

# The Pathways to Health and Well-Being for LGBT/Same-Sex Attracted Mormons

A study of 1,612 LGBT/SSA Mormons and Former Mormons

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# SURVEY OF 1,612 LGBTQ/SSA CURRENT AND FORMER MORMONS



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# Research Questions

## **What are the experiences of LGBTQ Mormons?**

- 1. Are attempts to change sexual orientation effective and/or damaging?**
- 2. How do LGBTQ Mormons navigate their identity?**
- 3. What decisions lead to optimal health/well-being for LGBTQ Mormons and former Mormons?**

**Ultimate goal: Help provide useful information to LGBTQ Mormons and family/friends for important life decisions.**

*OUR PRIMARY DESIGN GOAL:  
A LARGE AND DIVERSE SAMPLE*



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## New USU study to examine experiences of gay Mormons

LGBT FYI by Rosemarie Winters

Published August 1, 2011 11:51 am



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### Study looks at experiences of gay Mormons

July 31, 2011 - 4:59 PM

JENNIFER DOBNER, Associated Press

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SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Utah State University psychology professor



$$N = 1,612$$



# OTHER SIMILAR STUDIES

“People can Change” (2007 / not published),

$N = 224$

Spitzer (2000),  $N = 200$

Schroeder & Shidlo (2002),  $N = 150$

Jones (2009),  $N = 98$

Karten (2010),  $N = 117$

Maccio (2011),  $N = 37$

# Survey Sources

*n* = 1548

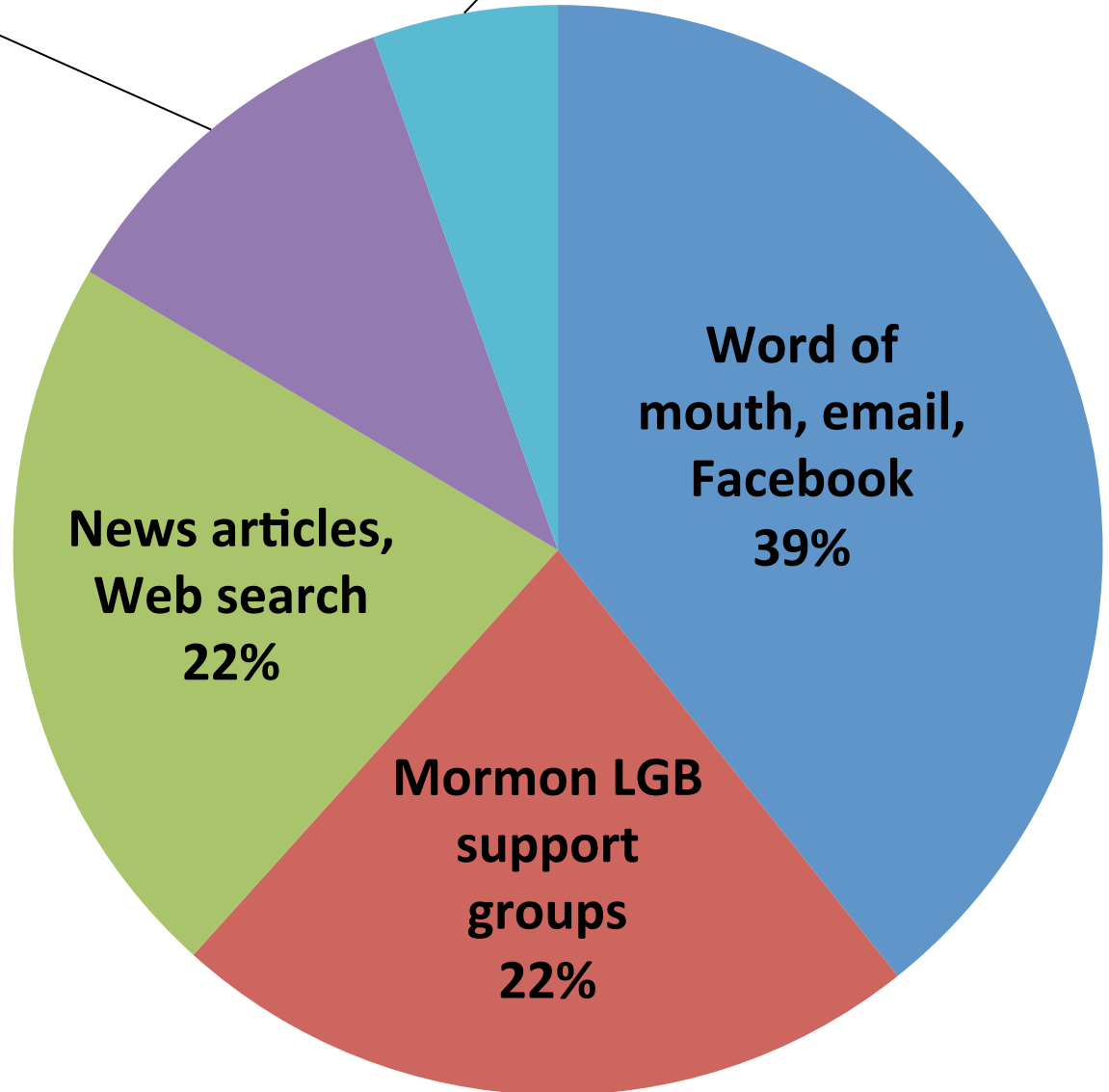
**Blogs, web sites,  
Internet forums  
11%**

