HANDBOOK FOR
Human Sexuality COUNSELING
A Sex Positive Approach

edited by
Angela M. Schubert
Mark Pope

American Counseling Association
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Dedication

Thank you to my mama, friends, and dear mentors for all your support. And a very special thank you to my wildlings and loovies for teaching me the greatest lesson of all—to love with courage and an open heart.

—Angela M. Schubert
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Preface

To set the tone of this book, we wish to share a clinical vignette to demonstrate the power of a sex positive approach. To do so, coauthor and coeditor Dr. Angela Schubert asked permission from her client to share his personal perspective of what brought him to counseling and the poem that was birthed from the ashes of his personal sexual script—one that was informed by religion, disability, identity loss, and the internal conflict that occurred as each of those aspects challenged the very essence of his sexual being. We give you Henry, in his own words.

Henry’s Voice

One of the main reasons I finally went to therapy was because I felt I had no identity. I was no longer in high school, no longer defined by school pride or religion, or by the characters I had been inhabiting during high school as a means of survival. I felt like a gray blob: unnamed, uncharacterized, unworthy. I hoped I had identities in me; I certainly had questions about what identities I could claim and what claiming an identity meant. I started with what felt most pressing and uncomfortable: disability. I live with epidermolysis bullosa, a genetic skin condition that causes my skin to be as fragile as a butterfly’s wings. I have always lived as a disabled person, but only through therapy was I able to comfortably claim and identify as disabled.

This poem tackles the intersectionality of disability and sex. It tells my story of how I grappled with sex as a disabled person raised in a Catholic school system that taught purity culture and denied the questions I had about my own human desire. A denial that ultimately pushed me to pornography as an alternative sex educator. Pornography is, of course, a shit teacher and only heightened my anxieties and worries that manifested over the years. Therapy has been tremendously helpful because it provides the space and safety to explore, unlearn, and craft identities. Self-love has been one of the constant areas of exploration for me to unlearn self-hatred, to challenge incorrect ideas, and, most importantly, to grow and craft and claim the identities I want to live.
My One Regret

Henry DeAngelis

I audibly choked
Swallowing the hopeless taste
Of purity culture.
“No, I don’t have any questions.”

My one regret.
My one moment I cannot forget.
The beginning of my emotional debt.

Fuck purity culture.
Fuck it until it restores to me
What should have always been mine:
A curious exploration of my body.
My sexuality.
My sexiness.
Oh yes.
Fuck purity culture.
Fuck it until it lets me ask those questions again.
Fuck it until it has a better answer than “you shouldn’t be thinking about it.”
(nasally)

Purity culture pushed me away.
Purity culture threatened to
Tell my parents
All my embarrassing questions
Threatened to shame me for wondering how sex worked with disability.
Shame me for wondering how I could be loved, when I was taught not to love myself;

Wondering how I could be desired,
when I was taught disabled people were
Undesirables.

Wondering how my crip hands could unclasp a button or bra.

How my tied tongue could french kiss,
How my coarse hands could soothe,
And stumpy fingers pleasure,
And fragile skin be touched.

Or even how to open the heavy door at the restaurant
Or have my date be seen as my date and not my nurse
Or have my date not pity me
And people not call my date a hero for going out with me
These are the questions purity culture pushed down my throat
to the very bottom of my stomach
From there it jumped up to my mind
And scolded me for wondering about my own human desire
And before it left
It whispered one final thing into my ear
Shame.

Shame for thinking about sex.
Shame for thinking about one day having children.
Shame for not being the asexual person purity culture believes I should be.

And with that purity’s damage was wrought
And it left me content with its knowledge
That I would forever shame myself
For my own human desire.

My one regret.
My one moment I can’t forget.
The beginning of my emotional debt.

As in that moment,
Purity.
Pushed.
Me. To.
Pornography.

