

IRAS

**Sexuality and Human Nature:
A Scientific, Religious, and Moral
Exploration**

Program and Schedule

Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

46th Annual Star Island Conference, July 31 to August 7, 1999

Conference Statement

Our sexuality has been viewed in many ways: Source of joy, temptation and damnation. Fountain of life and distraction from duty. Binding force and subversive disrupter. Balm of the senses and greatest personal threat. Some would say all of them.

This conference will explore the personal meanings of sexuality from evolutionary, anthropological, psychological and religious perspectives. Among the questions considered will be:

- What is sexuality and who are we sexually, as evolved animals and as social beings?
- To what extent can we consciously choose our own gender identities and sexual orientations?
- What gives rise to sexual pleasure in the brain, and how does it work in relation to other sources of pleasure?
- What is the relationship between the feelings of transcendence evoked by sexual and mystical experiences?
- How does society shape our sexual responses?
- How do our sexual responses shape society?
- What are the implications of differing sexual mores for family life and marriage?
- How is sexuality regarded by certain of the world's religious traditions?
- Is there more wisdom to religious regulation of sexual freedom than some in modern society like to admit?

WELCOME TO STAR ISLAND!

With great pleasure I welcome you to IRAS on Star Island. If you are here for the first time, you will find yourself rapidly becoming part of a unique blend of traditions combining the beauty and history of the New England coast, the 100-year anniversary of Star Island as a conference center, and 45 years of IRAS conferences.

You will hear the people who are returning to the island called “old shoalers.” But as a newcomer you already are becoming an “old shoaler.” I hope you will enjoy getting to know one another and those who have heeded the call from previous years, “You will come back.” Welcome to both new comers and those returning once again.

Echoing the thoughts of Ursula Goodenough, immediate past president of IRAS, there is no one way to participate in an IRAS conference. Each of us must discover our own optimal combination of intellectual, spiritual and recreational exploration. While some actively seek friendships, others revel in long-sought solitude. Some focus the week on their own projects; others participate in group discussions; most of us do both. What emerges is a shared sense of discovery, which keeps many of us coming back year after year.

Please introduce yourself to me during the week. I look forward to getting to know you and to helping ensure that your time here is thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding.

Karl E. Peters
President of IRAS

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ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF IRAS

In the late 1940s the American Academy of Arts and Sciences organized a Committee on Science and Values to address topics relating contemporary scientific knowledge to fundamental human concerns about life's morals and meanings. The Committee, which included astronomer Harlow Shapley, neurobiologist Hudson Hoagland, geologist Kirtley Fletcher Mather, biologist George Wald, and Ralph Wendell Burhoe, the executive secretary of the Academy, stated that "we believe that . . . the survival of human society depends on the reformulation of man's world view and ethics, by grounding them in the revelations of modern science as well as on tradition and intuition."

Several from this committee accepted an invitation to bring their views to an interfaith group at the Coming Great Church Conference on Star Island in the summer of 1954. Later in 1954 the group from the American Academy accepted an invitation of the Coming Great Church Conference to form the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, a multidisciplinary society, which carried forward the work of both predecessor groups. Other leaders involved in the establishment of IRAS included Brand Blanshard, Edwin Prince Booth, Dana McLean Greeley, Donald Szanthe Harrington, Henry Murphy, Lyman Rutledge, and Malcolm Sutherland.

Since 1954 IRAS has held an annual conference on science, values, and religion on Star Island, ten miles off the coast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. IRAS has also conducted--on its own or in collaboration with other groups--conferences in other places: at universities and theological schools, and at meetings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Academy of Religion.

In 1965 IRAS joined with the Meadville Theological School of Lombard College (later Meadville/Lombard Theological School) to establish a journal: *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. The first issue was published in March 1966 under founding editor Ralph Wendell Burhoe, director of the newly formed Center for Advanced Studies in Theology and the Sciences (CASTS) at Meadville/Lombard. In 1979 when Karl Peters succeeded Ralph Burhoe as editor, the editorial offices moved to Rollins College in Florida; IRAS, the Center for Advanced Study in Religion and Science (CASIRAS--successor to CASTS), and Rollins College became joint publishers. In 1989 the editorial offices moved back to Chicago under the editorship of Philip Hefner, director of the newly formed Chicago Center for Religion and Science. During the past quarter century, *Zygon* has been the chief international voice for the scholarly community in science and religion, and has greatly strengthened the influence of the IRAS-CASIRAS approach to relating religion and the sciences.

IRAS is a society of natural scientists, social scientists, philosophers, scholars of religion, theologians, and many others who seek to provide a forum for discussing issues of relevance to religion in an age of science. In its Constitution, the IRAS purpose is stated as follows:

The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science is established:

- (1) to promote creative efforts leading to the formulation, in the light of contemporary knowledge, of effective doctrines and practices for human welfare;
- (2) to formulate dynamic and positive relationships between the concepts developed by science and the goals and hopes of humanity expressed through religion; and
- (3) to state human values in such universal and valid terms that they may be understood by all peoples, whatever their cultural background or experience, in such a way as to provide a basis for world-wide cooperation.

The Institute is to carry on the work initiated by the Conference on Religion in an Age of Science, first held on Star Island, off Portsmouth, New Hampshire, USA, July 31 to August 6, 1954, and to engage in the development of such additional conferences, lectures, study groups, seminars, research projects, publications, etc., as may be useful for its purposes.

IRAS is a non profit membership organization. Governance is by a volunteer Council whose members are elected from the entire membership. New IRAS members and tax-deductible contributions are always welcome.

IRAS ON STAR ISLAND

Star Island, first settled by Captain John Smith in the early 1600s, is situated in what was known as the best fishing grounds in the Colonial world. Today one can still see the lobstermen setting their traps. A small museum and island tours allow one to recapture this early human history; and tours of the local flora and fauna, tide walks, and a marine biology lab help one appreciate the local environment.

Because it is ten miles off shore from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Star Island's temperature is usually ten degrees cooler than on the mainland. It thus became an ideal resort setting for one of the premier late-nineteenth century hotels on the east coast. Today the hotel, along with several cottages and motel-type units, is a conference center run by the Unitarian-Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ; these two religious organizations have formed the Star Island Corporation. Although IRAS is not affiliated with any particular religious organization, we have enjoyed the hospitality of the Star Island Corporation since our first IRAS conference in 1954.

The nineteenth century hotel and other facilities provide both the charm and the amenities of that period. Rooms are provided with wash basins and water buckets, and in most cases the toilet is down the hall. The Star Island management and its staff of mostly college students--called Pelicans--are first rate in meeting the various needs of guests from infants to octogenarians. A highlight of the week is the Pelican Talent show--a delightful "extra" from the hard-working staff. And in recent years IRAS conferees have returned the favor with their own talent show on the final night of the conference.

Star Island and other islands in the Isles of Shoals are excellent examples of the rocky New England coast. There are no roads, no cars, no bicycles, no TVs, and one public phone. (A cellular phone, 603-534-2190, is for emergencies only.) But there are rocks, bushes, grasses, nesting sea gulls, crashing ocean waves, sometimes fog horns, and sometimes crystal clear night skies to explore through telescopes with some of our professional astronomers (IRAS's first president was astronomer Harlow Shapley). There are opportunities for swimming, rowing, tennis, and ballroom dancing. And the Star Island Book Store and Gift Shop offer books related to the conference theme and other items to remember the week on the island.

Then there are the people who come to IRAS conferences--more than 200, from a variety of academic and professional fields as well as many well-educated "lay persons." Many belong to IRAS, which has about 300 members. Others come because they are interested in how liberal religion relates to science and in the particular topic. There is active dialogue in lectures, discussion groups, conversation on the porch overlooking the harbor and on the rocks, and at the social hour before dinner. For those interested, there are opportunities to meditate and worship together in the stone chapel on a high point of the island, at the gazebo, or in the reflective evening candlelight services.

Those who have been coming for a long time to IRAS conferences believe that the natural setting, the island history, and the people provide a unique opportunity for rigorous meaningful dialogue regarding religion and values in relation to contemporary science.

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Contextually, this year's conference is part of an informal grouping that began in 1996 and extends through next year, with the common theme of exploring who we are and how and what it is to be concerned with religious and moral meaning in light of the account reflected in current scientific theories of cosmological, biological and cultural evolution. In a sense, these hubristic inquiries are always at the core of IRAS conferences, but this grouping has been particularly concentrated. The 1996 conference was on *The Epic of Evolution*, and focused on whether the scientific story of the development of the universe can serve as an adequate grounding "myth" to inform a sustaining religious orientation. 1997 dealt with *The Origins of Morality*; 1998 concerned *Interweaving Art, Science and Spirituality*; 2000 will be on *Nurturing Environments*.

Since we first conceived the Sexuality conference, we have focused on the nature of its "personal meanings", for several reasons. We are acutely aware that the subject is highly important and emotionally charged and can be validly studied from sociological, political and economic perspectives. Were there world enough and time, views from those disciplines would merit full examination at this conference. They will inform both the approaches and content of a number of talks and workshops, and no approach will be off limits to questions in the plenary sessions and intense discussion in separate groups, both organized and ad hoc.

However, it tends to be IRAS's orientation to encounter religion and morality both from within the religious and moral impulses and as fields for sociological observation and analysis, both to think theologically and philosophically and to subject theology and philosophy to separate examination as disciplines and approaches; but not always to do all at the same time. We have only a week. Therefore, in seeking a unifying theme, we felt it best to try to explore the meaning of sexuality from the standpoint of the experiencing person, in light of what anthropology and physiology can tell us about our basic sexual natures and of what several religious and philosophical traditions have had to say about the place of sexuality within our lives. We expect there to be lively differences of view. IRAS conferences are imbued with exploration, and we look forward to collaborative discussions among the speakers, chaplains, workshop leaders and conferees that will inspire unanticipated insights, both public and personal.

The **plenary session lectures and discussion** are scheduled in the morning (starting at 10 am) and evening (starting at 7:30 pm). The speakers will develop the theme of the conference as they address different issues and questions from their own disciplines and perspectives.

A variety of optional concurrent activities offer choices during the afternoons. These include an IRAS seminar, Free University sessions, and Workshops.

The **IRAS seminar** this year will be on the book, *A Journey of Spirit in a Scientific, Pluralistic Age* by Karl Peters. It will be on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 1:40 to 2:40 pm. Further information may be found on page 13.