**News articles,  
Web search  
22%**

**Mormon LGB  
support groups  
22%**

**Word of mouth, email,  
Facebook  
39%**

**Non-religious support  
organizations  
6%**



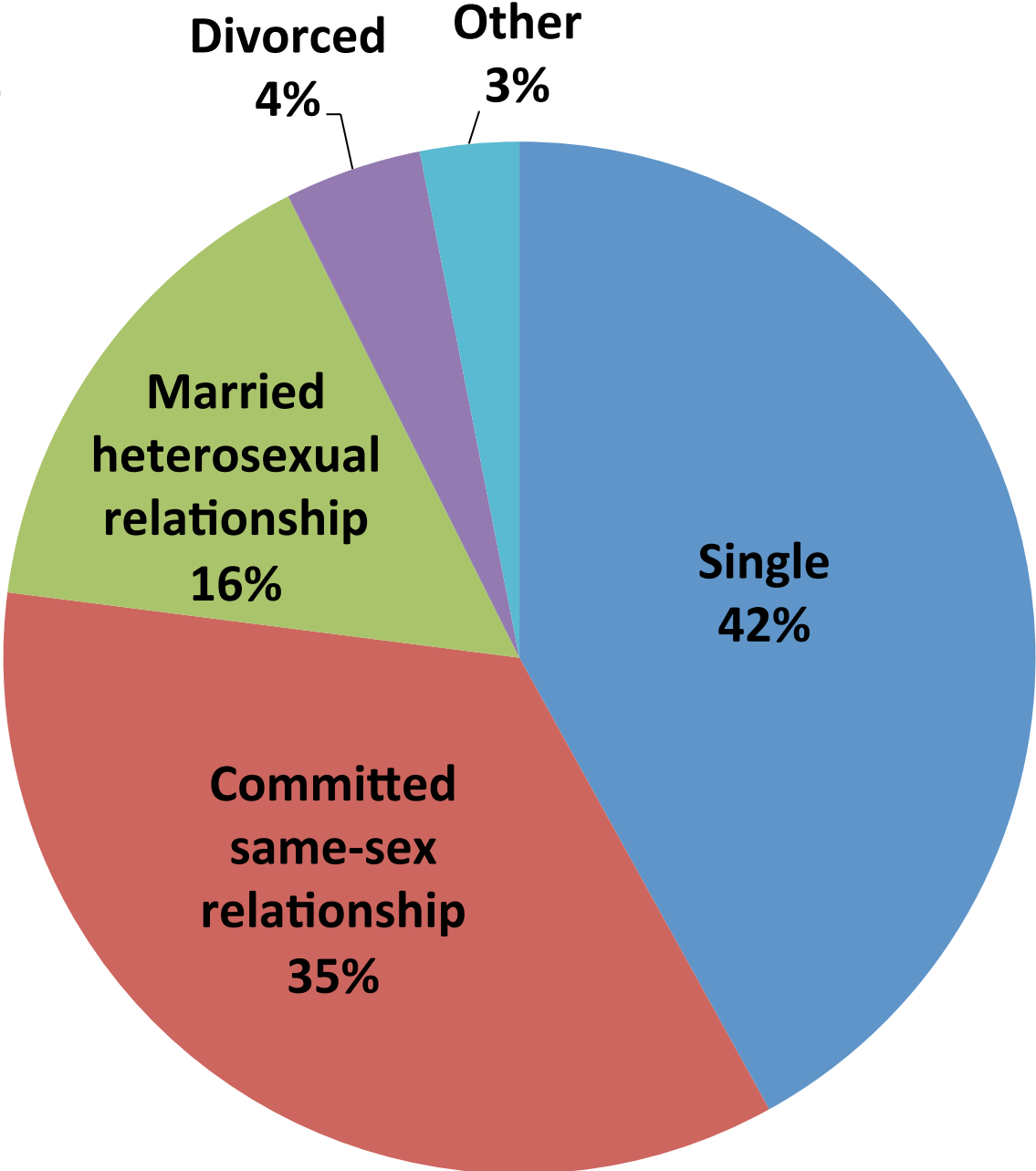


# Demographics

- 75% male, 22 % female
- Mean age – 36.9 years ( $SD = 12.58$ )
- 91% white
- 48 U.S. states and D.C. (94%), 22 countries
  - ▣ 45% Utah
- Higher than average income and education
  - ▣ 64% college graduates

