

# SEXUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF RELATIONSHIPS

*Emily A. Impett, Amy Muise, and Diana Peragine*

Most dyadic sexual behavior occurs in the context of ongoing romantic relationships (see review by Willetts, Sprecher, & Beck, 2004); however, until relatively recently, scholars have devoted scant attention to linking what is known about human sexuality with what is known about close relationships. Thus, the study of sexuality and the science of relationships have developed as two rather distinct research traditions, each with their own journals, professional organizations, and academic conferences (Diamond, 2010). Scientists in these two traditions have amassed an incredible amount of data and made significant strides in advancing what is known about human sexuality and what is known about close relationships. A few landmark studies in each of these traditions are illustrative (see also Chapter 3, this volume). Beginning with research on sexuality, in the 1940s, Kinsey and colleagues (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953) conducted in-depth interviews with 5,300 men and nearly 6,000 women regarding such topics as frequency of sexual behavior in marriage and same-sex behavior and attraction. In the 1990s, the first nationally representative study of sexuality was conducted. The National Health and Social Life Survey involved the collection of data from 3,432 participants and was specifically designed to investigate social and dyadic factors in human sexuality, such as sexual satisfaction, same-sex attraction, and partner matching on sexual preferences (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994). Turning to research on close relationships, in the 1970s the Boston Couples Study involved the

random sampling of college students in 231 heterosexual dating relationships (e.g., Peplau, Rubin, & Hill, 1977). Some sexuality-related topics were covered, including sexual intimacy and sex role attitudes in relationships. In the 1980s, the American Couples Study provided extensive survey data from both members of thousands of married or cohabiting heterosexual, lesbian, and gay couples on such topics as negotiations in the bedroom, sexual initiation, and extradyadic sexual relationships (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983).

Despite the tremendous growth of both of these fields in the past few decades, their growth as separate areas of scholarship means that fundamental questions about how sexual feelings, thoughts, and behaviors shape the development and maintenance of ongoing romantic relationships remain unanswered. Similarly, much is to be learned about how relationship processes influence and, in turn, shape sexuality. Our intention in writing this chapter is to discuss where psychology is in the study of sexuality and romantic relationships and to offer our thoughts about where it has yet to go. Because the literature on sexuality in relationship contexts has been pervaded by a focus on risk prevention and avoidance, we begin the chapter by presenting research on both the risks and the rewards of sexuality in the context of romantic relationships. Then, given the pervasive role of gender in shaping sexual interactions in ongoing romantic relationships and to provide a backdrop for the rest of our review, we discuss key male–female differences in three core aspects of sexuality: relational focus, sexual desire, and sexual

fluidity. Then, we discuss how sexuality is involved in the formation and development of romantic relationships, specifically focusing on the role of sexual attraction. We then turn to the role of sexuality in the maintenance of ongoing romantic relationships with an emphasis on attachment, sexual desire, and sexual satisfaction. Next, we review research on sexuality in the context of same-sex relationships as well as across the life span from adolescence to later adulthood. Finally, we consider the dark side of sexuality in romantic relationships, focusing on the topics of sexual aggression, extradyadic sex, and sexual jealousy. In each section of the chapter, we consider important directions for future research, and we conclude the chapter by discussing how several recent societal trends are changing the ways in which research on sexuality and relationships are conducted as well as the very ways in which sexuality is pursued and negotiated across relational contexts.

#### AVOIDING RISKS AND APPROACHING PLEASURE

A core conceptual issue in sexuality research in relational contexts reflects what has been—until relatively recently—a laser focus on risk avoidance and prevention. There are certainly good reasons to focus on preventing the risks associated with sex. For example, more than half of young women describe their first sexual experience as painful or disappointing (Thompson, 1990). Nearly half of all sexually active adolescents and young adults currently engage in unprotected sexual intercourse and put themselves at heightened risk for contracting sexually transmitted infections (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006). Among adults, lack of sexual desire for a romantic partner is one of the most common presenting problems at sex therapy clinics (Rosen, 2000). Most alarming is the fact that roughly half of newlyweds and those in long-term married relationships report having experienced sexual coercion at the hands of an intimate partner (Brousseau, Bergerson, Hébert, & McDuff, 2011; Panuzio & DiLillo, 2010). In short, the risks, dangers, and downsides of sex are incontrovertible.

Yet, to dwell on these and other negative outcomes of sex is at odds with several simple notions.

Most people want to engage in sex, and one of the most commonly cited reasons for engaging in sex is powerful feelings of attraction and love for an intimate partner (Impett, Peplau, & Gable, 2005). Most people are moderately or highly satisfied with their sexual relationships, derive great pleasure from engaging in a broad range of sexually intimate behaviors, and can do so across the life span. Sexuality is a key factor in shaping happiness and satisfaction in relationships. For example, in a cross-national sample of individuals from 29 countries, the people who were most satisfied with their sex lives were often the happiest with their lives in general (Laumann et al., 2006). Moreover, those individuals who are more sexually satisfied tend to be more satisfied with their relationships (Brezsnyak & Whisman, 2004; Sprecher, 2002). Given that satisfying romantic and sexual relationships are vital components of psychological and physical health (Diamond & Huebner, 2012; Diener & Seligman, 2002; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996; see also Chapters 11 and 21, this volume), it is essential to understand the ways in which sexuality enables individuals and relationships to thrive and to integrate what is known about the incontrovertible risks of sex with the growing area of research on positive dimensions of sexuality across the life course (Diamond, 2006; Impett, Muise, & Breines, 2013).

#### ROLE OF GENDER

Because of the central relevance of gender to the study of sexuality in relational contexts, we discuss it at the outset of this chapter (see also Chapter 2, this volume). The overwhelming majority of research on how gender shapes sexuality in the context of relationships has focused on understanding core male–female differences. A century ago, sex experts asserted that men and women had strikingly different sexual natures. Psychologists were skeptical of this view and, beginning in the 1960s, focused on establishing similarities between men and women. For example, Masters and Johnson (1966) proposed a human sexual response cycle that was applicable to both men and women, although recent research has challenged the universality of this sexual response cycle, especially for women (Basson, 2001; Alperstein et al., 2001). In recent years,

empirical research comparing men's and women's sexuality has flourished, leading psychologists to take stock of the available scientific evidence (see reviews by Peplau, 2003; Vohs, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2004). Our discussion of gender focuses on how three key gender differences—relational focus, sexual desire, and sexual fluidity—influence sexuality in the context of ongoing romantic relationships.

### Relational Focus

One of the most consistent and robust gender differences in sexuality is women's greater tendency to emphasize relationships and commitment as a context for sexuality and men's greater tendency to separate sexuality from love and commitment. For example, men and women tend to differ in their definitions of sexual desire. In one illustrative study, more men (70%) than women (43%) believed that sexual desire was aimed at the physical act of sex (Regan & Berscheid, 1996). In contrast, more women (35%) than men (13%) cited love or emotional intimacy as the goal of sexual desire. Women's sexual fantasies are more likely to include a familiar partner, to include affection and commitment, and to describe the setting for a sexual encounter (see review by Leitenberg & Henning, 1995). In contrast, men's fantasies are more likely to involve strangers, anonymous partners, or multiple partners and to focus on specific sex acts or body parts. Compared with women, men tend to have more permissive attitudes toward casual sex (Peterson & Hyde, 2010). The term *sociosexual orientation* has been used to capture this intercorrelated set of sexual attitudes, preferences, and behaviors (see review by Simpson, Wilson, & Winterheld, 2004). Significant gender differences have reliably been found on measures of sociosexuality, both in the United States and in more than 50 other countries (Schmitt et al., 2003), although it is important to point out that the variability in sociosexuality that exists within each gender greatly exceeds that which exists between men and women (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). In addition, recent research has suggested that men tend to report falling in love more quickly than do women (Harrison & Shortall, 2011). In addition, men's obsessive thoughts about a romantic partner make it difficult for them to

control their sexual thoughts and behaviors (Baumeister, Ventuneac, Pingle, & Parsons, 2012; Missildine, Feldstein, Punzalan, & Parsons, 2005), suggesting that the link between relationship factors and sexuality is not always stronger for women than for men.

The gender difference in emphasizing the relational aspects of sexuality has also been documented in samples of lesbians and gay men (see review by Peplau, Fingerhut, & Beals, 2004). Compared with gay men, lesbians have less permissive attitudes toward casual sex and are more likely to become sexually involved with partners who were first their friends. In fact, many lesbian and bisexual women have reported that they were never aware of their same-sex desires until they fell in love with a particular woman (Diamond, 2003). Gay men tend to report substantially more sex partners than either lesbians or heterosexuals and score significantly higher than other groups on measures of sociosexuality (Bailey, Gaulin, Agyei, & Gladue, 1994). Gay men in committed relationships are more likely than any other group to report that they have sex with partners outside their primary relationship and have open sexual arrangements (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Peplau et al., 2004).

Several explanations have been posited for this gender difference in relational focus (see review by Diamond, 2004). One idea concerns the fact that women are more likely than men to have their first experiences of sexual arousal in the context of heterosexual dating relationships rather than in the context of solitary masturbation. Another explanation is that women have historically been socialized to restrict their feelings of sexual desire to the context of intimate relationships, whereas men have had more social license to engage in casual sex. Third, biological factors may also contribute to this difference, in particular, neurochemicals that mediate bonding processes in mammals, including oxytocin, vasopressin, and dopamine (Diamond, 2004; Hiller, 2004).

In a review of gender differences in sexuality, Conley, Moors, Matsick, Zeigler, and Valentine (2011) have suggested that differences in men's and women's attitudes and willingness to engage in casual sex are explained by perceptions of a casual

partner's sexual prowess and anticipation of being stigmatized for engaging in a casual sex encounter. In a classic study by Clark and Hatfield (1989), men and women were propositioned for casual sex by confederates of the other sex. None of the women accepted the offer, whereas 70% of men agreed to casual sex with the female stranger who approached them. However, Conley (2010) provided evidence that the large gender difference in the acceptance of casual sex offers has less to do with the gender of the participants and more to do with the perceived personality characteristics of the proposer. Both men and women rated the female proposers of casual sex as more intelligent, successful, and sexually skilled than the male proposer. In a recent replication of the Clark and Hatfield (1989) study, Conley, Ziegler, and Moors (2012) found that when the proposed casual sex partner was someone attractive, known to the person, or perceived to have high sexual capabilities, a different pattern emerged. Gender differences in acceptance of a casual sex offer evaporated when participants considered offers from a very attractive person or someone familiar to them, such as a famous person. Women were also as likely as men to accept a casual sex offer if they believed that the person was a great lover and would provide them with a pleasurable sexual experience. Finally, women who anticipated being negatively labeled (e.g., called a slut) were less likely to have accepted both a recent real-life casual sex offer and a hypothetical casual sex offer.

### Sexual Desire

*Sexual desire* has been defined as the drive or motivation to seek out sexual objects or to engage in sexual activities (Diamond, 2004; see also Chapter 8, this volume). In a comprehensive review of empirical research on the topic, Baumeister, Catanese, and Vohs (2001) concluded that—across a variety of markers or indicators of sexual desire—men tend to show more interest in sex than do women. For example, compared with women, men think about sex more often (Laumann et al., 1994) and report more frequent sex fantasies and feelings of desire (Leitenberg & Henning, 1995). Across the life span, men rate the strength of their own sex drive higher than do their female age mates. Men and women

also differ in their preferred frequency of sex. When dating and married partners disagree about sexual frequency, men usually want to have sex more often than their female partners (McCabe, 1987; Smith et al., 2011). In heterosexual couples, actual sexual frequency may reflect a compromise between the desires of the male and female partners. In gay and lesbian relationships, in which sexual frequency is decided by partners of the same gender, lesbians report having sex less often than gay men or heterosexuals (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983).

We should advance a word of caution in interpreting evidence of men's greater sexual desire. The gender difference in desire is particularly strong when considering men's and women's desires for solitary sexual activity, such as masturbation, or for sex with new and unfamiliar sexual partners (Oliver & Hyde, 1993). Although men have more sexual thoughts than women, they also think about food and sleep more than women, suggesting that men may have more thoughts about personal needs in general than do women (Fisher, Moore, & Pittenger, 2012). The gender difference in desire is much smaller in the beginning stages of relationships in which intimacy levels are rapidly increasing (Baumeister & Bratlavsky, 1999). Within the context of ongoing, intimate relationships, it is more accurate to describe women's sexual desire as more variable than men's (Leiblum, 2002). In addition, Wallen (1995) has suggested that it is important to distinguish between having an intrinsic interest in pursuing sex (proceptivity) and the capacity to become sexually aroused in response to situational or relationship cues (receptivity). Women's desire can be just as strong as men's when they are appropriately aroused (Tolman & Diamond, 2001) but may be more vulnerable to disruptions by such factors as hormonal fluctuations and relationship issues and concerns (Impett, Strachman, Finkel, & Gable, 2008; Leiblum, 2002). Gender differences in sexual desire in the context of ongoing romantic relationships still tend to exist, but they are relatively small in magnitude (e.g., Davies, Katz, & Jackson, 1999; Holmberg & Blair, 2009) or may be hard to detect given the higher relative variability in women's desire. Finally, as with all male–female comparisons, there are many exceptions to this general pattern, as

research on highly sexual women has revealed (Blumberg, 2003; Wentland, Herold, Desmarais, & Milhausen, 2009).

Several explanations exist for the empirically documented gender differences in sexual desire. One explanation is primarily biological in nature and suggests that gender differences may be due to differences in levels of circulating androgens and estrogens (Bancroft, 1978; Udry, 1988). Indeed, evidence from the animal and human literatures extensively reviewed by Baumeister et al. (2001) has suggested that whereas androgens are responsible for the active initiation of sexual activity, estrogens are responsible for the acceptance of sexual activity. Another explanation for the gender difference focuses on the powerful social forces that restrict, limit, and control female sexual desire and cast girls and women in the role of sexual gatekeepers (Fine & McClelland, 2006). These messages are especially prominent in adolescence, a time when girls receive powerful messages that they do not want or need sexual activity as much as men and that sex is only appropriate in the context of committed or monogamous relationships (Tolman, 2006). These messages limit adolescent girls' ability to be aware of and to detect their own feelings of sexual arousal and may be responsible for the fact that many women report discrepancies between their degree of physiological arousal and their subjective feelings of arousal (Chivers, Rieger, Latty, & Bailey, 2005).

Regardless of their source, it is important to consider the implications of possible gender differences in desire for the successful maintenance of romantic relationships. One possible index of desire that may be especially important to consider is the desired frequency of sex. Research by McCabe (1987) demonstrated that across relationships of differing duration, whereas women reported that they were getting as much sexual intercourse as they wanted, men consistently reported wanting more sexual intercourse than they were currently getting. In a study of German university students in heterosexual relationships, Klusmann (2002) found that men were more likely than women to complain that their desired frequency of sex outpaced their actual frequency of sex, and this discrepancy grew larger with increased relationship length. In relationships

characterized by overall differences in desire between male and female partners, a man may believe that he would be better off with a woman with a higher sex drive and, conversely, a woman may believe that she is inadequate or unable to fulfill her partner's sexual needs. Both of these perceptions may present considerable challenges for relationships, especially as couples try to maintain their relationships over the long haul (see review by Vohs et al., 2004). In heterosexual relationships in which men desire sex more frequently than their female partners, men tend to report lower sexual and relationship satisfaction (Smith et al., 2011). Moreover, some studies have shown that satisfaction with one's sex life in the context of relationships tends to be more important for men than for women. In a longitudinal study of romantic couples, Sprecher (2002) found that sexual satisfaction decreased over time for both men and women, but this effect was stronger for men. Furthermore, sexual dissatisfaction tends to predict relationship dissolution more strongly for men than for women in samples of dating couples (Sprecher, 2002) and married couples (Dzara, 2010), suggesting that couples may be more likely to break up or divorce when men are not happy with their sex lives.

### Sexual Fluidity

Sexual fluidity (also called *erotic plasticity*) represents the extent to which an individual's sexual beliefs and behaviors can be altered by cultural, social, and situational factors. The original Kinsey et al. (1948, 1953) reports and Masters and Johnson's (1966) research on the human sexual response cycle suggested that women's sexual activity fluctuates more over time than men's. In a comprehensive review of research on the malleability of sexuality, Baumeister (2000) showed that women tend to exhibit more change in sexuality across time than men. For example, women change and adjust their sexual preferences more so than men over the course of a marriage (Ard, 1977). In her recent book, Diamond (2008) reviewed evidence suggesting that women exhibit greater changes in sexual orientation over time than do men (see Chapter 20, this volume). Baumeister (2000) also argued that social and cultural variables such as religion and education tend

to have a stronger influence on women's sexuality. In addition, compared with men, women demonstrate a lower consistency between their sexual attitudes and their behaviors. One example of attitude-behavior consistency that differs quite markedly for men and women concerns patterns of sexual compliance or consensual unwanted sex (Impett & Peplau, 2003; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). These terms refer to situations in which one partner consents to sexual activity that he or she does not personally desire. In ongoing romantic relationships, women are roughly twice as likely as men to report engaging in undesired sex (see review by Impett & Peplau, 2003), and women in longer term relationships tend to be more sexually compliant than women in short-term relationships (Carvalho, Brotto, & Leal, 2010). These results suggest that women may be relatively more likely than men to resolve a dilemma about undesired sex by taking their partner's welfare into account or by placing the relationship above their own sexual needs (Impett & Peplau, 2002).

The greater malleability of women's sexuality compared with the consistency and stability of men's sexuality over time has important implications for close relationships. Romantic relationships often involve a high degree of interdependence between partners, such that changes in one person's interests and preferences inevitably influence his or her partner (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2008). To the extent that women are more likely to change their sexual interests and preferences over time, these changes will influence their partner and the relationship. For example, in newly developing relationships, men and women tend to start out with high levels of desire. Although men tend to remain relatively high in sexual desire, women often report waning desire over the course of time in relationships (Baumeister & Bratlavsky, 1999). Thus, in the context of long-term intimate partnerships, men and women may find themselves in situations in which their levels of desire show decreasing correspondence—situations that may present challenges for the relationship.

In sum, research has pointed to three core gender differences in sexuality that have important implications for romantic relationships. Although the magnitude of these gender differences may be smaller in

the context of ongoing relationships, in general women tend to place greater emphasis on relationships as an important context for sexual activity, report lower and more variable interest in or drive for sex, and demonstrate more fluidity in sexual interests and preferences over time than do men. An important direction for future research will be to focus on the implications of these differences for the quality and stability of intimate relationships. Qualitative methods are needed to understand how men and women experience their sexuality, and longitudinal methods would be ideal to investigate how gender shapes sexuality at different points in relationships and at different stages of the life span.

## SEXUAL ATTRACTION

Before relationships are even formed and as they are initially developing, partners assess each other's romantic and sexual potential. In the 1960s and 1970s, research on close relationships focused on understanding initial romantic attraction. Much of this work was based on evolutionary perspectives and emphasized gender differences in partner preferences and mate selection. During the 1980s, with the growing influence of attachment theory, researchers shifted their focus from studying initial romantic attraction to studying relationship dynamics in ongoing romantic bonds (see Chapter 1, this volume). Yet in the past decade with the advent of speed dating, we have seen renewed focus on romantic attraction during real-life dating situations (Finkel, Eastwick, & Matthews, 2007). In this section, we review gender differences and similarities in partner preferences, consider individual differences in mating strategies, and discuss the disconnect between expressed partner preferences and actual mate selection.

### Mate Preferences

Research on mate selection criteria, or the traits that people report desiring in a romantic partner, has largely focused on gender differences and suggested that men and women value different criteria in potential mates. Across 37 cultures, when asked to rank the qualities that are desired in a mate, women ranked dependability, stability, education, and intelligence more highly than men for a long-term

partner, whereas men ranked physical appearance, health, and desire for a home and children more highly than women (Shackelford, Schmitt, & Buss, 2005). These gender differences in preferences for a long-term partner have been present across multiple generations. For example, in surveys of mate preferences conducted between 1939 and 1996, men consistently placed a higher premium on physical attractiveness, whereas women put greater importance on the financial stability of romantic partners (Buss, Shackelford, Kirkpatrick, & Larsen, 2001). Other studies on partner preferences have attempted to distinguish between necessary and "luxury" traits by giving people a "mate budget" and asking them to indicate which traits are necessities in a romantic partner. Men classified physical attractiveness as a necessity in a long-term partner, whereas women treated it as a luxury. The reverse pattern emerged for status and resources, with women viewing these qualities as necessities and men viewing them as luxuries (Li, Bailey, Kendrick, & Linsenmeier, 2002).

Although the mate selection literature has emphasized gender differences in partner preferences that persist across cohorts, cultures, and types of research methods, there are also important gender similarities. Although men ranked physical attractiveness higher than did women in Buss et al.'s (2001) cross-cohort study, it was nonetheless ranked only seventh of 18 possible characteristics. Similarly, women ranked financial stability as more important than did men, but it was only 11th on women's lists. In fact, for both men and women, the top four traits preferred in a long-term partner were dependability, emotional stability, pleasing disposition, and mutual attraction and love. With each successive cohort, physical attractiveness and financial prospects became more important for both sexes, with men in more recent years expressing a steeper rise in the importance of partner earning potential. Moreover, both men and women indicated that kindness and intelligence were necessities for a long-term partner (Li et al., 2002).

Gender differences are further attenuated when short-term partner preferences are considered. Both men and women name physical attraction as their top reason for considering casual sex and inquire

first about physical attractiveness when screening for a one-night stand partner (Li & Kendrick, 2006). Several differences in mate preferences within gender have also been identified. Women consistently report valuing kindness and high social status in long-term partners (Li & Kendrick, 2006). However, when considering what they desire in short-term partners, some women prioritize long-term qualities such as social status, whereas others emphasize physical attractiveness at the expense of kindness and social status. A similar pattern tends to emerge for men (Li & Kendrick, 2006). For some men, short-term preferences diverge only slightly from long-term preferences, whereas for others, physical attractiveness is heavily prioritized in short-term relationships at the expense of kindness, social status, and creativity. As such, individual variation in mate selection criteria within gender is important to consider.

