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Letter from the Editors

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Letter from the Editors

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This issue is the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education (JCSSW)*, the official journal of the Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness. We are very excited about this new resource in the counseling field that is dedicated to advancing the research related to human sexuality and sexual wellness, especially as it concerns the work of counselors and other helping professionals. This letter from the editors is designed to welcome readers to the journal, share a bit of the history of the journal, and to thank the many people and organizations that made JCSSW happen.

Welcome

Thank you, reader, for opening the pages of the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education (JCSSW)*. JCSSW focuses on all domains of sexuality and counseling sexology including sexual identity, pleasure, gender issues, sexual health, theories of sexology, and sexual exploitation issues relevant to counselors, counseling educators, and counseling supervisors. It is the first and only peer-reviewed journal with this goal and for this audience.

JCSSW, as the official journal of the [Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness](#), defines "sexuality" broadly. We endorse the World Health Organization (2006, p. 5) definition of "sexuality" as:

a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.

As a result, JCSSW acknowledges that sexuality intersects with a vast array of life domains and publishes articles framed within any of them. We use the Circles of Sexuality model (Corinna, 2011; Dailey, 1987) to operationalize how we consider whether content is related to sexuality. The Circles of Sexuality are: (a) intimacy, (b) sensuality, (d) sexual health, (e) sexual identity, and (f) sexual behavior and practices. We also consider whether the content is related to sexual rights, as defined by the World Association for Sexual

Health in their "Declaration of Sexual Rights" (2014). You will see these priorities highlighted in our Aims and Scope:

The *Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education* is a national peer-reviewed journal seeking to promote sexual wellness in the clients and communities counselors serve through a positive approach to sexuality and sexual rights. The journal publishes empirical research using rigorous quantitative and qualitative methods, best practices, descriptive and critical theory analyses, case studies, and current trends and issues focused on sexual wellness at all stages of life. Manuscripts should be of interest to professional counselors including clinical mental health, school, rehabilitation, and addictions counselors as well as to other helping professionals who work in a variety of mental and sexual health settings.

JCSSW is dedicated to publishing high-quality, medically accurate, sex positive, and non-stigmatizing sexuality-related content for counselors and other helping professionals. All submission to JCSSW undergo double-blind peer-review by at least two members of our [Editorial Board](#), a talented and diverse group of professionals from across disciplines and specialties.

We thank you, the reader, for being a part of the expanding understanding of sexuality as part of the human experience and of overall wellness. We hope that you find the articles published in JCSSW helpful to you in your practice, research, teaching, and mentoring.

History of JCSSW

The study of sex and sexual wellness has an interesting and colorful past. Many are aware of the works of Magnus Hirschfield, affectionately known as the "Einstein of Sex," or

the detailed research of William Masters and Virginia Johnson, culminating in a stage model of sexual arousal. These pioneers of sexuality research advanced our knowledge, but they were also met with hostility and controversy. The latter team went on to perform Conversion Therapy, now almost universally considered detrimental to the mental health of those who endure it. Perhaps such incidents have served as implicit barriers to the research, or perhaps there is yet stigma within the academic community about the import and appropriateness of such work. Until recently, the counseling field has largely been devoid of research related to sex and sexual wellness, though we often acknowledge we must be prepared to address such content in our work.

In an effort to address this identified need, Dr. Wynn Dupkoski formed the Sexual Wellness in Counseling (SWIC) interest network in 2013 (Rudow, 2013). As membership and interest grew, several counselors attending the 2017 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision annual conference recognized the opportunity to expand the conversation about sexual health and wellness within the counseling field, particularly as it relates to counselor education and training. Over the course of just a year, these counselors, and many members of SWIC, formed the Association of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness (ACSSW). ACSSW's mission is to:

promote sexuality as a central aspect of being human that includes the intersection of interpersonal and intrapersonal influences on sexual expression and identities inclusive of age, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender and gender expression, physical and mental health and abilities, and socioeconomic status.

Among many of the efforts to achieve this mission, ACSSW leadership ventured to create the first journal specifically dedicated to sexuality-related issues in counseling. As a result of their vision and dedication, we are now able to publish the first issue of *The Journal of Counseling Sexology & Sexual Wellness: Research, Practice, and Education*. We could not be more honored to have worked with and received the support of the ACSSW leadership, led by Dr. Angela Schubert, President of ACSSW. As the editors of ACSSW's official journal, we acknowledge and appreciate the tremendous faith they have placed in us to steward the journal during its establishment and launch. We look forward to publishing many more issues of *JCSSW* and to continue being a part of the wonderful work being done by ACSSW.

Thank You

The *JCSSW* would not be possible without the generous contributions from our supporters including The UNF LGBT Resource Center, The UNF Writing Center, Melinda Rojas, and The UNF Thomas G. Carpenter Library. We thank you

for being an integral part of the launch of this important journal and resource.

We would also like to thank our talented and supportive inaugural Editorial Board; all of their efforts will help us to inform the counseling profession of how to best serve our clients. Our Editorial Board is comprised of a diverse group of experts from across disciplines, specialties, and careers. Without their assistance and courage in light of the potential stigma surrounding sexuality research, we would not have been able to successfully launch this journal. Thank you for the keen eyes, thoughtful feedback, and experienced wisdom.

Finally, we want to thank the authors who contributed their work to our inaugural issue. We know that, in today's academic climate, there is considerable pressure to publish in certain journals. Submitting your important work to a new journal shows tremendous passion and dedication to the field of counseling sexology, and highlights the need for exactly this type of quality outlet for such research. We thank you for being the stars of this inaugural issue of *JCSSW*.

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