



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By way of informing you about developments within SSTAR, I will share with you the decisions taken by and the issues addressed at the recent Executive Council meeting. As you may know, the council meets for seven to eight hours over two days after the Fall Clinical Conference in New York to provide guidance to the organization and to plan for the future.

Much of the meeting was devoted to discussing the upcoming 2003 SSTAR meeting. As you will see from the other parts of this newsletter, Marta Meana has organized an excellent program. I am particularly looking forward to a number of presentations on child sexual abuse. This is a topic that has received increased interest of late and is badly in need of scientific grounding. We will also be having a quasi-debate on the topic of the impact of pornography with two experts in the field presenting their differing readings of the research literature. This is a new format for SSTAR presentations and, I hope, will make for a more interesting exploration of current issues in our field. Blanche Freund has planned excursions and entertainment for us to make sure we also have a fun time in Miami Beach.

You should also think about going west in June for the SSTAR West Coast Clinical Conference. Diane Morrissette and I have planned a one-day meeting similar to our East Coast Fall Conference in New York. This will be held at the Vallambrosa Center in Menlo Park, California, on Saturday, June 21, 2003. The preliminary program includes a half-day workshop with Barry McCarthy on sexless marriages and a case presentation of a sexual pain disorder with Irv Binik as the discussant. More information on this meeting will follow, but I suggest that you mark your calendar now, since attendance will be limited to 40 people in order to foster discussion.

For those of you who really like to plan ahead, the 2004 SSTAR Annual Meeting will be held in March or April of 2004 in Washington, D.C. Mike Plaut and the SSTAR national office are already at work in the planning. Sophie Bergeron will be the Scientific Program Chair.

A new benefit to SSTAR membership has recently been added. Through an agreement with the publisher, SSTAR members can now receive a subscription to the *Journal of Sex and Relationship Therapy* at the significantly reduced rate of \$55.00 per year. There is no obligation on the part of members or the organization, so this is a very good offer. Our own Sandra Leiblum is the North American Editor.

There was much discussion at the Executive Council meeting about ways to continue to build SSTAR membership and to broaden the diversity of the organization. One strategy is to develop an up-to-date brochure on the organization that can be used to attract new members. Our Membership Officer, Dan Watter, is taking the lead on this and would welcome your suggestions ([drwatter@morrispsych.com](mailto:drwatter@morrispsych.com)). Also, in the near future you will receive a ballot regarding changes in the by-laws that simplify the membership structure for SSTAR. We hope this will ease the application process for new members and ask that you endorse the changes.

Another initiative taken by the council is to enhance the SSTAR website in order to be a more useful tool for members and a more inviting introduction to the organization for non-members. President-elect Bill Maurice is heading a committee to find a more professional website designer and to identify new ways to use the site. Check out the website for yourself at [www.sstarnet.org](http://www.sstarnet.org). Your suggestions for the website re-design are also welcome. Contact Bill at [maurice@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:maurice@interchange.ubc.ca).

The council discussed two new issues in September. The first is whether SSTAR should take positions on policy issues that relate to our field of expertise. A recent example of this is the debate over federal funding for abstinence-only sex education. A number of sexuality organizations filed briefs in the recent court case on the topic. I would like to begin a discussion within SSTAR about the benefits and risks of the organization developing policy positions and what the mechanism for doing so might be. AASECT has recently developed such a procedure and may be a useful model. I would welcome members' ideas and responses to the idea that SSTAR begin to formulate positions on public policy issues that relate to sexuality and society. Please e-mail your thoughts to me at [rcarroll@nmff.org](mailto:rcarroll@nmff.org).

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A second issue that was discussed, but not resolved, was possible membership in a new group that is tentatively labeled as the North American Federation of Sexuality Organizations. The draft mission statement is:

*The North American Federation of Sexological Organizations (NAFSO) is a federation of organizations devoted to the promotion of sexual health and well-being.*

*The Purpose of the NAFSO is:*

1. *To promote cooperation, collaboration, communication, and coordination among sexual health and advocacy organizations in The United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean;*
2. *To promote international cooperation between NAFSO and other sexological federations including the World Association for Sexology.*
3. *To promote educational programs and research leading to increased knowledge for professionals in sexology related disciplines; and*
4. *To advocate for accurate and comprehensive sexual health information in the public domain.*

While the organization has not yet been formed, it is likely to be formally created in the near future. The federation would be closely aligned with the World Association of Sexuality and be similar to other federations in Europe, Latin America and Asia. It also has an explicit goal of advocacy on issues of sexual health and sexual rights. After discussion at the Executive Council meeting of the benefits and risks of membership in such an organization, it was decided to defer a decision until more specific information can be obtained regarding its membership, financing, and policies. I would also welcome members' opinions on SSTAR's involvement in such a federation.

