multiple imputation in model fit, Nagelkerke $R^2$, and regression coefficients. In terms of the model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ statistics, the statistics presented earlier in this chapter were for the
original data. Since the original data models tended to have equal or slightly lower fit values than the imputed datasets, conclusions drawn from these statistics are likely to be on the more conservative side (perhaps slightly *underestimating* model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$).

There were several cases where variables’ level statistical significance decreased after imputation, indicating a more conservative estimate within the imputed data models that were interpreted in this chapter. Some notable exceptions included several demographic variables for the models predicting denial of access to financial aid (disability status, FTM, and gender non-conforming), the models predicting denial of access to gender-appropriate housing (annual household income), and the models predicting access to bathrooms (college degree). These sociodemographic variables should therefore be interpreted with additional caution. However, in general, the evidence indicates that the multiple imputation process did not significantly distort model results or change the influence of most individual variables in a notable way.

**Mixed Methods Results**

My intention in concluding this chapter with mixed methods results is to highlight some key findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data as they relate to one another in answering Research Question One. Because the two datasets used in this study come from different sources and the data are anonymous, there is no way to know whether any individual respondent appears in both sources, thereby precluding case-by-case mixed data analysis. Consequently, my approach to analyzing the mixed data uses what Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 226) call a *category/theme display in merged*
data analysis whereby the researcher displays qualitative themes alongside related quantitative results.

Since one of the general gaps in the literature about structural bigenderism and transgender people’s experiences in higher education is in relation to within-group differences in terms of oppression, my primary focus in this section is on some of the differences between subgroups within the transgender community and how the other identities that one holds (race/ethnicity, social class, age, etc.) impact one’s experiences on campus. In particular, this analysis will look at some of the sociodemographic characteristics that people hold, as well as two gender-related characteristics (the frequency of being perceived as transgender and transition history).

“Just another slice of deli meat in my sandwich of identity messes on campus”: Exploring how intersecting identities impact transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences on college campuses. Within the logistic regression models for the NTDS data, one of the general patterns was that people with multiple marginalized identities tended to be at higher risk for discrimination in terms of financial aid and scholarships, access to bathrooms and other facilities, access to gender-appropriate housing, and ability to change their student records. Variables analyzed in those models (discussed earlier in this chapter) included annual household income, race, age, and disability status, among other predictors. In the conversations with the 30 participants within the CTOC study, many individuals spoke to how these dimensions of who they are interacted with being transgender or gender non-conforming and contributed to feelings of inclusion or exclusion on campus. Table 5.45 – Table 5.48
below are joint data displays that demonstrate the quantitative results of individual sociodemographic predictors from the logistic regression models alongside quotations from CTOC participants about how these particular sociodemographic identities impacted their experiences on campus. The CTOC research participants also spoke about the impact of other identities, such as their sexual orientation, religion, political perspective, and parental status. While these other sociodemographics were not included in the quantitative models and therefore cannot be analyzed through joint data displays, quotations from the qualitative data about these other dimensions of identity are provided in Appendix E.

Table 5.45
Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: The Role of Socioeconomic Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results: Annual Household Income (in $10K increments)</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid/ Scholarships</td>
<td>P: I participated on a faculty panel of first generation college students. I’m first generation. My dad didn’t graduate from high school. So I’m first with a BS, bachelor’s of [discipline] and then [master’s degree], and so…the getting ready for the first day to teach, so there was like the gender piece and then there was like the imposter piece of like “I’m not a professor”, like, “I’m totally in over my head, and oh my goodness!” and so I would say that class piece and the first generation college student piece still can come up because it does seem like a pretty well-resourced campus and that many of the students who come here…come from pretty well-resourced [families]…but I feel supported. I would say I feel pretty comfortable with my class background now, so I feel like it’s a strength I bring to the program, but there’s still moments of faculty small talk when people talk about trips and those sorts of things…and hear other middle class stories of how like people own homes and all these sorts of things, then…I have a moment of like, “Well, I don’t you know, and what does that mean, and do I have belong there?” So I still probably, even more than the gender piece, sometimes is the class piece here of, “Is this where I belong?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender- Appropriate Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 1,525)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = -0.09***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.e. = 0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR = 0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P: I came from a pretty lower class sort of background and going to [university], a private university, probably would not have been an opportunity or something that I would have ever sought out if I didn’t have the assistance of some of the financial systems that I had kind of help me out and stuff, so that was kind of neat to kind of intermix with this sort of higher class, people…The class thing was kind of interesting, so the assumptions made and the...really expensive [tuition]…But I guess maybe sometimes I would hesitate to express certain experiences I had in the past, kind of thinking that, “Well, that was probably pretty unique compared to the rest of the people in this room, so I’m not probably not comfortable talking about that.”

P: I am not aware of this latter one of the being forced to present as the wrong gender. I’ve known a number of people who chose a middle ground and who just go for an androgynous presentation in order to… I think, actually, a portion of that is economic, in the sense that, the student I was telling you about who worked in our office…I don’t know whether he intends to transition completely or if that’s important to him. It’s not my business, so I don’t ask. I don’t know what his intentions are in that regard, but I know that it’s not an easy thing for somebody in college to afford. The costs are pretty high. And that’s why I wonder whether there’s anything in relation to insurance. I think there probably isn’t.

P: My parents weren’t wealthy by any means, but we were middle class, White family, and that has given me the ability, and that everyone in my family is educated, so it’s given me the ability to take care of myself and figure out what I need to do to transition and how to finance it and all those kind of things. And I know people that are not as well-educated that are having trouble trying to find the resources to thrive, really.

P: Because I don’t live in poverty, I’m aware that there are a lot of things that I can do and I’m afforded a certain respect because of what I drive, because of the way I dress or whatever that I can get away with that someone who might be poor can’t.

**p < .01. *** p < .001.

The mixed data in Table 5.45 above demonstrate that—for both the quantitative models and the qualitative results—socioeconomic status matters when it comes to transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences on campus. Annual household income was a statistically significant predictor of discrimination in financial aid or scholarships, a lack of access to gender-appropriate housing, and an inability to change student records.
Specifically, those with lower incomes were at greater risk for negative outcomes. The quotations provided also reveal a similar pattern—that people who came from lower class backgrounds tended to question whether they belonged on campus and were more hesitant to speak about their background in a classroom setting. A few participants pondered about whether transgender people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds would be able to afford to undergo medical transitions while in college because so much of the costs tends to be out-of-pocket. The last two quotes in the table both offer reflections on social class privilege and how those who are at least middle class are able to achieve more and be perceived with respect on campus compared to trans people who are financially struggling.

Next, Table 5.46 looks at the role of race/ethnicity in transgender people’s experience in college settings. Within the quantitative logistic regression models, being a person of color predicted greater risk for being denied financial aid or scholarships and being denied access to bathrooms or other facilities due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. The qualitative data in the table above support these findings, indicating that trans people of color tend to face a climate that is not only less supportive of their gender identity/gender expression, but also not very welcoming and affirming of their racial and/or ethnic identities. A number of the quotes above indicate that those who are White on college campuses experience unearned privileges based on skin color in navigating spaces and being given priority when making specific housing and admissions requests; this is supported by the quantitative data about bathroom access, but not by the
### Table 5.46

**Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: The Role of Race/Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results: Race (Dummy)</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Aid/ Scholarships</strong> <em>(N = 2,076)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$B = 0.65^{**}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.e. = 0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR = 1.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I think being White has afforded me a lot of privilege on campus just interacting with administrators and just I have a lot of connections through like my [family member], in particular, I mean first year I came here I was…on the waitlist for school and to get into the dorms…My [family member] put in a phone call to a friend that called the chair of the [university board], called…the [upper-level administrator] of [university] and then the [upper level administrator]’s office called me and said, “We’re working on this. We’ll have an answer within a couple of days,” and I was first. I became number one, with priority preference. So I’m afforded a lot of privilege based on my [family member]’s connection…I mean there’s a lot things that play in, but so I’ve been really aware of that and…I’m fucking pissed if it was that hard for me as a White trans person, what it’s going to be for somebody with kind of multiple minority identities, you know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender- Appropriate Housing</strong> <em>(N = 1,525)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I feel like it’s fair to mention… maybe you all considered this but there are a lot of identity pieces at play, so the gender piece is…just another slice of deli meat in my sandwich of identity messes on campus. But it’s really hard to juggle because I never know what is the triggering problem here. And so I think academic institutions in a lot of ways do not accommodate a lot of different identities, and so to tack some of those pieces onto the gender variance piece just makes everything I think feel that much more complicated and overwhelming. But it’s pretty real—there are definitely places where that shows up, and I’m not only a gender freak but I’m also… a Mexican gender freak, and that will bring its own set of issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities</strong> <em>(N = 2,001)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$B = 0.33^{**}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.e. = 0.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR = 1.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> And being a minority is just putting it in a whole other field, in a whole other field. You know, mainly because folks of color have told me [university]’s a very White campus, and to me…I don’t like that term. I feel like it’s a campus and if there just happens to be more people of a certain group, that’s just the way it is. My dad is [European descent]…very light [skinned], and my mom’s [Latino] from [Latin American country] so I don’t look [European] at all because he’s my step-father, but that’s who I grew up with…But in this process I’ve realized that in my head becoming more male is now turning into a Latino male. I never would have thought of that before. Never thought like, “How are people going to perceive me as a Latino male?” I just thought male.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allowed to Change Student Records</strong> <em>(N = 1,400)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **P:** The fact that I’m certainly perceived as White and I’m three quarters Caucasian, carries a lot of privilege. That means I don’t have to deal with some of the double whammies that trans people of color have to
deal with and I’m very aware of that…

P: This is such a white campus there’s really no effects there [for me as a White person].

P: Within the GLBT population here there’s a lot of issues with racism. It’s bad. I think we spent most of last year dealing with the bad situations from that. Like somebody dropped the n-word in the [LGBTQ student organization]…It doesn’t directly relate to trans [issues], but just speaks to a broader culture.

P: Well, I most certainly have White privilege in navigating those spaces [on campus], and yeah, I’m sure my experience is a lot easier.

**p < .01. ***p < .001.

findings for race/ethnicity in the quantitative models predicting access to gender-appropriate housing.

As one of the participants of color noted, adding another marginalized identity to your background can make the campus experience even more “complicated and overwhelming.” It should be noted here, however, that the CTOC sample was limited in terms of racial and ethnic diversity; while there was a sizeable subsample of Latino participants, few to no participants identified as African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, or Native American, which limits this analysis of the impact of race and ethnicity.

Table 5.47 explores these dynamics in terms of a transgender person’s age. The results regarding age are not as straightforward as the results for some of the other dimensions of identity. Either age or age squared were statistically significant in two of the quantitative models, but even these results were in opposite directions: for each one year increase in age, a person was 1.11 times as likely to be denied access to financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender, whereas the relationship between age and denial
Table 5.47
Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: The Role of Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results: Age &amp; Age Squared</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Aid/ Scholarships</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 2,076)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B = 0.10^*)</td>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.e. = 0.05</td>
<td>OR = 1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR = 1.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Appropriate Housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 1,525)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 2,001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td>(B = -1.11 \times 10^{-3}^*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.e. = 5.13 \times 10^{-4}</td>
<td>OR = 9.99 \times 10^{-1}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allowed to Change Student Records</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 1,400)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Age Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \(p < .05\).

of access to bathrooms was curvilinear—with increasing risk up to about age 30, and exponentially decreasing risk thereafter. Very few CTOC participants spoke of the impact of age on their campus experiences when queried about the role of their identities other than gender, but comments that were offered were made by non-traditionally aged (older) students who expressed feeling a disconnect from or sense of frustration with the immaturity of their (younger) student colleagues. None of the participants in the CTOC
study spoke specifically about how their age may impact their experiences in obtaining financial support from the campus or in accessing bathrooms or other facilities on campus.

Finally, Table 5.48 is a joint display looking at how having a disability may impact one’s campus experience. In this context, the term *disability* is conceptualized in the same way as the term is used in the NTDS survey—including physical, learning, and/or mental disabilities, other than a gender-related mental health diagnosis. In the quantitative models, having a disability predicted greater risk for unequal treatment in access to financial aid/scholarships and to gender-appropriate bathrooms on campus. While only a small minority of the CTOC participants spoke of the impact of disabilities to their on-campus experience, those who are quoted above indicated that they generally faced greater hurdles to being “out” on campus, being involved in trans-related activities, and feeling anxious about locating restrooms. One of those quoted above even indicated that the harassment he’s faced on campus has been due to his visible physical disability, rather than to being transgender.

41 However, one participant referenced troubles with documenting financial independence from parents to the financial aid office, which is a situation that would not be faced by older students who can opt to be treated as financially independent based upon age alone.
Table 5.48
Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: The Role of Having a Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results: Disability Status (Dummy)</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Aid/Scholarships</strong> (N = 2,076)</td>
<td>P: There was never an opportunity for me [on campus] to come out really to anyone as trans. So… I never actively pursued being out…working with a group or doing the [trans-related presentations on campus], because they have the speakers go to all the classes, and I originally thought that that was something I would do, but I never got around to it…I had a rough move from [Midwestern state], and we had-- my wife and I went through a little rough patch with… I got really depressed and had a lot of anxiety, and so I was just like, I didn’t need to take on more stuff. I was struggling to get through the classes I was in, let alone branch out and do other stuff so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 0.35* s.e. = 0.15 OR = 1.42</td>
<td>P: Again I haven’t had, I’ve been very fortunate to where again, it’s hard again to challenge someone that’s in wheelchair. You don’t look really cool to beat someone up in a wheelchair…I can’t say that I’ve had negative experiences from the transgender issue specifically… I’ve been harassed for disabilities and things like that, but nothing transgender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-Appropriate Housing (N = 1,525)</td>
<td>P: I suffer from depression and anxiety, and I think that a lot of that is really tightly intertwined with the trans stuff. For years, I couldn’t go in a public restroom because they’d call security on me if I went in the women’s restroom, but if I went in the men’s restroom I wasn’t comfortable, so I would time my way from home not being more than… like I couldn’t go shopping all day, because I’d have to use the restroom at some point. So like the depression / anxiety parts of my life really played a lot with the trans parts, so… that’s kind of a big deal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to Bathrooms or Other Facilities</strong> (N = 2,001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 0.47*** s.e. = 0.11 OR = 1.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allowed to Change Student Records</strong> (N = 1,400)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not statistically significant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

The connection between frequency perceived as transgender, transitioning, and a lack of access to safe restrooms and other facilities on campus. Another finding that shows up in both the quantitative and qualitative data is how others’ perceptions of
one’s gender impact a person’s experience accessing safe, gender-appropriate restrooms and other facilities on campus. Generally, both sets of data indicate that the more frequently that a person is perceived as being transgender or gender non-conforming (or as not fitting gender norms for the particular space one is trying to access), the greater the likelihood of discrimination and mistreatment. The joint data display in Table 5.49 includes both qualitative and qualitative results on this topic.

Table 5.49
Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: Frequency Perceived as Transgender and Experiences Accessing On-Campus Restrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results – Accessing Restrooms and Other Facilities (N = 2,001)</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</strong></td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> The main problem I have is…using the women’s bathroom because I always, have always been assumed as a male. When people first look at me and they don’t hear me talk, they assume I’m a male. And so it has always been awkward using the women’s bathroom. So now it’s just more awkward…I’ve been walking behind females you know into the restroom, and they’ll turn around and say, “This is the women’s restroom.” And I’ll be like, “I know,” and as soon as they hear my voice, they’re like, “Oh I’m so sorry…” and then it’s awkward for us all and so…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B = 0.24</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> And again part of it is that I pass really well so that nobody bats an eye at me when I go into the women’s bathroom. It’s just like, I mean it doesn’t even register with them. It doesn’t set off their radar at all. It’s just another woman coming in to take a pee… But if I was six-foot-three and built like a linebacker, I don’t know what my experiences would have been like. It probably would have been somewhat different, and I had a big nose and the really masculine jaw line, I’m guessing it would be somewhat different, but it just depends on where you’re at… But I know that people who are visibly trans or even like butch lesbians on campus have dealt with crap going on in restrooms, have gotten static from people in restrooms on campus. So like genderqueer, female born genderqueer people in women’s bathrooms or butch lesbians in women’s bathrooms have had to put up with verbal harassment of one sort or another from other people in the bathroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>s.e. = 0.05</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Odds ratio = 1.28</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

250
P: I’ve been able to at least be androgynous enough to go into the guy’s bathroom and stuff like that…I’ve been lucky in a lot of ways.

P: When I had shorter hair, I always got, like, double takes [in bathrooms on campus]. And, I mean, no one ever said anything but…I always got the looks of, “Wait a minute… okay, yeah. You’re a girl, so.”

*** p < .001.

Additionally, there are interesting nuances between the qualitative and quantitative data in relation to transitions and restroom access on campuses, as detailed in Table 5.50. While in the quantitative models, undergoing any type of medical transition was not a statistically significant predictor of denial of access to bathrooms or other facilities on campus, the qualitative data indicate that where someone is in the transition process may play a role in how others treat them on campus in gender-segregated settings because of how this interacts with others’ perceptions of one’s gender. So, while the quantitative data suggest that there is not a difference more broadly between those who have not transitioned from those who have (when controlling for other variables such as frequency perceived as transgender), the qualitative data suggest that there is a difference in safety and access between those who are earlier in a transition process (and may have their gender frequently misread by others) and those who are farther along in such a process. Indeed, when the “frequency perceived as transgender” variable is dropped from the bathroom access model, medical transition becomes a statistically significant predictor of being denied access. This indicates that—at least related to bathroom and
Table 5.50
Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Data: Medical Transitions and Experiences
Accessing On-Campus Restrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAN Results – Accessing Restrooms and Other Facilities (N = 2,001)</th>
<th>QUAL Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition Not statistically significant</td>
<td>P: But during the vital stages of the initial transitioning, that’s an extremely challenging part because, yeah, if you don’t pass one way, the real boundaries and borders become the restroom. I’m sure you’ve had plenty of conversations on those. Because if you don’t pass a certain way it dangerous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: Safety’s something that I really haven’t been too worried about. Earlier in my transition I was, but at this point I’m not going to get beat up in a men’s [rest]room, it’s just not going to happen, because no guy is going to notice that I don’t have a penis unless he’s looking…So…I’m not so concerned for my safety as I used to be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: [Number of] years ago, when I first started, I was definitely still using the women’s restroom because I could pass more feminine. Now that I’ve started testosterone, it’s obviously more challenging. I can, again, because I…have a disability advantage, I can go into the men’s restroom and use the handicapped stall and it doesn’t become a question. But on the flip side, for my able-bodied brothers out there, there’s the issue of being standing up…Men take that as a personal thing. “You’re peeing like a girl.” …So, it’s definitely a scary thing… if you’re not the alpha dog…Using the restroom can be a scary thing if you’re a little Chihuahua in the big Great Dane world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: Before I had really been transitioning, on hormones or living full-time as trans, I once had a barrette in my hair and I went into a men’s restroom. A guy in there laughed at me. That was really the one harassment experience in bathrooms…but I also “hit the genetic lottery” in a lot of ways and no one typically challenges me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

similar facility settings—the degree to which someone is seen as “fitting” the gender norms for that space is a stronger factor in being granted access to the space. For many

42 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes. Verbatim notes are designated with quotation marks.
trans people, starting hormone therapy or undergoing one or more surgeries may result in more being frequently read as their correct gender and not being harassed by others within gender-segregated spaces that match one’s identity.
Chapter Six: Quantitative and Qualitative Results for Research Question Two

This chapter presents results for Research Question Two: How do transgender and gender variant people describe their interactions with people who represent the embodied power of an institution (e.g., supervisors, staff, administrators, professors, etc.)? This chapter will review qualitative and quantitative related to this question; the qualitative data speaks specifically to higher education settings, while the quantitative data focuses on social welfare settings.

Qualitative Results

In answering Research Question Two using the CTOC data, I utilized structural and in vivo coding, without explicit reference to the participatory data analysis coding process due to the difference in focus between this research question and that of the CTOC research team. After I refined and narrowed the codes that were developed to answer this question, a total of six themes were developed: (a) refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns; (b) ignores me or treats me and my community as invisible; (c) displays or promotes transphobia and/or a lack of education about trans people; (d) privileges binary systems of gender; (e) punishes me for being transgender or gender non-conforming; and (f) supports, listens to, and affirms me and other transgender people.
As with other research questions, a random subsample of data were coded for these themes\(^{43}\) by a member of my dissertation committee, using the theme names and definitions that I provided to that person for guidance. For the six themes for Research Question Two, Cohen’s \(\kappa = 0.75\), which Landis and Koch (1977) suggest indicates substantial reliability. This indicated a relatively strong consistency of data coding by the two raters using the theme definitions that I had developed. I will next review these six themes in detail.

**Theme One: Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns.** This first theme focused on participants’ stories of how people in positions of power (supervisors, professors, deans, staff, administrators, health care staff, etc.) either refused to use the correct names and/or pronouns when referring to the transgender individual or had a lot of difficulty doing so. This included instances where people in positions of power made incorrect assumptions about a person’s gender and name (usually their first name) or did not believe the person’s claimed identity. These actions may or may not have been maliciously intended, but the important point was that they regularly happened for many of the 30 participants and were perceived as frustrating and/or risk-producing situations. Participants who experienced pronoun and name misuse included those who identified as women or MTF, men or FTM, genderqueer or gender non-conforming, and those who identified with more than one of these groups. Similarly,

\(^{43}\) The committee member reviewing the data for this question actually reviewed a total of eight themes and definitions; however, later on in the process and after I gained greater familiarity of overlapping data between themes, I decided to drop one theme (*Response to Intersectionality*) due to adequate discussion elsewhere in this dissertation, and merge two other themes (*Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me*, and *Educates Themselves Ahead of Time about Transgender People & Related Issues*). Before these steps were taken, Cohen’s \(\kappa = 0.58\), which indicated moderate reliability.
problems arose regardless of whether an individual used male, female, or gender-neutral pronouns. I will review some examples offered by participants that occurred in specific campus settings: academic settings, campus employment settings, and on-campus health care centers. I will also review some data about the degree to which one passes or where one is in a transition process interacted with experiences of being addressed incorrectly.

Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns: Academic interactions. Most instances of name/pronoun misuse in academic-related settings occurred within the classroom by a faculty member or class instructor. One common classroom routine that presented problems was the class roll call. A number of participants said that they dreaded classes where professors read through a class roster to take attendance—the issue being that many times the “official” class list had an incorrect name listed due to the barriers trans people encounter in trying to change their names across campus systems. Here is one participant’s description of a professor taking attendance who had trouble addressing zir with the correct name:

P: I knew that [the professor] was going to call roll and I knew that it said [masculine birth name] on there, and I just recently decided to start going by [preferred name]...and I knew that I wanted to...let her know [my preferred name]...[When I told her of my preferred name], at first, she reacted the same way that most people do, which is...that pause, and then that eyebrow raise, and then like, “[Preferred name]?”...or “How do you spell that?”...I don’t remember exactly what she said, but she goes, “Well, I’ll try to remember that, I can’t make any promises.” And then the next [class] day... she was reading off roll, and she called my name and...I kind of raised my hand and I said, “[Preferred name],” and she goes, “Oh that’s right, okay. I’m really going to try and remember

At least one participant contested the use of the term preferred in relation to designating a trans person’s current names and pronouns, suggesting that the best way to phrase this would be to say correct names and pronouns. When I summarize data and draw conclusions, I try to use the language of correct name, as suggested by this participant. However, within participants’ direct quotations, where identifying information like a name is removed, the term preferred will often appear to emphasize the individual’s self-selected name/pronouns and to help avoid readers from conflating correct names with legal and/or birth names.
that.”…After class, I introduced myself and I said… “Just so you know, the reason that I want to go by [preferred name] is because I’m currently going through—” and I used the term “gender transition” because I didn’t want to explain all the minutia…The point that I was trying to make was…this is important to me… And she seemed standoffish to me when I was explaining that, and I think that she thought that I was attacking her for not remembering, when in reality I was trying to say… “I’m just not trying to be cute…This is the reason why I want that,” and she said, “Oh okay, well, like I said, I’ll do my best to remember.” And in parting, I was like, “Well why don’t you just mark it on your thing there, just erase those last letters, and that’s all it’ll take?”

There are a number of important things to note in this example—first, that the professor had to be reminded on multiple occasions how to correctly address this student, to the point where the student suggested the simple solution of jotting down a note on the roster. Secondly, as in this example, many times class rosters will only list a student’s legal name; transgender and gender non-conforming individuals who prefer a different name or pronouns often have to explicitly tell their instructors that their name is incorrectly listed. When an instructor simply reads through the class roster, as was done in this example, there is a risk of unintentionally “outing” a transgender student. Several participants noted that they tried to anticipate this issue ahead of time by contacting their instructors at the start of the academic term and letting them know that there may be a discrepancy between the class roster and their correct name. For example, a student in a Professional/Applied Science program noted:

**P:** There was an interesting moment where I had told the professor in advance, "I'm changing my name. Your records will say [old name], call me [first name]." And then, [the professor] forgot. I'm in classes with like 100 people and stuff like that, and so at one point he called on me. I'm raising my hand, and he calls me [old name], and I say, "It's [preferred first name]." He says, “But it says here it's [old name]." I'm like, "Dude!"...And, totally, that was hard in a room of 100 people, and I totally blushed…
In this instance, even warning a professor ahead of time did not stop the professor from “outing” the student’s old name. Another student, who generally chose not to disclose that he was transgender to other people on campus, described a situation where a professor called him by the correct name after being instructed to do so, but constantly used incorrect pronouns, perhaps due to assumptions made about the student’s gender based on the student’s name on the official roster:

P: I’m not so sure about my other teacher, in [humanities department], who calls me [preferred name] but also uses ‘she’ and ‘her’ [even though I use male pronouns].

[Interviewer: When you first start classes, do you talk with instructors both about your name and pronouns?]

P: After class, in the first class, I tell them to call my [first name]. I assume they’ll call me he… but I think the [humanities department] teacher made some assumptions based on the name that’s on my official records.45

Another student, this one in a humanities department, tried to correct a faculty member on his pronoun usage, but the instructor still did not change the way he addressed the student: “[Faculty member], he has not, I’m not too entirely sure whether it’s an act of refusal but even after I corrected him, he’s refused to use the correct pronouns to refer to me.” While this quotation indicates that the student was unclear about whether the faculty member was purposefully using the wrong pronouns, another student had the perception that most pronoun misuse was not ill intentioned, but was simply due to “forgetting”:

P: In general, I think the campus is fairly accommodating, but not being explicitly accommodating. I haven’t really encountered anything from my professors other than maybe not being trained on certain things…They respect pronoun choice without question, but they might slip a lot or forget, but it’s not…mal-intentioned [slang for “maliciously intended”].

45 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
One person who was in multiple roles on a campus, including taking coursework, described a scenario where class roll call became a nightmare when a substitute instructor was not informed of his correct name:

P: This year, I’m in [specific] class, and the fucking substitute that came in—and I don’t know how this happened—but instead of [removing] my female name [from the roster]…the [substitute is] like, “[Female name], is [female name] here? [Female name and last name]? [Female name], is she not here?” and it just, fuck!...I was just frustrated because everybody looked at me… because I was going by [male name]… and they knew I worked at the [LGBTQ student service office], and so that was really frustrating. So it’s still an issue.

In this situation, it was very likely that the substitute instructor did not mean to cause harm, but because the class roster had not been updated and information about the student’s correct name had not been shared with this instructor, this student was “outed” to his peers.

In other cases, participants described scenarios where it was clear that a faculty member was purposefully using incorrect names or pronouns to address them. A genderqueer student shared how professors at zir school have sometimes tried to justify pronoun misuse by referring to their feminist political beliefs:

P: I have had a few professors who I think do refuse to use gender-neutral pronouns...And I think it actually comes out of their feminist politics...I think it comes from a belief that, in using gender-neutral pronouns, I think everyone should use gender-neutral pronouns, and I don’t believe that at all. The example that was actually given to me by a professor was, “If you say he raped her, you know that there’s a power relationship there. That’s something that we can work with in society to challenge gender-based oppression, right? But if you say ze raped ze, you have no idea what that power relationship is, and you destroy any chance of challenging sex- or gender-based oppression, harassment, discrimination, all these sorts of things.” And so basically that I was making the category of gender null...And therefore...[this professor] does, I think, refuse to use gender-neutral pronouns, even though [the professor] actually never said, “No, I’m not going to do that,” I think that that’s the mentality that it’s coming out of. So yeah, so that has been frustrating.
The professor described above did not differentiate between engaging in a theoretical debate with students in the classroom about gender oppression with this individual student’s own needs for respect in terms of pronoun usage.

In addition to experiences with roll call and how students are addressed in the classroom, another academic situation where a trans individual might have their name challenged is in relation to classroom assignments and exams. These interactions may present risk particularly when a professor has a large class and/or does not necessarily know the names and faces of all of the students enrolled. In an earlier chapter (see page 163), I presented a quotation from a participant whose professor did not believe she was who she said she was when the student appeared at his office hours to make-up an exam. This professor actually required the student to present an ID (which he later copied and stapled to the assignment) in order to complete the exam. Trans and gender non-conforming students may encounter such challenge to their identities not just when taking a test or turning in an assignment, but when these assignments are being returned to students. A student in a Natural Science program told of such a situation:

**P:** [The professor’s] handing tests back at the end of class, and she calls names out, which is my absolute worst nightmare: instructors who like to stand at the front of the stadium and call each individual person’s name out and have them walk down the stadium stairs and take your paper and walk back to your desk. So…it’s our first test… I’m ready for the [first letter of my last name] so that I can just grab my paper…Totally feeling anxious. She calls my name, I walk up…and I reach for my paper, and she says, “No, [participant’s first name].” And I say, “Yeah, that’s me.” …And she says, “No… you’re not [participant’s first name].”…And at that point, I rip my paper out of her hand, and I just walked out of the room…She’s calling after me, she’s trying to stop me because-

[Interviewer: You’ve taken somebody else’s paper.]

