

Division 44 Newsletter
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APA Board of Directors Passes United States Joint Statement

Against Conversion Efforts: *Many people deserve thanks for this achievement*

Melissa J. Grey, PhD



Ending Conversion Efforts

I am happy to share that in June, 2023, the American Psychological Association Board of Directors voted unanimously for APA to sign on to the United States Joint Statement Against Conversion Efforts (USJS), as revised based on feedback from the APA Ethics Committee. APA signed on with more than 23 other associations (see statement attached below).

Over approximately eight years, many individuals and groups have contributed to this process, with Division 44 and CSOGD advocating that APA sign on.

A great deal of gratitude is shared for many contributions:

- Many thanks to CSOGD leaders for their partnership including Tania Israel, David Rivera, Brandon Hoeflein, Aakash Kishore, and Taymy Caso.
- Deep appreciation for the expertise and committed advocacy from Resolution writing group members including David Rivera, Seth Pardo, Avy Skolnik, Maggie Price, Doug Haldeman, Darren Freeman-Coppadge, and Tania Israel.
- Thanks to many Division 44 Board Members who engaged this item on many agendas and moved sticky institutional levers, especially Arlene Noriega and Michael Hendricks.

- Appreciation is also shared specifically with the Division 44 Public Policy Committee – especially co-chairs Kim Skerven and Katy Trotta and past co-chairs including Michele Schlehofer and Nick Grant – for strategizing, supporting, and reviewing; and to the cadres of PPC members for their collaboration even in the midst of turbulent policy times.
- Thank you also to each of at least seven Division 44 Presidents who also supported Division 44's significant role including Gary Howell, Kimberly Balsam, Margie Rosario, David Pantalone, Richard Sprott, Mira Jourdan, and Christina Patterson.
- It would not surprise many 44 members that we also credit assistance and wisdom from Ron Schlittler and Clinton Anderson at APA.
- Last but certainly not least many thanks to Jim Walker and Guy Albert for their persistence and advocacy as well as for their vision.

It takes many hands to move a project along, and rarely do we get to share appreciation for everyone's efforts. There were many consultations with colleagues throughout this process, and I am sure to have missed more than one important person. Please add their name if you know who I missed!

I personally find value in multiple dimensions of the USJS including its reflection of professional consensus and a clear message to help cut through the misinformation that attempts to sell conversion as an alternative to affirmation. Many thanks for everyone's contributions to the protection, well-being, and liberation of LGBTQ+ communities.

Sincerely, Melissa – Division 44 PPC Liaison to the USJS (2015–2023)

United States Joint Statement Against Conversion Efforts

Completed August 23, 2023

Purpose and Overarching Position

The purpose of the United States Joint Statement (USJS) is to protect the public by committing to end the practice of so-called conversion therapy in the US, which could have a spillover effect in other countries as well. Thus far the USJS has been signed by 28 major US medical and psychological professional associations representing more than 1.3 million healthcare providers. It represents a shared framework of principles and guidelines when addressing the needs of people who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is specifically concerned with the practice of so-called conversion therapy, also known as reparative or reorientation therapy, or by the terms of

sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE) or gender identity change efforts (GICE).

Background

GICE “refer to a range of techniques used by mental health professionals and non-professionals with the goal of changing gender identity, gender expression, or associated components of these to be in alignment with gender role behaviors that are stereotypically associated with sex assigned at birth (Hill et al., 2010; SAMHSA, 2015). In addition to explicit attempts to change individuals’ gender according to cisnormative pressures, GICE has also been a component of sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE). “SOCE include a range of techniques used by a variety of mental health professionals and non-professionals with the goal of changing sexual orientation (APA, 2009) or any of its parts.” Conversion efforts include both GICE and SOCE.

Decades of research findings and clinical expertise have revealed that variations in sexual orientation and gender identity are a normal part of human development across race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Having same- or multi-gender attractions, behaviors, and desires and transgender, non-binary, and gender diverse identities and expressions, far from being a pathology, is a healthy feature found in every society and culture. In agreement with the USJS, virtually all major medical and psychological professional associations have concluded that neither same-gender desire or behavior nor the expression of diverse gender identities or characteristics constitute, *per se*, a mental illness or pathology. Most major professional associations already have position statements about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Queer, and Non-binary (LGBTQ+) health and/or the ineffectiveness and potential harms of conversion efforts. Research and experience shared by scholars, clinicians, and patients have shown conversion efforts have not changed sexual orientation or gender identity/expression (SOGIE) and are harmful.

Research provides the scientific theories and evidence to understand that conversion efforts are a form of stigma or discrimination. Numerous studies have established that conversion efforts put individuals at significant risk of harm. More human rights organizations are recognizing the harm and danger of conversion efforts. The International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) states that “the act of conversion therapy is cruel, inhuman and degrading and, in many cases, torture” that can often cause “extreme, and often unimaginable, human suffering.” The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has also acknowledged that conversion efforts may be “tantamount to torture.” Thus, it raises profound ethical concerns when individuals are led to believe that they can or should change these aspects of their identity. Assertions that such change efforts are viable or desirable are not based on sound evidence. They can be dangerous by exacerbating harmful stigma already suffered by sexual orientation and gender identity minorities and by framing therapeutic practices in ways that conflict

with scientific and ethical principles embraced by the therapeutic professions.

Conversion Efforts Violate Core Ethical Principles of the Healthcare Professions

The USJS reflects and reinforces some of the core ethical principles of the health professions. Historically, the principle to “do no harm” has been a fundamental practice for healthcare professionals. The ethical principle of “Respect for People’s Rights and Dignity,” including the right of self-determination, requires that each individual is seen as a whole person supported in their right to explore, define, articulate, and live out their own identity. For this reason, it is essential for clinicians to acknowledge the broad spectrum in which individuals may live positively and healthfully with their sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. In order to do so, it is important to understand and respect individuals’ sexual orientations and gender identities in the context of their intersectional identities and backgrounds, including socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, trauma, oppression history, and ideological values. The principle of “Integrity” calls on healthcare professionals to ensure accuracy and truthfulness in their work and to avoid making fraudulent, deceptive, or unclear claims or promises to their patients, and the principle of “Justice” invites professionals to be sure that their biases, competence, and limitations do not unjustly interfere in their work. To ensure all healthcare providers adhere to the principle of “Beneficence and Nonmaleficence,” it is essential to recognize that a person is not mentally ill or developmentally delayed because they experience same-sex attractions or transgender, nonbinary, or diverse gender identities or expressions.

When an individual experiences an internal conflict with their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, the recommended focus of intervention (or therapy) is to comprehensively assess the sources of the individual’s distress regarding their sexual orientation or gender identity and provide strategies to address such distress, without directly or indirectly pressuring how they identify. Interventions should also focus on creating a healthy, affirming, productive environment for patients to explore potential social or physical identity changes and their relationship to gender, sex, and sexual orientation, and focus on supporting the processes of positive identity development. Exploration of issues pertaining to gender identity and sexual orientation in a way that does not favor or presume a particular identity or experience, would not be considered conversion therapy.

Research or treatment approaches that perpetuate stigma or efforts to change minority sexual orientation or gender identity violates the above core ethical principles. We suggest that healthcare providers allow expression of one’s authentic identities without fear of stigma, pressure, or reprisal. Providers should strive to acquire a full understanding of and respect for sexual orientation and gender identity minorities and the intersectionality of these and other factors in people’s lives, free from the influence

of pervasive heterosexism, monosexism, cissexist bias, discrimination, and prejudice. (Please refer to the guidelines for practice with individuals from diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions from relevant professions.)

Goals and Objectives

The USJS signatories share a framework for protecting the public from the risks and harms of conversion efforts. The signatories further share a dedication to ensuring full access to the benefits of ethical, affirmative healthcare for sexual orientation and gender identity minorities using an intersectional lens. Given the fact that sexual orientation and gender identity diversity are not associated with mental disorder, the lack of evidence showing that conversion therapy can effectively change sexual orientation or gender identity, and the strong evidence that such change efforts can increase stigma and cause other harms to patients and their families, we urge all healthcare professionals to commit themselves to ensure that:

- The public is informed about the research on conversion efforts and the risks thereof;
- Affirmative behavioral, psychological, and emotional healthcare interventions are available to reduce the negative effects of stress related to having a minority sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Healthcare professionals are made aware of the ethical issues surrounding conversion efforts, including the acquisition of appropriate training to competently address requests for “conversion therapy” and to provide ethical support to clients in distress over their sexual orientation and/or gender identity;
- Healthcare professionals from various disciplines collaborate to promote individual and public health through education, advocacy, and/or social justice efforts about the risks and harms of conversion efforts.