I hope it is clear that SSTAR is continuing to look ahead and to build for a strong future. As always, your involvement and input are not only welcome, but also necessary in this effort.

See you in Miami Beach!

Richard Carroll, Ph.D.  
President, SSTAR

## **SSTAR 2003 Annual Meeting in Miami Heats Up!**

Some of the most important and controversial issues facing discipline today will be addressed directly in the scientific program for SSTAR's 2003 Annual Meeting in Miami Beach this coming March. Mark your calendars for March 6-9 for a lively and intellectually stimulating round of talks by some of the foremost researchers and practitioners in our field – not to mention some fun and sun in South Beach.

Just prior to the formal start of the conference, participants will have a difficult choice between two concurrent workshops. Michael Perelman, Ph.D. will be guiding us through the integration of sex therapy and the new pharmaceuticals while David and Jill Scharff, M.D. will run a workshop on the psychodynamic approaches to couples' sexual difficulties. In the evening a reception will bring us all together for some drinks and hors-d'oeuvres to officially open the conference. A good time to catch up with old colleagues and meet new ones.

Friday morning, Roy Baumeister, Ph.D., will talk on female erotic plasticity and explore the influences of nature, culture and the sex drive on female sexuality. Changing gears altogether, Neil Malamuth, Ph.D., will then address the characteristics of male sexual aggressors from the perspective of the confluence and psychopathy models. We will then pick up our box lunches and spend the afternoon either in an organized excursion to the Everglades or you can opt out and just lie on the beach. Your choice. In the evening supper groups can stroll on Lincoln Street and settle for a gourmet delight in one of its many trendy restaurants.

On Saturday, breakfast roundtables will give you the opportunity to speak face to face with one of the presenters and maybe extend discussions touched upon during the presentations. After breakfast, a symposium on pedophilia will be given by James Cantor, Ph.D., Ray Blanchard, Ph.D., and Michael Seto, Ph.D., focusing on the neuropsychology and assessment of sexual offenders. This will be followed by a symposium on the Catholic Church in crisis, with Stephen Levine, M.D., Candace Risen, LISW and Stanley Althof, Ph.D., addressing clinical dilemmas in the treatment of priests who were identified as pedophiles. The afternoon program has a series of submitted papers on varied topics of interest and a debate on the impact on the effects of pornography by two distinguished researchers with differing views, William Fisher, Ph.D. and Neil Malamuth, Ph.D. We can all then shake off the seriousness of the day dancing to the rhythms of Miami at our annual banquet.

Before the conference winds down on Sunday, we have one more treat Sunday morning with a clinical case presentation by Karen Brash McGreer, MFT and Greg McGreer, Ph.D., treated using the principles of David Schnarch's approach. Dr. Michael Plaut will then provide an analysis of the case presented.

We look forward to seeing you all in March for this winter interlude of good science, good practice, and good fun!

Marta Meana, Ph.D.  
2002 Annual Meeting  
Scientific Program Chair

## SSTAR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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#### *Send Membership Dues and Address Updates To:*

SSTAR National Office  
409 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20024-2188

#### *Send Newsletter Materials To:*

Ursula Ofman, Psy.D  
155 E. 29<sup>th</sup> St., #30  
New York, NY 10016  
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Bill Maurice's E-mail address:  
[Maurice@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:Maurice@unixg.ubc.ca)



## 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Sexology Havana, Cuba March 10 – 14, 2003

The congress meeting of the World Association of Sexology (WAS), will be held in Havana, Cuba from March 10-14, 2003. It begins on the Monday after the SSTAR meeting in Miami, so participants can easily attend both meetings. There should be a charter flight from Miami to Havana on Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, departing after the SSTAR meeting ends (after 12:30 pm).

Be reminded that there are travel restrictions to Cuba still in place. Currently all professionals attending the meeting will be granted a professional visa. However, accompanying travelers must register with the State Department by sending a letter to receive a specific visa exemption ([www.treas.gov/ofac](http://www.treas.gov/ofac)). All expenses for the trip must be pre-paid and American issued credit cards are not accepted in Cuba. Visitors may only stay for the duration of the conference. WAS has organized some local travel during the conference so that some sightseeing will be possible. Pre-registration fee is currently at \$400 per person and will go up to \$500 just before the meeting convenes. You can register on line.

