



THE SOCIETY FOR THE
SCIENTIFIC STUDY
OF SEXUALITY

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LETTER FROM THE SSSS PRESIDENT DR. ZOË PETERSON

Happy 2020! With the start of the new decade, we are making some major changes at SSSS. In particular, I am excited to announce two important personnel changes that took place on January 1. Bios for our two SSSS staff members are included on page 6 of this newsletter.

First, please offer a warm welcome to our new Interim Executive Director, **John Donica**. John will serve as our Director over the next year or two. His goals include helping us (1) to grow our membership; (2) to reduce our annual meeting costs and increase sponsorship, so that our meetings are more affordable and profitable; and (3) to improve our website and membership/registration system. After he has shared his expertise, he will lead our search for more permanent executive leadership.

Second, I am pleased to announce that our amazing Administrative Assistant, **Dawn Laubach**, has received a well-deserved promotion to SSSS Office Manager. Dawn has long been an important part of SSSS, and I am sure most of you know her from her hours of work at our conference registration desk each year. Dawn also worked day and night to keep SSSS running during our two months without an Executive Director. I sincerely don't know what we would have done without her.

In addition to these personnel changes, I am working with members of our Board of Directors to update and improve our policies and procedures, so that our organization can function more efficiently and consistently going forward—even in the face of personnel changes and an always-rotating Board of Directors. As part of these efforts, our incredibly hard-working Treasurer, Myeshia Price-Feeney, is working tirelessly to ensure our financial security going forward by evaluating and revising our organization's fiscal policies and procedures. Please thank Myeshia when you see her. She has a ridiculously difficult--and often thankless--job!

Despite these important and exciting changes, much of what you love about SSSS will stay the same. Justin Garcia and Laura Widman, the 2020 Conference Program Co-Chairs, are already planning an amazing conference for New Orleans in November. The Mentorship Program (see p. 5) is thriving under the leadership of Shayna Skakoon-Sparling (who is also our indomitable newsletter editor). Our membership this year is substantially larger than it was at this same time last year. SSSS is in good health, and I am confident that it will only get stronger going forward. With our fantastic Board of Directors and our two skilled and experienced staff members, please know that SSSS is in good hands.

-Zoë Peterson, SSSS President

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MEET DR. ROBIN MILHAUSEN – THE 2019 RECIPIENT OF THE LESTER A. KIRKENDALL OUTSTANDING MENTOR AWARD!

The Lester A. Kirkendall Outstanding Mentor Award, named for the pioneer in sexuality education, is designed to “highlight individuals who, in the tradition of Dr. Kirkendall, are outstanding mentors”.

Robin (pictured right receiving her award in Denver and bottom with several of her letter writers at an event this past Fall) has been a professor at the University of Guelph in Canada for the past 12 years. In this time she has supervised dozens of undergraduate and graduate students and 1 postdoctoral fellow – but her mentorship extends beyond those under her direct supervision. Many of her letter writers attested to Robin’s openness to offering guidance and support to students who have contacted her from other departments, and even other universities!



Robin delivered a moving heartfelt speech at the SSSS annual meeting in Denver, she described how the exceptional mentorship she had received during her training taught her the skills she now applies in her work with her own students. She said “Be kind. You never know how one helpful interaction can shape a young person’s career or provide a critical piece of encouragement at a critical time. I have received many acts of kindness along the way that I am so grateful for. And we all have 100 moments a week where we can choose to respond with a kind word. It doesn’t cost us anything, and often doesn’t take much (or any) more time – but it can make a big difference.” Robin publishes extensively with her mentees and is generous with the opportunities she provides to learn and develop new skills. She says, “if you involve students in all of your work, students don’t take away from your work, and you are always accomplishing your work when you work with your students.”



Robin says she is so grateful to have been nominated for this award by her past and current trainees, who are now also colleagues and friends. Being recognized for this award is an honour she does not take lightly. She says “I’m so grateful – because working with students is so central to my work and life, this is the most meaningful award I could have received. It meant a lot that the award came forward from a group of past and current students, and students who I hadn’t officially supervised.”

STUDENT AND EARLY CAREER INVOLVEMENT UPDATE!

Our 2019 student reps Sasha Canan (outgoing senior rep) and Remi Coker organized several successful events at the recent annual meeting in Denver (see photo from the student luncheon trivia game on page 3). One of the successful events they organized was a group bowling excursion for the Student & Young Professional Night Out, at Lucky Strike in downtown Denver. Canan snapped some photos (inset) of some of those in attendance. We had over 40 people show up! Conversations were alive and games/fun were had! Sasha Canan’s tour as student rep is over now and we’re very grateful for the great work she’s done planning student and early career engagement events and for her service on the SSSS board of directors!

