

## Member Comments Regarding Membership in National OLOC 2-1-15

### Self Identified

Partners:

(One) finds it somewhat complicated but prefers this one; transgender women face too many exclusions already. (Other) says, as far as she's concerned they were born women, just in the wrong body.

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Partners

We both feel very strongly about this. If you restrict membership to female-born, we may have to separate ourselves from OLOC.

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I have many Trans women friends—Some identify as lesbian - Some do not. That is their right + privilege - we are all a blend —

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Haven't we had enough of segregation.

\*\*\*\*\*

I think anyone who self identifies as an old lesbian should be accepted.

\*\*\*\*\*

I do see the dilemma. We are the L, but in this day and age, which may make some uncomfortable, a person may feel like T & L. Since we don't wish to stifle, and are promoting respect, equality, justice and visibility, the membership statement should remain as written. We will welcome all colors, races, creeds, and origins...whatever route leads one to becoming a lesbian. We only need exclude young lesbians.

I hope your survey results make us proud....thanks

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(Partners) Good luck with this. We know this is very emotional issue for some folks.

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Having recent exposure to trans-women recently, I vote:  
OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian.

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"birth" is no longer a sufficient marker for gender identity

- the phrasing of the two options is tendentious
- if a majority of OLOC members chooses the first option, a renaming would be appropriate: "Old Lesbians Against Change"

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Woman born woman: What was Mother Nature thinking? It would be so easy if life were that simple. Every once in a while Mother Nature fools around and breaks the mold. Why does she do that? Bored? Struck by an artistic streak? Burnout or a nervous breakdown? What ever the reason we are stuck with the consequences. Do we punish the whims of nature? Take a Hitleresque approach? Or do we help each other make the best of an odd situation?

I grant you that we women have fought long and hard for a space in which to breath free. Let us look at life through a broader lens. One that starts with compassion. I am not saying to allow men into OLOC. I am saying we might look beyond the narrow definition of woman and think in terms of spectrum.

For those born looking male externally but who believe they are really born to be women then who are we to contradict them? I have spent years pondering this question.

As to whether they (those born male) should be allowed into OLOC, I have come to the conclusion that if they are in transition and under a psychologist, psychiatrist, or medical doctor's care or have fully transitioned they should be allowed in.

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Both my partner ... and I feel that, given the criteria of achieving a certain age, membership should be for anyone who self-identifies as an Old Lesbian.

I am guessing this is about the "woman born woman" schism that has infected the Michigan Women's Music Festival lo these many years. We would like to state our unequivocal support of transgendered persons. Gender identity should not be confused with the configuration of one's epidermis.

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Please include my vote to include MTF in OLOC.

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While I truly understand the other side of this conflict as I was one of the ones who fought for women-only spaces, my preference is for OLOC to be open to anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian. The world has changed so much in the past 40 years and we now recognize that there are many ways for people to express their sexuality. For those who identify as Old Lesbians, they belong in OLOC.

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I think anyone who passes as an old lesbian and says they are should be allowed to join. It says more about the person who is trying to join a group where they might not belong than it says about us. How do you know for sure unless you do genetic testing... The women in OLOC are strong and can work together if someone tries to overwhelm us with testosterone... To quote Rosie - WE CAN DO IT"

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OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian. If you choose the other option, how will you ensure that they are female-born. What will you do if someone is born with both sexes?

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I believe that all women should be members of OLOC as long as they identify as Old Lesbians. Thanks.

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Of the two badly stated choices, I choose self-identified.

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My response, if I *\*have\** to choose just one, is the second: for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian.

But I would have worded it: for anyone who *\*lives\** as an Old Lesbian. My very late 2 cents.