**P:** I’m some nut case who’s running off with somebody’s paper…And then she gives up and she says…“Oh, pffft! Whatever!” And then you hear students laughing.
This professor made a snap judgment about how someone with the participant’s first name should look and wrongly concluded that the student could not be that person, thereby challenging the student’s claimed identity. This encounter was made more miserable for the student because it happened in front of a classroom of peers, who laughed following the encounter, adding further embarrassment for the student.

As these examples demonstrate, within academic settings on campus, faculty and other instructors frequently addressed transgender and gender non-conforming people incorrectly, whether intentionally or not. Such occurrences have a detrimental impact on this population’s academic experiences and well-being on campus.

Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns:

Employment settings. Transgender and gender non-conforming people who were employed on college campuses also encountered situations where those who embody the power of the institution refused to use or had difficulty using correct names and pronouns to address the individual. Several of those interviewed discussed such scenarios, sometimes even after employees had been informed of correct names and pronouns or when the individual was hired with assurances that the campus was affirming of transgender people. For example, one participant describes how he encountered a lot of “mis-pronouning” (being referred to with incorrect pronouns) in his work department:

P: When I first arrived here, the first two months that I worked here, I hadn’t done any physical transitioning, and a lot of people in the [department] called me “she” even though they knew better. I mean, they’d all been informed otherwise.
[Interviewer: These are employees that didn’t interview you?]
P: No, there were people who were part of the interview. People who were mostly involved in the interview were the [department] faculty, my fellow faculty members, [and the fact that they] were mis-pronouning me was frustrating, and I never found out, I still don’t know how many people I work with know. I mean,
how many of them were informed [that I prefer male pronouns], or how they were informed, before I started working here. My boss claims she doesn’t know. With that in mind, I want to point out that the unit in which I work, the people I work with on a daily basis, have always been good about it, have never mis-pronouned me or anything, so that’s made it a lot better. Even my supervisor can’t say that. And my [upper level administrator] called me “she” in a team meeting, and it was all just horrible.

Another person described the disconnect between promises made before beginning work at a university and the actual environment in terms of respect for pronouns:

P: I think the other pieces [of resistance to transgender inclusion on campus] have been particularly where my colleagues as well as folks who are upper administration have just sort of flat out refused to do pronouns or think differently about those. I think what I was assured of when I came in was not and has not continued to be my experience, so I think that’s been a bit of whiplash.

Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns: On-campus health care centers. When accessing on-campus health care centers, participants hoped to find competent health providers who would respectfully address them with the correct names and pronouns and update any medical records that had incorrect information whenever possible. As discussed earlier in Chapter Five, there were frequently issues with medical records having the wrong name or gender listed for a transgender patient and with medical care staff who were not knowledgeable about transgender people or their needs. In some of these cases, the interactions included medical staff referring to the patient with wrong name and/or pronouns. For example, a student attending a large public university described:

P: I had to explain it all, and this doctor didn’t really make those sort of outraged faces, it was just more like confused. She’s in her… mid to late 50s, so my friend’s always saying, “We have to remember—she’s kind of old school”… So, she’s very good at diagnosing and figuring out what’s wrong and coming up with good and simple ways of taking care of things instead of using antibiotics, but she could never, she could never get my pronouns right. She really had a difficult…time switching my name.

262
When a health care provider refuses to or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns for their transgender patients, this can make patients reluctant to return for future care.

Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns: The role of “passing” and where one is in a transition process. One subtheme related to experiencing pronoun and name misuse by people in power on campus was the degree to which a transgender or gender non-conforming person “passes” as their gender identity and/or is farther along in a transition process. While it cannot be concluded that only people who are frequently perceived as transgender are addressed with incorrect pronouns and/or names, several participants attributed such experiences to the fact that they did not regularly pass as their gender or have not yet completed their transition process. Some exemplars are provided in Table 6.1, grouped by participant’s gender identity and preferred pronouns. These quotations indicate that how others perceived one’s gender, as well as where one was in a process of transitioning, had an impact on how often others struggled with using a transgender or gender non-conforming person’s correct names and pronouns.

Refuses to use or has difficulty using correct names and pronouns: Negative case examples. In coding data related to this theme, I also identified negative case examples--that is, examples of when people in positions of power were adept at using an individual's correct name and pronouns, responded with sensitivity to situations related to name/pronoun usage, or made sure to ask the individual about name/pronoun preferences. In many cases, these positive situations occurred because people either: (a) respected a
Table 6.1
Encountering Pronoun and Name Misuse: The Role of “Passing” and Where One is in a Transition Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Identity</th>
<th>Preferred Pronouns</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woman, or transsexual woman</td>
<td>She/her</td>
<td>P: I didn’t think I’d find much support because it is a small college. It doesn’t have the resources of [another local area university]…or any of the big colleges, but…I feel the community is quite supportive, except for a few instances like the diversity teacher calling me sir… [Interviewer Is that something that happens often?] P: It happens too often. But keep in mind, even once, in my opinion, is too often. I guess it’s probably because I’m more sensitive to it, because of the fact that I want to be seen as who I am, and I don’t want to be called mis-gendered because I’ve had to work, fight tooth and nail to be recognized for who I am. And it’s still, I mean my voice still sucks ass, and I still need to finish up my electrolysis, which is horribly expensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM, boy, guy, trans man</td>
<td>He/him</td>
<td>P: I don’t pass very well, which is problematic because I never used to have issues with that…I don’t think I foresaw problems with my teachers with pronoun[s] and stuff, but then I do have issues with those….I don’t know if it even occurred to me before I got here or not…When I did come out through [artwork] in one of my classes, and my teacher kept calling me she even after this [art product], I had the word ‘he’ in huge letters on the screen and [the professor] still didn’t get it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genderqueer, transgender</td>
<td>Ze/zir or mixed use of pronouns</td>
<td>P: I think that how I get seen in the context of language of particular pronouns, my students do a far better job than any of my colleagues around either mixing them up. For me, it’s kind of easy—you can mix them up and be good—and none of my colleagues really do that. And I’m not even sure if and when it comes to fruition that I start taking testosterone for a while that my colleagues will be able to see me in any of that language. No, I almost feel like I have to take testosterone before I get seen, which seems really screwed up to me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

person’s request for being addressed with particular names and/or pronouns; (b) corrected their own mistakes in addressing an individual, upon realizing they did so, in a sensitive manner; (c) fully recognized and affirmed trans individuals’ gender identity, including directly or indirectly challenging and altering university systems and procedures that did
Some examples of negative cases in academic settings are provided in Table 6.2. In most cases, the interactions described happened in classrooms between a faculty member and a transgender or gender non-conforming student.

Table 6.2
Refuses to Use or Has Difficulty Using Correct Names and Pronouns: Negative Case Examples in Academic Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> With teachers, I try to email them at the beginning of every [term]. Last [term] I forgot, so I had some issues, and then this [term] some of my teachers didn’t check their email until a week into classes… I really got on them about that. I was just like, “I emailed before classes started because this is a safety issue for me. If people find out my gender by my legal name then that can put me… in danger, I mean, if there’s someone that’s not accepting.” All of them replied back, “Of course, of course I respect that.” And sometimes they’ll be even more respectful. One of my teachers for [social science department], I think she might be genderqueer-identified… she sent me this little anecdote, “Of course I respect you. That’s totally fine. You can talk to me if you need it.” And other ones would just be like, “Yeah, sure.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I had forgotten to send out emails, so when [the professor] went down [the]…roll [call], I didn’t answer my name. I told [him] at the end, “My name’s [preferred name],” and I think I made up a last name because my last name’s so unique…so that people in the room wouldn’t make the connection. And then after class, I went up and said, “Actually, yes this is my first name, this is my name. I actually am enrolled on your roster.” So he e-mailed me that afternoon saying, “Hey, thank you for telling me. I’m really sorry that.” …He apologized and said, “If this is an issue, do you want to let the class know?” Because it was one of those seminar style ones where we always talk…so there’s a lot of third person pronouns and everyone knows everyone. So I was like, “Thank you for offering, but I’d rather do it through my work”…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I haven’t had anybody refuse to use preferred pronouns this [term]. It’s really great. This [term] I caught one of my teachers correcting himself on his pronouns for me without even having to be reminded…He used masculine pronouns and then…had a little stumble, backed up [and] used the feminine pronoun, and he’s done that twice so that doesn’t bug me because…he recognizes that there’s a pronoun disconnect here for this process and is working through it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related to the earlier discussion on passing as one’s correct gender, one participant notes that he does not generally tell people that he’s trans and has consequently had mostly positive interactions with instructors about respecting his preferred name:
[Interviewer: And what have been your experiences with disclosing your identity to students, staff, and faculty?]

P: What do you mean [by] disclose?

[Interviewer: Sharing with people that you’re trans.]

P: Oh. I haven’t disclosed on campus. I talk with teachers to tell them my preferred name, but that’s all… and they’re really good.

A few participants who were working on their campus described instances of having their names and/or pronouns respected in their employment setting. One positive example was offered in relation to going through the hiring process for a university. This individual was beginning to identify as male at the time and using male pronouns, but had not yet been “out” to all of his job references:

P: What wound up happening was I applied for the job at [university], and I usually have three references… When people from the search committee were checking my references, my two standard references, to whom I wasn’t out yet at the time, used female pronouns for me, used “she” and “her,” and then my friend here in [location]… called me “he” and she didn’t correct them, because she knew I identified as male… One HR person in the [department] apparently put two and two together, and called me at work… and asked me what pronouns I preferred… And, I really appreciated her asking because she’d prefaced it with wanting me to be comfortable interviewing. So that was pretty cool. And I came here and interviewed, and people mostly called me “he.” I don’t remember [anyone] calling me “she.”

In this case, the participant’s experience was made better partially because someone in the hiring process asked the individual what pronouns he preferred—and then made sure that those on the hiring committee were informed of this ahead of time.

Another participant, who was in both student and staff roles on a campus, discussed a sensitive situation around graduation where he had asked coworkers to use incorrect (female) pronouns for him so that his parents were not “freaked out” to find that he was addressed with male pronouns in his job on campus:

---

46 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
P: I had a time when my parents were coming to campus to see me graduate, and I knew that it would fully freak them out if all of my coworkers were using male pronouns for me [when my parents were using female pronouns for me]...So I sent out an e-mail to...selected people, and especially people I thought I would run into at graduation, and there was one person, [upper level administrator], who's someone I never really communicated that much with. She’s much older than me, and my own prejudice or bias was, “I don’t know if she’d gets it”... But she made a special trip down to my desk to say, “I wanted to let you know, that e-mail you sent out-- you’re just a beautiful writer. You’re just such a great writer.” And I was like, “Thank you.” And she was like, “And it just really pains me to think that you would have to send that out, that you would have to ask people to, and get called by the wrong pronoun all day for graduation.” And I was like, “Thank you for saying that.” I was just really like... I mean, it just blew me out of the water. I was like, “She’s [upper level administrator]!” And there was no indication in my mind that she ever even got it, so that really...that surprised me quite a bit.

This individual was pleasantly surprised by the support, respect and acknowledgment he received from this upper level administrator regarding his request of using different pronouns on this one occasion.

Finally, there were also some examples shared by participants of being addressed with the correct name in on-campus health care settings. One student shared a situation where health center staff worked around record-keeping barriers that otherwise made it difficult to change a patient’s name and gender information on file:

P: The [on-campus health center] reception desk and the nurse that checks you in and does your weight and blood pressure and stuff, all of them just kind of know [that I prefer to go by another name]. I think there’s probably other patients besides me [with similar requests], I don’t know. They just wrote in pencil my name on my file because they can’t change it legally and it has to be my name, which is tied to the [registrar], which has to be my legal name. But they have it written in pencil, so they know who I am when I call, when they check me in they know, so they just write it as follow up or something like that so they know how to code it so I don’t have to pay, and just how to schedule everything. I was just on the phone, and I was like, “Well, I have another appointment with the nurse, and blah blah blah,” and as soon as I answered, she was like, “Oh hi, [preferred name], we just wanted to let you know your injection appointment is still on, your follow up is this.”
This student had a more positive experience seeking healthcare because the staff had a way of noting and remembering to address him with the correct name, even though he had not yet been able to legally change his name.

**Theme Two: Ignores me or treats me and my community as invisible.** This theme included participants' comments that people in positions of power on campus either purposefully ignored a transgender or gender non-conforming person's presence and needs or treated them and their community as invisible and something not worthy of discussion or focus. This theme included actions whereby a person embodying power on campus pressured trans people to not focus on transgender-related issues in their work, teaching, or research, and acted in a way that minimized or dismissed the unique challenges faced by trans people on campus. While there is clearly a connection between this theme and that which answered Research Question One, the difference is that the focus here is on the actions of people who embody the power of the institution, whereas the theme on invisibility and isolation for Research Question One focused more generally on macro-level institutional patterns, characteristics, and policies.

One powerful way that this theme showed up was in how university officials, particularly upper-level administrators, did not speak about issues or concerns of transgender people, even when naming and supporting other minority populations on the college campus. A participant at a public university offered:

**P:** I think that shows up in the language that gets used or the folks who never get mentioned. I think it shows up in the fact that our [university’s lead administrator] talks about all kinds of different people and still leaves out folks around sexuality and gender identity and expression, when at least half, at least a quarter of suicides in the last year, attempted and unsuccessful, have had something, there have been pieces around sexuality and...gender identity present [that have been
thought to contribute to suicidality]…There’s no institutional accountability or
ownership for the ways in which transphobia, heterosexism, sexism, and all of the
ways in which oppression shows up, shows up on campus daily, and I think very
few things will change until the university as a whole starts to have that
correspondence with itself. And we can fight and organize on the ground as much as
we want. If things don’t shift on the top, very few things are going to change
where I am.

This participant highlights how, if a university truly wants to be committed to supporting
diversity and contributing to the visibility of marginalized populations, those who are
leaders of the institution need to do their part to acknowledge such populations in their
public speeches, their policy initiatives, and their everyday interactions.

While the situation described above was in relation to a college administrator who
more generally did not acknowledge issues around gender identity and gender expression
on campus, other participants talked about how they were ignored in one-to-one
interactions with people who have power on campus. A student described the following
interaction with a professor:

P: I’ve only disclosed to a couple of faculty members, several of whom are queer-
identified or allies and are [gender studies] professors and [department] professors.
I disclosed to a [gender studies] professor two years ago, and the class was
[culture/media/gender course]… I disclosed to her and our [teaching assistant]…And after that, [the professor] treated me really badly. She would
ignore me… I actually was bold enough to actually say what [the Employment
Nondiscrimination Act] was and what was going on [with this policy for
transgender people] in front of the class… and she just shut me down and didn’t
want to talk about it, even though it was all over the media. So, that was a bad one.

A different individual described a setting in which ze was making a presentation to
administrators about the need for gender-inclusive housing, yet those administrators
blatantly ignored and were disrespectful to the group making the presentation:

P: One of the things that we tried working on was gender-inclusive housing, and
we had come up with a couple of different plans and scenarios, and what
happened in the [meeting] with all of the [administrators] was that rather than
focusing on what was being talked about, people were texting or people were asleep—and these were [administrators]… For me and for one of my co-presenters, who is also queer…we walked out of there feeling like we have less allies, and if we, if the two of us, walked out of there, then that meant all of our students who were going to come in or who were already here who wanted to live on campus were going to have that much more of a difficult time.

Another way that this theme of being ignored and treated as invisible showed up on campus was related to how those who embodied power tried to discourage or pressure trans individuals not to focus on transgender-related topics in their work, their teaching, or their research. One faculty member described such a situation:

**P**: I meet with my [upper-level administrator] because we have annual evaluations…And, she…well, my research interests tend to be about queer stuff. She really does not like this. For example…last year, I told her about how I had wanted to do research following a participatory action model involving people [utilizing work department], disclosing as transgender and asking for resources, and then analyzing what type of assistance they received…And, so I told my [upper-level administrator] about this…First she said, “That doesn’t sound very quantitative.” Which, of course it doesn’t, because it isn’t quantitative research! It’s qualitative!...I think this pretty common among administrators, hates anything qualitative…and just wants numbers and numbers and more numbers….And, then, she said the thing about how I should do research about something that relates to my job. So, yeah, it definitely felt like I was being shut down, and it’s a concern, because I would like to stay here long enough to get promoted…and so my [administrator] has to sign off on that…So, I worry that the type of research and work that I do isn’t going to be okay because she doesn’t support it, which would then mean I probably won’t get promoted. So, yeah, that kinda sucks.

Part of the resistance that this individual received from the administrator was around his research proposal not being quantitative or “related to his job.” However, at the same time, the administrator did not acknowledge or affirm the value of research on the transgender community or how this topic may be particularly meaningful for the employee, who himself identifies as trans.

Other participants spoke about instances of being ignored or treated as invisible in terms of how campus staff or administrators responded to their requests for assistance or
reports of discrimination and harassment. One participant, who experienced multiple instances of being harassed and having property damaged by others on campus, discussed a situation in which housing staff ignored and minimized his reports:

P: I think it was [month] of [year], I started getting harassed by someone on campus. They broke into my room, wrote on some of my shit. I talked to the [housing staff] and they basically said, “I’m sorry, it’s not my problem,” and it just kind of continued. It escalated a little bit and then it kind of died down. And then like the Spring [term], was it, [year later]? I don’t know. The next [term], I think that’s right, [I] started getting harassed again, and I was outed on the floor several times just when new people would come by this one person in particular, just like leaving notes on the door.

This individual’s attempts to seek help and address problems of harassment were insensitively and ineffectively handled by housing staff, leaving the trans individual to feel unheard and ignored.

These data indicate the general pattern that trans and gender non-conforming people were regularly ignored or treated as invisible by people in positions of power on college campuses in Colorado.

**Theme Three: Displays or promotes transphobia and/or a lack of education about transgender people.** This theme is concerned with how people in positions of power on campus avoided methods for learning more about how to work with transgender and gender non-conforming people (even when such opportunities were provided on campus), actively communicated pejorative misinformation about trans people, and/or actively resisted and ridiculed transgender people and topics within their work, in the classes they teach, and in how they interacted with others. This theme included people who displayed disgust, fear, and/or discomfort in relation to transgender and gender non-conforming people (i.e., they demonstrated transphobia). This theme did
NOT include blaming a person's problems on their gender identity or transition process; there is a separate theme for this topic (*Privileges Binary Systems of Gender*).

Transphobia was encountered within the classroom, in employment and hiring situations, in daily interactions with other people, and within on-campus health care centers, student services, restrooms, and on-campus housing. Participants encountered transphobic reactions that were very blatant, as well as others that were more implicit. Some of the most blatant experiences were encountered by students in classrooms where faculty openly insulted and encouraged fear and hatred of transgender people. One student, who identified as a trans guy, reported such an encounter:

**P:** I had one negative experience with a professor… [where] I was like, “Wow, I can’t even take your class because you are so transphobic.” …It was a [social science] class… I remember talking to [the professor] about the idea of informed consent in the context of trans health care and how a lot of trans people have to jump through a lot of hoops and have to get all these psychological evaluations…In my experience, I had to jump through a LOT of hoops to get access to testosterone and a lot of different stuff. And I was like, “Why can’t there be a more informed consent model working with that?” And he was like, “Oh, because trans people are fucking crazy.” And I was like, “Whoa!” He was an intense guy to begin with. But, once I asked him about some of that trans stuff, it was like, “Dude, you are so not cool.” So, that was something I did not expect.47

This faculty member communicated a clear message that he sees transgender people as “crazy,” which is reflective of larger cultural messages that pathologize gender non-conformity. This student generally was not “out” about his identity as a trans guy, so it’s quite likely that this professor did not perceive the student as trans.

47 Within this portion of the participant’s interview, it was unclear if the participant was speaking of his current university or a previous university. Technically, if the participant was speaking of a university that he attended more than one year prior to the interview, this example would not be eligible for analysis in this research. However, since it was unclear which campus was being described, I erred on the side of including this description, as it is a powerful example of transphobia within a classroom.
Another student, who identified as a transsexual woman, shared a story of coming out in the classroom and being subsequently insulted by her professor:

P: [The professor] was talking about testosterone and its connection to sex drive. Then I spoke up and said, ‘As a transsexual, I think I have something to important to offer on this.’ The professor responded with, ‘We always seem to have weird people in here.’ Then, later in another class session, trans [issues] got brought up again. And the professor asked, ‘Wouldn’t you feel like beating up your wife if she was once a man?’ Students started agreeing and just expressing disgust about trans people, and the professor didn’t challenge it. I had to leave that space because it was so uncomfortable for me. I talked individually to the professor later, and he apologized. He asked if I would give him a primer on gender identity, which I did… but then later I’ve heard from other students that this professor was still being a problem…So that was a really negative experience with disclosing [my transgender identity]… After he brought that up in class, I stopped being that open. I didn’t want to be a spectacle! So I don’t really share my identity in classes anymore.48

In this instance, the professor both supported the idea that trans people are “weird” and later openly encouraged hostility among students towards the idea of having a trans spouse. These hostile discussions occurred after this trans student disclosed her identity, and this climate discouraged her from being as open about her identity in other classes for fear of being made “a spectacle.”

Other participants spoke of transphobia occurring in their on-campus employment or employment-related interactions. Several individuals discussed grappling with an apparent level of discomfort among their coworkers directed at them. An individual employed at a private university shared:

P: Well, I definitely feel that people who identity under the GLBTQ umbrella are much more open about [my process of understanding my gender identity on campus]…But my fear is the people who don’t say anything. The people who are very quiet. And I’m like, “Okay. What are they thinking? Are they okay with who I am? Can they work with me? Do they feel comfortable working with me? Am I

48 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
safe?” I have not luckily felt unsafe at all. I think a lot of the apprehension is my own because I’m still trying to figure out who I am and my gender expression.

This person’s experience indicates how others’ discomfort can show up as people avoiding conversation and being “very quiet” around the individual, which led this participant to question whether these colleagues were uncomfortable and afraid of him.

Another participant at a private university discussed similar interactions where people seemed uncomfortable:

**P:** I’d say there was one person in that in the [hiring] process here that seems a little uncomfortable... I can remember one person, like an admin person, where I could feel a little discomfort of like in their head like, “Oh, I totally misgendered you. I have to like regroup here,” but I’m pretty used to that and just giving people time to do that.

This person expresses how others’ reactions of discomfort towards her are so typical that she is “pretty used to” such situations.

Other individuals described a general lack of follow-through among university staff and administrators in learning more about how to competently serve and support transgender individuals on campus, even when trainings on these topics were provided at the university. A participant who worked part-time at a campus multicultural student services office noted:

**P:** Again, at the [multicultural student services office]… the staff that wasn’t directly involved with the [LGBTQ-specific position were]… resistant to going to the [LGBTQ and allies] training and to kind of explore that and do that kind of work. And they would talk the talk, but then, in practice, I never really saw it, which is very frustrating to be like, “Uh, just go to a training and learn and do something about it.” So that was disappointing to see that at again one of the progressive places to be like, “Hey, you don’t know gender identity issues and that’s not okay.”
Even though the staff described by this individual worked in an office focused on multiculturalism, there was still a general resistance to learning about gender identity issues that impact transgender people.

Others encountered transphobia and discomfort communicated by others when applying for positions at universities. For example, the following situation was described by a faculty participant:

**P**: I had applied for a position here that I didn’t get, and in processing that … I can’t rule out that my gender presentation wasn’t part of the reason I didn’t get the position. I think that the person, that lead decision maker was really uncomfortable with my gender and it was my understanding after the process that I was close to the unanimous choice of the search committee, but the [administrator] didn’t hire me, and so I remember having that thought in the interview because I definitely didn’t connect with him. It was just a one-on-one. We really met for about half an hour. I remember thinking like, “We’re not, we’re not connecting and I don’t know what’s going on here.” And so when I didn’t get it, in the processing, it was like…there’s a piece of it where I had that thought like, “Maybe he’s not ready to have someone be that visibly queer in his department and all that came with that,” so that would be my one other experience on-campus related to gender, and I can’t affirmatively say that that’s what it was, but I also feel like I can’t rule it out… There’s certainly no way to prove someone’s general discomfort with someone else’s gender presentation…but in hindsight, I wish there was a way to have that conversation.

Transphobia was encountered in other areas of campus life as well, including in on-campus housing and in interactions with student services staff. A person at a public university described multiple ways that the campus climate was hostile towards him and led him to feel unsafe:

**P**: I didn’t feel safe because I was outed in the hall. I didn’t have safe restrooms…I just didn’t feel safe anywhere. So it was a huge struggle and… everybody thought I was their source of frustration, so it just was really a lot of animosity towards me in the hall. And right after fucking victims’ assistance [staff]… said, “I’m sorry we can’t help you.” I think that [administrator] there is actually pretty transphobic. She’s white, she’s relatively privileged. And she doesn’t really get anything about race either. So it’s just really unfortunate and really not okay.
This individual felt he had little recourse for addressing the problems he faced, particularly when staff at victims’ assistance—who are meant to be a crucial aid to students who are harassed or assaulted on campus—were dismissive of his reports.

Another key resource that many transgender students may turn to on a campus is the student health center. Unfortunately, these settings were also sometimes fear-invoking places for trans students, particularly following interactions with medical staff who communicated disgust and shock towards transgender patients, such as occurred to one student participant:

**P:** So, I remember, I think I had bronchitis or something, so I had to go in [to the on-campus student health center], and this woman had a really big cross on, which is fine, and she had some… Christian things that can kind of pass as “I’m not putting something religious in my office,” these little sayings and pictures, but they totally are? She had those, and I was like, “Okay, that doesn’t necessarily mean anything.” And then … she’s like, “So, you’re on testosterone and you have had a double mastectomy?” And I was like, “I’m transgender.” She’s like, “What’s that?” So I had to explain that, and she just kept…making all these expressions of kind of shock and disgust and making me repeat things, and saying, “Well, I don’t really understand.” … I finally got through it, and was like, “Okay, can you listen to my lungs now?” And I felt terribly self-conscious about having to lift up my shirt because there were these scars that were pretty visible at that time…So I left, I’m like, “I never want to see her again.”

When transgender and gender non-conforming individuals who disclosed their identities were met with expressions of “shock and disgust” and basic questions about what transgender means among medical providers, this discouraged these patients from seeking follow-up care. This student’s reaction, for example, was that he “never wanted to see” this doctor again.

**Theme Four: Privileges binary systems of gender.** Participants' spoke regularly of experiences where people in positions of power acted in ways that privileged binary (man/woman) systems of gender and ignored transgender oppression. This theme
includes when people in these roles tokenized trans people on campus, expected them to educate cisgender people about "the transgender experience," asked them inappropriate personal questions, or treated being transgender (or undergoing transitions) as the root of all of a person's health/academic/job problems. This theme also incorporated when people in positions of power acted as if success was solely in the hands of the trans individual, thereby ignoring the role of systemic barriers that existed for transgender and gender non-conforming campus members.

Unlike the similar theme under Research Question One, this theme is concerned with *interpersonal interactions* rather than *macro-level patterns, characteristics, and policies*. However, many of the data that supported this theme were similar to the quotations that were already discussed for the first research question, including content related to tokenization/expecting trans people to educate cisgender people about “the transgender experience” and blaming being transgender (or undergoing transitions) as the root of a trans person’s health/academic problems. Therefore, I will not duplicate that discussion here; nonetheless, it is important to note that the data supported the idea that people who embodied the power of the college campus replicated some of the same patterns of tokenization and blaming of transgender people that were noted for the institution-at-large in Research Question One. My focus here will be on areas that were not covered in-depth in the earlier research question—specifically, evidence that people in positions of power regularly asked inappropriate personal questions of trans campus members, and emerging data that they may also ignore or minimize the systemic barriers that trans people face on a college campus.
Privileges the gender binary: Asking inappropriate personal questions.

Regardless of their role on campus, participants reported being asked personal questions by their supervisors, administrators, staff, or faculty. These personal questions were on topics such as their body or genitals, whether they had undergone transition(s), how they understood or expressed their gender, why they identified as transgender, and how their relationships are with family members after coming out as transgender. Such questions were asked by people who did not need this information to do their job or—in the few cases where such information was relevant—the questions were asked in a very insensitive manner. A student at one campus said:

P: I think there is a lot of gossiping on this campus in general, and then I’ve definitely experienced it as a trans person as well. And it kind of goes hand-in-hand with people asking personal questions… which is something I feel like happens in inappropriate ways on an almost daily basis on this campus…[In addition to the students], staff and faculty tend to ask a lot of personal questions, also.

This student experienced very frequent and persistent questioning, not only from students, but from faculty and staff who zir approached for support. Another student, who was 22 years old, noted that she has found it traumatic to be repeatedly expected to answer personal questions about her financial independence from her parents as part of the financial aid process at her school, even though she recognizes that financial aid staff were not trying to cause her harm:

P: Asking personal questions- well the staff has been really, financial aid staff has been really awful about that. And I don’t mean awful as in they’ve been maliciously trying to hurt me. They haven’t. In fact, they’ve given me enough time and space to actually tell them why because of the independent’s application. I mean, there are a lot of raw wounds that hadn’t been healed yet because of that, and I have to go through that again and again and again.
While it may be necessary for financial aid offices to ask very personal questions to students about their families as part of the process of determining financial need and eligibility, staff should be aware that transgender and gender non-conforming students, as well as other students who have been rejected by their families of origin, may find the experience to be very painful. Personal questions can be asked in a way that respects and acknowledges this reality for students and does not require the student to repeat the story to multiple staff members.

