

CASS
STAGE ALLOCATION MEASURE
(S . A . M .)

Dr Vivienne Cass

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1979

INSTRUCTIONS

There are TWO steps to this questionnaire.

STEP 1

1. On the next two pages are descriptions of SEVEN types of people.
2. Read through each description carefully and select the one that best fits the way you are NOW. Place a cross [X] in the box next to this description.
3. If none of the descriptions is exactly like you, select the one that is MOST like you now.
4. You must select one of the descriptions.

DESCRIPTIONS

X

- [] 1. You believe you are heterosexual and never question this. You rarely, if ever, wonder “Am I gay/lesbian?” You do not believe that homosexuality has anything to do with you personally.
- [] 2. You are not sure who you are. You are *confused* about what sort of person you are and where your life is going. You ask yourself the questions, “Who am I?”, “Is it possible I may be gay/lesbian?”, “Am I really a heterosexual person?” You sometimes feel, think or act in a gay/lesbian way, but would rarely, if ever, tell anyone about this. You’re fairly sure that homosexuality has something to do with you personally. You may be at the point of saying, “I *may* be gay/lesbian.”
- [] 3. You’re beginning to feel you *probably* are gay/lesbian, although you’re not definitely sure. You realise this makes you *different* from other people and you feel distant or cut-off from them. You may like being different or you may dislike it and feel very alone. You feel you would like to talk to someone about feeling different. You’re beginning to think that it might help if you met other gay/lesbian people but you’re not sure whether you really want to or not. You don’t want to tell anyone about the fact that you might be gay/lesbian, and prefer to put on a front of being completely heterosexual.
- [] 4. You’re beginning to feel more sure of being gay/lesbian. You put up with or *tolerate* this. You see yourself as gay/lesbian for *now* but are not sure about how you will be in the future. You may see yourself as gay/lesbian because of a special person in your life. You are not happy with other people knowing about your homosexuality and usually take care to put across a heterosexual image. You worry about other people’s reactions to you and are very aware of the stigma of homosexuality. However, you’re beginning to tell some other gay/lesbian people and to mix socially with them - or at least you would like to do this because of a need to meet others like yourself.

X

- [] 5. You are now quite sure you are gay/lesbian. You are beginning to accept this situation quite happily. You are prepared to tell a few people about being gay/lesbian (such as friends, family members etc) but carefully select who you will tell. You feel that other people can make trouble for gay/lesbian people and so you try to adopt an attitude of getting on with your life like anyone else. You want to fit in and not create problems. You never forget you belong to a minority group which is unacceptable to some people. Your private life is kept separate from those people you haven't told about being gay/lesbian. You can't see any point in confronting people with your homosexuality if it's going to embarrass all concerned. Socially you mix quite a lot with gay/lesbian people.
- [] 6. You feel proud to be gay/lesbian and enjoy living as one. You like reading books and magazines about gay/lesbian people, particularly if they portray homosexuality in a good light. You are prepared to tell many people about being gay/lesbian and make no attempt to hide this fact. You prefer not to mix socially with heterosexuals because they usually hold anti-homosexual attitudes. You get angry at the way heterosexuals talk about and treat gay/lesbian people. It feels like "them and us." You are happy to wear badges that bear slogans such as "how dare you presume I'm heterosexual" and to confront heterosexuals on their attitudes to gay/lesbian people.
- [] 7. You are prepared to tell *anyone* that you are gay/lesbian if it's appropriate. You are happy with being gay/lesbian but now see that this is only one part of you - not all of you. You pay less attention to your homosexuality than before and more attention to other aspects of your life. You mix socially with both gay/lesbian people and supportive heterosexual people, and with all of these are completely open about your homosexuality. There is little difference between who you are in *private* and who you are in *public*. You get angry at the way gay/lesbian people are treated, but this is less overwhelming than before. You believe there are some heterosexuals who support and accept gay/lesbian people, and whose opinions are worth listening to. You are proud of being gay/lesbian but feel less like a member of a minority group.

Now continue with Step 2 on the next page

STEP 2

How SIMILAR is the description you just selected to the way you think and feel now?

- Very similar
- Mostly similar
- Fairly similar
- A bit similar

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**CASS
STAGE ALLOCATION MEASURE
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Instructions for Researchers

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

1. *Printing S.A.M.:* If printing from email, note that the first eight pages are the S.A.M., followed by three pages of Instructions for Researchers and Relevant Publications. There are intentionally two blank pages in the S.A.M. These provide backing pages to Page 1 and Page 5 when you two-side print the questionnaire onto paper.
2. The questionnaire is intended to divide subjects into groups according to stage of homosexual identity formation (See Cass: 1979, 1996 - reference list)
3. The questionnaire consists of descriptions which correspond to each of the Cass stages of identity formation. Subjects are asked to nominate which description is most like them at the time of questionnaire completion.
4. Except for the first description, which represents pre-Stage 1, each description after this in order represents Stage 1 through to Stage 6.
5. *Part 2* of the S.A.M. allows for a more specific sample to be drawn from those allocating themselves into each stage. Given that gay/lesbian identity formation is a *process*, it is possible that some subjects nominating a particular stage will be moving *into* or *out of* that stage. This can reduce observable differences between stage groupings. By taking only those people who claim the description is *mostly* or *very similar* to the way they see themselves, differences between groups may be maximised.
6. Please note: the S.A.M. as currently written does not allow for people at different stages to be allocated along the various pathways hypothesized by the Cass model (Cass, 1996).
7. Dr Cass would appreciate receiving copies of any results obtained using the S.A.M. These can be sent to Dr Vivienne Cass, 155 South Terrace, Como, Western Australia 6152.

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- Cass, V.C. Who is Influencing Whom? The relationship between identity, sexual orientation and indigenous psychology. Gay and lesbian issues and psychology review. 2005, Volume 1, no 2, 47-52
- Cass, V.C. Sexual orientation identity formation: A Western phenomenon, In R. Cabaj & T. Stein (Eds), Textbook of Homosexuality and Mental Health American Psychiatric Press, Washington, 1996
- Reprinted in Out in the Antipodes: Australian & New Zealand perspectives on gay and lesbian issues in psychology Eds D Riggs & G Walker, titled: Sexual orientation, culture and the construction of gay and lesbian identities. Brightfire Press 2004
- Cass, V.C. The implications of homosexual identity formation for the Kinsey model and scale of sexual preference. Chapter in D. McWirter, S Sanders & R. Reinisch (Eds), Heterosexuality-Homosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation N.Y.: Oxford Press 1990
- Cass, V.C. Homosexual identity: A concept in need of definition. Journal of Homosexuality, 1983/4, 9(2/3), 105 - 126.
- Also in: DeCecco, J.P. & Shively, M.G.(Eds.) Bisexual and homosexual identities: Critical theoretical issues, New York: The Haworth Press, 1984.
- Cass, V.C. Homosexual identity formation: Testing a theoretical Model. Journal of Sex Research, 1984, 20, 143 - 167.
- Cass, V.C. Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. Journal of Homosexuality, 1979, 4(3), 219 - 234.

Other publications relevant to sexual orientation identity

- Cass, V.C. Bringing psychology in from the cold: Framing psychological theory and research within a constructionist psychology framework. In J. Bohan & G. Russell, Psychology and Sexual Orientation: The Meanings We Make - Conversations about Psychology and Sexual Orientation NY University Press 1999
- Cass, V.C. Homosexuality, in E. Knobil & J. Neill (Eds) Encyclopedia of Reproduction NY American Academic Press, 1998