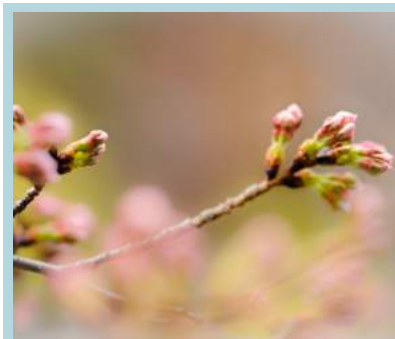




THE SOCIETY FOR THE
SCIENTIFIC STUDY
OF SEXUALITY

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CONSENT IS NOT AN AFTERNOON SNACK

Guest Feature by Dr. Kristen Jozkowski



Lately, the topic of sexual consent has been getting attention, both in academic settings and in mainstream

media. As one of several SSSS members who studies sexual consent (like Drs. Charlene Muehlenhard, Zoe Peterson, and Terry Humphreys, to name a few), I think this is a very exciting development!

With a national push from the White House (see [Not Alone](#), a report from the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault) Americans are re-examining our approach to sexual assault on college campuses. In response, violence prevention campaigns and PSAs have been circulating the Internet.

In the last year or so, one particular analogy was sent to me repeatedly: the “[Consent: It’s Simple like Tea](#)”. I have to admit, this analogy makes me cringe, and I do not think I am the only one to have this reaction.

Although the concept of consent should be so simple, in practice this is simply not the case.

Charlene Muehlenhard argued back in the mid- 90’s (see her SIECUS report regarding conceptualizations of sexual consent) that consent can be thought of as a *mental act* or as a *verbal/behavioral act*. Already this does not sound so simple...

The mental act of consent is a person’s internal sense of their own willingness to engage in sexual behavior. But, unless I communicate my

internal thoughts and feelings to my sexual partner in some way, they are not privy to what goes on inside my head.

My partner needs know what I want, which means we need the verbal/behavioral aspect of consent.

However, how people communicate, interpret, and conceptualize consent varies and is complicated by cultural contexts that paint sex, particularly sex engaged in by women, as something that is potentially shameful. In the absence of a tea-shaming culture, I am not sure that we can really say consent is like tea.

When I saw [a blog post that compared consent to cake](#), I was intrigued...

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Call for Research Participants!

Rosara Torrisi is seeking assistance recruiting participants for her dissertation research study. Rosara is a licensed clinical social worker in New York State and currently is a PhD candidate in Widener University's Human Sexuality program.

This study is about the sexuality of lesbian survivors of breast cancer. Every participant who completes the study will receive a \$20 Coupon Voucher for use at HankyPanky.com

Anyone who meets the following criteria may be eligible:

- 21 years of age or older
- Identify as a member of the lesbian community (Both lesbian women without a breast cancer history and lesbian survivors of breast cancer can participate. "Woman" and "Lesbian" are broadly defined).
- Have been diagnosed with breast cancer at any stage.

Please feel free to contact Rosara with any questions or concerns:
rosaratorrisi@lisextherapy.com

www.SexTherapyLongIsland.com

The Widener University IRB
approves this study
until 1/15/17 under study number 52-16.



Consent is NOT an Afternoon Snack Continued...

The author points out: *"cake has connotations of sin, temptation, forbidden pleasure and guilt (at least for the weight-watchers among us)."* That sounds a lot more similar to sex than a cup of tea.

Consent to sex is different than consent to drinking tea because we generally don't call people tea sluts if they drank a pot of green tea yesterday, oolong tea today, and plan to drink black tea tomorrow, but we do (especially for women) if those different teas represent different sex partners.

However, as I continued to read the cake analogy, my cautious optimism quickly turned to anger. The author summarizes her arguments as follows:

1. *If someone offers you cake and you say, 'Oh, I'd love some!' that's consent.*

Ok, great, I agree with this!

2. *If someone offers you cake and you don't really feel like eating it but say, 'Sure, I'd love some!', because you don't want to hurt their feelings, that's also consent.*

I can generally agree with this point too, with some caveats.

3. *If you say, 'Thanks, but I don't think so', and they convince you to change your mind, that's also consent. It doesn't matter how many times you said no. It doesn't matter if your friend was being an obnoxious, guilt-tripping, sulky, passive-aggressive pest... As long as you were free to refuse the cake without risking some tangible harm, it's up to you to grow a spine.*

I do NOT agree with this argument. I would call this coercion. If someone says 'no' many times, or just once, and someone else has sex with them that is not consensual. Saying that someone needs to "grow a spin" exemplifies victim blaming, which is not good.