Angela Schubert’s Voice

Henry was fearless in his pursuit to find his own truth and narrate his own story. His story and reliance on sexually explicit material, also known as pornography, for sex education is not unique to Henry. Considering the utter void of comprehensive sex education across all social fronts, it is no wonder sexually explicit materials have become the sex educator for all who are interested. This is not to say that sexually
explicit material is to blame for existing and thriving as the default sex educator, but rather that the finger is pointed at the gap that allows sexually explicit material to be the default educator in people’s lives.

Henry chose counseling as a means to explore his own path as a sexual being with desires and needs, to challenge his own assumptions and biases, and to redefine his own sexual script. Henry took the path toward awareness, acceptance, and self-love, and I humbly held the lantern to shine a light on the path. My foundation as a counselor educator and sex therapist is rooted in the firm belief that everyone is deserving of their sexual story, and everyone is capable of narrating their own sexual script. Throughout this book, you will find the term “sexual script” repeated. A sexual script is the result of embedded cultural beliefs, social messaging, biology, personal experiences, and any formal/informal education about sexuality a person has received over their lifetime.

In the counseling session, counselors are gifted the opportunity to support a person as they come into their awareness of themselves and, sometimes, awareness of their sexual script. As mental health professionals, we are absolutely capable of facilitating therapeutic conversations to help clients better understand how their upbringing and personal experiences have crafted a view of their sexual selves. We are in the perfect place to illuminate the path as they begin to explore their sexuality, their sexual essence, and as a result, honor the parts of sexuality they wish to keep and release the parts that no longer work for them.

This book is an attempt to help mental health professionals and budding mental health students understand how to approach specific issues with clients yearning to explore their sexual story—without judgment and full of radical acceptance.

**Why We Created This Book**

Human sexuality counseling is an area rarely addressed directly in either the human sexuality literature or the professional counseling literature. Human sexuality textbooks generally consist of the fundamentals of sexuality, specifically the physiological aspects. The 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Standards now address the need for educating counseling students about human sexuality counseling, specifically in clinical rehabilitation counseling (CACREP, 2016, Section 5, Standard D.2.m.); marriage, couple, and family counseling (Section 5, Standard F.2.e.); and rehabilitation counseling (Section 5, Standard H.2.h.).

Furthermore, there is a belief by some that “information is enough.” According to this approach, all that needs to be covered in sex education classes in secondary schools are basic and introductory facts and data. That approach may then carry over through a counseling student’s undergraduate coursework too. By the time that the counseling student reaches graduate school, they too may have integrated into their own belief system that information is enough. Researchers have found, however, time and time again that training in sexuality-related pathology is too limited and that information alone is not enough in terms of which topics are addressed in counseling related to sexuality (Blount et al., 2017). It is, therefore, ethically imperative for counselor education curriculum to include an affirmative and expansive training in known pathologies wherein sexual arousal is attributed directly to typical and atypical (or nonmajority/nonrepronormative/nonheteronormative)
fantasies, behaviors, or partners that cause danger, distress, or dysfunction (Blount et al., 2017).

Understanding and comprehensive application of effective treatment approaches associated with sexuality is absolutely necessary for the wellness of the counseling clients. Many people with sexuality-related concerns that are discovered in a medical setting are often referred to a mental health professional in conjunction with pharmacological interventions. For example, the American Urological Association (Burnett et al., 2018) guidelines for treating erectile difficulties recommend that urologists connect patients with a mental health professional to enhance communication about sexual concerns and to reduce performance anxiety. Furthermore, practicing urologists see an average of 70 patients per week, or 3,360 patients per year, and the types of cases they serve also include erectile dysfunction, pelvic floor, urinary tract concerns, penile rehabilitation following prostate cancer, reproduction, ejaculatory dysfunction, hypogonadism, penile implants, and sexually transmitted diseases—to name a few. Specifically, Burnett et al. (2018) explained that “psychotherapy and psychosexual counseling focus on helping patients and their partners improve communication about sexual concerns, reduce anxiety related to entering a sexual situation and during a sexual situation, and discuss strategies for integrating ED [erectile dysfunction] treatments into their sexual relationship” (p. 14).

