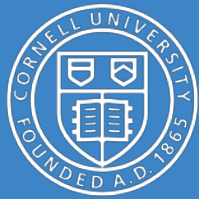


Creating, Enforcing, and Promoting Safe Fieldwork Culture:

Strategies aimed at protecting diverse researchers

*Amelia-Juliette Demery & Monique Pipkin
Cornell University*



#SaferScience



@MoniquePipkin

Who we are

Monique Pipkin (she/her)

Phd Student at Cornell University
Sloan Foundation Fellow

I study the ecological drivers and outcomes of feather coloration in birds, specifically I am interested in the adaptive value of iridescent feathers.





@acdemery

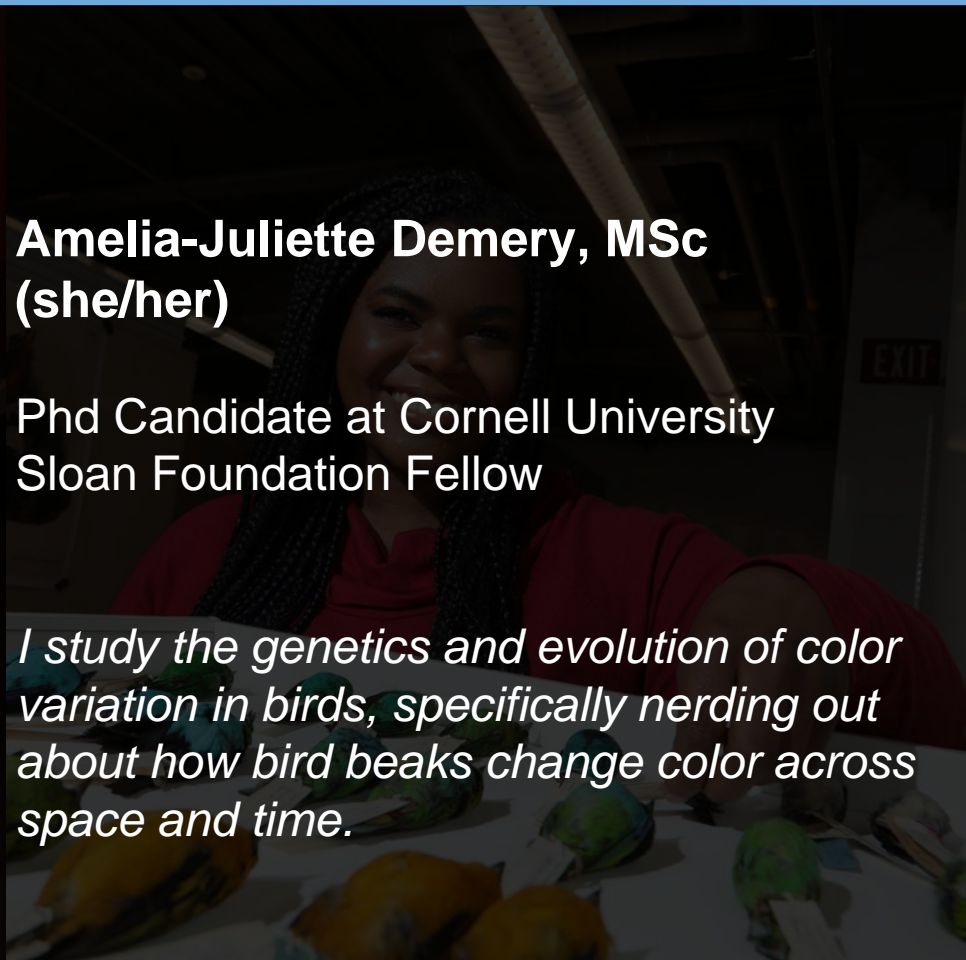
Who we are



**Amelia-Juliette Demery, MSc
(she/her)**

Phd Candidate at Cornell University
Sloan Foundation Fellow

I study the genetics and evolution of color variation in birds, specifically nerding out about how bird beaks change color across space and time.