Individual differences in partner preferences and, by extension, mating strategies are at least partially explained by differences in *sociosexuality*, broadly defined as the extent to which a person desires uncommitted sexual activity (see review by Simpson et al., 2004). Individuals scoring high on measures of sociosexuality are more comfortable having sex outside of a committed relationship, prioritize physical attractiveness in romantic partners, and tend to be involved in relationships characterized by the rapid development of sexual intimacy and low levels of investment, love, and commitment. In contrast, individuals scoring low in sociosexuality tend to be more committed to maintaining their relationships, believe that love is necessary for sex, and prefer partners who place a premium on intimacy and commitment. Schmitt (2005) examined sociosexuality scores of men and women from 48 countries and found that men scored substantially higher than women. More recent research that has considered multiple dimensions of sociosexuality—including attitudes, behavior, and desire—has suggested that the desire dimension is driving the gender differences in sociosexuality, because men generally report greater desire for uncommitted sexuality than women, and women's desire scores are more consistent with their behavior than are men's (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008). For example, women who have



positive attitudes toward uncommitted sexuality and a desire for sexual variety report a greater number of prior relationships, sex partners, and infidelities than men with similar attitudes and desires (Penke & Asendorpf, 2008). Consistent with this research, Penderson, Putcha-Bhagavatula, and Miller (2011) found that men and women do not differ in preferred number of sex partners, suggesting that individual differences may be more important than gender in considering partner preferences and mating strategies.

### Mate Selection

In the past decade, research on interpersonal attraction has shifted in focus from self-reported preferences for hypothetical partners to real-life dating outcomes, allowing researchers to consider whether reported partner preferences translate into actual mate choices. Consistent with research on partner preferences, gender differences in romantic interest have been observed in online dating contexts. Men in high-income brackets enjoy greater online dating success, as measured by the number of first-contact e-mails received, whereas the effect of income on e-mail receipt is only moderate for women (Hitsch, Hortacsu, & Ariely, 2010). In the same way, women who include a photo in their online profile receive more than twice as many e-mails as women who do not post a photo and describe themselves as average in physical attractiveness. This effect is less pronounced for men (Hitsch et al., 2010; see also Volume 2, Chapter 3, this handbook).

Eastwick, Finkel, and Eagly (2011) examined whether gender differences in reported partner preferences also exist in face-to-face interactions. In a sample of undergraduates, participants reported gender-typical partner preferences, and these preferences predicted romantic interest after the assessment of a potential partner's profile. However, when participants actually met the subject of the profile, stated preferences failed to predict romantic interest. It appears that interest in hypothetical targets (e.g., viewed in online dating profiles or personal ads) is consistent with partner preferences, but in a face-to-face meeting, preferred qualities are reinterpreted to fit the traits displayed by the potential partner. For example, poor financial prospects can be reinterpreted as the product of a lazy, unmotivated lifestyle

or the lot of a struggling but driven artist, depending on the context. The valence ascribed to target traits during face-to-face interactions dictates romantic attraction and, as a result, mate choice decisions after live interactions can deviate markedly from initial mate preferences.

Studies of romantic attraction in speed dating contexts have cast further doubt on the predictive validity of partner preferences. Eastwick and Finkel (2008) examined the mate preferences of undergraduates before a speed dating session and followed daters for 32 days. The data revealed no gender differences in partner preferences and no association between stated preferences and dating choices. For speed daters of both sexes, the physical attractiveness of a potential partner had the greatest bearing on romantic interest. Moreover, when women express an interest in a partner's earning potential or when men express an interest in good looks during a speed date, interaction troubles can follow (Korobov, 2011). By contrast, the expression of partner preferences that are resistant to traditional gender norms is more likely to result in mutual affiliation (Korobov, 2011). With regard to racial preferences, research by Fisman, Iyengar, Kamenica, and Simonson (2008) revealed that although speed daters expressed strong same-race preferences, nearly half of all matches are interracial. Speed dating studies have provided a unique opportunity to compare partner preferences and actual mate choices while retaining laboratory-like control and enhanced ecological validity. However, this approach may possibly prime short-term mating strategies, in which gender differences are muted to begin with, instead of providing evidence that both men and women place a premium on physical attractiveness for long-term partners (Eastwick & Finkel, 2008).

The question of whether speed dating choices merely reflect casual-sex partner selections has been addressed. In a sample of adults using commercial dating services who reported a greater interest in securing a long-term than a short-term partner, Asendorpf, Penke, and Back (2011) found that physical attraction was the main predictor of romantic interest for both men and women, consistent with the findings of Eastwick and Finkel (2008). Kurzban and Weeden (2005, 2007) compared reported



partner preferences with actual mate choices in community samples of adults. Although men tended to specify a preferred body type and women were more likely to list cut-off points for education and income, these stated preferences deviated from actual mate choices. For both men and women, romantic interest in speed dating partners was determined almost exclusively by physically observable attributes such as attractiveness, body mass index, height, and age.

In contrast to evolutionary models of mate selection, the speed dating literature has suggested that men and women are more similar than different in the traits that influence their attraction to a romantic partner. Although gender differences in partner preferences have been found across cultures, stated preferences do not appear to dictate actual romantic interest. Instead, the willingness to pursue a relationship with an individual of the other sex is highly dependent on that individual's physical attractiveness. Consistent with research that has demonstrated an association between sexual priming and relationship goal pursuit (Gillath, Mikulincer, Birnbaum, & Shaver, 2008), the attraction literature has pointed to sexual attraction as the overarching factor that motivates people to pursue intimacy in a relationship context.

Although speed dating provides a unique window into real-life attraction, its generalizability has been contested because of the fast and formalized nature of speed dating events as well as an exclusive focus on heterosexual participants. Future research should examine the function of partner preferences in gay men's and lesbians' speed date selection as well as in relationships initiated outside of a speed dating context. Finally, longitudinal data are needed to determine the role of ideal partner preferences in mate retention and to clarify whether the same sexually charged variables that predict initial attraction also predict the transition from casual to committed mating and relating.

## ATTACHMENT

Couples who stay together beyond the initial attraction phase will begin to develop an attachment bond, and attachment-related differences have implications

for the maintenance of relationships. Although attachment and sexuality are distinct behavioral systems that evolved for different purposes and can be experienced separately (Diamond, 2003, 2004), long-term romantic partners typically function simultaneously as sexual partners and attachment figures (see reviews by Birnbaum, 2010; Gillath & Schachner, 2006). More than 2 decades ago, Hazan and Shaver (1987) argued that romantic relationships are made up of three distinct but related behavioral systems: sex, caregiving, and attachment. Since then, researchers have devoted considerable attention to understanding how these systems are related as well as how individual differences in attachment predict differences in the way that people experience romantic and sexual relationships. In this section, we discuss the extension of attachment theory to romantic relationships, review the literature linking attachment and sexuality, and discuss how attachment shapes sexual motivation (see Chapter 1, this volume).

### Attachment in Romantic Relationships

Since the 1970s, attachment theory has been a leading perspective for understanding the bond between a child and a caregiver (e.g., Bowlby, 1979), and in the 1980s, this perspective was applied to romantic pair bonds (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The same behaviors that are characteristic of infant-caregiver attachment—seeking and maintaining physical proximity, seeking comfort when needed, experiencing distress on separation, and viewing the attachment figure as a secure base—are directed toward a mate in adulthood (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999). There are important differences, however, between the parent-child bond and the bond between romantic partners. Most notably, adult attachments involve reciprocal caregiving as well as sexual attraction and mating (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988). As such, romantic partnerships reflect an integration of the attachment, caregiving, and sexual systems.

Individual differences in attachment are best conceptualized along the two continuous dimensions of attachment anxiety and avoidance. An individual's position on the anxiety dimension reflects the extent to which he or she desires closeness with romantic partners but has heightened fears of rejection and abandonment. An individual's position on

the avoidance dimension reflects the extent to which he or she feels uncomfortable with closeness in romantic relationships and strives for independence and emotional distance from partners (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Low scores on both the anxiety and the avoidance dimensions reflect attachment security. An extensive body of research has shown that attachment anxiety and avoidance reliably predict differences in the way people experience romantic and sexual relationships (see review by Birnbaum, 2010). The bulk of the research on attachment in relationships has involved heterosexual samples, although similar prevalence rates of anxiety and avoidance and associations with relational and sexual outcomes have been identified among gay and lesbian individuals. One notable difference is that the attachment security of gays and lesbians is unrelated to their early relationships with parents but is instead predicted by self and peer acceptance, suggesting that for gay and lesbian individuals attachment security may be more strongly influenced by peer relationships than by early parenting (see review by Feeney & Noller, 2004).

### **Attachment and Sexuality in Relationships**

Individual differences in adult romantic attachment influence how individuals experience and make meaning of their romantic and sexual relationships. Securely attached individuals generally have committed, stable, and satisfying romantic relationships and enjoy sex in the context of relationships (Birnbaum, Reis, Mikulincer, Gillath, & Orpaz, 2006; Simpson, 1990). Highly anxious individuals, however, tend to use sex to meet their needs for emotional intimacy and reassurance and are often preoccupied with relationship issues and overly concerned with their partner's sexual needs (Davis, Shaver, & Vernon, 2004; Schachner & Shaver, 2004). Although anxious individuals report greater sexual desire and are more likely to maintain passion over time (Davis et al., 2004), they report lower levels of sexual and marital satisfaction (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Little, McNulty, & Russell, 2010). Interestingly, the romantic partners of anxiously attached individuals do not report lower levels of sexual satisfaction, a finding that may reflect the tendency for anxiously attached individuals to defer to a romantic partner's sexual

needs (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Impett & Peplau, 2002). Higher avoidance is also associated with lower levels of sexual satisfaction, reflecting avoidant individuals' greater discomfort with intimacy and closeness. Partners of more avoidant individuals are also less sexually satisfied, and their decreased sexual satisfaction detracts from feelings of relationship satisfaction (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; see also Volume 2, Chapter 4, this handbook).

The attachment and sexual systems not only influence one another but also contribute to the quality and stability of romantic relationships. For example, the influence that sexual experiences have on relationship satisfaction differs on the basis of an individual's attachment style. In a sample of married couples, the link between sexual and relationship satisfaction was stronger for people who were relatively more anxiously attached as well as for people who had anxiously attached partners (Butzer & Campbell, 2008). On days when anxiously attached individuals had more negative sexual experiences, their relationship satisfaction decreased, and on days when they had more positive sexual experiences, their relationship satisfaction increased. Conversely, the relationship satisfaction of avoidantly attached individuals was less influenced by their daily sexual experiences. Although avoidant individuals are not as affected by negative experiences, they are also less likely to reap the benefits of satisfying sexual experiences (Birnbaum et al., 2006). These findings highlight the tendency of anxiously attached individuals to use sex as a barometer for relationship satisfaction and the tendency of avoidant individuals to distance love from sex. Finally, this growing area of research on attachment and sexuality has also suggested that the frequency and quality of sexual interactions in a relationship may buffer against the negative impact of both attachment anxiety and avoidance on relationship quality. In a daily experience study, on days when partners reported more satisfying sex, anxiously attached individuals did not experience declines in their marital satisfaction, and among couples who reported more frequent sex, avoidance was not associated with lower marital satisfaction (Little et al., 2010).

Sexual fantasies can also provide a window into the interplay between attachment and sexuality in

romantic relationships. In a study by Birnbaum (2007), people who scored high on attachment anxiety reported a greater number of sexual fantasies than those low in anxiety, and their fantasies were more likely to reflect desires for intimacy and representations of a partner as warm and affectionate. In contrast, highly avoidant people were more likely to report sexual fantasies that involved distance and alienation from a romantic partner. Moreover, on days when negative relational events occurred, attachment-related concerns were exacerbated in the fantasies of both anxious and avoidant partners, with anxious individuals fantasizing about being helpless and avoidantly attached individuals fantasizing about feeling self-sufficient and independent (Birnbaum, Mikulincer, & Gillath, 2011).

Researchers have demonstrated the utility of dyadic approaches to studying attachment and sexuality in relationships. For example, in one study, when husbands were high in attachment anxiety or avoidance, their wives reported lower levels of sexual desire and sexual communication 5 months later (Feeney & Noller, 2004). Brassard, Shaver, and Lussier (2007) found that avoidant men and women reported less frequent sex when their partner was more anxious, a finding that is likely the result of their partner's heightened desire for intimacy and their own need to avoid closeness in relationships. Having an anxious partner who constantly pursues intimacy may also make avoidant partners' distancing attempts more pronounced. Furthermore, some degree of matching between partners on attachment styles may be important in relationships. When both partners are highly anxious, sexual frequency tends to be high, but an anxious man partnered with a less anxious woman often results in less frequent sex (Brassard et al., 2007). The neediness and desire for closeness that is characteristic of anxious attachment seems to be better received by a more anxious than a less anxious partner.

If sex and attachment are interconnected, priming one system should motivate a person toward goals of the other system. In a recent study, compared with those primed with neutral pictures, individuals who were primed with erotic words and pictures showed a heightened desire to form and maintain romantic relationships (Gillath et al.,

2008). In a review, Gillath and Schachner (2006) provided evidence for the interconnection between the attachment and sexual systems. When the sexual system is activated, people are motivated not only toward sexual behavior but also toward strengthening their current relationship; conversely, when the attachment system is activated, people are more interested in pursuing long-term, committed relationships than they are in pursuing short-term, casual relationships. Attachment avoidance, whether dispositional or primed, is associated with a desire for shorter term mating strategies, whereas attachment anxiety and security are associated with longer term mating strategies. In addition, when anxiously attached individuals are primed with security, they have a reduced desire for long-term partnerships, suggesting that attachment-related primes may remind anxious individuals of negative relational thoughts and experiences.

### Attachment and Sexual Motives

In romantic relationships, partners may use sex to meet specific attachment-related needs, and therefore individual differences in anxiety and avoidance are associated with distinct motivations for engaging in sexual activity. Anxiously attached individuals tend to engage in sex to please a romantic partner, to express love, and to achieve emotional intimacy and are less likely to engage in sex in pursuit of physical pleasure (Davis et al., 2003, 2004; Impett, Gordon, & Strachman, 2008). Anxiously attached individuals are more likely to engage in *sexting*—sending sexually suggestive or propositioning text messages to their romantic partners—a behavior that is motivated by a desire to maintain their partner's interest and meet their needs for reassurance by eliciting a response from their partner (Weisskirch & Delevi, 2011). In contrast, because of fears of and discomfort with intimacy, avoidant individuals' sexual motives tend to focus on detaching sex and love. Avoidant attachment is associated with having sex to avoid negative relationship interactions and is negatively associated with having sex to express love for a partner (Impett, Gordon, & Strachman, 2008). Instead, avoidant people are more likely to have sex for self-enhancing reasons such as to pursue their own sexual pleasure (e.g., Schachner & Shaver,

2004). Attachment avoidance is also associated with a greater likelihood of engaging in extradyadic sex to reduce discomfort with a primary partner's desire for intimacy (Beaulieu-Pelletier, Philippe, LeCours, & Couture, 2011).

Sexual motives are also influenced by a partner's attachment style. Because avoidant individuals are relatively less likely to respond to a romantic partner's needs for intimacy, men and women with avoidant partners are more likely to engage in sex to pursue their own physical pleasure (Impett, Gordon, & Strachman, 2008). Research has also suggested that gender differences exist in the ways that men and women respond to an anxiously attached partner. Whereas women with more anxious partners are more likely to have sex to please their partners, men with more anxious partners are less likely to do so (Impett, Gordon, & Strachman, 2008). In general, women are more likely than men to have sex with their partners when they have little or no desire (Impett & Peplau, 2003) and may feel more obligated to meet their partner's needs, particularly when they are high in attachment anxiety (Impett & Peplau, 2002). Men's intimacy needs may be satiated by having an anxious partner, and therefore men may be less likely to comply with an anxious partner's sexual wishes or may be frustrated with their partner's constant demands for closeness (Impett, Gordon, & Strachman, 2008).

Relationship threats, such as rejection, uncertainty about a partner's love, and concerns that another person might be attempting to attract one's partner, can activate attachment-related goals. In one recent study, after thinking about a relationship threat (e.g., a partner considering a breakup) versus a non-relationship threat (e.g., failing an exam), anxiously attached individuals reported fewer sexual motives focused on the pursuit of pleasure (Birnbau, Weisberg, & Simpson, 2011). This finding suggests that relational threats may trigger anxious individuals to focus even less on their own sexual pleasure. In a study of individuals who reported on the content of their sexual fantasies after a relational threat, highly anxious individuals reported a heightened desire to satisfy a romantic partner's sexual needs, a strategy that was likely enacted to maintain the relationship (Birnbau, Svitelman, Bar-Shalom,

& Porat, 2008). In contrast, highly avoidant people further withdrew from their partners after a relationship threat and reported lower desires to engage in sex (Birnbau et al., 2008). Interestingly, avoidant women, when threatened, were more likely to represent themselves as pleasing and affectionate toward their partner in their sexual fantasies, suggesting that in some situations women's greater relational orientation may supersede the impact of attachment (Birnbau et al., 2008).

In sum, a growing body of research has shown important ways in which attachment and sexuality are linked in romantic relationships. More longitudinal research is needed to understand how attachment influences relational and sexual experiences over the course of romantic partnerships, and further research is needed on how partners' attachment styles interact to influence relational and sexual outcomes.

## SEXUAL DESIRE

*Sexual desire*, defined as a motivational state that leads an individual to seek out opportunities to engage in sexual activities (Diamond, 2003, 2004; Gonzaga, Turner, Keltner, Campos, & Altemus, 2006), is another critical factor to consider in the maintenance of romantic relationships (see Chapter 8, this volume). Research on sexual desire has suggested that it involves both physical and cognitive aspects. Both men and women have reported gauging their levels of sexual desire via genital arousal (Beck, Bozman & Qualtrough, 1991), and some women have discussed desire as being sexual interest that is more thoughtful (Graham, Sanders, Milhausen, & McBride, 2004) and not necessarily indicative of a physical readiness for sex (Wood, Mansfield, & Koch, 2007). In this section, we consider how sexual desire changes over the course of a relationship, discuss the implications of partners having discrepancies in sexual desire, and review possible factors that may buffer against declines in sexual desire in relationships over time.

### Sexual Desire Over the Course of a Relationship

Sexual desire has important implications for relationship maintenance. People who report higher

levels of desire have fewer thoughts about leaving their current relationship and are less likely to be unfaithful to their partner or feel attracted to other people (Regan, 2000). Despite the associations between desire and relationship stability, there also seems to be a normative decline in desire over the course of a relationship, with sexual desire peaking in the early stages of a relationship and then decreasing over time (Sprecher & Regan, 1998). This decline occurs even if couples do not have children and when controlling for how satisfied they are in the relationship (Call, Sprecher, & Schwartz, 1995). Relationship duration has been shown to be a stronger predictor of sexual frequency than age (Johnson, Wadsworth, Welling & Fields, 1994), with one exemplary finding being that people who remarry later in life often report increased sexual frequency (Call et al., 1995). Researchers have suggested that declines in desire can be attributed to habituation to a romantic partner (see Chapters 7 and 13, this volume) and theorized that in long-term relationships, sex may be less rewarding than earlier in the relationship and therefore loses some of its importance (Call et al., 1995; Liu, 2000).

Whereas feelings of intimacy and closeness tend to increase over the course of a relationship, passion often declines. According to Baumeister and Bratslavsky (1999), passion is a function of changes in intimacy, meaning that long-term couples are at risk of declines in desire once the level of intimacy in a relationship is stable, even when levels of intimacy are high. In a recent empirical test of this theory in a 21-day diary study of established couples, daily increases in intimacy were associated with higher levels of passion, a greater probability of having sex, and greater sexual satisfaction (Rubin & Campbell, 2012). In-depth interviews with 22 women who reported high marital satisfaction but low sexual desire for their husbands revealed that the comfort and stability of long-term relationships contributes to the feeling that sex is less exciting (Simms & Meana, 2010). Other factors, such as the overfamiliarity of a long-term partner and the sexual repertoire and the desexualization of roles that often occurs in long-term relationships, such as shared household responsibilities and coparenting, also contribute to decreased desire (Simms & Meana, 2010). Changes in levels of

desire in an established relationship may also be the result of changes in one or both partners' sexual functioning. Not surprisingly, when one partner experiences sexual difficulties, both partners report declines in sexual desire. Low levels of desire in women often co-occur with other sexual problems and with a partner's sexual dysfunction (McCabe & Goldhammer, 2012; see also Volume 2, Chapter 4, this handbook).

Discrepancies between actual and desired frequency of engaging in sex shape the quality of romantic relationships, and this association differs over the course of a relationship. In a study of 8,096 heterosexual dating couples, higher sexual desire, especially as reported by the female partner, was associated with increased relationship satisfaction for both partners, even when actual sexual frequency was lower than desired frequency (Willoughby & Vitas, 2012). However, in longer relationships, higher discrepancies between desired and actual frequency of sexual activity led male partners to feel less satisfied with their relationship and female partners to question the stability of their relationship. Therefore, higher desire than frequency may serve as a motivator for individuals to invest in a new relationship, but it may lead to negative consequences in more established relationships.

Family life stage and transition to parenthood have an impact on desire and sexual frequency in relationships. In a study using data from the National Survey of Families and Households, sexual frequency decreased during pregnancy and the initial postpartum period, especially when a couple was also parenting other children younger than age 4 (Call et al., 1995). The general pattern of desire during the transition to parenthood that has emerged in the literature is that women's desire declines over the course of pregnancy, especially during the third trimester, and remains low for the first few months postpartum (see review by Haugen, Schmutzer, & Wenzel, 2004). Men may experience similar declines over the course of their partner's pregnancy, although these declines are relatively less dramatic. Conversely, some women report increases in desire at various stages of their pregnancy, and many women may retain an interest in noncoital sexual activities, even if they desire less frequent intercourse. In a sample of 128 Iranian

first-time parents, women's appearance concerns and fatigue were associated with lower levels of sexual desire, but high perceived intimacy among couples buffered against declines in marital satisfaction during the postpartum period (Nehzad & Goodarzi, 2011).

Ethnic differences in the experience of female sexual desire have been documented in the literature. The Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors, which included more than 14,000 women and spanned 20 countries, revealed that low sexual desire or a lack of interest in sex is more common among East Asian than European and North American women (Laumann et al., 2005). In one study, Woo, Brotto, and Gorzalka (2011) found that East Asian women reported more sexual guilt and sexual conservatism than Caucasian women, and sexual guilt accounted for the association between ethnicity and sexual desire.

Recent qualitative research has suggested that over the course of a relationship, sexual desire becomes an increasingly partnered experience. Women in long-term relationships discuss their desire as being more responsive to their partner's initiation than spontaneous (Goldhammer & McCabe, 2011), and many couples equate the quality of their sexual relationship with the quality of their relationship as a whole (Elliott & Umberson, 2008). Some women, however, discuss declining desire despite high levels of relational satisfaction (Simms & Means, 2010). Further qualitative work in this area could offer insights into how couples manage desire discrepancies in their relationships and how desire and sexual motivation change over the course of a relationship. Because sexual desire and sexual frequency are not synonymous, the sexual motives of a partner with lower desire may have important implications for relationship quality. Longitudinal studies that consider the ebb and flow of desire over the course of a relationship are also warranted and could identify additional factors that contribute to declines over time.