Remi Coker, our new senior rep, and Finn Muzzey, our new junior rep, will surely have an exciting time planning something fun for next year in New Orleans – keep an eye out for their future updates!



Memories of SSSS 2019 in Denver!



Team "Clit-orate" - Trivia Game Winners at the SSS Student Luncheon with their Prizes!



Amazing Data Blitz Presenters - After a Challenging but Fun Fast-Paced Session!



Members of the JSR Editorial Board



Members of SHABABY share their work as youth advocates in the San Diego-area South Bay community.



TWEETS FROM



#SSSS2019



@KrisRosentel: "Today, I presented my research on gender non-conformity... at #SSSS2019. Had some great post-presentation conversations and very glad to be part of this conference."

@Shaynagram: "I am absolutely loving the blitz session at #SSSS2019, but it is super challenging to tweet about these amazing talks because they are over in a flash!"

@DrDebNYC: "Talk of pleasure pervades SSSS this year! Love when the obvious is at the heart of sexuality research, policy and education..."

@DMotleyPhD: "So...@jbaumerme is giving a plenary right now, and I'm getting my whole life. He's confirming that I should pursue some work that I've been thinking about for a while. We have to consider the whole person in health research. Sex. Desire. LOVE. #SSSS2019"

@EngErotics: "What a fantastic time we had at #SSSS2019! The research that was presented was fascinating and it was so refreshing to discuss sex and science openly, honestly, and unapologetically."

So many of our amazing members were live-tweeting during the annual meeting in Denver! Check out the tweets tagged with #SSSS2019 to relive the magic and catch up on any presentations you might have missed!

IN MEMORIAM - JOSEPH LOPICCOLO

1943-2020

Written by Julia R. Heiman, PhD

I met Joe in 1974, when he first arrived to take a Professorship at Stony Brook University (then called State University of NY at Stony Brook). He was joining the brand new Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences department which was headed by its first Chair, Stan Yolles, MD who had been asked to create the department of psychiatry. Yolles was the prior head of NIMH, having resigned under President Richard Nixon, and who had interest in expanding research into sexuality as well as sleep. Joe was attracted to Stony Brook in part because of Yolles' commitment to building the field. Indeed, in just a few years, the department included Richard Green, MD, Richard Whalen, PhD, Diane Fordney-Settlage, MD, Charles Doering, PhD, and Joe LoPiccolo, PhD, a talented interdisciplinary crew who, together with members of the Stony Brook psychology (Jim Geer, PhD, Jerry Davidson, PhD) and sociology (John Gagnon, PhD) departments, formed a remarkable environment for sex research and training. Joe offered me the postdoc position on his NIMH grant and we worked together over the next 6 years. Notably, there was plenty of grant money from NIMH for clinical and basic sex research, as well as training postdocs. Years later, Joe would remark it was a kind of golden age for sex research.



Joe LoPiccolo
SSSS Past President 1983-1984
Fellow of The Society

Joe was energized, fair and eager to provide for the members of his rapidly growing team. When battles needed to be waged, he would not shirk but forcefully defend resources and spring for new ones. He continued to be funded with grants, wrote many articles, collaborated broadly and was very generous with sharing credit and authorship. He was an unusually good writer and sensitive to language. He fostered a keen regard for clinical work and research and influenced many researchers and clinicians of that time, including many Stony Brook psychology students. He was unapologetic about focusing on researching clinical outcomes long before the mention of evidenced-based treatments. This was not a popular position in academic research programs in psychology, where the lure to basic processes and mechanisms has been strong and important. Along with his commitment to sex therapy research was a balance of seriousness and a warm sense of humor. Joe was in demand on the workshop and talk circuit worldwide; his clear and colloquial style along with a strong research backing, made him popular and interesting to host. He was making important contributions and moving the field forward. And sex research then was hot—he was giving national and international talks at least 3 times/month.

On a personal level, Joe and his wife at that time, Leslie, who was an important and creative influence on the clinical ideas, were devoted to their son Joe Jr. and to having interests outside of work. Joe, to many student's dismay, was a hunter and shot ducks (deliciously served) in the winter, as well as a hunting trip to Africa. He regularly kept in practice by skeet shooting at his gun club. He played squash and racquetball. He hated the Long Island cold, and I learned the phrase, "it's colder than a rat's ass" from Joe—which I never heard before or since but have myself muttered during harsh winter days. He read a lot and often works of substance. Joe had a quick, responsive intelligence. I admired, respected and liked Joe very much. I also have a personal ongoing gratitude to him for his kindness, smarts, humor, warmth, loyalty and creating an environment in which my own research, separate from his, was nurtured. Joe occasionally mentioned his father died at a young age and unexpectedly. He had that on is internal radar and perhaps it infused his life and contacts. We are all lucky to have known him. Especially fortunate are his most immediate family, including his remarkable and much loved wife Cathryn Pridal, and his two sons, Michael and Joe. For the rest up us in the field, we owe him recognition and appreciation.