"Free University" sessions, from 1:40 to 2:40 pm each day except Thursday, provide conferees with an opportunity to present their ideas and discuss them with others. We expect that a number of conferees will, as in past years, volunteer to conduct these sessions, which will be announced in the *Star Beacon* and posted on the chalkboard. For those planning to organize a free university session, please check with Nancy Anschuetz the day before for a space assignment and, after doing so, give a written note to Jilana Ordman, editor of the *Star Beacon*.

Workshops and Discussion Groups will be offered during the afternoon from 2:50 to 3:50 and 4:00 to 5:00 pm. Leaders and workshop locations are listed in the schedule on the back page of this program booklet, and seminar and workshop descriptions are on pages 14ff.

At the end of afternoon activities, from 5:30-6:30 pm, we gather informally in Newton Centre for an hour of libations, snacks, and socializing. Contributions to cover the cost are needed and appreciated.

Afternoons are also opportunities for recreation: talking, thinking, napping, reading, walking, and playing. You can visit the Marine Laboratory of the University of New Hampshire on Appledore Island on Monday afternoon. (Please sign up at the front desk in advance--the boat capacity is limited.) Various tours by the Star Island staff will be announced or posted. The hardy (or masochistic) can enjoy

a polar bear swim each morning. There will be a traditional lobster dinner on Wednesday (tickets *must* be purchased by Monday noon). The traditional IRAS banquet will be on Friday. The Pelican show (organized by the Pelicans, the young people who do all the hard work to make our stay on Star Island so delightful) will be on Thursday evening, and the IRAS talent show on Friday. If you would like to participate in the Talent Show, especially if you have talent (this is an optional requirement; all hams are welcome), Barbara Avakian will be happy to hear from you.

Those who wish to learn more about IRAS and Zygon are invited to a reception at 5:10 pm on Wednesday in Newton Centre..

The *Star Beacon* is an IRAS tradition. This conference newspaper will appear at breakfast each morning and will give you up-to-date information on the conference and its participants. It will also provide an opportunity for you to publish poetry, commentary, and other forms of artistic expression, including humor--all at the discretion of the editor and as space is available.

Candlelight services allow time for quiet reflection and winding down at the close of each day. These have been arranged by Betty Lau. This year the candlelight services will be followed by musical postludes.

The **snack bar**, open until 11 pm, is a favorite place for congregating and socializing after the candlelight service.

An informal **farewell party** will be held on Friday night. This will be an opportunity for final conversations with old and new friends in a pleasant, noisy setting before "packing up," and for using up any refreshing substances left over from the social hours.

If you have any questions or suggestions concerning the conference, please bring them up with Nancy Anschuetz, Ted Laurenson, Micheal Ruse, or Barbara Whittaker-Johns.

Notes

The porch bell will be rung (a single stroke) five minutes before the beginning of the morning and evening sessions, at 9:55 a.m. and 7:25 p.m. We hope this advance warning will enable everyone to reach his/her seat in time to allow a prompt start at 10:00 a.m. in the morning and 7:30 p.m. in the evening.

A coffee/hot chocolate/bouillon break is scheduled for 10:55 - 11:15 a.m. each morning. When you hear the bell at the end of this break, please return quickly to the auditorium.

For those with children: children must participate in the children's program unless Nancy Anschuetz receives a signed waiver.

ARCHI PELAGOS: IRAS CONFERENCE YOUTH PROGRAM

While parents cogitate, their children play, create, explore Star Island, and develop friendships under the guidance of professional teachers and counselors. Our goal is to enjoy together stimulating games, opportunities for creative expression, crafts, stories and song. Our hope is to deepen our connection with Star Island and each other. We explore marine biology and island flora and fauna directly out and about and in the science center with island staff. We row over to Smutty Nose Island for a close-up of intertidal life and feast on fresh seaweed mussels on the beach. We have access to the island historian and musician.

We meet each morning at 9:00 in age specific groups until noon. The morning session is structured with both energetic and quiet activities. Older groups integrate conference themes. This year should be fun. At noon we bring our charges to Brookfield for choir practice before lunch.

Afternoons are free and youth are under the supervision of parents and guardians until the social hour (5:15-6:15). Snacks are offered in the well house at the bottom of the front porch stairs at 5:00. Choices for social hour include fishing, playground, juggling, field games, island runs, a tea party, and preparation for the dance and talent show. We gather together for a wacky afternoon of what we call our Gender Bender Olympics on Tuesday and invite you all to watch our Friday afternoon talent show.

Following supper we offer a sunset program (7:30-8:30) featuring bonfires with singing and s'mores on Saturday evening, music including a Wednesday evening dance, story telling, mysteries and games, and our own chapel service on Thursday (8:00-8:30). Parents and friends are invited to accompany their children in these evening activities. The activities are thoughtfully but not rigidly prepared and inspiration is appreciated in this vibrant place where we discover and nurture our collective being. After four years, many returning staff as well as children have found in Star Island a spirit home. We are grateful.

Sandra Woodworth, Coordinator

Marissa Morin, Island Assistant

Staff for each age group

Sue Pike (primary)

Kirsten Carr (6-7-8)

Angela Matthews and Susan Trelevan (9-10-11)

Rick Agran and Lisa Rockenmacher (12-13)

Jennifer Whitten and Jane Vailer (high school)

There will be a meeting for parents, children, and staff on Saturday at 5:15 pm in Brookfield, immediately after the Star Island Orientation Meeting. All parents with children in the Archi Pelagos program are asked to attend.

LECTURE ABSTRACTS AND BIO-SKETCHES

SATURDAY EVENING

ABSTRACT INSIGHTS ON CARNAL ECSTASY

Ted Laurensen

ABSTRACT

To reflect seriously on final things and the unknowable is part of being religiously serious. The deepest final question is why is there anything at all? Why the forward movement of space/time? How do we experience, and can we say anything about, the "will", the forward "drive", of the universe? As conscious, emotional experiencing animals, our closest links to these mysteries are the knowledge that we will die and our participation in the drive to ensure the perpetuation of beings like us through reproduction and nurture. The reproductive imperative, our participation in the will of continuation, is life's special case of participation, as conserved and conserving pattern, in the inexorable forward beat of the universe, our deepest linkage, save perhaps some kinds of meditation, to the impenetrable question of why we exist. That sexuality informs, undermines, motivates and overwhelms our rationality, and even, at times, as with homosexuality, calls into question the apparent evolutionary reason for its own existence, is to be expected as it links us to the unknowable irrationality not only of our own existence, but of all that surrounds us. As we tap into and feel its power as a drive and its infusion of our emotions, we should expect, as it does, that it will sprout and flow in many directions, deeply challenge and frequently outstrip our attempts to channel and suppress it, or even to define it. Given our need for nurture, and the consequent required commitment in order to be motivated to provide it, and given the breadth of our intellectual capabilities in relation to the lack of constraints imposed on their exercise by the evolutionary circumstances that brought them forth, and given the inevitable importance of power in personal relationships and influence within groups, we must expect that, in addition to the bonds that our sexual natures create and sustain, transgression, longing, power and ambivalence will inform our sexual responses. It is also natural that in its deepest expression sexuality will obliterate our feelings of separation and estrangement. In the context of these thoughts, I will speak concerning the relationships of the matters to be considered in this conference, the core this-is-who-I-am experience that inheres in the sexual response and the importance in the modern context of the ability to express that I-ness in the realization of our passionate existences. My title is

derived from a line in W.H. Auden's great poem, "Lullaby".

BIOSKETCH

Ted Laurensen practices corporate and securities law in New York City, with a particular but not exclusive emphasis on investment companies, investment advisers and various specialized aspects of the way the securities markets work. He did his undergraduate work at Amherst College and got his law degree at Yale Law School. In addition to practicing many types of corporate law at one point or another, immediately after law school he clerked for a federal judge, and he retains a continuing interest in constitutional law and myriad aspects of public policy. After mostly majoring in psychology as an undergraduate, he took some time off to work against the Vietnam War and then switched into an independent study program focusing on the intersections of psychology, political theory and moral philosophy, considering questions that he continued to pursue in law school and in ongoing spiritual and intellectual ruminations. He got involved in organizing and leading courses in human sexuality as an undergraduate, subsequently taught the Unitarian-Universalist About Your Sexuality course to teenagers, and has continued its study as an avocation. Having started to attend these conferences in 1990, he subsequently became legal counsel to IRAS, began to do conference write-ups for the newsletter, and jumped at the opportunity to help lead this year's offering. This is his first formal presentation at an IRAS conference, and after years of questioning and commenting on IRAS speakers' presentations he expects to have at least as many questions about what he will say here himself as he has ever had of them.

SUNDAY MORNING

PRIMATE SEXUALITY

Barbara Smuts

University of Michigan

ABSTRACT

Scientific observations of nonhuman primates reveal striking variation in sexual behavior across species. For example, some primates are monogamous and mate only, or mainly, with their life-long partners, while in other species, a female in estrous may copulate with 20 different males in single day. This enormous variation makes it impossible to characterize a "primate sexuality." Instead, I will concentrate on in-depth portraits of sexuality in two groups of primates in order to convey a feeling for the complicated ways that sex affects and is affected by

social bonds, intra-sexual competition, and power relations between the sexes. I will first review my own research on savanna baboons of East Africa. These baboons form long-term male-female "friendships" that reflect female attempts to exert their own social and sexual preferences in the face of physical domination by much larger males. Then I will review the diversity of socio-and sexual relationships among the great apes, with a focus on the dramatic contrast between common chimpanzees and pygmy chimpanzees (or "bonobos"), our two closest relatives. Among common chimpanzees, male sexual coercion of females is common, whereas among bonobos it is completely absent. How did such radical differences evolve and what are the implications of these differences for understanding the evolution of human sexuality? This talk will be illustrated with slides and, perhaps, some video footage.

BIOSKETCH

Barb Smuts is Professor of Biopsychology and Biological Anthropology at the University of Michigan. Over the last 25 years, she has communed with wild baboons, chimpanzees, gorillas, and dolphins. Her publications include two books (*Primate Societies and Sex* and *Friendship in Baboons*) as well as numerous scientific articles on social relationships in both human and other animals. She studies hatha yoga and insight meditation, and has learned much about both practices from nonhuman, as well as human, teachers. She has recently begun to explore in greater depth her long-standing interest in integrating evolutionary and spiritual perspectives on human behavior and consciousness.

