



LGBTQ+ in Academia: Implications for Mental Health

Centre for Integrative Biological Signaling Studies
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Disclaimer

Dragonfly Mental Health is not a healthcare provider organization. The information provided today does not qualify as medical advice and does not substitute for speaking to medical professionals.

Wendy Ingram, PhD

she/her

Molecular and Cell Biology
UC Berkeley, 2015

18 years of brain and behavior research
from **molecules to populations.**

I created peer-led organizations to address
mental health problems at
***Johns Hopkins University, UC Berkeley,
and Dragonfly Mental Health (NGO)***



Who We Are

Founded in
April 2020.

By Academics
For Academics

300+ volunteers
from 45
countries.



Mental Health Among Academics

Graduate students have **8 times** higher rates of severe depression and anxiety

(Evans 2018, Woolston 2019)

Those with higher IQ and education report higher rates of mood disorders and are **less likely** to seek treatment

(Karpinski 2017, MacCabe 2018, Woolston 2019)

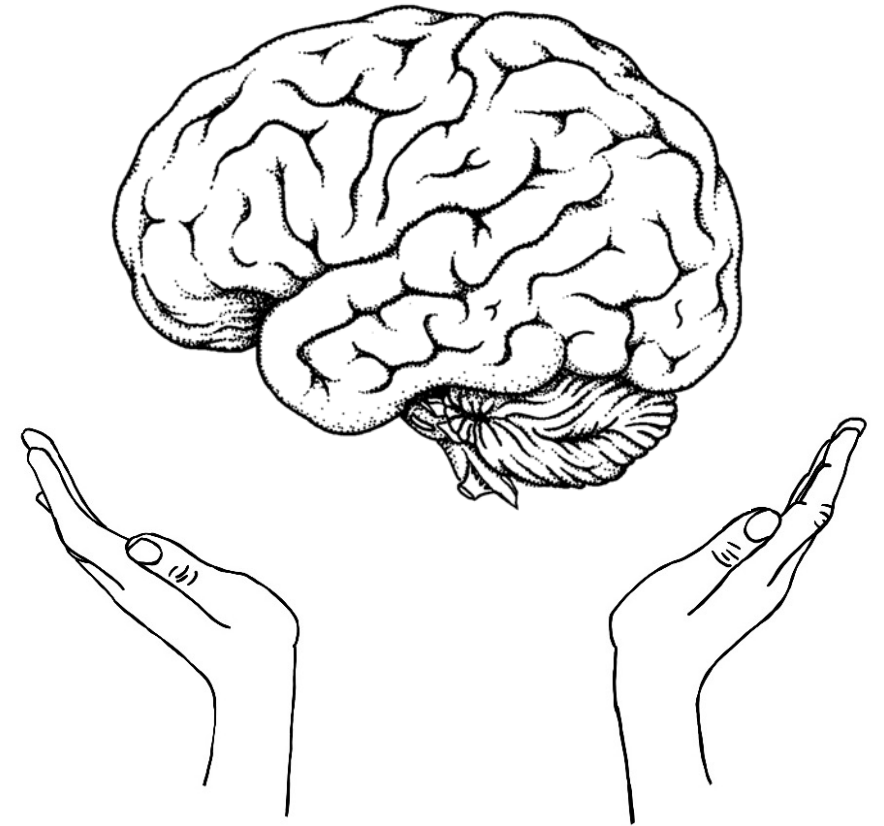
Medical students and residents met criteria for:

burnout at 40-44% and **depression at 30-50%**

(ACS 2008, Rothenberger 2017, Frajerman 2019)

Mental Diseases

- Real biologically *and* environmentally driven illnesses that can be episodic, chronic or singular events
- Often preventable and are highly treatable
- Critical to a mentally healthy climate and culture is access to care and community support



