

What follows are notes on collection and consent, age and regional breakdowns, and notes on how we addressed inherent bias in our largest of its kind survey of the religious backgrounds and practices of the LGBT community as reported in *Us versus Us*.

COLLECTION AND CONSENT PROCESSES

The following was referenced on page xxi, note 11, in *Us versus Us*.

Collection

Our three main recruitment strategies for the survey were consistent with previous LGBT research (Matteson, 1997; Miller, 2007; Ratti, Bakeman, & Peterson, 2000).

The first method was the distribution of flyers, posters, and advertisements across the country at over three hundred locations, including LGBT groups and diversity centers at major research universities; LGBT community centers; LGBT bars and clubs; LGBT conferences; LGBT-targeted businesses; LGBT rights and activist organizations; LGBT non-profits; and HIV/AIDS clinics.

Second, we used a purposive sampling method at the following locations: three LGBT equality rights conferences; the Gay Olympic Games VII; over a dozen Gay Pride parades around the country; over a dozen research collection events throughout the country's preeminent LGBT neighborhoods; and at over thirty major research universities where Andrew Marin lectured. Each purposive sample location had a response rate over 72 percent.

The final collection method was through The Marin Foundation's website and blog. Participants could participate anonymously online after accepting the survey's consent requirements (detailed below). This online collection was distributed through viral, grassroots requests from The Marin Foundation's staff, board of directors, volunteers, and research assistants; word of mouth from our partner organizations and individuals; and through other participants in the research.

The first method of collection (the distribution of flyers, posters, and advertisements) required that the potential participant call, email, or contact The Marin Foundation via social media to make known their interest. After contact was made, a trained research assistant from The Marin Foundation screened the respondent to see if they (a) had an LGBT orientation (whether the person was out or not), and (b) were eighteen years or older. If the criteria were met, a time and place was scheduled at the respondent's convenience to participate in the research, completing the survey on paper or iPad, or via an online interview with one of The Marin Foundation's trained research assistants through a live streaming service such as Skype.

The second means of collection via the purposive sampling method was as follows: A trained research assistant from The Marin Foundation would randomly approach individuals at the locales listed above and ask for their participation in the research. They would screen each respondent to see if they fit the criteria listed above. If criteria were met, the participant went through the consent process and completed the survey on the spot using either pen and paper or an iPad. Again, each of our purposive sampling locations had a response rate over 72 percent.

In-Person Consent

The consent process for our research was addressed as follows: A trained research assistant from The Marin Foundation would explain that the survey would take anywhere between five and ten minutes to complete. Before the participant began the survey, the research assistant would check official identification to make sure the participant was over eighteen years old. They would then take three to five minutes to explain the following:

- Background of the research study and The Marin Foundation.
- Goals of the research study.
- Key terminology in the research study.

The research assistant would then tell the participant that the study is completely anonymous so as to collect the participant's true experiences, thoughts, and feelings about their sexuality intertwined with their religious belief systems and practices—without the threat of their personal identity becoming public. The research assistant would then explain the research's numbering system and secure storage of the completed surveys.

Research assistants gave each participant a verbal and written warning that completing this survey could bring up uncomfortable or unwanted memories of negative personal experiences that could cause additional psychological, emotional, cognitive, or spiritual harm. Because of these potentially unwanted harms, the research assistant would assure the participant that they were under no obligation to participate in the research and could stop taking the survey at any point, and withdraw their responses from the data set, with no penalty whatsoever.

The research assistant would then explain that consenting to participation in the study meant some of the participant's qualitative responses in the survey could be used as direct, unchanged quotations in any future publication of the data.

If the participant consented to these terms, a consent form was numbered, signed, and securely stored for analysis at the completion of the collection phase.

Online Survey Consent

For consent via the online collection, a participant had to (a) self-certify they were over the age of eighteen and had an LGBT orientation (whether they were out or not), and (b) agree digitally to the entire consent process detailed above.

Once such consent had been given, the online respondent would complete the survey. Afterward (and depending on the method of collection), either a research assistant or an online screen would provide additional information about the work of The Marin Foundation and give The Marin Foundation's contact information to the participant so they could follow up at any point, if there were any additional questions.

In total our research gathered 1,712 usable participants, with at least twenty-one participants from each of the fifty states, as well as Washington, D.C.

AGE BREAKDOWN

In addition to the demographics in appendix B of *Us versus Us* (pp. 175-177), here is the age breakdown of the 1,712 usable participants:

Age

18-19	6.5%
20-24	19.3%
25-29	17%
30-34	16.9%
35-39	9.5%
40-44	9.1%
45-49	9.6%
50-54	6%
55-59	3.7%
60-64	1.2%
65-69	0.8%
70-74	0.3%
75 & above	0.1%

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

As previously noted, each of the fifty states in the United States yielded at least twenty-one participants, in addition to Washington, D.C. This totaled 1,071 participants. Seven states had in excess of twenty-one participants. This excess totaled the remaining 641 participants of our 1,712 usable surveys:

New York	144
California	121
Illinois	103
Georgia	101
Texas	72
Washington, D.C.	63
Michigan	37

ADDRESSING INHERENT BIAS

There is no such thing as a completely bias-free, generalizable research study—not with the LGBT population or any other. A researcher can only hope to mitigate inherent bias as much as possible. With this in mind we took the following steps to address inherent bias:

First, the survey created specifically for this research study tested an *alpha coefficient* of .93, well above the scientific standard of .75 needed for a survey to be considered both (a) an accurate test of its stated goals; and (b) valid to the extent that the significant data is deemed generalizable.

Second, to keep the data analysis as unbiased as possible, we brought in clinical researchers and statisticians from across the ideological, political, and religious spectrum to independently analyze and validate the data. Please read pages xxi-xxiii in the introduction of *Us versus Us* for further details on the persons involved.

A third step in how our team attempted to mitigate inherent bias is detailed in chapter one of *Us versus Us*, under the heading “Is 86 Percent Correct?” (pp. 3-6).

Finally, we attempted to be as demographically and geographically generalizable as possible within our collection phase (see above). Moreover, we attempted to have demographics in our study consistent to both the general LGBT population in America and the general American population overall. As you read *Us versus Us* you will see references comparing our significant findings to other LGBT data, as well as to the general American data on the same subjects.