LUST, ATTRACTION, ATTACHMENT: THE EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF HUMAN SEXUALITY, ROMANCE, AND FAMILY LIFE.

Helen Fisher

Rutgers University

ABSTRACT

My thesis is that humankind evolved three distinct emotion systems in the brain for mating and reproduction: for lust, for romantic attraction, and for familial attachment. I will discuss the primary hormones/neurotransmitters associated with each of these three emotion systems, as well as their psychological attributes and their adaptive functions. Then I will trace the evolution of human patterns of sex, romance, marriage, divorce and remarriage back to their origins on the grasslands of Africa millennia ago. Last I will explore several global contemporary forces that will affect 21st century patterns of sex and love.

BIOSKETCH

Helen Fisher is a member of the Center for Human Evolutionary Studies, and Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers University. From 1984 to 1994 she was Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at The American Museum of Natural History. She received her PhD in Physical Anthropology at the University of Colorado with a dissertation on the evolution of human female sexuality and the origin of the nuclear family. Her most recent book, entitled *The First Sex: The Natural Talents of Women and How They are Changing the World*, was published by Random House in 1999 and discusses gender differences in the brain and behavior and the impact of women on 21st century business, sex and family life. She is also the author of *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery and Divorce* (1992) and *The Sex Contract: The Evolution of Human Behavior* (1983), as well as numerous articles, and is a frequent lecturer and guest on TV and radio talk shows. She is currently engaged in a research project on the brain physiology of romantic attraction with colleagues at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and SUNY Stony Brook.

SUNDAY EVENING

COMMENT AND QUESTION SESSION

MONDAY MORNING

THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY: ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

James Weinrich

University of California, San Diego

ABSTRACT

This presentation shows how evolutionary biology can cast light on religious and/or spiritual questions pertaining to human sexuality. Some of these issues are:

- (1) To what extent is human sexual behavior undertaken voluntarily and consciously, and to what extent is it influenced by powerful emotions which are unconscious (not subject to conscious control)?

On a day-to-day basis, human sexual behavior is voluntary, but in the long run it is much less so. There ARE powerful, unconscious emotions which have an influence -- and which, when thwarted, can cause fugue states, depression, splitting, extreme forms of denial, and other unusual phenomena.

- (2) What rules do those unconscious mechanisms obey, if any?

Some of these rules are:

- A person can't fall in love with, or become strongly sexually attracted to, someone he or she grew up with on a daily basis of domestic intimacy.

- Parents indirectly teach their children what is sexy. Manifestations of love and care (even if abusive!) experienced in childhood are transformed into erotic/bonding responsiveness in adulthood.
 - Children indirectly teach one another what kinds of people are sexy. The "other" in childhood is transformed into the "sexy" in adulthood.
- (3) What is the purpose of human sexuality, if it can be said to have one?
Of course, evolutionary biologists attribute the same purpose to human sexuality that they attribute to most other human behaviors: the maximization of inclusive fitness. Religious and psychiatric authorities assert that human sexuality must be understood with respect to their own sets of purposes. The different purposes alleged by these three systems of thought have, obviously, been in conflict from time to time, but they are less different than they might at first seem.
- (4) Would having an evolutionary purpose validly influence the answers to the moral and ethical questions people ask about human sexuality? If so, how?
Practically speaking, yes, it could have a great influence. If someone else's sexuality seems alien, explaining it makes it less so. Finding a purpose -- even an expired one -- also helps people understand their own feelings when they seem out of synch with society. Logically speaking, there is little or no valid influence. No one actually leads her/his life by trying to maximize their inclusive fitness; instead, we maximize other things (holiness, happiness, wealth, the general good of society, etc.). And there is no inherent "good" to maximizing inclusive fitness, although there is (under evolutionary equilibrium) a correlation between fitness maximization and some of the other "goods" we do seem to try to maximize (happiness and so on).

BIOSKETCH

Jim Weinrich, Ph.D., is Assistant Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego, where he is Principal Investigator of the Sexology Project for the HIV Neurobehavioral Research Center. His research concerns the deeper reasons why people perform the sex acts they perform and experience the sexual fantasies they experience -- and how these factors interact with HIV status to affect safer-sex behaviors and treatment regimen adherence.

Jim was Bob Trivers' first graduate student and received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1976. He followed that with a three-year Junior Fellowship with the Society of Fellows at Harvard, then moved to Baltimore for a post-doctoral fellowship with sexologist John Money. In 1983 he returned to the Northeast, working with Richard Pillard at Boston University School of Medicine. In 1987, he moved to San Diego and began his biobehavioral AIDS research.

MONDAY EVENING

NEUROPHYSIOLOGY OF THE SEX DRIVE AND SEXUAL RESPONSE

Donald Pfaff

Rockefeller University

ABSTRACT

Neural circuitry and physiology as well as genetic mechanisms underlying animal sexual behaviors will be reviewed. Hypothalamic nerve cells controlling female sex behavior and preoptic neurons controlling masculine responses are of special interest. These very concrete neural and genetic explanations play into more abstract considerations of sexual motivation and arousal. In particular, they contribute to an understanding of the physiological aspects of human libido. Many of these primitive neural and genetic mechanisms have been conserved impressively throughout mammalian evolutionary history.

BIOSKETCH

Donald Pfaff graduated from Harvard College, magna cum laude, in 1961 and received his PhD from M.I.T. in 1965. He is now Professor and Head, Laboratory of Neurobiology and Behavior, The Rockefeller University in New York City. He was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1992 and a member of the United States National Academy of Sciences in 1994. He is the author of many articles and, this year, of *Drive: Neural and Molecular Mechanisms of Sex Motivation*. He is also an editor of *Genetic Influences on Neural and Behavioral Functions*, forthcoming this year.

TUESDAY MORNING

FROM PROHIBITION TO SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: FINDING SEX IN CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Jay E. Johnson

Church Divinity School of the Pacific

ABSTRACT

In contemporary western society, popular culture frequently portrays Christianity as a "sex-negative" tradition. Likewise in academic circles, a growing number of religious scholars concerned with fostering "embodied" forms of religious practice feel

compelled to abandon Christian traditions. Both popular perceptions and scholarly treatments of Christianity suggest, at best, an ambiguous posture among Christians toward sex and sexuality. In this paper I will trace some of the reasons - frequently good ones - why Christianity has developed this kind of reputation. In particular, I will consider Augustinian and Thomistic traditions as touchstones and backdrop for an overview of what are (in my view) particularly vexing issues for the intersection of Christianity and sexuality in the modern era. Overall, I will suggest that modern western Christians have generally inherited a form of Christianity which narrowly circumscribes "appropriate" sexual behavior and sexual roles. Those who fall outside these boundaries by engaging in prohibited sexual acts or relationships can find themselves outside the Christian tradition itself, either through censure or expulsion. In the twentieth century, we have witnessed a great deal of work toward expanding those previously confining boundaries (with reference to divorce and remarriage, for example, but also the growing acceptance of same-sex relationships).

Rather than adding more grist for that particular mill, I want to return to the history of Christian traditions and search for clues about the important contribution sexuality can make to theological discourse and Christian practice. In brief, the theologically significant role desire plays in human life (Augustine), the pervasive "gracing" of human nature (Aquinas), together with some insights from Anglican traditions (especially the stress on incarnation), might offer fruitful resources for understanding sex itself as a spiritual practice within Christian traditions.

BIOSKETCH

Jay Johnson grew up outside of Chicago and received his bachelor's degree from Wheaton College (1983) in biblical and theological studies. After receiving his Master of Divinity degree from Nashotah House Episcopal Seminary, he was ordained in the Episcopal Church and served a parish in the Diocese of Chicago for three years. He then moved to Berkeley, California to work on a Ph.D. in constructive theology, which he finished in 1998 after writing a dissertation on Christian eschatology and millennialism in North American cultures. Jay has taught courses in the history of theology, constructive theology, the history of the modern church, and theological ethics, all at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, in Berkeley, California. Jay has also led a variety of retreats, workshops and Christian education programs for parishes in Chicago and the San Francisco Bay area.

A COOK'S TOUR THROUGH THE PHILOSOPHY OF SEXUALITY

Michael Ruse

University of Guelph

ABSTRACT

Philosophers have always been interested in sex, although not always entirely comfortable with its practice. In this talk I will pull out some of the main themes which have been articulated by philosophers. Included will be reference to the thinking of Plato, Aristotle (and following him Aquinas), Kant, and the British utilitarians. I will then look at the challenges posed by the thinking of Darwin and Freud, bringing the discussion down into the twentieth century, with reference both to philosophers working in the Anglo Saxon tradition (like Thomas Nagel) and those working in the continental tradition (like Michel Foucault).

BIOSKETCH

Michael Ruse is professor of philosophy and zoology at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. He has been at the same institution for thirty four years and expects to stay there for another six, when he will be compulsorily retired. He is the author of many books, the most recent of which is *Mystery of Mysteries: Is Evolution a Social Construction?* (Harvard University Press). This is intended to prove offensive to scientists and cultural studies enthusiasts in equal proportions. His next book is *Can a Darwinian be a Christian? One Person's Answer* (Cambridge University Press). This is intended to prove offensive to atheists and believers in equal proportions. He has been coming to Star Island with his family for over fifteen years and intends to come for the next fifteen years. Next year, however, he will be spending in bed until all millennia celebrations are over.

TUESDAY EVENING

COMMENT AND QUESTION SESSION

WEDNESDAY MORNING

SEXUAL VIOLENCE, NESCIENCE, AND THE CULTIVATION OF TRUTH

Ann Jennings

Maine Department of Mental Health

ABSTRACT

Trauma is an experience that threatens one's basic sense of integrity or survival. Such terrifying experiences are all too common today. In our society, they are primarily the result of unchecked interpersonal violence. The most lethal form of this violence includes the sexual and physical use, abuse and torture of children - private, hidden acts of terror involving a terrible misuse of power against the most

vulnerable and helpless of our species. This particularly noxious kind of violence is perpetuated across and through generations. It wounds the soul, mind, body and spirit of the young developing child, and frequently has devastating impacts which last throughout his or her entire life span. I believe that child abuse is at the root of the violence and dysfunction of our culture. Increasingly, research indicates it is at the root of many of our most serious adult problems and dysfunctions, including severe and persistent mental illness, substance abuse and criminality. Yet it has been, like AIDS was, denied, ignored, largely unchecked, and mostly unresponded to by our helping professions and institutions—any of which unintentionally perpetuate the original violence through "re-traumatization", or silence. Dr. Roland Summit calls this inability to see and recognize the existence and repercussions of sexual violence in our culture "nescience", or deliberate, willful ignorance. My talk will focus on the prevalence and impacts of sexual abuse, and the story of my daughter, a beautiful young woman, sexually violated as a child, who became an artist - and a mental patient. Her story is told within the context of her artwork and writings, through which she spoke the truth of both her victimization and institutionalization, and which will be on exhibit for those who would reflect on the implications of what she expresses so eloquently.