Students were not the only trans people on campus to report facing personal questions—trans staff and faculty did as well. A staff person who worked in an administrative setting on campus noted:

P: And certainly, there have been folks who have asked [me] personal questions about gender, about transitioning, and not folks who had permission, and they felt entitled, although I would say primarily those folks are often colleagues.

A situation where staff and administrators feel “entitled” to ask personal questions of trans people—as if they have a “right” to the information they seek—can be particularly challenging and difficult for an individual to navigate. This participant was in the position of handling questions from work colleagues about gender and transitioning that are private matters and that no one should be forced to disclose.

Personal questions may come from anyone on campus, even from unexpected sources—including from people within the LGBTIQ community who one might expect to be more sensitive and competent. A faculty member encountered such a scenario when he first started teaching on campus:

P: I feel like [my faculty colleagues] that consider themselves to be under the GLBTQ umbrella kind of approached me, which I thought was positive…At first I thought it was, “Oh they’re trying to be warm and welcoming,” but then it felt
like they were more trying to get the scoop. Like, “Who is this new person, what is their identity about?” because then they started to talk about things that I felt like weren’t appropriate because I was so new... It was more of really wanting to know... really intimate details really soon, and those were from faculty members, so I was kind of like, “Okay”... And it really starts to kind of really mess with your mind because it’s like you think, “I just want to be myself.” I want to be able to bind at work and not have people question that. And it’s my own process as far as well, why-- why do I feel like I can’t bind and be who I am at [university]? And I think a lot of it is because I’m afraid that faculty are going to assume things about me, where I am in my process. Because, yeah, I’ve had people ask me all kind of horrible questions when I tell them I’m genderqueer... Remember, I was telling you that the faculty that were like kind of drawn to me in the beginning, they were like, “Oh, we want to know what you’re about?”... Because they’re under that GLBTQ umbrella, I think they thought I would be very open with talking to them about it, and I wasn’t. And they’d be like, “Oh yeah, well it’s like this, right?” And I’m like, “I don’t know yet. I don’t know.” .... I don’t know if that’s faculty thinking, “Oh well, I’m queer, too, so I can ask you those things.” It’s kind of like that if you meet another minority, “Oh, I’m a minority, too, so I know what you’re feeling. I know what it’s like.” And it’s like, “Maybe you have an idea, but we’re different people. We have different backgrounds. Just ‘cause we’re both minorities doesn’t mean you’re going to understand everything about me.”

Again, part of the pattern at work here was that faculty seemed to believe they were entitled to this personal information—“I’m queer, too, so I can ask you those things.”

This was a pressure-laden interaction for this participant, partially because he was so new on campus as a faculty member. He emphasized that he was not comfortable sharing these details and that just because these other faculty identified as GLBTQ does not mean that they will “understand everything about me.”

*Privileges the gender binary: Ignores systemic barriers that transgender people face.* A component of the broad theme *Privileges the Gender Binary* in relation to Research Question Two was how people in positions of power ignored or minimized the systemic barriers that transgender people face that can impede their success on campus.

This subtheme was only found in a portion of the interviews (and therefore needs further
exploration in future research), but I thought it important to highlight data indicating this topic. The importance of this subtheme in relation to Privileging the Gender Binary is that the action of ignoring or minimizing the barriers faced by trans people assumes that they are on equal footing with cisgender people; such “blindness” to structural oppression contributes to the problem of inequality precisely because there are documented disparities in how institutions treat transgender people compared to cisgender people.

This theme was communicated by a 30-year-old student who was relatively new to her degree program:

P: Over the time I’ve been on campus, I’ve identified a couple of people that for whatever minute reason I think, “You might be somebody I can talk to. Maybe.” And so I’ll give it a try, and it takes a lot to be…vulnerable and walk in and say, “Here’s my situation. I’m a big old freak show. I know it…It doesn’t matter what you think about it, but here’s what I need as a student in your course, what would be helpful to me.” And I don’t ever feel that I’m asking for anything above and beyond, but it’s really common for, I had one professor, her reaction to me was, “Well, situations are what we make of them, and we can only be responsible for ourselves. And, in the end, if you want to be successful, you will be.” And, and I had just finished trying to explain to her that I feel like so much of it is out of my control. If this were truly [a situation where]… my success rests squarely on my shoulders, then that would be an entirely different story, but I’m not sure that that’s really how it really goes down. So, not a lot of professors… try to give me pep talks…[or are] encouraging around how I’m being somehow self-deprecating or I’m bringing this on myself. And, actually that’s been, that has been my only experience. I have yet to reach a point where I come clean and reach out to a professor and have what feels like a really positive…validating experience.

This student points out that it can feel quite vulnerable to approach someone on campus who seems “safe” to seek help in succeeding on campus as a transgender or gender non-conforming person. Yet, this student’s experience in approaching a professor was to be told, “If you want to be successful, you will be,” which ignores the very real threats of discrimination and harassment that confront gender non-conforming people, including those negative consequences detailed throughout this dissertation. Assuming that anyone
who wants to succeed will is a line of thought that justifies blaming transgender people who end up struggling when they face discrimination, violence, or harassment.

**Theme Five: Punishes me for gender non-conformity.** This theme focused on participants' experiences with people in positions of power acting in ways that punished them for being transgender or gender non-conforming. Such punishment could be intentional or unintentional, malicious or kindly meant, including: (a) requiring trans people to jump through extra hoops that aren't required of cisgender people, such as showing IDs or surgery letters or getting a third party to document that the individual is not supported by family members; (b) publicly shaming trans people or teasing them about their name, pronouns, gender identity, or gender expression; (c) firing or not hiring a person because of their gender identity or gender expression; and (d) publicly outing a trans person. All of these issues were also discussed in the theme of the same name within Research Question One, and the vast majority of the related exemplar quotations for this theme about one-to-one interactions were explicated within that earlier section related to institutional characteristics. This may be because the types of punishments that trans people experienced were often at the hands of a specific person, typically someone who has institutional power. Therefore, I provide one sample quotation on each of these areas below in Table 6.3 in order to remind the reader of such experiences without being overly redundant of the content from Chapter Five.
Table 6.3
Punishes Me for Gender Non-Conformity: Sample of Exemplar Quotes, Organized by Subtheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requiring trans people to jump through extra hoops that aren’t required of cisgender people</td>
<td><strong>P</strong>: And so I show up to take my test [at the professor’s office], and he’s got a student in his office and they’re talking about something...And, [the professor] looks at me and he’s like, “Who are you?” and I said, “I’m [first name], we had e-mailed, you said I could come in and take my exam.” He said, “You’re not [first name].” And I said, “Yes, I am, actually. Here’s my ID,” right? Nip this in a bud, here’s my ID, it’s over. And he looks to the student and he says, “[First name]’s a girl’s name, isn’t it? Isn’t that a woman? He’s not a woman...do you know him?” And the student’s like, “What?”... And it just was this bargaining, bargaining to the point where I started to feel really frustrated and angry...So in my head, I’m starting to go into a total meltdown...He finally gave in, but he made me sit in his office while he was talking to the student, and then afterwards he asked me to see my IDs again, actually made a copy of my student ID and stapled it to my test. I don’t know what he was trying to do, right, but in his mind, he still wasn’t convinced, and so he’s trying to accumulate a body of evidence, I guess, to come back to after the fact. But that, that was a really, that was a really shitty experience...But it’s, that’s pretty typical—having interactions with professors who assume I’m a guy. I’m not. They’re flustered, frustrated, shocked, any number of emotions, and for some reason it comes out as negative stuff towards me...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Publicly shaming or teasing trans people about their name, pronouns, gender identity, or gender expression | **P**: So beforehand, [the professor] was talking about testosterone and its connection to sex drive. Then I spoke up and said, ‘As a transsexual, I think I have something to important to offer on this.’ The professor responded with, ‘We always seem to have weird people in here.’

---

49 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
Firing or not hiring a person because of their gender identity or gender expression

P: And then like a few days later...the head manager called me in and was like, “Okay, so there [are] some issues with your commitment to the job...” and she was like, “You just up and left early one day.” And I was like, “It was twenty minutes early, I asked the manager.” She was like, “I don’t have record of that.” And it’s like, okay so the manager failed to do their job to let you know that it was okay I left early, whatever. And then she...instead of just saying, “It seems that you don’t have a good fit with the job,” she framed it as, “[These] things that you’re going through with your life, [they’re] probably really stressful,” and she never outright said because you are a transgender...When she was firing me...to me, it sounded like her misperception of transition had given her the impression that I was just too stressed by it all. I mean, to me it seems like firing a woman because she’s like full of estrogen or something like that. It’s that same exact thing where, “Oh, well, you have this thing that just makes you stressed,” I mean, that’s the way it was phrased...To me it was just that I couldn’t handle a job with school stress. But she saw it as because of my trans, she even said later on, “When you’re a little farther along, a little more well adjusted, we can talk about you coming back.”

[Interviewer: That’s pretty blatant.]

P: Yeah. I feel like I could have done better as an employee, but at the same time, that reasoning was pretty plain—it was pretty obvious that it was because I was trans.

Publicly outing a trans person

P: This past fall...I found out through a basic conversation that the human resources person in the [department] had been outing me to employees. What happened is that, this is before I started hormones and I guess [was] kind of ambiguous, and people would ask her if I was a he or a she. And she would tell them, but then she would explain why...So I was very upset when I heard about that. Like, to the point where I think I spent several weeks just seething about it before I could even begin to do anything. And so, once I’d calmed down a little, I went and told my boss who said that this person was just trying to be helpful and she didn’t mean anything by it. And I’m like, “I don’t care if she didn’t mean anything by it, it’s still violating my confidentiality and my privacy.”

Theme Six: Supports, listens to, and affirms me and other trans people. Not all of the themes identified within the data reflected negative interactions with people who embodied institutional power. In fact, a number of those interviewed made clear that they have had very positive and supportive interactions on campus with people in administrative, faculty, and staff roles. Participants said that such experiences were
unexpected and often countered their expectations. This sixth theme thus encompassed participants' comments that people who have power on campus communicated support, demonstrated an ability to listen to trans and gender non-conforming people, affirmed and welcomed the presence of trans and gender non-conforming people on campus, and educated themselves about working with this population, even perhaps prior to encountering a transgender person on campus. These actions were carried out by individual staff, professors, supervisors, etc. that participants said were part of their support network on campus. The supportive actions included: (a) responding with support and affirmation when a transgender or gender non-conforming person discloses their gender identity; (b) recognizing that trans and gender non-conforming people may have some unique needs and challenges that differ from others on campus; (c) being kind to and not tokenizing of a trans person; (d) attempting to correct an individual’s records and e-mail address to reflect the person's correct name and correct gender; (e) attending or organizing transgender-inclusive trainings; (f) apologizing for mistakes (such as incorrectly labeling a person's gender) and correcting one's actions in the future; (g) allowing work employees to dress according to their gender identity; and (h) advocating for trans-inclusive policies and other changes on campus that were meant to support trans people and reflected best practices.

**Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Responds with support and affirmation when a trans person discloses their gender identity.** Participants noted that choosing to disclose one’s gender identity and/or status as transgender can be a moment of incredible vulnerability; to have this disclosure greeted with support and affirmation by another
person—particularly a supervisor, faculty member, staff person, or administrator—was often surprising for participants, and yet a very important moment of support within the college environment. Examples of such instances of support are provided in Table 6.4, organized by the person’s gender identity. All of the individuals quoted here were in student roles at public universities.

Table 6.4
*Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Responds with Support and Affirmation When a Trans Person Discloses Their Gender Identity, Organized by Participant’s Gender Identity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Gender Identity</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combination of categories</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I disclosed to my [natural science department] teacher first this term, and she’s the like the majorly strange or unknown to me before I had met her…and she… was pretty responsive…She had a lab notebook one day from with a male name in it and didn’t know if it was someone who was in that class because she wanted the names of all the men in the classroom, and she asked me as well as every other man in the room, which was pretty cool because most other students wouldn’t gender me that way, and she did it without like being awkward or obvious… It was pretty cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM, male, or trans-masculine</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> My sophomore year I think… there was a nurse that was working [at the health center]…that one of my friends who worked at [health center] had found out was pretty okay with trans issues. And I guess she had been doing [hormone] injections for different trans people for awhile and was just starting to really learn about it more. And I talked to her, and she was really awesome about it. She was like, “Okay.” … I told her I was trans, this is what’s going on, and she was really kind about it, didn’t really ask any personal question about it, was really sensitive, and even with a few things was like, “Here’s a birth control that can even help you in perhaps masculinizing a little bit.” And was really awesome about working with me on what I was comfortable with my body, maybe suggesting things. But in a respectful manner. So that was a huge improvement over the “doesn’t-even-know-how-it-works-and-not-being-respectful-at-all.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P:** And then, obviously, working here has been really supportive and great, [staff of LGBTQ student services office]. The staff is really great…The one other staff person …[who] was in my [LGBT studies] class years ago where actually I came out to the class, which is the only time on campus I’ve ever talked about my experiences…So, she knows, and she’s cool with it, and so it’s very, been very positive here.
Genderqueer, androgynous, or otherwise non-binary

P: I felt the most comfortable with the professors and teachers, and I never felt like I was in an unsafe classroom to be able to express stuff… I always appreciated the professors that I could connect with and be full disclosure with because they treated [me]… like an adult as opposed to a student, so I was able to have more conversation…They were just more understanding and more accepting…I don’t think it was necessarily because of gender stuff. I think it was just the fact that I was open and confident with them about my lifestyle and whatever…Building the relationship was really crucial because I couldn’t connect with the students, so that was really important for me.

Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Recognizes that trans and gender non-conforming people may have some unique needs and challenges that differ from others on campus. A second form of support described by the research participants was the ways that people in positions of power on campus recognized that transgender and gender non-conforming people may face unique challenges and have specific needs within the campus environment that differ from other people. Such recognition led to additional advocacy or steps taken to make sure the transgender person’s needs were being met in relation to housing, employment, respect in the classroom or on the job, record changes, and other areas. However, an important distinction should be noted here—this recognition of unique challenges and needs was different from pathologizing trans people or demanding that they educate others about the challenges they face. Rather, supportive actions recognized the humanity and dignity of the person, while acknowledging the existence of transphobia and structural barriers for trans people and the need for cisgender people to take the steps to educate themselves about such problems and to create positive change. For some exemplar quotes on this topic, see Table 6.5. These quotes are detailed according to the type of setting in which these supportive interactions occurred.
Table 6.5
*Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Recognizes that Trans and Gender Non-Conforming People May Have Some Unique Needs and Challenges that Differ From Others on Campus, Organized by Campus Setting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Setting</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support Services</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> Like, she’ll run into me, and [say], “How are things going? How are you doing?” And just something about that tells me that maybe she actually hears that I have some unique challenges and experiences on campus. And that, that’s been nice… It’s been nice to see how… she kind of took it and she handled [our initial negative interaction], she made it her own. She didn’t make it my problem. She owned that it was her thing, and she was going to figure out how to, I don’t know, come to peace with it or learn about it or whatever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Housing</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> So I went into the housing office, and got a name of someone to speak to, it was [housing office staff]. And I said, “Here’s the deal, I’m transgender. I’m wondering if there’s a way I can get a single in this building?” And he was like, “Of course!” [And I said,] “You don’t even need a letter from a therapist? You don’t need to prove this?” He was like, “No, no, no, I totally trust you. I totally understand, we’re here to help you.” So he let me do paper application to get it in first priority, he had, they were redoing the building, so he had all the floor plans because they were redoing it. And he even laid it on his desk and was like, “Here are all the singles, you get to pick whichever one you want,” really awesome with it…Looking back on it, I’m really happy that that avenue was available to me since I was able to get the name of this person, and they were so willing to help. Like within a few minutes of meeting with him he was just like, “Yep, we’ll take care it, we’ll help you.” And that was really amazing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Career Services      | **P:** I found [student career services] to be surprisingly supportive as well. I didn’t expect them to be aware of trans issues or think they could help trans people with employment issues. And actually, they’ve shown that they’re aware of things they confront, they present information to trans people about some challenges around job hunting.\(^{50}\)  

---

\(^{50}\) This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
Student Employment / Teaching Assistantship

P: [Faculty] who’s the professor that I’m currently [acting as a teaching assistant] for has requested me for next term, so I’ll work under him again, and he’s… he’s somebody that I have talked about the whole trans issue, and since I hope to be starting hormones before next [term], then we decided that it’d be great if I didn’t have to teach and his class doesn’t require recitations. And so, he’s like “I’ll just ask for you as my [teaching assistant], and then I won’t have to worry.” Yeah, so, so on that level, employment has been great. I couldn’t ask for anything more…[Faculty], the guy that I [am a teaching assistant] for, he’s actually not my advisor…but I’ve [worked] for him last year and we’ve become good friends anyways, and so I think his support, probably first and foremost, gave me the ability to even approach the idea of coming out to people.

Campus Health Center

P: And [the health care provider] even said, she even went through logistics. “If you don’t want to wait in the women’s waiting room, we’ll find another room for you. If you won’t insert anything here,” she’s like, “We will work with you on this.” She’s very respectful about everything. I had asked her if she could write me a carry letter, which is you know is the letter that…I can keep in my wallet, so if my ID gets rejected, I can say, “Hey, this is why I don’t look like my ID.” She even wrote that up for me. And she’s been working on other things in my file. She put on a specific flag and stuff that says I’m trans, so extra care with my file.

Hiring Process for On-Campus Employment

P: Someone who was on the search committee who I ended up staying in touch with followed back up with me and said, “I can’t rule out that [the decision of the administrator not to hire you] wasn’t around your gender.” When they said it, it was like, “Yeah, I can’t either,” and…so that was affirming on the one hand because I think I sometimes don’t track [whether there are] ways in which how I look impacts my life beyond the sort of constant, “Can I help you sir?”… I’m used to managing that, but I’ve never really sort of structurally thought how I look, it’s like the end-all thing. We often talk about people getting protection around not getting fired, but there’s also a piece within to where it would be protection around people not getting hired… It was supportive and a little bit surprising when … I didn’t get the [campus] job that people were willing to follow-up and say, “We disagree with the decision. We were on the search committee. We thought you were great.” It was hard, and, but it was supportive…because otherwise I was like, “Maybe I really just read it all wrong. Maybe I didn’t interview well. Maybe I just had a bad experience and don’t know it,” so it was that validating piece of just people following up saying, “No, it was great,” and then the particular comment around gender was supportive as much as it was hard. Because I think that’s one of the challenges with… when you internalize things, like, “Oh, I’m just being ridiculous! That had nothing to do with that,” and it’s like, “No. Possibly it did.” And so, I was able to dismiss it myself and be like, “You’re just being ridiculous. It probably had nothing to do with that,” but when someone else said it, I was like, “It might have, you know,” and like, “What does that mean?” And I’m not sure I’ve resolved that piece, but it doesn’t mean I’m going to put on dresses and change who I am. It might mean that it is probably a place I
don’t want to work, but it’s also sad. Yeah, so that was supportive—just people naming things that are real.

Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Acts with kindness and does not tokenize me for being transgender or gender non-conforming. Participants also discussed how some people on campus simply treated them with kindness and did not exoticize or call unnecessary attention to their transgender identity or expect them to speak for all transgender people. Such support came from student support services staff, multicultural student services offices, faculty, and other administrators. Table 6.6 includes quotations on this theme, classified by the race/ethnicity of the participant. One thing to note that, in the data representing this theme, participants of color appear to be over-represented compared to the sample-at-large; it is unclear why this is the case.

Table 6.6
Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Acts with Kindness and Does Not Tokenize Me, Organized by Participant’s Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity of Participant</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>P: I think about this woman who works at the [campus office]. I go in to visit her for [specific office assistance]…My assumption is that she’s queer, and she definitely has a kind of a gender-variant presentation. I don’t know anything about how she identifies, I know her name. But she’s always been super nice to me, and from the first time I walked in. I don’t know what your experiences are, but I feel like I come into contact with individual people and there’s just almost this, kind of like, “I know. I know you know. You know I know…The rest of the world is hell, so why don’t we just be good to each other here in this moment.” So, I stop in and see her whenever I’m having a rough day on campus… It’s not like it’s even a really intimate relationship: I know her name, and she knows my name, but we don’t talk about anything that really matters. It’s just being able to see her and knowing that, knowing that she knows and she’s not going to be mean to me. She’s going to give me [the materials I request], and she’s not going to make a big deal out of who I am or what my name is or… and I think that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
there are, just like her, there are a couple of individuals that I can think of that I stake out.

White & Latino  
P: I think [one place of support that surprised me] in general...[was] the nonchalance about it that I’d experienced when I’d disclose to professors, where they like take a minute to get it. You can always, like, see it. They’re like, “Oh, oh okay, that’s cool,” and it’s over, and they’re not about to ask me a ton of questions or like make me explain, and that kind of support is actually really helpful when people don’t necessarily have to get it in order to help you.

Unspecified/Other  
[Interviewer: What kinds of things have found to be helpful from fellow students, from professors, from staff people, administrators in terms of making you feel more part of the community or making you a successful student?] P: Well, definitely in the [LGBT sexuality] class having the staff member, the instructor who is willing to embrace all of the gender identities out there and gender orientations and all of it. It’s not, the instructor’s not, “If you’re this, you need to get out.” It’s the instructor that challenges the mind, and so that’s definitely an area in one of the places I find a great deal of good, positive space to be able to talk about these things and get more people involved ad give ten more people in my class more information about, real information and not just...them creepy guys on Jerry Springer… that’s where I’ve been most fortunate to find good, positive energy on campus. And an environment that’s promoted learning, on all levels…

Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Attempts to correct an individual’s records and e-mail address to reflect the person’s correct name and correct gender. As was discussed at length in Chapter Five about Research Question One, the participants in the CTOC sample reported frequently experiencing bureaucratic hurdles and resistance to changing their campus records to reflect their correct names and gender identities, if such change were needed. Therefore, when campus representatives actually went out of their way to support trans individuals in changing these records, these actions were perceived as forms of interpersonal support and affirmation, helping these individuals to feel welcome on campus. Participants said that just the act of trying to help them on this issue was supportive, even if campus bureaucracy and information systems ultimately would
not allow changing these records or required further documentation (e.g., a legal name change) that the individual did not yet have. While the vast majority of participants described many more occasions of resistance than of support in changing records, there were several individuals who described the latter. Table 6.7 provides evidence of this support.

Table 6.7
Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Corrects Records and E-mail Address to Reflect a Person’s Correct Name and Correct Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> So the bureaucracy has been very complicated. When I called the [LGBTQ student services office]…I said… “What do I do for all this stuff?” And, somebody, I think it was a guy who works in the orientation department, was working here, and he was like, “Okay, here’s the name of someone at the registrar, here’s the name of someone at all the different places who is either queer or an ally.” So, I would find this one person, I would go and I would say, “Okay, so my name,” and it wasn’t legally changed yet, so the woman at the registrar’s office was like, “Okay, we can use your initials. That’s all we can do. We can use your initials and then you can say, ‘Hey, there’s a mix-up. This is my name.’” …The woman who worked for [the IT department] was really great with the e-mail. And she erased my other name and made it all switch to just my initials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> When I declared my minor the other day, the professor that I went and talked to…she didn’t have any problem, and she tried to help me figure out a way to see if I could get my name changed in the system with my ID number so I wouldn’t have to have that conversation with every single person. And unfortunately, you can’t do that until it’s done legally, but still I thought that was pretty cool to have teachers and professors that are just like, “Yeah, well, we can help you out with that if you need it.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Educates themselves about transgender and gender non-conforming people and related issues.** This topic included participants' experiences of how people in positions that embody institutional power were proactive in learning about transgender people and how to best serve this population, even if they had yet to knowingly encounter a transgender person. The data indicated that people in positions of power had either informally educated themselves or had previously attended trainings, workshops, conferences, etc. that had contributed to their ability to competently
serve transgender and gender non-conforming people on campus. Such proactive education on the part of campus leaders and staff generally led to more positive interactions (as perceived by trans-identified individuals) and communicated that transgender and gender non-conforming people were welcome members of the campus community. This included experiences where transgender people were involved in leading a workshop or training for staff about transgender issues that was positively received, and their role was by their own choosing, not a situation where they were forced to fill the role of “trans educator.” Exemplar quotes are detailed in Table 6.8, classified by participant’s role on campus.

Table 6.8
Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Educates Themselves about Transgender and Gender Non-conforming People and Related Issues, Organized by Participant’s Role on Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role on Campus</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Student        | P: Okay, well part of a really supportive thing that I've experienced is just when… professors that I've talked to, they are already familiar with what I'm talking about and then take the next step of providing me with suggestions or ideas. Not only do I not have to explain myself to them, but they actually have sort of a complex understanding of me that then enables them to give nuanced advice or suggestions that's like into the future… I just feel really seen by some of the people who've been really supportive… It hasn't come from long conversations or explanations or anything. It's come from just a real… my sense is just that they're experienced, they're knowledgeable, personally. They don't need a lot of explanation… They just sort of hear me, and then they're excited to take the next step instead of getting stuck in, like, "No wait. Could you explain your gender identity one more time?" Or, "Could you explain your professional goals one more time?"
 |
| [Interviewer: What’s helped make your experience more positive?]  
P: …I’ve been able to meet supportive people or people that would be potential allies have become allies because of these resources. I haven’t had to do all the educating myself, I haven’t had to feel like an outsider. I found a community, I found support really easily. Most professors have heard something before, so maybe e-mailing them isn’t the first time that they’ve heard about it. I think that’s there’s just more awareness in general.
**Staff**

*P*: This particular building is very inclusive, intentionally inclusive, of a lot of issues, and a vein of that is definitely GLBT issues, diversity issues, very intentionally being the trans issues, the gender identity issues, even our [management group]… The film that [a student] was involved in…our [management group] reviewed that film with [staff of the LGBTQ student services office] because it was a student, first of all, because it was a student that was identifying as trans…That actually was presented to our [management group], which is basically all the managers of our departments in our building… [The response to the film] was very positive. There were a lot of questions, there were some discussions… I know some people came and talked to me, had some questions for me. I put myself out there as a resource… And I said, “I know [student], and I know during this filming I know what she went through.” I said, “Feel free to ask questions of me,” and… I was on that [management group] as a resource for people because it was uncomfortable for a couple of people that this is totally brand new, and like “Oh my gosh!” This is weird and unusual stuff they've ever seen before, so there were a couple of people that had never even thought of stuff like that…

**Staff**

*P*: The bureaucracy is getting better. I work a lot with the folks who do the [university ID] card, and they have been continuously open to figuring out different ways and working more closely now with admissions. The folks who are there are really not only supportive but knowledgeable, which has been kind of a breath of fresh air, and they know about asking gender inclusive questions on the common app. They are part of that process and were part of that process since Seattle, I think… and all that has popped up over the last six months. So while there's a lot of pain common, there is also a lot of goodness.

**Student**

*P*: And so, I got really lucky with this one doctor who, he’ll be like, “Okay, I don’t quite know…” He’ll just say, he was ordering a CAT scan or something for me, and he was like, “Now just so I get this right when I fill this out with them—I’m supposed to say you are female-to-male and you’re on testosterone, and you’re trans…?” He really checks and he admits what he doesn’t know, and he went to a training. So, he’s really good.

---

**Supports, listens to, and affirms me: Additional methods of support.** There were several other types of support described by participants; however, each of these topics was only mentioned by a small minority of the 30 participants interviewed in the CTOC study, thus indicating a need for additional follow-up and exploration before drawing more expansive conclusions. These additional methods of support included: (a) attending or organizing transgender-inclusive trainings; (b) apologizing for mistakes (such as incorrectly labeling a person's gender) and correcting one's actions in the future; (c)
allowing work employees to dress according to their gender identity; and (d) advocating for trans-inclusive policies and other changes on campus that were meant to support trans people and reflected best practices. Each of these topics is represented in Table 6.9 next to sample quotations that indicate these forms of support.

