Women's sexuality: Changing values and attitudes

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Abstract

Sexual script theory describes the way in which sexual behaviours and relationships tend to progress according to culturally bound social scripts. Culturally normative scripts prescribe agentic and recreational sexual orientations for men while sexual norms for women promote a person-centered orientation towards sexual scripts with an emphasis on communion and relational intimacy. It is according to these social structures that women develop their sense of self and sexuality with social processes creating a narrative for women's sexuality devoid of agency. These gender based norms are theorised to be barriers to women's sexual health and well-being by inhibiting their initiative in directing sexual activity, refusing unwanted sex, and negotiating safe sex practices such as the use of condoms. As traditional gender norms link femininity with sexual passivity and ignorance, there is concern that internalisation of these norms has a negative effect on women's sexual agency and sexual health. However, recent research has identified a change in sexual behaviours and attitudes among both youth and adult populations since the beginning of the 21st Century suggesting that the norms for women's sexuality have changed over the course of the 21st Century. Social changes including increased financial and relational independence for women as well as progressively more liberal sexual attitudes may have resulted in more opportunities for women to explore and experience their agency within their relationships. If a shift has occurred in the way women experience their sexuality, then this should be observed in the ways they describe themselves as sexual people. The focus of the current thesis was to explore the ways in which sexual agency manifests within women's sexual self-concepts whilst examining the social and psychological factors which influence women's sexual behaviours and attitudes.

The first study in this thesis assessed women's sexual self-concepts using a measure of sexual self-schemas. The Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale (SSSS) posits women's sexual self-views as reflective of sex-role stereotypes. While earlier research focused on sexual self-schemas as separate constructs for men and women, each based partly on traditional gender norms, more recent research suggests women evaluate their sexuality in terms of traits associated with both expressivity and agency. As current research trends propose sexual agency is associated with positive sexual health outcomes for women, revision of gendered constructs and associated measures are necessary. In this study, a community based sample of women (n= 1223) completed an online survey comprising a revised Sexual Self-Schema Scale along with measures of sexual health. Exploratory (EFA) and Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were employed to assess factor structure, while behavioural and attitudinal correlates were assessed. In contrast to the original three dimensions of the SSSS, an EFA determined four factors better fit the scale structure, with CFA supporting measurement fit. The dimensions identified comprised elements associated with both feminine and masculine gender norms, as well as sexual inhibition. Additionally, a newly identified sexual dimension described a facet of the self, reflective of sexual responsivity, excitement, and sensuality, accounting for the largest percent of variance in the measure and reporting the strongest association with sexual health measures. The addition of an explicitly sexual dimension of sexual self-schemas is in contrast to past research that suggests intimacy and relational bonding is the most important component of women's sexual evaluations. This newly revised measure challenges past conceptions of women's sexuality, further supporting current research suggesting sexual agency is a significant predictor for positive sexual health outcomes.

Where study one was designed to assess sexual agency as it manifests within women's sexual cognitions, behaviours, and affective-evaluations, a second study was conducted to investigate the sociocultural barriers to women enacting their sexual agency. A diverse community based sample of men and women (n= 512) completed an online person-perception experiment designed to assess potential perceived penalties for women who engage in sexually agentic behaviours, as well as a number of measures assessing sexual attitudes, personal attributes, and self-perceptions. While it was predicted that ambivalent sexism would reinforce traditional scripts acting as potential barriers to women's sexual agency, there was little support for this theory. Furthermore, evidence for a sexual double standard was limited with results supporting a general sexual conservatism amongst a minority of participants while the majority of participants endorsed largely egalitarian attitudes. Further, gender differences in personal attributes, sexual self-perceptions, and sexual evaluations were small. Findings from both studies support current research highlighting a shift in sexual norms in recent years. Results are discussed in terms of the need to critically evaluate established constructs and measures and to extend beyond college aged samples when assessing women and men's sexual health.

Ownership Declaration

Declaration

I declare that these works are my own and have not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

.....Hollie Baxter..... .....17/12/18.....
(signature) (date)

Statement of the Contribution of Others

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Preface

The research reviewed in this thesis and the studies conducted are informed largely by social structuralist and feminist theories of women's gender roles and sexuality. Whilst none of the research papers reviewed define gender explicitly, it is assumed that in these studies women are defined within the context of a gender binary. While recent scholarship has highlighted the social construction of gender advocating for the awareness of gender diversity and the inclusion of transmen, transwomen, and other nonbinary genders in research (Cameron & Stinson, 2019), the operationalisation of gender in the current thesis uses categorical measures as this is how they are measured in prior research (e.g., sex role stereotypes, gender norms, masculinity and femininity) (Cameron & Stinson, 2019). Whilst this categorical approach does not capture the multifaceted and dynamic construct of gender, and the findings discussed throughout are descriptive of cisgender women's sexuality at the exclusion of nonbinary women, sexuality research focusing on cisgender women has traditionally been devalued in the context of historical sexism in universities and research publications (Grabe, 2018) and is thus valuable in its own right. Furthermore, these feminist and social structuralist theories are built on the lived experience of women whose gender aligns with their biological sex. Therefore, with no intention of excluding women not born biologically female, the current thesis is informed by theories that have provided insight into the sexual development and experience of cisgender women according to their historical marginalisation in a gender hierarchy favouring cisgender men.

Chapter One

The sexual self-concept has been conceptualised as a multidimensional structure comprising knowledge, attitudes, and values central to the construction of individual sexual health and identity (Rostosky, Dekhtyar, Cupp, & Anderman, 2008; Tolman, Striepe, & Harmon, 2003). Whilst earlier research has focused on sex roles and gender differences in the sexual self-concept (Abrahams, Feldman, & Nash, 1978; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975), sexual risk-taking (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Rosenthal, Moore, & Flynn, 1991), and contraceptive use (Winter, 1988), more recent research has attempted to devise a conceptual model for the sexual self-concept (Deutsch, Hoffman, & Wilcox, 2014) focusing on structure and content. As a structure, the sexual self-concept is hypothesised to organise people's perceptions of their past and present sexual experiences, and their personal qualities into a cohesive construct that motivates and guides behaviour (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994; Hensel, Fortenberry, O'Sullivan, & Orr, 2011; Rostosky et al., 2008). Further research has focused on developing taxonomic measures of the sexual self-concept (see O'Sullivan, Myer-Bahlberg, & McKeague, 2006; Snell, 1998; Vickberg & Deaux, 2005) as well as the relationship between sexual self-concepts and sexual behaviours (Hensel et al., 2011) and gender roles (Garcia, 1999).

Traditionally, in comparison to men's physically oriented sexual self-views, women's sexual self-concepts have been theorised to comprise sexual self-evaluations situated within relationships (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Carroll, Volk, & Hyde, 1985; DeLamater, 1987; Leigh, 1989). The view that men's motivation for sexual activity is pleasure oriented while women's motives are relationally focused is pervasive (Leigh, 1989; Peplau, 2003; Sanchez, Fetterolf, & Rudman, 2012). For example, early research with a university sample found gender differences in men's and women's motivations for engaging in sex where women reported love and commitment as significant motivators for engaging in sexual relationships

and were more disapproving of casual sex than were their male counterparts (Carroll et al., 1985). Furthermore, while 61% of the men sampled reported they never or only sometimes required an emotional investment to engage in sex, 85% of women reported always or mostly requiring an emotional involvement with their sexual partner. Further research has identified similarities in sexual motivations between gay and heterosexual men, and lesbian and heterosexual women (Leigh, 1989). In this large and age diverse sample, support for traditional sex-role stereotypes was observed with the majority of men describing their sexual motivations to be pleasure and power oriented, whilst both heterosexual and lesbian women reported motivations focusing on creating intimacy and expressing love within relationships.

Bakan (1966) explained gender differences in social motivations using the concepts of agency and communion. According to Bakan, these concepts are fundamental principles within human existence where agency supports individualism and communion refers to the collaborative participation of an individual within a larger network (McAdams, 2001). As agency is associated with men's gender norms of masculinity, men are believed to possess an agentic orientation towards social relationships while a communal orientation is associated with norms of femininity and interpersonally focused social motivations for women. These orientations form the basis of traditional gender norms and sex-role stereotypes (Wood, Christensen, Hebl, & Rothgerber, 1997) and are believed to maintain sex differences within relationships to the extent that are integrated into the self-concept (Deutsch et al., 2013; Wood et al. 1997).

Social structuralist theories argue these traditionally held beliefs in Western cultures have shaped sexual scripts which position women as sexually submissive and men as powerful and sexually dominant (Rosenthal, Levy & Earnshaw, 2012). For men, sex is encouraged as a goal-driven activity with the purpose of experiencing pleasure. For women, sex is sanctioned within committed relationships as an act of emotional intimacy and bonding

(Hynie, Lydon, Cote, & Wiener, 1998). The negative consequences for adherence to gendered sexual motivations for women has been described in relation to women's sexual health and wellbeing, particularly concerning condom use (Schick, Zucker, & Bay-Cheng, 2008) sexual (dis)satisfaction (Dworkin, Beckford, & Ehrhardt, 2007; Kiefer & Sanchez, 2007), as well as reduced sexual autonomy (Sanchez, Kiefer, & Ybarra, 2006) and sexual self-efficacy (Impett, Schooler, & Tolman, 2006). In contrast to feminine passivity, sexual agency has been described as the awareness of sexual desire, initiative taking in meeting sexual needs, and freedom of sexual expression (Averett et al., 2008). Feminist theorists argue that sexual agency is necessary for women's sexual health. They maintain that women must recognise themselves as autonomous sexual actors and acknowledge their sexual needs and priorities (Averett et al., 2008). This places women's sexual health at the centre of their control. Therefore, these gendered sexual self-concepts observed in past research might be explained by social structures which have historically dictated the roles of men and women within relationships, with a sexual passivity linked with norms of femininity while norms for masculinity are associated with agency and sexual health.

More recently, research has identified a change in sexual behaviours and attitudes among both youth and adult populations since the beginning of the 21st century (Bălănean, 2012; Levant, Rankin, Hall, Smalley, & Williams, 2012). In particular, research suggests that the norms for women's sexuality have changed over the course of the 21st Century (Petersen & Hyde, 2010). Oliver and Hyde's (1993) meta-analysis of 177 studies identified gender differences in sexual behaviours and attitudes across 21 different criteria. They found the largest differences concerned permissive attitudes towards casual sex, and masturbation, both of which were more prevalent in men's reports. In a more recent meta-analysis, Petersen and Hyde (2010) found smaller gender differences in sexual behaviours and attitudes than previously reported. The authors found that while men reported engaging in more frequent

masturbation, pornography use, and casual sex, the effect sizes were not large. Further, small effect sizes for gender differences in sexual attitudes were also found, although women were more likely to report anxiety and sex guilt, and they were more likely to report emotional commitment as the context for which sexual relations take place. According to Levant et al. (2012), women's increased participation in education and employment opportunities over the past 50 years has afforded women more autonomy with this shift in status influencing changes to sexual norms. Social changes have seen women entering the workforce as well as changes to family structures including family planning with the oral contraceptive pill. Moreover, the sexual revolution of the 1970's as well as the women's and gay and lesbian rights movements in the 1960's and 1970's fought for equality, sexual rights, and the acceptance of diverse sexual identities (Tiefer, 2006). These social changes including increased financial and relational independence for women as well as progressively more liberal sexual attitudes may have resulted in more opportunities for women to explore and experience their agency within their relationships (Petersen & Hyde, 2011).

As sexual behaviours and identities are thought to be influenced by dominant social representations of gender roles within relationships (Breakwell & Millward, 1997), changes within social structures are expected to shape women's sexual attitudes and values. If a shift has occurred in the way women experience their sexuality and the attitudes they hold, then a contemporary model for women's sexual self-concepts is needed. The focus of the current research is to explore the social and psychological factors which influence women's sexual behaviours and attitudes, and the ways in which sexual agency manifests within women's sexual self-concepts.

Further, as development of a sexual self-concept is considered a normative milestone in adolescence (Impett & Tolman, 2006; Rostosky et al., 2008), most research to date has focused on adolescent sexual self-concepts (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Hensel et al.,

2011; Impett & Tolman, 2006; O'Sullivan et al., 2006; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975; Rostosky et al., 2008) and university aged populations (Deutsch et al., 2014; Winter, 1988; Wood et al., 1997; Vickberg & Deaux, 2005). However, theorists have suggested that the sexual self-concept is a malleable construct subject to modification based on experience as well as the sociocultural sphere and political climate in which individuals are situated (Abrahams et al., 1978; McCrae & Costa, 1988; Tolman et al., 2003; Winter, 1988). Consequently, research is needed to assess the fluidity of these self-conceptions in response to both maturation processes as well as the current social context.

The aim of this thesis is to address this gap in the literature to construct a theoretical model for women's sexual self-concepts with a contemporary and age diverse sample of women assessing current social structures which may inhibit or facilitate women's sexual agency.

Chapter Two. Thesis Structure

This thesis is structured around a theoretical model assessing the ways in which both sociocultural norms and personality attributes are associated with women's sexual self-concepts. This is a working model recognising the variability of women's sexual experiences as a function of age, social status, relationship status (Deutsch et al., 2013), as well as the reciprocal relationship between sexual behaviours, attitudes, and sexual cognitions (Brotto, Chivers, Millman, & Albert, 2016).

Baumeister (1997) defined the self-concept as "the totality of inferences that a person has made about himself or herself. These refer centrally to one's personality traits and schemas, but they may also involve an understanding of one's social roles and relationships" (p. 681). Adopting this definition, the current research defines the sexual self-concept as the sexually relevant traits and attributes reflected in women's sexual self-schemas and personal dispositions which may be influenced by gender roles and relationship characteristics.

Of particular interest to the current thesis are norms for femininity which are believed to be maintained by traditional sexual scripts and sex-role stereotypes (Wood & Eagly, 2015). Chapter 3 will provide a brief background on traditional sexual scripts which have been theorised to shape men's and women's sexual relationships. Further this chapter will introduce a feminist critique of the social structures under which women develop their sense of self and sexuality and highlight the ways in which social processes have created a narrative for women's sexuality devoid of agency.

Sexual self-schemas are central to this thesis as a multidimensional structure providing a framework for studying women's sexual self-concepts. Sexual self-schemas are cognitive generalisations about the sexual self, developed through interaction with the social world. This sexual knowledge about the self has been theorised to shape women's sexual experiences and relationships (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). An overview of the sexual

self-schema model will be presented in Chapter 4. Women's sexual self-schemas were originally constructed incorporating gendered stereotypes and norms. The current thesis aims to re-evaluate the dimensions upon which this concept was structured and devise a measure for women's sexual self-schemas extending beyond traditional ideologies of femininity.

Personality attributes are predicted to influence the sexual self-concept through their mediating role in shaping behaviours and attitudes (Breakwell & Millward, 1997). Chapter 5 will discuss the relationship between extraversion and personal attributes of agency and communion with women's sexual health. These variables have been included to assess the trait dispositions that are associated with women's sexual agency, as well as the personal attributes associated with traditional sex-role stereotypes that are embedded within social structuralist theories of gender.

Further, this thesis is interested in the ways in which the sexual double standard has discouraged women from engaging in casual sex and masturbation and proposes this social structure may act as a barrier to women enacting agency within their sexual relationships. These gender-based norms for behaviour are believed to be reinforced with sexist attitudes, where hostile sexism negatively reinforces women's gender norms by punishing women who challenge gender based inequities, and benevolent sexism rewards women who conform to cultural ideals of femininity. Chapter 6 will provide an overview of past research studying the sexual double standard and introduce ambivalent sexism as a framework for exploring potential barriers to women's sexual agency.

One of the objectives of this thesis is to explore the ways in which women's sexual agency is associated with sexual health. Tolman and Porsche (1998) define sexual health as "the ability to know and accept one's own feelings, both emotional and physical, and to make responsible and safe choices about relationships and sexual behaviours anchored in one's own wishes and desires" (p. 4). This thesis will argue that agency and sexual subjectivity are key

components of a sexual self-concept that fosters women's sexual health. Sexual subjectivity describes the awareness and embodiment of sexual needs and arousal responses (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006) and will be introduced as a key mediator for women's sexual satisfaction (Impett & Tolman, 2006).

As social norms have progressed in recent history with the women's movement and sexual revolution, shifts in sexual behaviours and attitudes have been documented (Peterson & Hyde, 2010; Wells & Twenge, 2005). This thesis will present the argument that changes to sociocultural sexual norms in recent years has facilitated more sexual freedom for women, and this will be reflected in their sexual self-concepts. Over time, women's sexuality has been constructed as weak and submissive (Sanchez et al., 2012), motivated by needs for interpersonal closeness and commitment within traditional relationships (Basson, 2000; Peplau, 2003). As more recent research suggests sexual agency is significant in predicting women's sexual health (Averett et al., 2008; Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015; Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005; Impett & Tolman, 2006; Schick et al., 2008) a revision of gendered constructs for women's sexual self-concepts is needed.

Chapter Three. The Social Construction of Women's Sexuality

Historically in Western cultures women have been discouraged from gaining sexual experience and encouraged to be sexually passive focusing on (male) partner's sexual satisfaction (Curtin, Ward, Merriwether, & Caruthers, 2011; Hurlbert, 1991). Traditional sexual norms for women promote sexual activity and intimacy only within monogamous relationships. The consequence of internalising such norms means that women may avoid engaging in sexual activity for the sole purpose of experiencing physical sexual pleasure, including casual sex, using erotica/pornography and masturbating (Alexander & Fisher, 2003). In addition, these gender-based norms are theorised to be barriers to women's sexual health and well-being by inhibiting their initiative in directing sexual activity, refusing unwanted sex, and negotiating safe sex practices such as the use of condoms (Morokoff et al., 1997). As traditional gender norms link femininity with sexual passivity and ignorance, there is concern that internalisation of these norms has a negative effect on women's sexual agency and sexual health.

This chapter will provide a brief overview of the historical context for understanding women's sexuality according to traditional scripts and feminist theories. First this chapter will discuss the sexual scripts which have historically prescribed the ways in which men and women interact. Social constructs of femininity which have been theorised to shape young women's sexual development will also be explored as significant in shaping the ways women experience their bodies and their sense of self. This chapter will then introduce the concepts of sexual subjectivity and sexual self-efficacy as significant attributes counteracting norms of femininity.

Social Structures and Sexual Scripts

Sexual script theory was developed from social scripting theory which proposes people adopt scripts to derive meaning from their social interactions, behaviours, and

emotional responses (Simon & Gagnon, 1984; Wiederman, 2005). Social scripts are conceptualised as the precursor to social behaviour, much the same as language precedes speech (Simon & Gagnon, 1984). Just as social behaviour is characterised by interactions within varying social contexts, sexuality too is a variable phenomenon embedded in specific historical eras and cultural contexts. That is, people formulate their sexual identities through the roles they play, and the scripts they follow within any given culture according to local social norms and gender roles (Gagnon, 1990). As such, sexual script theory describes the way in which sexual behaviours and relationships tend to progress according to culturally bound social scripts. In Western societies this culture is referred to by feminist theorists as patriarchy. As an umbrella term 'patriarchy' is used to describe an institutionalised hierarchy in which legal, economic, educational, and religious institutes and ideologies afford men dominance and control over resources and women (Lerner, 1990).

In line with traditional gender norms, culturally normative scripts describe agentic and recreational sexual orientations for men (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002; DeLamater, 1987) while sexual norms for women promote a person-centered orientation towards sexual scripts with an emphasis on communion and relational intimacy (DeLamater, 1987; Sanchez et al., 2012; Simon & Gagnon, 1986). In contrast to masculine gender roles which are dominant and independent, traditional roles for women prioritise emotionality, dependence, and passivity (Walker, 1997). While gender differences in sexual attitudes and behaviours are frequently cited to be based on biological differences (Buss & Schmidt, 1993), these sexual differences might be better explained using social structuralist theories. Gender differences in sexual behaviours, attitudes, and self-conceptions may reflect internalisation of social conventions regarding gender roles and sexual norms which have over time shaped sexual behaviours and relationships to conform to traditional sexual scripts.

According to script theory, scripting shapes behaviour via cultural scenarios,

interpersonal scripts, and intrapsychic scripts (Simon & Gagnon, 1984). Cultural scenarios are the institutionalised systems governing social roles within given societies. These abstract scenarios reflect sociocultural norms, religious instructions, laws, and governance. They rarely however predict behaviour and are in general too ambiguous to be applied in all situations (Simon & Gagnon, 1984). Cultural scenarios thus describe the roles ascribed to actors based on demographics such as age, sex, race, as well as social rules, laws, and customs. However, they do not provide sufficient detail to guide and direct actual behaviour based on the varying contexts in which behaviour occurs (Wiederman, 2015).

Interpersonal scripts are created to resolve incongruence between cultural scripts and specific situations or encounters (Simon & Gagnon, 1984). Interpersonal scripts are shaped by dominant cultural norms and roles provided by cultural scenarios, however they allow individuals to write their own scripts to shape behaviours to align with cultural norms in specific situations (Wiederman, 2015). Consequently, previously enacted scripts are constantly modified and improvised to fit new and novel situations. Attending to previous scripts and modifying to adapt to specific situations and encounters has been labelled the intrapsychic level of script theory (Wiederman, 2015). As various situations and encounters with others are subject to modification in learned scripts, individuals engage in a form of internal rehearsal whereby through fantasy and the reorganisation of social and cultural expectations, they are able to realise their individual desires and wishes in relation to social ideals (Simon & Gagnon, 1984). This behavioural and reflective rehearsal reinforces culturally valued norms and values linking cultural scenarios with individual's attitudes (Hynie et al., 1997).

At the interpersonal level, culturally dominant sexual scripts influence sexual behaviours within sexual relationship through the prescription of culturally normative activity, whilst at the intrapsychic level, sexual scripts shape individual's perceptions,

behaviours, and emotional responses to sexual stimuli (Gagnon, 1990; Wiederman, 2005).

Past research has found people defer to gender stereotypes when describing men's and women's sexual scripts (McCabe, Tanner, & Heiman, 2010). These gender differences in sexuality have centred around themes of men as motivated sexually towards physical pleasure while women are focused on emotional outcomes (Dworkin et al., 2007). Historically young men have been encouraged to engage in sexual exploration free from the social sanctions and stigma directed towards young women. Masculine gender roles of independence and mastery, in conjunction with men's proclivity to engage in earlier and more frequent masturbation, results initially in a self-focused set of sexual scripts for young men, with sexual stimulation a physically gratifying experience occurring in isolation (Wiederman, 2005). Furthermore, early experience with masturbation teaches young men that their sexual pleasure is something they are in control of (DeLamater, 1987). In contrast, early sexual experiences for girls are shaped by feminine gender roles promoting values of collective experiences and self-control, and less experience with masturbation. As a result, men's sexual identities are formed in an open and accepting explorative sphere, with an emphasis on achieving orgasm and self-gratification, while women learn to experience their sexual selves interdependently (DeLamater, 1987).

Feminist theorists have argued the socialisation of women into passive and dependent sexual roles negatively affects their sexual health and wellbeing (Schick et al., 2008). For example, support for relational scripts has been found to be negatively associated with condom use during young women's sexual encounters (Hynie et al., 1998). Sexual scripts promoting men's sexual dominance may be harmful to women's sexual health if women are encouraged to submit to men's needs forgoing their sense of entitlement to pleasure (Dworkin et al., 2007). Past research has found women who engage in submissive sexual behaviours report finding arousal difficult to achieve, with this link between arousal

difficulties and sexual passivity mediated by less autonomy within participants' sexual relationships (Sanchez et al., 2006). Thus, norms of femininity promoting deference to men's needs reinforces a sexual inequality which constrains women's sexual agency and arguably exaggerates biological explanations for gender differences in sexual behaviours and motivations.

Femininity Socialisation and the Cost to Sexual Health

'Femininity ideologies' describe the cultural scenarios and interpersonal scripts governing acceptable roles and behaviours for women according to social norms (Curtin et al., 2011). A major concern expressed within the feminist framework is the role of gender inequities and power imbalances in shaping the psychological development of young women (Tolman, Impett, Tracy, & Michael, 2006). One of the central premises of this perspective is that women's sense of self and the development of their sexual identity is defined by their ability to forge and maintain close relationships (Impett et al., 2006). Further, social pressures to *be* feminine within interpersonal relationships encourages women to silence their thoughts and beliefs in order to avoid conflict (Gilligan, 1977; Impett et al., 2006). An example of the negative consequences of feminine scripts has been observed in findings where young women who feel they are unable to express their honest thoughts and opinions within close relationships also report being unlikely to act on their sexual desires including refusing unwanted sexual activity (Impett et al., 2006).

Femininity ideologies describe a cultural scenario which positions young women as sexually naïve (Curtin et al., 2011). According to the heterosexual sexual script, women must be sexually available, and yet they must not be too interested or willing. The pressure to conform to sociocultural ideals of femininity is most evident in adolescence where young women are encouraged to be the sexual gatekeepers in their relationships (Allen, 2012; Shulman & Horne, 2003), silencing their own needs and desires (Impett et al., 2006). For

example, focus groups exploring women's arousal processes report young women describe having to "put on the brakes" in their sexual encounters (Graham, Sanders, Milhausen, & McBride, 2004). That is, despite feeling aroused and sexually willing, they decline or control sexual activity within their relationships to protect their reputations. Furthermore, the young women in this study reported 'feeling desired' as very arousing, suggesting sexual responsiveness for these women may be dependent on extrinsic motivations rather than subjective needs.

The Feminine Body

Learning to live in a woman's body is a key developmental task identified within a feminist framework (Impett et al., 2006). According to theory, dominant cultural ideals of attractiveness shape young women's experiences with their bodies, encouraging them to conform to idealistic representations of beauty. Consequently, young women may internalise social messages commodifying women's bodies and taking on an objectified self-view (Impett et al., 2006).

Sexual objectification focuses on women's bodies as sexual objects for partner's sexual gratification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Objectification theory suggests cultural practices that emphasise women's appearance and potential sexual value, socialises girls and women to evaluate their own appearances and bodies through an external gaze rather than experiencing their embodied self (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Wood et al., 1997). For example, young women are frequently depicted as sexually desiring and desirable in magazines aimed at teenage girls (Jackson & Cram, 2003). Durham (1998) argues contradictory messages of women as sexually desirable, as depicted through overt sexually postured imagery, and advice for young women to withhold from sex, instructs young women to be alluring, yet responsible in rejecting the advances of sexually rampant young men. Theorists argue that as young women internalise these messages promoting women as

commodities for men to enjoy, their sense of self shifts to focus on being attractive and desirable to other, distancing themselves from their own subjective needs, wants, and experiences (Welles, 2005; Wood et al., 2007).

In theory, as young women internalise feminine gender norms and refuse wanted sexual activity in exchange for social desirability, they disconnect from their bodily sensations and desires (Crawford & Popp, 2003). This disassociation from one's own body negatively affects women's sexual experiences and satisfaction (Impett et al., 2006) potentially resulting in women being unable to voice or to even understand their own needs (Tolman, 2002). As such, women who have been socialised to understand their sexual identities to be desirable to others whilst at the same time ignoring their subjective feelings of desire and arousal, may come to experience their sexual needs as responsive to external rewards rather than internal motivations for sexual pleasure.

Experimental research has found inconsistencies between women's objective sexual arousal (as measured by genital vasocongestion) and their subjective reports of sexual arousal (see Chivers & Bailey, 2005; Chivers, Rieger, Latty, & Bailey, 2004; Chivers, Seto, & Blanchard, 2007). In a series of laboratory studies, Chivers and colleagues assessed men's and women's physiological and subjective arousal to a variety of visual sexual stimuli. Across studies men showed category specific patterns of arousal in line with their sexual preference (i.e., heterosexual men became aroused by videos depicting male-female and female-female intercourse, whereas gay men were aroused by male-male footage and not female-male). In contrast, women demonstrated physiological arousal to most of the sexual stimuli, including videos of mating bonobos. This was despite their reports of little to no subjective arousal. That is, whilst data recorded vaginal vasocongestion to a variety of sexual videos, the women themselves were unaware of their arousal responses.

The above finding is in complete contrast to the findings using male samples. Chivers,

Seto, Lalumière, Laan, and Grimbos (2010) found men consistently show greater concordance between genital and subjective arousal than do women. This sex difference in subjective-genital agreement may be due to differences in sexual development. Men's erections are more visible and easily observed than women's physiological processes and therefore women may not be as in tune with their arousal responses. Furthermore, women report masturbating less than men (Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Petersen & Hyde, 2010) which may contribute to a lack of awareness about arousal responses to sexual stimuli. Further, women's perceptions of their genitals may be tainted by cultural messages related to menstruation, pubic hair, and odour (Chivers et al., 2010) and these attitudes and beliefs may negatively affect women's body esteem (Baumeister, 2000) and sexual response (Curtin et al., 2011).

Therefore, this disconnection between body and mind could be explained by socialisation processes and psychological factors specific to women's sexual development which have overtime subverted women's sexual agency and subjectivity (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Kiefer, Sanchez, Kalinka & Ybarra, 2006)

Sexual Agency

Achieving sexual agency is becoming increasingly recognised as an important milestone in young women's sexual development (Tolman, 2006). Sexual agency incorporates awareness and ownership of one's sexual desire, initiative taking, and confidence to express sexual attitudes and behaviours, including abstaining from sexual activity (Averett et al., 2008). Sexual agency positions women as sexual subjects (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005) able to communicate their desires and needs (Fetterolf & Sanchez., 2015) and advocate for their sexual health (Curtin et al., 2011). As such, sexual agency is critical for promoting women's sexual health (Tolman & Porsche, 1998).

In recent years there has been an increased focus on women's sexual agency and subjectivity, particularly in relation to young women's self-concepts. For example, Breakwell

and Millward (1997) describe an agentic orientation in the sexual self-concepts of a sample of adolescent women. This sexually assertive dimension was associated with the pursuit of sexually pleasurable relationships independent of relational goals. Further research assessing the structure of the sexual self-concept in adolescent populations have also constructed dimensions measuring different aspects of sexual agency. For example, O'Sullivan and colleagues (2006) developed a scale in a sample of ethnically diverse 12-14-year-old girls measuring sexual arousability, sexual anxiety and sexual curiosity. Rostosky et al. (2008) assessed sexual self-efficacy in a sample of adolescents, while Aubrey (2007) conceptualised the sexual self-concept in terms of sexual self-esteem and sexual assertiveness in her study on the effects of television exposure on university aged women's sexual self-concept.

Indeed, sexual self-efficacy and sexual assertiveness are two of the more frequently studied facets of sexual agency (Curtin et al., 2011), where assertiveness facilitates goal pursuits and communication of sexual needs (Ménard & Offman, 2009; Morokoff et al., 1997) and self-efficacy instils a sense of confidence in enacting desired sexual and health protective behaviours (Rosenthal et al., 1991). Incorporating these attributes of assertiveness, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, the concept of sexual subjectivity is a facet of agency describing the awareness and embodiment of sexual needs and arousal responses, and the self-efficacy to actively seek and advocate for sexual experiences (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006). As such, research suggests sexual subjectivity is a key mediator for women's sexual satisfaction (Impett & Tolman, 2006).

Sexual Subjectivity

Sexual subjectivity is an intra-individual facet of sexuality acting as an anti-thesis to traditional objectification and commodification of women's sexuality. For women to embody their sexuality, voice their needs and desires, and advocate for their sexual health, they need to actively resist sociocultural norms of feminine passivity (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck,

2006; Schick et al., 2008). Support for this theory has been found in research where sexual subjectivity has been associated with younger women's rejection of the sexual double standard (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006). Further research with young women has found support for gender equality was associated with intrinsic motivations for sexual activity such as a subjective need (sexual subjectivity) or want to experience pleasure (intrinsic motivation) (Schick et al., 2008). Sexual subjectivity and intrinsic motivations were further associated with higher levels of sexual satisfaction, and participant reports of self-efficacy when advocating for the use of condoms in their relationships.

Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck (2006) constructed the Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory (FSSI) to assess the ways in which young women overcome sociocultural barriers to sexual agency and develop a positive sexual identity. Sexual subjectivity has been conceptualised to incorporate sexual body-esteem shaped by self-perceptions of attractiveness and desirability. The authors argue that internalising an objectified self-view is harmful to women's sexual well-being, and therefore appreciation of one's physical body independent of the appraisals of others is necessary for positive sexual health. Further, sexual subjectivity involves embodying sexual desire, and therefore women must feel of sense of entitlement to sexual pleasure and the self-efficacy in satisfying their sexual needs and desires. (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005).

Young women who embody their sexuality report they are more likely to spend time thinking and reflecting about their sexual motivations, experiences, and pleasure, and they are more likely to be knowledgeable about safe sex practices (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005). As a significant aspect of sexual agency, sexual subjectivity motivates women to advocate for their sexual health and pleasure (Martin, 1996).

Sexual Autonomy and Self-Efficacy

Sexual self-efficacy is a facet of sexual agency fostering feelings of capability to act

autonomously (Morokoff et al., 1997). As gender norms promoting feminine passivity deny women power and agency (Sanchez, Crocker, & Boike, 2005), they may adversely affect women's belief in their ability to act autonomously and assert their sexual needs within relationships (Impett et al., 2006). Autonomy is the belief that one's actions and behaviour are self-chosen, originating within oneself rather than from external sources (Sanchez et al., 2005). Sexual health may be contingent on autonomy insofar as sexual self-efficacy is determined by one's sense of ownership of sexual decision making and sexual choices. This ownership includes awareness of safe sex practices and commitment to caring for one's sexual health (Impett et al., 2006). Studies have shown adolescent girls who are assertive in their sexual behaviours feel confident in their ability to refuse unwanted sex (Rosenthal et al., 1991) while self-efficacy has been found to mediate the relationship between feminine gender norms and adolescent girl's ability to advocate for safe sex practices (Impett et al., 2006).

Research has found women with more sexual experience report feeling more self-efficacy in initiating sex (Morokoff et al., 1997). Moreover, the more sexual partners a young woman reported, the more assertive she recalled being in advocating for her rights to contraception use, asking her partner to meet her needs, and withdrawing from sexual activity when she felt it was not in her best interests (Rickert, Sanghvi, & Wiemann, 2002). Indeed, women's sexual agency and assertiveness has been found to be associated with greater sexual experience (Breakwell & Millward, 1997) with positive sexual self-concepts in adolescent women related to more frequent sexual activity, approach motivations to sexual activity, greater sexual satisfaction (Impett & Tolman, 2006) and a rejection of traditional gender norms (Tolman & Porsche, 1998). Thus, sexual agency defined by women's acknowledgement of desire and sexual embodiment facilitates a subjective and internal sense of empowerment (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005; Peterson, 2010; Thompson, 1990; Tolman, 2002).

While research to date has emphasised women's relational needs within sexual relationships (Basson, 2000; Peplua, 2003) these needs may be related to traditional scripts which have over time inhibited women's sexual freedom to explore their sexuality (Alexander & Fisher, 2003). Moreover, sexual empowerment and agency is likely a long term developmental process beginning in adolescence and shaped by experience and experimentation (Petersen, 2010). Research suggests sexual scripts may function variably at different stages of the lifespan (Wiederman, 2015) and according to relationship status (Sanchez et al., 2012). As such, sexual scripts may be more influential during the formative years of identity exploration (Simon & Gagnon, 1984) and the earlier stages of attraction and relationship initiation (Sanchez et al, 2012). Consequently, age and experience may afford women the opportunity to actively resist cultural scenarios and rewrite interpersonal scripts (Dworkin & O'Sullivan, 2005).

This thesis argues that sexual agency represents a rejection of traditional scripts and feminine ideologies. While sociocultural norms and femininity ideologies are associated with poorer sexual adjustment in young women, the current thesis is interested in the ways in which women are able to overcome these social proscriptions to enact their agency within sexual relationships. The following chapter will assess the role of traditional feminine norms in the construction of women's sexual self-schemas and argue for the inclusion of sexually agentic attributes within models for women's sexual self-concepts.

Chapter Four: Women's Sexual Self-Schemas

This chapter will introduce the sexual self-schema scale as a measure for the structure of women's sexual self-concepts. While the term sexual self-schema has frequently been used to refer to the sexual self-concept (Deutsch et al., 2013), the sexual self-schema describes a more specific model of the sexual self-concept focusing on the cognitive evaluations people make of their sexual self. In this chapter past research with the scale will be evaluated and critiqued including the gendered conception of women's sexual self-views, and an argument will be presented for the re-evaluation of the dimensions of the Sexual Self-Schema Scale.

Measurement of Women's Sexual Self-Schemas

In order to address a gap in theoretical frameworks for describing, explaining, and predicting women's sexuality, Andersen and Cyranowski (1995) developed the sexual self-schema theory to address individual differences in women's sexuality. This approach to studying the sexual self-concept was influenced by Markus' (1977) theory that the self-schema is comprised of domain specific cognitive generalisations which serve to organise and influence past, present, and future decisions and inferences about the self. According to Markus, these cognitive representations are drawn from evaluations of past experiences as well as generalisations about self-attributes and trait dispositions.

Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) argued that using a social cognitive approach to studying women's sexuality might elucidate meaningful differences within women's sexual behaviours, attitudes, and self-perceptions. Research has highlighted the role of sexual cognitions in shaping sexual behaviours and responses as a top-down process (Brotto et al., 2016). Therefore, as cognitive structures, sexual self-schemas describe a general disposition to interpret and respond to sexual cues in the environment. These cognitive generalisations are believed to be activated within the intrapersonal evaluations people make of their

sexuality, further guiding and shaping experiences within interpersonal relationships (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1998).

Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale

The Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale was developed by first identifying systematic differences between women's ideas and beliefs about what it means to be a sexual person (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). In accordance with Galton's (1884) lexical hypothesis that personality descriptions will be encoded as a single word (as cited in McAdams, 2009), the Sexual Self-Schema Scale is comprised of trait-adjectives most commonly associated with a semantic representation of what it is to be a sexual woman (Cyranowski et al., 1999).

The scale was constructed over a number of studies beginning with a large pool of 300 personality trait adjectives rated by university aged women according to the relevance of each trait in describing a sexual woman. Items with low scores were omitted in subsequent studies until a final 26 items remained. Using a principle axis factor analysis, the final scale is made up of three factors labelled 'passionate-romantic', 'open-direct', and 'embarrassed-conservative'. Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) predicted that sexual self-schemas would be "derived from past experience, manifest in current experience, [and be] influential in the processing of sexually relevant social information to guide sexual behaviour" (p. 1079). In order to test this theory, the relationship between factors and convergent measures were assessed, focusing on attitudes towards casual sex, current and lifetime sexual activities and behaviours including one night stands, as well as experiences with romantic relationships and passionate love.

The romantic-passionate dimension was the largest factor identified with ten items comprised of expressive attributes such as romantic, passionate, warm, and loving. In testing the construct validity for the scale Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) reported this dimension

is associated with passionate love towards sexual partners and sexual arousability.

The open-direct factor is made up of items describing a straightforward, frank, and outspoken dimension of women's sexual cognitions. This dimension describes an openness to sexual activity with significant convergent associations found with measures of sexual behaviour, including recent sexual activity, as well as number of sexual partners and love relationships (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). The authors suggest this dimension might influence women's openness to not only engage in sexual activity but also romantic relationships.

The final factor represents an embarrassed-conservative dimension of women's sexual self-schemas describing an embarrassed and self-conscious facet of the sexual self. When assessing convergent validity, this dimension was negatively associated with all sexual behavioural and attitudinal measures as well as scales assessing romantic love (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994).

