

# 2009 ALTERNATIVE SEXUALITIES CONFERENCE

CULTURAL COMPETENCE  
AND CLINICAL ISSUES



## **2009 CONFERENCE STAFF**

**Braden Berkey, Psy.D.** – Conference Director

**Richard Sprott, Ph.D. and Robert Bienvenu, Ph.D.** – Program Development

**Cathy Buksar, MA** – Conference Coordinator

**Donna Williams** – Registration

**Danny Kopelson** – Marketing

**Justin Herren** – Art Direction

## **ART EXHIBITS @ CENTER ON HALSTED**

The Center on Halsted promotes talented artists from the LGBT community with continually evolving exhibits. Please take some time this weekend to enjoy the current displays.

Brian Tilton's architectural watercolors are on display in the second floor gallery. Tilton states, "I'm drawn to the details of older buildings, be they Victorian, Beaux-Arts or the architecture of the 20th century. The way sunlight hits and defines a building fascinates and captures my attention."

Niki Nolin and Maureen Seaton Collaborative exhibition is being held in the third floor gallery, located in the rooftop deck corridor. Niki Nolin and Maureen Seaton have been collaborating for ten years. Their similar aesthetics, theoretic underpinnings, and close friendship have enabled them to navigate long distances, coming together for several weeks each summer to consult and create face to face. They've exhibited their collaborative work at the International Digital Media Arts Conference in Philadelphia, the 11th Street Gallery and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and the Electronic Literature Organization's State of the Arts Symposium in Los Angeles.

***Recording and photography during the conference is permitted with the permission of the presenters.***

# 2009 Alternative Sexualities Conference

## *Cultural Competence and Clinical Issues*

***Leather, kink, BDSM, polyamory, alt sex.... Non-traditional sexual practices, lifestyles and identities have become increasingly visible in recent years. With more portrayals on television and in movies, as well as in literature and music, clients are feeling increasingly comfortable about bringing “forbidden” sexual issues to psychotherapy.***

Today's conference has been designed to provide clinical perspectives, empirical data and opportunities to discuss the challenges encountered in psychotherapy with individuals and couples in the alternative sexuality communities. It is the result of a partnership between the Community-Academic Consortium for Research on Alternative Sexualities (CARAS) based in San Francisco and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Institute (SOGI) at the Center on Halsted located in Chicago.

CARAS was founded in 2005 at the 9th Leather Leadership Conference with the intent to increase awareness, understanding, and visibility of alternative sexualities from a responsible and healthy perspective in scientific research, academic discourse, and clinical practice. SOGI was formed in 2007 with the mission to expand national access to high quality culturally competent mental health care for sexual minority individuals and their families. This is accomplished through the development and provision of educational programs for healthcare providers, using live and web-based formats. The Institute also advances clinical practice through the promotion of research on LGBT life course development issues.

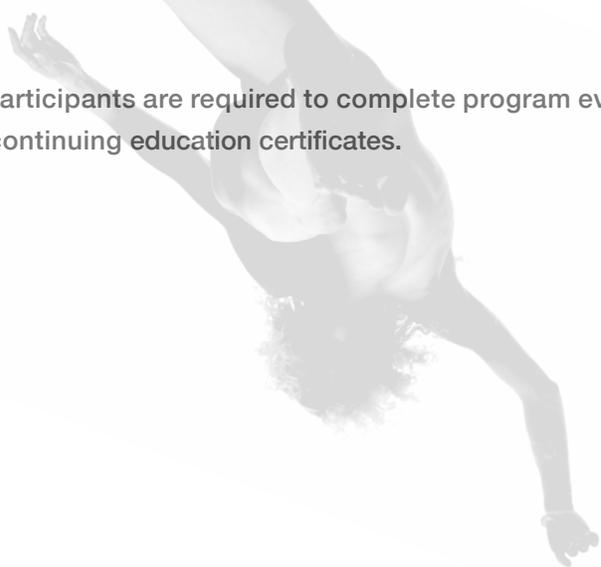
## **Continuing Education Credits & Conference Objectives**

Conference participants may earn 5.5 continuing education credits. The Center on Halsted is licensed by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation as a Social Work, Professional Counselor and Clinical Professional Counselor Continuing Education sponsor. The conference meets the requirements of the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists. Today's continuing education credits may be applied toward AASECT certification and renewal of certification. AASECT is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. AASECT maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

At the conclusion of the conference, participants will be able to:

1. Discern and distinguish emotional and sexual abuse from BDSM sexuality
2. Identify 3 of the most likely issues or concerns around BDSM sexuality in counseling interactions
3. Be able to identify 3 of the most likely issues or concerns around polyamory in counseling interactions
4. Identify at least two resources for learning more about BDSM sexuality or polyamory
5. Articulate the issues with DSM diagnosis of BDSM sexuality as a paraphilia
6. Identify conceptualizations of BDSM sexuality in classical clinical literatures
7. Identify some of the current research needs and current studies on polyamory and BDSM sexuality.