Table 6.9
Supports, Listens to, and Affirms Me: Additional Methods of Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Support</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attends or organizes transgender-inclusive trainings</td>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I was pleasantly surprised that the people with whom I work closest, except for my boss, never had a problem with me from day one. So that was really good. And they don’t like to, this is one of the reasons I fit in so well in my unit, is that the unit as a whole doesn’t really like to get involved in departmental stuff. If there’s a party, only go to get a [food] plate and leave… So, that’s why we’re tight. But for the trans [workshop], they all went - even the part-time people - and that was really cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apologizes for mistakes and corrects one's actions in the future</td>
<td><strong>P</strong>: And then…when we were finished with the workshop session, she came back to the interaction that we had initially had [where she misread my gender and said some racial remarks towards me]. And she said, “I’ve thought a lot about it, and I just want to say that I’m sorry. I still don’t know entirely where I went wrong, but I want to figure it out, and my job is to support all students on campus, and so if you need anything at all, if you think of any way that I can help you, please come back [to this office].” And that was really incredible because it kind of set the stage. I mean, after that point, every time that we run across each other on campus…we now recognize each other. We have this informal relationship, if you will, but she always stops to chat with me. There’s something that feels kind of, it definitely feels genuine…But, I guess that would be a big theme that would stand out is that the positive interactions are those who largely come from people who don’t make it my problem….--that somebody would actually kind of take that on: “Whoa! I fucked up! I am sorry to YOU.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P**: So I finally emailed staff at the [LGBTQ student services office] and was like, “Is there anyone on campus that I can talk to? Or is there anyone that you know of that maybe can at least help me out?” And she said, “Well there’s this one person at [health center] that has, I heard has been maintaining work for some people, so maybe you can talk to them.” So I went in and I was really nervous…But then I went in, [and the health care provider was] very respectful. She even said like she still is having a little bit of issue with gendered words like “You go girl!” or something like that. But she, as soon as she
says anything like that she’s like, “Oh sorry, I work at the [women’s health center]. I don’t have male patients, it’s just my habit.” And I’m like, “Don’t worry about it, I know.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allows work employees to dress according to their gender identity</th>
<th>P: My supervisor…has not ever, not once asked me to wear different clothing that would force me in any way, shape, or form, to wear a dress or anything that would make me represent anything besides what I am…So, yeah, that has not been a problem. At all. Ever.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocates for trans-inclusive policies and other changes on campus that are meant to support trans people and reflect best practices</td>
<td>P: The [recreation center], they are the only recreation center that I know who has put for every pair of gendered bathrooms a gender-inclusive restroom, as well as gender-inclusive locker rooms -- and not at my behest, but at the [upper-level administrator]’s, that was all their [upper-level administrator]. And so I think that that kind of leadership and I would say that actually [upper-level administrator] is actually part of my support network. I could pretty much go to her I think with anything…She’s amazing because she was just like, “This is the right thing to do,” and I’m like…that makes me extraordinarily happy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quantitative Results**

The analysis of the quantitative data was driven by the specific query: Which demographic variables, psychosocial risks and gender-related individual characteristics predict an increased risk for being denied equal treatment or access to social welfare services or being thrown out of homeless shelters due to being transgender or gender non-conforming? For information about the sample descriptive statistics, see Chapter Four (Methods). Information about independent variables was detailed earlier in Chapter Five.

**Dependent variables: Research Question Two.** Four dependent variables were analyzed as part of Research Question Two. The first variable was whether participants were ever denied access to or thrown out of a homeless shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. This situation was experienced by 33.8% \((n = 126)\) of those who had tried to access homeless shelters, while the remaining 66.2% \((n = 247)\) had not experienced such a circumstance. Just over 4% \((n = 16)\) of respondents who had ever
sought access to homeless shelters were missing data on the two questions about being denied access or thrown of out of homeless shelters. The second dependent variable for Research Question Two focused on whether participants had been denied equal treatment at either a rape crisis center or domestic violence shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Among those who had attempted to access one or both of these types of services, 7.5% \((n = 189)\) had been denied equal treatment at one or both of these services, while 92.5% \((n = 2,320)\) had not. Of the remaining respondents, 3,592 (91%) either did not access these services and/or did not present as transgender at one or both services, while 355 cases (5.5% of the total sample) were truly missing data on this question; these groups were not included in the final logistic regression models. A third dependent variable examined the same situation, but within mental health clinics and drug treatment centers: among those who had sought assistance from either and/or both of these settings, 10.8% \((n = 412)\) were denied equal treatment due to being transgender or gender non-conforming, while 89.2% \((n = 3,388)\) were treated equally. Of the cases that were not included in the logistic regression models, 2,297 (86.8% of dropped cases) either did not access these services and/or did not present as transgender at one or both services, while 359 (5.6% of the total sample) were truly missing data on one or both of these questions. Finally, the last dependent variable examined whether participants had been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Nearly one in five respondents (19.4%, \(n = 766\)) experienced this scenario, whereas 80.6% \((n = 3,184)\) did not. Of the 2,506 cases that were not included in the logistic regression models, 1,434 (57.2%) said they did not try to access a
government agency or official, 750 (29.9%) did not present as transgender in interactions with a government agency or official, and 322 (5.0% of the total sample) were truly missing data on this question.

**Inferential statistics.** The research question was answered by analyzing data from the NCTE and Task Force survey using SPSS, version 20. Logistic regression was used to predict four different dichotomous dependent variables: (a) whether participants who had tried to access a homeless shelter were ever denied access to or thrown out of this setting due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; (b) whether participants had been denied equal treatment at either a rape crisis center or domestic violence shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; (c) whether those who had sought assistance from either mental health clinics or drug treatment centers were denied equal treatment due to being transgender or gender non-conforming; and (d) whether participants had been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. As was done for Research Question One, for each of these outcome variables, three different logistic regression models were tested: one with sociodemographic predictor variables, a second with psychosocial risks as the predictor variables, and a third with gender-related predictor variables.

**Sociodemographic predictor variables models.** Four binary logistic regression models were designed to predict the dependent variables of interest. As with Research Question One, the predictor variables included annual household income, race, age, age squared, disability status, U.S. citizenship status, education level, and urbanicity. A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple imputation was
statistically significant for all four models (see Table 6.10). The table also includes information about model fit\(^5\) (comparisons of the full model to the constant-only model) and Nagelkerke \(R^2\).

Table 6.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Model Fit ((\chi^2))</th>
<th>Nagelkerke (R^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter ((N = 296))</td>
<td>17.48*</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Sh...</td>
<td>100.07***</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health or Drug Treatment C...</td>
<td>136.05***</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency/Official ((N = 3,480))</td>
<td>113.51***</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(* p < .05. *** p < .001.\)

For all four models, the full models were statistically significantly different from the constant-only models \((p\)-values ranged from \(<.05\) to \(<.001\)), which suggests that this group of sociodemographic predictors was useful in distinguishing those who experienced discrimination in each of these social welfare settings from those who did not.

The role of each of the sociodemographic predictor variables in predicting the four outcomes is more closely examined in 6.11. These models used the pooled data following multiple imputation.

\(^5\) Data for model fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) are all for the original data before multiple imputation; generally, these results are very similar if not identical to those obtained for the five imputed datasets (see the end of this chapter for a detailed comparison of models before and after imputation). SPSS does not produce pooled results for model fit and Nagelkerke \(R^2\) for imputed data.
Table 6.11
Logistic Regression Models for the Social Welfare Settings Predicting the Four Dependent Variables as a Function of Sociodemographic Variables (Pooled Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter (N = 373)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis/ Domestic Violence (N = 2,509)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health / Drug Treatment (N = 3,800)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency or Official (N = 3,950)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.12* (0.06)</td>
<td>-0.13*** (0.03)</td>
<td>-0.05** (0.02)</td>
<td>-0.06*** (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.44a (0.25)</td>
<td>0.33* (0.17)</td>
<td>0.35** (0.12)</td>
<td>0.23* (0.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.08 (0.07)</td>
<td>0.09a (0.05)</td>
<td>0.03 (0.03)</td>
<td>0.10*** (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.11 x 10^{-3} (9.18 x 10^{-4})</td>
<td>-1.54 x 10^{-3}a (6.53 x 10^{-4})</td>
<td>-6.17 x 10^{-4} (3.85 x 10^{-7})</td>
<td>-1.45 x 10^{-3}*** (2.97 x 10^{-4})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>-0.59* (0.26)</td>
<td>0.64*** (0.16)</td>
<td>1.00*** (0.11)</td>
<td>0.47*** (0.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.05 (0.48)</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.01*** (0.27)</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.24 (0.32)</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>-0.09 (0.17)</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>-0.57 (0.45)</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.49* (0.24)</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.68 (1.30)</td>
<td>-3.37 (0.92)</td>
<td>-2.68 (0.57)</td>
<td>-2.83 (0.44)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.
Annual household income, race, and disability status were statistically significant across the greatest number of models. For every $10,000 increase in annual household income, an individual was 11% less likely to have been thrown out of or denied access to a homeless shelter, 12% less likely to have been denied equal treatment at either a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter, 5% less likely to have been denied equal treatment at either a mental health or drug treatment center, and 6% less likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Compared to non-Hispanic Whites, people of color were 1.39 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment at either a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter, 1.42 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment at either a mental health or drug treatment center, and 1.26 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to be transgender or gender non-conforming.

Compared to those without a disability (other than a gender-related mental health diagnosis), those who had a physical, learning or mental health disability were 45% less likely to have been thrown out of or denied access to a homeless shelter due to gender identity or gender expression, but 1.90 times more likely to have been denied equal treatment at a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter, 2.71 times more likely to have been denied equal treatment at a mental health or drug treatment center, and 1.60 times more likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.
Age squared,

\[ \text{citizenship, having a college degree, and urbanicity were each statistically significant predictors in only one or two of the four models. The statistical significance of the age squared variable in the rape crisis/domestic violence shelter model and the government agency/official model indicated the presence of a curvilinear relationship (see Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2) between age and risk of unequal treatment due to being transgender. With the rape crisis/domestic violence shelter model, there is an increase in the likelihood that people experienced unequal treatment due to being transgender through approximately age 30, while after age 30 this risk begins to exponentially decrease. Within government settings, the risk of unequal treatment rises with age, is predicted to peak around age 34, then begins to exponentially decrease thereafter.}

Non-citizens were 2.75 times as likely as U.S. citizens to have been denied equal treatment in a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter and 1.90 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in a mental health or drug treatment center due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Compared to respondents with a college degree, those without a college degree were 33% less likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Finally, those living in rural areas 1.63 times as likely as those in urban areas to have been denied equal treatment in a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.

\[ \text{Any time that both the age and age squared predictor variables were statistically significant, I will only interpret the polynomial term (age squared).} \]
Figure 6.1. Curvilinear effect of age on risk for unequal treatment in rape crisis or domestic violence shelters due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.

Figure 6.2. Curvilinear effect of age on risk for unequal treatment in interactions with a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.
**Psychosocial predictor variables models.** Four regression models were calculated to predict each of the dependent variables as a function of several psychosocial variables, including (a) being currently homeless or living in a shelter; (b) having at least one previous suicide attempt; (c) having a history of engaging in sex work or working in the sex industry for pay; and (d) having children, parents, or family members who will not speak to or spend time with oneself due to one’s identity as transgender or gender non-conforming. A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple imputation was statistically significant for all four models (see Table 6.12).

Table 6.12
*Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the Four Social Welfare Settings Models Before Multiple Imputation: Psychosocial Risk Predictor Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (N before imputation)</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$) $df = 5$</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter (N = 338)</td>
<td>21.09***</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelter (N = 2,444)</td>
<td>197.14***</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health or Drug Treatment Center (N = 3,721)</td>
<td>253.02***</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency/Official (N = 3,876)</td>
<td>232.76***</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

For all four models, the full models were statistically significantly different from the constant-only models ($p < .001$), which suggests that this group of psychosocial risks was useful in distinguishing those who experienced discrimination in each of these social welfare settings from those who did not.
Table 6.13 more closely examines the role of each psychosocial risk predictor variable in predicting unfair treatment across these social welfare settings.

Table 6.13
*Logistic Regression Models for the Social Welfare Settings Predicting the Four Dependent Variables as a Function of Psychosocial Risk Variables (Pooled Data)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter (N = 373)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis/Domestic Violence (N = 2,509)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health/Drug Treatment (N = 3,800)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency or Official (N = 3,950)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B (s.e.) Odds Ratio</td>
<td>B (s.e.) Odds Ratio</td>
<td>B (s.e.) Odds Ratio</td>
<td>B (s.e.) Odds Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>0.70* (0.29) 2.01</td>
<td>0.76* (0.34) 2.13</td>
<td>-0.09 (0.35) 0.92</td>
<td>-0.27 (0.32) 0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.20 (0.25) 1.22</td>
<td>1.30*** (0.19) 3.66</td>
<td>0.95*** (0.12) 2.59</td>
<td>0.52*** (0.09) 1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.96*** (0.23) 2.61</td>
<td>1.41*** (0.17) 4.09</td>
<td>0.93*** (0.13) 2.53</td>
<td>0.60*** (0.11) 1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.03 (0.29) 1.03</td>
<td>0.77*** (0.20) 2.16</td>
<td>0.74*** (0.13) 2.09</td>
<td>0.80*** (0.10) 2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.08 (0.34) 0.93</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.25) 0.86</td>
<td>-0.48** (0.18) 0.62</td>
<td>-0.30* (0.13) 0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.46 (0.30) -3.99</td>
<td>-3.05 (0.21) -3.05</td>
<td>-2.06 (0.12) -2.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

Sex work history was a statistically significant predictor (p < .001) of negative treatment across all four models: those who had ever engaged in sex work were 2.61 times as likely to have been denied access or thrown out of homeless shelters, over four times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in either rape crisis or domestic violence shelters, 2.53 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in either
mental health or drug treatment centers, and 1.69 times as likely to have been denied
equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender, compared
to those who had never engaged in sex work.

History of a suicide attempt and the family loss variable were statistically
significant in three of the four models. Compared to those who had never attempted
suicide, those who had a history of a suicide attempt were 3.66 times as likely to have
been denied equal treatment in either a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter, 2.59 times
as likely to have been denied equal treatment in a mental health or drug treatment center,
and 1.69 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or
official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming. Controlling for those who
answered “not applicable” to the family loss question, those who had a family member
who broke off contact with them because of their gender identity were 2.16 times as
likely to have been denied equal treatment in either a rape crisis or domestic violence
shelter, 2.09 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in either a mental health
or drug treatment center, and 2.22 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment by
a government agency or official than those whose family members had not broken
contact with them. While the “not applicable” family loss predictor was primarily
included in the models as a control variable, this variable was itself statistically
significant in the models related to mental health/drug treatment centers and government
agencies/oﬃcials: compared to those whose family members did not break contact with
them, those who answered “not applicable” to the family loss questions were 38% less
likely to have been denied equal treatment in mental health or drug treatment centers and
26% less likely to have been denied equal treatment by government agencies or officials due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.

Finally, current homelessness was a statistically significant predictor in two of the models: those who were currently homeless were just over twice as likely to have been denied access to or thrown out of shelters and 2.13 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in rape crisis or domestic violence shelters compared to those who were not currently homeless.

**Gender-related predictor variables models.** Finally, the last four regression models were calculated to predict each of the dependent variables as a function of several gender-related variables, including (a) whether people could tell that one is transgender or gender non-conforming (referred to as frequency perceived as transgender); (b) medical transition history; and (c) three dummy variables related to gender identity: one indicating FTM identity, a second indicating cross-dresser identity, and a third indicating gender non-conforming identity. For these gender identity variables, MTF individuals acted as the comparison group. A comparison of the full model to the constant-only model before multiple imputation was statistically significant for all four models (see Table 6.14). All four of the full models were statistically significantly different from the constant-only models ($p < .001$), which suggests that this group of gender-related variables was more useful than the constant-only model in distinguishing those who experienced denial of access or unequal treatment from those who did not.
Table 6.14
Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the Four Social Welfare Settings Models Before Multiple Imputation: Gender-related Predictor Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (N before imputation)</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$) $df = 5$</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter ($N = 338$)</td>
<td>25.27***</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelter ($N = 2,440$)</td>
<td>30.23***</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health or Drug Treatment Center ($N = 3,728$)</td>
<td>29.85***</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency/Official ($N = 3,882$)</td>
<td>68.64***</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

Table 6.15 more closely examines the role of each of the gender-related variables in predicting the four outcomes. Frequency of being perceived as transgender was statistically significant across all four models: for every step increase in the frequency that one was perceived as transgender without telling others (e.g., an increase from Never to Occasionally, or from Sometimes to Most of the Time), the odds of being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters increased by 1.44, the odds of being denied equal treatment in rape crisis or domestic violence shelters increased by 1.34, the odds of being denied equal treatment in mental health or drug treatment centers increased by 1.16, and the odds of being denied equal treatment by a government agency or official increased by 1.17. The medical transition variable was statistically significant in three of the models: those who had sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming were 1.75 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment in a rape crisis or domestic violence shelter, 1.50 times as likely to have been denied
Table 6.15

Logistic Regression Models for the Social Welfare Settings Predicting the Four Dependent Variables as a Function of Gender-Related Predictor Variables (Pooled Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Denied Access/Thrown Out of Homeless Shelter ($N = 373$)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Rape Crisis/Domestic Violence ($N = 2,509$)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Mental Health/Drug Treatment ($N = 3,800$)</th>
<th>Denied Equal Treatment: Government Agency or Official ($N = 3,950$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$ (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
<td>$B$ (s.e.)</td>
<td>Odds Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.36***</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.30***</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.56*</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.60a</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-1.30*</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-3.60</td>
<td>-2.79</td>
<td>-2.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a p < .10. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

been denied equal treatment in a mental health or drug treatment center, and 1.78 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official due to being transgender or gender non-conforming.

Finally, gender identity played a statistically significant role in two of the models, albeit somewhat differently in each of them. Those who identified as MTF were 3.70 times as likely as those who identified as gender non-conforming to have been thrown out of or denied access to homeless shelters. The cross-dresser variable was statistically
significant in predicting unequal treatment by a government agency or official: compared to those who identified as cross-dressers, those who identified as MTF were 1.89 times as likely to have been denied equal treatment by a government agency or official.

Comparison of original data models and imputed data models. As was done with Research Question One, I will be comparing results of the logistic regression models for Research Question Two before and after multiple imputation to provide full disclosure of any differences in findings that stem from the imputation process.

Denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters. First, a comparison is made between the models predicting being denied access to or thrown out of a homeless shelter before and after multiple imputation. Results for model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ are provided in Table 6.16.

Table 6.16
Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Being Denied Access to or Thrown Out of Homeless Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 8$</td>
<td>Original Data</td>
<td>17.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 296)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data</td>
<td>19.67 to 28.47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 373)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td>Original Data</td>
<td>21.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 338)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data</td>
<td>27.23 to 27.90***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 373)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 5$</td>
<td>Original Data</td>
<td>25.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 338)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data</td>
<td>22.69 to 26.14***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 373)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. $^z$-values ranged from < .05 to < .001.
Generally, other than slight changes in chi-square values and an increase in the statistical significance in two models after multiple imputation, there is not a notable change in model fits or the Nagelkerke $R^2$ between the original data models and the models using imputed data in predicting being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters.

Table 6.17 examines the regression coefficients across the original sociodemographic data model, imputed data model (pooled across five imputations), and the range of values in the five imputed datasets themselves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>$p$-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.13*</td>
<td>-0.12*</td>
<td>-0.10 to -0.14</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.44a</td>
<td>0.42 to 0.46</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.05 to 0.10</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.69 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>-1.11 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>-7.37 x 10^{-4} to -1.46 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>Not significant to Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>-0.59*</td>
<td>-0.59*</td>
<td>-0.47 to -0.69</td>
<td>&lt; .05 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.16 to 0.22</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.21 to 0.28</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.54 to -0.64</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.55</td>
<td>-1.68</td>
<td>-1.23 to -2.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$p < .10$. $^* p < .05$.

One difference to note is that, after imputation, annual household income moves from being marginally significant to being significant at the .05 level. This indicates that the multiple imputation process contributed to slightly strengthening the predictive power of
income related to experiences in a homeless shelter. Similarly, race/ethnicity moves from being not statistically significant before imputation to marginally significant afterwards. These are both indications that the imputed data models could be slightly overestimating the impact of these two variables; they could also be more accurately reflecting the impact of these individual characteristics in a way that was harder to take into account with existing patterns of missing data (as questions about income and race are both sensitive questions that people may not want to answer). One other thing to note is that, in the five imputed datasets, some models suggested citizenship status had a positive regression coefficient value, while others indicated this variable had a negative regression coefficient value. Regardless of these differences, citizenship status was consistently found to be a non-significant predictor across all models before and after multiple imputation.

Table 6.18 offers the same type of comparison, this time for the psychosocial risk predictors models predicting being denied access to or thrown out of a homeless shelter. In these models, there is very little difference in the regression coefficients and their level of statistical significance between the original data models and those following multiple imputation. While both of the family loss variables have some differences in the direction of the regression coefficients across the five imputed datasets, all of those results remain statistically non-significant across all five imputed data models, the original data, and the pooled data results.

Finally, Table 6.19 compares regression coefficients for the gender-related predictor models predicting being denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters.
Table 6.18
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Being Denied Access to or Thrown Out of Homeless Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>0.71*</td>
<td>0.70*</td>
<td>0.66 to 0.73</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.13 to 0.27</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.81***</td>
<td>0.96***</td>
<td>0.94 to 0.97</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.06 to 0.14</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.20 to 0.11</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.51</td>
<td>-1.46</td>
<td>-1.41 to -1.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. *** p < .001.

Table 6.19
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Being Denied Access to or Thrown Out of Homeless Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.40***</td>
<td>0.36***</td>
<td>0.33 to 0.38</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.20 to 0.37</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.59a</td>
<td>-0.60a</td>
<td>-0.53 to -0.62</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.47 x 10^{-3} to 0.28</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-1.54*</td>
<td>-1.30*</td>
<td>-1.12 to -1.45</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-1.92</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-1.60 to -1.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a p < .10. * p < .05. *** p < .001.

Again, there is not much change in these regression coefficients after multiple imputation.

Denied equal treatment in rape crisis or domestic violence shelters. Another series of comparisons are made here, this time between the models predicting access to
rape crisis and domestic violence shelters before and after multiple imputation. Results for model fit and Nagelkerke \( R^2 \) are provided in Table 6.20.

Table 6.20

Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke \( R^2 \) Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Fit (( \chi^2 ))</th>
<th>Nagelkerke ( R^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong> ( df = 8 )</td>
<td>Original Data ( (N = 2,157) )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data ( (N = 2,509) )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong> ( df = 5 )</td>
<td>Original Data ( (N = 2,444) )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data ( (N = 2,509) )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong> ( df = 5 )</td>
<td>Original Data ( (N = 2,440) )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imputed Data ( (N = 2,509) )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** \( p < .001 \).

Other than the general increase in \( \chi^2 \) values after imputation, there were not notable differences in model fit and Nagelkerke \( R^2 \) values before and after multiple imputation for these models.

A comparison was also made between these models’ regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation (see Table 6.21, Table 6.22, and Table 6.23). In the sociodemographic predictor model for rape crisis and domestic violence shelters, one key difference after multiple imputation is that the citizenship dummy variable goes from
### Table 6.21
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>$p$-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
<td>-0.13***</td>
<td>-0.13 to -0.14</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.36*</td>
<td>0.33*</td>
<td>0.32 to 0.35</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.10a</td>
<td>0.09a</td>
<td>0.07 to 0.10</td>
<td>Not significant to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.61 x 10^{-3}*</td>
<td>-1.54 x 10^{-3}*</td>
<td>-1.30 x 10^{-3} to -1.76 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>&lt; .05 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.66***</td>
<td>0.64***</td>
<td>0.63 to 0.65</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.67a</td>
<td>1.01***</td>
<td>0.96 to 1.04</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.08 to -0.11</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>0.48*</td>
<td>0.49*</td>
<td>0.43 to 0.56</td>
<td>Marginal to &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-3.51</td>
<td>-3.34</td>
<td>-3.02 to -3.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

### Table 6.22
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelters*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>$p$-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>0.73*</td>
<td>0.76*</td>
<td>0.70 to 0.80</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>1.29***</td>
<td>1.30***</td>
<td>1.27 to 1.33</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>1.42***</td>
<td>1.41***</td>
<td>1.39 to 1.42</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.83***</td>
<td>0.77***</td>
<td>0.70 to 0.81</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.06 to -0.20</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-4.05</td>
<td>-3.99</td>
<td>-3.94 to -4.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.
Table 6.23
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Rape Crisis or Domestic Violence Shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>0.30***</td>
<td>0.29 to 0.30</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.52*</td>
<td>0.56*</td>
<td>0.53 to 0.63</td>
<td>&lt; .05 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.23 to -0.24</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>-0.32 to -0.40</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.10 to -0.17</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-3.52</td>
<td>-3.60</td>
<td>-3.55 to -3.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, *** p < .001.

being marginally significant to statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. This could mean that the imputed data are overestimating the impact of citizenship status in predicting unequal treatment in rape crisis and domestic violence shelters; however, these data could also be more accurately reflecting the impact of citizenship on predicting unequal treatment that was harder to take into account due to participants skipping the citizenship question. All other differences for the sociodemographic models—as well as for the psychosocial and gender-related characteristics models—before and multiple imputation were very minor.

**Denied equal treatment in mental health or drug treatment center.** Comparisons of model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the three logistic regression models unequal treatment in mental health and drug treatment centers are detailed in Table 6.24.
Table 6.24  
*Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Mental Health or Drug Treatment Centers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors Models</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,330$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>136.05***</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,800$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>156.13 to 160.28***</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,721$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>253.02***</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,800$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>249.25 to 255.51***</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,728$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.85***</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,800$)</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.47 to 32.20***</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

Other than the higher $\chi^2$ value for the sociodemographic predictors model following multiple imputation, these statistics were generally very similar with results prior to imputation.

A comparison was also made between the sociodemographic model’s regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation, as listed in Table 6.25. One difference that appears in the sociodemographic predictor model after multiple imputation is that the significance level of annual household income moves from $p < .05$ to just barely under the $p < .01$ level, which may indicate either a more liberal estimate of the predictive power of income or a more accurate picture of this variable’s influence following imputation. The race/ethnicity dummy variable changes in significance from $p < .001$ to $p < .01$. This indicates that the imputed data models may be slightly more conservative.
Table 6.25
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Mental Health or Drug Treatment Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.05*</td>
<td>-0.05**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>&lt; .05 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.45***</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.34 to 0.38</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-6.58 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>-6.17 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>-5.60 x 10^{-4} to -6.95 x 10^{-4}</td>
<td>Not significant to Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.97***</td>
<td>1.00***</td>
<td>0.99 to 1.00</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.63 to 0.65</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.02 to -0.03</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.13 to 0.23</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.79</td>
<td>-2.68</td>
<td>-2.60 to -2.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

in estimating the impact of race/ethnicity in predicting unequal treatment in mental health clinics and drug treatment centers than the original data models. Finally, a crucial difference in the model after multiple imputation is that citizenship status, which was non-significant in the original data model, reaches significance at the p < .01 level. Again, this could mean that the imputed data are overestimating the impact of citizenship status in predicting unequal treatment or could be more accurately reflecting the impact of citizenship on predicting unequal treatment that was harder to take into account in the original data due to participants skipping the citizenship question. While the direction of the regression coefficient for college degree changes from positive to negative following
imputation, the value remains non-significant across all models. All other differences before and after imputation are minor.

The next comparison looks at the psychosocial risk predictors model for mental health and drug treatment centers (see Table 6.26).

Table 6.26
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Psychosocial Risk Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Mental Health or Drug Treatment Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.03 to -0.15</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.96***</td>
<td>0.95***</td>
<td>0.95 to 0.96</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.92***</td>
<td>0.93***</td>
<td>0.92 to 0.93</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.74***</td>
<td>0.74***</td>
<td>0.71 to 0.76</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.55**</td>
<td>-0.48**</td>
<td>-0.44 to -0.52</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-3.06</td>
<td>-3.05</td>
<td>-3.03 to -3.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01. *** p < .001.

There were no differences of note between these regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation.

The third comparison examines the regression coefficients for the gender-related predictors models predicting denial of equal treatment in mental health clinics and drug treatment centers (see Table 6.27). There are no major differences in the data of the gender-related predictors model for denial of equal treatment in mental health or drug treatment centers before and after multiple imputation.
Table 6.27  
*Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Mental Health or Drug Treatment Centers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.14 to 0.15</td>
<td>&lt; .001 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.39 to 0.43</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.13 to 0.15</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.49&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-0.44&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-0.42 to -0.46</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.03 to -0.08</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.76</td>
<td>-2.79</td>
<td>-2.75 to -2.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>p < .10. **p < .01.

Denied equal treatment in a government agency or by a government official.

Comparisons of model fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ for the three logistic regression models unequal treatment in government agencies or by government officials are detailed in Table 6.28. Other than slightly higher $\chi^2$ values for the sociodemographic and psychosocial risk predictors models following multiple imputation, these statistics were generally very similar with results prior to imputation.

A comparison was also made between the sociodemographic model’s regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation, as listed in Table 6.29. One difference that appears in the sociodemographic predictor model after multiple imputation is that the significance level of college degree increases from <.05 to <.01, which may indicate either a more liberal estimate of the predictive power of having a college degree or a more accurate picture of this variable’s influence following imputation.
Table 6.28
Comparison of Model Fit and Nagelkerke $R^2$ Before and After Multiple Imputation for Models Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Government Agencies or by Government Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Fit ($\chi^2$)</th>
<th>Nagelkerke $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic Predictors Models</strong> $df = 8$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,480$)</td>
<td>113.51***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,950$)</td>
<td>123.06 to 127.00***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychosocial Risk Predictors Models</strong> $df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,876$)</td>
<td>232.76***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,950$)</td>
<td>234.03 to 236.81***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender-Related Predictors Models</strong> $df = 5$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Data ($N = 3,882$)</td>
<td>68.64***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imputed Data ($N = 3,950$)</td>
<td>67.11 to 74.36***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < .001$.

Table 6.29
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Sociodemographic Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Government Agencies or by Government Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>$p$-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Household Income</td>
<td>-0.06***</td>
<td>-0.06***</td>
<td>-0.06 to -0.07</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.22 to 0.23</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>0.10 to 0.11</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Squared</td>
<td>-1.41 x 10^{-3}***</td>
<td>-1.45 x 10^{-3}***</td>
<td>-1.42 x 10^{-3} to -1.53 x 10^{-3}</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>0.49***</td>
<td>0.47***</td>
<td>0.47 to 0.48</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.08 to 0.18</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>-0.22*</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>-0.26 to -0.27</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanicity</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01 to 0.09</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.80</td>
<td>-2.83</td>
<td>-2.79 to -2.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. 322
The next comparison looks at the psychosocial risk predictors model for government agencies and government officials before and after imputation (see Table 6.30).