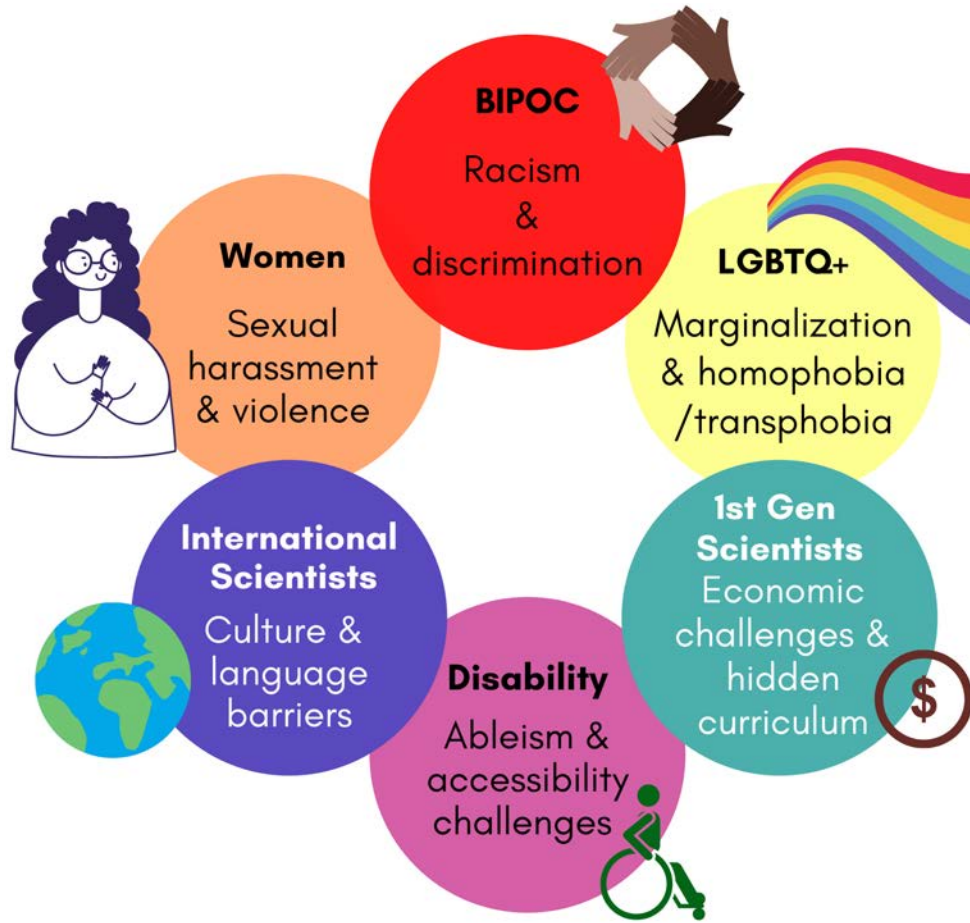
LGBTQ+ and Mental Health

	<u>MH</u>	<u>SUD</u>	<u>Suic</u>
LGB	2x	2x	11%
T	4x	4x	40%*

* Those with supportive families had much lower rates



Identity and Intersectionality



"You're too pretty to be a scientist"

Sexual harassment by PI or lab mate

"Why are you complaining? Don't Asian people love homework?"

Cultural communication differences with managers

"Oh you're the affirmative action hire" Or "wow you're so articulate"

Being stopped and questioned by police/security

"Are you using that wheelchair for sympathy? I've seen you walk"

Refusal to provide visual aids because "only one person needs it"

"Haha, that's so gay!"

Being told genderqueer clothing choices are "unprofessional"

"You should have thought about money before pursuing your education"

Assuming students can work for free or defer reimbursements

Microaggressions

Microaggressions can cause members of marginalized groups to feel isolated and invalidated, and to become hypervigilant. This can lead to anxiety and depression.

Remarks that seem harmless but when repeated daily and in all aspects of life, they have a cumulative effect—they serve as constant reminders that members of marginalized groups are "less than"

Intersectionality and Mental Health

LGBTQ individuals are **2x more likely** than heterosexual individuals to have a mental health disorder (APA)

Income x gender x immigration status **~3x higher** depression.
Race or SES x gender has **more than additive affect** on mental health.

