



WomanView

Fall 2019

*The Newsletter of the Section for the Advancement of Women
Society of Counseling Psychology (Div 17)
American Psychological Association
Morgan Grotewiel, Editor*

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Notes from SAW Chair

Jillian Wasson, Ph.D.



Greetings SAW Members!

Welcome to 2020, I hope the new year finds you well. I wanted to provide you all with a few SAW-related updates. First, I want to recognize and thank the SAW leadership for helping support SAW as we have moved through

some transitions. I would like to recognize Dena Abbott who took over the Membership Chair position in August and has been working on streamlining the membership process. Ashley Hutchison, Morgan Grotewiel, and Laurel Watson continue providing invaluable stability to our leadership in their positions as Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Past-Chair respectively.

We are gearing up for the 2020 Counseling Psychology Conference in New Orleans this April as well the annual American Psychological Association (APA) Convention in Washington, D.C. Consistent with past years, SAW will host a roundtable discussion at APA as well as the Woman of the Year talk following the SAW business meeting. We will

provide more information on the date and time of these events during our summer newsletter. Katie Jorgenson will be coordinating Student Poster Awards for this upcoming conference and we will announce these winners in the summer newsletter. I am sure that there are many topics that SAW members will be presenting at both conferences so please email our Newsletter Editor, Morgan Grotewiel (mgrotewiel04@webster.edu), so that she can highlight these presentations in the next edition of the newsletter as well as on the website.

Please stay tuned for more updates on the listserv!

Sincerely,


 LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST

Jillian Woodford Wasson
Jillianwwasson@me.com



Don't Call Me "Sweet"

Elizabeth Russell, Ph.D.

When I received my first student evaluations, I was terrified. Before I read them, I mentally prepared myself to be open to constructive feedback. However, as I paged through, I felt surprisingly unprepared for what I saw. I was shocked by the number of comments on my appearance. The number who addressed me by my first name, even though I went by "Professor Russell." The number of times I was called "sweet." (The last one is not even true.) Despite my interest in gender issues, I had never deeply considered how gender and other non-teaching factors influence student evaluations.

These experiences are shared among many faculty members with marginalized identities,

so much so that the American Sociological Association (ASA, 2019) recently recommended against using student evaluations in employment decisions as the main measure of teaching effectiveness. Student evaluations correlate with non-teaching factors such as grades, subject matter, course type, and class size (Macfadyen, Dawson, Prest, & Gašević, 2015; Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013). They are also influenced by instructor factors such as age, race, and gender, even when controlling for confounding variables (Abel & Meltzer, 2007; Bavashi, Madera, & Hebl, 2010; Boring, Ottoboni, & Stark, 2016; MacNell, Driscoll, & Hunt, 2015).

This may be because stereotypes influence students' perceptions and expectations of faculty. Women often find themselves in a "double bind," in which they are expected by students to be more nurturing and flexible but then are perceived as less competent and professional as a result (Sandler, 1991, p. 7). El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown, and Ceynar (2018) found that students expected more leniency from fictional female professors than male ones. Women of color, in particular, have to work especially hard to earn respect that White male colleagues are granted by default (Pittman, 2010). To make matters worse, colleagues are often unaware of these burdens, which have implications for career advancement and recognition (Blithe, 2019).

Ultimately, student evaluations systematically disadvantage certain faculty, yet we are often required to use them. Macfadyen et al. (2015) suggested that educators should acknowledge limitations of evaluations and interpret them accordingly. Though we cannot eliminate bias, here are several strategies to minimize its impact.

- Phrase items as concretely as possible (or, if you use a standardized university instrument, advocate for changes in

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wording). MacNell et al. (2015) found that perceived instructor gender influenced ratings of seemingly objective factors like promptness, even when controlling for grading speed. However, concrete phrasing may help. For example, instead of asking about helpfulness, ask whether an instructor responds to e-mails within 24 hours or whether they are available during office hours.