Please note that participants are required to complete program evaluations to be eligible for continuing education certificates.



# Conference Schedule

**8:30 - 9:30 AM Registration and Welcome** - Braden Berkey, Psy.D.

Hoover-Leppen Theater, Third Floor

*Continental breakfast provided courtesy of CoCreate: Relational Psychotherapy*

**9:30 - 10:30 AM Plenary** - Richard Sprott, PhD and David Ortmann, LCSW

Hoover-Leppen Theater, Third Floor

Polyamory: The Question of Consensual Non-Monogamy  
for Clinical Practice and Social Sciences

*Presentation sponsored by the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom*

**10:40 - 12:00 PM Break Out Sessions** – A Group

**Session A1**

HIV in The Leather Community

Board Room 200

**Session A2**

Borderline Personality Disorder or BDSM?

Adler Classroom 201

**12:00 - 2:00 PM Lunch – Sandwich Bar**

Third Floor, Irving Harris Family Foundation Reception Hall

*Lunch provided courtesy of Chicago Lakeshore Hospital.*

**12:15 - 1:30 PM Discussion Group & Luncheon for Kink-Identified Clinicians**

Adler Classroom 201

The conference is hosting the Kink-Identified Clinicians Discussion Group, which convened at the International Mr. Leather host hotel in the past. Now in its 10th year, the discussion group has been a safe space for clinicians to have open and candid exchanges regarding the unique challenges they face serving members of a marginalized community they identify with. Conversations typically involve issues related to professional boundaries, community affiliations and personal self-disclosures.

Practitioners, research investigators and graduate students who identify as members of the leather and kink communities are welcome. The group is open to individuals who are not attending the conference.

*This meeting is not open to the press. Meeting sponsored by the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom.*

## Conference Schedule - *CONT.*

### 12:15 – 1:30 PM **The Role of Communities in the BDSM Experience**

Benjamin Graham, Clarisse Thorn and members of the BDSM Community  
Board Room 200

This panel will explore the role that communities can play in the individual experience of BDSM. Community members will share the history of an informal, grassroots BDSM social group that has been in existence for over five years. The presentation will include historical perspectives on BDSM communities, contrast intentional versus therapeutic communities/groups, discuss the implications for clinical work, and explore issues in participatory action research with BDSM communities.

This community perspective will benefit clinicians and researchers with little knowledge of BDSM, as well as those more advanced in individual BDSM experience outside of the community context.

### 1:30 – 2:00 PM **Poster Presentations**

Third Floor, Irving Harris Family Foundation Reception Hall

### 2:00 – 5:00 PM **Break Out Sessions – B & C Groups**

#### 2:00 - 3:20 pm **Session B1**

Historical Development  
of BDSM Communities

Location Board Room 200

#### **Session B2**

Barriers to Therapy  
for the Consensually  
Non-Monogamous

Adler Classroom 201

#### **Session B3**

Filling the  
Research Gap;  
A National BDSM  
Community Health  
Assessment

Comm. Room 202

#### 3:30 -4:50 pm **Session C1** B/D, S/M and Aging

Location Board Room 200

#### **Session C2** Insatiable Wives: Hotwife/Cuckold Lifestyle

Adler Classroom 201

#### **Session C3** One Click Away: A Voyage Into Internet Sex Sub-Cultures

Comm. Room 202

### 5:15 - 6:00 PM **Case Presentation with Q&A Session – SOGI and CARAS Faculty**

Hoover-Leppen Theater, Third Floor

# PRESENTATION DESCRIPTIONS

## SESSION A1

### HIV in the Leather Community:

#### Prevalence and Risk Factors Among Men Who Have Sex with Men Who Practice BDSM

David Moskowitz, Ph.D.,

Center for AIDS Intervention Research, Medical College of Wisconsin

There have been no studies that directly explore the HIV prevalence and sexual health behaviors of submissive and dominant Leathermen. In previous research, 21% of barebackers (i.e. MSM who eschew condoms) considered themselves Leathermen; 46% reported wanting a partner who self-identified as a Leatherman. Thus, there is some evidence to suggest that there may be a propensity towards reduced sexual health within this community. The current study used an anonymous survey administered at two MSM events: the 2008 International Mr. Leather Competition in Chicago and the 2008 PrideFest in Milwaukee. Measures taken included: affiliation with a leather identity and leather orientations, HIV serostatus, last HIV/STD test, condom use, HIV disclosure, masculinity, hypermasculinity, and sex control. The study results indicate that the values that underlie the leather identity might be driving forces that influence condom disuse. Thus, a targeted intervention that addresses sexual control and masculinity in order to encourage safer sex may be warranted for this group.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Identify the difference in sero prevalence between Leathermen and non-Leathermen, and between the different sorts of Leathermen (i.e. Submissives, Dominants, Switches).
2. Understand why HIV infection and seroconversion are so rampant in this community.
3. Connect the underlying constructs valued by Leathermen (i.e. sexual power, masculinity, etc.) with relaxed safer sex practices.