Table 6.30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Homelessness</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>-0.24 to -0.29</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Attempt</td>
<td>0.51***</td>
<td>0.52***</td>
<td>0.52 to 0.53</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Work History</td>
<td>0.60***</td>
<td>0.60***</td>
<td>0.60 to 0.61</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss - Yes</td>
<td>0.81***</td>
<td>0.80***</td>
<td>0.78 to 0.81</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Loss – N/A</td>
<td>-0.31*</td>
<td>-0.30*</td>
<td>-0.27 to -0.35</td>
<td>&lt; .05 to &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.06</td>
<td>-2.06</td>
<td>-2.04 to -2.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, *** p < .001.

There were no differences of note between these regression coefficients before and after multiple imputation.

The third comparison examines the regression coefficients for the gender-related predictors models predicting denial of equal treatment in government agencies or by government officials (see Table 6.31). There are no major differences between the gender-related predictor models for denial of equal treatment in government agencies or by government officials before and after multiple imputation.

In summary, comparisons for all of the logistic regression models for Research Question Two indicate very few differences before and after multiple imputation in
Table 6.31
Comparison of Regression Coefficients Before and After Multiple Imputation for the Gender-Related Predictors Model Predicting Denial of Equal Treatment in Government Agencies or by Government Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Original Data</th>
<th>Pooled Data</th>
<th>Individual Imputed Datasets</th>
<th>p-value range of 5 imputed models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Perceived as Transgender</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
<td>0.15 to 0.16</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Transition</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
<td>0.58***</td>
<td>0.55 to 0.59</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09 to 0.10</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Dresser</td>
<td>-0.64**</td>
<td>-0.63**</td>
<td>-0.60 to -0.66</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Non-Conforming</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.12 to -0.17</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-2.20</td>
<td>-2.24</td>
<td>-2.21 to -2.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01. *** p < .001.

model fit, Nagelkerke $R^2$, and regression coefficients. There are a few instances where the statistical significance of variables increases following multiple imputation, and a few occasions where sociodemographic variables go from being non-significant or marginal to statistically significant (e.g., the citizenship status variable within the models for rape crisis/domestic violence shelters and mental health/drug treatment centers, and the annual household income variable in the homeless shelter access model). Of note, the only variables that change statistical significance in such ways are sociodemographic variables, and particularly variables that are somewhat sensitive and frequently have missing data in research (income, race/ethnicity, citizenship, and level of education). The impact of these variables on predicting discrimination and unequal treatment may be overestimated by the multiple imputation process. Generally, though, the majority of evidence indicates that the multiple imputation process did not significantly distort model results or change the influence of most individual variables.
Chapter Seven: Qualitative Results for Research Question Three

This chapter reviews results for Research Question Three: What specific institutional actions and policy changes do transgender and gender non-conforming people say are most needed to address the oppression they experience in higher education settings? And, how do suggestions differ based upon a person’s identity (e.g., as more gender normative versus gender variant, by one’s campus role, by one’s departmental affiliation, etc.) or campus characteristics (such as size of the student population)? This chapter will review qualitative data related to this question specific to higher education settings.

All of the data for this chapter stem from the Colorado Trans on Campus study. Content analysis was applied through the use of structural and in vivo coding (Saldana, 2009) of the transcripts and interviewer notes. I deductively searched for themes that answered Research Question Three across the 30 cases (Spencer et al., 2003) and then defined and differentiated these themes. I conducted a negative case analysis to search for cases that did not fit the themes (Patton, 2002). Within this chapter, I formally define five themes and offer explanatory accounts of findings (Spencer et al., 2003). These themes include the following suggestions: (a) offer education, campus programming, and support for trans individuals; (b) improve university systems and procedures to recognize more than two genders and give people permission to make changes to their name, gender
marker, and campus identification; (c) encourage greater inclusivity and recruitment of diverse groups; (d) make changes to facilities; and (e) hold people accountable.

In terms of inter-rater reliability for these themes, a comparison of my coding and that of another rater for a random sample of data resulted in a Cohen’s $\kappa = 0.82$, which Landis and Koch (1977) classify as being “almost perfect” reliability.

**Theme One: Offer Education, Campus Programming, and Support for Trans Individuals**

This theme incorporated participants' suggestions that university campuses improve their ability to support transgender and gender non-conforming individuals by offering additional (a) trans-inclusive educational content (e.g., workshops, orientation sessions, trainings, lectures, continuing education offerings), resources (e.g., library materials, literature, pamphlets), and classroom curricula; (b) campus programs and organizations (e.g., LGBTQ organizations/offices, women's/gender-related organizations, and other programs that discuss trans topics), and (c) other forms of on-campus supports for trans individuals (e.g., health and counseling services that include transition-related care and competent providers; mentorship programs; a list of trans-related resources; advertisement of allies and safe spaces). I will review data that support each of these areas, but first I wanted to outline a few differences between participants who discussed this theme versus those who did not.

Suggestions related to education, campus programming, and support for trans individuals were offered by participants of differing races and ethnicities and across various ages and campus roles (student, faculty, staff, or multiple). While those who
discussed this theme came from a variety of campuses in terms of size and status as public or private, those who did not discuss this theme frequently came from very large public universities with a student body of over 20,000 (see Figure 7.1). It may be that larger public universities are more likely to already have forms of support for trans individuals compared to smaller colleges and private colleges.

Figure 7.1. Comparison of campus sizes represented among those who spoke about Theme One (present) and those who did not speak about Theme One (absent).

Trans-inclusive educational resources, trainings, and classroom curricula.

Suggestions in this area indicated that campus educational resources currently lacked adequate, nuanced, and/or culturally competent content about transgender and gender non-conforming people and about cisgender privilege. Participants articulated the need for such content within trainings, workshops, and orientation sessions, within library references and other on-campus published materials, and within classroom curricula.

---

53 These calculations take into account that some participants had been affiliated in the past year with more than one campus and were describing one or all of these campuses during their interviews.
Some specific examples of a call for more transgender-inclusive content are offered in Table 7.1, categorized by the type of content being recommended and the participant’s role on campus (student, faculty, staff, or multiple).

Table 7.1
Trans-Inclusive Educational Content, Resources, Trainings, and Classroom Curricula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Content Recommended</th>
<th>Participant’s Role &amp; Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainings and Workshops</td>
<td><strong>Participant in multiple roles:</strong> I really wish that… in all schools, that issues for genderqueer or trans folks were just brought more to the forefront. It almost seems like it gets pushed aside or put in with like gay people…it is a different set of issues and experiences, so… I mean, I get to talk about it explicitly in my class, but I wish it was more a part of the diversity, they have explicit diversity training here, and I wish that I was hearing on campus that this was a really regular part of that diversity training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant in multiple roles:</strong> I’d also like to see more trainings for campus police. I heard about cops being resistant. Although most seem to be all right, some campus police are shaky. There are so many trainings that target [resident advisors] and teachers, but not the campus police.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Sessions</td>
<td><strong>Student:</strong> There needs to be more education around it. I think…most people don’t realize that there’s always someone in your class [who’s trans]. They don’t realize their stories, where they’re coming from, they don’t realize how important it is to have those sensitivity skills…I think that when students come to orientation at any school, there should be some sort of opportunity or training or something…so you’re aware. Or, there could have been more stuff on campus…in general about statistics and numbers of this many people or gay awareness time…It would be great if there was a larger presence of education…on campus…I feel like the education piece really helps break down the stereotypes… and I feel like people need to be exposed to it so it becomes a little more normalized, I guess.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

54 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library References &amp; Other Published Materials</th>
<th><strong>Student:</strong> They have a little library over at the [LGBTQ student services office]. They have maybe one or two books on trans issues. It’d be nice to see more literature, more phone numbers that you could contact somebody or just general resources...[Staff member of the LGBTQ student services office] gave me email addresses of speakers that they’ve invited before, but I’m not sure that I’d want to contact somebody who was a speaker here before, I mean--how the hell do they know me? I mean, I don’t even know if they’re in the business for talking to people one on one. I mean, being a public speaker about those issues is different. So it’d be nice to see more support there.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Curricula</td>
<td><strong>Student:</strong> Why aren't we incorporat[ing] all these other things in there that relate to these special populations? Like actually incorporating it into the curriculum instead of making it into this special, after-school thing? That would be amazing. That would be awesome if they brought in some consultant, some expert, who knew about [discipline] and trans stuff and was like, “Here’s how you incorporate these things that you’re teaching your students anyways.” It would take five minutes to mention this or that here and there. Obviously...easier said than done to re-vamp your curriculum to be trans inclusive. But it would be really nice to have some more visibility in the curriculum itself. <strong>Student:</strong> We just got a [gender studies] department in the last few years, so in that sense not as we don’t have a queer studies department at all. So I’d like to see more awareness of trans issues. There seems to be pretty fair recognition of GLBT, or certainly gay and lesbian, but, as with everything else, trans is further behind... But there are things I think that trans people deal with that nobody else does, or they deal with them in different ways than other people do. And there are just issues that are unique to being trans, so I think maybe greater visibility around those issues and more discussion of them, more classes...So maybe we’ll have a Queer Studies department someday. I can dream. I hope so. <strong>Participant in multiple roles:</strong> I think we have curricular problems to solve, and that’s there is an important allegiance between GLB issues and trans issues. They need to have a relationship and a shared agenda and then there are also places where they diverge. It’s in those points of divergence where the GLB community needs to have more education about the trans issues and has to stand as a strong advocate for those issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Educational Content / Not Specified</td>
<td><strong>Student:</strong> Maybe discussions about cissexuality and cisgendered stuff. I’d love to see those words or terms get out there more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the table above, those who tended to recommend general trainings, workshops, and the like were in multiple roles on campus, whereas students tended to
suggest improvements to orientation sessions, library resources, and curricula. However, this was only a general pattern and did not apply across all cases. For example, a faculty member participant offered specific feedback about improving curricula by weaving transgender-related content throughout all classes from start to finish:

**P:** I think maybe, and this again is coming from an instructor point of view, is maybe having [trans issues] incorporated more into the curriculum as a broader picture instead of, “Okay, well, here’s our two-hour class for today. We’re going to talk about GLBTQ, and then we’ll never mention it again.” … I’ve had students that have told me that my class, it’s like we talk about it throughout the whole period… we talk about the whole gamut, different cultures, people under that GLBTQ umbrella. I just incorporate it into every one of my classes. It’s not so much like I’m like, “Okay today we’re going to talk about minorities and GLBTQ,” and then I’ve done my political correct thing….I don’t have to talk about it again… The feedback I get from students is great. “I’m glad that you incorporated throughout the whole … class time, not just that one day where we talk about queer issues, or the one day we talk about minority issues. That it’s something that is ever-present. That you really never know when you’re talking to someone who may be transgendered [sic], you never know when you may be offending someone by the things that you say”… I don’t know if that’s something that needs to be talked about with like the [administrators] of the university… I don’t know where that needs to start, but making it more of a part of what you teach because the truth is it’s always there. It’s very fluid. It’s not like here’s the one day that we talk about this and then you’re an expert about it. You did your multicultural for a minute. [laughter]

This participant’s experience is that students’ education was impacted most positively by a thorough integration of multicultural content, rather than talking about GLBTQ issues on one day and another minority group the next.

A student participant also shared a critique and some advice about how to format general trainings and awareness-raising efforts on campuses about the transgender community. One of the points of feedback was to clarify that being transgender is not always about transitioning from one sex or gender to another or identifying within the man/woman binary:
P: I think that they way we build that awareness is really important, because for so long I think that trans awareness has focused on this understanding of trans identity as a process of transitioning from one sex or gender to the other, and that’s still the only framework that people can understand trans identity within, is being a man or woman. And so I think that building that trans awareness has to come with building a really broad awareness of a broad range and spectrum of trans identities. We kind of have to stop dumbing it down…And so I think that when we do education and we do awareness that we need to be really intentional about how it’s being done so that we’re not only receiving sort of a transsexual perspective. It’s clearly valuable and really important, but it can’t be the only story that we’re telling.

This participant also spoke of the need for re-infusing a discussion of political implications into transgender-related discourse and education, as well as acknowledging the role of intersecting identities of race, social class, ability, and other dimensions:

P: I’d really just like to see us move away from more normative notions of trans identity. Being trans, first of all, is not normative to begin with, but there is sort of a normativity within trans perceptions, and we still understand it in very binary terms. We understand it as being very apolitical in the sense that our broader understanding of trans identity is sort of this narrative of “Born in the wrong body, trapped in the wrong body, nothing I can do about this, need to get it fixed,” and that there are no political implications, this is just a medical or social necessity. And that’s certainly true for many trans people. But that these are also very political identities, and how do we sort of re-infuse the politics within our own debates and our own conversations…and I think that it’s really dangerous when it is because…in reality, it doesn’t challenge gender norms and it doesn’t challenge norms around race and around class and around ableism, all these sorts of things. So I’d like to see our conversations become much more nuanced than they are.... My perspective on that also comes from this sort of broader piece that single-issue organizing is not as effective as it used to be. And that we have to approach these things from an intersectional framework, and that’s going to shake a lot of what we’ve previously held and that the way that we’ve defined and defended trans identities in a lot of cases, and this falls equally on trans communities themselves is by saying, “Trans people are just like everyone else,” and when we say trans people are just like everyone else, and a lot of times what we’re saying, whether we realize it or not, is trans people have the capacity to reproduce White, middle class, heterosexual, able-bodied norms. And we need to be less invested in the project of protecting those identities by defending our own trans existences….And so how do we make those conversations also accessible to our allies is another huge piece of it for trans communities. It has to become more reciprocal and we have to be reaching across more tables than we currently are.

331
This participant highlighted the politics involved in discourse and education regarding trans identities and the problems that arise when efforts to communicate “normalcy” end up simply reinforcing the status quo and marginalizing trans people of color, trans people who are lower income, trans people who are LGBQ, and trans people with disabilities.

This theme also encompassed suggestions to require more individuals on campus to attend educational programming to help increase their sensitivity, awareness, and competency about working with transgender people. Participants discussed how mandatory trainings could benefit faculty, staff, students, campus police, health center employees, and others on campus. Example data on this topic are displayed in Table 7.2, categorized by the participant’s departmental/divisional affiliation on campus. Of note, the vast majority of participants who spoke to this issue came from private institutions of higher education.

Table 7.2
*The Need for Mandated Trans-Inclusive Trainings at Colleges and Universities, Classified by Participant’s Departmental or Divisional Affiliations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental or Divisional Affiliation</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>P: Oh, education. Like trainings. Really need more, they call them sensitivity trainings…My experience with the professors I've had…mostly people have been pretty good about race, ethnicity, religion… Mostly what I’ve experienced is issues with sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, so making the staff and the faculty go to trainings. And just because they go to the trainings doesn’t mean that they get educated, but…having that chance and making them have to at least go sometimes is enough for some people… And that’s another thing—the police department, they need to be trained, too… And, [sighs], I don’t know, just, having to go through more training, they need more trainings for everything, but LGBTQ and, and I really mean there’s so much heterosexism and homophobia and transphobia and biphobia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Affiliated with Multiple Divisions (in multiple roles)  

**P:** I also think that the [LGBTQ and allies training] should be mandatory for incoming staff and faculty, incoming students. I think it’s something that needs to be talked about when you first reach campus if campus is supposed to be so “inclusive.” And I quote inclusive.  

[Interviewer: Quote unquote inclusive.]  

**P:** Yes. So educating and then bringing up awareness I think would be a good first step for that.

**P:** It would be great if there was mandatory training for [specific human services professionals] on trans issues, especially in my program, not just the [human services professionals] who see the students, that would be great, too … I mean, they get a course on multiculturalism and diversity, but I feel that does really often comes down on race a bunch, which I’ll never say is not a good idea—I want the students to also have a really clear view on race and oppression, but I feel like the sexuality and gender parts don’t get really teased out and lots of [human services professionals] graduate…[and] think that “Oh, I’m open-minded and liberal, and therefore I can put myself down as able to work with queer folk.” And I’d really like to see that change, for at least to say, “If you have not received explicit training in working with different groups, then you really shouldn’t put yourself out there as an expert on those groups.”

Professions & Applied Sciences  

**P:** I think you should teach everybody, and I think diversity training, all faculty members have to go through it anyways, and I feel like it’s one of the important issues on diversity training and along with all the other issues that are no less important because you’re adding on another issue, but I definitely think certainly as numbers and visibility increase, it’d be nice to have those students feel safe and comfortable and have you know faculty know how to address it or at least a place to go to address it … It shouldn’t be like this little dirty secret because it’s just as any other sort of minority identity that needs support.

Administration  

**P:** I would like to see mandatory training for all [university] [health center] staff, not done by [LGBTQ student services staff] and not paid for by [the LGBTQ student services office]. So it would not come from the top down at and it would be about bringing somebody from national trans health organizations because they hold more weight and they can speak doctor-ese.

**P:** Obviously, I’d like to see more people affiliate…in the university community, whether they’re employees or students or both, to just have a heightened awareness of the potential issues. But, at the same time, I’m hesitant to say, “Everybody should go to Trans 101 training” even though that’s what I really want to say.
Campus programs and organizations (e.g., LGBTQ organizations/offices, women's/gender-related organizations, and others that discuss trans topics). A number of the 30 participants interviewed by CTOC said that adding formal campus programs and campus organizations that address topics of relevance to transgender people would markedly improve their experience while affiliated with the college or university. The types of organizations and programs that were recommended included: student, staff, and faculty groups related to the LGBTQ community; LGBTQ offices; women's/gender studies programs or organizations; violence prevention programs; and organizations and programs that focus exclusively on the transgender community.

Several participants noted that their lack of awareness of such programs or organizations was connected to the very weak or non-existent advertisement of these initiatives on campus. The majority of people who discussed these issues were students, or students who also filled roles as staff or faculty. Table 7.3 displays quotations calling for such organizations and programs.

Several of those quoted indicated that such groups or organizations may exist on campus, but very weak or non-existent advertisement of such groups led to a perception that they did not exist. Some participants said that such trans-related groups were already in existence on their campuses, but needed to be greatly improved, whether by increasing overall participation, doing a better job of recruiting and incorporating trans people, receiving better support and funding from the university or college, promoting greater sensitivity to transgender issues, or changing the types of programs and activities that are
Table 7.3
The Need for Transgender-Specific and Transgender-Inclusive Campus Organizations and Programming on College Campuses, Classified by Participant’s Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I definitely would like to see like an explicitly trans-focused student organization or… [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] type of thing that wasn’t probably called the [organization name that does not include the word transgender or related acronyms].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I think that you need more educational programs. We did a lot of those at [previous undergraduate university]. We had a transgender panel and we brought in four people. I was one of them, and we educated a group of people on trans history and what it is to be trans or whatever, and then we had another, we had a few educational speakers coming in and they had events a couple times a month, which was really important, and then they also like really advertised a lot of the programs… and thus far I haven’t seen anything [advertised on this campus]. I mean, the fraternities and sororities are more promoted on campus than anything else, so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I’d like to see an actual transgender group—a student group where trans people can feel like they can actually attend.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I would love to see there be… a trans student group, I don’t know if there’s enough trans students right now to do that… but to also have that be somehow explicitly addressed of the students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: Yeah, I mean, I’d love to see a trans group here, and maybe… maybe if they were more visible, they’d actually find that more students are transitioning. I mean, there are, I don’t know, [over 20,000] students on this campus or something. So, there’s got to be probably more than just me, but if they don’t even know that— I mean the [LGBTQ student services office] doesn’t advertise a lot anyways in my opinion, and so they advertise probably even less about the trans stuff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

offered related to transgender issues and topics. Data within Table 7.4 shed light on specific suggestions offered by participants.

55 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this quote is a paraphrase based upon the interviewer’s notes.
## Table 7.4

*Suggestions for Improving Existing Transgender-Specific and Transgender-Inclusive Organizations and Programming on College Campuses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased Funding</td>
<td>P: I think they should give us more money [for LGBTQ student services office]… We are responsible for raising beyond…[the amount] we get from [company] vending money, so every time somebody purchases a [specific food item], that vending money comes to us up to [specific amount] and then housing designates [smaller amount] for training. Anything above and beyond that is [our responsibility]. [Interviewer: And so does that [monetary amount] include paying for [the salary of LGBTQ student services office employee?] P: It’s everything. It’s fringe. It’s…[employee] salary. It’s …student staff salaries. It’s everything. So at the end of the year…if we don’t take out of our on endowed account, we wouldn’t be able to operate all year. So we continuously take out of and apply for collateral partnerships or mini grants across campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming about How Gender Non-Conforming People Can Negotiate on Professional Attire in the Workplace</td>
<td>P: I think for the [department]…I know there [were] some forums about professional attire, but it was, it wasn’t trans or queer-oriented. That needs to be addressed. I mean it just needs to be addressed. It will HAVE to be. The university will have to have some sort of programming or workshop or informational flyer or something. Just negotiating professional attire…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering More “Fun” &amp; Uplifting Events Related to Being Trans</td>
<td>P: I’d like to see fun events on campus like, “I want to do a cross dressing underwear jog that is fun, not so heavy or so political.” I think, “The only people getting involved with the queer community are queers and people who identify as allies.” Some people are turned off by how political it is. We should help people see they have a stake in it.(^{56})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not everyone believed that existing trans-inclusive campus programs or organizations were inadequate; while I will not spend a lot of time here exploring instances where participants praised existing organizations, I did want to offer an example of such a comment, specifically because it sheds light on the importance of trans-inclusive gender violence prevention on a college campus:

\(^{56}\) This quotation came from a portion of an interview after the audio recorder batteries had died and therefore is based on interviewer notes; verbatim quotes are indicated with quotation marks.
P: I’m on the [administrative committee on sexual assault and harassment] and the topic of gender violence that’s directed at trans people and genderqueer people is something that is always present in our discussions. It’s a sort of central tenet of ours that gender violence prevention requires a very broad definition of what form of gender violence takes, and so anti-trans kinds of comments fit into that rubric pretty well….It’s a major goal of the… [administrative committee on sexual assault and harassment] group to change the dynamics that produce these kinds of violence. And our gender violence prevention plan actually is structured around intervening on the lowest level kinds of slights that we think lead to the much more serious kinds of violence… I think one of the most important things [we have on campus related to improving the climate for trans people] is gender violence prevention…We’ve just had some real breakthroughs in the last year. We’re doing some exciting work about gender violence prevention. It’s a huge, huge challenge. But very important.

This participant’s feedback suggests that campus programs related to gender more broadly can have a positive impact on the well-being of trans people if their needs and concerns are taken into account in the planning and administration of gender-related initiatives and task forces.

Other forms of on-campus supports for trans individuals. Finally, participants also discussed some other suggestions that specifically relate to “support” for trans people on campuses. These “other” forms of support fall into two broad areas: (a) supports for building on-campus community (including suggestions for greater networking and mentorship and communicating the availability/presence of resources, allies and organizational nondiscrimination policies); and (b) improvements to on-campus health and mental health services (insurance coverage for transition-related care and available support/resources within mental health care on campus).

Supports for building on-campus community. Participants expressed an interest in improving campus efforts to build a strong community on campuses-- whether among trans and gender non-conforming people or the campus population in general. Such
efforts included LGBTQ networking, orientation sessions, and mentorship opportunities; an available list of local queer/trans resources; an advocacy or support team for trans community members; advertisement of allies and safe spaces; cross-group and cross-campus coalitions; an advertised commitment to trans inclusion among non-LGBTQ groups; and social events. Example data are displayed in Table 7.5, organized by the type of change being suggested.

Table 7.5  
*Suggested Supports for Building On-Campus Community*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| LGBTQ Campus-Wide Task Force                 | **P:** I would like to see an overall GLBTQ staff and faculty group that gets created by and sustained by multiple membership, not just me. I would like to see a campus-wide task force that is headed by faculty and staff of my choosing, and not my supervisor or her supervisor. That it comes from an academic and student affairs focus that multiple constituencies are represented.  
[Interviewer: What will be the focus of such a task force?]  
**P:** I think that they would be able to assist us in our campus climate assessment, and then assist in particularly the longer term institutional change, higher hanging fruits as well as the lower hanging fruits… I think that the task group would also work on making sure that the systemic policies of the university are trans-inclusive and keep in mind from the forefront the values of a land grant institution being that we are supposed to be about access and access to resources and recognizing on a day-to-day basis that those barriers that are thrown up for students, staff, and faculty who are trans and gender non-conforming prohibit that and actually are the antithesis to what a land grant institution should stand for and is. |
Mentorship, Advocacy and/or a Support Team for Trans People

P: And also, we have no advocacy. We need advocacy for dealing with the bureaucracy and the administration so that when someone graffiti’s a trans person’s door, there’s action involved and it’s not left to that person to have to go and talk to the [upper-level administrator]. So, someone who can advocate and address these issues... maybe a group of people with different areas of expertise that could be like a team of support... Maybe even having a referral of like, “Okay, so here’s this really great therapist, and you can see her for eight sessions, that’s covered by whatever. I think anyone can see her for eight sessions. And here’s someone in housing that can help you figure that out. Here’s someone with academics.” So a support team.

P: Again, I wish like the queer community would have been more connected with each other, that would have been really nice. Because you knew there were other groups, but really having access to those other groups or knowing what they were doing and how to connect. That would have been really nice to have that, to make it look like the community was bigger... I think also having faculty and staff really step up and be supportive of their students and really take on that role of mentoring would really be helpful and really feel good... I think having, for myself, having more people that I knew I could go to talk to about gender issues would have been really helpful. Because my gender identity, definitely, I explored it a lot more throughout my [number] years at [university] and not knowing who I could go to and having that, it would have been really helpful to have that instead of relying on my two genderqueer friends to be like, “What’s this process like? What do I do?”

Extra Support at Orientation

P: What would be really great is if there was... a stronger GLBTQ group on campus and if you identified [as GLBTQ at] the orientation you could go and you could have that kind of walk through—“Okay, this is campus, and... this is how you navigate campus as a queer person or whatever. And... these are the things that you need to know to help you even to socialize there [to] feel like you’re part of something as opposed to just ‘I gotta get through these four years’”... And that can be part of... an on-going orientation process for people that identify [as LGBTQ]... it would be like that support is build in as opposed to you having to sought it out... They help you with resources in town, or they help you with resources in housing and employment and... they help you navigate the campus... So, that would be really great if campuses did that more... So, that would be amazing because... this population of people [is] so isolated and because they are treated disrespectfully, et cetera, it’s hard to know how to socialize normally. It’s hard to know how to be able just to walk on campus and not just have that chatter in the back of your head thinking, “Somebody’s going to beat the shit out of me in a minute.”
Visible Allies and Safe Spaces  
**P:** Well, for one there was no one I recall in the [department] that had a little “Ally” sign on their door or whatever those little signs are, the little pink triangles they used to be. And I think that that would have made a difference—then I would have known at least who was willing to be a little more open. And that’s a problem in the [department school]: that there’s not a lot of safe spaces, declared safe spaces for queer people.

Advertisement for Campus Organizations Makes Clear that Trans People are Welcome  
**P:** And then the other thing is a lot of the diversity groups on-campus, like the Latino student coalition at [previous undergraduate university], they had a policy…that said, “We do not discriminate against anybody,” and then they listed like, “We include gender-variant people and people of various sexual orientations here,” and I haven’t seen that on any of the things here [on this campus]… I don’t want to go to a group…that will be like, “No you can’t come here,” or something like that. And I’m sure they wouldn’t do that. It’s just it’d be nice to have the disclaimer on the bottom [of advertisements of organizational programming].

**P:** I think part of that being visible piece in terms of what’s printed in terms of what’s posted on the wall, that sort of thing, I think what’s important about that is just like we have a picture of what it means to be gay, or what it means to be lesbian, or LGBT wherever the umbrella is, I think when people even use the word trans we don’t hear androgynous. We think M to F or F to M, but there’s this whole other—“I’m not having surgery. I’m perfectly fine with what’s there. It’s just somewhere in between.” And I think it just, the more that we create awareness of how different everybody is—because we’re all different-- then I think we’re all better off, and that to me is one of the greatest gifts that the academy gives to any student, and that’s just that ability to look at the wider world and be okay with it.

**Improvements to on-campus health and mental health services.** Earlier chapters discussed the frequent lack of trans-competent health and mental health providers within campus health centers and the need for additional training for providers. Another broad suggestion for improving on-campus health and mental health services for trans individuals is to provide insurance coverage for trans-related care (hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgeries, and mental health treatment). Such an issue was discussed by a small minority of participants, but they did represent different types of campus roles.

Some example quotations are provided in Table 7.6.
Table 7.6  
*Improvements to On-Campus Health and Mental Health Services: Providing Insurance Coverage for Transgender-Related Care*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Role</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I would like to see access to, not only hormones, but also therapy if students, staff, and faculty desire it, and transitioning tools be covered under student health as well as staff and faculty medical benefits, and inclusive in that [there] is the option to not work with the Harry Benjamin standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Roles</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> It would be great if physical transition was covered by our insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> So again, [what I’d like to see changed on campus is] better access to trans health care… I think that we should have…a lot more counseling sessions [for students]. You can’t [address] some of the issues the students face… in eight sessions, really. And some students work better with having talk therapy options in general, so yeah, those are the big pieces.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above data demonstrate a call for health insurance to offer more inclusive benefits related to hormone therapy, additional sessions of mental health treatment, and gender confirming surgeries.