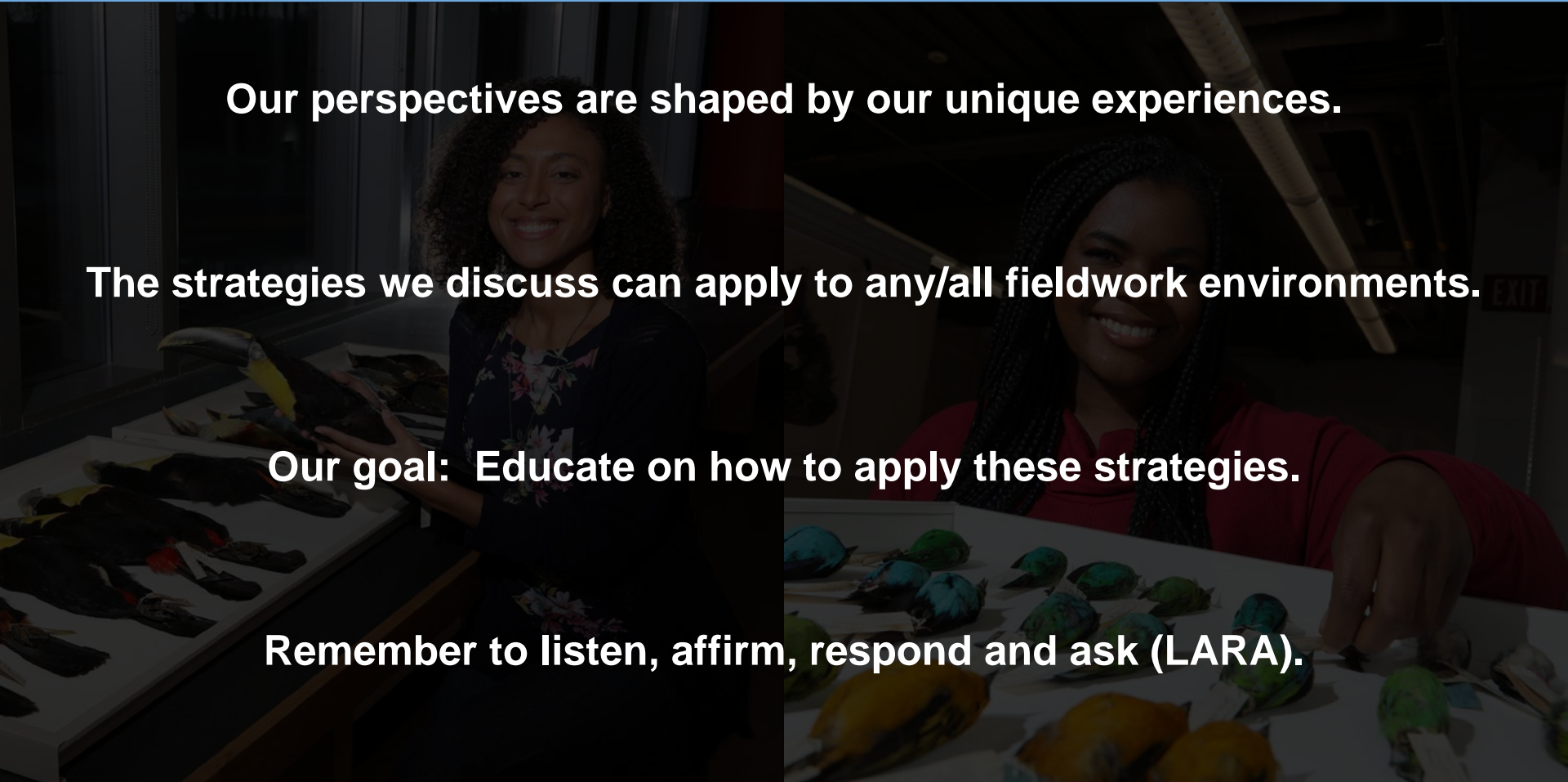
Who we are

Our perspectives are shaped by our unique experiences.


The strategies we discuss can apply to any/all fieldwork environments.

Our goal: Educate on how to apply these strategies.