Furthermore, physiological sexual dysfunctions in women are predominantly treated by pelvic floor therapists. Pelvic floor therapists are physiotherapists and occupational therapists who specialize in pelvic health. Berghmans (2018) identified a psychosomatic element in cases of female sexual dysfunction that cannot be treated with pelvic floor therapy alone. Instead, Berghmans advocated for a biopsychosocial approach that includes mental health treatment in conjunction with physiotherapy. Counselors need to be prepared to have these conversations with clients struggling with physiological disturbances in their sexuality and sexual expression to enhance the client’s quality of life.

The *Handbook for Human Sexuality Counseling: A Sex Positive Approach* is a straightforward, honest, and positive book on human sexuality counseling. This book consists of much more than the fundamentals of sexuality and gender. It is a book that steers away from the older views of human sexuality and that eschews pathology and “othering” approaches that pathologize and discriminate against sexual behaviors and expressions that are not heteronormative, reprenormative, or cisnormative. Sexuality is part of the human experience; however, it is often disregarded in both counselor training and the actual process of counseling (Reissing & Giulio, 2010). Ultimately, students and counseling professionals alike are left with resources that address the basic concepts of sexuality and gender many times from a narrow cisgender, heteronormative, and pathological framework. The foundation of each of the mental health professions’ codes of ethics is a nonjudgmental approach to issues of counseling. A sex positive approach to sexuality in counseling is a perfect integration of these issues as it challenges pathology and emphasizes nonjudgmental openness, sexual freedom, and liberation of sexual expression (Donaghue, 2015).

This book will be useful for both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as counselors and other mental health professionals. It is designed for those whose work will bring them into contact with clients of all types of sexual backgrounds and experiences. Most books try to broadly cover sexuality and gender-related topics in hopes to be generalizable, but the material is foundational at best. In this book, we selected
expert authors to write on a variety of diverse topics related to sexuality. Our aim was to be both fun and sex positive in the book’s approach to human sexuality.

As counselor educators with a combined 40 years of experience training counselors, we find that counseling students still complain of a lack of training in working with clients regarding sex. Many graduate programs provide only a cursory treatment of human sexuality counseling as part of their multicultural counseling course or as a small part of their foundational counseling courses, with school counselors especially noting a lack of knowledge and skills in this particular area. We believe that this book is a critical resource in bridging that gap in the training of counselors and other mental health professionals.

**Sex Positive Counseling**

The task of sex positive human sexuality counseling is to view all people and their sexuality as central and self-defining, rather than as marginal and defined by cisgender and heterosexual norms (Morrow, 2000). Sex positive human sexuality counseling is geared to the creative enhancement of an individual’s sexual and cultural identities. To be effective in their work, counselors must understand their own sexual orientation; have an appreciation for gender diversity; and understand their own sexuality, sexual beliefs, and values.

The bottom line is that clinicians of any theoretical framework can practice sex positive counseling, as long as they have examined their own heterosexism, homonegativity, or bi-negativity and the oppressive messages around transgenderism and clients who are questioning (Ritter & Terndrup, 2002). Therefore, it is our perspective that experience and expertise are more important than the counselor’s sexual orientation when practicing affirming human sexuality counseling with clients.

In the core traditions of the counseling profession, this book includes a strengths-based, developmentally appropriate, psychoeducational, and sex positive approach to human sexuality counseling. This approach permeates each chapter.

As Phillips (2000) stated, “Students with little experience are especially appreciative if they are given examples of what . . . therapists tend to do and say and what they tend not to do and say” (p. 349). Since training in this area is limited, it is not only students who are hungering for concrete examples of human sexuality counseling. Counseling professionals who are many times already licensed and practicing are also eager to understand what they should be doing and what they should be considering when working with clients addressing issues of their sexuality (Dworkin & Pope, 2012). In addition, both students and professionals need a constant reminder about how important it is to get in touch with and stay in touch with biases, stereotypes, and the negative messages from religion, society, and even parents.