Roles and Responsibilities

The USJS does not define a specific list of actions that every organization will carry out. Instead, it sets out a framework by which professional associations may be guided in ethically treating individuals who present with concerns about their sexual orientation or gender identity. In general, the statement’s signatories agree to accept the following roles and responsibilities:

- Review its own codes of ethical conduct for members and consider the need to reevaluate or alter their codes to support the provision of ethical care as discussed herein. Professional associations will ensure that their members have access to the latest information regarding the potential risks and harms of conversion efforts;
- Work together to create a shared information resource on the potential risks and harms of conversion efforts to assist both professionals and members of the public in accessing

up-to-date research on the matter;

- Work to ensure that academic, training, and professional development programs provide healthcare providers with a sufficient degree of multicultural intersectional competence to work effectively with sexual orientation and gender identity minority clients, including and especially among marginalized racial and other identities and determine such proficiencies on a regular basis;

- Help clinicians who are not sufficiently trained around issues of sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression find appropriate training or consultation or to connect patients with clinicians and agencies who are trained to provide culturally competent clinical care;

- Encourage auditing and accrediting organizations to review their current guidelines and policies for practitioners and training organizations to ensure that they promote the development of competence to work effectively with sexual orientation and gender identity minority clients.

We aim to:

- end the use of practices that attempt to change sexual orientation and gender identity,

- build greater social acceptance of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities of all ages, races, and ethnicities,

- account for developmental and intersectional identity considerations in each stage of life,

- encourage the provision of and access to appropriate culturally-relevant affirmative therapies for all individuals who seek therapeutic interventions,

- and determine professional proficiencies on a regular basis.

Understanding and supporting the experiences of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities will likely reduce health disparities and improve the wellbeing of these individuals, and by extension their families and communities. This joint statement is a collaborative effort that underscores the depth of our commitment to the ethical treatment of those at risk from conversion efforts.

USJS Signatory Associations as of August 23, 2023, the associations partnering with the USJS:

- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry;
- American Academy of Family Physicians;
- American Academy of Nursing;
- American Academy of Pediatrics;
- American Academy of Physician Associates;
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy;
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy's Queer and Trans Advocacy Network;
- American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work;
- American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists;

- American College of Physicians;
- American Counseling Association;
- American Medical Association;
- American Medical Student Association;
- American Psychiatric Association;
- American Psychoanalytic Association;
- American Psychological Association;
- Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies;
- Association of Black Psychologists;
- Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Addiction Professionals and their Allies;
- Association of LGBTQ Psychiatrists;
- Association of Psychology Training Clinics;
- Clinical Social Work Association;
- GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality;
- LGBT PA (Physician Associates) Caucus;
- National Association of Social Workers;
- National Latinx Psychological Association;
- Society of Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities;
- United States Professional Association for Transgender Health.

Notes: For a listing of current notes and references, please refer to the [PDF version](#) of the statement.

APA 2023 Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contributions to Psychology Presented to Beverly Greene, PhD, ABPP

One of the first openly lesbian African American psychologists

On the occasion of the 131st annual meeting, the American Psychological Association recognizes [Beverly Greene, PhD](#), for her outstanding lifetime contributions to psychology as an inspiring, award winning educator of all levels from the undergraduate to the post-doctoral, as a practicing clinical psychologist doing intersectional feminist therapy with marginalized people in settings ranging from county hospitals to private practices, and as a prolific and incisive scholar who has devoted her career, and her life, to lifting up marginalized people. Her work has been dedicated to making visible the invisible, to speaking for the silenced, and to shining a light on what has been hidden by a profession that has too often colluded with structural and systemic forms of oppression. She has been the best sort of iconoclast. While she has challenged destructive norms and constructs, she has also been instrumental in building a foundation for the next generation of psychologists on which to build more honest, equitable work.

Greene has broken through ceilings that were not simply made of glass, but were intended to be shatterproof against people like her, and immune to ideas like hers. As one of the first openly lesbian African American psychologists, she risked dealing with racism in the LGBTQA psychology community, and antilesbian bias among her colleagues of color. Yet she has persisted, an almost prophetic voice calling all of the strands of her own intersectional identities and the communities that they derive from to

come together to work as one another's allies, and to resist attempts to triangulate them against each other.

Greene's vision and passion for social justice derive from her family of origin. Raised as the eldest child of two devoted and loving parents who taught her that there was no obstacle larger than her enormous intelligence and aspirations, she has never faltered in the integration of her professional identity with all struggles for a more just world. Among her striking accomplishments have been her work bringing Jewish and African-American feminist practitioners together around our shared heritages of oppression and alliance, as well as working with communities of extreme poverty and creating high-quality service delivery systems in institutions that were more interested in blaming the victims, when she arrived, than in serving them in a more culturally responsive manner. Of course, she is among the mothers of womanist psychology and the deepened understanding of the lived experiences of African American women. When Greene sees a problem, she cannot rest until she has moved toward solutions.

One of her strategies for changing and healing the broken systems which she has had to enter in order to join this profession and work within it has been to write. A sustained and prolific scholar on such topics as the intersectional challenges of African American lesbians in particular, and African American women in general, she has been a leading voice in the development of intersectional feminist and womanist psychotherapies. She is the author/co-editor of over one hundred scholarly publications. Her writing has been compelling, and has led to her receiving twelve well-deserved awards from a wide range of organizations recognizing the high and persistent quality of her scholarship.

Greene has received over 40 illustrious awards for contributions to scholarship, leadership, mentoring, teaching, service, and advocacy, including APA's prestigious Senior Career Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest; and two APA Presidential Citations. She is an elected fellow of nine APA Divisions; is board certified in clinical psychology of the American Board of Professional Psychology; and is a Fellow of the Academy of Clinical Psychology. She is an honoree of the Ackerman Institute for Families Moving Families Forward Award, and her contributions are featured in Mental Health America's 2021 Website Salute to Black Pioneers in Mental Health.

A native of New Jersey but a life-long resident of Brooklyn who delights in taking all comers to Junior's restaurant to ensure that they have a taste of its famous cheesecake, Greene is now the matriarch of a large extended and loving family. While her family is diverse in its views, it is clear that her passion for and appreciation of the beauty of human difference both comes from and is reflected by that family. She is a doting aunt

and great-aunt to many exceptional young people, photos and videos of whom are what populate her social media feeds. In that, we see the quintessence of Beverly Greene; she is not speaking of her own accomplishments in these spaces, rather, she is highlighting the luminosity of the young people in her family's next generations.

Greene's colleagues describe her as brilliant, funny, warm, incisive, and not someone who suffers fools when foolishness is expressed as casual forms of racism, sexism, heterosexism, or other taken-for-granted versions of systemic oppression. She is, not secretly, a fan of the Star Trek universe, which she in part appreciates because it was, in her youth, and since that time, one of the few enduring locations of popular culture that has always highlighted and celebrated human diversity, as well as shown compassion for people's struggles with their own biases. For those who speak Star Trek, we can say that she is a little bit Bajoran (highly empathic), a little bit Klingon (ferocious in defending others), and a tad El-Aurian, like Guinan, the apparently ageless bartender on the Enterprise who presided with wisdom and humor, ever able to calm agitated colleagues and give wise counsel to leaders.

In short, Greene embodies the operational definition of excellence in psychology. She is a leader, a mentor, an educator, a scholar, a healer, and a deeply wise and empathic human being. She is never frightened by oppression. She is angered and energized into action by its presence. Our field owes her a debt of gratitude that we can only repay by attempting, as best we are able, to put into practice the anti-oppressive values that her life and work represent.

With deep gratitude for your exceptional career as a professor, scholar, practitioner, committed social justice advocate, and as one of the most extraordinary leaders in American psychology, the American Psychological Association is privileged to present you with the 2023 Award for Outstanding Lifetime Contribution to Psychology.

[Editor's Note: Beverly Greene was editor of the Division 44 Book Series for many years. A report of this award may be found on the [St. John's University Website](#). A transcript of an oral history interview with her is available on [Psychology's Feminist Voices](#). An entry for Beverly Greene is also available on [Wikipedia](#).