## SESSION A2

### Borderline Personality Disorder or BDSM? Distinguishing the Clinical Issues

Karen Torry Greene, LCSW, Independent Practice – Phoenix, Arizona

Working with Borderline Personality Disorder can be challenging and complex for any professional. Symptoms and behaviors are frequently expressed in subtle ways that can be confusing to the practitioner, and can be further complicated by co-morbid factors of other personality disorders, past trauma, or mood disorders. Lifestyle choices may either mirror or exacerbate maladaptive symptoms, and inaccurate assessment of behaviors can be devastating to a patient.

In this presentation, participants will have an opportunity to review Borderline Personality Disorder from different approaches, including schema-based and the DSMIV. Participants will build awareness of co-morbid influences, and how these factors might reflect on the behaviors of a borderline individual. Typical “rules of submission” and submissive behaviors will be reviewed, and compared and contrasted with Borderline Personality Disorder.

We will then lead a guided discovery with participants to develop a logical guideline as to how to distinguish which behaviors constitute clinical issues (or not) using several case examples. This will include discussion regarding respect, self-determination, freedom of choice, and individual safety.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize the symptoms, schematic distortions, and co-morbid factors of Borderline Personality Disorder.
2. Understand how persons with Borderline Personality Disorder, or Borderline characteristics can be more vulnerable in BDSM submissive roles.
3. Develop BDSM culturally sensitive guidelines to determine the difference between healthy submissive behaviors and unhealthy clinical issues.

## **LUNCH PANEL**

### **The Role of Communities in the BDSM Experience:**

Benjamin Graham, MS, LCPC and Clarisse Thorn, B.A., DePaul University, Chicago

This panel will explore the role that communities can play in the individual experience of BDSM. Much of the small but growing literature on psychotherapy and BDSM focuses on improving the therapeutic process and reforming traditional mental health infrastructure (e.g., improving clinical training, revising of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual). While the field of mental health can play an important role, another useful means of promoting wellness for BDSM individuals may not involve a clinician at all; rather, indigenous social groups can offer an important counter-narrative to social stigma against BDSM and address important issues of safety and consent. In turn, it is important that both clinicians and researchers understand this phenomena and its implications for their work.

A feature of the presentation will be community members sharing the history of an informal, grassroots BDSM social group that has been in existence for over five years. Members will share stories about the group’s formative years, common themes in the newcomer experience, and ways in which the group has increased safety and knowledge for its members.

The panel will include historical perspectives on BDSM communities, contrast intentional versus therapeutic communities/groups, discuss the implications for clinical work, and explore issues in participatory action research with BDSM communities.

This community perspective will benefit clinicians and researchers with little knowledge of BDSM, as well as those more advanced in individual BDSM experience outside of the community context.

After completing this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Understand contemporary theoretical and research support for the role of BDSM communities in promoting mental wellness, and contrast this perspective against psychology's historic framing of BDSM.
2. Explain the types of community resources that exist for persons exploring or experiencing BDSM-identity, including the differences and similarities of each.
3. Describe three clinical and three research implications in adopting a sex-positive, research-based, empowerment view of BDSM-identified individuals in a community context.

## **SESSION B1**

### **Historical Developments of BDSM Communities**

Robert Bienvenu, Ph.D., CARAS

It is helpful for clinicians working with patients who identify as members of the BDSM community to understand the origin and cultural context of the BDSM subculture, as well as the development of medical diagnostic frameworks that address BDSM. This presentation will provide an overview of the historical development of both the modern BDSM subculture, focusing on the United States from c. 1930, and medical diagnostic criteria addressing sexual sadism, sexual masochism, and fetishism, focusing on the DSM from the DSM-1 through the DSM-IV-TR.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the timeline for development and geographic centers of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual components of the BDSM subculture in the 20th century.
2. Identify social-organizational attributes of the gay, lesbian, and heterosexual "branches" of the BDSM subculture.
3. Describe the historical development of diagnoses of sexual sadism, sexual masochism, and fetishism.
4. Identify contexts in which medical classificatory frameworks have interacted with members of historical BDSM subcultures.

## **SESSION B2**

### **Barriers to Therapy for the Consensually Non-Monogamous**

David Rodemaker, M.A., Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Alex Iantaffi, Ph.D., MFT, University of Minnesota Medical School

Sexual minorities come in a variety of practices and orientations, one of which is most broadly described as the "consensually non-monogamous." This group is not uniform or homogenous and consists of the polyamorous, the polygamous, swingers, individuals in "open relationships," and others.

