2014 BLACK ROCK CITY CENSUS

Weighted Results Report

- Introduction
- Weighting the Census
- Sociodemographic Characteristics
- Burning Man Related Variables
- Life at Burning Man
- Identity & Self
- Burning Man in the Default World
- Main Reasons to Go to Burning Man
- Contributions and Acknowledgements

What is the Census?

The Census is a collaborative research project that started in 2002.

Although the BRC Census is technically a survey and not a real census (where everyone in a population was sampled), we aspire to be a true census where everyone voluntarily participates. Until that day, we will continue to provide the most complete picture possible of the highly diverse population of Black Rock City.

Method

- Based on analysis of 11707 surveys filled out online after the event in 2014 (roughly 1 in 5.5 citizens!)
- This is roughly the same proportion of useful data as the 2012 and 2013 surveys
- This is the 3rd consecutive year in BRC history that these results were weighted to correct for non-response biases.
  - *Implication: these results are the most reliable estimates available concerning the BRC population*
- Project was approved by a research ethics committee (@ Denver University) and confidentiality of respondents is protected

Details about the weighting procedure

- As with 2012 & 2013, the 2014 BRC Census created an “unbiased” reference by randomly sampling cars at the gate during ingress, asking nine sociodemographic questions of each sampled burner who accepted.
- In addition, we surveyed entering Burner Express Riders to add their data to the weighting procedure.
- The weighting procedure corrects the biases in the after-event, online survey due to self-selection. (i.e., burners who decided to fill out the Census might be different from those who chose not to fill it out)
- In population surveys, the national census is used as a reference to weight (i.e., adjust) each survey.
- Thus, the results from 2014 Census were weighted according to this random sampling at Gate and Burner Express, improving the collective accuracy of the data.

2014 Census Results

- This presentation covers the descriptive results for the most important questions.
- The first section of results contrasts the weighted (i.e., corrected results) and the unweighted (i.e., original but biased) results to help understand the usefulness of the procedure.
- The remaining sections present only the weighted results.
- These results are the most reliable estimates that we have of the Black Rock City population.
- The “real” population values could be slightly different from the presented values due to measurement error.
- For more results, visit us on the playa (near Center Camp) and follow the Census Lab’s blog at

  http://blackrockcitycensus.wordpress.com

Weighting the Census

Variables used to weight the 2014 Census

- Inherent self-selection bias in past surveys
- 2014 complemented census with a random sampling at the gate
- Random sample allowed us to weight the collected data
- Variables used to weight the 2014 Census:
  - Day of arrival versus number of participants arriving
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Virgin Burner or not
  - Foreigner or not
  - English Speaker as a first language or not
  - US Party Affiliation (if eligible to vote in the US)
  - Voting Behavior

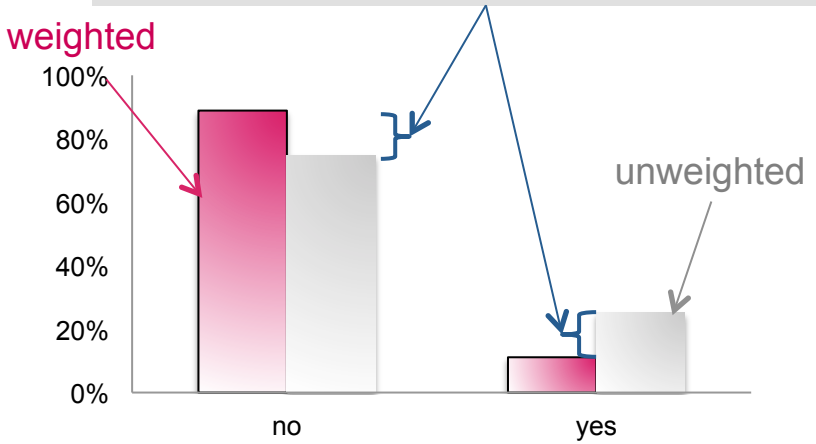
Details about the weighting procedure

- As with 2012 & 2013, the 2014 BRC Census created an “unbiased” reference by randomly sampling cars at the gate during ingress, asking nine sociodemographic questions of each sampled burner who accepted.
- In addition, we surveyed entering Burner Express Riders to add their data to the weighting procedure.
- The weighting procedure corrects the biases in the after-event, online survey due to self-selection. (i.e., burners who decided to fill out the Census might be different from those who chose not to fill it out)
- In population surveys, the national census is used as a reference to weight (i.e., adjust) each survey.
- Thus, the results from 2014 Census were weighted according to this random sampling at Gate and Burner Express, improving the collective accuracy of the data.

Understanding this section

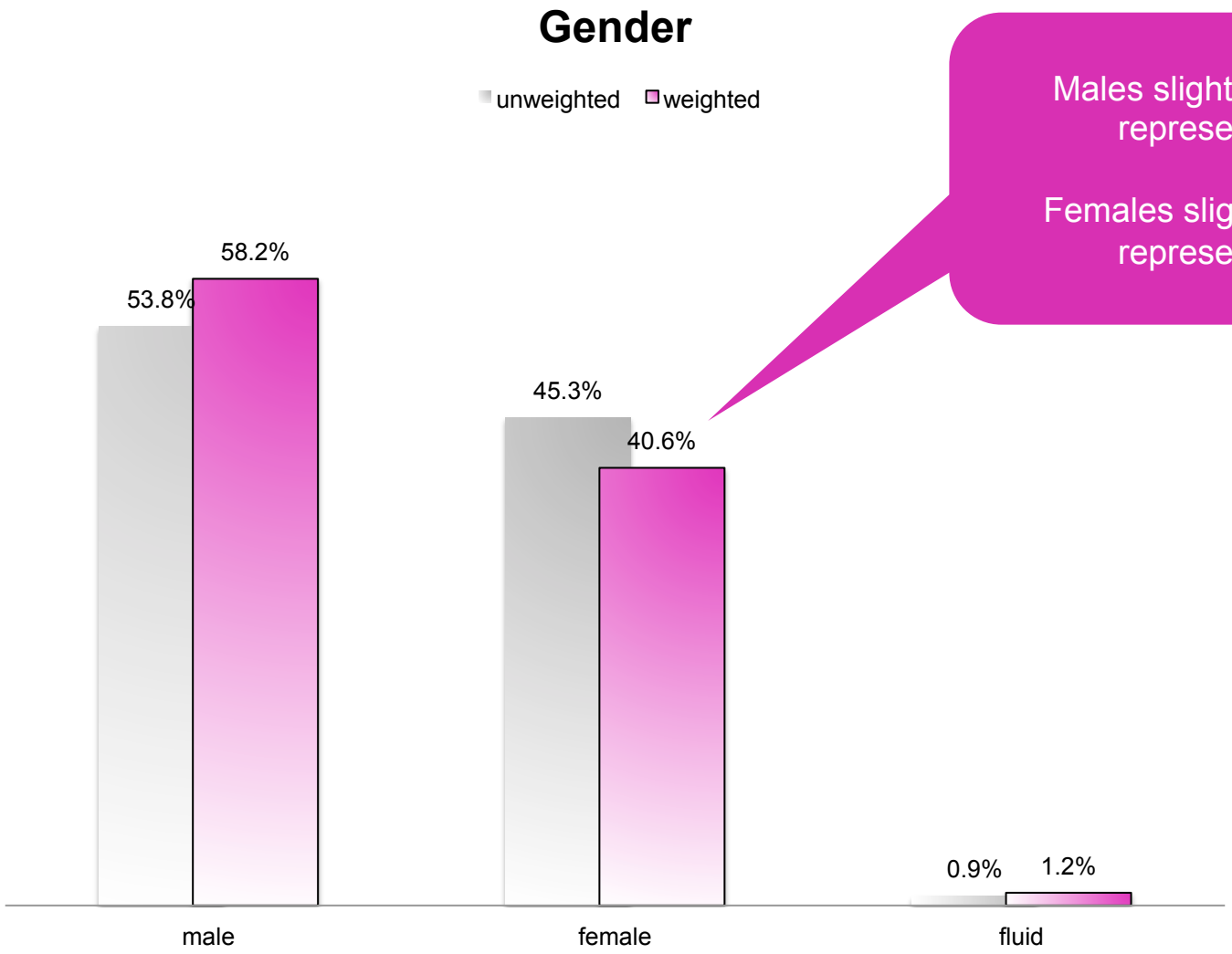
- In this section, we illustrate the weighted data based on the random sample and compare it against the unadjusted data of the convenience sample (online survey).
- Annotations of “over-represented” or “under-represented” are highlighting areas that have statistically significant differences between the weighted random sample data and the unweighted convenience sample data.

Those answering “yes” were more likely to fill out the online survey (i.e., over-represented) than those answering “no” (i.e., under-represented in the online data).



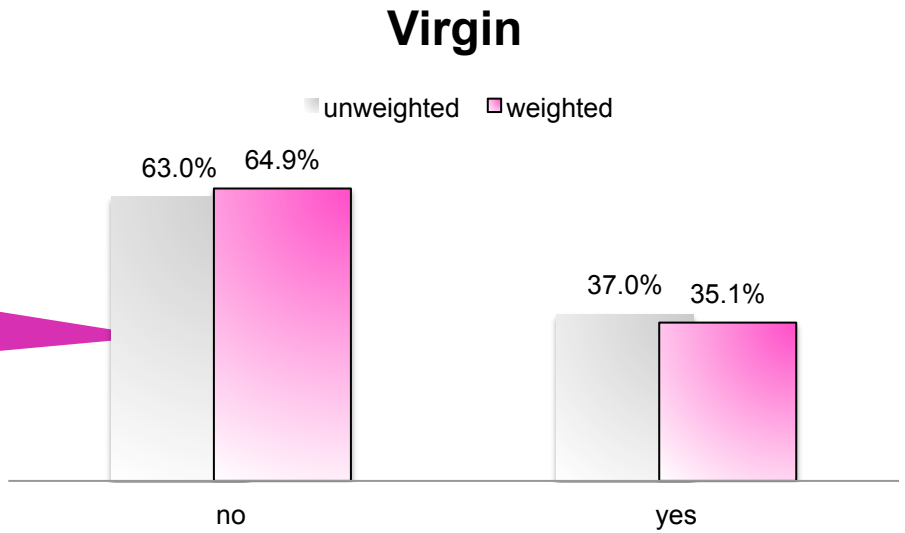
The **PINK** bars represent the results adjusted based on the random sample.
The **GREY** bars represent the unadjusted convenience (online survey) sample