Gender Based Harassment

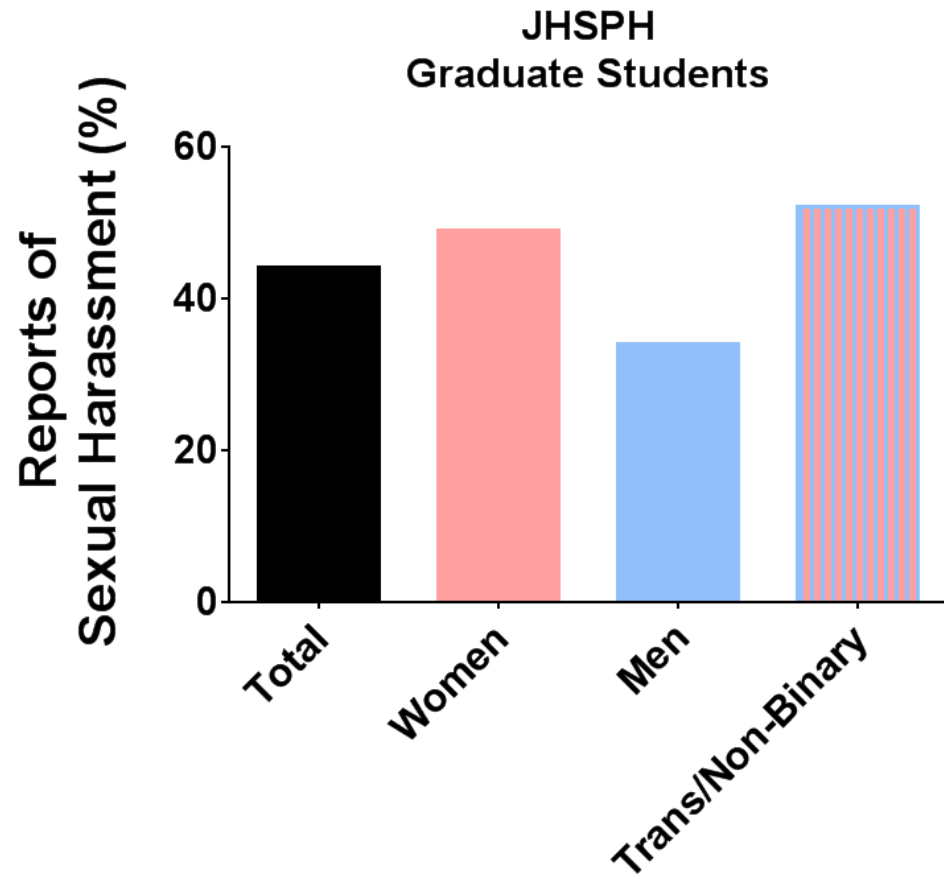


Table 2: Reports of Sexual Harassment of Any Type

Total	Women	Men	Trans/ Non-Binary	Prefer not to answer
(N=1,875)	(N=1,140)	(N=693)	(N=21)	(N=21)
44%	49%	34%	52%	48%

LGBTQ+ in STEM

US ₂₀₁₃ STEM ₂₀₁₃
LGBT 3.4% 2.8%

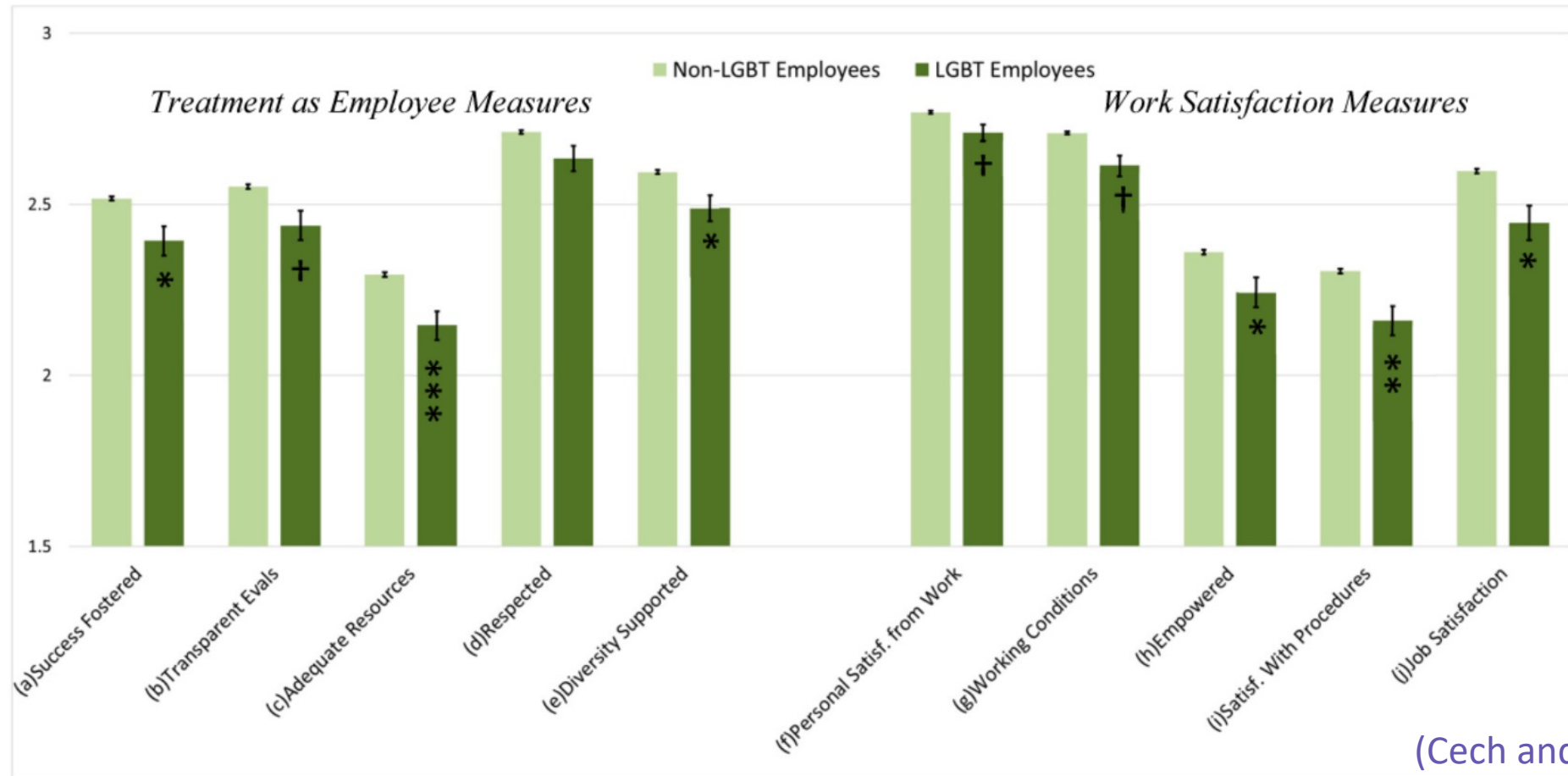
Americans' Self-Identification as LGBT, by Generation

