Officers

CHAIR
Verta Taylor
University of California, Santa Barbara
vtaylor@soc.ucsb.edu

CHAIR-ELECT
Tracy Ore
Saint Cloud State University
tore@stcloudstate.edu

PAST CHAIR
Barry Adam
University of Windsor
adam@uwindsor.ca

SECRETARY-TREASURER
Nancy Fischer
Macalester College
fischn@macalester.edu

COUNCIL MEMBERS
Wendy Chapkis
University of Southern Maine
chapkis@maine.edu

Tina Fetner
McMaster University
tina.fetner@mcmaster.ca

Gloria Gonzalez-Lopez
University of Texas, Austin
gloria386@mail.la.utexas.edu

Kari Lerum
University of Washington,
Bothell
klerum@uw.edu

Susana Peña
Bowling Green State University
susana pena@bgsu.edu

Sharon Preves
Hamline University
spreves@gw.hamline.edu

Kegan Allee (Grad Student Rep)
University of California,
Santa Barbara
allee@umail.ucsb.edu

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Peter Chua
San José State University
pchua@sjsu.edu

WEBSITE EDITOR
Jeffrey Sweat
University of California, Davis
jwsweat@ucdavis.edu

The Chair

There has never been a more important historical moment for those of us engaged in research, teaching, activism, and public policy initiatives pertaining to sexuality. I expect that we have been sobered by the enshrinement on November 2, 2004 of discrimination against gays and lesbians in 11 new state constitutions that now ban same-sex marriage. For those of us who are lesbian or gay, it is difficult not to feel like walking targets after the Republican Party made use of moral action teams protesting same-sex marriage at public polling places to help win Bush’s presidential victory. The campaign to restore traditional values is, of course, much more than a debate about same-sex marriage. It also manifests in a variety of ways: restrictions tantamount to censorship of federal research on sexuality, the use of federal funding to promote traditional marriage as a solution to poverty, the passage of laws preventing gays from becoming adoptive parents, the denial in several states of infertility treatment for lesbians and single women, the campaign to illegalize abortion, the spread of federally funded abstinence-only sex education programs that promote heteronormativity by teaching young people that abortion leads to sterility and suicide and that half of gay male teenagers in the U.S. test positive for the HIV virus—and this is just the tip of the iceberg. It is difficult not to be alarmed by the turning back of so many hard-won victories on behalf of sexual freedom and the resounding defeat of other progressive social policies. But this is not a time for despair and fear.

Many have spent our lives and academic careers teaching about and researching sexuality, even though our work frequently has been marginalized, ridiculed, and at times even attacked by colleagues, students, and the general public. In a moment like this, I find it helpful to turn to the scholarship on social movements, my other lifelong passion, reminding me that potentially significant social movements will generate opposition. The use of social movement forms and tactics to oppose or reverse changes advocated or won by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender movements is often a sign of the movements’ success. The recently released movie Kinsey chronicles Alfred Kinsey’s struggle to obtain support for and public acceptance of his landmark research on human sexuality, only to watch his entire research enterprise collapse as a result of vitriolic personal attacks on him and his work during the McCarthy era. These are similar times, and it is important that we continue to take the risks associated with researching, teaching, and engaging in public policy work and everyday activism to destabilize heteronormativity and promote sexual freedom. In the early 1970s when I began to come to terms with my sexual identity as a lesbian, I discovered Kinsey’s work on my own and in it I found validation for my sexual desires and experiences; of course, it was never mentioned in any class that I took. We should take heart that it is nearly impossible for students today to get through college without encountering some of the bountiful garden of ideas that has blossomed from the seeds sown by several decades of sexuality research. Recent polls report that young people are more receptive to diverse sexualities than earlier generations, and I am firmly convinced that this is, at least in part, because of the work that all of us do.