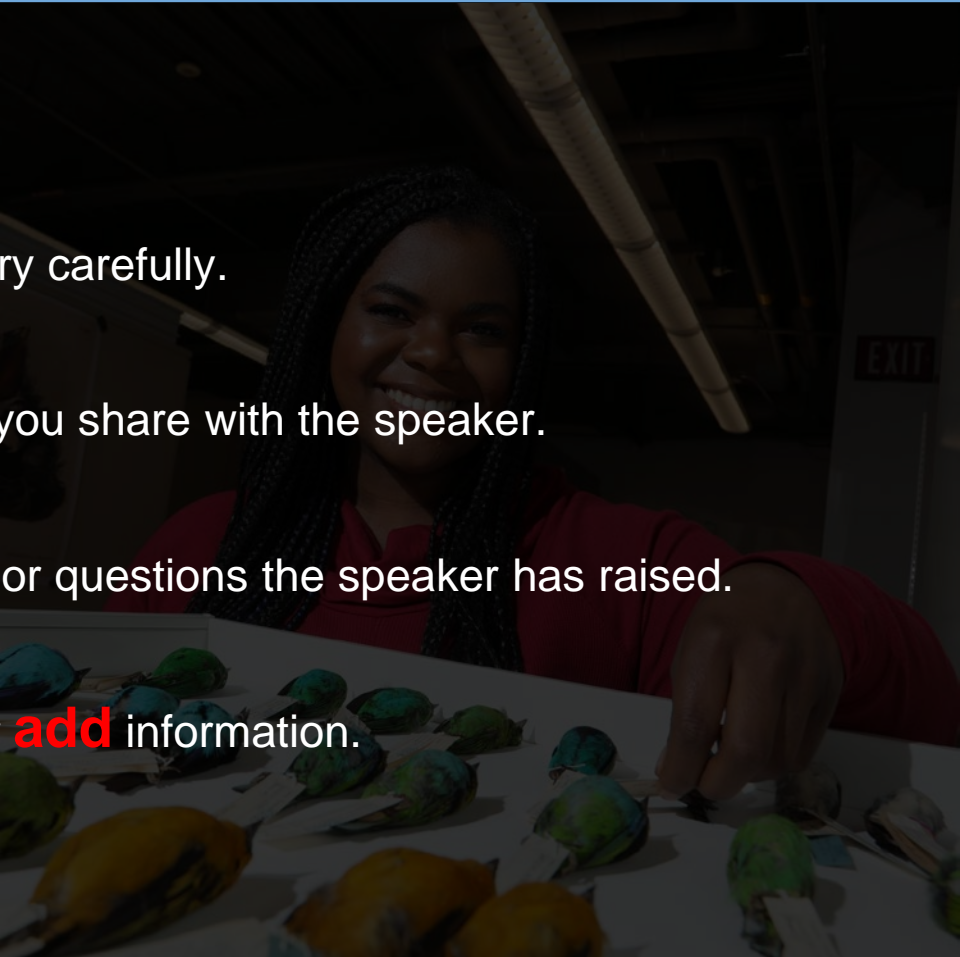
Remember to listen, affirm, respond and ask (LARA).



L A R A style of engagement

A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is standing next to a display case filled with several toucan birds. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the woman and the birds.

Listen very carefully.

A woman wearing a headscarf is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is standing next to a display case filled with several toucan birds. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the woman and the birds.

Affirm a feeling or value you share with the speaker.

Respond directly to the concerns or questions the speaker has raised.

Ask questions or **add** information.

Road Map

What does it mean to be “at-risk” in the field?

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Fieldwork is isolating, usually placing a researcher in an unfamiliar environment and/or in contact with unfamiliar persons.

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Individuals of under-represented identities already encounter risk in everyday life, including but not limited to harassment, assault and/or murder of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and disabled individuals.

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There is no one identity that is at risk, but there are identities that could be at increased risk due to implicit biases and prejudices.***

- race/ethnicity
- disability
- sexual orientation
- gender identity/expression
- religion

Breakout Group Activity 1

1. Groups of 4, each with their own Jamboard panel (link in chat)
 - a. Briefly introduce yourself and describe how you interact with fieldwork.
 - b. What does risk mean to you in regards to your field site?
 - c. What possible risk could exist and at what stages during field work?
 - d. Don't forget **L A R A**

You will have 20 minutes***

Breakout Group Activity 1 - regroup

Does any group want to share insights?

Synthesis of jamboards

Breakout Group Activity 1

Were there any identities you did not include?

Did you consider the perpetrator as a stranger to the site? As a colleague? As a superior?

Did you find yourself focusing on one type of risk, compared to others?