Rather than simply reviewing the literature about therapy with a given population, each chapter in this book integrates current research and clinical practice by providing examples of evidence-based, sex positive, and practical treatment planning and implementation. Each individual chapter author, or group of authors, addresses their topic with a modern, empowering approach and provides a specific protocol to follow in the treatment of clients.

Written from a multidisciplinary perspective, this book uses expert narratives to address treatment approaches for the sexual issues that many individuals and couples are facing today. The chapter authors provide examples of inclusive and affirming
language to use in counseling, as well as describing the attitudes and behaviors counselors should exhibit when addressing clients’ sexuality. Many of the authors have included a case example illustrating a sex positive approach to working with a fictional client. Some provide answers to questions readers may have “always wanted to ask” about their topic, and some take a personal stance, offering their personal and professional perspectives.

Chapter Highlights

The chapters in this book are organized into eight sections providing a comprehensive view of the human sexual experience:

- Foundations
- Physiological and psychological
- Attraction, orientation, and gender
- Sexual wellness
- Sexual agency
- Approaches to sexual divergence
- Relationships
- Education

Part 1: Foundations

Chapter 1 expands on current issues in mental health, explains the distinction between a sexual wellness and a medical framework, and provides a radically informed sex positive approach to sexual issues.

Chapter 2 provides an intersectional perspective on the history of sex, including cultural taboos around the world, contributions of religion to sexuality, and cultural differences in sexual norms. This chapter also addresses the politics of sex, including issues of sexual rights, reproductive rights, and the medicalization of sex.

Chapter 3 expands on the intersecting realities that exist in relation to ethical practices, decision-making, and sexual concerns. This chapter addresses common ethical and professional pitfalls specific to sexuality, including the professional obligation to identify personal biases, assumptions, and belief systems regarding sexuality and sexual concerns, as well as the need to ensure competency for any given sexuality topic and the process of referring to a sex therapist or other professional in cases where the sexual concern is beyond the competency of the counselor. This chapter provides an informative matrix, the knowledge-based decision-making matrix, to evaluate clinical competency.

Part 2: Physiological and Psychological

Chapter 4 provides readers with medical information associated with the reproductive systems of the human body as well as the physiology of sex in human beings, including the role of hormones and how human anatomy affects sexual expression. This chapter also describes the ways that a person’s physical body interacts with their psyche to promote or inhibit sexual health and response to therapeutic psychological interventions.

Chapter 5 examines the role of the brain during arousal and desire and in human beings. The chapter further elaborates on research that has used advanced brain imaging, such as functional MRI and positron-emission tomography (i.e., PET) scans, during
sexual activity. The chapter uses illustrations to elaborate on sexual functioning, sexual response, and arousal in hopes to provide education on how clinicians may better understand how to overcome barriers to sexual wellness.

Chapter 6 explores the perception and act of orgasm through an intersectional lens. It also addresses misconceptions, myths, and prescriptions around orgasm and how they influence a person’s perception of themselves as a sexual being. This chapter also examines techniques and strategies to clinically treat and support the orgasm explorations of clients from a therapeutic standpoint.

Chapter 7 explores the messages humans receive and communicate about sex and sexuality and addresses how these messages (implicit and explicit) affect the perception of oneself as a sexual being, such as with internalized anxiety around performance, faking interest and climax, and comparing one’s performance to sexual behavior that is depicted in commercial pornography.

**Part 3: Attraction, Orientation, and Gender**

Chapter 8 addresses the multidimensional role of sexual attraction in human sexual expression and how expression may change over time. Addressing the role of sexual attraction from a multiculturally responsive perspective, the chapter debunks myths related to sexual attraction and highlights the nuances of attraction and affectional identities.

Chapter 9 explores the sexuality orientation spectrum, including sexual and romantic attraction, straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, and asexual. This chapter also addresses constructs of sexual attraction that fall outside of these labels, such as men who have sex with men.

Chapter 10 reviews the spectrum of gender identity and gender expression. Topics include cisgender and transgender, sex role stereotyping, intersex, agender; masculinity and femininity explored; derailing the binary, trans people of color, hijra; two-spirited; eunuch; and more.

