

Dr. Sari van Anders details some of the work some of her lab's grad students have been doing, and the various honours and successes that have come their way.

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The image contains four portrait photographs of graduate students. In the top-left, Dr. Sara Chadwick is shown against a brick wall. In the top-right, Dr. Zach Schudson is shown with glasses and a beard. In the bottom-left, Will Beischel is shown wearing glasses and a green shirt. In the bottom-right, Aki Gormezano is shown with a mustache and a plaid shirt. Each photo has a small black box with the student's name in white text at the bottom.

Graduate Student Successes in the van Anders Lab!

by Dr. Sari van Anders
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Last year or so, then-department head Dr. Wendy Craig invited me to write about the wonderful successes my grad students had been having (and, full disclosure, that I had been tweeting a lot about!). Since then, they've only had more. I'm delighted to detail some of the work some of my lab's grad students have been doing – about gender/sex, orgasms, pleasure, porn, sexuality, minoritization, and my sexual configurations theory – and the various honours and successes that have come their way. The work is what matters but it's nice to be liked! As I have often said, when you're doing feminist work, you can kind of just expect a kick in the pants so an award is really special. Congrats to now-**Dr. Sara Chadwick** and now-**Dr. Zach Schudson**, as well as grad students **Will Beischel** and **Aki Gormezano**, on doing transformative work and the well-deserved recognitions. I wish everyone who did amazing work could get such amazing honours. And, though Eunju Son is newer to our lab, I'm excited for the work she is doing and for it to reach the broader community soon too!

DR. ZACH SCHUDSON - Just-completed Grad Student Zach Schudson (at the University of Michigan), who successfully defended his dissertation this summer, started his new tenure-track job as an Assistant Professor of Psychology at California State University, Sacramento.

About his research, Zach explains “My research investigates contemporary variation in people’s beliefs about the nature of gender/sex (i.e., gender/sex diversity beliefs) and their significance for understanding prejudice against gender/sex minorities. Patterns in individuals’ endorsement of gender/sex diversity beliefs suggest that these beliefs group together based on whether they

affirm or deny the existence and validity of minority gender/sexes. I have also found that sexual configurations theory (van Anders, 2015; SCT) can function effectively as an intervention to improve cisgender people's attitudes toward gender/sex minorities and increase their affirming gender/sex diversity beliefs." In the past year or two Zach received:

- The American Psychological Association Dissertation Research Award in 2019. He received \$1,000 USD awarded to support his dissertation research on sexual configurations theory as an intervention to promote affirming beliefs about gender/sex diversity and positive attitudes toward gender/sex minorities.
- An honourable mention for the 2019 Feminism & Psychology Student Presentation Award at the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Conference for his presentation titled "Centering Queer Perspectives on Gender/Sex: Implications for Intergroup Attitudes".
- An (accepted!) invitation to join the Editorial Board at Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity.

DR. SARA CHADWICK - Just-completed Grad Student Sara Chadwick (at the University of Michigan), just successfully defended her dissertation this fall, and has started her post doc at the University of Central Florida.

Sara's research focused on sexual coercion, gender, and orgasm. She explains, "Limited research has explored sexual encounters where the lines between consent, sexual pressure, and coercion are blurred. My research explores orgasm as an exemplary site for these 'gray-area' sexual encounters by assessing how consensual sex that includes orgasm can be characterized by sexual pressure/coercion. Accordingly, my research seeks to assess how individuals experience problematic sexual pressure during encounters traditionally defined as 'good sex' (i.e., orgasm is present), explore how pressuring someone to orgasm might be a coercive behavior, and to provide empirical evidence that ambiguously coercive experiences during consensual sex can have negative consequences. I also assess how gender and sexual (LGBTQ) identities contextualize individuals' sexual experiences, with the goal of developing more nuanced frameworks for understanding sexual coercion behaviors and sexuality more broadly." In the past year or two alone, Sara received:

- The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Post-Doctoral Trainee Fellowship
- The Gilead/Canadian HIV Trials Network Post-Doctoral Fellow Award from CIHR
- The 2019 Student Research Development Award from the International Academy of Sex Research for her work "*Orgasm Coercion: Overlaps Between Pressuring Someone to Orgasm and Sexual Coercion*"
- The University of Michigan's Lipschutz, Ayers-Host, and Olcott-Smith Award, which gives \$8,000 USD to women scholars who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly achievement, a sense of social responsibility, and an interest in the success of women in the academic community.
- The University of Michigan's Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship, one of the most competitive awards granted by the university's graduate school for research that is unusually creative, ambitious, and impactful.

- The University of Michigan's 2019 Nan Donald Award, which recognizes interdisciplinary research in Sociology and Psychology.
- The Society for Personality and Social Psychology's 2020 Graduate Travel Award to help students attend its annual convention.
- The University of Michigan's 2019 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, the top teaching award granted by the Rackham Graduate School for demonstrating extraordinary commitment, creativity, and skill in the classroom and is awarded annually to less than 1% of GSIs.
- Invitations (accepted!) to join the editorial boards of *Journal of Sex Research and Archives of Sexual Behavior*

PhD STUDENT WILL BEISCHEL - Will Beischel (at the University of Michigan) is midway through their dissertation and will be Dr. van Anders' last Michigan student.

About these accomplishments and their work, Will explains, "These awards were for my research on gender/sex diversity, wherein I administered diagrams from sexual configurations theory to over 200 individuals with diverse gender/sex identities. Results indicated that a) the diagrams were used in ways consistent with self-identified gender/sex and b) a level of nuance was captured that otherwise would have remained invisible. These findings indicate that drawing on SCT diagrams proves a promising way to allow people of all identities to describe themselves in ways that have not yet been explored in psychological research, with numerous potential uses in scientific research, clinical settings, and for individual self-understanding." In the past year or two, they received:

- The 2019 Feminism & Psychology Student Presentation Award at the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Conference for their presentation titled "Queer Challenges to Normative Gender/Sex Categories via Sexual Configurations Theory". This award recognized the best student presentation
- The Society for Personality and Social Psychology's 2019 Graduate Travel Award to help students attend its annual convention.
- The 2019 Pat Gurin Distinguished Lecture Award from the University of Michigan to give a talk entitled "Gender/Sex Configurations via Sexual Configurations Theory: A Novel Survey Method for Assessing Diverse Gender/Sexes".
- Honorable Mention for the 2020 Psychology Student Diversity Service Award at the University of Michigan, which annually recognizes one or more graduate students for their engagement in outstanding service activities that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

PhD STUDENT AKI GORMEZANO - Aki Gormezano is midway through his dissertation, having moved with Dr. van Anders to Queen's after completing his Master's at the University of Michigan.

About his project, Aki explains, "Porn use, especially among straight cisgender men, is often assumed to be homogenous (i.e., they all respond to porn in the same way). Our findings suggest that, on the contrary, straight cisgender men's responses vary with respect to nurturance and eroticism, as well as other affective dimensions such as guilt and disgust. Further, these different

responses have implications for whether men feel as though they are participating or just observing when they watch POV porn.” Aki elaborates that “showing that sexuality among straight cisgender men is heterogeneous is important because it counters the perception that their sexuality is uniform; doing so challenges their status as a ‘typical’ or essentialized norm.” In the last year or two, Aki received:

- The Best Poster award from the Canadian Sex Research Forum annual conference in 2020.
- The Society for Personality and Social Psychology’s 2019 Graduate Travel Award to help students attend its annual convention.
- The best poster runner-up Award from the Canadian Sex Research Forum in 2019.