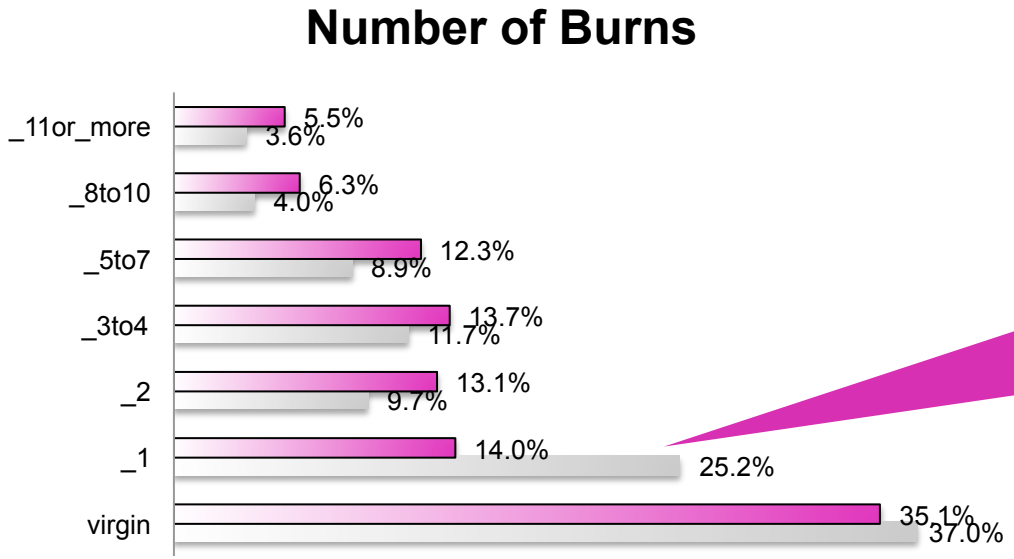
Weighting Variables



Weighting Variables

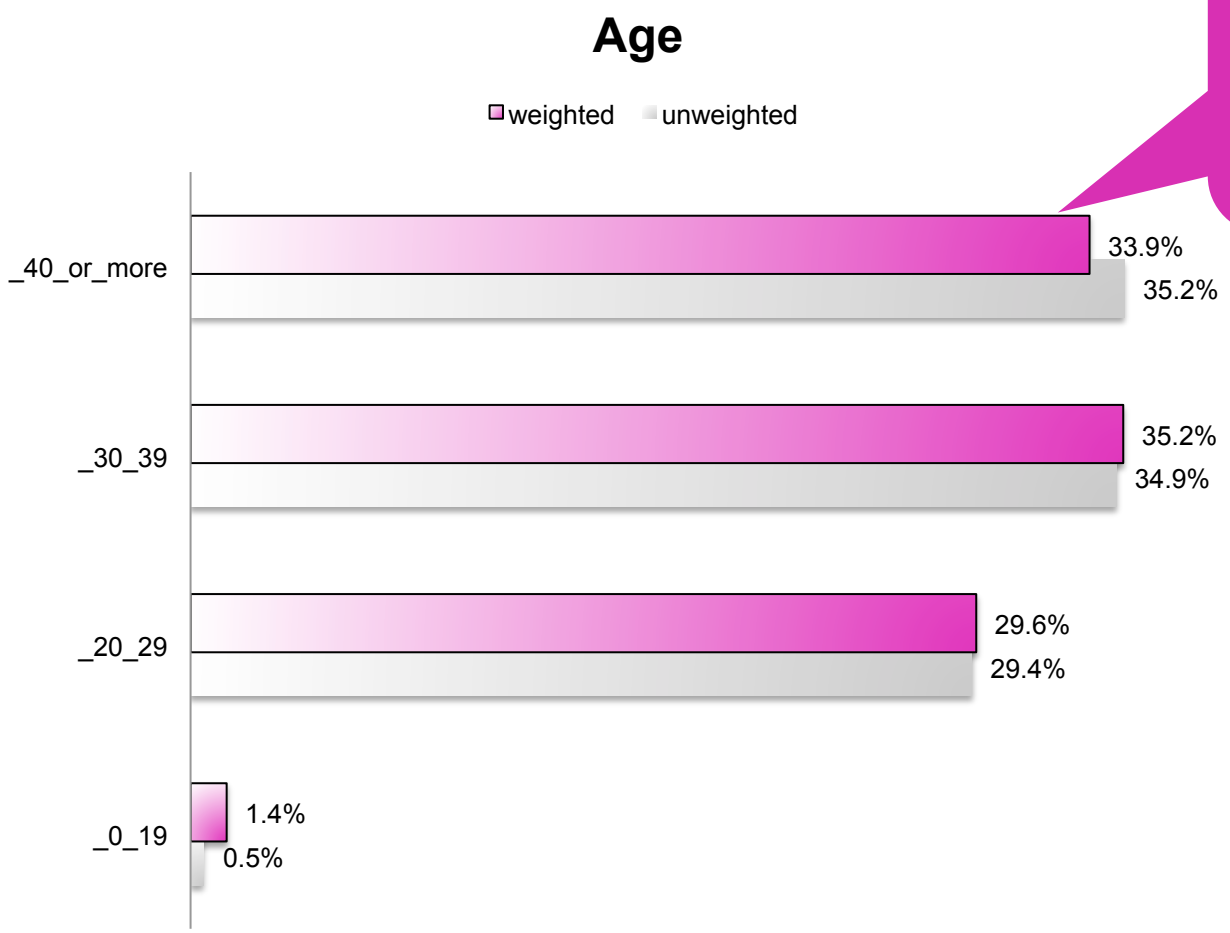
Virgins slightly over-represented





Newbies (0-1 burns) over-represented

Weighting Variables



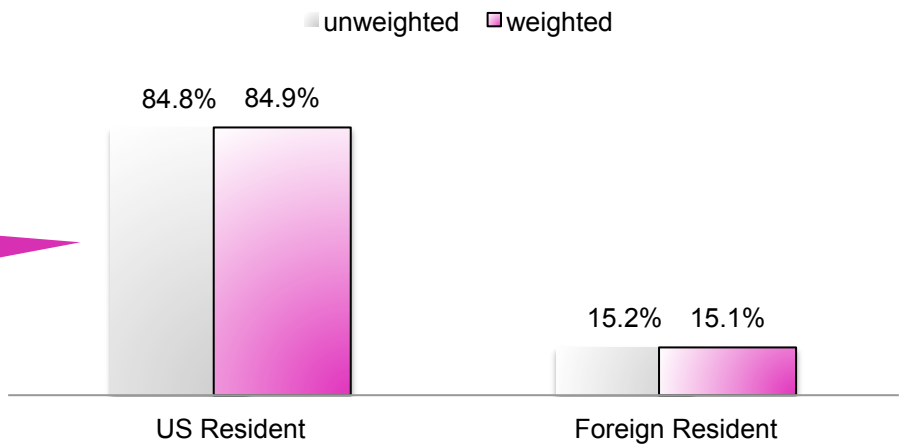
Oldest age group over-represented

Youngest age group under-represented

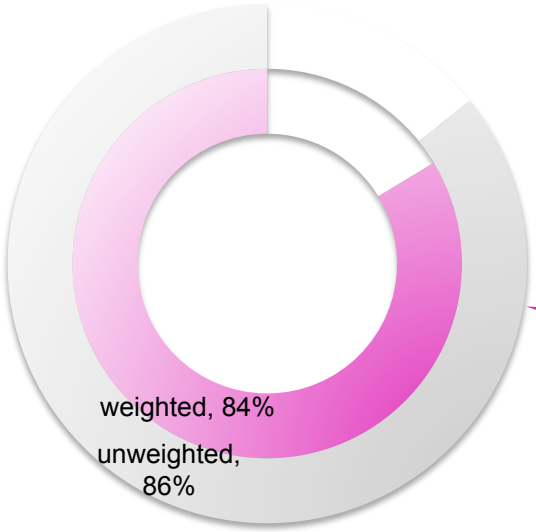
Weighting Variables

US vs Foreign was not a bias in the survey

US Residents



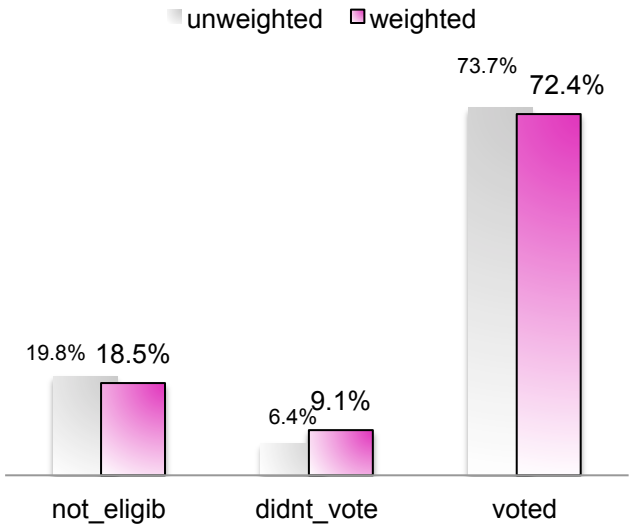
English as a Primary Language



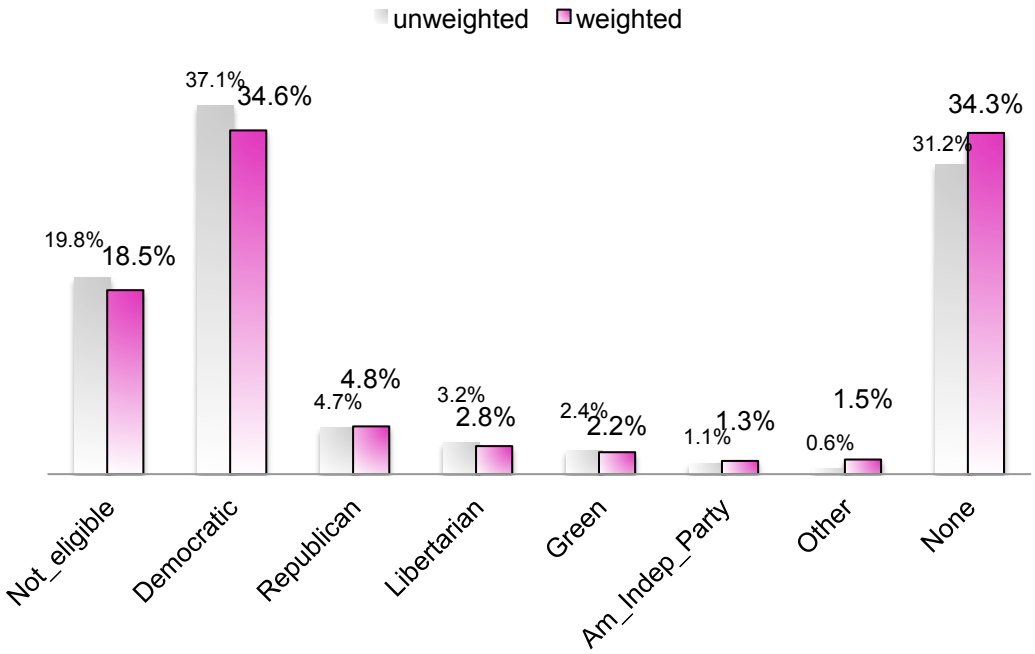
English speakers were slightly over-represented

Weighting Variables

Eligible to Vote



US Party Affiliation



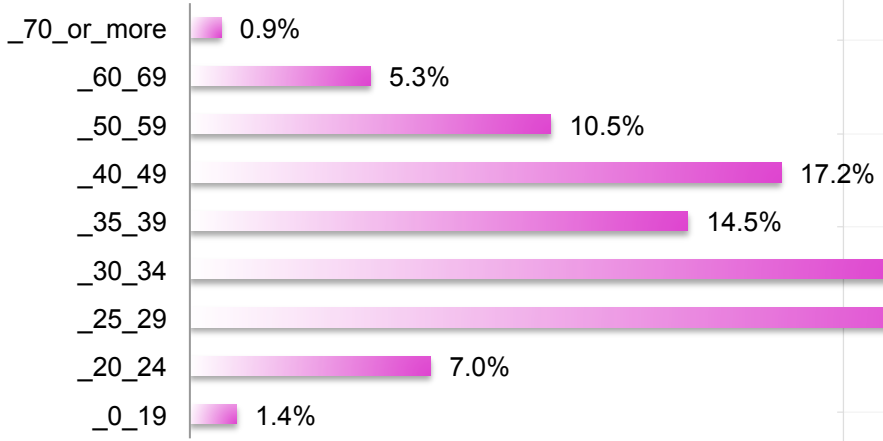
Those eligible but didn't vote, Independents or have no party affiliation were under-represented

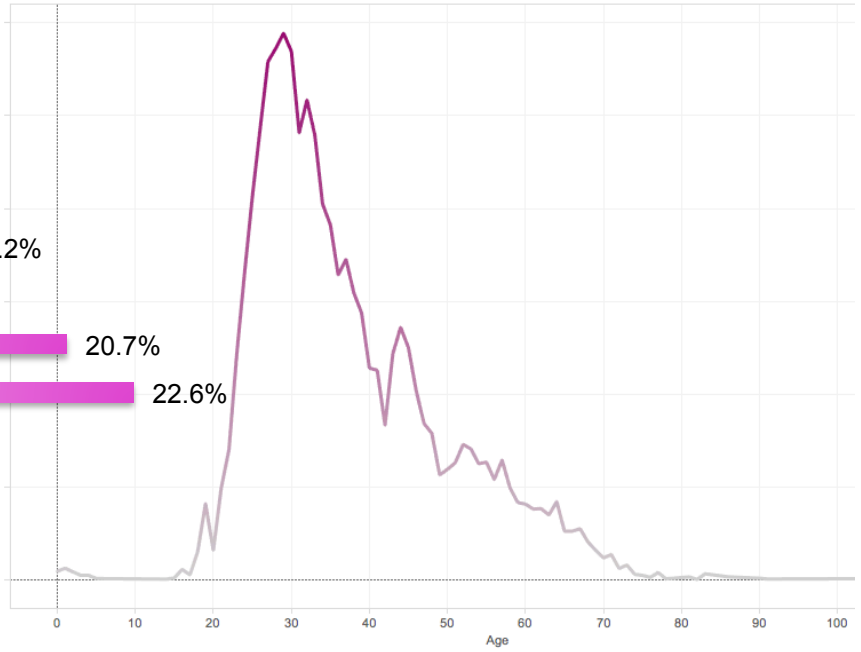
Libertarians, Democrats, Green & those not eligible were over-represented

Sociodemographic Characteristics

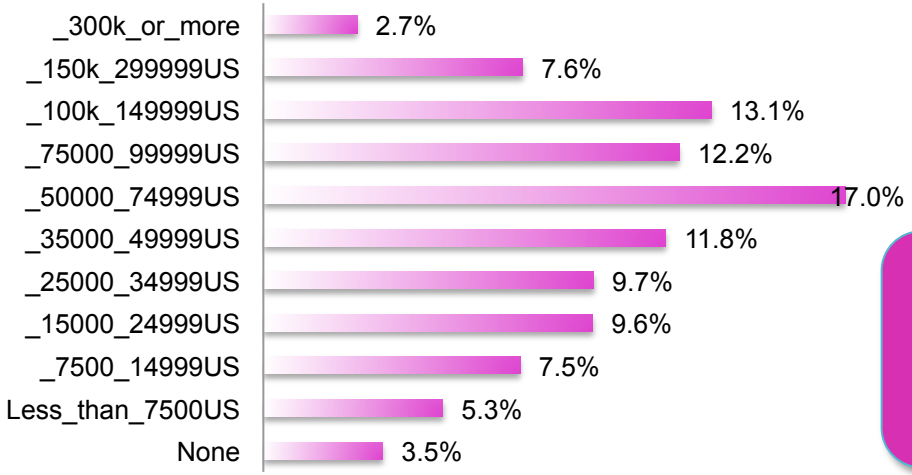
Sociodemographic Characteristics

Age Group





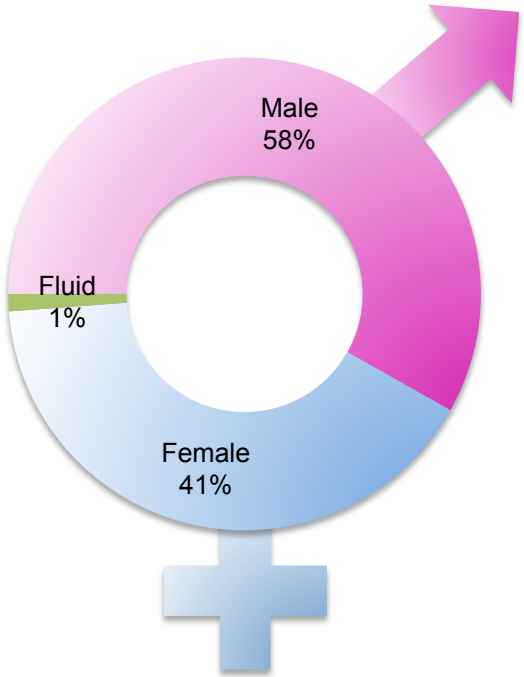
Income



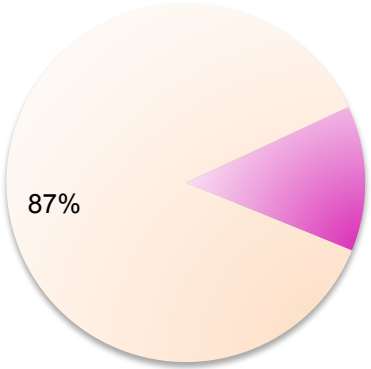
Median Age: 34
Median Personal Income: $54k-$55k