**Part 4: Sexual Wellness**

Chapter 11 reviews historical and current literature on the health benefits of masturbation and helps to familiarize counselors on how to support and empower clients to begin to see themselves as the protagonist of their sexual story. Myths surrounding masturbation are critiqued and factual explanations are provided. A sex positive approach is described to assist clinicians with this conversation with future clients.

Chapter 12 addresses information on how counselors can assist survivors of sexual harassment, assault, trauma, and trafficking. Of those who have experienced sexual trauma of any sort, many become disconnected from their sexual selves and, as a result, the very personal definitions of sexuality, sexual safety, and sexual script. The chapter also explores the consequences for victims of sexual abuse or exploitation and how this may affect their later sexual health or functioning.

Chapter 13 addresses the physical and psychological impact of chronic illness and pain on sexual attitudes and desire. This chapter also helps counselors understand the reality and possibility of sexual expression after diagnoses.

Chapter 14 describes the most common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how mental health professionals can approach clinical work with individuals with HIV and other STIs.
Part 5: Sexual Agency

Chapter 15 explores aging sexuality from a sex positive framework by first addressing the barriers and myths surrounding older adult sexuality. This chapter expands on how adults change and adapt to their bodies and sexual functioning, and how vitality and resiliency support sexual needs and expression.

Chapter 16 provides readers with the opportunity to experience a “person first” approach to disability and sexuality. Counselors will learn how to support clients to embrace both their sexuality and their disability. This chapter also introduces sex surrogatey and describes potential mental health and physical benefits of receiving sex surrogatey treatment.

Chapter 17 takes a unique approach to exploring the narrative of Black sexuality and sexual expression. Through their individual narratives, the authors reveal the ways in which Black bodies have been sexualized, objectified, and vilified. This chapter will help counselors explore their own implicit and explicit biases surrounding the intersection of race/ethnicity and sexuality as well as the role that the constructs of race and ethnicity play in attraction and desire.

Chapter 18 provides a comprehensive review of sexuality as it pertains to the most common religious groups. The chapter will explore the role of religion in sexuality and the taboos associated with certain religions. This chapter will help counselors better understand how to support sexual discussion within the confines of one’s religious values.

Part 6: Approaches to Sexual Divergence

Chapter 19 will explore alternative sexual activities such as kink, swinging, BDSM, fetishes, and consensual objectification. This chapter helps readers become acquainted with the current literature on sexual behaviors and activities that are focused on multiple definitions of pleasure and are not necessarily reproduction centered. Counselors will be confronted with many different aspects of sexual behavior in their counseling practice, and through exposure to such topics, this chapter seeks to increase comfort with addressing these topics.

Chapter 20 takes a sex positive approach to sexual divergence in relation to the paraphilic section of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Text Revision (5th ed.; DSM-5-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2022). The authors challenge the criteria of each of the paraphilic diagnoses and offer a sex positive approach to treatment by addressing the presence and severity of distress, dysfunction, and/or danger.

Chapter 21 explores the neuroscience of pleasure and healthy sexual behavior. This chapter challenges the medicalized framework used to approach frequent sexual proclivities and potentially troublesome sexual behaviors and offers a sex positive approach to treat hypersexual behaviors. This chapter will help counselors understand and treat clients who struggle with problematic sexual behavior.

Part 7: Relationships

Chapter 22 addresses modern love, dating, and hookup culture. Additionally, values are explored in terms of how people understand and engage in cyber dating, hooking up, and gamers and cyber love. Counselors will be better prepared to evaluate their own values on love, sex, and intimacy after reading this chapter.

Chapter 23 addresses how infidelity impacts relationships and how counselors can best help couples heal after infidelity. This chapter will define infidelity and provide current literature on how infidelity impacts emotional well-being and the relational dynamic of
both the individual and couple. The chapter also provides a step-by-step approach to helping the couple process the infidelity and move toward a place of compassion and healing.