While each factor describes a facet of the sexual self, the scale is interpreted by summing ratings from the two positive dimensions and subtracting scores from the negative dimension resulting in an overall schema score. Total scale scores are then assessed along a continuum with response patterns at the extreme ends differentiating between women holding either negative or positive self-schemas (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1998). Accordingly, the scale identified women with a positive sexual self-schema as someone who views herself as romantic and passionate, is open to sexual experiences and will generally not be limited by negative feelings including embarrassment and self-consciousness (Cyranowski et al., 1999). In contrast, women classed as having a negative sexual schema described their sexuality in terms of embarrassment and self-consciousness; reporting more behavioural inhibition and anxiety and viewing themselves as less romantic and passionate (Cyranowski et al., 1999).

In comparison to other models and measures for women's sexual self-concepts

(Deutsch et al., 2013; Vickberg & Deaux, 2005), the strength of the Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale lies in the ease in which women are able to describe their sexual self-views, drawing upon their sexual history, current attitudes and beliefs to make inferences about who they are as a sexual person. The scale has been validated as a reliable measure for assessing women's sexual self-concepts, as well as predicting sexual behaviour and responsiveness in university samples (Cyranowski et al., 1999). The scale has also been used to predict sexual function and responsiveness in clinical samples, including women with gynaecological cancers (Andersen, Woods, & Copeland, 1997; Cyranowski et al., 1999), and survivors of childhood sexual abuse (Meston, Rellini, & Heiman, 2006; Rellini & Meston, 2011). Further research has found negative schemas are associated with poor sexual adjustment in young women (Reissing, Laliberté, & Davis, 2005) with positive dimensions associated with body esteem and self-perceived attractiveness (Donaghue, 2009; Wiederman & Hurst, 1997).

These findings suggest women's sexual self-perceptions, as assessed on the scale, are a significant influence in mediating and facilitating sexual responsiveness within a number of different sexual contexts (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1998). Thus, the sexual self-schema scale has demonstrated its utility within the domain of women's sexual-self research as an evaluative and predictive measure of women's sexual behaviours. However, over time the factors derived from the scale and the archetypes defined for schematic women have become synonymous with the sexual self-schema concept itself. This has limited the construct from expanding and evolving to incorporate both changes within the social sphere as well as accounting for changes within women's sexual identities as they move through the lifespan.

According to the sexual self-schema model, the ideal sexual self-concept for women is built on a sexual openness and passion, however this sexual expression is embedded within the context of romantic relationships and emotional attachment. Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) noted that positive schematic women in their university sample reported more

extensive relationship histories. This, they suggest, reflects women's needs to foster romantic relationships. With women's self-esteem believed to be shaped by their ability to form and maintain interpersonal relationships, women's sexual self-schemas were described in part as motivational structures influencing intimate relationships to foster esteem needs (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1998). This positive profile reinforces gender stereotypes describing an idealised sexual self-concept for women that is interdependent with others.

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the gendered narrative for women's sexuality likely reflects sociocultural norms which have over time restricted the scope of women's sexual expression. While these factors derived from the Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale potentially reflect the normative values for women's sexuality prevalent at the time of the scale's construction, they might also be a function of sample characteristics associated with constructing a sexuality measure within a university setting.

Sexual Self-Schemas, Aging, Maturation, and Social Norms

Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) tested the validity of the SSSS with a small sample of sexually active older women (n = 21, age range 25-46 years, M_{age} = 34 years) documenting a link between sexual self-schema scores and women's satisfaction with sexual responsivity during the four phases of the sexual response cycle. Positive relationships were found between the loving- romantic factor and women's satisfaction with their capacity to experience desire and resolution. For the open-direct dimension positive associations were found with sexual desire and excitement, and for the embarrassed and conservative dimension, a negative relationship was reported with orgasm response and satisfaction with orgasm. Total scale scores were positively associated with self-reports of arousability as measured by the Sexual Arousability Inventory (Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976).

These findings suggest women's sexual self-concepts may be related to their evaluations of physical responsivity to sexual activity as they age. However, in contrast to

their undergraduate sample of women (n = 221) no significant relationships were found between older women's sexual self-schema scores and current sexual activities, a finding the authors suggest may be due to a small sample size and lack of power. Alternatively, they suggest sexual self-schemas may be unrelated to women's sexual behaviours as they age due to sexual constraints such as less sexual exploration and established sexual routines associated with long term relationships (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994).

As the sexual self-concept is an important predictor for sexual behaviour (Vickberg & Deaux, 2005) it is concerning that sexual self-concepts were not associated with the sexual behaviours of women in older age groups, particularly as the concept has been defined as a reference point for self-evaluations and predictions of behaviours for both the current and future sexual self (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). While these findings with a small sample of age diverse women support the scales utility in describing the sexual evaluations women make of their physiological responding, its explanatory power in terms of predicting the role of the sexual self-concept in mediating women's sexual needs as they age is limited.

Therefore, one of the limitations of the scale is the assumption that women's sexual self-concepts are developed during adolescence and young adulthood and that these self-perceptions remain fixed throughout the lifespan. Indeed, the sexual self-concept has been described as a fluid construct subject to modification based on experience (Winter, 1988). This might be particularly true for women whose sexuality has been described as malleable with the capacity to be modified based on external circumstances including relationship dynamics as well as sociocultural influences (Baumeister, 2000; Diamond, 2007; Garnets & Peplau, 2000). As such, a sexual self-schema construct built on the sexual evaluations of young women is limited in accounting for the variability in women's sexual experiences as a function of age and experience.

While the relational facets identified in the construction of the women's scale might describe younger women's motivations for engaging in sexual relationships (Sims & Meana, 2010), older women's sexual identities are likely shaped by a more extensive sexual and relational history (Meston et al., 2006). For example, research has highlighted the negative association between relationship duration and sexual frequency (Call, Sprecher, & Schwartz, 1995; Sims & Meana, 2010), while a positive relationship has been observed between relationship duration and sexual satisfaction in older couples (Heiman et al., 2011). As relationships progress, it is often found that sexual activity declines (Sims & Meana, 2010). Moreover, individuals who remarry show increases in the frequency of sex (Call et al., 1995). Despite this shift in the frequency of sexual activity, the satisfaction experienced within these long-term relationships appears to be enhanced as a function of relational longevity and/or maturation processes. As a reciprocal relationship exists between sexual desire, frequency, and satisfaction, fluctuations according to age and relationship factors may shape the evaluations women make of their sexual selves at different stages of the life span

McCall and Meston (2006) examined emotional and physical cues for sexual desire within relationships. They found that married women reported fewer cues for intimacy and emotional bonding than unmarried women. These findings are in contrast to previous research suggesting that women value intimacy and emotional closeness in their sexual relationships (Basson, 2000). Furthermore, research with older women and women in long term relationships has found themes of agency to be more important for sexual desire and satisfaction than themes of intimacy. For example, Hurlbert (1991) found women who were sexually assertive within their relationships communicated their sexual needs and reported more marital and sexual satisfaction compared to women who were sexually passive.

In terms of a lack of agency, Sims and Meana (2010) found married women described a loss of autonomy as contributing to their lowered levels of desire within their relationships.

As marriage transformed the nature of their relationship they moved from independence and freedom to commitment, routine, and responsibility. Whereas once sex had been about physical pleasure it was now about expressing love, and sometimes seen as an obligation to their partner. While emphasising intimacy in the relationship satisfied women's emotional needs, the change in sexual dynamics led to many women feeling a loss of individuality, and consequently a lack of desire. Winterich (2003) also found a lack of agency in her qualitative study with menopausal women in relation to sexual communication. For these women, a lack of self-efficacy in advocating for their changing sexual needs negatively affected their sexual satisfaction. These findings challenge the significance of a primary dimension for women's sexual self-schemas defined by relational motivations and suggest agency might be just as important in shaping women's sexual experiences and evaluations.

Hill (2007) suggests longitudinal or cross-sectional research may be beneficial in elucidating the structure of the sexual self-schema across the lifespan and in response to traditional gender roles. Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) concede the dynamic nature of sexual self-schemas may be influenced by changes in sexual behaviours over time, however to date this theory has not been tested. As a reciprocal relationship exists between one's self-views and behaviours, sexual self-perceptions may be fluid throughout the lifespan in response to developmental stages and significant life events as well as social norms and gender roles (Mueller, Rehman, Fallis, & Goodnight, 2016).

The Gendered Sexual Self-Schema

A sexual self-schema scale was also developed focusing on men's sexual self-perceptions (Andersen et al., 1999). The Men's Sexual Self-Schema Scale was constructed and validated using the same method as the women's scale. Similar to women's sexual self-schemas, the assessment of men's sexual self-views is comprised of a passionate-loving factor consisting of relationally focused self-attributes including passionate and romantic.

When validating the factors for the men's scale, this dimension was associated with sexual arousal and feelings of love towards sexual partner, as well as current and lifetime sexual behaviours (Andersen et al., 1999).

A second factor describes a powerful-aggressive dimension. The largest out of the three factors identified, this dimension is defined by an empowered, experienced, controlling, and individualistic facet of men's sexual self. When assessing convergent validity, this factor was associated with men's sexual behaviour histories and current sexual behaviours, number of lifetime partners, one night stands, and sexually coercive behaviour, as well as attitudes towards and experience with casual sex (Andersen et al., 1999).

The third factor describes an open-minded-liberal facet. This dimension was associated with men's sexual behaviour variables including one night stands, sexually coercive behaviour, as well as feelings of love towards sexual partner (Andersen et al., 1999).

According to Anderson and colleagues (1999) schematic men are those with high scores on the combined factors and these men tend to reflect on their sexuality in terms of passion and love, while at the same time seeing themselves as powerful, aggressive, arousable, and sexually liberal. Further, schematic men were sexually experienced both within and outside committed relationships. As such, the sexual self-schema scale for men is similar to the women's scale in that it describes desirable attributes which support traditional gender norms and sexual scripts, in this case socialising men to be sexual initiators (Dworkin & O'Sullivan, 2005) sexually coercive (Averett et al., 2008) and sexually available (Sakaluk, Todd, Milhausen, Lachowsky, & URGiS, 2014)

While both men's and women's sexual self-schemas encompass facets descriptive of expressive attributes, the scale for men comprises an active component which facilitates both romantic and instrumental sexual relationships (Andersen et al., 1999). In contrast, the romantic-loving, and open-direct facets of women's sexual self-schemas reinforces traditional

sexual scripts socialising young women to experience their sexuality within traditional committed relationships (DeLamater, 1986; Tolman, 2002).

Moreover, while research to date has emphasised women's relational needs within sexual relationships (Basson, 2000; Peplua, 2003) these needs may be related to traditional scripts which have over time inhibited women's sexual freedom to explore their sexuality (Alexander & Fisher, 2003). However, as research suggests sexual norms and scripts for women may be in a state of flux (Dworkin and O'Sullivan, 2005; Levant et al., 2012; Petersen & Hyde, 2010) the structure of women's sexual self-concepts may also have changed in recent years in response to increased opportunities to explore their sexuality and enact their agency within sexual relationships. As such, measures used to assess the structure of women's sexual self-concepts should reflect attributes associated with both traditional and non-traditional gender norms

Redefining Women's Sexual Self-Schemas

Extending upon the original men's and women's scales, a composite measure of the Sexual Self-Schema Scale was constructed with a factor analysis finding shared dimensions between genders (Hill, 2007). Similar to the initial factors observed by Andersen and colleagues, the composite scale contains three dimensions labelled loving-warm, reserved-conservative, and direct-outspoken. A comparison between male and female participants found small gender differences, with women scoring higher on the loving-warm and reserved-conservative factors, while both women and men showed similar scores on the direct-outspoken factor (Hill, 2007). These results suggest that women's sexual self-concepts are comprised of affective elements of love and warmth, as well as assertive characteristics associated with agency. In contrast to the original scale, this composite measure allows women to assess their sexual self-views with a broader range of descriptives not bound by culturally prescriptive norms for women's sexuality.

As described in the previous chapter, a more recent research trend has focused on the role of sexual agency in predicting women's sexual satisfaction (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005; Schick et al., 2008), however, as far as the author is aware, no studies to date have attempted to identify the cognitive component of sexual agency as it manifests in women's sexual self-schemas. This thesis proposes that social changes in recent years affording women more autonomy and agency in their professional and personal lives will be reflected in women's sexual behaviours and relationships. It is proposed that women's sexual self-schemas will incorporate elements of agency and sexual subjectivity which have not been identified previously due to limited response options available in the original women's measure.

As sexual agency positions women as sexual subjects (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006) able to communicate their desires and needs (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015) and advocate for their sexual health (Curtin et al., 2011), it is predicted that women who are sexually experienced and assertive will reflect on their sexuality in terms of independence and power, and these trait descriptives will be integrated into their sexual self-schemas.

The composite Sexual Self-Schema measure has been used in two independent samples of university students in the United States and Canada (Hill, 2007), as well as a measure of wellbeing in a sample of men and women with a sexually transmitted infection (Foster & Byers, 2016) and as a predictor variable for university students engaging in casual sex (Manthos, Owen, & Fincham, 2014). However, broader behavioural and attitudinal correlates assessing convergent relationships for sexual health and wellbeing have not yet been explored. This thesis will test the factor structure of the revised Sexual Self-Schema Scale in a contemporary and age-diverse sample of women, and will provide correlational data to assess the relationship between facets of the sexual self-schema and women's sexual health outcomes

Furthermore, while the structure of the sexual self-concept is theorised to comprise the cognitive schemas women hold of their sexual selves, it is predicted that personality traits and attributes will shape in part the behaviours and relationships they engage in and the sexual evaluations they make. As people reflect on who they are, they understand themselves in part through their interactions with others, and the trait characteristics that are most salient in their daily lives (McCrae & Costa, 1988). The following chapter will introduce personality traits and attributes identified in previous research as associated with women's sexual health. A psychosocial model will then be presented describing the ways in which personality traits and attributes might interact with social structures to influence women's sexual experiences and sexual self-concepts.

Chapter Five: Personality Theories and Social Structures

While past research has documented the influence of personality traits on life experiences relating to health, well-being, and job satisfaction (Costa, Fagan, Piedmont, Ponticas, & Wise, 1992), knowledge of individual differences in promoting positive sexual health outcomes is limited in scope. Historically, Freud proposed that sexual instincts were the impetus for personality development (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). More contemporary research has shifted the focus to study the ways personality traits influence sexuality (Costa et al., 1992).

Trait theory is lexical in its approach to studying personality, aiming to describe people's behaviours as they occur in everyday language (Noftle & Shaver, 2006). According to McCrae and Costa (1999) personality traits are the "individual difference variables" (p. 142) which characterise people "in terms of relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions" (p. 139). Eysenck (1976) asserted that the variability within human sexual behaviour had not been adequately explained by research thus far, and that individual differences in personality traits may account for some of this variability.

Traits associated with gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity have also been implicated in sexual health outcomes, particularly for women. While trait theory makes assumptions of the heritability of personality dimensions, personal attributes associated with sex-typed stereotypes are believed to be influenced by sociocultural factors.

This chapter will provide a brief overview of the trait dispositions and personal attributes that are associated with men and women's sexuality. Chapter three introduced sexual scripts and femininity ideologies as social structures derived from traditional gender norms which socialise women to be submissive and men to be powerful and sexually dominant (Rosenthal et al., 2012). This chapter will introduce agency and communion as personal attributes associated with traditional sex-role stereotypes embedded within social

structuralist theories of gender, and discuss the potential role of personality attributes in shaping the way women view themselves as sexual people

Personality Traits and Sexuality

Eysenck (1976) first correlated dimensions of personality with sexual variables, reporting a link between personality traits and sexual functioning. He found women who scored high on Neuroticism reported less sexual experience than their more emotionally stable counterparts, while men scoring high on Extraversion, characterised by sensation seeking and socially driven behaviour, reported a more extensive sexual repertoire. Eysenck (1976) predicted that in comparison to introverts, extraverts will engage in sexual intercourse at a younger age, will have sex more often, with a variety of partners, and with more varied and longer fore-play (Eysenck, 1976). These predictions have been supported in subsequent research (Barnes, Malamuth, & Check, 1984) and can be explained by the extraverts' sociable and person-oriented trait dispositions - extraverts actively seek out social interactions and interpersonal relationships (Costa et al., 1992).

Extending upon Eysenck's three factor model, the Big Five model of personality traits is comprised of five factors labelled Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Research with the five-factor model has attempted to identify and understand the personality traits significant in the shaping of sexual behaviours and attitudes. Using a measure for the Big Five and a sexual functioning scale, Costa and colleagues (1992) found women scoring high on the self-consciousness facet of Neuroticism tended to have less sexual experience than women scoring low on self-consciousness. In contrast, women scoring high on the activity facet of Extraversion tended to be more sexually experienced than women scoring low on activity. While there were no other significant correlations between personality dimensions and women's sexual functioning and sexual satisfaction, the dimension of extraversion was

predictive of men's positive affect, body image, and a variety of sexual behaviours (Costa et al., 1992).

Further research with a university sample of women has found young women who score high on Extraversion report more lifetime sexual partners and more frequent sexual intercourse, sexual thoughts and arousal (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). These findings are in contrast to findings from a sample of older women accessing a sexual behaviour outpatient clinic, where neuroticism was more predictive of sexual behaviours (Costa et al., 1992). However, cross-sectional research with non-clinical women found scores on Neuroticism decline after the age of 30, suggesting that the association between neuroticism and older women's sexual health is related to their clinical status rather than age (Srivastava, John, Gosling, & Potter, 2003).

Five-Factor Theory Personality System

Trait theory has been criticised for its narrow approach to describing behaviour (see McCrae & Costa, 1999). Trait theorists rarely elaborate on the social, cultural, political, and environmental influences on trait expression. Critics argue trait findings and their associated implications need to be situated within a system that describes their influence on behaviours and attitudes within the broader context of people's lives. McCrae and Costa (1999) propose a Five-Factor Theory personality system (FFT) comprising three core components which might describe the interaction of personality with both social and self-structures.

The first of the core components are basic tendencies, which are evidenced at the trait level. Second are characteristic adaptations as the expression of traits in social contexts, while the final core component is the self-concept (see Figure 1.). These core components are linked with dynamic processes which include the biological bases to trait dispositions. External influences include situational factors such as major life events and cultural settings, while the objective biography refers to the affective-evaluation of personal and cultural

factors which also influence behaviours.

According to this model, basic tendencies are the five factors of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism, and characteristic adaptations are the expression of traits in behaviours, attitudes, social roles, and interpersonal relationships, which are reflected upon and internalised into the self-concept. The self-concept consists of cognitive-affective evaluations individuals maintain in the form of self-schemas that are developed through interaction with the social world. This self-knowledge guides and organises information processing when encountering new situations (Cervone & Pervin, 2013).

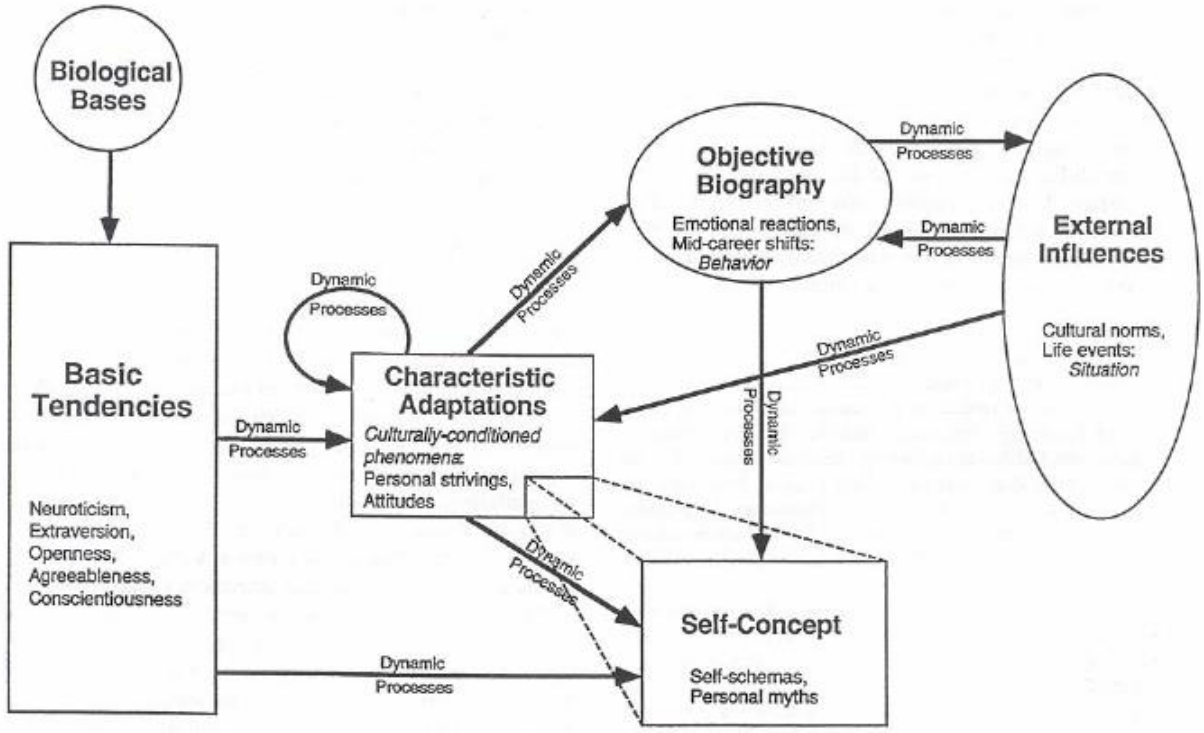

Figure 1. Five Factor Theory of personality. Reprinted from "A five-factor theory of personality," by R.R. McCrae and P.T. Costa Jr, 1999, *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, *2*, p. 142

This system of personality is influenced by the social setting in which behaviour occurs and is a dynamic model insofar as social situations are variable, social roles and expectations are fluid, and therefore characteristic adaptions are expected to be variable over

time. Whilst personality traits form a distinct component of a person's psychological profile, they are theoretically related to the self-concept insofar as they influence individual's behaviours and attitudes through the expression of trait dispositions in varying contexts.

If we were to slightly modify this model replacing the self-concept with the *sexual* self-concept, a model for the influence of personality traits on women's sexual self-schemas can be explored. Hypothetically, personality traits will influence behaviour, with these characteristic adaptations shaping self-perceptions incorporated into the sexual self-concept. As this involves dynamic processes, a reciprocal relationship occurs where the sexual self-schema guides future behaviours reinforcing an individual's characteristic adaptions and personal narrative. The system is further influenced by external factors including personal life events such as sexual socialisation and intimate relationships, as well as dominant socio-cultural norms for sexual behaviours. For the present purposes, this thesis is concerned with the ways in which personality dispositions might mediate external influences relating to traditional gender norms to shape women's sexual self-concepts.

Big Five Stability and Fluidity Over Time

Traditionally, personality traits have been considered stable across the lifespan (Cervone & Pervin, 2013), although some intergenerational variability has been reported, with older adults scoring higher on Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, and lower on Extraversion, Openness, and Neuroticism than younger adults (Costa & McCrae, 1994). While these findings may suggest personality changes throughout the lifespan as a result of maturation processes (i.e., people become more agreeable, less anxious, and less excitable as they age) they may also be the result of cohort effects.

Trait theorists have been relatively unconcerned with social influences of personality focusing instead on trait heritability. More recent research however suggests personality development across the lifespan may be related to ways in which individuals interact with

their social environments (Cervone & Pervin, 2013; Twenge, 1997).

For example, a longitudinal study with college aged women that began in the 1960's documented changes in personality across a 40-year time period (Helson & Kwan, 2000). Using the California Psychological Inventory (CPI; Gough & Bradley, 1996) a sample of 140 women born in the mid to late 1930's completed the CPI at ages 21, 27, and 43 years. The CPI assesses personal dispositions that manifest within social situations measuring three main themes of norm-orientation, social interaction, and cognitive breadth (Helson & Kwan, 2000). Norm-oriented measures include self-reports of responsibility, self-control, tolerance, flexibility, and femininity, and these attributes are correlated with Big Five traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. The social interaction subscales are associated with extraversion as they measure both social assurance and social vitality. Social assurance assesses agentic attributes including dominance, confidence, leadership, independence, and status. Social vitality refers to interest and emotional investments in social interactions including sociability, empathy, social presence, and self-acceptance.

Comparing scores on the CPI at different age points, changes in personality were observed between the ages of 21 and 27 years with women scoring higher on norm-oriented measures of self-control, tolerance, and social maturity as they aged. Scores on measures of social assurance and vitality showed no increase over the time period between the ages of 21 and 27 years. Interestingly, there was no increase on scores of independence as might be expected during a period when young adults are establishing their own identities and career paths (Arnett, 2006; Erikson, 1959). Rather, an increase in femininity was observed over this time period, describing increased sympathy, altruism, nurturance, and vulnerability. The authors proposed these findings support theories that young women during this stage of life are influenced more by sex-role orientations and gender roles as women prepare for parenthood (Helson & Moane, 1987).

Observations at age 43 found self-reports of femininity had significantly decreased, with women at this age scoring higher on dominance and independence (Helson & Moane, 1987). The authors argued the developmental period between ages of 27 years and 43 years which were associated with a decrease in feelings of vulnerability and an increase in confidence and independence, resulted in a shift in women's self-perceptions which led to positive self-evaluations. Women's self-concepts at age 43 were associated with perseverance and achievement, self-esteem and autonomy.

As women's scores on femininity decreased from the ages of 27 through to 43 years, the authors suggest that changes in personality over this time period were associated with role changes within the family unit, with women's reports of traditionally masculine oriented traits of confidence, independence, and assertiveness increasing concurrent to decreases in parental responsibilities (Helson & Moane, 1987). The authors suggested that during this period of time women were able to focus on their career trajectories as their children became more independent, and this may have given rise to greater confidence and autonomy to pursue more independent and self-focused goals (Helson, Pals, & Solomon, 1997). The authors concede however, that these variations in personality over time reflect more of a normative maturational process, as changes in personality dispositions were observed for all women in the sample regardless of parental status and trajectory of vocational achievements (Helson & Moane, 1987).

An alternative explanation suggests that as these changes in personality occurred alongside the rise of the women's movement, this shift in the socio-political climate influenced the self-perceptions women held (Helson & Kwan, 2000; Twenge, 1997). These women born prior to the baby boom came of age during the 1960's. This was a time of great social change where the influence of the women's movement saw more women entering the work force with changes observed in family size and stability. In theory, as the boundaries

became blurred between traditional social roles for men and women the distinction between gendered attributes may also have attenuated.

Support for this explanation is observed in longitudinal studies which have found increases in women's assertiveness and independence in samples of women with access to education, family planning, and where career pursuits were more readily available (Helson et al., 1997). A cross-temporal meta-analysis with studies from the 1960's through to the 1990's found cohort effects for university aged women's scores on Extraversion, with a progressive increase in mean scores for each sample over time (Twenge, 2001). At the same time, women's endorsement of traditionally masculine sex-role attributes also increased (Twenge, 1997). These changes occurred alongside shifts in social norms and structures which beginning in the 1960's began placing an emphasis on individualism and achievement. Twenge (1997) suggests cultural changes may have led to changes in women's personality traits and attributes. Extraversion, which is associated with assertiveness and dominance (Twenge, 1997), social competence, and power (John & Srivastava, 1999), as well as sex-role stereotypes of agency may have increased in women's self-reports in response to increased opportunities within education settings and the workforce.

Further evidence to support the fluidity of trait expression comes from research with a large sample of North American men and women who self-reported higher scores on Agreeableness between the ages of 31 and 60 in comparison to participants aged 18-30 years (Srivastava et al., 2003). This, the authors suggest, may be related to the role of parenting and child-rearing, with higher scores on conscientiousness over the same age range associated with professional development.

These findings highlight the variability of the expression of personality traits as a function of age, sex, and social roles. Moreover, they underscore the ways in which the sociocultural climate might facilitate or inhibit trait expression in culturally appropriate

behaviours. As described in earlier chapters, research suggests social roles and sexual norms for women have changed in recent history (Levant et al., 2012). Further, sexual scripts may also have evolved beyond traditional scripts to include sexually assertive and agentic roles for women (Dworkin & O'Sullivan, 2005). As these social changes have taken place, evidence would suggest concurrent shifts in personality dimensions associated with women's agency have also occurred. Taken together these findings highlight the potential for psychosocial variables to influence women's sexual behaviours, the relationships they engage in, and the sexual evaluations they make of themselves and others.

Social Structures, Gender Identity, and the Sexual Self-Concept

Social structuralist theories identify a gender hierarchy based on the social positions of men and women, with men traditionally holding more power and status than women and controlling more resources (Eagly & Wood, 1999). As described in chapter two, these social structures have been used to justify the sexual scripts which have theoretically shaped the sexual dynamics between men and women. According to these theories, biological factors such as men's greater physical strength and size, and women's capacity for child-bearing and lactation have prioritised the roles in the social structure to which women and men are assigned. Theorists argue that men's accommodation to social roles of elevated status and power has produced more dominant behaviour, whereas women's accommodation to roles with lesser power and status has produced more submissive behaviours. Over time psychological dimensions of masculinity and femininity have come to define these differences between men and women (Spence & Helmreich, 1978).

Gender stereotypes are shaped by people's perceptions about the characteristics of others which are observed through their behaviours (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). Abilities and attributes associated with behaviours and activities that people engage in are then inferred to be innate to that group of people. Further, people's behaviours and activities tend to be

associated with their social roles, and therefore stereotypes tend to reflect judgements about groups of people based on their association with certain roles within society (Eagly & Steffen, 1984).

Throughout history women have been typically observed nurturing and caring for infants, and working within the domestic sphere, and so observations about women have led to a stereotype of women as communal. In contrast, men have been observed establishing crops and business for commerce, in politics and warfare, and other independent activities associated with agency. Gender stereotypes thus tend to ascribe communal attributes and qualities to women and agentic orientations to men (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). As men and women enact stereotypical behaviours they reinforce gender stereotypes as fundamental differences in men and women's underlying personalities (Spence & Bucknal, 2000).

Much research into gender identities has focused on stereotypical personality traits for masculinity and femininity (see Bem, 1974; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp 1975) with individuals endorsing sex-typed norms more likely to incorporate these stereotypical aspects into their sense of self (Wood et al., 1997). As these traits are internalised into one's self-concept, they are predicted to shape cognitions, affective-evaluations, and behaviours in line with cultural norms (Wood & Eagly, 2015). In much the same way as feminist theorists propose ideologies of femininity dictate acceptable sexual behaviours and relationships for women (Curtin et al., 2011), sex-role stereotypes are also thought to mediate women's sexual expression and influence their sexual self-concept (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002).

Masculinity and Femininity, Agency and Communion

Historically masculinity and femininity were theorised to be anchors on a continuum (Lippa, 1996, 2001). With the development of sex-role scales in the 1970's and an increased interest in the study of androgyny, masculinity and femininity were reconceived as independent dimensions (Bem, 1974; Spence et al., 1978). Scales designed to measure these

constructs included items which assess identification with culturally desirable attributes associated with stereotypes of what it is to be a man or a woman. For example, the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974) defines masculinity by traits such as aggressiveness and independence, whereas femininity is described by emotionality and kindness. Spence and Helmreich (1978) labelled these constructs as agency or instrumentality for the masculinity scale, and communion, or expressivity for the femininity scale.

Initial support for these dimensions found men and women generally differ on a number of personality attributes, with men scoring higher on measures associated with agency including independence, confidence, activity, and dominance. In contrast, women tend to be more expressive, with higher scores on interpersonal attributes such as kindness, compassion, and understanding (Leary & Snell, 1988; Wood & Eagly, 2015).

Past research with sex-role questionnaires have supported the predictive ability of masculinity to assess agentic behaviours and femininity to predict communal behaviours (Taylor & Hall, 1982), as well as relational interactions and satisfaction (Wood & Eagly, 2015). Further, self-report measures of gender identity have been relatively consistent over the years in differentiating genders on personality attributes (Lippa, 2001), and have been used in research assessing masculinity and femininity in sex differences and gender roles (Ward, Thorn, Clements, Dixon, & Sanford, 2006).

Gender differences in sexual behaviours have also been attributed to stereotypically masculine and feminine personality attributes. As men tend to score higher than women on instrumentality, traditionally masculine attributes of confidence and assertiveness have been inferred to facilitate more liberal sexual attitudes and promote sexual exploration for men (Leary & Snell, 1988). Leary and Snell (1988) argue people who score high on instrumentality are more confident and individualistic and therefore may be more likely to

reject social and moral sexual norms such as proscriptions regarding casual sex, masturbation, and pornography use. As women have historically been encouraged not to engage in such self-focused behaviours (Alexander & Fisher, 2003) instrumentality is a dimension of personality which may facilitate greater sexual exploration for women.

Fink, Brewer, Fehl, and Neave (2007) provide support for this theory with their age diverse sample of German men and women, reporting women who scored higher on instrumentality reported a greater number of lifetime partners whereas the expressive dimension was unrelated to women's sexual outcome variables. Further research has found women identifying with instrumental traits report more frequent use of erotica and pornography as well as a broader repertoire of sexual behaviours, number of lifetime sexual partners, and lack of sexual anxiety (Leary & Snell, 1988).

Thus, as women internalise attributes associated with instrumentality they may be more likely to resist stereotypical gender roles transcending norms for women's sexual behaviour. As external influences, personal dispositions of agency and instrumentality might mediate the relationship between women's sexuality and social norms indirectly influencing the sexual self-concept.

The Big Five and Sex-Role Stereotypes

Digman (1997) suggested that the five factors of the Big Five trait taxonomy may give rise to two higher order factors, with Extraversion and Openness converging to form a superiority-striving, or agentic factor related to power. As factors of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Emotional Stability (inverse neuroticism) comprise traits associated with social interest and interpersonal relationships, these three dimensions have been theorised to converge to form a superordinate factor of communion (Digman, 1997; McAdams, 1985).

Indeed, the instrumental and expressive dimensions of the Personal Attributes

Questionnaire have been found to correlate with facets of the Big Five personality traits (Lippa, 1996), suggesting identification with sex-role stereotypes may be influenced by one's trait disposition. As extraversion is associated with norms of masculinity (John & Srivastava, 1999), with past research highlighting the relationship between extraversion and men's sexual behaviours (Costa et al., 1992), extraversion may also be associated with sexual health outcomes for women promoting sexual agency.

Using the Five-Factor Theory as a guide, this thesis aims to assess the ways in which personality traits interact with social roles in order to understand the psychosocial processes which might influence women's experience with their sexuality. Theoretically, extraversion and instrumentality might shape women's approaches to their sexual relationships, assisting them as they navigate and negotiate cultural and social norms to experience their sexuality with agency.

Chapter Six: Social Structures and Sexual Agency

The previous chapters have described the traditional gender norms, sex-role stereotypes and sexual scripts which according to theorists have shaped women's sexuality over time. As traditional norms and sexual scripts have positioned women's sexuality as relationally focused, women have been discouraged from instrumental sexual activities such as pornography consumption, masturbation, and casual sex (Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Conley, Zeiger & Moors, 2012). Evidence has also been presented suggesting these norms for women's sexuality have changed over the course of the 21st century (Levant et al., 2012; Petersen & Hyde, 2011). Theoretically women's increased presence in the work force and higher educational achievements has led to more female autonomy resulting in a shift in traditional gender roles (Levant et al., 2012). Because of this increased independence, women's sexual expression may also have evolved to include non-traditional behaviours and permissive attitudes. However, despite these social changes, research suggests women are still perceived to be judged more harshly for deviating from traditional scripts and engaging in non-traditional sexual relationships (Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Marks & Fraley, 2005; Milhausen & Herold, 2002; Rudman, Fetterolf, & Sanchez, 2012).

This chapter will introduce the sexual double standard as a potential social barrier to women exploring their sexual agency. According to this theory, the sexual double standard reinforces traditional scripts which position women's sexuality as relationally focused due to the stigma associated with challenging sexual norms. Ambivalent sexism will also be introduced as a theoretical framework which might partially explain the social processes reinforcing the sexual double standard and discouraging women from enacting their agency in sexual relationships.

Sexual Norms

Historically the sexual double standard referred to a moral code whereby women were

expected to abstain from sexual relationships until they married while men were granted more freedom to engage in non-relational sexual activities (Haavio-Mannila & Kontula, 2003). Over time premarital sex has become more acceptable for women in the context of a committed relationship (Hynie et al., 1998) however contemporary sexual standards may still operate with different criteria for men and women's engagement in non-relational and instrumental sexual activities (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002; Bordini & Sperb, 2013; Walker, 1997). These sexual standards have been shaped over time by traditional norms dictating how men and women should behave and sexual scripts describing how men and women typically behave (Lai & Hynie, 2011).

Scripts for sexual behaviours and relationships have been sold on the premise that men possess a much stronger sex drive than women whose drive is focused on interpersonal connection (Lai & Hynie, 2011). While there is some evidence that men hold more permissive sexual attitudes and engage in greater frequencies of masturbation and casual sex, critics argue sociocultural norms have limited women's opportunities to explore their sexuality outside of traditional roles (Leiblum, 2002). For example, Sakaluk and colleagues (2014) found men and women supported gendered sexual scripts with men's sex drive described as physical while women's sexual motivations were described as emotionally oriented. However, in this same study, participants then described the negative repercussions for women who enjoy sex. As one male participant reported "single women that have a lot of sex are labelled as sluts," (Sakaluk et al., 2014, p. 522). Furthermore, men perceived women who dressed sexily or provocatively to be asking for sex, and these women were expected to follow through with sexual activities or risked being called a tease. In contrast women's reputations were protected by enacting their sexuality according to traditional relational scripts.

Social Structures and the Sexual Double Standard

According to social structuralist theories, the sexual double standard is a cultural scenario reinforcing control and exploitation of women's sexuality (Baumeister, 2000). However, there is debate as to whether it is men or women who impose and reinforce these restrictive norms (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002). Female control theory argues that rather than men imposing restrictions on women's sexual expression, it is other women who stigmatise sexually permissive women in order to safe guard their male partners (Rudman et al., 2012). According to this theory, women support a sexual double standard using gossiping, name calling, and social exclusion motivated by fear that promiscuous women may steal sexual partners and providers (Zaikman & Marks, 2014).

The motivations for this fear can be explained by social exchange theory where sexual availability is a resource women possess that men want. Historically women have been less educated and employable than men and so theoretically have relied on using sex as a form of currency in exchange for financial security (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012). Accordingly, as access to sex increases, price decreases, therefore it is in women's interest to restrict the availability of sex in order to ensure the price stays high and they can secure financial security and emotional fidelity within committed relationships.

There is some support for female control theory with research showing women are more likely to endorse the sexual double standard than are men (Oliver & Hyde, 1993) although these attitudes seem to have dissipated in the past twenty years (Petersen & Hyde, 2010). Milhausen and Herold (1999) found young women believed it was other women who enforced the sexual double standard through gossip and threat to reputation, and whilst participants believed a sexual double standard exists, they did not apply this double standard to their own sexuality.

Rudman and colleagues (2012) found no support for female control theory in their

sample of university aged men and women. In contrast they found men supported a double standard for sexual behaviour more so than women, and this was mediated by men's hostile sexism. However, both women and men reported discouraging female friends and relatives from engaging in casual sex due to social stigma and rape myths. These beliefs aim to control women's sexual behaviours with the threat of violence and victim blaming for non-adherence to traditional sexual norms.