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Asking this way is not based on an informed discussion; it easily calls out bias and ignorance. A friend from the early days of Lesbian Resource Center was neuter (XO chromosomes) not female, but would you check chromosomes? To me my commonality as a lesbian was with non-

reproductive people, anatomically/sexually, living as women. We tended to think of women met in the lesbian community as childless and having to make their own living - the few that had kids more "bisexual." Would you OK a private OLOC group with those limits? You have apparently approved a "female born" private group to use OLOC's name. An element of our generation cultivated a sort of purity like that and contributed to our culture. But they cannot represent the breadth of old lesbians' experience, using our resources. Our identification to others is largely socio-political not biological; to ourselves it's whatever it is;

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I was uncomfortable with OLOC, as a national organization and a registered non-profit, not having a clearly defined membership policy. I hope that you adopt one! I feel it is a serious mistake to allow individual OLOC branches to establish their own policies about this.

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OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian is where I stand on this issue.

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OLOC is for whoever identifies as an old lesbian.

Comment: I'm sorry we have to continue having this conversation. And it will be even more divisive if the national organization wants local groups to agree to toe a line, either side of the controversy. Let's focus on the zillion of things that unite us in this time of right wing and police terror.

I hope this counts as my vote -- I cannot figure a way to check above, unless I copied the whole thing, which I guess I could have done.

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According to your own definition: OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an old lesbian and who is at least 60 years old.

(Not clear if there are two issues here or just one – is women-born the only issue, or is there a consideration of dropping the 60+ age limit as well, and leaving it to each woman to decide what “old” means?)

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I vote for allowing anyone wanting to identify as an old lesbian to join.

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We should not discriminate against anyone!!

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Bay Area OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian.

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To be more inclusive, OLs should be self-identified . We should always move towards inclusion and not exclusion!

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In my opinion, only wimmin born wimmin are wimmin. But I don't care if transgendered wimmin belong to OLOC.

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I would not want to belong to an exclusive organization. OLOC is for anyone who calls herself an old lesbian.

Life is tough enough. Why would we want to make it tougher for others?

We all need love and support.

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Appealing as it may be to be only with people who think exactly as we do, the organization will eventually shrink and disappear if there isn't a younger generation that is not simply the few younger partners of present members. I learned, when I was involved with the disability movement that there is a very big difference between those of us born with our disability and those newly disabled. The awareness of how discrimination existed in so many ways was much more evident for the newly disabled, those of us who were born with, had learned to simply adapt as children. The same can be said of both those newly old, and those newly women.....the variety makes for a rich political stew. Plus the young energy is very necessary for our continuation

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This is a very volatile issue, and one that does need to be addressed now. While I can understand the feelings of those who worked and fought so hard in previous times to gain our equality and keep a lesbian woman only space, we run the risk of becoming isolationist and stagnated as an organization. The times have changed. While it is well and good that hard-line lesbians say "let them make their own group", transgender lesbians do not have the numbers to do this. I feel strongly that they should be included in OLOC.

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I wasn't able to mark on the email, but I vote, with some trepidation, for OLOC membership to be open to anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian.

That said, with a sigh, is there some way of "educating" -- I can't think of a softer word (aiding sensitivity?) -- those OLOC members who don't want this, and the wimmin (most likely transgendered M to F) who are entering OLOC, about the valid reasons that some wimmin don't feel comfortable in the presence of those who were born and grew up male?

Perhaps, as Michigan does for Wommin of Color, have some workshops just for wommin born lesbians and some for just trans lesbians?

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Just because a person is born with a vagina and reproductive organs for a baby doesn't mean we are all the same. A woman is someone who identifies as a woman.

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"Female born" is a cultural construct and testing the "female-born" nature of a person would be extremely intrusive. Many people are intersex physiologically. Who are we to say who is female born and who isn't? OLOC should err on the side of inclusive rather than exclusive membership.

Cultural changes in the U.S. indicate that increasingly women entering their sixties will identify as "queer" and/or "genderqueer" rather than as "lesbian," but I think we will want them to be part of OLOC. Suppose a woman calls herself "gay?" Should she be excluded because she doesn't like the term "lesbian?" Being too fussy with identity politics and terminology can cause OLOC to disappear as society evolves.

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This issue is bouncing all over....How could it not?....I've been a Separatist before and loved it! However, now, being in the middle of Nebraskasome of my support is dependent on Transsexuals...so: I vote OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian.