Part 8: Education

Chapter 24 examines current laws and policies regarding K–12 sexual education in the United States and other countries. This chapter reviews the research results of both comprehensive sex education and abstinence-only sex education with respect to teen pregnancy, reported abstinence, and sexual engagement. The chapter also identifies implications of comprehensive sex education on decreasing rape and sexual assault, increasing sex positivity and body image, decreasing mental health concerns, and normalizing healthy sexual behavior. These implications are examined in terms of how they may surface in the counseling session.

Chapter 25 provides a rationale for sex education and counselor training across all states and all programs. This chapter addresses clinician ethical responsibilities and examines the current literature on counselors’ and counselor educators’ perceived comfort when addressing sexuality in both the counseling session and the counseling classroom. The chapter also addresses how specific sexuality counseling training will enhance comfort level and competency among counselors, increase clinical efficacy, and further enhance the professional role of the counselor in professional interactions with other mental health fields.

References


About the Editors

**Angela M. Schubert, PhD, LPC, NCC, BC-TMH**, is a clinical practitioner and associate professor for the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)-accredited clinical mental health counseling program at Central Methodist University. A member of the American Counseling Association (ACA), Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), Sexuality and Aging Consortium, American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT), and the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, Schubert served for 6 years as Missouri state chair for AASECT. She currently serves on the editorial board for the *Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness*. Dr. Schubert is the past president of the Association of Counseling Sexology and Sexual Wellness (ACSSW) and cohost of the *Let’s Get Uncomfortable* podcast. Her research interest focuses on intersectionality of culture, gender, age, and sexuality through a relational-cultural theoretical lens. She has continued to act as expert consultant on sexuality-related topics such as sexual wellness, aging sexuality, sexual consent, sexual assault, and body image. She is currently undergoing supervision to become an AASECT-certified sex therapist.

**Mark Pope, EdD, NCC, CCC, MAC, ACS**, is Curators’ Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Thomas Jefferson Fellow in the CACREP-accredited counseling and family therapy programs at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. He is the author/editor of 11 books, more than 100 other professional publications, as well as more than 150 keynote addresses, research symposia, and workshops at international, national, regional, and state venues from 1978 to 2021. From Dr. Pope’s first publication in 1990 on the sexual behavior and attitudes of midlife and aging gay men to his most recent article on the trials that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender international students face as they study in the United States, his work has been groundbreaking in the counseling literature. Through his scholarly work and leadership, he has been instrumental in bringing to the forefront of the counseling profession broadly and the career counseling field in
particular the special issues that lesbian and gay individuals face in American society. Dr. Pope has served as president of ACA; the National Career Development Association; the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling; and the Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity (Division 44 of the American Psychological Association). He was also editor of *The Career Development Quarterly*, the preeminent professional journal in career counseling and development, and senior associate editor of the *Journal of Counseling & Development* (the flagship journal of ACA) and the *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity* (the primary journal of the Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, Division 44 of the American Psychological Association).
About the Contributors

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Ethan L. Bratt, MS, LMFT, CST, (he/his) is a licensed marriage and family therapist and certified sex therapist. Having treated clients since 2007, in 2012 Bratt established Pivotal Counseling, a group practice specializing in relationship and sexual health issues that serves clients throughout Colorado and southeast Wyoming. He also works with many individuals and couples struggling to reconcile their religiosity and sexuality or seeking to reclaim and heal their sexuality after damaging religious experiences.

Roseina Britton, PhD, is originally from Queens, New York, and has a master’s degree in clinical mental health from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. She earned her PhD in counselor education and supervision from the University of Iowa in 2019. As a licensed professional counselor in Illinois, Dr. Britton specializes in researching, educating, and alleviating the stigma and related hardships associated with contracting and living with HIV/AIDS in the United States.

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Anastasia Canfield, MA, MT-BC, LPCC, NCC, specializes in music therapy with mental health populations across the life span, as well as children and young adults with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and autism spectrum disorders. Canfield recently completed her clinical training at Brightside Counseling as an intern under Dr. Angela Schubert, while she pursued a second master’s degree in mental health counseling from Northwestern University, earning dual licensure as a licensed professional counselor and a board-certified music therapist.

