

DEVELOPED BY



WARWICK CHEMISTRY

Facilitator Notes

Straight Jacket – Overcoming Society’s Legacy of Gay Shame

Part Three

By Matthew Todd

&

Exploring the Workplace for LGBT+ Physical Scientists

*A report by the Institute of Physics, Royal Astronomical Society
& Royal Society of Chemistry*



B O O K C L U B

DISCUSSION BOOKLET 3 – CRIB SHEET

*“Equality means more than passing laws. The struggle is really won in the hearts and minds of the community,
where it really counts.”*

Barbara Gittings

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All Diversity Book Club materials are brought to you as open access to enable you start your own club, through the hard work of the above individuals. We ask if you use these materials to keep the Acknowledgement Section in the Booklets you use and credit the Chemistry Department of the University of Warwick.



Thinking back - What challenged/surprised you from the chapters?

This could be something pertinent or something that really grabbed your attention and made you think twice.

This is an open question that we will likely use in some form in all the sessions. It is a good opportunity to gauge the feelings and understanding of the group.

Last session we discussed the personal consequences of the continued discrimination of the LGBTQUA+ community, as well as considering the objectification of the LGBTQUA+ community and why this occurs.

This session we will consider what it means to be an ally and what can be done to support the LGBTQUA+ community.

Discussion

How can a more positive environment for LGBTQUA+ individuals positively impact this community? *Re-read pages 293 – 301 (Chapter 18: We Are Family).*

A more positive environment for the community will allow members of the community to be who they truly are in a public space. It ensures respect and attitudinal change towards the community. It also allows both the positives to be discussed more openly, and also the problem of homophobic bullying to be discussed and addressed, while allowing those impacted by this to be supported more easily.

What is an ally? How do you become an ally? *Re-read Chapters 18 and 19.*

"I think everyone's important and we need to celebrate that. I've been surrounded by heterosexual and homosexual role models growing up, and I've got so many people in my life who are gay and that I love and are important to me, and I feel a responsibility and a duty to do something about this and not to ignore it."

Rachel, page 299

An ally: someone external to the community who actively supports members or the community and the community itself, even when this might be challenging or not in a public forum (this is the difference between allyship and performative activism). An ally doesn't necessarily agree with everything in a community but they support the community regardless.

To become an ally you would: be open to learning and understand that you won't know everything, confront your own bias/prejudices, take time to work/ build on how you support a community, recognise and acknowledge your own mistakes, respect people's identities, consider your language.

Chapter 19 (Towards a New Way of Living) gives a set of more precise examples of what allies can do in the LGBTQUA+ community.

Reflecting

How can events and initiatives for LGBTQUA+ individuals become more mainstream and help foster a community?

Re-read pages 306-307

Firstly, avoiding tokenism e.g. avoiding inviting people/ having an event to 'tick the diversity box'. Instead, seeing these activities as a year-long endeavour, rather than an isolated week/month where you can 'get it out of the way'. Also making sure that all individuals support the initiative.

- Continuously building events throughout the year
- Having a strategy and an aim for societies/socials and how they build memberships etc.
- Making sure events target both the community (inward facing) and those outside it (outward facing) (these can be the same or separate events) and communicating this properly when advertising events

What would be useful resources and training, for both members and allies, to better support the development of the LGBTQUA+ community? Re-read Chapter 19 (*Towards a New Way of Living*).

This is a very open question
Some examples might be; face-to-face training courses, online training, seminars and workshops,
Inclusion and Diversity training.
Bystander training, seminar on history of LGBTQUA+ communities in the UK, specific books
(exploring the bibliography of this book),

“The situation with trans people is very similar to that in the eighties with gay people that you describe. There are journalists who, based on zero evidence, portray trans people as dangerous or not who we say we are. Kids, like I was, are hearing that they are wrong, that they are unreal, all the time.”

Paris Lees, page 344

Paris Lees highlights the current prevalence of transphobia, how can we, as individuals and a department, better support the trans community?

Re-read pages 344-346.

Seeing trans-awareness the same way as we do with sexuality, race and sexism.
Considering practical aspects e.g. putting sanitary bins in all toilets. Also if making gender neutral toilets, doing this properly.
Educating ourselves on trans-issues and trans-rights. Apply the principles of being an ally to this community specifically. Using correct pronouns, allowing yourself to be corrected, not being afraid to ask, increasing trans-awareness initiatives (such as pronoun badges).

Application

What steps can you take to be a better ally of the LGBTQUA+ community?

Think about what you currently do well and what could you improve on?

People will have different suggestions of things they can do. While we have discussed what makes a good ally previously, this question is targeted more at what individuals are personally considering doing i.e. what they are good or bad at and how they can improve more generally.

Next Steps

First things first, thank you for taking part in the sessions, we hope you enjoyed them and will join us for the next book. Your contributions have been appreciated and the discussions we have had are contributing to making a more inclusive community for all. However, this is the last booklet in the series exploring Matthew Todd's book and the linked report, so any **comments, critiques or feedback** would be much appreciated by the authors of these booklets and the wider team.

Second, we will be holding a "Positive Action and Discussion Session" that all participants will be invited to. In this session we will discuss how we can bring about positive change in the community, curriculum and culture of the department and University.

We hope to see you all there!

Additional Notes;