

# sExploration 2014

## celebrating interSEXions

Sexual issues can be as difficult for clinicians to address as they are for clients to share. While it is easy for them to go unrecognized, they are ever present. **sExploration** is designed as a catalyst for discussions on integrating sexuality issues into all levels of our work: assessment, research, clinical practice, life span development, etc.

### SCHEDULE

#### **Poster Fair & Resource Tables** March 31– April 4

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Reception Area - Merchandise Mart

Poster presenters present Thursday 12-1 pm

#### **Colloquia** Impacts of Marriage Equality on Identity March 26

Intersections of Faith & Sexuality April 2

Wednesdays 12 – 1 pm Room 407/412 - 325 North Wells

#### **SEXtoids** March 31– April 4

Perspectives, facts and challenges on sexuality within the fields of psychology  
Faculty office doors in all departments

### TEAM

Poster Submission Process Anna Trout

Resource Tables Alisha Chan

Marketing & Event Program Michael Jones

Colloquium Programs Olivia Ellis & Joey Rea

PASD Executive Director Braden Berkey, Psy.D.

### PARTNERS

PRIDE

TCSPP Women's Group

The Chicago School Library

TPAN



## 1

### **Examining Evidence for Assumptions of the Effects of Female Pornography Use**

Alisha Chan [Ahc0251@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Ahc0251@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

As technology makes pornography more accessible to wider audiences, more information has been gathered about the effects of pornography use. Because pornography use has historically been considered to be a male behavior, the research on the effects of female pornography use is relatively sparse. Despite the lack of existing research, many assumptions exist as to the effects of pornography on women. Female pornography use is thought to lead to increased promiscuity, reduced quality of relationships and sex life, increased sexist attitudes toward women, and other largely undesirable qualities. This review aims to examine the evidence of these assumptions.

## 2

### **Effects of Childhood and Adolescent Exposure to Pornography on Sexuality**

Joey Rea [Jxr1181@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Jxr1181@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Although it offers myriad resources and is easily accessible, the Internet is also full of pornographic websites that are viewed by a plethora of people every day and sometimes those who stumble upon it did not originally intend to. Of this group of naïve web surfers, children are among those who are exposed to this content that many would definitely not consider “age appropriate.” Furthermore, this exposure to pornographic content at such a young age leads many to wonder if sexual development of these children is affected at all. Some researchers would argue yes, while others believe that pornography is such a westernized taboo that should not lead to negative side effects should premature exposure occur.

## 3

### **The Impact of Pornography on Intimate Relationships**

Eliana Swislow [ess4206@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:ess4206@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Nathan Sahyouni [nxs5286@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:nxs5286@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Pornography usage, as defined as use of the Internet for any activity involving sexual arousal, is a trend in American culture. In a recent study that examined use of pornography by college students, results indicated that 87% of men and 31% of women reported viewing pornography at least once in the past month. Further research has demonstrated that approximately 3-8% of the population that utilizes pornography will develop a compulsion in that they will view pornography 11 or more hours a week. Pornography usage can have a negative impact on monogamous partner relationships. In particular, there is research that suggests that viewing pornography increases the likelihood of infidelity in that viewing pornography elicits the illusion that one has more attractive options available than their partner. There is also research to suggest that conflict can arise between partners if there is disagreement regarding whether viewing pornography is considered as an act of infidelity. This poster intends to examine the negative impact that pornography usage can have on monogamous partner relationships.

## 4

### **Christianity and Sexuality**

Olivia Ellis [Oae0619@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Oae0619@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

This poster focuses on the intersection of Christianity (specifically from a Baptist perspective) and sexuality. Through the lens of Jennifer Wright Knust, an ordained American Baptist professor and Doctor of Religion, specific rules regarding sexuality in the Bible are explored, as well as what the Bible really says regarding topics such as the ideas behind marriage and sex before or during marriage in a heterosexual relationship. After an in-depth look at passages throughout both Old and New Testaments, various Biblical passages appear to be contradictory in regards to sexuality and desire. Knust explores whether the Bible should be used as a strict guide to sexual practices within Christianity, and if not, how Christians should look at sex and desire within their faith.