	LGBT %
Generation Z (born 1997-2003)	20.8
Millennials (born 1981-1996)	10.5
Generation X (born 1965-1980)	4.2
Baby boomers (born 1946-1964)	2.6
Traditionalists (born before 1946)	0.8

Cech and Pham, 2017. "Queer in STEM Organizations: Workplace Disadvantages for LGBT Employees in STEM Related Federal Agencies"

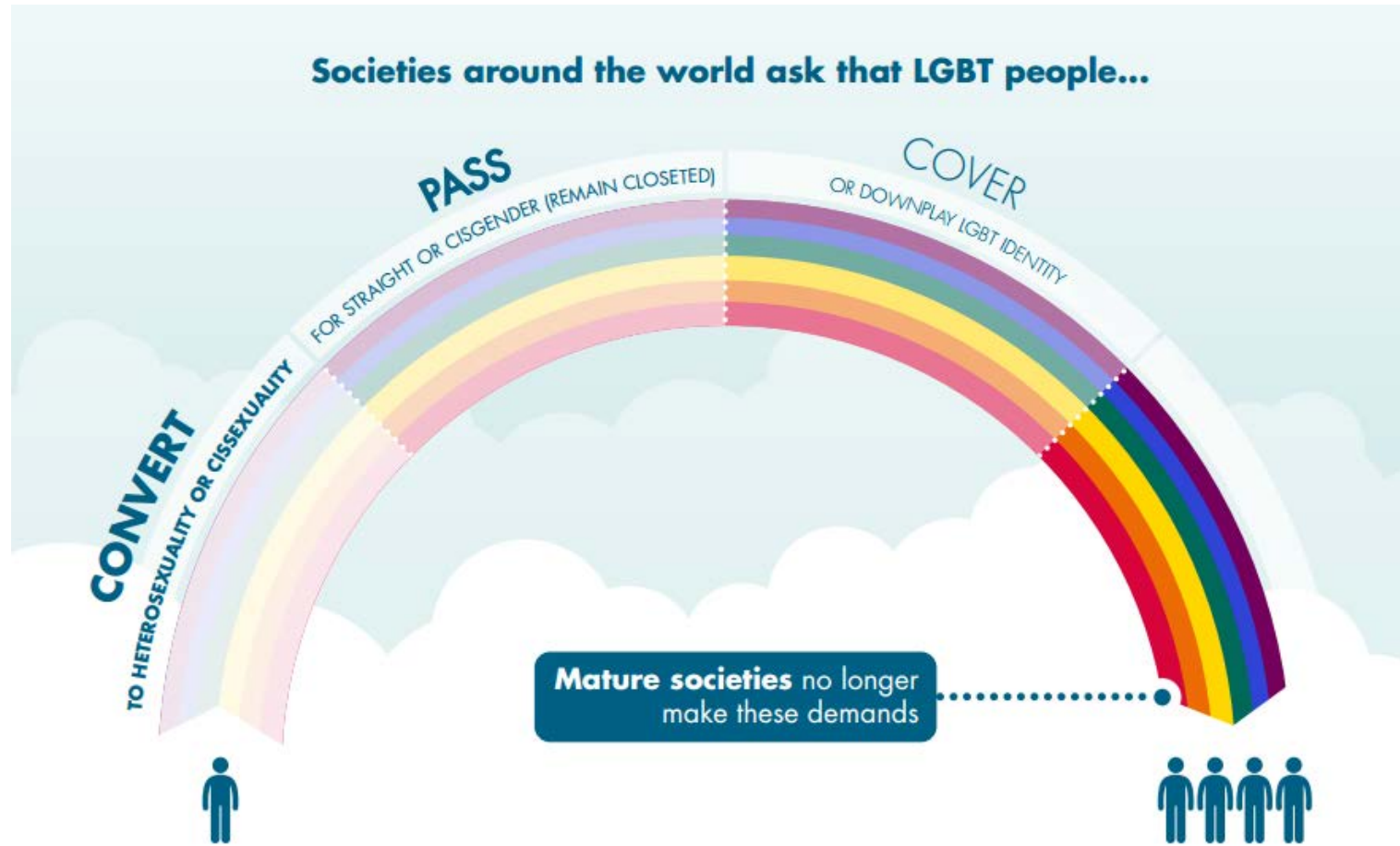
Gallup Poll 2022

LGBTQ+ in STEM

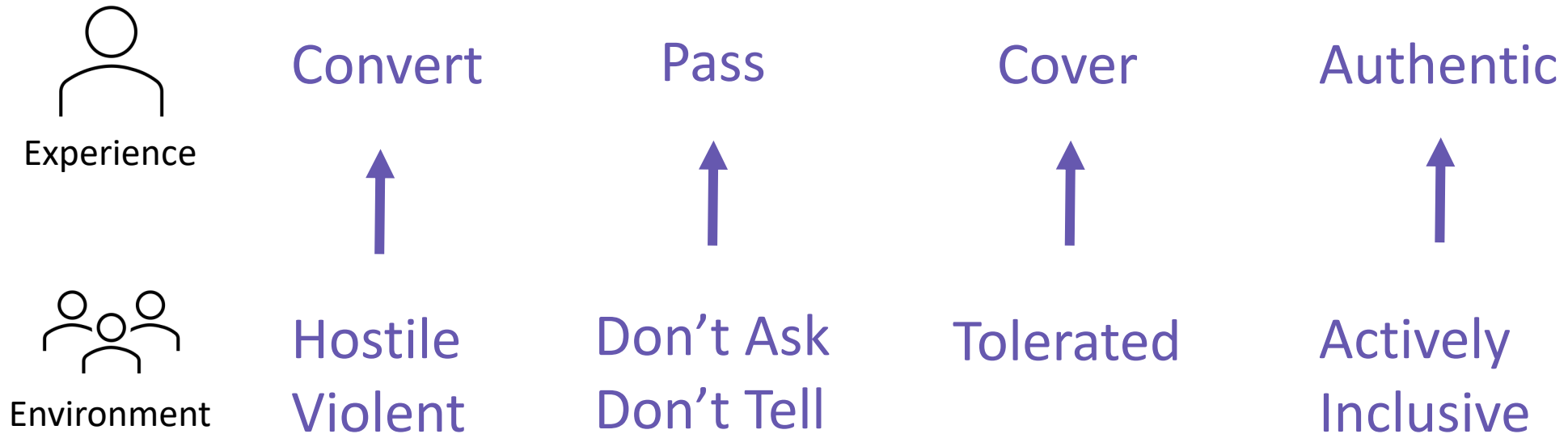


(Cech and Pham, 2017)