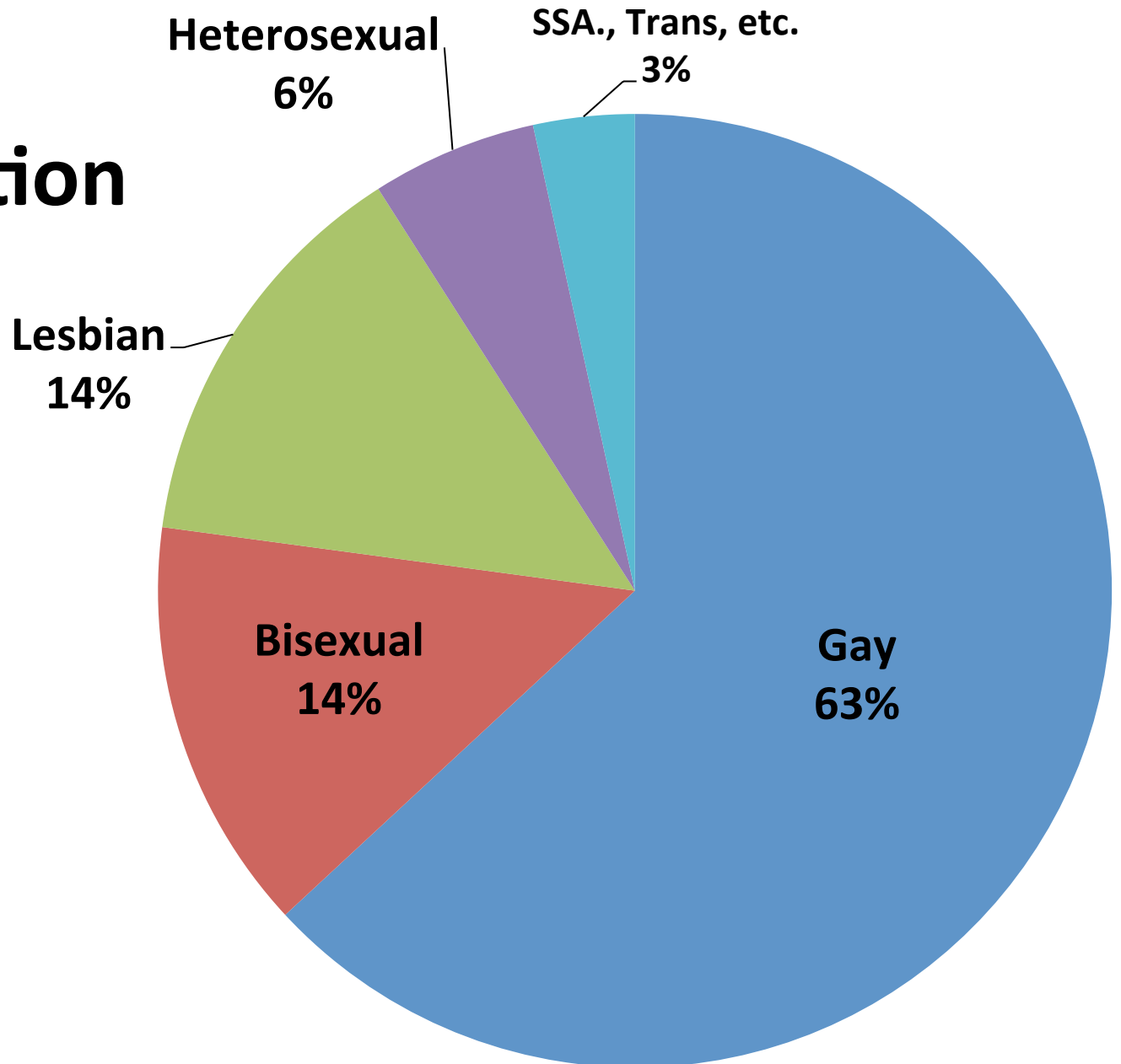
# Relationship Status

*n* = 1576



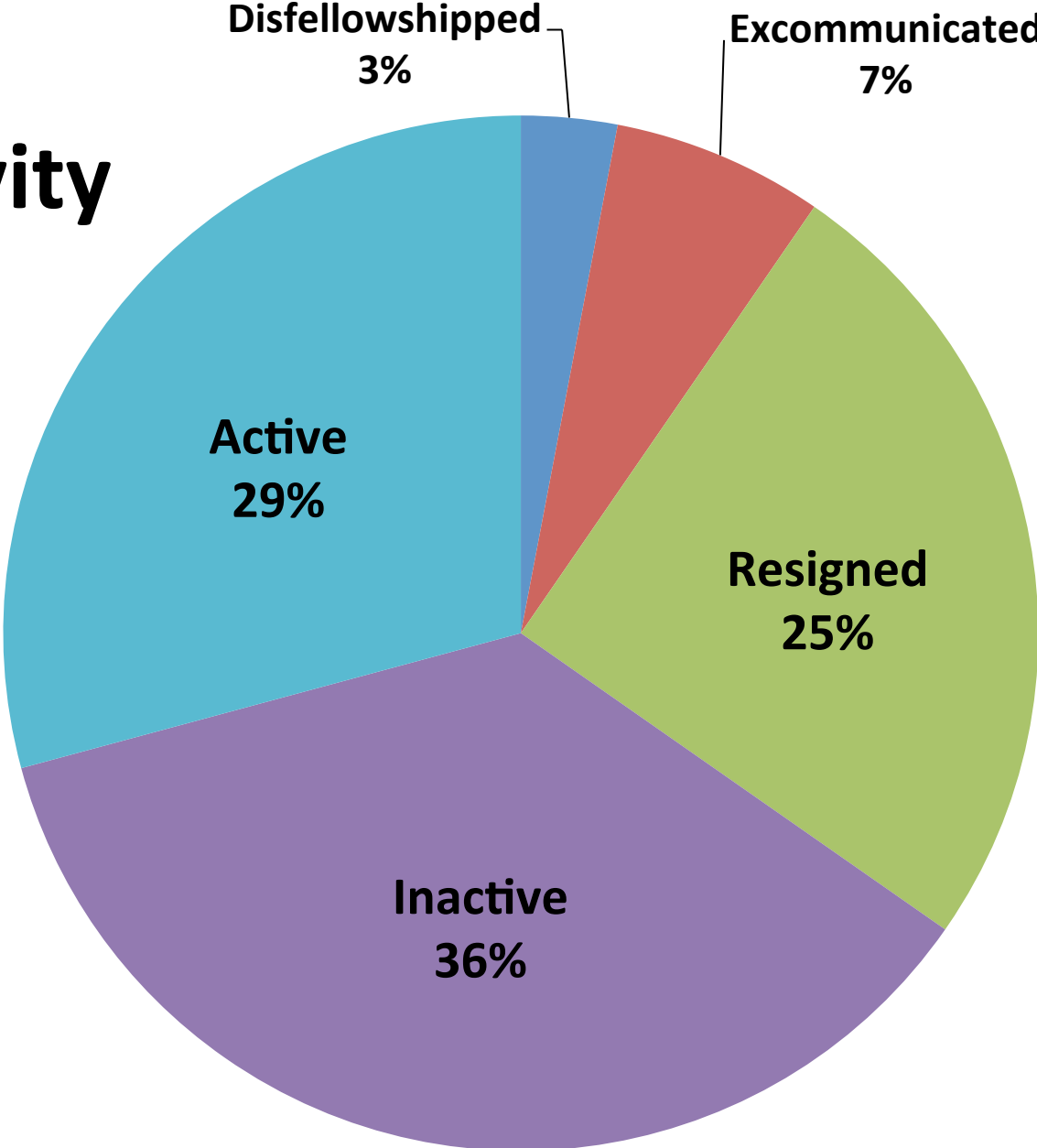
# Sexual Orientation

*n* = 1573



# Current LDS Church Activity

*n* = 1556



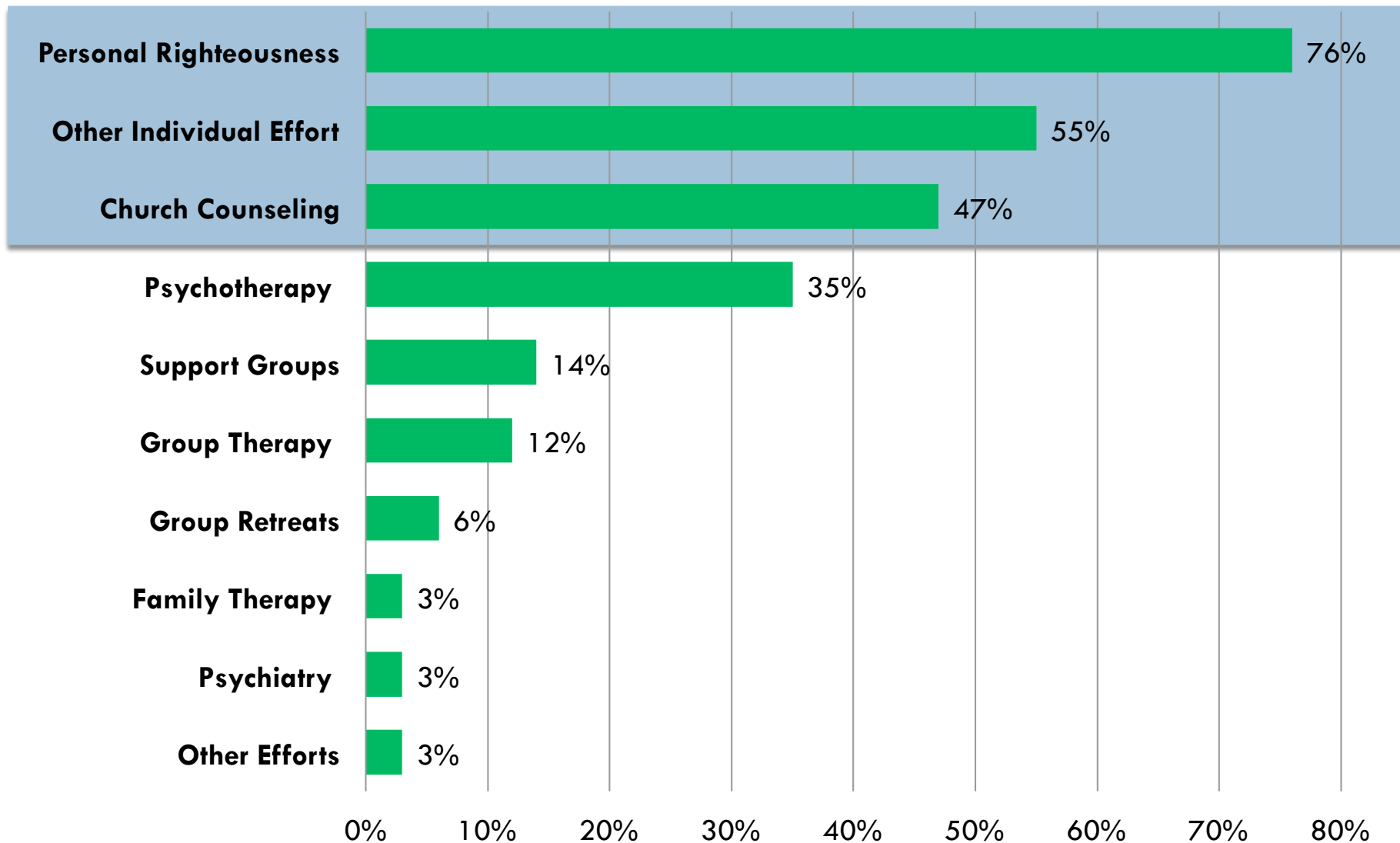
# Sexual Identity Development

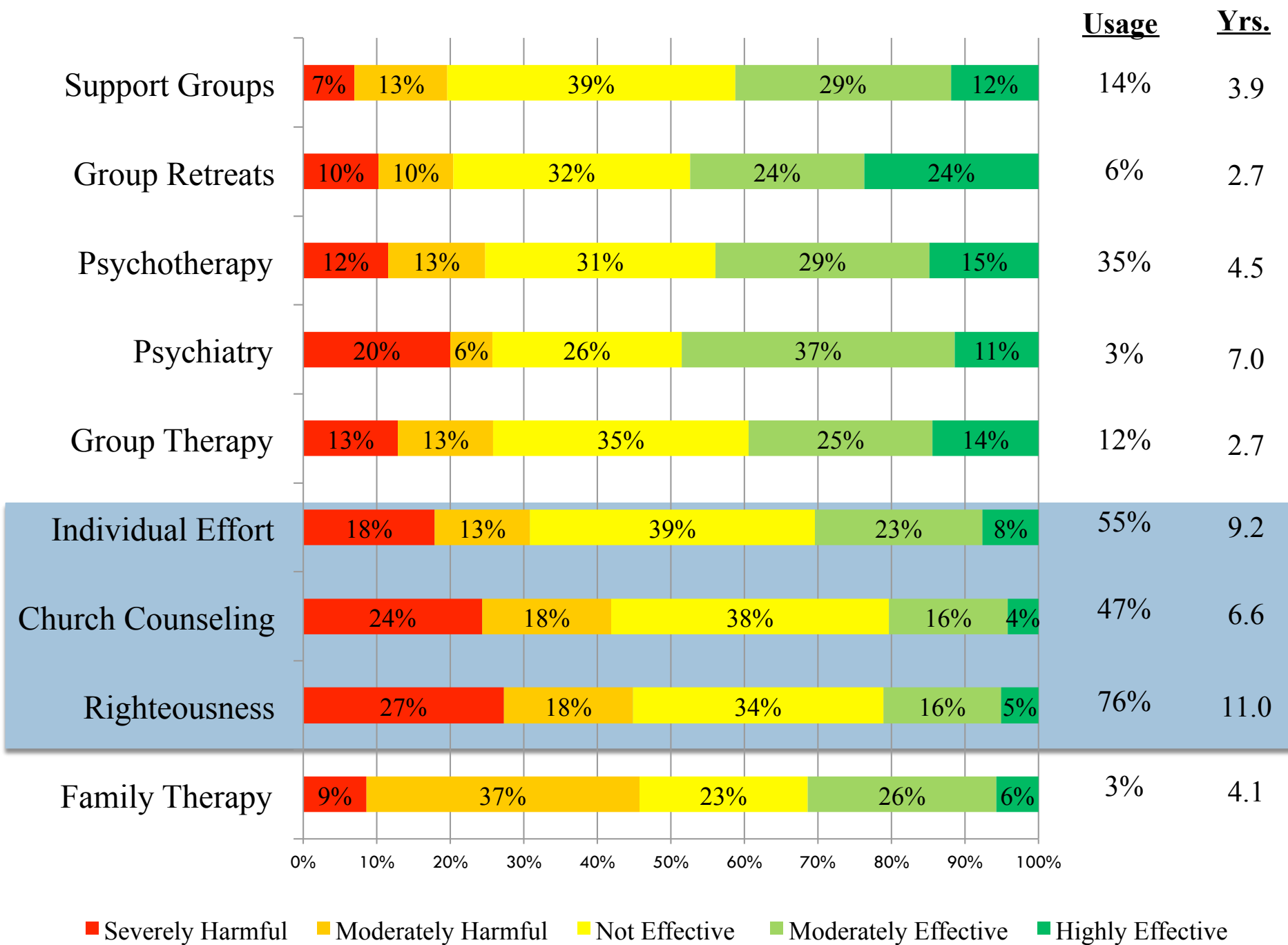
When did you first:	Age <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	
	Men	Women
Sense a difference (feeling, attitudes, behavior) between yourself and others of your same age and biological sex that you now attribute to your same-sex sexual orientation?	8.81 (3.9)	11.00 (6.2)
Realize you were attracted romantically or sexually to persons of the same sex?	12.74 (4.6)	15.91 (7.0)
Have a same-sex romantic or sexual experience?	18.15 (8.4)	21.61 (8.1)
Tell someone of your same-sex attraction?	21.96 (8.0)	23.38 (8.8)
Label yourself gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, questioning, queer, or another label you have chosen for yourself?	22.28 (8.6)	24.51 (8.8)