## 5

### **Sunnah, Makruh and Haram: The intersection of Islam and Sexuality**

Michael Jones [mwj4102@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:mwj4102@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

While traditions and practices vary across world regions, Islam gives sexual guidelines for both men and women that emphasize the unity and intimacy between couples. Browning, Green and Witte (2006) divulge extensive information about the relationships between men and women, quoting the Qur'an and various *hadiths* ("words of the prophet") that stress the mirroring equality of the two sexes. Sexuality is viewed as a means by which to build intimacy between a husband and wife and emphasizes the necessity of pleasure for both partners. Sexual practices between a married couple are prescribed in various *hadiths* (Al-Kawthari, 2007), which can be divided into three modalities: the *sunnah* (holy), *makruh* (looked down upon) and *haram* (forbidden). As with many other religions, the topic of sexuality is one that is often avoided, even in a clinical context. Nevertheless, sexual practices within the Islamic community give rise to various issues between Muslim couples and individuals. It is the goal of this exploration to better educate future therapists on the intersection of Islam and sexuality in order to build better competency when discussing sex with Muslim clients.

## 6

### **Shomer Negiah: The Laws and Psychological Consequences of Touch in Judaism**

Elie Saltzman M.S. C.R.C. [Esaltz1@gmail.com](mailto:Esaltz1@gmail.com)

Do you like high fives? How about fist bumps? For people of the Jewish faith, that question can be difficult to answer. The laws of Negiah (touch) are a delicate topic in the Jewish tradition, and it can have a strong impact on many psychological aspects. First, this presentation aims to look at the laws of Shomer Negiah (Guarding Touch) from a Biblical perspective. Secondly, the psychological perspective of Shomer Negiah will be addressed by looking at the many aspects of how it shapes adolescents' understanding and expression of sexuality. Finally, the efficacy of certain treatment methods will be examined to determine how best to approach a clients who may be experiencing problems in this area.

## 7

### **The InterSEXion of Religious Attitudes, Spiritual Practices and Sexual Satisfaction**

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Alexis Abern [lmv3559@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:lmv3559@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

This poster aims to explore the complex overlap between sexuality, religious beliefs, and spiritual practice. Current research examines the role of religious affiliation and how religious attitudes may impact attitudes towards sex and sexual satisfaction. Findings suggest that those with certain religious beliefs may report higher sexual satisfaction. Additionally, research exists on spirituality and sexuality, specifically regarding the phenomenon of transcendental sexual experiences. Studies looking at transcendental sexual encounters have found that people from varying spiritual practices are able to both spontaneously experience transcendent sexual occurrences, as well as intentionally cultivate such experiences. The purpose of this poster is to critically examine the parallels and disparities between religiosity and spirituality and their respective influence on sexual attitudes and sexual satisfaction.

## 8

### **Sexual Competence**

Kim Dell'Angela Ph.D., Kyle Simon, Alexandra Bernard, Ryan Andresen, and

Nickolas Armstrong [Kdellangela@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Kdellangela@thechicagoschool.edu)

The manner in which topics in human sexuality are addressed in professional education has been the subject of research in medicine, nursing and psychology. Human sexuality is a broad topic that may include social constructs of gender, physiology, developmental patterns, relationships and pathology. Miller (2010) found that psychologists report more training related to sexual problems (e.g., sexual violence, sexual disorders) than healthy sexuality. APA accredited programs are required to include education about diversity related to gender and sexuality as well as basic physiological aspects of sexual function in the curriculum.

Sexual concerns may arise as a consequence of societal, relational, psychological or physical health problems including pharmacological treatments related to these. Research has established that clinicians who have not received education/training in human sexuality do not address sexuality in clinical practice despite its relevance to the care of patients. Psychologists will be increasingly called upon to collaborate with health service provider colleagues on care of patients for who sexual health must be addressed (e.g. Post cardiac surgery sexual activity). This study responds to Reissing's (2010) call for an increased focus on whether sexuality training in current graduate curricula "...adequately prepare psychologists to assess, refer, and treat sexual health concerns."

All syllabi for courses taught in the Clinical Psy.D program at TCSPP Chicago for one year were searched for the presence of keywords related to sexuality. Data regarding how topics in sexuality are represented in the curriculum will be presented.

## 9

### **Sexual Education in the U.S. vs. Europe**

Anna Trout [Act9933@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Act9933@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

This poster focuses on the differences between sex education in the United State and European countries. It compares the types of sex education taught and the consequences of those educations, comparing teen pregnancy and STIs among other consequences. It also looks at the differences between the states and how sex ed is mandated to be taught there as there is no comprehensive curriculum for the whole country. By looking into what is currently being done we can see what needs to change in the future.