BIOSKETCH

Ann Jennings, Ph.D., has been involved for over 16 years in the design and implementation of strategic planning to produce fundamental changes in the way mental health and related human services delivery systems view and treat persons with histories of trauma. Currently, she is Director of the Office of Trauma Services with the Maine Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, focusing on interpersonal violence, particularly on the relationship of childhood and ongoing sexual and physical abuse to mental illness and emotional disorders. She has formed a statewide coalition of survivor/recipients of mental health services, trusted professionals, public mental health service providers, and policy makers; conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of trauma survivors and professionals; initiated statewide educational strategies in the trauma model; influenced departmental and court-mandated consent decree policies to further treatment responsive to the needs of trauma survivors; and designed and spearheaded the creation of trauma services in Maine. She has personal experience as the mother of a young woman diagnosed with serious mental illness whose sexual abuse and traumatization as a small child were

chronically unrecognized and untreated by helping professionals.

WEDNESDAY EVENING

CLOSETED CONSTITUTIONALISM

David Skover

Seattle University

ABSTRACT

Neither the U.S. Constitution nor any of the fifty state constitutions explicitly guarantees a basic right to what is a part of our everyday lives -- consensual adult sex. Although some sexual freedoms have been pulled into federal and state constitutions, by hook or by crook, these aspects of sexuality have had to be portrayed in a nonsexual fashion, and deflected or filtered through the lens of other rights. This process of "deflection" is both peculiar and pathetic. Peculiar because constitutional grammar must be twisted and distorted to encompass sexuality. Pathetic because adult men and women can only claim constitutional protection for the most intimate matters of personal freedom by arguing in circumlocutious and indirect ways. In our popular culture, sex is everywhere. In our constitutional culture, sex is nowhere.

BIOSKETCH

David M. Skover is a Professor of Law at Seattle University. He teaches and writes in the fields of constitutional law and mass communications theory. He is also a regionally acclaimed opera and musical theater singer. David graduated from the Woodrow Wilson School of International and Domestic Affairs at Princeton University. He received his law degree from Yale Law School, where he was an editor of the Yale Law Journal. Thereafter, he served as a law clerk for federal judge Jon O. Newman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. He is the co-author of *Tactics of Legal Reasoning* (Carolina Academic Press, 1986) and *The Death of Discourse* (Westview Press, 1996). American historian Leonard Levy labeled the latter book "literary dynamite ready to demolish the pomp and hypocrisy obstructing the proud edifice of the First Amendment." Additionally, David has published more than twenty scholarly articles in various journals, including the *Harvard Law Review*, *Yale Law Journal*, *Stanford Law Review*, *Michigan Law Review*, *Texas Law Review*, *The Nation* magazine, and the *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution* (Macmillan, 1991). He appears frequently on network affiliate television and has been quoted in the national popular press (e.g. NYT, WSJ, CSM, etc.) on a spectrum of issues ranging from constitutional law to media law and theory. David's forthcoming book, entitled *Comedy on Trial*, is an account of the four obscenity trials of

Lenny Bruce and their little-recognized importance for First Amendment jurisprudence.

THURSDAY MORNING

BUDDHIST SEXUAL ETHICS

José Ignacio Cabezón

Iliff School of Theology

ABSTRACT

In the first sermon after his enlightenment, the Buddha taught that the fundamental goal of the human life was the eradication of suffering. The chief obstacle to achieving that goal was craving or desire. Desire is a hankering after what is pleasurable. Given that the greatest form of pleasure possible in the realm where human beings live (the so-called "desire realm") is orgasm, the control of sexual activity was, both in the lay and monastic spheres, an essential part of the Buddhist program of self-perfection. This presentation will focus chiefly on the exoteric (non-Tantric) sources of the Buddhist tradition, and will explore the way in which sexual desire was thematized, and how it was sought to be controlled within Buddhist moral discipline. Here, the focus will be on examining the doctrine of "sexual misconduct," one of the "ten non-virtuous actions." The paper concludes with some remarks concerning the way in which some contemporary Western Buddhists are attempting to craft a sexual ethic relevant to contemporary life in the West, one that takes into account both the classical Buddhist sources and the current scientific and social scientific study of sexuality.

BIOSKETCH

José Ignacio Cabezón has a B.S. with an emphasis in Physics from Caltech and a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is currently Professor of Buddhism and Comparative Thought at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. He was an ordained Buddhist monk in the Tibetan tradition from 1977 to 1985, living for six of those years in a Tibetan monastery in south India, during which time he also translated for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He has published extensively in the area of Buddhist and comparative philosophy (chiefly on the theory of emptiness). Professor Cabezón has also published in the area of Buddhism and homosexuality, and is the editor of *Buddhism, Sexuality and Gender* (SUNY Press, 1992).

THE TANTRIC TRADITION AND SEXUALITY

Janet Gyatso

Amherst College

ABSTRACT

My presentation will begin with an overview of Buddhist personal values and the ritual and meditative traditions that have been developed to

cultivate them. This will be augmented by a summary of Indian and Tibetan medical conceptions about the body and of health. This background is essential in order to understand sexual yoga in Buddhism. A historical and sociological survey of sexual yoga, especially as it has been written about and practiced in Tibet, will follow. The final segment in the presentation will explore what we can possibly learn from tantric sexuality that would be applicable to our modern context and could enhance our life experience.

BIOSKETCH

Janet Gyatso started out as a math major at Boston University, but after a leave of absence at the Lamaist Buddhist Center in Freewood Acres, N.J., she returned as a religion major to University of California at Berkeley where she eventually received a Ph.D in Buddhist Studies. During her college years she also studied closely with a variety of Tibetan scholars in Berkeley, and took another leave of absence to work with Tibetan teachers in Nepal and India. She is now associate professor at Amherst College, and has also taught at Wesleyan University, Harvard University and University of Michigan. Her research has focused on Tibetan religion, Buddhist and otherwise. Topics of special interest have been memory, visionary experience, and the process of writing. She has published a number of books and articles, most recently *Apparitions of the Self: The Secret Autobiographies of a Tibetan Visionary* (Princeton, 1998). She is currently researching early Tibetan conceptions of sex and gender. She continues to maintain close contact with Tibetan scholars, and has recently had the opportunity to visit Tibet several times.

THURSDAY EVENING

COMMENT AND QUESTION SESSION

FRIDAY MORNING

EPILOGUE

PANEL SESSION CHAIRED BY TED

LAURENSEN

Questions and Comments from All

IRAS SEMINAR

In the IRAS Seminar, seminar leaders comment on a manuscript or recent book by a member (or members) of IRAS, followed by open discussion by all who would like to participate.

The book (still in manuscript form) being reviewed this year is:

A Journey of Spirit in a Scientific, Pluralistic Age

Karl E. Peters
Rollins College

The seminar will be chaired by Michael Ruse. Commentators will be Ursula Goodenough and Phil Hefner. For those who did not obtain a copy of the manuscript in advance, copies may be purchased for \$15 at the Star Island bookstore.

DESCRIPTION

A Journey of Spirit is written for a lay, educated public that includes liberal Christians, humanists, and naturalists. It is a naturalistic, empirical, evolutionary, ecological theology. In the context of living during a scientific age in an emerging global village, which our actions are placing in peril, the book addresses questions concerning the task of religion, methodology in theological inquiry, the concept of God, human nature, living effectively in the midst of suffering, and fulfillment in a finite world.

BIOSKETCHES

Karl E. Peters is professor of philosophy and religion at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. During the 1980s he was editor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*; currently he is co-editor. Karl joined IRAS in 1972. He has co-chaired four conferences, and has served as a vice president for religion and as treasurer of IRAS. Currently he is president. Karl earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University in philosophy of religion through the joint program in religious studies at Columbia and Union Seminary. Since graduate school he has focused on issues in religion and science: especially the concept of God and evolution, methodology in science and religion, and a relational understanding of the human self.

Ursula Goodenough is a professor of biology at Washington University in St. Louis, MO. She was educated at Radcliffe, Barnard and Columbia, received her PhD in cell biology from Harvard in 1969, and was on the faculty in Harvard's Biology Department for seven years before assuming her present academic position. She directs a laboratory that studies the evolution of sex in microorganisms, using the tools of molecular genetics and cell biology, and teaches cell biology to undergraduates. She is active in promoting the federal funding of scientific

research, and has served as president of the American Society of Cell Biology, and president of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science. Ursula has just written a book, *The Sacred Depths of Nature*, (Oxford, 1998) that seeks to integrate our scientific understanding of Nature with our need for religious orientation and aesthetic experience. She is married to fellow-scientist John Heuser and they have five children, Jason, Mathea, Jessica, Thomas and James. In her spare time she sings in a Presbyterian choir, goes out dancing in East St. Louis, and talks to her friends.

Philip Hefner teaches theology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, serves as director of the Zygon Center for Religion and Science, and co-editor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. He has been coming to Star off and on since 1976—long enough to know most of the good places on the island for catching the sun and a few restful moments. Whenever possible, he tries to keep Michael Ruse honest.

Michael Ruse is professor of philosophy and zoology at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. He has been at the same institution for thirty four years and expects to stay there for another six, when he will be compulsorily retired. He is the author of many books, the most recent of which is *Mystery of Mysteries: Is Evolution a Social Construction?* (Harvard University Press). This is intended to prove offensive to scientists and cultural studies enthusiasts in equal proportions. His next book is *Can a Darwinian be a Christian? One Person's Answer* (Cambridge University Press). This is intended to prove offensive to atheists and believers in equal proportions. He has been coming to Star Island with his family for over fifteen years and intends to come for the next fifteen years. Next year, however, he will be spending in bed until all millennia celebrations are over.

IRAS WORKSHOPS

In IRAS Workshops, topics related to the conference or of continuing general interest are explored and discussed in small groups.

LOVE, HAPPINESS, AND PURPOSE: DIVINE DESIRES OR BIOLOGICAL INSTINCTS?