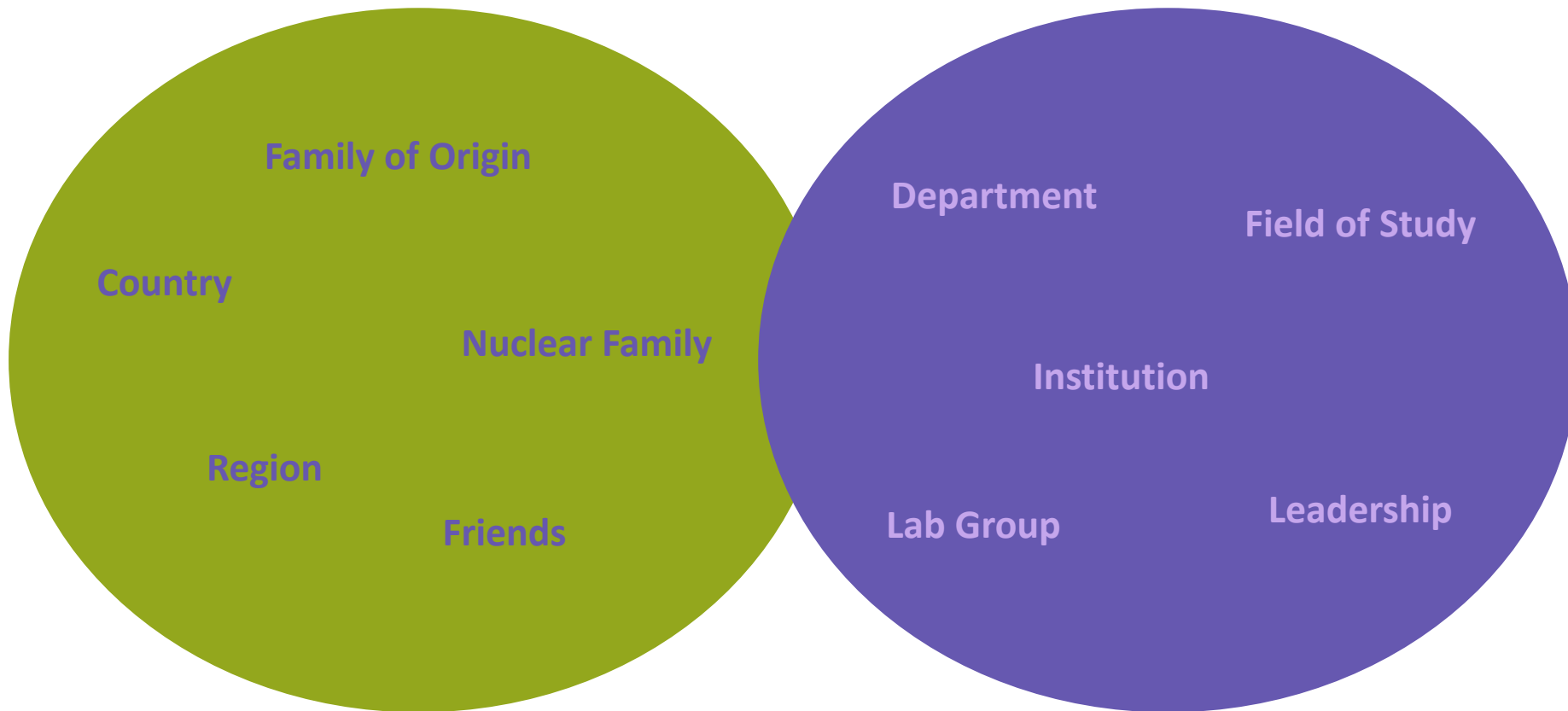
Belongingness and Inclusion



Belongingness and Inclusion



Context Dependent



LGBTQ+ Pride in STEM



“Raise the profile of LGBTQ+ people in science, technology, engineering and maths/medicine (STEM) as well as to highlight the struggles LGBTQ+ people often face.”

We aim to “queer up science spaces” and to “science up queer spaces”.

How to be actively inclusive?



1. Practice pronoun use
2. Announce inclusive policies
3. Discourage non-inclusive actions and speech
4. Offer awareness events and training
