ISSI Mission
To further our understanding of sexual identity, its development and synthesis, and to be a resource to students in training and those in the community who are stakeholders in these discussions. We do this through research, training, and clinical services/consultations.

Meet the Team
Mark Yarhouse (Director)
Trista Carr (RA)
Jill Kays (TA)
Rob Kay (GA)
Katie Maslowe (RA)
Audrey Atkinson
Veronica Johnson
David Colpitts
Deborah Mangum
Heidi Jo Erickson
Ryan Cahoun
Mary Zahar
Heather Kemp

ISSI Web Site:
www.sexualidentityinstitute.org

Note from the Director

ISSI has grown considerably this year, with 12 students in the role of core team members (several of whom are in our team picture above). Team members attend monthly research meetings where we coordinate our research projects, workshops/professional presentations, and clinical consultations. Team members also attend monthly trainings so that they have a better understanding of key issues in the field.

The list of core team members does not include the many ISSI affiliates we have across the country, including graduates and professionals affiliated with other institutions who have in the past or are currently collaborating with us on various projects. One such affiliate is featured in this newsletter, Dr. Corné Bekker, and I hope you enjoy the opportunity to learn more about him.

Featured Resource


This quick and easy-to-read resource is written to young people who experience same-sex attraction. It offers a definition of sexual identity and an overview of findings on sexual attractions and orientation. It also covers what a teen might expect if they were to participate in counseling, as well as thoughts as to how sexual identity questions and concerns might be navigated. The section on special considerations for youth also covers how language shapes experience and identity, finding others to talk to about what they are going through, and competing metaphors for how to best explain sexual attractions.

Upcoming Events

Several team members will be presenting at the Christian Association for Psychological Studies East Regional Conference in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, November 7-9, 2008. Mark Yarhouse and Trista Carr will be presenting a paper on gender identity; Mark Yarhouse, Dusty Braun, Erica Tan, and Jill Kays will present a poster on sexual identity therapy; and Mark Yarhouse, Christine Gow, and Ward Davis will present the results from a five-year follow-up study of mixed orientation couples.

Mark Yarhouse, Erica Tan, and Trista Carr will conduct an advanced training on sexual identity with the Institute for Sexual Wholeness at the Psychological Studies, Atlanta, Georgia, November 14-16, 2008. The training is part of a Sex Therapy certification offered through ISW. To learn more about certification, visit: http://www.sexualwholeness.com/isw/index.htm

Register Now! Mark Yarhouse will be conducting a 3-hour workshop on Sexual Identity in Therapy at the Christian Association for Psychological Studies Conference in Orlando, Florida this spring. The workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 4th, from 2-5pm at the Wyndham Orlando Resort. This is an extensive training on the current theory and research on sexual identity development and synthesis. He will also discuss Sexual Identity Therapy as a practical and innovative paradigm for exploring sexual identity issues in counseling. Go to www.caps.net to register for the training.

Affiliate Spotlight – Dr. Cornelius J. Bekker

Dr. Bekker teaches in the doctoral programs of the School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship at Regent University and is actively involved in research on the use of biblical hermeneutics and spirituality to explore leadership.

Dr. Bekker has had an on-going discussion with Dr. Yarhouse on the quest of faith to train Christian Leaders that will go forth and change the world. Dr. Bekker is convinced that a clearer understanding of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures holds the promise of a resurgence of moral and values-based approaches to Christian Scholarship today. He notes that only when our practice of scholarship is utterly informed and fueled by the Word of God will we have the kind of Christian leadership that will change the world. So the idea of an advance series of seminars on exegesis as it relates to the field of humans sexuality research was developed.

Dr. Bekker is introducing some of the newer social-scientific approaches to studying Scripture that will allow the Sacred texts to inform the social-science research approach of the Institute. Dr. Bekker’s desire is to provide ISSI with theoretical and practical knowledge of first principles of social-scientific approaches in reading the Bible thus enabling them to construct the original meanings of the Biblical texts. Dr. Bekker is passionate about placing the Hebrew and Christian Scripture back in the hands of those who need it. Researchers in human sexuality will be able to let these sacred Scriptures once again “speak for themselves” and to allow the ordinary person interested in the field of human sexuality hear the “Divine whisper” of love and redemption.

Research Spotlight: Exemplar Project

This year ISSI conducted a study of church-based ministries that are exemplary in their work with sexual minorities. We contacted ministries across that country that had been nominated as exemplary. Those that chose to participate completed an online survey regarding their ministry, and some accepted an invitation to meet in person. The results are “in press” with the peer-reviewed journal Edification.