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Rebecca Bryant and Kevin Sharpe

In this workshop we will be discussing recent developments in behavioral genetics, biochemistry, and evolutionary psychology which imply that love, happiness, and purpose (or motivation) are biologically rooted phenomena. Such developments, we suggest, challenge those theological traditions that understand love, happiness, and providence (divine purpose) as spiritual or moral traits.

Our aims are:

- 1 To highlight the possible conflict between science and religion in the specific areas of love, happiness, and purpose.
- 2 To suggest ways to move beyond the conflict.
- 3 To promote a less divisive, more holistic view of the God-world relationship, which involves an understanding of God as the world-as-a-whole or everything that exists.

Biosketches

Kevin Sharpe was born in 1950 in New Zealand, lived in the United States for sixteen years, and now resides in Oxford, England. He is a professor in the Graduate College of The Union Institute, Cincinnati, a non-traditional distance learning program, where he supervises and advises doctoral students. He is also a Visiting Fellow at the Ian Ramsey Centre, Oxford University. His academic background includes two doctorates, one in mathematics (from La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia) and one in religious studies (from Boston University). Ecclesiastically, he is an Episcopal (or Anglican) priest. The chief area of his academic interest lies in the relationship between religion and science. He thinks of himself as a full-time writer in the area, publishing two books (*From Science to an Adequate Mythology*, and *David Bohm's World: New Science and New Religion*). Another book has been accepted for publication (*Between the Idea and the Reality*) and he has nearly completed his next book, *Natural Morality*. Prehistoric archaeology (especially cave art) also interests him a great deal. Kevin edits the magazine, *Science & Spirit* and its companion website. He also edits the Fortress Press book series

“Theology and the Sciences,” and serves as an advisor to the John Templeton Foundation.

Rebecca Bryant works as a researcher and writer based in Oxford, UK, and is also a staff writer and associate editor for *Science & Spirit* magazine. She has co-written a book (*Love and Happiness: Spiritual Thought in the Light of Behavioural Genetics and Neurochemistry*) and several papers and articles with Kevin Sharpe. Rebecca holds a PhD in Philosophy of Science and an MA Honours degree in Mental Philosophy from Edinburgh University, Scotland. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Law from the College of Law, York, UK. She is currently working with an American press to publish her PhD thesis as a book.

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN PSYCHIATRY

Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Henry C. Everett

There is new information on the treatment of people at both ends of the lifespan. Social phobia is now considered the second most common psychiatric illness. (Depression is Number One.) Its onset is in adolescence. It is seldom diagnosed and treated. It is a major cause of subsequent alcoholism. It is eminently treatable. At the other end of life, there was much discussion at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association about care for patients with terminal illness. Nobody should have to die in pain. However, suicide in terminally ill people is more often due to disability and a sense of uselessness and helplessness. There was a very heated symposium on the issue of physician assisted suicide. The Hemlock Society is about to focus its efforts for its legalization in the State of Maine. There are more sources of relief for all kinds of situations that may occur throughout life. Those attending will be invited to share such situations facing themselves or their loved ones in an interactive group format.

Biosketch

Henry C. Everett, M.D. attended Harvard College and Johns Hopkins Medical School. He received his psychiatric training at Johns Hopkins. He has taught at the University of Wisconsin and Harvard Medical School. He has published papers on psychopharmacology, neurology, and group psychotherapy. He is currently working on a book for the general public.

STRAIGHT MARRIAGE WITH A GAY OR
LESBIAN: ISSUES, PROBLEMS AND
SOLUTIONS -- AND SUPPORT

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Ann Friend

Ann will present background information and materials and share her experiences in as much detail as anyone wants, and meet with individuals privately upon request. Confidentiality will be observed, of course.

Biosketch

Ann Friend is a life long Unitarian and a conference attendee for several years. She was married to a gay man for 29 years and they had 7 children together. They were divorced about 20 years ago and have maintained a good relationship. For the last 4 or 5 years she has served as a gay spouse support person for PFLAG of New Hampshire {Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays}. She has a BA from UNH and Masters from BU and Simmons College and worked for over 25 years as a school teacher and then later as a law librarian.

WHERE DOES SEX COME FROM ANYWAY?

Sunday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Ursula Goodenough

This will be a very left-brained Biology-1-level presentation, with interruptions encouraged, on the basics of sexual life cycles in such simple creatures as fungi and algae. The origins and evolution of sex are, in fact, two topics about which very little is known and far less is agreed upon, meaning that it is interesting to think about.

Biosketch

Ursula Goodenough studies the evolution of sex in green algae for a living, and also teaches cell biology and genetics at Washington University. She is past-president of IRAS and author of a recent book, *The Sacred Depths of Nature* (Oxford University Press), which offers religious responses to our scientific understanding of Nature.

JOURNALING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Joan Goodwin

In this workshop, the structured exercises from Ira Progoff's book, *At a Journal Workshop*, will be used to help participants explore and deepen their resources for spiritual growth. This approach centers on meditation followed by individual reflection and writing in the shared silence of the group. Talk will be at a minimum. The workshop will provide a basis for further journal work after the conference, and the sessions here will in themselves offer an opportunity for interesting insights. All participants should attend

the introductory session and as many more as they wish. Bring notebook and pen.

Biosketch

After many years of professional church work (Unitarian Universalist), Joan Goodwin now follows her bliss researching and writing women's history and biography. Her sketch of Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley appeared in the March, 1996, *Zygon*. Her book, *The Remarkable Mrs. Ripley: The Life of Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley*, was published last October, and may be available in the Star Island Bookshop this summer. For the past couple of decades, Joan has enjoyed journal writing as a tool for exploring religions/scientific/experiential understandings of her life, life patterns in general, and Life itself.

PSYCHE AND EROS: THE MARRIAGE OF
CONSCIOUSNESS AND PASSION

Sunday, 2:30 to 5:15 pm

Billy Grassie

In this workshop we will explore the ancient Greek myth of Psyche and Eros. Through dramatic role-playing of the story, we will explore the archetypal meanings of the ordeal in the uniting of stunning consciousness and deep passions.

Biosketch

Billy Grassie has a doctorate in religion from Temple University, where he trained with Dr. Samuel Laeuchli in the group process known as Mimesis. The process uses myths, fairy tales, and Biblical stories to explore archetypal themes and profound ambivalences in human life. The workshop is participatory and requires no previous knowledge of Greek mythology.

EROTIC LOVE AND THE DIVINE

Thursday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Yudit Greenberg

This workshop will be an exploration of some questions that stem from the Song of Songs and its deployment in several theological contexts, including the thoughts of the 20th century Jewish philosopher, Franz Rosenzweig.

Biosketch

Yudit Kornberg Greenberg is a Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Jewish Studies program at Rollins College. She teaches and writes on areas such as Religion and the Body, Cross-cultural concepts of Love, and on a variety of issues in Jewish Studies and Women's Studies. Her book, *Better than Wine: Love, Poetry, and Prayer in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig* was published in 1997 in the American Academy of Religion series by Scholars Press. She has recently taught a Templeton sponsored course, titled "Religion and Science in Dialogue" and is currently writing on love from the perspectives of science and religion.

SEXUALITY AND THE BIRTHRATE

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Diggitt McLaughlin and Eric Freudenthal

In any society, different groups hold strong beliefs about choices people "ought" to make about having children. A variety of factors influence societal and political views and practices, but other factors influence individual choices within the societies. Is sexuality, then, a factor influencing the birth rate? In this workshop, we will briefly consider obvious factors influencing population growth. Statistically speaking, there are four: birth and death rates and in- and out-migration. Community and individual economics clearly play a part. Then we will move on to an examination of factors influencing the "birth" rate specifically.

Social mythologies can't be quantified but are clearly important. Elsewhere in this conference, people are examining how social mythologies influence sexuality. We will examine the interaction of these elements.

We have found that organizing this workshop has raised many questions for us and we hope to find some answers. A list of several of these thinking points is available at the bookstore. People interested in this workshop might take a few minutes to familiarize themselves with these questions before the workshop begins.

Biosketches

Diggitt McLaughlin has been an IRAS member for nearly a decade. She started her career of having varied careers as president of her local Unitarian youth group. As a writer she has been an advertising copywriter, journalist, PR flack, scriptwriter for film and television, and she is now working on a novel. Her interest in science led her to several years acquiring, editing, and developing medical books. At IRAS, Diggitt is rarely seen without needlework or knitting, has been a weaver, and has designed and made costumes and artwear. As an activist she has managed campaigns and lobbying, primarily for environmental causes and abortion access issues, and has been president and director of Leagues of Women Voters from her village to the greater New York City Tri-State Region. Until recently, Diggitt was president of the Beczak Environmental Education Center, on the Hudson River in Yonkers, New York, overseeing the center's growth from good idea to vital regional resource, complete with a new building underwritten by Scenic Hudson. Her graduate studies were in urban planning; for several years she has been a student at the New York Botanical Garden and she will someday complete New York State certification in both field botany and plant systematics. Diggitt is an award-winning nature photographer and at IRAS 1998 ran a workshop on Photography and Poetry. Eric Freudenthal attended the International Affairs conference at Star on population issues four years

ago. For fifteen years, he has organized adult education programs at UU and Ethical Culture societies. Certified as a religious educator by the UUA, Eric presently serves on the board of Unirondack, a UUA-affiliated summer camp, and is a member of the Unitarian Societies in Hastings-on-Hudson and Brooklyn Heights, NY. His calling is to engage others in exploring the interwoven complexity of the ethical and technological challenges faced by our society. Eric is completing his PhD at the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University where he is employed as an Associate Research Scientist in the fields of computer vision, architecture, and operating systems.

AN INTRODUCTION TO OWL: THE NEW UUA SEXUALITY CURRRICULUM

Tuesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Roberta and Christopher Nelson

This workshop will explore the attitudes, values, issues and goals of the new UU Sexuality Education curriculum. *Our Whole Lives*. We will use materials from the curriculum. There will be time for discussion.

Biosketch

The Rev. Dr. Roberta Nelson is Minister of Religious Education, Cedar Lane UU Church. She is former President, Liberal Religious Educators Association and a recipient of the Angus H. MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education. She served on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and Panel on Theological Education and chaired The Sexuality Education Task Force. Christopher B. Nelson is an Environmental Engineer, Health Physicist with the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Government. He is an active church school teacher including teaching a course, "About Your Sexuality." Bobbie and Chris are trainers for AYS, OWL and Haunting House. They are co-authors of *Parents as Resident Theologians* and *Parents As Social Justice Educators* and the new curriculum, *Parents As Spiritual Guides*. They also lead workshops on Couples Enrichment and on Death and Dying. We consider ourselves old Shoalers.