TOPIC 1:

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION CHANGE EFFORTS  
AMONG CURRENT AND FORMER LGBTQ/  
SSA LDS CHURCH MEMBERS**

## Most common methods of attempting sexual orientation change





■ Severely Harmful   
 ■ Moderately Harmful   
 ■ Not Effective   
 ■ Moderately Effective   
 ■ Highly Effective



# SOCE Effectiveness

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- 0% reported elimination of SSA
- 3% reported some change in sexual orientation
- 40% reported harm from SOCE

# What is meant by “change”

- **“I think of a same-sex relationship every day , but I don’t act on it.”**
- **“Same-sex attraction diminished but never went away.”**
- **“These thoughts do not define who I am.”**
- **“Helped to decrease my negative reaction to my SGA.”**

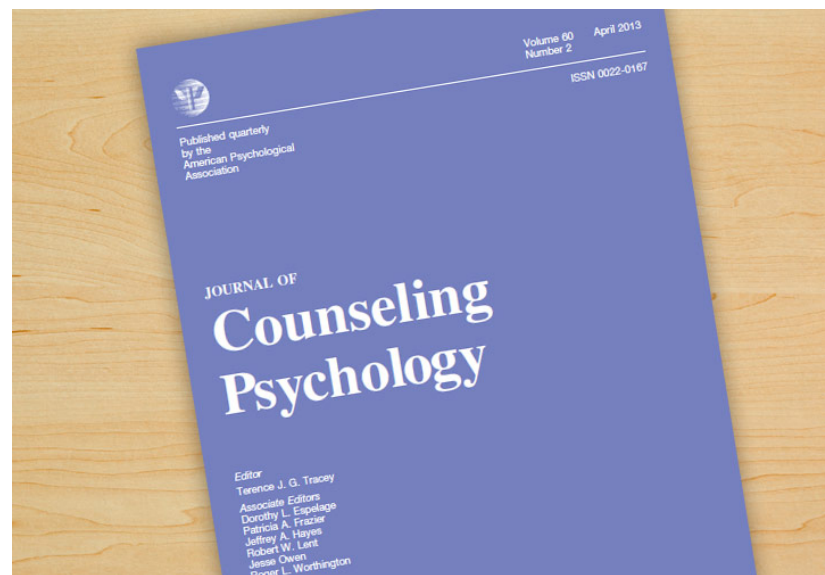
# SOCE Perceived Harm and Benefits

- **Benefits:** Acceptance, decrease in depressive or anxiety symptoms, improved family relationships
- **Harm:** Decreased self-esteem, increased self-shame, increased depression and anxiety, wasting of time and money, distance from God/church, worsening of family relationships, increased suicidality

Actual change in sexual orientation was very rarely mentioned as a benefit of sexual orientation change efforts

# Topic #1: Takeaways

- Most SSA-LDS attempt change
- Religious and private SOCE much more prevalent than therapist-led
  - ▣ Most harmful SOCE methods being used most frequently, and for the longest durations
- Overwhelming majority do not change their sexual orientation.
- Most feel harmed by the efforts, though some benefit reported (mostly around acceptance)



# Journal of Counseling Psychology

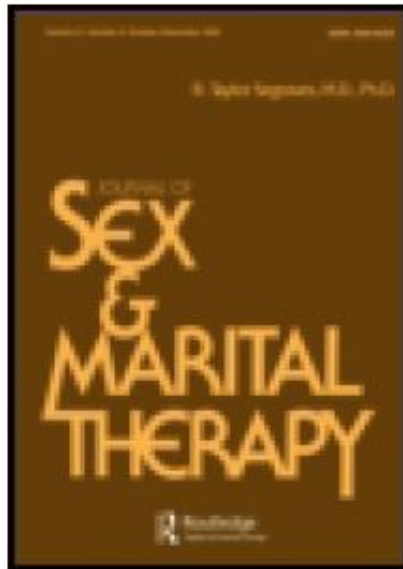
## Sexual Orientation Change Efforts Among Current or Former LDS Church Members

John P. Dehlin, Renee V. Galliher, William S. Bradshaw, Daniel C. Hyde, and Katherine A. Crowell

Online First Publication, March 17, 2014. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou0000011>

### CITATION

Dehlin, J. P., Galliher, R. V., Bradshaw, W. S., Hyde, D. C., & Crowell, K. A. (2014, March 17). Sexual Orientation Change Efforts Among Current or Former LDS Church Members. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou0000011>



## Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/usmt20>

### Sexual Orientation Change Efforts Through Psychotherapy for LGBTQ Individuals Affiliated With the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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Accepted author version posted online: 09 May 2014. Published online: 13 Jun 2014.

**To cite this article:** Kate Bradshaw, John P. Dehlin, Katherine A. Crowell, Renee V. Galliher & William S. Bradshaw (2014): Sexual Orientation Change Efforts Through Psychotherapy for LGBTQ Individuals Affiliated With the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, DOI: [10.1080/0092623X.2014.915907](https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2014.915907)

**To link to this article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2014.915907>

TOPIC 2:

**NAVIGATING SEXUAL AND RELIGIOUS  
IDENTITY CONFLICT: A MORMON  
PERSPECTIVE**



# Four strategies for navigating religious and sexual identity conflict (Pitt, 2010)

1. Reject LGBTQ identity (RLI)
2. Compartmentalizing LGBTQ and religious identities (COMP)
3. Rejecting religious identity (RRI)
4. Integrating LGBTQ and religious identities (INT)



# LGBT/SSA Mormon Identity Prevalence

- Reject Religious Identity: 53%
- Compartmentalize Identities: 37%
- Reject LGBT Identity: 6%
- Integrate Identities: 4%

# Psychosocial Measures

- Self-Esteem (Rosenberg)
- Quality of Life (QOL)



- 
- Internalized Homophobia
  - Identity Confusion
  - Sexual Identity Distress
  - Depression (CCAPS)



# Quality of Life Scale

## (Burckhardt & Aderson, 2003)

- Adapted for use in chronic illness groups
- 16 items: 1 = Terrible, 4 = Mixed, 7 = Delighted
- 5 conceptual domains:
  - ▣ Material and physical well-being
  - ▣ Relationships with other people
  - ▣ Social
  - ▣ Community and civic activities
  - ▣ Personal development and fulfillment
  - ▣ Recreation.
- Range: 16 – 112, 90 = “Healthy”