5. Create a support network
6. Celebrate role models

Powell, 2020. "How LGBT+ scientists would like to be included and welcomed in STEM workplaces." *Nature*

Representation Matters



Otto Heinrich Warburg



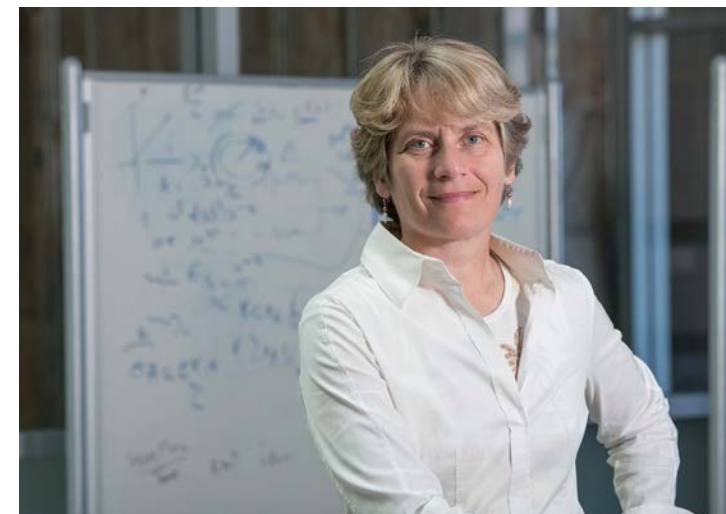
1931

Svante Paabo



2022

Carolyn Bertozzi



2022

Representation Matters

Alan Turing



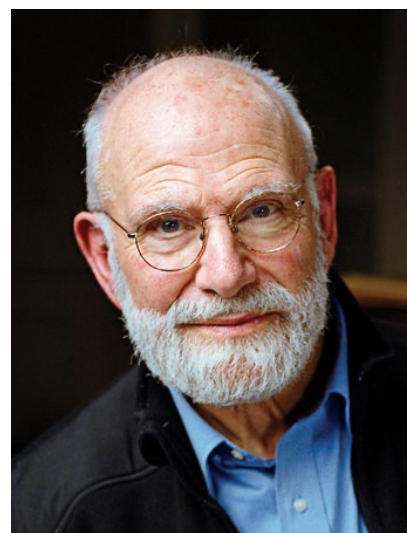
Rachel Carson



Sally Ride



Oliver Sacks



Ben Barres



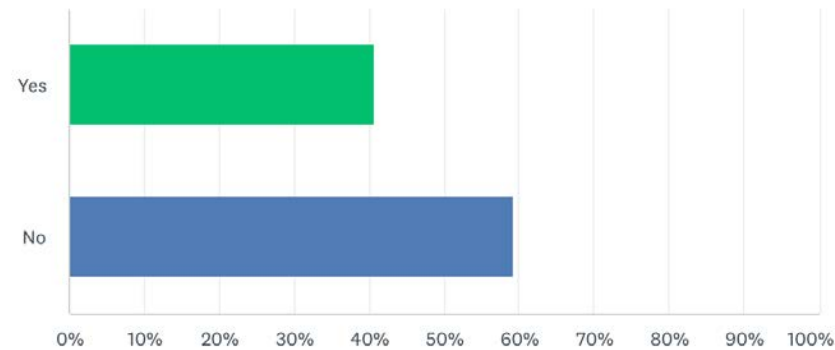
<https://www.asbmb.org/asbmb-today/people/061821/lgbtq-scientists-through-history>