According to Rudman and colleagues (2012), it is men who have over time sought to control women's sexuality. Male control theory is situated within evolutionary theory and explains sexual inequalities as a result of divergent mating strategies over the course of human evolution. This theory rests on the belief that historically women were naturally non-monogamous and open to having sex with many partners. In response men attempted to control women's sexuality with the implementation of the sexual double standard and the perpetuation of rape myths in order to ensure paternity and protect property rights (Rudman et al., 2012). Further, as men have historically held all forms of political power, they have had the potential to impose penalties on women's sexuality through control of access to contraceptives and abortion (Rich, 1980), and honour killings associated with premarital sex (Rudman et al, 2012), whilst permitting themselves greater freedom.

Male control theory also suggests women's greater sexual capacity was intimidating for men's sexual identity, with this threat to masculinity resulting in men's feelings of inferiority. As a consequence, there was an increased need for men to maintain control and possession of women to prevent them from seeking sex with other men (Baumeister & Twenge., 2002). Sherfey (1966) argues the female sexual drive is so strong and insatiable that it posed a threat to the social order and civilisation of modern human history. According to Sherfey (1966) women in antiquity were similar to other female primates who would have sexual intercourse up to 50 times a day during oestrus. This not only exhausted male partners

but caused social chaos. With women designated as carers and homemakers within the social hierarchy, an unrestricted sexual appetite threatened the stability of modern civilisation and undermined men's needs for power and dominance.

Contemporary Western cultures however have seen women achieving higher education levels and financial independence (Levant et al., 2012) with many changes occurring in the way women act and are perceived (Haavio-Mannila & Kontula, 2003). Thus, female control and social exchange theories are limited in their explanatory power. Rather, these findings highlight the cultural scenarios and dominant sexual scripts in play reinforcing a sexual double standard by rewarding women for adhering to gender roles whilst punishing those who deviate. That women may be more inclined to experience their sexuality within relationships speaks more to the social conventions of sexual norms than to biological or evolutionary differences between men's and women's sexual and relational needs. Female control theory may be related to deeply ingrained socialisation processes that have over time reinforced a sexual double standard by demonstrating the negative consequences for women who challenge the gender hierarchy. That is, women may discourage other women from sexually permissive behaviour as a protective measure so that they may avoid the stigma associated with violating sexual norms (Rudman et al., 2012).

Progressive Values in Western Culture

According to social structural theory (Schmitt, 2005) women in cultures with pervasive sex-role ideologies who have less political and economic independence and are reliant upon men should demonstrate more conservative orientations towards casual sex. Conversely, women in more egalitarian cultures with greater economic freedom and reproductive control may also have greater sexual freedom, and these cultures should demonstrate smaller gender differences in sexually permissive attitudes and behaviours (Schmitt, 2005). Thus, gender equality may be associated with fewer traditional gender roles

and social norms. For example, Gaughan (2002) found that women with higher educational achievements and prestigious jobs were less likely to be married. Similarly, Schmitt (2005) found gender differences in permissive sexual attitudes and behaviours were smaller in cultures where women had increased relational and socio-political freedom.

Past research examining gender differences in permissive orientations towards casual sex have found that men hold more permissive attitude, are more likely to accept offers of casual sex than women, and report more frequent fantasising about multiple sexual partners than do women (Clark & Hatfield, 1989; Schmitt, 2005). However, research suggests attitudes towards casual sex have become increasingly more liberal (Alison & Risman, 2013) particularly amongst university aged cohorts (Jonasan & Marks, 2009). Research with university samples have found both young women and men engage in casual sex or 'hooking up' short term relationships (Maticka-Tyndale, Herold, & Oppermann, 2003; Paul, McManus,& Hayes, 2000). Further, research with college aged students has found no differences in psychological well-being and self-esteem when comparing students who engage in casual sex with students in committed relationships (Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009). Moreover, contemporary commentary suggests the scope of women's sexual behaviours have expanded over time to include more sexual experimentation, including the use of online dating and chat rooms, as well as pornography use. Women are also delaying marriage, as well as choosing cohabitating and polyamorous relationships (Leiblum, 2002).

These findings suggest that as gender equality increases, the social control of women's sexuality decreases. That is, as women become more independent and self-sufficient in their working lives, they rely less on men for financial support and are therefore tied less to traditional monogamous relationships allowing for more sexual exploration (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002). Nonetheless, research suggests social norms may still operate

to impose separate standards for the sexual behaviours and relationships men and women engage in (Bordini & Sperb, 2013).

Sexism as a Mechanism for Control

Social role theory predicts that as social roles change over time and group members are observed engaging in behaviours incongruent with old roles, the stereotypes associated with group membership will also change. A barrier to stereotype change is the resistance a group faces as they enact new roles. This role incongruity between the stereotypical characteristics that a group is assigned and the attributes of the new roles they wish to engage in can lead to prejudice and backlash (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). For example, past research has found women who are assertive and dominant are perceived as less 'nice' and more discriminated against in their application for managerial positions described as feminine roles (Rudman & Glick, 1999).

Research has also focused on the stigma associated with engagement with casual sex. Conley, Zeiger, and Moors (2012) report women are subject to more negative evaluations for accepting offers of casual sex, including perceptions that they are less intelligent, more promiscuous, and psychologically unstable. To illustrate further, ethnographic research with 16 to 18-year-olds found young women reported that girls who are sexually curious, adventurous, or active outside the boundaries of intimate relationships are often labelled as deviant, with terms such as slut, slag, and whore used to describe a woman who deviates social prescriptions of femininity (Jackson & Cram, 2009). Within group discussions one young woman articulated how the sexual revolution saw increased opportunities for women, encouraging them to seek out higher education, careers, and material possessions, and yet if they pursue non-traditional sexual relationships they are labelled a slut (Jackson & Cram, 2009). These focus groups also uncovered themes of agency and resistance to the sexual double standard with young women describing themselves as sexually curious and

knowledgeable and using humour to subvert punitive attitudes. However, these young women reported they were less likely to accept an offer for casual sex in anticipation of the stigma and backlash associated with sexually permissive behaviours.

Further experimental research with a university aged sample has found both men and women who were described as sexually agentic in terms of dominance, assertiveness and aggression were considered worse romantic partners compared to those described low in agency (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015). In this person perception experiment, agentic targets were perceived to be sexually selfish and to practice safe sex behaviours less frequently, with women perceived to be more promiscuous when compared to men. While sexual agency was also associated with sexual desirability in this college aged sample, the perceived costs of sexual agency for women included anticipated negative evaluations in terms of violating traditional sexual norms. Conley et al. (2012) argue that stigmatising evaluations and labelling reduce the odds that women will engage in non-traditional sexual behaviours.

Ambivalent Sexism

Ambivalent sexism is founded upon social structuralist theories of patriarchal control (Lee, Fiske, Glick, & Chen, 2010). Accordingly, ambivalent sexism reinforces gender inequality promoting stereotypical attitudes and beliefs, resulting in the complementary process of punishing women perceived to be challenging men's status and power with hostility, while rewarding women with benevolence for maintaining the status quo (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Benevolent sexism positions women as the weaker sex, in need of protection and adoration. Women who comply with traditional norms of femininity are rewarded for their submissive and non-challenging behaviour by being placed on a pedestal, worshiped and adored. Conversely, hostile sexism is directed towards women who are considered powerful and independent as they are perceived to be threats to men's social control (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Where patriarchy constructs benevolent sexism as justification for men to

control power and resources, hostile sexism seeks to supress women's agency in order to uphold patriarchy.

Ambivalent sexism is structured according to three conceptual domains. Patriarchy can be either protective or dominant and acts as the prevailing social system rewarding women for subordination. Gender differentiation is the second domain and this refers to differentiation through the social construction of gender roles. Finally, there is the interdependence of men and women for the act of sexual reproduction (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

In support of gender differentiation, research has found men and women hold significantly favourable attitudes towards women who display stereotypical communal traits whereas they view women as inferior on agentic traits when compared to men (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). These findings suggest women are positively evaluated so long as they conform to traditional stereotypes associated with women's gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Further, themes of complementary gender differentiation have been documented in young women's essays on their experiences of womanhood (Field, Swan, & Kloos, 2010, 2010). These narratives contained themes supporting traditional roles with women describing themselves as caring, nurturing, and communal. Essay contents also reflected on participant's beliefs that women should have the means to be assertive and self-sufficient. However, whilst they believed women should be permitted independence and autonomy, their internalisation of traditional gender roles appeared to be most salient in their personal evaluations of what it is that makes them a woman. As one participant writes "A woman has a right to be traditional. Being a woman means being a nurturer and a caregiver for her family" and another states "Women are the beautiful sex.…We may be weak physically, but our ultimate power comes from within. We are sincere and meek.…I like being called a princess, hearing that I'm pretty, being told that I'm sweet and just being a girl" (Field et al., 2010, p. 564).

Maintaining Gender Roles

Research suggests that for men, benevolent sexism is evoked by the traditional (good) homemaker while hostile sexism is directed towards non-traditional (bad) career women (Glick et al., 2000). Becker (2010) found similar results with women, who reported they were more likely to think about housewives when they completed the benevolent sexism scale whereas they reported thinking of feminists, career women, and sexual temptresses when completing the hostile sexism scale. Further, the more women adopted benevolent sexist views and applied them to their self-concepts the more likely they were to endorse benevolent sexism in general, and these findings were also true for hostile sexism. Thus, benevolent sexism may influence women's hostile sexist views over time as they internalise views of women's subordination as normative and crucial to social cohesion resulting in hostile attitudes towards women who deviate from traditional roles.

Further research has found women's support for benevolent sexism to predict increasing acceptance of hostile sexism at both 6 and 12-month time periods (Sibley, Overall, & Duckitt, 2007). These findings were mediated by women's endorsement of Right-Wing Authoritarianism, a dispositional tendency motivated by a need to maintain traditional values in the face of perceived threats to social security and group cohesion. These findings suggest women support protective paternalism and gender differentiation insofar as they believe women who are homemakers deserve more positive regard for adhering to traditional gender roles. Conversely, women who challenge social norms by forging their own careers and striving for gender equality were perceived as somehow deviant and deserving of hostility.

In the sexual sphere this results in women being placed upon a pedestal (benevolent sexism) or in the gutter (hostile sexism), such that women who subscribe to traditional monogamous relationships may be thought of as 'saints,' while women who transgress relational norms are considered 'sluts' (Glick & Fiske, 1997, p.129). To this extent,

ambivalent sexism operates through the polarisation of women into either negative or positive subtypes based on their sexual behaviours (Glick & Fiske, 1997).

Sibley and Wilson (2004) found men made significantly more hostile sexist evaluations of a fictional woman when she was described as someone who enjoys casual sex with a large number of previous sexual partners. In contrast, a fictional woman described as someone with a less extensive sexual history who did not enjoy casual sex was evaluated with significantly more benevolent evaluations. Furthermore, these evaluations were mediated by men's sexual self-schemas such that men with more positive sexual self-schemas rated the sexually permissive character with more hostile sexism whereas men with more negative sexual self-schemas did not differ in their relatively low rating of hostile sexism for both the permissive and chaste targets (Sibley & Wilson, 2004). These findings demonstrate how men's sexual self-concepts are associated with variation in attitudes relating to traditional norms and sexual roles, with sexually experienced men endorsing more hostile attitudes towards sexually experienced women.

Fowers and Fowers (2010) attempted to replicate the findings of Sibley and Wilson (2004) using a mixed gender sample of students. They found that overall men were more likely to endorse hostile sexism in comparison to women, however both men and women evaluated both a sexually permissive and sexually chaste target with more benevolent sexism in comparison to hostile sexism. This finding is surprising as benevolent sexism is an ideology which is associated with maintenance of traditional roles for women. For example, exploratory research has found American men who endorse benevolent sexism prescribe ideal partner characteristics for women relating to traditional gender stereotypes including expressive attributes and an attractive appearance (Lee et al., 2010).

Further research found men and women's support for ambivalent sexism was associated with more positive evaluations of women with fewer sexual partners compared to

women described as having a larger number of previous sexual partners. In contrast, men were not evaluated any differently based on descriptions of their sexual history (Zaikman & Marks, 2014). These evaluations mirror the sexual double standard with the attribution of sexist evaluations directed towards sexually experienced women while men's sexuality remains relatively unscrutinised. With the threat of hostility for assertive sexual behaviour and the rewards associated with gender role conformity, ambivalent sexism is a social structure closely tied to the sexual double standard.

The Sexual Double Standard – A Review

Crawford and Popp (2003) reviewed 30 studies published over a 20-year time frame, including studies with experimental designs, interviews, focus groups, and ethnographies. While many studies reviewed did not find any differences in attitudes towards men and women's sexual behaviour outside of relationships, this appeared to be dependent on the research methodology used, with double standards more readily identified or endorsed in qualitative research designs rather than experimental methods (Crawford & Popp, 2003).

Marks and Fraley (2006) note these inconsistencies in research findings and question how anecdotal reports and public perceptions of a sexual double standard are prevalent, yet experimental designs are often unable to detect it. For example, an internet survey found 85% of participants believed the sexual double standard still exists (Marks & Fraley, 2005) while further research has reported 79% of men and 89% of women believe women are judged more negatively in comparison to men for a more extensive sexual history (Milhausen & Herold, 2002).

Marks and Fraley (2006) suggest a confirmation bias might be in effect whereby salient personal examples of a sexual double standard are drawn upon when study participants are asked to reflect on the sexual double standard. A confirmation bias would see people seeking out and paying attention to information that supports this double standard and

ignoring or failing to pay attention to scenarios that disconfirm the same standard. The authors tested this theory in a series of vignettes where participants were asked to recall the number of positive and negative comments made by either a fictitious male or female in a journal entry describing their sexual history. Despite an equal number of positive and negative comments, participants recalled more negative comments for the female target than the male, and more positive comments for the male target.

The authors conclude participants were more likely to pay attention to negative comments about women's sexual history as their pre-existing beliefs that women are more frequently shamed for their sexual behaviour leads them to seek out and pay more attention to information that confirms this belief. Furthermore, they argue that researchers might further reinforce and perpetuate a double standard within society through priming participants to pay attention to and evaluate men's and women's reputations based on their sexual experiences (Marks & Farley, 2006). It is not clear however how a confirmation bias explains inconsistencies in quantitative research evaluating the sexual double standard, nor how it may operate in qualitative studies where participants lived experiences are explored. That men and women may draw upon their personal experiences and anecdotes testifies that a sexual double standard must surely exist, however the prevalence and form it takes is still highly contested.

To address discrepancies between an inability to detect a sexual double standard experimentally with anecdotal reports that such a standard still exists, Milhausen and Herold (2002) designed a questionnaire asking participants the extent to which they believe a sexual double standard operates at a social level. Participants also responded to open ended questions assessing their perceptions of why each gender might be afforded more or less sexual power. Both men and women suggested that men are afforded more sexual freedom than women to have multiple partners and engage in casual sex and masturbation as there are fewer negative consequences for men in terms of social stigma. Nearly half of the

participants however reinforced traditional scripts when suggesting women hold more power within relationships as their sex drive is inherently lower than men's and they are therefore able to control the frequency of sexual activity within relationships (Milhausen & Herold, 2002). Further, both men and women used negative terms to describe a person with an extensive sexual history, with men more likely to be categorised as predatory whilst women were labelled promiscuous (Milhausen & Herold, 2002). These findings support social structuralist theories which position women as inherently weaker than men and naturally sexually uninterested. As sexually experienced men were described as predatory this narrative infers women are potential victims in need of protection, undermining their capacity to act with agency within their sexual relationships.

Milhausen and Herold (2002) also aimed to evaluate whether men and women personally supported the sexual double standard across a number of sexual behaviours and activities. Participants were asked to provide their personal evaluations for both men and women who might participate in sexual activities including casual sex, watching pornography, visiting a strip club, as well as evaluating past number of sexual partners. While they found that men were more likely to endorse a sexual double standard, women also supported a reverse double standard by negatively evaluating sexually permissive men. Closer examination of responses however indicated the majority of respondents reported a single sexual standard such that they negatively evaluated both men and women who were more sexually permissive in behaviour, with a minority of the male and female participants holding negative attitudes of the opposite sex. Sakaluk and Milhausen (2012) reported similar results using both explicit and implicit attitude measures. When evaluating explicit attitudes, the authors reported both men and women supported the sexual double standard, however implicit measures indicated that men held more egalitarian attitudes while women supported a reverse double standard.

While these results are somewhat inconclusive in identifying a sexual double standard, they highlight the personal attitudes and evaluations made of men's and women's sexuality associated with stereotypical beliefs about gender differences in permissive orientations. Further, they demonstrate the ways in which sexual norms might operate to reinforce culturally desirable behaviours by positioning women who transgress social norms as deviant, while constructing a representation of women's sexuality as inherently passive. As women's sexual agency promotes an ownership of women's desires and an assertive approach to meeting one's sexual needs, the sexual double standard may still operate as a deterrent for women to experiment with their sexuality and seek out satisfying sexual experiences independent of traditional relationships.

The present research proposes the sexual double standard is a cultural scenario which reinforces traditional gender norms potentially inhibiting women's sexual freedom. Gender norms have regulated women's sexual behaviour for centuries (Haavio-Manilla & Kontula, 2003) with research supporting motivations of patriarchal control. While prior research findings are inconclusive, they suggest a double standard may still persist with different norms and roles for men and women (Crawford & Popp, 2003). Evidence for a sexual double standard is significant as it highlights sociocultural factors which have discouraged women's sexual exploration (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002) encouraging them to refuse wanted sexual activity in exchange for status (Crawford & Popp, 2003).

While research findings suggest that sexual norms for women's sexuality affords greater freedom than previously granted, they still may act upon women's sexual behaviour dictating acceptable ages for sexual debut, number of sexual partners, and rules for engagement in non-relational sexual activities (Crawford & Popp, 2003). The consequences of these restrictive sexual rules for women in terms of their sexual health and satisfaction is therefore an important area of research to understand not only the mechanism for controlling

women's sexuality, but the ways in which they are able to overcome these barriers to sexual wellbeing.

Chapter Seven. The Current Thesis

The aims of the current thesis are to investigate the psychosocial processes which influence women's sexual attitudes, behaviours, and sexual self-concepts. This thesis has argued that social structures including traditional scripts for women's sexuality and sex-type norms have constructed a framework for women's sexuality devoid of agency. Research has been presented arguing traditional norms which have constructed women's sexuality as submissive are disempowering insofar as women learn to dissociate their subjective needs and desires. Theoretically, this disconnection between body and mind affects women's ability to embody and enjoy their sexuality (Schick et al., 2008). The sexual double standard and ambivalent sexism have been presented as social processes which may act as barriers to women exploring their sexuality and developing a sense of agency. In contrast, personal attributes including traits of extraversion and identification with sex-type stereotypes of agency may predispose women to act assertively within their sexual relationships and develop a resistance to traditionally restrictive sexual norms.

While prior research has focused on the negative relationship between feminine gender norms and women's sexual health, there has been little attention directed towards women's negotiation of their sexual identities, and the role of masculinity and femininity in shaping women's perceptions of their sexual selves (Graham, 2015). The current research aims to address this gap in the literature to assess the relationship between sexual norms, personal attributes, and women's sexual self-concepts. Recent research suggests social changes in the past 50 years such as the increase in access to education and participation in employment for women, the sexual revolution and the gay and lesbian civil rights movements (Levant et al., 2012), and more explicit sexual content in magazines and on television (Wells & Twenge, 2005), may give women today permission to explore a non-traditional sexual identity. As sexual norms for women have shifted in the succeeding decades it is expected

that changes in sexual attitudes have also occurred alongside women's increased independence, and these will be reflected in sexual self-concepts comprised of independent, powerful, and assertive self-perceptions.

The current research presents a contemporary model for the sexual self-concept incorporating the cognitive component of the sexual self-schema which are predicted to be influenced by women's subjective experiences, a rejection of traditional norms and stereotypes, and personal attributes of agency (Andersen et al., 1994; Duetsch et al., 2013; Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006). Historically, women's sexual self-schemas have been defined by expressive attributes such as loving and warm-hearted (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). This thesis has argued that recent findings with women rating themselves as comprising both agentic and communal characteristics suggests that independent and agentic sexual self-concepts may not be gender specific to men as previously assumed (Hill, 2007).

These findings may be the result of a shift in sexual and social norms over the course of recent history (Levant et al., 2012) or they may reflect an enduring aspect of women's sexual identities which have been overlooked due to a tendency within research and theory to conflate women's sexuality with relationality (Meana, 2010). The current research has been designed to identify how women construct their sexual identities and whether changes to gender norms have influenced women to view themselves and their sexuality in terms of agency as well as intimacy.

The Current Research

This thesis comprises two studies with different theoretical background, with overarching themes taken from social structuralist and personality theories.

In order to determine predictive factors for sexual agency and positive sexual self-concepts, these studies have been designed to tease out the roles of gender norms in the construction of women's sexual self-concepts. Where study one has been designed to assess

sexual agency as it manifests within women's sexual cognitions, behaviours, and affect, a second study has been constructed to evaluate the sexual double standard as a potential barrier to women's sexual agency, and assess the consequences of traditional norms in terms of sexual self-perceptions and satisfaction.

Chapter Eight. Study 1 Aims and Method

This study aims to assess the way sexual agency manifests in women's sexual self-concepts and to explore the ways in which these sexual self-perceptions are associated with women's sexual health. Research to date has emphasised women's relational needs within sexual relationships (Basson, 2000; Peplua, 2003), however the current thesis has argued these needs may be an artefact of socialisation processes channelling women's sexual experiences into socially acceptable contexts (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Impett et al., 2006; Schick et al., 2008; Tolman et al., 2006). As recent changes have been observed in women's sexual behaviours and attitudes, research suggests shifts might also have occurred in the sexual norms that have traditionally governed women's sexuality (Bălănean, 2012; Levant et al., 2012; Petersen & Hyde, 2010). The argument has been made that these changes in sociocultural sexual norms has facilitated more sexual freedom for women, and this should be reflected in their sexual self-concept.

In the current study, the sexual self-concept is assessed using a measure of sexual self-schemas (Hill, 2007).This study aims to assess the structure of women's sexual self-schemas using this composite measure of the trait adjectives most commonly associated with both men and women's semantic representations of what it means to be a sexual person (Hill, 2007). While earlier research focused on sexual self-schemas as separate constructs for men and women, each based partly on traditional gender norms (Andersen & Cyranowski 1994; Cyranowski & Andersen, 1999), more recent research suggests women evaluate their sexuality in terms of traits associated with both expressivity and agency (Hill, 2007). It is predicted that women's sexual self-schemas will incorporate an agentic dimension which has not been identified previously due to limited response options available in the original women's measure.

Predictions

This study uses a measure of the sexual self-schema which comprises trait adjectives taken from both the men's and women's Sexual Self-Schema scale. Therefore, it allows women to evaluate who they are as a sexual person according to the traits associated with both masculine and feminine sex-role stereotypes. In assessing the ways in which sexual agency manifests in women's cognitions, factor analysis will be used to assess the dimensions of women's sexual self-schemas identified in the Sexual Self-Schema Scale. It is predicted that a dimension describing an agentic facet of women's sexual self-concepts will be identified comprising independent and assertively oriented traits, whilst an expressive dimension comprised of communally focused attributes is also predicted to emerge.

Correlational analyses will then be performed to assess the relationship between women's sexual cognitions, behaviours, attitudes, and sexual evaluations to describe the ways in which women's sexual self-schemas are associated with their sexual health and wellbeing. As women's sexuality is predicted to be influenced by both personality attributes as well as external influences in the form of gender and sexual norms, measures have been chosen to clarify the relationship between individual differences in personality, sociocultural norms associated with femininity, and women's sexual experiences. Extraversion has been included as it is predicted to shape the ways in which women approach their sexual relationships consequently influencing the sexual self-perceptions women make. Further, sexual subjectivity is included here as a measure of resistance to feminine ideologies which position women as sexually passive. It is predicted that the expressive dimension will be associated with measures of relationship variables including sexual satisfaction, while agency is predicted to be associated with past and present behaviours, permissive sexual attitudes, sexual responsivity and sexual subjectivity.

As personality traits are also associated with women's sexual health (Andersen &

(Cyranowski, 1995; Costa et al., 1992), correlational analyses will be conducted to assess the relationship between sexual self-schemas and personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism. While extraversion is predicted to be positively correlated with women's sexual self-schemas and neuroticism is predicted to be negatively associated, sexual self-schemas are expected to be associated with women's sexual health outcomes above and beyond the influence of personality traits. A series of hierarchical multiple regressions will then be performed to provide evidence for the role of sexual self-schema's in shaping women's sexual behaviours and evaluations whilst controlling for the influence of personal dispositions.

As positive sexual self-schemas are predicted to be associated with more positive sexual health outcomes for women, a MANOVA will be performed to compare women with positive and negative sexual self-schemas on measures of behaviour, satisfaction, and sexual function. It is predicted that women whose sexuality is defined by agentic self-perceptions and personality traits will report more positive evaluations of their sexual response and satisfaction within relationships. Thus, group differences should be observed on measures of sexual behaviours, attitudes, and response when comparing women with positive schemas to women with negative schemas.

Group differences are also predicted to be observed between age categories of women. As sexual subjectivity and agency have been theorised to develop across the lifespan, it is predicted that older women will hold more positive sexual self-views compared to younger women.

Method

Participants Participants consisted of 1223 women aged between 18 and 71 years (M = 31.64, SD = 8.50). Of these, 915 (75%) reported they had a current sexual partner. When

asked about relationship status, 372 (30%) women reported they were married, and a further 383 (31%) women reported being in a relationship. Sixty-six women (5%) reported they were currently dating, whilst 311 (25%) reported they were single. The length of current relationship for 878 women ranged from 2 weeks to 47 years (*M* = 6.92 years, *Md* = 5.00, *SD* = 6.62 years). The sample was well educated with 30% of participants indicating they had completed at least some university study at the time of participation, 35% indicated they had completed an undergraduate degree, with 38% reporting postgraduate studies. The majority of participants indicated they did not have any children (79%) with 70% of women indicating they work full time and 19% reporting part-time employment or study. When asked about sexual orientation, 67% of women indicated they were heterosexual, 26% reported they were bisexual, and 2% of women reported their sexual orientation as lesbian/gay. The majority of participants were from the United States (65%), Australia and New Zealand (13%), Canada (7%), and the United Kingdom (4%).

The Current Sample

The current study used community samples of women and therefore contains a diverse range of ages. In order to categorise women into meaningful age groups for comparative purposes, similar studies were reviewed to devise a rationale for the proposed categories identified by the current author. Meston, Hamilton, and Harte (2009) compared women's sexual motivations across the lifespan by classifying their sample into ages ranged 18-22 years, 23-30 years, and 31-45 years. The rationale for each group was based on proposed developmental periods, with the youngest age group comprising college aged women, proposed to be unmarried with less experience in long term-committed relationships. Women aged 23-30 years represented an emerging developmental period where women are proposed to be establishing careers, entering serious long-term relationships, and starting a family. The final group aged 31-45 years was devised to represent women who are in

established relationships with children, have established their careers and some financial stability.

Easton, Confer, Goetz, and Buss (2010) created age categories for women in their study on sexual fantasy and sexual willingness based on women's reproductive capacity. Women aged 18-26 years were classified as highly fertile, women aged 27-45 years were grouped together on the premise their fertility is beginning to decline. And women aged 46 years and older were classified as menopausal. Similarly, Schmitt and colleagues (2002) were interested in whether a sexual peak in women aged in their early thirties might act as an evolved mechanism to increase reproductive success as women begin to experience a decline in their fertility. Ten age categories were devised in this sample of both men and women, although a rationale for age groupings was not specified other than an adequate number of participants to form each age category (i.e., participants were grouped into ages, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22-24, 25-29, 30- 34, and then ten-year age categories thereafter due to sample size restrictions).

Nationally representative samples such as the National Surveys of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal) in the United Kingdom (Mercer et al., 2013), and Australian Study of Health and Relationships (ASHR) (e.g., Richters et al., 2014) have included 10-year age categories. Other national probability samples have included 5-year age groups (e.g., Bancroft, Loftus, & Long, 2003)

Thus, there appears to be little uniformity when categorising participants into age categories for comparative purposes. The current study predicts developmental milestones such as education, career establishment, marriage, and raising children, may influence the sexual behaviours women engage in, the attitudes they hold, and the sexual histories on which they reflect. Age categories were devised based on these developmental periods focusing on research that suggests recent social changes have resulted in blurred boundaries

now being observed between traditional periods of the life-cycle, with new timelines emerging for major life stages such as establishing careers, getting married, and starting a family (Neugarten & Neugarten, 1996; Simon & Gagnon, 1984). For example, median age for marriage in Australia in 2014 was 29.6 years for women, and 31.5 years for men (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2017a), compared to a median age of 25.6 years for men and 23.5 years for women in 1986 (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2008). In the United States the median age for entry into marriage for men and women in 2010 was 28.7 years and 26.7 year respectively (Payne, 2012) in comparison to 20.1 years for women and 22.5 years for men in the late 1950's, and 23.6 years for women and 26 years for men in the late 1980's (Wetzel, 1990).

In Western nations women are also delaying having children. For example, in the United States the average age for first time pregnancies has risen from 24.9 years in 2000, to 26.3 years in 2014. This rise in mean age is largely attributed to a decline in the number of live births to women aged 20 years and under. First time pregnancies in women aged 30-34 rose 28% over the same time period (16.5% to 21.1%) and for women over 35 years this number increased 23% (7.4% to 9.1%) (Mathews & Hamilton, 2016). In Australia the median age for first time mothers is 31.2 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017b), compared to a median age of 27.5 year in 1990 (Harper, 2012). Further, since the beginning of the century, women aged 30-34 years have reported the highest fertility rate of all age groups, with a rate of 123 babies per 1000 women reported in 2010, with the fertility rate for women aged 35-39 exceeding that of women in the 20-24-year age category since the year 2005.

A number of reasons have been given for increases in the age Australian's first marry and start a family (Gray, Qu, & Weston, 2008; Harper, 2012). Factors such as higher education and delayed entry into the workforce, de facto relationships, and adult children leaving the family home at a later age (49% of men and 45% of women aged 18-24 years

reported still living in the family home in 2006-2007) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Advances in contraception, as well as delayed transitions from education to the work force, increased age at marriage, as well as relationship breakdowns have been cited as contributing to the increased age at which women are having their first child, as well as declining fertility rates. Furthermore, women's participation in the workforce and increased financial independence is also believed to contribute to declining fertility rates and increased age at first births (Gray et al., 2008).

In the current study, women aged 18-29 were categorised as emerging adults (n=567) as this age group is predicted to be completing education, establishing careers, and experimenting with relationships (Arnett, 2006). Women aged 30-44 years (n=544) were categorised as established adults (Arnett, 2015). Women in this age group can be argued to be developmentally different to the younger age group as they have had more opportunity to engage in a variety of relationships, for longer durations, and have more experience within the workforce. Women aged 45 years and over (n= 108) were categorised as midlife. Women in this age category are more likely to have older children, affording them more independence, with more extensive relational histories, and more extensive experience in the workforce.

Age Category Demographics

Relationship status across age groups is presented in Table 1. Over half of the women aged 18-29 years were in a relationship including 14% who were married. Of those women in a relationship, 86% had been in their relationship for 7 years or less, with 5% of women reporting they had children. The majority (99%) of women in this age group reported they had not been through menopause.

The majority of women aged 30 -44 years were either in a relationship or married. Of those women in a relationship, 50% had been in their relationship for 7 years or less, with

30% of women reporting they had children. Most of women in this age group reported they had not been through menopause (99%).

The majority of women aged 45 years and over were in a relationship or married. Of those women in a relationship, 32% had been in their relationship for 7 years or less, with 57% of women reporting they had children. Further, 63% of women in this age group reported they were going though or had already transitioned through menopause. Sexual orientation for women across age categories is presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Relationship Status by Age Categories (percentages)

Age Categories	Single	In a relationship	De Facto relationship	Married
18- 29 years	33.2	40.4	4.9	14.1
30-44 years	19.7	24.3	5.3	44.1
45+ years	13	19.4	6.5	48.1

Table 2

Sexual Orientation Identification by Age Categories (percentages)

Age Categories	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Lesbian	Other
18- 29 years	65.1	27.7	1.6	5.5
30-44 years	68.6	24.8	3.3	2.9
45+ years	75.9	24.1	-	-

Procedure

Participants were recruited online through a Facebook campaign initiated by the author inviting women over 18 years of age to complete an anonymous online questionnaire.

Further, acquaintances of the researcher were contacted and a snowball procedure for participant recruitment employed. Permission was also received to post a link to an online sex studies recruitment page maintained by Dr. Justin Lehmiller (http://www.lehmiller.com/sex-studies). An information sheet (see Appendix A) and consent form (see Appendix B) were provided and participants were advised of their rights to withdraw from participation at any time. The study was granted ethics approval from a university ethics committee of a regional Australian university. Data from internet service providers was not collected and responses were all anonymous

Measures

In determining positive women's sexual self-concepts to comprise characteristics of agency and autonomy, several scales were drawn upon measuring attitudes and behaviours consistent with subjective appraisals of one's sexuality. The study was designed to tap into the behaviours, attitudes and desires that are incorporated into women's sexual self-concepts. The survey was separated into six sections measuring: personality variables, sexual attitudes, sexual experiences, casual sex, sexual fantasies, pornography and masturbation, and demographics. Each section contained a number of validated rating scales (see Appendix C for the full questionnaire).

Personality

The Sexual Self-Schema Scale was included in the survey to measure women's semantic representations of their sexual selves. The revised version of the SSSS has been used with both men and women, measuring three factors or dimensions of the sexual self-schema. For present purposes, this scale was used as a measure of the sexual self-concept that incorporates reflections of intimacy as well as agency. A 44 item measure of the Big Five

was also included to measure the contribution of personality traits in the construction of sexual self-concepts.

Sexual Self-Schema Scale (SSSS) (Hill, 2007) The revised version of the SSSS has been validated for use with both men and women measuring them both on three dimensions. The SSSS is comprised of 35 trait adjectives commonly associated with a semantic representation of what it is to be a sexual person. Items were rated on a 7- point rating scale ranging from (0) not at all descriptive of me to (6) very much descriptive of me. The scale contains three underlying factors. Two positive dimensions are identified as loving-warm (12 items: loving, warm-hearted, feeling, warm, romantic, passionate, soft-hearted, sympathetic, sensitive, compassionate, sensual, unromantic – reverse keyed), and direct-outspoken (16 items: direct, outspoken, powerful, aggressive, straightforward, exciting, domineering, experienced, stimulating, frank, arousable, spontaneous, independent, uninhibited, revealing, individualistic). The third factor is negative in valence and is labelled reserved-conservative (8 items: reserved, conservative, embarrassed, cautious, self-conscious, inexperienced, timid, prudent). Scores on the two positive factors were summed, with the summed reserved-conservative scores subtracted to give an overall score. Higher scores indicate more positive sexual self-schemas. Internal consistencies for each factor have been reported as: loving-warm (Cronbach's α =.89), direct-outspoken (Cronbach's α =.85), and reserved-conservative (Cronbach's α =.77)**.**

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991) The BFI contains 44 items designed to assess the Big Five factors of Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism. Participants were asked to rate on a 5 point likert scale scale ranging from (1) disagree strongly to (5) agree strongly, the extent to which listed characteristics apply to them (*e.g., I am someone who tends to be quiet, I am someone who can be somewhat careless*). Scores for each factor were summed to give a total

factor score. Means of 3.26 (Extraversion), 3.55 (Openness), 3.71 (Agreeableness), 3.49 (Conscientiousness), and 2.95 (Neuroticism) have been reported for a large sample (N = 10,497) of undergraduate students (Noftle & Robins, 2007). Internal consistency for the present study for each factor ranged from Cronbach's α =.77 (Agreeableness) to Cronbach's α =.86 (Neuroticism).

Sexual Attitudes

Sexual attitudes were measured using the Brief Sexual Attitudes Scale and the Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory. Participants were asked to respond to a number of questions assessing sexual subjectivity and self-focused sexual attitudes. Sexual subjectivity includes embodied sexuality and awareness of desire. Items in this section measured participant's self-efficacy in initiating, negotiating and directing sexual activity so as to satisfy their own needs and desires. Self-focused attitudes reflect the degree to which participants view their entitlement to sexual satisfaction independent of meeting intimacy needs within traditionally monogamous relationships.

The Brief Sexual Attitudes Scale (BSAS) (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Reich, 2006) The BSAS is a 23 item scale comprising four factors of permissiveness, birth control, communion, and instrumentality. Items from the communion and permissiveness scales were used for the current study. The communion scale comprises 5 items measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree, to (5) strongly agree. Examples of items include *sex is the closest form of communication between two people,* and *a sexual encounter between two people deeply in love is the ultimate human interaction.* Item 4 *sex is a very important part of life* was reworded as *sex within relationships is a very important part of life* and item 5 *sex is usually an intensive, almost overwhelming experience* was reworded as *sex with the person I love is usually an intensive, almost overwhelming experience.* Cronbach's alpha for the current study was acceptable (α = .78). The permissiveness scale comprises 10

items measuring attitudes towards uncommitted casual sexual relationships. Examples of items include *I would like to have sex with many partners,* and *The best sex is with no strings attached.* Internal consistency for the present study was good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$.)

The Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory (FSSI) (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006) The FSSI is a 20 item scale comprising three elements and five factors. Element 1 assesses Sexual Body-Esteem including self-perceptions of desirability and sexual attractiveness (*e.g., physically I am an attractive person*). Element 2 assesses sexual desire and pleasure and comprises three subscales labelled Sense of Entitlement to Sexual Pleasure from Self (*e.g., I believe self-masturbating can be an exciting experience*), Sense of Entitlement to Sexual Pleasure from Partner (*e.g., I think it is important for a sexual partner to consider my sexual pleasure*) and Self-Efficacy in Achieving Sexual Pleasure (*e.g., I am able to ask a partner to provide the sexual stimulation I need*). The third element evaluates self-reflection of participant's sexual self and their experiences and is labelled Sexual Self-Reflection (*e.g., I spend time thinking and reflecting about my sexual experiences*). Responses were rated on a 5 point rating scale ranging from (1) not at all true of me, to (5) very true of me. Reliability for the 20 item scale was high (Cronbach's $\alpha \geq .86$) with Cronbach's α for each factor ranging from .77 (self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure) to .87 (sexual body-esteem). Scores for each subscale were summed to form 5 factor scores.

Initially, the scale was constructed for use with adolescent girls. For the present age diverse sample some skewness was observed in factor scores (Skewness of – 1.56 for sense of entitlement to pleasure from partner, and -2.31 for sense of entitlement to pleasure from self). While Cronbach's α for the present factors were good, the decision was made to force a three factor solution using the rationale that for the present sample three elements rather than five separate factors might provide a better fit for the data. Three factors accounting for 56.63% of the cumulative variance were reported. The first factor comprised items from

Element 2 in the original scale assessing a sense of entitlement to sexual pleasure from oneself, a sexual partner, and self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure. This factor comprised 8 items with two items assessing attitudes towards masturbation not loading on any factors. The second factor comprised the five items from Element 3 measuring sexual self-reflection, and the third factor comprised five items from Element 1 measuring body esteem. The first factor was labelled sexual self-efficacy and reported good reliability (Cronbach's α = .82). The second factor retained its structure and label of sexual self-reflection (Cronbach's α = .89), while the third factor retained its structure and label of sexual body esteem (Cronbach's α = .88).

