



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

SSTAR Successes and Challenges

I would like to take this opportunity to summarize the ongoing successes and challenges of SSTAR.

SSTAR's vitality and sustainability depends on:

1. Maintaining and recruiting active, dedicated, diverse members, who are the most knowledgeable in all significant research and clinical aspects of sexual health, who attend and present at meetings, and who are interested in working on committees and the Executive Board.
2. Continuing a relationship with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) in the form of our superb Administrator, Yvonnada Cousins.
3. Financial health - SSTAR is doing quite well with maintaining a knowledgeable, experienced core of members and recruiting the best and brightest, broad-thinking researchers and clinicians as dues-paying members.



Bonnie R. Saks, MD,
President

Many former SSTAR Presidents are still active in SSTAR. Michael Plaut and Bill Maurice have been excellent advisors. Bill does two important jobs: first, he confers with the webmaster, Mark Graves (from ACOG) and approves or edits any new information or changes to our website, <http://sstarnet.org>; second, he screens all email before it is posted on the SSTARgaze listserv. (He would love to have another SSTAR member as a back-up for this job). Richard Carroll has been invaluable as Local Arrangements Chair or "Grand Pooh-bah" as he prefers. He has worked on putting together the Annual Meeting brochure, editing it and overseeing its production and distribution. Richard also represented us at the NAFSO meeting held at SSSS in November. Other Past-Presidents—Stan Althof, Steve Levine, Taylor Segraves, Sandra Leiblum, Patricia Schreiner-Engel, Blanche Freund—continue to present and participate in meetings. So do former board members such as Derek Polonsky, Irv Binik, Lori Brotto, Miki Wieder, Cindy Goodwin, Diane Morrisette, Ursula Ofman, Pat Rubin, Kathy Segraves, Julian Slowinski, Bill and Lynda Talmadge, and Dan Watter. All of you who come to meetings, you are our core.

Our Executive Committee is a remarkable group to work with. Sharon Nathan is a superb Newsletter editor and a vital contributor to Executive Committee decisions. Marta Meana has been an outstanding Secretary-Treasurer. Blanche Freund, as Past-President, adds sound advice. She chairs the Nominations Committee, with David Goldmeier and Sharon Nathan being the other members. They have the difficult task of selecting a new Secretary-Treasurer this year when Marta completes her term. Marta has done a fabulous job analyzing our finances and reviewing all board correspondence from minutes to by-laws changes. Eric Corty is an excellent Continuing Education Officer. With Yvonnada Cousins's help he keeps continuing education credits available for our meetings. Sophie Bergeron, our Membership Officer,

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From the President *(continued from page 1)*

keeps track of new members' applications with precision and thoroughness. Michael Perelman, our President-Elect, has taken on the task of increasing SSTAR's profile at national and international meetings (recently in Sydney and Amsterdam). He will chair Leah Millheiser's SSTAR talk at ACOG in New Orleans. He promoted SSTAR at the Sexual Medicine Society of North America's (SMSNA) December meeting in Chicago. Caroline Pukall has been indefatigable in her work as Scientific Program Chair of this year's Annual Meeting in Chicago. Just read her enthusiastic article appearing in this issue! Yvonnada Cousins, our beloved administrator, is involved with all that is SSTAR, with a list too long to delineate. Congratulations to her and Wylie McNeil on their December 29th wedding!

The Professional Book Award Committee, chaired by the inimitable Peggy Kleinplatz with Karen Donahey, Joseph LoPiccolo, Joanna Whitcup and Dan Watter had a wealth of reading this year with so many excellent candidates. Again, a fabulous job!

Finally, I am grateful to the Student Research Award Committee, chaired by Stephanie Kuffel, for choosing another outstanding presentation. The Student Research Award (SRA) and new Young Investigator Poster Award, designed by Caroline Pukall (a former SRA winner herself), draw outstanding young researchers to SSTAR. There has been a great influx of young researchers often mentored by SSTAR members. We need a bit more work on encouraging clinicians, particularly physicians, to become active in our group.

The financial health of SSTAR is currently stable but is always a concern. With pharmaceutical industry support on the decline, our main revenues come from the Annual Meeting registration and Pre-Conference courses. We have tried to keep dues low. The Executive Committee has been discussing a pre-payment, "Life Membership" option, but we have not yet established anything. We always welcome any size gift or endowment donated to SSTAR.

The economic factor has limited our meetings to larger cities where meetings are assured of fuller attendance. Fortunately, we have been successful recruiting outstanding, cutting-edge speakers, who come to SSTAR, not for the remuneration, but for the camaraderie, prestige, and richness of information provided. I am looking forward to Chicago!