4. *"If you're drunk (but sufficiently in control of your faculties to eat cake...), that's also consent. If you weren't thinking straight and ate so much cake you were sick the next day, chalk it up as a valuable learning experience."*

Again, I do NOT agree with this. By definition, if someone is too intoxicated to “think straight” then I do not think they are in a position to be able to consent to sex. However, how do you know when someone is “too intoxicated?” That is yet another aspect that makes this issue very complicated...and thus not simple like eating an afternoon snack of tea and cake.

There are many factors that complicate issues around consent (for a recent review see the [article co-authored by Muehlenhard, Peterson, Humphreys and myself](#) in JSR). The bottom line is that I do not think consent is simple; consent is not like tea and it is not like cake.

There is so much cultural baggage that comes with consent to sex, including issues regarding gender and sexuality, our general view of sex as something that is shameful (even though we in SSSS know that it shouldn't be), and our inability to talk about sex, publically, in a serious way. Until we address some of these larger socio-cultural issues, I would like to see PSA's and blogs shy away from overly simple analogies.

Maybe one day our social views on sex will make it more like drinking a cup of tea, but until then, think critically about what you read and see online regarding sex and consent.

Dr. Kristen Jozkowski
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kjozkows@uark.edu



2015 Janice Epp. Award Winner!

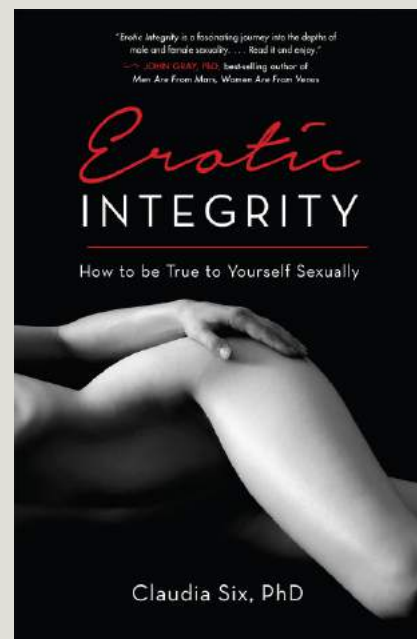
Veronica Tirado-Mercado is a MA student completing her degree in Public Health Education at the University of Puerto Rico. Much of her past work has been with Dr. Carlos Rodriguez-Díaz and the Sex+ TEAM, a team charged in promoting sexual health and rights. Veronica has collaborated in CDC/NIH funded projects pertaining to stigma, HIV+ people, LGBT and incarcerated populations. Her areas of interests include social constructs about sexuality, socio-structural stigma and the promotion and protection of Human Rights.

New Book by Dr. Claudia Six Erotic integrity: How to be True to your Erotic Self

“In *Erotic Integrity*, Dr. Claudia Six leads readers through ten sexual themes including garden-variety performance anxiety, sexual boredom, newly dating, coming out, and more and reveals three simple steps to a more rewarding sex life: knowing who you truly are as a sexual being, embracing that knowledge, and living it authentically. Frankly presented and illustrated with candid case studies, these steps can be applied by individuals and couples of all ages and sexual orientations, with or without children. Based on Dr. Six's twenty five years experience as a clinical sexologist, this straightforward guide skillfully challenges readers to self-examine, self-accept, and self-actualize for a more fulfilling sense of eroticism.”

Check it out here:

<http://drsix.net/erotic-integrity-book/>





The SSSS Executive and Board of Directors (pictured) met in Chicago this month to discuss the future of The Society, our upcoming meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, and to begin preparations for the 60th anniversary celebrations during our 2017 meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico!

Members can look forward to some exciting advancements, new local events (see pages 6 and 8 for more details), and a series of fantastic future annual meetings together, to mention just a few of the topics discussed at this meeting.

Our board takes their charge of ensuring the robustness of The Society seriously and everyone worked very hard at this spring meeting to help ensure a strong future for SSSS.

In Attendance:

Terry Humphreys President
 Osmo Kontula Past President
 Kristen Jozkowski Secretary
 Juline Koken Member at Large
 Jay Irwin Member at Large
 Tiffany Marcantonio Senior Student Rep.

Eric Buhi President Elect
 Mandy Peters Executive Director
 Swagata Banik Treasurer
 Kristen Mark Member at Large
 Carlos Rodriguez Diaz Member at Large
 Shayna Sparling Member at Large

Dr. Carry Roth Bayer, Dave & Emma Bayer, Kathey Paterson, and the Roth Families would like to extend their thanks to the SSSS Family for the beautiful flowers sent to honour Carey's father's passing. "My dad was so proud of how far I had come and where I was going – thanks for being a part of the journey!"



Dr. Robert Embree and his family would like to thank his SSSS friends and colleagues for the white lantern and flowers, which were displayed

at the memorial service of his wife, Valda Embree. "I and my family greatly appreciate the condolences from my SSSS friends and colleagues."

