

Summer 8-2017

# The “Finding What Feels Good Workshop”: Re-Imagining the Discourse of Young Adult Female Sexuality

Camille Joi Interligi

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THE “FINDING WHAT FEELS GOOD” WORKSHOP: RE-IMAGINING THE DISCOURSE  
OF YOUNG ADULT FEMALE SEXUALITY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Psychology

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August 2017

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Young women’s sexualities are influenced and limited by cultural discourses of acceptable sexual behavior. The aims of this study were to: 1) understand the discourses around female sexuality that currently operate in the lives of young adult women and color their constructions of “good” sex; 2) develop and implement a workshop for college-age women that provides an opportunity for participants to critique existing discourses around female sexuality and discuss wider possibilities for sexual expression from a sex-positive framework (i.e., the Finding What Feels Good workshop); 3) uncover whether participation in the workshop influences the kinds of discourses that young adult women endorse in their conceptualizations of “good sex”; and 4) determine whether participation in the workshop increases women’s sense of sexual subjectivity. A workshop evaluation was also completed. Results of a qualitative discourse analysis indicate that progressive (vs. limiting) discourses of female sexuality tended to be endorsed more strongly in the “good sex” narratives of women who participated in the workshop. Further, participant responses to a modified version of the Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory (Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006) show that participation in the workshop is correlated with higher levels of entitlement to pleasure from self and self-efficacy in achieving pleasure. In their evaluation of the workshop, participants noted that talking with others about sexuality is a critically important part of recognizing and respecting sexual diversity among others, and of feeling normalized regarding one’s sexual practices, preferences, and desires.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **How Can We Understand Young Adult Women's Sexuality?**

Women's sexuality—particularly young women's sexuality—remains a point of contention and public debate. At different points in the United States' history, young women's sexuality has been viewed as dangerous and sinful; as the site of transmission of personal and social hygiene; as the sole protector of society's morality, purity, and decency; and as “liberated,” but concerning (Weeks, 2002). The oft-changing description of the nature of female sexuality raises a number of questions: where do these notions of young adult women's sexuality come from, and how do they emerge? Do any of these constructions accurately reflect young adult women's sexuality? How can we best understand young adult women's sexuality?

#### **What is Sexuality?**

An individual's sexuality has traditionally been signified by her *sexual orientation*, or the sex(es)/gender(s) of individuals to whom one is typically sexually or romantically attracted (American Psychological Association, 2012). However, sexuality is multifaceted, and may include other elements in addition to sexual orientation, such as: 1) the sexual behaviors a person engages in (Schwartz & Rutter, 1998); 2) a person's motivation to participate in sexual behaviors (i.e., *sexual desire*; Schwartz & Rutter, 1998); a person's capacity for sexual feelings (like desire and arousal) and level of general interest in sex; a person's preferences for the organization of romantic, sexual, and intimate relationships (i.e., *relationship orientation*, or preferences for various types of monogamous and non-monogamous relationships); and a person's sense of *sexual subjectivity*.

Sexual subjectivity has been defined as “the pleasure we get from our bodies and the experiences of living in a body” (Martin, 1996, p. 10). Tolman (2002) elaborated on this definition, describing sexual subjectivity as “a person’s experience of herself as a sexual being, who feels entitled to sexual pleasure and sexual safety, who makes active sexual choices, and who has an identity as a sexual being. Sexual desire is at the heart of sexual subjectivity” (p. 5-6). Tolman (2002) explained that beyond feeling desire, sexual subjectivity involves being able to identify, communicate, and act on those desires. Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck (2006) have theorized that three core components constitute sexual subjectivity for women: *sexual body esteem* (i.e., perceptions of one’s own sexual desirability and attractiveness); *sexual self-reflection* (critical reflection on one’s sexuality, sexual experiences, and sexual behaviors); and *sexual desire and pleasure* (i.e., sense of entitlement to bodily pleasure and efficacy in achieving pleasure). Other feminist researchers point to the inextricable relationship between sexual subjectivity and power: “the power to appropriate sexuality, relational power, and social power connected to defining [“normal” and “deviant”] versions of sexuality” (Sheff, 2005, p. 4; see also: Ramazanoglu & Holland, 1993). Thus, individuals with more power may have a stronger sense of sexual subjectivity.

Because sexual subjectivity involves an assertion of personal agency, Martin (1996) argues that sexual subjectivity is an important component of self-esteem. As Martin (1996) notes, “one’s sexuality affects her/his ability to act in the world, and to feel like she/he can will things and make them happen” (p. 10). Martin (1996) and Tolman (2002) have suggested that women may experience a decline in self-esteem and personal agency during adolescence, as they struggle to form a sense of sexual subjectivity while receiving cultural messages about their sexuality that discourage female sexual empowerment and entitlement to pleasure. If this is true,

what is the nature of sexuality for young women coming into adulthood? Considering the multifaceted nature of sexuality, the question remains: how can psychologists study and understand young adult women's sexuality?

### **The Social Construction of Sexuality**

Postmodern theorists argue against an *essentialist* view of sexuality, which holds that there is some fundamental, natural, and necessarily true definition of sexuality (or its components) for all people (Gordon & Abbott, 2002). Discovering the true and objective nature of what sexuality *is* becomes the focus of an essentialist approach. For example, essentialist researchers investigate the relative contributions of 'nature' vs. 'nurture' in how women express their sexuality. In contrast, *social constructionism* contends that there is no one objective truth regarding the nature of sexuality (Gordon & Abbott, 2002).

Theorists who adopt a social constructionist perspective are interested in how individuals' interpretations of sexual behaviors, attitudes, and practices collaboratively construct a subjective understanding of "sexuality" unique to a particular culture. Because the production of meaning is a social process, examination of the ways in which this meaning is forwarded among individuals is crucial. Thus, rather than trying to determine some objective understanding of female sexuality, a social constructionist researcher would explore the culturally- and historically-bound discussions (i.e., *discourses*) surrounding women's sexuality, including women's perceptions of their own sexuality, and cultural notions about what constitutes "good" sex for women.

## **The Gendered Nature of Sexuality**

Concerning sexuality, gender matters (Tolman, Striepe, & Harmon, 2003). Importantly, gender is only one dimension along which the meaning of sexuality is organized (Hollway, 1984; Tiefer, 1995); its influence operates in concert with other facets of diversity (e.g., race and class). However, it has been argued that gender is the most critical aspect of identity that impacts one's sexuality (e.g., Schwartz & Rutter, 1998). To say that sexuality is "gendered" implies that it cannot be understood without considering the influence of gender, and that what is deemed normatively, appropriately, and "naturally" feminine and masculine regarding sex has been socially constructed (Rubin, 1984; Schwartz & Rutter, 1998).

The social construction of sexual difference between men and women in a patriarchal society ultimately positions females as secondary and disadvantaged (Bem, 1995), and leads to inequities that limit women's access to sexual knowledge and education, and contraception (Fine & McClelland, 2006). Further, socially-constructed differences sustain the sexually privileged status of white, heterosexual males of the upper-class (Rubin, 1984; Tolman et al., 2003). Definitions and understandings of sexuality are constructed from a predominantly male perspective (Weeks, 2002). Due to women's status as secondary and the resultant lack of attention to women's experiences, few discourses around women's sexuality have emerged. The discourses that have emerged afford women narrow frameworks from which to construct and understand their sexuality, and few avenues for "acceptable" sexual exploration. Moreover, the kinds of sexuality that these discourses allow for women reify existing gendered power relations (Tolman et al., 2003).

Gender polarization and the construction of difference is also evident in psychological discourse (i.e., theory and research; Bem, 1995). Bem (1995) argues that psychology emphasizes

sex differences without considering the context, impact, or implications of reifying differences. Adopting a social constructionist framework, the aim of the present study is to examine and influence the discourses around female sexuality in young adulthood through the use of a sex-positive workshop. Though the importance of gender differences to sexuality is acknowledged, the intent of the workshop is to explore and critique the contexts and discussions that contribute to the construction of this difference.

### **The Influence of Discourse on Female Sexuality**

As defined by Foucault (1972), *discourse* refers to a system of beliefs, ideas, attitudes, and their associated practices that systematically construct the understood nature of subjects/objects, and thereby shape reality. These institutionally-sanctioned assemblies of subjective knowledge are transmitted through spoken and written language (e.g., in informal conversation, in popular media, and in formal written communications), and serve to define the boundaries of what can and cannot be said concerning a specific issue. Thus, discourse has the power to legitimize particular versions of reality and disallow or demonize alternatives. Discourse is extremely powerful in shaping individuals' thoughts about a topic and the ways in which it is understood, the questions and inquiries raised around it, and the ways people behave in relation to these constructions. Considering the impact of discourse on individuals' understanding of reality or subjective "truth," a growing number of scholars have suggested a focus on discourse, or *discourse analysis* in research (e.g., Burr, 1995; Fairclough, 1989; Talbot, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 2003).

As Tolman (2000) notes, "the ways in which we do and do not "story" sexuality into being are definitive in how we make meaning out of our bodies and relationships, and so the ways in which we do and do not speak about sexuality are crucial" (p. 70). Numerous feminist

researchers have adopted Foucault's poststructuralist definition of discourse and have embarked on programs of research intended to analyze discourses that operate around women's sexuality (e.g., Fine, 1988; Hollway, 1984; Tolman, 2002). An analysis of the research reveals that the available discourses around female sexuality are both limited and limiting: women are offered few frameworks from which to understand their own sexual identities, feelings, and behaviors in United States culture. However, the construction of discourse is a process, and never reaches a complete or final state (Butler, 1990).

Thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between discourse around young women's sexuality and young women's lived experience of sexuality: discourse informs women's sexual thoughts, attitudes, and behavior, and their embodied expressions of sexuality further refine and shape discourse (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). The discussions around young women's sexuality set parameters for acceptable sexual motives and behavior, and thereby influence how women construct their identities as sexual beings, and how they experience and enact their sexuality. However, discourse does not necessarily define women's sexuality: through their sexual experiences, women can actively construct or modify their own sexual identities (Bryant & Schofield, 2007); by interpreting these discourses (consciously or unconsciously) and acting in ways that are congruent or incongruent with popular notions of female sexuality, women are active agents in shaping social patterns of "normative" sexual behavior (Connell, 1987, 1995; Dowsett, 1996).

Notably, popular discourses may be differentially applied or have different meanings based on young women's identities along various dimensions of diversity, including race, class, sexual orientation, and ability status (Bay-Cheng, 2003). Tolman (2000) notes that race and class are usually most influential in determining how female sexuality is discussed; non-white and

lower-class women may be more vulnerable to dismissal and demonization based on popular discourse (Pheterson, 1998). For example, constructions of the chaste and virginal white, upper-class woman are often contrasted with images of promiscuous, desire-driven lower-class women and sexually aggressive, available, exoticized/eroticized black women. Pheterson (1998) suggests women are viewed more favorably depending on the degree that they can separate themselves from images of impurity, and defilement. The more privileged a woman is, and thus, the freer she is from the constructed “dirtiness” of laboring or non-white skin, the more likely she is to be able to escape the “whore” stigma of unchastity.

### **Popular Discourses Around Female Sexuality**

#### **The Madonna/Whore Dichotomy**

Arguably the most prominent discourse around female sexuality is the *madonna/whore* dichotomy (Ussher, 1994)—also known as the *good girl/bad girl* (Crane & Crane-Seeber, 2002) discourse—which informs women’s sexual expression across the lifespan. This moralistic framework conceptualizes women’s sexuality as dichotomously “good” or “bad” (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). “Good” girls and women are positioned as passive recipients of sex—they operate as sexual objects responsive to masculine desire; they do not initiate sex or advocate for their own pleasure (Bryant & Schofield, 2007; Crane & Crane-Seeber, 2002; Gavey, 2013; Hollway, 1984; Ussher, 1994). Within this framework, “good sex” is that which occurs only within the context of a monogamous, heterosexual relationship, or in service of forming one (Gavey, 2013; Hollway, 1984). Though society has progressed beyond dictating total chastity before marriage for women, the *madonna/whore* discourse is still perpetuated in school-based sexuality education and within families (Bay-Cheng, Livingston, & Fava, 2013), where morality, abstinence, and sexual responsibility are touted as requirements of “good” young women. In

contrast, “bad” girls or women are active, agentic participants in their sexual lives: they attend to their desires, initiate sex, and are subjects (rather than objects) of their own sexual experience (Bryant & Schofield, 2007; Crane & Crane-Seeber, 2002). “Bad” girls/women have sex in ways that lie outside of the narrow confines decreed by society as acceptable: for example, outside of marriage or committed relationships, with one or more partners, or with women.

This discourse—which moralizes a lack of desire and sexual agency for women fundamentally positions women’s sexuality as dangerous and in need of control (Bryant & Schofield, 2007; Gavey, 2013; Hollway, 1984). It reflects both the *hostile* and *benevolent sexism* that characterizes United States patriarchal culture (Glick & Fiske, 1997). The “bad girl” archetype incites outwardly hostile sexist beliefs, such as the idea that women seek to gain control of and power over men (in this case, via sexual domination). The “good girl,” however, highlights the benevolently sexist idea that women have a quality or degree of purity that is not granted to men, and thus needs to be protected (by men). Though this remark (to the sexist) appears to be a kind and positive judgment of women, the statement serves to reinforce male dominance and power. Both forms of sexist beliefs assume that women are inferior, and support gender inequality (Glick & Fiske, 1997).

### **The Romance Narrative**

Another discourse that shapes the sexuality of adolescent and young adult women is that of *romance* (Kirkman, Rosenthal, & Smith, 1998; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993; Tolman, 2000). The romance narrative was first identified as one of four archetypal myths in literature (others: satire, tragedy, and comedy) used to structure and understand life experiences (Frye, 1957). In its most basic form, the romance narrative involves a male hero, a passive/dependent heroine, and a successfully pursued quest. The story follows a basic structure: boy and girl meet; boy

woos girl; boy and girl fall in love; and they live “happily ever after” (Kirkman et al., 1998).

Contextualized within a romance narrative, sexual relationships can only be part of a quest for love.

“Normal” adolescent female sexuality, then, is the story of a heterosexual “good” girl searching for love (Thompson, 1992). She does not herself feel desirous, but acts in response to her male partner’s essential and uncontrollable desire (Tolman, 2000); only this leads to a happy ending. In this story, young women are positioned as the desired objects of men, to be wooed, conquered, and taken (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993; Tolman, 2000). In both the romance narrative and the *madonna/whore* dichotomy discourse, appropriate female sexuality is positioned as fundamentally relational; it functions to forward romantic partnership rather than to fulfill desire. Likewise, as in the *madonna/whore* dichotomy, “good” young women in the romance narrative are posed as passive sexual objects, rather than agentic subjects of their own desire. Further, to become sexually desirable, young women engage in self-objectification. For example, they focus on *looking* sexy for a partner, rather attending to their bodies to know what it is to *feel* sexy when engaging with a partner (Tolman, 2000).

### **The Permissive Discourse**

Another discourse that informs women’s sexuality is the *permissive* (Hollway, 1984), *sexualized* (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013), or *new femininity* (Jackson & Scott, 2004) discourse. Here, women are viewed as being equally sexual as men, with comparable drives and urges (Gavey, 2013). This “sexually liberated” woman is touted as an unrepentant agent of her own desires; she exudes sex appeal and is desirable to others (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013). However, this vision of a sexually-empowered woman remains problematic (Gavey, 2013; Lamb, 2010a). It has been argued that this apparent acceptance of sexuality is fundamentally an acceptance of *male*

sexuality (Campbell, 1980)—instinctual and unapologetic. Other scholars suggest that a celebration of agentic sexuality may further reify masculine approaches to sex as those which are acceptable and appropriate (Lamb, 2010a).

**The permissive discourse and the empowerment debates.** Though the permissive discourse may parade as a discourse of sexual subjectivity, some feminists have argued that this discourse is simply a screen behind which gender inequality and the *sexual double standard* continue to exist (Douglas, 2010; Gavey, 2013; Levy, 2006). Indeed, research has concluded that women’s sexual expression continues to be judged more harshly or using different criteria than men’s, though the particular sexual behaviors and situations where a double standard is observed have changed over time (Bordini & Sperb, 2012; Crawford & Popp, 2003). Other feminists have touted the sexualized discourse as a popular rebranding of the *whore* (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013). Media portrays a sexually “liberated” woman who displays her (hetero)sexiness by conforming to stereotypic gender binaries: donning heels, push-up bras, and revealing clothing (Jackson & Scott, 2004). Further, the kinds of “empowering” activities this woman engages in (e.g., watching pornography; lap dances; stripping) are often regarded by feminists as sexist, objectifying, and still practiced in service of male pleasure (Gill, 2012; Lamb, 2010a; Levy, 2006). Lamb (2010a, p. 300) views this “empowered” young woman as “ironically similar to the power porn sexualized female we see marketed today.” Feminists continue to debate the nature and reality of empowerment for women, particularly in relation to the sexualized discourse (see: Fabello, 2014; Gill, 2012; Lamb, 2010a, 2010b; Lamb & Peterson, 2011; Peterson, 2010). Their fundamental question is this: do (young) women’s subjective feelings of empowerment constitute “real” empowerment? Is feeling empowered the same as being empowered (Lamb, 2010a)?

Lamb (Lamb, 2010a; Lamb & Peterson, 2011) argues that empowerment is often defined as choice, but that choice is typically an illusion: while “empowered” young women may contend that they have agency, they often imitate commodified, pornified sexuality. Thus, the degree to which young women’s sexual subjectivity, pleasure, and desire signal “real” empowerment is questionable. Peterson (Lamb & Peterson, 2011; Peterson, 2010) contends that endorsing an “expert” view of empowerment over women’s subjective experiences could be harmful to women’s sense of themselves as sexual beings. These feminists concede that subjective empowerment may be only one dimension of empowerment, and that young women would benefit from a more critical understanding of the sexualized/sexist culture in which they operate (Lamb & Peterson, 2011). They argue that this understanding could be advanced through comprehensive sexuality education and media literacy training, including opportunities for open discussion around the complexities of sexual expression.

### **The Risk/Victimization Discourse**

The *risk or victimization* discourse (e.g., Bay-Cheng, 2003; Fine, 1988; Harden, 2014; Russell, 2005; Tolman & McClelland, 2011) frames young women’s sexuality as problematic, inherently risky, and to be prevented (Russell, 2005; Tolman & McClelland, 2011). This discourse is rooted in the social hygiene movement of the early 1900s (Huber & Firmin, 2014) and forwarded by the majority of public sex education for adolescents (Bay-Cheng, 2003; Fine, 1988). The risk/victimization discourse equates any expression of sexuality in adolescence as a “risk behavior” that could provoke disastrous personal and social consequences (Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2004). Such unfortunate outcomes for young women and their society include: unintended pregnancy; sexually transmitted disease; negative emotional consequences including heartache, regret, guilt, and shame; immorality and impurity, and social ridicule (Fine, 1988).

Though all youthful sexual activity is identified as problematic, the typical focus of risk reduction in school-based sex education is heterosexual, genital-focused, coital sex (Bay-Cheng, 2003). If alternative forms of sexual expression, including different partner or practice choices are included (e.g., anal sex), they are briefly mentioned and positioned as *even more* risky.

This discourse, in addition to identifying female sexuality as risky, also positions women as vulnerable to and victims of a predatory and dangerous male sexuality (Fine, 1988). As the identified potential victims of (heterosexual) sex, teenage and young adult women are educated to defend themselves against sex's myriad consequences by avoiding it altogether. They are too irresponsible, unknowledgeable, and emotionally immature to make any appropriate sexual decisions (Preston, 2013). Abstinence, then, is considered the most appropriate behavioral outcome for young women (Harden, 2014), and they are instructed to just say "no" (Fine, 1988). However, they are also burdened with the "hyper-responsibility" of maintaining self-control and restraint with regards to sexuality not only for themselves and the security of their futures (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013), but also for the sexually-insatiable males they are assumed to be partnered with, and for the greater good of society.

The risk/victimization discourse has been extended into young adulthood, as expressions of sexuality typically associated with this stage of development (e.g., the *hookup*, a sexual encounter involving two strangers or acquaintances that may or may not include sexual intercourse, typically lasts only one night, and lacks the expectation of a developing relationship) have likewise been identified as "risky" (Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000). College-age women are likewise labeled and educated as victims of male desire: in accordance with Title IX, universities are mandated to provide prevention programming to students around what constitutes sexual violence, how to intervene, and how to report it (United States Department of

Education Office for Civil Rights, 2014). Prevention education offered on campus typically includes a discussion of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and rape. Services that promote agentic, pleasurable, and self-reflective sexuality are rarely encountered.

### **Sociocultural Control of Young Women's Sexuality**

The discourses discussed above are united in their underlying message: that young women's sexual behavior is only appropriate under specific circumstances and conditions. Thus, these constructions limit the kinds of sexuality that are deemed normal, acceptable, and appropriate for young women (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). But how are "appropriate" expressions of female sexuality socioculturally determined and translated into discourse?

### **Patriarchy**

Within the United States' patriarchal society, males—as the dominant group—are afforded more power and resources in all areas, including the social, political, economic, and sexual spheres of life (Ramazanoglu, 2012; Walby, 1989). Concerning the realm of sexuality, men are afforded wider sexual agency and freedom. Though discourses that have the power to normalize certain forms of male sexual expression do exist, in these discourses (e.g., the *male sexual drive* discourse (Hollway, 1984), in which men are constructed as "needing" sex), men's desire, agency, and pleasure has assumed importance. Further, written into these discourses is the notion that men should not be shamed by most sexual practices that are viewed as inexcusable in women, such as having sex with multiple partners, or for having sex outside of a relationship (Crawford & Popp, 2003). Women, as an oppressed group, are devalued and granted less power in all domains (Walby, 1989). Consequent of their devaluation, women's sexuality is less often a topic of consideration or discussion; as a result, discourses around female sexuality are limited. These discourses reflect women's secondary status in society: as previously discussed,

discourses that do exist are limiting, and grant or ascribe to women minimal sexual freedom and agency.

### **Heteronormativity and Compulsory Heterosexuality**

U.S. culture can also be described as *heteronormative*: it positions heterosexuality as primary and natural, and implies that heterosexuality is the only normal and acceptable expression of sexuality (Merer, 2015). Heterosexuality has become so central to the organization of U.S. society, that some feminist scholars have come to view heterosexuality as required or compulsory. Termed by Rich (1980), *compulsory heterosexuality* refers to the imposition of heterosexuality on individuals—particularly women—by society, regardless of individuals' actual sexual preferences. Compulsory heterosexuality restricts the kinds of sexual and romantic relationships that are visible to and possible for members of society to those between a male and a female; it positions heterosexuality as the only normal, natural, desirable, and moral expression of sexuality (Butler, 1990; Rich, 1980; Tolman, 2006). Heterosexuality is produced and normalized through a number of individual, relational, and cultural processes that make it simultaneously “desirable to and punishable not to engage in heterosexual relationships” (Tolman, 2006, p. 75). According to Rich (1980), these same processes also serve to suppress female sexuality by limiting their ability to explore or express their sexuality in ways unrelated to patriarchal male dominance.

Rich (1980) notes that, to maintain the existing patriarchal sociopolitical structure, it is imperative that women conform to heterosexual desires, sexual behaviors, and practices. Non-heterosexual expressions of sexuality, including desire for and participating in sexual activities with same- or sex/gender-nonbinary partners (e.g., intersex, transgender, or agender individuals), participation in non-procreative sexual behaviors (e.g., anal sex; BDSM), and non-monogamous

relationship practices are stigmatized as abnormal and are treated—even by mental health professionals—in a biased manner (e.g., Kolmes, Stock, & Moser, 2006). This heteronormative bias is reflected in society’s institutions, regulations, and products. For example, until June 26, 2015, only marriage between one man and one woman was considered legal by the national government (Liptak, 2015). There are also limited and stereotypic representations of non-heterosexual and non-monogamous relationships in popular media, which may further normalize heteronormativity (e.g., Shugart, 2003).

However, Butler (1990) argues that these “unnatural” or socially-demonized preferences, attitudes, and behaviors are just as integral to the continuation of compulsory heterosexuality as the exalted. The difference highlighted between the alleged immoral/abnormal proclivities and socially acceptable expressions of sexuality is exactly what defines heterosexuality normal and natural, and reifies the gender binary that is necessary for the system to operate. Applying Douglas’s (1966) notions of “dirt” and taboo to sexuality, supposed “perversity” is both dangerous and necessary to the systems of heteronormativity and compulsory heterosexuality (Bem, 1995). Non-heterosexual and non-normative sexualities challenge these systems, but can be managed by incorporating them into the framework as effective counterpoints (e.g., by positioning them as “bad,” in contrast to “good” heterosexuality; Bem, 1995).

**Hegemonic femininity.** Presuppositions that there are two (and only two) sexes (i.e., male and female), and thus, genders (i.e., men and women) underlie heteronormativity and compulsory heterosexuality (Bem, 1995), and these systems, in turn, reify the existence of a bipolar gender structure (Butler, 1990). In a heteronormative society, women and men are expected to conform to the rigid expectations of their gender roles (Tolman, 2006). The dominant form of femininity (i.e., *hegemonic femininity*), positioned as natural and legitimate,

dictates how women are expected to think, behave, and feel concerning their own bodies and identities; what roles they should take on in relationships; and what expectations they should have of men. All other performances of femininity are regarded as illegitimate, unnatural, or inappropriate. Regarding sexuality, hegemonic femininity mandates that “good” girls do not have or act on sexual feelings, and that they are responsive to insatiable male sexuality (i.e., Fine, 1988; Tolman, 1994, 2002, 2006).

### **Social Implications of Existing Discourses on Female Sexuality**

#### **The Sexual Double Standard**

Though the patriarchal, heteronormative culture in the United States also shapes the sexual expression of men, as the oppressed group, this sociosexual framework disempowers women’s sexuality in more apparent and damaging ways. Women’s sexuality is routinely judged more punitively or using different criteria than men’s (Bordini & Sperb, 2012; Crawford & Popp, 2003). The particular sexual behaviors, attitudes, and practices subject to this *sexual double standard* have evolved over time, but women’s sexuality continues to be monitored, policed, and controlled more actively than men’s. For example, though there is currently a relative acceptance of premarital sex for both young adult men and women, women are still judged differently than men for actively expressing their sexuality and having nontraditional relationships or partners (Bordini & Sperb, 2012).

For women, sex has been deemed acceptable only if it is heterosexual, coitus-centered, and occurring within a monogamous relationship (or in service of forming one; Bay-Cheng, 2003). Further, discourses around female sexuality imply that “desire and subjectivity [are] unnatural for girls” (Lamb, 2010a, p. 301). Young adult women’s sexuality is regarded as normal only if it is undesirous and passive—occurring only in reaction to a male partner’s desire or for

his pleasure—or if their “empowered” sexuality imitates what has been identified as “sexy” by US patriarchal culture (Hollway, 1984; Lamb, 2010a; Tolman, 2000; Ussher, 1994).

### **Slut-Shaming and Prude-Shaming**

Young women who express their sexuality in ways that are incongruent with accepted norms risk social ridicule in the forms of *slut-shaming* (Baumeister & Twenge, 2002; Harden, 2014; Jackson & Cram, 2003; Kreager & Staff, 2009; Ringrose, 2012; Vrangalova, Bukberg, & Rieger, 2014) and *prude-shaming* (Fischer, 2015). In slut shaming, women are condemned for “promiscuous” sexual behaviors, such as having more than one sexual or romantic partner at a time; engaging in non-normative sexual behaviors. When women are prude-shamed, women are criticized for their choice not to participate in sexual activity (Fischer, 2015). Notably, for both types of shaming, the specific offensive or objectionable behaviors vary according to the cultural, racial, or class identity of the transgressor (e.g., Armstrong, Hamilton, Armstrong, & Seeley, 2014).

In both slut-shaming and prude-shaming, young women’s sexuality is socially policed to conform to what has been deemed acceptable and “normal” (Fischer, 2015). Further, this practice silences women whose sexuality varies from the norm (Paul & Hayes, 2002). When women’s experiences do not meet society’s expectations, they may self-blame and choose not to discuss their sexuality. This has the dual effect of unjustly ostracizing diverse and alternative forms of sexual expression, and further reifying the existing sociosexual norms in discourse. Even if women actively and agentically reject dominant notions of female sexuality, they may experience internalized feelings of shame, guilt, or regret around their sexual decisions as a result of slut- or prude-shaming (Bryant & Schofield, 2007; Paul & Hayes, 2002).

## The Gatekeeper Role

If young women do engage in culturally-sanctioned sexual activity, young women are assigned the role of *sexual gatekeeper* (Peplau, Rubin, & Hill, 1977). As gatekeepers, young women are in charge of allowing/disallowing and pacing male-initiated sexual activity, and thus, of any consequences that may arise from it (Bay-Cheng, 2003). Young women, then, are cast as liable for controlling males' sexual desire, which has been positioned as uncontrollable, intractable, and essential (Gavey, 2013; Hollway, 1984; Tolman, 2000). Women's gatekeeper role has become a salient and fetishized part of "typical" sexual encounters. *Token resistance* (saying no to sexual activity when one really means yes; Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988) is often depicted in film and televised portrayals of sex: the female character is typically shown saying "no" (verbally or with body language) to a desired male pursuer before she is ultimately wooed and gives in to his advances (Bolotnikova & Evans, 2012). Belief in women's token resistance has become widespread, and has the impact of implying that males should not take a woman's "no" seriously (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). This makes it even more difficult for women to "properly" perform the role of sexual gatekeeper that they have been assigned.

Additionally, because women are identified as responsible for pacing and limiting sexual activity, they are often the ones blamed or ridiculed if wanted sexual encounters go "too far" (see: slut-shaming). If, as indicated by the *madonna/whore* discourse and *romance* narrative, they are supposed to demonstrate passivity, saying "no" or limiting the progression of sexual activity requires transgression of these frameworks (Milnes, 2004). Thus, these discourses may pressure women to agree to unwanted sexual activities or behaviors (Gavey & McPhillips, 1999). In this double-bind, where women are named responsible for pacing but afraid of the consequences of saying no, women are blamed for instances of unwanted, male-initiated sexual

activity (e.g., sexual assault and rape), especially when the assailant is an acquaintance (Raphael, 2013). In this *victim-blaming* model, women are identified as ineffective gatekeepers whose “no”s were unclear or inconsequential. Because the sexual encounter occurred and progressed, they must have been “asking for it” (Bolotnikova & Evans, 2012).

### **Sex-Negative Society**

The concepts of *sex-negative* and *sex-positive* were first introduced by Bullough (1976) as terms to describe a society’s overarching attitude and approach towards sexuality (Williams, Prior, & Wegner, 2013). From a sex-negative standpoint, sex is viewed as fundamentally bad (Glickman, 2000). Sex-negative societies construct sexuality as “risky, problematic, or perhaps adversarial” (Williams et al., 2013, p. 273); individuals are encouraged to practice self-discipline and avoidance of sexual indulgence (Bullough, 1976). Further, in sex-negative societies, there exists marked prejudice against certain kinds of sexual behavior that are deemed abnormal (Glickman 2000). In contrast, sex-positive societies recognize and accept diversity in their members’ sexual practices and preferences, as well as the meanings they attach to sex and sexuality (Bullough, 1976; Glickman, 2000; Williams et al., 2013). Certainly, a society’s cultural attitude towards sexuality largely impacts how individuals think about, write about, discuss, and research sex, thus setting the framework for the construction of sexuality-related discourse.