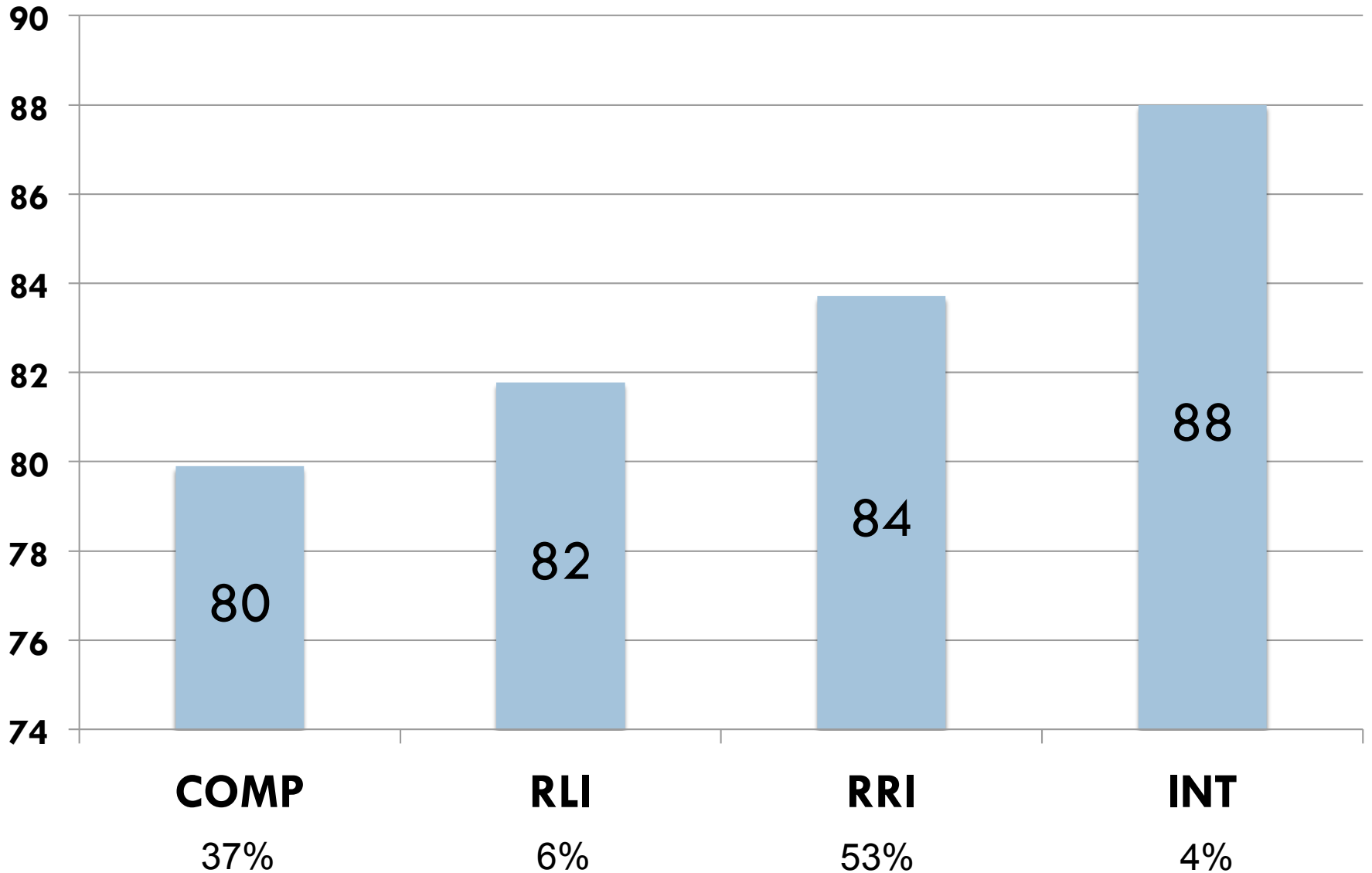
# Examples

- 1) Material comforts home, food, conveniences, financial security
- 4) Having and rearing children
- 5) Close relationships with spouse or significant other
- 6) Close friends
- 1 1) Work - job or in home
- 1 3) Socializing - meeting other people, doing things, parties, etc.
- 1 4) Reading, listening to music, or observing entertainment

# Psychosocial Health by Identity

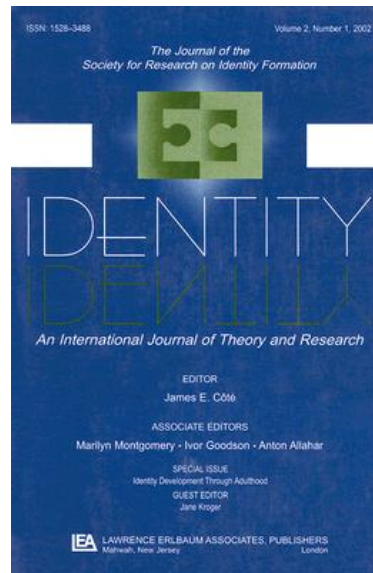
	<b>Reject LGBT</b>	<b>Comp.</b>	<b>Reject Religion</b>	<b>Integr.</b>		
	<b>n = 82</b>	<b>n = 554</b>	<b>n = 790</b>	<b>n = 65</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>η<sup>2</sup></b>
Intern. Homophobia	5.61	3.89	2.08	2.36	<.001	0.35
Ident. Confusion	2.87	2.44	1.56	1.60	<.001	0.12
Sexual Identity Distress	16.30	12.86	5.94	5.85	<.001	0.27
Depression	2.28	2.32	1.97	1.78	<.001	0.03
Self-Esteem	3.03	3.04	3.29	3.35	<.001	0.04
Quality of Life	81.78	79.90	83.71	88.00	<.001	0.02

# Quality of Life by Identity



## Topic #2 Takeaways: Factors possibly associated with better health/well-being

- Avoiding sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE)
- Accepting LGBTQ identity
- Coming out to family, friends, religious, work associates
- Reducing or eliminating LDS church activity
- Living outside of Utah
- If remaining LDS, integration of religiosity and sexual identity
- Committed, same-sex relationships



## Navigating Sexual and Religious Identity Conflict: A Mormon Perspective

Journal:	<i>Identity</i>
Manuscript ID:	HIDN-2014-0001.R2
Manuscript Type:	Empirical Research
Keywords:	LGBTQ, religion, identity, mormon, latter-day saints