Sexual Experiences and Relationship Satisfaction

Questions in this section measured women's current sexual enjoyment, functioning and satisfaction with partner. Participants responded to questions from the Personal Experiences Questionnaire –Short Form assessing sexual desire, sexual responsivity, sexual frequency and difficulties including pain and partner's sexual problems.

Personal Experiences Questionnaire—Short Form (SPEQ) (Dennerstein, Lehert, & Dudley, 2001). While the PEQ was initially designed to assess sexual functioning in peri/menopausal women, it can be used by women of any age and any sexual orientation. The scale comprises 9 items assessing feelings for partner, sexual responsivity, sexual frequency, libido, partner's problems, and vaginal dryness/dyspareunia. Examples of questions include, *how often during sex activities do you feel aroused or excited,* and *does your partner experience difficulty in sexual performance.* Responses were rated on a 7 point rating scale ranging from (1) not at all, to (7) a great deal. A composite score was calculated for 5 of the items to assess sexual functioning with the remaining 4 items used as predictors. The scale has demonstrated good reliability and validity (see Dennerstein , Anderson-Hunt, & Dudley,

2002). For the present study Cronbach's alpha for the composite sexual function score was aceeptable (α = .76).

Satisfaction with Married Life Survey (SWML) (Johnson, Zabriskie, &

Hill, 2006) The SWML questionnaire defines marital satisfaction as an emotional state of contentment with the interactions between partners. The scale comprises 5 statements rated on a 7-point Likert scale from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. A sample statement is, *so far I have gotten the important things I want in my married life.* Statements were modified in the current study with the term "marriage" replaced by the word "relationship" so as to be inclusive of participants who are in defacto relationships including lesbian participants. Scores for each item were summed to give an overall composite score ranging from 5 to 35 with higher scores indicating greater relationship satisfaction. The scale showed excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's α= .96).

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale –Short (NSSS-S) (Štulhofer, Buško, & Brouillard, 2010) The NSSS-S is a non-gender, sexual orientation, or relationships status specific measure used to assess sexual satisfaction. The NSSS-S consists of 12 items measuring satisfaction of personal sexual experiences as well as satisfaction with frequency of sexual activity as well as satisfaction with a partners sexual approach and response. Using a 5-point rating scale ranging from (1) not at all satisfied to (5) extremely satisfied, participants were asked to reflect on their sexual satisfaction over the previous 6-month period. Examples of statements include, *the way I sexually react to my partner,* and *the variety of my sexual activities.* Scores range from 12 to 60 with higher scores reflecting greater sexual satisfaction. Excellent internal consistency was reported for the current sample (Cronbach's α = .91).

Casual Sex

Traditionally women have been discouraged from engaging in casual sex. Items in

this section assessed women's past engagement with casual sexuality as a measure of their propensity to experience sexuality as independent of traditional scripts. This section contained questions relating to the two facets of *sociosexual behaviours* and *sociosexual attitudes* taken from the Sociosexual Orientation Inventory – Revised.

The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory - Revised (SOI-R) (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008) The SOI-R comprises 9 items assessing 3 components of sociosexual orientations. The first factor measures sociosexual behaviour by assessing past behaviour with non-relational sexual relationships. Factor 1 comprises 3 items *(e.g., with how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse on one and only one occasion)*. Items were rated on 9 point rating scale ranging from (1) one partner only, through to (9) 19/20 different partners. The second factor measuring sociosexual attitudes is comprised of 3 items assessing attitudes towards casual sex (*e.g., I can imagine myself being comfortable and enjoying "casual" sex with different partners*). Responses were rated on a 9 point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree; to (9) strongly agree. The third factor measures sociosexual desires (*e.g., how often do you have fantasies about having sex with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with*) with items scored on a 9 point scale ranging from (1) never, to (9) at least once a day. Reliability for the current study was acceptable, with Cronbach's alphas for each of the three subscales reported as, behaviour α = .78, attitudes α = .84, and desire α= .81. The total scale showed good reliability (Cronbach's α = .86). Higher scores indicate a more permissive sociosexual orientation.

Sexual Fantasies, Pornography and Masturbation Participants were asked to respond on 6 point scale their frequency of masturbation ranging from (0) never, to (5) several times a week. The same rating scale was used to assess frequency of erotica/pornography use. Pornography was defined to include erotic novels, photographs, movies, and audiotapes showing or describing people having sex (having sex referring to mutual masturbation, oral,

anal, and vaginal intercourse). Two items were taken from the third factor of the SOI-R (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008) assessing participant's frequency of sexual fantasies regarding strangers or people they are not in a relationship with. One item from the SPEQ (Dennerstein et al., 2001) was included to assess participant's frequency of sexual thoughts and fantasies over a one-month period. Responses were rated on a 6 point scale from (0) never, to (5) several times a day.

Demographics The final section of the survey contained demographic questions. Participants were asked to provide their age, employment status and highest level of education. Sexual orientation and relationship status were assessed as was parental status. Participants were asked about their menopausal status and whether they use any hormonal replacement therapy.

Chapter Nine. Study 1 Results

To assess the structure of women's sexual self-schemas, and test the prediction agency and expressivity would be identified in separate dimensions, scores on the Sexual Self-Schema Scale were subjected to a factor analysis using SPSS Version 23. A Principle Axis Factoring with oblimin rotation with a forced three factor solution was conducted to replicate the scale structure presented by Hill (2007). All KMO values for the individual items were above .05 and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) was .91. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant indicating a sufficient pattern of correlations. A forced 3 factor solution accounted for 43.55% of the cumulative variance, however the scree plot suggested a four factor solution may be more suitable. Closer inspection of the pattern matrix indicated Factor 1 contained items relating to both positive and negative traits such as experienced, and exciting, as well as self-conscious and embarrassed, with the negative worded traits loading negatively (see Appendix D). Further, two additional trait adjectives did not load strongly on any factor (factor loading < .40). Using the scree plot as a guide, a decision was made to force a four factor solution using Principle Axis Factoring in SPSS before conducting a Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

Confirmation of Factor Structure, Sexual Self-Schema Scale - Revised

Before confirming the factor structure the initial data set (n = 1223) was randomly divided into two data sets using the select cases function with instructions for selecting a random sample of approximately 50% of the sample (n = 612). Using the scree plot as a guide, a factor analysis with a forced four factor solution was conducted in SPSS with the resulting factor structure accounting for 46.59% of the cumulative variance. Four factors were identified, however a number of items had cross loadings greater than .3 (see Table 3).

In order to test the compete scale, the decision was made to include items with cross loadings for the confirmatory factor analysis, with largest factor loadings determining position of each item in the confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 3

Factor Loadings for Sexual Self-Schema Scale Maximum Likelihood with Oblimin Rotation (Forced Four Factor Solution)

Item	Stimulating/ Arousable	Warm/ Compassionate	Direct/ Straightforward	Embarrassed/ Self-conscious
stimulating	.674			
arousable	.648			
sensual	.605			
exciting	.505			
revealing	.505			
passionate	.474	.318		
uninhibited	.384			-.386
domineering	.381		.343	
spontaneous	.333			
warm-hearted		.867		
compassionate		.750		
warm		.741		
sympathetic		.727		
loving		.726		
soft-hearted		.646		
feelings		.618		
sensitive		.581		
romantic		.496		
unromantic		-.459		
direct			.829	
frank			.819	
straightforward			.806	
outspoken			.548	
aggressive			.495	
powerful			.462	
independent			.460	
embarrassed				.768
reserved				.677
self-conscious				.656
cautious				.630
timid			-.362	.526
inexperienced				.508
conservative				.451
prudent				.370
experienced domineering	.346			-.353

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was then conducted with the remaining 50% of the data set (n = 611) using AMOS Version 24 with a maximum likelihood estimation. While preparing the data set, examination of the descriptives indicated no skew or kurtosis, however there were two missing data points, a response on the item *domineering*, and a response for *spontaneous*. Both missing responses were substituted with the sample mean for each of those two items.

Based on recommendations by Jackson, Gillaspy, and Purc-Stephenson (2009), a priori fit indices were determined for multiple fit measures. Benchmark for fitness indices were selected as Chi-square/df (CMIN/DF) where values below 2 are very good and values between 2 and 5 acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), and SRMR < .09 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). According to Hu and Bentler (1998) RMSEA ≤.06, and the CFI ≥ .95 are criteria for a good fitting model, however RMSEA ≤ .08 and CFI ≥ .90 are often considered acceptable, with CFI values > .80 sometimes permissible as sample size and model complexity increases (Browne & Cudeck, 1993, Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Chi square goodness of fit test was initially observed, however as the chi square is easily rejected in large samples, additional fit indices were also considered (Furr & Bacharach, 2013).

Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the scale's ability to measure latent constructs (Awang, 2012). For the current study convergent validity was assessed by computing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each latent construct. Average Variance Extracted is the average percentage of variance explained by each item loading on latent constructs (Awang, 2012). For validity to be achieved, AVE needs to be .5 or higher (Hair et al., 2010).

Discriminant validity is determined by assessing the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) between latent constructs. To achieve discriminant validity, Maximum Shared

Variance needs to be less than the Average Variance Extracted for each latent construct (i.e., MSV < AVE) (Hair et a., 2010)

Reliability describes the internal consistency of a scale. The Composite Reliability (CR) is a more conservative estimate of internal consistency than Cronbach's alpha (Furr, 2012). Accordingly, a value of CR ≥ .6 is needed to achieve composite reliability. Composite reliability is determined by the association between a scale's underlying latent construct, and its unit-weighted composite (Geldhof, Zyphur, & Preacher, 2014). As a scale's unit-weighted composite may not always reflect its underlying, latent construct, maximal reliability (H) is an alternate method for estimating reliability, representing the reliability of the scale's optimally weighted composite (Geldhof et al., 2014, p. 74), and is generally considered more robust than composite reliability

Initial Model

To test the revised SSSS for model fit, reliability, and convergent validity, the following steps were undertaken as recommended by Awang (2012). First the CFA was run and model fit examined (see Figure 2). Results indicated poor model fit, $\chi^2(554, N = 611) = 3330.12$, $p < .001$, and goodness-of-fit indexes implied an unsatisfactory fit, CMIN/DF = 6.01, CFI = .76; RMSEA =.09; SRMR = .09. Composite reliability for each factor were all greater than .6, however construct validity was inadequate (AVE < .5; see Table 4).

Table 4
Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), Maximal Reliability, MaxR(H), Factor Intercorrelations - Initial Model

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Agency	Expressive	Apprehensive	Sexual
Agency	.858	.474	.282	.894				
Expressive	.893	.459	.172	.947	.019			
Apprehensive	.843	.408	.441	.960	-.528	-.010		
Sexual	.890	.457	.441	.971	.531	.415	-0.664	

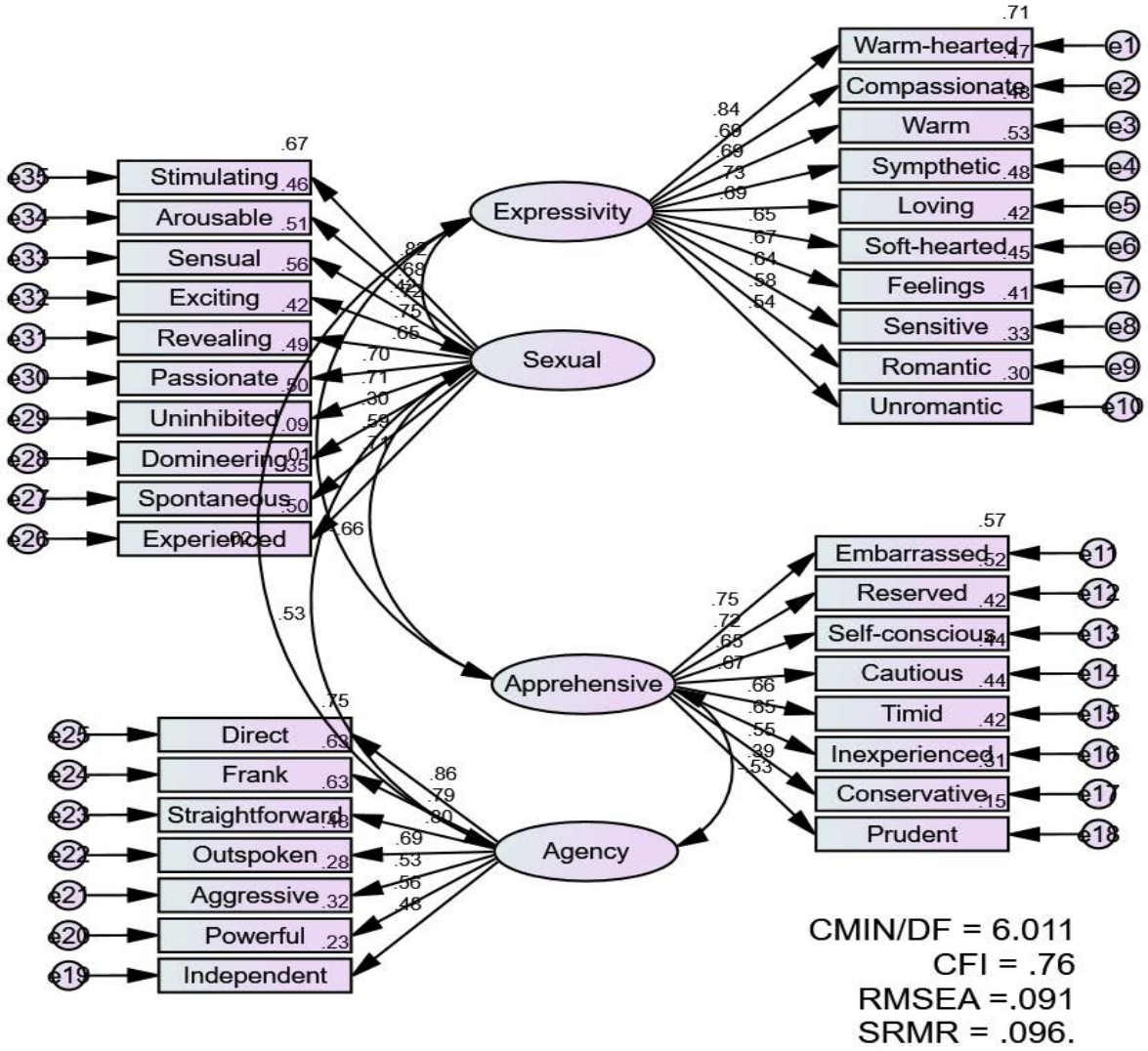

Figure 2. CFA first attempt Sexual Self-Schema Scale

Correlations between the factors sexual and expressive (r = .42), and agency (r = .53), and apprehensive (r = -.66), and correlations between agency and apprehensive factor (r = -.53) were moderate and in the expected directions. Correlations between expressive and agency (r = .02), and expressive and apprehensive (r = -.01), were negligible, and so covariance's between these factors were freed in further analyses. In revising the model,

factor loadings were examined to determine indicator variables with low loadings (less than .6, with R^2 less than .4; Awang, 2012). Items with the lowest factor loadings were domineering (R^2 =. 09), prudent (R^2 =.15), independent (R^2 =.23), aggressive (R^2 =.28), conservative (R^2 =.31), powerful R^2 = (.32), and unromantic (R^2 =.30) (see Appendix E).

Examination of modification indices (see Appendix E) indicated *powerful* cross loading on the sexual and agency factors and so rather than delete this variable given its conceptual importance to the scale, powerful was permitted to cross load onto both factors. All other variables with factor loadings less than .6 were deleted and the CFA was repeated.

Model 2

Results for the second model were still unsatisfactory, $\chi^2(372, N = 611) = 2178.03$, $p < .001$, CMIN/DF = 5.86, CFI = .82; RMSEA =.09; SRMR = .09 (see Appendix F). *Powerful* now loaded on the sexual factor with a loading of .46 and a loading of .30 on agency (R^2 = .412). Reliability for all factors was excellent however only the agency factor reported an AVE > .5 (See Table 5).

Table 5
Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), Maximal Reliability (MaxR(H), Second Model

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
Agency	.835	.525	.255	.890
Expressive	.889	.475	.168	.946
Sexual	.897	.469	.429	.964
Apprehensive	.841	.470	.429	.970

In an attempt to improve model fit, modification indices were consulted to determine any redundant items (see Appendix G). The largest covariance was in a negative direction reported between *experienced* on the sexual factor, and *inexperienced* on the apprehensive factor (M.I. 281.88), as well as *inexperienced* with the sexual factor (M.I. 47.83). Statistically, *inexperienced* appears to be redundant and was therefore dropped from the scale. Also on the apprehensive factor, the item *timid* reported a large modification index with agency (M.I. 50.19), suggesting a negative association. Further, modification indices suggested *timid* and *powerful* shared a significant amount of variance also with a negative association (M.I. 24.54), therefore *timid* was dropped from further analyses.

A large correlation between error term for *passionate* on the sexual factor, and *romantic* on the expressive factor was also reported. As romantic had a factor loading of .54 and a R^2 of .29, this was also dropped from further analyses. Finally, modification indices suggested a relationship between items *arousing* and *stimulating* on the sexual scale, and between *warm* and *warm-hearted* on the expressive scale. Further, large discrepancies between *warm* and *sympathetic* were observed, therefore warm was considered to be a redundant item and dropped from analyses while *arousing* and *stimulating* were allowed to covary.

Model 3

The third model reached benchmark criteria for fit indices, however was at the upper end of limits (see Appendix H; Browne & Cudeck, 1993, Hu & Bentler, 1999). Model fit reported a, $\chi^2(269, N = 611) = 1135.17$, $p < .001$, with fit indices, CMIN/DF = 4.22, CFI = .89; RMSEA =.07; SRMR = .08. Reliability was excellent, and convergent validity was adequate for all factors except for the sexual factor which fell slightly short of .5 (AVE = .466) (see Table 6).

Squared multiple correlations were consulted to determine the items with the largest

error variance for this factor. Items *revealing* (R^2 = .42) and *arousable* (R^2 = .42) contributed the lowest unique variance to the sexual factor. Removal of these two items resulted in a convergent validity value greater than .5 (AVE = .516), however model fit was worse, $\chi^2(226, N = 611) = 1106.01$, $p < .001$, with fit indices, CMIN/DF = 4.89, CFI = .88; RMSEA =.08, SRMR = .09. Conceptually, these items are important to the sexual factor describing a woman who is sexually arousable and responsive. The decision was therefore made to retain these two items.

Table 6
Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), Maximal Reliability (MaxR(H), Third Model

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
Agency	.834	.524	.214	.890
Expressive	.875	.503	.147	.941
Sexual	.896	.466	.411	.962
Apprehensive	.804	.507	.411	.967

Final Model

In a final attempt to increase the average variance extracted for the sexual factor and to improve model fit, regression weights for the item *powerful* were examined. *Powerful* recorded the largest regression weight on the sexual factor (.46) in comparison to the items factor loading on the agency factor (.29). Consequently, *powerful* was permitted to load on the sexual factor only and analyses were run again. Results indicated an acceptable model fit, $\chi^2(270, N = 611) = 1260.85$, $p < .001$, with fit indices, CMIN/DF = 4.38, CFI = .88; RMSEA =.07; SRMR = .08, with composite validity greater than .5 for all factors except for the sexual

factor (AVE = .479; See Table 7). While these indices are inferior to the model allowing a cross loading of powerful onto two factors, they are still within the boundaries initially outlined. Further, from a conceptual viewpoint, allowing powerful to load on only one factor results in a simpler structure for use in further analyses. The decision was made to retain this model as the final model for the revised scale.

Table 7

Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), Maximal Reliability (MaxR(H), Final Model

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
Agency	.873	.635	.234	.968
Expressive	.875	.503	.139	.923
Sexual	.901	.479	.420	.956
Apprehensive	.804	.507	.420	.809

The Final Model Women's Sexual Self-Schema - Revised

The final model is presented in Figure 3. Conceptually, this model still retains a similar factor structure to support the theoretical model initially proposed and was therefore accepted as the final model. Four factors were confirmed with similar item loadings as the exploratory factor analysis, however several items were deleted to improve model fit.

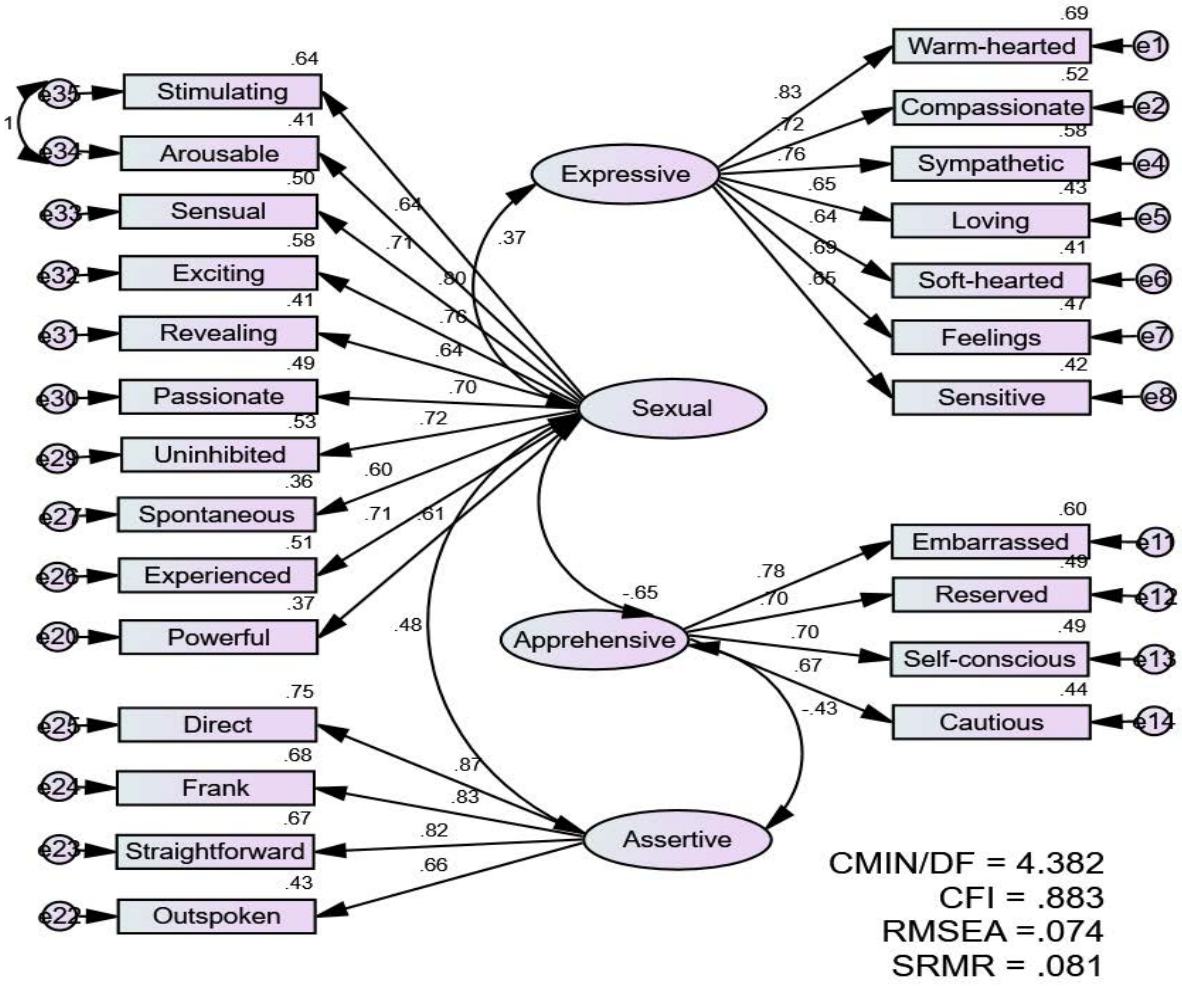

Figure 3. Final model Sexual Self-Schema Scale- Revised

The first factor, labelled the sexual dimension comprises ten traits; experienced, spontaneous, uninhibited, passionate, revealing, exciting, sensual, arousable, stimulating, and powerful, with item *domineering* being excluded from the model due to cross loadings, and a small loading weight.

The second factor was labelled the expressive dimension, and comprises seven items; warm-hearted, compassionate, sympathetic, loving, soft-hearted, feeling, and sensitive, with

items romantic and unromantic excluded from the final model due to multicollinearity and small regression weights.

The third factor was initially labelled agency however in the final model the factor is comprised of variables associated with an assertive disposition. This factor was therefore relabelled the assertive dimension and comprises four items; outspoken, straightforward, frank, and direct, with items aggressive and independent excluded from the final model due to low regression weights. The final factor was labelled the apprehensive dimension, and comprises four items; embarrassed, reserved, self-conscious, and cautious. Items timid, inexperienced, conservative, and prudent were excluded from this factor in the final model due to small factor loadings and multicollinearity.

Examination of regression weights found all items were significant, with standardised regression weights larger than .5, and squared multiple correlations ranging from .35 to .69 (see Table 8). While recommendations for factor loadings suggest only items loading greater than .6 should be retained, newly developed items are permissible to load above .5 (Awang, 2012). For the final model, all items loaded above .6 except for *spontaneous*, with a standardised regression weight of .589 on the sexual factor. As this is the first step in the validation of the Sexual Self-Schema Scale- Revised, the decision was made to retain this item.

For the current model, composite reliability was achieved with all factors reporting a CR greater than .6 and Maximal Reliability greater than .8 (see Table 7). Discriminant validity was also achieved with Average Variance Extracted greater than Maximum Shared Variance. Convergent validity was achieved for three of the four factors, with the sexual dimension falling short of the required .5, with an AVE of .479 (see Table 7), however unstandardized loading estimates for each factor were all significant at the .01 level establishing convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010). While modifications to the sexual

dimension resulted in an AVE greater than .5 for the construct, they also resulted in inferior model fit indices and so the decision was made to retain items with smaller factor loadings due to their conceptual importance. Further replication of the scale and confirmatory analysis is needed to support the overall fit of the model, convergent and discriminant validity, and test-retest reliability.

Table 8
Standardised Regression Weights, Standard Error, Critical Ratio, Significance, and Squared Multiple Correlations Final Model

		Loading	S.E.	C.R.	P	R^2
Sexual						
	Experienced	.695	.091	14.305	***	.48
	Spontaneous	.589	.055	13.566	***	.35
	Passionate	.719	.054	16.374	***	.52
	Revealing	.642	.055	14.716	***	.41
	Exciting	.767	.050	17.384	***	.59
	Sensual	.710	.055	16.181	***	.50
	Arousable	.652	.058	14.822	***	.43
	Stimulating	.814	.053	18.310	***	.66
	Powerful	.601	.056	13.817	***	.36
Expressivity						
	Warmhearted	.832	.068	19.174	***	.69
	Compassionate	.719	.040	19.180	***	.52
	Sympathetic	.764	.043	20.760	***	.58
	Loving	.654	.046	17.018	***	.43
	Softhearted	.636	.054	16.425	***	.40
	Feeling	.688	.047	18.119	***	.47
	Sensitive	.649	.052	16.860	***	.42
Agency						
	Outspoken	.658	.047	17.679	***	.43
	Straightforward	.820	.058	17.027	***	.67
	Frank	.826	.062	17.117	***	.68
	Direct	.868	.068	17.672	***	.75
Apprehensive						
	Embarrassed	.778	.069	16.102	***	.61
	Reserved	.694	.056	15.884	***	.48
	Self-conscious	.705	.058	16.123	***	.50
	Cautious	.668	.050	15.318	***	.45

*** $p < .001$ (two tailed)

While the final model does not meet strict model fit benchmarks, the values for fit indices are still within an acceptable range given the sample size and parameter estimates. According to Hair et al. (2010) absolute cut off values for goodness of fit measures are often inadvisable. Model fit is often a complex procedure influenced by sample size, degrees of freedom, and model complexity (Chen, Curran, Bollen, Kirby, & Paxton, 2009). While smaller samples and simple models are expected to meet strict fit indices, it is unrealistic to expect larger samples and more complex models with a large number of variables and parameters to meet the same standards (Hair et al., 2010, p. 651). Further, the use of item level data rather than continuous total or mean scores can often result in poor model fit due to extraneous noise associated with individual items, as well as cross loadings that are permissible in exploratory factor analyses (Kline, 1998). As secondary loadings in EFA account for additional variance explained, constraining these loadings to zero in CFA does not replicate the initial EFA correlation matrix and may result in poor model fit during CFA (van Prooijen & van der Kloot, 2001).

Therefore, the decision to retain the final model structure was based on conceptual reasoning. The items outlined in each factor, and indeed the whole model, are conceptually relevant to women's sexual self-schema's as outlined in theory. The final model comprises a factor associated with expressive facets as well as a negative dimension similar to the dimension identified in the initial structure of women's sexual self-schemas. It also contains an agentic dimension which was theorised in the current research to be a factor of women's sexual self-schemas that has been neglected in previous research. The addition of a sexually focused dimension was unexpected however conceptually this dimension makes sense. Thus the final model was accepted on the premise that conceptual and theoretical considerations are as important to model construction as statistical guidelines. These results were

conceptually driven resulting in a model that is relatively parsimonious, with close correspondence to the data, whilst retaining theoretical relevance (Kline, 2011).

Relationship of Factor Scores and Total Score

Using the factor structure from the final model, factors scores for each of the dimensions were computed in SPSS. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations with the total sample (n= 1223) are reported in Table 9. Large correlations were reported demonstrating strong relationships between each of the factors and the overall score. Factor 1 reported the strongest relationship to the total score, r = .87, with factor 4 which is of negative valence reporting the second strongest relationship, r = -.72. Correlations between factors were in the theorised direction with negative correlations found between the three positive factors and the fourth negative factor. Whilst three of the four dimensions reported moderate intercorrelations, the expressive dimension was correlated with the sexual construct only. Mean scores showed women scored highest on the expressive dimension (M = 4.32, SD = 0.99).

Table 9

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Sexual Self-Schema Factor and Total Scores

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4
Scale Score	8.71	3.09	-			
Factor 1 Sexual	3.61	1.08	.85**	-		
Factor 2 Expressive	4.32	0.99	.38**	.27**	-	
Factor 3 Assertive	3.90	1.24	.72**	.49**	-.04	-
Factor 4 Apprehensive	3.12	1.23	-. 73**	-.54**	-.05	-.38**

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).

Women's sexual self-schemas and sexual health

In order to assess the behaviours, attitudes, and psychosocial processes associated with each of these facets of women's sexual self-schemas, correlations are reported between the four factors of the composite scale and measures of sexual behaviour, attitudes, and sexual response, as well as relational factors. These analyses further serve to assess the convergent validity of the scale. As such, the approach taken was modelled on the initial construction of the Sexual Self-Schema scale (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). As sexual self-schemas are theorised to be shaped by past experiences, expressed in current sexual cognitions, guiding sexual behaviours (Andersen & Cyranowksi, 1998, p. 1364), measures were chosen that assessed past and present behaviours, and sexual attitudes. To assess the way in which sexual agency is associated with women's sexual cognitions as well as the influence of feminine gender norms, measures were chosen based on the degree to which they assess both sexually agentic behaviours and attitudes, as well as relational variables.

Behavioural measures include frequency of recent sexual activity, masturbation, and use of erotica, as well as experience with casual sex as measured by the behavioural factor of the Sexual Orientation Inventory- Revised (SOI-R) (Penke & Assendorpf, 2008).

Attitudinal measures include the permissive subscale of the Brief Sexual Attitudes Scale (BSAS) (Hendrick et al., 2006), and the Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory (Horne & Zimmer-Gimbeck, 2006). Sexual responsivity was measured with items from the Personal Experiences Questionnaire (Dennerstein et al., 2001).) which assess desire, arousal, and orgasm in relation to sexual function.

Finally, relational variables included the Satisfaction with Married Life Survey (Johnson et al., 2006) to assess relationship satisfaction, the New Sexual Satisfaction Survey (Štulhofer et al., 2010) to assess sexual satisfaction, and the communion subscale of the BSAS to assess the importance placed on sex within romantic relationships. A composite

score using items from the PEQ-S that assesses sexual partner characteristics including feeling of passion for partner, and partner's sexual performance were included as a reference to the influence of sexual partner's sexual ability on women's sexual experiences and self-views. Results are presented in Table 10.

Findings for the total scale scores found significant positive correlations with all measures of behaviours, attitudes, sexual responsivity, and relationships factors. These findings provide support for the convergent validity of the composite scale for women. In the present study, sexual self-schemas were associated with past and present sexual behaviours, they comprised attitudes relating to ownership of one's sexuality, and an efficacious attitude towards meeting needs and desires. Further, they were associated with positive affective-evaluations of body image, relationships, and a capacity for arousal and orgasm. The strongest relationships observed were with reported sexual self-efficacy, r = .55, positive body esteem, r =.49, and sexual satisfaction, r =.45

The sexual facet of women's sexual self-schemas was positively correlated with measures of past and present behaviours, attitudes, and sexual responsivity. The strongest correlations were found between women's self-views as a sexual woman and their feelings of sexual self-efficacy in meeting their sexual needs, r = .52, and sexual satisfaction, r = .48. The sexual dimension was also correlated with relational variables. These findings are in line with the Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) conception of women's sexual self-schemas comprising attributes indicative of sexual responsivity and passion, situated within the context of meaningful relationships. Worth noting are the positive correlations between the sexual dimension and permissive attitudes towards casual sex, as well as behavioural reports of engagement in casual sex. This facet of women's sexual self-schemas is therefore descriptive of a sexual responsiveness within both traditional and non-traditional relationships.

Table 10

Sexual Self-Schema Scale and Factor correlations with convergent variables

	Sexual	Expressive	Agency	Apprehensive	Total
Sexual behaviour					
Recent activity	.29*	.05	.03	-.19*	.21*
Masturbation	.24*	-.01	.10*	-.13*	.17*
Erotica	.16	-.02	.02	-.02	.07
Casual sex	.44*	-.02	.24*	-.35*	.38*
Sexual attitudes					
Permissive	.34*	-.09	.24*	-.27*	.29*
Body esteem	.44*	.03	.32*	-.47*	.49*
Self-efficacy	.52*	.15*	.43*	-.35*	.55*
Self-reflection	.37*	.15*	.09	-.16*	.28*
Sexual function					
Desire	.36*	.08	.15*	-.14*	.27*
Arousal	.49*	.21*	.22*	-.29*	.45*
Orgasm	.33*	.10*	.18*	-.22*	.30*
Relationships					
Sexual satisfaction	.48*	.19*	.23*	-.32*	.45*
Relational satisfaction	.16*	.11*	.19*	-.22*	.26*
Communion	.35*	.26*	.04	-.16*	.29*
Partner characteristics	.25*	.17*	.16*	-.21*	.29*

* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).

As the second factor comprised attributes associated with the evaluations a woman may make of herself within interpersonal relationships, the expressive dimension was expected to correlate primarily with relational variables. While the expressive factor was correlated with nine of the fifteen criterion variables, most correlations were small, r = .10 - .26. The expressive factor was moderately correlated with communion, r = .26, which

contained items relating to the importance of sex between two people in love. These results support the validity of the expressive dimension as a facet of women's sexual self-views associated with the evaluations they make of themselves within loving relationships.

The assertive facet of women's sexual self-schemas was expected to correlate with sexual behaviours, as well as permissive sexual attitudes, and sexual subjectivity. This was partially supported with positive correlations reported with all measures, except for recent sexual activity, use of erotica, and sexual self-reflections. Small correlations were found between agentic self-conceptions and behavioural variables, $r = .24$, and sexual responsivity, $r = .22$. The largest correlation between the assertive dimension and sexuality measures was for sexual self-efficacy, $r = .43$. The Assertive factor contains trait items direct, frank, straightforward, and outspoken. Whilst these items appear to be measuring an agentic orientation, the relationship between women's self-appraisals of assertiveness appear to be only weakly related to their sexual behaviours and attitudes. It was expected that sexual agency would demonstrate stronger relationships with sexual behaviours and satisfaction, however in the present sample an agentic facet of women's sexual self-views appears to be related mostly to self-reports of sexual subjectivity.

The apprehensive facet of the scale was negatively correlated with all variables. The largest correlation here was with women's self-appraisals of positive body esteem, $r = -.47$, and reports of self-efficacy in meeting their sexual needs, $r = -.35$.

Personality and the Sexual Self-Schema

To assess the relationship between personality traits and sexual self-schemas, mean scores from the Extraversion and Neuroticism factors of the Big Five Inventory (John et al., 1991) were correlated with total mean scores for the composite Sexual Self-Schema scale. Neuroticism was significantly correlated with the Sexual Self-Schema Scale, $r\ (1205) = -.26$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .07$, and Extraversion was significantly correlated with Sexual Self-Schema

scores, $r(1199) = .59$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .35$.

While the association between personality traits and sexual health outcomes have been identified in prior research, sexual self-schemas are predicted to be associated with sexual behaviours and attitudes independent of general personality dispositions (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994; McRae & Costa, 1988). A series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to assess the utility of the Sexual Self-Schema Scale in predicting women's sexual behaviours and evaluations after accounting for the variance explained by personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism. To test for incremental validity, neuroticism and extraversion were entered in as the first step with total scores from the Sexual Self-Schema Scale entered in the second step. Sexual frequency, sexual satisfaction, and sexual responsivity were selected as the dependent variables.

The incremental variance for sexual self-schemas after accounting for neuroticism was 3.7%, for sexual frequency ($p < .001$), 17%, for sexual satisfaction ($p < .001$), and 21% for sexual responsivity ($p < .001$). After accounting for extraversion, sexual self-schemas accounted for an additional 3.5% of the variance of sexual frequency ($p < .001$), with extraversion no longer significant in the final step. For sexual satisfaction, sexual self-schemas accounted for an additional 14.9%, of the variance ($p < .001$), and an additional 19% of variance for the measure of sexual responsivity ($p < .001$).

Group Differences in Sexual Behaviours and Affect

Before proceeding with analyses to assess differences in group scores and age categories, demographic variables are worth noting given the diversity of the sample in terms of nationality. As the sample comprised participants from several countries, a between subject's Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted on the sexual self-schema measure before further analyses to assess any significant differences in mean scores as a function of nationality. Using categories of United States, Australia, Canada, and United Kingdom and

Europe, no significant differences were found in mean total scores for the sexual self-schema scale, $F(2, 1218) = 1.15$, $p = .328$, and no significant differences were found on any of the four factors (see Appendix I).

To test the utility of the four factor Sexual Self-Schema Scale in differentiating between positive and negative schematic women, participants in the top and bottom quartiles were selected for comparative analyses. Women were first assessed on demographic variables, and then a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to determine differences in sexual behaviours, satisfaction, and sexual function. Personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism were also compared to control for variations in trait disposition.

The sample for the analysis consisted of 306 women in the top quartile ($M = 12.51$, $SD = 1.26$) and 307 women in the bottom quartile ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.77$). As expected, women in the top quartile scored significantly higher on the total scale score, $F(1, 611) = 4011.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .87$. Positive schema women were significantly older, $F(1, 609) = 30.18$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$, (Mean age 33.52 for positive schema women and 29.82 for negative schema women), and more likely to have a current sexual partner, $\chi^2 (1) = 64.29$, $p < .001$ (263 positive schematic women reported having a current sexual partner compared to 172 negative schematic women). There were no significant differences in level of education, $\chi^2 (4) = 2.71$, $p = .608$, however a significant difference was found in parental status, with more positive schema women having children than negative schema women, $\chi^2 (1) = 13.26$, $p < .001$.