**Theme Two: Improve University Systems and Procedures to Recognize More than Two Genders and Give People Permission to Make Changes to their Name, Gender Marker, and Campus Identification**

This second theme answering Research Question Three incorporated participants' suggestions for how to improve campus information technology and institutional procedures for collecting information about and making changes to one's name and gender. Most suggestions focused on: (a) providing a wider range of sex or gender options on campus forms; (b) allowing individuals to change their name and/or gender on records without having had a legal name/gender change; and (c) simplifying the process for requesting changes so that a person can request the change in one place and have it

---

57 “Harry Benjamin standards” is shorthand for the standards of care created by the organization now known as the World Professional Association for Transgender Health.
apply everywhere on campus (including class rosters). Many of these changes would occur in relation to either computer technology and/or training of staff for how to deal with such requests in a sensitive and confidential manner. I will briefly review exemplar quotations related to each of these areas.

First, though, I wanted to note that this was the only qualitative theme across the three research questions that had a possible lack of equitable representation for the two interviews that were not audio recorded. This theme had 14 affiliated quotations, across 12 participants. This represented nearly half of the 28 recorded interviews, and therefore I expected it to appear in at least one of the two interviews that were not audio recorded. However, interviewer notes for these two participants did not contain data related to this theme. This might indicate some unintentional interviewer bias in not recording information on this theme during these two interviews. On the other hand, perhaps neither participant saw this as an important area for change and therefore did not discuss it. Both of the individuals who were not audio recorded had been transitioning while on campus. Perhaps neither individual felt it critical to their experience to include more than two genders on campus forms and did not experience difficulty in changing their names and genders on records due to their documentation of their transition process. However, this is only speculation.

**Providing a wider range of sex or gender options on campus forms.** This suggestion was articulated by a subset of participants, particularly those who identified at least sometimes with a non-binary gender identity (genderqueer, gender variant, androgynous, etc.). Table 7.7 includes example quotations on this issue.
Table 7.7
Providing a Wider Range of Sex or Gender Options on Campus Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> [I would suggest] either just getting rid of asking for gender on things like college application forms, or—if it’s really necessary—being able to put in a larger range of options for gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> [What I’d like to see changed are] the forms that we fill out, which just continually reinforce that two gender perception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I would like the common app(^{58}) to actually ask sex and not gender. If they’re going to ask gender, [I would like it if]…they have more options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> When I’m filling out forms, I hate, I absolutely HATE having to mark male or female. I’m very resistant—every time I come to a website that asks me that, I’m like, “Rrrrr. I’m not going to.” I’ll stop doing what I’m doing and go to a different one if it asks me that. I’m just like, “You don’t need to know that!” So that, that probably would be something [to change on campus]… and I haven’t gone through the application process of a college in many, many years, but I’m sure, with the health records, and the admissions process, and the financial aid and the, I mean, there’s got to be numerous, numerous times where that comes up. And that’s got to be a pretty good amount of discomfort.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Allowing individuals to change their name and/or gender on records without having had a legal name/gender change.** Some trans and gender variant people wish to change their name or gender marker while affiliated with a college or university as faculty, staff, or student. In many cases, they may desire to initiate these changes before they have changed their name and gender marker on legal documents. Several participants discussed how, in such situations, their lives would have been improved by being able to note their correct name and gender on campus records, even if they had not yet obtained new legal documents. Campuses could work around this by having a way to designate an individual’s “preferred” name and gender, should it differ from their legal records, and have this recorded across campus systems so that people are consistently addressed correctly in classrooms, orientation sessions, health centers, and other campus...

---

\(^{58}\) “Common app” is shorthand for “common application,” a standardized college application form used by many colleges and universities around the U.S.
settings. Participants expressed the need for such designations that are neither dependent upon undergoing gender confirming surgery/ies nor on obtaining changes to legal documents.

Table 7.8
Allowing Individuals to Change Their Name and/or Gender on Records Without Having Had a Legal Name/Gender Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **P:** Definitely [I would like to see] some sort of legitimate system in place to do things, like for folks that can’t change their name [legally] or can’t for awhile, can get their initials [changed] like I had, so that they can go to their professors and say, “Hey, this is my, this is my name.” And something, something in place that took care of all those different departments…[so the wrong gender designation] doesn’t show up at [student health center] randomly and that kind of stuff. ‘Cause it’s so oddly connected, and yet disconnected. So, some sort of legitimate actual system and policy where you can go in and you can say, “Okay. I’m trans. I…” and, and something would be, it would be really hard to navigate it, but because to get the M and the F switched, people are really hooked on you having to have had surgery, and that’s so not okay and it’s certainly not a reality for many college students. So a system and policies in place so that someone could go one place and say, “Look, here’s what’s up. Can you use my initials and can you switch my gender designation?” And, that being able to be taken care of in the bureaucracy in a timely manner and cover all the bases. That would be really great.

| **P:** I think that if everything were finally just integrated and you could just go into the office and say, “Hi, I have a preferred name.” And they could just put it in, I think that would save so much because then you wouldn’t have to deal with professors, you wouldn’t have to deal with the students, you wouldn’t have to deal with doctors, or all these things I’ve run into problems with could be fixed really easily. Even though they probably…couldn’t change your legal name or gender marker. But they could just put a little flag on there or a little comment or something.

| **P:** I’ve also heard of this [possible] addition…to the software for registration that can allow a student to put in their preferred name and pronoun without legally changing it, and I, yeah. I would really love to see something like that.

| **P:** At the [student] orientation, I think that they should use preferred names instead of the name that [is] officially on your document[s] because when I went to the student orientation, they only did the one that comes on your transcripts…Same thing with [pre-admission] interviews. They call you by your…legal name, instead of your preferred name…. and it just seems to me that if on the application, you have a little section that says “preferred name,” you could at least…call the person by that name.

Simplifying the process for requesting changes so that a person can request the change in one place and have it apply everywhere on campus. Another suggestion
related to campus information systems and record procedures offered by participants was to have an easy, one-stop method for requesting a records change, thereby initiating a process that will carry across all records on campus. This suggestion very much depends upon having information technology that is standard and linked across all campus departments, offices, services, and work divisions. Suggestions on this topic were particularly spoken about by participants whose gender identity was non-binary (e.g., genderqueer, trans, queer, etc.). Example quotations are listed in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9
Simplifying the Process for Requesting Record Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: Small, immediate improvements would be fixing the computer systems so that, if you change your name or your gender in one location that it populates to all the other computer systems. There’s not enough integration of those to make that happen. I’d like there to be more privacy around somebody who is changing a name or gender in the system so that that information is, if it has to kept for bureaucratic reasons, that it’s kept at a very high level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: I would like to see there be a streamlined process for records changing, name changes that are specific to queer and genderqueer students, gender non-conforming students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>: Well the one thing that comes to mind is… I had one student that went by one name and she had asked for [department] to go by a different name, a male name, and when I got the list of students for the class, I called her by the female name… I’m like, “I wish somebody would have told me that they prefer to go by this name,” and why it was never changed on record I don’t know… All it would have taken is [university] to put on there “goes by” or change it in the system… So I think that’s something definitely that would be good for people to think about… I don’t know if there’s even a question that’s asked, “Do you go by a different name? How would you prefer us to list you on…the campus directories?” or whatever like that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One final note on this topic reflects some feedback I received during the member check process. An individual who was reviewing this theme made the point that—as part of a process of advocating for these changes to university systems—campuses may want to investigate the ways that they have allowed heterosexual women who get married to
change their names across all campus records. If the university or college already has a campus-wide procedure for record changes for this particular population, perhaps there is a similar method that can be adopted for transgender people requesting name and gender marker changes. This is a terrific example of looking at how institutional flexibility that is offered to one group privileged by sexual orientation (heterosexual women) can be used as a model to enact change for groups who experience widespread structural oppression (such as trans people).

**Theme Three: Encourage Greater Inclusivity and Recruitment of Diverse Groups**

This third theme encompassed participants' suggestions that campuses should make stronger, sustained efforts to both recruit and retain transgender and gender non-conforming people, in addition to other underrepresented groups in higher education (such as people of color, those who are first generation college students, etc.), and increase the number of trans and gender non-conforming people on campus. Many of these suggestions relate to policy-level change (and communication of such policies), administrator actions, funding mechanisms and scholarships supportive of trans people, and other actions at a systemic level that would encourage and support the long-term presence of trans staff, students, and faculty. This also included having campus mission statements and other visible, articulated commitments from campus leaders that emphasize a desire to be affirming and welcoming of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

A number of participants expressed general interest in having a more diverse campus population. For some, this meant more visibly gender variant or androgynous
people; others wanted to see more people of color or LGBTQ individuals. A white student at a small university stated: “I want to see more androgynous-looking individuals [on campus]…God, I mean, how that can happen… more people need to show up. What [university] can do about that, I dunno… [but] I want to see more diversity.” A different student spoke to zir experience at a two-year college: “At [community college], I’d like to see a bigger GLBT community.”

Another participant discussed the need for more intentional recruitment of trans people, but noted that she’s aware that some characteristics of her college may present barriers for this population:

**P:** And we also need more recruitment of transgendered [sic] people, and I think one prohibitive thing that causes people to shy away from [university] is the fact that it is a [specific religious characteristic] school. It’s not a career school…and the fact that the tuition, I mean being a private institution, it’s pretty high. I’m pretty sure it’s not as high as [another local university], but it’s still pretty high.

Throughout the interviews, participants emphasized the importance of recognizing intersectionality—in other words, that not all trans or gender non-conforming people are the same or come from the same background, and it is important to recognize the other identities that they hold, such as socioeconomic background, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, and citizenship. A staff person who was interviewed spoke to the importance of intersectionality in relation to changing the campus culture to be more welcoming:

**P:** Other things [I would like to see improved on campus] is just continuing to work with other offices on campus to make it easier for trans people and to continue to work on the campus culture that will be more trans-inclusive…Making student groups more trans-inclusive, more trans-sensitive, like

---

59 This quotation came from a portion of an interview after the audio recorder batteries had died; however, the interviewer indicated that this statement was a verbatim quote from the participant.
the [LGBTQ-specific campus organization] or whatever other group. More fully recognizing those intersectionalities because we all come with a bag of identities. We don’t come just as trans or just as bisexual or just as whatever. So that’s really important to me, too, to see real improvement on that. To make [university] a more welcoming campus to queer people, trans people, people of color, because the issue of people of color has been a vexing one for the campus.

Other participants offered specific suggestions for systemic ways to encourage recruitment of trans and other diverse populations. A list of such suggestions are provided in Table 7.10.

Table 7.10
Greater Inclusivity and Recruitment of Diverse Groups: Recommended Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Strategy</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus-wide Task Force to Help Implement Change</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I would like to see a campus-wide task force…that it comes from an academic and student affairs focus that multiple constituencies are represented…[This task force]… would be able to assist us in our campus climate assessment, and then assist in particularly the longer term institutional change… I think that the task group would also work on making sure that the systemic policies of the university are trans-inclusive and keep in mind from the forefront the values of a land grant institution being that we are supposed to be about access and access to resources and recognizing on a day-to-day basis that those barriers that are thrown up for students, staff, and faculty who are trans and gender non-conforming prohibit that and actually are the antithesis to what a land grant institution should stand for and is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Scholarships for LGBTQ Students</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> It’d be awesome if there were some scholarships specifically for queer students or something like that… I find that it feels good to know that the university values my presence or participation as a [minority ethnicity] student, partly in because of how they give money. I think that should be a part of how they give money. I don’t know. I think that’d be cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nondiscrimination Policy that Includes Gender Identity and Gender Expression</td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> [I would like to see] the [university governance board]’s taking that final step and actually passing, adding gender identity [and] expression to the nondiscrimination policy for the [university] system. That’s like the big thing, I think, and that’s something that’s do-able that can be done in the next six months, I think. That’s certainly my hope, and we’re feeling pretty hopeful about it right now. So that’s the next big step—to get them to pass that, approve that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clear Communication of Affirming Campus Policies

P: It would be cool if...I could have been notified of these policies that [university] has, even specifically just like, "We know you're queer because you've self-identified as such, so you might be interested in knowing these things." And/or if it was just part of the marketing or something that I was just more aware of... I think even though I had...my head down, I might have noticed that there was some sort of positive advertising that made me feel like I might be welcome.

Theme Four: Make Changes to Facilities

Another suggestion discussed by the individuals interviewed by CTOC was to make campus improvements related to buildings and infrastructure, including restrooms, locker rooms, and on-campus housing. In many cases, participants wanted to see more spaces that were single-occupancy and/or gender-neutral (welcoming to people of any gender) as a way to avoid the stress, frustration, and trauma associated with trying to "fit" into gender-regulated spaces as a gender non-conforming person. Example data supporting this suggestion are displayed in Table 7.11, categorized by the participant’s gender identity.

As can be seen from these quotations, suggestions for creating gender-neutral spaces tended to emerge from participants who either primarily identified their gender in non-binary ways (e.g., androgynous, trans, genderqueer) or used multiple gender identity terms that spanned multiple categories, such as using both non-binary and trans masculine words (e.g., trans man). Suggestions on this topic were less often voiced by those who identified primarily as women or as trans women or from those who identified primarily as men or trans men. It may be that such individuals are much more
Table 7.11
*The Need for Offering Some On-Campus Gender-Neutral Restrooms, Locker Rooms, and Housing Options, Organized by Participant’s Gender Identity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Gender Identity</th>
<th>P:</th>
<th>P:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Binary (Genderqueer, Androgynous, etc.)</td>
<td>Yeah! If they had fucking neutral—gender-neutral bathrooms, that would be great! That would be my single most biggest focus is that’s the one thing that <em>really</em> is such a pain in the ass every single day for me, so…</td>
<td>I would like to see gender-inclusive restrooms be required in any new building that goes up on campus and any single stall existing restroom have their sign signage changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of Categories</td>
<td>We should not have these binary bathrooms. It’s just stupid. It drives me crazy all the time. It’s just such a simple thing to do to loosen that little grip…that would make a huge difference… That’d be awesome. And it’d be awesomer [<em>sic</em>] if it wasn’t like, ”Oh yeah, one bathroom in the whatever, in the student center or something like that.” It’d be awesome if it were comprehensive.</td>
<td>Well, obviously the bathroom issues. I think that kind of extends, the bathrooms and the facilities, the recognition within the facilities of having trans or genderqueer people, anywhere there are sex-segregated areas—the [recreation center], the dorms…I think that presents a real blockage for any person…who’s differently gendered or gender variant. It just stops that flow all of a sudden of “Gosh, I have to choose,” or “What do I do?” or “What if I am outing?” or “What if I don’t pass?” or “What if I do pass, and I get caught?” It stops that nice even flow of, “I just want to go in there and do what I’m supposed to do and be done.” Whether it’s…something over at the [recreation center], or whatever… I guess that’s the one that’s really on my mind right now that would make kind of a big deal and an improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man or Trans Masculine</td>
<td>There’s a lot of, a lot of it’s just little systematic things [that can be improved on campus]. For example, having options of gender-neutral restrooms, having the option of single occupancy changing areas…</td>
<td>Gender-neutral bathrooms. That’s, ‘cause that’s just an everyday safety piece that I feel uncomfortable about. There’s a lot of, a lot of the guys’ bathrooms don’t, some don’t have stalls, they don’t lock, they have holes in them, so I always feel unsafe going to the bathroom. So, and that, I mean everybody always says that, but it’s so true. That’s probably number one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

350
comfortable using restrooms, on-campus housing, or other facilities that match their
gender and might often pass in such settings.60

Another suggestion for campus facilities was to ensure that restrooms are safe and
private. The last quotation in the previous table, for example, advocates for gender-
neutral spaces precisely because men’s bathrooms so rarely have stall doors that lock and
don’t have holes. Another participant said that simply adding curtains in shower stalls
could help increase comfort for trans people:

P: The absolute obvious [suggestion] is any gender-segregated shit…It’s hard to
navigate, and it’s really much more energy than it’s worth for anyone to try figure
out how to navigate. It would be a lot easier to just throw up some shower
curtains [in the locker rooms to provide greater privacy]—problem solved!

Another participant wanted to see dedicated "safe" housing for trans people:

P: I would like for there to be safe housing, and I almost wonder if there could be
somewhere that wasn’t the [LGBTQ-specific housing] for trans folks where there
was a gender-neutral bathroom that they could be safe and/or single rooms—no
roommates.

This person mentions that such housing could be created in a way that offers trans people
the option of single occupancy dormitory rooms that are not part of “LGBTQ-specific”
housing.

Participants also noted a need for educating the general campus population about
using gender-neutral spaces and about Colorado’s laws that allow trans people to use
whatever bathroom is appropriate for them. A person in multiple roles at a university said
that the biggest barrier to bathroom use is educating cisgender people about why gender-

---

60 This was a perspective voiced to me by a staff person at a community agency that serves LGBTQ people
of color—that some trans people prefer to use existing restrooms that match their gender, rather than use
gender-neutral spaces.
inclusive spaces are important and getting them to be more comfortable with using such spaces:

P: I am so tired of talking about the bathroom topic, I wish people would get over that and just accept it and they would just change them all and be done with it. It just gets really tiresome. It is very expensive to remodel all of them, but the bigger barrier there is just this great discomfort with a gender-neutral space that is going to take a lot more comfort, a lot more experiences, before people say, “Actually, this is no different from my own bathroom at home.”

A student participant expressed a similar desire to see more education of the general campus population about Colorado laws regarding bathroom usage:

P: I mean… yeah, there’s not necessarily any…bathrooms that are inclusive, but I’m not necessarily for multi-gender restrooms being this sort of segregated state, but maybe for there just to be like a general awareness among students that adults know which bathroom they’re in, and a general awareness that in Colorado now… you can’t be in the wrong bathroom necessarily.

Theme Five: Hold People Accountable

The final theme answering Research Question Three reflected the need to implement consequences for those who treat transgender individuals with disrespect, do not adequately prepare themselves for working with trans-identified people, or ignore a campus' commitment to diversity in terms of their response to trans and gender non-conforming individuals. This includes holding people responsible for their actions, carrying out appropriate punishments, and not ignoring problems related to trans inclusivity. This theme also incorporated participants' suggestions about having a remediation process in place so that they can properly report experiences of discrimination and mistreatment.

Only a small group of participants spoke to this theme, however those who did tended to reflect ages, roles, and departmental affiliations that generally reflected the
overall distribution of the sample of 30 participants. However, no one who expressed this theme was affiliated with a college with fewer than 10,000 students; it is unclear why the topic of accountability was not discussed by participants at smaller campuses.

Those who discussed this theme indicated that a basic level of accountability in relation to transgender inclusion was often lacking on their campuses. For example, one person at a public university discussed how a nondiscrimination policy alone is not enough: “I would like a nondiscrimination policy with teeth to it, so for me it’s not enough to have gender identity and expression in the nondiscrimination policy, I want to know how people are going to get held accountable.” This person calls for having procedures in place to deal with discrimination, in addition to any statements of nondiscrimination that may be written in policy manuals and on the university website.

A student participant at a public university expressed a similar sense of dissatisfaction with the lack of follow-through in improving services of the on-campus health center:

P: And then, the health center… I don’t know what they need, I don’t know if they need [trans-identified trainer who specializes in trans issues] for 20 hours or what, but…there’s no accountability for any of this. Nobody gets held up to anything. Nobody gets disciplined or educated… there’s no accountability. They just do whatever they want.

This quote reflects the perspective that problematic behaviors and a lack of education on trans issues need to be directly addressed, rather than swept under the rug.

A faculty member at a private university stated that individuals need to experience consequences for treating trans people poorly, regardless of whether they intended to do so or not:
P: I think it would help if there was accountability.  
[Interviewer: In terms of?]  
P: Like, if you screw something up, somebody’s going to talk to you about it, I mean with regards to respectfulness and stuff. [Whereas] before, it’s just been like, “Oh, well, they didn’t mean it.” …That’s kind of unsatisfying.

The final two quotations on this theme both call for having a specific point-person that they can go to when they encounter negative situations. A Latina individual shared:

P: It would great if there was some avenue for recourse. If I knew that there was some sort of procedure around grievances and who I could take my grievances directly to … as a student, [if] I felt empowered to say if I’d been mistreated or if I feel like something has happened that is out of…the realm of your own policies and procedures and guidelines of respectful behavior. I should have somebody, and I should know who that is that I can go to and I can say, “This happened. What’s the next step?” …When I think “recourse,” I don’t know that I even necessarily think punitive-punishment, “somebody must be punished” … Most people really I think in my experience are just clueless…If they just had some awareness, they could maybe adapt. If they had some sort of guidance or instruction or direction, leadership! Leadership that was establishing, that was establishing the culture, and establishing a safe and supportive culture for everybody…So that would be a big first step—give me someone I can go to to say something and have some sort of policy in place that talks about how, how you’re going to address these issues. Is it going to be provide more training…what is it going to be? Is it going to be to have mediators available who…I can call on to take into an interaction with a professor to, not even to fight my case, but to help mediate the situation because there’s a power imbalance?

A White individual also expressed interest in knowing what people he could go to for help, specifically noting that it would be helpful to have the names of people in such a support network listed in a student resource guide:

P: And, somebody needs to tell [people on campus] that they’re accountable…. It would be very hard for them to get away with doing anything around race or ethnicity or religion, and I mean professors have said things and classes have erupted and they've got in big trouble. So, I’d like to see it to the point where they can’t get away with [anything around gender or sexuality]…either. Accountability, and some sort of a safe system specifically for GLBT folks and really emphasizing the T, but a safe… set of people that you can go to. I’d like to see that in the big student handbook, like “We have the [LGBTQ student services office], and we have this, and we have that. And here is this group of people—if you had a problem with a professor or a particular class or all these other things
that you know you can go to.” And that it’s right there in the student resource
guide. And also, I think it’s even effective if it’s in the student resource guide,
some people will see it and then some people will know, “Hey, okay, so it’s
something that is here.”

A key point emphasized by this final theme is that if campuses want to most effectively
support trans and gender non-conforming individuals, there need to be procedures in
place for both reporting and responding to instances of harassment, discrimination,
marginalization, violence, and transphobia on campus. One important step in this process
is creating at least one person—and preferably a team of people—who trans people can
approach to seek help and report instances of victimization and discrimination.
Chapter Eight: Discussion

The results from Chapters Five, Six and Seven are quite extensive and have numerous implications for social work practitioners, social work faculty, and other personnel working in higher education and social services. In this final chapter, I will review findings by discussing implications for practice and for policy in social welfare and higher education settings and suggestions for future research. However, I will begin by discussing the methodological limitations of this dissertation.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study’s methodology. A key limitation concerns the samples—because the two samples are derived from two separate research projects conducted by differing entities (Colorado Trans on Campus, and the Task Force/NCTE), there is no way to know whether the same individuals participated in each study. This prohibited analyzing the quantitative and qualitative findings across individual cases, which would have likely offered valuable insights. On a related note, the two research projects were conducted for differing purposes and with differing scopes. Although I analyzed data from both projects to answer my research questions, it is important to realize that my research questions were developed independently from the construction of these two research projects by the community-based agencies. Both datasets offer rich data that could have been explored in a myriad of ways, and the analysis offered here is only one way of analyzing these data. The present study was also
limited in that it did not include qualitative data related to social welfare settings. Having further narrative detail about transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences in accessing social welfare services and the occasions in which they were denied service or equal treatment would have enriched the analysis of this study.

With regard to the CTOC study, the coalition chose to gather data from a purposive convenience sample. There is no way of knowing if the sample of 30 transgender and gender non-conforming students, staff, and faculty interviewed for this project (who were predominately White, young, and affiliated with urban campuses) are representative of the larger population of trans people across the U.S. who are working or studying in higher education. However, given that generalizability is not a goal of qualitative research, this is not a methodological limitation of the qualitative portion of this dissertation. Further, there are a number of characteristics of the sample that indicate transferability of the qualitative findings. For example, the sample included staff and faculty participants as well as students, which broadens the relevance of findings to people across campus roles. Additionally, by comparing and contrasting the qualitative data with the national survey’s quantitative results, findings related to higher education are likely to be more transferable.

The CTOC interview team did not collect data from all participants about their socioeconomic backgrounds, religious identities, abilities, citizenship, or other characteristics. Future researchers are encouraged to gather such information in studying trans people in higher education settings. Lastly, while at least two people reviewed the interview transcriptions while listening to the audio recordings, the data could have been
further checked for reliability by presenting these transcripts to the participants and asking them to review them for accuracy and to correct any language that may have been misinterpreted. Unfortunately, the CTOC group did not have the time or resources to do this additional reliability check. Nonetheless, the member checking process that was used—having three transgender or gender non-conforming individuals review initial themes, definitions, and quotations—certainly helped enrich and validate the data analysis process.

For the NCTE/Task Force portion of this dissertation, one weakness is that the survey instrument’s validity and reliability was weaker than desirable, as the survey did not use existing measures or composite measures. A strength, however, is that the survey was designed by activists, social scientists, and others who are well-connected to the trans community and deeply aware of the literacy levels of and terminology familiar to this population. While the survey instrument reflected what was feasible and manageable for those collecting these data, this dissertation would have been strengthened by having access to additional data about participants’ experiences in social welfare and higher education settings, such as the characteristics of the agencies in which people experienced unequal treatment or discrimination. Such characteristics might include whether these agencies had nondiscrimination policies, who precisely was treating people unequally, and how frequently negative experiences were occurring. These factors would be helpful to incorporate and analyze within future research.

Additional limitations with the NTDS data dealt with measurement. The four dependent variables in the education models did not specify the level of schooling being
discussed; while the items regarding financial aid/scholarships and housing on campus were likely most relevant to college settings for the majority of respondents, participants may have answered the questions about bathroom access and changing student records as if speaking to K-12 settings. The NTDS dataset was further limited by the lack of questions about whether respondents were currently enrolled in school, and if so, at what level. Additionally, a question about when respondents had graduated from or last attended college would have provided richer information about the timeframe in which they attended school. If these types of information had been collected, the higher education models analyzed in Chapter 5 would have been greatly strengthened. Since these questions were not asked, the models necessarily included both people currently enrolled in college and those who had previously attended college at any point in time. Still, the data provide an insightful overview of the experiences of the transgender population in education across all age groups and generational cohorts. The age and age squared variables are the best stand-ins from the dataset for understanding generational differences, presuming that for the majority of the sample, an older age corresponds to a longer length of time since attending college. Although these quantitative data do not allow for generational comparisons of college experiences, the qualitative data from the CTOC project indicate that there are numerous troubling patterns occurring for trans people within higher education today, not just in previous eras.

Another limitation with the quantitative methodology was that a respondent’s transition history was captured in a very broad stroke manner—either a “yes” or “no” to indicate whether one had reported hormone treatments, one or more surgeries, or a dollar
amount for such treatment(s)—which likely washed out some important differences between various gender subgroups who seek these treatments, the qualitative differences between “minor” and “major” surgical procedures, as well as how far along one is in a transition. Future researchers are encouraged to more fully capture these nuances in order to detail the role of transitions on experiences of structural oppression.

Findings related to access to homeless shelters may call for a more cautious interpretation than those related to the other social welfare settings. Compared to the other logistic regression models, the homeless shelter models had a noticeably smaller sample size (n = 373). This smaller sample size may have lessened the overall model fit and the number of statistically significant predictors in the homeless shelter models. Readers should also note that transgender individuals who access homeless shelters may have a very different profile than those who access the other social welfare settings—particularly compared to the broader category of anyone who reported interacting with a government agency. Those who have tried to access homeless shelters are likely a higher risk, lower income group of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals than those studied in the other models.

While the issues discussed above were some of weaknesses of this study’s methodology, there were also some strengths worth reiterating here. These strengths included:

1. The method allowed for both an examination of individual narratives and a statistical analysis of variables across participants that shed light on trans people’s experiences in social welfare and higher education settings.
2. Both sources of data came from community-based research initiatives and were driven by needs identified by those within trans and gender non-conforming communities.

3. The research integrated participatory methods that were both initiated by the community agencies (e.g., having trans people help develop the NTDS survey and CTOC interview protocol) and by the researcher (e.g., conducting member checks for the qualitative data).

4. Both datasets included information about demographics other than gender, allowing for analyses of other identities (race, age, income, etc.), which addressed a gap in the knowledge base.

5. Results and implications are framed to be directly useful and applicable to practitioners in social work, other helping professionals, and higher education personnel.

**Implications for Practice**

The mixed data from this dissertation shed light on the problem of structural bigenderism as it appears in higher education and social welfare settings. Based on the results of this study, I will provide some recommendations for practice in each of these settings.

**Higher education settings.** The CTOC and NTDS data related to higher education revealed high rates of negative experiences for transgender people on campus. These data are cause for concern and shed light on the experiences of transgender people located in school settings. Social work educators should take pause to understand the
prevalence of unequal treatment that is occurring within the environments where they teach and work; these issues need to be addressed to better reach, recruit, and retain transgender students and employees.

Across the quantitative models, participants who experienced multiple forms of marginalization (lower income, being a person of color, have a disability, being a non-citizen of the U.S., not have college degree) and had psychosocial risk histories were more at risk for being denied financial aid, access to gender-appropriate spaces, and denial of ability to change student records. This pattern was particularly strong—with the largest number of statistically significant predictors—among the models predicting denial of financial aid or scholarships and denial of access to appropriate bathrooms and other facilities. MTF individuals in particular were at higher risk than some other gender identity subgroups in accessing financial aid or scholarships, gender-appropriate housing, and bathrooms and other facilities. These findings fit into a literature base that notes particularly high and alarming rates of discrimination, harassment, and violence directed at MTF individuals across many types of settings in modern U.S. society. Further, this evidence supports the work of scholars such as Serano (2007) who posit that the highly negative reactions that trans women face reflect misogyny and a mocking of men who wish to give up their male privilege more than sanctioning for being transgender or transgressing gender binaries. Universities and colleges should anticipate that trans women may need pronounced support and advocacy on such issues.