Verta Taylor
Chair, Sexualities Section

Submit

Have Something to Say?
Send in your essays, announcements, comments, reviews, letters, reviews, artworks, and photos for the next issue of SexualitiesNews to: Dr. Peter Chua, pchua@sjsu.edu, Dept. of Sociology, One Washington Square (0122), San José State University, San José, CA 95912-0122, 408-924-5322 (fax).

Key Dates

January 18, 2005
Open paper submission deadline for the upcoming ASA meeting

July 1, 2005
Submission deadline for the Summer 2005 issue of SexualitiesNews

August 13-16, 2005
100th Annual Meeting of the ASA at Philadelphia, PA
The concept of homophobia was first developed as a psychological concept implying discomfort, hatred, or fear of one's or others' homosexuality. It has largely been a response to discrimination, used in defense of gay men and lesbians (although others, including bi and trans people, are sometimes included under the umbrella of homophobia's reach). It is a conceptual tool and a discursive resource for individuals and collectivities to name and respond to their oppression. We have found, however, that in many instances homophobia has become a taken-for-granted term that is often deployed without adequate critical attention to its meanings and consequent effects. Perhaps one of the best examples is when homophobia becomes a signifier of multiple meanings and instead of explaining a social reality, its naming imposes a judgment that reduces opportunities for analysis.

We solicit papers that develop sociological analyses of the unintended consequences of various deployments of homophobia: in relationship to gender and sexuality; in the ways that homophobia is at times associated with groups based on race/ethnicity, class, and urban/regional backgrounds; and in its relationship to theoretical analyses of multiple axes of power. In doing so, we hope to more complexly theorize the meanings and uses of homophobia as a potentially progressive/liberatory tool.

We are organizing two conference sessions—one at ASA and one at SSSP—that examine the uses and misuses of homophobia. The ASA session will be one of the Sexualities Section Roundtables. (Please submit directly to that session and note that your paper is for the “Rethinking Homophobias” table). The SSSP session is slated as a program committee sponsored Thematic Session. We invite paper submissions to one or both of these sessions. Submissions deadlines are Jan. 15, 2005 (ASA) and Jan. 31, 2005 (SSSP). Further information is available at www.asanet.org and www.ssp1.org.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at: Karl Bryant, Soc. Dept., Univ. of CA, Ellison Hall, Santa Barbara, CA 93106-9430, keb2@umail.ucsb.edu, and Salvador Vidal-Ortiz, PO Box 20180, Greeley Square Station, New York, NY 10001-0002, svidal-ortiz@gc.cuny.edu.
Activities

Sexualities & Borders Symposium
Bowling Green State University, Ohio  |  March 23-24, 2005

This interdisciplinary symposium will feature noted scholars from the Midwest region whose research focuses on the intersection of sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, migration, and borders. Dr. Roderick Ferguson, author of Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique and Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Minnesota, will provide a keynote address as part of BGSU’s Provost’s Lecture Series.

This gathering will analyze sexualities in relation to different kinds of borders: borders between and within social hierarchies, the geographical borders between nation-states, and borders between disciplines.

THE BORDERS BETWEEN & WITHIN SOCIAL HIERARCHIES
The study of sexuality, race/ethnicity, gender, and immigration has been limited by a narrow focus that views each of these structuring categories/processes as self-contained. The symposium will address this limitation by centering the intersection of these hierarchies and challenging any notion of race, sexuality, and gender as monolithic categories.

 GEOGRAPHICAL BORDERS & MIGRATION
Focusing on the movement of people, cultures, and capital across the borders of the nation-state draws our attention to the contact zone between “native” and “alien,” “white” and “Other.” This gathering will focus on research that analyzes migratory processes and immigrant culture in relation to sexuality.

BORDERS BETWEEN DISCIPLINES
Because we believe that sexualities are best understood through interdisciplinary study, we seek to foster conversations across disciplinary borders. Invited participants are trained in History, Sociology, Anthropology, Literature, and Performance Studies, among other disciplines and interdisciplinary areas.

