NEWS | POSTED JUNE 3, 2022

Member Spotlight: Meg D. Bishop

Doctoral Candidate, University of Texas at Austin; SRCD SOGIE Caucus Member, SRCD SOGIE Caucus Programming Committee Member.

AUTHOR

Meg D. Bishop

Doctoral Candidate

University of Texas at Austin

https://twitter.com/megdanabishop

What interested you in becoming a developmental scientist?

Developmental science is where the ideas, communities, and problems about which I'm most passionate coalesce. I have always been fascinated by time and its role in change. Intellectual traditions key to developmental science, such as life course theory and social-ecological models, provide me with the frameworks needed to explore time empirically.

I came out as queer in college. As so many of us do, I delved deeply into "me-search", reading everything I could find about queer history, identity development, and psychology. I saw some of myself reflected, but

other parts of my experience and communities were sorely underrepresented. I knew that my own experiences and those of the people I loved were valid and wanted to play a part in shedding light on the diversity that defines the queer community.

I have always found joy, energy, and inspiration in working with young people. I know that I'm most fulfilled when I can teach, mentor, and learn alongside students. Developmental science allows me to investigate the questions about which I'm most curious, to work with communities of scholars whom I admire on issues that promote social justice, and to support young people to actualize their professional, personal, and political goals.

What's your favorite aspect of SRCD membership?

SRCD biennial conferences are my favorite part of SRCD membership. Nothing makes me smile more than reconnecting with a colleague that I haven't seen in months or years—except perhaps hearing about the amazing work that they're doing. The biennial conferences are also a fantastic way to refresh my excitement about my own work. Understanding how my research connects to that of the scholars I most admire is invigorating. I often leave sessions with new ideas for papers, better ways to tackle problems, or practical information about how to accomplish a goal. SRCD is a great opportunity to both stay in touch with and contribute to the broader direction of LGBTQ-focused developmental science.

Who inspires you?

So many people inspire me! Right now, trans young people and their parents are some of the most inspiring people I know. I am so grateful for people like Rachel Gonzales, a friend, colleague, activist, and mom of a beautiful trans child, who proudly celebrates her family and travels the country to organize with folks supporting trans health and rights.

I'm also incessantly inspired by the undergraduate scholars with whom I work. I'm most proud of the work I've done to support their success. Seeing them develop into the next generation of queer scholars, activists, and policymakers is the best part of what I do.

What is something you learned in the last month?

Emmett Schelling, the executive director of the Transgender Education Network of Texas and tireless advocate for the rights and health of trans people in and beyond Texas, was recently named one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2022.

In response to the accolade, Schelling said, "Existing as a transgender person in this country has never been more politicized, especially in Texas, so it's not lost on me that TIME magazine has chosen to recognize a trans leader in Texas…Amid an unprecedented level of intentional cruelty from politicians who should be working to expand rights for all Texans, the trans community has continued to show resilience and fight for justice. We are in a critical moment in this country where people from all different backgrounds and communities are pleading to exist without being harmed, so my hope is that we can unite together to build a better, more inclusive, and healthier future for every Texan."

What does the SOGIE Caucus mean to you?

The SOGIE Caucus is an extended family of mentors and peers whom I can trust to provide informed, engaged, and critical feedback on my work and my professional development. The Caucus is a space where all of us—from senior intellectual leaders to scholars beginning our developmental science journey—gather to discuss new ideas, solve problems, and to simply be with like-minded others.

The current (and dismal) political climate surrounding the rights of sexual and gender minority people is vastly different than when I began my academic journey. Some politicians' blatant disregard of the empirical evidence is upsetting and discouraging. The SOGIE Caucus has provided me with a trusted community in which to process these challenges and forge a way forward.

The academy is not politically neutral. The SOGIE Caucus, alongside the Black Caucus, Latinx Caucus, and Asian Caucus, is a space where I can work alongside scholar-activists towards an explicitly anti-racist, anti-transphobic, anti-homophobic, and anti-fascist SRCD. I am inspired by the tremendous support that the Caucus provides me, as well as the welcoming reception of the SOGIE Caucus by the Latinx Caucus, Black Caucus, Asian Caucus, and the SRCD community at large. I am proud to be a part of this community.

Visit the

SOGIE CAUCUS WEBSITE

to learn about benefits, networking opportunities, and more!