As negative schema women were less likely to have a current sexual partner, behavioural variables chosen for comparison included frequency of masturbation and sexual thoughts/daydreams, and past experience with casual sex using the behaviour subscale of the SOI-R. Sexual responsivity was chosen to measure women's capacity to experience desire,

arousal, orgasm, and overall enjoyment of sexual activity. Sexual satisfaction was assessed using the NSSS where women were instructed to answer with regards to their current sexual partner, or most recent in the case of being sexually inactive at the time of participation. Extraversion and Neuroticism were also assessed using factor scores from the BFI.

A MANOVA for these variables was significant, F (7,518) = 115.03, $p < .001$; Wilk's $\Lambda = .383$, partial $\eta^2 = .617$. Follow up ANOVA were all significant at the .01 level (descriptives and effect sizes reported in Table 11). Results showed women with positive sexual self-schemas reported higher frequencies of masturbation and sexual fantasies, a more permissive sexual history, and greater sexual functioning. Furthermore, there were significant difference on measures of Extraversion with positive schema women scoring significantly higher, and negative schema women scoring significantly higher on Neuroticism.

Table 11

Means, Standard Deviations, Significance Values and Effect Sizes for Sexual Health Variables Positive and Negative Schemas

	Positive Schema		Negative Schema			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*p*	η^2
Masturbation	4.71	(1.48)	3.96	(1.65)	.000	.05
Sexual thoughts	3.90	(1.07)	3.06	(1.27)	.000	.11
Casual sex	4.07	(1.99)	2.20	(1.42)	.000	.22
Sexual response	23.25	(3.29)	17.78	(5.09)	.000	.29
Sexual Satisfaction	46.99	(8.88)	35.72	(9.43)	.000	.27
Extraversion	30.77	(5.58)	19.85	(5.46)	.000	.49
Neuroticism	24.22	(7.10)	28.87	(6.19)	.000	.11

Age Differences

To test for generational differences in women's sexual self-schemas, women were categorised into three age groups (18-29, n= 567, 30-44, n= 544, and 45 and older, n= 108).

To determine whether sexual self-schemas vary as a function of age, a series of one-way ANOVAs were performed assessing mean differences in scores across each of the four factors and total score. Levene's statistic for three of the factors and total scores were not significant, $p > .05$, however Levene's statistics for the Expressive subscale was significant, $p = .001$, and it was therefore decided that interpretation for this factor would be at $\alpha = .001$. Significant main effects were found for all factors except for the expressive subscale, $p = .36$ (see Table 12).

Table 12

Analysis of Variance Age Differences on Sexual Self Schema Factor and Scale Scores

	18-29 years (n=567)		30-44 years (n=544)		45+ years (n=108)				
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*(2,1216)	*p*	η^2
SSSS Total	8.38	3.02	8.88	3.04	9.69	3.23	9.911	.000	.02
SSSS Sexual dimension	3.50	1.04	3.66	1.11	3.90	1.07	7.289	.001	.01
SSSS expressivity	4.29	1.04	4.35	0.94	4.43	0.88	1.089	.337	.00
SSSS Assertive	3.78	1.29	3.96	1.18	4.25	1.19	7.775	.000	.01
SSSS Apprehensive	3.19	1.24	3.08	1.24	2.87	1.16	3.380	.034	.01

Bonferroni post-hoc analyses found significant differences between age groups with women in the 18-29-year age category scoring significantly lower than women aged 30-44 on the assertive factor, $p = .04$, and on total scale scores, $p = .02$. Women in the youngest age

bracket also scored significantly lower than women in the 45+ age group on the sexual factor, $p = .001$, the assertive factor, $p = .001$, and total scale scores, $p < .001$, whilst scoring significantly higher than the oldest age category on the apprehensive factor, $p = .04$. Women in the 30-44 years' age category scored significantly lower than women in the 45+ age category for total schema scores, $p = .03$. Effect sizes for all factor scores and total scores were small ($\eta^2 = .01$ - $.02$). There was no significant difference between age categories on the expressive dimension.

A one-way ANOVA was also performed to compare the overall sexual self-schema scores for women who identified as either heterosexual, bisexual, or lesbian/gay. A significant difference was found, $F(2, 1169) = 12.41$, $p = < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$, with women identifying as bisexual scoring significantly higher ($M = 9.46$, $SD = 3.10$) on total scale scores than women who identified as heterosexual ($M = 8.58$, $SD = 2.99$), and women who identified as lesbian/gay ($M = 7.78$, $SD = 3.05$).

Chapter Ten. Study 1 Discussion

Findings from the current study present a multifaceted model for women's sexual self-schemas. Dimensions of expressivity, agency, and sexual apprehension were identified in this diverse sample of women, and these dimensions are similar to the factors, loving-warm, direct-outspoken, and reserved-conservative established by Hill (2007). Further, a dimension of women's sexual self-schemas containing schematic representations of explicitly sexual evaluations was identified. The newly identified sexual dimension described a facet of self that is reflective of sexual responsivity, excitement, and sensuality and to date has not been identified as a separate dimension of women's sexual self-schemas.

Significant correlations between factors and criterion variables support the multidimensionality of women's sexual self-schemas and the validity of the scale. The sexual and apprehensive dimensions demonstrated the strongest relationships with all of the sexuality and relationship measures, as well as total scale scores. Further, separate dimensions descriptive of attributes associated with both masculine and feminine gender norms appear to be related to specific evaluations, with the expressive dimension of the scale most strongly associated with relational factors, and the agentic dimension related to a capacity for self-focused and sexually assertive attitudes towards one's body and needs.

The patterns of findings presented suggest women's sexual behaviours, attitudes, and response are associated with semantic self-representations that are explicitly sexual and assertive, with a self-conscious, timid, and inexperienced self-view potentially affecting a broad range of behaviours, attitudes, and response.

Expressive Attributes and the Sexual Self-Schema

The expressive factor identified in the current study is similar to the romantic-passionate factor identified in the original sexual self-schema construct (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). Initially, Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) proposed forming and

maintaining relationships is important to women's self -esteem and therefore expressive attributes which facilitate romantic relationships will form significant aspects of their sexual self-perceptions. The expressive dimension identified in the current study supports this theory insofar as comparison of mean scores across each of the four factors found women's scores were highest for the expressive dimension. However, this facet of women's sexual self-schemas demonstrated much weaker relationships with sexually relevant criterion variables than both the sexual and apprehensive factor.

This dimension comprised a number of traits identical or synonymous with traditional sex-role stereotypes such as warm, compassionate, sympathetic, and sensitive (Bem, 1974). Hill (2007) suggested this overlap between items on both the Men's and Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale with traits associated with traditional gender norms might result in participants responding in relation to their gendered self-views which may be unrelated to their sexuality. However, Breakwell and Millward (1997) argue that while gender and sexual identity are conceptually distinct, gender might influence the sexual self-concept with the internalisation of social definitions of masculinity and femininity. Accordingly, women who closely identify with social representations of gender and norms of femininity are believed to be more likely to internalise norms of femininity into their self-perceptions, influencing their sexual relationships and behaviours (Breakwell & Millward, 1997).

The current findings appear to partially support this theory with the expressive factor representing a gendered facet of women's sexual self-concepts. However, as this dimension was unrelated to sexual attitudes and behaviours with the only significant associations found for relationship satisfaction and communal values, women may identify with this dimension according to their gender identity or to the views they hold of themselves within interpersonal relationships. Importantly, as this dimension was not negatively associated with sexual health variables, there is no evidence in the current study to support the theory that internalisation of

feminine norms and attributes is detrimental to women's sexual function or satisfaction (Breakwell &Millward, 1997). Rather, this finding demonstrates the multidimensionality of women's self-concepts. While gendered attributes might describe a significant aspect of women's self-perceptions, this facet of the self does not appear to describe the views they hold of themselves as a sexual person.

Sexual Agency and the Sexual Self-Schema

Sexual agency was predicted to factor into women's sexual self-schemas and this was supported with a dimension identifying assertively oriented traits. The assertive dimension was associated with positive evaluations made by women of their sexual attractiveness, as well as self-confidence in meeting sexual needs. As an emerging body of research has documented the link between sexual agency and positive sexual health outcomes (Averett et al., 2008; Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015; Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2005; Impett & Tolman, 2006; Schick et al., 2008), it was surprising that this dimension did not demonstrate stronger relationships with convergent measures.

The newly identified sexual facet of women's sexual self-views was also positively associated with measures assessing self-focused and independent behaviours including frequency of masturbation, and past engagement with casual sex, as well as sexually permissive attitudes, and sexual subjectivity. This sexually explicit dimension may therefore be measuring sexual agency as it manifests in women's sexual cognitions. Sexual agency for women may be identified less in terms of power and independence in the traditional sense, and more in relation to an appreciation of oneself as a sexual person, an efficacious approach to seeking out and meeting one's sexual needs, and an evaluation of oneself as sexually powerful through the embodiment of sexual experience and response.

Martin (1996) suggests the feelings that women hold about their ability to act upon and determine sexual outcomes will influence the ways they feel about themselves. Sexual

subjectivity describes the ownership of desires and needs and the self-efficacy to shape sexual experiences. This facet of sexual agency reflects a resistance to an objectified view of women's sexuality requiring women to focus on their desirability to others (Schick et al., 2008; Welles, 2005) and instead fosters a sense of entitlement to pleasure and an assertive approach to securing sexually satisfying relationships (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006). In the present study, dimensions of sexual subjectivity demonstrated the strongest relationships with total scale scores for the sexual self-schema measure, as well as the sexual and assertive dimensions, with a negative relationship with a sexually apprehensive self-view. These findings suggest sexual subjectivity is more important for women's sexual development than relational needs. Consequently, sexual subjectivity may act as a key mediator in the relationship between social norms, behaviours, and sexual self-perceptions.

Group Differences

Andersen and Cyranowski (1994) operationalised the sexual self-schema concept by assessing the differences between women holding positive and negative sexual self-schemas on a number of intrapersonal and interpersonal variables. In the current study, bipolar representations of the sexual self-schema were also compared to gain an insight into the ways in which positive and negative sexual self-schemas are differentiated in relation to women's sexual experiences and attitudes.

The scales utility in differentiating individual differences in sexual self-views revealed significant differences between both positive and negative schematic women, with small differences observed between factor scores of women at different life stages. Examining group differences between positive and negative schematics found women with positive sexual self-views were older, and more likely to be sexually active. They demonstrated a greater sexual repertoire in terms of experience with casual sex, and more

frequent masturbation. They further reported more frequent sexual fantasies, greater sexual satisfaction within their current or most recent relationships, and were more sexually responsive than women with negative schemas.

However, effect sizes for behavioural variables were small. Mean scores for each category on behavioural variables indicated that whilst positive schema women scored significantly higher, negative schema women still reported engaging in sexual thoughts and masturbation and reported experience with casual sex. For example, the descriptive mean for frequency of sexual thoughts and fantasies for positive schema women was several times a week whereas the descriptive mean for negative schema women was once or twice a week. For negative schema women, the descriptive mean for frequency of masturbation was several times a month while for positive schema women the descriptive mean was closer to once a week. Larger differences were observed between positive and negative schematic self-reports of sexual responsivity and sexual satisfaction. These results suggest that women with negative sexual self-schemas are still apt to experience sexual desire in terms of thoughts, fantasy and masturbation, however there are some aspects of their sexual self-views which are associated with less arousal and pleasure in comparison to women with more positive sexual self-schemas.

The apprehensive dimension identified in the final factor structure might explain some of the variability between negative and positive schematic women's sexual function and evaluations. This dimension was comprised of the traits embarrassed, reserved, self-conscious, and cautious, and was negatively associated with women's sexual health outcomes. One of the largest negative correlations with this dimension was positive body esteem. Past research has found women's body image to be negatively associated with the embarrassed-conservative dimension of the Women's Sexual Self-Schema Scale (Donaghue, 2009). This suggests the way women feel about their bodies may influence the way they view

themselves as sexual person. Alternatively, sexual self-schemas might shape the way women feel about their sexual bodies. Further, women's poor body image has been found to be implicated in appearance-based distraction during sexual activity (Meana & Nunnick, 2006). These types of cognitive interference lead to autonomic nervous system arousal resulting in negative emotional states inhibiting sexual arousal, orgasm capacity, and sexual satisfaction (Dove & Wiederman, 2000). Thus, the self-conscious and embarrassed facets of women's sexual self-schemas might be associated with negative appraisals of the sexual body which potentially influence, or are influenced by, sexual function and satisfaction.

The apprehensive dimension was also negatively correlated with sexual self-efficacy. Past research has identified a relationship between positive sexual self-concepts and sexual self-efficacy in a sample of adolescent women (Rostosky et al., 2006). As sexual self-efficacy is associated with perceived ownership of sexual choices and decision making (Carlson & Soller, 2007) women with more negative sexual self-concepts might experience less satisfaction and arousal due to a lack of agency in directing sexual activities (Mosher & Danoff-Burg, 2005; Sanchez et al., 2006). This lack of agency may be associated with a reserved and cautious approach to sexual relationships identified in the negative dimension which undermines women's belief in their capacity to actively meet their sexual needs on their own and with their partners. This may be related to sexual inexperience, or conversely, unfulfilling sexual experiences and romantic relationships may discourage women from seeking sexual relationships. This apprehensive facet of women's sexual self-schemas might then describe an element of women's sexual self-views that inhibits sexual play, exploration, and responsivity, and negatively affects sexual satisfaction for women with less positive sexual self-concepts.

It is also possible that these findings for both categories of women are related to current relationship factors. Positive schematic women were more likely to have a current

sexual partner and therefore differences in sexual response and satisfaction may reflect more current sexual evaluations in comparison to negative schematic women. However, over half of the women with negative sexual self-schemas also reported a current sexual partner and therefore it is possible that lower scores on sexual response and sexual satisfaction are associated with characteristics of women's sexual relationships (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). Moreover, these findings may be the result of an interaction between negative sexual self-schemas and intimate relationships. Further research using qualitative designs might elucidate the intricate relationship between women's negative sexual self-schemas, agency, and relationships factors.

Sexual Self-Schemas and Sexual Orientation

An unexpected finding was the significant difference in schema scores for sexual orientation, with women identifying as bisexual scoring significantly higher than both heterosexual and lesbian women. As far as the author is aware this is the first study to date to identify schematic differences associated with sexual orientation. The percentage of respondents identifying as bisexual in the current study was quite high compared to population estimates (Richters et al., 2014). While this may potentially indicate a selection bias, research with representative samples suggests that for women, same sex behaviours and attraction are more prevalent than previously reported (Copen, Chandra, & Febo-Vasque, 2016; Diamond, 2008).

There has been little research directed towards investigating the positive aspects of identifying as a sexual minority, and while there has been an increased interest in sexual orientation and mental health outcomes in the past 30 years (Parent, Talley, Schwartz, & Hancock, 2015), bisexuality is an area of research that has been under-studied (Diamond, 2008). Previous research suggests bisexuality may be related to trait dispositions associated with extraversion. For example, Stief, Rieger and Savin-Williams (2014) found bisexuality

was associated with personality traits of sexual excitability, sexual curiosity, and sexual sensation seeking. Sensation seeking, also referred to as excitement seeking (Zuckerman, 2014) is one facet of the trait Extraversion (Costa & McCrae, 1992) which as a trait characteristic, manifests in the predisposition towards seeking novel and varied sensations and experiences (Zuckerman, 2014). Past research has found women who score high on sensation seeking report more sexually permissive attitudes, as well as a broader repertoire of sexual activities and a greater number of sexual partners (Zuckerman, 2014). Further, Parent et al. (2015) found women who identified with a non-heterosexual identity reported more sexual exploration, sexual self-efficacy, and a more coherent and structured sexual-self-concept than their heterosexual counterparts. While sexual orientation is generally considered to be independent of personality dimensions (Stief et al., 2014) these past findings suggest attributes associated with an extraverted disposition are also associated with women who engage in more non-traditional sexual relationships such as casual sex and same sex relationships, and these relationships potentially shape their sexual self-views (Stief et al., 2014).

Diamond (2008) argues bisexuality represents a relatively stable third type of sexual orientation that encompasses a sexual fluidity determined by both situational and relational factors. Findings from the current research may therefore be related to personality traits associated with sensation seeking and a sexual openness which allows women to seek out sexually satisfying relationships independent of sex and gender and these personal dispositions towards sexual fluidity may engender more satisfying sexual experiences for women.

Extraversion and the Sexual Self-Schema

Extraversion reported a strong relationship with the sexual self-schema measure sharing nearly 35% of the variance in scores. Importantly, while a large relationship was

observed, the Sexual Self-Schema Scale demonstrated significant incremental variance in predicting women's sexual responsivity and satisfaction. Past research has found young women scoring high on Extraversion report more lifetime sexual partners, more frequent sexual intercourse, sexual thoughts and arousal (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). As more extensive sexual experience and more liberal sexual attitudes have been associated with volunteering to participate in sexuality research (Wiederman, 1999), there is some concern that a self-selection bias may be in effect (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). This is believed to be unlikely though in the current sample given the number of participants and the range in scores on the SSSS (- 9 to 117, $M = 69.45$, $SD = 19.49$). Rather, the current thesis proposes that extraversion operates as an antecedent to sexual behaviours, mediating affective-evaluations of sexual stimuli, and acting as an organising principle in the saliency of cognitive representations.

According to the Five-Factor Theory personality system (McCrae & Costa, 1999), extraversion describes dispositional tendencies to be sociable, active, and to experience positive emotions. In the current study extraversion was associated with women's sexual behaviours, responsivity, and sexual satisfaction. These behavioural responses and evaluations are the characteristic adaptations through which personal attributes are expressed. The self-concept, or in this case, the sexual self-concept comprises the cognitive evaluations women have made based in part on their behaviours and attitudes which are shaped by their personal dispositions. Thus, whilst personality traits form a unique component of a person's psychological profile, they are related to the self-concept insofar as they influence behaviours and attitudes through the expression of trait dispositions in varying contexts (McCrae & Costa, 1988).

This interpretation is supported in the present study with positive schematic women who described themselves in terms of sexual responsivity and an assertive disposition scoring

significantly higher on Extraversion. As extraversion is associated with positive affect, women who are more extraverted may reflect on their sexual experiences more positively and this may influence their future sexual interactions (McAdams, 2009). Further, agentic trait dispositions associated with facets of extraversion may influence women to act assertively in their sexual relationships facilitating positive sexual health outcomes and self-evaluations. As women with the most positive sexual self-evaluations scored significantly higher on extraversion than women with less positive sexual self-schemas, these findings suggest individual differences in trait dispositions may guide women's evaluations of their self and sexual stimuli, influencing the behaviours and relationships they engage in.

Moreover, women with negative sexual self-schemas scored significantly higher on Neuroticism which is characterised by negative affect and emotional distress (McCrae & Costa, 1987). This disposition towards emotional instability potentially mediates cognitive responses towards sexual stimuli (Robinson & Tamir, 2005) as well as affective-evaluations of both relationship and the sexual satisfaction (Fisher & McNulty, 2008). Thus, it is possible that these individual differences in personality might explain some of the variability within women's sexual behaviours and attitudes (Eysenck's, 1976).

Sexual Self-Schemas across the Lifespan

Cross sectional analyses showed women aged 18-29 years scored significantly lower on total scale scores and on the sexual and assertive dimensions, while scoring significantly higher on the sexually apprehensive factor. Younger women reported significantly more embarrassment and self-consciousness in their sexual self-concepts than older women and this may be due in part to less sexual experience. Indeed, a primary dimension related to sexual responsiveness suggests experience with sexual behaviours and sexual exploration are significant aspects of a woman's self-view when asked to reflect on sexual identity. Research has shown women with more sexual experience report feeling more self-efficacy in initiating

sex (Morokoff et al., 1997). The more experience an individual has with a certain behaviour, the more efficacious they feel in repeating this behaviour in the future and the more confident they will feel in owning their decisions and behaviour. Self-efficacy has also been implicated in the mediation of feminine gender norms and associated with safe sex practices during adolescence (Impett et al., 2006). As women gain sexual experience as they move through the lifespan they may become more efficacious in initiating sexually satisfying relationships and may further be more resistant to traditional sexual and gender norms.

While women in the 30-44-year age category scored significantly lower than women aged over 45 years for total scale scores, there were no other significant differences between these theoretical age categories across each of the factor scores. This could be the result of a lack of power due to the relatively small sample size of women in the oldest age bracket. Alternatively, the development of a positive sexual self-concept may be related to maturation processes during young women's early adult years.

Most research to date with the sexual self-concept has focused on adolescent sexual self-concepts (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Hensel et al., 2011; Impett & Tolman, 2006; O'Sullivan, Meyer-Bahlburg, & McKeague, 2006; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1975; Rostosky et al., 2008) and university populations (Deutsch et al., 2014; Winter, 1988; Wood et al., 1997; Vickberg & Deaux, 2005). The current study has highlighted the need to extend research focus to include older samples of women when assessing the role of sexual self-concepts in mediating sexual behaviours, attitudes, and response.

These results however did not take into account within group variance. Factors such as relationship status and duration (Meana & Sims, 2010), religiosity (Lefkowitz, Gillen, Shearer, & Boone, 2004), physical health and sexual partner characteristics (Dennerstein et al., 2001) and sexual trauma (Meston et al., 2006; Rellini & Meston, 2011) may also influence women's sexual behaviours, attitudes, and subsequent self-reflections. Future

research with the revised scale could focus on age categories using predictive variables related to health and relationships to help clarify the antecedents relative to schema construction within each age category.

Women's Sexual Self-Concepts

The factor structure which emerged in the current study partially replicated past findings that women conceive of their sexual self-schemas along dimensions previously associated with men's sexual self-schemas (Hill, 2007). Both relational and agentic facets were identified, as was an apprehensive and self-conscious factor. These findings present a multifaceted structure for women's sexual self-concepts with content comprising evaluations of past and present behaviours and attitudes. This model suggests positive sexual self-schemas tend to be held by women who are sexually experienced, responsive, and assertive in their approach to securing and embodying satisfying sexual experiences. While relational variables were associated with a traditional view women held of themselves as agreeable and nurturing, cognitive representations describing a capacity for sexual responsivity and experience were more strongly associated with sexual health outcomes.

The use of correlational analyses however precludes any directional interpretations of these findings. More sophisticated statistical methods and modelling are needed to identify the relationship between each of these factors and in their combined role predicting both sexual and relational satisfaction. While the identification of an expressive dimension of women's sexual self-concepts in study one was descriptive of expressive and stereotypically feminine attributes, attitudes towards traditional gender norms and roles were not evaluated. Further research might include an explicit measure of engagement with and attitudes towards traditional gender roles, along with a measure of current and past sexual behaviours. Further, as the sexual self-concept is a multifaceted construct, each of the factors identified may be

unique aspects of women's sexual self-perceptions and future researchers may wish to study sexual self-views using individual factor scores rather than a total score.

As women's sexual self-schemas are theorised to reflect both their current and past behaviours and attitudes, the dimensions of agency identified in the current sample supports a recent line of thinking which suggests sexual and gender norms for women may have changed in recent years (Helson & Kwan, 2000; Levant et al., 2012; Twenge, 1997; Twenge, 2001). Social changes including increased access to education has resulted in greater financial independence for women (Fry, 2010) providing increased opportunities to explore non-traditional intimate and sexual relationships (Levant et al., 2012). For example, Krull (1994) found higher educational attainment was associated with more liberal sexual attitudes and permissive sexual behaviour, while Haavio-Mannila and Kontula (1997) reported a positive relationship between higher education and sexual satisfaction. The current sample were highly educated with 70% of participants reporting either an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. Access to higher education may afford women more agency both professionally and within their intimate relationships, and this may be reflected in the sexual and assertive self-views they report (Twenge, 1997). Alternatively, sexual self-schemas may be unrelated to educational achievement and rather reflect a developmental trajectory extending beyond adolescence and becoming relatively stable after the age of 30, at which time many women are established in their chosen career paths with more extensive sexual and relational histories.

One of the limitations with the current research therefore is the non-representative sample in terms of educational attainment. Further research with the revised Sexual Self-Schema Scale in a more representative sample is needed to provide support for the current findings. Furthermore, results presented here should be interpreted with caution given the relatively small sample size of women aged over 45 years. More research is needed with a

larger sample of women who are going though or have gone through menopause to assess the ways in which physiological changes associated with hormonal fluctuations as well as relationship duration influences women's sexual self-concepts.

Furthermore, while participants reported their nationality in the current study, information pertaining to race and ethnicity was not collected. This is a significant omission as research from the United States has shown African-American women are still subject to racialised sexual stereotypes (Bay-Cheng, St. Vil, & Ginn, 2020), are more likely to be perceived as hypersexual (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013) or aggressive (Settles, 2006), and are disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted infections (Bell, Aggleton, Ward, & Maher, 2017; Twenge, Sherman, & Wells, 2015). As such, sexual and gender norms for women within these communities have not shifted to the same extent as within the majority Caucasian population (see Twenge et al., 2015). Further, evidence of a sexual double standard has been reported by Australian research in Indigenous communities (Senior & Chenhall, 2013) where women still face stigma, shame, and reputational damage in relation to their sexual behaviours and sexual health outcomes such as acquiring sexually transmitted infections (Bell et al., 2017; Mooney- Somers et al., 2009; Senior, Helmer, Chenhall, & Burbank, 2014).

Thus, sexual agency for women in minority populations will likely be shaped by the sexual and gender norms operating within these communities. For example, Froyum (2010) found young black women in the United States were more likely to be targeted by abstinence only sex education in schools, and to be perceived within their own communities as sexually vulnerable in relation to racism and class inequality. As such, sexual agency was promoted within the context of sexual restraint and the reinforcement of gendered sexual norms. Further, Australian research has found reports of women's sexual agency in Indigenous communities to be associated with peer support networks and safe sex practices (Bell et al.,

2017), however pressure from sexual partners to forgo the use of contraceptives and condoms, along with unwillingness to discuss sexual health with partners (Larkins et al., 2007; Stark & Hope, 2007) have been found to adversely affect Indigenous women's sexual health (Bell et al., 2017). These findings highlight the intersectionality of racism with sexism, class and gender (Settles, 2006), as well as inequality in access to health care, particularly culturally appropriate health care services for Australian Indigenous women (Bell et al., 2017).

Bay-Cheng (2015) argues it is a neo-liberal approach to women's sexual agency which promotes individual self-interest and personal responsibility in achieving sexual empowerment. She argues that while this approach to women's sexuality is described as liberating and empowering, it is a privilege afforded to some based on race and class. As such, the costs associated with this individualised view of agency for women might be more problematic in minority communities as they are subject to greater shame, stigma, and discrimination, whilst sexual agency may take the form of protecting one's sexual health or reputation. Therefore, this notion of agency as increased sexual freedom, pleasure and desire, might be an ideal embedded within economically and racially privileged populations of majority white Western women. Consequently, the findings from the current study potentially reflect sexual norms associated with the increasing value placed on individualism and personal responsibility within Western cultures (Twenge et al., 2015). Further, gender and racial identity might be intertwined for women in minority groups (Settles, 2006) and this should be taken into consideration when studying a construct such as the sexual self-concept.

One of the strengths of the current study was the age diverse sample of women who contributed to the current findings. Despite the potential for selection biases, community and internet-based samples provide access to a larger more diverse population in comparison to university samples (Stief et al., 2014). Many sexuality studies to date have focused on clinical

or convenience university samples whose results may not be generalisable to non-clinical and age diverse populations (Dickinson, Adelson, & Owen, 2012; Meana, 2010; Meston et al., 2009 ; Sims & Meana, 2010; Wiederman, 1999). The present study assessed sexual self-concepts at different stages of the lifespan and in doing so may be more representative of the larger population than previous research findings. That non-withstanding, the current sample was unique in both the high levels of education reported by participants and the large number of women identifying as bisexual.

Despite these limitations, findings from the present study extended upon previous research with the Sexual Self-Schema Scale to describe quantifiable differences in the sexual self-view's women hold as they move through the lifespan. These findings suggest that as women age, they are more apt to describe themselves as sexually responsive and assertive, reporting less sexual inhibition and apprehension. In contrast, younger women whose identities are still emerging reported more sexual apprehension and held less positive self-views of themselves as sexual people. Women who identified as bisexual also reported more positive sexual self-schemas, and this may be associated with personality dimensions of extraversion and excitement seeking, or to a non-conformity to traditional norms facilitating a sexual fluidity. Extraversion may serve to mediate the relationship between the affective-evaluations of sexual experiences, or it may be reflective of a general predisposition towards sociability and positive affectivity across situations (Costa & McCrae, 1992). As the sexual self-schema is built upon trait adjectives similar to the concept used by the Big Five model of personality traits, sexual self-schemas could potentially be described as a dimension of personality representative of an individual's sexual disposition.

Whilst interpretation of the results presented here are limited in terms of generalisability, they provide preliminary support for the operationalisation of the revised Sexual Self-Schema scale in differentiating between the individual differences in women's

sexual cognitions. Future use with the scale may benefit from assessing the sexual self-schemas of women who report low sexual desire or desire discrepancies within relationships. As the scale is a measure of women's sexual cognitions that are associated with sexual evaluations, the utility of the scale as an outcome measure in a clinical setting is also worth investigating.

Chapter Eleven. Study 2 Aims and Method

While study 1 focused on the internalisation of sexual agency into women's sexual self-views, study 2 aims to investigate the social and psychological factors which influence women's sexual behaviours and attitudes. Leiblum (2002) argues women's opportunities to explore their sexuality outside of traditional roles has been limited due to sociocultural norms prescribing relationally focused sexual motivations for women. These gender-based norms are theorised to inhibit women's ability to assert their sexual needs and advocate for their sexual health (Morokoff et al., 1997). This study aims to assess the social structures which may act as barriers to women enacting agency within their sexual relationships, as well as the role of personal attributes in mediating the relationship between men and women's sexual health and social norms. This study will then assess the combined influence of sexual norms, personality attributes, and sexual evaluation in predicting an agentic sexual self-concept.

Part One. Women's Sexuality and Sociocultural Norms

This study predicts both the sexual double standard and ambivalent sexism are complementary processes reinforcing traditional norms for women's sexual behaviours and relationships. Both of these theories are grounded within sexual script theory which positions women's sexuality as relationally focused. As a social process, the sexual double standard potentially inhibits women's freedom to explore and experiment with their sexuality, while ambivalent sexism reinforces sexual passivity as it rewards women's gender conforming behaviours, whilst punishing women who challenge or threaten men's sexual power and dominance. As research has shown adherence to traditional norms for women's sexuality is associated with negative sexual health outcomes, this study will assess the relationship between men and women's support for a sexual double standard and their sexual satisfaction, desire, and perceptions of self.

There are a number of limitations in previous research aiming to detect the sexual

double standard including the narrow definitions and operationalisation of concepts that have been used (Milhausen & Herold, 2002), and the use of older scales and measures which may contain outdated terminology (Bordini & Sperb, 2013; Jonason & Marks, 2006). Further, the sexual double standard is more readily identified in ethnographic studies (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Jackson & Cram, 2003), whereas results from quantitative studies have been inconclusive. Large scale quantitative studies documenting attitudes on standardised Likert scales may fail to capture the real-life consequences of sexual behaviour as they occur within social contexts (Kraeger & Staff, 2009). Accordingly, researchers have called for more innovative research designs (Kraeger & Staff, 2009) including mixed method studies (Bordini & Sperb, 2013) and the use of vignettes representing real life scenarios in person perception experiments (Zaikman & Marks, 2014).

The current thesis aims to address some of these concerns by modelling its approach to that employed by Milhausen and Herold (2002) to assess whether a sexual double standard is still perceived to operate at a social level, whilst evaluating the sexual attitudes men and women hold of a number of non-traditional sexual behaviours including hooking up and using apps for seeking casual sexual relationships. Using a mixed methods design, these attitudes will be assessed in conjunction with a person perception experiment assessing attitudes towards a woman engaging in a one night stand. While the scenarios presented will represent the sexual double standard according to social norms for women's engagement in casual sex, the behaviour being evaluated will focus on the polarisation of women into negative and positive subtypes. It is proposed that ambivalent sexism reinforces the sexual double standard by discouraging women from engaging in sexually agentic behaviours, with hostile sexism punishing women who are sexually assertive, and benevolent sexism rewarding women who are sexually passive.

The person perception experiment is an unobtrusive measure assessing the qualities

participants attribute to hypothetical characters based on presented sexual scenarios. One of the strengths of using the person perception experiment for measuring sexual attitudes is that it demonstrates real world reactions in the assessment of other people's sexual behaviours. These responses provide some insight into the real-life attitudes held of women who engage in non-traditional sexual activity (Sprecher, McKinney, & Orbuch, 1987). Two vignettes have been constructed as similarly as possible with key variables manipulated. Using the definition of sexual agency as "the power to initiate sexual intercourse and communicate one's sexual desires" (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015, p. 961), including abstaining from unwanted sexual encounters (Averett et al., 2008), and demonstrating an assertive approach to sexual health by being condom prepared (Curtin et al., 2011), targets in each scenario will be evaluated in terms of ambivalent sexism, as well as perceived competence in terms of values and morality.

Predictions

Using a person perception experiment to assess sexist attitudes directed towards women according to their sexual behaviour, it is predicted that participants will evaluate a female target with more hostile sexism when her behaviour is described in terms of sexual agency than a female target whose behaviour is described in terms of sexual passivity. The target in the passive condition is predicted to be evaluated with higher scores on benevolent sexism than the target in the agency condition.

The current research will also examine the ways in which conservative sexual attitudes are associated with men and women's sexual self-perceptions and evaluations. As the sexual double standard reinforce traditional norms which limit women's sexual expression and experiences, it is predicted these attitudes will be negatively correlated with women's affective-evaluations and sexual satisfaction. While it might be argued that sexually

punitive attitudes held by men will serve to empower and enhance their sexual self and experience, it is hypothesised that these attitudes and evaluations will be negatively correlated as norms which limit women's sexual freedom inherently limit men's sexual experiences as well.

Part Two. Sexual Attitudes, Health, and Sex-Role Stereotypes

As personality is thought to shape individuals' cognitions, affective-evaluations, and behaviours (Wood & Eagly, 2015), it is expected to be associated with people's sexual attitudes and behaviours. One of the aims of this research is to assess the interaction of personality attributes with social norms to understand the ways in which these psychosocial processes influence women's sexuality. It is predicted that support for gendered sexual norms will be influenced by the extent to which individuals identify with traditional sex-role stereotypes. Research has found personal attributes of agency and communion to be closely tied to norms for masculinity and femininity where men tend to score higher on agentic attributes such as dominance and independence while women score high on communal attributes such as kindness and compassion (Leary & Snell, 1988; Wood & Eagly, 2015). Furthermore, identification with these sex-type norms has been found to predict behaviours congruent with gendered sexual scripts (Taylor & Hall, 1982; Wood & Eagly, 2015) as well as sex differences in gender roles (Ward et al., 2006).

Part two of this study aims to assess how self-reported identification with masculine and feminine personality attributes are related to hostile and benevolent sexist evaluations of women's sexuality and the sexual double standard. Further, as past research has highlighted the relationship between sex-roles stereotypes and sexual behaviours, with agentic attributes associated with greater sexual exploration and a wider repertoire of sexual behaviours (Fink et al., 2007; Leary & Snell, 1988), this study aims to assess the relationship between men and

women's identification with personality attributes of agency and communion, and their sexual satisfaction, desire, and perceptions of self.

Predictions

Sex-role stereotypes are predicted to be associated with the sexual double standard. It is expected that women who identify more strongly with traditionally feminine attributes will negatively evaluate women who challenge sexual norms. As such, communion is predicted to be positively correlated with the sexual double standard. It is expected that women who identify with traditionally masculine attributes will hold more positive attitudes of permissive sexual norms for women and therefore agency is predicted to be negatively correlated with the sexual double standard. It is expected that men who identify with traditional masculine sex-role stereotypes will negatively evaluate women who transgress sexual norms with permissive and assertive sexual behaviours. As such, agency is predicted to be positively correlated with the sexual double standard for men.

Sex-role stereotypes are also predicted to be associated with sexual health variables. As past research has highlighted the relationship between traditionally masculine attributes and sexually liberal and assertive behaviours and attitudes, it is predicted agency will be positively associated with sexual health variables for both men and women. Further, as feminine ideologies have positioned women as sexually passive and indifferent in comparison to men, the current research is interested in assessing any gender differences in sexual self-perceptions and sexual affective-evaluations.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 320 women with ages ranging from 17-years to 72-years (M_{age} = 29 years, *SD* = 10.12) and 192 men with ages ranging from 16-years to 83-years (M_{age} = 36.89, *SD* = 14.55). The mean age for the complete sample was 32 years while median age was 29 years (*SD* = 12.5 years). When asked which sexual orientation they most closely identified with, 372 (72%) participants indicated they identified as heterosexual, 105 (20%) responded they identified as bisexual, and 29 (7%) participant responded they identified as gay.

The majority of participants had completed or were completing an undergraduate degree (41%), a post graduate degree (22%), or had completed secondary school (21%). An additional 9% indicated they had completed some secondary schooling, while 4% responded they had completed either a trade certificate or diploma. The majority of participants worked or studied full time (57%), or worked or studied part time (26%), or did not work outside the home (17%).

When asked about relationship status, the majority of participants were either in a relationship (29%), married (26%), dating (11%) or in a de facto relationship (5%), while 29% indicated they were currently single and 5% indicated they were separated or divorced. A total of 176 participants (34%) indicated they had children. The sample was multinational with 247 participants from the United States (48%), 118 from Australia (23%), 45 (9%) from across Asia, with the majority from Singapore. There were 31 (6%) participants from the United Kingdom, 28 (5%) from Canada, and 28 (5%) from Europe.

For the person perception experiment the sample was randomly assigned to either the passive or agency condition. There were 256 participants in the passive condition (163

women and 93 men) and 256 participants in the agency condition (157 women and 99 men). There was no significant difference between the passive (M = 32.28, SD = 12.40) and agency (M = 31.61, SD = 12.75) groups on age, $F(1, 497) = .354$, $p = .55$. There were no significant differences between groups on education, X^2 (4, N= 509) = 2.248, $p = .69$, relationship status, X^2 (8, N= 512) = 11.45, $p = .17$, or sexual orientation, X^2 (2, N= 503) = .268, $p = .88$.Chapter twelve

Procedure

The study was disseminated online with men and women sourced through a Facebook campaign initiated by the author, and online research participant recruitment sites including the Australian based Facebook group 'psychology participants and researchers'. Further participants were recruited through an undergraduate research pool at an Australian University where students participated in research in exchange for course credit. An information sheet (see Appendix J) and consent form were provided (see Appendix K), and participants were advised of their rights to withdraw from participation at any time. The study was granted ethics approval from a university ethics committee of a regional Australian university. Data from internet service providers was not collected and responses were all anonymous.

Measures

The survey was designed to assess both men and women's attitudes to the sexual double standard using an experimental approach. Two vignettes were constructed where one scenario depicted a sexually assertive woman and the other a sexually submissive woman. Vignettes were evaluated for hostile and benevolent sexism. Scales measuring participants gender role attributes and sexual satisfaction were also included (see Appendix L for the full questionnaire).

Vignettes

The 'agency' vignette described a first date where the woman initiates sexual intercourse, is condom prepared and assertive about her sexual health and satisfaction. The 'passive' vignette described the same woman however in this scenario she did not initiate a sexual encounter and was not assertive about her sexual health or satisfaction. For each scenario respondents were asked to evaluate the fictional character using a modified version of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996), as well as a measure of personal characteristics relating to morals and values taken from the Perceived Competence Scale (Marks & Fraley, 2005). Six items from each of the Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism scales were modified so that participants rated the female protagonist on each item using a 6 point Likert scale. Participants were randomly assigned according to requested logic of random 50/50 split in the Survey Gizmo program. Responses to the vignettes using the ASI were also randomised.