United States culture can be described as overwhelmingly sex-negative. While there increasing trends towards sexual liberation and sex-positivity, this progress occurs in tandem with maintenance of the status quo (Jackson & Scott, 2004). For example: though there is increasing tolerance for premarital and “casual” sex, monogamy and heteronormativity continue to be reified; sexualization of the media coexists with concerns about its effect on youth; and egalitarian relationships are attempted while sexual double standards continue to exist. U.S. sex-

negativity is further exemplified by the morality inherent in the aforementioned discourses around female sexuality and society's restrictive mandates on women's sexual behavior; psychology's approach to the study of youth sexuality; and the status of sex education in the United States.

### **Sex-Negativity in Research**

The majority of research addressing sexuality in the lives of adolescents and young adults has adopted a sex-negative perspective (Harden, 2014; Russell, 2005; Tolman & McClelland, 2011). In general, research on youth sexuality assumes a “medicalized, reductionistic, and implicitly moralizing view of adolescent sexuality as risk behaviors that threaten social welfare and public health” (Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2004, p. 190-191). Guided by the *risk/victimization* discourse, researchers in this field overwhelmingly focus on the negative consequences of youthful sexual behavior, including pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, negative psychological consequences, and risk-taking behavior in other domains (Tolman & McClelland, 2011).

Research questions about youth sexuality typically ask, “what kinds of bad things happen when young people have sex?” (Harden, 2014). Other researchers ask the question, “what causes young people to have sex (which is unacceptable)?” Calling on society's construction of sexual behavior in adolescence as problematic and risky, youth sexuality research is typically justified by referencing its potential health risks (Harden, 2014; Russell, 2005). Further, with research that allows us to understand the correlates and predictors of youth sexual behavior, social interventions can be devised to control or extinguish it. Notably, the construction of pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease as health “risks” denies the possibility that some adolescents and young adults may knowingly and willingly engage in unprotected sex or choose to get

pregnant (Allen, 2007). Further, research on youth sexuality typically operationalizes sexual activity as sexual *behavior* and largely ignores other components of sexual activity and sexuality, such as desire, pleasure, attitudes, subjectivity, goals for participation, and contextual factors such as relationships (Harden, 2014).

### **Sex-Negativity in Sex Education**

Until the early 1900s, sex was considered a wholly private matter, unsuitable for public discussion (Huber & Firmin, 2014). Most discussion about sex occurred in the home, if it occurred at all. The content of these conversations was limited to physiology and the morals of sexual behavior. Social norms and traditional family values promoted abstinence until marriage. In the early 1900s, the social hygiene movement brought issues of sex and sexuality to the United States' social consciousness. Concerned with cleanliness and purity, public sex education was used as means to transmit information about and prevent sexually transmitted disease. Traditional sexual morality still prevailed in this context, however: marital sex was considered the most effective way to prevent immorality and disease.

In 1914, the National Education Association resolved to start a program of sex education in public schools for adolescents, beginning in Chicago (Huber & Firmin, 2014). Showing consistency with traditional values, early sex educators were concerned with correcting distorted ideas or information about sex, including the wild notion that “pleasure might be an acceptable motivation for sex” (Penland, 1981, p. 305). Self-control and sexual restraint were emphasized; sex was constructed as solely for procreation. Despite the conservative content of public school sex education, its opponents protested fiercely, insisting that *any* sex education would destroy youth innocence and unearth an inappropriate interest in sex (Huber & Firmin, 2014).

Little has progressed in terms of the messages disseminated within sex education from the 1880s to today. Despite the passage of 100 years, the content of sex education and the surrounding debate about the appropriateness of its existence have largely remained the same. Sex education at present is still largely concerned with the risks and dangers of youth sexuality, and forwards a moralistic agenda aimed at reducing youth sexual behavior (Bay-Cheng, 2003; Harden, 2014). At present, three major branches of risk-focused sex education persist: abstinence-only education, comprehensive sex education, and STD/HIV education (Kirby, 2008). Abstinence-only education, which is most closely tied to the traditional sexual morals of the late 1800s (i.e., promotes abstinence from sexual activity until marriage), has been found to be the least effective at reducing “risky” sexual behaviors among teens. Nonetheless, national and international policy continues to support these programs, even in the wake of the 2001 *Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health and Responsible Sexual Behavior* (U.S. Office of the Surgeon General & U.S. Office of Population Affairs, 2001), which called for application of effective sex education as indicated by scientific evidence (Russell, 2005). This further demonstrates the United States’ adherence to a particular sexual morality, even in spite of evidence demonstrating its limited influence reducing sexual “risk” behavior.

There has been some push for a more sex-positive approach to youth sex education. *The Surgeon General’s Call to Action* emphasizes that sexual health is inseparable from physical and mental health and that it is important throughout one’s lifespan (U.S. Office of the Surgeon General & U.S. Office of Population Affairs, 2001). Further, the *Call to Action* highlights that sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, and not merely reducible to sexual behavior—it also includes emotional, mental, and spiritual components. Sex educators also tend to endorse a holistic definition of sexuality (Preston, 2013). While some strive to implement a

sex-positive curriculum, research indicates that educators still see their primary teaching responsibilities as combating risk, and instilling in youth a sense of sexual morality.

Sex education has enormous influence on the construction of “normal” youth sexuality via the discourses it forwards (Allen, 2007). Allen (2007) argues that a focus on disease prevention and risk reduction limits the ways adolescents and young adults might enact their sexuality. Beyond conceptualizing sex as inherently risky, sex education paints “normal” youth sexuality as heterosexual, monogamous, and centered around penile-vaginal intercourse; individuals—especially women—who behave outside of this norm are stigmatized and othered (Bay-Cheng, 2003). This occurs through sex education’s general marginalization or complete omission of queer, nonmonogamous, or alternative desires, behaviors, and identities from its curricula.

### **The “Missing” Discourse of Desire**

Overall, the youth receiving this kind of risk-prevention sex education have found it insufficient at meeting their needs for information about desire, pleasure, and the “logistics” of sex (Allen, 2005, 2007; Forrest, Strange, Oakley, & Team, 2004; Hirst, 2004; Measor, Tiffin, & Miller, 2000). A discussion of desire and pleasure is largely absent from public sex education, especially for young women; further, a discourse of desire appears to be missing from most adults’ discussions of young women’s sexuality (Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006). When these subjects are approached, it is often only tentative, and hedged with a discussion of the potential risks and “consequences” (Fine, 1988). Fine (1988) argues that the inclusion of a discourse of desire in sex education curricula “would invite adolescents to explore what feels good and bad, desirable and undesirable, grounded in experiences, needs, and limits. Such a

discourse would release females from the dialects of victimization and pleasure, and would pose female adolescents as subjects of sexuality, initiators as well as negotiators” (p. 43).

Research in the past three decades has shown that desire also appears to be missing from many young women’s discussions of their own sexuality (e.g., Thompson, 1990; Tolman, 1994, 2000, 2002; Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). Some young women *do* articulate pleasure and desire, (Fine, 1988; Thompson, 1990; Tolman & Szalacha, 1999), but these narratives are often accompanied by discussions of risk and vulnerability (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). Many of the young women interviewed by Thompson (1990) who discussed their own pleasure as integral to their sexuality reported having sex-positive mothers who discussed sex and its potential pleasures—including their own experiences—with them. Notably, of the young women interviewed by Tolman (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999), those who endorsed a discourse of desire *without* an associated discourse of vulnerability tended to be White, heterosexual, of the middle- or upper-middle class, and have not experienced sexual abuse or violence. This suggests that valuing and communicating one’s desire and pleasure is inextricably bound to race, class, and sexual orientation, as well as parental styles of communication and lack of exposure to sexual violence, which are likely associated with those dimensions of diversity.

### **The Sex-Positive Movement**

The definition of sex-positivity as a concept and a movement has been evolving (Fahs, 2014; Glickman, 2000). Glickman (2000, para. 7) has noticed a shift in the definition of sex-positivity from the idea that “sex is good” or that “sex is a positive thing” to an individual’s process of “working towards a more positive relationship with sex.” This definition aptly recognizes: 1) that sex is inherently neither good nor bad; 2) that one’s sexuality is subjective; and 3) that one’s relationship with sex is constantly under development and capable of

improvement. A sex-positive approach also emphasizes and promotes sexual subjectivity and agency, by encouraging open communication in sexual and intimate relationships, fostering sexual self-reflection, and challenging existing (gendered) norms related to sexual expression (Gubrium & Shafer, 2014).

On an individual and societal level, adopting a sex-positive approach involves acknowledging and celebrating the vast cultural diversity in sexual practices while simultaneously recognizing and respecting individual variations in sexual preferences and meanings, and being willing to communicate openly with others about these differences (Williams, Prior, & Wegner, 2013). This understanding of sex-positivity has been adopted in popular media. On blogs and websites, sex-positivity has been described as “an attitude towards human sexuality that regards all consensual activities as fundamentally healthy and pleasurable and encourages sexual pleasure and experimentation” (e.g., Gabosch, 2014, para. 8). Feminist social media has recently described a sex-positive approach or attitude as containing three core components: 1) refraining from making moral judgments about others’ sexual behavior; 2) respecting others’ preferences; and 3) encouraging individuals to be active agents in learning which practices they do and do not enjoy (Fabello, 2014). Thus, individual (i.e., sexual self-reflection) and societal (i.e., acceptance of diversity) dimensions have become central to the definition of sex-positivity. As a result, advocacy for safe, consensual sex and comprehensive sex education has been identified as a major goal for the sex-positive movement (Gabosch, 2014).

Fahs (2014) has noted that the aims of the sex-positive movement have traditionally focused on *positive liberty*, or individuals’ freedom to diverse sexual expression and acceptance of that sexual diversity. She calls for sex-positivity to extend its goals to include securing

individuals' *negative liberty*—freedom from repressive regulations and requirements about their sexuality. For women, these negative liberties may include freedom from constructions of “normal sex” as heterosexual, requirements of body hair removal, and sexist ideas about what women consider sexually pleasurable. Fahs (2014) further argues that a sex-positive movement inclusive of negative liberty is crucially important for oppressed groups—such as women, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ individuals—who often experience less freedom from oppressive mandates.

### **Problems With Sex-Positivity**

Despite the movement's admirable goals, there are some potential dangers involved with adopting a sex-positive framework in educational, research and social contexts. First, the sex-positive movement may reify an artificial “specialness of sex” (Hawkes, 1996; S. Jackson & Scott, 2004; Lamb, 2010a). Granted profound individual and social significance through discourse, sex becomes a potential source of unease and preoccupation; of shame and pride; and of fear and fulfillment (Hawkes, 1996). The sex-positive movement places sexual freedom, pleasure, and self-understanding at the pinnacle of importance. But some feminists, like Lamb (2010a), wonder, “is the right to sexual pleasure so special and so important that it rivals all other rights?” (p. 302). Setting sexual fulfillment and authenticity as life goals and framing sex as something to be constantly improved upon can make sex a source of intense anxiety—particularly for young women, who are struggling to navigate these issues in a society that strictly polices their sexual expression (Jackson & Scott, 2004; Lamb, 2010a, 2010b). Paradoxically, writing about the difficulty women have achieving a sense of “healthy” or “positive” sexuality may further preserve the idea of sex as special (Lamb, 2010a).

With an emphasis on sexual behavior, the sex-positive movement also risks excluding those individuals who choose not to participate in sexual activity or who identify as asexual. If sex-positivity promotes sex as “natural” and, therefore, “healthy” (Hawkes, 1996, p. 6), it may implicitly suggest that those who do not engage in sex in any form are fundamentally *unhealthy*. Some proponents of the sex-positive movement explicitly recognize that understanding and advocating for one’s own sexual preferences includes preferences to not engage in sex (White, 2012). White (2012, para. 3) notes that modern sex-positivity is about “owning our desires,” but is also about “owning our lack of desire.” Without such explicit acceptance, sex-positivity may effectively alienate and discourage sexual diversity, rather than embrace and celebrate it.

Some scholars also find issue with placing emphasis on “good” sex (Jackson & Scott, 2004). “Good” sex is often construed as “the bedrock of getting and keeping your man (or woman)”; further, one’s ability to “give good sex” is identified as a measure of success (Hawkes, 1996, p. 6). Young women, then, are simultaneously supposed to abide by social mandates that limit their sexual expression and experience, but become “good” enough at it to attract and keep a partner. Jackson and Scott (2004) note that little empirical research has been conducted investigating the concept of “good” sex and how it relates to individuals’ actual sexual practices or wider social practices. They articulate that researchers “need to ask what counts as ‘good sex,’ who is defining it, why it is thought of as important, [and] what forms of cultural or social capital accrete around it” (p. 244).

**A need for critical analysis.** Moreover, sex-positivity without critical analysis is potentially harmful—particularly for women (Fabello, 2014). Fabello (2014) warns that labeling any decision an individual makes around sexuality as inherently empowering because it represents “choice” is problematic for multiple reasons. Echoing Lamb’s (2010a; Lamb &

Peterson, 2011) argument regarding subjective empowerment, Fabello (2014) notes that individuals cannot untangle their sexual behavior from the influences of socialization. Thus, we must consider why certain sexual preferences (e.g., dressing in miniskirts) exist, and how they may or may not be influenced by societal messages about what is “sexy.” Further, she highlights that just because a sexual preference (e.g., having sex “doggy style”) may be personally empowering, it does not mean that it empowers women as a group—especially when that behavior fetishizes the cultural status quo of women’s submissiveness to men. Fabello (2014), calling on the scholarship of Douglas (2010) and Levy (2006), finally cautions that the sex-positive movement, which advocates for women’s sexual freedom and flexibility, may actually constitute “new sexism” rather than sexual liberation. In essence, for women, uncritical sex-positivity may be eerily similar to the troublesome *permissive* discourse. With growing pressure and expectation for women to engage in adventurous sex (which most often serves male pleasure), the “new ideal” of a “sexually liberated” woman may be no less limiting than discourses that dictate women remain chaste and virginal (Fabello, 2014).

Finally, cultural sex-positivity has the potential to create a new, limiting discourse for young women: that of the idealized, agentic, and empowered *supergirl* (Lamb, 2010a; Lamb & Peterson, 2011). This discourse portrays a young woman who understands her sexuality and the social structures that impinge upon it, advocates for her pleasure, and makes empowered decisions regarding sex. Beyond raising the aforementioned “what is empowerment?” question (see: Fabello, 2014; Gill, 2012; Lamb, 2010a, 2010b; Lamb & Peterson, 2011; Peterson, 2010), this narrative requires of young women the kind of self-actualized relationship with sex that adult women struggle to realize (Lamb, 2010a). By placing such complex demands on young women, sex-positivity may imply that women who do not fit this lofty ideal are inadequate or somehow

*doing it wrong*. Further, a *supergirl* discourse does not allow for *ambivalence* in young women's sexual experience, which is arguably normative (Lamb & Peterson, 2011). Muehlenhard and Peterson (2005) recognize that there are numerous dimensions along which sex may be both wanted and/or unwanted, including wanting sexual activity vs. wanting the outcomes or consequences of sexual activity (e.g., pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, closeness and intimacy); and wanting sex vs. consenting to sex. Conversations around sexual ambivalence may be important for young women, as they reveal the complexities that exist around sexual decision-making and the nature of "authentic" sexuality raised by the sex-positive movement and the theoretical *supergirl* discourse.

Lamb (2010a) notes that theorists' definitions of authenticity frame this brand of sexuality as agentic, subjective (vs. objectified), and embodied (see: Thompson, 1990; Tolman, 2000, 2002). However, this definition may create a double-bind for women: the authentically sexual young woman engages in critical self-reflection and comes to understand her own desires and preferences (Lamb, 2010a). When she realizes these truths, she may find that she prefers a kind of sexuality that reflects one or more of the limiting discourses culturally available to her. By this, she risks being labeled inauthentic for buying into the kinds of sexuality deemed appropriate for and marketed to young women. Clearly, there is great difficulty—and perhaps impossibility—in the task of constructing, understanding, and expressing one's sexuality separate from culture. To combat this issue, Lamb (2010b) suggests providing young women with the knowledge and skills necessary to critique cultural messages around sexuality and make informed choices about what might be authentic and empowering for them. Another solution may be to encourage young women to consider what sexual behaviors and identities do *not* feel authentic or personally empowering.

## **Sex-Positive Research**

Over the last 30 years, there has been a small, but influential group of researchers who have abandoned psychology's focus on the risks, dangers, and negative consequences of youth sexuality (Harden, 2014; Russell, 2005; Tolman & McClelland, 2011). Beginning with the groundbreaking works of Fine (1988) and Thompson (1990), a growing assembly of progressive pioneers have investigated the positive experiences, characteristics, and outcomes of sex in adolescence and emerging adulthood (Harden, 2014; Tolman & McClelland, 2011). In stark contrast to the *risk* discourse, these researchers have adopted a view of adolescent sexuality as normative, healthy, and developmentally appropriate. This approach to research has focused on issues such as expanded conceptualizations of sexual behavior (i.e., beyond penile-vaginal intercourse); positive sexual identity development and sexual subjectivity; and sexual socialization, including the influence of peers and media, as well as the psychological and behavioral correlates of hooking up vs. romantic relationships (Tolman & McClelland, 2011).

It is important to recognize that the body of research examining the positive constructions and consequences of youth sexuality is small relative to that which positions sex as negative and risky (Tolman & McClelland, 2011). Those invested in the understanding of sexuality as normative and healthy have advocated for a proliferation of sex-positive research (see: Jackson & Scott, 2004; Russell, 2005; Tolman & McClelland, 2011). This research seems particularly important for understanding women's sexuality, considering the problematization of youth sexuality (Harden, 2014) and the level of restriction set on young women's sexual behavior by popular discourse (Tolman, 2000).

**The reciprocal relationship between discourse and research.** There exists a reciprocal relationship between discourse and research: the existing discourses around women's sexuality inform how it is conceptualized and what research questions are asked, while corresponding research findings and conclusions related to female sexuality shape and influence the prevailing discussions around it. This relationship is clearly exemplified in research around adolescent sexuality, which is informed and legitimized by the *risk/victimization* discourse, and the conclusions of which are used to hypostatize sexuality as something risky and dangerous for young women.

Further, once a discourse (or set of discourses) has been substantiated in the research literature, further analyses may fail to identify other existing narratives. Depending on the research questions asked, the methods employed, and the populations sampled, research on young adult female sexuality runs the risk of further reifying existing discourses, while potentially ignoring others that have yet to be identified. Qualitative, phenomenological, feminist, and sex-positive research can be implemented to combat this issue. This kind of research prioritizes women's voices and first-person perspectives, which have traditionally been ignored in academic and scientific circles (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). This approach takes seriously and aims to understand women's experiences that remain largely ignored in the culture at large, and can help concretize knowledge about women's lived realities. Moreover, this methodological approach refrains from problematizing young women's sexuality and allows for the consideration and discussion of all expressions of sexuality, rather than relying on a restrictive heteronormative definition of sex. Research utilizing this approach, which starts with and analyzes young women's personal narratives, can shed light on the variety of discourses operating in these women's lives. Thus, qualitative, phenomenological, feminist, sex-positive

research allows us to learn from young women what is currently unknown and risks remaining so (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999).

**Open discussion: changing discourses and empowering women.** A number of researchers emphasize that women may be able to critique and move beyond the limited and limiting discourses of female sexuality available to them through opportunities to discuss the ambiguities and complexities of sexuality in an open and supportive environment (e.g., Bay-Cheng et al., 2013; Tolman, 1994). Further, these scholars emphasize that a more sex-positive sexuality can be cultivated through such discussions. Feminist researchers tend to agree that “real” empowerment requires a critical understanding of social forces acting upon the individual (Lamb & Peterson, 2011; Tolman, 1994). Tolman (1994) argues that, through knowledge and critique of these discourses, young women can become empowered to practice more embodied sexuality in their own lives; further, their new understandings and actions can instigate social change for women around issues of sexuality-related oppression.

Sharing stories is instrumental in sexual socialization, as well as in establishing (and thus, changing) perceived norms (DeLamater & MacCorquodale, 1979; Lottes & Kuriloff, 1994; Paul & Hayes, 2002). When women do not share about sexual experiences that do not fit with prevailing discourses, those dominant constructions are reified and maintained (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Further, women whose sexuality does not meet society’s standards may feel shame or guilt over their sexual behavior (or lack thereof). Beyond gaining a more nuanced understanding of the limitations society places on women’s sexuality, sharing and listening to other women’s stories, experiences, and ideas can validate women’s fears, curiosities, pleasure, and desires, and promote sexual self-understanding (Tolman, 1994). Challenging and discussing alternatives to

“sanctioned stories” is critical (Tolman, 2000, p. 70): this kind of open discussion around sex may be able to shape or change prevailing discourses around female sexuality.

College-age individuals, who are in the developmental stage of *emerging adulthood* are in the process of negotiating their individual identities (particularly around sexuality), and may be most open to new ideas and perspectives (Arnett, 2000; Austrian, 2008; Winslow, Franzini, & Hwang, 1992). Residential college campuses are prime sites for sexuality research: sexual norms and mores are socially constructed, transmitted, and reinforced within a relatively closed community (Wonslow, Franzini, & Hwang, 1992; Paul & Hayes, 2002). This makes college-age women an ideal population with whom to implement an intervention aimed at actively identifying, critiquing, and expanding the discourses that influence young adult women’s sexuality.

### **The “Finding What Feels Good” Workshop**

The “Finding What Feels Good” workshop is an opportunity to talk with young adult women about “good” sex from a sex-positive framework. The purpose of the workshop is to understand how young adult women conceptualize “good” sex, invite them to reflect on the origins of these constructions in their own lives, and encourage them to think more broadly about what “good” sex could be. The objectives for this workshop include: 1) determination of young adult women’s existing ideas about “good” sex; 2) identification of the dominant discourses of female sexuality operating in these women’s lives; 3) critique of these discourses; 4) discussion of wider possibilities for sexual expression; and 5) envisioning new discourses for “good” sex in young women’s lives.

The aims of this study are to: 1) understand the discourses around female sexuality that currently operate in the lives of women at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) and color

their constructions of “good” sex; 2) implement the *Finding What Feels Good* Workshop with females at IUP, providing an opportunity for participants to critique existing discourses around female sexuality and discuss wider possibilities for sexual expression from a sex-positive framework; 3) uncover whether the implementation of the FWFG workshop shapes or changes the kinds of discourses around female sexuality that young women at IUP endorse in their discussions of “good” sex; and 4) determine whether participation in the FWFG workshop increases women’s sense of sexual subjectivity. Phenomenological research of this nature, which focuses on young women’s voices, examines young women’s personal narratives, promotes discussion and acceptance of diverse possibilities of sexual expression, and encourages sexual-self reflection is both feminist and sex-positive.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The research discussed in this chapter is that which explicitly examines how discourses of female sexuality operate in the lives of women and are present in their sexuality narratives. Evidence of each of the five prominent discourses of female sexuality identified in the introduction (i.e., the *madonna/whore* discourse, the *romance* narrative, the *permissive* discourse, the *risk/victimization* discourse, and the discourse of *desire*) is discussed here. The ways that these discourses are employed to control and limit women's sexuality (e.g., through the sexual double standard, slut/prude-shaming, and the gatekeeper role) are highlighted. Issues related to diversity and intersectionality are also addressed. Though separated into five distinct sections, multiple discourses are often present and discussed in individual articles. The review of literature related to discourse is presented in a way that encourages an appreciation of the connections and overlaps among various discourses.

Following these five sections on discourse, which highlight the need for intervention and change, research related to the usefulness of sexuality education and workshops is presented. Workshops that take a sex-positive stance and have been particularly influential for women are highlighted.

#### **Evidence and Implications of the Madonna/Whore Discourse**

##### **Ever-Present Pressure**

Using qualitative analysis, Bryant and Schofield (2007) examined the relationships between discourses of female sexuality and women's actual sexual practice, as well as how bodily experience is implicated in the construction of sexual identity and subjectivity. The authors highlight how discourse "becomes a 'real thing'" (p. 330) through the embodied practice

of sex. However, rather than being passive objects puppeted by discourse, Bryant and Schofield (2007) consider women to be “self-reflexive agents who interact with prevailing sexual discourse in the making of their own sexual subjectivities” (p. 331).

The researchers conducted 75-150 minute semi-structured life history interviews with 18 metropolitan Australian women (ages 19-79). Following Labov (1982) and Reissman (1993), participants’ interview data was analyzed for distinct narrative structures, and the overarching “story line” for each woman was identified (see: Dowsett, 1996). Then, each participant’s life story was discussed in terms of research themes, yielding 18 ‘analytic abstracts’ (Denzin, 1989). The abstracts were then compared regarding their overall themes and storylines (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). In their paper, the authors presented four case studies that best exemplified the results of their analyses: Deidre (79), Nicole (26), Kathleen (43), and Elena (63). Through their analysis of life story interviews, the researchers found the *madonna/whore* discourse to be present in all of the women’s narratives. Because she is closest in age to the proposed study’s participants, described here is Nicole’s case.

Nicole consciously and actively denounced the ‘proper’ conventions of female sexuality put forth by the *madonna* discourse, and instead pursued a kind of agentic, pleasure-driven sexuality indicative of the *whore* (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). Her active, predatory approach to sex was similar to the kind of “masculine” sexuality made available to women in the *permissive* discourse. For example, she remarked that she often engaged in “sex for the sake of sex” (p. 328) and had little interest in pursuing romantic relationships. Nicole actively decides when, with whom and under what circumstances she has sex. Recollecting a past encounter, she noted, “I had a date with a guy. We had nothing in common whatsoever. I thought, ‘Oh well, may as well

make the night worth while [by having sex]. So I [did]" (p. 328). This agentic stance allows her to position herself as a sexual subject (i.e., the "one doing the fucking," p. 328).

Her agency appeared tied to a direct rejection of the *madonna/whore* discourse and (unnoted by the authors) the *romance* narrative. (Bryant & Schofield, 2007). Recalling losing her virginity, she remarked:

I wasn't in a serious long-term relationship and I really wasn't gonna wait for Mr. Right to come along and that whole thing ... I don't know if you remember being a teenager and the whole virginity thing, and you have to wait for someone you love, and you have to wait to get married and 'are you a slut?', 'aren't you a slut?', 'and what am I?, should I?, shouldn't I?' [laughs]. There were just too many questions and too many 'ifs' and I just thought, 'I'm tired of wondering when and how and who'. So I'd rather take control of it and do it on my terms and just get rid of it.'" (p. 327-328).

However, her stories of sexual exploration and conquest were often tagged with regret and self-*slut-shaming*, demonstrating that these discourses still influence how Nicole structures her sexual identity. Despite these feelings of shame, her commitment to developing a sense of subjectivity is clear. Thinking on a recent sexual encounter, she reported,

"I'm always doing it for the wrong reasons. I'm always doing it for a quick fix. And the quick fix always turns into a massive guilt run that lasts for a couple of days, and it's just, oh {sigh} ... Friday night, I was so proud of myself that I finally got him; put a little notch on my belt. And then Saturday morning, I felt terrible ... because he's married and it wasn't romantic ... but I can't now go back and start analyzing what I think is a slut." (p. 328).

Bryant and Schofield (2007) highlight how Nicole's process of becoming sexually subjective and developing a sexual identity as "the same as a man" (p. 329) is exactly that: a process and an ongoing project. Rather than being one static sexual self—limited by discourse—it is Nicole's consistent engagement in sexual practice that allows her to rework and renegotiate her sexual sense of self and selfhood (i.e., identity and subjectivity). At times, this self-understanding and subjectivity is hindered by traditional discourses of female sexuality (i.e., *madonna/whore, romance*). However, through her continued sexual practice, Nicole continuously works to create her sense of self as equal and agentic.

Bryant and Schofield (2007) argue that this embodied sexual engagement can be transformative for women's individual sense of themselves—as well as for cultural patterns of sexual activity and the surrounding discourse. The authors conclude that, through sexual practice, women can construct a sense of sexual self and subjectivity, better learn about their likes and dislikes, and discover the kinds of relationships that will best serve their desires. Though women's sexual behaviors are not simple reductions of discourse, many researchers argue for the importance of discourse critique to increase women's sense of empowerment and subjectivity (e.g., Bay-Cheng et al., 2013; Lamb & Peterson, 2011; Tolman, 1994, 2000). I propose that open discussion of the discourses that hinder subjective sexual practice—as well as a broad consideration of what activities are possible and what might be "good" for them personally—may be an important intervention for increasing women's sexual subjectivity.

### **Prescribed Passivity**

Gavey and McPhillips (1999) used a feminist poststructuralist form of discourse analysis to shed light on the sociocultural forces influencing women's experiences with and use of condoms in heterosexual encounters. The authors conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 New

Zealand women of predominantly European descent (ages 22-43). These women primarily came from middle-class, educated backgrounds, and were recruited by word-of-mouth. In 1-1.5 hour interviews, participants were asked questions about their experiences with condoms, their views about condoms, how they imagined others considered condoms, and their (hetero)sexual behavioral practices and relationships. Interviews took a more “conversational” approach, intended to facilitate open and detailed responding. In addition to asking questions, the interviewer would share her elementary analyses, thus blurring the “boundary between data collection and analysis” (p. 359). Gavey and McPhillips (1999) found this technique to be useful in that it encouraged reflection and further discussion, and strengthened the analytic process and their confidence in emergent discourses. The authors acknowledged that discourses revealed in these exchanges were co-constructed, but sought to place precedence on interviewee accounts.

The form of discourse analysis utilized by Gavey and McPhillips (1999) is influenced by Foucaultian ideas of discourse (1972) and feminist poststructuralist theory (e.g., Weedon, 1987). It aims to uncover the ways participants’ experience is constituted within broader sociocultural meanings, and seriously considers gendered power dynamics (Gill, 1995; Weedon, 1987). Their approach rejects the essential notion of objective knowledge, and instead attempts to “generate new ways of making sense of the ‘ordinary but troubling’” (Gavey & McPhillips, 1999, p. 354). Underlying their work is an aim to produce new understandings that facilitate social change.

Drawing on two interviews, Gavey & McPhillips (1999) demonstrated that the *madonna/whore* discourse (named by the authors as a “discourse of heterosexual feminine sexuality”) and the *romance* discourse could play a role in women’s use of condoms—even in women who actively and outwardly reject romance. Christine discussed an encounter with a man she was forming a relationship with, in which she did not use a condom despite having one and

feeling strongly about using condoms in general. She noted that this was “tied up with kind of um not finding it easy to talk about sex anyway generally, you know. And not finding it easy to kind of just bring up the subject and be overt about it” (p. 357). Further, she reflects: “condoms are very unromantic...” (p. 358); “...me being the passive female he would’ve made some kind of move... [but] “he didn’t do it either [i.e., suggest using a condom]” (p. 358-359). Here, Christine demonstrated passivity, which is indicated as the acceptable role for women in the *madonna/whore* dichotomy and the *romance* narrative: she expected her partner to “make a move” to use a condom, but when he didn’t, she did not speak up about it. This difficulty was tied to ideas that women should follow the desires of men and trust their knowledge; ideas that women should not be overt about sex or their desires; and ideas that condoms are unromantic. Further, by taking control (i.e., speaking up about using a condom) and acting ‘unfeminine,’ Christine would risk jeopardizing the budding love between her and her partner (Gavey & McPhillips, 1999).