### Desire Discrepancies

In the context of a romantic relationship, perceptions of sexual compatibility, including the concordance between partners' levels of desire, have

implications for relationship quality (Hurlbert, Apt, Hurlbert, & Pierce, 2000). Instead of conceptualizing an individual's sexual desire as high versus low, some researchers have begun to think about a person's sexual desire as relative to their partner's desire and have considered discrepancies in sexual desire between partners. For example, in a study of 36 lesbian and 33 heterosexual women, the majority of both lesbian (66%) and heterosexual (75%) participants reported desire discrepancies in their relationships (Matthews, Tartaro, & Hughes, 2003). Moreover, although men generally report higher sexual desire than women (see review by Baumeister et al., 2001), women are not always the partner with lower desire in heterosexual couples. In fact, Davies et al. (1999) found that men and women were relatively equally split on indicating which partner reported higher sexual desire in a sample of heterosexual couples.

In one study of desire discrepancies in dating couples, Mark and Murray (2012) found that larger desire differences between partners were associated with lower levels of sexual satisfaction for women (but not men) after controlling for relationship satisfaction and were associated with lower relationship satisfaction for men (but not women) after controlling for sexual satisfaction. Both perceived and actual desire discrepancies may influence women's relationship satisfaction; for men, perceived discrepancies affected relationship satisfaction, and this association was fully mediated by sexual satisfaction (Davies et al., 1999). Davies et al. (1999) also investigated whether these effects are due to similarity versus dissimilarity in partners' levels of desire or whether a specific pattern is important in terms of which partner is higher or lower in desire. Couples were categorized into three groups: women with lower desire than their partner, women with similar desire to their partner, and women with higher desire than their partner. Women with lower desire were significantly less satisfied than women in the other two groups, suggesting that the nature of the desire discrepancy is important for relational outcomes.

In a sample of 1,072 women in same-sex relationships, Bridges and Horne (2007) made an important distinction between problematic and

nonproblematic desire discrepancies. When asking women about desire discrepancies in their relationship, they asked them to indicate whether they saw these discrepancies as problematic for their relationships. Women who reported that a desire discrepancy with their partner was problematic in their relationship had sex less frequently and felt less sexually satisfied than women who reported a nonproblematic desire discrepancy or no discrepancy with their partner. Therefore, a desire discrepancy may not necessarily be problematic in and of itself, but only to the extent that one or both members of the couple view it as problematic (see Chapter 20, this volume). Future research is needed to determine the extent to which desire discrepancies are perceived as problematic in heterosexual and gay male couples as well.

### Buffering Against Declines in Sexual Desire

Although, on average, sexual desire tends to decline over time in long-term partnerships, research evidence has also suggested that sexual desire does not inevitably wane over the course of a relationship. From their review of the literature, Acevedo and Aron (2009) concluded that although the obsessive element of passionate love decreases over time, the romantic elements—including strong sexual desire—can be maintained in long-term relationships. Couples in long-term marriages report that sexual activity remains an important component of the relationship, albeit not as prominent as during the earlier stages of the relationship (Hinchliff & Gott, 2004).

Researchers have begun to investigate factors that promote the maintenance of desire in relationships. One line of research in particular has drawn on approach–avoidance theories of social motivation (see Gable & Impett, 2012, for a review). In the domain of sexuality, approach goals for sex represent desires to pursue positive outcomes such as one's own sexual pleasure, a partner's pleasure, or increased intimacy in the relationship (Cooper, Shapiro, & Powers, 1998). Avoidance goals, in contrast, represent desires to avert negative outcomes such as guilt associated with turning a partner down or increased conflict in the relationship. Research has shown that individuals who engage in sex for

approach goals report increased desire during daily sexual interactions in their relationships and are more likely to sustain high levels of sexual desire for a partner over time, both in young dating couples (Impett, Strachman, et al., 2008) and in long-term cohabiting and married couples (Muise, Impett, Kogan, & Desmarais, 2012). One person's approach sexual goals are also associated with the partner's daily experiences, such that on days when one partner has sex to pursue approach goals, the other partner experiences more positive emotions, including feeling more loved by and affectionate toward their partner (Muise, Desmarais, Impett, & Milhausen, 2011). Moreover, engaging in novel activities with a partner creates opportunities for self-expansion and contributes to increased relationship satisfaction and less boredom in relationships (McKenna, 1989; McNeal & Aron, 1995). In this research, the link between exciting activities and increased satisfaction was stronger for couples who had been together longer, suggesting that self-expanding opportunities can help prevent against typical declines in passion in long-term couples.

Recent research using daily experience methods has suggested that sexual desire is responsive to changes in emotions and relationship quality within individuals and across partners. For example, in a 14-day daily experience study of college students in dating relationships, sexual desire was higher on days when people reported experiencing more frequent positive events and was lower on days with more frequent negative events (Impett, Strachman, et al., 2008). However, people who pursued sex for approach goals maintained high sexual desire even on days that would ordinarily be the most threatening to couples, such when they had disagreements with a partner. The link between approach goals and sexual desire in these studies was stronger for women than for men, consistent with research documenting that women's desire may be more fluid or responsive to situational cues than men's desire (Baumeister, 2000; Diamond, 2008). In a 56-day daily diary study, Ridley et al. (2006) documented considerable variation in patterns of desire in a sample of married couples and found that people's emotions and feelings about the relationship influenced their own and their partner's sexual desire. Specifically, on days when



one partner experienced more positive emotions, both partners reported greater desire, and on days when one partner experienced more negative emotions, both partners experienced lower desire. Feelings of closeness and of equality between partners strengthened the link between positive emotions and desire, and on days when wives felt closer and more equal to their partners, the link between their husband's positive emotions and their own desire was strengthened (see Chapter 2, this volume). These findings highlight the utility of using dyadic daily experience methods to understand how the daily context of romantic relationships either enhances or detracts from sexual desire.

## SEXUAL SATISFACTION

Whereas sexual desire provides the motivation or impetus for engaging in sexual activity, sexual satisfaction represents the extent to which people are satisfied or happy with their sexual experiences. Sexual satisfaction contributes to the quality of ongoing romantic relationships and to overall health and well-being (see Chapters 11 and 21, this volume). People who are the most satisfied with their sex lives are also the most satisfied with their relationships, and this is true for both dating and married couples (Breznyak & Whisman, 2004; Regan, 2000; Sprecher, 2002). In a multinational study of individuals from 29 countries, the individuals who were the most sexually satisfied were also the happiest with their lives in general (Laumann et al., 2006). A nationally representative survey revealed that the overwhelming majority of U.S. residents are extremely or very pleased with the physical (87%) and emotional (85%) aspects of their sex lives (Laumann & Michael, 2001). In this section, we discuss the well-documented association between sexual and relationship satisfaction, with a focus on exchange perspectives, and provide an overview of several established correlates and predictors of sexual satisfaction in relationships.

### Sexual Satisfaction and Relationship Satisfaction

In dating and married couples across the life span, sexual and relationship satisfaction are closely linked (Byers, 2005; Sprecher, 2002). In a study of

university students in dating relationships, changes in sexual satisfaction were positively associated with changes in relationship satisfaction, love, and commitment over 4 years (Sprecher, 2002). In a study that assessed sexual and relationship satisfaction over an 18-month period, changes in sexual and relational satisfaction were not directional but synchronous, and this finding was partly explained by the quality of communication in the relationship (Byers, 2005).

Much of the research on sexual satisfaction in relationships is grounded in exchange perspectives. Exchange perspectives consider such factors as the balance between rewards and costs, perceptions of equity and equality in relationships, and comparisons between what people expect and what they actually experience in their relationships (see review by Byers & Wang, 2004; see also Chapter 11, this volume). This research has shown that people tend to be most sexually satisfied when they experience high sexual rewards (e.g., feeling closer to a partner), experience fewer sexual costs (e.g., engaging in sexual activities that they do not enjoy), and perceive that both partners are relatively equal in sexual rewards and costs (Lawrance & Byers, 1995). Women are more likely than men to report sexual rewards that are focused on the partner or the relationship (e.g., how their partner treats them when they have sex) and to report sexual costs that focus on physical aspects of the sexual encounter (e.g., how easily they reach orgasm; Lawrance & Byers, 1995). In a sample of married couples, partners who perceived equitable treatment in their relationship were more sexually satisfied than partners who were either overbenefited or underbenefited, although overbenefited partners were more sexually satisfied than those who felt underbenefited (Hatfield, Greenberger, Traupmann, & Lambert, 1982). Finally, people who evaluate their rewards and costs more favorably than their expectations of how rewarding a sexual relationship should be are more sexually satisfied (see review by Byers & Wang, 2004).

Using the interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction, Lawrance and Byers (1995) have shown that nonsexual aspects of a relationship are associated with sexual satisfaction. For example, in both dating and married couples, relationship satisfaction and its correlates (e.g., unresolved conflicts)

are associated with sexual satisfaction (see review by Byers & Wang, 2004). General self-disclosure as well as disclosure of specific sexual likes and dislikes contribute to perceptions of rewards and costs in a relationship and therefore influence levels of sexual satisfaction (Byers & Demmons, 1999). Sexual self-disclosure is one factor that helps to maintain sexual satisfaction in long-term relationships (MacNeil & Byers, 2009).

Although sexual and relationship satisfaction are often tightly linked, research has also shown that one can occur without the other. Apt, Hurtbert, Pierce, and White (1996) used cluster analysis to identify distinct profiles of married women who varied in their sexual and relationship satisfaction. Whereas the most sexually satisfied women experienced the highest levels of relationship satisfaction and the most sexually dissatisfied women experienced the lowest levels, two of the groups evidenced clear discrepancies between their levels of sexual and relationship satisfaction. Some women reported being satisfied with their sex lives, but not with their relationship, whereas others reported relationship satisfaction without sexual satisfaction. As such, levels of relationship satisfaction are not sufficient to account for the experience of sexual satisfaction in all individuals. Nevertheless, research has shown that couples who enjoy positive, satisfying sexual relationships have more stable relationships than couples who are less sexually satisfied or who report sexual problems (e.g., Edwards & Booth, 1994; Sprecher, 2002). Future research should explore how the association between sexual satisfaction and relationship stability changes over time as intimate relationships progress through different stages and transitions.

### Sexual Activity and Sexual Satisfaction

Although sexual satisfaction is not synonymous with sexual frequency, they are often linked. Both men and women report greater sexual satisfaction when their frequency of engaging in sex is high (e.g., Laumann et al., 1994), and this association has also been documented in non-Western countries such as China (Cheung et al., 2008) and Iran (Rahmani, Khoei, & Gholi, 2009). In fact, Norwegian couples indicated that having too little sex was the

primary reason for reporting sexual dissatisfaction (Træen, 2010). Sexual frequency and sexual satisfaction are also positively correlated in samples of gay and lesbian individuals (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). This association is likely bidirectional, with satisfied couples pursuing sex more frequently and frequent sex leading to increases in sexual satisfaction (McNulty & Fisher, 2008). In a recent study of heterosexual couples in midlife and older adulthood conducted in five countries (Heiman, Long, Smith, Fisher, & Sand, 2011), affectionate behaviors such as kissing, cuddling, and caressing were associated with increased sexual satisfaction for both men and women. Contrary to common gender stereotypes, these associations were strongest for men. These behaviors were also significant predictors of men's (but not women's) general relationship satisfaction. Using data from the China Health and Family Life Survey, Parish, Luo, Stolzenberg, et al. (2007) found that knowledge of sexuality and more permissive sexual attitudes predicted greater sexual satisfaction in a sample of married and dating Chinese individuals living in urban areas, and this association was fully mediated by a greater variety of sexuality practices such as kissing, fondling, and oral sex. Similarly, among East Asian men living in North America, greater acculturation was associated with higher levels of sexual satisfaction, less sexual avoidance, and fewer sexual issues (Brotto, Woo, & Ryder, 2007). East Asian cultures consider sexuality a private issue, and therefore conversations about sexuality are thought to be taboo. Greater acculturation was associated with great sexual knowledge and more liberal attitudes about sex, which accounted for higher levels of sexual satisfaction and functioning.

Some studies have indicated that women report similar or higher levels of sexual satisfaction than men (Heiman et al., 2011; McNulty & Fisher, 2008). Over the course of a long-term relationship, women tend to report lower sexual satisfaction than men in the early stages of the relationship but higher sexual satisfaction later on in the relationship (Heiman et al., 2011). Sexual frequency may play a role. If men generally desire more frequent sex than women, women in heterosexual relationships may be having sex closer to their desired

frequency than are their male partners. Indeed, ideal frequency is closer to actual frequency for women than for men (McNulty & Fisher, 2008). In general, physical aspects of sexual response are poor predictors of heterosexual women's sexual satisfaction; better predictors include their emotional well-being and the quality of their relationship with their partner (Bancroft, Loftus, & Long, 2003). However, in a study of middle-aged adults, sexual duration and frequency of sex and orgasm were significant predictors of sexual satisfaction for both men and women. Contrary to popular beliefs, however, physical aspects of sex were better predictors of women's satisfaction than relational factors, whereas relational aspects of sex were better predictors of men's satisfaction (Carpenter, Nathanson, & Kim, 2009). This research has suggested that the factors predicting women's satisfaction may be numerous, complex, and fluid across the life span (see Chapter 13, this volume).

Although physical sexual response (e.g., frequency of experiencing orgasm) is associated with sexual satisfaction (Laumann et al., 1994), it is important to note that sexual response is not sufficient for the experience of sexual satisfaction. Similarly, reporting a sexual issue (e.g., a problem with sexual response, sometimes termed *sexual dysfunction*) does not necessarily preclude having high sexual satisfaction, just as the absence of sexual issues does not inevitably mean that people are sexually satisfied (M. King, Holt, & Nazareth, 2007). In one study, 81% of women reported satisfaction with their sexual function, despite the fact that 70% of them reported at least one sexual problem (Ferenidou et al., 2008). In her research on optimal sexuality, Kleinplatz (2006; Kleinplatz et al., 2009) has argued that great sex has little to do with physical function but instead involves the critical factors of being present, connection, deep sexual and erotic intimacy, extraordinary communication, interpersonal risk taking and exploration, authenticity, vulnerability, and transcendence. An interesting finding was that orgasm, which is typically viewed as a standard indicator of sexual function, did not emerge in Kleinplatz's work as a key component of or even necessary to experience great sex.

### Dyadic Approaches to Sexual Satisfaction

Dyadic approaches to understanding sexual satisfaction have also gained traction in recent research. In a study that validated a new scale for measuring sexual satisfaction, Stulhofer, Busko, and Brouillard (2010) found that sexual satisfaction has two main dimensions, one that is self or ego focused and reflects satisfaction with personal sensations and experiences and one that is partner or sexual activity focused and reflects satisfaction with a partner's sexual engagement. Men involved in long-term relationships in middle and later adulthood felt more satisfied with their relationships and their sex lives when they placed greater importance on their partner's reaching orgasm during sex (Heiman et al., 2011), indicating the role of the partner in individual reports of sexual satisfaction.

Exchange perspectives also demonstrate the utility of applying dyadic approaches to the study of sexual satisfaction. Men's and women's reports of their own sexual rewards and costs contribute to their partner's sexual satisfaction above and beyond their partner's own reports of rewards and costs (see review by Byers & Wang, 2004). Using the framework of the interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction, Yucel and Gassanov (2010) demonstrated that sexual satisfaction in marriage was predicted by the interpersonal exchange of sexual rewards (e.g., frequency of sex, marital satisfaction) and costs (e.g., use of pornography, infidelity). Husbands and wives were more sexually satisfied when they had a partner who reported high marital satisfaction, had not experienced infidelity in the relationship, and had a partner who did not report solo use of pornography. It is important to point out that in this study, no negative impact was found when partners used pornography together, a finding that is consistent with other research that has found a positive association between viewing sexually explicit material with a partner and sexual satisfaction (Maddox, Rhoades, & Markman, 2011; see also Volume 2, Chapter 1, this handbook).

One person's feelings about a relationship contribute to both partners' experiences of relationship and sexual satisfaction. In a study of 198 couples, Bodenmann, Ledermann, and Bradbury (2007) found that people who reported higher levels of stress in their relationship, such as high levels of

family responsibilities or conflict over the division of household tasks, had partners who were less sexually satisfied. In addition, when women report low levels of stress, marital satisfaction is not associated with frequency of sexual activity, and high levels of marital satisfaction buffer against declines in sexual activity during times of stress. Conversely, when men are relatively dissatisfied in their relationships, increased stress promotes sexual activity, suggesting that partners may become more sexually intimate during times of adversity (Bodenmann et al., 2007). Low levels of sexual satisfaction are associated with greater concerns with a partner's ability to provide support or commit to the relationship; however, one partner's feelings of sexual satisfaction seem to bolster the other partner's feelings of certainty about the relationship (Theiss & Nagy, 2010). One person's feelings about him- or herself can also contribute to both partners' feelings about the relationship. Women's feelings about their bodies are related to levels of sexual and relationship satisfaction (Koch, Mansfield, Thurau, & Carey, 2005; Pujols, Meston, & Seal, 2009), and among married heterosexual couples, both men and women feel more satisfied with their relationships to the extent that the woman in the relationship feels more sexually attractive (Meltzer & McNulty, 2010).

Sexual satisfaction has been conceptualized and measured in diverse ways (see review by Stulhofer et al., 2010), which partially accounts for some of the differences observed across studies. In the future, researchers would benefit from working toward a common definition that is multidimensional and considers the context in which sexual activity occurs. In addition, much of the research on sexual rewards and costs is based on individual perceptions. Given the dyadic nature of sexual satisfaction in relationships, research that assesses both partners' perceptions of sexual rewards and costs is warranted.

## SEXUALITY IN SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

We now turn our attention to sexuality in the context of the relationships of lesbians and gay men (see also Chapters 18 through 20, this volume). At the outset, it is important to point out that most

lesbians and gay men want to have committed intimate partnerships (Bauermeister, 2012; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001), and just as do heterosexual individuals (Laumann et al., 1994), the majority of gay men and lesbians report currently experiencing their sexuality within the context of an ongoing intimate relationship (Lever 1994, 1995). Despite the fact that most gay men and lesbians say that having legally sanctioned gay and lesbian marriages is very important to them (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001), these relationships continue to develop within a climate of sexual prejudice (Herek, 2000). Negative social attitudes and unsupportive environments color the lives of lesbians and gay men and contribute to distinct sexual costs in intimate relationships (Maisel & Fingerhut, 2011). In one study, gay men and lesbians indicated that feelings of vulnerability and negative cultural and social attitudes detracted from their sexual relationships (Cohen, Byers, & Walsh, 2008). It will be essential for future research to investigate how living in a climate of prejudice and fear affects sexual minority couples' experiences of and feelings about their sexuality (see Chapter 6, this volume). What is known about sexuality in the relationships of sexual minority couples is primarily limited to the topics of sexual frequency, desire, and satisfaction as well as sexual exclusivity and sexual openness.

## Sexual Frequency, Desire, and Satisfaction

Research comparing the frequency with which heterosexual and sexual minority couples engage in sexual activity has revealed three general trends. First, in the early stages of a relationship, gay couples tend to engage in sex more often than heterosexual and lesbian couples. For example, findings from the American Couples Study revealed that among couples who had been together for 2 years or less, two thirds of gay men reported having sex three or more times per week, compared with fewer than half of heterosexual couples and a third of lesbian couples (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). The relatively higher rates of engaging in sexual activity in gay couples may be influenced by a variety of factors, including men's relatively higher rates of sexual desire and comfort with sexual initiation (see reviews by Bauermeister et al., 2001; Peplau, 2003).

A second trend concerns sexual frequency and desire over the course of a partnership. In heterosexual relationships, sexual frequency and desire tend to be highest in the beginning stages of relationships when partners are just getting to know each other and then decline over time (Klusmann, 2002; Michael, Gagnon, Laumann, & Kolata, 1994). This steady decline in sexual frequency is also present in gay and lesbian relationships (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Christopher & Sprecher, 2000). Similar to heterosexual couples, the most sexually active gay and lesbian couples are those who have been together for 2 years or less (see review by Peplau et al., 2004).

A third pattern—but one that is highly controversial—is that lesbian couples tend to engage in sex less frequently than either heterosexual or gay male couples at different stages of relationships (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Laumann et al., 1994). For example, in the American Couples study (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983), lesbian couples engaged in sex less frequently than heterosexual or gay male couples, whether their relationships lasted less than 2 years or more than 10 years. Several recent studies, however, have not found differences in sexual frequency between women in lesbian versus heterosexual relationships (Matthews et al., 2003; Meana, Rakipi, Weeks, & Lykins, 2006). Because of these inconsistencies, some have suggested that biases in traditional conceptualizations of sexuality that equate sex with penile penetration may be at play in this research (Iasenza, 2002). Other possible explanations for possible lower sexual frequency in lesbian couples include gender socialization that encourages women to inhibit and repress sexual feelings, lower levels of sexual desire, and lower rates of sexual initiation (see review by Peplau et al., 2004; see also Chapter 20, this volume).

In addition to studying the frequency with which gay and lesbian couples engage in sex, researchers have also examined sexual satisfaction. Typically, gay and lesbian couples find their sexual relationships to be very rewarding (see review by Peplau et al., 2004). In general, research has revealed no substantial differences between heterosexual and gay and lesbian relationships in ratings of overall sexual satisfaction (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983;

Kurdek, 1991). Research has shown that lesbians tend to have orgasms more often during sexual interactions than do heterosexual women (Kinsey et al., 1953; Nichols, 2004), a finding that may stem from differences in knowledge and sexual techniques of women's partners or differences in the emotional qualities of sexual experiences. The correlates of sexual satisfaction for gay men and lesbians are similar to those found in heterosexual couples. In general, partners are more sexually satisfied to the extent that they engage in sex more frequently and are more satisfied with their relationships (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Kurdek, 1991). The strength of the link between sexual and relationship satisfaction is similar in magnitude across different kinds of relationships (Holmberg & Blair, 2009). Internalized homophobia, or a gay and lesbian person's internalization of society's negative attitudes toward sexual minority individuals, is one factor that uniquely affects the sexual satisfaction of lesbians and gay men. Research with both gay men (Rosser, Metz, Bockting, & Buroker, 1997) and lesbians (Henderson, Lehavot, & Simoni, 2009) has shown that internalized homophobia detracts from both sexual and relationship satisfaction.