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Anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian, except men.

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How can we discriminate against anyone as people who have fought discrimination against ourselves?

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Thanks for asking!

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Judge not least you be judged

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My partner and I each vote to include trans women. We vote the 2nd option. If a person identifies at the age of 50 or 60 as "an old lesbian" she should be included in OLOC. i would hate to see OLOC become exclusionary.

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Please put me down as "OLOC membership is for ANYONE WHO IDENTIFIES AS AN OLD LESBIAN"

I have to add that the first option offends me, and that I'm sorry that the whole question is being raised this way.

Should OLOC officially choose the first option ("female-born"), I would have to re-consider my membership, participation in, and support of OLOC. And I would hate to have to do that, and I would hate to have to be in that position. Just as I've also hated having to reconsider my membership in NCLR, because of their support of the boycott of Michigan and Michigan performers and vendors. The commonality is that, as I age, I really don't want anyone telling me who and what I am, or what to do. I pretty much gave up being told who I am, what to do, and who I could be with when I left my parents home at 17 over the fact that I was a lesbian. Getting old hasn't made being told who and what I am any more attractive. I decide who I am. No one else has that right.

Or to put it more cheerfully, this all reminds me of when, as a 26-year-old (lesbian) feminist bookseller I gathered all my guts and asked our accountant if she was a lesbian. You gotta visualize this: She was a Korean War vet, combed back silver hair, and the most buxom butch I'd ever seen. (And I'd done a lot of looking, in a lot of places, over the previous 11 years!) "Out" was still a new concept and it certainly wasn't in her vernacular. She looked me up, and she looked me down, and then she looked me up and down again. And then she said, slowly, looking me right in the eye, "I don't know what I am. I only know what I do."

I didn't have to ask what she did. THAT was perfectly clear to all of us.

But it did give me to understand that no Old Lesbian needs to answer to anybody for who she is, what she looks like, for what she wears, for the shape of her body, if she packs (or not), or for any of the scars she may have acquired over the years of her life.

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I urge OLOC to accept as members anyone who identifies as an old lesbian.

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Thanks for doing this. It's a start.

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I vote for anyone who identifies as an old lesbian. If OLOC decides to prohibit participation of trans lesbians, I would have to resign as a member. I teach in LGBT Studies and have many trans students. I could not belong to a group that discriminated in this way. I love OLOC and would hate to resign. But I would definitely need to do so.

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Some transsexual lesbians would argue that their psyches were "female born," and their bodies were just not in alignment with their psyches. It's bigoted to try to impose a "female born" rule based on an infant's genitalia at birth.

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As the grandmother of a girl who transitioned to boy when she left for college, I have learned a lot about this issue. Plus a former lover was a MTF in the bad old days when they met a lot of prejudice from the gay/les community. We don't need to revert to intolerance; we've had enough of it for ourselves as lesbians. Remember when some female Olympic contestants were considered too "male," too "strong" to be real females, and tested by having their bodies examined? Do we need to test an old lesbian for her bonafides because some other lesbian thinks she looks suspicious--too butch? too femme? too outspoken? Where does it stop?

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OLOC membership is for anyone who identifies as an Old Lesbian, though I am conflicted, because I value female-born women's space and identity—however, I can't stand the divisiveness that comes from exclusion—for this reason, I also feel that women should be able to self-identify as old without strict age limits—

Sorry, not good at one-word answers

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Personally, I feel that someone who identifies themselves as Old Lesbians are welcomed to our gatherings. If someone, who may be a transgender female (not female-born), identifies herself as an Old Lesbian, then she is welcomed. If she finds that the activities we do are not really what she is seeking, she will disappear. There was a concern about patriarchal behavior disrupting our gatherings. I find that at times we do need to deal with behavior that is not respectful to individuals or us as a group. We deal with the behavior when it comes up, not in anticipation of someone attending our gatherings who may not be female born.

Thanks for asking.

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Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion!

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I am a member of OLOC, and my feedback is that anyone who identifies as an old lesbian should be able to become a member of OLOC.