Division 44 Presidential Speech August, 2023

Thank you to so many of you who held a moment with me

Christina A. Patterson, PhD

When I was first approached about being a candidate for President-elect for Division 44, my first thought was not “no,” it was “hell no.” I was relatively new to Division 44 leadership. I am an early-career psychologist, so new to my profession. I felt that I had nothing to offer. I worried if people would trust me as their leader. I worried that I didn’t trust myself as a leader. But instead of saying “No,” I said, “Let me think about it.” I talked to people that I trust. And most importantly, I thought about my mom’s words. When I was growing up, my mother used to tell me, “If you’re worried about what other people think, you’re not ready to do it.” I think she meant this as way to help me navigate peer relationships. You know, sex, drugs, rock and roll, the usual. But her words have always held an important space in any decision I make. In that moment, I was worried about what people would think about me. I worried that they would think I was unqualified. I worried that they would think I failed them. I worried that I would fail them. So the obvious answer was “No, I was not ready to do it.” But that didn’t feel right to me. And my mother died eight years ago, so I couldn’t ask her for more advice. So then, I remembered when I attended the convention in 2018 and attended a meeting in the Division 44 suite focusing on women, trans, and nonbinary folks entering into leadership positions within the Division and APA at large. One of the discussion points was that we often think, “why me”; and we were encouraged instead to think “why not me?” And all of the reasons I worried I would fail became the reasons I thought I might just do okay. And then, I stopped worrying about what people would think and focused on what I thought I could do. So I said “Yes.”



Now, it’s time to reflect on my presidential year.

I stand here as a proud queer and genderqueer psychologist because of the elders who came before me to ensure that I had a place to stand. I often tell others the reason that I learned to love being queer and genderqueer is because I loved all of you first. I love you for your bravery, your audacity, your spirit, your fight, your queerness and transness, your love, your nuances and messiness, and your authenticity. Thank you for existing, so that I always have a family in this world. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

To those who are still figuring out who you are, where you belong, and how to move in this world, you will always have a place to stand with me. You are forever my family. I love you.

And because I love us so much, I know we can do better. Our community has many issues internally and externally.

First, let me reflect on our internal challenges.

Like the rest of the world, we struggle with white supremacy culture, as a community and as a Division. Our community is hierarchical, sexist, cissexist, racist, classist, ableist, and ageist. And because of that, so is our Division. One of my presidential initiatives was to continue the work being done on anti-racism and dismantling white supremacy culture. White supremacy culture is pervasive and is threaded so perniciously in all that we do that it becomes a challenge to see it and tear it down. Throughout the past year, I worked really hard to engage in reflection, discussion, and practice to tackle this issue. If I were to give myself a review, I'd say I did "okay." I have not been able to complete some of my goals, such as creating white accountability spaces, but I plan to continue this work in the upcoming year. I am not abandoning this goal.

Further, throughout the past year, I saw so many in Division leadership work diligently on this topic. We had difficult discussions about our own actions and those of others, about what accountability really means, and who we want to be as a Division. In all of these difficult moments, I saw a lot of beauty. I saw vulnerability, fear, and hope. I saw commitment to action and commitment to change. One concrete step we took was to enhance our parity rule for elected positions. Previously, certain elected positions (e.g., President, Secretary) had a gender parity rule where one year the nominees were male/nonbinary-identified; and the following year the nominees were female/nonbinary-identified. We made a change to this parity rule. Now, one year the nominees are BIPOC folks of any gender; one year the nominees are women, trans, and nonbinary folks of any race/ethnicity; and one year the nominees are open to any racial, ethnic or gender identity. Our hope is that by centering historically excluded identities, we will be more intentional about seeking and supporting more diverse leadership. We have so much more work to do in front of us, but I believe that we will continue to make this a priority. I am so incredibly proud of my team this year.

One thing I encourage Division 44 leadership and members do in the upcoming years is to consider who we want to be. At the midwinter meeting, I asked us to consider three questions: How do we envision the future of Division 44? How does white supremacy culture exist in Division 44 that prevents us from moving forward? How do we know when we are making progress?

Some of the questions that I have asked myself to help me understand the ways in which I uphold white supremacy culture through my action and inaction have been: How do I decide to use my time? When I speak *versus* when I don't? What are the intentions of my words? What are the impacts? What is said *versus* unsaid? What choices do I choose to make of what I say *versus* what I don't? Where do my biases show up? Where do my fears show up? How am I intentionally or unintentionally perpetuating white supremacy culture?

In my reflections on these questions, I grapple with my fear, worry, guilt, embarrassment and shame. I stand before you grappling with them right now. We must do this work individually and collectively. And today, I offer to do this work with you, beside you; and I ask that you do this work with me, beside me. I know that we will mess up and hurt each other. I ask for patience in learning, but also accountability for growing.

There are moments where I feel I effectively led the Division to grow in this area; and there are moments where I feel I failed. When I failed, I failed our leaders, our membership, and our community of color. For that, I am sorry. I promise to continue to engage in this work.

Next, let me address our external struggles. James Baldwin wrote a poem that I would like to share.

Untitled by James Baldwin¹

Lord,
 when you send the rain
 think about it, please,
 a little?
Do
 not get carried away
 by the sound of falling water,
 the marvelous light
 on the falling water.
I
 am beneath that water.
 It falls with great force
 and the light
Blinds
 me to the light.

¹ From *Jimmy's Blues and Other Poems* by James Baldwin (Beacon Press, 2014).

Y'all, we are standing under some serious falling water right now.

This year alone, we have had over 500 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced to federal, state, and local legislatures. Many passed.

From August, 2022, to today, we have lost so many family members to the violence of others. Let me speak the names of the ones we know: Caelee Love-Light, Mar-Quis "MJ" Jackson, Destiny Howard, Diamond Jackson-McDonald, Daniel Aston, Kelly Loving, Tiffany Banks, Semaj Billingslea, Acey Morrison, Mya Allen, Dede Ricks, Camdyn Rider, Jacob Williamson, Chanel Perez Ortiz, Ashia Davis, Banko Brown, Koko Da Doll, Ashley Burton, Tasiyah Woodland, Tortuguita, Cashay Henderson, Maria Jose Rivera Rivera, Zachee Imanitwitaho, Unique Banks, KC Johnson, Jasmine "Star" Mack, Akira Ross, O'Shae Sibley. My heart breaks for these souls and their families. My heart breaks for us as a community. We are deeply hurting.

In our hurt, we must turn to love and hope. Love for ourselves and one another. Hope for a better tomorrow for us and those that come after. To combat this hate, we cannot let them come between us. Now, more than ever, we must be a family that supports one another, pushes one another to do better and be better, and moves forward when we are being pushed back. When they seek to divide, we seek to unite. When they speak hate, we speak love. When they try to erase us, we shine and uplift each other. When they go low, we go even lower because nobody is pettier than us.

In all seriousness, I am so honored to be part of a community that refuses to give up. Thank you to all of you engaging in public policy: to those fighting for progress in your governments, workplaces, and institutions, and to those helping create a better now and tomorrow.

I want to personally thank the Division 44 Public Policy Committee: Kim Skerven, Katy Trotta, Michelle Schlehofer, Ryan Flinn – and any others that I am forgetting – for all of their hard work and efforts. You have not gone unnoticed.

I want to thank Ron Schlittler and Leo Rennie at APA. I both want to thank and call out APA. I want to thank APA for many efforts to support LGBTQ+ equality, particularly related to collaborative efforts between Division 44, the Portfolio of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, and APA Advocacy. And I want to call them out for taking too long, moving too slowly, and at times, hindering the work our Division was doing. Behind the scenes, we had many efforts denied, edited so heavily that the message was lost, or just not prioritized. For an organization that wants to be viewed as a front-of-the-pack leader, they sure struggle to lead, especially on LGBTQ+ issues. Never let it be said that I'm not gracious and petty in the same breath.

Similar to the other efforts I will continue into my immediate past-president year, I will continue to support Division 44 policy efforts.

And now, I want to spend a moment thanking so many people.

I want to thank my partner whose belief in me and love for me built a protective shield around me. I want to thank my communications co-chairs, Kristine Diaz and Bekah Estevez for helping Division 44 be front-facing, amplifying the work of our members and leaders, and navigating the new website (to be unveiled later this year). Thank you Kristine for recognizing when I was struggling and stepping up to help me. Your kindness and thoughtfulness are deeply appreciated. Thank you, Richard Sprott for also stepping up to help me during these times as well. I appreciate you. Thank you to Derek Phillips for providing compassion and empathy and laughter. I needed so much of that this year. Thank you to so many of you who held a moment with me whether that be a conversation, a laugh, a hug, or even tears. When I think of this past year, I think of the shared moments that were only made possible by me being in this position. I look forward to so many more shared moments.

Earlier I said that I am a proud queer and genderqueer person. All of that is true. In recent times though, I have struggled with internalized stigma in other aspects of my identity. In particular, I struggle with internalized ableism. White supremacy culture teaches us that our value is based on how we can contribute to producing capital, output, and productivity. Academia and our field reinforce those beliefs.