Road Map

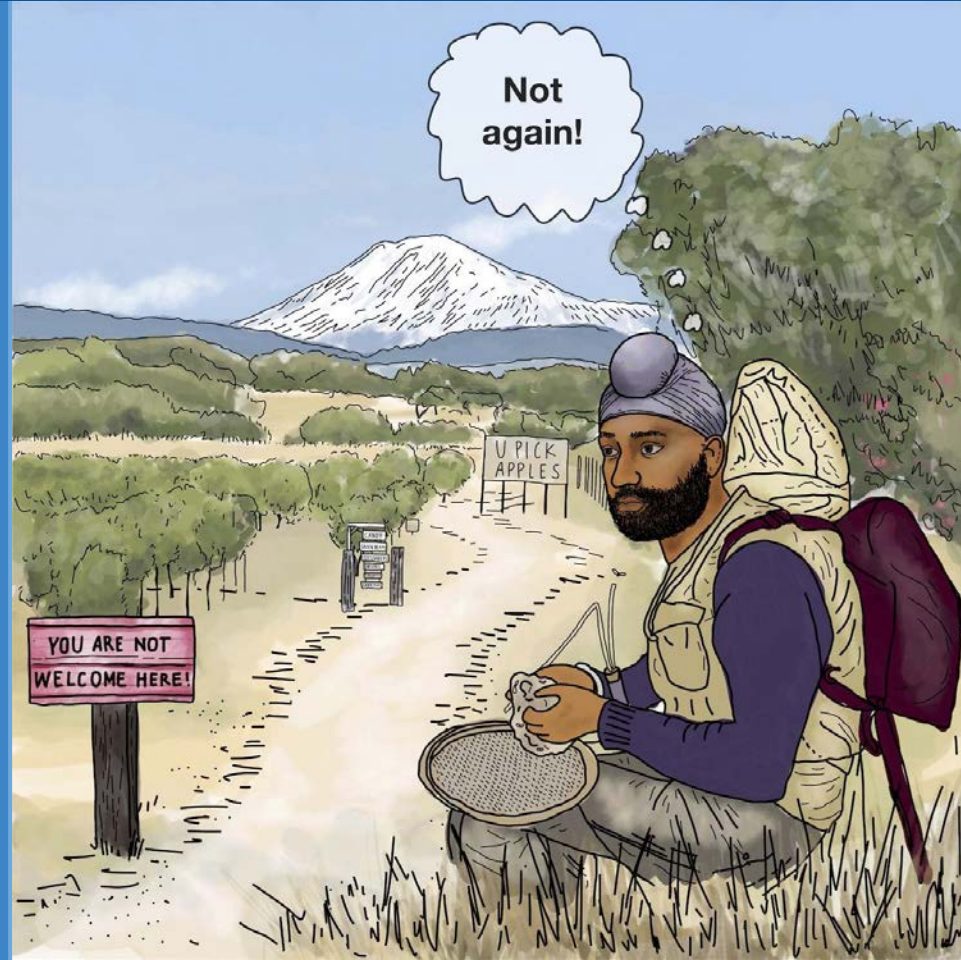
What does it mean to be “at-risk” in the field?

Vignettes - examples of potential risky situations and consequences

Vignettes - example situations and a case studies in risk-mitigation



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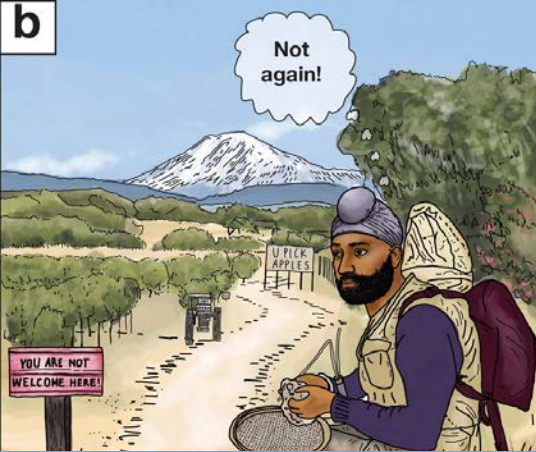
Vignettes - example situations and a case studies in risk-mitigation