As a radical lesbian feminist separatist in the 70's & 80's, I absolutely opposed anyone who wasn't born female being considered a lesbian (I remember the conflict over this at OLIVIA Records when a transgender

woman, who identified as a lesbian, wanted to be a member of the staff). However, times have changed and so has my consciousness.

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I'm Ok with "transLesbians"

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For the most part, I believe OLOC membership should be open to anyone who identifies as an old lesbian. Having been married 35 years before finally making a move to leave the marriage and confirm my lesbian identity, I have felt my own status "questioned" -- certainly not by anyone in OLOC, but years ago by a group of academics. It's not something I'd wish on anyone who identifies as a lesbian.

I must at the same time explain that I do NOT feel the same about the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. I solidly believe it should be open only to women-born-women. It has always attracted a number of lesbians, but it has primarily served as a safe place for women -- women in the *gender* sense, our gender identity being a product of years of socialization in a two-sex-hierarchical society. Men who transition have, for the most part, been socialized as male regardless of how they identify.

But OLOC is not a withdrawal from the everyday in the same sense as Michigan. It is, at least in my mind, an organization to bring together *lesbians* (note, not *women*) who, because of our age at this particular point in time, have strongly political, social justice, social movement roots. This may change over time as younger lesbians whose experience has differed age into OLOC membership. But for now, I find no problem with having OLOC being open to anyone identifying as lesbian. Thanks for asking.

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I think there may be a middle ground for this survey in which the identifying translesbian actually has lived as a lesbian for some time and continues to do so. I have seen comments wary of someone walking in off the street and saying she identifies as a lesbian who doesn't live the life.

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A year ago, my vote would have been different, but now I find that I no longer have the expectation that OLOC would be a place reserved for women-born women. Keeping OLOC open to all self-identified old lesbians seems to be the best way to move forward and heal the wounds. I'm not giving up the need for true women-only space, but I will find it elsewhere. I'm very concerned that we lesbian feminists are losing our voice and our vision of a non-patriarchal world. I'm glad that the new Bay Area chapter for woman-born lesbians is being acknowledged, and I hope that those of us who identify primarily as lesbian feminists will keep speaking our truths.

\*\*\*\*\*

Or another way of saying this: nobody had any business in a lesbian's pants unless she invited them there.

If, in this day and age, when even the word "lesbian" is disappearing, if we don't believe - and cherish and respect -- an old woman when she says she's a lesbian, then who the hell is going to?

Nobody owns the word "lesbian" except the woman who uses it.

## **Female Born**

Thank you for this questionnaire! Awesome! My stand is that oloc membership is for female-born Old Lesbians.

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Female-born ONLY.

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Membership for female born older lesbians only!!!!

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By female born I mean identified at birth as biologically female (even if in error) and raised as a girl.

By Old Lesbians I mean women who are age 60 and older as well as women who have been and are drawn to other women for intimacy.....physical, sexual, emotional.

Lesbian is more than "Best Friends" and more than "the Lysistrata solution"

\*\*\*\*\*

I don't think there is a way to remove the male privileged that male-born females grew up with so they can never really understand the discrimination female-born females have experienced throughout their lives. They cannot feel the same shame foisted on us. They expect to be in charge still believing they are the chosen ones. They are free to make their own organizations which will deal with their issues.

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wimmin born wimmin

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Thanks for this opportunity to have input.

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OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians" my only choice.

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I think the question is a little biased in the general way it is asked "anyone who identifies as an old lesbian" I mean Barbara Bush could claim to be an old lesbian as could her husband!

Anyhow, I was not at the national meeting and did see that issues were raised about transgender folks.

I support individuals who want to transition but that does not mean I don't value lesbian space and old lesbian space too. So no OLOC can support transgender civil rights and still have space for ourselves.

Thanks for taking on this important discussion.

\*\*\*\*\*

thanks for doing this

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OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians!!!!!!