SSSS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

The new SSSS Mentorship Program has been running since August 2019 and our mentee-mentor matches have reported a lot of positive results! Some mentees are now skyping in to join their mentor's regular lab meetings. Others are working on exciting collaborations – like Dr. David Knox and Flora Oswald (pictured left at the recent SSSS Meeting in Denver). Dr. Knox, one of our mentors, wrote me to say “*Flora Oswald and I have had weekly emails, have set aside time to meet at SSSS, and are launching a research project. As you know, the future of SSSS is new members. You are helping to ensure that new members are connected to those already in SSSS and are as excited about their interest as they are. I*

think we are all in the profession because someone cared about us/nurtured our interest. Flora requires very little. She is absolutely brilliant and I see her as the President of SSSS someday....I'll be dead, but you will see it happen.”

Want in on the fun? The SSSS Mentorship Program is a great way for new and long-time members of SSSS to connect, collaborate on projects together, and build bonds! You can learn more about signing up for the program here:

<http://sexscience.org/resources/mentoring-program/>

TOWARDS EROBOTICS: A FIRST SYMPOSIUM AT SSSS'S ANNUAL MEETING IN DENVER

By Simon Dubé & Maria Santaguida

Technology is reshaping our erotic lives. Advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, virtual or augmented reality, and the Internet of Things/Senses, are changing how, who, and what we intimately connect to. Amidst this Erotic Revolution, we are witnessing the rise of erobots; a term characterizing all virtual, embodied, and augmented artificial erotic agents, as well as the technologies from which they necessarily emerge. This term includes — but is not limited to — sex robots, virtual or augmented erotic characters, artificial partner applications, and erotic chatbots.



Unlike previous technology, erobots do not simply mediate erotic experiences, but are becoming themselves subjects of desire; exposing humans to the possibility of intimate relations with artificial beings. Their controversial advent has polarized public and academic discourses concerning their impacts and value. Some denounce their risks (e.g., promotion of harmful norms), while others defend their potential benefits (e.g., health, education, and research applications). Yet, the scientific study of human-machine erotic interaction remains limited and mostly speculative; no serious theoretical model has been proposed and the empirical literature on these phenomena is scarce.

In response to this knowledge gap, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS) hosted on November 8th, 2019 (Denver, CO), its first symposium on Erobotics - an emerging field of transdisciplinary research exploring human-erobots interactions and guiding the development of beneficial erotic machines. This well-attended event saw Ellen Kaufman, MA (PhD student, Kinsey Institute), present research on the experience of RealBotix's Harmony app users; Maxine Lynn, ESQ (Unzipped, Sex Tech and Law), explore legal ramifications of AI-powered childlike robots; Rhonda Balzarini, PhD (York University), address the impact of sexual novelty on relationship quality; and co-organizers, Simon Dubé and Maria Santaguida (PhD candidates, Concordia University), present on people's future behaviors with - and reasons to purchase - sex robots.

This symposium represents a starting point within SSSS to pool expertise (i.e., psychological, legal, and informatics) and consider the possibilities and consequences of new erotic technologies. It highlighted the urgent need to investigate human-machine erotic interactions; contributed empirical results on human-erobots interactions; and underlined theoretical, experimental, and clinical research directions for SSSS regarding Erobotics.

It is our hope that this kind of initiative will continue to flourish within our scientific community and inform the future of human sexuality. The organizers would like to thank all speakers and attendees, as well as SSSS for hosting this event.

SSSS STAFF PROFILE – DAWN LAUBACH

Dawn Laubach, A.A.S. has years of experience in office administration with hiring, scheduling, training, maintaining continuing education records, time sheets/payroll, and so much more. Her experience was mostly through part-time work, since her full time position consisted of being a stay-at-home mom while raising her two children—now 27 and 25. Always yearning to continue her education, Dawn attended the local community college for Paralegal Studies, where she graduated summa cum laude in May, 2014. Shortly thereafter, she became the Administrative Assistant at The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS). Whether she's answering emails, updating the website, preparing for membership and the annual meeting, or finalizing the year end, she always has the interest of the SSSS members, annual meeting attendees, and those interested in The Society in mind. She would like to thank the SSSS community for always welcoming her into their professional home and also for the recent promotion to Office Manager. When Dawn isn't working, she spends her time taking care of her parents, trying new restaurants, and enjoying every moment she can with her husband and growing family.