Consensual non-monogamy exists at what is often a complex intersection of spirituality, sexual orientation, gender, and culture. The differences in identity and practice within this population prevent a “one size fits all” conceptualization. As such, working with individuals and families that engage in consensual non-monogamy poses special challenges to the traditionally trained therapist due to a lack of cultural competence. Questions around the boundaries of fidelity and infidelity, family structure and roles, hierarchy and power, sexual health and practice, along with the dynamic tension between privacy and openness or recognition (the “Walk-in Closet”) all play an important part in the issues involved in therapy where consensual non-monogamy is the focus. The purpose of this roundtable is to familiarize the participants with the barriers to seeking and benefitting from psychotherapy that the consensually non-monogamous face. These barriers are internal, in the sense that many individuals and families may resist seeking therapy due to fear of stigmatization and judgment; external, in that therapeutic models and training tend to focus on a dyadic constructs that reinforce cultural gender norms and stereotypes; and systemic because laws and custom enforce certain choices on both therapists and clients in the therapeutic process.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Be more aware of the barriers to effective therapy that come from both the client’s and the therapist’s perspective and experiences.
2. Provide more culturally competent care for consensually non-monogamous individuals and families.
3. Better understand the cultural varieties and relational styles of consensual non-monogamy.

## **SESSION B3**

### **Filling the Research Gap: A National BDSM Community Health Assessment.**

Richard Sprott, Ph.D., CARAS

CARAS is leading the development of a major study of health and psychiatric morbidity in the BDSM communities. This session provides an overview of the need for such a study and invitation to join the research team.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Cite 2 reasons for the need of a community-based study of health and psychiatric morbidity.
2. Understand the basic research designs needed for a rigorous study of health and psychiatric morbidity.
3. Cite a possible community benefit of the planned study

## **SESSION C1**

### **B/D, S/M, and Aging**

Douglas C. Kimmel, Ph.D., City College, City University of New York

Frequently aging sexuality is seen as restricted by biological changes and ageist stereotypes regarding

youthful attractiveness, especially with regard to gay men and heterosexual women. For those who develop expertise in b/d and s/m, however, this skill can offset the absence of youth, physical prowess, and stereotypic aspects of beauty. Likewise, adding this new dimension into a long-term relationship can rekindle erotic relations and connect earlier fantasies with the reality of later life sexualities.

The advent of the HIV/AIDS risk in sexual activities has increased general interest in “safer sex” which clearly includes many activities associated with b/d and s/m. This growth in interest among younger gay and bisexual men has facilitated cross-generational relationships unusual for contemporary young and middle-aged adults. These relationships provide also a potential friendship network to assist the older man or woman with tasks of living as well as during health crises.

Since b/d and s/m often focus less on gender and more on power exchange and skill with sexual/erotic equipment, it allows for bisexual potentials to emerge in previously monosexual persons over the lifespan. It therefore permits older adults to “come out” as gay or bisexual, opening new doors of fulfilling life experiences. Moreover, issues of aging sexuality can be minimized, or even eroticized, through skillful application of b/d and s/m techniques.

Use of this information in psychotherapy and in providing services and counseling with older adults will be discussed.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Identify three ways in which expertise in b/d and s/m can increase the sexual attractiveness of older partners.
2. Describe specific ways older adults utilize specialized sexualities to develop a friendship network and support system.
3. Specify b/d and s/m techniques that can compensate for aging changes in male and female sexual response.

## **SESSION C2**

### **INSATIABLE WIVES:**

### **WOMEN WHO REJECT SEXUAL FIDELITY IN MARRIAGE AND THE MEN WHO LOVE THEM**

David J. Ley, Ph.D., Independent Practice - Albuquerque, New Mexico

This presentation summarizes the results of an investigation of the history, incidence and etiology of the “Hotwife/Cuckold Lifestyle.” This Lifestyle is distinguished from swinging and polyamory in that the husband rarely seeks sexual contact outside their marriage except for participation in group sex with his wife and other men, while the wife is permitted and sometimes encouraged to pursue unrestrained sexual encounters with outside men.

The presentation will address:

- Social stigma towards nonmonogamous couples and related clinical assumptions present in behavioral health research and treatment;
- Historical/cross-cultural marriage practices which explicitly condoned and encouraged non-fidelity by wives;
- Description of female historical figures who rejected monogamy within marriage, with the explicit or implicit consent and support of their husbands;
- Description of the results of qualitative interviews and investigation by the presenter, with couples currently living lifestyles that encourage nonmonogamous sexual behavior by the wife;
- Review of paraphilias such as troilism, candaulism and eligibility paraphilias, and discussion of the problems involved in applying sexual disorder concepts to these couples and individuals.
- Presenter will offer specific case examples of individuals and marital dyads where these nonmonogamous behaviors occurred in an adaptive, stable, and psychologically healthy context;
- Potential insights that Evolutionary Psychology and neurobiology may offer in understanding and contextualizing these behaviors;
- Identification of specific issues presented by these couples and individuals that may be encountered when/if they present in behavioral health services, and ways in which clinicians can provide more effective services to these clients.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Participants will be able to frame the occurrence of female and marital nonmonogamy within a historical and cross-cultural context.
2. Participants will be able to discuss the ways in which female nonmonogamy within marriage can serve healthy, adaptive functions within an individual and a marital dyad.
3. Participants will have confronted their own social, professional and clinical assumptions regarding the occurrence of female nonmonogamy within marriage, and be prepared to offer ethical, effective therapeutic services to these clients.