I know in this day and age, the above belief is thought to be politically incorrect and those who believe that womyn born womyn should have our own space are likened to nazis on the internet. I believe, VERY STRONGLY, that we need our own space. As i recently wrote, I support individual's rights to express themselves in any gender, body or way that they want. BUT I ask them to support my right to associate with other womyn in womyn born womyn space. There is a difference in being womyn born and raised in this society. If I color my skin black or brown, there is no way that I can say that I have the same experiences as a black or brown person growing up in this country. Neither can transgendered people say they have the experience of being a little girl in our country.

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Female born old lesbians only.

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As a psychotherapist, I worked with several male/to female transsexuals.

In one case, the educational privilege he had had as a son compared to born female women in the 1950' s were striking; parents paid for weddings for their girl children and college education for their sons. His opportunities for advancement and pay when he was a male was beyond most women's. When he transitioned, he was an engineer designing high end building structures and he was making a six figure salary and owned his own home. Not one woman around me had that kind of career, making that kind of money in the mid-1980's.

\*\*\*\*\*

That particular client came to see me as a therapist cause her boyfriend had just left her. She did not speak of her transition nor did she want to discuss any emotions about loss, etc. Though she was now in the body of a woman, she had many of the behaviors and desires of her male education and early parenting. She was analytical, non expressive, and extremely controlling. Plus, she actually disliked most female born women.

\*\*\*\*\*

Transsexual men do not comprehend the "privilege" they had as born male. Not much has changed since the two I treated back in the eighties. In fact, female hatred is rearing up again in violent ways, but now there are no feminist spokespersons to address it, as well as outlets for publishing in today's disappearing print media. Misogyny and violence against women is on the rise, just as racial hatred, and both are being fed by the media. I need to have at least one organization I belong to that comprehends that there is misogyny and hatred of the elderly woman.

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Put me down for female-born.

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Female born old lesbians. We share a herstory when others were not there. They did not join us. They did not help us. They did not embrace our struggle. Where were they? Silent and not with us.

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A couple of years ago I would have said OLOC should be open to all who identify as old lesbians, but after much thought, I think only female-born Old Lesbians should be part of OLOC.

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I say female born old lesbians.. Same R Michfest too... Be curious what the response is.

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Let the 'I think I am's' create the 'I think I am an older lesbian' group. HELL knows 'I think I am's' have power of positive thinking

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As you already know this is a sticky wicket. Having been discriminated against so much ourselves, we are loath to do such to anyone else. My dilemma is I think I should be alright with anyone who identifies as a lesbian. Which is not someone whose wife did not leave them when they transitioned from male to female and find themselves in a same sex relationship by default. In the case of a lesbian couple who became able to marry simply because one of them transitioned from female to male, I am happy for them, but the wife is a lesbian and the husband isn't.

Other possibilities are an old man who likes to dress as a female with all of the same hormones and anatomy of a man. Not a lesbian either. I guess, what I'm trying to say is it takes more than women's clothes and a desire for women at any age to be a lesbian. If you can change your clothes and be a man, you are not a lesbian, or even a woman. Since it does not seem possible to have a DNA or visual proof of gender or partner choice than I would have to say: woman born lesbians is my choice and leave the trans women to form their own support groups as their issues are not the same as ours. I think that is the closest I can come to the truth as I experience it. With one exception: If someone came to OLOC and no one noticed they weren't a woman born woman either in appearance or experience, that would be the same as if they were woman born. The question would not come up. In another context I might vote another way as the differences between us would not be so important, but the OLD part of OLOC is part of the point and growing up female, living the life of a female deviant for most of the years of our lives, is the point. I think about being part of a support group full of men, women, lesbians & women whose husbands became women through hormone therapy. . . . I would have no interest and little in common with such a group. I would not belong. \*\*\*\*\*

OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians. Transgendered women are still men and they can form their organization. We need our Lesbian space – it's the only place I can go to be assured of that.

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PLEASE keep OLOC for womyn born womyn ONLY. We have little enough space of our own. I have withdrawn my financial support from several organizations who have boycotted not only Michfest, but all artists and craftswomyn there also. OLOC has benefited from this since my last donation was \$ that would have gone to HRC, NCLR, NGTLF and/or GLAAD

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OLOC should be for Old lesbians who were born female, raised female, and lived their entire lives as women. The experiences we share are uniquely for those of us born and raised as women.