The symposium is organized by the Sexualities and Borders Cluster of BGSU’s Institute for the Study of Culture and Society (ICS).

For more information, please contact Susana Peña at susanap@bgnet.bgsu.edu.

GenderQueer/QueerGenders
Conversations Among Artists, Activists & Academics
University of California, Santa Barbara  |  February 11, 12, & 13, 2005

GenderQueer/QueerGenders is a multidisciplinary, multimedia conference for people who’ve been thinking about queerness and gender from different places (institutions, geographic locations, identities) and through different means (performance, scholarship, organizing, cultural politics, etc). The conference will bring together artists, scholars and activists as equal contributors to conduct workshops, exhibit and perform art, and present academic research. A priority of this conference is to reflect the diversity and complexity of gender expressions and the meanings gender has in different racial and cultural locations. To that end, we particularly encourage proposals by and for people of color, working-class people, and people with disabilities.

GenderQueer/QueerGenders will be a forum for discussing the multiplicity of queer gender identities as they are experienced and expressed simultaneously with race, region, class, access, ability and other identities. One catalyst for this project has been our collective frustration with the lack of certain critical discourses about intersections of genders and sexualities. Specifically, we are concerned about the limited discourse on “emerging” queer genders including, for example, queer femininities, heterosexual queers, and the ways that gaps like these overlap with existing silences about race, class and privilege. We fear that these discourses are sometimes overshadowed by homogenizing “conventional” narratives of genderqueer and transgender communities. We hope to create a space to theorize a wider range of queer genders more fully representative of our identities, communities, and political/artistic work.

For more information, e-mail: gq_qg@riseup.net.

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS SYMPOSIUM
San José State University
Student Union, 2-5pm
May 3, 2005

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Jamison Green
Author of Becoming a Visible Man (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004)

Transformations
Photographic Exhibition by Jana Marcus
“Just a Boy”
A Documentary Film
by Aidan Crawford and Discussion

Workshops and Panels with Travis Gardner, Tyler Fong, Damon Helton, and many others.

For more info, contact Dr. Susan Murray, summuray@email.sjsu.edu.
Recent Articles & Chapters

Recent Books

Section Listserv
Subscribe to the Sexualities Discussion Listserv.
In addition to the official announcement listserv to which all section members are automatically subscribed, we have an informal discussion listserv to which you may subscribe by sending an e-mail message to Majordomo@listserv.asanet.org.
In the body of the message, type “subscribe sexualities” (without the quotation marks). Leave the subject line blank, and make sure that anything else in the body is removed, such as any signature your e-mail program may automatically add.

Awards
Martin Levine Dissertation Award
The Martin Levine Memorial Dissertation Award was established to honor the memory of Martin Levine, who died of AIDS in 1993. It provides $3,000 to a graduate student (and $500 to an honorable mention) in the final stages of dissertation research and writing, who is working on those topics to which Levine devoted his career: 1) the sociology of sexualities, 2) the sociology of homosexuality, and 3) HIV/AIDS research.
Those wishing to be considered for the Martin Levine Award should submit five copies of their approved dissertation proposal, a letter of application indicating how their work adheres to the mandate for the award, and a letter from the chair of their dissertation committee about the work to the chair of the award committee. (This letter must state that the applicant has advanced to candidacy.) Send materials to: Dr. Verta Taylor, Dept. of Sociology, 2834 Ellison Hall, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA, 93106-9430, vtaylor@soc.ucsb.edu. Applications are due on April 15 of each year.

Graduate Student Paper Award
This award is given to a paper authored by a student currently enrolled in a sociology graduate program. A paper may be co-authored by two or more students who would share the award (papers co-authored with faculty are not eligible). The predominant focus of the paper should be sexualities broadly defined. Papers should be manuscript length and no longer than 35 typed, double-spaced pages. An original and four copies of the paper should be sent by June 1, 2005 to Dr. Jessica Fields, Dept. of Sociology, 1600 Holloway Ave, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132.