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/stories/lgbtq-people-stem>

LGBTQ+ CIBSS Survey

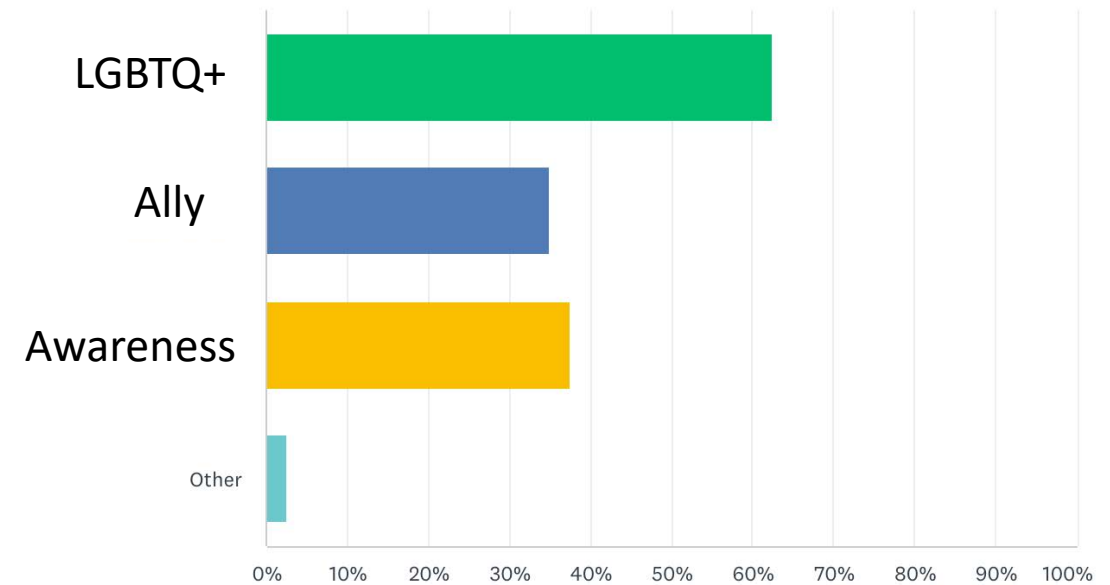
Are you a CIBSS member or associated with CIBSS?

Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



What makes you interested in the topic of LGBTQ+ in STEM (multiple selections possible)?

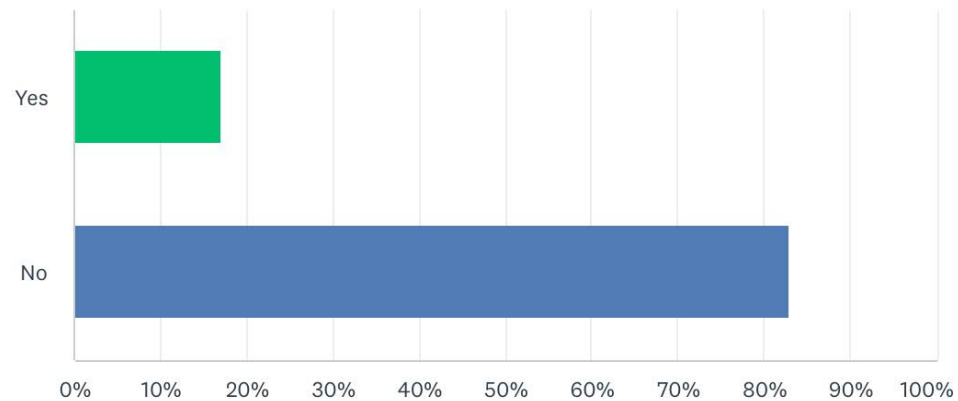
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



LGBTQ+ Survey: Opinions

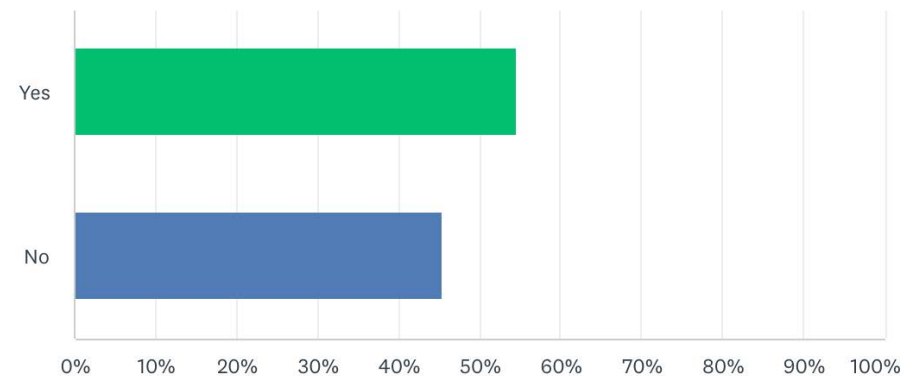
Do you think that the sexual orientation of a person matters in STEM?