The authors further demonstrated that, by positioning themselves within the *madonna/whore* and *romance* discourses, women may lose their sense of sexual subjectivity (Gavey & McPhillips, 1999). In her narrative concerning her first sexual encounter with someone she went on to form a relationship with, Michelle positioned herself as a sexual object to whom unprotected sex ‘just happened.’ She noted, “I didn’t actually think it would get that far... [it was] a lot more sudden than I’d thought it was going to be... the whole thing just sort of happened so quickly that there wasn’t really the opportunity to say, hey where’s your condom” (p. 362). Michelle saw herself as a passive observer of events and recipient of activity, rather than active constructor of her sexual reality. Gavey and McPhillips (1999) conclude by suggesting that in acting as a sexual subject and taking control (i.e., by suggesting to use

condoms), and thus, by acting against the *madonna* and *romance* discourses, women may lose the identified rewards of romance (i.e., love, protection) and disrupt their sexual sense of self (e.g., as “good”). So, women guided by these discourses may see it as being in their best interest to be passive in sexual situations.

## **Evidence and Implications of the Romance Narrative**

### **Objectified by Romance**

In 1994, Deborah Tolman embarked on a program of research analyzing the narratives of 30 adolescent (ages 15-18) urban and suburban girls in public high schools to learn about young women’s sexuality and desire (e.g., Tolman, 1994, 2000, Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). Her work is based on the “radical” assumption “that a normative expectation for adolescent girls is that they can and should experience sexual desire” (Tolman, 2000, p. 70). Irrespective of whether they should or actually do engage in sexual behavior, Tolman argues that young women should be able to recognize and name this important aspect of the self. To elicit sexuality narratives, Tolman engaged each participant in a 45-minute to 2-hour one-on-one, semi-structured interview (Tolman, 1994; Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). In each interview, Tolman (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999) asked a standard set of questions intended to gather narrative data about young women’s subjective experiences of and thoughts about sexuality, including sexual pleasure and desire, sexual fantasies, and feeling sexy. Standard, direct questions were followed by unique and individualized follow-up prompts intended to let the participant know that she has been heard, and enable her to further elaborate on her story (Tolman, 1994; Tolman & Szalacha, 1999).

To analyze her participants’ stories, Tolman (1994, 2000, Tolman & Szalacha, 1999) used a feminist narrative analysis called *The Listening Guide* (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller, & Argyris, 1989), which aims to uncover women’s voices that have been silenced within an

androcentric culture. This method of analysis enables the researcher to examine how the interview context and relationship between speaker and listener influences the speakers' narratives (Milnes, 2004); it also capitalizes on the reader or listener's ability to recognize her own perspectives and identities related to the subject of discussion, in an effort to remain clear about the speaker's perspective and avoid bias or "voicing over" participants (Tolman, 2000). After transcribing the interviews, Tolman (1994, 2000, Tolman & Szalacha, 1999) reread each transcript four times in search of four distinct voices: the *voice of the self*; an *erotic voice* (i.e., speaking of one's own sexual feelings); a *voice of the body* (i.e., an acknowledgement and description of one's own bodily feelings); and a *voice of response* (i.e., girls' thoughts, feelings, and actions in response to their sexual desire). By underlining areas of the transcript in which each voice was heard, Tolman was able to create a "map" of participants' sexuality related to her perspective of youthful female sexuality as normative.

Working from her body of interviews, Tolman (2000) explored the extent to which the romance narrative informed the personal conceptualizations of sexuality endorsed by one participant—Isabel—17-year-old, white, middle-class heterosexual female. Isabel's desires and fantasies were informed by the discourse of *romance*. She described longing and searching for a boyfriend, who would help her make sense of her own sexuality. Isabel confessed to worrying that she may be asexual: she is alarmed by her lack of sexual attraction to others, but still fantasizes about being romantically involved with a male partner. Isabel's fantasies are devoid of sexual desire. For her, romance is the basis of attraction and the impetus for any kind of "sexual" activity. She describes:

I have this little fantasy world where um, everything is just totally romantic and I like wanted to meet this guy who's in college, who's just absolutely gorgeous, and he's just

going to be incredible... and we'd just go out and um, and have this wonderful time, and, and we'd just lie close together, but we wouldn't do anything.... and I'd feel like I was deeply connected to him. But it never goes beyond that. It never goes like, and then we'd strip off our clothes or something. I mean, maybe we would, but it wouldn't be like, as in any kind of sexual, any like, a deeply sexual connotation, like we were going to have intercourse. (p. 75)

Notably, an erotic voice was heard only occasionally throughout Isabel's entire narrative (Tolman, 2000). A voice of the body surfaced often, but it was an objectified—rather than a subjective—voice. When asked about what it is like to *feel* sexy, Isabel named her experience of *looking* sexy to others. She states, “I just feel sexy, and, I know that everybody must be just looking at me like, ‘Oh wow, she’s like so beautiful.’ ...the girls would say that and the boys were like, ‘Oh, maybe I should ask her out.’” For Isabel, “sexy” is a state of being that is tied to others’ perceptions of her; it is not about her own bodily feelings or desires. Tolman (2000) suggests that the absence of an erotic voice and the objectification of her voice of the body is tied to Isabel’s investment in the *romance* narrative—a discourse of female sexuality in which the female role is inherently that of “object to be desired,” and conquered, and in which women are granted no sexual agency or desire of their own. In this way, Isabel is “socialized into objectifying her own body” (p. 74).

Tolman (2000) argues that, by organizing their own sexuality around the romance narrative, young women are trained into and experience themselves as sexual objects to be obtained and used, rather than as agents of their desires who own and subjectively experience their own bodies. She notes that Isabel, like most other young women interviewed, has not had opportunities to speak with her female peers or adult models about her sexual desires, fantasies,

and questions. She suggests that engaging young women in critique of “sanctioned stories” and discussing alternative discourses for sexuality could be a crucial intervention in empowering women to enhance young women’s sexual subjectivity (p. 78).

### **Romance as a Route to the Sexual Double Standard**

Using semi-structured interviews, Kirkman and colleagues (1998) examined the extent to which 57 Australian adolescents (ages 16-18; 30 female) endorsed the *romance* narrative in descriptions of sexual relationships, and how this discourse relates to adolescents’ condom use. For each participant, an interview was conducted by a same-sex young person. Rather than inquiring about the personal experiences of the participant, interviewers asked about the sexualities of “young people” in general, or those in their grade. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and subject to two analyses: the interview transcripts as a group were analyzed for overall themes, including Relationships, Condoms, Safe Sex, Reputation, Sex Concerns, and Life Concerns; then, individual interview transcripts were analyzed to find evidence of the romance narrative and discern how personal meanings related to sexuality are contextualized within it.

Though not the only discourse present in adolescents’ discussions of sexuality, Kirkman and colleagues (1998) found that *romance* predominated in the youths’ narratives around female sexuality: overall, they situated women’s sexual experiences and ideas about sexuality within a romantic quest for love, in which men and women have specific roles. Female and male participants endorsed that young women’s sexual behavior is justified as an expression of love and intimacy within a committed relationship, or as part of a quest for love. (This lies in stark contrast to young men, for whom sex is merely a quest for physical pleasure; a relationship is simply an outlet for their sex drive.) As part of this discourse, young women are not actually

interested in sex. As Louise reflects on her female friends who have lost their virginity, she states, “The most common mistake [is that] they think they’re in love with the guy, and they just ... get used ... most of them regret it” (para. 49). Peter states, “I think they do it because they do love the guy more than anything else. But I don’t think it’s got great importance to them.”

The sexual double standard flourishes within the *romance* narrative (Kirkman et al., 1998). In the interviews, sexually active young women were stigmatized as *tarts*, *whores*, *sluts*, and *sleazes*, while sexually-active adolescent men were almost always glorified as *legends*, *studs*, *heroes*, and ‘*cool*’ (note: they also garnered the label of *sleaze*; para. 77). Participants were able to identify how the sexual double standard is used to police young women’s sexuality by influencing their sexual reputation. Within this framework, all sexual decisions made by young women come with the risk of shaming. As Jessica states, “Guys don’t really have reputations.” But as Sophie explains,

People don’t look at a girl with a great deal of respect if she sleeps around. She’ll get a bad reputation if she does that. Um, I guess it’s a kind of catch 22 for a girl in a lot of situations: If they don’t have sex they’re called a prude or whatever, you know; if they do, they get a reputation. (para. 87)

Further, the participants’ endorsement of the *romance* narrative highlighted both women’s passivity and submission in sexual encounters, as well as their contradictory role as gatekeeper (Kirkman et al., 1998). While young women are supposed to be responsive to their male partners’ powerful sex drive to show their love, they are also positioned as responsible for controlling it. Though she may be free to say “no,” she shouldn’t, for fear of losing love or being prude-shamed.

A “discourse of safe sex” (i.e., the *risk/victimization* discourse) also emerged within the adolescents’ discussions of sexual relationships and experiences as they noted the importance of condom use for safe sex. However, this was found to be incompatible with the *romance* narrative. Condoms could be used to prevent premature pregnancy; this is arguably consistent with the *romance* narrative, in which the couple might eventually procreate. However, participants saw using condoms to prevent sexually transmitted disease as unnecessary, because in a romantic relationship, monogamy is assumed and partners are expected to trust that the other is faithful and ‘clean.’ Yet, even the use of condoms to prevent pregnancy is undermined by the *romance* narrative, because she demonstrates her commitment to and trust in her partner by not demanding that he wear one. Further, a young woman should not carry a condom, because it demonstrates too-brazen an interest in sex (vs. love and romance), and puts her at risk for slut-shaming.

### **Evidence and Implications of the Permissive Discourse**

#### **More Options, but Few Choices**

Milnes (2004) examined how nine heterosexual young mothers (ages 16-24) from the U.K. considered and narrated their sexuality and experiences of motherhood. After conducting narrative interviews with participants in the locations of their choice, Milnes (2004) used The Listening Guide (Brown et al., 1989) to analyze their narratives. She noted that several participants invoked the *permissive* discourse (Hollway, 1984) while openly denouncing aspects of the *romance* narrative, and presented themselves as invoking a more “masculine” sexuality: promiscuous, predatory, and engaging in casual sexual relationships.

However, the *romance* narrative still operated in many of these women’s narrative accounts of their sexual experiences. For example, Natalie noted that, “to a lot of other people

[her promiscuous behavior] was... being a tart or whatever, but I don't see it like that, not when ... the male ... can get away with it" (Milnes, 2004, p. 159). She, like the other women in this study, experienced stigmatization for having sex outside of monogamous, long-term relationships. Invoking the sexual double standard, Natalie is still a "tart" to most; even if she can engage in the same sexual behaviors as males, she experiences social ridicule for it. Moreover, even the women in this study who self-identified as promiscuous were guilty of perpetuating the sexual double standard. For example, Abby described both herself and female peers who demonstrated "masculine" sexuality as women who had "been round't estate a few times" (p. 167). Though the *permissive* discourse opens a range of sexual behaviors not typically available to young women, Milnes (2004) highlights how the *romance* narrative's definition of what is "appropriate" leads to negative social consequences for these women's sexual behavior.

Milnes (2004) finds that her participants' narratives also demonstrate how the *permissive* discourse can constrain young women's sexuality in a magnitude equal to the *romance* narrative. She demonstrates how Abby positions herself as a promiscuous "bad" girl, whose sexuality lies in stark contrast to the "good" girls who avoid sex outside of monogamous, long-term relationships (i.e., who follow the *romance* narrative and *madonna* discourse). As promiscuity is the norm in her community and "good" girls are denigrated as "tight" or "frigid," she feels compelled to explain herself whenever she says no to sex or demonstrates behavior inconsistent with the *permissive* discourse. As promiscuous sexual behavior warrants slut-shaming from the framework of the *romance* narrative (and *madonna* discourse), conservative sexuality warrants prude-shaming when operating from the *permissive* discourse.

However, the *romance* narrative also surfaced in positive ways within these women's discourses: many of the participants' most positive encounters occurred in the context of a

monogamous, long-term, loving and committed relationship characterized by romance, trust, commitment, and intimacy (Milnes, 2004). It was commonly noted that, since finding “Mr. Right,” the women interviewed could now truly enjoy sex in ways that they did not when these conditions were not met. Milnes (2004) argues that, while organizing their experiences from this framework may currently serve these women well, it is important to be mindful of the kinds of limits and pressures the *romance* narrative places on female sexuality. While the women in this study invoked both the *permissive* discourse and *romance* narrative in framing their sexuality, Milnes (2004) suggests that her participants did not see the possibility of a “middle ground” between the two: they were pressured to conform either to the mandates of promiscuity or girlfrendhood. Sexual liberation and equality for women, Milnes (2004) argues, is about freedom to experiment without fear of consequence, rather than freedom to behave in traditionally masculine ways.

### **Evidence and Implications of the Risk/Victimization Discourse**

#### **Risk, Victimization, and Exposure to Violence**

Tolman and Szalacha (1999) combined qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis to elucidate the ways in which race, class, and exposure to sexual violence influence how women experience and act on their desire. Tolman (1996) notes that urban girls are often stereotyped as hypersexual, while suburban girls are typically considered to be relatively asexual. A secondary aim of this study was to challenge these racialized and classist notions of sexuality (Tolman and Szalacha, 1999).

Tolman and Szalacha's (1999) analyses were conducted using the same pool of 30 interviews with urban and suburban adolescent females as previously described (see: Tolman, 1994, 2000). Within the interviews, participants were identified as having experienced sexual

violence by answering the question, “Has anything bad ever happened to you that has to do with sex that you would like to tell me about?” (p. 18). Of the 15 urban girls, eight reported sexual violation. Of the 15 suburban girls, 7 reported sexual violation. To elucidate participants’ social class locations, participants were asked to discuss their families and social contexts. From the interviews, it was determined that all urban girls were from poor or working-class backgrounds, while all of the suburban girls were from middle- or upper-middle-class backgrounds. Of the urban girls, seven identified as Black, three identified as Latina, and five identified as White. Of the suburban girls, 14 identified as White and one identified as Latina.

Working from her initial qualitative four-voice analysis of participant narratives, Tolman and Szalacha (1999) elucidate differences between how urban (predominantly non-white; poor or working-class) and suburban (predominantly white; middle- or upper-middle class) girls manage their desire. Urban participants understood their desire as a source of vulnerability: they endorsed a sense of agency in self-protection, ultimately sacrificing pleasure for safety from dangers such as pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, and a soiled reputation (i.e., invoking the *risk/victimization* discourse). Inez described how her “mind [is] lookin’ towards [her] body” (p. 15) in an effort to protect herself from her own desire. However, the suburban participants considered their desire to be a source of pleasure, but acted to suppress those sexual feelings due to internalized messages about what is and is not appropriate feminine sexual behavior (i.e., drawing on the *madonna/whore* dichotomy). Emily described feeling “self-conscious” about admitting that she “needs to have [her] desires fulfilled” (p. 16). The authors interpreted this difference as resulting from the girls’ social locations, and the resultant differences in the consequences of exploring one’s sexuality: while minority, lower-class urban girls are more likely to live in dangerous, resource-poor environments where the consequences of responding to

desire could lead to serious economic, physical, educational, and social consequences, white, upper-class suburban girls live in a comparatively safe, resource-rich environment in which material consequences are less threatening, but acting on one's desire poses internal and psychological conflict.

Tolman and Szalacha (1999) then subjected the girls' desire narratives to thematic coding, using the themes and categories that they had learned were significant from the participants themselves (i.e., *interpersonal relationships*, *social relationships*, *personal identity*, *physical*, *psychological*, and *other*). All narratives were double-blind coded by each researcher for its overall theme: experience of desire as *vulnerability*; experience of desire as *pleasure*; or experience of desire as *both vulnerability and pleasure* (interrater reliability: Cohen's Kappa = .87). Narratives were also identified by whether they were told by: 1) a suburban girl who had not reported experiencing sexual violence; 2) a suburban girl who had reported experiencing sexual violence; 3) an urban girl who had not reported experiencing sexual violence; or 4) an urban girl who had reported experiencing sexual violence.

Of the 128 narratives identified from the 30 interviews (controlling for differences in the number of narratives told by each participant), 46.9% described desire as *vulnerability*; 28.9% described desire as *pleasure*; and 24.2% described desire as *both vulnerability and pleasure* (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). The authors found that suburban girls told significantly more *pleasure* narratives than the urban girls (37.3% vs. 17%). Further, using regression modeling, the researchers determined that suburban girls who had not experienced sexual violence told significantly more *pleasure* narratives than the other three groups of girls (who shared 2.8 times more *vulnerability* and *both vulnerability and pleasure* narratives).

Using the same qualitative analytic method as before, Tolman and Szalacha (1999) then focused specifically on the voices of the *body* and *self* to examine the differences in how suburban girls who have not reported experiencing sexual violence describe the relationship between body and psyche in their desire narratives versus the other three groups of girls. The suburban girls who did not report experiencing sexual violence, unlike the other three groups, described a mind-body connection which contributed to desire and followed from acting on it; for these young women, bodily feelings and emotions were deeply integrated. For Eugenia and other members of this group, “sexual pleasure’s something that’s like so intensely emotional and so intensely physical” (p. 30).

The other three groups of young women—all of whom had been exposed to sexual violence or general community violence—were similar in that they voiced a dissociation of body and self in the experience of desire. The most striking contrast in narratives was between suburban girls who had and had not reported experiencing sexual violence. For example, Nikki describes how her desire is experienced: “It’s all in my head, I think about it, but my body has nothing to do with it.” The researchers suggest that exposure to violence (sexual or otherwise) for both groups of urban girls can lead to a dissociation of mind and body concerning the experience of desire, which acts as a personal safeguard in a violent community, where sexuality can lead to damning consequences. However, for sexually violated suburban women—who are typically protected from general violence and its material consequences—these traumatic experiences further emphasize their sense of vulnerability and abolish their sense of pleasure associated with sexuality. Importantly, some of the urban girls who reported experiencing sexual violence voiced resistance to a body-mind dissociation related to their experience of desire; their narratives sounded similar to those voiced by suburban girls who had not reported experiencing

sexual violence. For example, after being repeatedly molested in her childhood, Barbra “wanted to be able to feel pleasure” and “worked upon it [herself] a lot” until she found that her “whole body [could] feel good” (p. 32).

What Tolman and Szalacha’s (1999) study shows is that different discourses may be more or less influential to young women based on their intersectional identities and life experiences. The *risk/victimization* discourse, which positions young women’s sexuality as dangerous and putting women at risk for disease, pregnancy, and violence, may be more relevant to lower-class and minority women, for whom these risks may lead to devastating consequences. Further, considering one’s sexuality through this perspective can lead to a sense of vulnerability, which can be exacerbated for women who have actually experienced violence and victimization—sexual or otherwise. For white and upper-class young women, who experience more freedom to explore and experience pleasure due to their privileged status (including a lack of exposure to community violence and access to resources), the *madonna/whore* discourse may be more relevant. Their main concerns regarding their sexuality are maintaining a sense of self and social reputation as a “good” or “normal” young woman. However, as some of the urban girls who experienced sexual violence demonstrated, even women from oppressed backgrounds, and/or those who have been subject to disempowering life experiences can transcend these limiting discourses.

### **Teaching the Risk/Victimization Discourse**

Preston (2013) found evidence of the *risk/victimization* discourse in her examination of sex educators’ definitions of sexuality and assumed teaching responsibilities. She conducted semi-structured interviews with 15 sex educators (ages 28-62) who worked with middle and high school-aged adolescents. Participants were recruited via teaching association and sex education

list serves, as well as through snowball sampling methods. Of the participants, 11 worked in high school settings. The participants worked in a total of 6 different states; urban, suburban, and rural locales were all represented. Eight participants described the surrounding political climate as liberal, while seven described it as conservative. Only four participants were directly trained in human sexuality (note: these programs adopted a sex-positive framework); among all participants, the level of teaching experience ranged from 4 to 37 years.

Interviews were conducted either in person or on the phone, and gathered information concerning teachers' curricula; educational models endorsed by their school board; education regulations they were required to follow; their definitions of sexuality; their beliefs about their major responsibilities as sex educators; and their beliefs about the sexualities of their students. Interviews were recorded and transcribed (Preston, 2013). Using grounded theory methods (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), raw interview data was coded in three steps to identify major themes, and emergent discourses of adolescent sexuality that are present in sex education (Preston, 2013).

In contrast to existing (and limiting) discourses around adolescent sexuality, Preston (2013) found that all respondents defined sexuality comprehensively, encompassing emotion and desires in addition to behaviors and pubertal changes. In general, definitions of sexuality were sex-positive. For example, one participant noted,

I think sexuality is anything and everything about a person. It doesn't have to be kissing and hugging, its kind of who they are and what they are and how they express that to others and with others. I think we put way too much effort on intercourse, sexuality is so much more than that. (p. 26)

Despite sharing a broad and inclusive definition of sexuality, the educators differed in their beliefs about their teaching responsibilities. The four educators who received specialized human sexuality training saw their primary responsibilities as providing a sex-positive curriculum, including respecting everyone's diversity; normalizing sexuality and encouraging communication around sex; and discussing sexual rights and pleasure.

However, invoking the *risk/victimization* discourse, the majority of educators saw their most important tasks as combating risk, and instilling in youth a sense of sexual morality, which “ignore[s] the reality of the ways in which gender, race, class or other forms of difference shape young peoples’ agency” (Preston, 2013, p. 27). Educators routinely cited their most pressing concerns for adolescents to be sexually transmitted diseases, sexual coercion, unplanned pregnancy, and emotional hardship that is assumed to follow from youths’ desire. Though most educators attempted to discuss the risks and dangers of sex in an open, direct manner that did not capitalize on students’ fears, one veteran educator noted, “I definitely do try to scare them” (p. 28).

The *risk/victimization* discourse shaped educators’ constructions of adolescent sexuality—even among those who saw their primary teaching responsibility as providing sex-positive education (Preston, 2013). All teachers believed that their students’ lives were characterized by moral ambiguity, media-saturation, and oversexualization. All except one educator considered adolescents to be engaging in “risky” sexual experimentation while lacking the emotional maturity, judgment, responsibility and sexual knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the negative consequences of sexual behavior) they regarded as necessary to participate in sexual activity. Overwhelmingly, they considered popular media to be the primary mechanism by which adolescents learned about sexuality. Participants perceived students’ families as naïve to their

children's sexual behavior, and contributing to the development of unhealthy (i.e., risky and immoral) adolescent sexuality by serving as problematic role-models. Often, this assumption rested on stereotypic beliefs about individuals from particular class backgrounds. One educator stated:

With the demographic that I teach [rural, low income adolescents], so many of their moms and dads break up with one girlfriend and boyfriend and move in with the other. It's not normal... [I give] them the message that there's an alternative to falling into bed with somebody because with the media and what they see at home they think it's very normal to go on a date once or twice and then [have sex].

Thus, even when educators hold positive definitions of sexuality, the pervasive *risk/victimization* discourse influences actual classroom behavior (Preston, 2013). Preston (2013) argues that the adoption of a risk-informed view of adolescent sexuality hinders the voicing of the *discourse of desire* (Fine, 1988). However, educators whose work and training were informed by a sex-positive model named primary responsibilities that were not based in risk management, but instead focused on acceptance of diversity, pleasure, and open communication (Preston, 2013). This implies that adopting a sex-positive framework may help educators to critique and combat the *risk/victimization* discourse (as well as other limiting discourses), and promote more subjective sexuality in their work with students.

### **Evidence and Implications of the (Missing) Discourse of Desire**

#### **Where is Desire?**

In her groundbreaking work, Michelle Fine (1988) observed that a discourse of *desire* was missing from adults' public and formal discourses around adolescent females' sexuality, especially within sex education. After careful study of then-current sex education curricula, and

first-hand interviews and observations of classroom sex education in New York City, Fine concluded that discourses of female sexual *desire* were suppressed, while *victimization* and morality (i.e., the *madonna/whore*) discourses dominated curricula. Fine discovered that in sex education, young women were routinely educated about how to defend themselves against the dangers of sex, including pregnancy and disease. Further, sex education's moralistic framework emphasized abstinence, self-control, and sexual modesty. From her analyses and observations, Fine noted that "the naming of desire, pleasure, or sexual entitlement, particularly for females, barely exists in the formal agenda of public schooling on sexuality" (p. 43). Further, in the rare instances that desire does enter the discussion, it is discouraged by naming the many risks that can come with acting upon it, including physical, reproductive, financial, moral, and emotional "consequences." In effect, "young women are currently educated away from positions of sexual self-interest... [as they are] trained through and into positions of passivity and victimization" (p. 56).

Though absent in formal discussions of sexuality forwarded by adults, Fine (1988) located a discourse of desire in the discussions of sexuality voiced by adolescent women themselves. Citing excerpts from her interviews and observations, Fine noted that young women can name their desires. However, their discussion of pleasure and passion was often weaved with talk about fears and dangers associated with sexuality; excitement about sexual expression was typically accompanied by anxiety. For example, Betty (age unidentified), proclaimed, "Boys always be trying to get in my panties. I don't be needin' a man who won't give me no pleasure but take my money and expect me to take care of him" (p. 46-47). In this way, young women express *ambivalence* around sexuality: on one hand, Betty wants physical pleasure, but she does not want the consequences of sex (i.e., expectations to take care of a partner financially and

otherwise). Fine notes that any educational curriculum that attempts to separate a discussion of pleasure from that of risk and danger creates a false dichotomy, as these elements are frequently combined in women's experiences and communications.

Fine (1988) also discovered that young women's talk of sexuality often underscored its gendered nature. This was sometimes met with dissatisfaction. As Mille (16) states, "I'm still in love with Simon, but I'm seeing Jose. He's OK but he said, "Will you be my girl?" I hate that. It feels like they own you." Considering that popular discourse informs and shapes sexuality, Fine advocates for the inclusion of a discourse of *desire* in sex education curricula; this would allow more space for young women to consider their desires, feel entitled to their own pleasure, form a sense of sexual subjectivity, and construct their own complex sexual meanings beyond those that have been prescribed to them by adults.

Fine and McClelland (2006) reported that desire continues to be ignored in formal sex education curricula, even 20 years later. 'Abstinence only until marriage' sex education, which promotes abstinence and heterosexuality as the only appropriate sexual choices, hinders the development of young women's *thick desire*. Fine and McClelland (2006) theorize that sexual desire is only a piece of thick desire--of all the forms of wanting, desiring, and entitlement experienced by individuals. Certainly, if women's sexual desire is limited or hindered, individuals feel less entitled to their right to pleasure. However, the notion of *thick desire* highlights how the development and expression of one's desires is inherently tied other social desires, including economic and political desires: if women's sexual desire is ignored in formal sex education, women may not only feel less entitled to sexual desire and pleasure and sexual rights, but to fulfillment and equal rights in all areas of life.

Beyond limiting young women's sexual subjectivity, Fine and McClelland (2006) demonstrate that abstinence only sex education leads to exacerbated health and educational consequences for young women—particularly those inhabiting other oppressed identities (e.g., LGBTQIA+, non-White, disabled, poor)—who are provided constricting sexuality discourses and served unequally by social institutions, policies, and laws. Without a framework of *thick desire*, young women are held responsible for “bad” decisions and “poor” sexual morals, without consideration of the social structures influencing this construction. The authors advocate for sex education and learning opportunities that inquire about and critique the ways in which these cultural forces influence how individuals learn about, practice, and consider sexuality.

### **Experiencing Desire: Young Women's Accounts**

Thompson (1990) also found evidence of a discourse of *desire* in adolescent girls' accounts of sexual initiation. Using a snowball sampling method from 1978-1986, Thompson interviewed 400 teenage girls about their sexual and romantic experiences. Analyzing a subsample of 100 narratives (15% African American; 15% Hispanic; 25% teenage mothers; 10% self-identified lesbian), Thompson identified two main frameworks from which participants discussed first penetrative coitus: sex as pain, disappointment, and/or boredom (endorsed by about 75% of participants); and sex as desire and pleasure (endorsed by about 25% of participants).

Most young women in Thompson's (1990) study described their first experience of intercourse as something that “just happened.” For these participants, sex did not occur on their own terms, and was not associated with feelings of desire or pleasure. While most of these respondents received sex education and knew how sex worked, they described not *really* knowing what they were doing, or what “came over” them to participate in sex—as if out-of-

touch with their own desire and bodily feelings. These young women routinely described their first coital experiences as physically painful, boring, and disappointing (e.g., “It hurt a little bit. It was uncomfortable. I was pretty bored, actually. I didn’t see anything very nice about it at all,” p. 346).

Importantly, many of the participants that discussed their sexual experiences from this framework described first intercourse as involuntary or coercive, though they did not always identify it as such (Thompson, 1990). Though not coerced into having sex, some participants framed these encounters as involuntary because they conflicted with their “good girl” identities and corresponding beliefs or values. Invoking the *romance* narrative, others experienced coercive sex, but reframed these encounters as “special” because they occurred with romantic partners. After these unpleasant first encounters, many participants reported waiting to have sex until they had a “better” boyfriend. Thompson intimates that these young women speak “as if they had no sexual consciousness at all before first penetration” (p. 344); seeking evidence in support of this claim she notes that, when asked about their childhood experiences, these participants did not report an evolving sexual curiosity or experimenting with sex play, or masturbation.

About 25% of Thompson’s (1990) sample (i.e., the “pleasure narrators”) described first coitus as desired and pleasurable. These women endorsed both sexual agency and subjectivity: they consciously and actively decided when to say “yes” or “no” to sexual activity; they described taking initiative in instigating pre-coital sexual activities; they reported communicating with their sexual partners about what they found pleasurable; and they endorsed a sense of entitlement to their own pleasure. These women were desirous. They approached first intercourse

with an understanding of the bodily pleasures sex could give them, joyfully anticipated sexual initiation, and prepared for sex (e.g., obtaining contraception).

Most of the “pleasure narrators” described a number of pre-coital experiences that afforded them such knowledge, agency, and subjectivity, including childhood sex play, masturbation, and a steady progression through pre-coital sexual activities (Thompson, 1990). Further, these young women reported having “open” mothers with whom they could freely talk about sex. These mothers were described as sex-positive role models who shared their own stories of sexual pleasure and taught their daughters that women can be sexual subjects. It is important to note that, while a discourse of *desire* was voiced, the overwhelming majority of Thompson’s (1990) participants described their first sexual encounters as unpleasant, passive, and devoid of desire or pleasure. Opportunities to discuss and experiment with sexual acts, as well as access to sex-positive, agentic, and sexually-subjective female role models were highlighted as key factors in endorsing stories of sex as desired and pleasurable.