Bonnie R. Saks, MD
SSTAR President

Come to SSTAR and Enjoy Chicago!

Richard Carroll, PhD
2008 Local Arrangements Chair

The 2008 SSTAR Annual Meeting will be held at the Intercontinental Hotel built in 1929 as the Medinah Athletic Club, an exclusive men's club for members of the Shrine organization. The building has been renovated as an elegant hotel several times in the past 20 years, the last time just several years ago. It is nationally famous for its eclectic architecture and interior décor. Be sure to appreciate the Assyrian bas relief on the exterior. The interior is done in a mix of medieval, Celtic, Spanish and Mesopotamian motifs. You will be able to visit the Hall of Lions, King Arthur's Court, the Spanish Tea Court, the Renaissance Room, the Grand Ballroom, and the remarkably ornate swimming pool. This is my favorite hotel in Chicago, and you get it at a great price!

The Intercontinental Hotel is in the heart of the Magnificent Mile, the cultural and shopping center of the city. You will be only blocks away from the Art Institute of Chicago, the Contemporary Museum of Art, the Spertus Museum, The Chicago Cultural Center, and the Symphony Center. Some of Chicago's finest restaurants are within walking distance. You can stroll the shores of Lake Michigan, the Chicago River, the stores on North Michigan Avenue, Navy Pier, or the top of the John Hancock building. On Saturday, in honor of St. Patrick's Day, you will even get to see the Chicago River turn green. If you want to do more, there are many fine theater and music venues nearby.

Special attention has been paid to creating opportunities to spend time with colleagues. Both Friday and Saturday nights there will be small dinner groups hosted by local Chicagoans or other SSTAR members. On Friday there is an excursion to the Art Institute of Chicago for a private tour focusing on "Sexuality Through the Eyes of the Artist." Afterwards, weather permitting, there will be a guided walk through Millennium Park and along elegant North Michigan Avenue.

We think you will find enjoying the great city of Chicago with friends and colleagues almost as exciting as the meeting program!



SSTAR Fall Clinical Case Conference, 2007

Bonnie Saks, MD

This year's Fall Conference was a great treat! One of my favorite jobs as SSTAR President is putting together this wonderful, intimate affair. This year's conference was more than fully subscribed long before the registration deadline.

We are grateful, as always, to our gracious host, Julian Slowinski, for procuring the elegant and cozy New York Penn Club with its delicious food, fabulous facilities, lovely library, and (my new discovery) marvelous martinis.

Boldface Names

ERICA PLUHAR gave birth to a son, Sebastian Pluhar Tatum, in July. **GALE GOLDEN** became a grandmother (x2) in December when her daughter had twins.

SANDRA LEIBLUM retired from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in December to enter private practice in New Jersey and to spend more time in Vancouver, where she hangs out with **BILL MAURICE** and **LORI BROTT** among other friends.

New Scientist named **BEVERLY WHIPPLE** one of the 50 most influential scientists in the world in 2006. (She was the only sexual scientist to appear on the list.) *The Science of Orgasm*, a book co-written by Beverly, Barry Komisaruk and Carlos Beyer-Flores, won the Foundation for the Scientific Study of Sexuality's Bonnie and Vern Bullough Award as the most distinguished book written for the professional sexological community in 2006.

ELI COLEMAN was elected President of the International Academy of Sex Research (IASR). He will serve as President-Elect in 2007-2008 and begin his two-year term as President in 2009.

A devastating fire completely demolished the Putnam Valley, New York, home of **MARIAN DUNN** and her husband Elliott Dranoff on August 20th. As Marian puts it, "It destroyed everything but our optimism." Talk about optimism: Elliott says they have to travel the world again to collect new things for a new house they may build on the same site.

SSTAR administrator **YVONNADA COUSINS** married her fiancé Wylie McNeil on December 29th. She will return to the SSTAR office on January 14th as **YVONNADA MCNEIL**.

The morning began with an exquisite, stellar presentation by Lisa Anllo.

In an intriguing case of a man with prostate cancer and sexual and relationship dysfunction, Lisa described therapeutic pitfalls and identified advantages of individual therapy versus couples therapy for the patient and his partner. She artfully discussed relationship dysfunction associated with chronic medical illness and comprehensively evaluated the latest evidence regarding the risk of erectile dysfunction in patients receiving radiation treatment for prostate cancer; she also assessed the literature on the safety of testosterone replacement therapy after prostate cancer. In addition to reviewing the literature, Lisa wove in her consultations with urologist and testosterone researcher, Andrew Guay, and with our own SSTAR member, psychiatrist Adam Ashton.