## **SESSION C3**

### **One Click Away : A Voyage Into the Internet Sex Sub-Cultures**

Timaree Schmit, M.Ed. and Courtney Weaver, M.Ed., Widener University

For those who share a sexual interest or identity, the Internet is a bastion, an emotional and economic nerve center and an unparalleled means of communication. People can find each other, share ideas and images, collectively form a group identity and develop their sexual lives both privately and publicly. These online communities have also served as a gateway to new fantasies and sexual behaviors previously unknown or experienced.

Many sexual minorities, fetishists, and pornography purveyors and consumers have created vibrant online communities where like-minded individuals can interact, share and hawk their wares. This

seminar will introduce participants to these communities, including some more obscure sub-cultures. These groups will be examined for characteristics pertinent to sexuality educators, counselors and therapists, considered in terms of how they inter-relate to each other and to broader categories of sexual fantasy and behavior. Participants will be given the opportunity to practice applying this new knowledge, identifying teaching opportunities and potential clinical issues. They will also brainstorm methods of interacting with these groups that will promote the healthy sexuality, and inform their own their own clinical and/or investigative work.

After completing this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe two obscure sexual sub-cultures that have flourished on the Internet.
2. Identify how at least two online sexual sub-cultures are inter-related to each other or to broader categories of fetish affiliation/identification/orientation.
3. Devise at least one strategy for reaching out to and interacting with members of sexual sub-cultures in terms of sexuality education, counseling or therapy.

## **POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

### **Kink and Competence:**

#### **Training Therapists in Differentiating BDSM Practices from Pathology**

Alexis Silas, M.S., Alexandria Gerrick, M.S., James Carney, B.A.,  
and Shani Bensman, B.A., Chicago School of Professional Psychology

The purpose of this poster presentation is to review literature that defines BDSM practices and differentiates it from abuse. The presentation will emphasize the ethical responsibility of practitioners to become familiar with these differences and cultural factors that can impact work with BDSM clients. The presentation will also explore the ways in which BDSM culture and practices are typically presented to students, and will make recommendations to improve training and supervision in doctoral programs.

### **Ultra-Vanilla:**

#### **Non-penetrative Gay Male Sex as a Healthy and Hot Alternative practice.**

Paul C. Larson, Ph.D., Chicago School of Professional Psychology

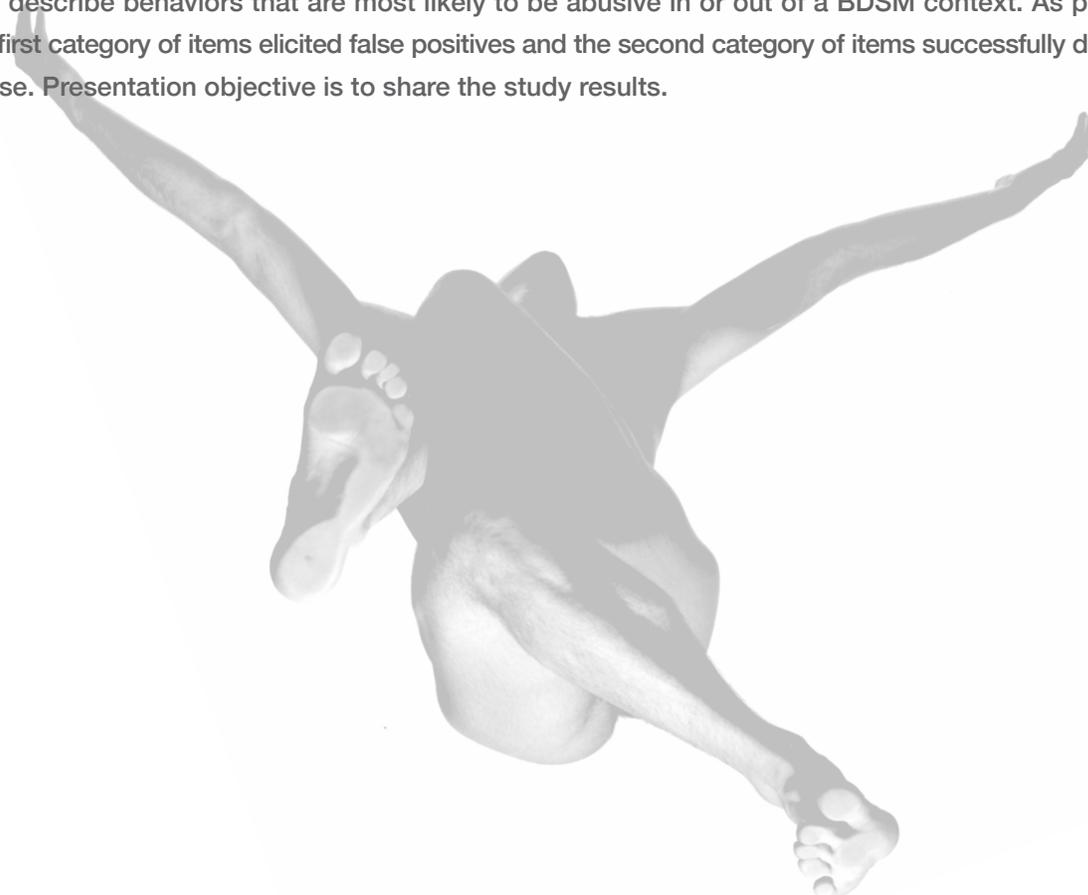
There are many erotic activities two men can do with each other, yet contemporary gay culture has focused mostly on anal sex as the “main event” leading to climax and all other forms of sexual activity are generally conceived of as foreplay. Anyone who shows a distinct preference for other forms is often looked down upon as either immature or in some way handicapped or disadvantaged. Non-penetrative sex (NPS) practices, including 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. The attitudinal barriers to the wider use of these techniques will be