Robert is making a donation of \$500 to the FSSS.

*In Loving Memory of
 Valda J. Embree*



*April 14, 1930
 March 22, 2016*



In Memoriam: John Gagnon

John Gagnon, a sociologist who changed the field of sex research by proposing that sexual behavior could better be understood by looking at social forces rather than biology or psychology, died on Feb. 11, 2016 at home in Palm Springs, CA. He was 84.

Professor Gagnon established his career as a researcher at the Institute for Sex Research (now the Kinsey Institute) at Indiana University in the 1960s, and in the 1990s carried out a comprehensive survey of sexual behavior in the United States. Unlike the Kinsey studies, which were based on selected samples and anecdotal evidence, Professor Gagnon's survey used sampling techniques to arrive at a representative population of about 3,400 adults between 18 and 59. It offered a more accurate picture of the diversity in American sex lives.

Gagnon is survived by his wife, Dr. Cathy Greenblat, his four children, and five grandchildren.

Adapted from:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/26/us/john-gagnon-sociologist-who-explored-human-sexuality-dies-at-84.html>



Dr. Sandra Caron has published a new children's book: **Birds and bees and more: How babies are made and families form.** It covers the typical way babies are made through sexual intercourse (including a lovely illustration), along with reproductive technologies (e.g., IVF, ICSI, IUI), sperm and egg donation, surrogacy, as well as adoption and foster care. The book celebrates the great diversity of families (e.g., single, straight, gay/lesbian) and the great lengths individuals and couples may go to become parents. It's geared for elementary school-aged children. It is available in hardcover on lulu.com and as a paperback on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

Congratulations Dr. Terri Messman-Moore, of the Psychology Department at Miami (OH) University! Terri has been awarded an **FSSS Grant in Aid** for the following study: "Sexual Trauma and PTSD in bisexual women – A test of minority stress theory" Great Work!

Now Accepting Applications for the 2016 Janice M. Epp Student Scholarship Award!

The Janice M. Epp Scholarship Award is given annually to encourage students to participate in SSSS academic meetings by defraying the cost of registration.

Applications are due August 1st, 2016. More information here:

http://www.sexscience.org/honors/janice_m_epp_student_scholarship_award/



Have an Idea for a Sexuality Event? Apply for a SSSS Mini-Grant!

The Board of Directors for the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality would like to inform you of yet another excellent perk of being a SSSS member. We are thrilled to announce the launch of **10 annual mini-grants for supporting sexuality research events in your neighborhood**. The mini-grants can be used by our members to support a variety of events that are in line with the vision and mission of SSSS. Examples of events include: local conferences or symposia that are focused on sexuality research/education/therapy; new developments bringing sexuality researchers/educators/therapists together to conduct workshops; sponsoring sexuality researchers/educators/therapists to provide talks to the local community, etc.

The purpose of these grants is not only to give back to our members, but also to broaden the SSSS brand. We are looking to expand awareness of our organization and possibly its numbers. **Think about how you might utilize one of these mini-grants to further the wonderful sexual science happening in your local area.**

If you are interested in applying for one of these grants, we are interested in hearing from you! Check the SexScience.org website to access the application form.



2016 Mini-Grant Recipients so far:

SSSS Member: Carlos Rodriguez-Diaz
Location: University of Puerto Rico
May 2-4, 2016
<http://vconferenciasp.rcm.upr.edu/>

SSSS Member: Dr. Terry Humphreys
Location: Trent University
June 2-3, 2016
<https://sexualconsentconference.com/>

SSSS Member: Dr. Stephanie Sanders
Location: Indiana University
October 6-8, 2016 <https://www.indiana.edu/~iucweb/newviewcapstone/>



2015 Janice Epp Award Winner!

Lisa Meyers, PhD, is a licensed clinical social worker in Kansas and Missouri, and she has a private practice in **Kansas City, MO**. She continues to help mold future social workers through her involvement in the Kansas University Practicum Program as a Field Liaison and Field Instructor.

Dr. Meyers presented in a symposium at the recent SSSS meeting in Albuquerque titled **The History and Potential of Three Somatic Sexuality Interventions: Emerging Research from the Field**.

Dr. Meyers was honored to receive the **SSSS Janice Epp Student Award** for 2015 in recognition of her research. Dr. Meyers is currently conducting pre and post surveys with women who are participating in Bodysex workshops between September 2015 and June 2016.

"One of the primary benefits of attending the 2015 SSSS annual meeting was reconnecting with colleagues from around the country that I don't get to see very often. When I come to these events I also get to geek-out or fan-girl over notable professionals that I admire. I would say that I learned the most from the two sessions on interacting with the media. David Ley and Jimmy Manning, in their respective breakouts with fellow speakers, made the information accessible and translatable to the daily work I do. Thanks to them, I have less anxiety about engaging the public through various forms of media."