SSTAR members who wish to attend the Havana conference may contact Maribel Hernandez at the Marazul Charters for information and to make arrangements. If you want to prepay travel and also be included on the charter from Miami you must contact them ASAP. Marazul Charters # is 1-800-223-5334 or send an email to [Maribel.Mhernandez@marazulcharters.com](mailto:Maribel.Mhernandez@marazulcharters.com)

Some SSTAR members will be staying at the Hotel Golden Tulip Parque Central in Old Havana, which is a 5-Star hotel. Make this reservation with Marazul as well.

More information about the WAS meeting can be found at: [www.cubasexologia.com](http://www.cubasexologia.com).

Blanche Freund, Ph.D., RN  
2003 Annual Meeting  
Local Arrangements Chair

## SSTAR 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Wyndham Miami Beach Resort • Miami Beach, Florida March 6-9, 2003

Those of you who attended the 1996 Annual meeting in Miami Beach will remember what a great accommodation the Doral Beach and Spa was. The hotel is the same only the name has changed and it has been refurbished. It is a boutique hotel that is just large enough to have the roomy conference rooms that make our society attendees comfy, yet small enough that you feel the whole hotel is catering to our program, banqueting and beaching fun. Everywhere you turn, you face the beautiful blue Atlantic Ocean or the beautiful views of the Miami skyline. Needless to say, the hotel is located right on the beach, near a boardwalk to run in the morning, and minutes away from South Beach (SOBE).

**FRIDAY:** Friday break time is scheduled to run from 12:30 to 5:30-6 pm. To save time we plan to provide you with a box lunch that you can eat before the buses leave for two planned afternoon excursions. You may sign up for either one when you register.

**EVERGLADES EXCURSION:** This excursion is for the nature-lover and the adventurous that wants to spend sometime in the Everglades. You will have approximately a one half hour bus ride to an area of the Everglades where you then board an airboat for a powered ride thru the Sawgrass. You will see the many birds and wildlife that inhabit that area. Depending on the water level you may see alligators close up. A ranger will relate the wonders of the Everglades. The airboats are noisy so bring your earplugs (usually provided).

**CITY TOUR AND VILLA VIZCAYA:** This excursion will be for the folks that want to see sites around Miami such as Villa Vizcaya, which is a magnificent Italian Renaissance-style palace with beautiful formal gardens. It was built as a winter home for James Deering, one of the founders of the International Harvester Company and an early Miami resident. You can roam around the gardens, which sit right on the edge of beautiful Biscayne Bay.

For those of you who want to get their sun and leisure swimming in, you can stay back from the excursions and enjoy the warm balmy breezes of March in Miami Beach. Bring your sunscreen and hats. Remember, for the tennis buffs there are tennis courts at the resort. There are also beach concessions to rent jet skis. Maybe we can set up a volley ball game at some point. I still have one volleyball from the spirited SSTAR team playing in Ft. Lauderdale.

### Friday evening:

South Beach (SOBE): The 4 main drags are, Washington Avenue, Lincoln Road, Ocean Drive, and Collins Ave. Leave enough vacation time to explore these areas. Along Lincoln Road there is street music, art galleries and notable fine restaurants to dine outside while you watch the cross section of Miami Beach residents, South America and Europe walk by. Friday evening we will set up some restaurant sites on Lincoln Road for your gourmet dining. Some of you may want to dine on Stone crabs at the famous Joe's Stone Crab restaurant (305-673-0365) on Washington Ave. Reservations will be setup there for a group. For dessert there is a great gelato place on Lincoln Road (Gelateria Parmalat), and right next door is NEXX another dessert and coffee hangout of SOBE residents. Good dining is plentiful in SOBE.

### Saturday Banquet:

For those of you who attended the 1996 annual meeting, you will remember the beautiful Starlight Room at the top of the new Wyndham. This room has fantastic views of the city and with plenty of room to boogie. On this evening you will boogie with the DJ *Boogie Man George*, who will also teach us line dancing. We are hoping to arrange some surprise entertainment from the decadent side of SOBE. It's still in the works, so no promises.

We are planning a fun, full schedule so bring your energy, kids, bathing suits and sunscreen. A few may have to bring their PowerPoint slides to stimulate our knowledge and learning with the fabulous program Marta Meana has provided. When you see the program call the hotel right away and make your reservations as there are a limited number of rooms reserved for us. If you want to get a head start call 1-800-Wyndham and book in. Ask for the SSTAR rate, which is, for single or double, \$185. You can come ahead of time at that rate if space is available (3 days prior and 3 days post). The cut off date for this rate is Feb 2. So book your airfare to Miami Airport, which is closer or you may get better rates to Ft. Lauderdale. Take the Supershuttle to the hotel, kick off the coats, gloves, and galoshes, and slip into the bikini or thong and start your SOBE vacation. Email me if you need some help with arrangements: freunddrblanche@aol.com.