- Compare evaluation data within and not across instructors. Due to bias, less effective instructors sometimes get better evaluations than more effective instructors (Boring et al., 2016), so it is more valuable to attend to variations within an instructor across time and courses (ASA, 2019). This allows instructors to identify patterns.
- Critically reflect on evaluations instead of taking them at face value. Include items about student effort, expected grade, and perceptions of course difficulty, which can all influence evaluations (Macfadyen et al., 2015; Spooen et al., 2013). Further, consider course content – gender may uniquely impact evaluations when teaching about certain topics, such as sexism (Abel & Meltzer, 2007). Interpreting evaluation data with these factors in mind adds meaningful context.
- Provide other evidence of teaching effectiveness. Examine student learning outcomes or ask colleagues to observe classes and provide feedback. A holistic approach to evaluating teaching is increasing in popularity (ASA, 2019). Student evaluations should be one piece of a larger body of evidence of teaching effectiveness.
- Consider intersectionality when interpreting evaluations. For instance, women of color experience gendered racism that may influence evaluations

differently than for White women (Pittman, 2010). Academic rank further influences women's experiences (Blithe, 2019).

- Advocate for workshops regarding effective evaluation of teaching. Anyone who makes personnel decisions should be well-trained in how to appropriately use student evaluation data (ASA, 2019). This may increase fairness in hiring and promotion processes.

Student evaluations have an impact. Further, they have a disproportionate impact on marginalized faculty. Although such ratings may provide valuable information, we should be thoughtful in how we use that information, especially when students' comments reflect more on our culture than our curriculum.

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Elizabeth J. Russell, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Winona State University. Dr. Russell can be reached at erussell@winona.edu.



Ending Period Poverty: An Advocacy Example

Meredith Higgins, B.S., Madison Hurley, B.A., Marijo Villano, B.S., Kathy Torres, M.Ed., Allison Comiskey, M.A., Abigail Baird, M.S., & Sally D. Stabb, Ph.D.

What started as feminist critique some 20 years ago (e.g., Bobel, 2006; Long, 2000), is now a rapidly expanding social movement to eliminate what has been termed *period poverty* – encompassing concerns regarding information, access, and cost of menstrual products worldwide, all of which impact the wellbeing, education, and productivity of people who menstruate (Sanchez & Rodriguez, 2019; Tull, 2019). Writing in the *University of Miami Law Review*, Montano (2018) persuasively argues that making people who menstruate pay for menstrual products is violation of human rights and equal protection, and should not occur in public restrooms just as pay toilets were eventually outlawed in the U.S. She states:

Like toilet paper, menstrual hygiene products, such as tampons and pads, are necessities for managing natural and unavoidable bodily functions. However, menstrual hygiene products widely receive separate treatment in restrooms across the globe. While it would be absurd today to carry a roll of toilet paper at all

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This photo is from one of the events at which this work was promoted (a Reproductive Justice Fair). It showcases the first author, doctoral student Meredith Higgins, at the event table with the project mascot, Tammy the Tampon.

times, it is considered necessary and common sense for all menstruators to carry menstrual hygiene products at all times, for approximately forty years, in case of an emergency. (p. 370)

The movement to eradicate period poverty is gaining increasing momentum. Growing numbers of non-profit organizations are devoted to the issue and city, state, and federal governments are introducing legislation to address period poverty in correctional settings, shelters, and educational institutions (AP, 2017; Austin, 2019; Quinn, 2018; Rabin, 2016). The issue has also taken the global stage; Scotland recently became the first

country in the world to institute government-funded the initiatives for free menstrual products in schools, colleges, and universities (Zipp, & Røstvik, 2018). However, the need for similar programming elsewhere persists (Sanchez & Rodriguez, 2019).