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My response to the questionnaire is that OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians.

Otherwise, why not just call it Old Men and Women Organizing for Change, which is how some of our previously women's organizations have changed. (The Berkeley Women's Health Clinic is now the "Berkeley Health Center for Women and Men.")

If it's about how someone "identifies," why not include younger Lesbians who identify as Old? I'd prefer that to men perving on us. At least they are actually Lesbians and women.

It's really horrific how much we have lost. No Lesbian should have to ever deal with seeing in "Lesbian" space a man who has sexually harassed her.

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OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians.

Can I, a white woman at birth, expect the Wampanoag tribe to accept me as a tribal member because I feel like I am an Indian, a feeling that emerged when I was 10 and has grown to be a conviction? No, I have neither the biological inheritance of a Wampanoag, nor have I lived their culture and history.

Comparably, I do not think that anyone not born and not having grown up female can identify as an Old Lesbian.

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yes, I'd prefer that OLOC was for Lesbians Born Female and Raised as Girls only

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Thank you for the opportunity to answer this question and to comment.

Absolutely, OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians. There is no such thing as an Old Lesbian who is not female-born. Men cannot be women. Men cannot be Lesbians. I am not willing to voluntarily let men appropriate our very identities as women and as Lesbians. I am not willing to cooperate with men destroying some of the last remaining precious and hard won Lesbian-only space we had.

As long as OLOC continues to give membership to men who claim to be Lesbians it's no longer a Lesbian organization, is now misnamed and should be renamed.

I hope that when answers are counted it will be remembered that some Lesbians have already resigned from OLOC because they did not want men admitted as members. That's a pretty clear statement of how they would vote.

Thank you to all members of the steering committee for your ongoing dedicated work.

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I am conflicted. I choose #1 for my preference , and will accept the changing tides of #2 as a new reality I need to understand better as well. I do not want to add to another person's discrimination and I do want to feel comfortable in the sacred lesbian place. I am of two minds on this subject. So, I thought that would make my answer a wash.

Thank you for asking.

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Thanks for asking.

Partners

Exception if grew up as a female with womyn culture life & experienced ie school & socialization as a female

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Oh Goddess, don't get me started!

Will someone please create a festival for the male-gender-confused."community" Eunuch and sexual deviants. ha ha ha  
Invasive Non Issue!

Even our bookstores have gone under because of men's gender confusion and basically ego mania pornographic male issue. NO BRAIN BOOKS.

Lesbian Born!!

Lesbian Rights are Womyn's Rights. (childrens +) women's rights are the most needed and ignored of Human rights, especially by the self-centeedd

few egtbt (sadist masochist mysogeny) other men's groups priest, soldiers, convicts, sex slavers, pimps

And lesbians have been on the front lines of every human rights crisis! racism. war. aids. justice, since Egypt!

Men's rights include slave-"marriage" religions, military, police, priests, racism, s +m criminal convicts, prisons, homophobic boy scouts mysogeny sm, gm, transies, bisexual smgmtbe

straight men, gaymen, bi's transies and eunichs may they all get human rights but they are not supportive of women in any way and are separate from Lesbians. They are not "our" boys!

Parthenogenesis will se you free.

also-no support but only"war" against us. They protest the only women's space and gathering. It's happened over and over again. The dicks will only bring us down and separate us from our true intentions old lesbians for change. I'm assuming "change" for the better.

Not to mention Lesbian culture is the oldest sustained group of humans (besides the death-squads of militia men and criminals-form ancient times - all inclusive of all herigages, ages, faith and not aw based in our sexuality isolated from intelligence sensuality, goodness + commune. Let's see any support by the men for Lesbians before we welcome them to our sanctuary.

The (double woman sign) movement continues and needs a jump start. Don't let these men, dickless eunuchs, or otherwise claim us as their commune

Those gbts and straight men are not our community. They are not our "men and never have held women in respect.