MEMBER NEWS!



Chelsea Reynolds wrote an article that was published on Vox about recently deceased Prince's legacy for gender and sexuality. You can read it for yourself here: <http://www.vox.com/2016/4/24/11495344/prince-queer-theory>

Dr. Heino F. L. Meyer-Bahlburg has been asked to spearhead a subworkgroup on gender with the **US Pediatric Endocrine Society and the European Society for Pediatric Endocrinology**. Two papers have been published as a result of this work so far:



Meyer-Bahlburg HFL, Baratz Dalke K, Berenbaum SA, Cohen-Kettenis PT, Hines M, Schober JM. Gender assignment, reassignment, and outcome in disorders of sex development: Update of the 2005 Consensus Conference. *Horm Res Paediatr* 85(2): 112-118, 2016.

Lee PA, Nordenström A, Houk CP, Ahmed SF, Auchus R, Baratz A, Baratz Dalke K, Liao LM, Lin-Su K, Looijenga 3rd LHJ, Mazur T, Meyer-Bahlburg HFL, Mouriquand P, Quigley CA, Sandberg DE, Vilain E, Witchel S, & The Global Update Consortium: Global disorders of sex development update since 2006: Perceptions, approach and care. *Horm Res Paediatr* 85(3): 158-180, 2016.

Dr. Meyer-Bahlburg will also be part of the team (as the only mental health specialist) that will update the 2010 Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline for Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia.



Dr. Joye Swan has published a new paper that discusses how "monogamy" may actually increase the risk of HIV infection:

Swan, J. D., & Thompson, S. C. (2016). Monogamy, the protective fallacy: Sexual versus emotional exclusivity and the implication for sexual health risk. *Journal of Sex Research*, 53, 64-73.

Dr. Carey Roth Bayer and the faculty from the **Center of Excellence for Sexual Health** and the **Association of American Medical Colleges' Committee on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Sex Development** have created and released 20 clinical vignette videos and 20 faculty development videos on caring for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender nonconforming populations, and people born with differences of sex development (LGBT, GNC, DSD).



You can check out the Clinical Vignettes:

<https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/diversity/axis/educationalresources/450606/clinicalvignettes.html>

Faculty Development Videos: <https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/diversity/axis/educationalresources>

and Book: <https://www.aamc.org/lgbtdsd>

For further information, contact Dr. Carey Roth Bayer at cbayer@msm.edu

Coming Up....

The **University of Trent** will be hosting the first **Sexual Consent Conference** in central and eastern Canada on **June 2nd and 3rd**. This meeting will feature plenary talks by Terry Humphreys, Tara Williamson, Lori Schindel-Martin, and Charlene Senn.

More information: <http://sexualconsentconference.com/>

The **Guelph Sexuality Conference**, one of the largest and longest running sexuality conferences in Canada is happening at the University of Guelph this **June 23rd and 24th**. This year will feature plenary talks by Francisco Ramirez, Emily Nagoski, and Jessica O'Reilly! More information here: <http://guelphsexualityconference.ca/plenary-sessions-2016/>

The **International Academy of Sex Research** (IASR) will be holding their annual conference in Malmö, Sweden from **June 26th to 29th**. This year will feature plenary talks by Afsaneh Najmabadi and Ine Vanwesenbeeck (and more).

More information: <http://www.iasrsite.org/2016-annual-meeting/>

This summer George Washington University will be hosting a **SSSS local symposium** titled: "Science of Health, Gender, and Sexuality: A Multidisciplinary Symposium". The symposium will take place **July 13th** and will be co-chaired by Mark Schoen, PhD and Michael Vigorito, LMFT. A full list of speakers and registration details will be posted mid-to late May

The **International Association for Relationship Research** (IARR) will be holding their annual conference in Toronto, Ontario from **July 20th to 24th**. This year will feature plenary talks by Harry Reis and William Fisher (and more).

More information: <http://iarr.psych.utoronto.ca/program.html>

Opportunity!

The George Washington University graduate certificate program in [LGBT Health Policy & Practice](#) is now accepting applications for the 2016-17 program year. The certificate is a 12-credit, combined online/on-campus interdisciplinary program that trains medical and mental health professionals to better care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

Their [application portal](#) is open now. They operate on a rolling admission basis: applications will be processed as they are submitted. The next cohort starts classes at the end of June 2016. The final application deadline is May 31. More Info: lgbt.columbian.gwu.edu/how-apply

Get your news in the next edition of the Sex Science Newsletter!

If you have any content that you'd like included in upcoming newsletters (announcements, accomplishments, news, obituaries, job openings, research-related posts, etc.) feel free to send them in by **June 15th, 2016** for inclusion in our next newsletter:

newsletter@sexscience.org

