

## 2020 Global Sex Research Virtual Conference

Presentations-On-Demand begin November 6  
Live Streaming — November 19-20



# SYMPOSIUM/CE PRESENTATIONS

## ***Troubling Orgasm: New Ways into Sexual Pleasure***

**Moderator:** Breanne Fahs, PhD

**Presenters:** Sara Chadwick, PhD; Jennifer Chmielewski, MS; Deborah Tolman, EdD

**Co-Authors:** Christin Bowman, PhD; Sari van Anders, PhD

**Thursday, November 19, 2020 | 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm (EST)**

**1.0 CE Hour**

### **Presenters:**

**Breanne Fahs** is Professor of Women and Gender Studies at Arizona State University. She is the author of *Performing Sex, Valerie Solanas, Out for Blood*, and *Firebrand Feminism*, and co-editor of *Burn It Down!*, *The Moral Panics of Sexuality*, and *Transforming Contagion*. She is the Founder and Director of the Feminist Research on Gender and Sexuality Group at Arizona State University, and also works as a Clinical Psychologist.

**Sara Chadwick** is a PhD candidate in Psychology and Women's & Gender Studies at the University of Michigan, working with Dr. Sari van Anders. Broadly, my research focuses on how sexual scripts create gendered expectations that influence people's sexual behaviors and experiences, especially related to orgasm and sexual coercion. I am especially interested in challenging typical assumptions about sexual pleasure, orgasm, and what these concepts represent. I will soon be joining these research interests with Public Health as a University of Central Florida Postdoctoral Associate, working with Dr. Eric Schrimshaw.

**Jennifer Chmielewski** is a doctoral candidate in the Critical Social/Personality Psychology program at the CUNY Graduate Center. She received her master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research uses critical feminist theories and methods to explore women and girls' embodiment and lived experiences of gender, desire, and sexual identity through an intersectional and social justice lens. Her dissertation is a conceptual analysis of young women's desire, centered on subjective experience within contexts of injustice. She is also the Project Director and Senior Editor of *sexgenlab.org*, whose mission is to build and disseminate critical research on gender and sexuality to the public.

**Dr. Deborah Tolman** (she/her/hers) is a Professor of Women and Gender Studies at Hunter College and a Professor of Critical Social Psychology at The Graduate Center at CUNY. She has studied adolescent sexuality for over twenty years and is an innovative qualitative and mixed methods researcher. She has written and edited several books, including *Dilemmas of Desire: Teenage Girls Talk about Sexuality (2002/2005; AWP Book Award)* and *The American Psychological Association Handbook on Sexuality (2015; (Choice "essential"; Division 44 Book Award) (co-edited with Lisa Diamond)*, as well as many peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. She and her students launched *sexgenlab.org*, a resource (for professors, researchers and the public), translating and disseminating gender and sexuality research. She is a co-founder (with Lyn Mikel Brown and Dana Edell) of SPARK Movement *www.sparkmovement.org*, an intergenerational initiative and set of resources to support girls' and youth feminist activism. She is currently writing a book, *Desire Matters: Listening to Adolescent Girls Talk about Sexuality*.

**Abstract:** Sexual pleasure in the sexuality literature and sex therapy has been assumed to be or defined as orgasm. Fundamental belief about orgasm is that it is always only about pleasure and that it is the only pleasure that counts. Sexual pleasure conceptualized so narrowly, grounded in reproductive function, can be understood as a heteronormative hegemony; the orgasm "gap" reflects centering male sexual pleasure in heterosex. Questions about either orgasm or sexual pleasure among queer and/or non-binary/gender non-conforming people, whose sexuality is often abjected, fetishized or missing, are nascent. In this symposium, we will unseat orgasm as the lodestone of sexual pleasure, by situating inquiry and analysis within feminist and queer to defy a silent orgasmic hegemony. Across talks, the presentations trouble and complexify orgasm, highlighting relational contexts, orgasm expectations, unnamed coercion, assumptions about what and whose pleasure matters, and what pleasure's presence and absence mean.