explored. Specific cognitive strategies for promoting change in attitude will be 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.

### **Do Standard Abuse Scales Elicit False Positives Among Sadomasochistic Participants?**

Evelyn Comber, M.H.S., M.P.C., M.A., LCPC

The purpose of this study was to examine whether standardized abuse scales would elicit over-reporting (false positives) or under-reporting (false negatives) of abuse among sadomasochistic participants. Thirty-three women, 21 men, and two transgender individuals (n = 56) volunteered. Half the participants had experienced a previously abusive Bondage, Discipline, Sadomasochism (BDSM) relationship; the other half had experienced a non-abusive BDSM relationship. BDSM practice can make the diagnosis of abuse more difficult in two ways. First, BDSM practitioners in abusive relationships might mistakenly classify the abuse as BDSM, leading to false negative diagnoses. This possibility was not supported - participants did not under-report abuse. Second, BDSM practitioners in non-abusive relationships might mistakenly be diagnosed as being in an abusive relationship due to the nature of their consensual BDSM activities. This possibility received some support. In addition, two a priori categories of the six abuse scale items were defined: (a) items describing behaviors that appear in many sadomasochistic scenes and, as a result, were hypothesized to most likely elicit false positive responses, and (b) items that describe behaviors that are most likely to be abusive in or out of a BDSM context. As predicted, the first category of items elicited false positives and the second category of items successfully diagnosed abuse. Presentation objective is to share the study results.



## CONFERENCE STAFF & PRESENTERS

**Braden Berkey, Psy.D.** (Conference Director, Panelist) completed his doctoral work in clinical psychology at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and moved to Chicago for an internship at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1988. During the past 15 years his private practice ([www.prairiepsychological.com](http://www.prairiepsychological.com)) has focused on serving sexual minorities and those impacted with HIV/AIDS. Recognizing the unique clinical dilemmas faced by providers within the leather community, Dr. Berkey created the Kink-Identified Clinicians Discussion Group ten years ago. In 2004 he completed a certification in Nonprofit Management through the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at UIC. He served as the Director of Behavioral Health and Social Services at Howard Brown Health Center for six years, during which time he expanded graduate training opportunities and developed a comprehensive substance abuse program. In 2006 Dr. Berkey joined the Center on Halsted, where he serves as the founding director of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Institute. He is currently developing a web-based certification program in LGBT culturally competent care, while crafting a research initiative for the Center. Dr. Berkey is also an Associate Professor at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology ([www.thechicagoschool.edu](http://www.thechicagoschool.edu)).

**Robert Bienvenu, Ph.D.** (Program Development, Presenter) completed his doctorate in sociology in 1998 at Indiana University, Bloomington, focusing on cultural sociology, theory, and the sociology of sexuality. His dissertation addressed the development of sadomasochism (SM) as a cultural style and involved several years of archival and field research in gay and heterosexual SM subcultures. He is completing a book on the history of the kink community, which will be published by Duke University Press. Information on his research can be found at <http://sexresearch.us>.

**Cathy Buksar, MA** (Conference Coordinator) is currently completing a doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology at the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago. Her research and clinical interests include LGBT family issues, BDSM communities, mindfulness, human relational systems and the intersection of mental health with the law. She is currently a therapy extern at the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Institute at the Center on Halsted.

