

Carnegie Mellon University

Materials Science & Engineering

presents

No Sexuality Please, We're Scientists

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ABSTRACT: It is tempting to suggest that science can be conducted in a social vacuum, disconnected from the reality of everyday society and the human actors who call themselves scientists. However, there is significant evidence [1] to suggest that enabling humans to be human enables them to think freely and supports the long-term prosperity of the scientific discourse. Enabling individuals to bring their whole selves to work promotes the ability for us to form diverse teams who can draw from a range of perspectives to provide robust decision making and find exciting new avenues of inquiry. In the diversity space, a significant amount of attention is placed upon understanding challenges in attracting and retaining women and girls in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths). Many of these challenges are shared by LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, plus more) colleagues, people of different races, people with disabilities (both visible and invisible), and different social class. In this talk, we will explore the motivations and recent research around the issues of LGBTQ+ in STEM (e.g. [2]), as well as initiatives to queer up science spaces and science up queer spaces to promote and embrace a more accessible, equal, diverse and inclusive STEM culture.

In the lead up to this talk, if you want to find out why coming out in STEM matters, you can read <https://medium.com/@BMatB/so-its-lgbtstemday-so-what-c068094f58b6>

[1] S.E. Page "The difference: How the power of diversity creates better groups, firms, schools, and societies" (Princeton Univ. Press 2008)

[2] B. E. Hughes "Coming out in STEM: Factors affecting the retention of sexual minority STEM students" (Science Advances 2018)

BIOGRAPHY: Dr. Ben Britton is a materials scientist and engineer, based at Imperial College London. He leads the Experimental Micromechanics Group (www.expmicromech.com) and the group's research focusses on understanding the behaviour of materials at the micro- to nano-scale using advanced electron microscopy and micro-scale mechanical testing for aerospace, oil & gas, and nuclear power. Dr Britton is a Chartered Engineer, a Chartered Scientist and a Fellow of the Institute of Materials Minerals and Mining (IOM3). In 2014 he won the IOM3 silver medal, and in 2016 he was awarded the RAEng/Engineers Trust Young Engineer of the Year Award as one of the UK's "future engineering leaders". Together with 200+ other STEMM professionals he successfully triggered an #MyScienceInquiry by the House of Commons Select Committee to look into diversity, equality, inclusion and accessibility in STEMM funding (<https://www.tigerinstemm.org/news>). He is also a trustee of Pride in STEM and a member of the IOM3 Pride Committee.

Pride in STEM (<http://www.prideinstem.org/> and @PrideinSTEM) is a LGBTQ+ charitable trust established to promote visibility, intersectionality, and improvement in STEM. It is led by an independent group of volunteers and runs frequent events including OutThinkers to provide role models and showcase STEM talent in the LGBTQ+ community. Pride in STEM were one of the organisations that spearheaded the #LGBTSTEM day (celebrated internationally) and we were nominated for the Gay Times Honours in 2017.

IOM3 Pride is a voluntary committee of the IOM3, who aim to promote individuals and highlight issues related to LGBTQ+ individuals in materials, minerals and mining and support equality, diversity and inclusion within the wider science and engineering community.

**CMU Remote, 12:00 pm
Friday, September 25, 2020**