My biggest regret, sadness, reflection is how I feel that I did not do enough. I was really proud of the first seven months of my presidential year. And then, in February of this year, I decided to move ahead with my doctors' recommendations and schedule a series of surgeries. I spent two months in and out of doctors' offices preparing for surgery and being medically cleared. I then spent the next two months undergoing surgery that included about 60–70% of my body. And in between surgeries, and for months following, I spent a lot of time in physical therapy and follow up. I feel so frustrated and ashamed that I was unable to do all that I hoped to do, that I was less accessible, less responsive, and so exhausted.

As I say all of this, I am battling internalized ableism that all of this is just an out-loud excuse for not being enough as President. I know, logically that I was and am enough. But white supremacy culture is powerful, and it is an ongoing battle to fight against demeaning messaging. I debated including any of this in today's speech, but I promised myself a long time ago to be authentic to my feelings and myself.

To dismantle white supremacy culture, we have to be willing to be go against what we are taught.

So today, I share my vulnerabilities with all of you in hopes that it does something. What do I want it to do? I'm not sure, but maybe it will help me and you be more ourselves without holding onto the shame. In a class discussion this summer, our group was discussing what it means to be have self love; and I reflected that I think self love is an ongoing intention of centering myself in all of my messiness. I told them that I love myself enough to grapple with the shame of being human. So today, I do that with you.

Thank you for bearing witness to this process. The moments where I feel most proud of myself in this past year are the moments I was most authentic to myself.

I began the start of my journey to this moment with fear and thoughts of what others would think as I considered my next steps. I now end this journey with a bit of fear and zero care of what others will think as I consider my next steps. I hold my mother's words close, and I am ready for it.

So to all of you, let me be your mother for a minute, "If you're worried about what other people will think, you're not ready to do it. But baby, we gotta do it, so you need to be ready. Be so authentically you that you cannot be denied. Head high. I will always walk beside you – sometimes behind you – as I push you forward; and sometimes in front to shield you. I will ask you to do and be better because I see that version of you. And baby, I love you." Thank you.

Five New Division 44 Fellows Announced

Four are New APA Fellows approved by the Council of Representatives

Melissa J. Grey, PhD (she/her)

The Fellows Committee is honored to celebrate Division 44 members and their significant contributions to sexual orientation and gender diversity in psychology and to 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Big congratulations and welcome to the Division 44 Fellows inducted in 2023: Franco Dispenza, PhD, Phillip Hammack, PhD, Michele Schlehofer, PhD, Kim Skerven, PhD, ABPP, Matthew Skinta, PhD, ABPP, and Laurel Watson, PhD! Please read a little about each Fellow below:

Dr. Franco Dispenza's (he/him) groundbreaking scholarship has been at the vanguard of vocational concerns for sexual and gender minority persons living with chronic illnesses and disabilities (CID). His expert use of diverse methodologies and descriptive

and applied perspectives has created vital knowledge for the field and made rehabilitation and psychology professionals' clinical practice with sexual and gender minority persons living with CID more culturally responsive and effective. Dr. Dispenza's extraordinary leadership including in Division 44, APA, and the American Counseling Association includes co-chairing the APA Taskforce responsible for developing the *Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Sexual Minority Persons*. Translated into several languages, these guidelines have significant global reach. Dr. Dispenza's leadership has keenly applied and amplified much needed research for sexual and gender minority communities. His impressive scholarship and leadership have shaped policy, guidelines, and best practices for LGBTQ+ people. Dr. Dispenza has had an extensive effect on the field, and especially on the social justice-related vocational concerns of LGBTQ+ persons living with CID.

Dr. Phillip Hammack (he/him) was first inducted into the APA Fellows through Division 5 for his leadership in promoting qualitative methods in the discipline. His innovative scholarship has deeply impacted the psychology of sexual orientation and gender diversity and LGBTQ+ individuals. Dr. Hammack's research on sexual and gender diversity has proposed new paradigms, including a "queer paradigm of relationship diversity," developed important understandings of LGBTQ+ generations, placed LGBTQ+ health in social contexts of societal shifts in stigma and oppression, and destigmatized intimate diversity including kink and asexuality. In addition to generating knowledge that has shaped the field, Dr. Hammack engages in leadership and service that extends the impact of his work. His editorship of the Oxford University Press book series on Sexuality, Identity, and Society illustrates one of the ways Dr. Hammack cultivates creative scholarship. Dr. Hammack's contributions have advanced the field and provided new ground on which to advance scholarship that integrates social context and lived experiences of individuals with minoritized sexual and gender identities.

Dr. Michele Schlehofer's (she/her) extraordinary advocacy shines the light of sexual orientation and gender diversity science on public policy. As seen in Division 44, APA, and other organizational leadership roles, she has mobilized local, state, and national levers of power to advance LGBTQ+ equity and well-being. The list of public policy issues addressed by her position statements, webinars, community organizing, and program evaluations includes LGBTQ+ students' safety, non-discrimination, housing for trans individuals in the carceral system, Title IX protections for gender diverse youth, gender-affirming care protections, military service personnel, and too many more to include here. Her work infuses psychological science into every level of social action and grounds it all in the lived experiences of those most impacted. A thought-leader and scholar in "LGBTQ+ and Community Psychology," as the *American Psychologist*

special issue she co-edited was titled, Dr. Schlehofer embodies the praxis of “public psychology.” Dr. Schlehofer’s work has strengthened affirming and evidence-based narratives, shaping national policy and the field, and protecting the well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Dr. Kim Skerven’s (she/her) tenacious advocacy and clinical leadership has shaped positive legislation and led the way to more inclusive and effective Dialectical and Behavior Therapy (DBT) for LGBTQ+ clients. Her national advocacy is rooted in translational science, making advocacy connections to address anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, conversion therapy, and legislative attacks on transgender and non-binary youth, to name a few examples. Dr. Skerven has been a driving force in collaborative groups including her state psychological association and the Division 44 Public Policy Committee to create vital resources including an APA policy statement, briefing sheets, website resources, webinars, and practice bulletins. Dr. Skerven’s extraordinary contributions in DBT have also broken new ground for LGBTQ+ clients through her research and theory building, creating training materials, and service leadership. Her role as Editor of the Clinicians’ Digest for the journal, *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, also reflects her dedication to LGBTQ+ well-being. Dr. Skerven’s contributions have shaped a more positive policy landscape as a way of health promotion and created psychotherapy structures to heal the harms from invalidating, anti-LGBTQ+ environments.

Dr. Matthew Skinta’s (he/him) transformational teaching and scholarship on Contextual Behavior Therapy (CBT) with sexual and gender minority (SGM) clients has impacted the field and SGM individuals and communities in the U.S. and internationally. Among his large catalog of publications, Dr. Skinta wrote an important guidebook on tailoring CBT for SGM clients, *Contextual Behavior Therapy for Sexual and Gender Minority Clients: A Practical Guide to Treatment*. He created models of CBT training and has taught them to clinicians around the world including in Canada, Dominican Republic, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Poland, Sweden, and U.K. His trainings, invited dozens of times, target not only evidence-based intervention strategies for SGM specific stressors but also targets vulnerabilities in the social context, countering systematic and dangerous misinformation about SGM people. His research on SOGIE concerns in Poland, in the midst of anti-LGBTQ legislation and widespread negative public attitudes, is groundbreaking. Dr. Skinta’s work has national and international impact, creating transformational, evidence-based practice and promoting well-being for SGM communities around the world.

Dr. Laurel Watson (she/her) is an extraordinary scholar and leader in the study of

embodied multiple marginalization. Among the first to research bisexual experiences with sexual assault and objectification, Dr. Watson's research created a bridge between related experiences that occupied separate research areas. Dr. Watson's research also developed the Trans Discrimination Scale, which has reached across the U.S. and internationally, including Turkey, England, Lithuania, and Holland. Her intersectional scholarship makes important connections among objectification, microaggressions, minority stress, trauma, and other topics with scientific rigor and theoretical soundness. Dr. Watson's impact is broad both in its scholarly and societal reach. Her research appears in the popular press media as well as in practice guidelines. Through her editorial leadership at three leading journals, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, and *Sex Roles*, Dr. Watson further strengthens scholarship and advances research. With her scholarship, leadership, and mentorship, Dr. Watson's contributions have forged new pathways in gender and sexual orientation diversity and for the larger community of scholars.

APA Council of Representatives Report

We participated in advocacy efforts regarding the continued legislative onslaught on our communities

David Rivera, PhD

We are pleased to present the APA Council of Representatives 2023 August Meeting Report, summarizing the key events and discussions that took place during the meeting from August 2 to August 3, 2023. Below we present the highlights from the meeting that are pertinent to Division 44. Please see the [August 2023 Council Meeting Highlights](#) report located on the APA Council of Representatives webpage for more information about the business covered during the meetings.