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Gender

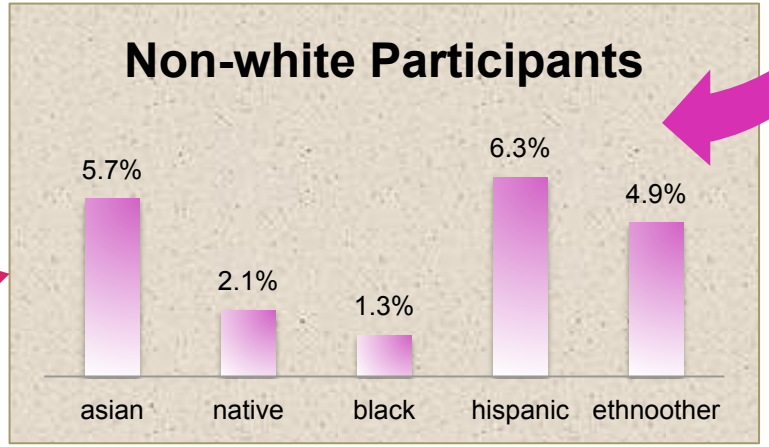


White

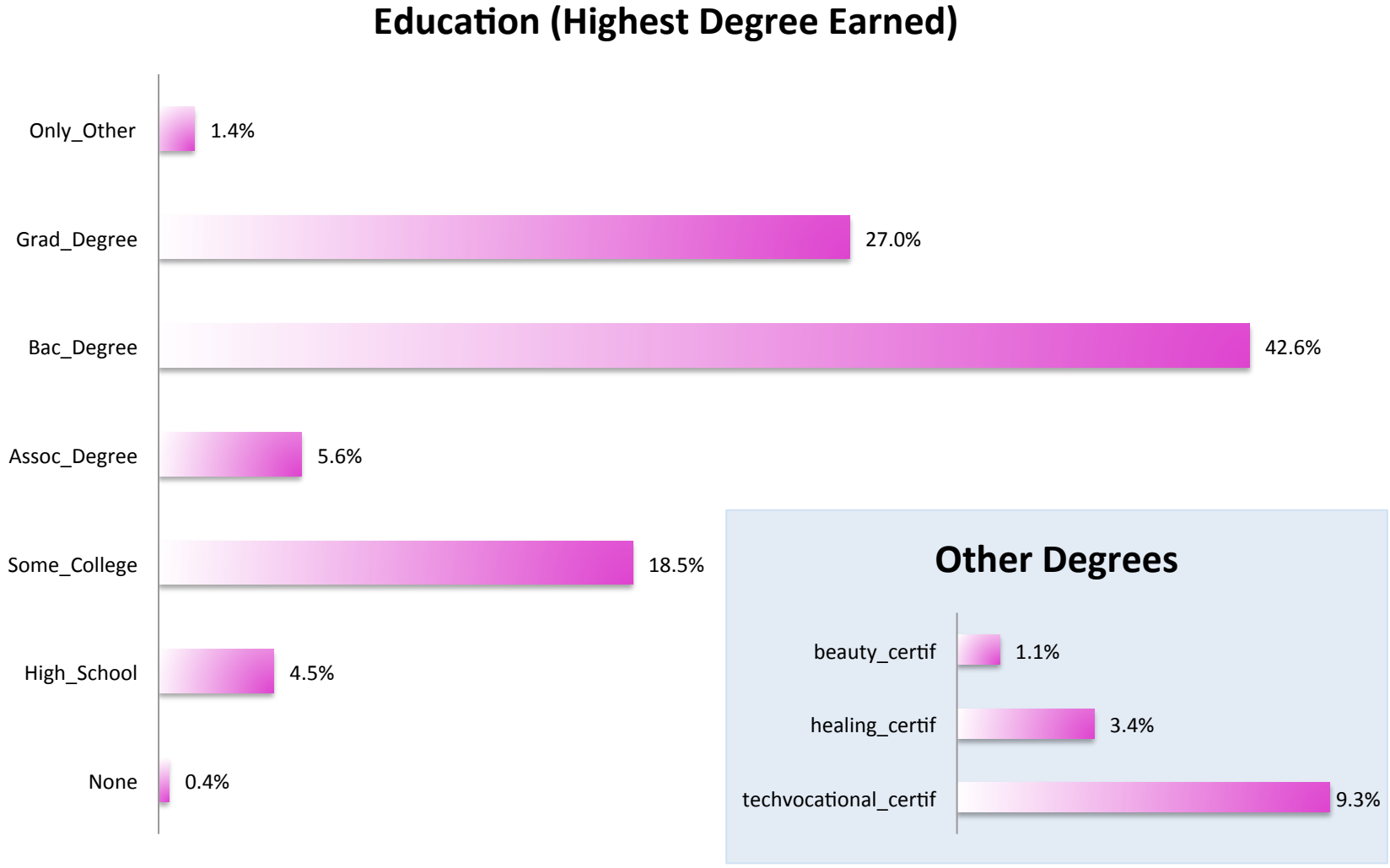


Includes respondents who may have checked more than one answer

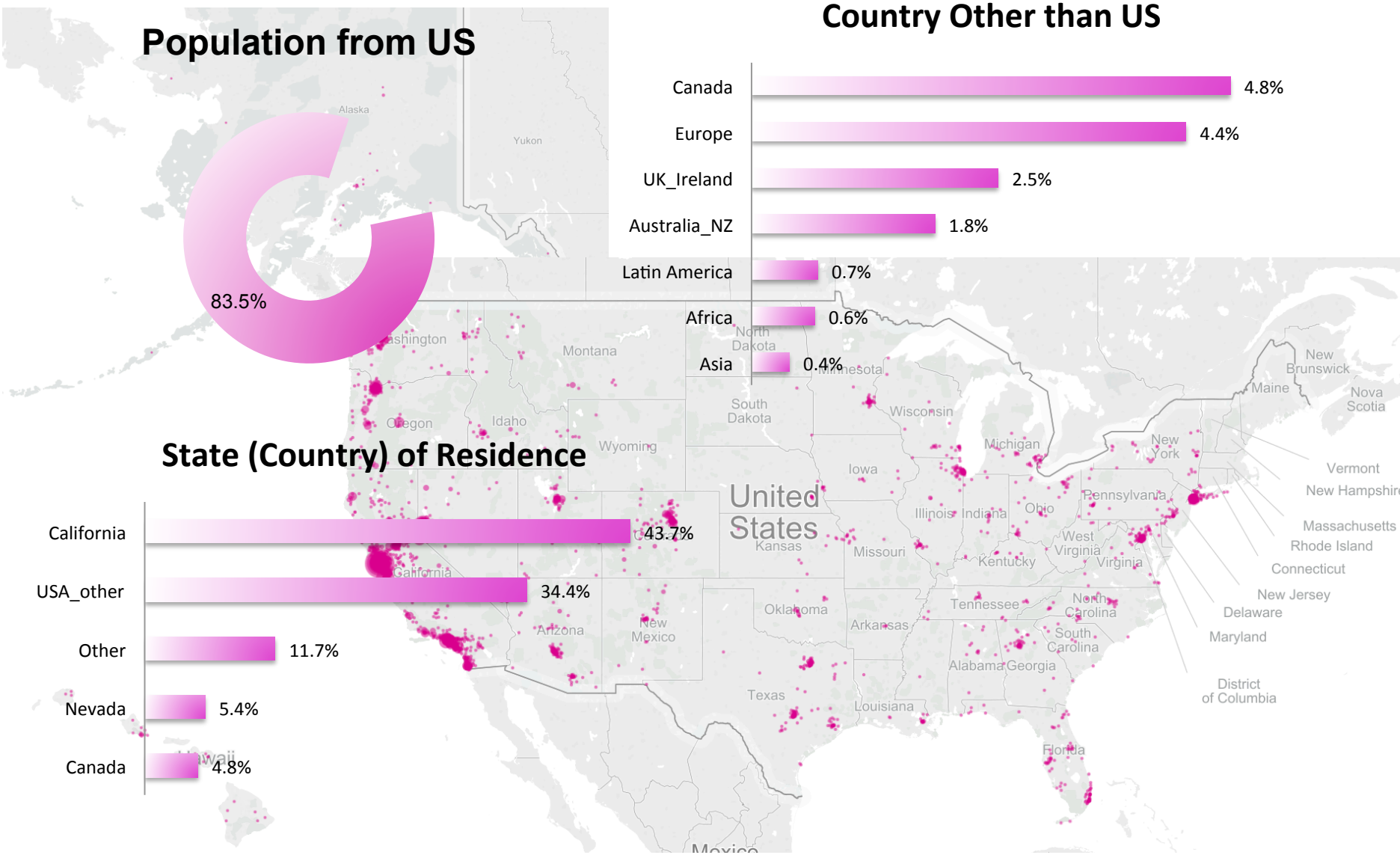
Non-white Participants



Sociodemographic Characteristics

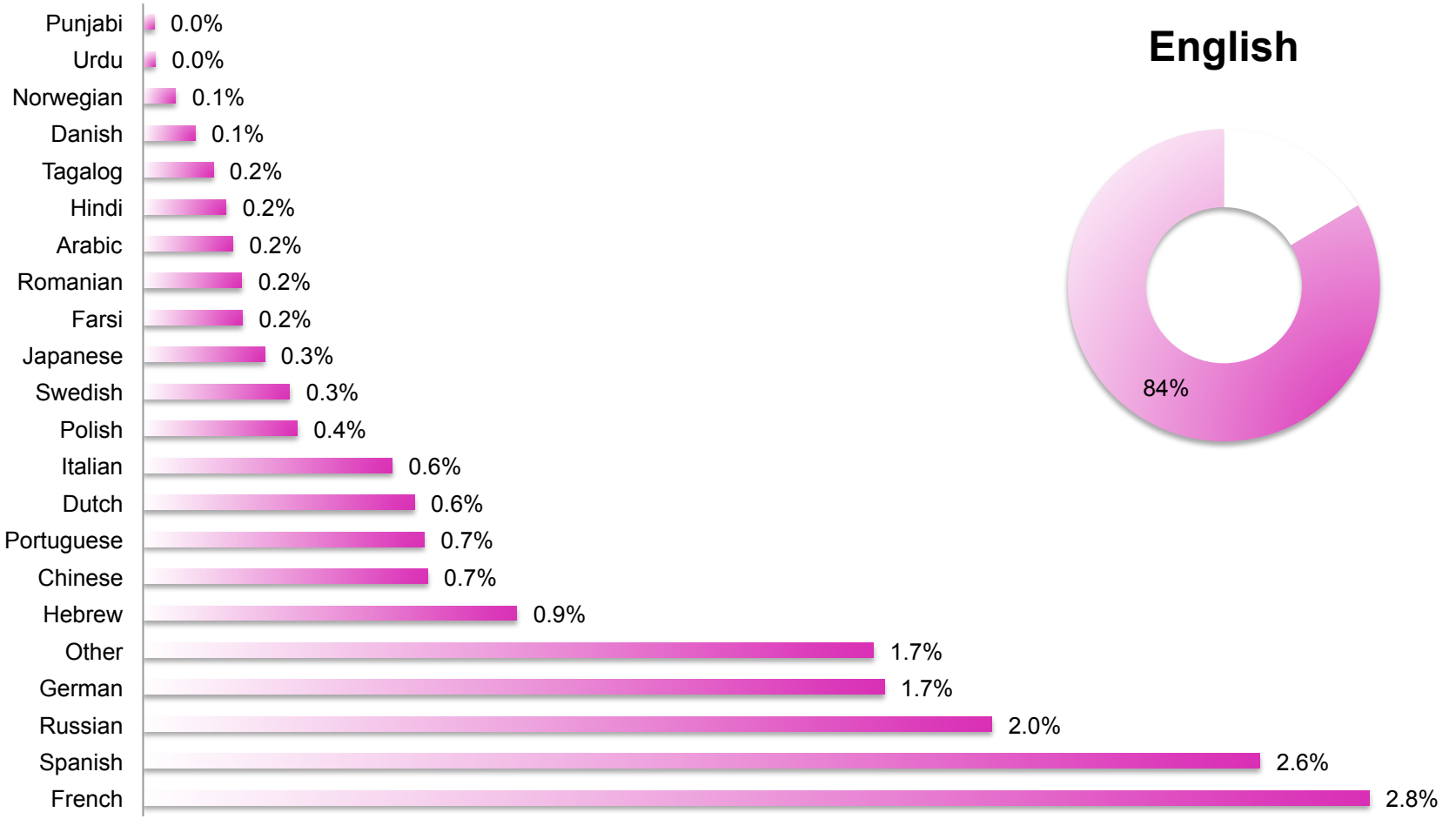


Sociodemographic Characteristics (USA)