I would have felt sorry for the discussant following her if it were not the indefatigable Stan Althof, who came through with another fascinating angle on viewing chronic illness and sexual dysfunction, a perspective that was not a bit redundant but meshed beautifully with Lisa's presentation. The ensuing discussion from the floor was vibrant as usual.

The whole morning made me glow with pride in the quality of knowledge and the presentation talent we have in our organization. Bravo Lisa and Stan!

Lunch was delicious and a wonderful time to catch up with old friends and welcome new participants.

For the afternoon we tried an experimental format, with the fascinating author, couples therapist, and new SSTAR member, Esther Perel giving an insightful and brilliant presentation of how her ideas evolved on the common incompatibility of what is intimate versus what is sexy. These ideas are discussed in her intriguing book, *Mating in Captivity*, which has been translated into 20 languages. (Esther has extensive knowledge of love and sex in many cultures, and she will share them with us in a pre-conference workshop at the Annual Meeting in Chicago this coming March.)

At the Fall Clinical Conference Esther used a video presentation of a couple new to therapy as an illustration of her points. Joanna Whitcup then role-played the therapist and Carol Hillman and Pat Rubin a heterosexual couple in therapy, with Esther as an advisor commenting from "behind the one-way mirror." Members of the audience also participated by role-playing the patients, and there was lively discussion.

After the conference, we sojourned with our cocktail coupons to the Penn Club Grill where more fun and fabulous conversation was enjoyed by all—a delightful day and a marvelous group!

OP-ED**The Sexual Rights of Children and Adolescents**

Charles Moser, PhD, MD

There are very few groups that are prohibited from expressing themselves sexually — with a partner or even by themselves. Even individuals interested in proscribed sex acts are still free to engage in other socially approved sex acts. Minors comprise one of these sexually deprived groups; others include prisoners, the institutionalized, and members of some religious groups.



Charles Moser, PhD, MD

This article will focus on how we try to limit the sexual expression of minors by “sex education” and ignoring their sexual concerns.

I apologize in advance for the US-centrism of this article. The situation may be different elsewhere in the world, but somehow I doubt there are many places that are truly supportive of the sexual rights of minors. So that there is no misunderstanding, the following discussion presupposes that all sex materials and sex partners are age-appropriate.

My premise is simple: kids are sexual, they have a right to be sexual, and a right to have their sexual concerns addressed. To exercise a right responsibly requires education, and we need to provide real sex education so children and adolescents can learn about their sexuality and express it responsibly. Unfortunately, the goal of most sex education courses is to browbeat or terrify the student into abstinence. Abstinence Only Sex Education courses, which receive almost all of the government funding, actively deny students the information they need and want. Worse than supplying no information, they supply misinformation, and rather than teaching, they moralize (see <http://4parents.gov/> for the government-sponsored message and a more realistic perspective at <http://www.funnyordie.com/videos/cab8398d33>).

Unfortunately, Comprehensive Sex Education programs (usually abstinence focused plus some birth control and STI information) are not much better. Sex education should be more than reproductive biology and values clarification (which is usually just clarifying the values of the local school board to the student). It should delineate the breadth of sexual expression and the scientific basis of sexology.

School boards and parents often object to Comprehensive Sex Education, fearing it will encourage students to explore sex. But the desire to explore sex is healthy; it should not be smothered. Depriving children and adolescents of sexual knowledge does not stop them from exploring sex—they just do it with reckless abandon. It is a process similar to learning to drive a car without taking lessons; one gets the hang of it eventually but with more accidents and unnecessarily scary moments in the process.

Sex education also involves a lot more than the

mechanics of insert tab A into slot B (or more correctly, some combination of tabs A, B, and C inserted into slots D, E, and F). Most of these courses do not even enumerate all the options. Sex and sexuality influence society, history, law, art, etc. Conversely, society, history, law, art etc. influence sex and sexuality. It is hard to understand our culture without understanding how sex influences it. Students need skills to analyze critically the “problems” that are confronting society (e.g., availability of sexually explicit media, abortion, prostitution, gay marriage, treatment of sex offenders, rights of sexual minorities). Sex education needs to be taught more like chemistry than like a drivers’ education—as a body of knowledge and not just a life skill.