**Evelyn Comber, M.H.S., M.P.C., M.A., LCPC** (Presenter) has provided clinical services to the alternative lifestyles populations for the past 10 years. She devoted her master's thesis to the study of BDSM, and she is currently completing a doctorate in psychology through Northern Illinois University. Ms. Comber has provided, as well as attended, workshops covering such topics as communication, psychological aspects of conditioning, behavior management, and other psychological aspects of being involved in a BDSM relationship.

**Benjamin Graham, MS, LCPC** (Presenter) has seven years of clinical experience in community mental health contexts, including a one-year fellowship specializing in school-based violence prevention. He is currently a senior doctoral student in community psychology, and has conducted research on self-help therapeutic communities immigrant worker rights, student wellness issues on college campuses, and inclusive education for students with disabilities. For the past two years he has extrapolated his experience working with marginalized communities to BDSM, applying concept of social stigma and serving as a guest lecturer on BDSM in human sexuality courses.

**Karen Torry Greene, LCSW** (Presenter) is the founder and director of VIP Mental Health and Life Coaching ([www.vipmhc.com](http://www.vipmhc.com)), a small private practice in Phoenix that specializes in working with personality disordered and seriously mentally ill individuals. After receiving her MSW from Arizona State University in 2000, Ms. Greene participated in an intensive two-year residency in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), where she was formally trained in CBT and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). While learning DBT, Karen developed a penchant and love for

working individuals with personality disorders, people in crisis, and those who have multiple and complex diagnoses. She is currently actively involved in client advocacy and work to create change in the public mental health system, as well as in the kink-community.

**Paul Larson, Ph.D.** (Presenter) obtained his doctorate in counseling psychology in 1977 with a dissertation entitled, Sexual Identity and Self Concept. He started the first gay consciousness-raising group in Utah as part of his research. He is a charter member of Division 44, APA. He is head of the Health Psychology concentration in the Clinical Psy.D. program at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology where he also teaches GLBTQ issues at his current position and has supervised dissertations on gay and alternative sexualities.

**Alex Iantaffi, Ph.D.** (Presenter) is currently the research coordinator for the All Gender Health Online project, a NIH funded study on gender identity and HIV prevention. Ze received hir PhD from the University of Reading (UK) and hir MSc in systemic psychotherapy from the University of Bedfordshire (UK). Alex's research interests have focused on gender, sexuality, disability, polyamory, and BDSM. Some of hir most recent co-authored publications are included in Moon, L. (2007) Feeling Queer or Queer Feelings? Radical Approaches to Counseling Sex, Sexualities, and Genders, L. and Langridge, D. and Barker, M. (2007) Safe, Sane and Consensual. Ze is editor-in-chief of the Journal of Sexual and Relationship Therapy and visiting professor for the Institute of Constructivist Psychology in Padua, Italy. Alex's other research interests include: polyamorous families and parenting; non-monogamous relationships and queer issues in relation sexual and mental health; transgender parents; and sex-positive parenting.

**Douglas Kimmel, Ph.D.** (Presenter) is author of Adulthood and Aging (Wiley, 1974, 1980, 1990), co-editor of Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Experiences (Columbia University Press, 1993, 2003) and co-editor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Aging: Research and Clinical Perspectives (Columbia University Press, 2005). He was Chair of the Association of Gay Psychologists (1977), President of the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues: Division 44 of the American Psychological Association (1987-88), and served on APA's Committee on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns (1980-83), the APA Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility (1983-86), focusing on ageism issues, and was chair of the APA Board of the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (2008). He was a co-founder of SAGE (now Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) in New York City, and now has a private practice of psychology in Hancock, Maine.

**David Ley, Ph.D.** (Presenter) earned a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of New Mexico. He has worked for many years in the assessment and treatment of sexual issues. When he first encountered the phenomenon of Hotwife/Cuckold Lifestyle he approached it with the basic assumptions of psychopathology, misogyny, abuse and relationship dysfunction that are applied by most behavioral health practitioners. However, the psychological health and relationship stability of these couples forced this writer to confront these assumptions and investigate further.

**David Moskowitz, Ph.D.** (Presenter) is currently being trained as an NIH postdoctoral fellow at the Center for AIDS Intervention research. His educational background is in interpersonal relationships, communication, and behavioral health. Much of his research centers on risk-taking behaviors among men who have sex with men and the creation of technology-based interventions to curtail such behaviors. He has published articles in AIDS and Behavior, Sexual and Relationship Therapy and Archives of Sexual Behavior.

**David Ortmann, LCSW** (Presenter) is psychotherapist and sex therapist in private practice in San Francisco. His area of clinical focus and study is the sexuality of leather, BDSM, kink and fetish communities. As an author, he

has been published in journals, magazines, and anthologies of fiction and non-fiction. David serves as an expert witness, providing testimony regarding the psychology, scope, process, and ritual of consensual BDSM sex play for civil and criminal cases. He assisted in the development of the Community-Academic Consortium for Research on Alternative Sexualities (CARAS) at the 9th annual Leather Leadership Conference in 2005 in Phoenix Arizona. David serves as an advisor and consultant on sexuality to several Bay Area organizations. In addition to serving on the Board of CARAS, David is a member of the San Francisco Leathermen's Discussion group, the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom (NCSF), the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT), and the Northern California Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology (NCSPP).