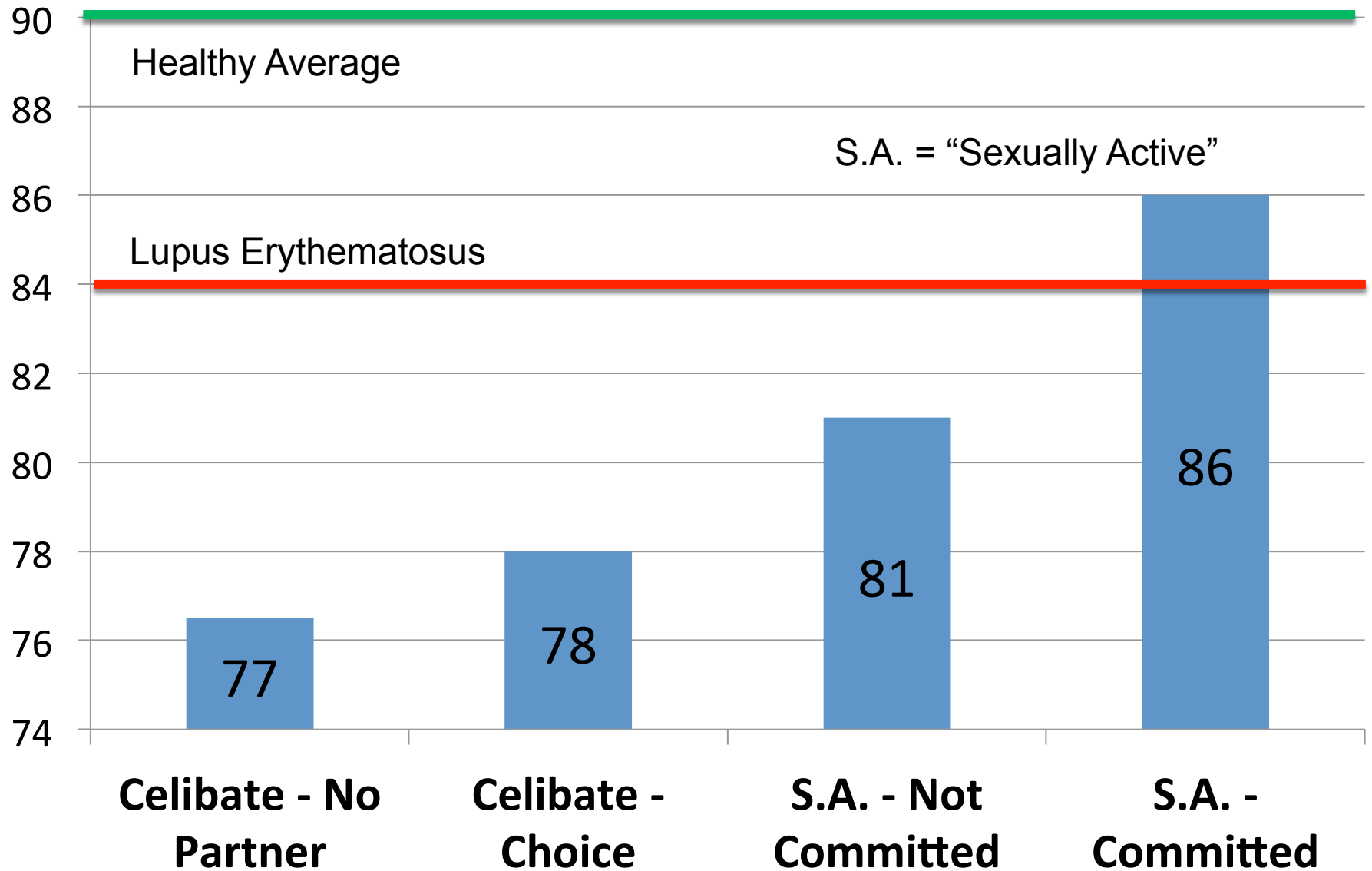
## TOPIC 3:

# **THE PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING OF SAME-SEX ATTRACTED MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER- DAY SAINTS**

# Historical LDS Church Approaches for LGBTQ Individuals

- Do not believe that SSA is biological/fixed
- Do not adopt an LGBTQ identity
  - ▣ “Same-gender attracted”
- Try to change your sexual orientation if possible
  - ▣ Personal Righteousness, Counseling with Bishop
  - ▣ LDS Family Services
- Stay single/celebrate if you can't change
- Mixed-orientation marriage when possible
- Increased church activity and righteousness (i.e. “Draw closer to Christ”)

# Quality of Life by Sexual Activity Status



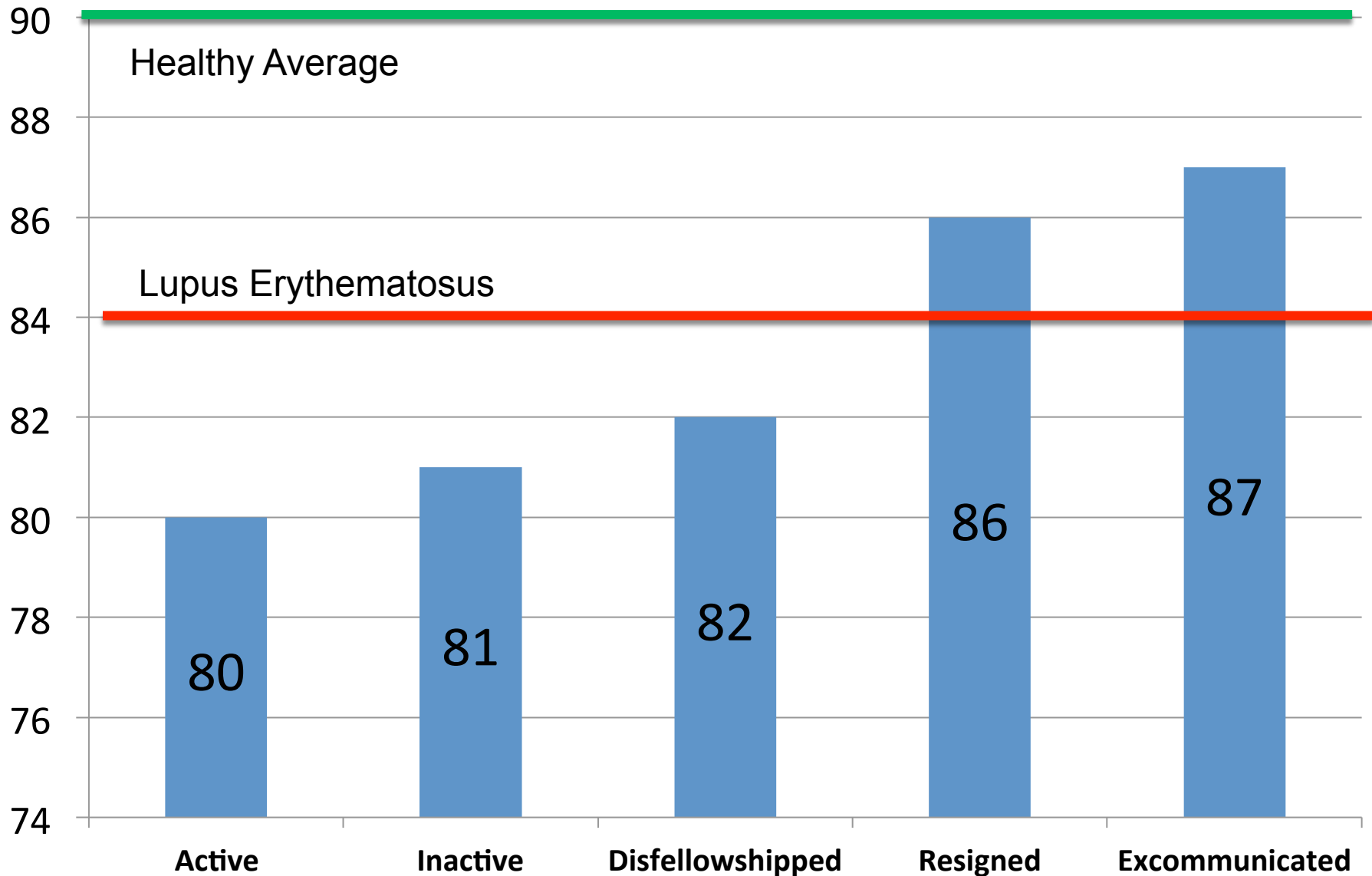
# Mixed Orientation Marriage Divorce Rates

- First marriages ending in divorce
  - ▣ Between 22%-28% (same for Mormons and non-Mormons)
- Divorce Rates from This Study
  - ▣ ~70% projected divorce rate for mixed-orientation marriages
  - ▣ 85% for men on the exclusively homosexual end of the continuum
- Participants who remain in mixed-orientation marriages self-describe as bisexual