College level human sexuality classes are not much better. They often consist of a parade of speakers from different sexual lifestyle groups, transvestites one day and BDSM enthusiasts the next. It seems more like a circus, complete with “wild” animals trained to perform for the audience, who can keep a safe distance. Students can even get extra credit for going to an adult bookstore, nudist colony, or swing club, sort of like a safari to see the animals in their own habitat. A few students do go native, so to speak, but most of the others just banter about how weird the last group was. These activities could theoretically have important educational value but too often are used as fillers. The courses need fillers because frequently they are taught by individuals who have no training in, or passion for, sex education. Many of you teach these classes and I know you often do a much better job, but I am embarrassed when I hear what passes for a Human Sexuality course at many colleges.

So far, I think most of you are with me, but now I am going to go one more step. We know that sexual dysfunctions occur in teenagers, though we rarely study this population. Anecdotally, we know many boys suffer from rapid ejaculation; some experience erectile dysfunction; many girls suffer from anorgasmia or dyspareunia; and both sexes can be distressed by their lack of desire. Yet it is virtually unheard of for a minor to be referred to a sex therapist or sexual medicine physician to address these concerns. In a very real sense, youth with sexual concerns have been abandoned by our best sex therapists. A few sex therapists are helping kids deal with gender issues and unusual sexual interests, but even most of these are left without help. What are the kids who have these concerns to do, except feel shame, self-loathing, and doubts?

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The Newsletter welcomes opinion pieces of about 1000 words on sex therapy and sex research issues. Please send these Op-Eds to the Newsletter Editor at snathan@alum.mit.edu.



Lyndsay Foster, BA

WHAT'S NEW IN RESEARCH

The Human Sexuality Research Group at the University of New Brunswick

By Lyndsay Foster, BA and Sandra Byers, PhD



Sandra Byers, PhD

The Human Sexuality Research Group at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, under the direction of Dr. Sandra Byers, is involved in a number of research, teaching, and clinical projects focusing on human sexuality. A strength of our group is its diversity—graduate students have the opportunity to pursue and develop a program of sexuality research in the area that interests them the most. Our meetings allow us to share the findings from our work, to provide each other with feedback, to practice conference presentations, and to discuss sexuality issues. Our group is currently active in research in sexual relationships, sexual satisfaction, and sexual health. A common theme of our research is the practical applications of research findings to sex education and sex therapy.

Many of our research projects focus on understanding factors that influence sexual functioning and sexual satisfaction. Angela Weaver, who recently received her PhD in clinical psychology, investigated how women's body image and internalization of the ideal of thinness affects sexual functioning. She found that women's subjective feelings about their bodies are related to their sexual well-being, even when the women's weights are within a healthy range. Shannon Glenn, another recent graduate of the doctoral

clinical psychology program, examined the impact of sexual coercion on women's relationship and sexual satisfaction. Her study showed that after sexual coercion self-blame is key to understanding women's well-being in relationships. Jacquie Cohen studies sexual-minority group members' intimate relationships and experiences of stigma. She is currently conducting a study examining the influence of minority stress and resilience factors on the sexual functioning of sexual-minority women.

Members of the group also conduct research on couples' understanding (and misunderstanding!) of their partner's sexual desires. Through her investigation of women's and men's desired duration of foreplay, Andrea Miller found that people tend to rely on stereotypes instead of on their partner's actual desires when estimating their partner's desired duration of foreplay. Dee Simms investigated the accuracy of heterosexual couples' estimates of the sexual rewards and costs their partner obtains in the relationship. This research showed that men rated their sexual relationship as more costly in comparison to their expectations than did the women, even though both sexes thought women have higher sexual costs than do men. Dee is currently conducting a study examining differences in partner understanding of sexual desires and its association with sexual and relationship well-being.

Some members of the research group are investigating issues related to sexual health and sexual health education. Several students have been involved in a study that surveyed parents, high school students, middle school students, and teachers about their attitudes toward, and experiences with, sexual health education at school and at home. All groups were strongly in favor of having comprehensive sexual health education in the schools. This research has also identified factors associated with the quality of parent-child sexual communication. Lyndsay Foster is currently investigating the effects of gender and attributions of controllability on stigma, shame, and blame associated with sexually transmitted infections. Krystelle Shaughnessy is planning a study to examine sexual health information-seeking behavior in adulthood.

Andrea Miller is researching how education and cognitive-affective factors relate to psychologists' "sexual intervention self-efficacy"—their confidence and willingness to treat clients with sexual problems. In connection with this, several of our students have done an advanced practicum in sex therapy in Dr. Byers's private practice.

