Sponsored by: WSU Sociology Department, Shocker SOC Club, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
A: Gender and Violence

Cycles of Violence in Kenya – Maasai Community

**Sain Lengeju** – WSU Graduate Student

In all Maasai villages women and girls remain severely marginalized by cultural traditional that do not value girl’s education. Girls are regularly married off at a young age (8-16) after undergoing female genital mutilation (FGM), a painful and dangerous rite of passage into adulthood. These girls are subjected to domestic violence and repeated rape. The few in school tend to have high school dropout rates. Education is the only way to stop these cycles of violence. Using culturally acceptable models will help the community understand the importance of education in turn end this cycles of violence and embrace gender equality.

Integration of Discussions of Gender and Sexuality in Anti-Trafficking Prevention Education

**Sara Zafar** – WSU Center for Combating Human Trafficking,  **Bailey Patton Brackin** – WSU Center for Combating Human Trafficking,  **Karen Countryman-Roswurm** – WSU Assistant Professor/WSU Center for Combating Human Trafficking

Discussions of gender and sexuality are integral to the successful prevention of Human Trafficking, specifically Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) (Countryman-Roswurm & DiLollo, 2015; Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin, 2014; Ferrer-Wreder et al., 2004; Glodich et al., 2001). Messages normalizing the commoditization, marginalization, and exploitation of young girls and women, as well as the hyper-masculinization of boys and young men are unrelenting in pop culture, advertising, and media (Countryman-Roswurm & Patton-Brackin, 2015; Jensen, 2007; McGee & Buddenberg, 2003; Stark & Whisnant, 2004). These messages perpetuate tolerance of unhealthy and even violent intimate relationships among teens and young people; increase the risk of predators subjugating young people to DMST, and increase societal acceptance of “johns” seeking sexual relations (Jensen, 2007). Intimate partner violence often sets the stage for later subjugation to trafficking (Countryman-Roswurm, 2014). A history of intimate partner violence was found in 28% of women who were sexually exploited (Raymond & Hughes, 2001). This is due, in part, to social and cultural acceptance and reinforcement of gender inequality, and the imbalance of power between women and men (Dworkin, 1997; Stark & Whisnant, 2004). / / The Wichita State University Center for Combating Human Trafficking (CCHT) LOTUS Prevention to ProsperityTM Curriculum includes age-appropriate in-depth considerations of gender, sexuality, and societal expectations for young women and men (Countryman-Roswurm, 2015; Countryman-Roswurm & Shaffer, 2015). This curriculum is used with young people in schools, community and faith-based groups, in social and justice direct-care service programs, and is part of the larger CCHT Prevention Program. Workshop-style conversations help counter damaging images of unhealthy sexuality and gender expectations prevalent in society and culture with messages of value and respect. The conference workshop will include discussions on integration of gender and sexuality into the CCHT prevention curriculum, as well as initial research analysis from pre-test and post-test data collected from prior presentations of the curriculum to local youth.

B: LGBT Health and Well-Being

Transgender Youth: A Systematic Review of the Mental Health Literature

**Kris Hohn** – University of Texas-Arlington Graduate Student,  **Marcus Crawford** – University of Texas-Arlington

Purpose: A comprehensive list of literature related to the topic of transgender youth and mental health functioning does not exist. As such, the purpose of this study is to systematically review literature regarding transgender experiences in youth and adolescence, across mental health outcomes and parental relations. The objective is a comprehensive examination of the literature to date that analyzes the experiences of transgender youth in order to catalogue what is known and what gaps in the knowledge base exist, so that future research can be aimed at filling these gaps. Method: The researchers reviewed seven databases, utilizing the key search terms “youth”, “transgender”, and “parent” for peer-reviewed articles published in the last ten years. The last ten years were chosen because this reflects the current trends in the field. A final total of ten studies from fourteen articles were identified. The articles included data from 7,527 transgender individuals. Results: Evidence reinforced that parental support decreases depression (M=11.05, SD=11.96) and increases life satisfaction scores (M=3.35, SD=0.73). The proportion of the transgender sample (including “not sure” identified participants) with significant depression was 92 (34%) out of 273 transgender individuals. This was a significant finding when compared to non-transgender individuals, where 897 (12%) out of 7,580 scored as having significant depression. Conclusion: The combined view of this sample
provides future research with the perspectives of transgender individuals across several cultures. The abuse that transgender children suffer due to their gender nonconforming behaviors calls for more attention and research into providing services for families processing non-heteronormative behaviors of their children.