Sociodemographic Characteristics

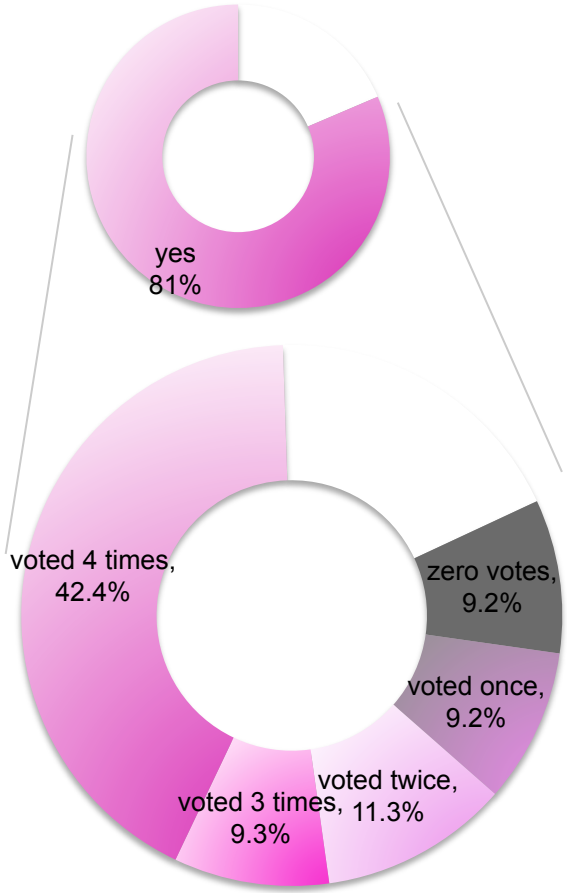
Primary Language other than English



English

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Eligible to Vote



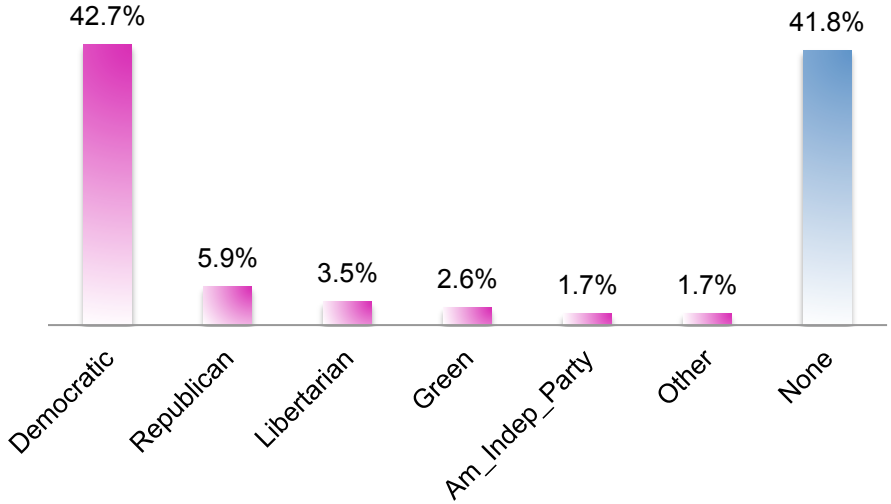
Voting Probability

Over 52% of Eligible Burner Voters have voted in each of the past 4 elections

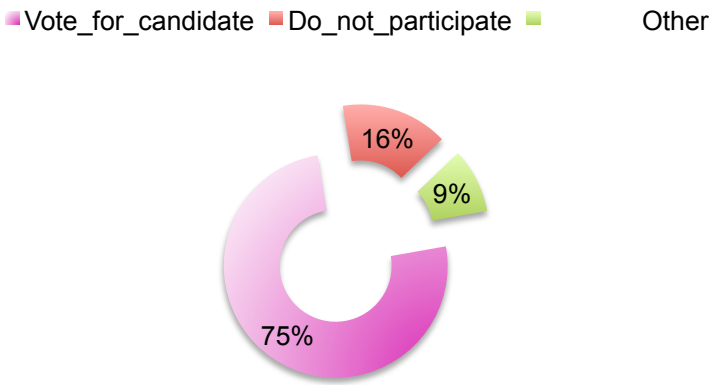
77% of Burners who are eligible to vote have voted in at least 2 of the last 4 elections

Sociodemographic Characteristics

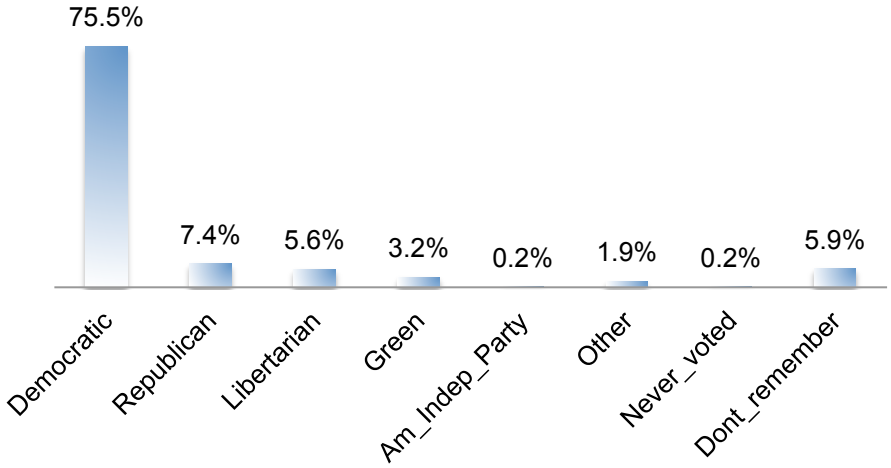
Party Affiliation if Eligible



Reason Independent



If unaffiliated, how did you vote?

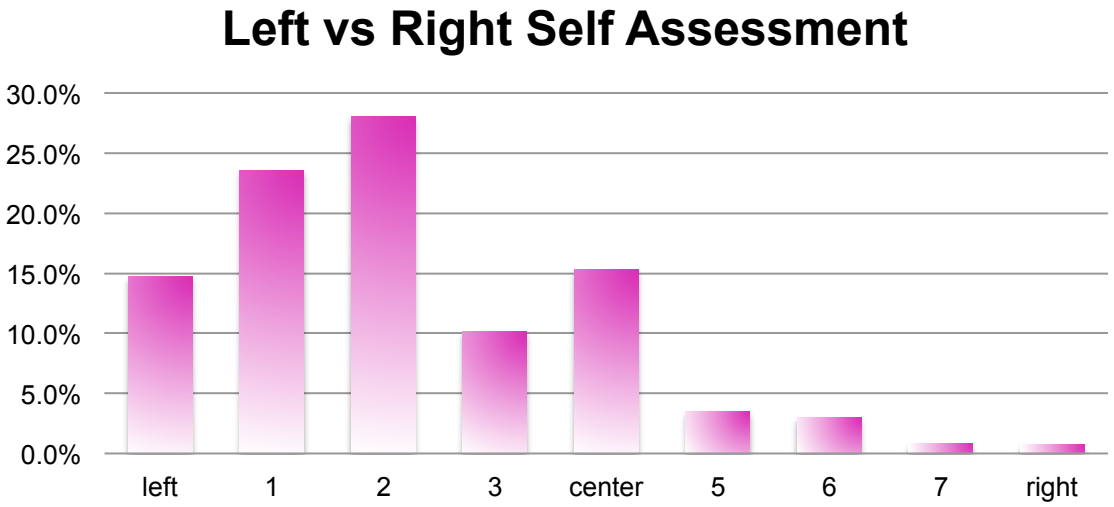


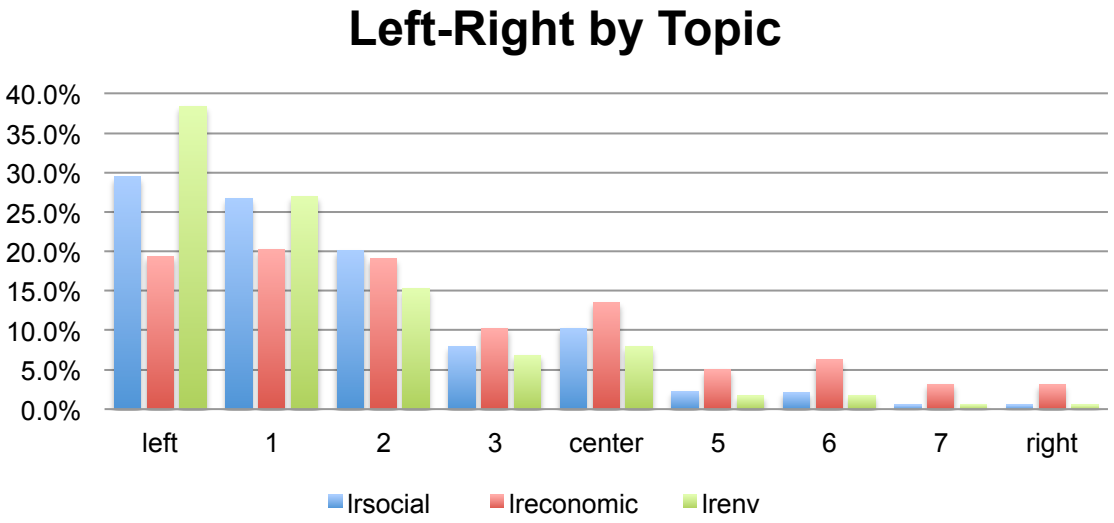
Party Affiliation

Large Burner bias toward Democratic Party

Even those claiming no affiliation overwhelming voted Democratic

Sociodemographic Characteristics





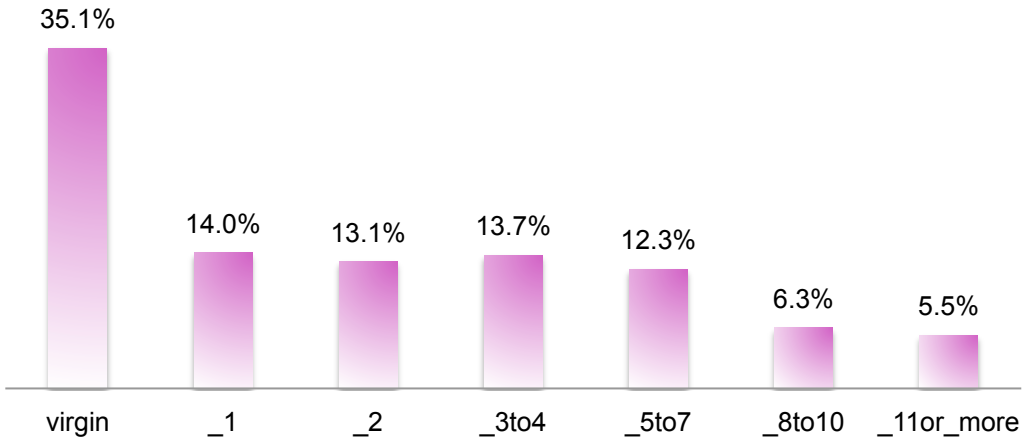
Left-vs-Right

Burners tend to classify themselves as Left-of-Center

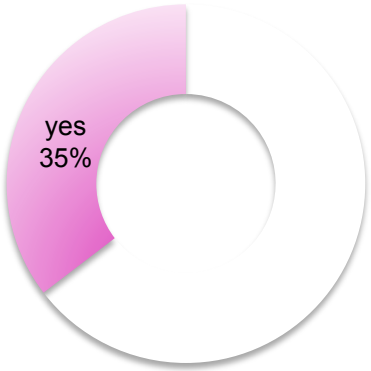
More strongly Leftist sentiment around Environmental and Social issues

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Number of Burns



Virgin?