### **Sexual Exclusivity and Sexual Openness**

One of the major differences between lesbian and gay male couples concerns norms and patterns of sexual exclusivity versus sexual openness in relationships (see review by Peplau et al., 2004). In lesbian relationships, monogamy tends to be the norm (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). For example, in a study of lesbians from Vermont who sought civil union status for their relationships, 92% of the women indicated that their relationship was sexually exclusive both in principle and in practice, and only 4% reported having sex with a person other than their partner since their relationship began (Campbell, 2002, as cited in Peplau et al., 2004).

Whereas monogamy tends to be the norm in lesbian relationships, gay male relationships are characterized by higher levels of sexual openness, perhaps a reflection of men's relatively more permissive attitudes toward casual sex (Peterson & Hyde, 2010). In the Campbell (2002, as cited in Peplau et al., 2004) study of Vermont civil unions, 83% of

men characterized their relationships as sexually exclusive, and 61% of the sample reported being sexually exclusive since their relationship began. Other studies have found lower rates of sexual exclusivity among gay men (see review by Peplau et al., 2004). One consistent finding is that although many gay men begin their relationships with expectations of exclusivity, many either explicitly change their intentions or fail to live up to the standards they initially set (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; McWhirter & Mattison, 1984).

Because sexual exclusivity is not the norm in gay male relationships, partners tend to make agreements about the nature of their sexual relationship and their expectations for sexual behaviors that occur outside the relationship. In a large quantitative study of 566 gay couples, 45% had monogamous agreements, 47% had open agreements, and 8% reported discrepant agreements (Hoff, Beougher, Chakravarty, Darbes, & Neilands, 2010). Consistent with previous research (Blasband & Peplau, 1985; LaSala, 2004; Ramirez & Brown, 2010), couples with monogamous and open agreements reported similar levels of relationship satisfaction, suggesting that for gay couples, sexual openness does not diminish the quality of a primary partnership. In an in-depth qualitative follow-up study with 39 of these couples, Hoff and Beougher (2010) investigated the ways in which sexual agreements were negotiated. Negotiation typically involved one of three scenarios: clarifying an existing agreement or expectation, opening a monogamous agreement, or renegotiating an agreement after it had been broken. The men in this study acknowledged that having agreements to allow sex with outside partners had several benefits, including actualizing a nonheteronormative sexual identity and establishing boundaries that ultimately fostered a sense of trust and love between partners.

In sum, the picture painted of sexual minority couples is one of overwhelming similarity to heterosexual couples. Most gay and lesbian couples are quite satisfied with their sexual relationships, and relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction can both enhance and detract from one another. Frequency of sex and sexual desire tend to decrease over the course of time in relationships, a pattern to which no type of couple is immune. Whereas most

lesbian relationships are sexually monogamous, gay male couples are more likely to be sexually open and to have explicit sexual agreements that regulate this openness. Currently, very little is known about sexuality among older lesbian and gay couples (Wierzalis, Barret, Pope, & Rankins, 2006). In addition, bisexual identity has been almost absent from the study of sexuality in the context of relationships. From in-depth interviews with bisexual men and women, researchers know that maintaining monogamous and open relationships that are satisfying and stable is possible (Edser & Shea, 2002; Gustavson, 2009). However, a survey of more than 700 people revealed that bisexual individuals experience unique challenges in finding a dating partner because they are often stigmatized as not desiring committed relationships (Andruff & Reissing, 2010). Future research that explores how bisexuality shapes couples' sexual and relational experiences is needed. In addition, lesbian, gay, and bisexual relationships may be altered as structural changes such as legal recognition continue to occur. Finally, as researchers explore diverse sexual identities, it is important to consider that sexuality exists alongside race, gender, class, and other identities. For example, M. R. Moore (2012) argued that despite the growing visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender sexualities, the majority of the research has been conducted with White, middle-class participants. Greater knowledge of how various identities intersect can help researchers better understand the diversity of sexual experiences. Future research is needed with more diverse samples as well as to investigate the link between sexual experiences and specific cultural norms, values, and attitudes.

### SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS IN ADOLESCENCE AND EMERGING ADULTHOOD

Forming a healthy sexual identity is a key developmental task of adolescence (see review by Tolman & McClelland, 2011; see also Chapter 15, this volume). Research on adolescent sexuality is commonly organized around diminishing risks and negative outcomes (Ehrhardt, 1996), and historically very little has been known about positive



dimensions of adolescents' sexual experiences, particularly those of adolescent girls. Investigations of adolescent sexuality have focused far more on tabulating the number and timing of youths' sexual behaviors than on understanding how sexuality develops in a relationship context (see review by Diamond & Savin-Williams, 2009). In this section, we consider recent research on adolescents' first sexual experiences, the varieties of sexual expression, and the pursuit of sexuality in alternative relationship contexts.

### First Sexual Experiences

An individual's first sexual encounter symbolizes an important milestone or rite of passage in North America (e.g., O'Sullivan, Cheng, Harris, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007), yet most conceptualizations of first sexual experiences are quite negative. First sexual experiences are often referred to as *loss of virginity* and explored in reference to negative consequences such as risk and feelings of guilt (see reviews by Irvine, 2002; Levine, 2003). Initial sexual experiences lay an important foundation for sexual and relationship development, so it is especially important to highlight the positive aspects of these experiences. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of adolescents find their first sexual experience to be satisfying. For example, a study of more than 11,625 teens in England and Scotland showed that nearly three quarters were highly satisfied with their first sexual experience (Wight et al., 2008). Most adolescents pursue their first sexual experiences in the context of dating relationships (Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2000), although boys are more likely than girls to have their first sexual experiences with acquaintances or with girls whom they are "just dating" (see review by Diamond & Savin-Williams, 2009), a finding that reflects the broader gender difference in the extent to which men and women view relationships as an important motivator and context for sexuality (see review by Peplau, 2003).

Men consistently report more satisfying first sexual experiences than women (e.g., Carpenter, 2002; Wight et al., 2008). Feelings of guilt, shame, and regret about engaging in sexual activity, which are more common among women than men, are likely

at play (Crockett, Bingham, Chopak, & Vicary, 1996; Higgins, Trussell, Moore, & Davidson, 2010). Nevertheless, focusing primarily on gender differences obscures the fact that many girls and women do indeed have pleasurable first sexual experiences, and many boys and men do not (Smiler, Ward, Caruthers, & Merriwether, 2005). A recent Canadian survey found that focusing on the emotional aspects of first intercourse, as opposed to physical satisfaction, reduced the gender discrepancy. Women reported less physical satisfaction than men, but equal levels of emotional satisfaction. Three quarters of both men and women reported having no regrets about first intercourse (Tsui & Nicoladis, 2004). It is important to note, however, that about half of the women reported pain at first intercourse (52%), and few reported having an orgasm (11%).

Some researchers have explored the relational factors that make first sexual experiences satisfying (Higgins et al., 2010; Smiler et al., 2005). For both men and women, relationship commitment and greater planning and intentionality predict having a better first sexual experience (Higgins et al., 2010; Smiler et al., 2005; Wight et al., 2008). The relationship context in which sexual activity occurs is also important. Several studies have shown that adolescents tend to find their first sexual experiences more satisfying when they occur in the context of healthy "steady" relationships (Donald, Lucke, Dunne, & Raphael, 1995; Weinberg, Lottes, & Shaver, 1995), although the relationship context appears to be more influential for women's than for men's sexual satisfaction. In addition, Carpenter (2002) reported that women whose first sexual experience was cunnilingus with another woman were more likely to describe the experience as physically pleasurable than women whose first experience was through sexual intercourse.

### Varieties of Sexual Expression

Although most of the existing research on adolescent sexuality has focused on sexual intercourse, adolescents engage in other physically intimate behaviors such as kissing, intimate touching, and oral sex more often than they have intercourse (Carver, Joyner, & Udry, 2003; Hensel, Fortenberry, & Orr, 2008). In one study, more than 80% of teens had



engaged in noncoital, partnered sexual activities before age 16 (Bauserman & Davis, 1996). Several studies have shown that noncoital affectionate behaviors are positively correlated with relationship satisfaction and commitment (Rostosky, Galliher, Welsh, & Kawaguchi, 2000; Welsh, Haugen, Widman, Darling, & Grello, 2005).

Consistent with the more general focus on diminishing sexual risk taking and promoting safer sexual behavior among adolescents, much of the research on adolescent sexual behavior has focused on identifying the barriers to as well as the factors that promote consistent contraceptive and condom use (see review by Diamond & Savin-Williams, 2009). Given that condom use involves an interaction between two partners, it is essential to understand the relationship factors that promote or hinder participation in safe sex. Condom use tends to be more common with a new sexual partner and during the early weeks of relationships (Ku, Sonenstein, & Pleck, 1993; Manning et al., 2000). Research has shown that rates of condom use among adolescents tend to drop off dramatically, perhaps at less than 1 month of relationship duration (Fortenberry, Tu, Harezlak, Katz, & Orr, 2002). Condom use tends to be less likely in relationships marked by greater emotional intimacy and closeness (Hensel et al., 2008; B. Katz, Fortenberry, Zimet, Blythe, & Orr, 2000), consistent with findings in the literature on young adults (see review by Noar, Zimmerman, & Atwood, 2004).

Research with both adolescents and young adults has shown that different types of reasons for engaging in sex are associated with sexual risk-taking behaviors. For example, research by Cooper et al. (1998) has shown that having sex for enhancement reasons (e.g., to pursue physical pleasure) has been linked to an earlier age of first intercourse, more sexual partners and one-night stands, and a greater risk for acquiring sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies. Engaging in sex for intimacy reasons (e.g., to promote closeness with a partner) has also been associated with more frequent sex as well as less frequent and consistent condom use (Cooper et al., 1998; B. Katz et al., 2000). However, a study of British adolescents suggested that youths who engage in sex in pursuit of intimacy are more

likely to discuss contraceptive use before first intercourse and to actually use it during their first sexual experience (Stone & Ingham, 2002), suggesting that pursuing sex for intimacy goals may enable young people to feel more comfortable discussing sexual topics at the beginning of their relationships.

Moving beyond a focus on sexual risk, some researchers have investigated links between sexual intercourse and the quality of adolescent romantic bonds. Sexual intercourse has complex links to romantic relationship quality (Fortenberry, Temkit, & Tu, 2005) and depends on such factors as the timing of intercourse and the relationship context. For example, in early adolescence engaging in sexual intercourse has been associated with being involved in poorer quality relationships characterized by lower relationship satisfaction and commitment (Welsh et al., 2005). However, engaging in sexual intercourse in a romantic relationship context later in adolescence has been associated with greater satisfaction and commitment. In early adolescence, sexual behavior may be more commonly motivated by desires to avoid losing the relationship or difficulties communicating about sexual behavior (O'Sullivan & Meyer-Bahlberg, 2003; Widman, Welsh, McNulty, & Little, 2006). As romantic relationships become more intimate, sexual behaviors may be one way in which partners express their growing commitment (Rostosky et al., 2000). In addition to age, sexual motivation has been shown to influence sexual experiences in adolescence. In a sample of girls ages 16 to 19, those who engaged in sex out of feelings of physical attraction or love were more likely than girls with lower approach goals to report that their most recent sexual experience was good, that they liked how their body felt, and that the experience made them feel closer to their partner (Impett & Tolman, 2006).

### Alternative Sexual Relationships

Although the majority of adolescents and emerging adults have their first sexual experiences within the context of romantic relationships, there has been growing concern over young people engaging in alternative sexual arrangements that deviate from the conventional couple model of exclusive romantic involvement (Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006;

Grello, Welsh, Harper, & Dickson, 2003; Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005; Manning et al., 2000; Paul & Hayes, 2002). Casual sexual relationships are no longer solely defined as a one-time sexual encounter; instead, casual sexual experiences can range from a one-time hook-up to an ongoing sexual relationship with a friend. In a focus group study, young people identified a variety of casual sex relationships, including one-night stands, one-time sexual encounters with a stranger or an acquaintance, friends-with-benefits (FWB) relationships, and the addition of sex to an existing friendship without a romantic commitment (Wentland & Reissing, 2011). In a nationally representative sample of sexually experienced adolescents ages 12 to 21, 70% to 85% reported engaging in intercourse with a casual sex partner in the previous year (Grello et al., 2006), most frequently with a friend (see also Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2006). In addition, FWB relationships have become common occurrences among college and university students, with 33% to 60% of undergraduate research participants reporting at least one experience of a FWB relationship (Owen & Fincham, 2011).

Although empirical work has suggested that adolescents whose first sexual experience took place in a casual rather than a romantic relationship are more likely to report depressive symptoms and delinquent behaviors (Grello et al., 2003; Monahan & Lee, 2008), these adolescents tend to report these problems both before and after the sexual experience, suggesting that casual sex is a correlate rather than a cause of adjustment problems. The associations between casual sex and poor adjustment tend to be stronger for women than for men (Grello et al., 2003, 2006), in part reflecting the influence of a double standard that stigmatizes women for engaging in casual sex (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Milhausen & Herold, 2001). Studies focusing specifically on young women have found that alternative relationships are frequently associated with shame, disappointment, regret, and sometimes sexual coercion (Caruthers, 2006; Hughes et al., 2005; Paul & Hayes, 2002). It is also important to point out that sex in the context of casual relationships has the potential to be as empowering as it might be damaging. Alternative sexual relationships may allow

women in particular to break free of gender-stereotypical relationship roles. In terms of FWB relationships specifically, research has not supported the assertion that these relationships are emotionally damaging for young people (Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009), and in fact Giordano, Manning, and Longmore (2006) suggested that these relationships may allow teens to seek sexual pleasure outside the confines of conventional relationships marked by power differentials between partners. In an in-depth qualitative study, Caruthers (2006) found that young adult women with one or two casual hook-ups did not have lower psychological or sexual well-being than did women who pursued sex within conventional dating relationships, and those young women who had periodic hook-ups were characterized by high sexual assertiveness and high sexual self-esteem.

In general, the majority of both men and women report more positive feelings about their FWB relationships such as happiness, excitement, and desirability than they do negative feelings such as disappointment, confusion, or emptiness, with men being more likely than women to report positive outcomes (Owen & Fincham, 2011). University students have indicated that the main advantage of a FWB relationship is access to sex and companionship with a known and trusted friend without the commitment of a romantic relationship; however, there were also possible downsides, such as ruining the friendship or risking emotional pain if one person develops unreciprocated romantic feelings (Bisson & Levine, 2009; Weaver, MacKeigan, & MacDonald, 2011). Direct, honest communication about the nature of the relationship is thought to be one way to buffer against the negative consequences (Weaver et al., 2011), and those who worry about losing the friendship or are hoping for a committed relationship are more likely to experience negative emotions (Owen & Fincham, 2011). Nevertheless, FWB relationships have sexual health implications. Because of the established friendship, FWB relationships typically involve lower rates of condom use than other casual sex relationships, and individuals involved in FWB relationships may have additional sexual partners that are not always disclosed (VanderDrift, Lehmillier, & Kelly, 2012).

In future research, it will be important to understand the factors that account for the diversity of outcomes of pursuing different types of sexual relationships so that positive sexual development in adolescence and emerging adulthood can best be promoted. In addition, research that explores more nuanced motivations for pursuing ongoing casual sex relationships and that uses longitudinal and daily diary methods to understand how FWB relationships are managed and negotiated over time is warranted. Research on FWB relationships has also tended to rely on hypothetical scenarios or retrospective reports. Using daily experience and longitudinal methods, researchers can assess an individual's initial hopes, concerns, and expectations for the relationship, as well as aspects of his or her personality, and then track the development of sexual relationships over time. Such research could provide valuable information about who is most likely to experience positive or negative consequences of involvement in FWB relationships. Although Bisson and Levine (2009) suggested that a minority (10%) of FWB relationships develop into romantic relationships, it would be interesting to explore how the FWB arrangement affects a potential romance and the existing friendship between partners. Finally, although an extensive body of research has explored the influence of social class and race/ethnicity on sexual risk-taking behaviors in adolescence (e.g., Blum et al., 2000; Santelli, Lowry, Brener, & Robin, 2000), very little work has examined how these factors shape the development of different types of sexual relationships in adolescence, an important direction for future work.

## SEXUALITY IN MIDDLE AND OLDER ADULTHOOD

Sexuality is an important component of romantic relationships throughout the life course (see Chapters 13 and 17, this volume). Although middle adulthood (typically defined as ages 45–59) and older adulthood (age 60 and older) have been associated with declines in sexual frequency, especially for women, these studies have often failed to discriminate between partnered and nonpartnered individuals (Araujo, Mohr, & McKinlay, 2004). Driven in

part by the growing use of pharmaceuticals for male sexual dysfunction, much of the research on sexuality and aging reflects biological and medical perspectives that suggest that physical transformations, hormonal changes, and chronic illnesses reduce sexual activity and interest with age (Bacon et al., 2003; Corona et al., 2010; Lindau et al., 2007). The protective function of a positive partnership and reports of enhanced sexual experience in later-life relationships have largely been absent from the literature. In this section, we discuss sexual activity, sexual desire, and the association between sexual and relationship satisfaction in the context of relationships during middle and older adulthood.

### Sexual Activity

Age-related changes in sexual interest and frequency can, at least partially, be accounted for by a person's relationship status—because the proportion of single individuals increases with age—and by the prevailing belief that real sex is penetrative sex. Women are more likely than men to lose their partners during older adulthood, because women tend to marry at younger ages than do men and have a longer life expectancy (Karraker, DeLamater, & Schwartz, 2011). Because the vast majority of sexual activity takes place within the context of marriage or long-term partnerships, opportunities for sexual activity tend to diminish with age, particularly for women (Gott & Hinchliff, 2003; Waite, Laumann, Das, & Philip, 2009). Couples in middle and older adulthood also report declines in sexual frequency, but these declines are only weakly predicted by age-related physical changes and the presence of illness (DeLamater & Moorman, 2007). Moreover, in a study of partnered individuals ages 57 to 85, the proportion of individuals who reported engaging in sexual intercourse in the past year declined with age, but the frequency of noncoital sexual activities such as kissing, caressing, and cuddling was not associated with age (Waite et al., 2009). Waite et al. (2009) found that partnered individuals who remained sexually active at older ages had fairly frequent sexual relations. Sexual frequency remained stable throughout the 65- to 75-year-old age range, with a modest decrease at older ages. In the oldest age bracket, 25% of individuals who had been

sexually active in the past year reported engaging in intercourse at least once per week (Waite et al., 2009). This pattern reflects an age-related decrease in the proportion of couples remaining sexually active but does not suggest dramatic age-related declines in sexual frequency for all couples.

Despite these findings, physical functioning is an important factor to consider when studying sexuality and aging. Failure to meet expectations for intercourse leading to orgasm can lead to declines in sexual self-confidence, satisfaction, and, ultimately, avoidance of sexual activity (Kontula & Haavio-Mannila, 2009). The association between one's own health problems and partnered sexual activity is stronger for men than for women (Karraker et al., 2011; Kontula & Haavio-Mannila, 2009). Male health problems are overwhelmingly cited as the reason for sexual inactivity in relationships during older adulthood (Gott & Hinchliff, 2003). Despite recent advances in sexual enhancement drugs such as sildenafil (Viagra), many older adults would rather not trade the synchrony and sensual pleasures of natural aging for a medically aided return to penetrative sex (Potts, Grace, Vares, & Gavey, 2006; Vares, Potts, Gavey, & Grace, 2007). For aging couples fixated on penetrative sex, sexual frequency may decline even as desire is maintained. Consistent with reports that African American women older than age 35 display a strong preference for vaginal intercourse (Quadagno, Sly, Harrison, Eberstein, & Soler, 1998), Huang et al. (2009) found that African American women between the ages of 45 and 80 are less likely than Caucasian respondents to report weekly sexual activity despite a greater propensity to report at least moderate sexual desire. Couples who are able to move beyond the notion that intercourse is the primary or only mode of sexual expression and whose sex lives incorporate a broader repertoire of sexual behaviors seem better able to maintain or experience heightened sexual satisfaction in older adulthood (Hartmann, Philippsohn, Heiser, & Ruffer-Hesse, 2004; Hinchliff & Gott, 2008; Potts et al., 2006). For these couples, physical satisfaction with the relationship, sexual desire, and positive attitudes about sex are integral to remaining sexually active (DeLamater & Moorman, 2007).

An individual's sexual repertoire in later life is associated with his or her sexual activities and preferences across the life span. Woloski-Wruble, Oliel, Leefsma, and Hochner-Celnikier (2010) observed that current variety of sexual activity was predicted by sexual variety throughout the life course for women older than age 56, highlighting the importance of conducting longitudinal research on sexuality. These findings raise questions about the cross-sectional approach typical of aging research. If sexual activity is consistent across the life span, lower sexual activity in older age brackets may stem from cohort effects, rather than being a function of aging in and of itself. An important direction for future work will be to survey individuals who reached sexual maturity during or after the sexual revolution. Longitudinal data from this generation will be better poised to depict the sexual changes associated with aging than the cross-sectional data that are currently available.

### Sexual Desire

Although research has indicated that the frequency of sexual activity often declines with age, feelings of sexual desire may be more likely to remain high. In a nationally representative U.S. study of partnered individuals in middle and older adulthood, no association was found between age and problems with sexual interest (Waite et al., 2009). Umidi, Pini, Ferrett, Vergani, and Annoni (2007) examined the impact of both aging and relationship context on sexual desire in single and married residents of Milan older than age 65. Taken together, levels of desire for sexual contact with a partner in this population were high, and gender discrepancies disappeared once singles were removed from the sample, with sexual desire reported by 91% and 89% of married men and women, respectively. In addition, ratings of the importance that people placed on affectivity and sexuality predicted levels of sexual desire. Similarly, Papaharitou et al. (2008) found that the majority of older adults in their sample who had married out of love and were still in love with their partners reported feeling sexual desire, flirting with their partner, and having regular sexual intercourse. For women, sexual desire becomes increasingly responsive to relationship factors with age.

In a sample of women ages 24 to 60, sexual desire, intimacy, and excitement declined with age and relationship duration, but mid-life and postmenopausal women exhibited increased synchrony between relationship satisfaction and sexual desire, arousal, and satisfaction (Birnbaum, Cohen, & Wertheimer, 2007). Feelings about intimacy in the relationship and behaviors such as eye contact, kissing, and caressing may become more important to sexual desire with age.

### Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction

As in relationships at other stages of the life course, sexual and relationship satisfaction are associated in middle and older adulthood (DeLamater, Hyde, & Fong, 2008; Penhollow, Young, & Denny, 2009). Studies that have reported declining sexuality with age have often not distinguished between partner-specific and global measures of sexual satisfaction, which have been shown to have distinct correlates (Dundon & Rellini, 2010). Although factors such as psychological well-being and menopausal symptoms are linked to global sexual satisfaction, other factors such as relationship quality and emotional closeness to a partner are associated with partner-specific sexual satisfaction. Joint decision making on sexual matters may also contribute to sexual satisfaction for aging couples. In line with reports that Hispanic women older than age 35 are more likely than African American and Caucasian respondents to jointly decide on the timing and type of sex (Quadagno et al., 1998), Huang et al. (2009) found that Hispanic women between the ages of 45 and 80 enjoy greater sexual satisfaction than Caucasian respondents. In contrast to the idea that relational factors are more important to women's sexuality than to men's, partnered men in middle and late adulthood exhibit greater concordance between their relationship and sexual satisfaction than partnered women in the same age group (Heiman et al., 2011; Penhollow et al., 2009). In the same way, the proportion of partnered men reporting that they would not have sex without love increases in older age brackets while remaining stable for women (Waite et al., 2009). Finally, the importance of having a loving relationship with one's current partner is more closely tied to men's sexual satisfaction than to

women's in the 40- to 59-year-old age range (Carpenter et al., 2009).

The shifting dynamics of sexual and relationship factors as couples age also provide the potential for improvements in sexuality in later life. Hartmann et al. (2004) examined the relation between age and sexuality for women across the life span and observed a higher correspondence between desired and actual frequencies of sexual activity for women older than age 45 than for younger women. In a study of more than 1,000 couples in the United States, Japan, Brazil, Germany, and Spain, Heiman et al. (2011) found that men's relationship happiness increased with relationship duration, and men in the 55- to 59-year-old age range were more likely to report experiencing heightened physical and emotional satisfaction with their sexual relationships than their younger counterparts. Similarly, men who reported more frequent kissing, hugging, touching, and caressing, as well as those who placed a premium on partner orgasm, expressed greater relationship happiness. For women, relationship duration was more closely tied to sexual satisfaction than to relationship satisfaction. Women in longer term relationships (i.e., those lasting 25–50 years) reported experiencing greater sexual satisfaction than men in long-term relationships as well as greater sexual satisfaction than women in relationships of 10 years or less (Heiman et al., 2011). Consistent with these findings, Carpenter et al. (2009) found that women ages 40 to 59 preferred longer sexual encounters than same-aged men and exhibited a greater link between bodily aspects of the sexual relationship (such as orgasm regularity, sexual frequency, and duration of the sexual encounter) and sexual satisfaction. Research framing late life as a period with potential for sexual growth and enhancement provides a unique counterpoint to the claim that physical aging detracts from partnered sexual activity.

In sum, although research on sexuality and relationship factors in middle and older adulthood has been limited, the emerging picture of the aging couple is not one of certain asexuality. Instead, this research has highlighted the protective effects of being involved in a positive, healthy partnership during a life stage when erotic and intimate aspects

of relationship functioning become more deeply intertwined. Age-dependent biological changes that take place within the context of a close relationship and that are accompanied by an inclusive shift in sexual meaning-making represent opportunities for sexual growth and discovery. As survey data from older adults who were socialized during or after the “swinging ’60s” become available, empirical evidence for sexual expansion during this life stage may be obtained.

## DARK SIDE OF SEXUALITY

Romantic relationships can include sexual experiences that are positive, emotionally rewarding, and highly pleasurable at all stages of life, but they can also include negative emotions and risks of emotional and physical pain. In this section, we discuss sexual aggression, extradyadic sex (EDS), and sexual jealousy in the context of ongoing intimate relationships.

### Sexual Aggression

In the same way that intimacy enhances the positive qualities of sex, the relational context may also influence the physical and psychological consequences of unwanted sexual behavior and other forms of sexual aggression (see Chapter 12, this volume). Still considered less serious and given less attention than nonpartnered assault, sexual aggression at the hands of an intimate partner is especially traumatic (Kirkwood & Cecil, 2001; Plichta & Falik, 2001; Temple, Weston, Rodriguez, & Marshall, 2007). It is also more prevalent than is widely believed, with 21% to 30% of undergraduates and 49% of newlyweds reporting sexual coercion in their current relationship (Brousseau et al., 2011; J. Katz & Myhr, 2008; Panuzio & DiLillo, 2010). Among long-term married couples, the prevalence of sexually aggressive behaviors is as high as 50% (Monson, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, & Taft, 2009). In heterosexual relationships, women are more commonly victimized than men (Brousseau et al., 2011), but Waldner-Haugrad and Gratch (1997) found no such gender differences in gay and lesbian relationships, with 52% of all individuals reporting at least one lifetime incident of sexual coercion. Rates are also affected

by racial and ethnic differences, but individuals are often collapsed into White and non-White groups, concealing between-groups variation. Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) partitioned subjects into separate minority groups and found that data showing no significant difference between White and non-White subjects revealed higher rates of intimate partner rape for American Indian/Alaska Native individuals and lower rates for Asian/Pacific Islanders. Other researchers have reported exceptionally high rates of sexual aggression in African American couples. In a study by Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano, and McGrath (2007), Black couples reported higher rates of both male- and female-perpetrated sexual aggression than White and Hispanic couples. Although Ramisetty-Mikler et al. speculated that greater bidirectional violence among Black couples may be an artifact of Black women’s lower tolerance for partner violence because of their historical role as breadwinners and resultant willingness to defend themselves, it is difficult to ascertain whether cultural differences, willingness to report, or actual victimization are the cause of racial differences in sexual aggression.

Making broad interpretations of the existing data and comparing findings across studies is difficult because of inconsistencies in the ways in which sexual aggression is operationalized and measured. For instance, lower prevalence rates are found when aggression is narrowly conceptualized as the use of physical force (Russell, 1990). Verbal coercion has been neglected by sexual aggression researchers, but exerting social or emotional pressure on one’s partner to obtain sex is just as reflective of wider relational problems as the use of physical force (J. Katz & Myhr, 2008). Moreover, people report lower rates of sexual victimization when polled about their current relationship than when they are asked about past relationships (Brousseau et al., 2011), and higher rates of marital rape are obtained when semi-structured interviews rather than standard survey methods are used (Russell, 1990), suggesting that the types of methods that researchers use influence comfort with disclosing sensitive information about sexual experiences (see Chapter 4, this volume).

Sexual aggression within intimate relationships leads to greater and unique physical and psychological damage, compared with when the same acts are

perpetrated by a stranger or acquaintance. First, revictimization is a hallmark of intimate partner sexual aggression. Compared with women raped by a stranger, victims of marital rape suffer greater proximity to the abuser and are more likely to sustain multiple sexual assaults (Mahoney, 1999). Second, the overlap between sexual, physical, and psychological aggression is greater when an intimate partner is the offender. For instance, people who suffer a combination of physical and sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner tend to experience more unwanted sexual activity, more psychological aggression, and more severe partner abuse than victims of physical or sexual violence alone (J. Katz, Moore, & May, 2008). Finally, given the ties between revictimization, covictimization, and sexual aggression within intimate relationships, the psychological harm incurred from intimate partner aggression is especially severe. Across studies, women victimized by a partner are more likely to be diagnosed with depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder than victims of nonintimate sexual aggression (Plichta & Falik, 2001; Temple et al., 2007).

The physical and psychological injuries associated with intimate partner sexual aggression have prompted relationship researchers to clarify the factors that place couples at risk for this behavior. J. Katz and Myhr (2008) identified three important correlates of sexual aggression in undergraduate dating relationships, including emotional abuse, monitoring behaviors, and general psychological aggression. Moreover, destructive verbal conflict patterns such as negative conflict engagement, withdrawal during conflict, and infrequent positive problem solving were associated with increased sexual aggression. Among married couples, correlates of unwanted sexual activity include the victim's belief that sex is a duty as well as female sexual dysfunction variables such as vaginal dryness, sexual pain, low arousal, and inorgasmia (Parish, Luo, Laumann, Kew, & Yu, 2007). In addition, relationship characteristics such as physical violence, inequity, an absence of daily intimacy and foreplay, and insensitivity to female sexual needs are associated with marital sexual aggression. In intimate relationships in which the man perceives himself to be of equal or

greater desirability than his partner, men's perceptions of a relational threat, such as their partner's sexual infidelity, predict greater rates of sexual coercion. Finally, DeMaris (1997) examined whether the elevated sexual activity that is typical of violent marriages can be attributed to mutual hypersexuality or sexual extortion. Only husbands' violence predicted more frequent marital sex, lending support to the sexual extortion hypothesis.

The effects of intimate sexual aggression on sexual and relationship functioning are far reaching. Verbal sexual coercion in dating relationships is associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and sexual desire (J. Katz & Myhr, 2008). In a longitudinal study of newlywed couples, Panuzio and DiLillo (2010) found that higher rates of sexual coercion were associated with lower marital satisfaction 1 and 2 years later, regardless of the aggressor's gender. Consistent with these findings, victims of marital rape report more difficulties reaching orgasm and greater fear of sexuality than victims of marital violence alone (Shields, Resick, & Hanneke, 1990). In addition to sexual functioning problems, 88% of women who have been stalked and forced to have sex by an intimate partner report diminished sexual enjoyment, compared with 48% of women who have experienced a stalking-only relationship (Logan, Cole, & Shannon, 2007).

Just as many aspects of intimate relationships change with increased relationship duration and commitment, so too does sexual aggression. J. Katz and Myhr (2008) found that with increasing relationship duration, there is a shift from pestering dating partners for sex to verbal sexual coercion. In the same way, after sexual access has been established in a relationship, many men transition from using positive pressure tactics such as professing affection, paying their partner compliments, and promising to move the relationship forward to negative tactics such as threatening to leave the relationship and evoking feelings of guilt and obligation (Livingston, Buddie, Testa, & VanZile-Tamsen, 2004). Basile (2002) determined that although 10% of women report experiencing intimate partner rape in their lifetime, this number jumps to 13% when only married respondents are considered. Moreover, prevalence rates for all types of sexual coercion are greater



for women victimized by a spouse than by another type of intimate partner. These findings suggest that, if anything, increased commitment and relationship duration amplify the constraints on leaving and promote rather than buffer partners from perpetrating or being the victims of sexual aggression.

In sum, victimization by an intimate partner constitutes an extraordinary breach of trust and security. This aspect of intimate partner sexual aggression, coupled with greater opportunities for revictimization and covictimization, amplifies the sexual, physical, and psychological symptoms of sexual coercion. Future studies should seek to dispel myths that intimate partner sexual aggression is not real rape and to identify how sexual coercion changes over the course of ongoing intimate relationships.

### Extradyadic Sex

The central role of sex in ongoing relationships is underscored by the impact of nonconsensual extradyadic sex (EDS) or infidelity on intimate relationships. A major source of relationship distress and dissolution, EDS is the most common antecedent of divorce and is frequently accompanied by depression and decrements in general psychological health for betrayed partners (Amato & Previti, 2003; Cano & O'Leary, 2000). Despite expectations for sexual exclusivity in more than 94% of ongoing relationships, 1% to 17% of cohabiting and married individuals report at least one lifetime incident of EDS, with prevalence rates ranging from 2% to 5% in any given year (Træen & Martinussen, 2008; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Whisman, Gordon, & Chatav, 2007; Whisman & Snyder, 2007). In undergraduate populations, EDS rates range from 19% to 21%, with as many as 51% of individuals reporting infidelity when the definition is expanded to encompass both sexual and emotional involvement with an extrapair partner (Brand, Markey, Mills, & Hodges, 2007; Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011). The disconnect between expectations for sexual exclusivity and the reality of EDS has been the focus of much research, but findings have varied across studies, and conclusions have been hampered by inconsistent and ambiguous definitions of extradyadic involvement. In the same way, the air of secrecy, guilt, and shame surrounding EDS makes it imperative to protect par-

ticipants' anonymity. As a result, retrospective, cross-sectional designs that conflate the causes and consequences of EDS have dominated the literature, and longitudinal studies that provide detailed data on EDS but ensure anonymity are scarce.

Research undertaken to identify the factors that compel certain individuals to violate couple scripts for sexual exclusivity has focused on uncovering the demographic and personal characteristics that predispose individuals to engage in EDS as well as more proximal factors that provide individuals with direct incentives and opportunities for engaging in EDS. In terms of demographic and personal factors, research has shown that individuals who are low in religiosity, are more educated, and have higher income are relatively more likely than others to engage in EDS (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001). The influence of other factors such as age and relationship duration on EDS is less straightforward (DeMaris, 2009; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Findings on race and EDS are mixed, with some researchers reporting higher rates of EDS for African Americans than for individuals of other racial and ethnic groups (Treas & Giesen, 2000) and others reporting no between-race differences (Choi, Catania, & Dolcini, 1994). Wiederman's (1997) data suggested that the incidence of EDS in the past year is highest for African Americans, but that lifetime EDS does not differ between racial groups. One relatively consistent finding is that men have a greater desire to engage in EDS and hold more permissive attitudes toward EDS than women. Consistent with these gender differences in attitudes, some research has pointed to higher prevalence rates of EDS for men than for women (Atkins et al., 2001). Other studies have suggested that gender differences in the prevalence of EDS are shrinking or nonexistent, especially in younger cohorts (Brand et al., 2007; Mark et al., 2011). To address these inconsistencies, Treas and Giesen (2000) found that sex differences in EDS among married and cohabiting individuals were substantially reduced after accounting for sexual interest, sexual values, relationship satisfaction, and network ties to one's partner. These findings indicate that sex differences in EDS may be the product of attitudinal and relationship variables rather than reflecting the influence of gender per se.

In addition to demographic and personal characteristics, specific interpersonal circumstances seem to make EDS more likely. Low marital quality and female sexual unavailability during pregnancy represent proximal incentives for interested individuals to engage in EDS (DeMaris, 2009; Whisman et al., 2007). In addition, high-quality alternatives and time away from one's primary partner serve as proximal opportunities for EDS (Atkins et al., 2005; DeWall et al., 2011). DeMaris (2009) investigated the association between EDS and proximal and distal factors in a 20-year longitudinal study of married and cohabiting individuals. Although racial minority status, low religiosity, and marital duration predicted engaging in EDS, marital quality variables were uniquely associated with EDS and fully mediated the race-EDS link. Others have speculated that racial differences in EDS arise from ethnic differences in the gender ratio, with the shortage of single men in the Black community affording married men more opportunities to engage in EDS with single Black women (Wiederman, 1997). The intervening role of proximal variables in the link between intrapersonal characteristics and EDS was further clarified in three studies. In a study by Whisman et al. (2007), marital dissatisfaction accounted for the effects of low self-esteem on EDS. In a study by DeWall et al. (2011), avoidantly attached individuals were more likely to engage in EDS because of lower levels of commitment to their romantic relationships. Finally, in a study by DeMaris (2009), whereas EDS was not associated with relationship satisfaction, it was associated with spousal violence, proneness to divorce, marital instability, and time spent together, suggesting that specific relationship factors may contribute to EDS more than does the general quality of intimate relationships.

Research has also examined people's self-reported motivations for engaging in EDS. Individuals tend to emphasize relationship dissatisfaction as a major reason for their extradyadic involvement. In a study of undergraduates by Brand et al. (2007), boredom and dissatisfaction with a primary relationship, as well as being made to feel attractive by an extrapair individual, were among the most frequently reported reasons for pursuing EDS. Dissatisfaction with the primary relationship is cited more

often by women than by men, suggesting that although prevalence rates do not differ by gender, motivations for engaging in EDS do (Blow & Hartnett, 2005; Brand et al., 2007). Among married and cohabiting men, EDS has been linked to the tendency to engage in regretful sexual behavior during negative emotional states, a high propensity for sexual excitation, high sexual inhibition stemming from fears of performance failure, and low regard for the consequences of EDS (Mark et al., 2011). The same sexual inhibition factors predict female EDS, along with low relationship happiness and low sexual compatibility (Mark et al., 2011). These findings point to the relatively larger role of relationship variables and mate-switching intentions in female than in male EDS.

Differences in EDS motivations are implicated in the outcome-related discrepancies of male- versus female-perpetrated EDS. Women who engage in EDS are more likely to reveal their extrapair involvement to their primary partner, initiate a break-up after EDS, and begin seeing their extrapair partner after relationship termination (Brand et al., 2007). Researchers have suggested that this gender difference signals a link between EDS attributions, forgiveness, and relationship dissolution. In a study by Hall and Fincham (2006), forgiveness after EDS predicted couple reconciliation, and attributions for EDS that were external, specific, and unstable led to forgiveness. Gender differences in attributions for EDS may detract from partner forgiveness after female EDS (Meston & Buss, 2007). As a result, relationship dissolution may be more likely in the case of female EDS resulting from a woman's possible intentions to switch mates and less forgiveness on the part of male partners. Future research should examine the combined effect of self-reported motivations for EDS and partner forgiveness on relationship dissolution.

Although relationship dissolution is the most common outcome of EDS, some couples persevere in the face of discovery of EDS. Reports of relationship improvement are rare, but enhanced marital closeness, increased assertiveness and self-care, a greater appreciation for good marital communication, and a higher value placed on family have been observed after infidelity (Charny & Parnass, 1995;

Olson, Russell, Higgins-Kessler, & Miller, 2002). By the same token, although couples attending therapy for infidelity problems report less time together, less enjoyment of time spent together, and more dishonesty, narcissism, and relationship instability at the outset of therapy, their relationship change is comparable to or faster than that of couples attending therapy for other reasons (Atkins, Eldridge, Baucom, & Christensen, 2005; Atkins, Yi, Baucom, & Andrew, 2005).

Research on long-term EDS is scarce, but the marital dynamic in cultures that tacitly condone male EDS provides insight into the effects of unaddressed infidelity on ongoing relationships. K. Moore (2010) gathered qualitative data on couple dynamics in Japanese marriages. Individuals older than age 60 reported sexless, siblinglike relationships, and individuals often attributed current marital celibacy to husband infidelity beginning early on in the relationship. Typically, this infidelity was not addressed. What followed was a breakdown in couple communication, growing distance between partners, female sexual unavailability, and the eventual loss of sexual ways of relating within the couple. These findings are consistent with reports that women react to partner EDS by distancing themselves from the marital relationship, whereas men more often respond with violence (Jankowiak, Nell, & Buckmaster, 2002).

### Sexual Jealousy

Feelings of jealousy are one response to a perceived relationship threat, such as a partner's extradyadic behavior. Although jealousy can be seen as a sign of love and intent to preserve an important relationship (Bringle & Buunk, 1991), it is more often described as a negative emotion, one that has detrimental consequences for romantic relationships. In general, jealousy is associated with relational dissatisfaction and instability (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995) as well as aggression toward a romantic partner (DeSteno, Valdesolo, & Bartlett, 2006).

An abundance of evidence has suggested that men are more likely than women to experience jealousy in response to sexual infidelity and that women are more likely than men to experience jealousy in

response to emotional infidelity, findings that have been attributed to men's greater concern about parental certainty and women's greater concern about loss of resources (e.g., Buss, 2000; Buss, Larsen, Westen, & Semmelroth, 1992). One common criticism of these findings is that they are based on hypothetical forced-choice scenarios (DeSteno, 2010). When they are not forced to choose between emotional and sexual infidelity, men and women alike tend to rate both types of infidelity as jealousy provoking (DeSteno, Bartlett, Braverman, & Salovey, 2002; Lishner, Nguyen, Stocks, & Zillmer, 2008), suggesting that these two types of infidelity overlap and that both can be distressing for men and women. Research has also focused on gender differences in response to actual infidelity in romantic relationships. In one study (Kuhle, 2011), researchers analyzed 51 episodes of *Cheaters*, a reality show that captures actual infidelity experiences, and found that men were more likely than women to inquire about the sexual nature of the infidelity, such as asking their partners, "Did you have sex?" whereas women were more likely than men to inquire about the emotional nature of the infidelity, such as asking their partners, "Are you in love?"

A great degree of variability exists in the extent to which individuals experience jealousy in relationships and worry about relational threats (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). Miller and Maner (2009) found that gender differences in responses to sexual versus emotional infidelity were substantially more pronounced in individuals who were higher in chronic jealousy. Several individual differences also predict the experience of jealousy. Both men and women who have higher sex drives experience more sexual jealousy, and this association is stronger for men than for women (Burchell & Ward, 2011). Previous experience with sexual infidelity and higher levels of avoidant attachment predict increased sexual jealousy for men (Burchell & Ward, 2011). In general, avoidantly attached people are more distressed by sexual infidelities because of their discomfort with emotional closeness (Levy, Kelly, & Jack, 2006). In contrast, men and women who are higher in anxious attachment report higher levels of emotional jealousy (Knobloch, Solomon, & Cruz, 2001). In two studies of heterosexual couples, both self and

partner personality characteristics were associated with jealousy. Highly neurotic and less agreeable individuals reported experiencing more jealousy, and those who were high in conscientiousness and who had conscientious partners worried less about a partner's infidelity but reacted more negatively to a partner's betrayal when it did occur (Dijkstra & Barelds, 2008).

In a study of individuals in dating and marital relationships, expression of jealousy was a stronger predictor of relationship satisfaction than jealousy experience. Partners who were able to express their feelings without placing blame on the partner were more satisfied than those who used accusatory, argumentative statements or who actively distanced from a partner (Andersen et al., 1995). Behavioral responses to jealousy can involve direct confrontations or more indirect behaviors such as ignoring one's partner (Guerrero, Andersen, Jorgensen, & Spitzberg, 1995) and engaging in partner surveillance or "snooping" behaviors. Guerrero and Afifi (1999) found that more intense and frequent experiences of jealousy predicted more partner surveillance (e.g., snooping or keeping close tabs on a partner). Among newlywed couples, a person was most likely to snoop if their partner was reluctant to share information with them and discuss their thoughts and feelings, and this was especially true for people who had low trust in their partners (Vinkers, Finkenauer, & Hawk, 2011). Because of the importance of jealousy responses for relationship quality, additional dyadic research on how couples manage jealousy in their relationships and qualitative research on how couples experience jealousy is warranted.

## CONCLUSION

It is an exciting time for research on the psychology of sexuality and relationships, and much progress in these two fields of inquiry has been made. However, despite the growth of research in each of these topic areas as well as their wide appeal, we suggest that not enough of this work focuses on topics and questions truly at the intersection of the study of sexuality and relationships. With great eagerness, we look forward to future research on sexuality that

considers the various contexts in which relationships are pursued and, similarly, research on close relationships that considers the central role of sexuality in the development and maintenance of intimate bonds.