Agency Vignette

Chrissy was nervous about the blind date her friends had set her up on. After a couple of serious relationships and quite a few one night stands she was open to the idea of meeting someone special and maybe settling down. She needn't have been nervous as the date was going great and after a bottle of wine and much talk she was finding herself more and more attracted to the gorgeous man sitting across from her. As they wait in line at the taxi rank Chrissy invites the man to share a cab with her, suggesting he call into her house for a drink and to listen to the new CD she had downloaded that afternoon. Half way through the cab ride home she leaned over the back seat and kissed him, drawing his tongue deep into her mouth. By the time they had closed the front door of her flat they were tearing each other's clothes off. Making their way to the bedroom Chrissy grabbed a condom from her bathroom

cabinet and climbed on top of the gorgeous man. He stops what he is doing and asks her if she is on the pill, it's just condoms decrease the sensitivity and he's not really into them. Chrissy pulls out the line she learned in sex education "if it's not on, it's not on" however her date refuses and so Chrissy puts the kettle on instead and offers him a coffee, perhaps they will just listen to music and chat after all. As her date leaves Chrissy is unsure whether she is interested in seeing him again. She washes her makeup off and climbs into bed, reaching into her bedside drawer for her trusty pink vibrator.

Passive Vignette

Chrissy was nervous about the blind date her friends had set her up on. After a couple of serious relationships Chrissy was still hoping that she would meet someone special to settle down with. She needn't have been nervous as the date was going great and after a bottle of wine and much talk she was finding herself more and more attracted to the gorgeous man sitting across from her. As they wait in line at the taxi rank Chrissy's date invites her to share a cab with him, suggesting she call into his house for a drink and to listen to the new CD he had downloaded that afternoon. Despite being worried he might be only after a one-night stand – something Chrissy wasn't interested in, she agreed, thinking it would give them more time to get to know each other. Half way through the cab ride home her date leaned over the back seat and kissed her, drawing her tongue deep into his mouth. By the time they had closed the front door of his flat they were tearing each other's clothes off. Chrissy hesitated, despite feeling attracted to the man she had wanted to get to know him more before they moved to this stage however she didn't want him to think her a prude. Making their way to the bedroom Chrissy asks her date if he has any condoms. He asks her if she is on the pill, it's just condoms decrease the sensitivity and he's not really into them. Chrissy tell him she isn't on the pill and pulls out the line she learned in sex education "if it's not on, it's not on"

however her date refuses and despite her apprehension they end up in the bedroom having sex.

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) (Glick & Fiske, 1996) A modified version of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory was developed by Sibley and Wilson (2004) to evaluate hostile and benevolent sexist attitudes for each female character in their vignettes. Six items from the Hostile Sexism subscale (α = .91) were reworded to evaluate the female character in each scenario. For example, the original item *women seek to gain power by getting control over men* was modified to read *women like Chrissy seek to gain power by getting control over men*. Items number 2, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 18 from the hostiles sexism scale were used in this manner with response options presented on a 6 point Likert scale ranging from (1) disagree strongly to (6) strongly agree. Six further items from the Benevolent Sexism subscale were modified to target sexist evaluations of each female character (α = .95). Items number 3, 8, 9, 17, 19 and 22 were chosen due to ease of rewording without altering the meaning of the statement. An example is an original item *many women have a quality of purity that few men possess*, reworded to state *many women like Chrissy have a quality of purity that few men possess.* Sibley and Wilson (2004) provide evidence of reliability with the modified version of the ASI with strong correlations between the 6 items for each of the HS and BS subscales with each of their respective full scales.

Perceived Competence Scale (Marks & Fraley, 2005) The perceived competence scale is comprised of 4 subscales (values, peer popularity, power/success, and intelligence) made up of 30 statements evaluating the personal characteristics of targets in a sexual double standard person perception experiment. For the present study only the ‘values’ subscale was used. Using a 5-point Likert scale from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, participants were asked to rate each target in the vignette on 4 statements (e.g., *this person is respectful*, and *this person would make someone a good husband/wife*) (Cronbach’s α = .83).

Personality Attributes Questionnaire PAQ (Spence & Helmreich, 1978) The PAQ consists of three scales used to measure stereotypically masculine and feminine personality attributes. The Masculine (M) scale reflects instrumentality and consists of traits such as independence and self-confidence. The Feminine (F) scale reflects expressivity and consists of traits such as kindness, warmth and understanding. The third scale consists of a mixture of both masculine and feminine attributes and has been labelled Androgyny. The Androgyny scale is rarely used by researchers and was not used in the present study. More recently confirmatory factor analysis has resulted in modification to both the masculine and feminine scales improving the reliability of both subscales (Ward, Clements, Dixon, & Sanford, 2010). Accordingly, due to factor loadings on multiple scales, one item from the Masculinity scale was dropped and this scale was renamed Agency, and two items from the Femininity scale were dropped and this scale was renamed Communion. The Agency scale contains 6 items rated on a 5 point rating scale ranging from (1) not at all descriptive of me to (5) very descriptive of me. Examples of items include, *very independent* and *very competitive*. Internal consistency for the Agency scale was acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .79$). The communion scale comprises 6 items using the same rating scale where (1) is not at all descriptive of me, and (5) is very descriptive of me. Examples for the Communion scale include *very understanding of others*, and *able to devote self completely to others.* Internal consistency for the present sample was good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$)

New Sexual Satisfaction Scale –Short (NSSS-S) (Štulhofer, Buško, & Brouillard, 2010) The NSSS-S is a non-gender, sexual orientation or relationships status specific measure used to assess sexual satisfaction. The NSSS-S consists of 12 items measuring satisfaction of personal sexual experiences as well as satisfaction with partners sexual behaviours and reactions as well as frequency of sexual activity. Using a 5-point rating scale ranging from (1) not at all satisfied to (5) extremely satisfied, participants reflected on their

sexual satisfaction over the previous 6 month period. Examples of statements include *the way I sexually react to my partner* and *the variety of my sexual activities.* Scores range from 12 to 60 with higher scores reflecting greater sexual satisfaction. The NSSS-S reported excellent reliability for the current sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$).

Sexual Double Standard (Milhausen & Herold, 1999/2002) Items assessing the sexual double standard were sourced from two research studies conducted by Milhausen and Herold. Questions were divided into two categories examining participants perceptions of the sexual double standard at a societal level, and their own personal acceptance/endorsement of these standards. Additional items for each category were constructed to tap contemporary social issues such as the perceptions of the use of online dating and hook-up websites. Identical questions were constructed referring to both male and females.

Perception of Societal Double Standard Using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, participants were asked to respond to five pairs of statements relating to the ways in which they believe men and women who have multiple sexual partners and/or engage in casual sex are perceived by others. Examples of items include *women who have had many sex partners are judged more harshly than men who have had many sex partners,* and m*en who enjoy casual sexual relationships (one night stands, booty calls, friends with benefits) without an interest in pursuing the sexual encounters as a committed monogamous relationship are judged more harshly than women who enjoy similar sexual relationships.* Scores were summed for both scales with higher scores for each scale indicating agreement with perceptions of either a traditional double standard or a reverse double standard at the societal level.

Personal Acceptance of the Double or Reverse Double Standard To assess participants personal acceptance of a double standard, five pairs of identical items (one item

relating to male targets and the other to females) were responded to using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Statements asked participants to reflect on a variety of sexual behaviours identified in past research as eliciting varying judgements for men and women. Example of items include *I would think badly of a man/woman who had protected sexual intercourse with a woman/man he/she was not emotionally committed to,* and *I would think badly of a man/woman who signed up to Tinder or an online dating site looking for casual sexual relationships only.* Scores for each scale were summed with higher scores indicating support for either a traditional or reverse double standard. Internal consistency for the current sample was excellent (Cronbach's α = .94)

Sexual Desire Inventory (SDI) (Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1996) Measuring strength and frequency of sexual thoughts, the SDI is a self-report measure comprising two subscales measuring dyadic, and solitary sexual desire. The dyadic desire scale consists of 9 items measuring desire to participate in sexual activity with a partner. Examples of items include *during the last month, how often would you have liked to engage in sexual activity with a partner (for example, touching each other's genitals, giving or receiving oral stimulation, intercourse, etc.),* and *when you have sexual thoughts, how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behaviour with a partner?* Response options vary from frequency options (e.g., once a day, once a week etc.) to 8-point rating scales ranging from (0) no desire, to (7) strong desire (Cronbach's α =.90).

The solitary desire scale (Spector et al., 1996) comprises 4 items assessing participants desire to behave sexually by themselves. Examples of items include *how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behaviour by yourself?* and *compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually by yourself?"* Response options are based on 9-point rating scales with varying anchors (e.g., no desire – strong desire; much less desire – much more desire) (Cronbach's α =.92). A final question asked

participants *how long could you go comfortably without having sexual activity of some kind?* with 9 response options ranging from (0) forever, to (8) less than one day.

Self-Reported Sexual Agency (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015) Two indexes were modified from a study conducted by Fetterolf and Sanchez assessing perceptions of sexual partners as desirable, and agentic. For the present study, participants were asked to rate on a 7-point rating scale where (1) not at all descriptive, and (7) is very descriptive, the degree to which traits were descriptive of themselves as a sexual person and sexual partner. The desirable sexual partner index is made up of 5 items; sexually alluring, sexually desirable, sexually exciting, sexually skilled, and sexually confident (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$), and the agentic sexual partner index contains 4 items, sexually dominant, sexually assertive, sexual passive – reverse keyed, and sexually submissive – reverse keyed (Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$).

Demographics To assess respondent characteristics that may predict endorsement of the sexual double standard, participants were asked to provide demographic details regarding their age, gender, highest level of education, and, relationship status.

Chapter Twelve. Study 2 Results

Part One. Women's Sexuality and Sociocultural Norms

It was theorised that ambivalent sexism is a social process reinforcing traditional gender roles. As sexual agency is traditionally associated with men's sexual norms, it was predicted that women who enact their sexual agency will tend to be evaluated with hostility whilst women whose sexuality follows traditional scripts of passivity will tend to be evaluated with benevolence. To test this theory two vignettes were designed identically with key variables manipulated to create a sexually passive and sexual agency condition. Targets in each scenario were then evaluated in terms of both hostile and benevolent sexism, as well as perceived competence in terms of values and morality. Mean scores on hostile and benevolent sexism and perceived competence for each condition are reported in Table 13.

Table 13

Mean Ambivalent Sexism and Perceived Competence Scores Person Perception Experiment

Condition	Hostile Sexism	Benevolent Sexism	Perceived competence
Sexually passive			
Men	13.59 (5.39)	18.84 (6.77)	16.74 (4.25)
Women	11.97 (4.96)	18.48 (6.44)	17.42 (4.22)
Sexual agency			
Men	14.07 (6.29)	18.37 (6.53)	17.71 (4.96)
Women	12.25 (5.43)	18.85 (7.42)	17.99 (5.40)

A 2 (gender) x2 (condition) x3 (ambivalent sexism subscales and perceived competence) MANOVA was conducted to analyse differences in benevolent and hostile sexism scores as well as perceived competence of target as a function of gender and condition. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between gender and either the passive or agency vignette on the combined dependent variables, F (3, 506) = 0.40, p = .76; Wilks' Λ = .998. There was also no significant main effect for the passive or agency condition on hostile or benevolent sexism and perceived competence, F (3, 506) = 1.70, p = .17; Wilks' Λ = .990. However, there was a statistically significant effect for gender on measures of sexism and perceived competence, F (3, 506) = 4.24, p = .006; Wilks' Λ = .975, partial η^2 = .03. Follow up ANOVA found a significant effect for gender on hostile sexism, F (1,510) = 12.06, p = .001, η^2 = .02, with men scoring significantly higher (M = 13.84, SD = 5.84) than women (M = 12.11, SD = 5.19) with a small effect size. There were no significant differences for gender on benevolent sexism, F (1,510) = 0.01, p = .92, or perceived competence, F (1,510) = 1.08, p = .30.

To test for differences of scores on the sexism measures within each condition, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. A significant difference was observed between hostile and benevolent sexism, F (1, 510) = 292.59, p < .001; Wilks' Λ = .635, partial η^2 = .36, with both the agency and passivity targets being rated significantly lower on hostile sexism (passive condition M = 12.56, SD = 5.17; agency condition M = 12.95, SD = 5.83) compared to benevolent sexism (passive condition M = 18.69, SD = 6.56; agency condition M = 18.67, SD = 7.08).

To test for age differences, a one-way ANOVA was performed for age categories on both hostile and benevolent sexism. A quartile split was performed for the entire sample with the first age category similar to university aged participants used in much sexuality research (see Table 14; for justification of age categorisation see p. 69). Levene's F statistic for hostile

sexism was significant ($p < .05$) however standard deviations for each of the age categories ranged from .50 to .64 with none of the largest standard deviations more than four times the size of the smallest standard deviation. Therefore, ANOVA was evaluated to be robust enough to cater to unequal variances (Howell, 2009). A significant difference was reported between groups for hostile sexism, F (3, 495) = 10.81, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Bonferroni post-hoc analyses found significant differences between age groups, with participants aged 18-21 (M = 15.11, SD = 6.42) scoring significantly higher than participants aged 22-29 years (M = 11.70, SD = 4.86), 30-39 years (M = 11.70, SD = 4.97) ($p < .001$), and participants aged over 40 years (M = 12.82, SD = 5.25) (p =.008). There were no other significant differences between the three oldest age categories. For benevolent sexism there were no statistically significant differences between groups, F(3, 495) = 1.216, p = .303.

Table 14

Gender Frequency According to Age Categories

Age Category	Men n (%)	Women n (%)
18-21 years	30 (6)	85 (17)
22-29 years	36 (7)	101 (20)
30-39 years	48 (10)	83 (17)
40+	71 (14)	45 (9)

The Sexual Double Standard

The sexual double standard was assesssed using two measures. The first measure contained five pairs of items assessing participant's personal perceptions of either men or women who engage in a range of sexual activities traditionally conceived of as permissive. The five pairs of items on the Personal Sexual Double Standard Scale included statements

about men or women who engage in uncommited sex, report a large number of past partners, watch sexually explicit videos and strip shows, and use Tinder or other hook up and dating apps. The second scale asked participants about their perceptions of whether a sexual double standard exists which judges women more harshly than men for sexually permissive behaviours, or whether a reverse double standard exists which judges men more harshly for sexually permissive behaviours. This scale also included five pairs of identical items. Means and standard deviations for the complete sample are presented in Table 15. along with skewness statistics.

Table 15

Means, Standard Deviations, and Skewness for Sexual Double Standard Variables (complete sample)

	Mean (SD)	Skewness
Personal Reverse DS Men	10.93 (4.57)	.599
Personal SDS Women	9.90 (4.52)	.899
Social SDS Women	16.75 (3.37)	-.356
Social Reverse DS Men	11.65 (3.41)	.312

Personal endorsement of a traditional double standard reported the lowest mean score in the combined sample, while perceptions of a social sexual double standard reported the largest mean score within the total sample. There was a statistically significant difference between perceptions of a social sexual double in comparison to perceptions of a social reverse double standard, $t(497) = 33.71$, $p < .001$, providing support for the theory that women's sexual behaviours outside of relationships are at least perceived to be judged more harshly in comparison to men.

Skewness statistics indicate both the social perceptions of a sexual double standard for men and women are approximately symmetrical. Examination of the distribution of scores for

the personal endorsement of a sexual double standard for women and a reverse double standard for men show the data to be positvely skewed. Although the skewness statistic for both these variables falls within the +/- 1 range, suggesting a moderate skewness (Bulmer, 1979) quite clear floor effects for both these variables are evident. Comparisons then between social perceptions and personal endorsements suggest that men and women perceive a sexual double standard to be in force however a large percentage of participants rejected a restrictive sexual standard for both men and women.

Gender differences

A one way MANOVA found a significant effect for gender on the sexual double standard scales, F (4, 486) = 7.17, $p < .001$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .944$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. A follow up analysis of variance was performed to assess difference on each scale. As the data was not normally distributed, assumptions of equal variance were assessed before proceeding with ANOVA. Examination of Levene's F statistic for three of the sexual double standard scales were not significant ($p > .05$) however the F statistic for the personal endorsement of a reverse sexual double standard was significant ($p = .02$) indicating unequal variances. Checking the standard deviations for men on this variable found a standard deviation of 4.20, while the standard deviation for women was 4.75. Due to the small difference between standard deviations, analysis of variance was considered robust to deal with unequal variance in this case (Howell, 2009).

Follow up analysis of variance found gender differences on perceptions of a social sexual double standard that judges women more harshly than men, F (1,501) = 10.93, p = .001, $\eta^2 = .02$, with women (M = 17.13, SD = 3.29) scoring significantly higher than men (M = 16.11, SD = 3.41). Gender differences were also observed on personal endorsement of a sexual double standard, with women (M = 11.34, SD = 4.75) endorsing a reverse double standard which judges men's permissive sexuality more harshly, F (1,504) = 6.92, p = .009,

$\eta^2 = .01$, when compared to men ($M = 10.25$, $SD = 4.20$). Consequently, it was women who were more likely to believe a sexual double standard is in force prescribing acceptable behaviours for women's sexuality, however in comparison to men, women were more likely to then endorse a standard which judges men for sexually permissive behaviours.

Difference scores were calculated for each of the personal sexual double standard variables to determine whether participants endorsed a single standard, a double standard, or a reverse double standard (Milhausen & Herold, 2002). To determine difference in scores for personal endorsement of the sexual double standard, scores from the responses to items relating to men's sexual behaviour were subtracted from the same item describing women's sexual behaviour, with negative scores indicating a reverse double standard and positive scores indicating support for the traditional double standard. The scores were then summed to give an overall difference score for each participant.

The mean difference score for men was -0.74 ($SD = 2.42$) while the mean difference score for women was – 1.26 ($SD = 1.82$) indicating both men and women endorsed a reverse sexual double standard judging men's sexual behaviour. This gender difference in endorsement of a reverse double standard was significant with women's scores more extreme than men's, $t(318.68) = 2.57$, $p = .01$ (equal variances not assumed). Difference scores are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Percentage of Support for a Reverse, Single, or Double Sexual Standard for Items on the Personal Sexual Double Standard Scale by Men and Women

	Men			Women		
Item	Reverse	Single	Double	Reverse	Single	Double
Uncommitted Sex	16.1	76	7.8	19.2	75.3	5
Many partners	33.3	56.3	10.4	42.6	54.1	3.1
Viewing strippers	19.7	72.9	7.3	21.1	74.7	3.4

Watching pornography	11.6	82.3	5.2	11	83.8	4.7
Tinder/hook up apps	13.5	79.2	7.3	22.3	73	4.7

It can be seen that most participants endorsed a single standard for all items. Most research to date assessing the sexual double standard has focused on number of sexual partners as a criterion with women judged more harshly. In contrast to past research, both men and women held more negative attitudes of men with a large number of past sexual partners, while a small percentage of men held unfavourable attitudes towards women with a more extensive sexual history.

Sexual Double Standard and Sexual Health Variables

Sexual double standard variables were predicted to be negatively correlated with sexual health variables. This prediction was partially supported for women (see Table 17). For women, the largest correlations were reported between holding a sexual double standard as well as a reverse double standard with their reported strength of desire to engage in autoerotic behaviours, as well as self-perceptions of oneself as a desirable sexual partner.

Table 17

Sexual Double Standard and Sexual Health Variable Correlations for Women

	Personal reverse DS men	Personal SDS women	Social Reverse DS men	Social SDS women
Desirable lover	-.23**	-.27**	-.13**	-.07
Agentic lover	-.11*	-.11*	-.09	-.07
Sexual satisfaction	-.14**	-.11*	-.18**	-.17**
Desire for partner	-.20**	-.22**	-.16**	-.03
Desire for self-pleasure	-.33**	.38**	.20**	.07

Agentic Self-concept	-.21**	-.24**	-.13**	-.08

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed).

The largest correlations reported for women was between endorsement of a sexual double standard and self-reported strength of desire. As low sexual desire is one of the most frequent complaints for women in comparison to men's sexual function, it was theorised that sexual agency which is traditionally associated with men's sexuality might mediate the relationship between social norms and sexual experiences.

To determine whether sexual agency mediates the relationship between the sexual double standard and women's desire, a mediation analyses was run using PROCESS version 24 with endorsement of a sexual double standard for women entered as the independent variable, self-reported sexual desire as the outcome variable, and an agentic sexual self-concept as a mediator. The agentic sexual self-concept variable is a composite score of the desirable and agentic lover variables which describes the sexual self as alluring, exciting, skilled, confident, dominant, and assertive.

Using a 5000 bootstrapped sample with bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) the model was significant, F (2,275) = 56.33, $p < .001$, $R = .54$, $r^2 = .29$ (see Figure 4).

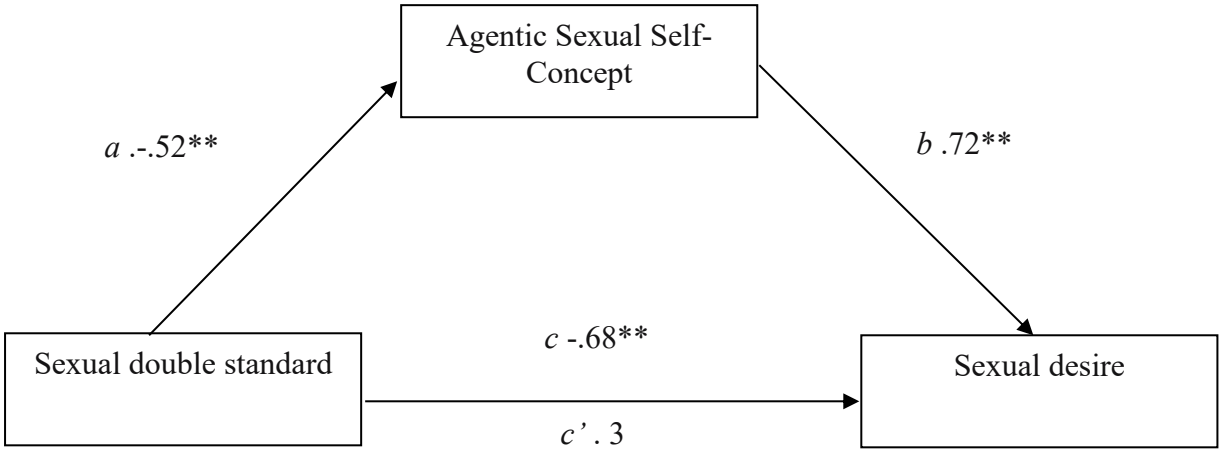

Figure 4. Agentic sexual self-concept as a mediator variable for the sexual double standard and sexual desire

Women's endorsement of the sexual double standard was negatively associated with women's sexual agency, while sexual agency was positively associated with sexual desire (ab = - .38, 95% CI = -.621 to -.189). The total effect of the sexual double standard on women's desire was significant (c = -.68, $p < .05$, 95% CI = -1.04 to -.317), however this relationship failed to reach significance when taking into account sexual agency (c'= .30, $p > .05$, 95% CI = - .619 to .023), suggesting sexual agency acts as a protective measure mediating the relationship between social norms and women's sexual desire.

For men, the largest correlations were negative in valence reported between endorsement of personal double standards with strength of desire for solitary and dyadic sexual activity (see Table 18). In comparison to women however, the sexual double standard variables were unrelated to an agentic sexual self-concept or sexual satisfaction. Furthermore, sexual norms for men were largely unrelated to their sexual appraisals and self-perceptions.

Table 18

Sexual Double Standard and Sexual Health Variable Correlations for Men

	Personal SDS men	Personal SDS women	Social SDS men	Social SDS women
Desirable lover	-.15*	-.08	-.07	.05
Agentic lover	.07	.14*	.06	.14*
Sexual satisfaction	-.04	-.06	-.02	.04
Desire for partner	-.26**	-.20**	-.00	.07
Desire for self-pleasure	-.21**	-.22**	-.04	-.02

Agentic Self-concept	-.06	.01	-.02	.11

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed)

Age Differences on Sexual Standards

As sexual norms have become more progressive over time, differences may be observed between different age groups in relation to perceptions and endorsement of sexual standards. Whilst more progressive sexual norms are predicted to be evident in younger cohort's sexual evaluations, age and maturation including more sexual experience may be associated with more progressive sexual attitudes and evaluation in older cohorts. A one-way MANOVA was performed to test the hypothesis that group differences in attitudes and perceptions of a sexual double standard would be evident between age categories. A statistically significant result was found, $F(12, 1249) = 4.24$, $p < .001$, Wilks' $\Lambda = .917$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Means and Standard Deviations for each of the age groups on sexual double standard variables are reported in Table 19.

Table 19

Means and Standard Deviations Sexual Standard Scores by Age Category

	Personal Reverse Double Standard	Personal Sexual Double Standard	Perceptions Traditional SDS	Perceptions Reverse SDS
18-21	12.30 (4.34)	11.77 (4.64)	17.09 (3.45)	12.38 (3.42)
22-29	10.38 (4.80)	9.36 (4.69)	16.74 (3.37)	11.06 (3.47)
30-39	10.18 (4.35)	8.82 (4.06)	16.69 (3.36)	11.36 (3.32)
40+	11.07 (4.62)	9.92 (4.36)	16.77 (3.35)	12.17 (3.32)

Follow up ANOVAs found significant differences between groups on personal endorsement of a reverse sexual double standard, $F(3, 490) = 5.30$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .03$,

personal endorsement of a traditional sexual double standard, F (3, 491) = 9.97, $p < .001$, η^2 = .06, and perceptions of a social reverse double standard judging men's sexuality more harshly, F (3, 487) = 4.26, p = .006, η^2 = .03. There were no group differences on age for perception of a traditional sexual double standard for women, F(3, 486) = .52, p = .671.

For a personal reverse sexual double standard, participants aged 18-21 years scored significantly higher than ages 22 -29 years (p = .006) and ages 30-39 year (p = .002). For endorsement of the traditional sexual double standard, participants aged 18-21 years also scored significantly higher than ages 22 -29 years ($p < .001$), ages 30-39 year ($p < .001$), and ages 40 years and older (p = .01). For perceptions of a reverse double standard at the social level participants aged 18-21 years scored significantly higher than ages 22 -29 years (p = .02). These findings indicate that younger cohorts appear to endorse more conservative views for men's and women's sexual behaviours.

Part Two. Sexual Attitudes, Health, and Sex-Role Stereotypes

Sex-Role Stereotypes, Sexism, and the Sexual Double Standard

Sex-role stereotypes were predicted to influence sexist attitudes as well as perceptions and endorsements of a sexual double standard. First a set of t tests were conducted to assess gender differences in self-identification with personality attributes of agency and communion. There was a significant difference between men (M = 23.41, SD = 4.50) and women (M = 24.25, SD = 3.40) on communion, t(465) = - 2.10, p = .04, Cohen's d = .2, with women scoring marginally higher. In contrast to past research (Wood & Eagly, 2015) there were no significant differences found between men (M = 20.58, SD = 4.88) and women (M= 20.32, SD = 3.69) on agency scores, t (432) = .610, p =. 54.

Identification with sex-role stereotypes was predicted to be associated with both hostile and benevolent sexism. As the communion subscale measures sex-role stereotypes associated with femininity with its emphasis on nurturing and caring, it was predicted that

communion and benevolent sexism would be significantly correlated as benevolent sexism is a social mechanism reinforcing traditional gender norms for women. Hostile sexism was predicted to be positively correlated with the agency subscale. As the agency subscale was originally conceptualised as a measure of masculinity, it was anticipated that masculine sex-role stereotypes would be associated with negative evaluations of women who are perceived to be sexually powerful and challenge traditional gender norms. These predictions were partially supported in the current study. Whilst hostile sexism was not significantly correlated with agency ($p > .05$), a small negative correlation was reported between hostile sexism and communion, $r\ (473) = -.12$, $p = .004$.

Benevolent sexism was also correlated with communion, $r\ (473) = .14$, $p = .001$, whereas no significant correlation was found between benevolent sexism and agency ($p > .05$). Whilst the correlations are only small, they partially support the hypothesis that sexism reinforces traditional sex roles. Benevolent sexism which rewards women for adhering to traditional sex roles was associated with traditionally feminine sex-role stereotypes of communion, while hostile sexism which is directed towards women who challenge the gender hierarchy was negatively associated with communion attributes.

As agency and communion were expected to correlate with hostile and benevolent sexism, they were further predicted to be associated with the sexual double standard. As the traditional sexual double standard reinforces traditional sexual norms prohibiting sexually permissive behaviours for women, it was anticipated that for women, communion attributes would be positively correlated with endorsement of a traditional sexual double standard such that women who identified with traditional sex-role stereotypes would negatively evaluate women who transgress sexual norms.

For women, agency was expected to negatively correlate with endorsement of a sexual double standard as it was anticipated that women who identify with masculine sex-role

stereotypes would be more inclined to evaluate sexually permissive women more positively and therefore reject traditional norms which restrict women from enacting their agency. For men it was anticipated that agency would be positively correlated with endorsement of a traditional sexual double standard as men who identify with traditional sex-role stereotypes of masculinity were predicted to negatively evaluate women who are sexually permissive and hence challenge sexual norms and the gender hierarchy. There were no predictions made for men and communion as identification by men with feminine sex-role stereotypes and sexual norms has not been addressed in research to date and therefore the analyses here for men are somewhat exploratory.

Correlations between sex-role identification and the sexual double standard are reported in Table 20. There was no support for the proposed relationships in the current study. For both men and women endorsement of either a sexual double standard or reverse double standard were not significantly correlated with agency or communion.

Table 20

Correlations Personality Attributes and the Sexual Double Standard

	Men		Women	
	Agency	Communion	Agency	Communion
Personal SDS men	- .02	.02	-.07	-.02
Personal SDS women	.08	-.03	-.10	-.04
Social SDS men	.05	-.06	-.15	-.08
Social SDS women	.08	-.13	-.05	-.12

Sex-Role Stereotypes and Sexual Self-Perceptions and Evaluations

Sex-role stereotypes were also predicted to influence sexual self-perceptions, desire, and sexual satisfaction, Correlations between both agency and communion and sexual health variables are reported in Table 21. It was expected that agency would be significantly correlated with women's sexual satisfaction, an agentic sexual self-concept, and increased reports of desire for solitary and partnered sexual activity. Communion was predicted to correlate with sexual satisfaction, as well as increased reports of desire for sexual activity with a partner. Agency was predicted to be associated with all of the sexual evaluations and self-perceptions variables for men, while communion was predicted to be unrelated to men's sexual evaluations. These predictions were partially supported.

Table 21

Correlations Personality Attributes and Sexual Health Outcomes

	Men		Women	
	Agency	Communion	Agency	Communion
Desirable lover	.61**	.33**	.47**	.21**
Agentic lover	.42*	.03	.35**	.03
Sexual satisfaction	.24**	.31**	.23**	.18**
Desire for partner	.25**	.14*	.20**	.23**
Desire for self-pleasure	.07	.09	.17**	.05

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed).

For men, the largest correlation reported was between agency and self-perceptions as a desirable lover. For women, agency was also correlated with self-perceptions as sexually desirable. In contrast to predictions that communion would be unrelated to men's sexual evaluations, sexual desirability ratings for men were positively correlated with communion. This relationship between desirability and communion was stronger for men than for women,

suggesting that for men, sexual self-perceptions of oneself as a desirable sexual lover are more strongly associated with personality attributes than they are for women.

It was predicted that communion would be negatively associated with women's sexual self-perceptions of agency. This was not supported in the current study. While communion was positively correlated with women's sexual self-perceptions of desirability, there was no relationship between communion and sexual agency.

For both men and women identification with traditionally feminine or expressive attributes was associated with sexual satisfaction, however the relationship here was stronger for men. In contrast, agency demonstrated the largest correlation with women's sexual satisfaction compared to communion.

In contrast to past research and theory which situates women's sexual motives and satisfaction within the context of feminine norms of communion, for women personality attributes of agency demonstrated a stronger relationship with sexual satisfaction than expressive traits associated with traditionally feminine gender roles. Furthermore, for women agency was associated with strength of desire for solitary sexual activity whereas neither agency nor communion was significantly correlated with men's strength of desire to engage in solitary sexual behaviours.

Gender Differences on Sexual Self-Perceptions, Desire, and Satisfaction

One of the aims of this study was to assess gender differences in sexual desire and an agentic sexual self-concept which have been traditionally associated with men's sexuality. Strength of desire for sexual activity with a partner as well as strength of desire for solitary sexual activity were both assessed, along with sexual satisfaction. Sexual self-perceptions of self as a desirable lover and an agentic lover were also assessed. As an agentic sexual self-concept is theorised to comprise self-perceptions of both desirability and assertiveness, the desirable lover subscale and sexual agent subscale were summed to create a composite score

for an agentic sexual self-concept measuring sexual self-perceptions of desirability, confidence, and assertiveness. Means and standard deviations for sexual outcome variables are presented in Table 22. Interestingly, mean scores on sexual self-perception scales are similar for both men and women. A significant difference in self-perceptions of sexual agency was observed, $F(1,506) = 9.34$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .02$, with men scoring significantly higher. Men also scored significantly higher on their self-reported desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner, $F(1,448) = 25.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$, as well as on their own, $F(1,463) = 15.73$, $p < .001$. $\eta^2 = .03$. On sexual satisfaction however it was women who scored significantly higher, $F(1,461) = 5.23$, $p = .023$. $\eta^2 = .01$, although the effect size was only small.

Table 22

Means and Standard Deviations Sexual Health Variables for Men and Women

	Men	Women
Item	*Mean (SD)*	*Mean (SD)*
Desirable partner	22.34 (7.11)	23.19 (7.08)
Agentic Partner	17.23 (4.95)	15.91 (4.60)
Sexual Satisfaction	39.93 (9.28)	42.01 (9.60)
Partnered desire	51.40 (10.28)	44.94 (14.62)
Solitary desire	21.43 (6.10)	18.53 (8.42)
Agentic Sexual Self-Concept	39.62 (10.35)	39.09 (10.13)

Sociocultural Norms, Personality, and the Sexual Self-Concept

In order to assess the ways in which sociocultural norms and personality attributes influence sexual self-perceptions, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to determine significant predictors for an agentic sexual self-concept in the combined sample of men and women. As an agentic sexual self-concept is theorised to comprise self-perceptions of both desirability and assertiveness. In this analysis, the desirable lover subscale and sexual agent subscale were summed to create a composite score for an agentic sexual self-concept

measuring sexual self-perceptions of desirability, confidence, and assertiveness. Predictor variables were entered in four blocks. Gender was coded as 0 for men and 1 for women, and relationship status was coded as 1 for single, 2 for dating, and 3 for in a relationship which included de facto relationships and married participants. Personality attributes of communion and agency were entered in step two. Step three included the sexual double standard variables, and step four comprised current sexual evaluations of sexual satisfaction and self-reported levels of desire for sex with a partner as well as solitary sexual desire.

The rationale here was to try and derive a model which included personality attributes, social influences, as well as current sexual evaluations. Steps 1 to 3 are presented in Table 23. Relationship status was a significant predictor in step one accounting for 5% of the variance in an agentic sexual self-concept. Personality attributes explained an additional 27% of the variance in step two, with identification with masculine sex-role stereotypes a significant predictor ($p < .001$). External influences in the form of perceptions and endorsement of a sexual double standard and a reverse double standard were entered in block three. These accounted for an additional 2% of the variance, however none of these predictors were significant ($p > .05$).

Table 23

Steps 1 to 3 in Predicting an Agentic Sexual Self-Concept for Men and Women

Variable	Beta	*t*	***p***	*R*	R^2	ΔR^2	R^2*change*
Step 1				.233	.055	.047	.055
Gender	-.013	-.26	.794				
Relationship Status	.233	4.67	.000				
Step 2				.576	.332	.323	.277
Gender	-.008	-.36	.718				
Relationship Status	.168	3.98	.000				
Agency attributes	.512	11.81	.000				
Communion	.063	1.44	.151				
Step 3				.591	.350	.334	.018
Gender	-.016	-.36	.718				

Relationship Status	.168	3.98	.000
Agency attributes	.512	11.81	.000
Communion	.057	1.29	.195
Personal Reverse DS	-.040	-.42	.677
Personal SDSwomen	-.062	-.65	.517
Social reverse DS	-.075	-1.36	.172
Social SDS women	.100	2.00	.046

*Gender coded 0= men, 1 = women
* Relationship status coded 1 = Single, 2 = dating, 3 = in a relationship

The final model is presented in Table 24. This model accounted for 47% of the variance of an agentic sexual self-concept, with relationship status, personality attributes associated with agency, self-reported sexual satisfaction, desire for sex and Masturbation all significant predictors ($p < .001$).

Table 24

Final Model Predicting an Agentic Sexual Self-Concept for both Men and Women

Variable	*R*	R^2	ΔR^2	R^2*Change*	Beta	*t*	*p*
	.701	.492	.476	.142			
Gender					.032	0.81	.418
Relationship status					.101	2.65	.008
Agency attributes					.424	10.76	.000
Communion attributes					-.013	-0.31	.751
Personal SDS men					.007	0.08	.932
Personal SDS women					-.016	-0.18	.853
Social SDS men					-.047	-0.96	.333
Social SDS women					.068	1.53	.128
Sexual Satisfaction					.233	5.82	.000
Partnered Desire					.236	5.02	.000

Solitary Desire	.105	2.28	.023

*Gender coded 0= men, 1 = women
* Relationship status coded 1 = Single, 2 = dating, 3 = in a relationship

To further assess relationship status and sexual agency, a one way ANOVA was performed to assess differences in group means of relationship categories (see Table 25). A significant difference was found between categories of relationship status and a sexually agentic self-concepts, $F(6,497) = 7.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Bonferroni post-hoc analyses reported people who were single scored significantly lower on an agentic sexual self-concept than people who were dating ($p < .001$), in a relationship ($p < .001$), in a defacto relationship ($p = .019$), and people who were married ($p = .003$). There were no other differences reported between any of the other group means. These results suggest that sexual self-concepts including perceptions of oneself as exciting, skilled, confident, and dominant are more evident in people who are currently in a relationship.

Table 25

Means and Standard Deviations Sexual Agency according to Relationship Status

Relationship Status	n	*M (SD)*
Single	135	34.99 (9.37)
Dating	45	43.51 (10.15)
In a relationship	146	41.55 (8.92)
DeFacto	23	42.39 (10.64)
Married	133	39.55 (10.87)
Divorced	15	36.13 (10.72)

Chapter Thirteen. Study 2 Discussion

To date there has been little attention directed towards people's perceptions of women's sexual agency (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015). The aim of this study was to evaluate current social attitudes towards women's sexual expression. Hostile and benevolent sexism were predicted to reinforce traditional sexual norms of passivity acting as a potential barrier for women's sexual agency, however these predictions were not supported. Identification with sex-role stereotypes was predicted to be associated with sexist attitudes towards women's sexuality and this was partially supported with feminine sex-role stereotypes of communion negatively correlated with hostile sexism and positively correlated with benevolent sexism. Identification with traditional sex-role stereotypes was more strongly associated with sexual evaluations however, with a strong relationship for both men and women between agency and perceptions of the self as a desirable and agentic lover, with communion demonstrating a moderate relationship with men's sexual satisfaction and perceptions of self as sexually desirable.