The mixed data results in particular indicated that the multiple, overlapping identities that transgender people held while affiliated with a college or university matter
for how they were treated by the institution and by other people on campus. Such findings emphasize both the importance of recognizing that not all transgender people are alike or have the same experiences and that we should not ignore the impact of other forms of oppression (such as racism, classism, etc.) on the lives of transgender people within college settings. College faculty and personnel need to be aware that there is a need for support and a sense of community among trans people on campus because they are so often isolated or feel like the only “different” person on campus; those who are marginalized along other cultural axes in addition to gender will also benefit from efforts that build community across and within these other marginalized identities. This conclusion also speaks to both the theory bases that underlie this dissertation—both the tenet of postmodern theories (such as queer theory) that there is not just one universal experience, and the tenet of structural social work theory that there are oppressive polarizations that privilege some groups and oppress others (Carniol, 2005).

Based on findings, I offer a few specific suggestions for improvements that can be made in various areas of campus life to tackle structural bigenderism and better support the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

**Campus records.** Qualitative findings from this dissertation add to and further support the work of previous empirical research about binary gender labeling within higher education (Bilodeau, 2007; Mintz, 2011) and how there is often a disconnect between institutional procedures and individual identity. Building on the work of theorists (Butler, 2002; Garfinkel, 1967; Gilbert, 2009; Hill, 2000; Markman, 2011) who call attention to the problematic assumptions embedded within institutions that suppose
that everyone identifies as either man or woman and that such an identification never changes, this dissertation adds to the contributions of those scholars who have challenged the way that such assumptions exclude trans experiences and reproduce oppression.

Qualitative findings indicated that people in positions of power overly relied upon institutional records to determine what name or pronouns to use for people rather than asking them how they preferred to be addressed. Further, people often had difficulty adjusting names or pronouns for transgender and gender non-conforming people who requested a change in how they were addressed. Faculty, staff and administrators often relied upon their own assumptions of what a “man” or “woman” should look like in determining what pronouns to use when speaking to or about an individual; thus, those who were more often “read” as their correct gender by others and those who were farther along in a transition process were less likely to be addressed with incorrect names or pronouns. All of these practices tended to negatively impact the overall experience of transgender people on campus, sometimes resulting in unnecessarily “ outing” trans individuals.

Quantitative findings demonstrated that those who have sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender were less likely to have been prohibited from changing student records, which indicates that colleges and universities may be requiring people to show evidence of such medical treatments in order to change their name and sex marker on records. While such policies provide an opening for some transgender individuals (particularly those who are transsexual) to seek record changes, they exclude those who either do not wish to have or cannot afford hormone therapy or
surgeries, as well as those who identify outside of the binary. These individuals may also seek to change their name and/or gender marker on records, but may be facing greater hurdles from the university in doing so. An additional quantitative finding was that, controlling for whether one had undergone hormone therapy or surgeries, those who identified as cross-dressers were over five times more likely than trans women to be denied the ability to change their student records. This indicates that colleges and universities may have document change policies that work better for transsexual people than for those who may not wish to transition full-time to a different sex. More research could shed light on the precise experiences of cross-dressers who have requested changes to their records at their school and been denied—specifically, who did they approach, how did that person respond, and what reasoning was given for refusing such a request.

Based on these results, suggestions for best practices in higher education include:

- Whenever possible, colleges should allow individuals to self-identify their gender on forms and applications, such as listing the word “gender” next to a blank space where people can write in their gender identity. This emerged as a specific suggestion from the perspective of participants of the CTOC study.
- Offer clear communication about how people can request changes to their name and/or gender marker on their student or employee records. Include information about who can assist with this process and where they can be found on campus. Work to correct an individual’s records and e-mail address to reflect the person's correct name and correct gender.
Universities should streamline the process for requesting changes to one’s records so that there is one place where individuals can go to report a name or gender marker change request and have that change globally applied everywhere on campus. When university systems prohibit a permanent change to name or gender without first obtaining changes to legal documents, institute a process in which individuals can designate a “preferred” name and gender on records and update this information across campus systems.

Financial aid and scholarships. Because colleges and universities rely upon the federal guidelines for documenting a student’s financial need, their own processes are often bound to the same limitations within the federal system, particularly when a student is wanting to change a name or gender marker. According to findings in this study, those who had sought hormone treatment or surgeries related to being transgender or gender non-conforming were 1.94 times more likely to have been denied access to financial aid or scholarships due to being transgender. An important note here is that there is no way of knowing whether those participants who have sought hormone treatment or surgeries did so before, during, or after college; therefore, some of these individuals may have conceivably been trying to access financial aid before their transition and may have had difficulty updating and correcting their name and gender on financial aid applications at that time. Advocates have documented that there can be delays or issues in processing an individual’s financial aid application when there are some discrepancies in the student’s record regarding name and gender (Center for American Progress, 2011). With these findings in mind, recommendations include:
• Develop a resource for transgender students and others who may change their names or gender markers while affiliated with campus about how to maintain their financial aid eligibility during this transition and how to obtain a legal name change, if necessary.

• As suggested by other researchers (Rankin, 2003), offer university scholarships that specifically support trans students and cisgender allies who are advocates for this population. If possible, make this financial support available even when individuals are going through gender transition and have a preferred name or gender than is listed on their legal documents.

  **Restrooms and locker rooms.** Issues with bathroom access have been documented as a consistent challenge for people who are trans or gender non-conforming by other researchers (Bilodeau, 2007; Browne, 2004; Clark, 2011; Lucal, 1999), but this study adds to this literature by looking at such access using quantitative data from a large sample of trans people and revealing within group differences. This included findings demonstrating that those who had a disability, lived in rural areas, were people of color, did not have a college degree, and/or had a history of psychosocial risks were at greater predicted risk of discrimination in school bathrooms. There was also a curvilinear relationship between bathroom access and age. It is unclear whether the findings related to age had more to do with older trans people being less often challenged in such spaces currently, generational differences in school bathroom access over time, or older individuals having weaker recall about accessing bathrooms in school settings many years ago.
While in the quantitative models, undergoing *any* type of medical transition was not a statistically significant predictor of denial of access to bathrooms or other facilities on campus, the qualitative data indicate that *where* someone is in the transition process may play a role in how others treat them on campus in gender-segregated settings because of how this interacts with others’ perceptions of one’s gender. When I removed the “frequency perceived as transgender” variable from this quantitative model, the medical transition variable became statistically significant, supporting the idea that medical transitions may contribute to how one is perceived in settings such as bathrooms and whether one is challenged or denied access to such spaces. The change in statistical significance of the medical transition variable may also reflect the previously discussed limitation of this form of measurement and how a dichotomous variable may not have adequately captured differences between various gender subgroups who seek surgeries and/or hormone treatment.

CTOC participants voiced a need for improvements related to campus facilities, including restrooms, locker rooms, and on-campus housing. In many cases, participants wanted to see more spaces that were single-occupancy and/or gender-neutral (welcome people of any gender) as a way to avoid the stress, frustration, and trauma associated with trying to "fit" into gender-regulated spaces as a gender non-conforming person. These findings replicate the call of advocates and researchers who have recommended that campuses offer more gender-neutral facilities, including locking single-stall restrooms (accessible to anyone, including those with disabilities who are accompanied by a differently-gendered caretaker), multiple-stall all-gender restrooms, private changing
areas within locker rooms, single-occupancy dormitory options, and gender-neutral campus housing options (Beemyn, n.d.; 2005b; Beemyn, Curtis, Davis, & Tubbs, 2005; Bilodeau, 2007; Finger, 2010; McKinney, 2005; Rankin, 2003). Within the present study, those who suggested creating gender-neutral spaces tended to either identify their gender in non-binary ways (e.g., androgynous, trans, genderqueer) or use multiple gender identity terms that spanned multiple categories, such as both queer and trans man. Recommendations on facilities were less often voiced by those who identified primarily as trans masculine or trans feminine. It may be that such individuals are much more comfortable using restrooms, on-campus housing, or other facilities that match their gender and might often pass in such settings, or that perhaps these individuals see changes to facilities as less of a priority than some other areas of campus life.

Invisibility and isolation related to campus facilities focused on participants’ thoughts on whether they knew of “visible” safe spaces and gender-neutral restrooms, locker rooms, and housing options on campus. This finding relates to the literature about the challenges of navigating gender-segregated spaces for some trans people (Bilodeau, 2007; Browne, 2004; Clark, 2011; CWLA & LLDEF, 2006; NCAVP, 2009). Underscoring what other scholars have found (Browne, 2004; Clark, 2011), findings from this dissertation indicate that gender “policing” frequently occurs within gender-segregated environments such as restrooms and locker rooms and that trans people often are challenged, questioned, assaulted, and thrown out of such spaces when their gender expression is perceived as “different” than predominant cultural norms for the gender label on the bathroom door.
Suggested improvements to facilities include:

- Designate some restrooms and locker rooms on campus as gender-neutral (open to all genders). Create a campus map that shows where people can find gender-neutral and/or single-stall bathrooms and locker rooms with private changing areas on the campus.

- Educate the general campus population that people have the right to use spaces that match their gender identity and that it is not appropriate to challenge someone’s access to a restroom, locker room, or dormitory based upon their gender expression. What matters for access to space is appropriate and safe behavior, rather than gender expression.

- Ensure that bathrooms are safe and secure—that they have locking doors/stalls, shower curtains, and private changing areas.

  **On-campus health care and mental health services.** Within the qualitative results, there was evidence that participants want to see on-campus health and counseling services that are offered by practitioners who are competent and knowledgeable about the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming patients, which supports findings and suggestions made by other researchers (Finger, 2010; McKinney, 2005; Rankin, 2003). Participants also articulated a need for inclusion of transition-related health care in campus health insurance programs. Currently, only 37 colleges and universities in the U.S. are documented as currently covering both hormone therapy and gender confirmation surgeries for students, with an additional 26 covering only hormones for students (TLPI, 2013c). Twenty colleges are documented as having insurance plans for
employees that cover both hormones and gender confirming surgeries (TLPI, 2013b). Therefore, suggested improvements to on-campus health care and mental health services include:

- Train medical providers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other health center staff about how to sensitively and effectively serve those who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.
- Advertise the presence of trans-competent staff in health center materials and brochures. If no one has a particular expertise in working with trans patients, provide a list of community providers and local or national organizations that provide competent health care support to trans individuals. Be prepared to refer patients to such resources.
- Advocate for university health insurance plans for students, employees, and staff to cover transition-related care (gender confirming surgeries and hormone therapy).
- Use health record systems in which one can designate a patient’s preferred names or genders, and monitor that all staff use these correct designations.
- When medical services are targeted to one gender (such as Women’s Health Centers), train staff to be prepared that they may serve transgender patients and others who have different bodies than what staff may expect.

**LGBTQ campus organizations, offices, and programs.** Qualitative results from this study reflect further explication of Bilodeau’s (2007) findings related to the privileging of binary and cisgender identities within LGBTQ campus organizations and invisibility and isolation. Structural forces on campus systematically treated transgender
and gender non-conforming people (and related topics/programming) as invisible, non-existent, not credible, irrelevant, and not important, resulting in a lack of action taken on campus to support, recognize, affirm, and welcome this community and create designated safe spaces on campus. Participants reported feeling that trans-related programming and resources were not well-advertised and/or that transgender people were not adequately discussed, included, or addressed through programming. These realities contributed to making the transgender community invisible and isolated in these organizations; in particular, some subpopulations within the trans community—including trans people of color, straight trans people, and femme trans women—often felt out-of-place and isolated within campus LGBTQ groups. Invisibility and isolation also related to participants’ thoughts on whether they knew of “visible” safe spaces. This finding relates to scholarship about the importance of having safe spaces, “counter spaces,” and organizations on college campuses that are designed to reach, support and affirm historically marginalized communities (Nasir & Al-Amin, 2006; Revilla, 2010).

Those interviewed for the CTOC study discussed how making changes to campus organizations could help improve their experiences. Specifically, they articulated the need for increasing the number of organizations on campus that effectively initiate programs about gender and what it means to be transgender, and further improving transgender inclusion among existing organizations by increasing overall participation, doing a better job of recruiting and incorporating trans people, encouraging better support and funding from the university or college, and changing the types of programs and
activities that are offered related to transgender issues and topics. Suggestions for practices related to LGBTQ organizations and spaces include:

- Advertise the presence of LGBTQ organizations, offices, and programs to all of campus.

- Train leaders and staff about transgender competence and inclusion to help address this problem.

- Create, promote, and financially support the presence of spaces on campus that are meant to support multicultural groups on campus and can be safe havens when individuals need somewhere to go where they know they will find people who are knowledgeable and competent for supporting trans people.

- Realize that not all trans people may wish to use LGBTQ-specific resources. However, their presence matters and communicates a basic openness to supporting LGBTQ people on campus.

- Broaden outreach and educational efforts to reach other diverse populations that also are a part of LGBTQ communities—including people of color, first generation students, lower income individuals, those with disabilities, international students, and people of diverse religious backgrounds and political perspectives. Be willing to address issues of racism, classism, ableism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice that appear within LGBTQ campus organizations.

- Consider offering mentorship programs and support teams that can help transgender individuals navigate difficult bureaucracies on campus. List names of people who...
have been trained to offer such support. Provide one-to-one mentorship opportunities when possible.

**Classrooms and teaching environments.** Qualitative results from this dissertation build upon scholarship related to the experiences of marginalized communities’ in higher education. Specifically, the narrative data indicated examples of transgender people experiencing the types of situations that other scholars have documented as facing other communities, such as being asked to “speak for” all of a population (Lindsay, 2010; Molina, 2008), being taught from curricula that do not contain content on their identities (Ballan, 2008; Lindsay, 2010; Quaye & Harper, 2007), and being blamed for the problems they encounter (Schiele, 2007). As shared by those interviewed by CTOC, people in positions of power on campus often tokenized transgender individuals, asked them inappropriate personal questions, put them on the spot to speak for all trans people, and treated being transgender as the root of a person’s problems on campus. Findings from a study by Nadal, Skolnik, and Wong (2012) suggest that such themes reflect the types of microaggressions targeted at transgender people across settings—including assuming that all trans people are the same, treating their lives as “exotic,” and pathologizing transgender people. Further, the CTOC participants noted a lack of faculty expertise on the transgender community. The invisibility of trans people was reflected in both the frequent lack of curricular content related to transgender communities and the lack of “visible” trans people in classroom settings. Suggestions for improving educational practices include:
• Offer trainings and ongoing support for faculty about how they can effectively reach and teach trans students and other diverse groups of students. Guide faculty about how to avoid tokenizing students, avoid punishing those who are gender variant, avoid grouping students into men/women groups for activities, and avoid asking students to “speak for” all people in a particular oppressed population.

• Provide strategies for how faculty can take classroom attendance without relying upon student’s legal names on records and rosters. Instead, develop an approach that allows students to self-identify their preferred name and pronouns.

• Support, encourage, and reward faculty who develop curricula that incorporate the works of transgender authors, scholars, and advocates and other topics related to gender non-conformity and gender diversity.

On-campus employment. Related to on-campus employment, the qualitative data reflected a pattern of invisibility related to having one’s transgender identity ignored by supervisors and colleagues, including having no one who mentions and advocates for social change for the trans community. Some suggested practices are to:

• Allow employees to dress according to gender identity.

• Offer incentives that recognize, support, and encourage staff for attending diversity trainings—including content on the transgender community.

• Recognize staff and faculty who go out of their way to be allies to transgender people and other diverse groups. Encourage the types of actions that have been identified in this research as being supportive and affirming of trans people, such as:
o Respond with affirmation and tact when a transgender or gender non-conforming person discloses their gender identity.

o Acknowledge the unique needs and challenges that trans people face on campus and offer your support.

o Be kind to and not tokenizing of trans people. Do not ask inappropriately personal or exoticizing questions, but instead educate oneself about the trans community.

o Advocate within the campus to change an individual’s records and e-mail address to reflect the person's correct name and correct gender.

o Attend and/or organize transgender-inclusive trainings on campus.

o Apologize for mistakes (such as incorrectly labeling a person's gender) and work to correct one's actions in the future without requiring prompting from others.

o Advocate for trans-inclusive policies and other changes on campus that are meant to support trans people and reflect best practices.

Training and education for administrators, staff, faculty, and students. The qualitative data from this study documented that people in administrative, faculty and staff roles were contributing to the invisibility of transgender and gender non-conforming people on campus by never speaking about them in public speeches, ignoring trans people when encountering them on campus, and discouraging trans people from studying topics or doing research about being transgender. This may indicate the need for basic training for those in administrative and leadership roles about what it means to be
transgender, what this population may need on campus, and why mentioning this population by name in speeches, policies, and mission statements is important to creating an inclusive environment.

Findings also demonstrated that staff, faculty, and administrators often carried out sanctions against trans people. Punishments included: (a) requiring trans people to jump through extra hoops not expected of cisgender people; (b) publicly shaming or teasing a person about their name, pronouns, gender identity or gender expression; (c) firing or not hiring a person because of their gender identity or gender expression; and (d) publicly outing a transgender person. These findings connect to the broader literature about the ways that transgender people are often openly shamed, threatened, harassed, fired or not hired, made to “prove” their gender or jump through other hoops, and told in a myriad of other ways that they are not worthy of the same level of respect as is set aside for cisgender people (Bilodeau, 2007; CWLA & LLDEF, 2006; Gilbert, 2009; Grant et al., 2011; Nadal, Skolnik, & Young, 2012; Rankin, 2003; Serano, 2007; Weiss, 2001; Whittle, Turner, & Al-Amani, 2007, WWRC, 2010). Campus personnel need to be trained on how to identify and stop such forms of treatment, why they are unacceptable, and how to treat transgender people with the same respect and dignity as cisgender people.

Another issue that could be addressed through training and education for campus members is the incorrect use of names and pronouns in addressing transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Findings on pronoun misuse are documented by other researchers who have studied trans people’s experiences in higher education (Finger, 2010; Mintz, 2011). Some “best practices” regarding name and pronoun use
(whether in higher education or other settings) include asking for people’s name and preferred pronouns, respecting their choices, correcting your own mistakes, establishing clear communication and policies indicating one’s commitment to respecting preferred names and pronouns (such as in syllabi), and learning how to appropriately use gender-neutral pronouns (Case, Stewart, & Tittsworth, 2009; CWLA & LLDEF, 2006; Marine, 2011; Markman, 2011; Mottet & Ohle, 2003). Yet, despite such recommendations, Mintz (2011) noted that some trans people become frustrated when they are repeatedly asked to state their gender identity and preferred pronouns, particularly when they are usually read as their correct gender (Mintz, 2011). At least one participant in the CTOC study expressed incredulity about being asked to share her preferred pronouns after stating that she was a transsexual woman; this person stated that it should be obvious that, as a woman, she would prefer female pronouns. Such examples indicate the importance of reading context in knowing when asking for such information is appropriate; some trans people take great pride in identifying as women or men and expect to be treated as such, including being addressed with the usual pronouns for that gender.

One recommendation of participants in the CTOC study for improving college campuses for transgender individuals was to offer workshops, orientation sessions, trainings, lectures, and continuing education opportunities that incorporate trans content; those who were from small- (less than 10,000 students) or medium-sized (between 10,000 – 20,000 students) disproportionately made such suggestions. Some participants particularly said they would like to see mandated trans-inclusive trainings for particular groups on campus (faculty, staff, campus police, health center employees, students
entering helping professions) or for everyone on campus. Participants also described the need for expanding campus resources (library materials, literature, pamphlets), offering more curricula about the trans community.

Recommendations for campus trainings and education include:

- Provide workshops, orientation sessions, trainings, lectures, and continuing education opportunities that incorporate trans content.

- Offer trainings about how to respond in affirming ways when people disclose their transgender status and/or request to be addressed with different names or pronouns. Include discussion of how to read the context of a situation to decide whether asking people to share their preferred pronouns would be helpful and appropriate. Role-play how to correct oneself and apologize for making a mistake in addressing a trans person, as well as how to use gender-neutral pronouns in everyday conversation.

- Provide professional incentives for attending trans-inclusive trainings, or mandate training for certain campus groups or student populations (administrators, faculty, staff, campus police, health center employees, students in helping professions). Participants from the CTOC study indicated that people who organized or attended such trainings were more often perceived as sources of support on campus.

- Educate campus members about how it is unacceptable to treat transgender students, staff, or faculty as inferior to cisgender people or treat them unequally. Provide information about the unique needs and challenges that transgender people on campus.

- Ensure that trans people and their histories are represented among library materials and other resources on campus.
Orientation for new students and employees. CTOC participants identified a particular need for improvement to campus orientation sessions for new students, staff, and faculty. Suggested practices in this area include:

- Provide information to new students and employees about LGBTQ resources on campus and in the local community. Include information about staff, student, and faculty support groups and organizations for people who are from marginalized communities, including trans people.

- Highlight policies that support and protect trans people and the types of discriminatory behaviors that are unacceptable on campus. Emphasize mission statements or policies that clearly articulate a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

- Offer mentorship opportunities for incoming trans students where they can be paired with a trans or trans-competent faculty or staff person, if desired.

Social welfare settings. The NTDS data revealed information about transgender people’s experiences trying to access social welfare settings. This quantitative analysis was based on the assumption that those who deny access to or throw individuals out of homeless shelters or treat clients unequally are those who typically embody the power of such an agency. My hope in exploring the predictors of such situations was that these data could reveal—broadly—the subgroups within the transgender community that are at the highest risk for being denied access to homeless shelters and being treated unequally due to being transgender. Further, my hope was that these data could help inform social workers employed in such settings so that we can better serve transgender people and be
attuned to the intersectionality of our clients and how that often impacts their risk profile for discrimination.

Descriptive information about the national sample encourage practitioners to be aware of the high risks for poverty, unemployment, suicidality, homelessness, and sex work among this population; yet, practitioners are encouraged not to interpret these data in a way that pathologizes the transgender community. A key takeaway point is to understand that there are remarkable needs for services among this population, and yet, a sizeable portion of trans people face unequal treatment from service providers.

Within the logistic regression models that examined social welfare settings, there were consistent patterns of statistical significance indicating that being lower income, being a person of color, and having a disability predicted higher risk due to being transgender in these settings. Additionally, being a non-citizen predicted unequal treatment in rape crisis centers/domestic violence shelters and in mental health/drug treatment clinics. In general, the patterns of statistical significance indicate the role of intersectionality and the presence and impact of other “isms” in social welfare settings that create more unequal treatment for those clients with multiple marginalized identities. Social workers can benefit from having an understanding of theories of anti-oppressive practice and how to work with clients to overcome the sometimes overlapping and multiple forms of oppression that they face. Findings corroborate the theoretical and advocacy work of those such as Spade (2006) who articulate the need for critical analysis of how those who are most marginalized in our society are often also faced with the harshest consequences for transgressing gender norms, particularly when trying to
receive assistance from social welfare systems. Further, social workers can partner with clients who transgress gender norms to advocate for social change that opens up more opportunities for transgender individuals and dismantles the systematic bigenderism that is ingrained in so many of the social welfare institutions in our society.

There was one incidence of a reverse pattern, however, where those with a marginalized identity were at lower risk—those who had a disability were statistically significantly less likely to be thrown out of or denied access to homeless shelters due to being transgender than those without a disability. Because of the broad nature of the disability dummy variable (it included anyone who had either a physical, learning, or mental disability, not including gender-related mental health diagnoses), there is no clear indication as to what this finding might mean. Perhaps having a disability—particularly one that is visible to others or is disclosed during a typical intake assessment—prompts homeless shelter staff to have empathy for the individual and encourages them to house a transgender person, whereas they may be less likely to do so for an able-bodied transgender person. However, this is merely speculation.

Transgender people who have experienced significant hardships—such as losing a home, engaging in survival sex for income, having attempted suicide, and being rejected by family members—were found to be more likely to experience inhospitable services from these social welfare settings. These findings mirror those of the WWRC (2010), which also found higher risks of unequal treatment among LGBT and gender non-conforming individuals who were homeless and trying to access social services agencies. This dissertation adds to the literature by providing further documentation of such
patterns within one of the largest known samples of transgender and gender non-conforming people. Nonetheless, I cannot overemphasize the importance of not interpreting these data in a causal manner—the models examined in this dissertation only show evidence of relationships between psychosocial risks and discrimination and unequal treatment in various settings for transgender people; one cannot interpret these data as indicating that these psychosocial risks in some way cause this unequal treatment, or that unequal treatment causes these psychosocial risks. Such relationships cannot be tested through the research design utilized by the NTDS.

The logistic regression models also indicated some notable findings about how gender-related characteristics predicted risk for unequal treatment in social welfare settings. The more often an individual was perceived as transgender by others without telling them, the more likely that individual was to be thrown out or denied access to homeless shelters or treated unequally in the other settings. This is perhaps the clearest indication of transphobia at work—that whether others often “think” a person is transgender had an impact on quality of services. Of course, since the dependent variables being predicted were worded as “being based upon being transgender” (rather than all forms of unequal treatment), perhaps there is some conceptual overlap between this item and frequency of being perceived as transgender. Nonetheless, such quantitative findings reiterate themes of the qualitative data—that participants reported being unfairly singled out, shamed, teased, and punished when they were perceived as not conforming to gender norms.
Another finding was that, controlling for gender identity, those who had undergone surgeries or hormone therapy or paid money for such treatments as part of transitioning were statistically significantly more likely to be treated unequally in all of the settings except homeless shelters. This may be related to how staff and administrators reacted to visible and physical changes to a client who was transitioning and how this impacts staff’s perceptions of the gender identity of that client. Further, perhaps “unequal treatment due to being transgender” occurred when staff questioned individuals about how or why they were transitioning or treated the individual poorly after that person requested a change to a name, gender marker, or pronouns in the agency setting. Again, these are only presuppositions, and it is important to realize that the medical transition variable was conceptualized incredibly broadly by the NTDS instrument.

Another key finding was that there were no statistically significant differences in denial of service and unequal treatment between MTF and FTM individuals. This is a critical point, as so little research has offered quantitative comparisons of the risk profiles of these groups, and social workers may benefit from knowing that FTM individuals—counter to some stereotypes—face notable rates of discrimination in such settings, as do MTF individuals. Cross-dressers were found to be statistically significantly less likely than MTF individuals to be treated unequally in government agencies. This is an intriguing finding, although additional research would need to be done to explore why cross-dressers may report lower levels of unequal treatment due to being transgender than MTF individuals. Gender non-conforming individuals were less likely than MTF individuals to be denied access to or thrown out of homeless shelters. This result supports
the work of others (Mottet and Ohle, 2003), who have indicated that shelter staff often have misguided beliefs that allowing MTF individuals into a women’s shelter will make the space less space. Such reactions may be based on the assumption that trans women are “predators” who will go after cisgender women in shelter settings; perhaps homeless shelter staff are less likely to believe that predation will be carried out by gender non-conforming people. Further, gender non-conforming people—even if they claim this as their gender identity—may still be perceived by intake staff as the “same” birth sex (correctly or not) as other shelter clients in the space and therefore not denied access.

To help combat the high rates of unequal treatment and denial of access to services for transgender people, administrators are encouraged to provide training for staff about what it means to be transgender, common barriers to effective service (such as pronoun misuse and placement according to birth sex rather than gender identity), the strengths of this community, and the risks they face in trying to seek help from social workers and other helping professionals. Staff may benefit from discussions of what it means to have cisgender privilege and how this privilege may show up in assumptions made about transgender clients. Efforts should be made to discourage staff from treating clients unfairly based upon perceptions of that client being transgender or gender non-conforming, their place in a transition process, their request to be addressed with a different name, or their insistence on using services or facilities that match their gender identity.
Implications for Policy

**Higher education settings.** Findings from the dissertation have implications for a number of different areas of higher education policy. For example, CTOC participants said that they found it supportive and affirming when individuals on campus advocated for trans-inclusive policies and other changes that were meant to support trans people and reflect best practices. Participants suggested that campuses should make stronger, sustained efforts to both recruit and retain transgender and gender non-conforming people, in addition to other underrepresented groups in higher education, and increase the number of trans and gender non-conforming people on campus. Many of these suggestions relate to policy-level change (and communication of such policies), administrator actions, funding mechanisms and scholarships supportive of trans people, and other actions at a systemic level that would encourage and support the long-term presence of trans staff, students, and faculty. This also includes having campus mission statements and other visible, articulated commitments from campus leaders that emphasize a desire to be affirming and welcoming of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

Previous researchers have noted the importance of having mechanisms for recruiting, supporting, and retaining transgender students in particular—such as through scholarships (Grant et al., 2011; Rankin, 2003), nondiscrimination policies that include gender identity and gender expression (Beemyn et al., 2005; Bilodeau, 2007; Finger, 2010; Rankin, 2003), campus-wide inclusivity initiatives and a cohesive mission that communicates a commitment to affirming and supporting diversity (Harley, Nowak, Gassaway, & Savage, 2002), and opportunities for mentoring from others both within and
outside of the transgender community (Finger, 2010; Harley et al., 2002). Yet, there is less discussion of the ways of building community among and better supporting trans faculty and staff, partially because so few studies have sampled these subgroups.

Transgender faculty and staff in this study mentioned the importance of having inclusive policies, implementing task forces that can carry out positive change for the transgender community, and making the culture more welcoming for all types of vulnerable populations. This last part highlights the importance of recognizing the overlapping identities held by transgender people and that some within this community face additional forms of oppression based upon social class, race, age, and other identities. A clear theme indicated by the CTOC participants is that ensuring that a campus is welcoming for all types of diversity helped them to feel more welcome in general. While some researchers have touched upon the importance of intersectionality in such efforts (Finger, 2010; Harley et al., 2002), this is generally a recommendation that is not as thoroughly discussed in the literature about improving campus systems for transgender people and something that should not be overlooked.