## 10

### **On Sex, Attachment, and the Back home Preceptorship: The Work of the Reflective Practitioner-in-Training within Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

Gideon Litherland and Amanda Gallegos

The Family Institute at Northwestern University

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The presenters venture to articulate the clinical importance of the practitioner's selfhood within a therapeutic relationship. The presenters advance such a position from a relational-dynamic theoretical approach and clinical training program. Presenters will share their own experience of participating in a Preceptorship experience and the utility of "digging into the interior." Recent research within the field of mental health counseling and related disciplines is critiqued to provide historical-cultural context while simultaneously offering up attachment-informed possibilities for future therapist action and clinical intervention. Here, the presenters distinguish between sex therapy and sexuality counseling within the field of mental health. The focus of the presentation asserts that a practitioner's keen self-awareness of sexual issues, ranging from culturally-bound sexuality to "normative" sexual behavior, is of incredible significance to the therapeutic relationship and the resultant psychosocial development of the client.

## 11

### **Ultra-vanilla: Non-penetrative Gay Male Sex as Healthy and Hot Alternative Practice**

Paul Larson, PhD. [plarson@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:plarson@thechicagoschool.edu)

Non-penetrative sex (NPS) is presented as an "ultra-vanilla" form of alternative sexuality. There are many erotic activities two men can do with each other, yet contemporary gay culture has focused mostly on anal sex as the "main event" leading to climax and all other forms of sexual activity are generally conceived of as foreplay. Anyone who shows a distinct preference for other forms is often looked down upon as either immature or in some way handicapped or disadvantaged. Non-penetrative sex (NPS) practices, include mutual masturbation and frottage are presented as a healthy and desirable alternative. The chief advantage is the reduced risk of transmission of STDs, though other advantages are discussed as well. At least two websites have taken up advocacy for NPS practices, and communities of interest have arisen from them. These will be discussed in light of emerging social diversity in the gay male community. The attitudinal barriers to the wider use of these techniques are explored, including viewing NPS as psycho-sexually immature and incomplete. Specific cognitive strategies for promoting change in attitude are presented. In addition, several suggestions borrowed from Masters and Johnson's "sensate focus" approach to treatment of sexual dysfunction are discussed as a means of enhancing the erotic appeal of these practices.

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### **A Brief History and Debate of Intersex Psychology**

Ethan Kowalski [Sxk2121@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Sxk2121@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Throughout history, society has regulated intersexuality (hermaphroditism) in many different ways throughout many different cultures. In the Victorian Era, intersex bodies have been controlled from a religious standpoint and eventually as history went on they have been controlled under the supervision of medicine. In the mid-twentieth century psychologists and social scientists, including John Money, tried to separate the definitions of sex and gender in order to get a better view of what our biology and identity means in terms of the debate of nature versus nurture. The priority of doctors since intersexuality has become a more well researched topic has been to provide genital reconstruction surgeries on intersex children without their consent. This has been a huge controversy, especially for those who had the surgeries themselves. Greenburg and Stam (2012) mention Cheryl Chase who had ambiguous genitals at birth, was raised as a boy for eighteen months, then given genital reconstruction surgery to appear more “feminine” then raised as a girl, “The surgery was so traumatic that Cheryl stopped speaking for about six months. For most of her childhood and young-adult life, she felt extraordinarily unhappy and isolated. By nineteen, she was filled with rage and had suicidal thoughts” (Greenburg & Stam, 2012). It is not unordinary for doctors to decide the gender in which a child should be raised and this has proven to have negative implications for intersex people throughout history. There is also debate within the intersex community whether or not intersexuality is equivalent to queerness.

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### **Navigating Jewish and Transgender Identities**

Nicole Thalheimer, M.A. [Nat3861@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Nat3861@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Holding both a transgender and a Jewish identity can come with a plethora of challenges and stigma. The invalidation of an already marginalized group is exacerbated by clinical invisibility, lack of empirical research, and lack of understanding how individuals hold these identities. The current review of literature yielded no empirical studies that examine the experiences of women who identify as transgender and Jewish; though some narratives have been compiled in recent popular memoirs looking at individuals with these intersecting identities.