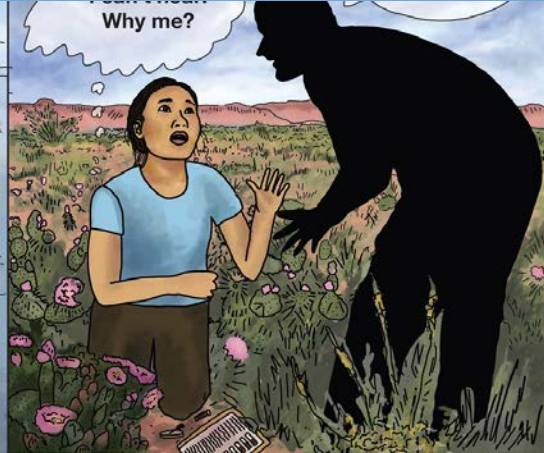
a



b



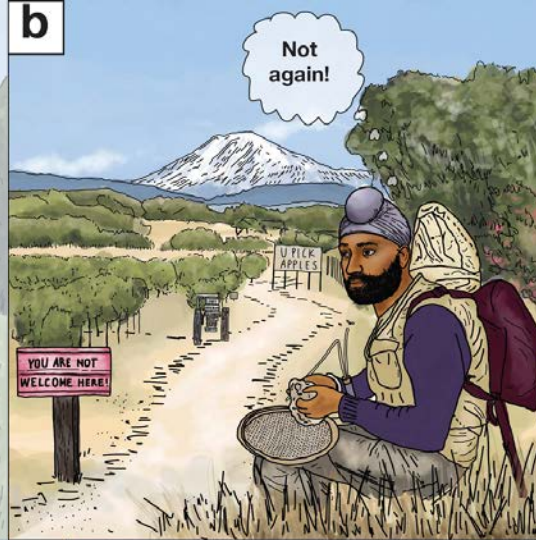
Risk and Consequences



a



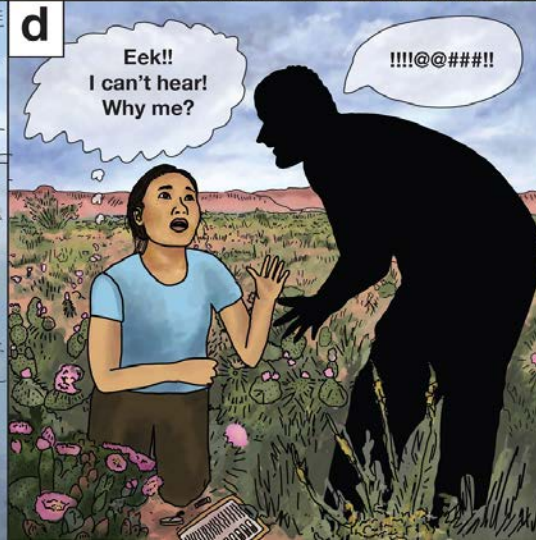
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c



d

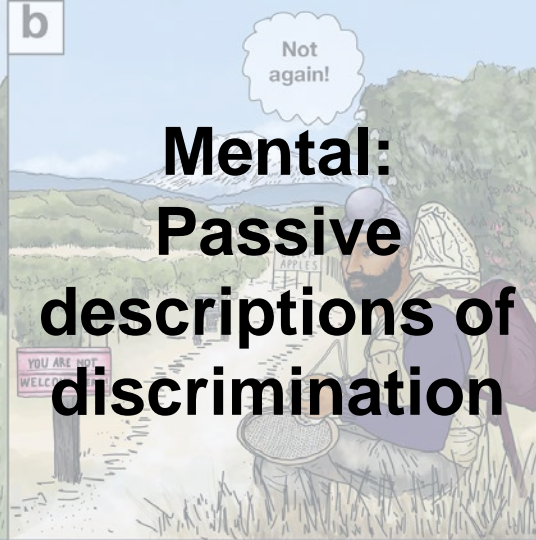


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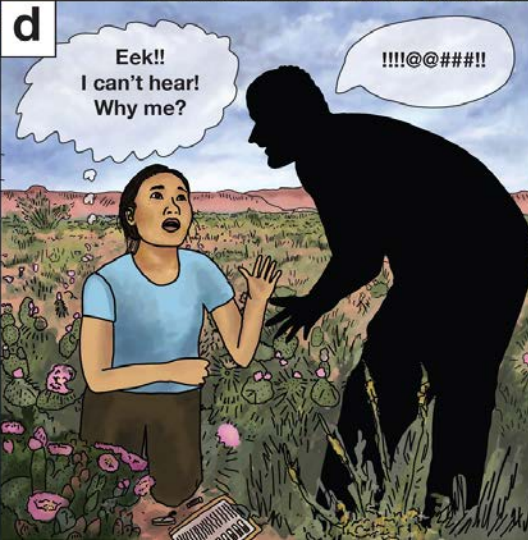
**Physical:
Safety
Health
Life**