Many higher education institutions are also working to offer free menstrual products for their students. Furman University (Berry, Rector, Fink, & Davis, 2018), the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (Hansen, 2017), Christopher Newport University in Virginia (AP, 2017), UCLA, Middlebury, University of Arizona, and Emory University (Austin, 2016) are responding to student initiatives to offer

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free menstrual products on campus in their budgets and facilities. Some universities are further along in their efforts, and a growing number of universities now supply free products, including Brown University (McDermott, n.d.), Ohio University (Morris, 2017), Grinnell, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the University of Iowa (Austin, 2016). The University of Minnesota began their project to offer free tampons and pads in gender neutral and women's restrooms in 2016 (Eischens, 2016); they now have signage in every restroom with the location of menstrual supplies, specifically to help menstruating transgender students have access to products (Mahamud, 2018). Halifax University also uses signage in every restroom to help students locate the pickup locations of free menstrual products offered on campus (Canadian Press, 2018). As an environmentally friendly alternative to tampons and pads, the Diva Cup™ partnered with Pomona College in 2017 to offer free access to menstrual cups for their students (PR Newswire, 2017). Providence, Rhode Island launched a program to offer menstrual products in all middle schools and high schools in women's and gender neutral bathrooms to address the number of students reporting interruptions to their education from lack of access during their menstruation (AP, 2019).

It is against this backdrop that the co-authors of this article began an initiative to end period poverty on their campus, Texas Woman's University (TWU). The campus had provided several pay machines for menstrual products, which were observed to be empty or non-functional. Several meetings with university officials revealed that a decision had been made to discontinue stocking these machines for financial reasons. However, this decision was made without student input. The irony of this decision at the largest public institution in the country primarily for women was striking. For these reasons, the co-authors chose to

address this issue for a social justice project in their Professional Issues course in the spring semester of 2019. Co-authors partnered with TWU student government at both undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as several faculty members who were a part of reproductive health initiatives on campus for valuable additional input and support.

Methodology

Data collection regarding the subject of menstrual product use on TWU campus consisted of two components: a survey and a behavioral experiment. The survey was intended to gather information regarding student awareness of the removal of products from campus restrooms, past and present need for menstrual supplies, and potential barriers to students' access to menstrual products. This measure was distributed electronically by way of departmental emails and social media accounts, as well as in classrooms and in-person at a Reproductive Justice Fair on campus. The behavioral portion of the data-collection process was intended to gauge the rate of use of products supplied to restrooms in high-traffic areas of campus. Representatives from the non-profit organization *TakeChargePeriod* provided a surplus of free menstrual supplies for this experiment, which were then separated into 25 boxes, distributed throughout campus, and monitored weekly for use.

Survey Results

Four hundred ninety TWU students were surveyed. According to our survey results, a majority of students (78.9%) were unaware of the decision to remove menstrual products from TWU campus restrooms. Slightly more than half (53.3%) of those surveyed reported having attempted to access these menstrual products in campus restrooms in the past. The three most common reasons students were prevented from accessing products in TWU campus restrooms were that those surveyed

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supplied their own menstrual products (55.7%), the dispensers were empty (52%), and that students did not have money to pay for the products (43.9%). When asked how likely those surveyed are to buy from campus dispensers, the most frequent response was a 3 (27.9%) in a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = *not likely at all*, 5 = *very likely*), and when asked how likely they are to access free menstrual products from campus restrooms, the majority (n = 335, 69.2%) chose 5 in a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = *not likely at all*, 5 = *very likely*). Overall, the survey suggested that provision of free products would impact a significant number of menstruating individuals on TWU campus.

Results from Boxes with Menstrual Products

Of the 25 boxes of menstrual products created to be placed into high traffic restrooms, five boxes were removed from the restrooms (likely by janitorial staff) before data could be collected. Of the 17 boxes that were distributed, there were approximately 50 products in each box, composed of a mixture of maxi pads, pads, liners, and tampons. After two weeks, there were nine completely empty boxes, six boxes more than half empty, and two boxes more than half full. Three boxes remained undistributed after the group was reprimanded for not seeking permission for distribution in all of the targeted buildings. Observed usage patterns were directly related to the degree of student traffic in their respective buildings.

Discussion

The findings from this project illustrated the need for students' unrestricted access to menstrual products in campus restrooms. More than half of survey respondents reported having attempted to access menstrual products from campus restrooms in the past and over 40% reported being unable to pay for products from dispensers in campus restrooms; this may in

part reflect the high number of non-traditional, non-White, and first-time college students at TWU. In high traffic areas of campus where donated menstrual products were supplied, all products were used within a single week, which spoke to the need for unrestricted access to menstrual products.