Holding multiple minority statuses can compound minority stress in a multitude of ways, often times affecting the mental health of the individual. Transgender individuals are often marginalized for identifying outside the gender binary, which complicates and compounds the lived experience of individuals who find themselves at the intersection of other marginalized statuses as well, such as religious or cultural identifications. Without research to guide their practice, many clinicians may feel at a loss when trying to work with a client who identifies as transgender and Jewish. The poster discusses the existing information on individuals who identify as transgender and Jewish, the need for further research, and the importance of an intersectional approach when working clinically with transgender individuals.

## **Sexual Satisfaction in Trans Male-to-Female Individuals**

Greg Mendelson, M.A. [gam0948@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:gam0948@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

The purpose of my study is to address the lack of research related to sexual satisfaction in the transgender community. There is a significant lack of research examining factors that may contribute to quality of sex in the transgender community. Research that does exist often focuses on physical factors that either enhance, or hinder sexual satisfaction. The few studies that examine sexual pleasure often use self-report questionnaires, and although many of these questionnaires are valid and useful scales, they fail to explore the reasons behind participant's sexual satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Furthermore, these questionnaires are often originally created for biological females, and may not address the issues of transgender women. Given the positive benefits of sexual expression on one's physical and emotional health, it is important to understand the lived sexual experiences of transgender individuals, and to not solely focus on sexual complications or dysfunction.

Many of the studies examining sexual satisfaction or functioning are limited to transsexuals who have had sex reassignment surgery (SRS), specifically, vaginoplasty. In addition, they are mainly conducted in Europe or Brazil, and few are done in the United States. Moreover, those done in the United States may be limited in that many participants who could afford this expensive surgery were of higher socio-economic status (SES). This is different in many of the other countries where previous transsexual studies were done, where laws are different with regards to transsexuals (where surgery is available at a lower cost or free).

Lastly, there is often a medical bias, in that staff members or doctors that performed the individual's surgery often conduct these studies.

## **Unqueering Transgender: Interacting with Inmates Diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder**

Jeffrey M. Washelesky, M.A. [jmw9644@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:jmw9644@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Inmates who identify as transgender pose special challenges to correctional staff within the prison and jail system. Research suggests that inmates who identify as transgender are at a higher risk of self-harm and sexual assault while incarcerated. Currently, there is not a Supreme Court ruling regarding housing of inmates who identify as transgender. Therefore, the states are allowed to determine if an inmate should be classified in accordance with the self-identified gender or their gender at birth. Often times, male-to-female transgender inmates are housed in a male population, leaving them extraordinarily vulnerable to physical and sexual assault by other inmates. It has also been suggested that often, the correctional staff is at fault for allowing such violence to occur, or are perpetrating the violence themselves. In an effort to reduce the stigmatization that inmates who identify as transgender are subjected to, decrease the occurrence of the physical and sexual assaults that they encounter while incarcerated, and increase appropriate correctional staff responses to crisis situations involving inmates who identify as transgender, a 2-day training program, focusing on the special needs of transgender inmates, has been designed for all correctional staff. How to appropriately manage, interact, and protect inmates who identify as transgender is a level 3 program aimed at educating correctional staff and other prison or jail employees about inmates who are transgender and provide them with the knowledge to professionally and ethically work with this special population.

## **Relational Satisfaction in Long-Term, Non-monogamous, Heterosexual Relationships**

Heather Tahler, M.A., Leesa Contorino, and Olivia Ellis

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This study was designed to explore questions examining relational satisfaction in long-term non-monogamous heterosexual couples in comparison to relational satisfaction in long-term sexually monogamous heterosexual couples, as well as gain insight into whom those involved in non-monogamous relationships disclose to and the potential stigma felt by this disclosure. Demographic variables were also explored to see if any prediction of marital satisfaction occurred.

Both long-term sexually monogamous and long-term sexually non-monogamous participants responded to a secure online survey. The survey consisted of informed consent, inclusion criteria, ENRICH marital satisfaction scale (Fowers and Olson 1993) items, and open-ended questions for items not assessed by the ENRICH scale alone.