Further results from this age diverse sample found both men and women perceived a sexual double standard is in force judging women for sexually permissive behaviours. However, neither sex endorsed a strong traditional double standard, while women endorsed a weak reverse double standard judging men's sexual expression negatively. Support for traditional sexual standards for both men and women were negatively associated with sexual self-perceptions, sexual satisfaction, and desire, however the relationships here were

generally stronger for women.

Initial findings suggest sexist attitudes and the sexual double standard are not potential barriers for women's sexual agency. Furthermore, evidence for a sexual double standard was limited with results supporting a general sexual conservatism amongst a minority of participants while the majority of participants endorsed largely egalitarian attitudes. Further, gender differences in personality, sexual self-perceptions, and sexual evaluations were small. These results support current research highlighting a shift in sexual and gender norms in recent years.

Ambivalent Sexism

Ambivalent sexism is proposed to operate through the categorisation of women into two separate groups. These subtypes characterise women as 'good' or 'bad' predicated upon their adherence to traditional gender roles and stereotypes. While past research has documented the role of hostile and benevolent sexism in differentiating subtypes of women according to either permissive or conservative sexual behaviours (Fowers & Fowers, 2010; Sibley & Wilson, 2004), in the current study classification of women as sexually assertive and women as sexually passive failed to replicate this effect.

The person-perception experiment used in the current study was designed to assess potential perceived penalties for women who engage in sexually agentic behaviours. It was expected that the target in the agency condition would elicit much greater responses of hostile sexism compared to benevolent sexism. The target in the passive conditions was expected to be evaluated with more benevolence as she was described as sexually receptive and compliant. According to theory, responses directed toward this situation should be favourable from the point of view that sexual passivity adheres to cultural scripts for heterosexual intimacy with gender conforming women complementing men's position in the gender hierarchy (Lee et al., 2010).

Key variables were manipulated between each condition such that the sexual agency target was more assertive in her approach to seeking out sexual activity, she advocated for her sexual health by insisting on using a condom with a new sexual partner, and she declined sexual activity when she felt it was not in her best interest. The sexually passive target in contrast was hesitant but ultimately receptive to a sexual invitation and whilst she advocated for her sexual health by requesting a condom be used with a new partner, she was submissive in continuing with the sexual encounter when her partner did not respond to her needs. Whilst these conditions were designed in line with theoretical considerations and research describing sexual agency and sexual passivity (Averett et al., 2008; Curtin et al., 2011; Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015), in the current study there was no differentiation in the evaluation of each character. Instead, both conditions elicited low scores on hostile sexism with significantly higher scores on benevolent sexism**.**

In an experimental study with university aged women, Fischer (2006) found young women who were presented with fictional information that men's attitudes towards women were negative, scored significantly higher on benevolent sexism compared to women in both a positive attitude and control condition. Fischer questioned whether it was the fictional account of the individual men's attitudes women responded to, or perceived global or social attitudes which elicited benevolent reactions. Higher scores for benevolent sexism on both the agency and passive condition in the current study could possibly be a reaction to perceived social norms which denigrate sexually permissive women. Of the sexual double standard measures, mean scores were the highest on perceptions of a social double standard and these responses were invariable across age categories highlighting a pervasive belief that a sexual double standard is in force. Benevolent evaluations of both conditions in the current sample by both men and women are potentially a reaction to this belief. As participants perceived that social norms restrict women's sexual expression and shame them for sexually

permissive behaviour they may have reacted with more favourable evaluations as a protective measure (Glick et al., 2000).

Cross cultural research has found gender differences in endorsement of hostile and benevolent sexism, with stronger endorsement by men of hostile sexism associated with women's higher scores on benevolent sexism (Glick et al., 2000). Further, across nations, endorsement by both men and women of hostile and benevolent sexism is negatively associated with objective measures of gender equality (Glick et al., 2000). As such, ambivalent sexism is more prevalent in nations where women have less power, financial resources, access to health services and are afforded less autonomy and independence (Fischer, 2006). Consequently, in more egalitarian societies, men may be less hostile in their attitudes towards women, and women are therefore free to reject benevolent sexism. In the current study men scored only marginally higher on hostile sexism compared to women, while there were no significant differences on benevolent sexism. As the current sample was comprised of participants from mainly Western and industrialised countries the current results may be a reflection of the gender equality within these nations.

This interpretation is supported by the near identical mean scores for each target on both hostile and benevolent sexism. These similarities between conditions is interesting given this was a between subject design and participants responded to either the passive or agency condition only. An explanation for this similarity between the agency and passivity conditions on sexism measures may be that shifts in sexual norms have seen more women engaging in casual sex and this might have resulted in lower levels of hostile evaluations of both women. The current sample were also more age diverse than the participants in previous similar studies. Further, participants in the age category of 18-21 years who are most similar in age to the university students used in previous studies scored significantly higher on hostile sexism compared to older age categories. Therefore, it is possible that the current study did

not find significantly higher scores on hostile sexism directed towards the agency condition as a result of sample characteristics. Experimental research has found men and women who reported being more sexually experienced held more favourable perceptions of women who provided a condom in a fictional sexual counter than women who used no condom (Kelly & Bazzini, 2001). In the current study the agency target who insisted on using a condom and refused intercourse when her potential partner failed to comply was not evaluated in terms of hostile sexism as was expected and this may be due to the older and presumably more experienced participants in the sample.

These findings may also be a factor of the study design. While the passive vignette was constructed to describe a sexually submissive woman who was predicted to elicit more positive evaluations, the role the woman played in the sexual encounter whilst submissive may still be perceived as sexually permissive due to the fact she engaged in an uncommitted sexual encounter. In contrast, the target in the agency condition did not follow through with the sexual encounter and was potentially perceived as a sexual tease. That is, the behaviours that led to the sexual encounter may have been taken into less consideration than whether or not the target engaged in the sexual act. Thus, it is possible participants evaluations of each scenario were influenced by more salient aspects of the scene such as overt behaviour compared to the subtle manipulation of target characteristics. It is also possible that responses to each of the vignettes are a result of demand characteristics or social desirability, particularly for evaluations of hostile sexism. Mean scores for benevolent sexism however were still quite low and so it seems unlikely that participants would endorse lower ratings of a perceptually more positive response. Whilst the sample comprised participants mostly from Western nations, limiting generalisability, these results suggest the role of sexism in mediating women's sexual agency is limited, with agency and passivity failing to meet the requirements for the conditioning of positive or negative subtype.

Sexual Double Standard

In assessing the sexual double standard, the current study found men reported more egalitarian sexual attitudes compared to women, although a third of the men in the sample reported judging other men more harshly for a more extensive sexual history. Nearly half of the women in the sample agreed they judge men more harshly for having had many sexual partners, with nearly a quarter of women judging men more harshly for using Tinder or other hook up apps, or for going to a strip show. Findings from qualitative research suggest men who are sexually experienced may be perceived by women to be sexual predators and players. Further, terms such as sleazy, dirty, and self-focused have been used by women to describe sexually experienced men (Milhausen & Herold, 1999, p. 364; Milhausen & Herold, 2002). That women in the current study negatively evaluated men with more sexual experience or with an active interest in pursuing casual sexual relationships may be attributed to a general distrust of men's sexual intentions and a safeguard for women in protecting their sexual health and reputations. These perceptions of men as sexually self-focused and potential predators may stem from socialisation processes whereby young women are taught to safeguard their sexuality for fear of social stigma and unwanted pregnancies (Averett et al., 2008; Tolman).

At the same time, feminists have critiqued the sexual double standard along with more vocal concerns about sexism, sexual objectification, and sexual violence (Milhausen & Herold, 2002; Phipps, Ringrose, Renold, & Jackson, 2017). While women perceived a sexual double standard operates at the societal level, they negatively evaluated men for the same behaviours. In the current study, women's support for a reverse double standard might also represents a backlash towards men's active sexuality such that women respond with a heterosexual hostility in relation to their beliefs that men are sexually aggressive and manipulative (Glick & Fiske, 1999).

The majority of research studying the sexual double standard has focused on university samples limiting the generalisability of results (Bordini & Sperb, 2013). Historically young adulthood has been a time of identity exploration with this period of the lifespan centred on forming intimate relationships (Erikson, 1959). More recently, studies have found an increasing number of university aged men and women are engaging in casual sex while holding more permissive sexual attitudes (Jonasan & Marks, 2009; Paul et al., 2000; Maticka-Tyndale et al., 2003). Whilst this population may be more likely to be involved in the dating scene (Fuge`re, Escoto, Cousins, Riggs, & Haeric, 2008) other factors such as age and life experience might afford people a different perspective on women's sexuality. For example, in a large study of university aged student's attitudes towards the sexual double standard, Alison and Risman (2013) found young women and men's sexual attitudes became more liberal as they aged. Further, in a between subject's analysis, Milhausen and Herold (2002) reported women who described having more sexual experience with multiple partners were more likely to indicate they would consider dating a man with many past sexual partners (Milhausen & Herold, 1999).

The current study comprised a sample of participants with the mean age for men and women older than convenience samples used in prior research (Bordini & Sperb, 2013). Indeed, men and women in the youngest age category scored significantly higher on support for the sexual double standard, a reverse double standard, as well as hostile sexism when compared to older age groups. Similar to the age differences observed for hostile sexism, these findings suggest sexual attitudes may become more liberal with age and experience, with younger adults more susceptible to the influence of sociocultural norms.

Has the Sexual Double Standard Changed Over Time?

While results from the current study highlight the pervasive perceptions of gendered sexual norms, they also provide support for more current commentary on the elusive

detection of the sexual double standard (Marks & Fraley, 2005). The current study was designed to assess discrepancies between men and women's perceptions of social norms, and their sexual attitudes towards a number of sexual scenarios and relationships. Supporting previous research (Milhausen & Herold, 2001), participants perceived sexual standards are in force stigmatising women's sexual behaviours, however the majority did not personally endorse attitudes judging women more harshly for a range of sexual behaviours including engaging in uncommitted sex, watching pornography, or using dating apps for casual sex. Rather, participants held mostly egalitarian attitudes insofar as they evaluated men's and women's sexual behaviours to the same standards. As the current research evaluated sexual attitudes chosen to represent more contemporary sexual behaviours and relationships in comparison to previous research (Bordini & Sperb, 2013), these findings suggest the current conception and evaluations of the sexual double standard in the literature are in need of revision

Jonasan and Marks (2009) found support for a sexual double standard in college aged students for sexual behaviours they considered unusual or non-normative for this age group. The authors suggest shifts in social norms have resulted in less stigma associated with sexual acts such as one night stands, casual sex, and multiple pre-marital sexual partners Consequently, these sexual behaviours and relationships may now be considered the norm such that the sexual double standard has diminished resulting in single sexual standards for both men and women (Jonasan & Marks, 2009).

A rejection of sexual double standards in the current sample supports this suggestion. The results presented here may be a reflection of current sexual norms in relation to casual uncommitted sex, multiple sexual partners, and engagement with erotic activities including pornography and strip shows. Further, in the current study, correlations between the personal endorsement of a traditional sexual double standard and the reverse sexual double standard

scales were large (*r's* > .8) for both men and women, suggesting these two scales are measuring similar concepts, if not the same. Examination of the pattern for women's correlations suggested that women's attitudes in relation to sexually permissive behaviours for both men and women fall along a negative to positive continuum whereby they tended to either endorse conservative standards, or support more liberal sexual standards for both sexes concurrently. While prior research suggests conservative sexual attitudes are gender specific to women (Jonasan & Marks, 2009), the results from the current study highlight the complexity of this issue suggesting that conservatism may be significant for both women and men when evaluating the sexual behaviours of others, however liberal and egalitarian attitudes are also endorsed by both genders.

It is possible that social desirability may have influenced reporting in the current sample, or a selection bias was in effect. However, self-report measures are frequently used in sex research with many studies supporting their reliability (Petersen & Hyde, 2010). Further, anonymity in self-report surveys and experimental studies have been found to reduce biased and socially desirable responding (Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Schroder et al., 2003).

Social Norms, Personal Attributes and Sexual Evaluations

While results from prior research are largely inconclusive about the ongoing presence of a sexual double standard, few quantitative studies to date have focused specifically on the relationship between support for a sexual double standard and sexual self-perceptions and evaluations. In the current study, the sexual double standard was negatively associated with sexual self-perceptions and sexual evaluations for both men and women. For women, support for the traditional sexual double standard was negatively associated with aspects of their sexual self-concept, as well as self-reported desire for sexual activity with a partner highlighting the ways in which internalisation of social norms is associated with the sexual self-concept. However, for women, perceptions of a traditional sexual double standard at the

societal level were unrelated to sexual evaluations. Thus, whilst the majority of women perceived sexual standards are in force restricting their sexual freedom, these social norms when not internalised appear to have little effect on women's sexual desire or sexual self-concept.

For men, perceptions of a traditional and reverse double standard were unrelated to their sexual evaluations and self-perceptions. Baumeister (2000) argues men's sexuality is relatively fixed in relation to sociocultural influences and pressures. He cites the sexual revolution as a period where women's sexual expression changed in response to progressive sexual norms whereas men's sexual behaviours and attitudes remained the same. This, he argues, provides evidence for the inherently rigid and biologically driven nature of men's sexuality. Accordingly, this combination of biological and evolutionary forces, along with greater physical and structural power has afforded men an unrestricted sexuality and greater social control such that their sexuality has developed with resistance to external influences (Baumeister, 2000). Consequently, social norms whether perceived or endorsed are unlikely to have much influence on men's sexual behaviours and self-reflections as outcomes are insignificant in shaping men's sexuality.However, endorsement of a traditional and reverse double standard was negatively associated with men's self-reported desire for both solitary sexual activity and desire for sex with a partner. Similar then to findings with the women in the sample, for some men, conservative sexual attitudes may negatively influence desire for sexual activity. Conversely, low sexual desire might shape negative attitudes towards others with a sexually liberal orientation.

For men, conservative sexual attitudes demonstrated the strongest association with benevolent sexism. This was unexpected as it was predicted that men's hostile sexism would reinforce traditional sexual roles for women (Rudman et al., 2012). While the correlations were small in magnitude, they suggest a relationship exists between men's perceptions of

women as the nobler yet more weaker sex, and their attitudes towards sexually permissive behaviours. This relationship might be explained by traditional attitudes towards gender roles coupled with a paternally protective attitude towards women's sexual reputations (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

For women, conservative sexual attitudes reported the strongest association with hostile sexism. These findings describe a relationship between the endorsement of hostile attitudes towards women who are potentially sexually powerful and negative evaluations of sexually permissive behaviours. In contrast to the men in the current study, women's sexually conservative attitudes appear to be associated with a maintenance of traditional norms by punishing other women for sexual transgressions, whereas for men, perceptions of women as potential victims of men's sexuality were associated with maintenance of traditional sexual norms.

These findings may be explained by social control theories for men and women. According to female control theory, it is women who punish other women for sexually permissive behaviours as a form of mate guarding (Rudman et al., 2012). While female control theory is based on motivations for guarding male partners from promiscuous women in order to safe guard financial security, another possible explanation is that women who are sexually conservative are fearful of women who they perceive to be sexually powerful and a threat in terms of relationship security (Zaikman & Marks, 2014). While the majority of women rejected traditionally sexist and restrictive sexual attitudes, for some women, sexually conservative attitudes may be associated with sexual and relational insecurities.

In contrast, male control theory suggests men seek to maintain control of women's sexuality in order to protect their sexual status and prevent their sexual partner's from seeking sexual activity outside of the relationship (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002). For a minority of men in the current study, conservative sexual attitudes may also be associated with a sexual

insecurity manifesting in positive sexual attitudes towards women who are sexually chaste and therefore provide more relational security and a sense of sexual validation (Fowers & Fowers, 2010). It is also possible that these beliefs may be a reflection of sexually conservative men's past and present sexual behaviours such that they are more likely to experience their sexuality within traditional relationships, holding more romanticised opinions of women as committed lovers and partners.

There are a number of limitations to these interpretations. Firstly, they are correlational and therefore no claims for causality can be made. Furthermore, correlations were mostly small and so a large percentage of variability in these relationships is unaccounted for by traditional sexual attitudes or personality attributes. This may be due to a lack of power. While the sample size in total is modest, the number of men and women endorsing hostile sexism and the sexual double standard is small. Therefore, these findings are descriptive of a set of attitudes held by a minority of men and women. Other factors such as religiosity (Burn & Busso, 2005), personality traits (Hald, Malamuth, & Lange, 2013) including a social dominance orientation (Fowers & Fowers, 2010) and right wing authoritarianism (Sibley & Wilson, 2004), nationality (Alison & Risman, 2013), sexual experiences (Hald et al., 2013) and experiences within relationships (Glick & Fiske, 1996) are also potentially influential in shaping sexist, as well as sexually conservative and traditional attitudes.

While there was little support for the sexual double standard it is possible that the items chosen to assess sexual attitudes did not tap into the current sexual climate. For example, a question was framed about judging either a man or a woman for having uncommitted sex, which assesses sexuality outside of relationship. While mostly responses to these statements were egalitarian with similar standards reported, perhaps the statement needed to ask about men or women who have a lot of uncommitted sex. For example, Alison

and Risman (2013) found half of their large sample of college students reported they would lose respect for both men and women who engaged in a lot of casual uncommitted sex. These results suggest casual sex in and of itself has become less stigmatised over the course of the 21st Century, however frequent engagement in casual sex at the expense of committed relationships is potentially still perceived negatively by men and women. In contemporary samples where the age of marriage has increased, it is not unusual for men and women to have a larger number of past sexual partners compared to previous generations who were married at younger ages. Future research might assess the ways in which the sexual double standard applies to different sets of behaviours which are potentially non-normative for both younger and older age groups. For example, Jonasan and Marks (200?) found support for a sexual double standard for engagement in sexual threesomes, while qualitative research has reported a sexual double standard in adolescence with regards to anal sex (Marston & Lewis, 2014.)

Further, only attitudes towards permissive sexual behaviours and casual sexual relationships were evaluated. Accordingly, results are limited in terms of evaluating the influence of norms and attitudes on actual behaviour. That is, contemporary sexual attitudes may be unrelated to sexual norms and expectations, however whether this translates into action within short term and committed relationships is unknown. A measure of sexual desire however which included self-reported desire for both partnered and solitary sexual activity provided an indication of participants desired level of activity independent of any compromise between partners or absence of partner

Sex-Role Stereotypes

The current study assessed personality attributes associated with traditionally masculine or feminine sex-role stereotypes, using the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ; Spence & Helmreich, 1978). Whilst masculinity and femininity are the labels that

have been used for these concepts in prior research, masculinity has often been referred to as instrumentality (Spence & Helmreich, 1980) or agency (Ward et al., 2006) and femininity is often labelled expressivity (Spence & Helmreich, 1980) or communion (Ward et al., 2006). While these terms are used interchangeably, some debate has ensued as to how representative these labels are for the content of each scale (for a discussion see Gill, Stockard, Johnson, & Williams, 1987). The masculinity scale of the PAQ comprises instrumental attributes such as self-confidence as well as autonomous attributes such as independent and active (Gill et al., 1987) which are descriptive of an agentic orientation, while the femininity scale contains prosocial traits of kindness and empathy characteristic of an expressive orientation promoting values of communion. The revised version of the PAQ used in the current study uses the labels agency and communion and these will be the terms used for the present findings (Ward et al., 2006).

Whilst past research has differentiated men and women on their personality attributes with men scoring higher on instrumentality and women scoring higher on expressivity (Feingold; 1994; Leary & Snell, 1988), in the current study both men and women reported similar scores on both agency and communion. These similarities in men's and women's personality attributes may be due to the evolving nature of cultural scripts. Research has documented shifts in gender norms coinciding with changes to social structures, with an increase in women's identification with instrumental attributes since the inception of sex-role scales in the 1970's (Twenge, 1997). Women may have become more assertive in response to changes to social roles and status (Twenge, 2001). Furthermore, agency has been found to have a reciprocal relationship with social roles over time such that agency predicted women's career success with career success associated with increases in agency (Abele, 2003). As women have become more autonomous in their working and personal lives, achieving higher educational outcomes and financial security, traits of perseverance, self-confidence, and

independence appear to have become incorporated into their sense of self.

Women also identified with sex-role stereotypes descriptive of communal attributes with mean scores only marginally higher than men. Historically women have been perceived to embody communal traits to a greater extent than men in response to social pressures and gender roles (Bosak, Sczesny, & Eagy, 2008). Similarities between men and women on communion in the current findings suggest social norms dictating desirable attributes for men may have also evolved in response to shifts in social norms and gender roles. Research has found men's participation within the home with childcare and domestic tasks has increased since the 1960's (Bianchi, Sayer, Milkie, & Robinson, 2012). Women still spend more time each week caring for children and completing household chores, however as women have engaged in more paid employment outside the home, gender disparities in time spent working within the home have decreased (Altintas & Sullivan, 2016; Bianchi et al., 2012). As men's roles within the family have expanded to include child-caring and domestic work, a shift in identities may have occurred with less focus on traditional conceptions of masculinity (Bianchi et al., 2012) facilitating increased identification with communal and expressive attributes.

Not surprisingly, men's identification with traditionally masculine sex-role stereotypes was positively associated with their sexual self-perceptions of desirability, and agency, as well as their strength of desire for partnered sexual activity. In contrast to past findings (Mosher & Danoff-Burg, 2005) self-reported communal traits were also associated with men's sexuality, demonstrating a moderate and positive association with sexual satisfaction, as well as perceptions of oneself as sexually desirable. Personality attributes are thought to influence the self-concept by mediating behaviours and therefore these results would suggest that for men, traits of kindness, empathy, and interpersonal warmth, are significant in shaping positive sexual self-perceptions. A reciprocal relationship might also be

evident whereby communal traits influence men to seek out sexually satisfying experiences promoting warmth and intimacy within relationships, which are then reflected upon and incorporated into the sexual self-concept (Abele, 2013).

There is a lack of research assessing men's identification with expressive traits and the role of communion within intimate relationships. Research suggests the social attribution of communal stereotypes for men as well as the internalisation of expressive attributes into men's self-concepts has remained relatively stable over time (Abele, 2003). The current results however highlight the ways in which men's internalisation of traditionally feminine traits is not only similar to women, but also the ways in which these attributes are associated with their sexual evaluations and self-perceptions. While women are believed to be more communal than men striving for intimacy and connection with other (McAdams, 2009) in the current study these attributes were also significant within men's sexual relationships.

While traditional gender norms prescribe desirable traits for both men and women, there is some evidence that as they move through the lifespan personality attributes develop or become more salient in response to social influences. For example, agency and communion were found to influence generativity and life satisfaction in a sample of middle aged men and women, and while agency was positively correlated with both men and women's generative concerns, communion was found to be positively associated with generativity for men only (Ackerman et al., 2000). Therefore, the similarities in agency and communion observed for men and women in the current study may also be a factor of age and maturation. As the men in the current study were older than university aged students participating in prior research, the current findings might point to more life experience for older men within relationships and families facilitating the development of more expressive attributes (Eagly, 1987).

Furthermore, as internalisation of traditional stereotypes is contingent on contextual

factors including norms for social roles, changes in social structure should result in less defined stereotypical attributes being socially assigned and self-prescribed (López-Sáez, Morales, & Lisbona, 2008). While prior research suggests the social attribution of stereotypical traits used in sex-role research has not changed in recent years (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016; López-Sáez et al., 2008) the current research suggests internalisation of sex-role stereotypes has with women endorsing assertive and agentic characteristics as descriptive of themselves while men identified with expressive and communally focused attributes.

Agency, Communion, and the Sexual Self-Concept

Individuals who endorse sex types norms are expected to incorporate these traits into their sexual self-perceptions (Wood & Eagly, 2015). Instrumentality or agency has been theorised to shape men's sexuality insofar as men are generally more sexually confident and assertive and report more liberal sexual attitudes compared to women (Leary & Snell, 1988). As sexual agency is associated with men's sexual satisfaction (Keifer & Sanchez, 2007) with sex-role stereotypes of agency associated with women's sexual satisfaction (Mosher & Danoff-burg, 2005) it was anticipated that personality attributes associated with agency would be positively associated with sexual evaluations and self-perceptions. This was supported in the current study with agency significantly correlated with men's and women's sexual satisfaction. Further, for women in the current study, sex-role stereotypes associated with agency were associated with their strength of desire for solitary and partnered sex, as well as their sexual self-perceptions of desirability and sexual agency.

These findings support the theory that gender differences in sexual behaviours and attitudes to date are associated with personality attributes with instrumental traits typically ascribed to men significant in promoting positive sexual evaluations and self-perceptions (Leary & Snell, 1988). The similarities between men and women on personality attributes of agency in the current results may explain why gender differences on sexual evaluations,

perceptions, as well as attitudes towards permissive behaviours were small or otherwise not significant.

Moreover, personality attributes of agency were the largest single contributor to an agentic sexual self-concept, highlighting the role of internal attributes in shaping men and women's sexual self-perceptions, behaviours, and attitudes. Current sexual evaluations also predicted self-concepts described in terms of agency, with strength of desire and sexual satisfaction, as well as relationship status significant predictors in the final model for men's and women's agentic sexual self-perceptions. While sexual evaluations and relationship status predicted sexual agency, it is also possible that men and women who are sexual agents actively seek satisfying sexual relationships which influences the strength of their desire for solitary and partnered sexual activity. Moreover, sexual agency may be fluid within and between relationships such that men and women who are not currently in a relationship may report lower perceptions of agency due to less current experience with agency to reflect upon. That is, relationship status may not predict sexual agency so much as sexual agency is more readily identified in men and women who are in a sexual relationship.

While past research has emphasised gender differences in sexual behaviours and relationships (Peplau, 2003), the results from the current study suggest gender differences in attitudes and evaluations are not as large as previously reported. For the current sample, men and women reported similar levels of desire and sexual self-perceptions which comprised evaluations of the sexual self as alluring, exciting, skilled, confident, assertive, and dominant. Furthermore, while men scored higher on desire for partnered sex, women reported more sexual satisfaction. While women's desire may be less intense than men's reports in the current sample, agentic self-perceptions were found to predict sexual satisfaction over and above sexual desire. These findings support more recent research which highlights the relationship between women's sexual agency and sexual health outcomes, and suggests that

for women, sexual agency may be shaped in part by personality attributes.

As social role theory dictates that gender differences in behaviour are the result of the distribution of men and women into social roles requiring either agentic or communal attributes (Eagly, 1987), the results from the current study suggest blurred boundaries are emerging between men and women's roles within intimate relationships. If gender differences in social behaviours are the result of social pressures to conform to gendered norms and roles (Moskowitz, Suh, & Desaulniers, 1994), then gender similarities in sexual behaviours are potentially subject to similar social processes. Consequently, men and women who occupy similar roles should share similar attributes.

This thesis theorised that shifts in gender norms and social roles have over time influenced changes to sexual norms with women now observed engaging in more sexually permissive behaviours. As such, stereotypes about women's sexuality have also shifted. Women identified with sex-role stereotypes of agency to the same degree as men and agency was significantly correlated with their sexual self-perceptions and sexual evaluations. Furthermore, the majority of women rejected sexual norms and hostile attitudes, with these socially imposed attitudes and proscriptions unrelated to their sexual evaluations and self-perceptions.

The revised version of the PAQ used in the current study measured agency and communion. These two concepts are theorised to differentiate men and women based on socially desirable sex-role attributes. Whilst historically these scales have measured masculinity and femininity, in the current sample they better reflect the distinction between agency/autonomy, and expressivity/communion, neither of which appears to be gender specific to men or women. Rather, sex-role stereotypes in this contemporary sample better describe two dimensions of personality measuring interpersonal warmth and assertiveness. These findings suggest the utility of employing sex-role stereotypes to assess and predict

gender differences in behaviours and attitudes is limited in contemporary research.

Moreover, these results support recent arguments that gender differences in sexual behaviours and attitudes have dissipated over the course of the 21st century (Levant et al., 2012). In contrast to biological and evolutionary perspectives on gendered sexuality, the current results support social structuralist theories of gender and sexuality highlighting a shift in sexual norms and subsequent sexual health outcomes. Further, identification with both agency and communion attributes potentially mediates this relationship between social norms and sexual health outcomes with attributes of agency for women and communion for men associated with agentic sexual self-concepts and sexual satisfaction.

Chapter Fourteen. Conclusion

The aim of the current thesis was to evaluate the social and psychological influences and attributes which shape women's sexual self-concepts. Traditionally, communal roles and expressive attributes have been described as significant in shaping women's sexual motivations and self-appraisals (Basson 2000; Peplau, 2003). The current research has reassessed gendered conceptions of women's sexuality and extended past findings to describe the ways in which sexual agency manifests within women's cognitions and behaviours (study 1). While it was predicted that social structures reinforcing traditional scripts and sex-role stereotypes might act as potential barriers to women's sexual agency, there was little support for this hypothesis with a mixed gender sample rejecting punitive attitudes towards women who are sexually agentic as well as the sexual double standard (study 2). Further, while gender norms have traditionally differentiated men and women's behaviours along a masculine-feminine sex-role continuum, the current thesis found similarities between genders on personal attributes, as well as sexual attitudes and evaluations (study 2). The results from both studies support research highlighting a recent shift in women's sexual behaviours and attitudes in conjunction with changes to sexual and gender norms (Leiblum, 2002; Levant et al., 2012, Petersen & Hyde, 2010).

In drawing conclusions from the current research, results will be integrated from both studies according to predicted psychosocial influences of personality and social structures to present a final model for women's sexual self-concepts.

Social Structures

Social structuralist theories describe the position of men and women within a gender hierarchy which has over time shaped social roles, behavioural norms, and gender stereotypes (Spence & Buckner, 2000). Drawn from sexual scripts defined by cultural scenarios, traditional norms have created a narrative for women's sexuality focusing on intimacy needs and relational outcomes. Research reviewed has suggested the identification with social representations of gender and sexual norms will be integrated into women's sexual self-concepts and influence their relationships and behaviours (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994; Breakwell & Millward, 1997), however much of this research has focused on adolescent and young adult populations.

The current research extended beyond college aged populations to reassess the dimensions of women's sexual self-concepts and to evaluate the salience of sexual norms within women's sexual self-perceptions as well as current social attitudes. The findings presented suggest this relationship between norms and sexual identity is not as straightforward as previously assumed. If young women are susceptible to the adverse outcomes associated with femininity ideologies, the current research would suggest that older women are somewhat resilient to these norms (study 1). These findings are significant in terms of reviewing the history of women's sexual socialisation and the influence of traditional norms for women's sexual experiences and self-concepts.

According to theorists, young women are socialised to experience their sexuality within the context of a committed relationship (DeLamater, 1987; Tolman, 2002) with sexual behaviours that do not conform to cultural scripts stigmatised (Jackson & Cram, 2003; Kitzinger, 1995). The sexual double standard follows a traditional script which has over time reinforced sexual norms by limiting women's sexual expression. While some sexual activities such as casual uncommitted sex have been permitted for men (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002)

sexually assertive behaviours have been stigmatised for women. Theoretically it is the fear of social retributions which have acted as barriers to women enacting their agency within sexual relationships (Rudman et al., 2012).

Findings from the current thesis challenge these assumptions (study 2) and provide support for a variation in traditional cultural scenarios observed within women and men's intrapsychic scripts (Gagnon, 1990; Simon & Gagnon, 1984; Wiederman, 2015). As participants interpersonal scripts reflected a tolerance for non-traditional behaviours, then these are assumed to be a reflection of dominant social norms which are embedded in cultural scenarios (Wiederman, 2015).

These findings support recent research suggesting sexual norms for women have evolved to become more egalitarian (Levant et al., 2012). Surprisingly though, both men and women in the late adolescent and emerging adult age categories endorsed more sexually conservative attitudes supporting traditional sexual scripts (study 2). If sexual norms have evolved to allow greater sexual freedom for women, it might be assumed that evidence for this shift in sexual expression would be observed in younger populations as they commence sexual and relational explorations (Fuge`re et al., 2008). A possible explanation for these findings may be that cultural norms and expectations for younger peoples' sexual relationships have not changed, rather the scripts held by older participants in the current research may be more variable in response to maturation and lifespan development.

Theorists have suggested sexual scripts may vary as a function of age and relationship status, with women and men in longer terms relationships less influenced by sociocultural scripts than younger people in early stages of their sexual and relational development (Sanchez et al., 2012; Wiederman, 2005). As younger participants were more likely to endorse sexually conservative attitudes in line with traditional scripts, the current findings suggest developmental differences in attitude formation and behavioural enactment, with

increasing age and the experience it affords potentially resulting in more sexually liberal attitudes and positive sexual evaluations. `

Age differences were also observed when assessing dimensions of women's sexual self-schemas with younger women reporting more sexual apprehension and less sexual agency (study 1). These findings support research which has described the 'missing discourse of desire' within women's formative years (Fine, 1988; Tolman, 2002), with young women's sexual agency discouraged in favour of a role as sexual gate-keeper (Allen, 2012; Dworkin et al., 2007; Sakulak et al., 2014). As such, young women might be more susceptible to the adverse consequences associated with adhering to traditional norms of passivity.

According to Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck (2006) embodying one's sexual experiences involves actively resisting femininity ideologies. Evidence from the current thesis suggests sexual subjectivity is a significant component of women's sexually empowered and agentic self-perceptions (study 1). Prior research findings suggest sexual experience facilitates sexually assertive attitudes and self-efficacy associated with sexual subjectivity (Breakwell & Millward, 1997; Impett & Tolman, 2006; Rickert et al., 2002). Thus, sexual experience potentially mediates the relationship between social norms and behaviours accounting for the differences in sexual self-concepts between younger and older women. As sexual experience for women has been devalued in relation to sexual norms and mores (Curtin et al., 2011; Hynie et al., 1998) the current results might be explained by a reciprocal relationship between sexual maturation, social norms, and agency. As women move through the lifespan navigating roles, rules, and expectations, sexual embodiment becomes an act of resistance allowing women to create and define safe and secure sexual relationships.

Personality Traits and Attributes

According to the Five-Factor Theory model, external influences in the form of

cultural norms and social structures are expected to interact with personality variables in shaping both characteristic adaptations and the self-concept. This theory was supported with personality attributes of agency associated with women's perceptions of their sexual desirability, sexual satisfaction, and strength of desire (study 2) while extraversion demonstrated a strong relationship with women's sexual self-schemas (study 1). This link between personality attributes as the basic tendencies of women's psychological profile, and their characteristic adaptations in terms of attitudes and sexual responses, was significant in predicting an agentic dimension of women's sexual self-concepts (study 2) as well as women's sexual behaviours, response, and satisfaction (study 1). While much research has focused on social structures and scripts as significant in facilitating or inhibiting women's sexual agency, the current study demonstrates the ways in which individual differences in traits and personality attributes might influence behaviours and attitudes to shape the sexual self-perceptions women hold.

Historically, psychologists theorised the structure of personality was formed in childhood, and while social influences were thought to have the potential to shape the expression of the personality structure, the basic tendencies were believed to be fixed relatively early in the lifecycle (Caspi & Roberts, 2001). Contemporary theorists have suggested personality develops throughout childhood and adolescent, becoming relatively stable after the age of 30 (Costa &McCrae, 1988). As childhood and adolescence is a time of rapid growth and maturation (Christie & Viner, 2005), novel experiences are believed to challenge pre-existing attitudes resulting in continuity and changes to schema development (Glenn, 1980). Over time however, theorists argue perceptions of the self become more salient and resistant to the influence of cultural factors resulting in a relatively stable sense of self (McAdams & Olsen, 2010).

Evidence from the current research supports this theory suggesting women may

experience significant changes in their personality and sexual self-perceptions as they move through early adulthood (study 1). Research has found changes in women's personality over the course of the lifespan, with traits descriptive of extraversion becoming more prominent in self-reports as women aged (Twenge, 2001). While women have reported more independence, confidence, and assertiveness as they aged, these shifts in personality have occurred alongside social changes promoting women's rights as well as the sexual revolution (Helson & Kwan, 2000).

The current findings support the Five-Factor Theory model describing a reciprocal relationship between personality traits, behaviours, and self-knowledge, which may be influenced by social structures and life experiences. These findings not only highlight the relationship between personal dispositions and women's sexual health outcomes, but they also suggest dimensions of personality may be malleable in response to sociocultural influence. As social norms have become more progressive, women have engaged in more agentic or assertive behaviours which are incorporated into the self-concept, guiding attitude formations and future behaviours. Results from the current research potentially reflect an interaction between women's maturation processes (study 1) within the context of progressively more liberal and egalitarian social and sexual norms within Western cultures (study 2).

Women's Sexual Agency

In re-evaluating the gendered components upon which women's sexual self-schemas were constructed, the current findings were able to identify elements of agency as they manifest within women's sexual cognitions. In support of previous research and theory, women's sexual agency was described in terms of subjective sexual knowledge, experience, and confidence (Averett et al. 2008). A key dimension of women's sexual self-concepts reflected perceptions of sexual subjectivity defined by a sexually focused facet of their sexual

identity (Tolman, 2002). In contrast to men's sexual agency described in terms of individuation and assertiveness (Andersen et al., 1999) women's sexual power is realised through its association with a sexual subjectivity which transcends social and relational sexual norms (Sheff, 2005).

Relationally focused attributes tied to feminine gender norms have been previously identified as significant for younger women's self-esteem and sexual self (Andersen et al., 1998), however in the present thesis these were unrelated to women's sexual health. A possible explanation for the relational themes prevalent within women's sexual research over time might be the use of samples made up of university aged women. These relational themes potentially reinforce gendered conceptions of women's sexuality which then influence the design and interpretation of future research (Meana, 2010). The current findings suggest research to date focusing on adolescent and young women's sexual self-concepts is limited in its utility in describing women's sexual self-views as they move through the lifespan (Abrahams et al., 1978; Averett et al., 2008; Impett & Tolman, 2006; McCrae & Costa, 1988; Rostosky et al., 2008 Tolman & Porsche, 1998).

The implications for these findings are twofold. Much research has focused on the negative sexual health outcomes for young women in terms of sexual development and gender norms and ideologies (e.g., Curtin et al., 2011; Impett et al., 2006; Morokoff et al., 1997; Sanchez et al., 2006; Tolman, 2002). The current findings would suggest these concerns are warranted insofar as younger women reported more sexual apprehension (study 1) and young men and women endorsed more hostile and punitive sexual attitudes (study 2). The current findings however provide evidence that social structures are unrelated to older men and women's sexual attitudes and evaluations (study 2) and that older women appear to be more resilient to sexual norms (study 1).

These findings reinforce the need for educational settings to promote positive sexual

health education for young women and men, focusing on sexual curiosity and exploration as a normative developmental process (Fine, 1988; Impett & Tolman, 2006; Petersen, 2010), promoting the concept of sexual agency for women as an achievable and desirable attribute (Welles, 2005), and challenging gendered beliefs about sexual roles to promote mutual respect (Smith et al., 2011).

Further, longitudinal studies are needed to evaluate developmental trajectories of attitudes and behaviours from adolescence into adulthood. For example, if relational bonding and intimacy are the primary motives for young women to engage in sex, then how do we explain the lack of sexual desire that is present in many long-term relationships? (see Graham et al., 2004; Sims & Meana, 2010). While the answer to this question is likely complex (Mark & Lasslo, 2018) one cannot help but wonder whether there is a relationship between a society which acts to suppress and control young women's sexual expression and the lack of desire reported by older women who have learned to experience their sexuality interdependent with others? A longitudinal design might elucidate the development of women's sexual self-concepts within sociocultural settings to assess the intricate relationship between maturation, psychological constructs, and social structures. While the current findings suggest attitudes and behaviours have become more permissive over time, it is not clear whether these are a result of shifts in contemporary norms, cohort effects, or a combination of both.