In addition to the official business of Council, your Division 44 Representatives also participated in advocacy efforts regarding the continued legislative onslaught on our communities, especially the efforts that seek to eliminate empirically-validated and culturally-relevant affirming healthcare for young people. We met with a coalition of members primarily from Divisions 44 and 54 (Society of Pediatric Psychology) to strategize our efforts. APA staff is also participating in these efforts. We hope that our continued advocacy efforts will lead to stronger APA policy and position statements that will influence legislative and judicial processes.

An important matter that enhances Division 44's ability to advocate for our issues as strongly as possible is the apportionment of three Council Representatives for our Division. This is only possible through the active participation of our members in the apportionment ballot election, which will run November 1–December 15, 2023. We

strongly encourage you to participate in this very important election to help ensure that our Division maintains our current level of representation. We especially encourage our student members to vote as it's the first year that student members have been given the privilege of voting. We wholeheartedly support our students' meaningful engagement throughout the association, including the important voting processes.

August 2:

CEO Update: APA CEO Arthur Evans provided an update on the association's partnership with Sesame Street, aimed at bringing the science of psychology to the public. Concerns raised about legislative attacks on LGBTQI+ communities were discussed.

Financial Update: APA Treasurer Michael Hendricks (a Division 44 member) discussed the overall fiscal health of the association, confirming APA is in good financial standing.

Item #11: [APA Policy Statement on the Developmental Risks and Opportunities of Adolescent Employment](#). This policy statement was discussed with no dissenting opinions. The vote was 181-2-2 in favor.

Item #13: [Board of Educational Affairs \(BEA\) Racial Disparities Task Force Report: Racism and Bias in Pre K-12 Education](#). Discussion points included concerns about testing validity and internet issues in underserved communities. A motion was made to refer the report back to BEA for revisions, but this motion did not pass. An amended motion to accept the report with a foreword addressing the concerns discussed by the Council was accepted.

Item #17: [APA Guidelines for Operational Psychology](#). Operational Psychology refers to the application of psychological science to the operational activities conducted in support of national security, national defense, and public safety. Ultimately, the motion to approve the guidelines passed with a vote of 107-55-4.

Item #9, [APA Policy Statement on Equitable and Inclusive Student Admissions in Higher Education](#). The motion to approve this policy statement passed with a vote of 142-6-8. The statement reaffirms APA's commitment to addressing educational inequities.

Nominations for the Advocacy Coordinating Committee were discussed, with a November deadline. [Division 44 Public Policy Committee co-chair, Katy Trotta, has been appointed to this committee – Editor.]

August 3:

President Bryant shared data on how APA members feel about belongingness and inclusion in the association.

Item #2, *Election of Initial Fellows*. Four new Division 44 Initial Fellows were elected. [see Fellows Committee Report in this issue of the *Newsletter* – Editor.]

President Bryant presented a Presidential Citation to the Committee on Women in Psychology celebrating their 50th anniversary. President Bryant also awarded the Raymond D. Fowler Award to a Division 44 member and treasure, Dr. Sandra Shullman.

Item #5, *Amendments to Bylaws and Association Rules: President-Elect Nomination Ballot*. This item proposed to change the minimum number of candidate language in the president-elect election process from “5” to “up to 5”. Discussions of various aspects of this item took place and the item was voted in favor (138-11-2) of forwarding to the membership for vote.

In total, the meeting covered a wide range of topics and provided opportunities for productive discussions and decision-making. We look forward to implementing the outcomes of these discussions and maintaining our work together to ensure that issues impacting sexual orientation and gender diversity continue to be APA priorities.

Respectfully, your Division 44 Council Representatives
Sarah Burgamy, Mira Jourdan, & David Rivera

Division 44 Committee Reports

Committee on Aging – Braden Berkey and Katie Mendoza, Co-chairs

- We are working on a new committee name change: Committee on Gender, Sexual & Relationship Diversity in Older Adults (GSRD in OA), pending Executive Board voting.
- We are updating our committee FAQ sheet and have created the following survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BFHNGCR>
 - This survey will be open until end of year 12/31/2023.
 - We ask that folks take the time to complete the three questions to help us understand what this new FAQ sheet should contain.
 - Please forward the link to other divisions, members, colleagues, etc.
 - We welcome folks who would like to take part in creating the new FAQ sheet

to our next meeting. Please contact committee chairs for meeting details.

- We will be focusing our efforts on submitting a proposal for next year's APA convention on a skill-building session regarding relationship structures within older adult populations. The aim is to provide education, interventions, and resources to those in attendance. We discussed several avenues of approaching this topic as there is limited literature on this topic such as, cultural considerations, intersecting identities, systems influences, historical context, etc.

If you would like to be a part of this group, please contact us!

Bisexual Issues Committee – Angela Lewis, Co-chair

The [Bisexual Issues Committee](#) (BIC) is expanding in terms of our committee members and programming! Dakota Leget, our previous program coordinator, took over as co-chair along with Angela Lewis. We also added three new student representatives. Also, we are in the process of accepting a new program coordinator and possibly an outreach coordinator.

In addition, we are in the process of revamping our [newsletter](#). We recently renamed our newsletter to “Points of Biew” – previously known as “Beyond the Binary”.

In terms of professional growth opportunities, BIC continues to offer programming supporting bi+ folks. This September BIC hosted a webinar on “Black Bi+ Mental Health,” facilitated by Dr. Tangela Roberts and Dr. Zori Paul. We are hoping to plan another webinar soon.

Lastly, we are always expanding. If you want to be more involved please feel free to reach out and look out for our [newsletter](#) for upcoming programming and events.

Fellows Committee Report – Melissa Grey, Co-chair

The Fellows Committee is honored to celebrate Division 44 members and their significant contributions to sexual orientation and gender diversity in psychology and to 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Big congratulations and welcome to the Division 44 Fellows inducted in 2023: Franco Dispenza, PhD, Phillip Hammack, PhD, Michele Schlehofer, PhD, Kim Skerven, PhD, ABPP, Matthew Skinta, PhD, ABPP, and Laurel Watson, PhD! Their biographical statements are printed elsewhere in this issue of the *Newsletter*.

During August's APA Convention, we also celebrated the 2022 Fellows at the Division 44 Fellows Addresses Symposium (watch talks that have been recorded so far [here](#)). Congratulations and thanks to our 2022 Division 44 Fellows: Rachel Farr, PhD, David P.

Rivera, PhD, Michelle Vaughan, PhD, and Leo Wilton, PhD.

Applications for new Fellows are due November 17th. Even if you are not prepared to submit an application this year, it is always a good time to have a conversation about your interest in applying, or to encourage someone else to apply. Please feel free to contact us with your questions and recommendations.

Submitted by Melissa and Sharon with your Division 44 Fellows Committee:

Rachel Farr (she/her)

Paz Galupo, PhD (they/she)

Melissa Grey (she/her) Co-chair

Sharon Horne (she/they), Co-chair

Douglas Kimmel (he/him)

David Rivera (he/him)

Leo Wilton (he/him)

Public Policy Committee – Katy Trotta, Co-chair

The PPC has been busy! We hosted a discussion in the Division's suite during the 2023 APA Convention on the topic of legislation targeting transgender and gender diverse people. This is a critical time, as there have been innumerable bills, laws, and policies advanced on the topic. The session was well-attended and we shared ideas about how to increase our social media presence and how to coordinate with people within and outside of APA. From that meeting, we have been working in small groups on a number of emerging projects. We met with representatives from GLMA: Health Professionals Promoting LGBTQ+ Equality to begin discussions about how we can effectively collaborate moving forward. In November, we will be meeting with representatives from the Sexual Orientation & Gender Diversity (SOGD) Forum and the Women's Constituencies as part of our continued efforts to strengthen our Division's connections with other APA groups interested in this work.

PPC Co-Chair, Katy Trotta, met with APA leaders recently to gain understanding about religious school exemptions in APA-approved training programs and why APA has to allow these exemptions based on various different laws that are in place (by the U.S. Department of Education) and previous lawsuits. This is something that several members expressed concern about and the PPC wanted to gain some clarity on the topic. The PPC is going to continue to partner with APA on producing some materials to help psychologists and students better understand the exemptions and seeking ways to support students in understanding the exemptions and how to assess educational institutions for a good fit not only in academics but highlighting some of these possible exemptions. More on this in the future.

Also, Katy was just appointed to the Advocacy Coordinating Committee (ACC) in APA starting in January 2024 for a three-year term. The ACC is responsible for evaluating and prioritizing advocacy goals for APA. Congratulations, Katy!