Blanche Freund, Ph.D., RN  
2003 Annual Meeting  
Local Arrangements Chair

## A NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT!

SSTAR members can now subscribe to the UK journal "Sexual and Relationship Therapy" for the reduced price of \$55 (US). When subscribing tell them that you are a member of SSTAR. Nothing else is necessary. The only stipulation on the part of the publisher (Taylor & Francis) is that the journal be for personal use and not be placed in a library or substitute for an institutional subscription. For information about the journal, you could check out their Web site at:

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14681994.html>

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Jacqui Tearle ([jacqueline.tearle@tandf.co.uk](mailto:jacqueline.tearle@tandf.co.uk)) works with Taylor & Francis society partners and I was told she would be happy to deal with inquiries from SSTAR members.

If you have any further questions, contact Bill Maurice (phone: 604 822-7220, or e-mail: [maurice@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:maurice@interchange.ubc.ca)).



## SSTAR MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SSTAR is pleased to welcome three new members to our ranks! At the September, 2002 meeting of the Executive Council, Drs. William Fisher and Sarah Karl were accepted as Full Members, and BatSheva Marcus, M.S. was accepted as an Associate Member.

**Dr. Fisher**, a psychologist, is Professor of Psychology at the University of Western Ontario. A prolific researcher, Dr. Fisher was an invited presenter at our Las Vegas meeting. He is also scheduled to present to the SSTAR membership at our upcoming Miami meeting in March, 2003.

**Dr. Karl**, also a psychologist, is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey—New Jersey Medical School. At UMDNJ, Dr. Karl is involved in the teaching of medical students. In addition, she maintains a private psychology practice in New Jersey.

**Ms. Marcus**, is a social worker. Currently, she serves as the managing director of the *Medical Center for Female Sexuality* in White Plains, NY.

Congratulations to our newest colleagues!

### Of note:

Prevention Magazine just published its new "Ultimate Guide to Women's Health and Wellness" (Rodale, 2002). You may be interested to know that the chapter on sexuality quotes four fellow SSTAR members, namely: Bonnie Saks, Marian Dunn, Yula Ponticas and Michael Plaut.

(Please inform me of your publications/events at [dr.ursula@ofman.us](mailto:dr.ursula@ofman.us))

## Acknowledgements!!!

SSTAR would like to acknowledge Past President, Dr. Michael Plaut for providing the marvelous photos from the 2002 Annual Meeting held in Las Vegas, Nevada that were published in the July 2002 issue of the newsletter.

Also Ms Clementine Gilbert, a 13-year old friend of Dr. Ofman, Newsletter Editor, provided the illustration for the article by Marie-Josée Lord on the proper position for bowel movements.

## Caroline F. Pukall, Ph.D.

Caroline has been a student member of SSTAR since 1998 and you may know her from her presentations at a number of our annual conferences. Born and raised in Montreal, she developed an early interest in cars, which she sustains to this day. Her professional career, however, was focused on psychology right from the start.



*Caroline F. Pukall, Ph.D.*

As an undergraduate she worked with Norman White on memory research with rats. While she was interested in neuro-psychology, she realized soon, that animal research was not for her. Irv Binik was a teacher of hers during her undergraduate years, and he has been a mentor and major influence on her ever since. As an alternative to animal research, she volunteered to work with clinical populations, and became a research assistant to Ken Mah doing orgasm research, and worked on Sophie Bergeron's VVS outcome study. She found the effectiveness of the treatment they were validating very compelling. It was enjoyable for her to see the direct impact her intervention

could have on patients in pain and distress. In fact, the experience resulted in her focusing her graduate work on this area as well.

Caroline will be defending her thesis in the summer of 2003. The proposed title is "Pain Measurement and Mechanisms in Vulvar Vestibulitis Syndrome and she is currently working at Montreal General Hospital's Pain Clinic, following her interest in expanding her work into other aspects of pain. While she loves research, she also wants to teach, and enjoys clinical work.

Her current interest in sexual pain focuses on women with vulvar vestibulitis syndrome; she has developed tools with which to measure sensitivity in the genital region of women who experience genital pain. She has also just completed a functional magnetic resonance imaging study to examine brain activation patterns in response to genital touch and pain in women with vulvar vestibulitis syndrome and matched controls, and is interested in further examining the role of emotional distress and its interaction with perceived pain.

In her private life she enjoys reading, working out, getting massages, and spending time with her long-term boyfriend Michael. However, she currently does not own a car.