b



**Mental:
Passive
descriptions of
discrimination**

c

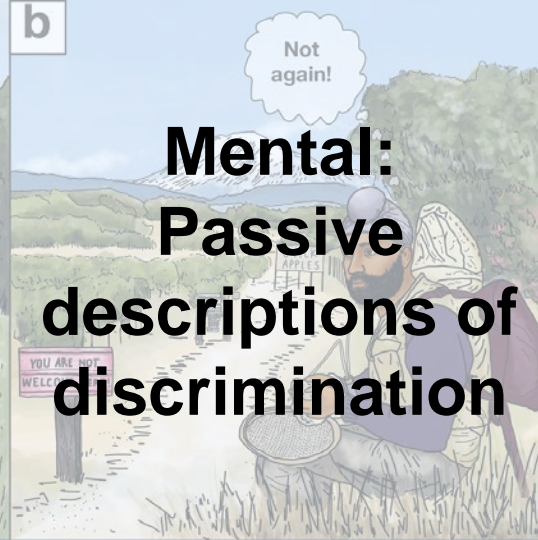


a



**Physical:
Safety
Health
Life**

b



**Mental:
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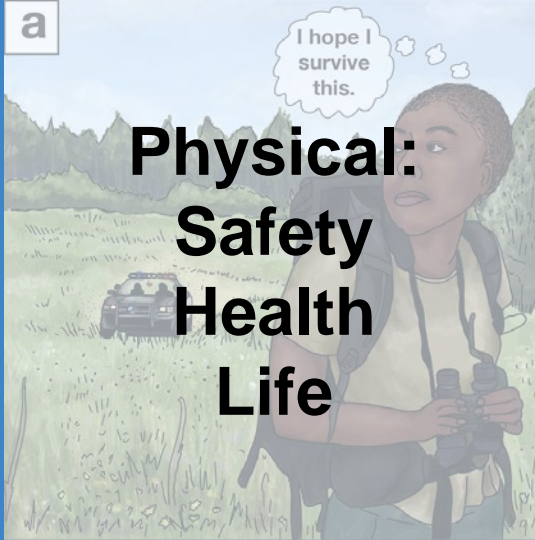


**Mental:
Verbal
harassment**

d

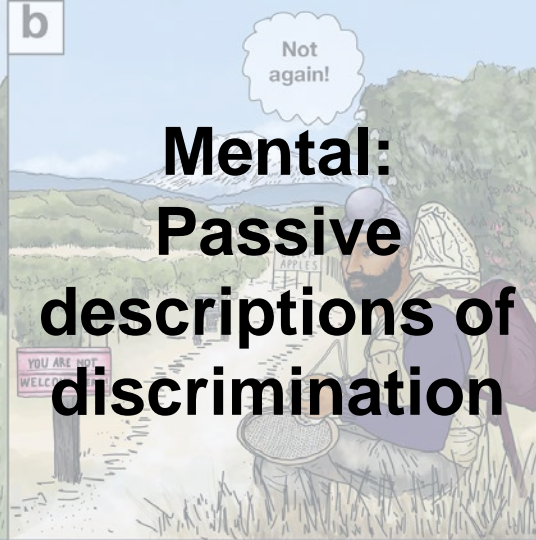


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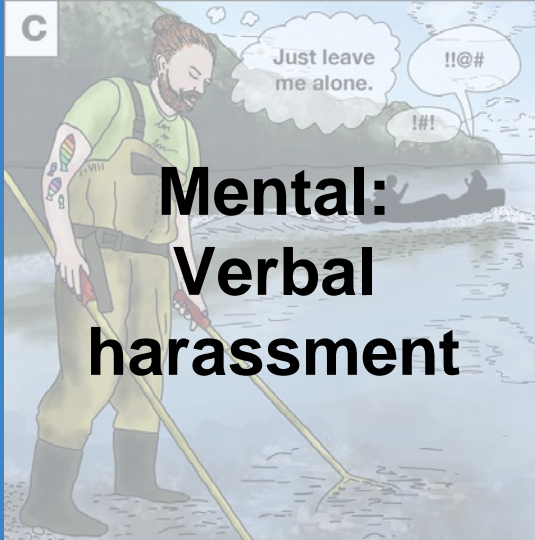
**Physical:
Safety
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**Mental:
Passive
descriptions of
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c