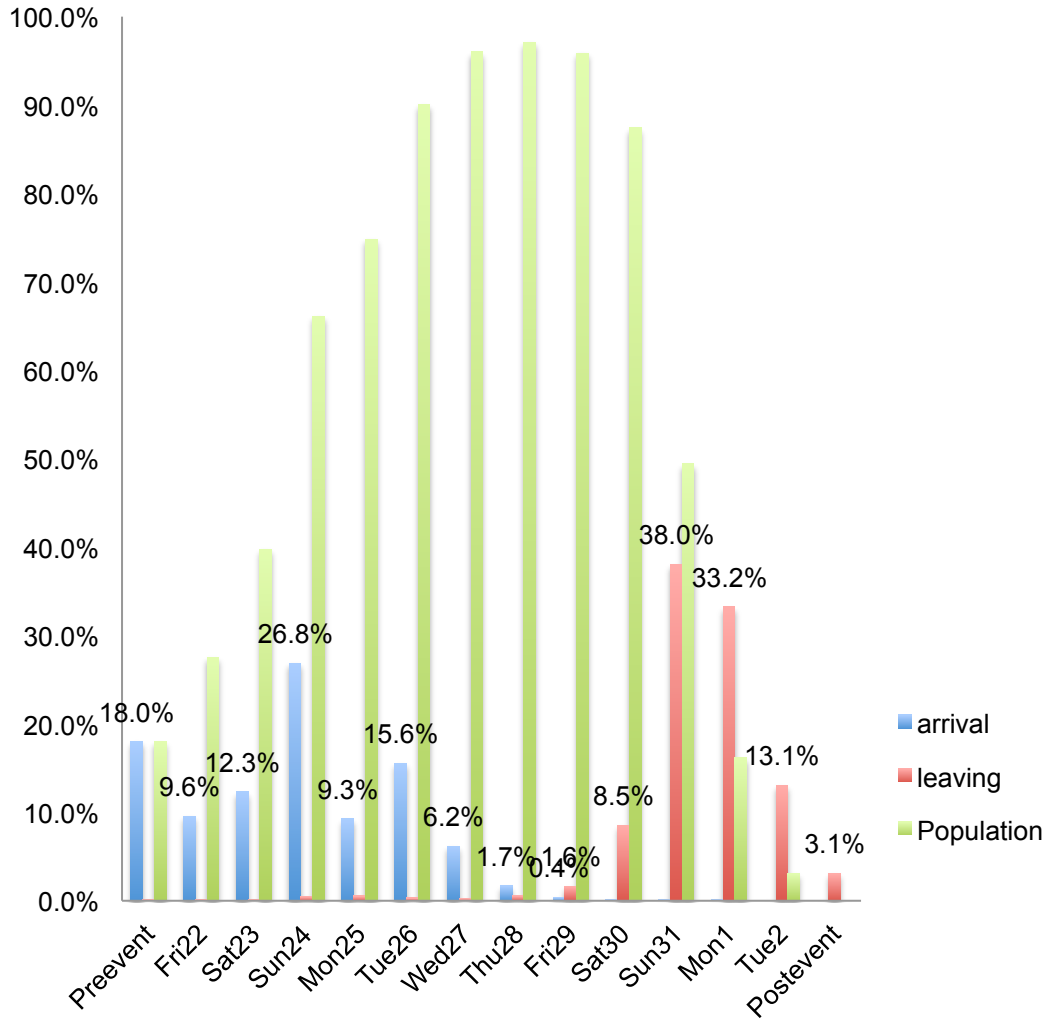
Improvements in Weighting Procedure Impacted this Measure Significantly

Virgins -6% from preliminary results

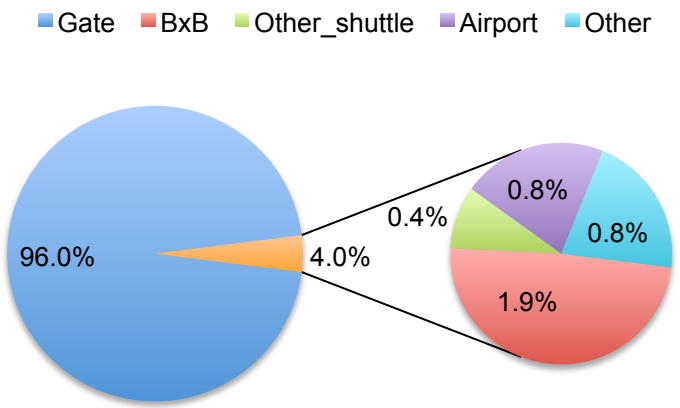
Burning Man
Related Variables

Burning Man Related Variables

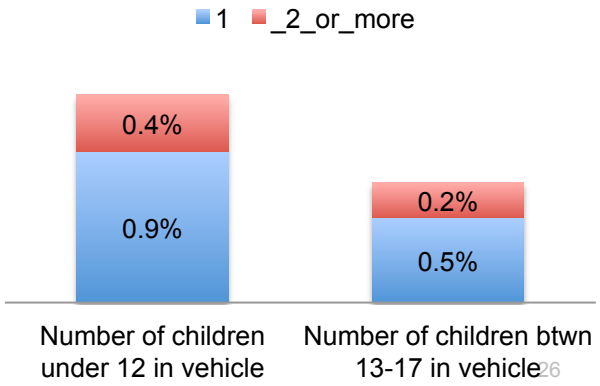
Arrivals and Departures



How did you enter BRC?

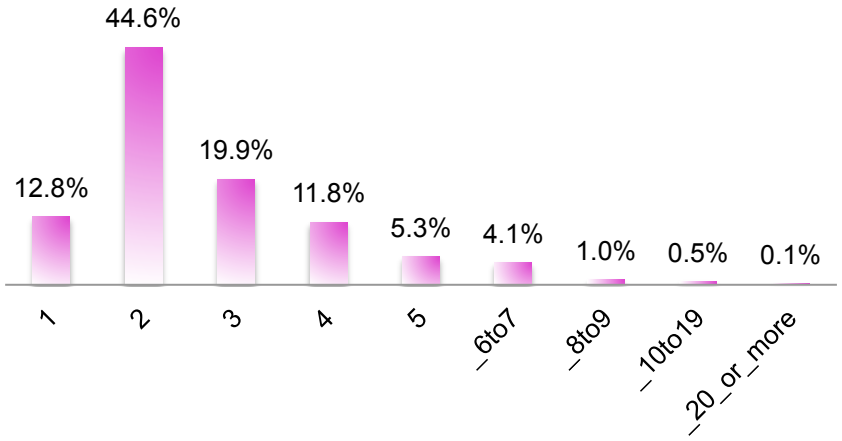


Number of children in your vehicle

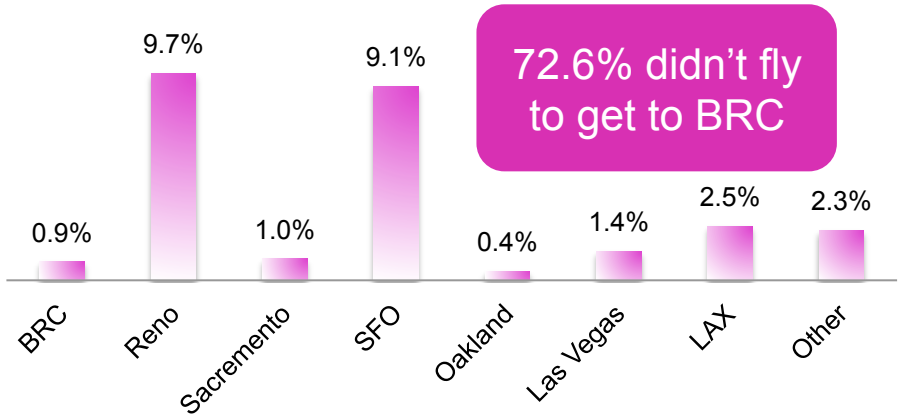


Burning Man Related Variables

Number in Vehicle

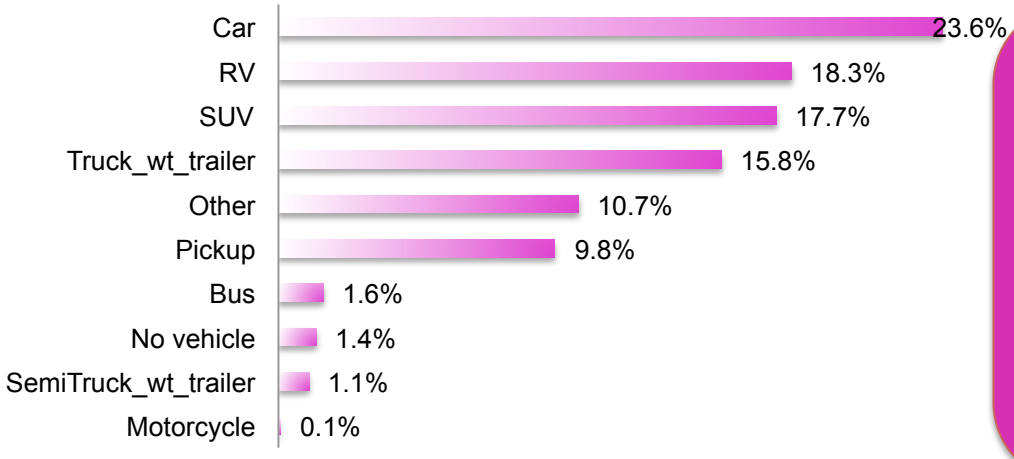


If you flew, what airport?



72.6% didn't fly to get to BRC

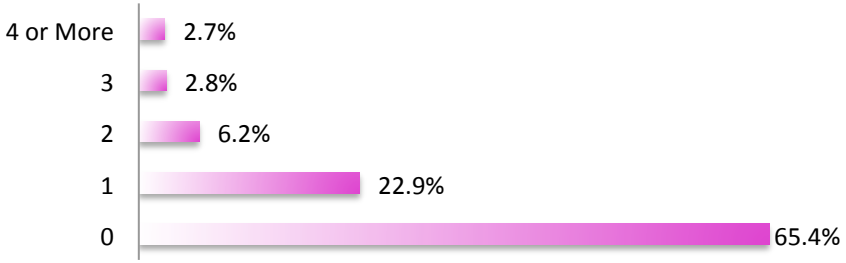
Type of Vehicle



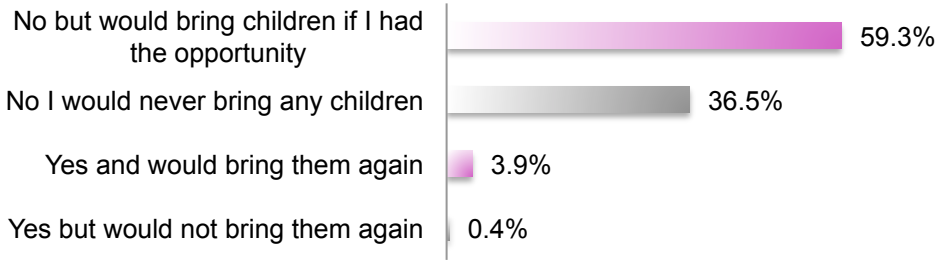
Projected Average # Miles Driven / Burner is ~272miles with a reported 19.7 MPG
Roughly 6.3 Million Miles Consuming around 320,000 gallons of gas to get to BRC

Burning Man Related Variables

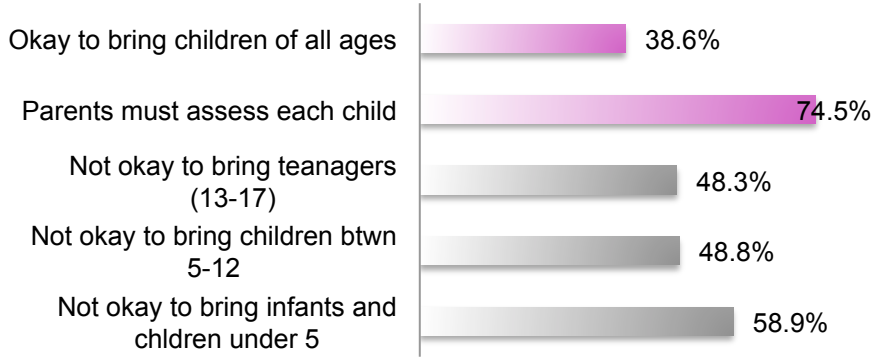
Number of Family Members With You



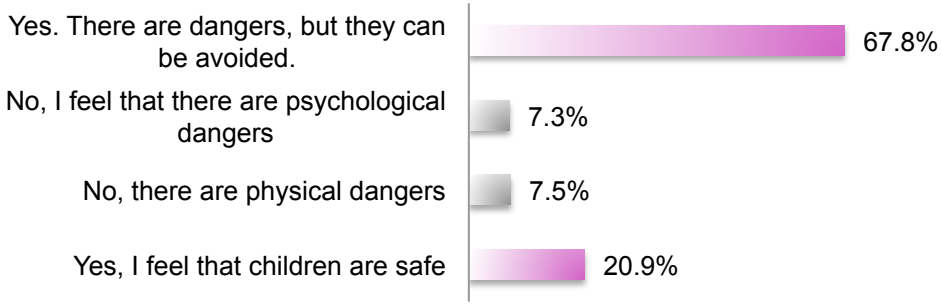
Have you brought children under 18 to BRC?



How do you feel about children under 18 in BRC?

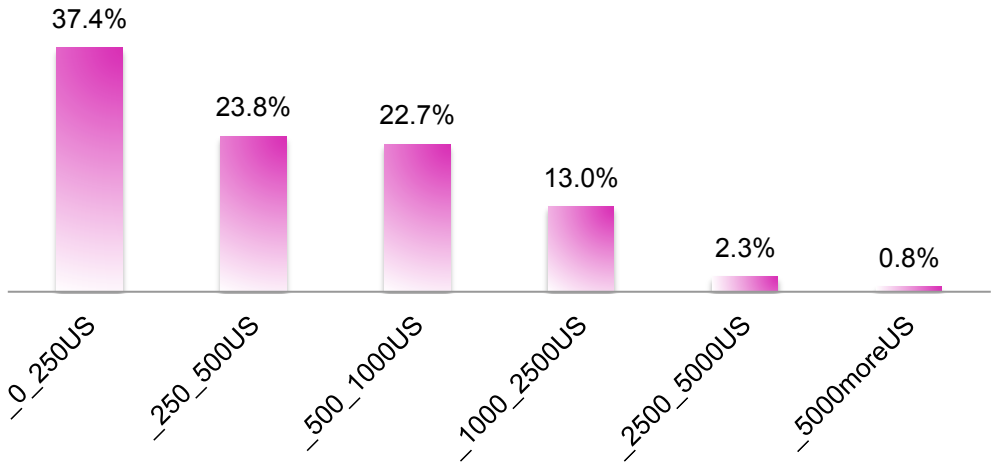


Do you think that children are safe in BRC?