A couple of recent societal trends are changing the ways in which sexuality is pursued and negotiated across relational contexts and, as such, lead to several critical directions for future research. First, the use of Internet technology and social media has outpaced the research on the influence of new media on relationships and sexuality (see Volume 2, Chapter 3, this handbook). Greater connectivity presents new opportunities such as connecting couples across geographical distance and providing new forums for sexual expression. A recent study documented that individuals who reported engaging in cybersex were more likely to engage in partnered online sexual activities than in online sexual activities without a partner (Shaughnessy, Byers, & Thornton, 2011), suggesting that Internet technology may create new opportunities for sexual exploration in relationships. In addition, online social networks can connect sexual minority youths and those living in rural areas and may provide an additional forum for coming out, social support, and connection (Gray, 2009; see Chapter 19, this volume). New media may also present new challenges for relationships, such as greater availability of alternate partners and access to relationship-relevant information (Muisse, Christofides, & Desmarais, 2009), which may have implications for relationship satisfaction and stability. An important future direction will be to learn about the ways in which couples use the Internet and social media to benefit their sexual relationships and how they manage the new challenges that technology may bring.

A second societal change that has important implications for research on the intersection of sexuality and relationships concerns the growing racial and ethnic diversity in North American society. Although relationships in both adolescence and adulthood tend to be racially homogamous (Blackwell & Lichter, 2004), younger adults are most likely to participate in relationships that cross racial lines (Joyner & Kao, 2005), suggesting that the prevalence of multiracial and multiethnic couples

will increase with time. Interracial sexual relationships that are formed in adolescence and young adulthood may influence the subsequent choice of partners later in life, as research has shown that women whose first sexual experience was with a partner of a different race are significantly more likely to be in interracial relationships as adults (R. B. King & Bratter, 2007). Moreover, relationship and sexual practices undoubtedly vary in important ways among racial and ethnic minorities and across the social class spectrum, and these diverse populations and patterns of intimacy present unique opportunities for new research that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Finally, the nature and process of forming intimate relationships have changed in important ways over the past several decades (see review by Sassler, 2010). The delay of marriage, relationship dissolution, and high divorce rates have all extended the amount of time that adults spend outside of formal marriage. In addition, the legal recognition of same-sex marriages and unions, as well as increased acceptance and visibility of alternative types of relationships such as polyamorous relationships (Barker & Langdridge, 2010), has increased the relationship options available. As a result, individuals have a variety of new types of intimate and sexual arrangements from which to choose, including short-term, casual sexual relationships; dating as a way to find long-term partners; and cohabitation as either a precursor to or a substitute for formal marriage. As the options for relational and sexual intimacy continue to expand, so too must our approaches to research on what we argue is one of the most dynamic and growing areas of research in psychology today.

## References

- Acevedo, B. P., & Aron, A. (2009). Does a long-term relationship kill romantic love? *Review of General Psychology*, *13*, 59–65. doi:10.1037/a0014226
- Alperstein, L., Ellison, C., Fishman, J. R., Hall, M., Handwerker, L., Hartley, H., . . . Tiefer, L. (2001). A new view of women's sexual problems. *Women and Therapy*, *24*, 1–8.
- Amato, P., & Previti, D. (2003). People's reasons for divorcing: Gender, social class, the life course, and adjustment. *Journal of Family Issues*, *24*, 602–626. doi:10.1177/0192513X03024005002
- Andersen, P. A., Eloy, S. V., Guerrero, L. K., & Spitzberg, B. H. (1995). Romantic jealousy and relational satisfaction: A look at the impact of jealousy experience and expression. *Communication Reports*, *8*, 77–85. doi:10.1080/08934219509367613
- Andruff, H., & Reissing, E. (2010). *What women think of relationships with bisexual men: An analysis of female attitudes toward bisexual male partners*. Paper presented at the 36th annual meeting of the Canadian Sex Research Forum, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Apt, C., Hurlbert, D. F., Pierce, A. P., & White, L. C. (1996). Relationship satisfaction, sexual characteristics, and the psychosocial well-being of women. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, *5*, 195–210.
- Araujo, A. B., Mohr, B. A., & McKinlay, J. B. (2004). Changes in sexual function in middle-aged and older men: Longitudinal data from the Massachusetts Male Aging Study. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, *52*, 1502–1509. doi:10.1111/j.0002-8614.2004.52413.x
- Ard, B. N. (1977). Sex in lasting marriages: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Sex Research*, *13*, 274–285. doi:10.1080/00224497709550985
- Asendorpf, J., Penke, L., & Back, M. (2011). From dating to mating and relating: Predictors of initial and long-term outcomes of speed-dating in a community sample. *European Journal of Personality*, *25*, 16–30. doi:10.1002/per.768
- Atkins, D. C., Baucom, D. H., & Jacobson, N. S. (2001). Understanding infidelity: Correlates in a national random sample. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *15*, 735–749. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.15.4.735
- Atkins, D. C., Eldridge, K. A., Baucom, D. H., & Christensen, A. (2005). Infidelity and behavioral couple therapy: Optimism in the face of betrayal. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *73*, 144–150. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.73.1.144
- Atkins, D. C., Yi, J., Baucom, D. H., & Andrew, C. (2005). Infidelity in couples seeking marital therapy. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *19*, 470–473. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.19.3.470
- Bacon, C. G., Mittleman, M. A., Kawachi, I., Giovannucci, E., Glasser, D. B., & Rimm, E. B. (2003). Sexual function in men older than 50 years of age: Results from the health professionals follow-up study. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *139*, 161–168.
- Bailey, J. M., Gaulin, S., Agyei, Y., & Gladue, B. A. (1994). Effects of gender and sexual orientation on evolutionarily relevant aspects of human mating psychology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *66*, 1081–1093. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.66.6.1081
- Bancroft, J. (1978). The relationships between hormones and sexual behavior in humans. In J. B. Hutchison (Ed.), *Biological determinants of sexual behavior* (pp. 493–519). Chichester, England: Wiley.

- Bancroft, J., Loftus, J. L., & Long, J. S. (2003). Distress about sex: A national survey of women in heterosexual relationships. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 32*, 193–208. doi:10.1023/A:1023420431760
- Barker, M., & Langdridge, D. (2010). Whatever happened to non-monogamies? Critical reflections on recent research and theory. *Sexualities, 13*, 748–772. doi:10.1177/1363460710384645
- Basile, K. C. (2002). Prevalence of wife rape and other intimate partner sexual coercion in a nationally representative sample of women. *Violence and Victims, 17*, 511–524. doi:10.1891/vivi.17.5.511.33717
- Basson, R. (2001). Human sex-response cycles. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy, 27*, 33–43. doi:10.1080/00926230152035831
- Bauermeister, J. A. (2012). Romantic ideation, partner-seeking, and HIV risk among young men who have sex with men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 41*, 431–440.
- Bauermeister, J. A., Ventuneac, A., Pingle, E., & Parsons, J. T. (2012). Spectrums of love: Examining the relationship between romantic motivations and sexual risk among young gay and bisexual men. *AIDS and Behavior, 16*, 1549–1559. doi:10.1007/s10461-011-0123-8
- Baumeister, R. F. (2000). Gender differences in erotic plasticity. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*, 347–374. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.126.3.347
- Baumeister, R. F., & Bratlavsky, E. (1999). Passion, intimacy, and time: Passionate love as a function of change in intimacy. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 3*, 49–67. doi:10.1207/s15327957pspr0301\_3
- Baumeister, R. F., Catanese, K. R., & Voh, K. D. (2001). Is there a gender difference in strength of sex drive? *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 5*, 242–273. doi:10.1207/S15327957PSPR0503\_5
- Bauserman, R., & Davis, C. (1996). Perceptions of early sexual experiences and adult sexual adjustment. *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality, 8*, 37–59. doi:10.1300/J056v08n03\_03
- Beaulieu-Pelletier, G., Philippe, F., LeCours, S., & Couture, S. (2011). The role of attachment avoidance in extradyadic sex. *Attachment and Human Development, 13*, 293–313. doi:10.1080/14616734.2011.562419
- Beck, G. J., Bozman, A. W., & Qualtrough, T. (1991). The experience of sexual desire: Psychological correlates in a college sample. *Journal of Sex Research, 28*, 443–456. doi:10.1080/00224499109551618
- Birnbaum, G., Cohen, O., & Wertheimer, V. (2007). Is it all about intimacy? Age, menopausal status, and women's sexuality. *Personal Relationships, 14*, 167–185. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2006.00147.x
- Birnbaum, G. E. (2007). Beyond the borders of reality: Attachment orientations and sexual fantasies. *Personal Relationships, 14*, 321–342. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2007.00157.x
- Birnbaum, G. E. (2010). Bound to interact: The divergent goals and complex interplay of attachment and sex within romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 27*, 245–252. doi:10.1177/0265407509360902
- Birnbaum, G. E., Mikulincer, M., & Gillath, O. (2011). In and out of a daydream: Attachment orientation, daily couple interactions, and sexual fantasies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 37*, 1398–1410. doi:10.1177/0146167211410986
- Birnbaum, G. E., Reis, H. T., Mikulincer, M., Gillath, O., & Orpaz, A. (2006). When sex is more than just sex: Attachment orientations, sexual experience, and relationship quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*, 929–943. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.91.5.929
- Birnbaum, G. E., Svitelman, N., Bar-Shalom, A., & Porat, O. (2008). The thin line between reality and imagination: Attachment orientations and the effects of relationship threats on sexual fantasies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 34*, 1185–1199. doi:10.1177/0146167208319692
- Birnbaum, G. E., Weisberg, Y. J., & Simpson, J. A. (2011). Desire under attack: Attachment orientations and the effects of relationship threat on sexual motivations. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 28*, 448–468. doi:10.1177/0265407510381932
- Bisson, M. A., & Levine, T. R. (2009). Negotiating a friends with benefits relationship. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 38*, 66–73. doi:10.1007/s10508-007-9211-2
- Blackwell, D. L., & Lichter, D. T. (2004). Homogamy among dating, cohabiting, and married couples. *Sociological Quarterly, 45*, 719–737. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2004.tb02311.x
- Blasband, D., & Peplau, L. A. (1985). Sexual exclusivity versus openness in gay male couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 14*, 395–412. doi:10.1007/BF01542001
- Blow, A. J., & Hartnett, K. (2005). Infidelity in committed relationships I: A methodological review. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 31*, 183–216. doi:10.1111/j.1752-0606.2005.tb01555.x
- Blum, R. W., Beuhring, T., Shew, M. L., Bearinger, L. H., Sieving, R. E., & Resnick, M. D. (2000). The effects of race/ethnicity, income, and family structure on adolescent risk behaviors. *American Journal of Public Health, 90*, 1879–1884. doi:10.2105/AJPH.90.12.1879
- Blumberg, E. S. (2003). The lives and voices of highly sexual women. *Journal of Sex Research, 40*, 146–157. doi:10.1080/00224490309552176
- Blumstein, P., & Schwartz, P. (1983). *American couples*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.



- Bodenmann, G., Ledermann, T., & Bradbury, T. N. (2007). Stress, sex, and satisfaction in marriage. *Personal Relationships, 14*, 551–569. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2007.00171.x
- Bowlby, J. (1979). *The making and breaking of attachment bonds*. London, England: Tavistock.
- Brand, R., Markey, C., Mills, A., & Hodges, S. (2007). Sex differences in self-reported infidelity and its correlates. *Sex Roles, 57*, 101–109. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9221-5
- Brassard, A., Shaver, P. R., & Lussier, Y. (2007). Attachment, sexual experience, and sexual pressure in romantic relationships: A dyadic approach. *Personal Relationships, 14*, 475–493. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2007.00166.x
- Brezsnyak, M., & Whisman, M. A. (2004). Sexual desire and relationship functioning: The effects of marital satisfaction and power. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy, 30*, 199–217. doi:10.1080/00926230490262393
- Bridges, S. K., & Horne, S. G. (2007). Sexual satisfaction and desire discrepancy in same sex women's relationships. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy, 33*, 41–53. doi:10.1080/00926230600998466
- Bringle, R. G., & Buunk, B. P. (1991). Extradyadic relationships and sexual jealousy. In K. McKinney & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Sexuality and close relationships* (pp. 135–153). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Brotto, L. A., Woo, J. S. T., & Ryder, A. G. (2007). Acculturation and sexual function in Canadian East Asian men. *Journal of Sexual Medicine, 4*, 72–82. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2006.00388.x
- Brousseau, M. M., Bergerson, S., Hébert, M., & McDuff, P. (2011). Sexual coercion victimization and perpetration in heterosexual couples: A dyadic investigation. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 40*, 363–372. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9617-0
- Burchell, J. L., & Ward, J. (2011). Sex drive, attachment style, relationship status and previous infidelity as predictors of sex differences in romantic jealousy. *Personality and Individual Differences, 51*, 657–661. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2011.06.002
- Buss, D., Shackelford, T., Kirkpatrick, L., & Larsen, R. (2001). A half-century of mate preferences: The cultural evolution of values. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 63*, 491–503. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00491.x
- Buss, D. M. (2000). *The dangerous passion: Why jealousy is as necessary as love and sex*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Buss, D. M., Larsen, R. J., Westen, D., & Semmelroth, J. (1992). Sex differences in jealousy: Evolution, physiology, and psychology. *Psychological Science, 3*, 251–255. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9280.1992.tb00038.x
- Butzer, B., & Campbell, L. (2008). Adult attachment, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction: A study of married couples. *Personal Relationships, 15*, 141–154. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2007.00189.x
- Byers, E. S. (2005). Relationship satisfaction and sexual satisfaction: A longitudinal study of individuals in long-term relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 42*, 113–118. doi:10.1080/00224490509552264
- Byers, E. S., & Demmons, S. (1999). Sexual satisfaction and sexual self-disclosure within dating relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 36*, 180–189. doi:10.1080/00224499909551983
- Byers, E. S., & Wang, A. (2004). Understanding sexuality in close relationships from the social exchange perspective. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 203–234). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Call, V., Sprecher, S., & Schwartz, P. (1995). The incidence and frequency of marital sex in a national sample. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 57*, 639–652. doi:10.2307/353919
- Cano, A., & O'Leary, K. (2000). Infidelity and separations predict major depressive episodes and symptoms of nonspecific depression and anxiety. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*, 774–781. doi:10.1037/0022-006X.68.5.774
- Carpenter, L. M. (2002). Gender and the meaning and experience of virginity loss in the contemporary United States. *Gender and Society, 16*, 345–365. doi:10.1177/0891243202016003005
- Carpenter, L. M., Nathanson, C. A., & Kim, Y. J. (2009). Physical women, emotional men: Gender and sexual satisfaction in midlife. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 38*, 87–107. doi:10.1007/s10508-007-9215-y
- Caruthers, A. S. (2006). "Hookups" and "friends with benefits": Nonrelational sexual encounters as contexts of women's normative sexual development. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Carvalho, A. A., Brotto, L. A., & Leal, I. (2010). Women's motivations for sex: Exploring the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, fourth edition, text revision criteria for hypoactive sexual desire and female sexual arousal disorders. *Journal of Sexual Medicine, 7*, 1454–1463. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01693.x
- Carver, K., Joyner, K., & Udry, J. R. (2003). National estimates of adolescent romantic relationships. In P. Florsheim (Ed.), *Adolescent romantic relations and sexual behavior: Theory, research, and practical implications* (pp. 23–56). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2006). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2005. *MMWR Surveillance Summary, 55*(SS-5), 1–108. doi:10.1111/j.1746-1561.2006.00127.x
- Charny, I., & Parnass, S. (1995). The impact of extramarital relationships on the continuation of marriages.



- Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 21, 100–115. doi:10.1080/00926239508404389
- Cheung, M. W. L., Wong, P. W. C., Liu, K. Y., Yip, P. S. F., Fan, S. Y., & Lam, T. (2008). A study of sexual satisfaction and frequency among Hong Kong Chinese couples. *Journal of Sex Research*, 45, 129–139. doi:10.1080/00224490801987416
- Chivers, M. L., Rieger, G., Latty, E., & Bailey, J. M. (2005). A sex difference in the specificity of sexual arousal. *Psychological Science*, 15, 736–744. doi:10.1111/j.0956-7976.2004.00750.x
- Choi, K., Catania, J., & Dolcini, M. (1994). Extramarital sex and HIV risk behavior among US adults: Results from the National AIDS Behavioral Survey. *American Journal of Public Health*, 84, 2003–2007. doi:10.2105/AJPH.84.12.2003
- Christopher, F. S., & Sprecher, S. (2000). Sexuality in dating, marriage and other relationships: A decade review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 999–1017. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00999.x
- Clark, R. D., & Hatfield, E. (1989). Gender differences in receptivity to sexual offers. *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality*, 2, 39–45.
- Cohen, J. N., Byers, E. S., & Walsh, L. P. (2008). Factors influencing the sexual relationships of lesbians and gay men. *International Journal of Sexual Health*, 20, 162–176. doi:10.1080/19317610802240105
- Conley, T. D. (2010). Perceived proposer personality characteristics and gender differences in acceptance of casual sex offers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100, 309–329. doi:10.1037/a0022152
- Conley, T. D., Moors, A. C., Matsick, J. L., Zeigler, A., & Valentine, B. A. (2011). Women, men, and the bedroom: Methodological and conceptual insights that narrow, refine, and eliminate gender differences in sexuality. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 20, 296–300. doi:10.1177/0963721411418467
- Conley, T. D., Zeigler, A., & Moors, A. C. (2012). Backlash from the bedroom: Stigma mediates gender differences in acceptance of casual sex offers. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/0361684312467169
- Cooper, M. L., Shapiro, C. M., & Powers, A. M. (1998). Motivations for sex and risky sexual behavior among adolescents and young adults: A functional perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 1528–1558. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.75.6.1528
- Corona, G., Lee, D., Forti, G., O'Connor, D., Maggi, M., O'Neil, T., . . . Wu, F. C.; EMAS Study Group. (2010). Age-related changes in general and sexual health in middle-aged and older men: Results from the European Male Ageing Study (EMAS). *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 7, 1362–1380. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01601.x
- Crawford, M., & Popp, D. (2003). Sexual double standards: A review and methodological critique of two decades of research. *Journal of Sex Research*, 40, 13–26. doi:10.1080/00224490309552163
- Crockett, L. J., Bingham, C. R., Chopak, J. S., & Vicary, J. R. (1996). Timing of first sexual intercourse: The role of social control, social learning, and problem behaviour. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 25, 89–111. doi:10.1007/BF01537382
- Davies, S., Katz, J., & Jackson, J. L. (1999). Sexual desire discrepancies: Effects on sexual and relationship satisfaction in heterosexual dating couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 28, 553–567. doi:10.1023/A:1018721417683
- Davis, D., Shaver, P. R., & Vernon, M. L. (2004). Attachment style and subjective motivations for sex. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1076–1090. doi:10.1177/0146167204264794
- Davis, D., Shaver, P. R., Widaman, K., Vernon, M., Follette, W. C., & Beitz, K. (2003). "I can't get no satisfaction": Insecure attachment, inhibited sexual communication, and sexual dissatisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 13, 465–483. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2006.00130.x
- DeLamater, J., Hyde, J. S., & Fong, M. (2008). Sexual satisfaction in the seventh decade of life. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 34, 439–454. doi:10.1080/00926230802156251
- DeLamater, J., & Moorman, S. (2007). Sexual behavior in later life. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 19, 921–945. doi:10.1177/0898264307308342
- DeMaris, A. (1997). Elevated sexual activity in violent marriages: Hypersexuality or sexual extortion? *Journal of Sex Research*, 34, 361–373. doi:10.1080/00224499709551904
- DeMaris, A. (2009). Distal and proximal influences on the risk of extramarital sex: A prospective study of longer duration marriages. *Journal of Sex Research*, 46, 597–607. doi:10.1080/00224490902915993
- DeSteno, D. (2010). Mismeasuring jealousy: A cautionary comment on Levy and Kelly (2010). *Psychological Science*, 21, 1355–1356. doi:10.1177/0956797610378688
- DeSteno, D., Bartlett, M. Y., Braverman, J., & Salovey, P. (2002). Sex differences in jealousy: Evolutionary mechanism or artifact of measurement? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1103–1116. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.83.5.1103
- DeSteno, D., Valdesolo, P., & Bartlett, M. Y. (2006). Jealousy and the threatened self: Getting to the heart of the green-eyed monster. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 91, 626–641. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.91.4.626
- DeWall, C., Lambert, N., Slotter, E., Pond, R., Deckman, T., Finkel, E., Luchies, L., & Fincham, F. (2011). So

- far away from one's partner, yet so close to romantic alternatives: Avoidant attachment, interest in alternatives, and infidelity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101, 1302–1316. doi:10.1037/a0025497
- Diamond, L. M. (2003). What does sexual orientation orient? A biobehavioral model distinguishing romantic love and sexual desire. *Psychological Review*, 110, 173–192. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.110.1.173
- Diamond, L. M. (2004). Emerging perspectives on distinctions between romantic love and sexual desire. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 116–119. doi:10.1111/j.0963-7214.2004.00287.x
- Diamond, L. M. (2006). Introduction: In search of “good” sexual-developmental pathways for adolescent girls. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2006, 1–7. doi:10.1002/cd.158
- Diamond, L. M. (2008). *Sexual fluidity: Understanding women's love and desire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Diamond, L. M. (2010, July). *Where's the sex in relationship research? Where are the relationships in sex research?* Keynote address presented at the biennial meeting of the International Association for Relationship Research, Herzliya, Israel.
- Diamond, L. M., & Huebner, D. M. (2012). Is good sex good for you? Rethinking sexuality and health. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6, 54–69. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2011.00408.x
- Diamond, L. M., & Savin-Williams, R. C. (2009). Adolescent sexuality. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology: Vol. 1. Individual bases of adolescent development* (pp. 479–523). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological Science*, 13, 81–84. doi:10.1111/1467-9280.00415
- Dijkstra, P., & Barelds, D. P. H. (2008). *Self and partner personality and responses to relationship threats*. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42, 1500–1511. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2008.06.008
- Donald, M., Lucke, J., Dunne, M., & Raphael, B. (1995). Gender differences associated with young people's emotional reactions to sexual intercourse. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24, 453–464. doi:10.1007/BF01537191
- Dundon, C., & Rellini, A. (2010). More than sexual function: Predictors of sexual satisfaction in a sample of women age 40–70. *Journal of Sex Medicine*, 7, 896–904. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01557.x
- Dzara, K. (2010). Assessing the effect of marital sexuality on marital disruption. *Social Science Research*, 39, 715–724. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.06.003
- Eastwick, P., Finkel, E., & Eagly, A. (2011). When and why do ideal partner preferences affect the process of initiating and maintaining romantic relationships? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101, 1012–1032. doi:10.1037/a0024062
- Eastwick, P. W., & Finkel, E. J. (2008). The attachment system in fledgling relationships: An activating role for attachment anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 628–647. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.95.3.628
- Edser, S. J., & Shea, J. D. (2002). An exploratory investigation of bisexual men in monogamous, heterosexual marriages. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 2, 5–43. doi:10.1300/J159v02n04\_02
- Edwards, J. N., & Booth, A. (1994). Sexuality, marriage, and well-being: The middle years. In A. S. Rossi (Ed.), *Sexuality across the life course* (pp. 233–259). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Ehrhardt, A. A. (1996). Our view of adolescent sexuality: A focus on risk behavior without the developmental context. *American Journal of Public Health*, 86, 1523–1525. doi:10.2105/AJPH.86.11.1523
- Eisenberg, M. E., Ackard, D. M., Resnick, M. D., & Neumark-Sztainer, D. (2009). Casual sex and psychological health among young adults: Is having “friends with benefits” emotionally damaging? *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 41, 231–237. doi:10.1363/4123109
- Elliott, S., & Umberson, D. (2008). The performance of desire: Gender and sexual negotiation in long-term marriages. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 391–406. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00489.x
- Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (2004). Attachment and sexuality in close relationships. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 183–201). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ferenidou, F., Kapoteli, V., Moisiadis, K., Koutsogiannis, I., Giakoumelos, A., & Hatzichristou, D. (2008). Presence of a sexual problem may not affect women's satisfaction from their sexual function. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 5, 631–639. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2007.00644.x
- Fine, M., & McClelland, S. I. (2006). Sexuality education and desire: Still missing after all these years. *Harvard Educational Review*, 76, 297–338.
- Finkel, E., Eastwick, P., & Matthews, J. (2007). Speed-dating as an invaluable tool for studying romantic attraction: A methodological primer. *Personal Relationships*, 14, 149–166. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2006.00146.x
- Fisher, T. D., Moore, Z. T., & Pittenger, M. J. (2012). Sex on the brain? An examination of frequency of sexual cognitions as a function of gender, erotophilia, and social desirability. *Journal of Sex Research*, 49, 69–77. doi:10.1080/00224499.2011.565429