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Michael P. Chaney, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, and a licensed professional counselor and approved clinical supervisor. He has held several leadership positions, including president of the Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gen-
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Reginald W. Holt, PhD, NCC, MAC, LPC, is assistant professor and clinical program coordinator in the Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy at Central Connecticut State University. He completed a PhD in counseling/counselor education at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, an MA in clinical psychology at East Tennessee State University, and a 2-year postgraduate training program in advanced psychodynamic psychotherapy at the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute. Dr. Holt is recognized by the Connecticut Certification Board as an advanced alcohol and drug counselor and by the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium as an internationally certified advanced alcohol and drug counselor. In addition to operating his own private practice, he has had an extensive clinical career that included work in behavioral health care hospitals, the correctional system, and a Fortune 500 managed care organization.

Kim Lee Hughes, PhD, served as the 2020–2021 president for the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development, a division of ACA. She served as a tenure-track assistant professor in the Department of Mental Health Counseling at Clark Atlanta University and The University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Lee Hughes’s research centers on the expansion of social justice and cultural responsibility within counseling and related professions, women of color across the life span, the impact and efficacy of group practices based on positionality, women in leadership, collaboration in counselor education, queer communities and social mobility, and best practices in qualitative methodology in counselor education.

J. Richelle Joe, PhD, NCC, is an associate professor in the Department of Counselor Education and School Psychology at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Her scholarship and service focus on culturally responsive services for underserved and marginalized clients and communities and includes an emphasis on the experiences of individuals of color and the mental health and wellness implications of HIV for individuals and families. Dr. Joe has written extensively about HIV, with publications that address the ethics of counseling clients living with HIV, the importance of using stigma-free language in counseling, and the value of relationally and culturally informed therapeutic approaches for women affected by HIV and intimate partner violence. At UCF, she leads the HIV Education, Awareness, and Research Team, known as HEART, which collaborates with university and community organizations in their efforts to provide HIV education and prevention programming.

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Virginia Ogletree, PsyD, graduated from Wright State University School of Professional Psychology in 2019 after many educational, vocational, and personal detours, then finally finding her calling in a community college classroom during an introductory psychology class. As a survivor of childhood maltreatment, her professional interests are focused on the stress and growth that result from trauma. As a person who experiences both privilege and oppression, she aligns with the oppressed peoples of the world in seeking and working toward liberation.

Karen O’Hearn, MEd, LSC, (she/her) is a retired high school teacher and counselor in St. Louis and retired associate professor of counseling at the University of Missouri–St. Louis and Saint Louis University. Her counseling coursework and research focus is career development and adolescent sexual health and wellness. Since retirement, she promotes comprehensive sexuality education by speaking at school district and community resource board meetings in St. Charles, Missouri.

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Jessica Z. Taylor, PhD, LPC, NCC, BC-TMH, is an associate professor and director of assessment for the CACREP-accredited master’s-level clinical counseling program at Central Methodist University. Dr. Taylor obtained a PhD in counselor education and certificate in university teaching from the University of Missouri–St. Louis and an MS in nonprofit management from Johnson & Wales University. A board-certified telemental health provider, she is a member of ACA and ACES. Her professional counseling-related specializations and research interests include psychosocial aspects of medical illness and disability, allergies and anaphylaxis, crisis intervention, emotional regulation, DBT, EMDR, counselor education pedagogy, trauma-informed teaching, college counseling, research self-efficacy, and program assessment and evaluation.

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Ilene Wong, MD, FACS, is a general urologist and award-winning novelist in the greater Philadelphia area. Her essays and features have appeared in The Washington Post, San Francisco Chronicle, Newsweek, Scientific American, New York Daily News, San Jose Mercury News, and Journal of General Internal Medicine. A graduate of Yale Medical School, she has lectured on intersex awareness at medical schools across the country and is a board member at interACT Advocates: Advocates for Intersex Youth.

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