From the *Newsletter* 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 & 35 years ago

Doug Kimmel

December 2018

Margaret Rosario, President, noted that the Trump administration has been in office for only one and a half years, but its agenda with respect to LGBT issues is clear. The bottom line on federal sexual identity or gender identity data collection is this: If we are not counted, we do not count.

APA President Jessica Henderson Daniel, PhD, awarded approximately 40 Citizen Psychologist citations to prominent APA members. Of these, four were awarded to Div. 44 members, accounting for 10 percent of all of the Citizen Psychologist Awards. The Div. 44 members who received this very distinguished recognition were Nicholas E. Grant, PhD; Perry N. Halkitis, PhD; Arlene Noriega, PhD; and Skyler Jackson, PhD.

Melissa Manley reported on a survey by the Bisexual Issues Committee that found most of the challenging experiences respondents reported were related to invisibility and erasure. The vast majority of respondents also indicated rewarding and positive experiences being bi+ in psychology.

The Div. 44 Student Representative Trio (Rebekah Estevez, Halleh Hashtpari and Jacks Cheng) gave an update on the newly minted Community of Students (CoS) Leadership Team which was created with the goal of increasing the participation and representation of our approximately 320 student members in Division activities.

Fall 2013

Michael Hendricks, President, noted that it would now be thought of as unusual and perhaps peculiar if the leadership of APA encountered a challenge that involved LGBT issues or affected LGBT people and did not reach out to consult with the Division 44 Presidential Trio or the Executive Committee.

After 29 years of continuous publication three times a year, the APA Division 44 *Newsletter* is changing to a new model of delivering information as the Division moves from its previous Web site to its new format on the APA Web site. This will be the last issue of the *Newsletter* in a form that can be printed out as a booklet for mailing to those

who have requested a hard copy, according to Doug Kimmel, *Newsletter* editor.

Arlene Noriega, President, began her address: “The highest court in our country with a stroke of the pen struck down a law that legitimized oppression of the LGBT community by repealing DOMA.” She noted, “the story is about heroes who championed those with less power.” Most of her talk focused on the history of Division 44 and quoted from many of its leaders over the years [[pp. 14–20](#)].

Randal Ehrbar, in his report to CLGBTC, announced that the Division journal’s title is *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*. Founding editor John Gonsiorek has been selected, the publisher will be APA.

Fall 2008

Randy Georgemiller, President, announced his initiative for the year, “Living Well: Advancing Competent, Available and Accessible Healthcare for the LGBT Community.”

Randall Ehrbar reported that the APA Task Force on Gender Identity and Gender Variance completed its mission after more than two years of work. The six-member task force reviewed the scientific literature as well as APA policies regarding transgender issues.

Harold Kooden wrote a first-person history as “one of the original and surviving gay male elders of activism in gay psychology at age 71.” He was the first chair of the APA Task Force on the Status of Lesbian and Gay Male Psychologists and one of the founders of Division 44.

The Division 44 Transition Task Force requested members to complete a survey about the relative merits of changing the Division’s name. According to lore m. dickey, “Over the last 10 years Division 44 has embarked on a progressive process of incorporating transgender people and issues into the life of the Division.

Francisco Sánchez announced that registration for the 2009 National Multicultural Conference & Summit, to be held in New Orleans, is now open.

Fall 2003

Judith Glassgold, President, began her column noting that this summer the U.S. Supreme Court struck down sodomy laws, the Ontario Appellate Court (Canada) affirmed the right of same-sex couples to marry, and the Episcopal Church elevated V. Gene Robinson to Bishop.

The Presidential Address by James Fitzgerald, “Engaging with Abraham, Jesus, Mohammed, and Buddha: Igniting Conversation between Religions and the LGBT Community” was reprinted. It concluded: “We need to educate them, not allow them to dictate wrong beliefs to us. We are the experts!”

Jelica Todosijevic, Scrivner Award Recipient, summarized her research on “Relationship Satisfaction, Coping, and Stress in Same-Sex Couples with Civil Unions.”

Nicole A. Noffsinger-Frazier, Malyon-Smith Award winner, reported on her study, “The Role of Religious Orientation, Depression, Personalized Homonegativity, and Religious Conflict Among LGBT Individuals.”

Fall 1998

Steven E. James, President, noted his theme for the year is the reaffirmation of the Division’s commitment to the issues of youth and families. He reported that Randy Georgemiller and Davina Kotulski are the new Public Policy Committee co-chairs.

Barry Chung, *Newsletter* Editor, noted the pullout ballot for the Division 44 Mission Statement and a Member Satisfaction Questionnaire. He also printed his first poem written in English, “Be All That We May.”

Christine Browning’s Presidential Address, “We Are Families: Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Men and Women Expanding the Definition of Families,” was reprinted.

Laura Anderson and Brian Parks summarized the APA Graduate Student’s Committee on LGB Concerns’ discussion hour on the “Academic Climate for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students in Psychology.” Students described subtle rather than overt discrimination, the importance of role models, and often feeling isolated.

Connie Chan received the APA Committee on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns Outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of her scholarship and leadership.

January 1994 [Fall 1993]

Olivia Espin, President, noting the difficulty writing a “chatty” commentary in English, reported that she had appointed the co-chairs of the new Science Task Force: Allen Omoto, Suzanna Rose, and Frank Wong.

Douglas Kimmel, APA Council Representative, reported three significant actions: a resolution on GLB youth in the schools, a resolution on the referendum in Colorado, and extension of the ad-hoc Committee on Psychology and AIDS.

John Gonsiorek’s Presidential Address, “Challenges to Maintaining Personal and Professional Integrity in Lesbian and Gay Affirmative Psychology,” was reprinted. He reminded the audience that: “we got into this to change the world, to make it better than it was for us.”

November 1988

Laura S. Brown, President, serving the first half of Alan Malyon’s term, noted that Adrienne Smith, who “role-modeled me through graduate school at a time when she was

just about the only openly lesbian PhD in psychology I knew,” will become President in January. She thanked Greg Herek for his work as program chair.

Laura S. Brown’s Presidential Address, “New Voices and Visions: Toward a Lesbian/Gay Paradigm for Psychology” (1988) was reprinted. She spoke of several themes in lesbian and gay reality, including “biculturalism,” “marginality” and “being normatively different” which leads to “normative creativity, the ability to create boundaries that will work where none exist from tools that may be only partially suited to the task.”

Douglas C. Kimmel’s Presidential Address, “Lesbians and Gays Also Grow Old” (1987), was reprinted. He concluded: “If you live long enough, you also will be old. ... The opportunity that gay aging provides, no matter what age we are, is to live all the years of our lives with the integrity and courage of the pioneers that we are.”

Barbara Sang, Adrienne Smith, and Joyce Warshow are editing a book on middle-aged lesbians. Contributions to the anthology should be sent to Warshow, who is also seeking women age 40–55 to fill out questionnaires.

2023 Division 44 Transgender Research Award: Understanding how minority stress, gender identity, and resilience predict psychological distress among asexual TGNC individuals

Addresses a significant gap in the research literature

Jared Boot-Haury, PsyD

This abbreviated summary discusses one of the 2023 Transgender Research Award projects (Boot-Haury, 2022; Boot-Haury, 2023), which addresses a significant gap in the transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) research literature.

Data suggest asexual people comprise one percent of the general population but 10% of the overall transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) population (Bogaert, 2004; James et al., 2016; Miller, 2011). Although initial research on asexual TGNC adolescents and young adults indicates a unique vulnerability to adverse mental health outcomes (McInroy et al., 2020), resilience factors



were not investigated. Furthermore, few studies have assessed differences among gender subgroups within the TGNC community (Newcomb et al., 2020; Valentine et al., 2017). No research could be found that looked at differences among subgroups within the asexual TGNC community. Informed by the concepts of intersectionality, minority stress theory, and resiliency theory, the aims of the present study were threefold. First, the study examined how gender expression, minority stress, proximal (vigilance and isolation), and distal (harassment & discrimination and victimization) minority stressors relate to psychological distress in asexual TGNC individuals. Secondly, the project examined whether resilience moderates the relationship between minority stressors and psychological distress. Lastly, the study assessed whether resilience moderates the relationship between gender identity, gender expression minority stress, proximal and distal minority stressors, and psychological distress. Results revealed that a) only vigilance and gender expression minority stress were significant positive predictors of psychological distress; b) resilience was a significant negative predictor of psychological distress but did not moderate the relationship between minority stress, gender identity, and psychological distress; and c) Other than potential group differences in harassment and discrimination, group differences between gender identity groups were not found. These findings on an under-researched community could guide further research, education, community organizing, and clinical interventions.