*LGBT Health Advocacy by Medical Providers*

**Sarah Houssayni** – Pittsburg State Assistant Professor

LGBT individuals can be a health minority and suffer the consequences of providers’ ignorance and bias. By educating health care providers about Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SO/GI) as well as LGBT health basics at the medical, nursing, PA schools and residency programs we can guarantee health care providers who are informed and adequate health care providers to LGBT folks. Why should a provider care? What changes when they do? What happens when they don't know? What are the basics of SO/GI and why should a provider know? In a 30 minutes presentation I will discuss the answers then have a 20 minute discussion time for the group and their experiences with informed/misinformed healthcare.

**Breakout Session 2 – 10:30-11:45**

**A: Conceptualizing Gender**

*Toward an Inclusive Account of Gender*

**Huxley Gay** – K-State Undergraduate Student

In this paper I argue that it is not feasible to attempt to eliminate the concept of gender and that we should not desire to do so. I hold that abolitionist and trait/norm covariance accounts of gender are flawed despite their differing approaches, and I critique abolitionist views that call for an elimination of the concept of gender. I also critique concepts of gender that have problematic implications for transgender persons in looking for a philosophical account of gender that is cognizant of both the identities of transgender persons and the positive value placed on gender as an aspect of identity by trans and cisgender men and women. Furthermore, I will argue that a desirable concept of gender is inclusive of the identities and experiences of trans individuals, and that many theories I critique cannot accommodate such identities and experiences. In addition to critically examining such theoretical accounts, I explore various ‘tropes’ of transgender women as presented by Julia Serano and Rachel McKinnon. Two problems cited from the latter author are of particular concern to trans women because the problems affect them differently from cisgender women. By examining McKinnon’s Stereotype Threat and Attributional Ambiguity for Trans Women, I maintain that a proper concept of gender ought to be inclusive of both the existence and experience of trans individuals. I combine this point with Serano’s ‘intrinsic inclinations’ model, maintaining throughout that Serano’s model offers the best approach to a concept of gender.

*Toward and Intersection Analysis of Rape in the Novels of Alice Childress and Jacqueline Wilson*

**Angela Hubler** – K-State Associate Professor

Although neither Childress nor Woodson depict black rape survivors in their young adult rape novels, they contribute to a black feminist tradition which articulates an intersectional analysis of violence. In Childress’ Those Other People (1989), Jonathan, the white protagonist, witnesses an attempted rape. He is reluctant to support Theodosia, the white girl who was attacked; however, after he receives notes threatening to reveal that he is gay. Susan and Tyrone, Theodosia’s new black neighbors are also reluctant to support her because of the racism they’ve encountered since their move to a predominantly white community. But Kwame, their uncle, argues “you have to be concerned about other people besides yourself” (169). He gives Jonathan evidence from Susan and Tyrone that supports Theodosia’s charge, prompting Jonathan to come out, and to support Theodosia. Those Other People reveals the interlocking nature of oppression based on race, class, gender, and sexuality; and articulates the need for solidarity among the oppressed. In I hadn’t Meant to tell You This (1994), the black protagonist, Marie, becomes friends with a white girl, Lena, who reveals that her father is sexually abusing her. Neither Lena nor Marie’s fathers want them to be friends. Lena tells Marie that her father calls her a “nigger lover” and “don’t really like mixing races…. he say if God wanted us to mix, he would’ve made us all one color” (41). Marie’s father, a college professor, calls families like Lena’s “trash,” and tells Marie, “White people hate us, and we go on hating them right back” (5, 28). But Marie and Lena “came together” (1), forging solidarity across “multiple lines of difference” (Keating 94). Their relationship offers a model of coalitional consciousness, which women-of-color feminist theorists Chandra Mohanty, Maria Lugones, and Bernice Johnson Reagon argue is necessary for feminist social change to occur (86).
Battle of the Book Boyfriends: Constructions of Masculinity in Popular Romance Novels

Jodie Hertzog – WSU Associate Professor, Jodie Simon – WSU Lecturer

The romance novel industry generated an estimated billion dollars in revenue in 2013 alone (Romance Writers of America, 2013), legitimating its prominence as a popular culture entity. Despite the existence of a highly interactive romance reader-blogger- author community on-line, studies in the social sciences have focused limited empirical attention on romance novels or the romance subculture to date. The purpose of the current study, then, is to explore the content and consumption of romance novels using an unobtrusive qualitative case study of “book boyfriends.” Drawing data from two popular trilogies, related reader/blogger reviews, and book teaser/marketing, we explore how typically feminine artifacts engage in the construction of romanticized masculinities and the ways in which these constructions maintain or challenge hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