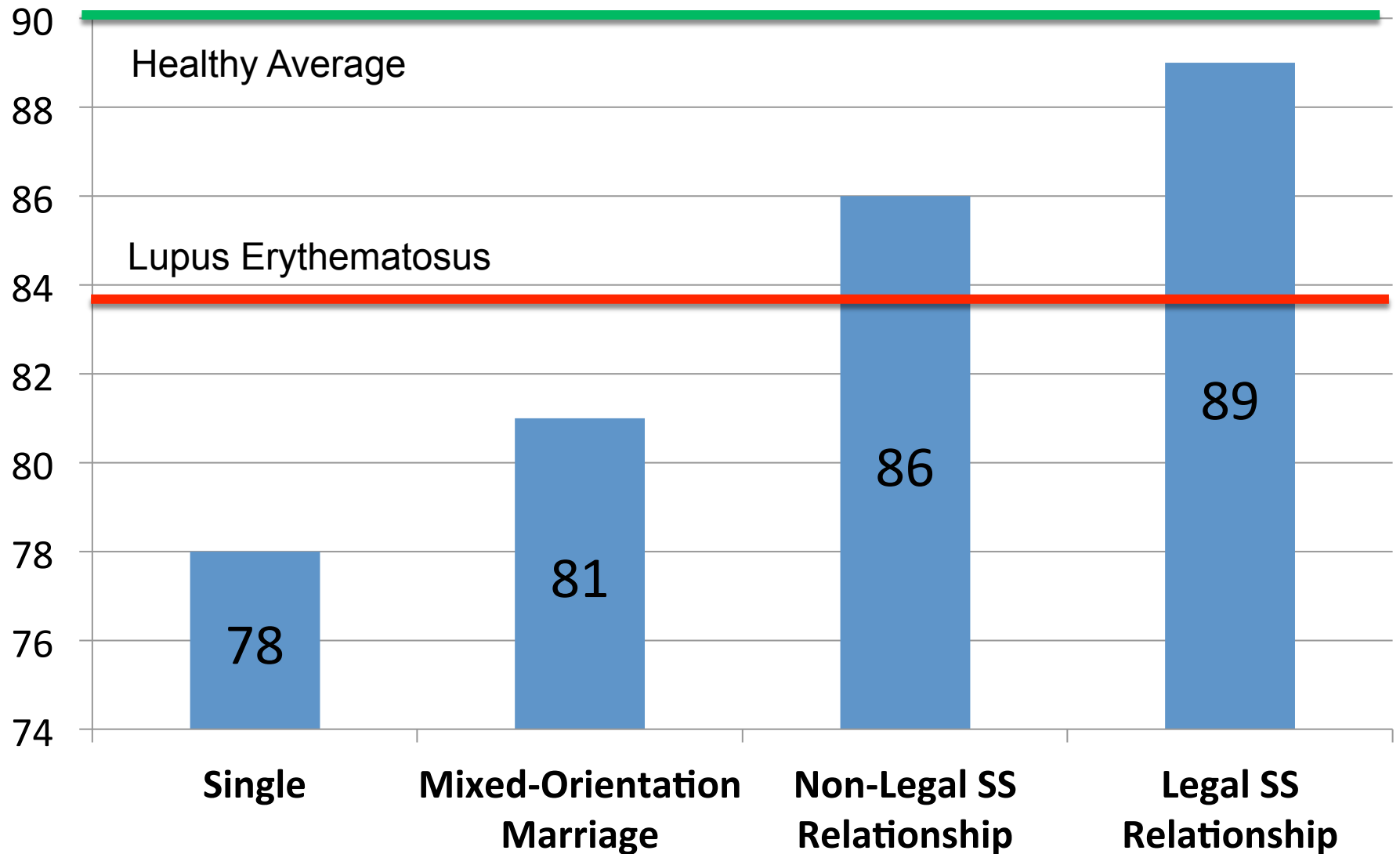
More than 70% of LGBT/  
SSA Mormons end up  
leaving the LDS Church.

Not a strong foundation for  
marriage/children originally  
based on religious  
commitments.

# Quality of Life by LDS Church Status



# Quality of Life by Relationship Status



# Correlates to Health/Wellbeing



- Belief that SSA is due to family, upbringing, sin, etc.
  - Attempts at sexual orientation change (therapy, righteousness, bishops)
  - Staying in the closet
  - Active/inactive LDS
  - Single or mixed-orientation marriages (divorce)
  - Celibacy
- Belief that SSA is biological
  - Acceptance of SSA
  - Coming out of the closet
  - Disfellowshipped, resigned, excommunicated LDS
  - Sexually active
  - Same-sex committed relationships or marriage





## Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wglm20>

### Psychosocial Correlates of Religious Approaches to Same-Sex Attraction: A Mormon Perspective

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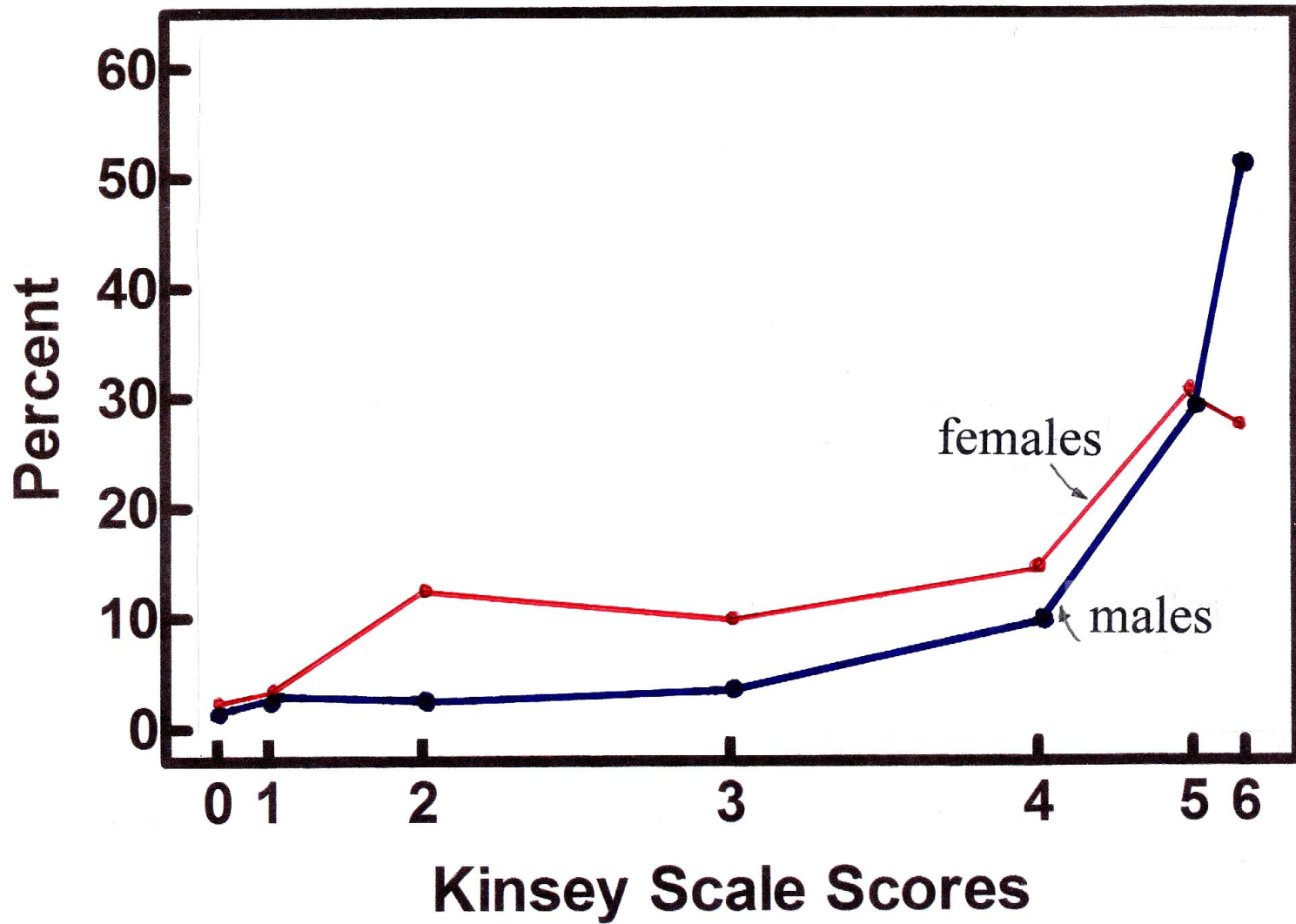
Accepted author version posted online: 25 Apr 2014. Published online: 14 Jul 2014.