Methodology

For this study, a quantitative approach using a correlational design was used to answer the research questions. Because of the sensitive nature of sexual and gender minority research, previous research highlights the importance of anonymity associated with recording Internet-based survey responses at one point in time (Woodford et al., 2018). Researchers have also noted the difficulty in obtaining large enough sample sizes of asexual and TGNC participants without using convenience samples (Brotto & Yule, 2009; Henderson et al., 2019). Therefore, participants were recruited from online discussion boards, listservs, and social media platforms from groups specific to asexual and TGNC communities. Participants completed a Qualtrics survey consisting of the following scales: Kessler et al.'s (2002) K10 Scale was used to measure psychological distress, and modified versions of Harms et al.'s (2017) Protective Factors Resilience Scale and Balsam et al.'s (2013) Daily Heterosexist Experiences Scale were used to measure resilience and minority stress, respectively.

Participants

A total of 300 participants met the inclusion criteria and completed the survey. After reading and agreeing to informed consent to participate, individuals had to be a) be 18 years of age or older, b) self-identify as asexual, c) self-identify as transgender or gender nonconforming, d) read English proficiently, and e) be residents of the United States.

Results and Implications

Overall, this study clarifies the role of minority stressors, gender identity, and resilience on psychological distress to better understand how the asexual TGNC community self-reports gender expression minority stress, proximal (isolation and vigilance), and distal stressors (harassment & discrimination and victimization), resilience, and gender identity experiences, as well as whether these variables predict psychological distress. Multiple regression showed vigilance ($\beta = 0.22, p < .001$) and gender expression minority stress ($\beta = 0.24, p < .001$) were the only significant positive predictors of psychological distress in this study, which may have implications for areas to be targeted in the treatment of asexual TGNC individuals. In addition, resilience is a significant negative predictor of psychological distress ($\beta = -0.33, p = .01$), despite its non-significance as a moderator, which highlights the importance of future research on protective factors for the asexual TGNC community.

Kruskal Wallis H-Test results indicated potentially significant group differences in harassment & discrimination minority stress, $\chi^2(2) = 7.27, p = .026, \eta^2 = .02$, depending on the gender identity of the participants. However, post-hoc analysis revealed no significant differences in harassment & discrimination scores between TGM (mean rank = 171.06) and other gender identities, TGW (mean rank = 164.17) and other gender identities, or GNC individuals (mean rank = 139.74) and other gender identities. Future research may clarify whether harassment & discrimination experiences differ based on gender identity, which could assist in tailored case conceptualization and intervention depending on the gender identity of clients. No other differences based on gender identity for other minority stressors, resilience, or psychological distress were found. Individualized conceptualization and intervention may result in improved psychological functioning, treatment outcomes, and quality of life among asexual TGNC individuals, who in this study had elevated psychological distress consistent with a moderate mental disorder ($M = 27.89, SD = 6.93$) identified among participants in the present study, using the K10 cutoff scores by Andrews and Slade (2001). This study may aid researchers, clinicians, policymakers, health professional training curriculum leaders, and LGBTQIA+ community leaders in focusing on specific minority stressors and resilience factors that affect psychological distress among asexual TGNC individuals.

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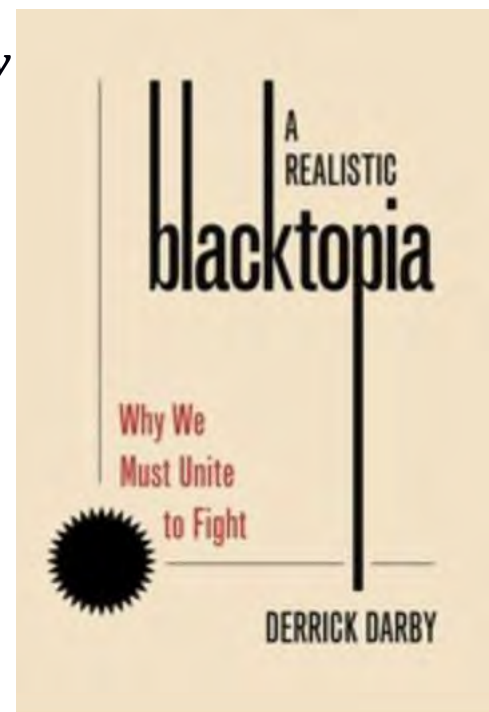
Book Review: *A Realistic Blacktopia: Why We Must Unite To Fight*

Review author: Thorayya Said Giovannelli, PsyD

Citation: Darby, D. (2023). *A realistic Blacktopia: Why we must unite to fight*. New York: Oxford University Press (320 pages).

In line with the shift to a more holistic, systemic psychotherapy to address psychological concerns, Derrick Darby puts forth a well-researched position that any viable approach to addressing America’s racism malady must be systemic, or as he puts it “big tent.” Darby notes that just as the absence of illness does not equate to health, the reduction of overt racism does not equate to racial equity.

It is clear that Darby has a background working with social psychologists, as much of his approach comes from the idea that best remedies are not helpful if they are not palatable. He posits that with racism’s shift from glaring, overt behaviors (e.g. separate restrooms) to more covert policies (e.g. stop and frisk practices), many within privileged groups can be comfortable affirming that America has moved into a “post-racial era.” Darby breaks this argument apart while also highlighting the importance of recognizing its existence. From our neighbors who are polled stating that white people are more discriminated against than BIPOC, to the Supreme Court ruling that colleges need not take race into account in their admissions, he recognizes that these are voices within the nation that cannot be ignored or dismissed.



While the idealist may be caught off guard, Darby recognizes that a cure is not a cure if no one takes it. Rather than using, as he coins them, “race-first” policies, such as affirmative action, he suggests a broader stance to ensure democratic access for all marginalized people within America. I would compare this approach to how one may weave intersectionality into discussions on white supremacy or privilege. Often if the topic is approached too directly with those who hold more privilege, resistance rises and the opportunity is lost. However, if we are encouraged to see the threads that unite us via our intersectional identities, there is less resistance and more openness to see the other as a peer.

The book is divided into three parts – each with three chapters – that outline Darby’s vision for a *realistic Blacktopia*, or an America where Black people are fully represented and included within the nation. In part one, he breaks down the ways that the “small-tent remedies” (i.e., affirmative action, voting rights, and reparations) are limited in the nation’s current climate. He cites several court cases that highlight how these remedies, or “race-first” initiatives in the text, are vulnerable to false dichotomies. Darby utilizes the 2013 Supreme Court’s ruling *Shelby County v. Holder*, which weakened the Voting Rights Act, to demonstrate how easily a discussion about race and the law was watered down into a binary question.

After outlining the vulnerability of many of the “small-tent remedies”, Darby segues to part two, which provides the rationale for and introduces the “big-tent remedies,” or strategies that tackle broader challenges that impact Black Americans and other non-majority groups, such as climate justice or mass incarceration. In this section, he deftly addresses his reasoning for this pragmatic approach, as well as the potential concerns such as cost effectiveness and morality. He highlights the challenge: “figuring out how, given that we must live and die together, we can work together to solve problems with which we live” (p. 132).

In part three titled, Demand for Democracy, Darby introduces his vision for the “big tent” approach, that stresses the importance of voting rights in a functional democracy. He recognizes that the right and access to the ballot box is a necessary but not sufficient step to inclusion and equity within the nation. Darby cites W.E.B. DuBois’ approach that without this right, it becomes difficult to both hold one’s representatives accountable and to access other rights. However, if society views racial progress as merely the elimination of overt racism, then voting access can be curtailed, as we are witnessing across several states under various guises other than discrimination (e.g. voting integrity). The idealist will appreciate Darby’s approach that America’s democracy has yet to be realized as it has yet to be open to all.

While the text may be a bit dense for those whose last acquaintance with philosophy was during their early undergraduate years, such as myself, Darby writes in a clear, conversational style that is easy to follow. He introduces his sources carefully and in a way that leads you to want to read further on the topic. This book will definitely have readers shifting their lens a bit wider when considering racial inequality in America.

Book Review: LGBTQ Family Building: A Guide for Prospective Parents

Review author: Dr. Matt Goldenberg, PsyD

Citation: Goldberg, A. E. (2022). *LGBTQ Family Building: A Guide for Prospective Parents*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association (319 pages).

LGBTQ Family Building by Abbie E. Goldberg, PhD, presents a coherent, clear guide to identifying ways that LGBTQ people become parents as well as articulating the need to remove stigma associated with LGBTQ parenting. Each chapter begins with a glimpse into the lives of LGBTQ persons and details their family building experiences. Chapters can be read independently, as each chapter covers a different sub-topic that readers may find helpful. The book offers a flow that begins with decisions to become a parent and concludes with parenting our children. Thus, *LGBTQ Family Building* offers a developmental approach to LGBTQ parenting, from decisions to build a family, to how LGBTQ people become parents, to supporting the children we have in our lives.