B: Gendered Sexual Scripts

From Medical Procedure to a Gift from Father: Female Sexual Awakening and the Rise of the Vibrator

Carolyn Schmidt – WSU Graduate Student

This research project looks at the use of female orgasm as medical treatment through the lens of male convenience and comfort. Using both secondary and primary sources to trace the increase in the medical-therapeutic application of orgasm to treat female hysteria from the mid-nineteenth century, as it evolved from hand to mechanical manipulation, this paper argues that it was the male understanding and interpretation of female sexuality that initially normalized female orgasm and eventually led to the legal prohibition of the in-home mechanical devices that made female orgasm attainable in the privacy of the home. The purpose of this presentation is to extend the historical analysis of the fairly well-known practice of the medical use of the female orgasm. Previous research focused on the “fact” of the medical use of orgasm in the mid-late nineteenth century and has not yet begun an in-depth analysis of how that practice reflected gender politics and the second-class status of women in American society during this same period. This paper uses secondary sources to sketch the outline of what is known of the history to set up an in-depth primary source analysis of commercial and classified newspaper advertisements from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth in the United States. My initial findings are that female orgasm was considered socially acceptable during a period where it was separated from female sexuality from a male vantage point. As the male perspective of female sexuality shifted in response to the rise of stag films in the early twentieth century, American men came to understand female orgasm as a sexual experience. With that awakening came the legal prohibition of mechanical vibrators for at-home use and a decline in the social acceptability of the medical use of female orgasm.

Religiosity and Sexual Shame among Young Women

Alissa Bey – WSU Undergraduate Student, Jennifer Pearson – WSU Associate Professor

Many religious teachings, particularly those from Judeo-Christian traditions, have commonly prescribed abstinence until marriage. Because religious doctrine is more inclined to address female sexuality negatively, females are shown to hold more sex shame than their male counterparts (Daniluk, 2008). Past research suggests that these higher levels of sexual shame contribute to the limitation of sexual expressiveness, inhibition of sexual desire, and hindrance of outreach for social support about sexually related concerns (Sharma, 2008; Hull, 2008; Woo, et al., 2012). This study uses data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health to explore the role of religiosity in the sexual development of young women. Preliminary analyses, based on a sample of 6,503 young women from the Wave 1 survey, demonstrate that religious beliefs and practices are significantly associated with young women’s sexual attitudes and efficacy. Strongest findings were for models predicting sexual shame: Controlling for race/ethnicity, age, and parental education, young women reporting higher levels of religious attendance, importance, and fundamentalist beliefs reported higher levels of guilt and shame about sex. In addition, Conservative Protestants had higher levels of guilt and shame compared to mainline Protestants, while young women with no religious affiliation had lower levels of shame. More religious young women also had lower expectations of pleasure during sex and perceived more obstacles to using birth control. Further analyses will incorporate data from Wave 3 to examine the long-term consequences of religious beliefs and sexual shame for young women’s sexual relationships and experiences. We will examine the relationships between adolescent religiosity, sexual shame, and three dimensions of adult sexual relationships, including initiating sex with a partner, experiencing sexual pleasure, and expectations of unwanted sex.
This qualitative study focuses on the role of body physicality, masculinity conduct; and presumed and actual identities, in shaping social and sexual interactions among gay men. Exploring sociocultural influences on shaping interactions and identities remains a relatively unstudied area especially when it comes to men of diverse backgrounds. To illuminate the experiences of men previously neglected from this area of inquiry, the researcher conducted interviews with 46 self-identified gay and bisexual men of diverse backgrounds. Fifteen of the participants were interviewed face-to-face through in-depth semi-structured open-ended interviews and thirty-one participated in the study via Qualtrics an online survey tool. From these interviews important themes emerged regarding the centrality of the body to social experience as well as the significance of the body in understanding notions of privilege, power, accountability, and embodiment practices among a select group of gay men.