Recruitment, support and retention can be encouraged through proactive policies that communicate a dedication to diversity and inclusion. Examples include:

- Nondiscrimination policies that include the phrases “gender identity” and “gender expression,” or other wording that is meant to protect campus members from actions such as being fired or not hired because of being transgender.
- Domestic partner benefits.
• Campus mission statements and other visible commitments from leaders that emphasize an intention to be welcoming and affirming of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, as well as other types of diversity based upon race, age, ethnicity, social class, religion, ability, sexual orientation, language, country of origin, etc.

• Scholarships, awards, and promotions that honor campus member’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, particularly related to gender identity and gender expression.

• Targeted recruitment of staff and faculty with an expertise in the transgender community, affirming and support those who conduct research on this population, and considering staff member’s commitment to diversity as part of tenure and promotion.

The CTOC data also highlight a need for campuses to have clear processes and procedures for responding to situations of harassment, discrimination, violence, and blatant denigration of transgender people, as well as the more nuanced microaggressions that occur. Participants emphasized that even if a university has nondiscrimination policies in place or has a stated commitment to inclusivity, these pronouncements are meaningless if there continues to be poor treatment of transgender people on campus with no consequences for those carrying out such actions. Accountability procedures would include carrying out appropriate punishments, not ignoring problems related to trans inclusivity, and having a remediation process in place so that campus administrators can properly report experiences of discrimination and mistreatment. One important step in
this process is creating at least one person—and preferably a team of people—who trans
people can approach to seek help and report instances of victimization and discrimination.
This kind of support team should be widely advertised across campus so that everyone is
aware of this resource in case problems arise for trans and gender non-conforming
individuals.

While some scholars, such as Rankin (2003), have noted the importance of having
procedures in place for ensuring that campuses actually implement best practices for
supporting LGBT people (such as timelines, assigned responsibilities, resources, and a
system of accountability), there appear to be few instances where a recommendation for
better accountability has been documented as emerging from transgender students, staff,
or faculty participants within research. Thus, this is a unique contribution of this research,
although one should keep in mind that only a small group of the CTOC participants
discussed this topic. Nonetheless, those who did discuss accountability tended to reflect a
variety of ages, roles, and departmental affiliations. No one who expressed this theme
was at a college with fewer than 10,000 students; it is unclear why the topic of
accountability was not discussed by participants at smaller campuses.

Another area of policy implications is in relation to facilities. For students and
others who seek housing on campus, the findings from this research support having
gender-neutral housing assignment options, meaning that a housing applicant can indicate
if they are open to having a roommate of particular gender or any gender. Campuses can
then implement housing options (certain rooms, floors, buildings, houses, etc.) that are
mixed gender. Regardless of the availability of gender-neutral housing options, housing
policies need to ensure that transgender people can be housed according to their gender identity (rather than birth sex) if desired and that their needs for safe housing and bathroom access are ensured as part of their housing assignment. Campuses should communicate bathroom use policies that discourage “gender policing” and emphasize safety and appropriate behaviors in such spaces.

For record change requests and financial aid, universities should NOT require people to prove that they have undergone surgeries to change their name or gender marker. Such a policy unfairly disadvantages those who cannot afford or do not desire to undergo surgeries or hormone therapy. Even if an individual cannot change their name legally, the university can help a trans person navigate campus life by providing a way for individual’s to designate a preferred name across all campus systems. Private information about a person’s status as transgender or previous names/gender markers should only be available at the highest level to those staff who need to have this information to complete their jobs.

Social welfare settings. Based on the findings from this dissertation and the evidence of unequal treatment in social welfare settings, social workers can implement a number of policies within these environments to better serve transgender clients. Some policy recommendations include:

- Allow people to use shelters and other gender-segregated spaces according to gender identity, rather than sex assigned at birth.
- Policies regarding when/how a person should be denied access to a space (such as a bathroom) or a gender-segregated service should focus on violations of behavioral
guidelines. Assessments of whether a transgender client will be offered a specific service targeted towards men or women should be based upon the client’s gender identity, not sex assigned at birth.

- Permit clients to designate their preferred names and gender in their records, even if they have not been able to secure a legal name/gender marker change. Ensure that these preferences respected by ALL staff as part of employee procedures and regulations.

- Develop and announce clear procedures for how clients can report instances of discrimination and unequal treatment based upon gender identity, gender expression, or transition status to administrators, advocates, or other key staff of a social welfare agency.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

While this research adds to the knowledge base related to structural bigenderism in various settings, there continues to be a huge need for research in this area. Although the NTDS sample used as part of this study is much larger than most samples of transgender people, there are still some limitations. For example, both the NTDS and CTOC samples were disproportionately made up of White, young, urban, and highly educated individuals. Researchers who wish to attempt to sample large groups of trans individuals will need to continue to refine sampling procedures to better reach hard-to-access populations (such as those in rural areas and those who are older) as well as trans people of color and those with lower educational attainment. These subgroups likely have
needs and experiences that are not adequately captured by samples that are biased towards White, young, urban, and highly educated trans people.

The present study offers a key contribution in its use of mixed methods. However, one suggested improvement to such an approach is to track individuals across both types of data so that researchers could examine individual cases across both the quantitative and qualitative results. Such an approach could allow for a focused analysis that looks at how participants’ explanations of experiences of unequal treatment and discrimination relate to quantitative variables for that individual.

Since I was using a secondary dataset for my quantitative data analysis, I had no control over how various constructs were measured or what questions were asked of participants. In doing my analysis, I became aware of a number of measurement limitations inherent to NTDS dataset. Some issues included the lack of composite measures or items with documented reliability or validity, questions about school experiences that did not adequately specify the level of school (e.g., K-12 vs. college), and a lack of information about respondents’ current level in school and the year in which they last attended college. These issues with measurement weakened the quantitative analyses and limit generalizability and replication, particularly for the models looking at educational settings. I recommend that future researchers keep such details in mind when interpreting findings from the present study and when constructing measurement instruments.

Some additional areas for future research on various subtopics in this dissertation are provided in Table 8.1.
Table 8.1
Suggestions for Future Research on Higher Education and Social Welfare Settings

**Higher Education**

**Campus Climate / Generational Differences**
- Comparisons across generational cohorts to look at how campus climates for trans individuals have changed over time

**Psychosocial Risks & Consequences of Mistreatment on Campus**
- Longitudinal research that examines *when* some of the psychosocial risks found to be related to negative campus experiences in the present study (e.g., suicidality, homelessness, disconnection from family) are occurring for transgender people and whether they proceed or follow campus experiences.

**Experiences of Faculty and Staff**
- Additional research into the ways that trans faculty and staff experience the campus environment, the hiring and employee evaluation process, and other aspects of campus life.

**Bathroom Access**
- Further quantitative studies replicating an examination of trans people’s access to bathrooms in higher education. The present study was limited in that the question about bathroom access did not specify “at college;” the results therefore may include participants’ experiences in other levels of education.
- Exploration of why those trans folks with other marginalized identities (those with a disability, living in rural areas, people of color, etc.) may experience greater risk of discrimination in school bathrooms. More data is needed about comparing people currently affiliated with a college and differences in bathroom access by age.

**Record Change Requests**
- Research into situations where someone is denied the ability to change their records—how is the decision justified by college staff? What policies are being used to deny record change requests?
- Further research is needed to replicate the finding in the present study that cross-dressers are statistically significantly more likely to be denied record changes compared to MTF individuals. If replicated, why does this discrepancy occur?

**Social Welfare Settings**

**Timing of Service Access & Generational Differences**
- More research is needed to learn precisely *when* in their lives trans individuals try to access social welfare settings and whether there are different rates of unequal treatment between various age cohorts of trans individuals.
Qualitative Descriptions of Experiences in These Settings

- Since all of these findings related to social welfare settings in the present study were only based upon quantitative models, these settings could be more richly explored by looking at narrative descriptions of how, why, and when discrimination occurs for trans individuals in such settings. What does this unequal treatment look like? How frequently does it occur? Who are the people who are communicating the message that transgender people should leave/are inferior/are not welcome? What are the characteristics of agencies where such discrimination occurs and where it does not occur? What role is played by policies and staff trainings in decreasing the amount of discrimination faced by transgender people?

Gender Differences in Service Access and Treatment

- Additional research could explore why cross-dressers report lower levels of unequal treatment in government agencies due to being transgender and why gender non-conforming individuals are less likely to be denied access to homeless shelters than MTF individuals. What is at work in these differences in service provision?
- The present study only compared each gender identity group to MTF individuals; future research could make other comparisons (e.g., between FTM and gender non-conforming people).
- Researchers could explore how people’s descriptions of unequal treatment relate to their gender identities and the frequency at which others perceive them to be transgender—is how they are perceived by others the key factor for unequal treatment, above and beyond gender identity?

Relationship Between Unequal Treatment in Social Welfare Services and Psychosocial Risks

- The present study demonstrated statistically significant relationships between psychosocial risks and unequal treatment in social welfare settings. Future research could explore the relationship between these variables—is unequal treatment in social welfare settings leading to subsequent experiences of homelessness, suicidality, sex work, etc.? Or are these risks occurring before trans people are trying to access these services?

Many rich qualitative themes emerged from the present study about the patterns and practices of higher education institutions and the people in positions of power and how they impact the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming study, staff, and faculty. The qualitative findings from this dissertation were designed to build on the
work of previous researchers with the hope of fleshing out these themes in detail. My hope is that the themes identified here with regard to higher education settings can be used by other researchers to develop quantitative measures and assessment tools for examining structural policies and procedures at colleges and universities and their impact on transgender populations.
References


doi:10.1300/J367v03n01_08


397


Gates, G. J. (2011). *How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?* Retrieved from The Williams Institute website:


Appendix A

Additional Terms and Definitions

** Many of these terms and definitions are courtesy of Colorado Trans on Campus**

**Transsexual:** A term for people who seek to live in a gender different from the one assigned at birth and who may seek or want medical intervention (through hormones and/or one or more surgeries) for them to live comfortably in that gender. Transsexuals are people who generally live full time as a different gender than the one they were assigned at birth (National Center for Transgender Equality, 2009).

**FTM or F2M:** “Literally “female-to-male”, a person assigned female sex and feminine gender at birth who is either transitioning into a male identity and/or body, or who identifies as an FTM transperson, transman, [trans guy], or transsexual” (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, *FTM (Female-to-Male)*, 2008).

**MTF or M2F:** “Literally “male-to-female”, a person assigned male sex and masculine gender at birth who is either transitioning into a female identity and/or body, or who identifies as an MTF transperson, transwoman, or transsexual” (University of Minnesota Transgender Commission, *MTF (Male-to-Female)*, 2008).

**Preferred gender pronouns (PGPs):** “[T]he pronoun or set of pronouns that an individual would like others to use when talking to or about that individual” (Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools, n.d. para. 2). A person may prefer masculine pronouns (he/him), feminine pronouns (she/her), gender neutral pronouns (see definition below), plural pronouns (they/their), a combination, or may have no preference.

**Gender neutral pronouns:** “[P]ronouns that neither reveal nor imply the gender or sex of a person... While these exist in many languages (Traditional Chinese does not use gendered pronouns), there are no universally accepted gender-neutral pronouns in English. Some gender neutral pronouns that have come into use, especially in the trans community, are ‘ze’ (or ‘zie’) for she/he, and ‘hir’ for his/her” (Lehigh University, n.d., *Gender neutral*), as well they/them/ theirs.

**(Physical) Transition:** “The social and/or legal process of changing from a [birth-assigned] gender to the gender with which a person identifies and/or to the medical process involved in changing physical appearance and anatomical characteristics. This term is preferred to the misleading phrase “sex change”, which makes transition seem inextricably linked with genital surgeries. Some people seek transition to non-binary gender identities.” (Youth Pride Inc., n.d., *Transition*). Can involve hormone treatment and/or gender reassignment surgeries (see next definition) and includes the time during which someone is living full-time in their preferred gender before gender reassignment surgeries.
Gender reassignment surgery (GRS), gender realignment surgery, sex reassignment surgery (SRS): The process of changing/reassigning anatomy through one or more surgeries. Some transsexuals may elect to alter one part of the body or may elect for numerous surgeries to alter many parts of the body. Generally, phrases like “the surgery” or “sex change” are not preferable because they hide the reality that there are many different types of surgeries, such as facial feminization surgery, genital reconstruction, bilateral mastectomy, and chest augmentation (Sex Reassignment Surgery, n.d.).

Queer: This term can be used to describe people who do not identify as heterosexual and/or as gender conforming. (Note: some transgender people do identify as heterosexual). “Queer” originated as a derogatory word. Currently, it is being reclaimed by some people within the LGBTQ population and used as a term of empowerment. Some people identify as “queer” to distance themselves from the rigid categorization of “straight” and “gay”. Some LGBTQ and non-labeling people, however, reject the use of this term due to its connotations of deviance and its tendency to gloss over and sometimes deny the differences between these groups (International + LGBT at the University of Michigan, Queer, n.d.).

To disclose: The process of sharing one’s identity or history of being transgender with other people. This may or may not include sharing information about gender confirming surgeries and one’s transition history.

Coming out vs. being “closeted”: Coming out is a lifelong process in which people who are LGBTQ accept who they are and begin to identify as LGBTQ. People first begin to accept this identity themselves, and then may choose to share it with others. Publicly disclosing one’s identity may or may not be a part of coming out for a person (Gill Foundation, n.d.). Someone who is closeted or “in the closet” has not disclosed their gender identity or sexual orientation to others or has only shared this information with a select group of people (Gill Foundation, n.d.).

Stealth: When a transgender person is frequently read as their correct gender identity and others are not aware of that person’s transgender history, that person is said to be living stealth. Some of those who are stealth have completed a transition and do not want to disclose their transgender history. Some transgender people choose to be stealth for employment reasons or to maintain safety (Vaden Health Center at Stanford University, n.d.).

Passing: ”A term that is used by people who are transgender to mean that they are seen as the gender by which they self-identify. For example, a transgender man…[assigned a female gender marker at birth]… who most people see as a man” (Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, n.d., Passing).

Presenting: The way in which people outwardly express their gender (see the definition of gender expression within the dissertation). For example, a person may present oneself as a man to others, but may identify as a woman, as genderqueer, as androgynous, or as
another identity. Decisions about presenting may be influenced by feelings of safety (or lack thereof), involvement in drag communities, anticipated regulation of gender expression in certain spaces (such as shelters), or by whether one wishes to disclose to others about one’s gender identity. Sometimes one’s presentation differs significantly between settings.
Appendix B

Barriers to Full Citizenship: Transgender Experiences on Colorado Campus

Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Introduction:

Again, I would like to thank you for participating in this research study. Our hope is that the information that you and other participants provide will help us document the experiences that trans-identified and gender variant people have on the college campuses here in Colorado as a way to begin to create more inclusive and just communities.

Part I: Context Information

I’d like to start by hearing from you about your overall experience of the campus community at ____(name of school)____.

1. What is your overall perception of the campus environment when it comes to trans and gender expression issues?

Follow-up questions:

a) How visible would you say – in general – trans issues are on your campus?
   • In what ways are trans issues visible?

b) What staff, student, or faculty groups/clubs/organizations are specifically focused on trans issues on your campus?
   • Are you involved in those organizations? If so, in what way? (As a leader? As a member? Attending their events?)

c) What staff, student, or faculty groups/clubs/organizations on your campus do NOT specifically focus on trans issues, but try to address trans issues as part of their overall goals? (For example, multicultural centers, queer organizations, etc.)
   • Are you involved in those organizations? If so, in what way? (As a leader? As a member? Attending their events?)

d) Do you know if your campus has a non-discrimination policy that specifically lists sexual orientation? Gender identity? Gender expression?

e) Do you know if your campus provides insurance coverage for any transition-related health care (such as hormones, surgery, mental health services, etc.)?
f) Do you know if your campus offers domestic partner benefits to employees or students?

Part II: Gender identity and disclosure

Now that I have a better sense of your campus community, I would like to talk with you about your identity and how that interacts with your campus experience and expectations.

1. What words (or terms) do you use to describe your gender identity?
2. How did you identify when you first came to campus?
3. How have your experiences on campus influenced the words you use to describe your gender identity, if at all?
4. What were your expectations about campus in relation to your identity, finding support, and relating to staff, students, and faculty?
5. What influenced what your expectations of what it would be like?
6. How have your experiences matched or been different from your expectations?
7. What have been your experiences with disclosing your identity to students, staff, and faculty?
   a. What influences your decisions to disclose?

Part III: Experiences on campus

Next, I’d like to ask a few more questions about your experiences on campus in some specific settings and in relation to other people. *** NOTECARD***

1. What has been your experience with employment on campus?
2. [STUDENT] What about your experiences with on-campus housing?
3. On-campus medical and counseling services?
   • Insurance?
4. [STUDENT] Classrooms? Lack of discussion of trans issues in classrooms?
   • Lack of discussion of gender identity and expression issues in classrooms? With colleagues/students?
5. Have you come across any difficulties with the bureaucracy on your campus? This could be things like difficulty in getting your name and/or gender changed in university documents? Email?

6. This next question is really about interpersonal violence. The way we are thinking about interpersonal violence includes things like physical violence, sexual violence, harassment, being excluded, gossiping, asking personal questions, refusal to use preferred pronouns, and being forced to present as the wrong gender.

I know I just gave you a whole list of examples. If it’s helpful, here’s a visual. [give note card with list as a prompt].

We’d like to know about any of these experiences you’ve had that you are willing to share.

Part IV: Things that worked

I’d like to shift gears now and talk a bit about what is working or has worked on your campus and where you have found support.

1. What kinds of things have you found to be helpful – with colleagues, with students, with coworkers, etc.?

2. Where have you found support on campus?
   a. Who do you consider part of your support network? (not names, just roles- colleagues, friends, teachers, etc. Probe if needed: on campus? Off campus?)
   b. Were there instances or places of support that surprised you? Could you give me one or two examples?
   c. Were there instances or places of resistance that surprised you? Again, could you give me a couple of examples?

3. What would you like to see changed that would improve the campus for trans-identified and gender-variant students, faculty, and staff?

Part V: Other Thoughts

Is there anything you’d like to share that we haven’t covered?
Part VI: Conclusion

Again, thank you very much for taking your time to have this conversation with me. It has been very helpful and will add so much to the findings of our study.

CREATE DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

1. Which college/university are you affiliated with?
2. What is your role on the campus? Are you a student, faculty, staff, administrator combination? (Ask major or department if not provided).
3. How long have you been part of the campus in that role?
4. Are you a full-time or part-time student/employee?
5. What is your age?
6. How do you define your race/ethnicity?
Appendix C

Flashcard Prompts Used During CTOC Interviews

Flashcard 1

*Interpersonal violence* can include:
- physical violence
- sexual violence
- harassment
- being excluded
- gossiping
- asking personal questions
- refusal to use preferred pronouns
- being forced to present as the wrong gender
- being questioned in bathrooms

Flashcard 2

*On campus experiences:*

- Employment on campus
- On-campus housing
- On-campus medical and counseling services
- Insurance
- Classrooms
- Bureaucracy (getting your name and/or gender changed in university documents, getting name changed on university email system)
- Bathrooms & locker rooms
Appendix D

Structured Questions Used in Member Check Process

- What do you think of the “themes” that attempt to answer my research questions—do they offer insight about transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences in college & university settings? What are some ways to improve the clarity of the titles and definitions of these themes?

- Is there a theme that does not seem to “fit” with the others? How might this be addressed?

- Are there any themes that do not accurately reflect transgender and gender non-conforming people’s experiences on campus?

- Are there any words/terms used in these results that feel disrespectful to you, are not fully inclusive of subgroups within the transgender community, reflect unquestioned privilege (either cisgender privilege or other forms of privilege), or that are confusing?

- Are there any aspects of your own campus experience as a transgender and/or gender non-conforming individual that are overlooked and/or not explored deeply enough through these themes? How would you suggest addressing this oversight?

- Are there certain participant quotations that do not seem to be good examples of the themes they’re grouped under? Describe why you believe the quotation is a bad fit for that theme.
### Appendix E

The Role of Intersecting Identities in Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People’s Campus Experiences: Identities Not Included in the Quantitative Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Identity Being Discussed</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Orientation</strong></td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> And then, with [on-campus] medical [care], I got my annual women’s exam and all that good stuff, and I wanted to get tested for HIV and all the STD’s and [the health provider] was like, “Oh, but you’re a lesbian, you don’t need to worry about that.” I was like, “Really”? I was like, “One, you don’t know what my sexual behavior looks like, and I don’t even identify as a lesbian” and all those kind of things. And I just felt like, “Wow, way to silence someone.” This is health and I want to get tested for STD’s. It’s important. And she’s like, “You don’t have to come back for another two to three years”. But other women have to come back every year. And just because I might not identify as a woman, biologically that’s what’s going on for me. I feel like you should support that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Identities</strong></td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I find it problematic that in higher ed there seems to be a rift between values and talking about valuing authenticity and whole selves, and what happens I think, not only in our office in with queer folks, but across the board in terms of women and survivors, disabled folks and people of color is that people get told to separate them, and I don't know about anybody else, but some days it can make me feel really schizophrenic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Orientation, Relationship Status, &amp; Parenthood</strong></td>
<td><strong>P:</strong> Well, I think the identity of being in a partnered relationship, that I consider myself married- and having children presents this whole other identity to people because…I can say, “My kids, blah blah blah blah blah.” And people…they would automatically think either you have a boyfriend or a husband…and that was one thing that so many people do that to you, and even being pregnant now, people are just, “Oh, what does your husband think?” and like, yeah, no. So it’s, I think that was an interesting thing for people, when I would say, “I have kids blah blah blah,” and then we had an extended conversation, I’d be like, “My partner,” and they’d be like, “Wait a minute, your partner? You have kids—explain!” or they’d be, they’d be curious where they’d be like, “Oh okay,” or they would-they would just kind of look at me like-, not that they were looking at me in a bad way they’re just like confused, like, “How did that happen exactly?” So, that was an interesting part of disclosing to people, that part of my life, and there were even people that- that would be so curious that they would be like, “Can I ask you more questions about this?” And , I’d be able to go into detail about what the process is like for two women having children, and stuff like that so I appreciate people that are really curious, and I appreciate people that are just like let me talk about it and not, you know get weird. And, ‘cause it’s-, I feel like it’s a huge part of my identity being a mom and being partnered, like it’s-, it’s a big part of who I am so, to be able to express that on campus is pretty cool.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sexual politics, BDSM, kink, relationship styles

P: And then the other piece of it, I think, does center a lot around my sexual identity, in that I self-identify as having pretty radical sexual politics. I’ve been involved in leather communities, BDSM/kink communities, most of my relationships are not monogamous, but they’re still very healthy, clearly defined and communicated. And so, trying to convey sort of my sexual politics or my sexual identity in relation to a trans identity is really challenging sometimes. Because like I just said, a lot of sort of the acceptability around my trans identity comes from being perceived as respectable in all these other categories. And that that becomes really threatened by conversations around my sexual identity, which I’m also very open and forward about. It’s not something that I disclose like I disclose being trans for example because there’s no reason to, but if the subject comes up, it’s certainly not something that I’m closeted about, and that sort of tends to threaten a lot of other things that I might have said previously, even that people have agreed with before. So that’s been sort of an interesting thing to navigate.

Kink / sexual identity

P: I would say that many of my colleagues in my cluster for the diversity programs are supportive. I think from [university] I have very few people as part of my support network, in part because they there only supportive for one piece [of who I am] and not in totality, like they’ll be supportive around the trans piece, but they make assumptions about the kink piece [of my sexual identity], which doesn’t feel very good to me.

Sexual orientation

P: I think the counselors on campus, in my own experience as well as some friends that also went to the counseling center, they were supposed to be queer-savvy and stuff, but they definitely were not. My experience with my therapist was that they either had internalized homophobia going on or was just homophobic in general. Definitely projected a lot of shit on me… Yeah, and me having some kind of background in counseling and being like, “You can’t do that, you shouldn’t be doing that. You’re like fucking with me. This is not ok!” I had to really terminate that because it was really unhealthy. I was like, “I don’t know what’s going on with you.” I think that person was going through their own kind of coming out process and they were projecting a lot of their shit on me. I was just like, “Oh, not good!”

Religious affiliation, Christian privilege

[Interviewer: Can you describe any ways that your experience as an androgynous person on campus might be influenced by other aspects of your identity such as race, ethnicity, social class, religion, things like that?]

P: Yeah. Wow. Probably all of those to some degree…And being a Christian is sort of a double-edged sword. There’s a lot of privilege that comes with that culturally, but at the same time the assumption is that I’m not Christian because I’m androgynous and I’m lesbian…which always throws people off, like, “Wait a minute, aren’t you gay?” It’s like, “Yes.” “Oh.” Isn’t that amazing how that works? So that one’s always an interesting one.
| **Religiosity** | **P:** I’m completely irreligious so… no effects there …as far as how I view myself [on campus]… |
| **Sexual orientation, relationship style** | **P:** Well, like I said, my sexual orientation and preferred relationship style have an impact. Relationship style as in monogamy versus polyamory. I feel out of place in a space that is predominantly queer, polyamorous… In some sense, I felt like I couldn’t be a trans person on this campus if I was straight. For awhile, I believe that I was the only straight trans person out of [over 10,000] students, so I did feel isolated. |
| **Sexual orientation, race, White privilege, social class** | **P:** But personally, other identities for me that are important other than being trans…I’m a queer-identified trans-person so I’m primarily attracted to women, female, feminine people. I’m queer-identified, I’m not straight-identified so I consider myself doubly-queer in a way. So more general queer issues are important to me, although sometimes when you move more into those, move away from trans issues, that’s when you tend to bump up against the transphobia that is out there in the queer community. But as a Caucasian person, I don’t… I’m part of [the] so-called quote mainstream, but I’m very concerned about people of color on campus and I think it’s really important that they feel welcome and they are able to do what they need to do on campus and to create a more aware and more welcoming campus with regard to racial and ethnic issues. I think that’s very important. And that’s been an issue that has really been tearing at the campus GLBT community ‘cause there’s a lot of tension and ill will about it, not so much among faculty and staff, but amongst the students, from what I gather, that it’s been a fairly tense thing regarding racial and ethnic issues. That just angers me a little bit that we still have to fight that battle, and I guess it is something that is kind of important to me is the fact that I’m from working class origins. My brother and I were the first college graduates in our immediate family, so I still carry that - a working class identification- so I bristle at snobbery and classism. That really bothers me a lot too. So I guess that’s an identity that is still a part of me. |
| **Sexual orientation** | **P:** I guess I’m much more likely to hear comments made more so about what I consider my homosexual orientation towards men, or homosexual orientation or sexual orientation in general than about gender and those comments are usually, span I guess like a larger body of opinion. And yeah, so that will create a space or not for me to disclose or not disclose and if, yeah, if the class or the environment feels explicitly homophobic or heterosexist, then I’m definitely not going to be disclosing. |

---

61 This interview was not audio-recorded, and therefore this is a paraphrase based on the interviewer’s notes.
P: I don’t think I ever end up passing as a heterosexual guy, unless it’s a very, one of those science classes where I just don’t say anything, because in almost all my classes, if somebody says something fucked up about women or race, I always speak up. And a lot of times, if you are a guy that shows any interest in feminism or really anything, even if you’re like, “That was really racist! You can’t say that!” you are immediately pushed into, “That guy must be gay, then.” There’s no, “That guy’s liberal,” or anything, it’s “That guy’s gay.” So, my identities as a feminist and someone who’s interested in social justice, those definitely impact my perception by others in the classroom. And sometimes, I have to admit that in some classrooms, like that one class I was talking about where the professor was really shitty, there were guys that said awful, misogynistic things. I was like “How can you, in a [gender studies] class, let them say this?” But I got too freaked out to say anything because there was this con-cluster of 12 guys and I was like, “I don’t, I don’t want to deal with that.”

P: In the [department] and it’s not that it has always been bad or malicious resistance. I want to be really clear on that. It’s just that in a place where ideas around gender and sexuality are so heavily contested all the time, I think that people tend to have pretty strong opinions on the implications of gender and the way we perform gender and all this other stuff and that that comes from different ideological perspectives and that sometimes that does come with really strong resistance. But I also think that, I mean, it’s important to acknowledge in that that I haven’t been resisted as an individual in these contexts. I’ve been supported on an individual level by professors saying like, “Okay, we’ll use the right name” or you know saying like, “We support you as an individual”. But I also feel a large part of my transsexual identity are my trans politics. And that those are heavily resisted, especially in feminist circles, I feel like. So, and how do you like separate yourself from your politics, and I don’t know, and obviously other people don’t know either. They still support me like as [name], but not necessarily as someone of those broader ideologies that feel so salient to my own identity at the same time.

P: I mean, I think I’ve experienced a lot more like sexual harassment and gossiping based on being perceived as female than I have as trans. I’m sure you know, unfortunately you’re familiar with this model. Yeah, it’s more of just like unwanted sexual advances or like comments and that thing. Usually not in a classroom setting, but in a campus like outdoor setting between buildings or something like that. [Interviewer: Yeah. And this is solely based on people’s perceptions of you as female?] P: Yeah, I think so. And then occasionally probably also people’s perceptions of me as a dyke. I mean it’s, yeah. I don’t really get read as trans. I don’t think I’ve experienced that, I think.