Working from this pool of interviews, Thompson (1990, 1992) found that self-identified lesbian teens described having more pleasurable initial sexual experiences than most heterosexual adolescent females. Lesbian participants reported that their first sexual experiences with other women typically resulted in orgasm (Thompson, 1990). If they did engage in heterosexual intercourse, lesbian teens tended to endorse more comfort than heterosexual young women who described sex as painful, boring, and disappointing. However, like these women, lesbian adolescents also tended to blame themselves for lack of pleasure (i.e., for not speaking up about what would feel good). Of all participants, lesbian pleasure narrators described experiencing the most desire- and pleasure-charged pre-coital sexual experiences, which afforded them new understandings of their sexual identities (Thompson, 1990). Thompson

(1992) supposed that the even greater silence around lesbian sexuality (vs. heterosexual female sexuality) served a protection function: while sex is typically portrayed in narrow (and overwhelmingly negative) ways for heterosexual young women, the relative lack of discourse around what lesbian sexual experience should look like affords more freedom for the enactment of sexuality and experience of pleasure.

As previously described, Deborah Tolman has analyzed the narratives of 30 urban and suburban adolescent girls in multiple ways as part of her program of research focused on young women's sexuality and desire (e.g., Tolman, 1994, 2000, Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). Over the course of her work, Tolman has found that, rooted in the limiting constructions of "appropriate" and "normal" adolescent female sexuality, knowing, feeling, and responding to sexual desire poses a dilemma for young women. In contrast to Thompson (1990), Tolman (1994) found that desire featured in most young women's sexual experiences. Concerning their experience of sexual feelings, only three participants in her sample reported that they did not experience desire, while two thirds reported explicitly that they experienced relational, embodied desire (Tolman, 1994). The remainder of the participants spoke about their desire in "confusing" ways (p. 327). Participants who reported experiencing desire elaborated on how they respond to it. In general, they endorsed a "sense of struggle... being aware of both the potential for pleasure and the threat of danger that their desire holds for them" (p. 328). Concerning these dangers, participants shared the concern of acting on their desires directly and still maintaining their sense of self and reputation as a "good" or "normal" girl, as well as a sense of physical safety (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999).

## Differences in Discourse: Young Women's Sexual Orientation

Tolman (1994) examined the ways in which sexual orientation influences how young women experience and express sexual desire, and narrate their sexuality. In this work, she presented three case studies (one heterosexual teen girl; one bisexual teen girl; and one lesbian teen) to highlight the dilemmas of responding to one's desire, based in cultural constructions of young women's sexuality. Though not explicitly using these terms, Tolman (1994) discussed how the girls' sexuality narratives demonstrate evidence of the influence of *madonna/whore*, *risk/victimization*, and *romance* discourses, which place weighty demands on young women's behavior and leave them vulnerable to social consequences should they choose to act on their desire. Rochelle (a heterosexual girl) and Megan (a bisexual girl) both discussed how society's expectations of "good" girls to be relatively asexual and undesirous (i.e., the *madonna/whore* discourse) led them to fear acquiring a "reputation" and being ostracized as a slut. As Rochelle states, "when you get birth control pills, people automatically think you're having sex every night and that's not true" (p. 330). Megan's narrative highlights the risk of slut-shaming that comes with expressing desire for young women, as well as the burden of sexual *gatekeeper* placed on them:

It's so confusing, 'cause you have to like say no, you have to be the one to say no, but why should you be the one to, cause I mean maybe you're enjoying it and you shouldn't have to say no or anything. But if you don't, maybe the guy'll just keep going and you can't do that, because then you would be a slut. (p. 333)

Rochelle and Melissa (a lesbian) both invoked the *risk/victimization* discourse in their narratives (Tolman, 1994). Rochelle expressed fear of the health and reproductive consequences of her desire, such as unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Despite the

potential consequences and influenced by the promises of the *romance* narrative, Rochelle still engages in sex because “he wanted it” and because sex is something “that a girl and a guy [are] supposed to do... to make [her] life complete” (p. 329). Both women feared the physical violence that could result from acting on their desires: for Rochelle, physical abuse from a male partner who was dissatisfied when she decided she was no longer interested in a sexual relationship; and for Melissa, potential physical violence from those who are intolerant of her sexuality. Heteronormativity and ideas of how “good” girls behave, informed and evidenced by the *madonna/whore* discourse, also led her to fear “society” and being shunned as “unnatural” regarding her desire for other young women (p. 335).

Tolman (1994) argues that these “cultural contexts” (i.e., discourses; p. 324) disempower young women from experiencing and acting on their desires. She asserts that young women who know and trust their bodily feelings may develop a stronger sense of self, a sense of entitlement to sexual pleasure, and a sense of agency that may help them make “safe” sexual decisions. Further, she contends that, to develop this sense of sexual subjectivity, young women need to be exposed to opportunities to speak about their sexuality and disrupt current discourses that frame it as problematic.

### **Discourse: A Summary**

What is clear from this review is that the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive*, and *risk/victimization* discourses inform young adult women’s sexualities. These discourses often overlap and can influence women in complex ways, which are often negative, limiting, and result in self-shame (e.g., Bryant & Schofield, 2007). Even when women endorse a discourse of *desire* or consciously rebuff these cultural mandates, women’s diverse identities and personal experiences can leave them vulnerable to the constraining influence of the identified discourses

(e.g., Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). In general, the research described here has a discourse or narrative approach to qualitative analysis, working from transcriptions of semi-structured interviews. What remains unexplored is whether discourses can be identified with the same richness and complexity from written narratives obtained from specified prompts. Further, while researchers have examined the discourses invoked by women in their broad sexuality and desire narratives (e.g., Bryant & Schofield, 2007; Tolman, 1994, 2000) or in their descriptions of condom use (e.g., Gavey & McPhillips, 1999; Kirkman et al., 1998), research has not examined the ways in which popular discourses of female sexuality are present in young adult women's descriptions of "good" sex.

Many of these studies either imply or explicitly state that providing young women with an opportunity to discuss these discourses and issues related to sexuality is crucial in increasing women's sense of agency and sexual subjectivity (e.g., Tolman, 1994, 2000). Research has shown that these limiting discourses can be reflected to recipients of sex education even when facilitators have holistic and sex-positive definitions of sex in mind—unless they explicitly incorporated sex-positive aims into their curricula (Preston, 2013). Thus, sexuality programming intended to challenge the discourses of female sexuality may benefit from utilizing an explicitly sex-positive approach.

### **Sexuality Workshops**

A primary site for sexuality-based education and workshops for young adults is college campuses. Workshops for young adults that focus on sexuality issues have primarily invoked the *risk/victimization* discourse, and tout the dangers and risks involved with sexual activity, including rape and sexual assault. A PsycINFO search for 'rape prevention education', 'rape

prevention workshop’, and ‘rape AND education AND workshop’ yielded 19 relevant studies examining the use of these programs with college-age individuals.

Few non-risk focused sexuality workshops were found using a PsycINFO search (search terms: ‘sexuality workshop’, ‘sexuality education’, and ‘sexuality AND education’). The programs found focused primarily on promoting sexuality and sexual self-reflection, and were found to be effective with young adult populations. For example, Fyfe’s (1979) 12-hour “sexual enhancement” workshop focused on affective and attitudinal aspects of young adults’ sexuality, including anxieties related to sexual activities (including the experience itself and expressing needs and difficulties), as well as attitudes towards certain sexual activities. 44 undergraduates (28 female) participated in the workshop, which included viewing of sexually explicit films and discussions led by a male-female team. Pre- and post-testing with the Sex Knowledge and Attitude Test (Lief & Reid, 1972) and Concept-Specific Anxiety Scale (Cole, Oetting, & Sharp, 1969) revealed that workshop participation led to significant changes in attitudes towards masturbation (participants became more accepting) and anxiety related to engaging in sexual activity (participants’ anxiety lessened).

Cohen, Byrne, Hay, and Schmuck (1994) conducted two-day sexuality workshops with 164 undergraduates in professional programs (i.e., nursing, medicine, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy) intended to increase students’ awareness of their sexual values and attitudes; learn about and come to accept others’ values and beliefs regarding sexuality and become more comfortable discussing sex-related topics with clients. Pre- and post-intervention administration of the Sexual Attitude Scale, the Comfort Scale, and the Knowledge Scale (developed by the researchers) demonstrated statistically significant changes in the positive direction (i.e., increased sexual knowledge, increased comfort discussing sex, and more positive

attitudes towards sexuality). These few examples show the promise of sexuality programming for altering young adults' views of "stigmatizing" sexual behaviors, comfort with discussing sex and sexuality, and capacity for sexual self-reflection—all of which are components of a sex-positive sexuality.

### **Sex-Positive Programming**

Some sexuality programs have explicitly taken a sex-positive approach. A PsycINFO search for 'sex positive education' and 'sex positive workshop' yielded only two programs (i.e., Gubrium & Shafer, 2014; Tambling, Neustifter, Muska, Reckert, & Rua, 2012)—neither of which were specifically intended for use with young adult women.

**The pleasure-centered educational program.** Tambling and colleagues (2012) implemented a series of 1.5-2 hour pleasure-centered workshops for predominantly African American women (ages late teens – 60s) at a domestic violence shelter, named the Pleasure-Centered Educational Program (PCEP). Noting the dearth of sex education programming for adults, they argued for the necessity of "an open dialogue format (not restricted to prevention or abstinence) that is inclusive of all adults regardless of age, sex, sexual identity, relationship status, etc." (p. 269). The intent of this workshop program was to provide women an opportunity to discuss openly their sexual experiences (both positive and negative), their likes and dislikes, and consider how pleasure could be a part of their future experiences. Workshops focused on diverse topics, including both negative and positive sexual rights (respectively, the right to protection from harm and disease, and the right to pleasure). The facilitators proposed that, by engaging women in positive, pleasure-centered conversation about sex and sexuality, they may be at reduced risk for future sexual abuse.

Tambling and colleagues (2012) developed PCEP utilizing a strengths-based model, and were informed by four key documents in the sexuality and domestic violence literature: *Sexual Health for the New Millennium: Declaration and Technical Document* (World Association for Sexual Health, 2008); “A New View of Women’s Sexual Problems” (The Working Group on a New View of Women’s Sexual Problems, 2002); and the Duluth Model’s Power and Control Wheel (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, n.d.b) and Equality Wheel (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, n.d.a). *Sexual Health for the New Millennium* (World Association for Sexual Health, 2008) discusses individuals’ sexual rights, including negative and positive rights. ‘A New View’ (The Working Group on a New View of Women’s Sexual Problems, 2002) discusses the ways in which racism, sexism, homophobia, and sexual violence may negatively impact women’s sexual lives. While the Power and Control Wheel (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, n.d.b.) visualizes the typical circumstances in which women are abused by male partners, the Equality Wheel (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, n.d.a) helps individuals visualize more positive relationships based on nonviolence and relationship equality.

PCEP also utilized a holistic definition of sexual pleasure, including emotional, physical, and relational components (Tambling et al., 2012). Participants engaged in activities such as ‘My Body, My Pleasure,’ in which they were asked to consider and communicate which areas of their bodies did and did not have the potential to experience pleasure, and how they might want to explore those pleasures by themselves and/or with others. To reduce risk of future sexual abuse, safety was discussed regarding each of these three components. Emotional safety was conceptualized to include preparing oneself to communicate thoughts, feelings, boundaries and expectations with partners in a vulnerable, yet assertive way. Physical safety was discussed in terms of learning about one’s body and its needs so one can take care of it and ask for what it

needs and wants from others, if one is interested in a partnered relationship. Relational safety was explored by evaluating one's current relationships for openness, support, and intimacy concerning pleasure.

PCEP workshops were offered once per week, several weeks per month, over the course of a year by a Caucasian facilitator (Tambling et al., 2012). Participants were recruited by word of mouth and flyers posted throughout the shelter; they were invited to attend sessions that interested them. Between six and 12 women participated in each workshop. Curricula were developed to accommodate a diverse range of backgrounds (i.e., sexual experience and orientation, educational background, gender), and included the use of props (e.g., vibrators; vulva puppet), slang terms for body parts and activities, and appropriate humor. Further, the facilitator promoted judgment- and shame-free discussion by avoiding assumptions about the characteristics of participants' partners (including number and gender of partners). To create a safe environment, the facilitator reframed participants' questions and statements if they used any clearly offensive or oppressive language.

To structure workshops throughout the year, the facilitator gathered feedback from participants about the usefulness of particular session elements and ideas for future topics before, during, and after sessions (Tambling et al., 2012). Information about participants' recent sexual behaviors and experience of pleasure was also gathered towards this aim. Non-anonymous feedback addressing the format, applicability, and accessibility of PCEP was also gathered via interviews with groups of participants, facilitator observations, and discussions with shelter administrators. In general, participants favorably reviewed the open dialogue format and opportunity to discuss sexuality without pressure to engage in any sexual behavior; the accessibility of materials, including educational pamphlets; the approachability of the material

aided by her use of slang terms in addition to scientific language; and the use of props.

Participants also noted that creating clear rules for a safe conversation was key to establishing a sense of safety and willingness to share personal experiences and concerns in the workshops.

Tambling and colleagues (2012) noted that there could have been positive bias due to the non-anonymous nature of the feedback gathered, and suggested that future researchers utilize an anonymous questionnaire.

**Safe spaces.** Bay-Cheng and colleagues (2013) conducted a series of focus groups on the ways young women grapple with the conflicting messages they offered about sex and sexuality with 43 predominantly white adolescent girls (ages 14-17). To promote discussion, participants were asked about the concerns they had about having and not having sex; what they had been taught about sex in school and from families; how useful their sex education experiences were; and what information they have not received about sex that they wanted access to. To create rapport and foster a nonjudgmental atmosphere, all focus group sessions began with setting the following ground rules: 1) treat all group members with respect; 2) recognize that there will be diversity in people's opinions and acknowledge that they are all valid; 3) only one person speaks at a time; 4) there is no need to come to group consensus on any topic; 5) while participation is encouraged, it is not required; and 6) no one should share private or sensitive information about themselves or their experiences. Though discussion questions were phrased in such a way that would allow for discussion of non-heterosexual interactions, focus groups focused exclusively on heterosexuality.

Notably, the participants tended to attribute any negative sexual consequences to girls' own poor judgment and character flaws (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013). They distanced themselves from these dangers by positioning themselves as "hyper responsible"—too goal-directed, mature,

and ambitious to risk their futures by engaging in “risky” sexual behavior. They saw themselves as the ultimate gatekeepers, and often invoked common cultural values (i.e., discourses) explaining their decisions to not have sex, including: teenagers are too young to have sex (i.e., the *risk/victimization* discourse); people should save themselves until marriage (i.e., the *madonna/whore* discourse); and you should wait until you trust your partner enough (i.e., the *romance* narrative). Despite this hyper-responsibility, women admitted to having ambivalence towards saying “no” to a male’s unwanted sexual advances, depending on the context. For example—invoking the *romance* narrative—some participants wavered in their decision to say no to unwanted sex when it was attached to the promise of developing or maintaining a romantic relationship.

Overall, focus group participants described feeling uncomfortable talking to teachers and parents about sex, and felt that the information they received was one-sided and overwhelmingly negative (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013). Many participants noted that they valued engaging in conversations about sex and sexuality with same-age or slightly older peers “because they’re more likely to listen. You’re like, ‘Oh. Hey. You live now. You’re my age. You know what’s going on” (p. 271). They wished for open conversation with young adult individuals who were nonjudgmental in addition to being knowledgeable.

Bay-Cheng and colleagues (2013) considered the results of these focus groups as evidence for the importance of “safe spaces” to discuss sex and sexuality with peers that allow for ambiguity and discussion around the complexities, contradictions, and ambiguities of sexual experiences. The authors argue that discussion of ambivalence can support sexual well-being by allowing for the development of “critical insight into one’s own feelings and behaviors, as well as into the surrounding social world (e.g., gender norms, sexualized media)” (p. 263). Certainly,

part of this critical insight includes understanding and critiquing the discursive pressures placed on women's sexuality.

**“Sensual sexuality education”.** Gubrium and Shafer (2014) used findings from focus groups with 10 Latina, working-class, adolescent mothers at an alternative education center to develop a sex-positive sex education program intended to enhance young mothers' sexual subjectivity. The focus group discussion was audio recorded, transcribed, and read multiple times to identify themes. Overall, focus group participants reported that they experienced a silencing around talk about sexuality in school and at home. They also expressed dissatisfaction with having learned only about the risks and negative aspects of sex from parents and teachers (i.e., *risk/victimization* discourse-informed sex education)—if anything at all. Further, their sex education overwhelmingly promoted sexual double standards and sought to limit female sexual subjectivity. As Eva noted, “[The teachers] always ... explain everything about the guys, what the guy would do ... but what about us? They're just telling us don't lose our virginity, what's what you know?” (p. 654). Clearly, focus group participants had experienced sex education informed by the *risk/victimization* and *madonna/whore* discourses of female sexuality.

Participants asked specifically for a more balanced, sex-positive, and inclusive kind of sex education. Rosa stated, “They tell us all the bad stuff: it hurts, you should wait, you can get something ... But they never say the good stuff. Just give us the whole thing all at once, and we can figure it out!” (p. 654). Specific topics the focus group participants wanted to learn more about included desire and pleasure, and sexual activities beyond penile-vaginal intercourse, including masturbation and “girls having sex with girls and boys having sex with boys” (p. 655).

These emergent themes were used to develop a six-week curriculum (one hour workshop per week) that included straightforward education about safer sex precautions, as well as

education and skill-building exercises on communication skills that could enhance sexual agency (Gubrium & Shafer, 2014). The multi-sensory curriculum also included arts-based activities, movement-based activities, and storytelling modalities, all of which encouraged program participants to consider and discuss their own sexual preferences and meanings. For example, during one session, participants were asked to design their ideal method of contraception and discuss how this preference might influence their sexual sense of self and their place in society. Gubrium and Shafer (2014) argue that this multisensory “sensual” approach invited an explicitly embodied consideration of one’s sexuality, in which participants were free to explore “what ‘felt’ good and bad, desirable and undesirable” (p. 659), in the context of one’s specific intersectional identity, personal history, and intimate relationship practices.

Following the completion of each week’s session, anonymous, short essay-format evaluations were completed by participants. Participants rated their satisfaction with the workshop, the understandability and relatability of the presentation, and their level of comfort with asking questions and sharing personal experiences during the session. A session on gender expectations regarding sex was one of the highest rated (specifics of results not reported). Further, while this sex-positive education program was designed with intentions to increase young mothers’ sense of sexual subjectivity, no measurements were taken to determine whether participation in the program had this desired effect.

### **Conclusions & Implications**

There are few examples of explicitly sex-positive programming that exist in the literature, and those that do exist are not explicitly intended for use with young adult women. A few components of existing workshops stand out as important to program participants: the creation of a safe, nonjudgmental environment; open, positive discussion; discussion about a broad range of

sexualities and behaviors; freedom from pressure to participate or engage in sexual activity; opportunities to discuss ambivalence; and appealing to multiple senses (e.g., auditory, visual, tactile [Bay-Cheng et al., 2013; Gubrium & Shafer, 2014; Tambling et al., 2012]). Workshops of this kind may feel particularly participant-friendly if led by a similar-age, knowledgeable, and non-judgmental peer (Bay-Cheng et al., 2013). Still, considering the lack of research in this field and model programs, there is still great opportunity for innovation in sex-positive interventions.

A sex-positive approach to sexuality programming is proposed to be successful in challenging existing discourses around female sexuality and increasing young women's sexual subjectivity (see: Gubrium & Shafer, 2014; Tolman, 2000). However, none of the research conducted on sex-positive sexuality programming has explicitly examined the ways in which participation challenges and changes the discourses invoked by women in their sexuality narratives in general, and in particular, in their descriptions of "good" sex. Further, the degree to which participation in sex-positive sexuality programming increases sexual subjectivity has not been examined.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PRESENT RESEARCH

#### **Overview of the Research**

This research was focused on the development, provision, and evaluation of the *Finding What Feels Good* workshop, a sex-positive sexuality program intended to help young adult women: 1) consider their existing ideas about what constitutes “good sex;” 2) critically assess the messages they have received about female sexuality; and 3) discuss wider and more authentic possibilities for sexual expression in their own lives. Through feminist discourse analysis of written narratives, this research also intended to assess the impact of participation in the FWFG workshop on the ways women are influenced by the various discourses of female sexuality (e.g., the *madonna/whore* dichotomy; the *romance* narrative; the *permissive* discourse; the *risk/victimization* discourse; and the discourse of *desire*) when they conceptualize “good sex.” Further, using both qualitative (i.e., discourse analysis) and quantitative (i.e., self-report questionnaire) methods, this research intended to uncover whether participation in the FWFG workshop promotes sexual subjectivity within young adult women. All young adult women involved in this research project participated in the FWFG workshop. To determine the impact of the workshop on participants’ use of sexuality discourses and sexual subjectivity, these qualitative and quantitative assessments were administered either before or after workshop participation.

#### **Participants**

Forty individuals participated in this study, with 22 women in the control group and 18 in the experimental group. All participants were enrolled in PSYC 101 and recruited through the IUP subject pool. Participants received 3.0 credits towards their research requirement for PSYC

101. Two experimental participants' data were excluded from analysis. One participant was excluded because she did not meet the age qualifications for participation (i.e., 18-25 years), and the other was excluded because they did not identify as female.

### **The “Finding What Feels Good” Workshop**

The FWFG workshop was created after extensive review of the literature, as well as my own experiences facilitating sex-positive workshops for Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) undergraduate and graduate students; attendees of the 2015 Association for Women in Psychology conference; practitioners working with older adults; attendees of the 2015 Woodhull Sexual Freedom Summit; and clients with serious and persistent mental illness at the Indiana County Community Guidance Center. I also facilitated a seven-week sex-positive therapy group for undergraduate women at IUP. Each of these forums fostered open discussion about the nature of “good” sex, the societal messages individuals receive around “good” sex, and the social and individual barriers to “good” sex.

All participants took part in the FWFG workshop as part of this study. This workshop is a safe space for young women to talk about “good” sex from a sex-positive framework. The purpose of the workshop is to understand how young adult women conceptualize “good” sex, invite them to reflect on the origins of these constructions in their own lives, and encourage them to think more broadly about what “good” sex could be, with the intent of encouraging sexual self-reflection and acceptance of sexual diversity. The objectives for this workshop include: 1) determination of young adult women's existing ideas about what constitutes “good” sex; 2) identification of the dominant discourses of female sexuality operating in these women's lives; 3) critique of these discourses; and 4) consideration of wider possibilities for authentic, pleasurable sexual expression.

Objective one was achieved in workshop Activity 1 (“Identifying Discourses”), where participants wrote words, ideas, and phrases they use to describe “good sex” on a large sheet of paper. Objectives two and three were met as participants identified and discussed the messages they have received about (good) sex growing up, and the sources of these messages (workshop Activity 2, “Discourse Critique”). Objective four was met through the use of the *Yes, No, Maybe So Sexual Inventory Stocklist* (Corinna & Turett, 2014) in workshop Activity 3, “Exploring New Possibilities.” The Stocklist is an inventory of over 100 sexual and relationship behaviors. Participants can indicate their level of interest in these behaviors using a six-choice rating system (i.e., “Yes;” “No;” “Maybe;” “I don’t know;” only in “Fantasy;” and “Not applicable”). See Appendix A for a detailed outline of this workshop, and Appendix B for the complete *Stocklist*. Major themes and differences between groups related to these objectives are highlighted in the Results section.

### **Workshop Evaluation**

All participants completed a workshop evaluation questionnaire intended to provide the facilitator with quantitative and qualitative information about the participants’ experiences in the workshop, including whether attending the workshop was enjoyable, interesting, helpful, and relevant to their lives (rated on a Likert scale of one to five); and which components of the workshop were most and least enjoyable, interesting, helpful, and relevant. Participants also responded to questions about whether the workshop influenced how they think about their own sexuality, whether the workshop will influence how they embrace or express their sexuality in the future, and whether the workshop influenced how they think about young adult women’s sexuality using a four-choice response system (“Definitely;” “Somewhat;” “No;” and “Not Sure Yet.”). They were asked to elaborate on their responses to these questions in writing. Participants

were also invited to write about how they thought the workshop could be improved. This data was collected with the intent of improving the workshop for future use after the completion of this study. See Appendix C for the complete workshop evaluation questionnaire.

## **Materials**

### **Demographics**

All participants completed a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix D) including information about their age, gender, socioeconomic/class background, ability status, religious/spiritual affiliation, sexual orientation, relationship orientation, relationship status, experience with sex education, whether or not they are currently sexually active, and age at which they were first sexually active. In the questionnaire, *sexually active* was defined as “engaging in any kind behavior that you think of as sexual, by yourself or with a partner. Examples include, *but are not limited to*: kissing, masturbation, manual stimulation, oral stimulation, and genital-to-genital contact.”

### **Discourses**

To determine which discourses of young adult female sexuality were operating in participants’ lives, all participants answered the following two open-ended writing prompts: *For each question, please describe with as much or as little detail as you feel comfortable: 1) Imagine a good sexual/intimate encounter. What would happen? Who is it with? When and where does it occur? What activities are involved? What makes this encounter good? Why/for what reason would you engage in this encounter? 2) Would you realistically engage in this type of encounter? Why or why not?* To promote thoughtful and detailed responses, the workshop facilitator encouraged participants to take their time thinking about the open-ended questions and responding to them. See Appendix E the open-ended writing prompt worksheet.

## Sexual Subjectivity

The Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory (FSSI; Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006) is a 20-item, Likert-scale, multidimensional self-report inventory designed to measure aspects of sexual subjectivity in Australian adolescent and young adult women (ages 16-22). This measure is still in development, and “requires further pilot testing and validation,” according to the researchers (Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006, p. 137). Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck (2006) have theorized that three core components constitute sexual subjectivity: *sexual body esteem* (e.g., “I am confident that others will find me sexually desirable”); *sexual self-reflection* (e.g., “I spend time thinking and reflecting about my sexual experiences”); and *sexual desire and pleasure*. The authors further subdivided the ‘sexual desire and pleasure’ element into 3 factors: *sense of entitlement to sexual pleasure from self* (e.g., “It is okay for me to meet my own sexual needs through self-masturbation”); *sense of entitlement to sexual pleasure from partner* (e.g., “I would expect a sexual partner to be responsive to my sexual needs and feelings”); and *self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure* (e.g., “I would not hesitate to ask for what I want sexually from a romantic partner”). The researchers note that, due to the complexity of the construct, the scales should stand alone as measures of the unique facets of sexual subjectivity, rather than be summed to create one ultimate measure of subjectivity. In reliability testing, the five scales corresponding to each of these five elements demonstrated acceptable to good reliability (Cronbach’s alpha: .77-.89). The five-factor structure was validated through confirmatory factor analysis. Notably, the FSSI has not been validated for use in an American sample.

A modified, true-false version of the FSSI (see Appendix F) was administered to participants to determine the influence of workshop participation on participants’ sense of sexual subjectivity. This version includes the same 20 questions as the original FSSI and utilizes the

same approach (i.e., agree-disagree), but in a simplified, forced-choice format. The true-false version of the FSSI was administered only after completion of the open-ended writing prompts, to ensure that participants were not primed to consider and discuss aspects of sexual experience and subjectivity explicitly identified by the FSSI (e.g., their own pleasure).

### **Procedure**

Participants signed up for a 180-minute research session (assigned by the experimenter as an “experimental group session” or “control group session,” unbeknownst to participants) through the IUP SONA research website. Five to eight participants were included in each session. Research sessions were run until the experimental and control groups each contained at least 15 participants. A total of three experimental group sessions (with seven, five, and six participants respectively) and three control group sessions (with seven, eight, and seven participants, respectively) were conducted.

After completing informed consent (Appendix G), individuals in the experimental group sessions formed a discussion circle on the floor and participated in the FWFG workshop. Each workshop took about two hours to complete. Following the workshop, the experimental participants completed the open-ended writing prompts, followed by the modified FSSI, the workshop evaluation, and the demographic questionnaire. To ensure privacy, participants broke out of the discussion circle and spread out in the room before completing these materials. Further, to ensure privacy and encourage open responding, all data was sealed in an envelope by the participant before being submitted to the facilitator. After collecting this data, the facilitator concluded the experimental sessions with debriefing. Campus/community resources and a sex-positive media resource list (Appendix I) were provided.

After completing informed consent (Appendix H), individuals in the control group sessions completed the open-ended writing prompts, followed by the modified FSSI. After these materials were collected, the facilitator provided the FWFG workshop to the control participants. This allowed control participants to benefit from involvement in the workshop without influencing their responses on the open-ended writing prompts and FSSI. After completing the workshop, control participants broke out of the discussion circle and completed the workshop evaluation and demographic questionnaire. After collecting the evaluations, the facilitator concluded the control sessions with debriefing and provision of resource materials.

### **Hypotheses**

One aim of this study is to determine how young adult women at Indiana University of Pennsylvania think about “good” sex, and how these constructions are connected to prominent discourses of female sexuality, including the *madonna/whore* dichotomy; the *romance* narrative; the *permissive* discourse; the *risk/victimization* discourse; and the discourse of *desire*. It is hypothesized that young women in the control group (i.e., those with whom no intervention is conducted before completing data collection) tend to endorse the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive* and *risk/victimization* discourses in their responses to the open-ended writing prompts. If they endorse the discourse of *desire* at all, it will be to a lesser extent than the other discourses.

Young adult women in the experimental group (i.e., those who participate in the FWFG workshop and who will have an opportunity to challenge the sociocultural pressures placed on women’s sexuality before completing data collection) are expected to endorse the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive* and *risk/victimization* discourses in their narratives to a

lesser extent than young women in the control group. Experimental group participants are also expected to invoke the discourse of *desire* more often than control group participants.

Another aim of this study is to determine whether implementation of the FWFG workshop can increase women's sense of sexual subjectivity. Young adult women in the experimental group are expected to endorse a discourse of *sexual subjectivity* in their descriptions of "good" sex to a greater extent than women in the control group. It is also hypothesized that women in the experimental group will score higher than women in the control group on all scales of the FSSI, excluding the sexual body esteem scale. Further, it is expected that the largest difference in scale scores between experimental and control group participants will be on the sexual self-reflection scale. At its core, the FWFG workshop is an exercise in sexual self-reflection. As workshop participants consider the range of possibilities for being sexual, they examine their own desires, and discuss how to advocate for their own pleasure. However, while issues related to self-perceptions of sexual desirability may arise during discussion and critique of existing discourses around female sexuality, the FWFG workshop does not cover how young adult women may enhance or improve these self-perceptions.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### **Participants**

The 38 participants included in the analysis ranged in age from 18-20 years, and identified as Caucasian (78.9%), African American (13.2%), or Bi/multiracial (5.7%). Regarding socioeconomic status (as indicated by total household income growing up), the majority of participants identified themselves as coming from middle class families (55.3%). Fewer participants identified themselves as coming from upper-middle class (28.9%), upper class (7.9%), lower-middle class (5.3%), and working class (2.6%) families. Participants' religious/spiritual affiliations included Catholicism (42.1%), Christianity (15.8%), Protestantism (7.9%), Baptist (5.3%), and Methodist (2.6%). Eight (21.1%) participants denied any spiritual affiliation, while 5.3% identified as atheist. The majority of participants did not have any diagnosed disabilities at the time of study (84.2%). The other participants had either a diagnosed psychiatric disability (7.9%), learning disability (5.3%), or medical disability (2.6%).

