



# Using 25+ Years of ABCT Conference Participation to Examine Psychology's "Leaky Pipeline"

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## BACKGROUND

- Approximately 75% of doctoral degrees in psychology are awarded to women (American Psychological Association, 2017). However, women are vastly under-represented in upper-level roles.
- This has been called the "leaky pipeline" problem: women enter the field, but often do not advance past early- or mid-career stages.
- By looking at participation in ABCT's annual meetings, we can examine women's representation in psychology.
- From 2012 to 2016, women were under-represented in nearly all roles, except for poster author. Under-representation of women was greater in roles associated with later career stages and with greater prestige.
- The goal of this study was to evaluate women's participation in ABCT's annual meetings since 1993.

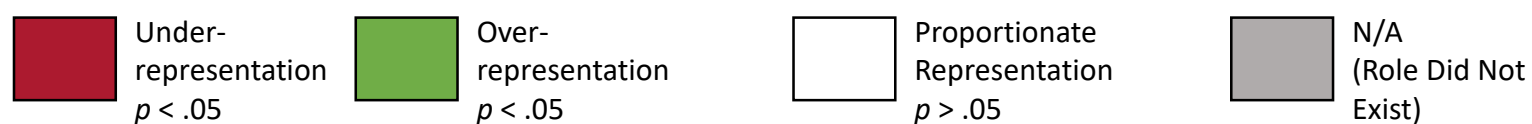
## METHOD

- Program guides from 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, and 2013 were obtained and coded for each participant's gender (based on first name) and role (e.g., symposium author).
- Conference participation from 1993-2013 was compared to previously published data from recent annual meetings (2014-2017).
- Chi-square tests for goodness of fit compared the proportion of women in each role to the overall proportion of female conference participants for each year.
- The proportion of female conference participants was also compared to:
  - The proportion of Ph.D.s awarded to women in each year.
  - The estimated proportion of women in the active psychology workforce for each year, defined as the weighted running average of Ph.D.s awarded to women over the 25 years preceding the conference.

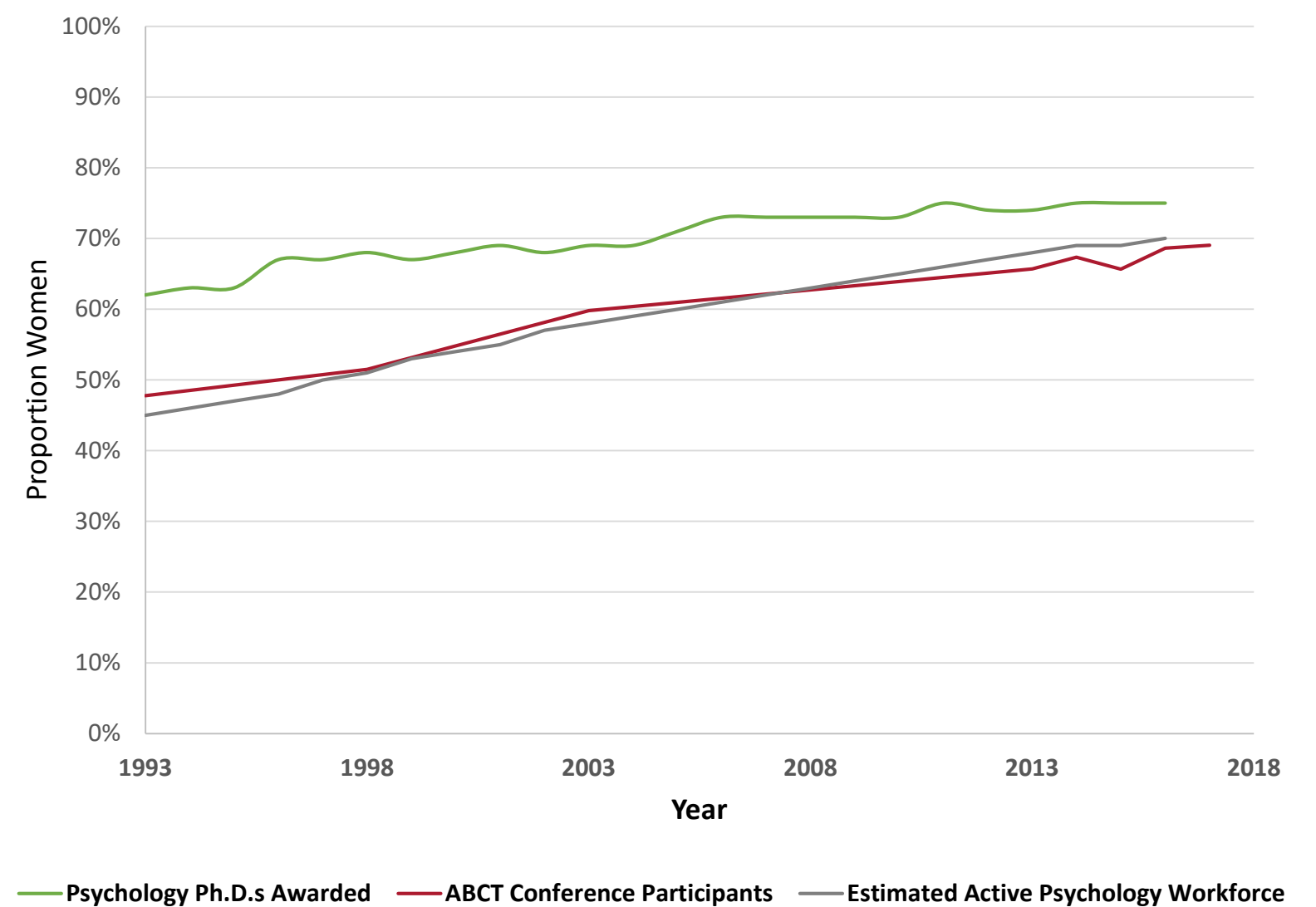
## RESULTS

Women's Role-Specific vs. Overall Conference Participation by Year

Role	Prestige Rating (1 = Highest)	1993	1998	2003	2008	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Institute Leader	4.82									
Workshop Leader	8.05									
Mini Workshop Leader	9.83									
Symposium Discussant	10.01									
Clinical Round Table Moderator	10.26									
Clinical Round Table Panelist	11.10									
Symposium Chair	11.48									
Panel Panelist	12.03									
Symposium Author (first)	12.26									
Poster Author (first)	16.26									



Women as Participants in ABCT Compared to Women's Representation in Psychology (Doctoral Degrees and Total Workforce)



## DISCUSSION

- While women hold the majority of doctoral degrees in psychology, they are under-represented in the most prestigious roles at the conference. There is little evidence that women's under-representation in advanced and prestigious roles has improved over time. This supports the "leaky pipeline" within ABCT.
- There is a consistent pattern of decreasing representation of women as role prestige increases. For example, from 1993 through 2017, 58% of symposium *authors* were women, 57% of symposium *chairs* were women, and only 39% of symposium *discussants* were women.

- This suggests that women are better represented in self-initiated roles compared to invited roles.
- ABCT and similar organizations should focus on supporting women in mid- and later-career stages and provide opportunities for promotion and advancement of women in the organization.
- Organizers of conference submissions, such as panels and symposia, should be aware of implicit gender bias and prioritize inviting women for more prestigious roles (e.g., discussants, invited panelists).