SEX & SPIRIT IN THE CELTIC TRADITION

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Sean O'Reilly

The Celts once populated an area rivaling the Roman empire at its peak, yet our knowledge of them is limited to secondhand accounts, a few written records, and beautiful artifacts scattered from Turkey to Ireland. Somehow these people still capture our imagination and challenge us to fathom their mysteries.

Drawing on this age-old perspective, Sean guides us to see ourselves as the Celts did. We're more than just flesh, blood, and bone; we comprise individual worlds. Within each of us is the dwelling place where

the mystery of the spirit world weaves intricacies with the physical world -- like the never-ending lines of a Celtic knot.

"Sex & Spirit in the Celtic Tradition" leads us down a nearly forgotten path of wisdom regarding what it means to be human. The workshop presents an absorbing multimedia exploration of the connections we all carry inside us -- not just connections to the ancient Celts, but connections we forge with the worlds of our friends and loved ones.

Recommended Reading in Advance of the Workshop
Peter Cherici, *Celtic Sexuality: Power, Paradigms and Passion* (Tyrone Press, 1994)

Peter Berresford Ellis, *Celtic Women: Women in Celtic Society and Literature* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995)

Robert O'Driscoll, ed., *Celtic Consciousness* (George Brazillier, 1981)

Biosketch

Sean Patrick O'Reilly holds several degrees in Psychology and Spirituality. He is an author and speaker; mediator and consultant; Marriage and Family therapist. He has been working in the self-development field since 1981. Sean specializes in training and assisting others to build relationships that encourage authentic, creative, and transcendent dynamics.

Sean's on-going evolution with Christian and Celtic Spiritualities continues through his doctorate studies at the School of Creation Spirituality in Oakland, California.

His passion for Irish culture recently has led to his founding of Seattle's Center for Celtic Spirituality. This non-profit organization promotes friendship and healthy partnerships between couples and communities, creative environmentalism, and enhanced dialogue among the arts and sciences. Sean's work is humor-filled and multi-media rich. He nourishes your lifelong journey in discovering and enjoying yourself, others, and Spirit.

BODY, PSYCHE, AND MOVEMENT

Monday and Wednesday, 2:50 - 5:00 pm

Tom Rockwell

This workshop will introduce participants to two forms of improvisational dance and movement therapy: Contact Improvisation and Authentic Movement. Contact Improv, as it's called, typically takes the form of an improvised duet, without music, in which two dancers stay in physical contact as they move through the space, walking, falling, rolling and lifting each other. While it can be practiced as an almost acrobatic "art-sport", it also can be a slow, meditative dialogue between the two dancers. The focus here will not be on acrobatics, but rather on what the form can teach us about body awareness, physical touch, trust and boundaries. In Authentic Movement, which began as a form of movement therapy, "movers" close their eyes and allow

themselves to move, alone, in a free-association of impulses, feelings and images. It could be described as automatic writing or a Jungian "active imagination" practice for the body. One or more "witnesses" sit around the edge of the movement space with their eyes open, taking in the movements, providing an attentive and safe "container" for the movers. No prior experience or 'fitness' is required. Participants should come dressed for movement and bring something to write in.

BIOSKETCH

Tom Rockwell is an artist and designer whose work focuses on the interface between Science and Art. Recent projects include illustrations for a popular book on String Theory, an Evolution Walkway for a park in New Mexico, and designs for "Materials Microworld", an exhibition on Materials Science in which visitors will climb-through crystal lattices and other microstructures. When not trying to illustrate 11 dimensional spaces, or building a walk-through model of geological time in the face of creationist protests, Tom can be found spending time with his family or out dancing in Ithaca NY. He and his wife are co-founders of Tiamat Studio, a movement studio and community center for creative and healing pursuits. He has been practising Contact Improvisation and Authentic Movement for the past six years.

POETRY AND SEX

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Bob Schaible

Sex has inspired poets and artists for millennia. In this workshop we will read a variety of poems for reflection and insight as regards some of the more problematic aspects of human sexuality, but also, yes indeed, for enjoyment, celebration, and perhaps even quiet poetic arousal. The workshop will be organized around poems that treat some or all of the following themes: the sexuality of romantic love and mature love; problems such as exploitation, deprivation, and repression; the unabashed erotic (poems in this category include sexually explicit language); and the humor of sex.

Biosketch

Bob Schaible is an associate professor of arts and humanities at the University of Southern Maine. His teaching and scholarship are primarily interdisciplinary. In recent years, he has collaborated with faculty in a variety of fields to offer papers and courses in such areas as "Metaphor in Science, Religion, and Literature," "Life and Literature after Darwin," "Photography and Poetry: Two Ways of Speaking," and "White Males Teaching for Diversity: Why and How." He has also worked in programs funded by the NSF and the NEH designed to help both secondary and college-level faculty develop curricula that bridge the gap between the sciences and

the humanities. He is attending the conference with his wife, Sally Bowden-Schaible, a psychotherapist.

DO YOU KNOW IT WHEN YOU SEE IT? THE MYOPIA OF AMERICAN OBSCENITY LAW
Thursday, 2:30 pm - 5:15 pm

David M. Skover

A presentation and seminar-style discussion of the theory and doctrine, past and present, of First Amendment obscenity law, and the current cultural tensions experienced in America's "pornutopia."

Reading List:

Donald Alexander Downs, *The New Politics of Pornography* (University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 8-32.

Collins & Skover, *The Death of Discourse* (Westview Press, 1996): Book III is essential reading for the workshop. It is available in the bookstore. The Prologue, Book II, and the Epilogue are highly recommended.

"The Business of Pornography," *U.S. News & World Report*, February 10, 1997, pp. 43-52.

Biosketch

David M. Skover is a Professor of Law at Seattle University. He teaches and writes in the fields of constitutional law and mass communications theory. He is also a regionally acclaimed opera and musical theater singer. David graduated from the Woodrow Wilson School of International and Domestic Affairs at Princeton University. He received his law degree from Yale Law School, where he was an editor of the *Yale Law Journal*. Thereafter, he served as a law clerk for federal judge Jon O. Newman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. He is the co-author of *Tactics of Legal Reasoning* (Carolina Academic Press, 1986) and *The Death of Discourse* (Westview Press, 1996). American historian Leonard Levy labeled the latter book "literary dynamite ready to demolish the pomp and hypocrisy obstructing the proud edifice of the First Amendment." Additionally, David has published more than twenty scholarly articles in various journals, including the *Harvard Law Review*, *Yale Law Journal*, *Stanford Law Review*, *Michigan Law Review*, *Texas Law Review*, *The Nation* magazine, and the *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution* (Macmillan, 1991). He appears frequently on network affiliate television and has been quoted in the national popular press (e.g. *NYT*, *WSJ*, *CSM*, etc.) on a spectrum of issues ranging from constitutional law to media law and theory. David's forthcoming book, entitled *Comedy on Trial*, is an account of the four obscenity trials of Lenny Bruce and their little-recognized importance for First Amendment jurisprudence.

SO, WERE THEY LOVERS?

Sunday 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Carl Smith

Some reflections on the theme of "longing" in love, in art, and in religion, using the letters, poems, and drawings of Michelangelo to, for, and about Tommaso dei Cavalieri, the young Roman nobleman whom he "much loved," as points of departure. This workshop will make use of both the visual and the musical arts.

Biosketch

Carl Smith is Senior Lecturer in Music Composition and Theory at The Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. Previously he lived for more than 25 years in St. Louis, where he taught in the Music Department at Washington University. An organist and harpsichordist by profession, he is also a composer of song cycles, cantatas, motets, and instrumental works. He has an especial affinity for all things having to do with the art of renaissance Italy in general and with the verse of Michelangelo in particular. This is his fourth IRAS conference.

HUMOR AND SEXUALITY

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Robert Sorensen and Diggitt McLaughlin

Why do we laugh when we hear a joke? We all know the surprise, recognition, and perhaps even shock that accompany the moment of "getting the joke", when we start to laugh. Is sexual humor different, and if so, how? If trends in sexuality exist, why are we amused by centuries-old bawd and recognizable characters like Chaucer's Wife of Bath? Bring your stories and ideas and we'll see why they are funny ... or not. Bob Sorensen continues his popular humor workshop of years past with Diggitt McLaughlin's assistance.

Biosketches

Dr. Robert Sorensen, who some people think occasionally shows a sense of humor, is a longtime member of IRAS and attendee at IRAS conferences. He co-chaired a Star Island IRAS conference on free will and determinism and, with Viggo Mortensen, edited a book of contributions to the same subject made in a conference they co-chaired in Denmark. He is an applied social psychologist and survey researcher, long specializing in situational conflict: marketing, litigation, and political warfare. Diggitt McLaughlin has been an IRAS member for nearly a decade. She started her career of having varied careers as president of her local Unitarian youth group. As a writer she has been an advertising copywriter, journalist, PR flack, scriptwriter for film and television, and she is now working on a novel. Her interest in science led her to several years acquiring, editing, and developing medical books. At IRAS, Diggitt is rarely seen without needlework or

knitting, has been a weaver, and has designed and made costumes and artwear. As an activist she has managed campaigns and lobbying, primarily for environmental causes and abortion access issues, and has been president and director of Leagues of Women Voters from her village to the greater New York City Tri-State Region. Until recently, Diggitt was president of the Beczak Environmental Education Center, on the Hudson River in Yonkers, New York, overseeing the center's growth from good idea to vital regional resource, complete with a new building underwritten by Scenic Hudson. Her graduate studies were in urban planning; for several years she has been a student at the New York Botanical Garden and she will someday complete New York State certification in both field botany and plant systematics. Diggitt is an award-winning nature photographer and at IRAS 1998 ran a workshop on Photography and Poetry.