The co-authors of this project gathered benchmarking data on costs from other regional universities, such the University of Texas at Austin, which has initiated a pilot program to supply free menstrual products in the restrooms of their student union building (Hadman, 2018). Co-authors and their student government allies took this financial information, along with survey results, to TWU officials. These efforts were rewarded as the TWU administration proved to be receptive to data and corresponding arguments, agreeing to pilot free menstrual products for a two-year time frame. Specifically, Texas Woman's University Student Senate committed to funding products during this time and the Facilities and Maintenance department committed to purchasing two brand new, updated machines. We are proud that our local advocacy initiative will reduce period poverty in our small part of the world, and would be happy to discuss any of our process with others interested in such projects and policy reforms.

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Meredith Higgins, B.S., Madison Hurley, B.A., Marijo Villano, B.S., Kathy Torres, M.Ed. Allison Comiskey, B.A., and Abigail Baird, M.S. are 2nd year doctoral students at Texas Woman's University. Sally D. Stabb, Ph.D. is the director of the doctoral program in Counseling Psychology at Texas Woman's University. Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to Sally D. Stabb, Ph.D., SStabb@twu.edu.



Trauma as a Source of Strength and Growth: Posttraumatic Growth in the Women of *Game of Thrones* and *World of Warcraft*

Gabrielle T. Loehr, B.A. and Meera B. Patel, M.Ed.

The #MeToo movement on social media, which gained traction in 2016, brought to attention the exceedingly high prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Thousands of stories came out about women who had suffered tremendously because of sexual assault or harassment. Women described derailed careers, psychological problems, and decades of traumatic memories, kept to themselves because no one believed them or because they had nowhere to go for help.

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Trauma can cause Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as well as a lifetime of other negative consequences for the victim. However, personal growth can also occur after traumatic events, and highly distressing, painful events can become a source of strength (Joseph, Murphy, & Regel, 2012). Notably, social modeling is a powerful way for people to explore new ways to react and behave (Benight & Bandura, 2004), and popular culture has numerous representations of women who have been traumatized repeatedly, yet become stronger in the aftermath.

Game of Thrones (GoT) is one of the most popular shows in the world and is watched by millions live and online, both legally and illegally (Whitten, 2019). Additionally, World of Warcraft (WoW) has millions of players, and since its introduction, it has been immensely popular (Valentine, 2018). Both GoT and WoW have numerous prominent female characters. More specifically, Jaina Proudmoore and Sylvanus Windrunner from WoW and Cersei Lannister, Sansa Stark, and Daenerys Targaryen from GoT are all wildly popular female heroines that have been in nerd and popular culture for decades.

The women in both GoT and WoW are well-developed characters with interesting backstories, complex personalities, and nuanced motives. Each character has dealt with considerable trauma throughout their development and is portrayed as being or growing into a strong, powerful, and independent woman. Westeros and Azeroth are richly developed fantasy worlds. However, they lack modern amenities such as therapists, psychotropic medications, legal recourse, self-help books, support groups, nonprofit groups and shelters.

Although each woman is quite different, they and their situations have numerous

commonalities. For example, in both the GoT and WoW, all of the women are royalty, and the visibility they have because of their social status puts their traumas, and subsequent suffering, on public display for all to see. Many of the women are in politically treacherous environments with few to no confidants, so they had few options for trustworthy people to turn to in their periods of distress.

Notably, all of the women suffered tremendous losses because of war; Sansa lost her parents and brother; Daenerys lost all of her family, including her husband and her unborn child; and Cersei lost all of her children. Jaina lost her father and brother, was ostracized from her homeland, and then her new home was destroyed. Sylvanus was turned into a weapon, against her will, and was used against her people as a powerful weapon of war.

In GoT, all of the women were placed into arranged marriages; none of them were able to marry the men they loved; they were all victims of sexual violence; and they were all treated as unable to learn or understand politics. Despite the lack of environmental support, all the women became rulers and all ruled without a spouse. While WoW has many powerful female characters, in GoT, Cersei, Daenerys, and Sansa all become the first queens of Westeros, ruling independently of male partners.