SSSS STAFF PROFILE – JOHN DONICA

John has spent the better part of his career in the non-profit arena, beginning in healthcare — hospitals, mostly. Over the past 20+ years he has directed non-profit professional associations, including larger organizations (e.g., an international association of aviation insurance professionals and companies), as well as smaller state professional organizations (nurse practitioners and mental health counselors).

His association management philosophy of “The members come first!” will serve the interests of all SSSS members as we improve the Society's benefits and value to all of you in your professional lives. If you have ideas or suggestions on ways to improve your SSSS experience, John wants to hear from you!

E-mail him at john@SexScience.org

MEMBER NEWS!

Tiffany Marcantonio, Malachi Willis, Kristen N. Jozkowski, Zoe D. Peterson, and Terry Humphreys recently published an article on non-consensual first time intercourse experiences of young women in the United States and Canada. They found that women who had a non-consensual first time intercourse more often had partners older than them, less desire for the sex, were less likely to report using contraceptives, and reported responding with silence or a refusal to their perpetrators' behaviors, compared with women who had a consensual first time intercourse. Their findings further support research which suggest sexual assault intervention and prevention should occur at an earlier age and focus on sexual consent and refusal communication. The article is available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/vio0000262>

Dr. Carey Roth Bayer was recently recognized by the Association of American Medical Colleges with a Top 10 Reviewer of 2019, Outstanding Reviewer Award for MedEdPORTAL, The AAMC Journal of Teaching and Learning Resources!



Dr. Stephanie Buehler is happy to announce that she has just signed a contract with Springer Books for an updated third edition of *What Every Mental Health Professional Needs to Know about Sex* to be published in 2021.

Dr. Shayna Skakoon-Sparling's recently published article on HIV risk communication is available here: <http://bit.ly/2Gqtm6g>

Dr. Rhonda Balzarini & Dr. Taylor Kohut have co-authored a new paper with their collaborators: *Surveying Pornography Use: A Shaky Science Resting on Poor Measurement Foundations*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00224499.2019.1695244>

Dr. David Knox's work on sex dolls was referenced in a recent Psychology Today article: <http://bit.ly/31fkavf>

Jared Boot recently wrote a post about providing culturally competent therapy services to asexual identified clients. You can read the piece here: <https://societyforpsychotherapy.org/culturally-competent-psychotherapy-for-the-asexual-community>



SSSS STUDENT MEMBER PROFILE MEET JOKE DEPRAETERE!

Joke Depraetere is a PhD fellow of the research foundation Flanders (FWO) at Ghent University in Belgium. She became interested in scientific research, and sexual violence research in particular, during her college studies in Criminology and Sexology at the Catholic University of Leuven. After graduating in 2017, she started working on a large scale, nationally-representative project that aims to Understand the MEchanisms, Nature, Magnitude and Impact of Sexual violence among the general Belgian population (i.e. the UN-MENAMAS project). She is currently working on various projects in which she examines the influence of stereotypical gender roles on the risk and consequences of male sexual victimization.

When Joke isn't glued to a computer screen, she spends time looking up her next travel destination, enjoys a drink with friends and family, and generally loves meeting new people all around the world. As a PhD fellow, Joke has had the opportunity to travel abroad to attend various conferences. As such, in November 2019, she attended the annual meeting of the SSSS Annual Meeting in Denver where many of her interests, both professionally and personally, were addressed. Having had the opportunity to meet incredibly friendly people - both students and major scientific researchers in the field of sex research, learn more about ongoing studies regarding sexual violence, and enjoy Denver and its Rocky Mountains, this conference was one of the most enjoyable conferences she has attended. SSSS can therefore count on her presence at the next annual meeting.

SSSS SENIOR MEMBER PROFILE MEET DR. BEVERLY WHIPPLE!

Dr. Beverly Whipple is a Professor Emerita at Rutgers University of NJ. She has a BS in Nursing from Wagner College, a Masters in Counseling, a Masters in Nursing, and a PhD in Psychobiology, with a major in Neurophysiology, from Rutgers University. Dr. Whipple has an honorary Doctorate from Wagner College, where she received her undergraduate degree in Nursing. Her concern with women's health derives naturally from her over forty years of helping women to feel better about themselves, as a nurse, a nurse educator, and researcher. Her research focuses mainly on women's health issues and the sexual physiology of women. Dr. Whipple is the co-author of the international best-seller, *The G Spot and Other Discoveries About Human Sexuality*, which has been translated into 23 languages. Dr. Whipple has appeared on over 300 radio and TV programs and has been featured in hundreds of magazines, including being named in 2013, one of the *10 Sexual Revolutionaries You Should Know* by Cosmopolitan magazine. On October 2013 *El Centro de Investigacion en Sexologia: Dr. Beverly Whipple* was inaugurated in Puebla, Mexico. Dr. Whipple is a Fellow of SSSS and a Past-president of SSSS. She currently lives in Voorhees, NJ with Jim, her husband since 1962. They have 2 grown children and 5 grandchildren.