A particular strength of this book is that there seems to be no preferential attitude towards any method of becoming a parent. Instead, there is equal attention paid to individuals and or couples that choose adoption, surrogacy, heterosexual sex, fostering, and insemination. It is rare to find a resource that does not perpetuate judgment that one method of becoming a parent is preferable to another. There are many family structures within the LGBTQ community, and *LGBTQ Family Building* offers equitable resources for several types of families. Additionally, the book is evidence-based as Dr. Goldberg conducted a survey of 543 LGBTQ individuals and their experiences in family building, a project titled “The LGBTQ Family Building Project.” The author references several other studies, which enriches the diversity of evidence that LGBTQ families are valid, desirable, and loving.



Given that the text demonstrates the complex decisions that LGBTQ parents face in building a family, the author has also included self-assessments and questions to ask a partner which may help benefit the journey to becoming a parent.

The appendix includes a timeline of U.S based LGBTQ parenting events, beginning in 1956 and ending in 2021 such as when a California man became the first person to adopt a child as an out gay man (1968) and when the Sperm Bank of CA became the first bank in the country to service gay and lesbian people (1982).

In Chapter 1, readers are asked to consider that the changing media representation of LGBTQ individuals has benefitted the visibility of LGBTQ parents, such as in popular television shows like “Modern Family.” Though the chapter points out that LGBTQ people become parents for virtually the same reasons as cisgender and heterosexual people, the journey on how and when to become parents may offer more decision points for LGBTQ people. The text suggests that LGBTQ individuals are well-served by reflecting on and communicating about their motivations, needs and values in becoming a parent. The chapter reflects the authors deep psychological understanding of LGBTQ people in that it includes internal, external, and interpersonal barriers to parenting. For instance, a brief introduction to the role of internalized homophobia as a barrier to LGBTQ parenting was an especially useful insight to show barriers that are unique to LGBTQ parents. As other chapters do, Chapter 1 included both data and direct quotes from the author's prior survey on LGBTQ parenting experiences.

Chapter 2 explores both domestic and international adoption and states that LGBTQ people statistically appear much more likely than heterosexual couples to adopt. Given that there are multiple pathways in adoption such as choosing a public or private adoption, this chapter offers an introduction to multiple critical decision points on the road to adoption. A strength of this chapter is that it included a sound explanation of the common myths regarding adoption, such as the myth that open adoption is similar to co-parenting and assumes the birth family and adopted family will share equal levels of responsibility for the child. It was also refreshing to learn exercises an individual or prospective parents can try to consider their attitudes and beliefs about trans-racial adoption.

Chapters 3 and 4 explain considerations of donor insemination and surrogacy, respectively and include information about the potential costs and legal considerations of both options. It is noted that surrogacy may be more popular for wealthier gay men than other demographics in the LGBTQ community.

Chapter 5 stresses the importance of locating LGBTQ inclusive service agencies and

healthcare providers, especially for members of the community such as transgender individuals who may face additional discrimination. The chapter contains questions one can ask of prospective agencies or providers to ensure folks are accessing spaces that are inclusive of their identity. Additional service agencies that may interact with LGBTQ people, such as midwifery services, are explored; and specific agencies that have a positive history of serving the LGBTQ community are included.

Chapter 6 examines the journey to becoming a parent, including brief introductions to both post-partum anxiety and postpartum depression, as well as how to navigate the changing dynamics in your sex, love, and working life.

The concluding chapter in *LGBTQ Family Building* considers educational options for families of young children (such as schools and daycare) and also offers tips on preparing yourself and your children to face bias. Several books and learning resources are presented to support parenting, as well as advice on answering questions from children and others regarding an LGBTQ family.

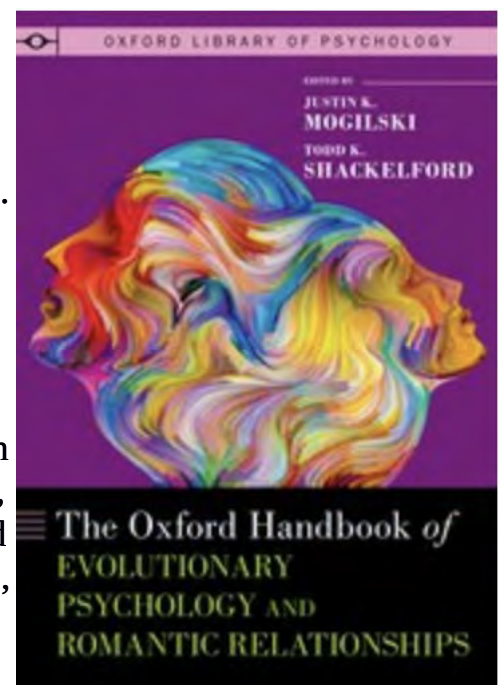
Overall, Dr. Goldberg achieves a comprehensive examination of pathways, barriers, and resources for LGBTQ individuals who seek to become or are already parents. This book would also serve as a fair guide for a clinician who would like to increase cultural competency in working with LGBTQ individuals and families.

Book Review: *The Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology and Romantic Relationships*

Review author: Mia Semelman, PsyD

Citation: Mogilski, J. K. & Shackelford, T. K, (Eds.). (2023). New York: Oxford University Press (850 pages). ISBN: 9780197524718

The field of evolutionary psychology has historically focused on heterosexual, cisgender, and monogamous people. *The Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology and Romantic Relationships* edited by Justin Mogilski and Todd Shackelford is a 30-chapter, modern, updated and diverse volume that explores some new and historically ignored topics and populations. For instance, the authors touch on how technology such as social media and dating apps may be shaping romantic relationships. The contributors also discuss relationship



processes in LGBTQ people, non-monogamous people, older adults and divorced people, to name a few. The book is divided into three parts each with 10 chapters: Relationship Initiation, Relationship Maintenance and Relationship Dissolution, which provide a helpful structure to comprehensive information.

In Part One, Relationship Initiation, the contributors discuss how people select and compete for mates, while staying attuned to cross cultural variation. This is done through various lenses such as physical cues, hormonal mechanisms and social dynamics. The chapters build on each other and repeat important information from previous chapters, which can be helpful for learning the material. Most of the section (and the book) focuses on heterosexual dynamics and trends observed and replicated for cisgender men and women. There is one chapter devoted to the initiation of non-heterosexual relationships and one chapter devoted to relationship initiation among older adults.

In Part Two, Relationship Maintenance, the authors discuss various approaches people of different genders use to preserve their relationships. They discuss how reproduction and societal structures affect these strategies. More specifically, the authors discuss how jealousy, hormones and other factors – such as how people protect investments in intimate partnerships – enable people to continue existing relationships. This section also explores interpersonal violence (IPV), parenting, consensual non-monogamy, sexual and gender diversity, older adults and how relationship practices vary across cultures.

Part Three, Relationship Dissolution, discusses various ways relationships end. The first chapter, 21, discusses what leads people to being dissatisfied in relationships. It is followed by other interesting topics like infidelity, menstrual cycle variation, divorce and spousal death, and affective responses to relationships ending. There is one chapter focused on the dissolution of LGBTQ+ relationships. I found some of these articles refreshing as there has been little focus on some of these topics such as finding love after divorce.

Most of the articles in this handbook were comprehensive and thought-provoking. The reader may disagree with the author, but the articles provide a good foundation for discussion. It was helpful that each section began with an introduction and summary of all the articles in the section, and that each article began with an abstract, introductory paragraph and ended with directions for future research. This could help the reader select articles of interest and easily find ways to build upon existing literature.

My favorite articles centered LGBTQ+ (Valentova, Amaral and Varella's article, Initiation of Non-Heterosexual Relationships) and non-monogamous people (Mogilski,

Rodrigues, Lehmiller and Balzarini's article, *Maintaining Multipartner Relationships: Evolution, Sexual Ethics, and Consensual Nonmonogamy*) because it was inspiring to see how these historically targeted, stigmatized and ignored populations were conceptualized through evolutionary psychological frameworks. For instance, the authors consider how relationship variance is beneficial for species evolution and progression. These articles also help us broaden our conceptions of relationships and challenge existing assumptions.

The handbook is likely most helpful for relationship researchers as it generally provides information about trends in populations. The book does not focus on interventions; however, clinicians working with couples and individuals on relationship issues may still find some of the articles helpful as they can provide context for certain behaviors or issues.

Being armed with general knowledge about relationships can help clinicians increase compassion and normalize desires. It can also help build shared language about relationship processes and support clients in feeling understood.