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OP-ED *(continued from previous page)*

It seems obvious (at least to me) that teenagers who do not explore their own sexuality are much more likely to develop sexual concerns later in life. We would brand parents who denied their children the opportunity to develop scholastically or socially as abusive, but denying the development of their children's sexuality is not even questioned. It is time we affirmed that parents who shelter their children from sex and sexual imagery actually are hurting them, not protecting them. Sex education and early treatment of sexual concerns are the best chance we have to avoid creating another generation of sexually dysfunctional, guilt-ridden, ignorant and biased adults.

We need to say it: Kids are sexual, they have a right to be sexual, and a right to have their sexual concerns addressed, or the situation will never change.

Research *(continued from previous page)*

Sharing knowledge about sexuality and sex research is an important goal of the research group. All of the graduate students in the group present their research at conferences (several winning student presentation awards) and most have published their work in scholarly journals. Many have also taught an undergraduate human sexuality course. A number of students are learning about collaborative action research by becoming members of research teams. In addition, our research groups meet regularly with Dr. Lucia O'Sullivan's Adolescent Sexual Health-Risk Research Group to share information and ideas.

Furthermore, graduate students have the opportunity to co-supervise and mentor undergraduate students who are interested in sexuality research (Emily Benjamin and Breanne Green this year). Many of the undergraduate students have also presented and published their work. Our research has not infrequently been cited in the news and popular media.

The research and teaching activities undertaken by Dr. Byers's research group reflect the multifaceted but interrelated nature of the human sexuality field. Overall, the group hopes to contribute to knowledge that informs future sex research, sex education, and the practice of sex therapy.

ALEXANDER LEVAY: 1932–2007

By Sharon G. Nathan, PhD

Alexander Levay, who was SSTAR's fourth President (1978-1979), died on September 28th. Although he had not been active in our organization for many years, he is remembered fondly by many SSTAR members for his warmth, charm, European elegance, and intellectual acuity. Many of these characteristics are portrayed vividly in Carol Lassen's recollection of him:

"Alex was President the year I first attended EAST in the 70's shortly before it became SSTAR. I came representing the Colorado Association of Sex Therapists, of which I was then President. He spoke with me on the phone ahead of time and welcomed me warmly. He was, as others have said, knowledgeable and sophisticated, but had his own strong ideas of how sex therapy fit with psychodynamic theory. I particularly remember his elegant European manner. I can't however, from this distance, quite place his equally elegant accent. I remember as we waited for the doors to open for the Ball that year that he took my arm and said "Come we will lead the way as two Presidents!" and paraded me into the room. It was quite a welcome. But what I came to realize was that he epitomized the warmth and welcome of the entire group. He and many others of all disciplinary and theoretical persuasions made this group my professional home. And in my mind he represented that quality of intellectual, professional and human acceptance."

The following obituary was circulated to the Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons (my thanks to Meg Kaplan for providing it):

"LEVAY, Alexander Nicholas....He is survived by his loving wife, Matilde, his three sons, Alex, Thomas, and William and three grandchildren. Dr. Levay was born June 30, 1932 in Nyiregyhase, Hungary. He and his parents, Dr. Nicholas and Margaret Levay, fled the Russian Army in World War II. After attending Benedictine School in Metten, Germany, they immigrated to America where Alexander received a full scholarship to Wesleyan University in Connecticut, graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1953. He attended medical school at the University of Rochester (so he could be close to his parents) graduating in 1957. Dr. Levay married the beautiful Mathilde Escudero on June 20, 1959 and the couple lived in Cape Cod while Dr. Levay proudly served as Captain in the U.S. Air Force. Dr. Levay practiced medicine at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons from 1962 until his death. He was a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Board certified in both Internal Medicine and Psychiatry. He was a kind, loving and humble man who always placed his patients before himself, treating everyone with kindness and dignity."

JOIN US FOR SSTAR'S 33rd ANNUAL MEETING!

Caroline F. Pukall, PhD • 2008 Scientific Program Chair

The 33rd Annual Meeting of SSTAR will be held in beautiful Chicago from March 13-15, 2008. The program is an exciting one, featuring local and international speakers on a variety of topics guaranteed to enlighten and provoke.