After checking for univariate normality and outliers and assessing missing value patterns, results show that both the Marital Satisfaction and Idealistic Distortion scales were reliable. The findings in the study revealed that relationship type did not have a significant impact on marital satisfaction or idealistic distortion, with similar levels of satisfaction and idealistic distortion in both monogamous and non-monogamous couples. The results also demonstrated, through linear regression for demographic variables, that only income level significantly predicted marital satisfaction. After qualitative data was coded, there were many themes found within both monogamous and non-monogamous couples.

Data supports the original hypothesis that there was very little difference in marital satisfaction between monogamous and non-monogamous heterosexual couples. With these results, non-monogamy is a more viable relationship option than previously recognized for couples that are interested, and it is necessary to create models to work with these couples. Developing further research within this population specifically is also necessary for the future.

## **Understanding Non-Monogamy**

Maximilian Willson [Mcw3658@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Mcw3658@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

The poster aims to provide a basic understanding of non-monogamy in order to aid clinicians in practice. It explains a few commonly used terms and describes some common aspects of non-monogamous relationships. It is based in scholarly research, but will include particular concerns crowd-sourced from the polyamorous community. In this way the polyamorous community will be able to reach out and give therapists and those training to be therapists a greater understanding of this lifestyle, and the strengths and challenges that come with it.

## **“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”: The Historical Context of Sexual Orientation in the U.S. Armed Forces and the Lived Experiences of Disclosure**

Dawn Ko Mitchell, M.A. [Dkm0313@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Dkm0313@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

“Don’t ask, don’t tell”(DADT), a U.S. policy enacted in 1994, prohibited individuals from disclosing his or her sexual orientation or engaging in dialogue about *any* homosexual relationships, while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Disclosure of sexual orientation as homosexual or participation in homosexual conduct, resulted in involuntary discharge from the military, as individuals were deemed



unfit for military service. Unlawful investigations and increased harassment of alleged servicemen and women led to a revision of the policy, “don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t pursue, don’t harass”. Repercussions from disclosure of sexual orientation in the U.S. Armed Forces, predates DADT. As seen throughout history, consequences of affirming sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) have resulted in discrimination, severe physical, psychological and sexual harassment and violence. Sexual minorities in the military experience further stressors and extraordinary challenges; Fear of being “outed”, inequality of entitlement, medical regulations labeling transgender individuals as mentally unstable and prohibiting service in the military, disruption of unit cohesion, morale and retention, in addition to infinite worry surrounding a nation at war. The repeal of DADT in 2011 permits LGB individuals to serve openly in the U.S. military, however, little is known about the lived experiences for sexual minorities after the repeal. This paper will explore the historical context of sexual orientation in the military, the impact of DADT on sexual minorities in the military and will seek to understand the experience of disclosure while serving in the military before, during and after the repeal of DADT.

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### **Sexuality....Not Every Sexual Minority Fits the LGB Acronym**

*PRIDE* at the Chicago School

Erica Aten [exa4937@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:exa4937@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

In line with our group’s mission statement of raising awareness, *PRIDE* at The Chicago School made this poster in an effort to highlight sexual minorities who do not identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Nontraditional sexuality labels are becoming more commonplace and it is our goal to describe the intricacies and nuances within these labels to foster multicultural awareness among future and practicing clinicians.

## 21

### **Effects of a Defusion Exercise on Implicit Attitudes toward Heterosexual and LGBT**

#### **Terms**

Jon Emory, MA, Fawna Stockwell, PhD, BCBA-D, and Scott Herbst, PhD

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The Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure (IRAP) is a computer-based procedure based on principles of Relational Frame Theory that directly measures participant’s implicit attitudes by tracking participants’ response latencies when presented with specific stimuli (Barnes-Holmes, Power, Hayden, Milne, & Stewart, 2006). In the present study, the IRAP was utilized as a pretest measure to examine participant’s negative implicit attitudes toward sexual and gender orientation terms: gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), heterosexual, and straight, in college graduate students. The relational terms “True” and “False” were presented as response options with sample terms such as “Heterosexual” and “Gay” and various positive and negative stimuli (i.e. “Good” and “Bad”). Additionally, a paper questionnaire examined participants’ explicit attitudes related to the same terms both prior to the IRAP. A simple defusion exercise in the form of a packet containing pro-LGBT exemplars was presented to each participant immediately following the IRAP. Participants then completed the IRAP again as a post-test immediately following the defusion exercise. Results showed an effect at the group level but this effect was not consistent across all participants.