- Fisman, R., Iyengar, S., Kamenica, E., & Simonson, I. (2008). Racial preferences in dating. *Review of Economic Studies*, 75, 117–132. doi:10.1111/j.1467-937x.2007.00465.x
- Fortenberry, J. D., Temkit, M., & Tu, W. (2005). Daily mood, partner support, sexual interest, and sexual activity among adolescent women. *Health Psychology*, 24, 252–257. doi:10.1037/0278-6133.24.3.252
- Fortenberry, J. D., Tu, W., Harezlack, J., Katz, B. P., & Orr, D. P. (2002). Condom use as a function of time in new and established adolescent sexual relationships. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92, 211–213.
- Gable, S. L., & Impett, E. A. (2012). Approach and avoidance motives and close relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6, 95–108.
- Gillath, O., Mikulincer, M., Birnbaum, G. E., & Shaver, P. R. (2008). When sex primes love: Subliminal sexual priming motivates relationship goal pursuit. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 1057–1069. doi:10.1177/0146167208318141
- Gillath, O., & Schachner, D. A. (2006). How do sexuality and attachment interrelate? Goals, motives, strategies. In G. S. Goodman & M. Mikulincer (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 121–147). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Giordano, P. C., Manning, W. D., & Longmore, M. A. (2006). Adolescent romantic relationships: An emerging portrait of their nature and developmental significance. In A. C. Crouter & A. Booth (Eds.), *Romance and sex in adolescence and emerging adulthood: Risks and opportunities* (pp. 127–150). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Goldhammer, D. L., & McCabe, M. P. (2011). A qualitative exploration of the meaning and experience of sexual desire among partnered women. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 20, 19–29.
- Gonzaga, G. C., Turner, R. A., Keltner, D., Campos, B., & Altemus, M. (2006). Romantic love and sexual desire in close relationships. *Emotion*, 6, 163–179. doi:10.1037/1528-3542.6.2.163
- Gott, M., & Hinchliff, S. (2003). How important is sex in later life? The views of older people. *Social Science and Medicine*, 56, 1617–1628. doi:10.1016/S0277-9536(02)00180-6
- Graham, C. A., Sanders, S. A., Milhausen, R. R., & McBride, K. R. (2004). Turning on and turning off: A focus group study of the factors that affect women's sexual arousal. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 33, 527–538. doi:10.1023/B:ASEB.0000044737.62561.fd
- Gray, M. L. (2009). Negotiating identities/queering desires: Coming out online and the remediation of the coming-out story. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14, 1162–1189. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01485.x
- Grello, C. M., Welsh, D. P., & Harper, M. S. (2006). No strings attached: The nature of casual sex in college students. *Journal of Sex Research*, 43, 255–267. doi:10.1080/00224490609552324
- Grello, C. M., Welsh, D. P., Harper, M. S., & Dickson, J. W. (2003). Dating and sexual relationship trajectories and adolescent functioning. *Adolescent and Family Health*, 3, 103–112.
- Guerrero, L. K., & Afifi, W. A. (1999). Toward a goal-oriented approach for understanding communicative responses to jealousy. *Western Journal of Communication*, 63, 216–248.
- Guerrero, L. K., Andersen, P. A., Jorgensen, P. F., & Spitzberg, B. H. (1995). Coping with the green-eyed monster: Conceptualizing and measuring communicative responses to romantic jealousy. *Western Journal of Communication*, 59, 270–304.
- Gustavson, M. (2009). Bisexuals in relationships: Uncoupling intimacy from gender ontology. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 9, 407–429. doi:10.1080/15299710903316653
- Hall, J., & Fincham, F. (2006). Relationship dissolution following infidelity: The roles of attributions and forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 25, 508–522. doi:10.1521/jscp.2006.25.5.508
- Harrison, M., & Shortall, J. (2011). Women and men in love: Who really feels it and says it first? *Journal of Social Psychology*, 151, 727–736. doi:10.1080/00224545.2010.522626
- Hartmann, U., Philippsohn, S., Heiser, K., & Ruffer-Hesse, C. (2004). Low sexual desire in midlife and older women: Personality factors, psychosocial development, present sexuality. *Menopause*, 11, 726–741. doi:10.1097/01.ju.0000164397.64370.d9
- Hatfield, E., Greenberger, D., Traupmann, J., & Lambert, P. (1982). Equity and sexual satisfaction in recently married couples. *Journal of Sex Research*, 18, 18–31. doi:10.1080/00224498209551131
- Haugen, E. N., Schmutzer, P. A., & Wenzel, A. (2004). Sexuality and the partner relationship during pregnancy and the postpartum period. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 411–435). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511–524. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511
- Hazan, C., & Zeifman, D. (1999). Pair-bonds as attachments: Evaluating the evidence. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment theory and research* (pp. 336–354). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Heiman, J. R., Long, S. J., Smith, S. N., Fisher, W. A., & Sand, M. S. (2011). Sexual satisfaction and relationship

- happiness in midlife and older couples in five countries. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40, 741–753. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9703-3
- Henderson, A. W., Lehavot, K., & Simoni, J. M. (2009). Ecological models of sexual satisfaction among lesbian/bisexual and heterosexual women. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 38, 50–65. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9384-3
- Hensel, D. J., Fortenberry, J. D., & Orr, D. P. (2008). Variations in coital and noncoital sexual repertoire among adolescent women. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 42, 170–176. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2007.07.009
- Herek, G. M. (2000). The psychology of sexual prejudice. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 19–22. doi:10.1111/1467-8721.00051
- Higgins, J. A., Trussell, J., Moore, N. B., & Davidson, J. K. (2010). Virginity lost, satisfaction gained? Physiological and psychological sexual satisfaction at heterosexual debut. *Journal of Sex Research*, 47, 384–394. doi:10.1080/00224491003774792
- Hiller, J. (2004). Speculations on the links between feelings, emotions, and sexual behaviour: Are vasopressin and oxytocin involved? *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 19, 393–412. doi:10.1080/14681990412331297974
- Hinchliff, S., & Gott, M. (2004). Intimacy, commitment, and adaptation: Sexual relationships within long-term marriages. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 21, 595–609. doi:10.1177/0265407504045889
- Hinchliff, S., & Gott, M. (2008). Challenging social myths and stereotypes of women and aging: Heterosexual women talk about sex. *Journal of Women and Aging*, 20, 65–80. doi:10.1300/J074v20n01\_06
- Hitsch, G., Hortacsu, A., & Ariely, D. (2010). What makes you click? Mate preferences in online dating. *Quantitative Marketing and Economics*, 8, 393–427. doi:10.1007/s11129-010-9088-6
- Hoff, C. C., & Beougher, S. C. (2010). Sexual agreements among gay male couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 39, 774–787. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9393-2
- Hoff, C. C., Beougher, S. C., Chakravarty, D., Darbes, L. A., & Neilands, T. B. (2010). Relationship characteristics and motivations behind agreements among gay male couples: Differences by agreement type and couple serostatus. *AIDS Care*, 22, 827–835. doi:10.1080/09540120903443384
- Holmberg, D., & Blair, K. (2009). Sexual desire, communication, satisfaction, and preferences of men and women in same-sex versus mixed-sex relationships. *Journal of Sex Research*, 46, 57–66. doi:10.1080/00224490802645294
- Huang, A., Subak, L., Thom, D., Eeden, S., Ragins, A., Kupperman, M., . . . Brown, S. (2009). Sexual functioning and aging in ethnically and racially diverse women. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 57, 1362–1368. doi:10.1111/j.1532-5415.2009.02353.x
- Hughes, M., Morrison, K., & Asada, K. J. K. (2005). What's love got to do with it? Exploring the impact of maintenance rules, love attitudes, and network support of friends with benefits relationships. *Western Journal of Communication*, 69, 49–66. doi:10.1080/10570310500034154
- Hurlbert, D. F., Apt, C., Hurlbert, M. K., & Pierce, A. P. (2000). Sexual compatibility and the sexual desire-motivation relation in females with hypoactive sexual desire disorder. *Behavior Modification*, 24, 325–347. doi:10.1177/0145445500243002
- Iasenza, S. (2002). Beyond “lesbian bed death”: The passion and play in lesbian relationships. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 6, 111–120. doi:10.1300/J155v06n01\_10
- Impett, E. A., Gordon, A., & Strachman, A. (2008). Attachment and daily sexual goals: A study of dating couples. *Personal Relationships*, 15, 375–390. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2008.00204.x
- Impett, E. A., Muise, A., & Breines, J. (2013). Because it feels good: Toward a positive psychology of sexuality. In M. Hojjat & D. Cramer (Eds.), *Positive psychology of love* (pp. 57–76). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Impett, E. A., & Peplau, L. A. (2002). Why some women consent to unwanted sex with a dating partner: Insights from attachment theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 359–369. doi:10.1111/1471-6402.t01-1-00075
- Impett, E. A., & Peplau, L. A. (2003). Sexual compliance: Gender, motivational, and relationship perspectives. *Journal of Sex Research*, 40, 87–100. doi:10.1080/00224490309552169
- Impett, E. A., Peplau, L. A., & Gable, S. L. (2005). Approach and avoidance sexual motivation: Implications for personal and interpersonal well-being. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 465–482. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2005.00126.x
- Impett, E. A., Strachman, A., Finkel, E. J., & Gable, S. L. (2008). Maintaining sexual desire in intimate relationships: The importance of approach goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 808–823. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.94.5.808
- Impett, E. A., & Tolman, D. L. (2006). Adolescent girls' sexual experiences and sexual satisfaction. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 6, 628–646. doi:10.1177/0743558406293964
- Irvine, J. M. (2002). *Talk about sex: The battles over sex education in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Jankowiak, W., Nell, M., & Buckmaster, A. (2002). Managing infidelity: A cross-cultural perspective. *Ethnology*, 41, 85–101.
- Johnson, A. M., Wadsworth, J., Wellings, K., & Field, J. (1994). *Sexual attitudes and lifestyles*. London, England: Blackwell.
- Joyner, K., & Kao, K. (2005). Interracial relationships and the transition to adulthood. *American Sociological Review*, 70, 563–581.
- Kaiser Family Foundation. (2001). *Inside-OUT: A report on the experiences of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in America and the public's view on issues and policies related to sexual orientation*. Menlo Park, CA: Author.
- Karraker, A., DeLamater, J., & Schwartz, C. (2011). Sexual frequency decline from mid to later life. *Journal of Gerontology*, 66, 502–512.
- Katz, B. P., Fortenberry, J., Zimet, G. D., Blythe, M. J., & Orr, D. P. (2000). Partner-specific relationship characteristics and condom use among young people with sexually transmitted diseases. *Journal of Sex Research*, 37, 69–75. doi:10.1080/00224490009552022
- Katz, J., Moore, J., & May, P. (2008). Physical and sexual coictimization from dating partners: A distinct type of intimate abuse? *Violence Against Women*, 14, 961–980. doi:10.1177/1077801208320905
- Katz, J., & Myhr, L. (2008). Perceived conflict patterns and relationship quality associated with verbal sexual coercion by male dating partners. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23, 798–814. doi:10.1177/0886260507313949
- King, M., Holt, V., & Nazareth, I. (2007). Women's views of their sexual difficulties: Agreement and disagreement with clinical diagnoses. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 36, 281–288. doi:10.1007/s10508-006-9090-y
- King, R. B., & Bratter, J. L. (2007). A path toward interracial marriage: Women's first partners and husbands across racial lines. *Sociological Quarterly*, 48, 343–369.
- Kinsey, A. C., Pomeroy, W. B., & Martin, C. E. (1948). *Sexual behavior in the human male*. Philadelphia, PA: W. B. Saunders.
- Kinsey, A. C., Pomeroy, W. B., Martin, C. E., & Gebhard, P. H. (1953). *Sexual behavior in the human female*. Philadelphia, PA: W. B. Saunders.
- Kirkwood, M., & Cecil, D. (2001). Marital rape: A student assessment of rape laws and the marital exemption. *Violence Against Women*, 7, 1234–1253. doi:10.1177/1077801201007011003
- Kleinplatz, P. J. (2006). Learning from extraordinary lovers: Lessons from the edge. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 50, 325–348. doi:10.1300/J082v50n02\_16
- Kleinplatz, P. J., Menard, A. D., Paquet, M.-P., Paradis, N., Campbell, M., Zuccarino, D., & Mehak, L. (2009). The components of optimal sexuality: A portrait of "great sex." *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 18, 1–13.
- Klusmann, D. (2002). Sexual motivation and the duration of partnership. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 31, 275–287. doi:10.1023/A:1015205020769
- Knobloch, L. K., Solomon, D. H., & Cruz, M. G. (2001). The role of relationship development and attachment in the experience of romantic jealousy. *Personal Relationships*, 8, 205–224. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2001.tb00036.x
- Koch, P., Mansfield, P., Thurau, D., & Carey, M. (2005). "Feeling frumpy": The relationships between body image and sexual response changes in midlife women. *Journal of Sex Research*, 42, 215–23. doi:10.1080/00224490509552276
- Kontula, O., & Haavio-Mannila, E. (2009). The impact of aging on human sexual activity and sexual desire. *Journal of Sex Research*, 46, 46–56. doi:10.1080/00224490802624414
- Korobov, N. (2011). Mate-preference talk in speed-dating conversations. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 44, 186–209. doi:10.1080/08351813.2011.567102
- Ku, L., Sonenstein, F. L., & Pleck, J. H. (1993). Young men's risk behaviors for HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases, 1988 through 1991. *American Journal of Public Health*, 83, 1609–1615. doi:10.2105/AJPH.83.11.1609
- Kuhle, B. X. (2011). Did you have sex with him? Do you love her? An in vivo test of sex differences in jealous interrogations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 51, 1044–1047. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2011.07.034
- Kurdek, L. A. (1991). Sexuality in homosexual and heterosexual couples. In K. McKinney & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 177–191). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Kurzban, R., & Weeden, J. (2005). HurryDate: Mate preferences in action. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 26, 227–244. doi:10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2004.08.012
- Kurzban, R., & Weeden, J. (2007). Do advertised preferences predict the behavior of speed daters? *Personal Relationships*, 14, 623–632. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2007.00175.x
- LaSala, M. C. (2004). Extradynamic sex and gay male couples: Comparing monogamous and non-monogamous relationships. *Families in Society*, 85, 405–412.
- Laumann, E. O., Gagnon, H. J., Michael, R. T., & Michaels, S. (1994). *The social organization of sexuality: Sexual practices in the United States*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Laumann, E. O., & Michael, R. T. (Eds.). (2001). *Sex, love, and health in America: Private choices and public policies*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Laumann, E. O., Nicolosi, A., Glasser, D. B., Paik, A., Gingell, C., Moreira, E., & Wang, T.; GSSAB Investigators' Group. (2005). Sexual problems among women and men aged 40–80 y: Prevalence and correlates identified in the Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors. *International Journal of Impotence Research*, 17, 39–57.
- Laumann, E. O., Paik, A., Glasser, D. B., Kang, J., Wang, T., Levinson, B., . . . Gingell, C. (2006). A cross-national study of subjective sexual well-being among older women and men: Findings from the global study of sexual attitudes and behaviors. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 35, 145–161. doi:10.1007/s10508-005-9005-3
- Lawrance, K., & Byers, E. S. (1995). Sexual satisfaction in long-term heterosexual relationships: The interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 2, 267–285. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.1995.tb00092.x
- Leiblum, S. R. (2002). Reconsidering gender differences in sexual desire: An update. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 17, 57–68. doi:10.1080/14681990220108027
- Leitenberg, H., & Henning, K. (1995). Sexual fantasy. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117, 469–496. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.469
- Lever, J. (1994, August 23). The 1994 Advocate survey of sexuality and relationships: The men. *Advocate*, pp. 18–24.
- Lever, J. (1995, August 22). The 1995 Advocate survey of sexuality and relationships: The women. *Advocate*, pp. 22–30.
- Levine, S. (2003). The nature of sexual desire: A clinician's perspective. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 32, 279–285. doi:10.1023/A:1023421819465
- Levy, K. N., Kelly, K. M., & Jack, E. L. (2006). Sex differences in jealousy: A matter of evolution or attachment history? In M. Mikulincer & G. Goodman (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 128–145). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Li, N., Bailey, J., Kendrick, D., & Linsenmeier, J. (2002). The necessities and luxuries of mate preferences: Testing the tradeoffs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 947–955. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.82.6.947
- Li, N., & Kendrick, D. (2006). Sex similarities and differences in preferences for short-term mate: What, whether, and why? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 468–489. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.90.3.468
- Lindau, S., Schumm, P., Laumann, E., Levinson, W., Muirheartaigh, C., & Waite, L. (2007). A study of sexuality and health among older adults in the United States. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 357, 762–774. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa067423
- Lishner, D. A., Nguyen, S., Stocks, E. L., & Zillmer, E. J. (2008). Are sexual and emotional infidelity equally upsetting to men and women? Making sense of forced-choice responses. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 6, 667–675.
- Little, K. C., McNulty, J. K., & Russell, V. M. (2010). Sex buffers intimates against the negative implications of attachment insecurity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36, 484–498. doi:10.1177/0146167209352494
- Liu, C. (2000). A theory of marital sexual life. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 363–374. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00363.x
- Livingston, J., Buddie, A., Testa, M., & VanZile-Tamsen, C. (2004). The role of sexual precedence in verbal sexual coercion. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 28, 287–297. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.2004.00146.x
- Logan, T., Cole, J., & Shannon, L. (2007). A mixed-methods examination of sexual coercion and degradation among women in violent relationships who do and do not report forced sex. *Violence and Victims*, 22, 71–94.
- MacNeil, S., & Byers, S. (2009). Role of sexual self-disclosure in the sexual satisfaction of long-term heterosexual couples. *Journal of Sex Research*, 46, 3–14. doi:10.1080/00224490802398399
- Maddox, A. M., Rhoades, G. K., & Markman, H. J. (2011). Viewing sexually-explicit materials alone or together: Associations with relationship quality. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40, 441–448. doi:10.1007/s10508-009-9585-4
- Mahoney, P. (1999). High rape chronicity and low rates of help-seeking among wife rape survivors in a nonclinical sample: Implications for research and practice. *Violence Against Women*, 5, 993–1016. doi:10.1177/10778019922181590
- Maisel, N. C., & Fingerhut, A. W. (2011). California's ban on same-sex marriage: The campaign and its effects on gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67, 242–263. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01696.x
- Manning, W. D., Giordano, P. C., & Longmore, M. A. (2006). Hooking up: The relationship contexts of “nonrelationship” sex. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 21, 459–483. doi:10.1177/0743558406291692
- Manning, W. D., Longmore, M. A., & Giordano, P. C. (2000). The relationship context of contraceptive use at first intercourse. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 32, 104–110.
- Mark, K., Janssen, E., & Milhausen, R. (2011). Infidelity in heterosexual couples: Demographic, interpersonal, and personality-related predictors of extradyadic