All those women mutilated (not by vain chice) and no longer bleed, no uterus or breasts, are now welcome in the vatican and are candiadate for equal pay.

There are so many more necessary + important human rights issue for strong smart OLOCs to leave a legacy of our lives work. Keep on!

Other issues up for a vote:

If an OLOC disagrees with policy will we be dismembered?

Will/Does or can an unique/Eunuch or an "under 60: support OLOC without being a "member"?

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I'd love to vote for (deceased partner) also but...

Please, Lesbian only space is so special, men, pricks, males need to stick it in where they can - keep pricks out of OLOC.

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I have sought my lesbian, especially female born and raised, sisters consistently in spite of a mixed and changing world.  
I will not stop doing that even IF OLOC becomes or has to be "mixed".

There were "others" at Oakland and I continued to seek out those I wanted to connect with. And drifted by those with whom I did not wish to engage. Love and compassion as you and we negotiate our ways amongst each other.

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Thanks for providing options.  
As much as I am able to understand trans politics, I am not, for this organization,  
at this point in time anyway, comfortable with inclusion.

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Thanks for asking.

My vote: OLOC membership is for female-born Old Lesbians.

Local chapters will have guests at their meetings, I'm sure.

Next question is how to increase our membership.

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This is the same question that challenged me when I was first coming out in a new town and holding a position in a new workplace. My partner and I had traveled to San Francisco to join in a meeting of Daughters of Bilitis. The discussion centered on whether or not to accept into the group a person who was not born woman. In my mind, I pictured a person dressed in muddy green "army fatigue" shirt and trousers with long flowing hair who wanted to participate in DOB meetings. This picture appeared to me because a person of this description had come into a womens bar elsewhere and it was rumored that s/he was not born woman. Ironically, in terms of appearance, s/he looked like the mirror image of me. I was torn, then, and now because I know from my own experience how difficult it is to find safe space anywhere to come out and to live differently. I know of one woman-identified old lesbian who made space on her womens land for a transgendered woman. Her decision was difficult for her and for the surrounding community of women. Through the years since my early DOB experience, much has happened and changed. Most

significantly for all of us has been the growth and support of LGBTQ centers where we can accept, protect, and stretch our boundaries. It is because of the growth of LGBTQ centers with the capacity to welcome all of us in our diversity that I am led to respond to the question above:

\_\_\_\_\_ OLOC membership should be for female-born Old Lesbians.

This is where I stand at the present time. I do think that as an organization OLOC could accept contributions (financial and otherwise) from supporters and friends of OLOC and that OLOC at local and national levels could co-host events deemed appropriate by membership.

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how or where or why did this question emerge?

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To me a lesbian is a woman, born female, raised as a girl, and lives her life as a woman who loves women.

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With all the name calling on this issue, there is little room for dialogue about the life experiences of lesbians who have lived our whole lives as females in a female-hating society. Where do we go to talk about this if "identification" is the only criterion?

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of course I want female born only

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I remember discussions at The Gathering about getting input from OLOC members, but I don't remember anything about taking a 'vote.' Voting about anything always leaves a dissatisfied, alienated and frequently angry minority. I'm constantly amazed at the ease with which men divide women and the seemingly endless ways that women will support men even when it's against their (our) best interests. One way or another, decade after decade, crisis after crisis, it always seems to come back to men.

Obviously I support OLOC as an organization for old lesbians. Obviously I think old lesbians are women and that men, whether among the 1/4 that have been surgically and hormonally enhanced to mimic women and identify as lesbians or the 3/4s that haven't had any sort of genital surgery

and who may or may not take hormones, but who for interesting reasons call themselves lesbians should not be in OLOC.

That primary question that I'm interested in hearing more discussion about is why so many of the above men identify as lesbians and why so few--any?--at least from the discussions/reading that I've had/done over the years, seem to have relationships with each other.

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Female-born only because I feel more comfortable with it. It is an issue of safety.

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Thanks for asking!!!

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Lesbianism is separatism

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