**To cite this article:** John P. Dehlin MS, Renee V. Galliher PhD, William S. Bradshaw PhD & Katherine A. Crowell PhD (2014) Psychosocial Correlates of Religious Approaches to Same-Sex Attraction: A Mormon Perspective, *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 18:3, 284-311, DOI: [10.1080/19359705.2014.912970](https://doi.org/10.1080/19359705.2014.912970)

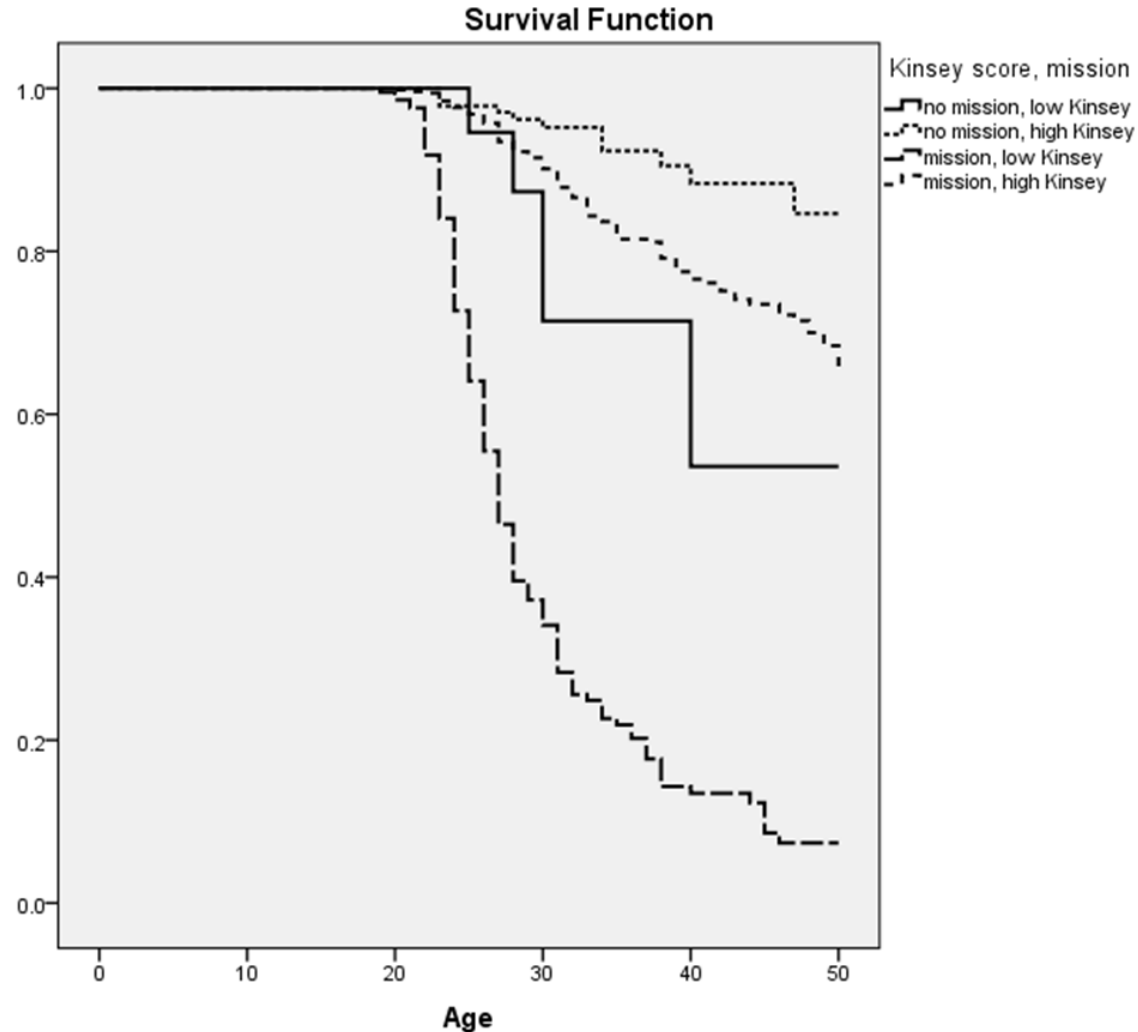
**To link to this article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19359705.2014.912970>

# HETEROGENEITY IN THE LGBT POPULATION

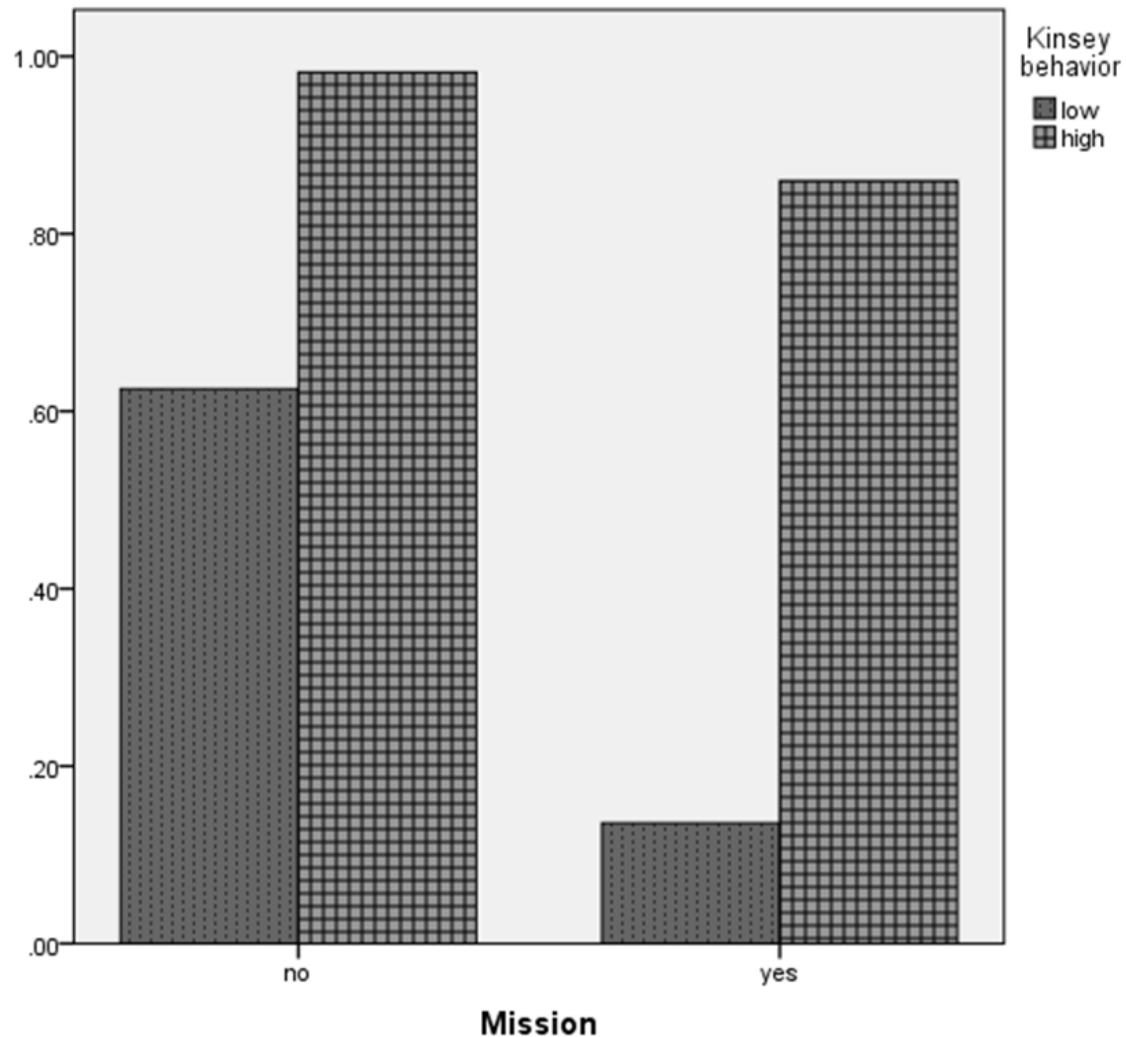




# Life Table Estimates of the proportion still single



# Percent of the ever married who have divorced



# Summary

- ❑ **One's sexual orientation is not a choice.**
- ❑ **Sexual orientation is a graded biological response.**
- ❑ **Claims of success in SOCE are rare and ambiguous.**
- ❑ **SOCE efforts are often reported as harmful**
- ❑ **Personal Religious SOCE are most common and harmful.**
- ❑ **Accepting sexuality identity is healthy.**
- ❑ **Most LGBT LDS disaffiliate and report increased mental health.**
- ❑ **Highest wellbeing reported by participants in legal, committed, same-sex relationships**
- ❑ **Bisexuality provides different options for some**

# For questions, please email:

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