Regarding sexuality, identity, and relationships, 94.7% of participants identified as exclusively heterosexual. One participant (2.6%) identified as exclusively homosexual, while another participant identified as bisexual (2.6%). At the time of study, 86.8% of participants described themselves as “currently sexually active.” Modal age for onset of sexual activity was 16 years. When asked to describe their typical approach to sexual, romantic, or intimate relationships, 50% of participants specified their approach as “monogamous,” while 26.3% preferred casual relationships, 18.5% preferred a mix of both casual and exclusive relationships, 2.6% identified their approach as “mostly monogamous,” and 2.6% preferred open relationships.

More than half (52.6%) of participants were engaged in an intimate, sexual, or romantic relationship at the time of the study.

Thirty (78.9%) participants had received formal sex education by the time of study. Of those who had received formal sex education, all identified school as a site of instruction. Seven (33.3%) of these participants also received formal sex education from their religious institution, community organization, and/or family/friends. Almost all (94.7%) participants indicated that they had received informal sex education by the time of study. Friends (91.6%), media (86.1%), and family members (75%) were named as the sources of such informal education, with most participants (58.3%) receiving education from all three sources. Thus the results of this workshop are most applicable to Caucasian, middle class, Catholic, heterosexual, able-bodied women who have received sex education.

#### **The Workshop Process and Answering the Question: “What is Good Sex?”**

A total of six *Finding What Feels Good* workshops were conducted as part of this study: three with control groups (seven, eight, and seven participants, respectively), and three with experimental groups (seven, five, and six participants, respectively). All workshops followed the outline described in Appendix A, and focused primarily on heterosexual sexual activity. Though the group leader used gender-neutral language (e.g., “partner[s]”), most participants spoke of “boyfriends.” Despite the focus on heterosexuality and being sexually active, individuals who identified as lesbian, bisexual, and virgins were able to share their identities and experiences/opinions as each workshop progressed.

Most groups achieved a similar quality and depth of discussion. Most or all participants contributed to the discussion, and participants tended to contribute by discussing women “in general,” sharing anecdotes about friends, and/or sharing personal information about their own

sexualities. Two groups stand out in particular for their differences in the quality of discussion achieved: control workshop group 1 and control workshop group 2. In the first control workshop group, all participants took turns talking, with few silences. Further, participants readily shared personal information about their own sex lives—more so than any other group. In contrast, three voices dominated in the second control workshop group, with the remaining participants staying mostly silent. Participants rarely shared personal information about their sexualities, and instead shared anecdotes about friends or spoke of women “in general.” In addition to the unique grouping of women in each workshop, this difference may be related to how participants engaged during the “Introduction” portion of the workshop. Participants in control group workshop 1 voiced that having all members participate would make the workshop feel like a safer space. This ground rule was not voiced by participants in control group workshop 2.

### **“What is Good Sex?”**

The following table (Table 1) charts the words and phrases used to describe “good sex” by participants in each workshop as part of Activity 1, “Identifying Discourses” (see Appendix J for a list of keywords by workshop group, including definitions when provided). During the brainstorming process, participants were invited to repeat and re-write words other group members had listed if they felt the word also applied to them, leading some words to be mentioned multiple times. Lists of “good sex” keywords were expanded upon by the group through the course of the workshop. Words in brackets represent those that were not identified initially by participants, but were later listed as important for good sex.

Table 1

*Keywords Used to Describe “Good Sex” by Participants of the FWFG Workshop*

<b>Workshop Group</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in all groups</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in five groups</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in four groups</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in three groups</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in two groups</b>	<b>Keywords appearing in one group</b>
<b>Control 1</b>	- Passion (x2) - Confidence	- [Comfort]	- [Consent]	- Attraction (x5) - Foreplay - Communication - Meaningful		- Neck kissing - Good kisser - Not rough - Rough - Control - Smells good - Lights off - Good oral
<b>Control 2</b>	- Passion - [Confident]		- Consent	- Mutual attraction - Intimate (x3) - [Communication] - [Meaningful]	- Orgasms - [Feeling sexy & wanted]	- Long - Good - [Dynamic] - Compassion - Care free
<b>Control 3</b>	- Passion - Confident (x2)	- Being comfortable (x2)		- Mutual attraction - Intimacy with a partner you love - Connections	- Trust - Feelings	- Beauty - Lust - Private - Security - [Long term partner] - [Respecting boundaries]
<b>Experimental 1</b>	- Passion - [Feel confident]	- Being comfortable		- Foreplay - [Meaningful] - [Connected] - [Safe sex]	- [Feel sexy]	- Considerate partner (x2) - Taking time - (Partner’s) experience - A lot of kissing - Don’t be awkward - Be awkward/be “yourself” - Talking & laughing - Eye contact - Music - [Know your body] - [Honesty] - [Monogamous] - [Not too many partners]
<b>Experimental 2</b>	- Passion (x3)	- Comfort (x5)	-	- Foreplay	- Trusting	- Timing (x2)

	- Confidence (x2)		Consensual (x4)	- Communication (x2) - [Emotional connection] - Safe (x4)		- Understanding (x2) - Able to “explore” (x2) - Fun (x2) - Exciting (x2) - Open - Happy - When he’s not talking - Knowing limits - Warming up - [Romance]
<b>Experimental 3</b>	- Passion - [Confident]	- [Comfortable]	- [Consent]	- [Intimate] - [Safe]	- Orgasm - Mutual feeling	- Love - Good strokes - [Slow (it depends)] - [Spontaneous] - [Someone you know] - [Could be someone you don’t know] - [Partner with lower body count]

The only keywords used to describe good sex by all six workshop groups were “passion” and [feeling] “confident.” Groups spent time discussing the similarities and differences between their definitions of passion (e.g., being totally engaged with one’s partner(s)) and the portrayal of “passionate” sex in the media (e.g., glistening bodies; hands in each other’s hair; guy and girl pounce on each other). Definitions of sexual confidence forwarded by participants were related to body confidence and a sense of confidence attained from reinforcement by one’s partner(s).

Five workshop groups noted that [being] “comfortable” was important to good sex. This included feeling comfortable with oneself, with one’s partner(s), and in the sexual environment. Participants in control workshop group 3 described “being comfortable” as “not [being] in your head” and when you “don’t have to act a certain way” during sex. Four workshop groups reported that “consent” was important for good sex. One additional group (i.e., control workshop group 3) discussed the importance of “respecting boundaries,” but did not explicitly name consent as part of what makes sex good.

While five of the six groups indicated that some kind of specific sexual activity was related to good sex (e.g., foreplay, kissing, oral sex), only two groups specifically identified that their pleasure (i.e., orgasm) was important for sex to be “good.” When the group leader pointed out that pleasure was missing from groups’ descriptions of good sex, participants offered mixed reactions, including surprise and insistence that pleasure was “implied.”

There were two major differences between the lists of “good sex” keywords generated by participants in control vs. experimental workshop groups. First, “attraction” was listed as important for good sex only by participants in the control workshop groups. Second, only participants in the experimental workshop groups indicated that “good” sex was also “safe.” One experimental group specifically listed the keyword “safe sex,” while two experimental groups listed the keyword “safe.” It is unclear whether these keywords are all related to traditional notions of safe sex (i.e., using methods to decrease chances of STDs and pregnancy), or whether the definitions capture other meanings (e.g., good sex occurs with a partner(s) you feel safe with).

The “good sex” keywords noted by the workshop groups highlighted variations in sexual preferences among group members, and acknowledged diversity in sexual expression. For example, participants in control workshop group 1 indicated that both “rough” and “not rough” sex is good. Additionally, participants in experimental workshop group 1 had varying views on whether “be[ing] awkward” made sex good. Further, participants in experimental workshop 3 noted that good sex occurs with “someone you know,” but “could [also] be [with] someone you don’t know,” and that “it depends” whether “slow” sex qualifies as good sex.

During Activity 2 (Discourse Critique”), participants across all workshops acknowledged that not all words identified by their workshop group applied to all women in general, or even all

members of the workshop group. Some group members explicitly identified which keywords generated by their group did not apply to them personally. For example, participants in experimental workshop group 3 indicated that sex was “good” when their partner had fewer previous sexual partners. However, one woman in this group voiced that she did not care about her partner’s sexual past.

### **Formal and Informal Sexual Messages**

When asked to discuss where they had learned messages about sex as part of Activity 2, participants in all workshops named three major sources of sexual messages: family (including parents, siblings, and other older family members), friends, and media (including television, movies, music, and pornography).

Participants noted that the messages they received from family varied greatly based on their relationships with parents or other family members, as well as the family culture around discussions of sex (i.e., open vs. not open). Messages from parents often invoked the *risk/victimization* discourse, including an emphasis on the risks involved with sexual activity (including STDs, pregnancy, damage to one’s reputation, and bringing shame to the family), safety and protection, consent, and contraceptive methods. Participants reported that their parents often urged them to “wait til [they’re] ready,” “be careful”. Some participants’ family members also forwarded elements of the *madonna/whore* discourse by sending the message that “having sex makes you a bad person.” One lesbian participant noted that she feels pressure to “legitimize [her] sexuality” to her parents. The *romance* narrative was also invoked by family members who sent messages that participants should wait until marriage to have sex; that sex is for men and women in love; and that “good” sex is meaningful, intimate, and related to feelings of love. Unrelated to any of the identified discourses in Chapter 1, one participant in experimental

workshop group 3 reported learning from family that feeling comfortable is part of what makes sex “good.”

Participants shared that they often learned about “what sex is supposed to be like” from their friends. Reflecting the *desire* and *sexual subjectivity* discourses, participants learned about sexual pleasure, masturbation, and orgasm, and were encouraged to “try new things” and “explore.” Mirroring Paul and Hayes’ comments (2002), participants reported that sharing stories and personal experiences with friends is important for normalizing one’s own behaviors. Participants in experimental workshop group 2 also recognized that friends can put pressure on individuals to be sexual, even if one is not ready for or not desirous of sex. This kind of pressure on women to be sexual reflects elements of the *permissive* discourse.

Participants recognized media as a source of varied and conflicting sexual messages. They noted that media often forwarded idealized, romanticized portrayals of sex; sex is presented as a “fairytale”—a “passionate,” “intimate,” “perfect,” “beautiful,” “glamorized” and “not awkward” act occurring between two “sexy,” “glistening” individuals who fit a narrow beauty standard. Media portrayals of sex that participants described often invoke the *madonna/whore* dichotomy and the sexual double standard. For female characters, much emphasis is placed on their virginity and “losing it,” promoting the idea that “the first time is special.” While female characters are expected to look sexy, they cannot be too sexually aggressive or have too many sexual partners. If they do, they are slut-shamed by other characters. Sometimes, participants noted, a one night stand turns into a relationship, saving a female character from shame (and placing her neatly within the *romance* narrative). Other media portrayals of sex described by participants forward the *permissive* discourse, and show hypersexual female characters engaging in one-night stands and hookups. Pornography, in particular, forwards images of sex that

promote the *permissive* discourse, and dictate that “good” sex is sex that is especially exciting and lasts a long time. While more “permissive” media portrayals of sex may send the message that “sex is OK,” participants noted that they are often centered on male pleasure.

All groups except control workshop group 2 named religion as another source of sexual messages. Participants noted that religious institutions often—but not always—forwarded ideas such as “sex is bad,” and “no sex at all,” or “no sex until marriage.” These messages are consistent with the *madonna/whore* discourse of female sexuality, and, as noted by participants, promote much guilt and shame around sexual activity. Two control workshop groups (1, 3) and experimental workshop group 3 noted that they learned specific messages about sex from their hometown or high school culture. For example, one participant noted that teenage sexuality was normalized in her high school, which had a daycare center for the children of student mothers.

All experimental workshop groups and control workshop group 3 highlighted formal school-based sex education (SBSE) as a source of education about sex and sexuality. SBSE was often critiqued by participants as unhelpful. Participants noted that SBSE was largely heteronormative, and primarily focused on STD prevention, safety, consent, and protection (i.e., the *risk/victimization* discourse). Notably, as a requirement for university entry, all workshop participants had attended an orientation of consent and sexual assault. Overwhelmingly, workshop participants noted that the idea of consent has been “hammered into [them]” in a way that is dry and boring. While participants agreed that consent is necessary for sex, some participants (i.e., in control workshop groups 2 and 3) still held misconceptions about consent, including: 1) that consent must always be a clear, verbal, “yes”—otherwise it’s rape; and 2) this definition of consent makes it easy for women to “cry rape.” Alternatively, these statements could be interpreted as participants’ resistance to prominent constructions of women as “victims”

of male sexuality. Regardless, it is unclear whether the workshop discussion about consent (i.e., as “sexy;” as something to enhance pleasure and communicate one’s sexual likes, desires, and responses) impacted these participants’ views.

All groups except control workshop group 3 reported that they learned about sex through their own experience, both with and without partners. Through their own sexual experiences, participants discover and learn to communicate what feels good, what makes for “good strokes,” and what makes them orgasm. Some participants also reported that personal experience helped them learn that sex is “good” for them when they feel connected to their partner, when it feels intimate, when it is “passionate,” or when it is related to love. Through their own sexual experiences, participants have expanded their personal narratives of *desire*, pleasure, and *subjectivity*. They have also learned which elements of other discourses (e.g., connection and love from the *romance* narrative) are important for increasing their own desire, pleasure, and subjectivity. It is notable that few, if any, participants in each workshop spoke openly about their own experiences with masturbation. Some participants reported that they have never masturbated, while others reported that they have tried it, but prefer sexual stimulation with a partner. One can argue that this sort of self-knowledge (i.e., about preferring partnered sexual activity) still reflects a discourse of *sexual subjectivity*.

### ***The Yes No Maybe So Sexual Inventory Stocklist***

Participants took about 15-20 minutes to complete the *Yes, No, Maybe So Sexual Inventory Stocklist* (Corinna & Turett, 2014) as part of Activity 3 (“Exploring New Possibilities”). Participants completed the *Inventory* individually, while sitting either in the group discussion circle, or outside of the circle for more space and comfort. After completing the *Inventory*, participants regrouped for discussion. In all workshops, the group leader offered the

example of disliking hickies to initiate a discussion of variation sexual preferences. Participants were more reluctant to participate in this activity than any previous activities. While some participants named their “likes” and “hard no’s,” most did not. However, participants did express interest in learning about sexual behaviors they had no information about (e.g., using a latex glove as a barrier method for protection; toileting in front of a partner). Sexual practices that participants were curious about demonstrated that the majority of participants’ sexual knowledge was limited to heteronormative practices.

This activity also raised the question of how participants defined “sex.” Again, highlighting a heteronormative point of view, most participants who answered this question defined “sex” as penile-vaginal intercourse. To promote a more expansive definition of sex, the group leader challenged participants to consider how sex occurs between lesbians and physically disabled individuals, and introduced the idea of “sexual space” (i.e., that whatever happens between individuals during a period of time designated as “sexual” qualifies as sex).

When asked to describe how they might become sexual agents and get what they want from a sexual encounter, participants agreed that communication was key and that they needed to “ask for it” from a partner(s). The group leader further challenged participants to consider how the process of “ask[ing] for it” could be different for different individuals. Some participants suggested that a person’s upbringing (e.g., parental role models and parenting styles) may make a woman feel more or less comfortable in asking for what she wants. Some participants also suggested that confidence and self-esteem in general were related to one’s ability to communicate their needs and desires. Though not generated by participants themselves, participants demonstrated to understand and appreciate the group leader’s comment that

individuals who prefer non-normative sexual practices may experience more difficulty asking for what they want in a sexual encounter for fear of judgment and shaming.

### **Sex-Positive/Sex-Negative Tensions**

Across all workshops, participants discussed how the messages society forwarded about sex did not always match up with individuals' personal sexual preferences, using their own experiences and experiences of their friends as examples. Further, participants across all workshops espoused sex-positive viewpoints regarding others' sexual behavior. For example, participants acknowledged and touted acceptance of variance in individuals' sexual practices and preferences, especially related to relational style (e.g., monogamy vs. casual relationships one with vs. multiple partners). However, comments in favor of diversity in sexual expression were sometimes accompanied by sex-negative statements. Some participants (e.g., in experimental workshop group 3) expressed overt disgust for alternative sexual practices such as fetishism, calling it "gross."

Other sex-positive/sex-negative tensions were subtler. For example, participants in all workshop groups acknowledged the existence of the sexual double standard, and agreed that it shames women who have multiple sexual partners. While participants generally agreed that women should be able to have as many sexual partners as they want and not be judged for it (regardless of their own personal preference), some participants (e.g., control workshop group 2; experimental workshop group 1) simultaneously forwarded the idea that there is a "right" number of partners for men and women to have, or that they would not consider a sexual partner who had too high a "body count".

## Learning From Participants

Learned from workshop participants, the term *body count* refers to number of sexual partners an individual has been with. Discussion of body count was typical across workshops, and often related to the *risk/victimization* discourse. Many participants expressed disinterest in partners who have sexually engaged with multiple people, particularly out of fear for contracting STDs, and harm to one's reputation that comes from having an STD. "Cleanliness" was cited as a reason for choosing a less promiscuous partner (e.g., experimental workshop group 3). Yet, other women openly expressed having no concern about their partner's body count (i.e., experimental workshop group 3). Some even identified that having a partner with more experience made for good sex (i.e., experimental workshop group 1).

## Workshop Evaluation

All participants completed a questionnaire evaluating the workshop. One-way MANOVAs revealed that participant responses to the workshop evaluation questionnaire did not significantly vary by experimental condition for items using 5-point rating scales ( $F(2, 35) = 0.495; p = .636; \text{Wilk's } \Lambda = 0.974, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .026$ ), or for items using the four-choice rating system ( $F(4, 33) = 1.095; p = .375; \text{Wilk's } \Lambda = 0.883, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .117$ ) described below.

Participants were asked to indicate whether they thought it was worthwhile to attend the FWFG workshop. To answer this question, participants selected from four response options: "Definitely," "Somewhat," "No," and "Not Sure Yet." Of the 38 participants included in this study, the majority of participants (89.5%) indicated that it was "Definitely" worthwhile to attend, and 10.5% thought it was "Somewhat" worthwhile to attend. Study participants were also asked to rate how enjoyable and interesting their workshop experience was on a scale of 1 (least enjoyable) to 5 (most enjoyable). All participants gave their experience a ranking of 5 (65.8%) or

4 (34.2%). When asked to describe the most enjoyable or interesting aspect of the workshop, participants' responses converged around four major themes: being able to talk openly about sex and sexuality; being able to talk about sex with other women; being able to hear a variety of opinions and perspectives on sex and sexuality; and feeling comfortable in the group environment. Participants noted that being able to talk with other women their age about sex allowed them to gain new perspectives on these topics, while simultaneously validating and normalizing their own opinions and preferences. When asked to describe the least enjoyable or interesting aspect of the workshop, 50% of participants wrote "nothing" or did not supply a response. The remaining 50% described disliking that not all participants opened up or shared with the group, and the length of time spent sitting on a hard floor.

Further, participants rated how helpful and relevant they found the FWFG workshop to be to their own lives on a scale of 1 (least helpful) to 5 (most helpful). The majority of participants rated the helpfulness and relevance of the workshop as a 5 (71.1%) or 4 (23.7%). One participant (2.6%) rated the helpfulness and relevance as a 3, and one participant (2.6%) rated it as a 2. When participants were asked to describe which workshop components they found least helpful or relevant, 32 (84.2%) participants wrote "nothing" or did not provide an answer. The six participants who did answer provided very different answers: 1) "talking about consent;" 2) "didn't find out why I can't reach orgasm;" 3) "sex education, because my experience with it was so different [than the rest of the group's];" 4) "the standards that people have;" 5) "the fact that a few people didn't talk;" and 6) "things i already knew, like terms and definitions."

Participants also indicated whether participation in the FWFG workshop influenced: 1) how they think about young adult women's sexuality, in general; 2) how they think about their own sexuality; and 3) how they will embrace or express their own sexuality in the future. To

answer these questions, participants selected from four response options: “Definitely;” “Somewhat;” “No;” and “Not Sure Yet.” Most participants noted that workshop participation “Definitely” (47.4%) or “Somewhat” (21.1%) changed how they think about young adult women’s sexuality, in general. Seven participants (18.4%) expressed that participation in the FWFG workshop did not change how they think about young adult women’s sexuality, while 13.2% of participants were “Not Sure Yet” if participation would change their perspective. When asked to elaborate on their answers, participants who reported “Definitely” or “Somewhat” indicated that: 1) they learned more about the constraints placed on women’s sexuality, such as “the sexual double standard” and “slut shaming;” 2) the workshop helped them discover that they were not alone in their perspectives on women’s sexuality (e.g., learning that others are “open and accepting”); and 3) that they have become more “comfortable,” “confident,” and “open” regarding issues of sexuality. Participants indicating “No” to this question reported that they already knew the information discussed in the workshop (e.g., that “everyone’s sexuality is different”; that they already refrained from “judg[ing] anyone by their sexuality”), or that they felt the same way they had before the workshop.

Similarly, the majority of participants noted that workshop participation “Definitely” (34.2%) or “Somewhat” (39.5%) influenced how they think about their own sexuality. Nine participants (23.7%) indicated that participation did not influence how they think about their own sexuality, and one participant (2.6%) was “Not Sure Yet.” Participants indicating “Definitely” or “Somewhat” reported that the FWFG workshop influenced them to: 1) consider their sexual desires more seriously, as well as the need to communicate their desires to partners. One experimental group participant reported that the workshop “made me more aware that I need to talk with my sexual partner more to get what I need/want.” The workshop also encouraged

participants to feel more confident in their desires and “less weird in what [they] think or feel” through the experience of listening to other women’s opinions, perspectives, and preferences. Furthermore, the FWFG workshop encouraged some participants to be more intentional in their sexual decision-making, including their choice of sexual partners and activities. One experimental group participant noted, “it made me think about how I don’t want a lot of bodies and how I want a passionate partner.” Two participants who responded “Somewhat” to this question acknowledged that they still “don’t feel that comfortable” or feel “shy” about discussing sex and sexuality. Participants reporting “No” to this question indicated that they “already know [their] likes and dislikes”, and are “pretty sure of what they want.” One participant reported that she “do[es not] think about [her] sexuality.”

The majority of participants also reported that workshop participation “Definitely” (34.2%) or “Somewhat” (44.7%) influenced how they will express or embrace their sexuality in the future. Seven participants (18.4%) indicated that participation in the workshop would not influence their sexual expression, and one participant (2.6%) was “Not Yet Sure.” When asked to expand on their response, participants reporting “Definitely” or “Somewhat” indicated that they felt more “open,” “comfortable,” and “confident” about their sexuality and desires, and about communicating those desires to others. In a clear assertion of agency and subjectivity, one experimental group participant wrote: “I will be getting pleased more often and not just whenever he feels like he should.” Three participants indicated that they will be more open to trying new activities and taking risks, or discovering new sexual likes and dislikes. One participant described being more mindful about her sexuality. She stated, “I think I’ll think twice about who I sleep with and why I’m sleeping with that person.” Participants reporting “No”

explained that they felt “open” and “comfortable” with their sexuality before participating in the workshop, or that they still think/feel the same as they did before about their sexuality.

Participants were also asked to indicate the most important thing they considered or learned as a result of attending the FWFG workshop. Twenty-one (52.6%) participants reported that the most important thing they learned was that, when it comes to sex and sexuality, “everyone is different and it’s perfectly okay”—that there is diversity in sexual expression, and that this variance should be embraced and respected. Another important theme for participants was the normalization: the normalization of female sexuality and desire (23.7%), and the normalization of participants’ perspectives on sexuality in general (15.9%). Participants noted that workshop participation helped them learn that “it’s okay to express your sexual needs/wants,” that “what [they] want is important,” and that they are “not the only one[s] with these feelings.” Participants were encouraged to learn that “other girls feel the same way [they] do” about women’s sexuality, including the perspective that diversity in sexual expression should be accepted. Two participants (5.3%) also noted that participation in the FWFG workshop specifically helped them learn more about their own sexuality and what makes sex “good” for them.

At the end of the evaluation questionnaire, participants were also invited to provide suggestions to improve the FWFG workshop. Nineteen (50%) participants did not answer this question, wrote “nothing,” or indicated that the workshop did not need improvement. The 19 participants that answered suggested that workshop groups be larger, that the workshop include more discussion questions or activities (questions with a narrower focus or more structure), and that pillows to sit on be provided.

## **Hypothesis Testing: Participants' Use of Discourses and Sexual Subjectivity**

### **Discourse Analysis of Participant Narratives**

Thirty-eight “good sex” narratives were written by participants (16 experimental; 22 control) in response to open-ended questions. All but one narrative was written from a first-person perspective (one narrative was written from the third-person perspective). Each participant’s responses to the two open-ended questions were combined to yield one narrative description of “good” sex. To ensure blindness to condition, each narrative was given a numeric identifier and analyzed in a randomly-determined order.

To uncover and compare the discourses around female sexuality operating in young adult women’s narrative descriptions of “good” sex, a form of discourse analysis informed by social constructionist theory, Foucaultian notions of discourse (1972) and feminist theory (Gill, 1995) was used. This explicitly feminist approach takes seriously the voice of the participant (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Further, this reflexive approach to discourse analysis requires the analyst to be clear about the positions from which they are reading and analyzing participant narratives (Gill, 1995; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Thus, as a feminist researcher informed by Foucault and social constructionist theory, I was particularly attuned to the ways in which gendered notions of sexuality and power construct women’s experience and notions of “good” sex. This influences the kinds of discourses that I identified as mattering, as well as the likelihood that evidence of these discourses were be found in participant narratives. As a sex-positive researcher, I am keenly attuned to the ways in which participants’ definitions of “good” sex were or were not expansive and inclusive. Further, I was attuned to the ways my identity and experiences as a young, white, upper-middle-class, educated, able-bodied, queer female influence my reading of participant narratives. Finally, as a social constructionist, I assumed that

any objective, essential “facts” about young women’s sexuality could not be gleaned from this study, but that important new ways of thinking about and understanding women’s sexuality could be generated by analyzing the ways their constructions of “good” sex were informed by prevailing discourse.

“Good” sex descriptions from participants in the experimental and control groups were compared to determine whether implementation of the FWFG workshop changed the discourses women use when thinking about “good” sex, and whether participation in the workshop increased women’s sense of sexual subjectivity in their sexual encounters. It was hypothesized that control participants would tend to endorse the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive* and *risk/victimization* discourses in their descriptions of “good” sex to a greater extent than the discourse of desire. It was also hypothesized that experimental participants would endorse the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive* and *risk/victimization* discourses to a lesser extent than control participants. Further, the experimental group was hypothesized to endorse the discourses of *desire* and *sexual subjectivity* more frequently than the control group.

Each narrative description was analyzed using a procedure based on *The Listening Guide* (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller, & Argyris, 1989). Whereas *The Listening Guide* (Brown et al., 1989) searches for distinct “voices” in an interview transcript, this analysis searches for distinct discourses in a written narrative. The procedure was as follows: first, the narrative was read through four times for evidence of the four distinct discourses that limit women’s sexuality (i.e., *madonna/whore*; *romance*; *permissive*; *risk/victimization*). Then, the narrative was read a fifth and sixth time for evidence of more expansive, progressive, and sex-positive discourses of women’s sexuality (i.e., *desire* and *sexual subjectivity*). The narrative was then read a seventh time for any *new* discourses. A particular sentiment will be identified as a new discourse if it

appeared in more than one participant narrative. Most narratives included some evidence of at least four of the six existing discourses of young adult female sexuality, as well as some evidence of a new discourse. Finally, each narrative was categorized by which discourse it represents most strongly, the purpose of comparison between and within experimental groups. See Appendix K for more detailed information on this discourse analysis and how I distinguished between discourses, and Appendix L for the complete coded analysis of participant narratives. Table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages of experimental and control group narratives that most strongly represent each discourse.

Table 2

*Frequencies and Percentages of Participant Narratives Representing Each Discourse of Young Adult Female Sexuality*

Discourse	Experimental Narratives	Control Narratives
Madonna/Whore Dichotomy	0 of 16 (0%)	3 of 22 (13.63%)
Romance Narrative	4 of 16 (25%)	7 of 22 (31.82%)
Permissive Discourse	1 of 16 (6.25%)	4 of 22 (18.18%)
Risk/Victimization Discourse	0 of 16 (0%)	0 of 22 (0%)
Discourse of Desire	3 of 16 (18.75%)	2 of 22 (9.1%)
Discourse of Sexual Subjectivity	5 of 16 (31.25%)	6 of 22 (27.27%)
New Discourse (Comfort)	3 of 16 (18.75%)	0 of 22 (0%)

**The limiting discourses of young adult female sexuality.** As hypothesized, participants who did not participate in the FWFG workshop before completing the open-ended questions tended to endorse the limiting discourses of young adult female sexuality (*madonna/whore; romance; permissive; risk/victimization*) in their descriptions of “good sex” more than those who had participated in the workshop. The majority (63.63%) of control participant narratives represented these discourses most strongly, versus only 31.25% of experimental participant

narratives. This suggests a correlation between workshop participation and reduced use of these discourses in conceptualizing “good sex.”

***The romance narrative.*** The most common limiting discourse of young adult female sexuality invoked by participants was the *romance* narrative: 31.82% of control participant narratives and 25% of experimental participant narratives invoked this discourse most strongly. Participants invoking the romance narrative wrote of good sex as heteronormative and related to love, romance, and relationship. One control participant essentially set up a “boy meets girl” romantic tale in her narrative. She wrote:

The 2 people meet in a bar setting and *they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her* and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. *The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. They makeout before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex.* This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes [I would realistically engage in this encounter] if the convo is interesting because *I would want to know this person more.*

This narrator describes a chaste sexual/intimate encounter in which the male partner assumes a more active, agentic role (i.e., he “approaches her”). Further, the sexual activity functions to help the individuals form a relationship and “get to know each other” better.

Many other participants also emphasized engaging in sex in service of feeling closer to their partner, as in the following experimental participant narrative:

*Sex, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while* and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay. The person I'm with will make it good *just spending time and*

*feeling close to my partner. I would engage for the pleasure and passion and closeness.*

Yes [I would realistically engage in this encounter], because that's what people do.

As this participant notes, having sex to enhance or further one's relationship is "what people do" within the *romance* narrative.

***The permissive discourse.*** The second most common limiting discourse of young adult female sexuality among participant narratives was the *permissive* discourse. Four control participant narratives (18.18%) versus one experimental participant (6.25%) evidenced this discourse most strongly. Though seemingly "empowered" the permissive discourse represents the adoption of a masculine form of sexuality that may not actually include desire, pleasure, or agency for women. For example, this control participant writes:

We would go back to his room + it would probably occur *late at nights*. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. *We usually go to eachother for sexual needs* to that is why it happened. basically *we just get to the point*.

Here, the narrator describes a predatory sexuality in service of meeting sexual "needs." Though sexual needs can be understood as desires, she makes no mention of pleasure or enjoyment—instead, this kind of sex just "get[s] to the point." An experimental participant shares a similar sentiment. She writes:

A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, *just satisfying our needs* and it is always good to have some passion, but *I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex*. I'm extremely *open to trying new things*, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

Again, this participant describes having a desire for sex, but does not mention receiving pleasure from sex. Within this context, her openness to “trying new things” may reflect the pressure placed on young adult women to engage in adventurous sex.

