School of Psychology and Exercise Science 
Research Seminar 

Speaker: Severi Luoto  
Title: A Life History Approach to the Female Sexual Orientation Spectrum: Evolution, Development, Causal Mechanisms, and Health  
Where: 460.3.030 (ECL3)  
Host: Dr David Lewis

Abstract:  
Women’s capacity for sexual fluidity is at least as interesting a phenomenon from the point of view of evolutionary biology and behavioral endocrinology as exclusively homosexual orientation. Evolutionary hypotheses for female nonheterosexuality have failed to fully account for the existence of these different categories of nonheterosexual women, while also overlooking broader data on the causal mechanisms, physiology, ontogeny, and phylogeny of female nonheterosexuality. Using the synergistic approach of Tinbergen’s four questions, I review the evolutionary-developmental origins of various phenotypes in the female sexual orientation spectrum. This synthetic review indicates that various nonheterosexual female phenotypes emerge from and contribute to hormonally mediated fast life history strategies. Life history theory provides a biobehavioral explanatory framework for nonheterosexual women’s masculinized body morphology, psychological dispositions, and their elevated likelihood of experiencing violence, substance use, obesity, teenage pregnancy, and lower general health. Synthesizing life history theory with the female sexual orientation spectrum enriches existing scientific knowledge on the evolutionary-developmental mechanisms of human sex differences.

Biography:  
Currently in his final year of PhD candidacy at the University of Auckland, Severi’s research encompasses diverse topics in evolutionary-developmental psychology, cultural evolution, cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, behavioral neuroscience, evolutionary biology, and evolutionary-developmental origins of health and disease. Severi collaborates with an international research group and has published work in fourteen scientific journals, also attracting the attention of media outlets such as WAtoday, The Sydney Morning Herald, and The New Zealand Herald.

Meeting the presenter:  
To arrange a meeting with the presenter, please contact the host.

Reading for the keen:  