LOCAL DISCUSSION GROUPS---A SHARING OF IDEAS

Thursday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

John Swanson

This workshop will be a creative, shared discussion about the current local discussion group program. It will consider ways to improve and expand the program. In 1996 IRAS began four local discussion groups on a pilot basis. The emphasis was on bringing the science/religion interface to a grassroots level, involving people who had not been previously involved. The number of groups has now increased to eleven throughout the United States and Canada, with others in the process of formation. This program has been very successful on a limited basis. Now we need to consider how it might be improved and expanded? At this workshop, members of the different groups will share their experiences. Among topics that will be discussed are the formation and organization of new groups, meeting dates and places, conduct of meetings, topics of discussion, and types of resources that have proven effective. We will consider ways in which the liason relationship between groups can be strengthened, as well as the role of the project coordinator in bringing this together. We will reexamine the discussion group's website and consider ways to improve it, as well as plans to expand the project's newsletter. We will consider additional resources that the project coordinator might be able to offer to the various groups. In an effort to expand the scope of the program, we will ask and try to answer the following questions: Is there a way in which local discussion groups might serve younger people? What organizations or churches might be interested in organizing groups for the discussion of science and religion? Could discussion groups be formed on college campuses? Could the media or the religious editors of newspapers be used to promote the formation of new groups? How can we use the discussion group program to strengthen IRAS

and promote its agenda more effectively. We will explore these and any other options that participants suggest.

Biosketch

John Swanson attended Southern Methodist University before graduating from Baylor University College of Dentistry in 1951. He retired from the practice of dentistry five years ago. He has had a lifelong interest in those scientific, philosophical and theological trends in contemporary society that are leading to new ways of looking at old problems. As a director of religious education, holding leadership positions in different churches, he has had first-hand experience with the changes affecting the dialogue between science and religion. In Dallas, he has formed one local discussion group and is working to help build up a second. Since he retired, he has served as a volunteer chaplain for a low income non-profit hospital, attended various science/religion conferences around the country, patronized the arts, read extensively from IRAS authors, and enjoyed his boat on Lake Texoma. This year, he will coordinate the local discussion group program for IRAS, taking over a very successful program from Michael Cavanaugh who originated it.

SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION: WORK/FAMILY IMPLICATIONS—A PERSONAL JOURNEY

Thursday, 2:50 - 3:50 pm

Elizabeth White

This addiction generally manifests itself as Sex Addiction in men, as in uncontrollable promiscuity, for example, and as Love Addiction in women, as in an inability to walk away from, even violently, abusive relationships. However, in both instances, the dysfunctional behavior is driven by a core dysfunction in the individual's ability to form a satisfying, "complete," relationship with her or himself. This core dysfunction has its origin in the individual's early family history. This workshop will focus on the presenter's personal 17 year journey from Love Addiction to emotional, relational, and professional health: on the specific steps in her own recovery, and on the journey as documented in her poetry.

Biosketch

Elizabeth White, MBA, Ph.D.: Management Science, is a behavioral theorist and poet whose special interest is Human System Theory: where our minds, our daily lives, come from and how it all fits with everything else. She has spent the last three years at Texas Instruments in Dallas, Texas, as a worldwide leadership development consultant.

CHAPEL AND CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

Activities of the day begin right after breakfast each morning with chapel.
Scheduled activities of the day end with a candlelight service.

CHAPEL SERVICES

Leslie Kawamura and Barbara Whittaker-Johns will serve as co-chaplains for the week.

On Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday mornings, Leslie will focus on the idea of sexuality from the perspective of Eastern Religions. He plans to discuss this idea within the story of creation and in terms of cosmology within religious traditions such as Shinto (Japan) Taoism and Confucianism (China) and Buddhism. As part of the Chapel talks, he will introduce some simple meditative practices that may contribute towards a more balanced bodily state.

Leslie Kawamura is a Buddhist and a professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary. He teaches Eastern Religions, focusing primarily on the Mahayana Buddhist Traditions of India, China, Tibet, and Japan. He is also chair of the Asian Studies Group at the University of Calgary. He presented a paper at the IRAS conference, "Cosmology and the Meaning of Human Existence" in 1988, and returned as Chaplain in 1992 for the conference on "Global Ecology and Human Destiny," and in 1995 for the conference on "Life in the Universe." He has published many articles and books. One of his recent publications, *Madhyamika and Yogacara*, is a translation of a collection of essays by Professor G. M. Nagao, his mentor.

Barbara's theme on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings will be: "Stories to Hallow Human Sexuality."

Recent Star Island conferences have included reflection on the place of story in our spiritual and ethical appropriation of the "new cosmology." Among the various roles of story explored have been the use of narrative, ritual and the arts to help us internalize the epic of evolution and the capacity of received stories in particular religious traditions to be reinterpreted in a fresh way, one that points us toward the holy power of the scientific story of evolution. But recent conferences have also touched upon the capacity of personal stories to focus our awareness on the daily and universal grace and guidance offered human beings by the larger epic of evolution. If, as a kind of spiritual practice, we do frame stories which tell of everyday grace and guidance as a part of our scientific understanding of the universe,

the we would expect that story-telling to include matters of the grace and guidance we need to embrace delight, wisdom and justice in our human sexuality.

And, in telling stories to hallow our human sexuality, we find wide-ranging areas of concern and hope—our inner lives, intimate relationships, the children who look to us for example, the political extensions of personal sexuality which none of us can afford to ignore. In the three morning chapel services on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday we will touch on this theme of story-telling as a spiritual practice to bless and guide us to charting the waters of human sexuality.

Barbara Whittaker-Johns is Senior Minister at First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, MA, and has been in parish ministry for 14 years. She studied for the ministry at Harvard Divinity School and had a prior professional life in education. Currently, she is a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree in Creation Spirituality in a program started recently by the theologian Matthew Fox in Oakland, CA. Barbara has been active in IRAS since 1984, including serving as Chaplain in 1987 and 1993 and as Vice President for Conference Planning from 1989 - 1996. She comes to Star Island with her husband, Frank Toppa, and their child, Isaac Toppa. Frank, and sometimes Barbara and Isaac, often are part of the musical offerings of the week. Isaac has been coming to IRAS week since he weighed 10 pounds. This will be his 11th consecutive season of feeling welcomed back to his spirit's home.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

Saturday: **Phil and Neva Hefner.** "Women and Men Reflecting on Love"

Sunday: **Sean O'Reilly.** "The Resurrection of Stone"

Monday: **Tom and Paula Fangman.** "Friendship"

Tuesday: **Marjorie Ann Young.** "Quieting the Mind"

Wednesday: **Ruth Bruns and Bonnie Falla.** "A Gift of Words and Music"

Thursday: **Sharon Stein McNamara and Craig McNamara.** "Running with the Wolves"

Friday: **Betty Lau.** "Closing"

MUSICAL POSTLUDES

A new "musical offering" will be a part of each day's schedule: a kind of reflective postlude to the day's events and efforts. These will take place in the chapel immediately following Candlelight. Each will last not more than 30 minutes, of which at least 20 minutes will be music. These sessions will be led by Carl Smith, who will provide introduction to and commentary on the music, all of which will be chosen to reflect in some way the context in which we find ourselves: in a chapel at a conference on an island in an ocean under a wide and starry sky with birds flying around. The music will tend towards the reflective (as befits the hour), will come largely from this century (as it draws to a close), will require no musical expertise to understand and appreciate, and will be unrelated to the music offered on other nights, so conferees may attend as frequently or infrequently as they choose.

Carl Smith is Senior Lecturer in Music Composition and Theory at The Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. Previously he lived for more than 25 years in St. Louis, where he taught in the Music Department at Washington University. An organist and harpsichordist by profession, he is also a composer of song cycles, cantatas, motets, and instrumental works. He has an especial affinity for all things having to do with the art of renaissance Italy in general and with the verse of Michelangelo in particular. This is his fourth IRAS conference.

PEOPLE

Conference Planning Committee

Ted Laurensen	Cochair
Michael Ruse	Cochair
Barbara Whittaker-Johns	Cochair
Nancy Anschuetz	
Sally Bowden-Schaible	
Ursula Goodenough	
Philip Hefner	
Robert Sorensen	

Conference Officials

Conference Coordinator	Nancy Anschuetz
Registrar	Bonnie Falla

Conference Facilitators

Announcements	Ruth Bruns
Book Table	Marjorie Young
Candlelight Coordinator	Betty Lau
Children's Program	
	Sandra Woodworth, Coordinator
	Marissa Morin, Island Assistant
Choir Director	Jane Penfield
IRAS/ <i>Zygon</i> Reception	Nancy Anschuetz
Program Pamphlet	Tom Gilbert
Social Hour Coordinator	Sara Sturges
<i>Star Beacon</i> Editor	Jilana Ordman
Talent Show	Barbara Avakian
Workshop Coordinator	Sally Bowden-Schaible

Most of the facilitators are recruited on the Island. A more complete list of facilitators will be prepared and distributed later, after we know who they are.

The successful functioning of the conference is utterly dependent on the facilitators. If you would like to become actively involved in the functioning of the conference and meet and work with new and old friends, the conference chairpersons and coordinator, choir director, and *Star Beacon* editor and production manager would like to hear from you.

IRAS Scholars

David Brown
 Karen Barrows
 Jonathan Rodgers
 Robert Hamilton

IRAS Officers

Karl Peters	President
Ursula Goodenough	Immediate Past President
Mary Evelyn Tucker	Vice President, Religion
Christopher Corbally	Vice President, Science
Billy Grassie	Vice President, Interdisciplinary Affairs
Robert Schaible	Vice President, Conferences
Thomas Gilbert	Vice President, Development
Joan Goodwin	Secretary
Thomas Fangman	Treasurer

Elected Council Members

Michael Cavanaugh	Edwin Laurensen
Christopher Corbally	Bruce Naylor
Terrence Deacon	William Orme-Johnson
Willem Drees	Ann Pederson
Lawrence Fagg	Karl Peters
William Grassie	Mary Evelyn Tucker
Marion Griswold	Barbara Whittaker-Johns
Nancy Houk	

Other Council Members (Ex Officio)

Philip Hefner	Zygon Editor
Solomon Katz	CASIRAS Representative

Others with Official Responsibilities

Marjorie Davis	Historian/Parliamentarian
Paula Fangman	Membership Coordinator
Kevin Sharpe	<i>Science and Spirit</i> Editor
Douglas Burton	Webmaster

Honorary Officers

Donald Harrington	Honorary Vice President
George Riggan	Honorary Vice President
Macolm Sutherland	Honorary Vice President

Committee Chairs

Archives	Philip Hefner
Awards	Lawrence Fagg
Development	Thomas Gilbert
Finance	Thomas Fangman
Internet	Billy Grassie
Long-Range Conf. Planning	Robert Schaible
Membership	Nancy Anschuetz
Newsletter	William Falla
Nominating	Joan Goodwin
Publicity	Marion Griswold
Scholarship	William Falla

READING LIST

In this year's conference we intend to explore some of the many personal meanings of sexuality, in light of a number of both “objective” and “subjective” perspectives concerning what it is all about.. The subject is vast, implicating and encompassing huge swaths of biology, anthropology, sociology, law, politics, literature, religion, morality, and much else. It can be, and has been, viewed from an amazing number of viewpoints, and we do not pretend that we can even hint at a comprehensive approach in one week, regardless of the intensity of our examination.