Answered: 76 Skipped: 5



Do you think that LGBTQ+ researchers in STEM should be worried to experience disadvantages or problems at work or in the scientific community?

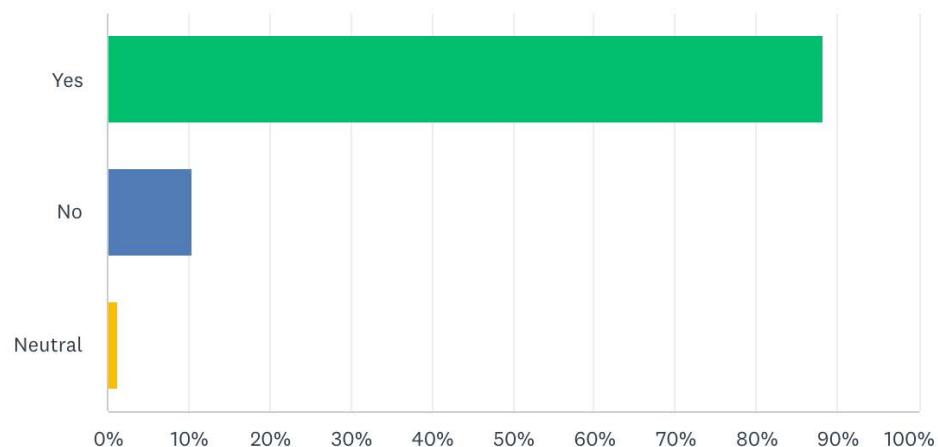
Answered: 77 Skipped: 4



LGBTQ+ Survey: Experience

Would you say your work environment is LGBTQ+ friendly?

Answered: 77 Skipped: 4



“I get treated like any other”

“LGBTQ+ club exists, but appears inactive”

“Not trans-friendly”

“Partially. As friendly as possible at the current time in Germany”

“People in scientific community don't seem to be actively hating anyone but there is little awareness and understanding of all the additional challenges.”

“Biology very often focuses on binary genders and never takes gender and sexual diversity into account, thus excluding me and many others.”

“There are a few people that ask uncomfortable questions and open inappropriate conversations regarding sexuality. I have learned to handle it.”

“There is a huge lack of representation in my work environment for LGBTQ+ members, it is something not openly discussed and no one in higher positions is openly LGBTQ+”

LGBTQ+ Survey: Experience

“I have to constantly hear from one guy at my school during every science lesson that relationships between two people of the same sex or people transitioning not “natural” and not “biologically correct”.”

“Uninvited comments from coworkers about my looks as a transgender person. Misgendering on purpose. Inappropriate questions and comments about the “necessity” of gender affirmative surgeries.”

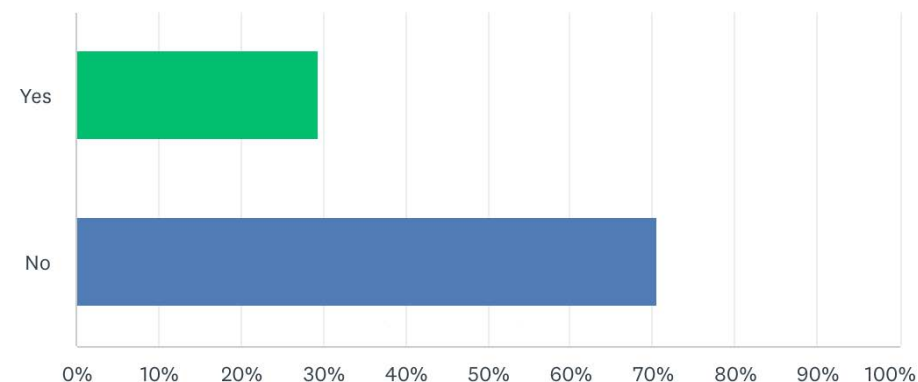
“A former teacher of mine had to switch schools because he got married to another male teacher at the school, however there were many heterosexual married teacher couples at the school.”

“Because everyone is assuming that everyone is cishet, the environment, no matter how friendly people think they are, does not encourage you to speak about the difficulties you face or to openly express your feelings. Instead, you're constantly ruminating of whether or not to even mention your queerness in the conversation”

“I did not experience disadvantages, but I only out myself if I feel that it wouldn't be any problem and only since I am older and got more courage in showing it in public.”

Have you yourself or someone you know experienced any disadvantages or problems because of LGBTQ+ identification at work or in the scientific community?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 3



Thank you!

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hello@dragonflymentalhealth.org

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Feedback, please:

<https://tinyurl.com/DragonflySurvey>