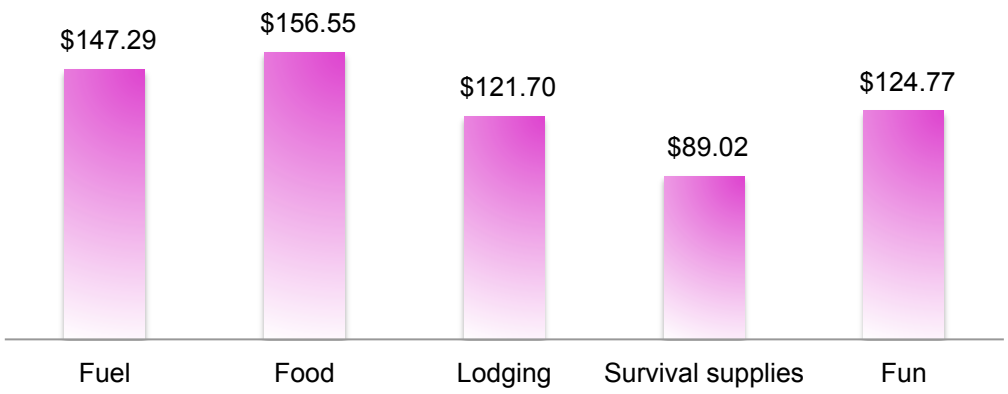
Impact on Nevada

Nevada Spending

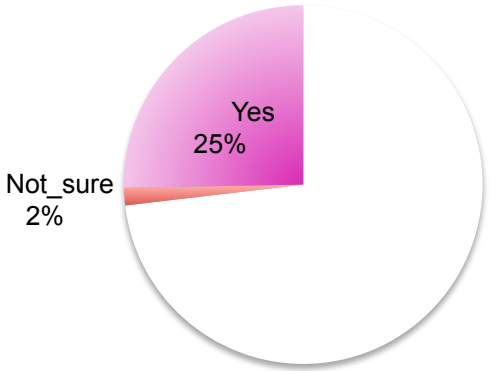


Average stated spending in Nevada is ~$639/Burner

Where Burner's spent their Nevada $'s

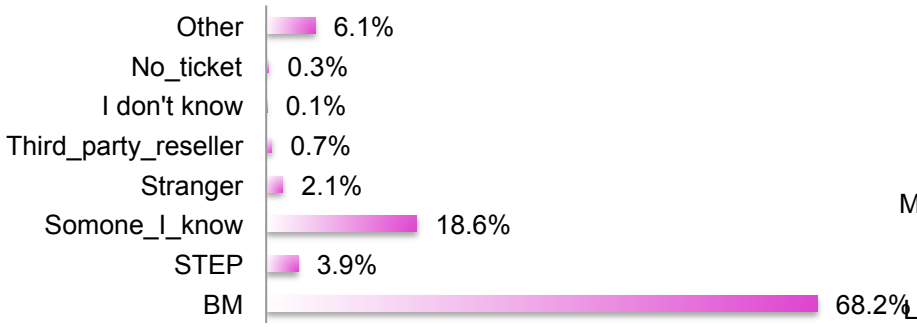


Visit a Park in Nevada?

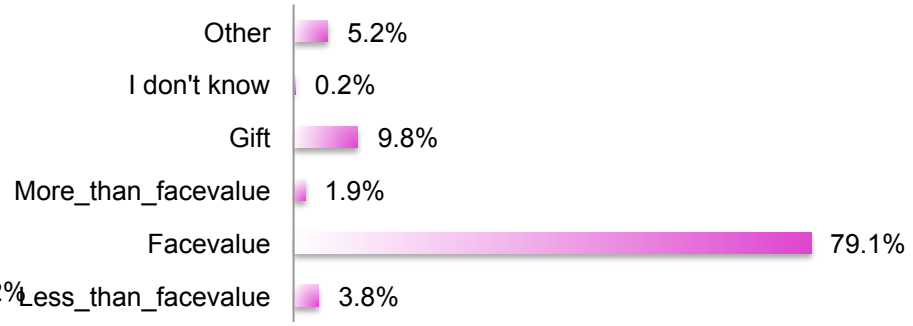


Burning Man Related Variables

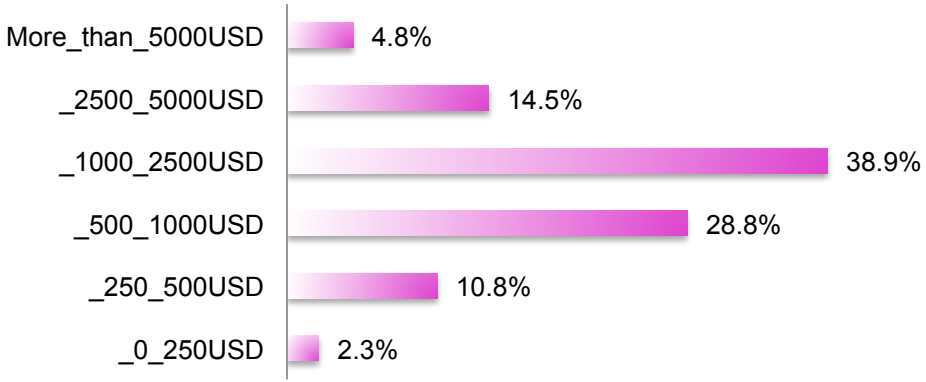
Where did you purchase your ticket?



What did you pay for your ticket?