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### **Measures of Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward Mainstream and BDSM Sexual Terms Using the IRAP and Questionnaire with BDSM/Fetish and Student Participants**

Fawna Stockwell, PhD, BCBA-D, Diana Walker, PhD, BCBA-D, John Eshleman, EdD, BCBA-D [fstockwell@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:fstockwell@thechicagoschool.edu)

The Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure (IRAP) examines implicit attitudes through the measurement of response latencies. In this study, the IRAP was used to assess implicit attitudes toward “mainstream” sexual terms (e.g., Kissing) and “BDSM” terms (e.g., Bondage) among individuals reporting BDSM interests and among students who did not report such interests. A questionnaire was used to measure explicit attitudes toward the same sexual terms as well as self-reported sexual behaviors. Results showed that the Student group generally displayed pro-mainstream attitudes, while the BDSM group displayed pro-BDSM attitudes. These effects were mirrored in the questionnaire results, which provides support for the IRAP as a potentially useful tool in measuring participant attitudes toward complex sexual stimuli.

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### **Erotic Pain**

Vanessa Hicks, M.A. [Vah3564@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:Vah3564@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Sadomasochism is a sexual culture that is often viewed as immoral and pathological. This deviant paradigm within which sadomasochism is often understood is likely a result of the inability to imagine pain—an element commonly associated with sadomasochism—as anything other than aversive. The research outlined in this poster will explore the phenomenon of erotic pain. A number of implications of the research will be described, including the liberation of constricted, pathological views of erotic pain, which may aid practitioners in providing more informed therapeutic care for individuals engaging in activities categorized as “sadomasochistic.”

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### **An Exploratory Comparison of Sexual Behavior Frequencies of Female Sex Workers and Non-Sex Workers**

Fawna Stockwell, PhD, BCBA-D, Ann Sturtz, MA, BCBA, and Dena Valentino, MA, BCBA [fstockwell@thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:fstockwell@thechicagoschool.edu)

This exploratory study involved the use of daily log books to gather information on the relationship between orgasms and erotic material use for several women who identified as sex workers, and several women who did not identify as sex workers. This study also examined the impact of participant-reported life events on the frequency of orgasms and erotic material used. Three Chicago-area sex workers and two non-sex workers (23-39 years old) participated in this study for between 6 and 9 weeks in total. Participation involved completion of a daily behavior log at home; this included reporting orgasm frequency, context, and type, the duration and type of erotic material they viewed, and notable daily events. Results showed that patterns of behavior were idiosyncratic and varied greatly across participants, with no clear differences observed between sex workers and non-sex workers. Participants reported viewing a broad range of erotic materials, and specific life events appeared to affect both the occurrence of orgasms and the occurrence and duration of viewing erotic material.

## **Sexual Health for Females with Autism**

Dasha Hentoff [drh3467@ego.thechicagoschool.edu](mailto:drh3467@ego.thechicagoschool.edu)

Autism is not equally diagnosed in males and females with a ratio of 4:1 male to female (APA, 2013) and thus adolescent girls on the autism spectrum present with a unique set of needs that have only recently been recognized as an important area for study and treatment. According to research by Attwood (2002) people with autism do desire social and romantic relationships but often do not know how to go about it which leads to misunderstandings and often times abuse. A lack of education around sexual education, health, and rights puts women with disabilities at even greater risk. The US Department of Justice, "68% to 83% of women with developmental disabilities will be sexually assaulted in their lifetimes. In addition to what researchers tell us about the specific needs of females with autism, my own personal experience as a student and trainee has confirmed these research findings for me. After working with many females with autism, it became apparent that both females with autism and their parents expressed great anxiety around puberty, lack of education around their bodies, sex, and relationships, as well as their rights as women. Thus, this poster presentation examines existing research about sex education specifically tailored for the needs of adolescent and young adult women with autism.



**MISSION STATEMENT:** Projects Advancing Sexual Diversity applies the practice of psychology to further the understanding and acceptance of diverse sexual and gender identities, practices and cultures. We explore narratives of healthy, normative development in these populations. Utilizing innovative research and interventions, PASD also strives to create sustainable change in conditions impacting the welfare of sexual and gender minority individuals, families and communities.

[www.ProjectsAdvancingSexualDiversity.org](http://www.ProjectsAdvancingSexualDiversity.org)

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