**Mental:
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d

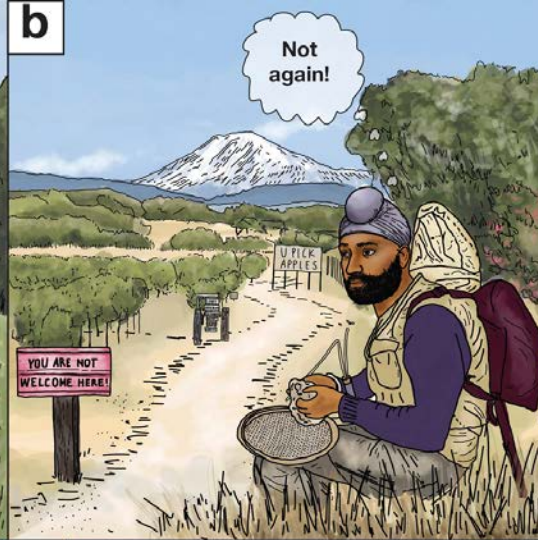


**Mental:
Misguided
anger
Harassment
Assault**

a



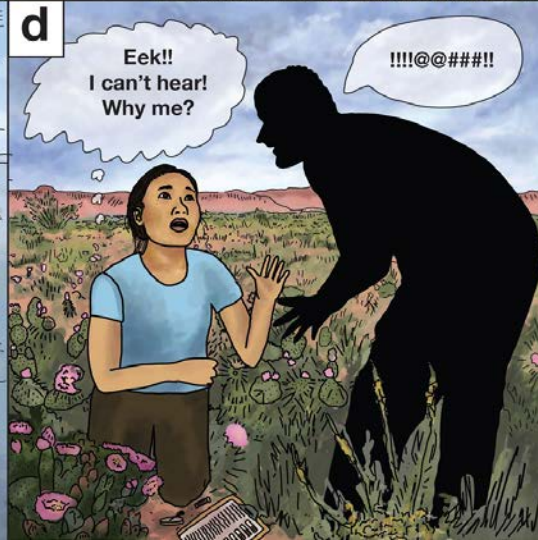
b



c



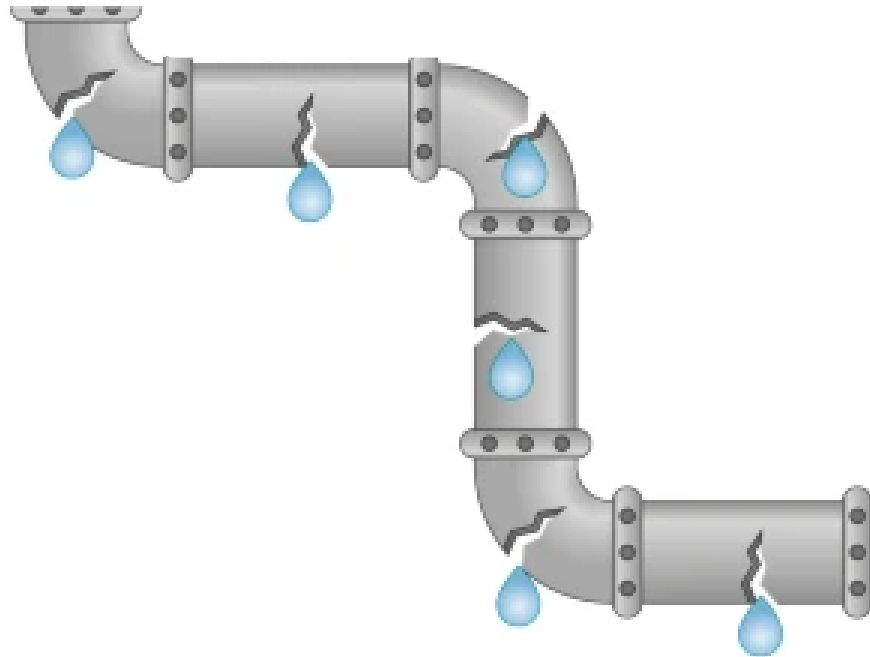
d



Risk and Consequences

- **Professional downstream impacts**
 - Decreased productivity
 - In and outside of the field site
 - Professional development
 - Support network
 - Mentorship
 - Retention in STEM
 - “Do I belong? Do I have a place here?”

**Entering STEM
education**



STEM workforce



**Entering STEM
education**





5 minutes for reflection and R&R



Road Map

What does it mean to be “at-risk” in the field?

Vignettes - examples of potential risky situations and consequences

Incorporating different strategies of risk-mitigation into field work

Case study from the perspective of:

- Researcher
- Supervisor
- Department / Institution

Shared Responsibility to Mitigate Risk

Preface

There is no way to eliminate risk during fieldwork

Some strategies have been informally shared among researchers

These strategies can be tailored to your situation

Shared Responsibility to Mitigate Risk

Researcher

- The individual conducting fieldwork or outdoor activity
- Individuals who will be directly interacting with risk

Strategies to mitigate risk - the researcher

- Engage in fieldwork with another person



Strategies to mitigate risk - the researcher

- Engage in fieldwork with another person
- Carry credentials and wear identifying clothing



Strategies to mitigate risk - the researcher

- Engage in fieldwork with another person
- Carry credentials and wear identifying clothing
- If at any time you feel unsafe or had a risky encounter, report it



Shared Responsibility to Mitigate Risk

Researcher

- The individual conducting fieldwork or outdoor learning
 - Individuals who will be directly interacting with risk

Supervisor

- Individual with direct authority of the research and the researcher
 - Help provide support, respond and mitigate risk