What we can do, however, is to examine with rigor, humor and care the ways in which religious, scientific and moral perspectives influence how we and others think about sexuality, and the many ways in which views and knowledge of who we are as biological and social beings, and how we got that way, interweave with our and others' religious and moral standpoints and our individual psychologies.

The books and articles listed below have been suggested by the speakers and conference co-chairs. They do not begin to exhaust the literature, or to present all the valid and stimulating viewpoints, that one can find and take concerning sexuality. But if you read even a few of them, or some of the ones in areas with which you are not already familiar, we think you will come all the more ready to participate vigorously in what promises to be a fascinating and challenging conference, where, as noted in the conference statement, we will explore:

- What is sexuality and who are we sexually, as evolved animals and as social beings?
- To what extent can we consciously choose our own gender identities and sexual orientations?
- What gives rise to sexual pleasure in the brain, and how does it work in relation to other sources of pleasure?
- What is the relationship between the feelings of transcendence evoked by sexual and mystical experiences?
- How does society shape our sexual responses?
- How do our sexual responses shape society?
- What are the implications of differing sexual mores for family life and marriage?
- How is sexuality regarded by the world's religious traditions?
- Is there more wisdom to religious regulation of sexual freedom than some in modern society like to admit?

Author	Title¹	Publisher
Cabezon, Jose.I., ed.	Buddhism, Sexuality and Gender #	State U.of NewYork Press (Albany), 1992
Collins, Ronald & Skover, David ²	The Death of Discourse #	Westview Press, 1996
Countryman, L. William	Dirt, Greed and Sex: Sexual Ethics in the New Testament and Their Implications for Today	Fortress Press, 1990
De Waal, Frans	Bonobo: The Forgotten Ape	U. of Cal. Press, 1998
Downs, Donald A.	The New Politics of Pornography	U. of Chicago Press, 1989
Faure, Bernard	The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality	Princeton U. Press, 1998
Fisher, Helen E.	First Sex: The Natural Talents of Women and How They Will Change the World #	Random House, 1999
Fisher, Helen E.	Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Mating, Marriage and Why We Stray #	Fawcett Books, 1995
Fox, Matthew	Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality	Bear & Co., 1996
Gyatso, Janet	Journal of the American Academy of Religion (67.1), "Healing Burns with Fire: The Facilitations of Experience in Tibetan Buddhism," pp. 113-147. #	
Helfing, Charles, ed.	Our Selves, Our Souls and Bodies: Sexuality and the Household of God	Cowley Publications, 1996
Herman, Judith	Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror	Basic, 1997
Hrdy, Sarah Blaffer:	The Woman That Never Evolved	Harv. Univ. Press, 1983
Levin, Bruce; Blauch, Andre; Jennings, Ann, eds.	Women's Mental Health Services: A Public Health Perspective #	Sage, 1998
Pfaff, Donald W.	Drive: Neurobiological and Molecular Mechanisms of Sexual Motivation #	MIT, 1999
Pfaff, Donald W. et al, eds.	Genetic Influences on Neural and Behavioral Functions #	CRC Press, 1999
Rudy, Kathy	Sex and the Church: Gender, Homosexuality, and the Transformation of Christian Ethics	Beacon Press, 1997
Ruse, Michael	Mystery of Mysteries: Is Evolution a Social Construction? #	Harvard U. Press, 1999
Ruse, Michael	Taking Darwin Seriously: A Naturalistic Approach to Philosophy #	Prometheus Books, 1998
Smuts, Barbara B.	Sex and Friendship in Baboons #	Aldine De Gruyter, 1985
Solomon, Robert C.	Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor	Prometheus Book, 1990
Solomon, Robert C., ed.	The Philosophy of Erotic Love	Univ. Pr. of Kansas, 1991
Tinburgen, Niko	The Herring Gull's World: A Study of the Social Behavior of Birds	out of print
U.S. News & World Report (2/10/97)	"The Business of Pornography," pp. 34-52.	
Weinrich, James	Sexual Landscapes: Why We Are What We Are, Why We Love Whom We Love #	out of print
Yeshe, Lama Thubten Landlaw, Jonathan, eds.	Introduction to Tantra: A Vision of Totality	Wisdom Publications, 1993

¹# Denotes books or articles written or edited by a main conference speaker.

²In addition to his main presentation, David Skover will lead a workshop on "Do You Know It When You See It? The Myopia of American Obscenity Law," and strongly suggests that workshop participants read at least Part III of this book.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to our speakers and workshop leaders, to those who said "yes" when we asked them to be a facilitator, and to our conferees -- all of whom share our enthusiasm for this conference and who generously contribute their time and talents without pay as they carry out the planning and innumerable tasks necessary for a successful conference. We express our appreciation to the Star Island staff for the competent, courteous, and efficient way they take care of our needs and help make our week on the Island so rewarding. IRAS also acknowledges and expresses its gratitude for a grant from the Isles of Shoals Association (UU) to cover certain workshop expenses at this conference.

46th Annual IRAS Conference, "Sexuality and Human Nature." Saturday, July 31, thru Friday, August 6, 1999

PERIOD	ACTIVITY	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 -9:00 a	Breakfast							
Morning Activities: Chapel and Plenary Lectures								
9:00-9:45 a	Chapel	Barbara Whittaker-Johns and Leslie Kawamura, Conference Chaplains						
10:00-10:55 a	Lectures (El)	Welcome to Star Island	Barbara Smuts Helen Fisher	James Weinrich	Jay Johnson Michael Ruse	Ann Jennings	José Cabazón Janet Gyatso	Ted Laurenson & Panel
10:55-11:15 a	Break							
11:15-12:15 p	Discussion							
12:30-1:30 p	Lunch							
Afternoon Activities¹: Recreation², Seminar, Workshops, Free University³, and Socializing								
1:40-2:40 p	Session I Annual Meeting IRAS Seminar Free University	ARRIVING, GETTING SETTLED, GREETING FRIENDS, EXPLORING		IRAS Seminar (Nb)	IRAS Seminar (Nb)	IRAS Seminar (Nb)	IRAS Annual Meeting Starts at 1:40 pm ⁴	
2:50-3:50 p	Session II Workshops		Schaible (PP) Sorensen/McL (Nf) Goodenough (El) Grassie (Br) ⁵	Schaible (PP) Sorensen/McL (Nf) Friend (Sp) Rockwell (Br)	Schaible (PP) Sorensen/McL (Nf) Friend (Sp) Bryant/Sharpe (Pk) Nelson (Lw)	Schaible (PP) Rockwell (Br) Friend (Sp) Bryant/Sharpe (Pk)	Skover (Nf) ⁵ Greenberg (PP) White (Lw) Bryant/Sharpe (Pk)	
4:00-5:00 p	Session III Workshops	Star Island Orientation (MANDATORY ⁶)	Everett (PP) Smith (El) Grassie (Br) ⁵	Everett (PP) Goodwin (Nf) O'Reilly (El) Rockwell (Br)	Everett (PP) Goodwin (Nf) O'Reilly (El) Nelson (Lw) McLaugh/Freud (Pk)	Rockwell (Br) Goodwin (Nf) O'Reilly (El) McLaugh/Freud (Pk)	Skover (Nf) ⁵ Swanson (PP) McLaugh/Freud (Pk)	
5:30-6:30 p	Social Hour (Newton Centre)					IRAS/Zygon Reception ⁷ Starts at 5:10 pm		
6:30-7:30 p	Dinner					Lobster Dinner ⁸		Banquet
Evening Activities: Plenary Lectures, Candlelight Services, Snacks, Shows, and Owl Sessions								
7:30-9:30 p	Lectures and Discussion	Ted Laurenson	Smuts/Fisher (discussion)	Donald Pfaff	Johnson/Ruse (discussion)	Davod Skover	Cabazón/Gyatso Pelican Show ⁹	Talent Show
9:45-10:15 p	Candlelight (Chapel) ¹⁰	Phil and Neva Hefner	Sean O'Reilly	Tom and Paula Fangman	Marjorie Ann Young	Ruth Bruns Bonnie Falla	Sharon & Craig McNamara	
10:15 p - ?		Musical Postludes, Snacks, Films, Dancing, and Socializing ¹¹						Farewell Party (Newton)

¹Room abbreviations are: **Br** = Brookfield; **El** = Elliott; **Lw** = Lawrence; **Nb** = Newton back; **Nf** = Newton front; **Pk** = Parker; **PP** = Pink Parlor; **Sp** = Sandpiper.

²There will be an excursion to Appledore Island on Monday afternoon. Please sign up on Sunday

³"Free University" and other activities organized by conferees will be announced on the Island and scheduled for the 1:40 to 2:40 pm period.

⁴The Annual IRAS Meeting will start at 1:40 pm and probably be over by 2:40 pm. It will be followed immediately by a meeting of the new IRAS Council, which may last until 5 pm. Council meetings are open; observers are welcome.

⁵The Grassie and Skover workshops begin at 2:30 pm and end at 5:15 pm.

⁶The Star Island Orientation, conducted by the Star Island staff starting at 4 pm, is the one and only scheduled activity that is mandatory for all conferees.

⁷The IRAS/Zygon reception starts at 5:10 pm and merges into the social hour. All are invited; we urge you to join us.

⁸There will be a lobster dinner on Wednesday. Tickets are \$5.50 per person and must be purchased by Monday noon. Lobster diners should be seated by 6:15 pm.

⁹On Thursday evening, the plenary session discussion ends at 8:55 pm, the Pelican show starts at 9:05 pm, and the Candlelight Service begins as soon as the Pelican Show is over.

¹⁰The Candlelight Service will be followed by a Musical Postlude, also in the chapel.

¹¹The snack bar closes at 11 pm. Socializing and informal discussions can continue until dawn. There will be dancing in Brookfield after Candlelight.