

## **LGVMA sponsors *special lecture*: “Sexual Diversity in the Animal Kingdom”**

Washington, DC, June 7, 2007- The Lesbian and Gay Veterinary Medical Association is sponsoring Professor Joan Roughgarden of Stanford University to present the keynote lecture titled “Sexual Diversity in the Animal Kingdom” at the LGVMA’s Annual Meeting scheduled for Sunday, July 15, 2007 from 12 Noon to 2PM at the JW Marriott Hotel in the Capitol Ballroom FG, located at 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC. This ground-breaking lecture and discussion will take place during the Annual Meeting of the American Veterinary Medical Association. It is believed that this is the first such lecture/discussion on this provocative topic to take place at national veterinary meeting in the United States.

Roughgarden will speak about sexual diversity in the animal kingdom, including zoological aspects of homosexuality in domestic animals and humans. “This talk is especially timely,” Roughgarden says, “in view of the Oslo Museum exhibit on homosexuality and animals that opened in 2006, which has been widely reported in the press. It would be wonderful if all the information on domesticated animals could be folded into the wider zoological picture that is emerging.”

Professor Roughgarden has authored many books, including, *Evolution’s Rainbow: Diversity, Gender and Sexuality in Nature and People* and has been published in Science and other scientific journals. This discussion is not a rebuttal of the central idea of natural selection, but an extension of Darwin’s explanation of the mechanism of selection that addresses biological issues beyond Darwin’s theories. She draws on a huge range of animal studies to illustrate the diversity of forms of sexual activity in nature, and in doing so challenges a number of key assumptions of neo-Darwinism. In species ranging from fruit flies to lizards and primates she finds behaviors that include same-sex sexual play, sexual switching between male and female, multiple sexes and genders and reproductive behavior requiring more than the commonly expected single male and single female genders to achieve reproductive success and much else besides. Although some scientists are critical, Roughgarden is quoted as being “not altogether surprised” by the volume of dissent, and has pointed out that her team had refuted most of the criticisms. Throughout history, science has tended to have blind spots that are later proven true.

Join this provocative ground-breaking lecture for the veterinary community. Lecture will be from 12-1:30 PM followed by questions and open discussion from 1:30-2:00 PM. We are scheduling a book signing following the lecture/discussion. This lecture is for the veterinary community although press passes and special invitations are available.