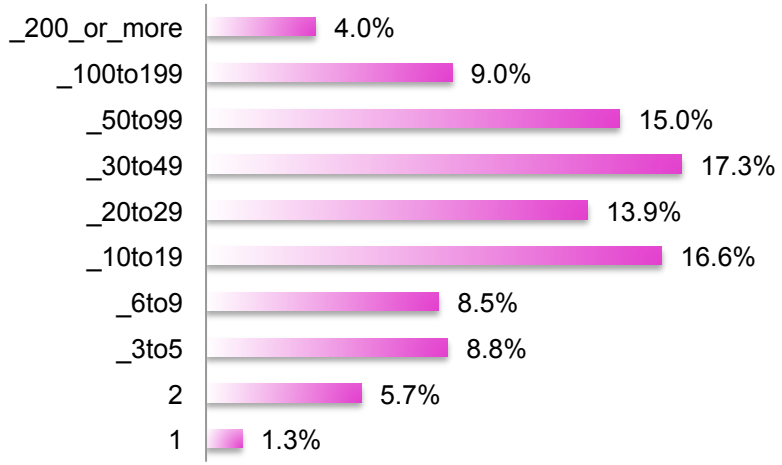
Your personal cost of attending



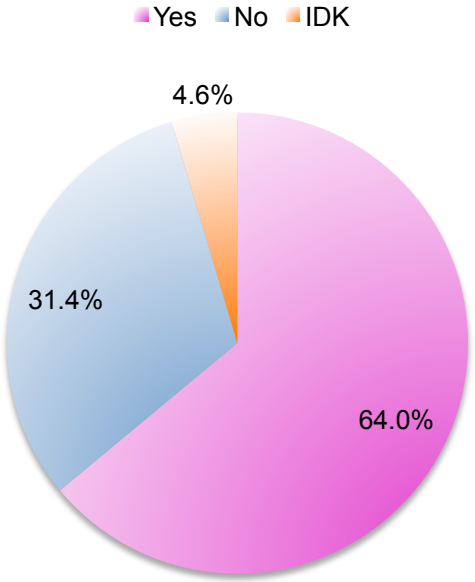
Life at Burning Man

Camping

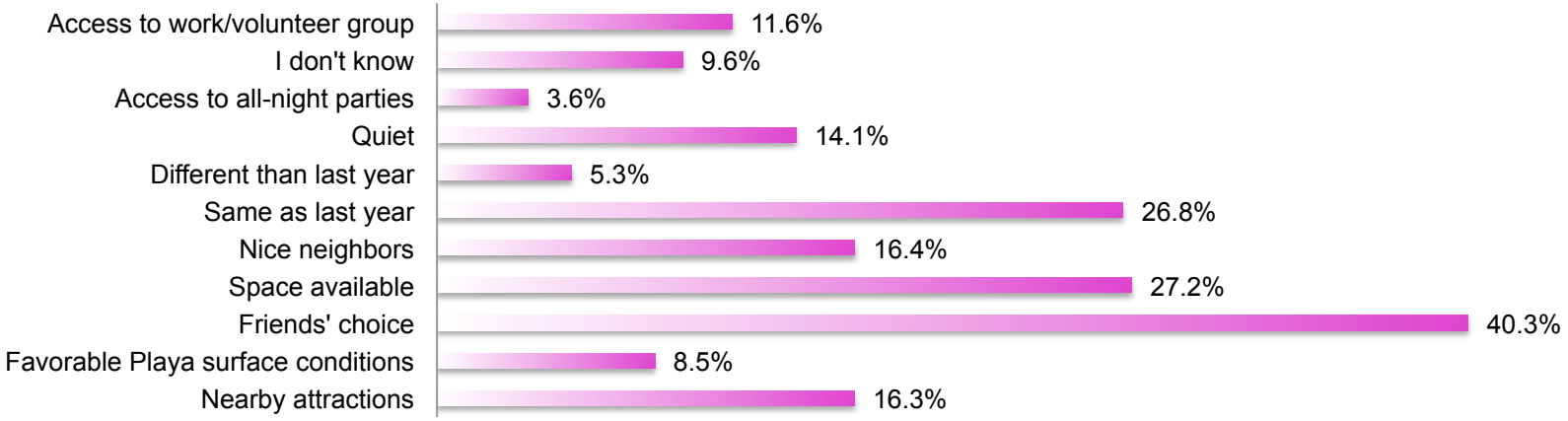
Number in your Camp



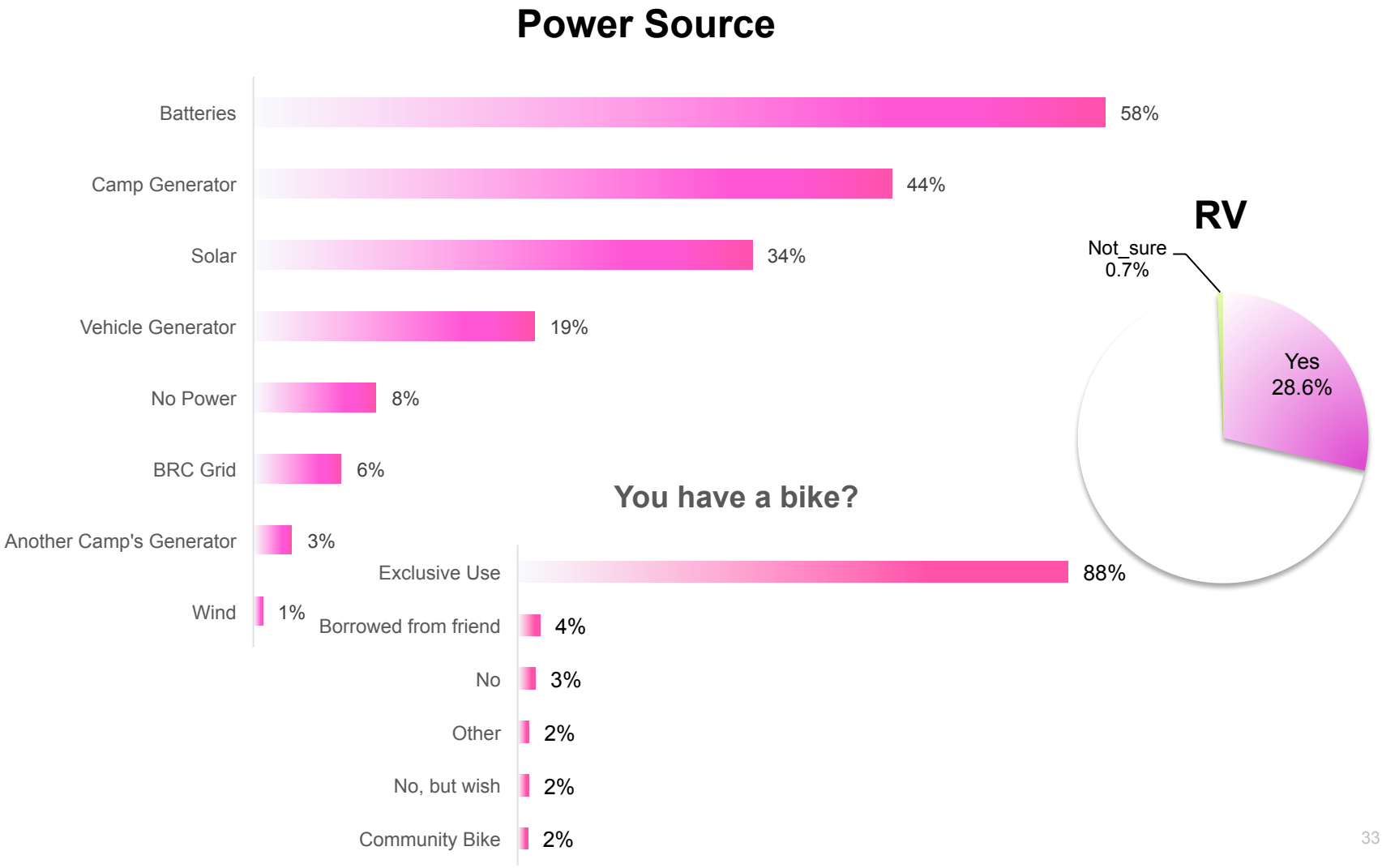
Assigned by Placement



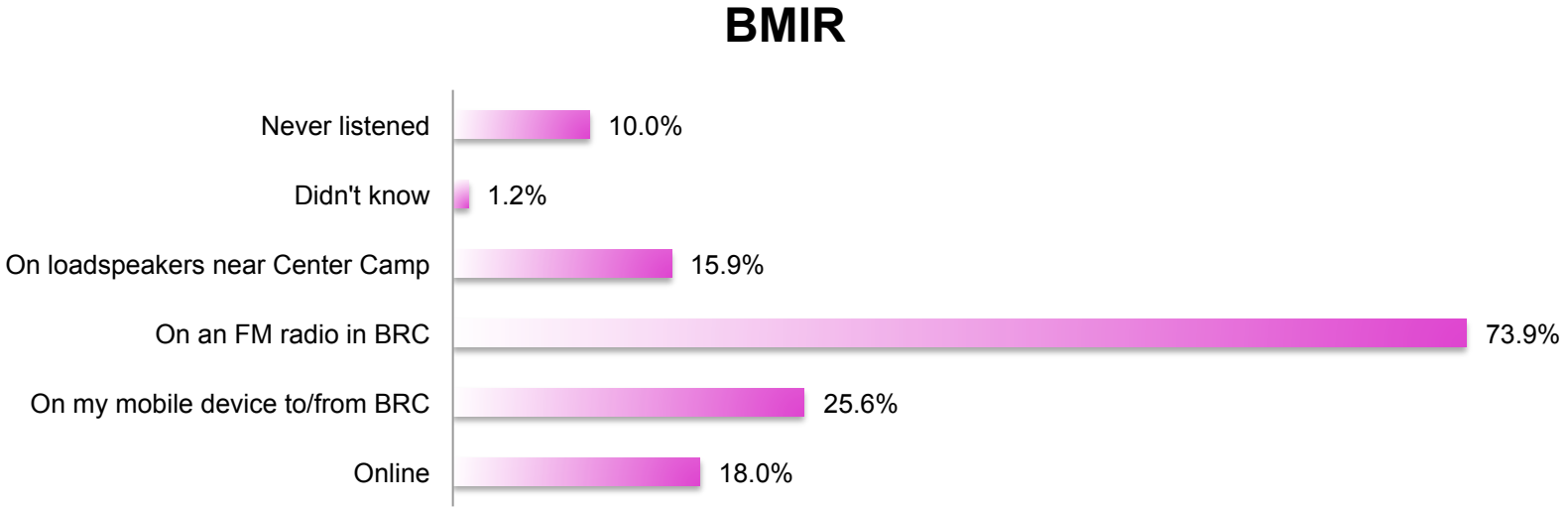
What determined camp location?

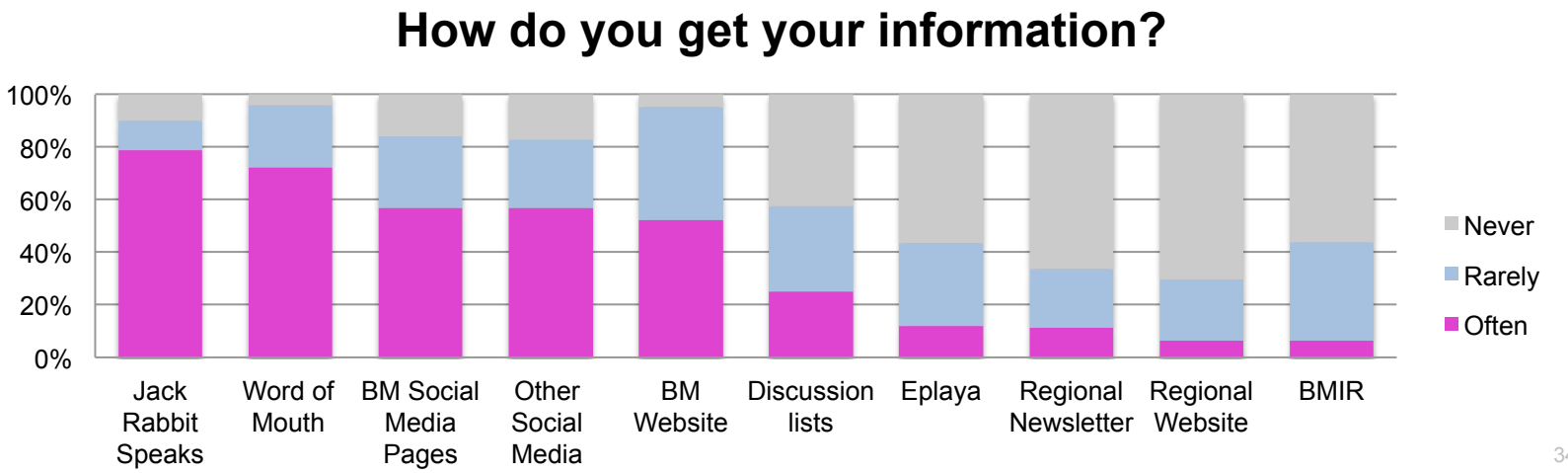


Burning Man Specific Variables



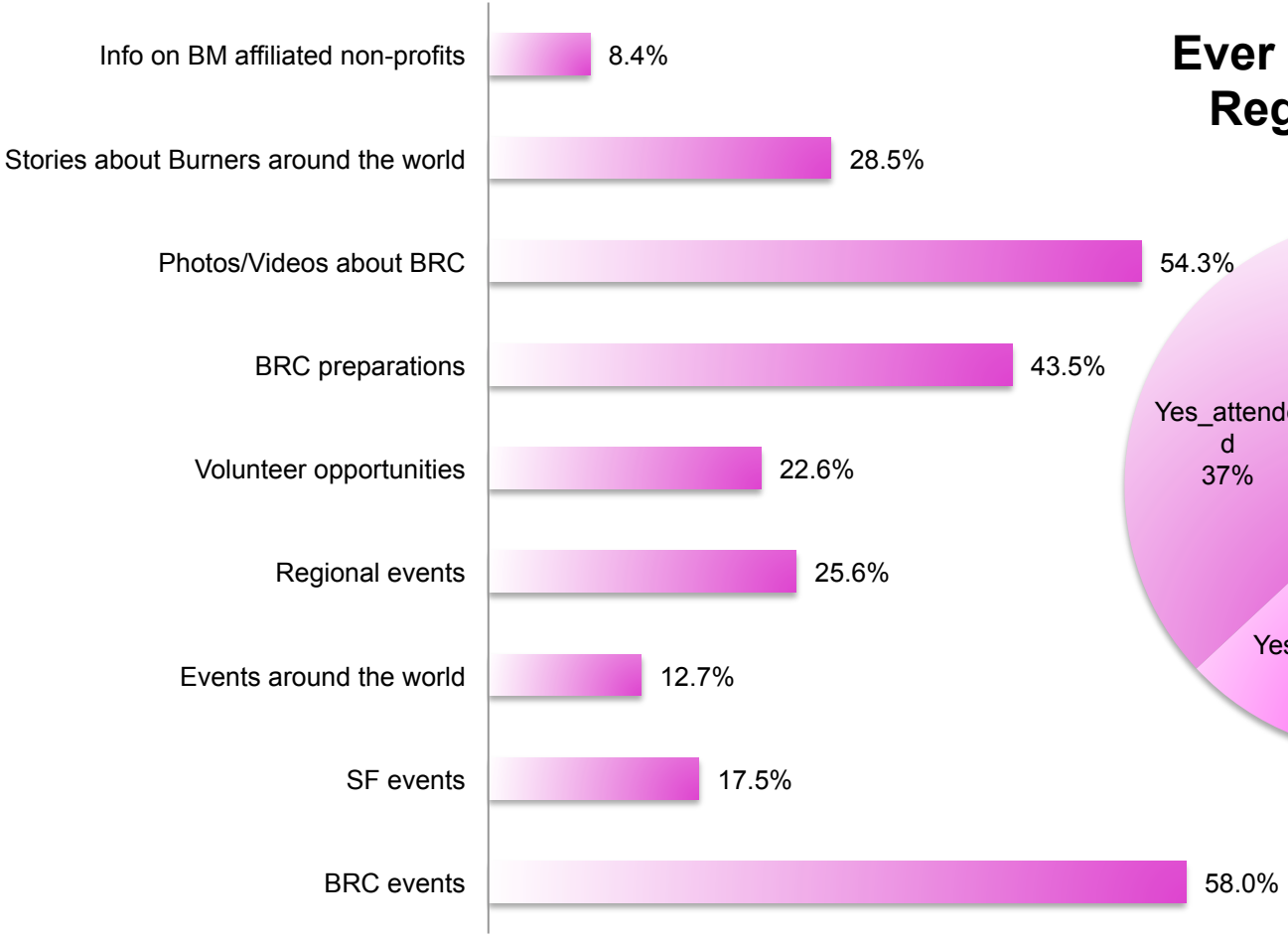
Burning Man Related Variables - Information



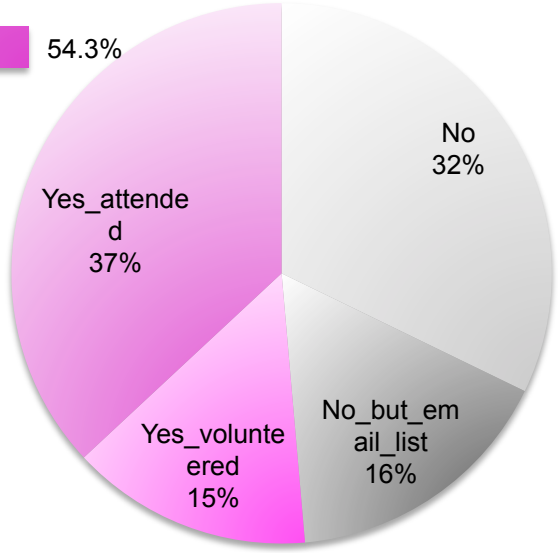


Burning Man Related Variables

What information do you value most?

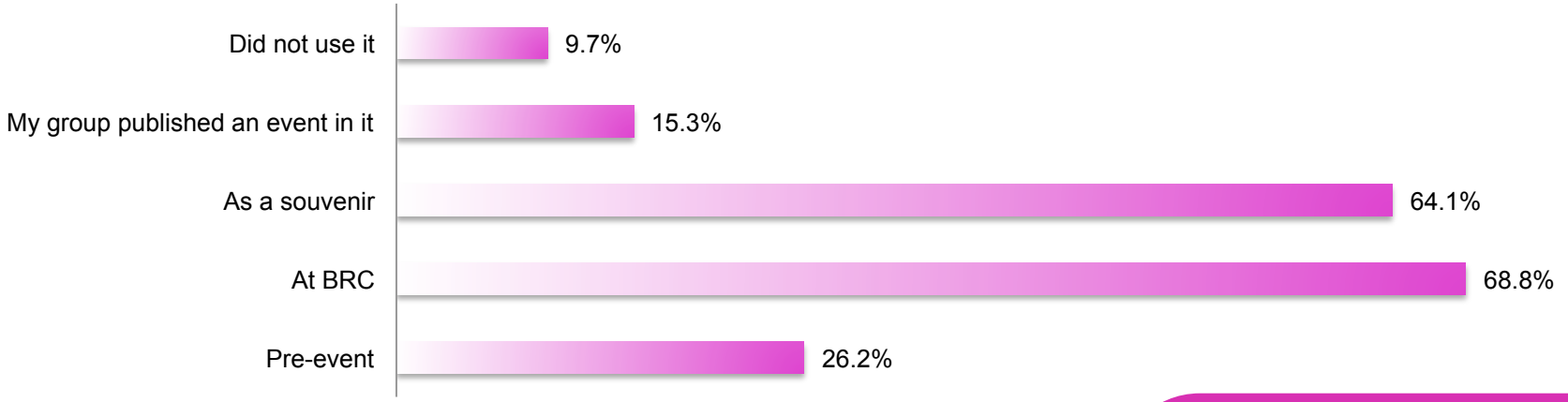


Ever attended a BM Regional event?

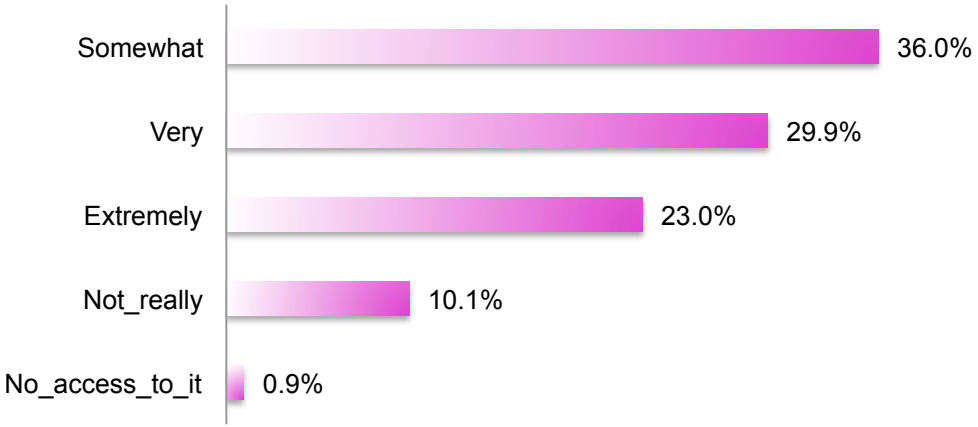


Burning Man Specific Variables – WWW

Did you use the WWW Guide?