TECH & RELATIONSHIPS CONFERENCE IN ANNECY – JULY 17-19TH!

This small conference, sponsored by the Kinsey Institute, the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, the International Association of Relationship Research, and ERIS Enterprises, will focus on integrating applications from technology and theory in a range of domains, including interpersonal relationships, health and well-being, and sexuality.

The conference will feature keynotes, including Amanda Gesselman and Justin Lehmiller (the Kinsey Institute), Catrin Finkenauer (Utrecht University), Lorne Campbell (Western University), Jim Coan (University of Virginia), and Gurit Birnbaum (IDC Herzliya). Attendees will benefit from being exposed to a variety of technologies and analytic tools to expand their research repertoire, and immediately leverage acquired knowledge through "hackathon" style development sessions to produce concrete products/applications and begin new collaborations with industry and other researchers, during the conference.

Website: <https://techandrelationships.org>

This conference will take place in Annecy, France at the Beauregard Hotel; <https://www.hotel-beauregard.com>

The call for abstracts is currently open – all submissions are due by Feb 25th: <https://bit.ly/2YEmoCQ>

We invite submissions from researchers of all career stages interested in tech or relationships (broadly defined), and especially the intersection of the two. Academics may apply to either give an academic presentation or to lead a topic during one of the hackathon sessions.

Registration will cost up to 350 Euros, which includes a two-night hotel stay at the Beauregard Hotel, as well as breakfast and lunch.





Widener University's Center for Human Sexuality Studies (CHSS) is pleased to announce the inaugural **Summer Institute in Sexuality Studies** taking place from **June 15 - June 26** in **Chester, PA** (outside Philadelphia). Undergraduate and graduate

students seeking additional coursework in human sexuality studies is encouraged to apply and attend. Courses will focus on sexuality education, sexual behaviors, and sexuality studies in the context of social justice. More information: contact Christopher White, Director of Graduate Studies: cwhite@widener.edu. And look for more information regarding application and fees later this spring!

OPPORTUNITY! The Kinsey Institute is accepting applications for a **Postdoctoral Research Fellow** position with Dr. Jennifer Barber. More information here: <http://indiana.peopleadmin.com/postings/9266>

OPPORTUNITY! SSSS is Seeking Up to Two Volunteer Social Media Assistants! Social Media Assistants are responsible for developing and coordinating social media content for The Society. They will monitor sex science news, writing and posting relevant content to social media channels on a weekly basis.

The Assistants will ensure that all social media content represents The Society's voice and professional ethics. They will review social media posts' performance, engaging stakeholders including but not limited to the Society's membership. They will moderate comments and field message requests.

The Assistants must be competent with appropriate platforms, including Facebook and Twitter. The Social Media Assistants report directly to the Media Relations Chair. These are volunteer positions.

If interested, contact: thesociety@sexscience.org

OPPORTUNITY! Postgraduate students who have submitted their thesis within the last three academic years (2016-2019) are invited to submit for the Feminism & Psychology and BPS POWES Postgraduate Award:

<https://powesbps.wordpress.com/student-prizes/>

Upcoming...

Guelph Sexuality Conference
Guelph, Canada
June 18-19

<https://www.guelphsexualityconference.ca/>

Preach 2020: LGBTQ Psychology Conference
Prague, Czech Republic
July 16-17

<https://cpasogii.com/preach2020>

Tech & Relationships Conference
Annecy, France
July 17-19

Call for Abstracts Open

<https://techandrelationships.org/>



International Academy of Sex
Research
Berlin, Germany, July 26-29

Call for Abstracts Open

<http://www.iasrsite.org/upcoming-meeting>

International Association for Relationship Research
London, England
July 30 – Aug 3

<http://www.iarr.org/Conferences/>

Canadian Sex Research Forum
Waterloo, Canada
Oct 15-17

<http://www.canadiansexresearchforum.com/>



Annual Conference of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality
New Orleans, US
Nov 19-22

Call for Abstracts Coming Soon!

<http://sexscience.org/events/annual-meeting/>