Due to the success of previous pre-conference workshops, we are once again offering one all-day, and two half-day, workshops. The full-day workshop is ideal for professionals who are not sexuality specialists but who deal with sexual concerns in their practices. The workshop, *Sexual Disorders: Evaluation and Management*, provides up-to-date, evidence-based information on the evaluation and treatment of sexual dysfunctions. Speakers are Michael Metz (assessment and treatment of male sexual dysfunctions), Leah Millheiser (current concepts in the evaluation and management of female sexual dysfunctions), Claudia Panzer (hormonal therapy in the postmenopausal woman with sexual dysfunction), Lori Brotto (using a clinical model to assess and treat women's loss of sexual desire and arousal), and Michael Krychman (chronic medical illness and sexuality). The two half-day workshops, intended for SSTAR members and other sexuality specialists, run concurrently with the full-day workshop. The first, on the psychosocial and medical aspects of painful intercourse, is presented jointly by psychologist Sophie Bergeron and gynecologist Andrew Goldstein. The second workshop, a multicultural approach to sexuality and intimacy, is presented by Esther Perel, an experienced couples therapist and author of *Mating in Captivity*.

After the welcome reception, Peggy Kleinplatz will present the Health Professional Book Award to Sharon Lamb for her book entitled *Sex, Therapy, and Kids*. The conference officially begins on Thursday evening with a screening of the sure-to-be-controversial film, *Betty Dodson Presents her Life of Sex and Art* (a Mark Schoen film), and Derek Polonsky will moderate the discussion.

Rachel Maines (Department of Science and Technology Studies, Cornell University), author of *The Technology of Orgasm*, will set Friday in motion with a thought-provoking presentation on sexual technologies and the double standard. A symposium with three presentations on the latest research and treatment for the sexual pain disorders is next on the Friday morning schedule. Sophie Bergeron (Department of Sexology, Université du Québec à Montréal) will discuss the results of her latest randomized treatment trial comparing therapy and medical management for the treatment of vestibulodynia. Christina Petersen (Department of Sexology, University of Copen-



Sophie Bergeron, PhD

hagen) will present the results of her randomized controlled trial on the effectiveness of Botox® injections for vestibulodynia. Marie-Andrée Lahaie (Department of Psychology, McGill University) will discuss the little-studied but common condition, vaginismus.

During Friday lunch, we will have the chance to hear the winner of the SSTAR Student Research Award,



Melanie Jodoin, BSc

Mélanie Jodoin (Department of Sexology, Université du Québec à Montréal), present her work on the role of attributions on psychosexual and relationship adjustment in women with vestibulodynia.

The afternoon will continue with an energizing paper session on theoretical and practical issues in sexuality, with talks by Anne Katz, Talli Rosenbaum, Michael Metz, and Michael Perelman. The day's program will end with an important lecture by Stacy Tessler Lindau of the University of Chicago on the prevalence, impact, and treatment of sexual problems experienced by women in later life.

Saturday morning will start with a triple-presentation symposium on traditional and non-traditional medical treatments for sexual dysfunctions featuring SSTAR's own President, Bonnie Saks (Department of Psychiatry, University of South Florida), Leah Millheiser (Stanford University School of Medicine), and Kevin McVary (Department of Urology, Northwestern University).

A paper session presenting student research will follow, with Tuuli Kukkonen, Amy Lykins, and Jane Woo presenting their exciting and novel work. Talks will discuss thermal imaging of sexual arousal, eye tracking during erotic films, and the effects of acculturation on sex research participation.

A one-hour, moderated poster session will take place before lunch. We have numerous, excellent posters on topics ranging from sexual orientation to sexual pain to persistent genital arousal disorder. Poster abstracts can still be submitted during our Late Breaking Abstract Submission call (deadline: January 9, 2008). For the first time, a SSTAR Student Poster Award will be given to the student with the best poster.



Christina Petersen, MD



Kevin McVary, MD

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Join Us for the 33rd *(continued from previous page)*



Meredith Chivers, PhD

During the lunch business meeting (SSTAR members only), Michael Perelman will present the SSTAR Service Award to Bill Maurice for his immense dedication to SSTAR.

A paper session will follow lunch, featuring presentations on predictors, correlates, and issues in the development of sexual pain. Speakers include Robyn Donaldson, Kelly Smith, Geneviève Desrochers, and Katherine Sutton – all of whom are students doing high-quality, original work on this topic. Next, Meredith Chivers (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Canada) will present her research on sex and sexual orientation differences in the specificity of arousal. Ending the program will be a case presentation by Kathryn Hall on the partition of self and sexuality in a Pakistani man.

See you there!

SSTAR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2008 Scientific Program Chair and Local Arrangements Chair

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Upcoming Meetings

SSTAR Continuing Education Workshop

Sexual Disorders: Evaluation and Management
 March 13, 2008
 Chicago, Illinois

&

SSTAR Annual Meeting in Chicago

Sexual Disorders: Latest Research
 and Effective Treatment
 March 13 -15, 2008
 Chicago, Illinois

Download registration materials at www.sstarnet/AnnualMeeting.cfm and register today.