***The madonna/whore dichotomy.*** The third most common limiting discourse of young adult female sexuality in participant narratives was the *madonna/whore* dichotomy. However, this narrative was only endorsed most strongly by participants in the control group: three control participant narratives (13.63%) endorsed the *madonna/whore* dichotomy over other discourses, while no experimental participant narratives most strongly invoked this discourse.

Like the *romance* narrative, the *madonna/whore* dichotomy emphasizes passive female sexuality that is acceptable in the context of a heteronormative relationship. However, unlike the *romance* narrative, the *madonna/whore* dichotomy does not emphasize engaging in sex *in service of* a relationship. Additionally, the *madonna/whore* dichotomy works to position “good girl” sexuality against “bad girl” sexuality, as in the following control participant narrative:

I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place *with my boyfriend*, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say *what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning.* Like I said in question 1, *I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.*

Here, the narrator describes engaging in heteronormative “meaningful” sex with a committed partner that includes deep feelings. However, the narrator makes no mention of engaging in sex to further or support the relationship--she engages only because of its “meaning.” Further, this narrator positions herself as a stereotypical “good girl” who does not engage in one night stands (the kind of sexual behavior a “bad girl” would engage in).

***The risk/victimization discourse.*** No participant narratives most strongly endorsed the *risk/victimization* discourse, and only 10 of the 38 narratives (26.32%) included evidence of this discourse at all. However, evidence of the *risk/victimization* discourse was more common in control participants’ narratives: 36.36% control participant narratives included evidence of this discourse versus only 12.5% of narratives written by experimental group participants.

Statements invoking the *risk/victimization* discourse included the following sentiments: 1) “feel[ing] safe” with one’s partner; 2) limiting one’s sexual partners (e.g., no “randoms” or “one night stands”); 3) engaging only with others who have had fewer sexual partners (e.g., “I’d engage with anyone who I knew wasn’t a man whore or slept around”); 4) avoiding penetrative sex (“they don’t have sex”); and 5) avoiding consequences of sex. One control group participant wrote of wanting to avoid the reputational risks associated with sex. She wrote: “I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what’s going on, so being home alone is ideal.” Another control participant described wanting to avoid painful sex (i.e., “preferably anything but sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally”). No participants made explicit mention of using contraceptive methods such as birth control or condoms, or of avoiding medical consequences such as pregnancy or STDs.

**Progressive discourses of young adult female sexuality.** Taken together, participants in the experimental group tended to write more narratives that endorsed progressive and expansive discourses (i.e., *desire* and *sexual subjectivity*) than participants in the control group (50% vs. 36.37%, respectively), suggesting that participation in the FWFG workshop may be associated with increased use of sex-positive and expansive discourses in conceptualizing “good sex.”

***The discourse of desire.*** As hypothesized, participants who participated in the FWFG workshop before writing the narrative tended to endorse the discourse of *desire* in their descriptions of “good sex” more often than those who had not yet participated in the workshop. 18.75% of experimental participant narratives versus 9.1% of control participant narratives endorsed this discourse most strongly. Moreover, as hypothesized, control participants’ endorsement of the discourse of *desire* was to a lesser extent than the limiting discourses of female sexuality (except the *risk/victimization* discourse). The discourse of *desire* includes a description of desire for sexual activity and sexual pleasure. However, this discourse often lacks the agentic ability to communicate which specific activities/behaviors are desired, as in the following experimental participant narrative:

*Fun + pleasurable things would happen.* It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner *wanted it to + we were in the mood.* Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

Though the narrator describes “want[ing]” sex, being “in the mood” for sex, and engaging in “pleasurable” activities, she fails to articulate her specific desires.

Conversely, a discourse of desire may include an acknowledgement of desire and some communication of specific activities that are desired, but lack a discussion of sexual pleasure, as in the following experimental participant's narrative:

It would be *with someone I'm attracted to* and comfortable with. It could occur any where private at any time. *activities would include foreplay/sex*. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/considerate of *what I want*. *I would engage because I wanted sex*. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

Though the *discourse* of desire is a step towards sex-positivity for women, it fails to include all of the elements that constitute subjective sexuality (i.e., sexual desire, pleasure, and agency).

***The discourse of sexual subjectivity.*** Experimental participants endorsed the discourse of *sexual subjectivity* in their narratives to a slightly greater extent than control participants (31.25% vs. 27.27%, respectively). Contrary to hypothesis, the percentage of narratives that invoked this discourse most strongly was comparable between groups. Going beyond the discourse of desire, the discourse of *sexual subjectivity* includes a discussion of sexual desire, pleasure, and agency. Narrators invoking this discourse position themselves as active participants in a sexual encounter. They can communicate their desires and feel entitled to pleasure. One such narrator from the experimental group writes:

[Good sex occurs] With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (*risky places are cool too though*). *A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex*. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because *I would really want to* with this person. They have an awesome "touch" and thats what makes this encounter

good. Yes, [I would realistically engage in this encounter because] I'm comfortable with the person *I have chose to do it with* and we would both *enjoy it*.

This narrator engages in sex because she “really want[s]” to with her partner, and actively “cho[o]se[s]” to do so. Further, she can identify a number of specific activities that would bring her (and her partner) enjoyment and pleasure.

It is important to note that adopting a stance of sexual subjectivity does not exclude individuals from engaging in sexual encounters for reasons related to love, romance, relationship, and intimacy, as seen in this control participant’s narrative:

A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because *intamecy is important to me*. There would be a *good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex*. *The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense*. *The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done*. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that *it is satisfying* as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both *like to do this together*.

Here, our subjective narrator has thought about and can explain why “good sex” involves her boyfriend rather than “some random”—because she values intimacy. She is thoughtful about her sexual experiences, and has come to understand her own sexuality better. She engages in sex in service of herself and her pleasure, as well as her relationship.

**New discourses of young adult female sexuality.** Three out of the 16 (18.75%) experimental participant narratives most strongly represented a new discourse, while none of the control participant discourses did so, suggesting a positive correlation between workshop

participation and the use of new discourses in conceptualizing good sex. Six new “good sex” discourses (*comfort; familiarity; mutuality; consent; spontaneity; and self-concept*) were discovered through the reading of participant narratives. Table 3 shows the frequencies and percentages of participant narratives endorsing evidence of these six new discourses of young adult female sexuality.

Table 3

*Frequencies and Percentages of Participant Narratives Endorsing Evidence of New Discourses of Young Adult Female Sexuality*

Discourse	Experimental Narratives	Control Narratives	All Narratives
Comfort	11 of 16 (68.75%)	3 of 22 (13.64%)	14 of 38 (36.84%)
Familiarity	2 of 16 (12.5%)	11 of 22 (50%)	13 of 38 (34.21%)
Mutuality	5 of 16 (31.25%)	6 of 22 (27.27%)	11 of 38 (28.95%)
Consent	5 of 16 (31.25%)	5 of 22 (22.73%)	10 of 38 (26.32%)
Self-Concept	1 of 16 (6.25%)	1 of 22 (4.55%)	2 of 38 (5.26%)
Spontaneity	0 of 16 (0%)	2 of 22 (9.09%)	2 of 38 (5.26%)

***The comfort discourse.*** The most common new discourse expressed by participants was a discourse of *comfort*, with 14 of the 38 (36.84%) participant narratives demonstrating evidence of it. The *comfort* discourse highlights the importance of feeling comfortable—with oneself, one’s partner, and/or in one’s environment—in making a sexual or intimate experience “good” or enjoyable. Invoking the discourse of *comfort*, one experimental participant wrote:

I think that a good encounter would be *with someone I'm completely comfortable with*. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. we'd both give & receive oral. *It's good because I'm comfortable.*

She reports that being with someone that she feels “completely comfortable” around is what makes sex “good.” Another experimental participant shares a similar sentiment in her narrative:

Good sex can happen with anyone, *if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable*. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and *am completely comfortable with it*.

Beyond feeling comfortable around her partner, this participant highlights the importance of feeling comfortable with herself, and with the activities she engages in for sex to be “good” and “enjoyable.”

Young adult women who had participated in the FWFG workshop were more likely to invoke the comfort discourse in their narratives than those who had not yet experienced the workshop: evidence of the *comfort* discourse was found in 68.75% of experimental participant narratives versus only 13.64% control participant narratives. Further, all three experimental participant narratives that were identified as predominantly expressed a *new* discourse were those that most strongly represented the discourse of *comfort*. This suggests that participation in the FWFG workshop may have reinforced the importance of comfort in participants’ conceptualizations of good sex.

***The familiarity discourse.*** The second most common new discourse that participants expressed was a discourse of *familiarity*. 34.21% of all participant narratives demonstrated evidence of this discourse. The familiarity discourse represents participants’ sense of good sex as familiar—that “good sex” is of a kind or quality that they have already experienced. Participants who invoked the familiarity discourse often made reference to the fact that they had already engaged in the kind of sex they described in their narratives. For example, one control participant writes:

It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included. I would

engage if I was attracted to this person/was really into them. *Yes [I would realistically engage in this encounter]. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary.*

Young adult women who had not yet participated in the FWFG workshop were four times more likely to demonstrate evidence of the *familiarity* discourse in their narratives than those who had; half of all control participant narratives included evidence of the *familiarity* discourse, versus only 12.5% of experimental participant narratives. This suggests that participation in the FWFG is related to reduced use of the *familiarity* discourse in young adult women's conceptualization of "good sex."

***The mutuality discourse.*** Another common discourse, evidence of which was found in 28.95% of all participant narratives, is a discourse of *mutuality*. Experimental and control participants were similarly likely to include evidence of this discourse in their "good sex" narratives (31.25% versus 27.27%, respectively). This suggests that workshop participation did not have an effect on the expression of the mutuality discourse.

The *mutuality* discourse highlights participants' desire for mutuality in participation, engagement, and/or enjoyment of a sexual encounter by all parties involved. For some participants, all individuals getting what they want from the encounter (even if those desires differ) is what makes sex good. One experimental participant writes:

Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. *Both of us getting what what we want would make the encounter good.* [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them.

For other participants, mutuality would enhance sex, but is not necessary for an encounter to be good, as one control participant's narrative demonstrates:

I'm in love with my best friend, Laura [name changed]. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insides her until she orgasmed. *Hopefully she would do the same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't.* It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would [realistically engage in this encounter], but not with her. She is straight.

***The consent discourse.*** Ten of the 38 participant narratives (26.32%) also included evidence of a discourse of *consent*. Experimental group participant narratives tended to invoke this discourse more often than control participant narratives (31.25% vs. 22.73%, respectively), suggesting that participation in the FWFG may have influenced how young adult women conceptualize consent as part of “good sex.”

The *consent* discourse reflects participants' clear requirement of consent for “good sex.” For example, one control participant writes:

It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) we would kiss, take off clothes and so forth. *Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good* and also it's good because it's with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner.

The *consent* discourse also reflects participants' subtler desire for all individuals in a sexual encounter to *want* to engage in some specified sexual activity. As this experimental participant states:

In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex. The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. *I would engage in this because myself and my partner both wanted to.* Yes, because I like these things and so does my current partner.

On the surface, both parties wanting to engage in sexual activity may look like the mutuality discourse. However, whereas the *mutuality* discourse emphasizes mutuality in participation, engagement, and enjoyment of a sexual encounter, the *consent* discourse highlights mutuality in desire and continual agreement to participate. This discourse, and the above narrative, reflect participant desire for *enthusiastic consent*—for both parties to be enthusiastically and continually interested in engaging sexually, and invested in each other’s enjoyment (Project Respect, 2015).

***The discourse of self-concept.*** One participant in the experimental group (6.25%) and one participant in the control group (4.55%) endorsed a discourse of *self-concept* (5.26% of the total sample). This discourse highlights participant sentiments that good sex makes one feel good about oneself. The control participant writes:

In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a really good looking guy that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night. I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to do so. Yes [I would realistically engage in this encounter]. I have in the past and now. *It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.*

While the control participant attributes feeling good about herself to agentically engaging in the desired act of sex, the experimental participant attributes feeling good about herself to her partner's attitude and/or actions throughout the act of sex. She writes:

I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. *It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want.* That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

In both cases, these women experience improved self-concept through their sexuality.

***The spontaneity discourse.*** Two control group participants (9.09% of the control group; 5.26% of the total sample) endorsed a discourse of *spontaneity*. This discourse highlights participants' ideas that spontaneity and surprise are key to good sex. One participant writes:

It would be with someone I find very attractive and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. *To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised* and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

Another participant sees sex as something that just “just happens” to her, and doesn't think sex “occurs right” if it isn't spontaneous:

I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. *I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me.* I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of

feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

In both cases, surprise and spontaneity are essential for sex to be considered good.

### **Sexual Subjectivity**

A one-way MANOVA was used to compare experimental and control participants' scores on the five subscales of the modified FSSI: 1) *sexual body esteem*; 2) *sense of entitlement to pleasure from self*; 3) *sense of entitlement to pleasure from partner*; 4) *self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure*; and 5) *sexual self-reflection*. Two control participants and two experimental participants were excluded from this analysis for missing data. Participants in the experimental group were expected to demonstrate higher scores on all subscales of the modified FSSI than the control group, except for the *sexual body esteem* scale.

Multivariate analysis revealed that the difference in sexual subjectivity based on participation in the FWFG workshop approached, but did not reach, statistical significance,  $F(5, 28) = 2.445, p = 0.059$ ; Wilk's  $\Lambda = 0.696$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .304$ . Overall, participants who had attended the FWFG workshop before completing the FSSI reported higher levels of sexual subjectivity than participants who had not yet attended the workshop.

Tests of between-subjects effects demonstrated that workshop participation had a statistically significant effect on participants' sense of *entitlement to pleasure from self* ( $F(1, 32) = 5.814; p = .022$ ; partial  $\eta^2 = .154$ ) and participants' sense of *self-efficacy in achieving sexual*

*pleasure* ( $F(1, 32) = 8.308; p = .007; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .206$ ). Participants who had attended the FWFG workshop before completing the FSSI reported significantly higher levels of *entitlement to pleasure from self* and *self-efficacy in achieving pleasure* than those who had not yet attended the workshop. The effect of participation in the FWFG workshop on participants' sense of *entitlement to pleasure from partner* approached, but did not reach, statistical significance ( $F(1, 32) = 3.898; p = .057; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .109$ ). Participants who had attended the FWFG workshop before completing the FSSI reported higher levels of entitlement to pleasure from a partner than participants who had not yet attended the workshop.

Contrary to hypothesis, participation in the FWFG workshop did not have a significant effect on participants' level of *sexual self-reflection*,  $F(1, 32) = 2.053; p = .162; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .06$ . However, consistent with hypothesis, workshop participation did not have a significant effect on participants' sense of *sexual body esteem*,  $F(1, 32) = .595; p = .446; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .018$ . Participants who attended the FWFG workshop both before and after completing the FSSI reported similar levels of sexual self-reflection and sexual body esteem.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### **Lessons From the “Finding What Feels Good” Workshop**

Within the context of this study, the Finding What Feels Good Workshop was both a tool to learn about, and an intervention to alter the discourses influencing young adult women’s sexuality at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Within the workshop, participants were invited to consider the messages they’ve learned about sex and sexuality, critique them, and consider more positive and inclusive avenues for authentic sexual expression. They were encouraged to think about their sexual desires and boundaries, and consider how they might act as agents within their sexual lives. Through six administrations of the FWFG workshop important information about the sexualities of young adult women at IUP was discovered.

Through Activity 1 (“Identifying Discourses”), it became clear that there is some convergence in participants’ individual definitions of “good sex.” The words “passion,” “confidence,” “comfort,” and “consent” were used to define good sex by women in four or more workshop groups. Additionally, these terms were sometimes used by multiple participants within any given workshop group, further highlighting agreement in how to define “good sex.” Notably, most words and phrases that participants used to describe good sex were unique and appeared in only one workshop, highlighting diversity in sexual desires and preferences. Throughout the workshop, participants expressed surprise and appreciation for the similarities of their definitions and experiences of good sex, as well as acceptance of the diversity in sexual expression within their group. Participants shared the ways they were both similar to and different from other group members in how they experience and express their sexuality.

Activity 2 (“Discourse Critique”) shed light on the specific sexual messages participants received throughout their lifetime, and the sources of these messages. Many of these messages reflected elements of the four limiting discourses of young adult female sexuality: the *madonna/whore* dichotomy, the *romance* narrative, the *permissive* discourse, and the *risk/victimization* discourse. Three major sources of sexual messages were identified by all groups: family, friends, and media. Messages from many participants’ families (especially parents) reflect the *risk/victimization* discourse, the *madonna/whore* dichotomy, and the *romance* narrative. Parents urge their daughters to “be careful” and wait until marriage; they send the message that having sex makes one a “bad” girl. Yet, as in Thompson’s (1990) study, parental openness to discussing sex had a major influence on the kinds of messages participants received.

Participants reported that they learned about what sex is “supposed to be like” from friends. While this message often included elements of the *desire* and *sexual subjectivity* discourses (e.g., discussion of sexual pleasure and encouragement to “explore”), occasionally this encouragement resembled pressure to be sexual, reflecting the *permissive* discourse. Participants also explored complex and contradictory messages forwarded by media (including movies, television, music, magazines, and pornography). Consistent with the literature on the sexualization of girls in media (e.g., American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2007) participants noted that elements of the *madonna/whore* dichotomy (e.g., emphasis on virginity) and the *romance* narrative (e.g., romanticized portrayals of sex; focus on male pleasure) exist alongside portrayals of women as *permissive* and hypersexual.

Other common sources of sexual messages were formal sex education, religion, hometown/high school culture, and one’s own sexual experiences (both partnered and unpartnered). Consistent with the literature on school-based sex education (e.g., Bay-Cheng,

2003; Fine, 1988). Most participants noted that their formal sex education experiences were heteronormative and focused on reducing sexual *risk*. Religious institutions' messages about sex routinely reflected the madonna/whore dichotomy, and positioned sex—especially sex out of wedlock—as “bad.” It appears clear that most of the lessons participants have received about female sexuality are sex-negative and limiting to the development of an authentic, subjective sexuality.

However, from their own sexual experiences, participants have been able to expand their own personal discourses of *desire*, pleasure, and *sexual subjectivity*. As noted by Bryant & Schofield (2007), discourse construction is an active process; personal experience is a powerful tool in shaping discourse. Through their own sexual experiences, participants have discovered which activities they enjoy, which activities they do not, and which partner or relationship characteristics make for more enjoyable sexual encounters. Personal sexual experience has also allowed participants to identify which elements of other discourses (e.g., love and intimacy from the *romance* narrative) are important for increasing their own desire, pleasure, and subjectivity.

Activity 3 (“Exploring New Possibilities”) highlighted the heteronormative perspective of sex adopted by most participants. Participants who had questions about items on the *Yes, No, Maybe So Sexual Inventory Stocklist* (Corinna & Turett, 2014) demonstrated that their knowledge of sexual practices and behaviors was limited to those that are normally accepted as occurring between a man and a woman. Participants also demonstrated their heteronormative perspectives in defining sex almost exclusively as penile-vaginal intercourse. Many workshop participants did not share their specific sexual preferences and boundaries as identified on the *Inventory*. There are multiple explanations for this phenomenon. First, it is possible that sharing about one's sexuality in this level of detail felt too personal for most participants. Second,

participants may have been bored, disengaged, or uncomfortable sitting in the discussion circle by this point of the workshop. Indeed, many participants indicated on the Workshop Evaluation questionnaire that sitting on the floor without a cushion was uncomfortable. Third, participants may have answered “I don’t know” or “Maybe” to many questions on the *Inventory*, indicating uncertainty in their own preferences. Because participants were instructed to keep their completed *Inventory*, the likelihood of this possibility cannot be known.

### **Lessons From the Workshop Evaluation**

Overall, the *Finding What Feels Good* workshop was received positively by participants of this study. Generally, participants found it worthwhile to attend, enjoyable, and helpful. Additionally, most participants reported that the workshop “Definitely” or “Somewhat” influenced: 1) how they think about young adult women’s sexuality, in general; 2) how they think about their own sexuality; and 3) how they will embrace or express their own sexuality in the future.

In their evaluations of the workshop, participants reported that being able to talk openly about sex and sexuality in a comfortable environment with other women was a particularly enjoyable and valuable experience. Through this experience, participants reported that they were able to both hear a variety of opinions and perspectives on sex and sexuality and gain new appreciation for sexual diversity. They learned that “everyone is different and it’s perfectly okay;” they came to acknowledge diversity in sexual expression and expressed that this variance should be respected. Simultaneously, participants had their own opinions and sexual preferences validated and normalized. Participants learned that female sexuality is normal: that “it’s okay to express your sexual needs/wants,” and that they are “not the only one[s]” with sexual desires. These two experiences were labelled as the most important aspects of the workshop by

participants. Participants appreciated the opportunity to learn that “other girls feel the same way [they] do” about the ways society limits young adult women’s sexuality, and also hold the view that women’s desire and pleasure is important.

This finding reflects the great importance of open discussion and sexual socialization in empowering women and changing the prevailing discourses of young adult female sexuality (see: Bay-Cheng et al., 2013; Paul & Hayes, 2000; Tolman, 1994; Tolman, 2002). As noted by Paul and Hayes (2002), sharing stories that challenge existing sexual norms can break down and change them; gathering women to critique and discuss alternatives to the “sanctioned stories” (Tolman, 2000, p. 70) of women’s sexuality is crucial in changing the discourses that limit them. Participants have noted that engaging in an activity such as the *Finding What Feels Good* workshop is an opportunity to do just this.

From my experiences conducting these six *Finding What Feels Good* workshops and from the workshop evaluations completed by participants, it appears that many women hold sex-positive points of view, particularly related to accepting diversity in sexual expression. However, before entering the workshop, each woman’s perspective existed in a silo--separate from, and thus not accessible to, other women with whom they would not ordinarily talk about sex. By engaging in the workshop, participants were able to share their sex-positive stance with other women, normalizing this point of view and dismantling sex-negativity and shame. Participants reported that talking with other women about sex over the course of the workshop helped them feel more confident in their desires, and more willing to communicate these desires to partners. Providing more women opportunities to engage in such a discussion has the potential to change individuals’ personal sexual practices, and our culture’s overarching stance towards sexuality.

## Lessons From the Discourse Analysis of Participant Narratives

The “good sex” narratives written by participants shed even more light on the dominant ideas influencing young adult women’s sexualities. Interestingly, most participant narratives--regardless of experimental condition--included some evidence of at least four of the six discourses of young adult female sexuality (i.e., the *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive*, *risk/victimization*, *desire*, and/or *sexual subjectivity* discourses). This suggests that the young women of this study have been influenced by many (if not all) of the stories of female sexuality that are typically disseminated within U.S. culture, including those that are more progressive for women. Most narratives also included some evidence of one or more of the six new discourses of young adult female sexuality identified through this analysis (i.e., *comfort*, *familiarity*, *mutuality*, *consent*, *self-concept*, and *spontaneity*), suggesting that this particular group of young adult women, who predominantly identify as White, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied and educated, are influenced by sexuality discourses that have yet to be identified in the psychological literature.

Importantly, the analysis revealed that participation in the FWFG workshop was related to changes in the discourses participants used to describe “good sex.” In particular, workshop participation was associated with reduced use of the limiting discourses of female sexuality (i.e., *madonna/whore*, *romance*, *permissive*, and *risk/victimization*) and increased use of progressive or expansive discourses (i.e., *desire* and *sexual subjectivity*) in participants’ “good sex” narratives. Thus, participating in the Finding What Feels Good Workshop can help participants move beyond the limiting discourses of young adult female sexuality towards more authentic, agentic, and pleasurable sexual expression.

Of the limiting discourses influencing young adult female sexuality, the *romance* narrative was most commonly invoked by participants. This discourse includes the sentiments of, but extends beyond the *madonna/whore* dichotomy and focuses on the relational usefulness of sex. The *romance* narrative was most dominant in 28.95% of all participant narratives, though it was more common in control participant narratives. The prominence of the *romance* narrative suggests that the young adult women in this study place great importance on sex as it relates to love, romance, and relationships. For almost a third of participants, “good sex” is conceptualized to occur with a committed partner, and in service of that partnership. Or, as Kirkman, Rosenthal, and Smith (1998) write, “being in love justifies having sex” (p. 362).

The permissive discourse, highlighting young adult women’s expression of masculinized sexuality that does not necessarily correspond to their own desire or pleasure, was less commonly found to dominate participant discourses. Participants endorsing the permissive discourse described engaging in casual sex with non-romantic partners. Much of the psychological literature exploring the sexualities of college-age women has focused on the “hookup” and the so-called widespread “hookup culture” (e.g., Bogle, 2008; Eaton, Rose, Interligi, Fernandez, & McHugh, 2015; Paul & Hayes, 2002; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000). The hookup has been defined as a sexual encounter “usually lasting one night, between two people who are strangers or brief acquaintances” that “may or may not include sexual intercourse” (Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000, p. 79). Other definitions exist, though the sentiment remains the same: the hookup is a form of casual sexual interaction that exists outside of a specific romantic relationship. Though hookups may provide women more sexual freedom than more traditional scripts (e.g., the “date”) that outwardly emphasize female passivity, studies show that traditional gender roles (e.g., male initiation) are still part of the hookup script (Eaton

et al., 2015). Thus, the hookup can be considered a reflection of the *permissive* discourse that continues to reify gendered notions of sexuality that disempower women.

Though the hookup has oft been considered to be the most common form of sexual/intimate interaction among college students (e.g., Bogle, 2008), new research shows that the traditional date is more common than the hookup at predominantly white collegiate institutions (Eaton et al., 2015). The present findings, which point to prominence of the *romance* narrative over the *permissive* discourse, are consistent with the results of Eaton and colleagues' (2015) study.

Also notable was the lack of narratives among either group that highlighted the *risk/victimization* discourse most strongly. Though some participants referenced safety, and minimizing the medical and reputational consequences of sex, no narratives were most influenced by this discourse. Further, no narratives included an explicit discussion of the use of contraceptive methods. Is it possible that the idea of birth control and barrier methods is antithetical to participants' notions of "good sex"? Is safe sex totally unsexy? Research suggests that adolescents choose not to use barrier methods of contraception due to perceptions that condoms decrease sexual pleasure and that partners will disapprove if they ask to use a condom (Brown, DiClemente, Crosby, Fernandez, Pugatch, Cohn, Lescano, Royal, Murphy, Silver, & Schlenger, 2008). It is possible that many young women fear that initiating contraceptive use could "spoil the mood," so discussions of safer sex are absent in their "good sex" narratives.

Regarding the more expansive and progressive discourses of young adult female sexuality, participants who had completed the FWFG workshop were more than twice as likely to endorse a discourse of *desire* most strongly in their narratives. However, contrary to hypothesis, the percentage of experimental and control participant narratives most strongly

endorsing a discourse of *sexual subjectivity* were about equal (31.25% to 27.27%, respectively). It appears that the FWFG was not successful in increasing women's sense of sexual subjectivity to the extent suspected, but was successful in increasing some aspects of sexual subjectivity--namely *desire*.

According to Tolman (2002), "sexual desire is at the heart of sexual subjectivity" (p. 5-6). Yet, a discourse of *sexual subjectivity* extends beyond desire, and includes being able to identify, communicate, and act on desires in a way that feels pleasurable. The results of the discourse analysis suggest that the FWFG workshop was successful in encouraging participants to identify that they have desire for "good sex." However, the analysis also suggests that the workshop was less successful in encouraging agency in communicating one's desires. This may be due to the structure and format of the workshop: though the workshop focused on validating participants' desires and encouraging them to explore and name their desires for themselves, it did not focus on skills or strategies to communicate one's desires. This lack of focus on precisely how to exhibit sexual agency may have contributed to the lack of difference in sexual subjectivity between control and experimental participant narratives.

However, it is notable that around a third of the narratives from both groups most strongly reflected the discourse of *sexual subjectivity*. The high incidence of sexually subjective narratives, regardless of workshop participation, may be a result of the particular population with whom this study was conducted. This sample was predominantly White, heterosexual, and middle-class or upper-middle class--very similar to the young women who Tolman and Szalacha (1999) found to endorse a discourse of desire without an accompanying discourse of vulnerability. Women from this particular background may be afforded the privileges of desire and subjectivity compared to other women due to their sociocultural status. Thus, the FWFG

workshop may be more effective in increasing sexual subjectivity among women who do not identify as White, heterosexual, or middle/upper-middle-class, and who are thus less likely to experience a sense of sexual subjectivity due to sociocultural privilege.

Further, it is important to note that the discourse of *sexual subjectivity* may reflect a problematic, non-inclusive form of sex-positivity, as demonstrated by the following control participant's narrative. She writes:

We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.

This discourse, while sex-positive, does not qualify as sexually subjective (or desirous) according to the rules of this analysis. There is a discussion of pleasure (e.g., "I like going slow"), and an agentic discussion of personal boundaries (i.e., "not much would be involved;" "I do not like doing anything I don't want to"), but this discourse is not sexually-subjective due to its lack of discussion of desire for sexual activity/sexual pleasure. Whereas inclusive sex-positivity is about "owning our desires" and "owning our lack of desire" (White, 2012, para. 3), the discourse of *sexual subjectivity* is exclusively focused on the experience and agentic pursuit of desired sexual activity. The discourse of sexual subjectivity, then, excludes individuals who are asexual or choose not to participate in sexual activity. Thus, the definition of sexual subjectivity may need to be reconsidered and reworked to become more inclusive of individuals with varying levels of desire.

Another important finding is the existence of six new discourses in participants' "good sex" narratives: the *comfort* discourse, the *familiarity* discourse, the *mutuality* discourse, the *consent* discourse, the discourse of *self-concept*, and the *spontaneity* discourse. The comfort discourse was the most common new discourse, appearing in over one third of all participant narratives and dominating three experimental participant narratives. This discourse, which reflects participants' sense of feeling comfortable with themselves, their partners, and in the sexual environment, reflects participants' requirement for authenticity in "good" sexual encounters. As determined by participant narratives and participants' descriptions of "good sex" in the FWFG workshop, *comfort* includes feeling as though they can be totally themselves during a sexual encounter. If they feel comfortable, they are free to be themselves, and acknowledge and advocate for their desires. In this way, the *comfort* discourse is a progressive, sex-positive discourse. That the *comfort* discourse was more common in the experimental participant narratives suggests that the FWFG workshop was successful in promoting authenticity in sexual expression.

The familiarity discourse, found to be more common in control participant narratives, represents participants calling on their past sexual or intimate encounters to describe a good sex experience. While it is not impossible for participants to have enjoyed good sex in their lives already, the use of this discourse suggests minimal use of imagination, fantasy, or unexpressed desires in describing a good sex experience; its use suggests that participants are thinking about sex in a limited way. Thus, the fact that more control participants used this discourse in their descriptions of "good sex" suggests that participation in the FWFG workshop allowed experimental participants to conceptualize sex in more imaginative, expansive ways.

The *mutuality* and *consent* discourses are complementary, but distinct; they respectively call for mutuality in pleasure from and desire for sexual activity among all individuals involved. Evidence of the *mutuality* discourse was comparable among experimental and control participant narratives. However, the *consent* discourse was slightly more common among experimental participant narratives, suggesting that participation in the FWFG workshop may have influenced participants' conceptualizations of good sex to include consent. This would make sense, considering the explicit discussion of consent in the FWFG workshop.