- sex. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40, 971–982. doi:10.1007/s10508-011-9771-z
- Mark, K. P., & Murray, S. H. (2012). Gender differences in desire discrepancy as a predictor of sexual and relationship satisfaction in a college sample of heterosexual romantic relationships. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 38, 198–215.
- Masters, W. H., & Johnson, V. E. (1966). *Human sexual response*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Matthews, A. K., Tartaro, J., & Hughes, T. L. (2003). A comparative study of lesbian and heterosexual women in committed relationships. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 7, 101–114. doi:10.1300/J155v07n01\_07
- McCabe, M. P. (1987). Desired and experienced levels of premarital affection and sexual intercourse during dating. *Journal of Sex Research*, 23, 23–33. doi:10.1080/00224498709551339
- McCabe, M. P., & Goldhammer, D. L. (2012). Demographic and psychological factors related to sexual desire among heterosexual women in a relationship. *Journal of Sex Research*, 49, 78–87. doi:10.1080/00224499.2011.569975
- McKenna, C. (1989). *Marital satisfaction and sensation seeking in the first ten years of marriage: Self expansion versus boredom*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, California Graduate School of Family Psychology, San Francisco.
- McNeal, J. L., & Aron, A. (1995, June). *Exciting activities and relationship satisfaction: A comparison of married and dating couples*. Paper presented at the International Network Conference on Personal Relationships, Williamsburg, VA.
- McNulty, J. K., & Fisher, T. D. (2008). Gender differences in response to sexual expectancies and changes in sexual frequency: A short-term longitudinal study of sexual satisfaction in newly married couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 37, 229–240. doi:10.1007/s10508-007-9176-1
- McWhirter, D. P., & Mattison, A. M. (1984). *The male couple: How relationships develop*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Meana, M., Rakipi, R. S., Weeks, G., & Lykins, A. (2006). Sexual functioning in a nonclinical sample of partnered lesbians. *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy*, 5, 1–22.
- Meltzer, A. L., & McNulty, J. K. (2010). Body image and marital satisfaction: Evidence for the mediating role of sexual frequency and sexual satisfaction. *Journal of Family*, 24, 156–164. doi:10.1037/a0019063
- Meston, C. M., & Buss, D. M. (2007). Why humans have sex. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 36, 477–507. doi:10.1007/s10508-007-9175-2
- Michael, R. T., Gagnon, J. H., Laumann, E. O., & Kolata, G. (1994). *Sex in America: A definitive survey*. New York, NY: Warner Books.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). *Attachment in adulthood—Structure, dynamics, and change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Milhausen, R. R., & Herold, E. S. (2001). Reconceptualizing the sexual double standard. *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality*, 13, 63–83. doi:10.1300/J056v13n02\_05
- Miller, S. L., & Maner, J. K. (2009). Sex differences in response to sexual versus emotional infidelity: The moderating role of individual differences. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 46, 287–291. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2008.10.013
- Missildine, W., Feldstein, G., Punzalan, J. C., & Parsons, J. T. (2005). S/he loves me, s/he loves me not: Questioning heterosexist assumptions of gender differences in sexual compulsivity and romantic obsession. *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity*, 12, 1–12.
- Monahan, K. C., & Lee, J. M. (2008). Adolescent sexual activity: Links between relational context and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 37, 917–927. doi:10.1007/s10964-007-9256-5
- Monson, C. M., Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., & Taft, C. T. (2009). Sexual aggression in intimate relationships. In K. D. O’Leary & E. M. Woodin (Eds.), *Psychological and physical aggression in couples: Causes and interventions* (pp. 37–57). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Moore, K. (2010). Sexuality and sense of self in later life: Japanese men’s and women’s reflections on sex and aging. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 25, 149–163. doi:10.1007/s10823-010-9115-9
- Moore, M. R. (2012). Intersectionality and the study of Black, sexual minority women. *Gender and Society*, 26, 33–39. doi:10.1177/0891243211427031
- Muise, A., Christofides, E., & Desmarais, S. (2009). More information than you ever wanted: Does Facebook bring out the green-eyed monster of jealousy? *Cyberpsychology and Behavior*, 12, 441–444.
- Muise, A., Desmarais, S., Impett, E., & Milhausen, R. R. (2011, September). *Approaching sexual desire in long-term couples: How approach and avoidance goals influence desire*. Paper presented at the 37th annual meeting of the Canadian Sex Research Forum, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- Muise, A., Impett, E., Kogan, A., & Desmarais, S. (2012). Keeping the spark alive: Being motivated to meet a partner’s sexual needs sustains sexual desire in long-term romantic relationships. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1948550612457185
- Nehzad, M. Z., & Goodarzi, A. M. (2011). Sexuality, intimacy, and marital satisfaction in Iranian first-time parents. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 37, 77–88. doi:10.1080/0092623X.2011.547336



- Nichols, M. (2004). Lesbian sexuality/female sexuality: Rethinking "lesbian bed death." *Sexual and Relationship Therapy, 19*, 363–371. doi:10.1080/14681990412331298036
- Noar, S. M., Zimmerman, R. S., & Atwood, K. A. (2004). Safer sex and sexually transmitted infections from a relationship perspective. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 519–544). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Oliver, M. B., & Hyde, J. S. (1993). Gender differences in sexuality: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 114*, 29–51. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.114.1.29
- Olson, M., Russell, C., Higgins-Kessler, M., & Miller, R. (2002). Emotional processes following disclosure of an extramarital affair. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 28*, 423–434. doi:10.1111/j.1752-0606.2002.tb00367.x
- O'Sullivan, L. F., & Allgeier, E. R. (1998). Feigning sexual desire: Consenting to unwanted sexual activity in heterosexual dating relationships. *Journal of Sex Research, 35*, 234–243. doi:10.1080/00224499809551983
- O'Sullivan, L. F., Cheng, M. M., Harris, K. M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2007). I wanna hold your hand: The progression of social, romantic, and sexual events in adolescent relationships. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 39*, 100–107. doi:10.1363/3910007
- O'Sullivan, L. F., & Meyer-Bahlburg, H. F. L. (2003). African-American and Latina inner-city girls' reports of romantic and sexual development. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 20*, 221–238. doi:10.1177/02654075030202006
- Owen, J., & Fincham, F. D. (2011). Effects of gender and psychosocial factors on "friends with benefits" relationships among young adults. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 40*, 311–320. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9611-6
- Panuzio, J., & DiLillo, D. (2010). Physical, psychological, and sexual intimate partner aggression among newlywed couples: Longitudinal prediction of marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Violence, 25*, 689–699. doi:10.1007/s10896-010-9328-2
- Papaharitou, S., Nakapoulou, E., Kirana, P., Giaglis, G., Moraitou, M., & Hatzchirou, D. (2008). Factors associated with sexuality in later life: An exploratory study of Greek married older adults. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics, 46*, 191–201. doi:10.1016/j.archger.2007.03.008
- Parish, W. L., Luo, Y., Laumann, E., Kew, M., & Yu, Z. (2007). Unwanted sexual activity among married women in urban China. *Journal of Sex Research, 44*, 158–171. doi:10.1080/00224490701263751
- Parish, W. L., Luo, Y., Stolzenberg, R., Laumann, E., Farrer, G., & Pan, S. (2007). Sexual practices and sexual satisfaction: A population based study of Chinese urban adults. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 36*, 5–20. doi:10.1007/s10508-006-9082-y
- Paul, E. L., & Hayes, K. A. (2002). The casualties of casual sex: A qualitative exploration of the phenomenology of college students' hook-ups. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 19*, 639–661. doi:10.1177/0265407502195006
- Penderson, W., Putcha-Bhagavatula, A., & Miller, L. (2011). Are men and women really that different? Examining sexual strategies theory (SST)'s key assumptions about sex-distinct mating mechanisms. *Sex Roles, 64*, 629–643. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9811-5
- Penhollow, T., Young, M., & Denny, G. (2009). Predictors of quality of life, sexual intercourse, and sexual satisfaction among active older adults. *American Journal of Health Education, 40*, 14–23.
- Penke, L., & Asendorpf, J. (2008). Beyond global sociosexual orientations: A more differentiated look at sociosexuality and its effects on courtship and romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*, 1113–1135. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.95.5.1113
- Peplau, L. A. (2003). Human sexuality: How do men and women differ? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12*, 37–40. doi:10.1111/1467-8721.01221
- Peplau, L. A., Fingerhut, A., & Beals, K. P. (2004). Sexuality in the relationships of lesbians and gay men. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 349–370). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Peplau, L. A., Rubin, Z., & Hill, C. T. (1977). Sexual intimacy in dating couples. *Journal of Social Issues, 33*, 86–109.
- Peterson, J. L., & Hyde, J. S. (2010). A meta-analytic review of research on gender differences in sexuality, 1993–2007. *Psychological Bulletin, 136*, 21–38. doi:10.1037/a0017504
- Pfeiffer, S. M., & Wong, P. T. P. (1989). Multidimensional jealousy. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 6*, 181–196. doi:10.1177/026540758900600203
- Plichta, S., & Falik, M. (2001). Prevalence of violence and its implications for women's health. *Women's Health Issues, 11*, 244–258. doi:10.1016/S1049-3867(01)00085-8
- Potts, A., Grace, M., Vares, T., & Gavey, N. (2006). "Sex for life"? Men's counter-stories on "erectile dysfunction," male sexuality and ageing. *Sociology of Health and Illness, 28*, 306–329. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9566.2006.00494.x
- Pujols, Y., Meston, C. M., & Seal, B. N. (2009). The association between sexual satisfaction and body image

- in women. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 7, 905–916. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01604.x
- Quadagno, D., Sly, D., Harrison, D., Eberstein, I., & Soler, H. (1998). Ethnic differences in sexual decisions and behavior. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 27, 57–75. doi:10.1023/A:1018657825068
- Rahmani, A., Khoei, E. M., & Ghohi, L. A. (2009). Sexual satisfaction and its relation to marital happiness in Iranians. *Iranian Journal of Public Health*, 38, 77–82.
- Ramirez, O. M., & Brown, J. (2010). Attachment style, rules regarding sex, and couple satisfaction: A study of gay male couples. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 31, 202–213. doi:10.1375/anft.31.2.202
- Ramisetty-Mikler, A., Caetano, R., & McGrath, C. (2007). Sexual aggression among White, Black, and Hispanic couples in the U.S.: Alcohol use, physical assault, and psychological aggression as its correlates. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 33, 31–43. doi:10.1080/00952990601082639
- Regan, P. C. (2000). The role of sexual desire and sexual activity in dating relationships. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 28, 51–59.
- Regan, P. C., & Berscheid, E. (1996). Beliefs about the state, goals, and objects of sexual desire. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 22, 110–120.
- Ridley, C. A., Cate, R. M., Collins, D. M., Reesing, A. L., Lucero, A. A., Gilson, M. S., & Almeida, D. M. (2006). The ebb and flow of marital lust: A relational approach. *Journal of Sex Research*, 43, 144–154. doi:10.1080/00224490609552309
- Rosen, R. (2000). Prevalence and risk factors of sexual dysfunction in men and women. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 2, 189–195. doi:10.1007/s11920-996-0006-2
- Rosser, B. R. S., Metz, M. E., Bockting, W. O., & Buroker, T. (1997). Sexual difficulties, concerns, and satisfaction in homosexual men: An empirical study with implications for HIV prevention. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 23, 61–73.
- Rostosky, S. S., Galliher, R. V., Welsh, D. P., & Kawaguchi, M. C. (2000). Sexual behaviors and relationship qualities in late adolescent couples. *Journal of Adolescence*, 23, 583–597. doi:10.1006/jado.2000.0345
- Rubin, H., & Campbell, L. (2012). Day-to-day changes in intimacy predict heightened relationship passion, sexual occurrence, and sexual satisfaction: A dyadic diary analysis. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3, 224–231.
- Rusbult, C. E., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2008). Why we need interdependence theory. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 2049–2070. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2008.00147.x
- Russell, D. (1990). *Rape in marriage*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Santelli, J. S., Lowry, R., Brener, N. D., & Robin, L. (2000). The association of sexual behaviors with socioeconomic status, family structure and race/ethnicity among US adolescents. *American Journal of Public Health*, 90, 1582–1588. doi:10.2105/AJPH.90.10.1582
- Sassler, S. (2010). Partnering across the life course: Sex, relationships, and mate selection. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 72, 557–575. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00718.x
- Schachner, D. A., & Shaver, P. R. (2004). Attachment dimensions and sexual motives. *Personal Relationships*, 11, 179–195. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2004.00077.x
- Schmitt, D. (2005). Sociosexuality from Argentina to Zimbabwe: A 48-nation study of sex, culture, and strategies of human mating. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 28, 247–311. doi:10.1017/S0140525X05000051
- Schmitt, D. P., Alcalay, L., Allik, J., Ault, L., Austers, I., Bennett, K. L., . . . Zupanè, A.; International Sexuality Description Project. (2003). Universal sex differences in the desire for sexual variety: Tests from 52 nations, 6 continents, and 13 islands. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 85–104. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.85.1.85
- Shackelford, T., Schmitt, D., & Buss, D. (2005). Universal dimensions of human mate preferences. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 39, 447–458. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2005.01.023
- Shaughnessy, K., Byers, E. S., & Thornton, S. J. (2011). What is cybersex? Heterosexual students' definitions. *International Journal of Sexual Health*, 23, 79–89. doi:10.1080/19317611.2010.546945
- Shaver, P., Hazan, C., & Bradshaw, D. (1988). Love as attachment. In R. J. Sternberg & M. L. Barnes (Eds.), *The psychology of love* (pp. 68–99). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Shields, N. M., Resick, P. A., & Hanneke, C. R. (1990). Victims of marital rape. In R. T. Ammerman & M. Hersen (Eds.), *Treatment of family violence* (pp. 165–182). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Simms, K. E., & Meana, M. (2010). Why did passion wane? A qualitative study of married women's attributes for declines in desire. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 36, 360–380.
- Simpson, J., & Gangestad, S. (1991). Individual differences in sociosexuality: Evidence for convergent and discriminant validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 870–883. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.60.6.870
- Simpson, J. A. (1990). Influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59, 971–980. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.59.5.971

- Simpson, J. A., Wilson, C. L., & Winterheld, H. A. (2004). Sociosexuality and romantic relationships. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 87–111). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Smiler, A. P., Ward, M. L., Caruthers, A., & Merriwether, A. (2005). Pleasure, empowerment, and love: Factors associated with a positive first coitus. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 2, 41–55.
- Smith, A., Lyons, A., Ferris, J., Richters, J., Pitts, M., Shelley, J., & Simpson, J. M. (2011). Sexual and relationship satisfaction among heterosexual men and women: The importance of desired frequency of sex. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 37, 104–115. doi:10.1080/0092623X.2011.560531
- Sprecher, S. (2002). Sexual satisfaction in premarital relationships: Associations with satisfaction, love, commitment, and stability. *Journal of Sex Research*, 39, 190–196. doi:10.1080/00224490209552141
- Sprecher, S., & Regan, P. C. (1998). Passionate and companionate love in courting and young married couples. *Sociological Inquiry*, 68, 163–185. doi:10.1111/j.1475-682X.1998.tb00459.x
- Stone, N., & Ingham, R. (2002). Factors affecting British teenagers' contraceptive use at first intercourse: The importance of partner communication. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 34, 191–197.
- Stulhofer, A., Busko, V., & Brouillard, P. (2010). Development and bicultural validation of the new sexual satisfaction scale. *Journal of Sex Research*, 47, 257–268. doi:10.1080/00224490903100561
- Temple, J., Weston, R., Rodriquez, B., & Marshall, L. (2007). Differing effects of partner and non-partner sexual assault on women's mental health. *Violence Against Women*, 13, 285–297. doi:10.1177/1077801206297437
- Theiss, J. A., & Nagy, M. E. (2010). Actor-partner effects in the associations between relationship characteristics and reactions to marital sexual intimacy. *Personal Relationships*, 27, 1089–1109. doi:10.1177/0265407510381254
- Thompson, S. (1990). Putting a big thing into a little hole: Teenage girls' accounts of sexual initiation. *Journal of Sex Research*, 27, 341–361. doi:10.1080/00224499009551564
- Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (Report No. NCJ-181867). Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.
- Tolman, D. L. (2006). In a different position: Conceptualizing female adolescent sexuality development within compulsory heterosexuality. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 112, 71–90. doi:10.1002/cd.163
- Tolman, D. L., & Diamond, L. M. (2001). Desegregating sexuality research: Cultural and biological perspectives on gender and desire. *Annual Review of Sex Research*, 12, 33–74.
- Tolman, D. L., & McClelland, S. I. (2011). Normative sexuality development in adolescence: A decade in review, 2000–2009. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21, 242–255. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00726.x
- Træen, B. (2010). Sexual dissatisfaction among heterosexual Norwegians in couple relationships. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 25, 132–147.
- Træen, B., & Martinussen, M. (2008). Extradyadic activity in a random sample of Norwegian couples. *Journal of Sex Research*, 45, 319–328. doi:10.1080/00224490802398324
- Treas, J., & Giesen, D. (2000). Sexual infidelity among married and cohabiting Americans. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 48–60. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00048.x
- Tsui, L., & Nicoladis, E. (2004). Losing it: Similarities and differences in first intercourse experiences of men and women. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 13, 95–106.
- Uchino, B. N., Cacioppo, J. T., & Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K. (1996). The relationship between social support and physiological processes: A review with emphasis on underlying mechanisms and implications for health. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119, 488–531. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.119.3.488
- Udry, J. R. (1988). Biological predispositions and social control in adolescent sexual behavior. *American Sociological Review*, 53, 709–722.
- Umidi, S., Pini, M., Ferrett, M., Vergani, C., & Annoni, G. (2007). Affectivity and sexuality in the elderly: Often neglected aspects. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 44(Suppl. 1), 413–417. doi:10.1016/j.archger.2007.01058
- VanderDrift, L. E., Lehmilller, J. J., & Kelly, J. R. (2012). Commitment in friends with benefits relationships: Implications for relationship and safe-sex outcomes. *Personal Relationships*, 19, 1–13. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2010.01324.x
- Vares, T., Potts, A., Gavey, N., & Grace, M. (2007). Reconceptualizing cultural narratives of mature women's sexuality in the Viagra era. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 21, 153–164. doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2006.08.002
- Vinkers, C. D. W., Finkenauer, C., & Hawk, S. T. (2011). Why do close partners snoop? Predictors of intrusive behavior in newlywed couples. *Personal Relationships*, 18, 110–124.
- Vohs, K. D., Catanese, K. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2004). Sex in "his" versus "her" relationships. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook*

- of sexuality in close relationships (pp. 455–474). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Waite, L. J., Laumann, E. O., Das, A. S., & Philip, L. (2009). Sexuality: Measures of partnerships, practices, attitudes, and problems in the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Study. *Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 64(Suppl. 1), i56–i66.
- Waldner-Haugrad, L., & Gratch, L. (1997). Sexual coercion in gay/lesbian relationships: Descriptives and gender differences. *Violence and Victims*, 12, 87–98.
- Wallen, K. (1995). The evolution of female sexual desire. In P. R. Abramson & S. D. Pinkerton (Eds.), *Sexual nature, sexual culture* (pp. 57–59). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Weaver, A. D., MacKeigan, K. L., & MacDonald, H. A. (2011). Experiences and perceptions of young adults in friends with benefits relationships: A qualitative study. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 20, 41–53.
- Weinberg, M. S., Lottes, I. L., & Shaver, F. M. (1995). Swedish or American heterosexual college youth: Who is more permissive? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 24, 409–437.
- Weisskirch, R., & Delevi, R. (2011). "Sexting" and adult romantic attachment. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 1697–1701. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2011.02.008
- Welsh, D. P., Haugen, P. T., Widman, L., Darling, N., & Grello, C. M. (2005). Kissing is good: A developmental investigation of sexuality in adolescent romantic couples. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 2, 32–41. doi:10.1525/srsp.2005.2.4.32
- Wentland, J. J., Herold, E. S., Desmarais, S., & Milhausen, R. R. (2009). Differentiating highly sexual women from less sexual women. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 18, 169–182.
- Wentland, J. J., & Ressing, E. (2011). Taking casual sex not too casually: Exploring definitions of casual sexual relationships. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 20, 75–91.
- Whisman, M., Gordon, K., & Chatav, Y. (2007). Predicting sexual infidelity in a population-based sample of married individuals. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 21, 320–324. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.21.2.320
- Whisman, M., & Snyder, D. (2007). Sexual infidelity in a national survey of American women: Differences in prevalence and correlates as a function of method of assessment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 21, 147–154. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.21.2.147
- Widman, L., Welsh, D. P., McNulty, J. K., & Little, K. C. (2006). Sexual communication and contraceptive use in adolescent dating couples. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 39, 893–899. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2006.06.003
- Wiederman, M. (1997). Extramarital sex: Prevalence and correlates in a national survey. *Journal of Sex Research*, 34, 167–174. doi:10.1080/00224499709551881
- Wierzalis, E. A., Barret, B., Pope, M., & Rankins, M. (2006). Gay men and aging: Sex and intimacy. In D. Kimmel, R. Rose, & S. David (Eds.), *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender aging: Research and clinical perspectives* (pp. 91–109). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Wight, D., Parkes, A., Strange, V., Allen, E., Bonell, C., & Henderson, M. (2008). The quality of young people's heterosexual relationships: A longitudinal analysis of characteristics shaping subjective experience. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 40, 226–237.
- Willets, M. C., Sprecher, S., & Beck, F. D. (2004). Overview of sexual practices and attitudes within relational contexts. In J. H. Harvey, A. Wenzel, & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *The handbook of sexuality in close relationships* (pp. 57–85). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Willoughby, B. J., & Vitas, J. (2012). Sexual desire discrepancy: The effect of individual differences in desired and actual sexual frequency on dating couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 41, 477–486. doi:10.1007/s10508-011-9766-9
- Woloski-Wruble, A., Oliel, Y., Leefsma, M., & Hochner-Celnikier, D. (2010). Sexual activities, sexual and life satisfaction, and successful aging in women. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 7, 2401–2410. doi:10.1016/S0022-5347(11)60266-8
- Woo, S. T. J., Brotto, L. A., & Gorzalka, B. B. (2011). The role of sex guilt in the relationship between culture and women's sexual desire. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40, 385–394. doi:10.1007/s10508-010-9609-0
- Wood, J. M., Mansfield, P. K., & Koch, P. B. (2007). Negotiating sexual agency: Postmenopausal women's meaning and experience of sexual desire. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17, 189–200. doi:10.1177/1049732306297415
- Yucel, D., & Gassanov, M. A. (2010). Exploring actor and partner correlates of sexual satisfaction among married couples. *Social Science Research*, 39, 725–738. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2009.09.0022

APA Handbooks in Psychology

APA Handbook of  
**Sexuality and  
Psychology**

VOLUME 1

Person-Based Approaches

Deborah L. Tolman and Lisa M. Diamond, *Editors-in-Chief*

José A. Bauermeister, William H. George, James G. Pfaus,  
and L. Monique Ward, *Associate Editors*

Copyright © 2014 by the American Psychological Association. All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, including, but not limited to, the process of scanning and digitization, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by  
American Psychological Association  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242  
www.apa.org

To order  
APA Order Department  
P.O. Box 92984  
Washington, DC 20090-2984  
Tel: (800) 374-2721; Direct: (202) 336-5510  
Fax: (202) 336-5502; TDD/TTY: (202) 336-6123  
Online: [www.apa.org/pubs/books/](http://www.apa.org/pubs/books/)  
E-mail: [order@apa.org](mailto:order@apa.org)

In the U.K., Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, copies may be ordered from  
American Psychological Association  
3 Henrietta Street  
Covent Garden, London  
WC2E 8LU England

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION STAFF  
Gary R. VandenBos, PhD, *Publisher*  
Julia Frank-McNeil, *Senior Director, APA Books*  
Theodore J. Baroody, *Director, Reference, APA Books*  
Katherine R. Lenz, *Project Editor, APA Books*

Typeset in Berkeley by Cenveo Publisher Services, Columbia, MD

Printer: Edwards Brothers, Inc., Lillington, NC  
Cover Designer: Naylor Design, Washington, DC

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

APA handbook of sexuality and psychology / Deborah L. Tolman and  
Lisa M. Diamond, editors-in-Chief ; José A. Bauermeister, William H.  
George, James G. Pfaus, and L. Monique Ward, Associate Editors.

volumes ; cm. — (APA handbooks in psychology)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4338-1369-6

ISBN-10: 1-4338-1369-6

1. Sex (Psychology) I. Tolman, Deborah L.  
BF692.A63 2013  
155.3—dc23

2013012916

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data  
A CIP record is available from the British Library.

Printed in the United States of America  
First Edition

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/14193-000>