SSTAR Fall Clinical Meeting

Friday, September 19, 2008
 The Penn Club of New York
 30 West 44th Street
 New York, New York 10036

NEW MEMBERS

SSTAR is pleased to welcome the following
 12 new members:

Full Members

Elaine Kleinbart, LCSW, New York, NY, USA
 Naomi Korn, LCSW, St.Petersburg, FL, USA

Associate Members

Sari Cooper, LCSW, New York, NY, USA
 Chris Reynolds, MS, Anchorage, AK, USA
 Judith White, LCSW, New York, NY, USA

Student Members

Karen Lyndsay Blair, Kingston, ON, Canada
 Stephanie Camille Boyer, Kingston, ON, Canada
 Corrie Goldfinger, Kingston, ON, Canada
 Tina Landry, Montréal, QC, Canada
 Bianca Leclerc, Montréal, QC, Canada
 Evelyne Gentilcore Saulnier, Kingston, ON, Canada
 Samantha Erin Waxman, Kingston, ON, Canada

MEMBER PROFILE

Daniel N. Watter, EdD

It is truly an honor for me to have been asked to provide this issue's member profile. I would like to thank Newsletter Editor Sharon Nathan for thinking of me for this project. I'm not sure I've ever really thought about the details and circumstances that led me to a career in sexuality, so I am most grateful to have such an opportunity to do so.

As a young boy, I never imagined this would become my life's work. To be honest, psychology was my second choice. My first choice of career would have been to be one of the Beatles. Unfortunately for me, John, Paul, George, and Ringo thought they could make it on their own. In all seriousness, though, music was my passion all through my youth, and remains an important part of my life today. I have been a guitarist for more than 40 years, and while I don't play nearly as much as I used to, I still love the instrument.

As I think about my career in sex therapy what strikes me most is how fortunate I have been to meet such supportive and helpful people along the way. My interest in the field of sexuality began while I was an undergraduate at the University of Alabama. It was probably during Abnormal Psychology class that I found myself drawn to the discussions related to human sexual behavior. I soon found myself becoming an advocate for sex education in the schools, but this was not a very popular position in Alabama in the 1970's. Nevertheless, I was encouraged by one of my professors to continue to focus my attention on the topic. One day he gave me a brochure he had received in the mail about a new organization that focused on sexuality. The organization was AASECT (then AASEC) and I quickly joined as a student member. That made me, at 19 years old, one of two AASEC members in the state of Alabama. With the help of this professor I researched human sexuality classes at the college level and developed a proposal for a course at Alabama. To my great surprise, the University was enthusiastic about such a course, and the professor who initially told me about AASEC taught the first course in Human Sexuality the semester after my graduation.

With such a rewarding experience behind me, I sought out graduate education in sexuality. I found my way to the doctoral program in Human Sexuality at New York University and completed my degree in 1985. The program was the first accredited doctoral program of its kind in the United States. Students came from a variety of backgrounds, and most were interested in becoming sex educators or counselors. In addition to taking basic human sexuality courses, I remember being fascinated by courses in sexuality and disability, sexual orientation and lifestyles and non-standard sexual behavior. It was a program that was highly innovative and taught an



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understanding and tolerance of sexual diversity that was found in few academic settings. I was fortunate to have been mentored there by deryck calderwood and Ron Moglia, two of the finest sex educators I have ever known. As a result of wonderful contacts made while at NYU, I was offered a tenure-track position at the William Paterson College of New Jersey. I spent the next nine years at WPC teaching courses in the Department of Health Science. It was truly a wonderful time for me. I loved teaching and interacting with students and colleagues. However,

after a few years, I found my interest swaying more towards the clinical area. I always had an interest in counseling and psychotherapy, and as a result of the courses I taught, many students would seek me out to discuss their sexual problems and concerns. The more time I spent working with students in this way, the more interested I became in furthering my clinical skills. With the support and blessings of the WPC administration, I was given the opportunity to return to school and take the additional coursework (including internship) in order to sit for both my Marriage and Family Therapy license (1986) and my Psychology license (1989). My early psychotherapy influence was Albert Ellis, and I was fortunate enough to do some post-graduate training with him. My doctoral dissertation was on applying his principles of Rational-Emotive Therapy (now Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy) to the classroom environment. Specifically, my dissertation focused on using the RET paradigm as a teaching method to develop more tolerance and acceptance among heterosexuals toward homosexuality. Ellis was extremely generous with his time and input as I was working on my dissertation. Since I already had a good knowledge of RET, I gravitated toward that as my primary psychotherapy style. As my therapy studies progressed, I also found myself greatly influenced by the works of Irvin Yalom, Thomas Szasz, and Viktor Frankl, all humanistic thinkers like Ellis. Yalom and Frankl had great influence on me in terms of their existential/humanistic philosophies, and Szasz lit a fire under me by his constant questioning of the status quo in mental health treatment. I would describe my current approach to psychotherapy to be a blending of each of these outstanding thinkers.