The *self-concept* and *spontaneity* discourses were not endorsed by many participants, but are worth noting because of their appearance in more than one narrative. The idea that “good sex makes you feel good about yourself” (i.e., the discourse of *self-concept*) and that good sex “just happens” (i.e., the *spontaneity* discourse) are worth investigating further. Do they constitute independent discourses in their own right, or reflect elements of other, established discourses? Future research in this area can help clarify this question.

### **“Good Sex” Keywords Versus “Good Sex” Narratives**

Interestingly, the words used in participants' “good” sex narratives did not always correspond with the keywords participants used to describe “good sex” in Activity 1 of the FWFG workshop. One might expect that control participants, who had just written their “good sex” narratives, might use words and ideas reflective of those narratives when describing good sex in the FWFG workshop. This appeared to be the case with the term “attraction,” which was present in five control participant narratives (as well as one experimental participant narrative), and was used to describe good sex in all three control workshops. Similarly, it might be expected that experimental participants, who had just completed the FWFG workshop, would use words from the “good sex” brainstorming session in their narratives. For example, the

terms/ideas of “comfort” and “consent”—common in the brainstorming sessions—appeared in experimental participant narratives 11 and five times, respectively.

However, many terms used to describe good sex in the FWFG workshops did not appear in participant narratives. For example, while the word “confident” was used to describe good sex by all six workshop groups, this word did not appear in any participant narratives. Further, the sentiment of “feeling good” about oneself (i.e., the *self-concept* discourse) only appeared in two participant narratives. Similarly, the word “passion,” which was used to describe good sex by all six workshop groups appeared in only five participant narratives (three experimental, two control). Other keywords and ideas that were used to describe good sex in more workshops than participant narratives include: 1) “communication” (three workshops versus one experimental narrative); 2) “connection” (three workshops versus two control narratives); 3) “safe” (three workshops versus one control and one experimental narrative); and 4) “sexy” (two workshops versus zero narratives). Further, one term (i.e., “private”) was only used to describe good sex in one control workshop, but appeared in five experimental and two control participant narratives. This may have occurred as a result of the difference in the way participants were asked to describe “good sex.” The workshop brainstorm was prompted by a brief, open-ended question: “What is good sex?”, while participant narratives were written in response to a detailed prompt inquiring about the why, when, where, how, and what of a “good” sexual/intimate encounter.

### **Lessons From the Modified FSSI**

The modified FSSI is a quantitative measure of five aspects of sexual subjectivity, as defined by Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck (2006): 1) *sexual body esteem*; 2) *sense of entitlement to pleasure from self*; 3) *sense of entitlement to pleasure from partner*; 4) *self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure*; and 5) *sexual self-reflection*. As expected, due to lack of focus on

body image in the FWFG workshop, experimental and control participants' scores did not differ significantly on the *sexual body esteem* scale. Further, as expected, participants who had completed the FWFG workshop demonstrated significantly higher scores, or higher scores that approached significance, on many of the FSSI scales (i.e., *sense of entitlement to pleasure from self*; *self-efficacy in achieving sexual pleasure*; *sense of entitlement to pleasure from partner*).

As previously discussed, few, if any, participants in each workshop spoke openly about their own experiences with masturbation, and many participants described disliking masturbation compared to partnered sexual activities. Considering that the *sense of entitlement to pleasure from self scale* concerns masturbation, it may be possible that participation in the FWFG workshop changed participants' ideas about masturbation as a pleasurable or worthwhile activity. It was hypothesized that the difference between control and experimental participants' scores would be greatest on the *sexual self-reflection* scale, as the FWFG workshop is, in essence, an exercise in sexual-self reflection. However, there was no significant difference between the groups' scores, suggesting that participation in the FWFG workshop did not influence participants' level of sexual self-reflection. It is possible that participants viewed participation in the FWFG workshop as separate from their typical approach to thinking about their own sexuality and sexual experiences. Overall, the results of the FSSI reinforce the results of the discourse analysis of participant narratives: participants who completed the FWFG workshop before completing the FSSI were more likely to endorse many—but not all—elements of sexual subjectivity.

## **Study Limitations & Future Directions**

### **Generalizability**

There are a number of limitations to this study which hinder the generalizability of the results. First, the generalizability of results is limited by the makeup of the study sample. This study utilized a small sample of predominantly White, heterosexual, able-bodied, educated, middle-class women. This sample is appropriate, given the fact that the existing discourses of young adult female sexuality utilized in this analysis have been studied most extensively with women of this sociocultural background. Similar studies could be conducted with women from different backgrounds, including adolescent, middle-aged, and older women; women from different racial and cultural backgrounds, urban women, women with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ women, and women from other social class backgrounds. Variants of the FWFG workshop can also be developed to work with men and gender-nonbinary individuals, with a focus on the specific discourses that inform and constrain their sexualities. In all cases, future researchers can use the new discourses forwarded by these groups to inform continued research and theory on sexuality, as well as to structure other targeted intervention efforts that encourage empowered sexuality for all individuals.

Further, participants elected to participate in this study, so there may be crucial differences in the ideas of, attitudes towards, and narratives written about “good sex” by the women who have volunteered to participate in a study about female sexuality compared to those who do not. One may expect that choosing to participate in a study where discussing sex with others is the focus would draw participants who actively think about their sexuality and are comfortable discussing issues related to sex. However, as demonstrated by participant responses to the modified FSSI and Workshop Evaluation questionnaire, this was not the case for at least

some participants. For example, 14 participants responded “False” to the FSSI question, “I think about my sexuality.” On the Workshop Evaluation, one participant wrote, “I don’t think about my own sexuality,” and another participant explicitly wrote that she “doe[es]n’t feel that comfortable” talking about sex. Another possibility is that choosing to participate in a study related to sexuality may indicate that an individual actively acknowledges their desire for or enjoyment of sex. This may have influenced the finding that a similar percentage of control and experimental group participants invoked the discourse of *sexual subjectivity* most strongly in their “good sex” narratives.

Another limitation to generalizability related to the study location. This study took place at a residential college campus that all participants (and I, the researcher) attended. As previously discussed, residential college campuses are prime sites for sexual socialization, and the construction, transmission, and reinforcement of a particular set of sexual norms. So, participants and I came into this study with ideas about sex that are unique to the university we attended. At Indiana University of Pennsylvania, there is a major focus on *victimization* and *consent* in sex education programming (e.g., sexual assault, rape, domestic violence, stalking, alcohol and consent). All incoming student are required to attend an orientation workshop focused on these issues. Residence hall walls are plastered with signs and posters calling for consent. It seems logical, then, that many participants expressed that the requirement of consent for sex has been “hammered into” them. It also seems logical, then, that a discourse of *consent* would emerge in participants’ descriptions of “good sex” during the FWFG workshop, and in participant “good sex” narratives. At different universities or within other communities, different discourses may emerge.

## Limitations of the Research Methodology

Other study limitations result from the research methods selected. In this study, workshops of five to eight participants were run until the control and experimental groups included at least 15 participants each. As a result, the control and experimental groups were uneven, with 22 and 16 participants with usable data, respectively. Additionally, workshop groups did not have equal numbers of participants, introducing variability in group dynamics. Moreover, all participants experienced the FWFG workshop as part of this study. Though all participants reported enjoying the workshop and many indicated that it imparted important information and influence, this decision limits the ability to conduct follow-up research. The long-term effectiveness of participation in the FWFG workshop cannot be studied experimentally with this sample, as there is no longer a control group of young adult women who have not experienced the workshop. Studying the long-term effects of participation in the FWFG workshop is a worthwhile endeavor, but would require a new sample of young adult women from this university with sociocultural characteristics similar to the present sample.

Further, the decision to use a modified, true-false version of the FSSI likely influenced the results of the quantitative portion of this study. The FSSI was chosen for use in this study because it is the only existing measure of sexual subjectivity. However, it is a measure still in development, and has yet to be validated for use in an American sample. Using a forced-choice version of the measure limited its sensitivity: for example, the finding that participation in the FWFG workshop increased participants' sense of *entitlement to pleasure from partner* may have been significant (rather than approaching significance) had a Likert-scale been used. However, that significant results (i.e., workshop participation is correlated with higher levels of *entitlement*

*to pleasure from self* and *self-efficacy in achieving pleasure*) were found using the true-false format points to the robustness of these findings.

Additionally, the decision to collect written “good sex” narratives from workshop attendees (vs. interviewing workshop attendees about “good” imagined sexual or intimate encounters) impacted the kind and quality of data received for analysis. Participants varied in their willingness and ability to communicate their conceptualizations of a “good” sexual or intimate encounter in a written format, as indicated by differences in narratives’ length and level of detail. However, the anonymity of a written format and submission process may have encouraged some of the participants to write in the moderate level of detail they provided in their narratives.

An interview format may have felt too personal or exposing for some participants to feel comfortable discussing the details of a “good” sex encounter, especially for women in the control group, with whom little rapport was made before data was collected. Further, discourses can be “co-constructed” in a semi-structured interview format, depending on how the interviewer frames follow-up questions (see: Gavey & McPhillips, 1999). This could lead the participant to frame her responses in terms of discourses that are subtly promoted by the interviewer. Still, considering that an interview format has traditionally (and successfully) been used to analyze discourse, interviewing young women about “good” real or imagined sexual/intimate encounters and a corresponding discourse analysis remains an important avenue for future research.

### **Group Dynamics and Facilitator Influences**

Finally, there are group dynamic and facilitator variables that may have influenced the results of this study in ways that are beyond the current scope of analysis. Because each workshop and grouping of women was unique (in terms of sociocultural and personality

variables), participants related to each other differently in each workshop and created different atmospheres for discussion that may have influenced participants' willingness to open up and share. This, in turn, influenced the kind and quality of discussion in the workshop. While most groups achieved a similar depth of discussion, the contrast between the first and second control groups' styles of interacting highlights this point. In the first control workshop group, all participants took turns talking, with few silences. Further, participants readily shared personal information about their own sex lives. In contrast, three voices dominated in the second control workshop group, with the remaining participants staying mostly silent. Participants rarely shared personal information about their sexualities, and instead shared anecdotes about friends or spoke of women "in general." In this workshop, there were many silences that participants described as "awkward" in the Workshop Evaluation.

As researcher and workshop facilitator, my individual sociocultural and personality characteristics influenced how each workshop was conducted. As a white, queer, non-religious, upper-middle-class, able-bodied, educated woman in a monogamous relationship with a male, there are ways I could and could not relate to each group member demographically and experientially. This may have influenced how participants related towards me as facilitator, and thus, how they shared their experiences with (as a member of the group) and for (as a subject in my study) me. Additionally, my approach to giving workshops--with a non-judgmental attitude, an eye towards inclusiveness, a willingness to share personal examples, and an appropriate sense of humor--may have influenced the impact of the FWFG workshop in ways that are beyond the scope of analysis. The Workshop Evaluation questionnaire did not ask participants to rate the facilitator, so minimal data about my influence on the workshop experience was collected. Only one participant commented on my skills as facilitator. She wrote, "The woman directing it did an

awesome job also with making us (me) feel comfortable and speaking up.” Future versions of the workshop evaluation should include a question that examines the impact of the facilitator on the participants’ experience of the FWFG workshop.

### **Refining the “Finding What Feels Good” Workshop**

The results of this study point to important considerations and changes that could be made to the *Finding What Feels Good* workshop to improve its palatability and effectiveness. One improvement exists at a structural level. First, while sitting on the floor in a discussion circle adds to an atmosphere of intimacy among participants, providing pillows or cushions to sit on would make the workshop experience more comfortable.

Further, as is the case within any research design utilizing a group discussion format, the appropriate balance needs to be struck between fostering participants’ sense of safety and encouraging discussion. In this study, such a balance was sought by placing a limit on acceptable group sizes (i.e., five to eight participants) and establishing ground rules for participation as a group at the beginning of each workshop. However, in some groups, there was still “awkward silence” if some members chose not to share actively and consistently. In the Workshop Evaluation, some participants suggested including more group members. Perhaps a group size of six to ten women would be more effective in encouraging participation without adding pressure to speak. Additionally, including more participants would add to the diversity in sexual expression that could be explored within the group.

Other possible improvements relate to changes at the level of workshop format. This workshop utilized a number of open-ended questions (e.g., “What is good sex?” “Where did you learn about sex?”) for the purpose of generating authentic, extended participant responses. However, some participants expressed confusion about these broad questions, and felt unsure of

how to respond. Including more more focused questions to clarify and expand upon the broad questions that the workshop is based on—especially towards the beginning of the workshop—may also encourage responding.

Finally, while this workshop appears to be successful at encouraging the identification, exploration, and validation of one's desires, the results of the discourse analysis of participant narratives and modified FSSI suggests that it is less successful in encouraging agency in communicating one's desires—a key element of sexual subjectivity. Participants were able to identify that they need to communicate their desires to reliably have them fulfilled, and could identify some barriers to communication. However, the workshop did not focus on building agentic communication skills. Making the *Finding What Feels Good* workshop a two-part workshop (with the second half focused on enhancing sexual communication skills) could help build this facet of sexual subjectivity among women.

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## Appendix A

### Workshop Procedural Outline

#### **Introduction**

- 0.1 Facilitator will orient participants to the workshop, explaining that: 1) the workshop is an open forum to discuss issues related to sex and women's sexuality; and 2) that participants should feel free to participate at their comfort level.
- 0.2 Together, the group will create ground rules for participation to make the workshop environment a safe space. The importance of confidentiality will be emphasized.
- 0.3 The facilitator will be open about the fact that she has facilitated workshops of this type before, and that the conversation often tends to be focused on straight, white women's experiences, but that participants should be mindful that individuals of other backgrounds and orientations may be in the room. Tolerance for diversity of all kinds—but particularly sexual diversity—will be emphasized, and participants will be encouraged to speak about how their backgrounds and identities influence how they think about sexuality.
- 0.4 Participants will engage in an *icebreaker activity* and will all name a celebrity that they think is sexy.

#### **Activity 1: Identifying Discourses**

- 1.1 Participants will *discuss what they consider to be "good" sex* (e.g., who it is with, under what circumstances it occurs, when it occurs, and what kinds of activities are included). Key words will be written on a large piece of paper by participants.
- 1.2 Participants will *discuss what US culture says "good" sex is, including what young women are told or taught about sex*.
- 1.3 Participants will *discuss barriers to women's sexuality*, potentially including the sexual double standard, the gatekeeper role, ideas of "normal" sex and the traditional sexual script, difficulties related to communication, and consent; and ignorance of female pleasure and desire.

#### **Activity 2: Discourse Critique**

- 2.1 Participants will *identify where these ideas about sex come from*, including family, friends, media, religion, and experiences with sex education. Key words will be written on the same piece of paper, and participants will draw lines from these influences to the ideas about "good" sex that they identified before to visualize their relationship.
- 2.2 Participants will discuss how their unique backgrounds influenced how they think about sex (to uncover variance due to diversity).
- 2.3 Participants will *identify the degree to which these ideas about sex are relevant to women in general, versus themselves personally* (to consider the applicability of the discussed discourses to particular groups of women).

#### **Activity 3: Exploring New Possibilities**

- 3.1 Participants will engage in an activity that encourages them to *think about what kinds of (expanded) activities good sex could include, and what they might authentically like or dislike in a sexual encounter* (i.e., review and discussion of *Yes, No, Maybe So: A Sexual Inventory Stocklist*

- 3.1.1 *Sexual diversity* (i.e., different behaviors and practices, meanings, relationship/partner choices, and levels of engagement) *will be affirmed and celebrated* by the facilitator and through women's discussion of their preferences and limits.
- 3.1.2 The facilitator will normalize and participants will discuss any *ambivalence* that emerges around sexual choices (e.g., wanting sex vs. wanting its consequence).
- 3.2. Participants will discuss *how they might strive to be sexual agents* and advocate for what they want from their sexual/intimate experiences.

## Appendix B

### Yes, No, Maybe So: A Sexual Inventory Stocklist (Corinna & Turett, 2014) (For Use in the FWFG Workshop)

#### Code Guide

Y = Yes

N = No

M = Maybe

IDK = I don't know

F = Fantasy

N/A = Not Applicable

#### Body Boundaries

- A partner touching me affectionately without asking first
- Touching a partner affectionately without asking first
- A partner touching me sexually without asking first
- Touching a partner sexually without asking first
- A partner touching me affectionately in public
- Touching a partner affectionately in public
- A partner touching me sexually in public
- Touching a partner sexually in public
- Having my shirt/top off with a partner
- Having a partner's shirt/top off
- Having my pants/bottoms off with a partner
- Having a partner's pants/bottoms off
- Being completely naked with a partner with the lights off or low
- A partner being completely naked with the lights off or low
- Being completely naked with a partner with the lights on
- A partner being completely naked with the lights on
- Direct eye contact
- Being looked at directly, overall, when I am naked
- Grooming or toileting in front of a partner
- A partner grooming/using the toilet in front of me
- A partner looking directly at my genitals
- A partner talking about my body
- Talking about a partner's body
- Some or all of a disability, identity or difference I have being specifically made part of sex, sexualized or objectified
- Some or all of a disability, identity or difference a partner has being specifically made part of sex, sexualized or objectified
- Some or all kinds of sex during a menstrual period
- Seeing or being exposed to other kinds of body fluids (like semen, sweat or urine)
- Shaving/trimming/removing my own pubic hair

- \_\_\_ Shaving/trimming/removing a partner's pubic hair
- \_\_\_ Other:
- \_\_\_ Other:

Some parts of my body are just off-limits. Those are:

I am not comfortable looking at, touching or feeling some parts of another person's body. Those are:

I am triggered by (have a post-traumatic response to) something(s) about body boundaries. Those are/that is:



*What helps me feel most comfortable being naked with someone? What ways a partner does or may talk about my body make or could make me feel uncomfortable? What do I "count" as sexual touching and what do I consider affectionate touching?*

### **Words & Terms**

I prefer the following gender/sexual identity or role words (like man, woman, boi, femme, butch, top, etc.) to be used for me:

I prefer my chest or breasts be referred to as:

I prefer my genitals to be referred to as:

I prefer my sexual orientation and/or identity to be referred to as:

Some words I am not okay with to refer to me, my identity, my body or, or which I am uncomfortable using or hearing about, with or during any kind of sex are:

I am triggered by certain words or language. Those are/that is:



*Are certain words okay in some settings or situations but not in others? How flexible am I with what a partner might want to call something I like calling something else? Why do I use the words for my parts that I do?*

### **Relationship Models & Choices**

- A partner talking to close friends about our sex life
- Talking to close friends about my sex life
- A partner talking to acquaintances, family or co-workers about our sex life
- Talking to acquaintances, family or co-workers about my sex life
- An exclusive romantic relationship
- An exclusive sexual relationship
- Some kind of casual or occasional open/non-exclusive romantic relationship
- Some kind of casual or occasional open/non-exclusive sexual relationship
- Some kind of serious or ongoing open/non-exclusive romantic relationship
- Some kind of serious or ongoing open/non-exclusive sexual relationship
- Sex of some kind(s) with one partner at a time, only
- Sex of some kind(s) with two partners at a time
- Sex of some kind(s) with three partners at a time
- Sex of some kind(s) with more than three partners at a time
- A partner directing/deciding for me in some way with sex
- Directing or deciding for a partner in some way with sex
- Other:
- Other:



*What kind of agreements do/would I want with the kinds of relationships models I want or am interested in? What are my personal values with relationships and simultaneous sexual partners?*

### **Safer Sex and Overall Safety Items and Behaviors**

- Sharing my sexual history with a partner
- A partner sharing their sexual history with me
- Doing anything sexual which does or might pose high risks of certain or all sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Doing anything sexual which does or might pose moderate risks of certain or all sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Doing anything sexual which does or might pose low risks of certain or all sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Using a condom with a partner, always
- Using a condom with a partner, not always
- Putting on a condom myself

- Putting on a condom for someone else
- Someone else putting on a condom for me
- Using a dental dam, with a partner, always
- Using a dental dam, with a partner, not always
- Putting on a dental dam for myself
- Putting a dental dam on someone else
- Someone else putting a dental dam on me
- Using a latex glove with a partner, always
- Using a latex glove with a partner, not always
- Putting on a latex glove for myself
- Putting on a latex glove for someone else
- Someone else putting a latex glove on me
- Using lubricant with a partner
- Applying lubricant to myself
- Applying lubricant on a partner
- Someone else putting lubricant on me
- Getting tested for STIs before sex with a partner
- Getting regularly tested for STIs by myself
- Getting tested for STIs with a partner
- A partner getting regularly tested for STIs
- Sharing STI test results with a partner
- Doing things which might cause me momentary or minor discomfort or pain
- Doing things which might cause a partner momentary or minor discomfort or pain
- Doing things which might cause me sustained or major discomfort or pain
- Doing things which might cause a partner sustained or major discomfort or pain
- Being unable to communicate clearly during sex
- Having a partner be unable to communicate clearly
- Initiating or having sex while or after I have been using alcohol or other recreational drugs
- A partner initiating or having sex while or after using alcohol or other recreational drugs
- Other:
- Other:

I am triggered by something(s) around sexual safety, or need additional safety precautions because of triggers. Those are/that is:

 *Are sexual history conversations loaded for me? Do I have any double-standards with safer sex, testing or other safety? What makes me feel some risk is worth it, while another isn't?*

## Sexual Responses

- Experiencing or expressing unexpected or challenging emotions before, during or after sex
- A partner experiencing or expressing or challenging emotions before, during or after sex
- Not experiencing or expressing expected emotions before, during or after sex
- A partner not experiencing or expressing expected emotions before, during or after sex
- Feeling and being aroused (sexually excited), alone
- Feeling and being aroused, with or in front of a partner
- Having genital sexual response, like erection or lubrication, alone
- Having genital sexual response, like erection or lubrication, seen or felt by a partner
- Not having or "losing" erection or lubrication, alone
- Not having or "losing" erection or lubrication, with or in front of a partner
- Being unable to reach orgasm, alone
- Being unable to reach orgasm, with a partner
- Having one orgasm, alone
- Having one orgasm, with or in front of a partner
- Having more than one orgasm, alone
- Having more than one orgasm, with or in front of a partner
- Ejaculating, alone
- Ejaculating, with or in front of a partner
- Having a partner ejaculate with me/while I'm present
- Having an orgasm before or after you feel like you "should" with a partner
- Having a partner have an orgasm before or after you feel like they "should"
- Making noise during sex or orgasm, alone
- Making noise during sex or orgasm, with a partner
- Having sex interrupted by something or someone external or your own body or feelings
- Other:
- Other:

I am triggered by certain sexual responses of my own or those of a partner. Those are:

I like or don't like having or giving certain kinds of sexual aftercare (like snuggling or reaffirming emotional feelings). Those are:

**?** *Is what I/we think of as ideal in alignment with what our responses and comfort with them really are? What parts of sexual response make me feel vulnerable or exposed? Am I putting any pressure on myself or partners to respond a certain way?*

## Physical and/or Sexual Activities

- Masturbation
- Holding hands
- Hugging
- Kissing, cheek or face
- Kissing, closed-mouth
- Kissing, open-mouth
- Being kissed or touched on the neck
- Kissing or touching a partner's neck
- Giving hickeys
- Getting hickeys
- Tickling, doing the tickling
- Tickling, being tickled
- Wrestling or "play-fighting"
- General massage, giving
- General massage, receiving
- Having my chest, breasts and/or nipples touched or rubbed
- Touching or rubbing a partner's the breasts, chest and/or nipples
- Frottage (dry humping/clothed body-to-body rubbing)
- Tribadism (scissoring, rubbing naked genitals together with a partner)
- A partner putting their mouth or tongue on my breasts or chest
- Putting my mouth or tongue on a partner's breasts or chest
- Masturbating in front of/with a partner
- A partner masturbating in front of/with me
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on penis or strap-on), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers to penis or strap-on), giving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on testes), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on testes), giving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on vulva), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on vulva), giving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers inside vagina), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers inside vagina), giving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on or around anus), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers on or around anus), giving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers inside rectum), receiving
- Manual sex (hands or fingers inside rectum), giving
- Ejaculating (coming) on or in a partner's body
- A partner ejaculating (coming) on or in my body
- Using sex toys (like vibrators, dildos or masturbation sleeves), alone
- Using sex toys (like vibrators, dildos or masturbation sleeves), with a partner
- Oral sex (to vulva), receptive partner
- Oral sex (to vulva), doing to someone else
- Oral sex (to penis or strap-on), receptive partner
- Oral sex (to penis or strap-on), doing to someone else
- Oral sex (to testes), receptive partner
- Oral sex (to testes), doing to someone else

- Oral sex (to anus), receptive partner
- Oral sex (to anus), doing to someone else
- Vaginal intercourse, receptive partner
- Vaginal intercourse, insertive partner
- Anal intercourse, receptive partner
- Anal intercourse, insertive partner
- Using food items as a part of sex
- Cross-dressing during sex
- Having a partner cross-dress during sex
- Biting a partner
- Being bitten by a partner
- Scratching a partner
- Being scratched by a partner
- Wearing something that covers my eyes
- A partner wearing something that covers their eyes
- Having my movement restricted
- Restricting the movement of a partner
- Being slapped or spanked by a partner in the context of sexual pleasure
- Slapping or spanking a partner in the context of sexual pleasure
- Pinching or having any kind of clamp used on my body during sex
- Pinching a partner or using any kind of clamp on them during sex
- Other:
- Other:

I am triggered by certain sexual activities. Those are:



*If I said yes to something but my partner said maybe, what conditions might make their maybe a yes? With a partner, can we each live with and accept our no's? What ways do each of us, so far, know we like things done we've said we would do/like to do?*

### **Non-Physical (or Not Necessarily Physical) Sexual Activities**

- Communicating my sexual fantasies to/with a partner
- Receiving information about a partner's sexual fantasies
- Role-play
- Phone sex
- Cybersex, in IM
- Cybersex, in chat room
- Cybersex, on cell phone
- Getting sexual images of a partner in my email or on my phone
- Giving sexual images to a partner in their email or on their phone
- Reading pornography or erotica, alone

- Reading pornography or erotica, with a partner
- Viewing pornography, alone
- Viewing pornography, with a partner
- A partner reading or viewing pornography
- Giving pornography/erotica to a partner
- Getting pornography/erotica from a partner
- Other:
- Other:

I am triggered by certain non-physical sexual activities. Those are:

**?** *How do non-physical sexual activities figure into our/my relationship agreements? How big a role do non-physical sexual activities play in my sex life or do I want them to play?*

### **Birth Control/Reproductive Choices**

- Doing anything sexual which does or might pose a risk of pregnancy without using a reliable method of birth control
- Doing anything sexual which does or might pose a risk of pregnancy with a reliable form of birth control
- Using emergency contraception
- Having a partner use emergency contraception
- Becoming pregnant
- Creating a pregnancy with a partner
- Helping a partner throughout a pregnancy and delivery
- Experiencing a loss with a pregnancy, like miscarriage or abortion
- Supporting a partner through a loss with a pregnancy, like miscarriage or abortion
- Parenting with a partner
- Parenting by myself
- Paying child support for a pregnancy I co-created
- Terminating a pregnancy (abortion)
- A partner terminating a pregnancy (abortion)
- Choosing adoption if there was a pregnancy
- Other:
- Other:

**?** *In what situations do I see myself making a given reproductive choice (if applicable)? How do/might I feel about a partner having very different answers in this section than I do, and how would that impact my choice to be with them?*

Appendix C

Workshop Evaluation  
(Completed by Experimental and Control Groups)

**How enjoyable and interesting was the experience of attending this workshop? Please circle a number from 1 to 5:**

Least Enjoyable      1      2      3      4      5      Most Enjoyable

**What did you find most enjoyable or interesting about this workshop?**

**What did you find least enjoyable or interesting about this workshop?**

**Do you think it was worthwhile to attend this workshop? Please circle one of the following:**

Definitely              Somewhat              No              Not Sure Yet

**Did you find this workshop to be helpful and relevant to your life? Please circle a number from 1 to 5:**

Least Helpful      1      2      3      4      5      Most Helpful

**What was the most important thing you considered or learned as a result of attending this workshop?**

**What component(s) of this workshop did you find least helpful or relevant to your life?**

**Did this workshop influence how you think about your own sexuality? Please circle one of the following:**

Definitely              Somewhat              No              Not Sure Yet

**Please describe:**

**Do you think this workshop will change how you embrace or express your sexuality in the future? Please circle one of the following:**

Definitely

Somewhat

No

Not Sure Yet

**Please describe:**

**Did this workshop change how you think about young adult women's sexuality, in general? How? Please circle one of the following:**

Definitely

Somewhat

No

Not Sure Yet

**Please describe:**

**How do you think this workshop could be improved? Please describe:**

Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire  
(Completed by Experimental and Control Groups)

**Instructions:** Please answer each question by placing an **X** next to the best/most appropriate response **OR** by filling in the blank. When indicated by the question, please check **ALL** that apply. If you cannot or do not want to answer a question, circle the question number and move on to the next question.

1. **Gender:**     Female         Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Race/ethnicity:**

African American                       Hispanic                       Other (please specify):  
 Asian American                       Native American                      \_\_\_\_\_  
 Caucasian                       Bi/multiracial

4. **What is your social class background (as indicated by total household income growing up)?**

Lower class (\$0-\$15,00)                       Middle class (\$50,001-\$100,000)  
 Working class (\$15,001-\$35,000)                       Upper middle class (\$100,001-\$250,00)  
 Lower middle class (\$35,001-\$50,000)                       Upper class (Above \$250,000)

5. **What is your religious or spiritual affiliation?**

Catholic                       Muslim                       None  
 Protestant                       Buddhist                       Other (please specify):  
 Christian                       Atheist                      \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jewish                       Agnostic

6. **Do you have any disabilities?**

No disability                       Deaf/hard of hearing                       Speech/language  
 Learning disability                       Blindness/low vision                      disability  
 Physical disability                       Medical disability                       Other (please specify):  
 Brain injury                       Psychiatric disability                      \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your sexual orientation?**

- |                                       |   |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Heteroflexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homosexual   | <input type="checkbox"/> Homoflexible   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fluid           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sapiosexual    | <input type="checkbox"/> Skoliosexual    | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Demisexual     | <input type="checkbox"/> Trans-attracted |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pansexual    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asexual        |  |  |

**8. How would you describe your typical approach to sexual, romantic, or intimate relationships?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monogamous            | <input type="checkbox"/> Open relationships           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-monogamous        | <input type="checkbox"/> Casual relationships         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly monogamous     | <input type="checkbox"/> No interest in relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly non-monogamous | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polyamorous           | _____   |

**9. Are you currently in an intimate/sexual/romantic relationship?**  Yes  No

**10. Have you received any formal sex education?**  Yes  No

**10a. If yes, from where? Please check all applicable:**

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious institution  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community organization |                                      |

**11. Have you received any informal sex education?**  Yes  No

**11a. If yes, from where? Please check all applicable:**

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family  | <input type="checkbox"/> Media (e.g., books, internet, magazines) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |

**12. Are you currently sexually active? “Sexually active” is defined as engaging in any kind behavior that you think of as sexual, by yourself or with a partner. Examples include, but are not limited to: kissing, masturbation, manual stimulation, oral stimulation, and genital-to-genital contact.**

Yes  No

**13. At what age did you first become sexually active?** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Open-Ended Writing Prompts (Completed by Experimental and Control Groups)

*For each question, please describe with as much or as little detail as you feel comfortable:*

1. Imagine a good sexual/intimate encounter. What would happen? Who is it with? When and where does it occur? What activities are involved? What makes this encounter good? Why/for what reason would you engage in this encounter?