Outside of Westeros and Azeroth, do women fare better in the face of such abuse? The women of GoT and WoW were able to come out of top in their situations, but in each case this was largely because of their social status, and even with their power, they often still had little recourse towards the men who abused them. In the United States, 35% of reported rapes make it as far as clearance, which is when an arrest is made, and the case is transferred to the courts (SafeHome, 2017). From there, many cases are dropped, and fewer

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rape cases end up being prosecuted (Fantz, Hernandez, & Vashi, 2018). Marital rape was entirely legal in all 50 states until the late 1970s and was not illegal nationwide until 1993 (Ross, 2015). Some states still have lesser penalties for marital rape. For example, in South Carolina, the maximum sentence for marital rape is 10 years, whereas the maximum sentence for non-marital rape is 30 years.

However, not all trauma is sexual or from relationships. War impacts the lives of all the GoT and WoW characters, whose experiences mirror those of so many women and children today. The United States (U.S.) has been at war in Afghanistan since 2001 and Iraq since 2003, which are the longest wars the US has been in. Troops are going to Iraq and Afghanistan that were not yet born or young children when 9/11 occurred. The United States is also involved in the conflicts in Syria and Yemen. Altogether, these wars have killed hundreds of thousands of people and impacted the lives of millions of people, including women and children.

The media portrayal of women and female suffering mirrors the way women suffer in real life. Women typically have unrealistic expectations of perfection foisted on them by society (Sherry et al., 2009), yet are also frequently the victim of multiple traumas throughout their lives (Rees et al., 2014). Characters such as the strong women in WoW and GoT give real women powerful social models for how to face trauma in a way that is transformative and empowering, without demanding perfection.

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Gabrielle T. Loehr, B.A. is a student in the Media Psychology PhD program at Fielding Graduate University, and Meera B. Patel, M.Ed. is a student in the Counseling Psychology PhD program at the University of Memphis. Gabrielle can be reached at gabrielle.loehr@gmail.com, and Meera can be reached at mbpatel@memphis.edu.



Poetry by Asia Amos

“The feminist killjoy comes up without you having to say anything. You can kill joy just by not being made happy by the right things” (Ahmed, 2017, p. 53).

Killjoy Femme

Have you ever seen a girl
 Holding a gun
 Glare in her gaze
 Cocked back her thumb?
 Have you ever seen a girl
 Murder she writes
 Baby doll heads

Betwixt her thighs?
 Have you ever seen a girl
 Wielding a wish
 Alien world
 Soot in her kiss
 Have you ever seen a girl
 Walking around
 Killing your joy
 Refusing to smile

“The voice renders, it doesn’t reproduce” (Min-ha, 2011, p. 81).

Red Potatoes

I'm buying some red potatoes today
 Admiring their rustiness
 Their roughness and sound-(knuh).

Look at me, I'm in relationship with my
 potatoes,
 They're sliding around in my plastic bag,
 Twisting up, up,

A man is there
 He turns, he says
 "what is the difference between this potato and
 that potato?"
 "well I don't know. They cook differently, I
 guess
 ...This is why I like them."

I'm about to tell him how I like to season them,
 onion, olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic
 I don't tell him

I've pulled off my headphones
 Stopped the flow of my shopping
 To answer his question
 He looks at me. Laughs.
 "Well, I couldn't ask a man, because then he'd
 have an answer."

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Commentary

I am black woman. I see him as a white man. I am a "young" woman. I see him as an "older man". I am able-bodied. I see him as able-bodied, and aged, which I assume as debility if not invisible disability. It feels risky, responding to him. I never know what's going to come out of a white man's mouth. They're unpredictable, and as people who've been socialized to move so obliviously, they feel foreign to me, and most times, terrifying. They can say anything, do anything to me, and I might be as powerless as I've been taught to perceive. This possibility is my fear.