The current research also adds to the literature on the elusive detection of the sexual double standard (Marks & Fraley, 2005). Qualitative research with men and women at different life stages might refocus research directions in terms of the current climate of sexual norms and mores. Alternatively, future research might look beyond the sexual double standard as a predictor for sexual behaviours and attitudes to focus on more current socialisation processes such as social media (Mikorski & Szymanski, 2017; van Oosten,, Peter, & Vandenbosch, 2017; Yonker, Zan, Scirica, Jethwani, & Kinane, 2015), relationship

factors including divorce, dating, and remarriage for older women and men (Fileborn, Thorpe, Hawkes, Minichiello, & Pitts, 2015; McWilliams & Barrett, 2014), as well as social acceptance of non-traditional relationships such as consensually non-monogamous (Conley, Matsick, Moors, & Ziegler, 2017; Sheff, 2005).

Limitations

Limitations to the current findings have been discussed throughout the thesis, however one of the major limitations worth reiterating is the non-representative samples in terms of education and sexual orientation and the exclusion of demographic data describing participants race or ethnicity. In what was an unfortunate oversight by the author, participants were asked about their nationality but not about their ethnicity. The use of snowball sampling resulted in a greater number of participants from countries such as the United States than was anticipated. In comparison to the United States where race is frequently assessed when collecting demographic data, in Australia race is more frequently assessed in terms of specific social and cultural attributes (Stevens, Ishizawa, & Grbic, 2015). For example, census data in Australia has moved away from assessing race or ethnicity and focuses instead on questions about ancestry, birthplace of parents, and language spoken at home (Stevens et al., 2015). In relation to sex research, results from the nationally representative Second Australian Study of Health and Relationships (Richters et al., 2014) were released with questions establishing ethnicity focusing on birthplace within or outside Australia, indigenous status, and language spoken at home. Socioeconomic status however is also linked to health and wellbeing in the Australian population (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2016.) with socioeconomic status a strong predictor of health outcomes for white Americans (Crimmins, Hayward, & Seeman, 2004).

One indicator of socioeconomic status linked to health is education (Guzzo & Hayford, 2012). In the current study the majority of participants in both samples were well

educated. In lieu of demographic data describing the ethnic composition of the current research sample, this indicator of status might be useful in situating current findings within a middle to upper socioeconomic population. Until these results have been replicated, caution is advised in generalising findings, particularly to economically and socially disadvantaged groups and those living in developing countries (Campbell & Mannell, 2016; Wellings et al., 2006).

The current findings also represented attitudes and behaviours from a largely sex positive sample of men and women. While these findings might reflect a selection bias limiting generalisation to the larger population, the relationships identified between dimensions of personality, social structures, and sexual evaluations describe a framework for future researchers interested in studying determinants of positive sexual health outcomes.

Conclusion

The current thesis incorporated assessments of psychological and social variables to describe a model for women's sexual self-concepts operationalised as the semantic representations women hold of themselves as sexual people (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). The current findings demonstrate the multidimensionality of women's sexual self-views and the fluidity of women's sexuality over time. Not only is women's sexuality variable according to age and life stage, but also in response to shifts in sociocultural norms.

The dimensions of the sexual self-schema identified in the current research present a structure for women's sexual self-concept, with the content comprising sexual evaluations related to embodied sexual awareness. Further, personality traits of extraversion, and agentic sex roles stereotypes were associated with the sexual evaluations women made and the sexual self-views they hold. The current thesis argues the structure of the women's sexual self-concept identified in terms of sexual cognitions, organises and shapes these aspects of women's personality, experiences, and social influences, into a cohesive and integrated

construct which guides their sexual behaviours and relationships (Hensel et al., 2011; Rostosky et al., 2008).

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Appendix A
Information sheet

INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: **Women's Attitudes to Sexual Relationships Study**

You are invited to take part in a research project about the different sexual relationships women engage in, including long term monogamous relationships and short term casual sex. Topics covered include your attitudes and experiences with your past and present relationships. This study will also look at sexual behaviours and attitudes. The study is being conducted by Hollie Baxter and will contribute to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy – Psychology at James Cook University.

If you agree to be involved in the study, you will be asked to respond to an online survey containing a number of attitude and behaviour scales, as well as some background information about yourself. This survey should only take 25 minutes of your time and all responses are anonymous.

This study is for women over the age of 18. People who are single as well as those in relationships are invited to participate, and women who do not identify as exclusively heterosexual are encouraged to participate. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part at any time without explanation or prejudice.

Sexuality research is sensitive however this study is not intended to cause any distress. If you do feel any distress you may withdraw immediately from participation. Should you feel any distress in completing this survey it is recommended you call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or 1800RESPECT, a national sexual assault and domestic violence hotline and talk to one of their trained volunteers should you feel the need for emotional support.

Whilst the responses generated from this study will be used for a research project and thesis conducted by the investigator, all responses are anonymous so you cannot be identified in any way.
your responses will be strictly confidential and no identifying data will be made available.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the principal investigator.

Principal Investigator:
Hollie Baxter
School of Psychology
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Supervisor:
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Mobile:
Email: peter.raggatt@jcu.edu.au

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:
Human Ethics, Research Office
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au)

Appendix B
Informed Consent Form

This administrative form has been removed

Appendix C.

Women's Attitudes to Sexual Relationships Survey

For each word consider whether or not the term describes how you feel about yourself as a sexual person compared to others of your same gender and age
Rate each item on a 7 point scale ranging from 0 = Not at all descriptive of me, to 6 = Very much descriptive of me to indicate how accurately the adjective describes you

	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Romantic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Soft-hearted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Passionate	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Powerful	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Warm	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Outspoken	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Loving	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Spontaneous	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Timid	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Independent	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Feeling	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sympthetic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Domineering	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Arousable	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Stimulating	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Revealing	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Aggressive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Direct	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Warm-hearted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Frank	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Exciting	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Experienced	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sensitive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Uninhibited	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Reserved	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embarrassed	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Conservative	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Unromantic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Compassionate	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cautious	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Self-conscious	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Straightforward	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Inexperienced	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Prudent	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Individualistic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sensual	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Copy of For each word consider whether or not the term describes how you feel about yourself as a sexual person compared to others of your same gender and age
Rate each item on a 7 point scale ranging from 0 = Not at all descriptive of me, to 6 = Very much descriptive of me to indicate how accurately the adjective describes you

	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Romantic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Soft-hearted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Passionate	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Powerful	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Warm	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Outspoken	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Loving	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Spontaneous	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Timid	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Independent	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Feeling	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sympthetic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Domineering	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Arousable	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Stimulating	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Revealing	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Aggressive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Direct	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Warm-hearted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Frank	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Exciting	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Experienced	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Sensitive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Uninhibited	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Reserved	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Embarrassed	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Conservative	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Unromantic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Compassionate	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Cautious	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Self-conscious	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Straightforward	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Inexperienced	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Prudent	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Individualistic	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sensual	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Please choose the response that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

I am someone who...

	Disagree strongly	**Disagree a little**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree a little**	**Agree strongly**
Is talkative	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Tends to find faults with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Does a thorough job	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is depressed, blue	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is original, comes up with new ideas	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is reserved	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is helpful and unselfish with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be somewhat careless	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is relaxed, handles stress well	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is curious about many different things	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is full of energy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Starts quarrels with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is a reliable worker	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be tense	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Is ingenious, a deep thinker	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Generates a lot of enthusiasm	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has a forgiving nature	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to be disorganised	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Worries a lot	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has an active imagination	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to be quiet	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is generally trusting	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to be lazy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is inventive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has an assertive personality	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be cold and aloof	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Perseveres until the task is finished	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Can be moody	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sometimes shy, inhibited	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Does things efficiently	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Remains calm in tense situations	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Prefers work that is routine	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is outgoing, sociable	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sometimes rude to others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Makes plans and follows through with them	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Gets nervous easily	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Likes to reflect, play with ideas	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has few artistic interests	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Likes to cooperate with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is easily distracted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Copy of Please choose the response that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

I am someone who...

	Disagree strongly	**Disagree a little**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree a little**	**Agree strongly**
Is talkative	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to find faults with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Does a thorough job	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is depressed, blue	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is original, comes up	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

with new ideas					
Is reserved	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is helpful and unselfish with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be somewhat careless	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is relaxed, handles stress well	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is curious about many different things	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is full of energy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Starts quarrels with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is a reliable worker	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be tense	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is ingenious, a deep thinker	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Generates a lot of enthusiasm	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has a forgiving nature	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Tends to be disorganised	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Worries a lot	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has an active imagination	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to be quiet	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is generally trusting	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Tends to be lazy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is inventive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has an assertive personality	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be cold and aloof	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Perseveres until the task is finished	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Can be moody	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sometimes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

shy, inhibited					
Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Does things efficiently	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Remains calm in tense situations	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Prefers work that is routine	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is outgoing, sociable	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sometimes rude to others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Makes plans and follows through with them	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Gets nervous easily	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Likes to reflect, play with ideas	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Has few artistic interests	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Likes to cooperate with others	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is easily distracted	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

It is expected that a woman be less sexually experienced than her partner

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

A woman who is sexually active is less likely to be considered a desirable partner

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

A woman should never appear to be prepared for a sexual encounter

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

It is important that the men be sexually experienced so as to teach the women

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

A "good" woman should never have a one-night stand, but it is expected of a man

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

It is important for a man to have multiple sexual experiences in order to gain experience

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

In sex the man should take the dominant role and the woman should assume the passive role

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

It is acceptable for a woman to carry condoms

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

It is worse for a woman to sleep around than it is for a man

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

It is up to the man to initiate sex

( ) Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Undecided ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly disagree

Thinking a little bit more about the roles men and women play in relationships, for you personally, how important is each of the following factors in a romantic/sexual relationships?

	Not important at all	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Extremely important**

Both of us having similar attitudes	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Having an egalitarian (equal power) relationship	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Each of us being able to have our own career	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sharing financial responsibility equally	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Having a supportive group of friends as well as my romantic/sexual partner	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Having major interests of my own outside the relationship	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Both of us having similar political attitude's	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Being able to laugh easily with each other	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Sex is the closest form of communication between two people

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

A sexual encounter between two people deeply in love is the ultimate human interaction

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

At its best, sex seems to be the merging of two souls

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

Sex within relationships is a very important part of life

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

Sex with the person I love is usually an intensive, almost overwhelming experience

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

I do not need to be committed to a person to have sex with him/her

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

Casual sex is acceptable

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would like to have sex with many partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

One-night stands are sometimes very enjoyable

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

It is okay to have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one person at a time

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

Sex as a simple exchange of favours is okay if both people agree to it

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

The best sex is with no strings attached

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

Life would have fewer problems if people could have sex more freely

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

It is possible to enjoy sex with a person and not love them

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Moderately disagree ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Moderately agree ( ) Strongly agree

---

My sexual behaviour and experiences are not something I spend time thinking about

( ) Not at all true of me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true of me

It bothers me that I'm not better looking

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

It is okay for me to meet my own sexual needs through self-masturbation

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

If a partner were to ignore my sexual needs and desires, I'd feel hurt

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I would not hesitate to ask for what I want sexually from a romantic partner

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I spend time thinking and reflecting about my sexual experiences

( ) Not at all true of me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true of me

I worry that I am not sexually desirable to others

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I believe self-masturbating can be an exciting experience

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

It would bother me if a sexual partner neglected my sexual needs and desires

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I am able to ask a partner to provide the sexual stimulation I need

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I rarely think about the sexual aspects of my life

( ) Not at all true of me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true of me

Physically, I am an attractive person

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I believe self-masturbation is wrong

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I would expect a sexual partner to be responsive to my sexual needs and feelings

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

If I were to have sex with someone, I'd show my partner what I want

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I am confident that a romantic partner would find me sexually attractive

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I think about my sexuality

( ) Not at all true of me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true of me

I think it is important for a sexual partner to consider my sexual pleasure

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I am confident that others will find me sexually desirable

( ) Not at all true for me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true for me

I don't think about my sexuality very much

( ) Not at all true of me ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Very true of me

---

The quality of my orgasms

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My 'letting go' and surrender to sexual pleasure during sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The way I sexually react to my partner

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My body's sexual functioning

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My mood after sexual activity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The pleasure I provide to my partner

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The balance between what I give and receive in sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very Satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's emotional opening up during sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's ability to orgasm

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's sexual creativity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The variety of my sexual activities

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The frequency of my sexual activities

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

---

I feel content with the way my present sex life is

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I often feel something is missing from my present sex life

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I often feel I don’t have enough emotional closeness in my sex life

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I feel content with how often I presently have sexual intimacy (kissing, intercourse etc.) in my life

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I don't have *any* important problems or concerns about sex (arousal, orgasm, frequency, compatibility, communication etc.)

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

My partner often gets defensive when I try discussing sex

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

My partner and I do not discuss sex openly enough with each other, or do not discuss sex often enough

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I usually feel completely comfortable discussing sex whenever my partner wants to

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

My partner usually feels completely comfortable discussing sex whenever I want to

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I have no difficulty talking about my deepest feelings and emotions when my partner wants me to

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

My partner has no difficulty talking about their deepest feelings and emotions when I want them to

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I often feel my partner isn't sensitive or aware enough about my sexual likes and dislikes

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I often feel that my partner and I are not sexually compatible enough

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I often feel that my partner's beliefs and attitudes about sex are too different from mine

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I sometimes think my partner and I are mismatched in needs and desires concerning sexual intimacy

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I sometimes feel that my partner and I might not be physically attracted to each other enough

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

I sometimes think my partner and I are mismatched in our sexual styles and preferences

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree a little ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) Agree a little ( ) Strongly agree

When answering these questions were you thinking about a current relationship or a past relationship?

( ) My current relationship

( ) A past relationship

Overall, how satisfactory or unsatisfactory is your present sex life?

( ) Completely satisfactory ( ) Very satisfactory ( ) Reasonably satisfactory ( ) Not very satisfactory ( ) Not at all satisfactory

---

How enjoyable are sexual activities for you?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

How often during sex activities do you feel aroused or excited?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

Do you currently experience orgasm (climax) during sex activity?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

How much passionate love do you feel for your partner?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

Are you satisfied with your partner (s) as a lover?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

Do you currently experience any pain during intercourse?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

Does your partner(s) experience difficulty in sexual performance?

( ) Not at all ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) A great deal

About how many times during the past month have you had any sexual activities?

( ) Never ( ) less than once a week ( ) once or twice a week ( ) several times a week ( ) once a day; sometimes twice ( ) several times a day

In most ways my relationship is close to ideal

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) 6 ( ) Strongly agree

The conditions of my relationship are excellent

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) Strongly agree

I am satisfied with my relationship

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) 6 ( ) Strongly agree

So far I have gotten the important things I want in my relationship

( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) 6 ( ) Strongly agree

If I could live my time spent in my relationship over again, I would change almost nothing

( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5 ( ) 6 ( ) Strongly agree

---

With how many different partners have you had sex within the past 12 months?

( ) 0 ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5-6 ( ) 7-9 ( ) 10-19 ( ) 20 or more

With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse on one and only one occasion?

( ) 0 ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5-6 ( ) 7-9 ( ) 10-19 ( ) 20 or more

With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse without having an interest in a long-term committed relationship with this person?

( ) 0 ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) 5-6 ( ) 7-9 ( ) 10-19 ( ) 20 or more

Sex without love is OK

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) 6 ( ) 7 ( ) 8 ( ) Strongly agree

I can imagine myself being comfortable and enjoying "casual" sex with different partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Neither agree nor disagree ( ) 6 ( ) 7 ( ) 8 ( ) Strongly agree

I do not want to have sex with a person until I am sure that we will have a long-term, serious relationship

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ( ) 4 ( ) Neither agree not disagree ( ) 6 ( ) 7 ( ) 8 ( ) Strongly agree

How often do you experience sexual arousal when you are in contact with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?

( ) Never ( ) Very seldom ( ) About once every 2 or 3 months ( ) About once per month ( ) About once every 2 weeks ( ) About once a week ( ) Several times per week ( ) Nearly every day ( ) At least once a day

How often do you masturbate?

( ) Never ( ) Less than once a month ( ) Once or twice a month ( ) Several times a month ( ) Once a week ( ) Several times a week

How often do you consume erotica/pornography (including erotic novels, photographs depicting people engaging in sex, online movies showing people having sex, audiotapes describing people having sex. Having sex refers to mutual/masturbation, oral, anal and vaginal intercourse)

( ) Never ( ) Less than once a month ( ) Once or twice a month ( ) Several times a month ( ) Once a week ( ) Several times a week

How often do you have fantasies about having sex with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?

( ) Never ( ) Very seldom ( ) About once every 2 or 3 months ( ) About once a month ( ) About once every 2 weeks ( ) About once a week ( ) Several times per week ( ) Nearly everyday ( ) At least once a day

In everyday life, how often do you have spontaneous fantasies about having sex with someone you have just met?

( ) Never ( ) Very seldom ( ) About once every 2 or 3 months ( ) About once a month ( ) About once every 2 weeks ( ) About once a week ( ) Several times per week ( ) Nearly everyday ( ) At least once a day

About how many times have you had sexual thoughts or fantasies (e.g., daydreams) during the last month?

( ) Never ( ) Less than once a week ( ) Once or twice a week ( ) Several times a week ( ) Once a day; sometimes more

How old are you?

_____

Which sexual orientation do you mostly identify with?

( ) Heterosexual

( ) Bisexual

( ) Lesbian/gay

( ) Other

Do you have a current sexual partner?

( ) Yes

( ) No

What is your relationship status?

( ) Single

( ) Dating

( ) In a relationship

( ) De facto

( ) Married

( ) Separated/divorced

( ) Widowed

If you are in a relationship, roughly how long have you been together with your partner?

_____

What is the length of your longest relationship?

_____

What is your highest level of education?

( ) Some secondary schooling

( ) Completed secondary school

( ) Some university study

( ) Completed undergraduate university degree

( ) Postgraduate studies

Do you have any children?

( ) Yes
( ) No

What age group do your children belong to?

( ) Infant to 12 years
( ) Teenagers
( ) Young adults

Do you work outside the home? (this may include studying)

( ) No
( ) Yes - part time
( ) Yes - full time

Do you use SSRI's (antidepressants)?

( ) No
( ) Yes

Do you use hormonal contraceptives?

( ) No
( ) Yes

Are you going through, or have you gone through menopause?

( ) No
( ) Yes

Are you using hormone replacement therapy?

( ) No
( ) Yes

( ) Not applicable

If you have gone through menopause do you use lubricants (e.g., KY Jelly) to assist with vaginal dryness?

( ) No

( ) Yes

( ) Not applicable

1) In which country do you live?

_____

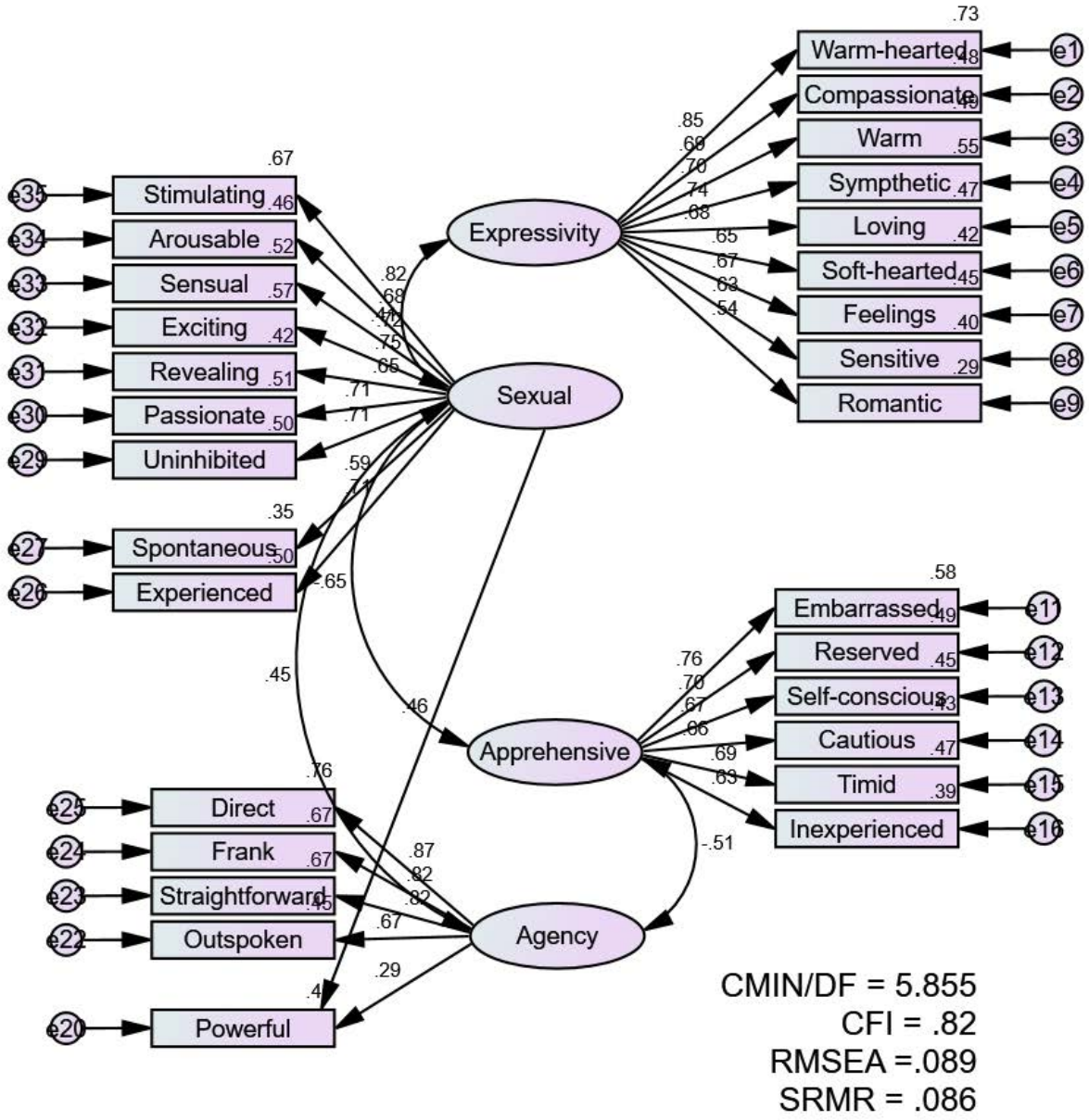
Appendix D
Factor Loadings for Sexual Self-Schema Scale (Forced Three Factor Solution)

Item	Factor1	Factor 2	Factor 3
reserved	-.697		
cautious	-.694		
embarrassed	-.648		
inexperienced	-.624		
self-conscious	-.602		
uninhibited	.599		
experienced	.562		
conservative	-.536		
prudent	-.529		
exciting	.457		
stimulating	.450		
timid	-.427		
revealing	.419		
arousable			
spontaneous			
warm-hearted		.824	
sympathetic		.719	
loving		.687	
feelings		.682	
compassionate		.680	
warm		.673	
sensitive		.667	
soft-hearted		.658	
romantic		.602	
unromantic		.513	
passionate	.400	.454	
sensual		.406	
direct			.830
frank			.787
straightforward			.765
outspoken			.613
aggressive			.562
domineering			.527
powerful			.525
independent			.489
individualistic			

Appendix E
Standardised Regression Weights and Squared Multiple Correlations

Item	Std. factor loading	R^2
Domineering	.296	.089
Prudent	.391	.153
Independent	.479	.229
Aggressive	.533	.284
Conservative	.553	.306
Powerful	.561	.315
Unromantic	.579	.296

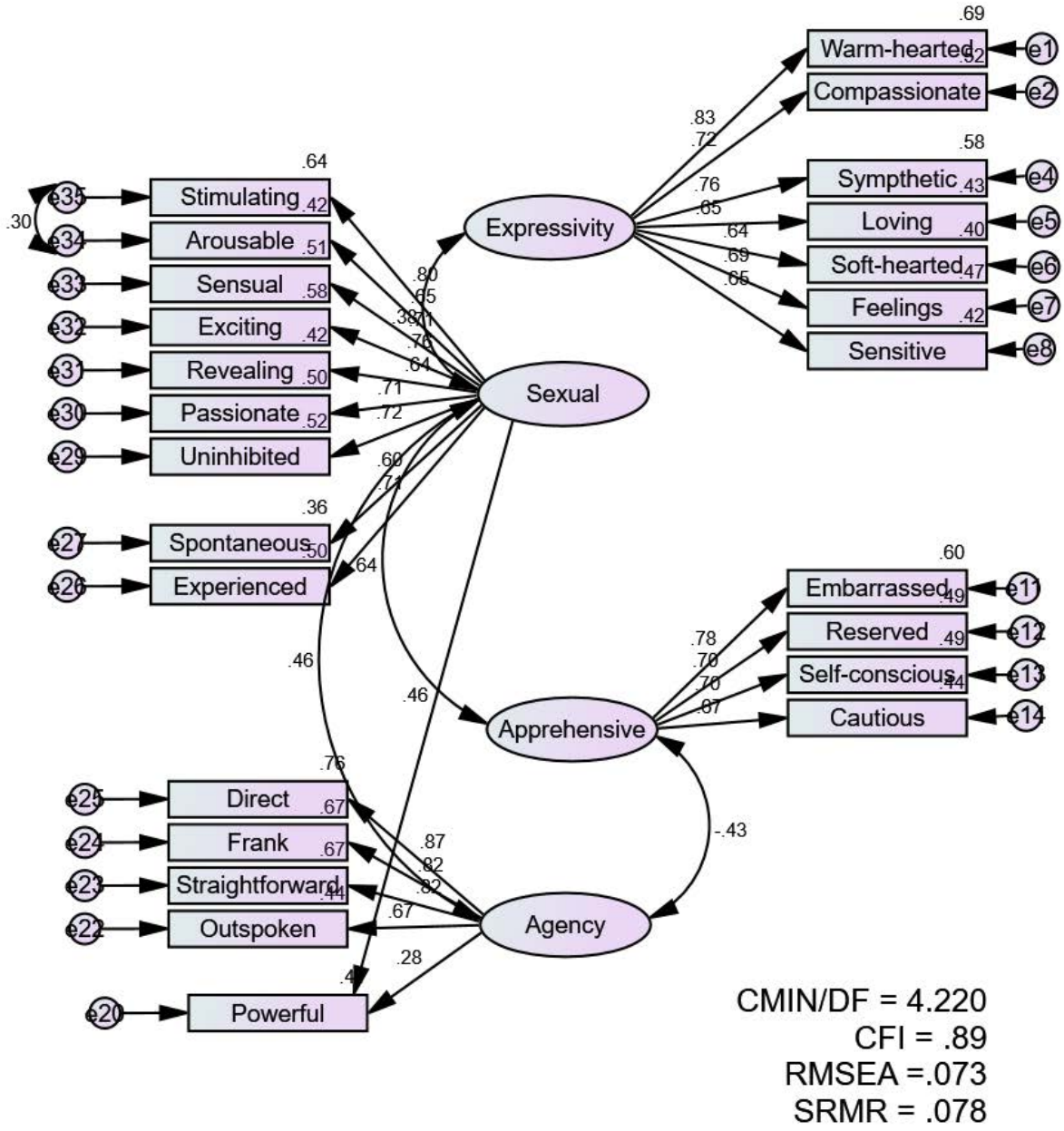
Appendix F
CFA second attempt Sexual Self-Schema Scale



Appendix G
Modification Indices Model Two

			M.I.	Par Change
e34	<-->	e35	41.714	.283
e33	<-->	e34	29.135	.292
e32	<-->	e34	33.784	-.271
e30	<-->	Expressivity	23.396	.222
e29	<-->	Apprehensive	34.981	-.301
e26	<-->	Apprehensive	26.596	-.276
e20	<-->	e22	28.674	.349
e16	<-->	Sexual	47.830	-.360
e16	<-->	Apprehensive	23.288	-.280
e16	<-->	e26	281.877	-1.230
e15	<-->	Agency	50.192	-.158
e15	<-->	e20	24.542	-.323
e12	<-->	e29	22.528	-.290
e12	<-->	e22	21.060	-.301
e11	<-->	e13	30.693	.340
e9	<-->	e33	21.534	.255
e9	<-->	e30	49.313	.379
e8	<-->	Apprehensive	24.022	.239
e7	<-->	e8	22.936	.234
e5	<-->	e22	26.224	.266
e4	<-->	e7	32.213	.218
e3	<-->	Apprehensive	20.524	-.196
e3	<-->	e8	40.935	-.312
e3	<-->	e5	22.324	.193
e2	<-->	e9	24.064	-.214
e2	<-->	e4	31.220	.182
e1	<-->	e7	24.811	-.162
e1	<-->	e3	38.010	.199

Appendix H
CFA third attempt Sexual Self-Schema Scale



Appendix I

Means, Standard Deviations, and ANOVA Results between Country Categories, Study 1

	Total Scale	Sexual	Expressive	Assertive	Apprehensive
	M (SD)	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*
United States	8.78 (3.12)	3.62 (1.08)	4.32 (0.98)	3.93 (1.25)	3.10 (1.23)
Australia	8.88 (3.14)	3.56 (1.08)	4.44 (1.03)	3.82 (1.32)	2.94 (1.28)
Canada	8.49 (2.98)	3.59 (1.09)	4.25 (1.09)	3.83 (1.08)	3.21 (1.27)
UK and Europe	8.71 (3.09)	3.56 (1.08)	4.24 (0.95)	3.85 (1.26)	3.26 (1.24)

There were no significant differences found between country categories on mean scores for the sexual dimension, $F(2, 1217) = .322$, $p = .810$. There were no significant differences found between country categories on mean scores for the expressive dimension, $F(2, 1217) = 1.34$, $p = .259$. There were no significant differences found between country categories on mean scores for the assertive dimension, $F(2, 1217) = .576$, $p = .631$. There were no significant differences found between country categories on mean scores for the apprehensive dimension, $F(2, 1217) = 2.03$, $p = .108$.

Appendix J
Information sheet

PROJECT TITLE: **Sexual desire and desirability: Perceptions of self and others within sexual relationships**

You are invited to take part in a research project about the qualities and attributes people value in their sexual and romantic partners as well as in themselves as sexual people. This study also looks at attitudes to different types of relationships including long term committed relationships and short term sexual relationships. The study is being conducted by Hollie Baxter and will contribute to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy – Psychology at James Cook University.

If you agree to be involved in the study, you will be asked to respond to an online survey containing a number of attitude scales, as well as a series of vignettes with corresponding scales. This survey should only take 20 minutes of your time and all responses are anonymous.

This study is open to men and women over the age of 18. People who are single as well as those in relationships are invited to participate. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you can stop taking part at any time without explanation or prejudice.

Sexuality research is sensitive; however this study is not intended to cause any discomfort. If you do feel uncomfortable you may withdraw immediately from participation. The phone numbers for Lifeline is 13 11 14 and it is recommended you call and talk to one of their trained volunteers should you feel the need for emotional support.

Whilst the responses generated from this study will be used for a research project and thesis conducted by the investigator, all responses are anonymous so you cannot be identified in any way.

Principal Investigator:
Hollie Baxter
School of Psychology
James Cook University
Phone:
Email: hollie.baxter@my.jcu.edu.au

Supervisor:
Name: Dr. Kerry McBain
School: Psychology
James Cook University
Phone:
Email: kerry.mcbain@jcu.edu.au

If you have any concerns regarding the ethical conduct of the study, please contact:
Human Ethics, Research Office
James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, 4811
Phone: (07) 4781 5011 (ethics@jcu.edu.au)

Appendix K
Informed consent form

This administrative form has been removed

Appendix L.

Sexual Desire and Desirability; Perceptions of Self and Others Survey

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Please choose a number which best describes where you fall on the scale

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Not at all independent|Very Independent	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Very passive|Very active	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____

Not at all able to devote self completely to others|Able to devote self completely to others	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Not at all helpful to others|Very helpful to others	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Not at all competitive|Very competitive	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____

Not at all kind|Very kind	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Not at all aware of feelings of others|Very aware of feelings of others	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Gives up very easily|Never gives up easily	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Not at all self-confident|	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

Very self-confident	_____ _____ ____	_____ _____ ____	_____ _____ ____	_____ _____ ____	_____ _____ ____
Feels very inferior|Feel very superior	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Not at all understanding of others|Very understanding of others	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____
Very cold in relation with others|Very warm in	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____

relation with others					
Goes to pieces under pressure|Stands up well under pressure	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____

How old are you

_____

What is your gender

( ) Male

( ) Female

What is your highest level of education?

( ) Some secondary school

( ) Completed secondary school

( ) Undergraduate degree

( ) Postgraduate degree

( ) Other - Write In: _____

Do you work outside the home (includes studying)?

[ ] Yes - full time

[ ] Yes- part time

[ ] I don't work outside the home

Copy of Do you work outside the home (includes studying)?

[ ] Yes - full time

[ ] Yes- part time

[ ] I don't work outside the home

What is your relationship status?

[ ] Single

[ ] Dating

[ ] In a relationship

[ ] De facto

[ ] Married

[ ] Separated/divorced

[ ] Widowed

[ ] Other - Write In: _____

Which sexual orientation do you most closely identify with?

( ) Heterosexual/straight

( ) Bisexual

( ) Homosexual/gay

If you are in a relationship, roughly how long have you been together with your partner? (if you are in multiple relationships you may choose the longest or most significant relationship or include them all)

_____

What is the length of your longest relationship?

_____

Do you have any children?

( ) Yes

( ) No

How old are your children

[ ] 0-12

[ ] 13 +

[ ] Not applicable

What country do you live in?

_____

Thinking of yourself as a sexual person and sexual partner, to what extent do each of the following traits describe you where 1 = not at all descriptive, and 7 = very much descriptive

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Sexually alluring	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Selfish	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually dominant	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually desirable	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Self-involved	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually assertive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually exciting	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Self-focused	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Sexually passive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually skilled	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Self-centered	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually submissive	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Sexually confident	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

The quality of my orgasms

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My "letting go" and surrender to sexual pleasure during sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The way I sexually react to my partner

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My body's sexual functioning

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My mood after sexual activity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The pleasure I provide my partner

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The balance between what I give and receive in sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's emotional opening up during sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's ability to orgasm

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My partner's sexual creativity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The variety of my sexual activities

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The frequency of my sexual activity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

---

The quality of my orgasms

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My "letting go" and surrender to sexual pleasure during sex

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The way I sexually react to my partner

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My body's sexual functioning

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

My mood after sexual activity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

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( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

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( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

The frequency of my sexual activity

( ) Not at all satisfied ( ) A little satisfied ( ) Moderately satisfied ( ) Very satisfied ( ) Extremely satisfied

---

Many women like Chrissy seek special favours, such as hiring policies that favour them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality."

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Most women like Chrissy fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy seek to gain power by getting control over men

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Once a woman like Chrissy gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

When women like Chrissy lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

There are actually very few women like Chrissy who get a kick out of teasing by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

In a disaster, women like Chrissy ought not necessarily to be rescued before men

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Many women like Chrissy have a quality of purity that few men possess

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy should be cherished and protected by men

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

A good woman like Chrissy should be set on a pedestal by her man

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Chrissy is a person who is trustworthy

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy is respectful

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy would make someone a good girlfriend

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy would make someone a good wife

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy is a person who is immoral

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

---

Many women like Chrissy seek special favours, such as hiring policies that favour them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality."

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Most women like Chrissy fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy seek to gain power by getting control over men

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Once a woman like Chrissy gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

When women like Chrissy lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

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( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

In a disaster, women like Chrissy ought not necessarily to be rescued before men

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

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( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly ( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

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( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

Women like Chrissy, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste

( ) Disagree strongly ( ) Disagree somewhat ( ) Disagree slightly ( ) Agree slightly
( ) Agree somewhat ( ) Agree strongly

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( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy is respectful

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy would make someone a good girlfriend

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy would make someone a good wife

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Chrissy is a person who is immoral

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

---

During the last month *how often* would you *have liked* to engage in sexual activity with a partner (for example touching each others genitals, giving or receiving oral stimulation, intercourse etc.)?

( ) Not at all

( ) Once a month

( ) Once every two weeks

( ) Once a week

( ) Twice a week

( ) 3 or 4 times a week

( ) Once a day

( ) More than once a day

During the last month, *how often* have you had sexual thoughts involving a partner?

( ) Not at all

( ) Once a month

( ) Once every two weeks

( ) Once a week

( ) Twice a week

( ) 3 or 4 times a week

( ) Once a day

( ) More than once a day

When you have sexual thoughts, *how strong* is your desire to engage in sexual behaviour with a partner?

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

When you first see an attractive person, *how strong* is your sexual desire?

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

When you spend time with an attractive person (for example, at work or school), *how strong* is your sexual desire?

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

When you are in romantic situations (such as candle lit dinner, a walk on the beach, etc.) *how strong* is your sexual desire?

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

***How strong* is your desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner?**

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

How important **is it for you to fulfill your sexual desire through activity with a partner?**

Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Very important

Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually with a partner?

Much less desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Much more desire

How strong **is your desire to engage in sexual behaviour by yourself?**

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

How important **is it for you to fulfill your desires to behave sexually by yourself?**

Not at all important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Very important

Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually by yourself?

No desire 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong desire

During the last month, *how often* would you *have liked* to behave sexually by yourself (for example, masturbating, touching your genital etc.)?

( ) Not at all

( ) Once a month

( ) Once every two weeks

( ) Once a week

( ) Twice a week

( ) 3 or 4 times a week

( ) Once a day

( ) More than once a day

How long **could you go comfortably without having sexual activity of some kind (including masturbation)?**

( ) Forever

( ) A year or two

( ) Several months

( ) A month

( ) A few weeks

( ) A week

( ) A few days

( ) One day

( ) Less than one day

I question the character of a man who has had a lot of sexual partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a woman who had protected sexual intercourse with a man she was not emotionally committed to

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a man who went occasionally to see female strippers

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a man who signed up to Tinder or an online dating site looking for casual sexual relationships only

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a man who liked to watch sexually explicit videos

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I question the character of a woman who has had a lot of sexual partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a woman who went occasionally to see male strippers

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a woman who liked to watch sexually explicit videos

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

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( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

I would think badly of a woman who signed up to Tinder or an online dating site looking for casual sexual relationships only

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

---

Men who are known to enjoy casual sex cannot be trusted to be faithful in monogamous relationships

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Women who enjoy casual sexual relationships (one night stands, booty calls, friends with benefits) without an interest in pursuing the sexual encounters as a committed monogamous relationship are judged more harshly than men who enjoy similar sexual relationships

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Women who are known to enjoy casual sex cannot be trusted to be faithful in monogamous relationships

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Men who enjoy casual sex are not viewed as good potential partners/spouse

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Men who have had many sex partners are judged more harshly than women who have had many sex partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Men who enjoy casual sexual relationships (one night stands, booty calls, friends with benefits) without an interest in pursuing the sexual encounters as a committed monogamous relationship are judged more harshly than women who enjoy similar sexual relationships

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Women who have had many sex partners are judged more harshly than men who have had many sex partners

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Men who are known to enjoy casual sex are more likely to have an affair with a woman already in a monogamous relationship

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Women who enjoy casual sex are not viewed as good potential partners/spouse

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree

Women who are known to enjoy casual sex are more likely to have an affair with a man already in a relationship

( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Neutral ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly agree