**David Rodemaker, M.A. C.H.** (Presenter) has had a strong interest in working with sexual minorities for years. A student member of the APA, CARAS, AASECT, and SSSS, he also sits of the National Student Committee for AASECT. He recently defended his dissertation, *Altsex: The Clinician's Guide to BDSM*, an interdisciplinary guide to BDSM and Leather for mental health professionals. He also started and facilitates the Many Loves Seminar and Support Series for individuals interested in Polyamory and Consensual Non-monogamy at the Center on Halsted in Chicago, IL. Other research and clinical interests include spirituality, multiculturalism, and human relational systems and structures.

**Timaree L. Schmit, M.Ed.** (Presenter) is currently completing a doctoral degree in Human Sexuality from Widener University. She has worked in the sexuality field for many years a sex advice columnist, HIV Prevention counselor, peer sex educator, adjunct professor and researcher. She founded the Human Sexuality Education Student Organization (HSEDSO) and served as Chair until fall of 2008. She maintains the website <http://sexwithtimaree.com>.

**Alexis Silas, M.S.**, and her copresenters; **Alexandria Gerrick, M.S.**, **James Carney, B.A.** and **Shani Bensman, B.A.** are second-year doctoral students in the Clinical Psy.D. program at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Through their practicum experiences they developed a realization that little, to no training is available to graduate students regarding alternative sexual practices in general, and BDSM practices in particular. She and her colleagues hope that presenting at this conference will draw awareness to this gap in training, and inspire graduate-level educators to bring more attention to these issues.

**Richard Sprott, Ph.D.** (Program Development, Presenter) is a research psychologist specializing in human development, earning his doctorate in developmental psychology from UC Berkeley in 1994. He is the first Executive Director of the newly formed organization, the Community-Academic Consortium for Research on Alternative Sexualities (CARAS), a nonprofit corporation designed to promote scientific and scholarly research on BDSM sexuality, polyamory and other forms of negotiated non-monogamy. Dr. Sprott teaches in a counseling psychology program (MFT program) at a SF Bay Area private university and also in the Department of Human Development and Women's Studies at California State University, East Bay. As a researcher he has focused on the interconnections of social development and language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and the impact of stigma and prejudice on interactions between counselors/ therapists and members of stigmatized groups. Dr. Sprott has examined in detail the relationship between professional identity development and the development of professional ethics in medical doctors, ministers and teachers. In addition, he has a long history of conducting program evaluations for educational programs for migrant farm-worker families, which highlight the ways in which social organizations and communities help and hinder the educational achievement of migrant farm-worker children. All of these efforts highlight the ways in which stigma, prejudice, minority dynamics, language, identity development and community development all intersect and affect each other.

**Clarisse Thorn, B.A.** is a feminist, sex-positive, pro-BDSM activist best known for curating the Sex+++ documentary film series at Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. She has delivered lectures on both sexual communication and BDSM to a variety of audiences, including several Chicago universities and New York's Museum of Sex. She also volunteers as an archivist at the Leather Archives & Museum. Her blog is available at: [clarissethorn.wordpress.com](http://clarissethorn.wordpress.com)

**Courtney Weaver, M.Ed.** (Presenter) is a third year doctoral student at Widener University studying human sexuality education. Her interest and work in the sexuality field revolves around internet-based sexuality education where she has created a web series entitle "The Sexual Chronicles" which can be vied on YouTube. She is current the chair of her student organization (HSEDSO), where she previously held the office of Vice Chair of Financial Affairs. Ms. Weave also host "Instant Pleasure," a weekly sex-talk radio show.



## **CONFERENCE SPONSORS**

### **Chicago Lakeshore Hospital**

**Chicago Lakeshore Hospital**

[www.chicagolakeshorehospital.com](http://www.chicagolakeshorehospital.com)



national coalition for sexual freedom

**National Coalition for Sexual Freedom**

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

**CoCreate: Relational Psychotherapy**

773-539-9183

# SAVE THE DATE

**2010 Alternative Sexualities Conference**  
Chicago, Illinois

May 20, 2010

Write [sogi@centeronhalsted.org](mailto:sogi@centeronhalsted.org) for additional information  
and presentation proposal forms.

This conference was made possible with the help of the CARAS BDSM Therapy Project Volunteers, CARAS Staff and the Staff and Volunteers at the Center on Halsted.

Photography provided by Sandro.

Special Thanks to:

**Chicago Lakeshore  
Hospital**

**CENTERONHALSTED**