What is happening while I'm buying my red potatoes? I smiled, but there was a tightness, a resistance at the corner of my lips, and then bewilderment at why I smiled at something which offended me. Then, doubting why I felt offended-why I had taken inward and given energy to words. Somehow his remarks reflected a failure on my part, a failure to respond differently, a failure to not respond at all. A failure of being affected. Voice evoked, then voiceless. I heard in my tight smile what I did not say. My reality, I shut down to control, my responses (re) recorded, lest I become black, woman, black woman, angry black woman, some body to harm, dismiss, ignore, nobody at all.

I'm sure I've had no effect on him at all.

Asia Amos is a Ph.D. student in Counseling Psychology at the University of Memphis. Asia can be reached at Asia.amos@memphis.edu.



Poetry by Tanvi Shah

Systems

Round and round
On and on
This and that
You on me
Us and them
Right and wrong

Alive and dead

Migration Dialogues

What do I want?
What do I want to do?
Why am I here?
Why am I here listening?

I have a voice
I have a thought
I have a face
I have a body

I am handed an enforced personality
When I have an independent identity

Then why do I stay here feeling like I am
No one or nothing?

Tanvi Shah, M.A., is a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Boston University. Tanvi can be reached at tnshah@bu.edu.




Announcements

Professor Silvia Sara Canetto, APA Counseling Psychology "Fellow" was awarded the Heritage Award of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Society for the Psychology of Women. APA's Heritage Award recognizes distinguished, long-standing contributions to research and teaching on women and gender. She also received the International Council of Psychologists' (ICP) Denmark-Gunvald Award for feminist research and service. Her Denmark-Gunvald Award invited address on the human rights of women was delivered at the ICP convention in Cadiz, Spain. .

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When you renew your SAW membership this year, please consider becoming a Lifetime Member for a one-time payment of \$150. We appreciate our members and their support!




<https://www.facebook.com/SawDiv17APA>

Visit the SAW Facebook page for a great way to meet many like-minded individuals seeking to address issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity, and social justice. This page will keep you up to date on the most current SAW information. It also provides non-members with a quick and easy way to join SAW. Like us on Facebook!

<http://www.div17.org/sections/advancement-of-women/>

Visit the SAW website to learn more about SAW, including our leadership, task forces, awards, bylaws, and projects. You can also join our listserv and download the membership application.



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jillianwasson@me.com

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watsonlb@umkc.edu

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Ball State University
anhutchison@bsu.edu

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Louisiana Tech University
dabbott@latech.edu

Newsletter Editor

Morgan Grotewiel, Ph.D.
Webster University
mgrotewiel04@webster.edu

Others

Student Representatives

Aashna Banerjee
Ball State University
aashnabanerjee95@gmail.com

Madeline Brodt, M.S.
University of Massachusetts Boston
madeline.brodt001@umb.edu

Student Research Award Coordinator

Ginny Maril, Ph.D.
California Lutheran University
vmaryl@callutheran.edu

APA Student Poster Coordinator

Katherine Jorgenson, Ph.D.
University of St. Mary
katherine.jorgenson@stmary.edu

More Pie Initiative Liaison

Tania Israel, Ph.D.
University of California, Santa Barbara
tisrael@education.ucsb.edu

SAW Task Force: Women and Girls in the Justice System

Julie Ancis, Ph.D.
Corinne Datchi, Ph.D.
Meghan Davidson, Ph.D.

Website Coordinator

Morgan Grotewiel, Ph.D.
Webster University
mgrotewiel04@webster.edu

Interim Newsletter Assistant Editor

Aashna Banerjee
Ball State University
aashnabanerjee95@gmail.com

**Section for the Advancement of Women (SAW)
Membership Application for 2020**

To become a member of the Section for the Advancement of Women, complete the form below and mail it to:

Dena Abbott, Ph.D., Membership Chair
Louisiana Tech University
Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences
600 Mayfield St., WOOH 118
P.O. Box 10048
Ruston, LA 71272

Membership dues should be submitted in January of each year in order to remain active within the Section. Annual Dues are \$15 for psychologist members and \$5 for graduate and undergraduate students. We also offer a Lifetime Membership for a one-time fee of \$150.

Please make checks or money orders payable to **Division 17 Section for the Advancement of Women.**

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