I left WPC in 1990 to pursue clinical practice, and I have been engaged in the practice of sex therapy since. My practice is almost exclusively sex-related. I treat a range of sexual dysfunctions, but I also have many patients who function fine physically but have questions about their sexual identities lifestyles, relationships, and/

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or preferences. Much of my clinical work has a relational perspective, but I have done quite a lot of forensic sex therapy as well. Frequently I have been asked to evaluate and/or treat individuals who have been accused of a variety of sexual crimes. This work has been fascinating and challenging, and many years ago I realized I needed to have specific training in the forensic area. This training was not nearly as easy to find as it is today, but I did manage to find some excellent supervisors. I would certainly recommend that anyone wishing to venture into this area receive specialty training before diving in. In addition, I have kept my hand in teaching and teach a graduate-level course in sex therapy each semester at local colleges in New Jersey.

I became a SSTAR member in 1989, and attended my first annual meeting that year. I immediately felt comfortable at SSTAR and remember meeting many warm and welcoming people. Sandra Leiblum asked me a couple of years later if I would present a case at the Fall Clinical Conference in New York, and that was a real thrill. My case discussant was Steve Levine, and I still remember how much I learned from his discussion of my case. My involvement at SSTAR continued with the support of SSTAR Past-President Peter Fagan. I remember sitting at a SSTAR business meeting when there was a call for a representative from the membership to serve on the Nominations Committee. Peter said, "Dan, I think its time to get you involved here," and he proposed my name. The following year, I again found myself sitting next to Peter at the business meeting when the call for a representative to the Nominations Committee was made. Peter again proposed my name and I gladly served on the committee. Believe it or not, the following year I yet again found myself sitting next to Peter at the business meeting. When the familiar call for a representative from the membership to the Nominations Committee came up, Peter stood up and said, "I would like to nominate anyone but Dan Watter for this position. It's time to give him an opportunity to run for office." Since that time I have served two terms as Membership Officer, I have been Co-Chair of the Scientific Program Committee, and have given two additional presentations at the Fall Clinical Conference and four presentations at Annual Meetings. Thank you Peter!

Currently I find my interests evolving once again. My recent work has been focused in the area of ethics and healthcare with a particular emphasis on the ethical practice of sex therapy. This interest has been fueled by two wonderful experiences. One has been my return to school as a student. I am currently completing a post-graduate certificate in Medical Humanities with a focus on biomedical ethics at Drew University. The other has been a fantastic collaboration with Peggy Kleinplatz. Peggy and I have been presenting together on ethics in sex

therapy for the past few years. It has been an extremely meaningful endeavor for me in that Peggy's intelligence and professionalism have pushed me to look more deeply into my own work and to refine my ethical philosophy.

On the home front, I am fortunate to be celebrating my 30th wedding anniversary this year with my wife Laurie. She has been a constant source of support in my life and work, not to mention the love of my life ever since we met as kids at summer camp. She has spent the past several years working as a school nurse in a school that serves kids on the autism spectrum. We have two terrific kids of our own, Michael, 24, who is currently living and working in Los Angeles, and Emily, 20, a college sophomore. We live in a very friendly and welcoming lake community in northwest New Jersey, and it has been a terrific place to live and grow as a family.

All in all, it has been a wonderful ride that I hope will continue for quite some time. I often say to friends and colleagues that if I had my entire career to do over again there is very little I would change. I consider myself an extremely fortunate person, and I am pleased to say that my experiences in SSTAR have played a large part in my career enjoyment. Thank you SSTAR!



New Books by SSTAR Authors

Barry McCarthy and **Michael Metz**, *Men's Sexual Health: Fitness for Sex Satisfaction*. Routledge/Taylor Francis, 2008.

Hani Miletski, *Mother-Son Incest: The Unthinkable Broken Taboo Persists*. East West Publishing, 2007.

Rachel Needle and L E. Walker, *Abortion Counseling: A Clinician's Guide to Psychology, Legislation, Politics and Competency*. Springer, 2007.

David E. Scharff and Jill Savege Scharff (Eds.), *New Paradigms for Treating Relationships*. Jason Aronson, 2006.