

Special ASA Symposium for 2008 Annual Meeting

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Newberg, Oregon

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Issues in Human Gender, Sexuality, and Sex

Human sexuality and gender are fundamental to our identities as persons, yet the Christian community struggles to understand foundational issues such as God's intent in creating us as sexual and gendered beings and the appropriate expressions of sexuality and gender. Within the Christian community and society as a whole, struggles surrounding human gender, sexuality, and sex, continue for equality, fairness and justice. Furthermore, the Christian community struggles to discern how research in biology, medicine, psychology and sociology might apply to the identity struggles of persons encountering broken, distorted, or different gender and sexuality.

Session A. Gender Issues in the Sciences. This session focuses on how men and women experience being scientists and Christians, dealing with communities, structures, barriers and opportunities. These issues are particularly relevant for ASA members—both as Christians and scientists—trying to integrate and function in multiple communities as whole persons. How are women scientists perceived and treated in our churches, academic institutions and research organizations compared to men? How can men and women keep up with research while balancing the demands of marriage, career and family? Might affirmative action keep some qualified men out of positions because they are not women? How does this affect how Christians tend to think about women, men, roles and callings?

Session B. What the Sciences Tell Us About Gender and Sexuality. Biology, psychology, and sociology have much to tell us about gender and sexuality. How do Christians engage these stories? This session will focus on intersexuality, sexual orientation, transgender issues, sex changes, endocrine phenomena, and the ethical and theological issues associated with them.