**To view the full abstract, go to the Continuing Education (CE) section of the Conference Program.**

## ***Sex and Relationships in the Time of the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic***

**Moderator:** Amanda Gesselman, PhD

**Presenters:** Justin Lehmiller, PhD; Justin Garcia, PhD; Kristen Mark, PhD, MPH; Rhonda Balzarini, PhD

**Co-Authors:** Giulia Zoppolat, MS; Amy Muise, PhD; Richard Slatcher, PhD

**Friday, November 20, 2020 | 1:00 pm to 2:15 pm (EST)**

**1.0 CE Hour**

### **Presenters:**

**Dr. Amanda Gesselman** is the Associate Director for Research, the Head of the Research Analytics and Methodology Core, and the Anita Aldrich Endowed Research Scientist at The Kinsey Institute, Indiana University. She is also a research fellow at the Rural Center for AIDS/STI Prevention and affiliate faculty at the Indiana University Network Science Institute. Dr. Gesselman has been involved in a wide array of social-behavioral research. Her current research interests are in new trends in the romantic and sexual lives of adults around the world, the influence of close relationships on health and well-being, and how technology can be used to facilitate those meaningful connections. Dr. Gesselman has served as a scientific or statistical consultant for various corporations and non-profit organizations focused on social connection or romantic and sexual relationships. She was recently awarded a Social Science Research Council Rapid-Response Grant to fund an ongoing study of LGBTQ+ adults' technologically-facilitated relationships during COVID-19 isolation.

**Dr. Justin Lehmiller** is a social psychologist and Research Fellow at The Kinsey Institute. He is author of the blog *Sex and Psychology* and the book *Tell Me What You Want: The Science of Sexual Desire and How It Can Help You Improve Your Sex Life*. Dr. Lehmiller is an award-winning educator, having been honored three times with the Certificate of Teaching Excellence from Harvard University, where he taught for several years. He is also a prolific researcher who has published more than 50 academic works, including a textbook titled *The Psychology of Human Sexuality* that is used in college classrooms around the world. Dr. Lehmiller is a much sought-after voice in the media on sexuality research and education and he makes frequent appearances on radio and television. He also has bylines in *The Washington Post*, *Playboy*, *USA Today*, *VICE*, *Psychology Today*, *Men's Health*, *Politico*, and *New York Magazine*.

**Justin R. Garcia, Ph.D.** is Executive Director & Research Director of The Kinsey Institute, IU Bicentennial Professor and Ruth N. Halls Endowed Associate Professor of Gender Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington. At Indiana University he is also Co-Chair of the Interdepartmental Graduate Committee on Human Sexuality, and a Research Fellow with the Rural Center for AIDS/STD Prevention. His research program focuses on the biocultural foundations and dynamics of romantic and sexual relationships across the life course.

**Kristen Mark, PhD, MPH, CSE** is a sex and relationships researcher, educator, and therapist. She has been at University of Kentucky for the past 8 years and is in the process of moving into the University of Minnesota Medical School as the Joycelyn Elders Endowed Chair in Sexual Health Education and Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. She is also affiliate faculty at the Kinsey Institute. Her research focuses on sexual health and well-being, specifically sexual desire, sexual desire discrepancy, sexual pleasure, satisfaction, and the intersection of sex and relationships. She is the scientific consultant for Coral, a sexual wellness app, and is regularly relied upon to digest sex and relationship science to the public through television, print, and audio media.

**Dr. Balzarini** is a social psychologist studying the interpersonal processes that enhance and detract from the quality of romantic and sexual relationships. Her recent research focuses on how diverse couples can have satisfying and passionate relationships and successfully navigate challenges during times of conflict or distress.

**Abstract:** In an effort to slow the spread and "flatten the curve" of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, governments around the world implemented sweeping restrictions on movement and social contact. Lockdown orders and "social distancing" guidelines prompted drastic changes in daily life, with significant implications for our intimate lives. Are those living alone under lockdown orders effectively mandated to a state of involuntary celibacy? Do those living with partners face new relationship challenges? With depression and anxiety heightened, childcare unavailable, and limited outlets available for relieving stress, has maintaining a healthy and fulfilling intimate life become daunting? The goal of this symposium is to shed light on how people's sex lives and relationships changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. By identifying areas where people struggled as well as thrived, we may be able to learn lessons that help us more effectively navigate future emergency situations. Four talks will be presented that explore changes in sexual behavior patterns as well as predictors of sexual satisfaction and desire.

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