Strategies to mitigate risk - the supervisor

- Self-educate on the experience of your team members' identities and the corresponding risk



Strategies to mitigate risk - the supervisor

- Self-educate on the experience of your team members' identities and the corresponding risk
- Review and agree upon fieldwork and safety plans with the researcher before any fieldwork begins



Strategies to mitigate risk - the supervisor

- Self-educate on the experience of your team members' identities and the corresponding risk
- Review and agree upon fieldwork and safety plans with the researcher before any fieldwork begins
- Discuss field safety and associated risk with all team members***



Shared Responsibility to Mitigate Risk

Researcher

- The individual conducting fieldwork or outdoor learning
 - Individuals who will be directly interacting with risk

Supervisor

- Individual with direct authority of the fieldwork and the researcher
 - Help provide support, respond and mitigate risk

Department / Institution

- The larger organizing body of where the fieldwork occurs
- Educate individuals and provide resources to prepare for fieldwork

Strategies to mitigate risk - the department / institution

- Make available a general field safety training, harassment training, first aid courses, DEI & mentorship resources



Strategies to mitigate risk - the department / institution

- Make available a general field safety, harassment training, first aid course, DEI and mentorship resources
- Inform and advise about the benefits of acting responsibly with care and potential ramifications



Strategies to mitigate risk - the department / institution

- Make available a general field safety, harassment training, first aid course, DEI and mentorship resources
- Inform and advise about the benefits of acting responsibly with care and potential ramifications
- Provide resources to give credentials and increase safety



Breakout Group Activity 2

Scenario:

Cairo is a graduate student studying plant communities at a residential field station in a rural prairie. She has dark skin and wears a headscarf everyday. A stranger approached Cairo in the field, and made comments about her appearance and associated identity before leaving the field site. While Cairo was physically fine, the interaction made her feel uncomfortable and unsafe for the rest of her stay at the field station.

Questions:

1. Identify the risk and consequences that Cairo experienced in the scenario.
2. Write at least 3 actions that can be taken by the researcher, supervisor and department/institution to assist Cairo in mediating this risk.
3. How would the recommended actions change if the perpetrator was not a stranger but a colleague in the field with Cairo.
4. Consider how you could implement these strategies at your home institution. Be specific.

You will have 20 minutes

Final Thoughts

What can you do now?

- When you leave think and ask what your researchers, supervisors, dept/institution need?
- How you would implement strategies discussed here and by your peers?

For more strategies... #SaferScience

Safe fieldwork strategies for at-risk individuals, their supervisors and institutions

As a result of identity prejudice, certain individuals are more vulnerable to conflict and violence when they are in the field. It is paramount that all fieldworkers be informed of the risks some colleagues may face, so that they can define best practice together: here we recommend strategies to minimize risk for all individuals conducting fieldwork.

Amelia-Juliette Claire Demery and Monique Avery Pipkin

Check for updates

comment



Empowering geoscientists to transform workplace climate

EDUCATION Opinion



Ten Steps to Protect BIPOC Scholars in the Field

Institutions should heed these recommendations to prepare faculty and students for discrimination and racialized violence before traveling and to protect them once in the field.

REVIEW SUMMARY

URBAN ECOLOGY

The ecological and evolutionary consequences of systemic racism in urban environments

Christopher J. Schell*, Karen Dyson, Tracy L. Fuentes, Simone Des Roches, Nyeema C. Harris, Danica Sterud Miller, Cleo A. Woelfle-Erskine, Max R. Lambert

UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

Field Operations Safety Manual

Recreating Wakanda by promoting Black excellence in ecology and evolution

Our non-Black colleagues must fight anti-Black racism and white supremacy within the academy to authentically promote Black excellence. Amplifying Black excellence in ecology and evolution is the antidote for white supremacy in the academy.

Christopher J. Schell, Cylita Guy, Delia S. Shelton, Shane C. Campbell-Staton, Briana A. Sealey, Danielle N. Lee and Nyeema C. Harris

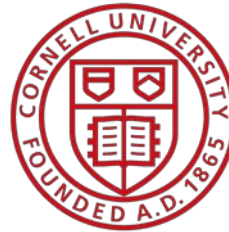
Thank You & Acknowledgments

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And anyone who has ever shared fieldwork safety suggestions through the whisper network!

#SaferScience

The Department of
Ecology & Evolutionary Biology



Cornell
CALS

College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences

Diversity & Inclusion Committee



Cornell University
Graduate School



Diversity & Inclusion Committee



Callie R. Chappell