{ Lunch 11:45 am - 1:15 pm }

**Keynote Workshop 1:15 - 2:30**

Robyn Ochs: *Transgressing Binaries: Activism & Academia*

**Breakout Session 3 - 2:45-4:00**

A: Rural Spaces

*Queering Rural Place and Space*

**Brandon Haddock** – K-State Director/Administrator

This session examines how rural regions have developed distinctive social networks for marginalized sexualities and gender identities. This discussion places emphasis on the availability and form of such networks and how they can provide a sense of community. The challenges to rural communities continue to be a topic of social concern particularly with issues such as aging populations, outward migration, and corporatization of labor. As rural communities experience demographic and social changes do those of differing sexuality and gender identities that may consider these areas their home. It is the intent of this session to bring together those who find interest in the intersections of rural communities and sexuality and gender identity research and examine how the application of educational initiatives can be utilized to stabilize and enable possible growth in rural regions. Through experiential and theoretical approaches, this session examines and identifies how we are able to connect to networks and “gatekeepers” of rural communities. The intent is to promote awareness of diversity and inclusion within the larger rural region by seeking advocacy and education of sexuality and gender identity issues and how they may relate to larger social and demographic rural experiences.

*“The Unmistakable Scent of Apples”: Queering and Filipinizing Kansas through Bienvenido Santos’s Exile Literature*

**Tom Sarmiento** – K-State Instructor (Adjunct)

Queerness, and Filipinos, and Kansas—oh my! This presentation invites a re-imagination of the nation’s heartland as a place defined not exclusively by dominant US social and cultural norms based on whiteness, middle-class-ness, and heterosexuality. Presenting distinguished Filipino/American author Bienvenido Santos’s life and literature as a case in point, I frame Kansas and the Midwest more broadly as a simultaneously queer for and queered by people of Asian descent. Whereas dominant cultural imaginaries position non-white bodies as out of place in the interior US, the presence of such bodies in places like Kansas actually disrupts the myth of the heartland as White America. Moreover, as Santos’s short stories tacitly reveal, the Midwest can facilitate the expression of homoerotic desires between exiled Filipino countrymen. As a Distinguished Writer in Residence at Wichita State University during the 1970s and early 1980s, and whose most famous collection of short
stories Scent of Apples was published during his tenure in Kansas, Santos offers a critical entry point to not only queer conventional ideas about Asian American literature but also the heartland as “real” America. By attending to Kansas in Santos’s life and literature, I offer an alternative imaginary of queerness, Filipinos, and the Midwest.

**B: Global Perspectives**

*Female Suicide Terrorism: Individual Motivations, Organization Dynamics, and the Interplay between the Two*

Emily Dee – WSU Undergraduate Student

Past research on terrorism has focused primarily on men most likely due to the stereotypical notions that women are more maternalistic, passive, and peaceful than men. However, the limited amount of research on female suicide terrorism (FST) has alleged that FST is a growing phenomenon that has been widely overlooked. Though secular terrorist organizations are more likely to employ female suicide bombers than religious terrorist organizations, both types of terrorist organizations have utilized FST in achieving their groups’ strategic goals due to the efficaciousness of it. Females generate less suspicion, elude detection through relaxed security measures, and are able to better conceal explosives. Since female suicide bombers are perceived as violating gender norms, they garner more media attention and sympathy for the terrorist organization’s cause. In order to develop future models of suicide terrorism, provide insights into the recruitment and radicalization processes, and to recommend policies that target suicide terrorism, it is essential to build upon knowledge of suicide terrorism by examining FST in future research studies and analyses. Thus, in order to elucidate FST, this paper will address the reasons FST have been found to be more pernicious than male suicide terrorism, females’ motivations to carry out suicide missions, the strategic goals of terrorist groups, and the interaction between individual motivations and the aims, strategies, and ideologies of terrorist organizations.

*How is Gender Identity Education Approached in a Neoliberal Era?: Recognizing Gender-Nonconforming Students*

Kelsey Swanson

Global forces have affected the ways in which gender identity is taught, reinforced, and enmeshed in educational curriculum and pedagogy. This paper is predicated on an understanding of globalization as a neoliberal ideology, which adheres to capitalism and the market over the well-being of citizens, including those who would be viewed as ‘others’. The notion of globalization is approached with a critical lens, taking the stance that gender identity education is rarely recognized within neo-liberal, capitalist, heteronormative and male/female binary notions of globalization and needs to be better understood and brought into traditional educational environments in order to build cultures, nations and a world of fully equal and invested citizens. This paper seeks to explore ways in which forces of power in neo-liberal flows of globalization have impacted how children learn identity, and specifically sexuality and gender identity, in schools, and why schools must transform in order to be inclusive to nonconforming students.

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**Evening Keynote 6 pm**

Educator, Speaker, and Activist Robyn Ochs: *Getting Bi: Beyond Bisexuality 101*