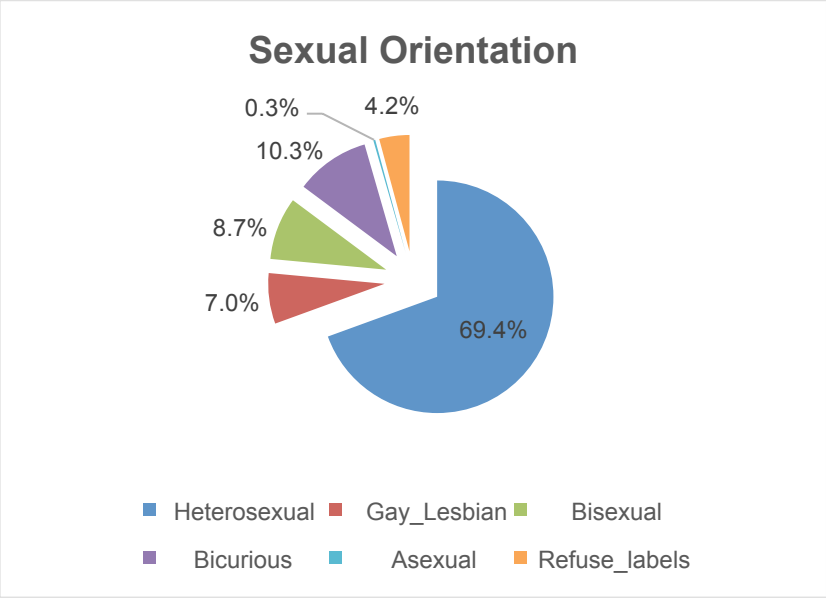
How Useful was the WWW Guide?



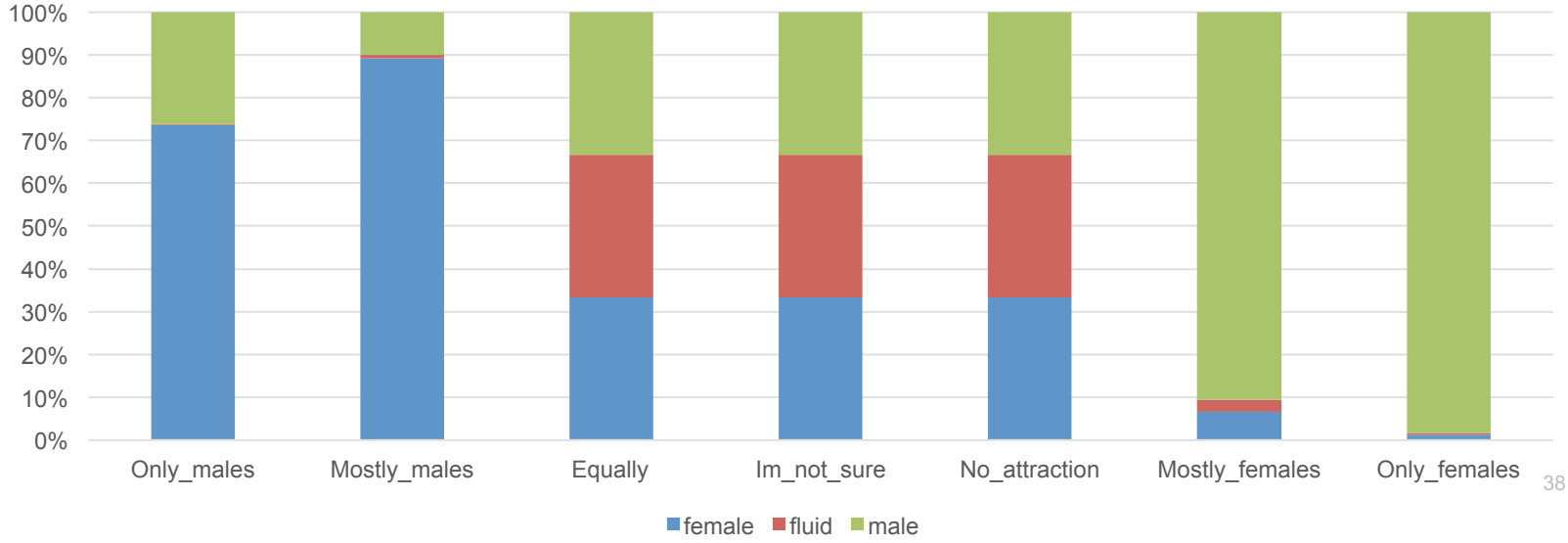
What, Where, When continues to be popular for people as a souvenir almost as much as an On-Playa Guide

Identity & Self

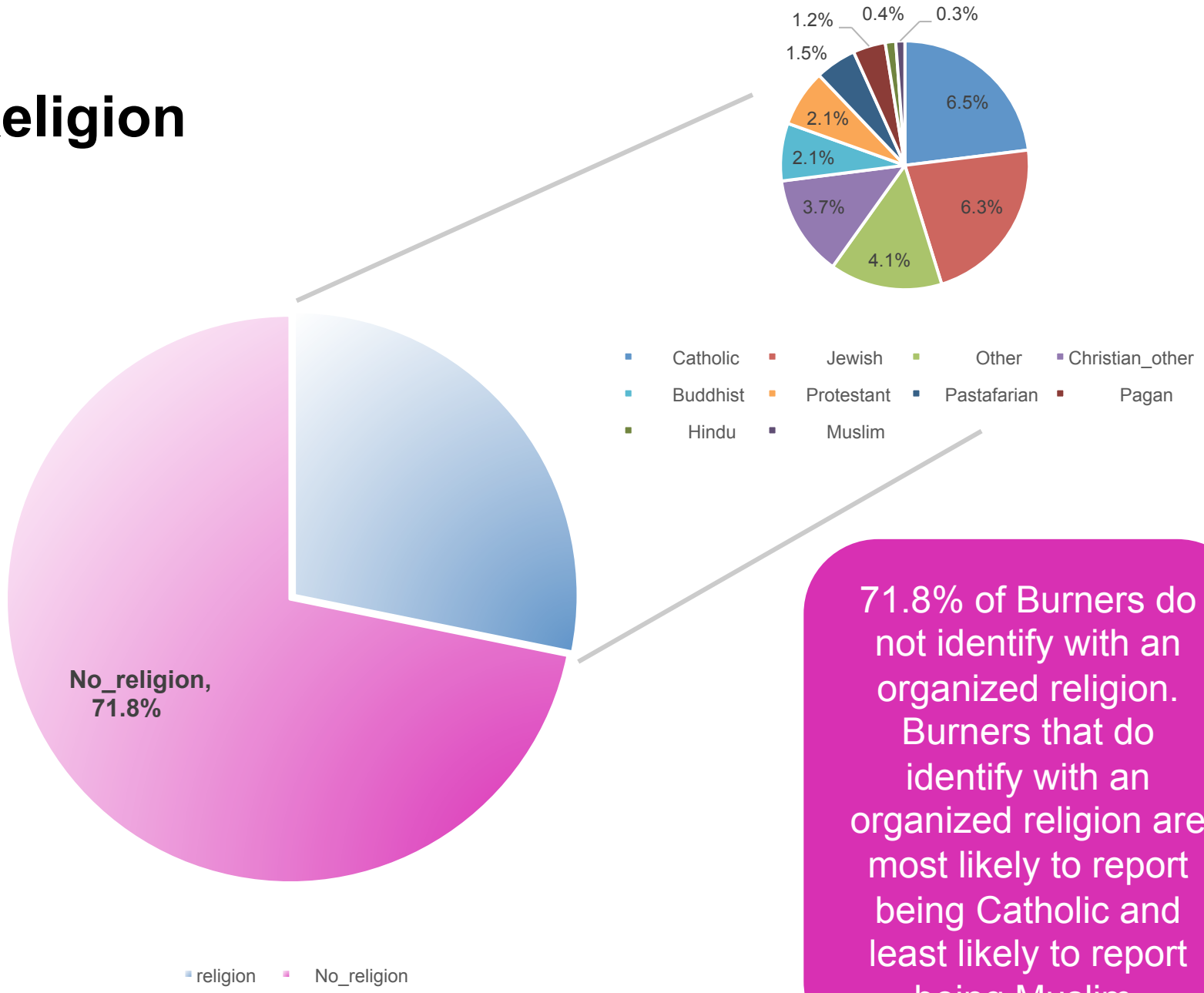
Sexual Orientation and Attraction



In regard to sexual attraction, reported heteronormativity persists within the Burning Man population. This ideology is reflective of distributions in the default world with men reporting less fluidity in sexual attraction than females.

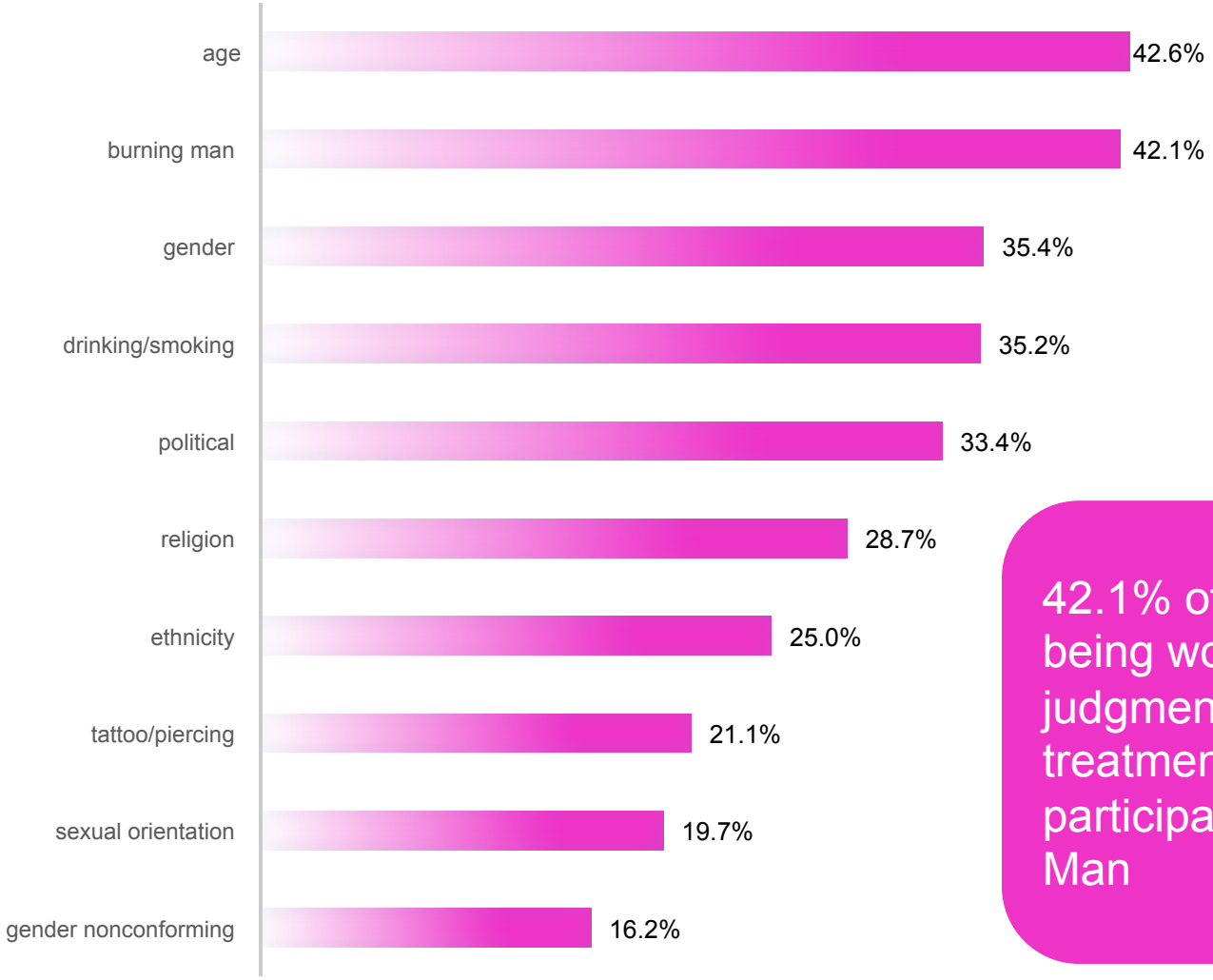


Religion



71.8% of Burners do not identify with an organized religion. Burners that do identify with an organized religion are most likely to report being Catholic and least likely to report being Muslim.

Report of Judgment and Unfair Treatment



42.1% of Burners report being worried about judgment or unfair treatment based on their participation in Burning Man

Main Reasons to Go to Burning Man

Contributions and Acknowledgements

Contributions and acknowledgements

Project coordination:

Megan Heller (Countess), David Nelson-Gal (Scribble), Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost (Hunter) and Kateri McRae (Variance) are the principal investigators who led the 2014 Census project.

Sampling & data analysis:

Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost (Hunter)

Report coordination, graphics, layout & design:

David Nelson-Gal(Scribble) & Andrew Pedersen

The 2014 Census Lab :

The project also involved numerous other volunteers whose contributions were essential in many ways : research collaborators, volunteer coordinators, statisticians, camp builders, gate samplers, keypunchers, census lab hosts, graphic designers, and many more. These contributors will globally be referred to as “the Census Lab”. We would also like to thank the Burning Man organization for the resources that they provided both on playa and off playa and for believing in the project.

Special thanks to Entropy for rescuing our volunteers at Gate on stormy Monday.

A final thanks to all the BRC citizens who contributed to the 2014 Census. The Census project could not exist without you.

Still Curious?

For more information about the 2014 Census project or the people involved in the project, please write to census@burningman.org .

For more information about this report, please write to Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost at beaulieu-prevost.dominic@uqam.ca .

You can also access the Census blog at

http://blackrockcitycensus.wordpress.com .

Citation: Heller, S.M., Beaulieu-Prévost, D., McRae, K, Nelson-Gal, D., and the 2014 Census Lab. (2014). *2014 Black Rock City Census: Weighted results report*. Black Rock City Census.
Copyright © 2014 Heller et al. This is an open-access report distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

CENSUS