2. Would you realistically engage in this type of encounter? Why or why not?

## Appendix F

Modified Female Sexual Subjectivity Inventory  
(Based on Horne & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006)  
(Completed by Experimental and Control Groups)

**INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle T (for True) or F (for False) to answer the following questions**

1. T F | It bothers me that I'm not better looking
2. T F | It's okay for me to meet my own sexual needs through self-masturbation.
3. T F | If a partner were to ignore my sexual needs and desires, I'd feel hurt.
4. T F | I would not hesitate to ask for what I want sexually from a romantic partner.
5. T F | I spend time thinking and reflecting about my sexual experiences.
6. T F | I worry that I am not sexually desirable to others.
7. T F | I believe self-masturbating can be an exciting experience.
8. T F | It would bother me if a sexual partner neglected my sexual needs and desires.
9. T F | I am able to ask a partner to provide the sexual stimulation I need.
10. T F | I rarely think about the sexual aspects of my life.
11. T F | Physically, I am an attractive person.
12. T F | I believe self-masturbation is wrong.
13. T F | I would expect a sexual partner to be responsive to my sexual needs and feelings.
14. T F | If I were to have sex with someone, I'd show my partner what I want.
15. T F | I think about my sexuality.
16. T F | I am confident that a romantic partner would find me sexually attractive.
17. T F | I think it is important for a sexual partner to consider my sexual pleasure.
18. T F | I don't think about my sexuality very much.
19. T F | I am confident that others will find me sexually desirable.
20. T F | My sexual behavior and experiences are not something I spend time thinking about.

## Appendix G

### Informed Consent Form for Experimental Group

You are invited to participate in this research study in order to help us learn more about women's sexuality and ideas about good sex. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. You are eligible to participate because you are a student at IUP enrolled in PSYC 101. As part of your course requirement, participation in this study will result in 3.0 credits towards your research requirement. This research has been approved by IUP's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (724-357-7730).

The purpose of this study is to understand how young adult women think about their sexuality. Participation in this study will require approximately 3 hours of your time, and participating is worth 3 research credits. You will be asked to participate in a workshop that includes facilitated discussions related to topics of sexuality. Then, you will be asked to anonymously respond to two open-ended questions about sexuality, complete an anonymous questionnaire, and complete an anonymous evaluation of the workshop.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign and date below. When you complete the workshop, you will be given an information sheet that will provide additional resources to learn more about sex- and sexuality-related topics, campus and community resources, and the researchers' contact information if you have any questions or wish to receive results of the study.

It is important to note that discussing issues related to sexuality can be uncomfortable for some individuals. Further, please remember that you are encouraged to participate in the discussion and share details of your own experience only to your level of comfort. Though participants are discouraged from discussing personal details others may have shared (i.e., "what is shared in the workshop stays in the workshop"), confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

However, you may find the experience enjoyable and interesting. Further, participation may help increase your awareness of sexual diversity, as well as issues that could influence your own sexuality, or the sexualities of women in general. You may learn more about what you are looking for from enjoyable sexual interactions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators. If you would prefer not to participate in this study, research credits may be earned instead by participating in other research studies and/or reading and reviewing scientific articles. If you wish to withdraw during the study, you may do so by leaving the room. If you wish to withdraw from the study after you have participated, please contact the researcher using the contact information below. If you request to withdraw from the study, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and the data will be kept securely.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign and date below. The researchers' contact information is provided if you have any questions or wish to receive results of the study.

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Participant's Signature

Camille Interligi, M.A.  
Department of Psychology, IUP  
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[c.j.interligi@iup.edu](mailto:c.j.interligi@iup.edu)

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Date

Maureen C. McHugh, Ph.D.  
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[mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu)

## Appendix H

### Informed Consent Form for Control Group

You are invited to participate in this research study in order to help us learn more about women's sexuality and ideas about good sex. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. You are eligible to participate because you are a student at IUP enrolled in PSYC 101. As part of your course requirement, participation in this study will result in 3.0 credits towards your research requirement. This research has been approved by IUP's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (724-357-7730).

The purpose of this study is to understand how young adult women think about their sexuality. Participation in this study will require approximately 3 hours of your time, and participating is worth 3 research credits. You will be asked to anonymously respond to two open-ended questions about sexuality and complete an anonymous questionnaire. You will then have the opportunity to participate in a workshop that includes facilitated discussions related to topics of sexuality, and complete an anonymous evaluation of the workshop.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign and date below. When you complete the workshop, you will be given an information sheet that will provide additional resources to learn more about sex- and sexuality-related topics, campus and community resources, and the researchers' contact information if you have any questions or wish to receive results of the study.

It is important to note that discussing issues related to sexuality can be uncomfortable for some individuals. Further, please remember that you are encouraged to participate in the discussion and share details of your own experience only to your level of comfort. Though participants are discouraged from discussing personal details others may have shared (i.e., "what is shared in the workshop stays in the workshop"), confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

However, you may find the experience enjoyable and interesting. Further, participation may help increase your awareness of sexual diversity, as well as issues that could influence your own sexuality, or the sexualities of women in general. You may learn more about what you are looking for from enjoyable sexual interactions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators. If you would prefer not to participate in this study, research credits may be earned instead by participating in other research studies and/or reading and reviewing scientific articles. If you wish to withdraw during the study, you may do so by leaving the room. If you wish to withdraw from the study after you have participated, please contact the researcher using the contact information below. If you request to withdraw from the study, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and the data will be kept securely.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign and date below. The researchers' contact information is provided if you have any questions or wish to receive results of the study.

---

Participant's Signature

Camille Interligi, M.A.  
Department of Psychology, IUP  
724-357-2621  
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Date

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724-357-2448  
[mcmchugh@IUP.edu](mailto:mcmchugh@IUP.edu)

## Appendix I

### Debriefing Form (For Experimental and Control Groups)

The following information is provided to you so that you will know the purpose of the research study you have participated in:

The purpose of this study is to determine how young adult women at Indiana University of Pennsylvania think about “good” sex and young adult women’s sexuality in general. By challenging these views, examining the sociocultural pressures placed on women’s sexuality, and inviting women to consider wider possibilities for sexual expression in an interactive workshop, the researchers hope that participants will come to endorse a more expansive and inclusive understanding of “good” sex for young adult women.

If you are interested in the topics/issues discussed today, we recommend the following resources:

1. *Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World Without Rape* by Jaclyn Friedman & Jessica Valenti
2. *The Purity Myth* by Jessica Valenti
3. *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* by Ariel Levy
4. **Laci Green:** sex-positive sex education activist and vlogger.
  - a. Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/lacigreen>
  - b. Tumblr: <http://lacigreen.tumblr.com>
  - c. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/officiallacigreen>
5. **Ashley Manta:** feminist sexuality educator, whose mission is to “empower individual and foster person, relational, and sexual growth.”
  - a. Website: <http://www.ashleymanta.com>
  - b. Podcast: Carnalcopia
6. **Sex Nerd Sandra:** sex-positive educator and podcast host.
  - a. Website: <http://sexnerdsandra.com/>
  - b. Podcast: <http://nerdist.com/tag/sex-nerd-sandra/>
7. **Scarleteen:** “Sex ed for the real world. Inclusive, comprehensive and smart sexuality information and help for teens and 20s.”
  - a. Website: [www.scarleteen.com](http://www.scarleteen.com)
  - b. Tumblr: <http://hellyeahscarleteen.tumblr.com>

For some, talking about sexuality can bring up questions or concerns related to health, safety, identity, and emotional well-being, as well as other issues. Provided is a list of campus and community resources that may help you in addressing these issues:

1. **IUP Counseling Center:** offers individual and group counseling services to students.
  - a. Phone: 724-357-2621
  - b. Website: <https://www.iup.edu/counselingcenter/>
  - c. Location: G31 Suites on Maple East

2. **IUP Haven Project:** offers confidential support and free services to students who have experienced violence.
  - a. Phone: 724-357-4799
  - b. Website: <http://www.iup.edu/haven/>
  - c. Location: G59 Suites on Maple East
3. **IUP Health Service:** provides routine health services to students, including STD and pregnancy testing (for a fee).
  - a. Phone: 724-357-2550
  - b. Website: <https://www.iup.edu/healthservice/>
  - c. Location: Suites on Maple East
4. **Adagio Health:** provides a wide spectrum of women's healthcare and education services (e.g., obstetrics and gynecology, breast and cervical cancer screening, STD testing and treatment, nutrition counseling) regardless of age or insurance status.
  - a. Phone: 724-349-2022
  - b. Website: [www.adagiohealth.org](http://www.adagiohealth.org)
  - c. Location: 1097 Oak St., Indiana PA 15701
5. **Kink Aware Professionals Directory:** provides a listing of psychotherapeutic, medical, legal, and other professionals that have stated that they are knowledgeable and sensitive to diverse expressions of sexuality.
  - a. Website: <https://ncsfreedom.org/key-programs/kink-aware-professionals/kap-program-page.html>

This research project is sponsored by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Department of Psychology. The investigator is Dr. Maureen McHugh, Ph.D. If you have any questions or would like to receive the results of this research when it is completed, please give you name and contact information to the researcher (Camille Interligi, M.A.), or call the Psychology Department at 724-357-2426.

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## Appendix J

### List of Keywords Used by Participants of the FWFG Workshop to Describe “Good Sex”

**Note:** During the brainstorming process, participants were invited to repeat and re-write words other group members had listed if they felt the word also applied to them, leading some words to be mentioned multiple times. Lists of “good sex” keywords were expanded upon by the group through the course of the workshop. Words in brackets represent those that were not identified initially by participants, but were later listed as important for good sex.

#### Control workshop 1:

- Passion (x2)
- Meaningful
- Neck kissing
- Attraction (x5)
- Good kisser
- Not rough
- Rough
- Control
- Foreplay
- Smells good
- Lights off
- Communication
- Confidence
- Good oral
- [Comfort]
- [Consent]

#### Control workshop 2:

- Passion
- Intimate (x3)
- Long
- Good
- Consent
- Compassion
- Mutual attraction
- Orgasms
- Care free
- [Meaningful]
- [Feeling sexy & wanted]
- [Communication]
- [Confident]
- [Dynamic (i.e., changing positions)]

#### Control workshop 3:

- Passion
- Trust (i.e., no pressure; partner not talking about sexual history) (x7)
- Confident (i.e., reinforcement from partner; body confidence) (x2)
- Feelings
- Beauty
- Connections
- Lust
- Intimacy with a partner you love
- Being comfortable (i.e., not in your head; don’t have to act a certain way) (x2)
- Private
- Mutual attraction
- Security
- [Long term partner]
- [Respecting boundaries]

### **Experimental workshop 1:**

- Music
- Being comfortable
- Passion
- Talking & laughing
- Eye contact
- Considerate partner (x2)
- Taking time
- A lot of kissing
- (Partner's) experience
- Don't be awkward
- Be awkward/be "yourself"
- Foreplay
- [Meaningful]
- [Connected]
- [Know your body]
- [Honesty]
- [Monogamous]
- [Feel confident]
- [Feel sexy]
- [Not too many partners]
- [Safe sex]

### **Experimental workshop 2:**

- Passion (x3)
- Comfort (x5)
- Timing (x2)
- Understanding (x2)
- Consensual (x4)
- Communication (x2)
- Able to "explore" (x2)
- Foreplay
- Warming up
- Confidence (x2)
- Happy
- Open
- Safe (x4)
- Knowing limits
- When he's not talking
- Fun (x2)
- Exciting (x2)
- Trusting
- [Romance]
- [Emotional connection]

### **Experimental workshop 3:**

- Love
- Good strokes
- Orgasm
- Mutual feeling
- Passion
- [Confident]
- [Comfortable]
- [Spontaneous]
- [Partner with lower body count]
- [Slow (it depends)]
- [Intimate]
- [Consent]
- [Someone you know]
- [Could be someone you don't know]
- [Safe]

## Appendix K

### Coding Notes for Discourse Analysis

#### **Madonna/Whore Dichotomy:**

- Narrator positions herself as passive in the encounter
- Narrator describes being responsive to make desire and sexuality
- Sex occurs in the context of a relationship
- Sex as heteronormative
- Sex is described as something private or to be hidden
- Narrator demonizes or passes judgment on any permissive or non-normative expressions of sexuality

#### **Romance Narrative:**

- Mention of a specific romantic partner (e.g., "boyfriend," "husband")
- Sex occurs in the context of a relationship
- Sex occurs in service of forming or maintaining a relationship (e.g., increasing intimacy or closeness)
- Narrator positions herself as passive in the encounter
- Narrator describes being responsive to her romantic partner's desire and sexuality
- Sex as heteronormative
- Inclusion of romantic keywords (e.g., "love," "intimacy," "romantic," "swept off my feet")
- Any mention of the "boy meets girl" love story

#### **Permissive Discourse:**

- Narrator describes a stereotypically masculine approach to sex and desire (e.g., sex without feelings; meeting sexual "needs" or "urges")
- Minimal discussion of sexual agency (may describe self as passive in the encounter)
- Minimal discussion of pleasure
- Emphasis on heteronormative and/or male-pleasure-centered activities

#### **Risk/Victimization Discourse:**

- Narrator describes avoiding consequences/risks of sex (e.g., pregnancy, STDs, bad reputation, pain)
- Narrator describes limiting one's number of sexual partners, or engaging with a partner who has had fewer sexual partners
- Narrator describes contraceptive use
- Narrator describes "safety" or feeling "safe"  
Abstaining from sex (until marriage)

**Discourse of Desire:**

- Desire:
  - Includes a discussion of desire (e.g., “need;” “want;” “in the mood”)
- Pleasure OR agency:
  - Includes a discussion of pleasure (e.g., “enjoy;” “like;” “pleasurable;” “feels good;” “have fun”) OR communication of specific sexual activities (e.g., “kissing;” “oral sex;” “anal sex;” “dirty talk;” “foreplay”), but not both
- Narrator may describe assuming a passive position in the sexual encounter

**Discourse of Sexual Subjectivity:**

- Desire:
  - Includes a discussion of desire
- Pleasure:
  - Includes a discussion of pleasure
- Agency:
  - Narrator communicates specific sexual activities
  - Narrator may identify other agentic language that places the narrator as the subject of the sexual encounter (e.g., “choose;” “communicate;” “suck”)

**New Discourses:**

- A phrase, idea, or sentiment counts as a “new” discourse if it does not fit with the above discourses, and appears in more than one narrative.

## Appendix L

### Discourse Analysis of Participant “Good Sex” Narratives

**Note:** Prompts are separated by condition, but are otherwise presented in a randomly selected order.

#### Experimental

##### 1. Narrative 1: Desire

###### a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. It would be with someone I'm attracted to and comfortable with. It could occur any where **private** at any time. activities would include foreplay/sex. the encounter would be **good if my partner know what he was doing**/considerate of what I want. I would engage because I wanted sex. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

###### b. ROMANCE

- i. It would be with someone I'm attracted to and comfortable with. It could occur any where private at any time. activities would include foreplay/sex. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/considerate of what I want. I would engage because I wanted sex. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

###### c. *PERMISSIVE: lack of stereotypical sexual aggressiveness*

- i. It would be with *someone I'm attracted to* and comfortable with. It could occur any where private *at any time*. activities would include *foreplay/sex*. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/considerate of *what I want*. I would engage because *I wanted sex*. Yes I would because *sex is healthy + natural*.

###### d. RISK

- i. It would be with someone I'm attracted to and comfortable with. It could occur any where private at any time. activities would include foreplay/sex. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/considerate of what I want. I would engage because I wanted sex. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

###### e. *DESIRE: identifies desire, but is not communicating about pleasure or specific needs/wants*

- i. It would be with *someone I'm attracted to* and comfortable with. It could occur any where private at any time. activities would include *foreplay/sex*. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/*considerate of what I want*. I would engage *because I wanted sex*. Yes I would because *sex is healthy + natural*.

## F. SUBJECTIVITY

i. It would be with **SOMEONE IM ATTRACTED TO** and comfortable with. It could occur any where private at any time. activities would include **FOREPLAY/SEX**. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/**CONSIDERATE OF WHAT I WANT**. I would **ENGAGE BECAUSE I WANTED SEX**. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

### g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort)

i. It would be with someone Im attracted to and *comfortable* with. It could occur any where private at any time. activities would include foreplay/sex. the encounter would be good if my partner know what he was doing/considerate of what I want. I would engage because I wanted sex. Yes I would because sex is healthy + natural.

## 2. Narrative 2: Sexual Subjectivity

### a. MADONNA/WHORE

i. **With a specific person**. probably somewhere more **private**. (risky places are cool too though). A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I would really want to with this person. They have an awesome "touch" and thats what **makes this encounter good**. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both enjoy it.

### b. ROMANCE

i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (risky places are cool too though). A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I would really want to with this person. They have an awesome "touch" and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both enjoy it.

### c. PERMISSIVE

i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (*risky places are cool too though*). A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and *foreplay*. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more *rough play and rough sex*. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I would really want to with this person. They have an *awesome "touch"* and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both *enjoy it*.

- d. RISK
  - i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (risky places are cool too though). A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I would really want to with this person. They have an awesome "touch" and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both enjoy it.
- e. *DESIRE*
  - i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (risky places are cool too though). A lot of *soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex.* I would engage in this encounter mainly just because *I would really want to with this person.* They have *an awesome "touch"* and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both enjoy it.
- f. **SUBJECTIVITY: HAS DESIRES, DISCUSSES PLEASURE, CAN COMMUNICATE DESIRES; AGENTIC**
  - i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (RISKY PLACES ARE COOL TOO THOUGH). A lot of SOFT/SENSITIVE TOUCHING AND KISSING AT FIRST AND FOREPLAY. PLAYING AROUND WITH EACHOTHER WHICH WOULD THEN LEAD TO MORE ROUGH PLAY AND ROUGH SEX. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I WOULD REALLY WANT TO with this person. They have AN AWESOME "TOUCH" and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I HAVE CHOSE to do it with and we would both ENJOY IT.
- g. NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality)
  - i. With a specific person. probably somewhere more private. (risky places are cool too though). A lot of soft/sensitive touching and kissing at first and foreplay. Playing around with eachother which would then lead to more rough play and rough sex. I would engage in this encounter mainly just because I would really want to with this person. They have an awesome "touch" and thats what makes this encounter good. Yes, I'm comfortable with the person I have chose to do it with and we would both enjoy it.

3. Narrative 3: Romance

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. Sex, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay. The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. I would engage for the pleasure and passion and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

b. ROMANCE: focus on partnership, sex in service of closeness

- i. Sex, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay. The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. I would engage for the pleasure and passion and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

c. *PERMISSIVE:*

- i. *Sex*, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, *living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay.* The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. *I would engage for the pleasure and passion* and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

d. RISK:

- i. Sex, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay. The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. I would engage for the pleasure and passion and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

e. *DESIRE:*

- i. *Sex*, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. *foreplay maybe roleplay.* The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. *I would engage for the pleasure and passion* and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

f. SUBJECTIVITY:

- i. **SEX**, it would be with a person who Ive been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bed room, living room, backyard, etc. **FOREPLAY MAYBE ROLEPLAY.** The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. **I WOULD ENGAGE FOR THE PLEASURE** and passion and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.

- g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort)
  - i. Sex, it would be with a person who I've been with for a while and am comfortable with. Most likely night time in a comfortable place bedroom, living room, backyard, etc. foreplay maybe roleplay. The person I'm with will make it good just spending time and feeling close to my partner. I would engage for the pleasure and passion and closeness. Yes, because that's what people do.
- 4. Narrative 4: Romance
  - a. MADONNA/WHORE
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) in the morning or before bed 3) foreplay between both parties 4) sex. slow-passionate 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - b. **ROMANCE: sex is good because it is with a romantic partner; sex related to love**
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) in the morning or before bed 3) foreplay between both parties 4) sex. slow-passionate 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - c. *PERMISSIVE*
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) *in the morning* or before bed 3) foreplay between both parties 4) sex. slow-passionate 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - d. RISK
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) in the morning or before bed 3) foreplay between both parties 4) sex. slow-passionate 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - e. *DESIRE*
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) *in the morning or before bed* 3) *foreplay between both parties* 4) *sex. slow-passionate* 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - f. SUBJECTIVITY
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) **IN THE MORNING OR BEFORE BED** 3) **FOREPLAY BETWEEN BOTH PARTIES** 4) **SEX. SLOW-PASSIONATE** 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.
  - g. NEW DISCOURSE
    - i. A good sexual encounter for me involves: 1) my boyfriend 2) in the morning or before bed 3) foreplay between both parties 4) sex. slow-

passionate 5) intimate. I would enjoy this because it is with someone I love. Yes I would! It makes sex enjoyable.

5. Narrative 5: New Discourse (Comfort)

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

b. ROMANCE

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. *Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.*

d. RISK

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and *enjoyable*. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and **ENJOYABLE**. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort)

- i. Good sex can happen with anyone, if you're comfortable with them and yourself it should be good and enjoyable. Honestly, I engage in sex quite often and am completely comfortable with it.

6. Narrative 6: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex. I'm engaged because I want to have sex and the partner also wants to. Yes because I enjoy being sexually stimulated.

b. ROMANCE

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex. I'm engaged because I want to have sex and the partner also wants to. Yes because I enjoy being sexually stimulated.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. *Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex.* I'm engaged because *I want to have sex* and the partner also wants to. Yes because *I enjoy being sexually stimulated.*

d. RISK

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex. I'm engaged because I want to have sex and the partner also wants to. Yes because I enjoy being sexually stimulated.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. *Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex.* I'm engaged because *I want to have sex* and the partner also wants to. Yes because *I enjoy being sexually stimulated.*

**F. SUBJECTIVITY: INCLUDES DESIRE, PLEASURE, AND SPECIFIC SEXUAL ACTIVITIES**

- I. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. **FOREPLAY AND KISSING LEADING UP TO SEX.** I'm engaged because **I WANT TO HAVE SEX** and the partner also wants to. Yes because **I ENJOY BEING SEXUALLY STIMULATED.**

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort, consent)

- i. With someone I feel comfortable with, inside a room. Foreplay and kissing leading up to sex. I'm engaged because I want to have sex and the partner also wants to. Yes because I enjoy being sexually stimulated.

7. Narrative 7: New Discourse (Comfort)

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were **in private.** we'd both give & receive oral. It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before

b. ROMANCE

- i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. we'd both give & receive oral. It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. *we'd both give & receive oral.* It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before

- d. RISK
    - i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. we'd both give & receive oral. It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before
  - e. *DESIRE*
    - i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. *we'd both give & receive oral.* It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before
  - F. SUBJECTIVITY
    - i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. **WE'D BOTH GIVE & RECEIVE ORAL.** It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before
  - g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort; familiarity)
    - i. I think that a good encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. it can occur whenever as long as were in private. we'd both give & receive oral. It's good because I'm comfortable. Yes, it's happened before
8. Narrative 8: New Discourse (Comfort)
- a. MADONNA/WHORE
    - i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it felt right and I wanted it
  - b. ROMANCE
    - i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it felt right and I wanted it
  - c. *PERMISSIVE*
    - i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it felt right and I wanted it
  - d. RISK
    - i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it felt right and I wanted it

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it *felt right and I wanted it*

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it **FELT RIGHT AND I WANTED IT**

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort, consent)

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter would be with someone I'm completely comfortable with. The where, when and what would happen would be whatever both parties are comfortable with. I would if it felt right and I wanted it

9. Narrative 9: Romance

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us getting what we want would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

b. ROMANCE: sex in service of relationship; passive recipient of sex

- i. Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us getting what we want would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us getting what we want would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

d. RISK

- i. Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us getting what we want would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter]

Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. Me and my partner would *have sex*. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us *getting what what we want* would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY**

- i. Me and my partner would **HAVE SEX**. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us **GETTING WHAT WHAT WE WANT** would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

g. **NEW DISCOURSE** (mutuality)

- i. Me and my partner would have sex. It would be [with] a boyfriend or someone I have been talking to for a while. In a room where it's just us. Any activity that he wants to do. Both of us *getting what what we want* would make the encounter good. [I would engage in this encounter] Because I have strong feelings for them. Yes, because I have feelings for that person.

10. Narrative 10: Permissive

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just satisfying our needs and it is always good to have some passion, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

b. **ROMANCE**

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just satisfying our needs and it is always good to have some passion, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

c. *PERMISSIVE: satisfying sexual needs in a stereotypically masculine way; no discussion of pleasure*

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, *just satisfying our needs* and it is

always good to have some passion, *but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex*. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just satisfying our needs and it is always good to have some passion, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just *satisfying our needs* and it is always good to have some *passion*, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

F. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just **SATISFYING OUR NEEDS** and it is always good to have some passion, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm **EXTREMELY OPEN TO TRYING NEW THINGS**, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort)

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would be with someone I am comfortable around. A relaxed environment, just satisfying our needs and it is always good to have some passion, but I'm less into the emotional stuff and more into just sex. I'm extremely open to trying new things, but we don't have to [to] make it a good sexual experience. Yes, I think that is a very reasonable encounter.

11. Narrative 11: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be lots of foreplay, dirty talk and kissing. The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's what I'd want at the time. Absolutely, I enjoy sexual encounters

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be lots of foreplay, dirty talk and kissing.

The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's what I'd want at the time. Absolutely, I enjoy sexual encounters

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be *lots of foreplay, dirty talk* and kissing. The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's what I'd want at the time. Absolutely, I enjoy sexual encounters

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be lots of foreplay, dirty talk and kissing. The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's what I'd want at the time. Absolutely, I enjoy sexual encounters

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be *lots of foreplay, dirty talk and kissing*. The encounter would be good if it *feels good, is fun* and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's *what I'd want at the time*. Absolutely, *I enjoy sexual encounters*

f. **SUBJECTIVITY: DISCUSSION OF PLEASURE, DESIRE, AND IS COMMUNICATING SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be **LOTS OF FOREPLAY, DIRTY TALK AND KISSING**. The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's **WHAT I'D WANT AT THE TIME**. Absolutely, **I ENJOY SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS**

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort, consent)

- i. A good sexual encounter would either be w/ a male or female that I have a level of trust, comfort, and understanding with. It would occur in a comfortable place, there would be lots of foreplay, dirty talk and kissing. The encounter would be good if it feels good, is fun and consensual. I would engage in this encounter because it's what I'd want at the time. Absolutely, I enjoy sexual encounters

12. Narrative 12: Desire

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. Fun + pleasurable things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a **private** space. This

encounter would happen because me + my partner wanted it to + we were in the mood. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

b. ROMANCE

- i. Fun + pleasurable things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner wanted it to + we were in the mood. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. *Fun + pleasurable things would happen.* It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner *wanted it* to + we were *in the mood*. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

d. RISK

- i. Fun + pleasurable things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner wanted it to + we were in the mood. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

e. DESIRE: desire and pleasure, but not communicating specific desires

- i. *Fun + pleasurable* things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner *wanted it* to + we were *in the mood*. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. **FUN + PLEASURABLE** things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner **WANTED IT** to + we were **IN THE MOOD**. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort, consent, mutuality)

- i. Fun + pleasurable things would happen. It would be with somebody that i am comfortable with and it would happen in a private space. This encounter would happen because me + my partner wanted it to + we were in the mood. Yes. i would do this because it would be something that i feel safe and comfortable doing.

### 13. Narrative 13: Sexual Subjectivity

#### a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. We would cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood. Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

#### b. ROMANCE

- i. We would cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood. Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

#### c. PERMISSIVE

- i. We would cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen *anytime during the day into the night* usually in a bed or *shower*. *Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood.* Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

#### d. RISK

- i. We would cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood. Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

#### e. DESIRE

- i. We would *cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay.* It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. *Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral*

*action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood.* Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

F. **SUBJECTIVITY: DISCUSSION OF PLEASURE AND DESIRE; COMMUNICATES SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES; AGENTIC**

i. We would CUDDLE FOR A WHILE, WATCHING A MOVIE OR TALKING THEN START KISSING AND LEAD TO FOREPLAY. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. DIFFERENT POSITIONS ARE USED SO ITS NOT MISSIONARY THE WHOLE TIME. CLITORAL ACTION MAKES IT FEEL GOOD AND I WOULD ENGAGE IN THIS ENCOUNTER BECAUSE I WANTED TO OR BECAUSE I WAS IN THE MOOD. Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort)

i. We would cuddle for a while, watching a movie or talking then start kissing and lead to foreplay. It would be with someone I had been talking to. No randoms. It can happen anytime during the day into the night usually in a bed or shower. Different positions are used so its not missionary the whole time. Clitoral action makes it feel good and I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to or because I was in the mood. Yes because that is in my comfort zone and what I feel comfortable doing.

14. Narrative 14: Romance

a. MADONNA/WHORE

i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I might be in my mood. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

b. **ROMANCE: sex in service of relationship; desire as secondary to having sex "because it's [her] man"**

i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I might be in my mood. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and *there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other* and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I might be in my mood. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I might be in my mood. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and *there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other* and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I *might be in my mood*. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and **THERE WOULD BE A LOT OF ROLE PLAY AND FEELING AND KISSING ON EACH OTHER** and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I **MIGHT BE IN MY MOOD**. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality; familiarity)

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend or the man that I am talking to for a while and It could happen in a room where there is a bed and there would be a lot of role play and feeling and kissing on each other and it would make it good if the feelings were mutual and I would engage in this encounter because that's my man and I might be in my mood. Yes, because if we did it before and it was good than I know it would be good the next time.

15. Narrative 15: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex. The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner both wanted to. Yes, because I like these things and so does my current partner.

b. ROMANCE

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex. The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner both wanted to. Yes, because I like these things and so does my current partner.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. *Oral, vaginal, and anal sex.* The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner *both wanted to. Yes, because I like these things* and so does my current partner.

d. RISK

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex. The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner both wanted to. Yes, because I like these things and so does my current partner.

e. DESIRE

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some *talking first*, just basic stuff. *Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex.* The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner both *wanted to. Yes, because I like these things* and so does my current partner.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY: DISCUSSION OF PLEASURE, DESIRE, COMMUNICATES SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES; AGENTIC**

- i. In a good sexual encounter I like some TALKING FIRST, just basic stuff. LIGHT KISSES ON A COUCH WHILE WATCHING A MOVIE OR JUST TV THAT GET MORE INTENSE. ORAL, VAGINAL, AND ANAL SEX. The encounter is good w/ COMMUNICATION and trust. I would engage in this because myself and my partner both WANTED TO. YES, BECAUSE I LIKE THESE THINGS and so does my current partner.

- g. NEW DISCOURSE (consent; mutuality)
  - i. In a good sexual encounter I like some talking first, just basic stuff. Light kisses on a couch while watching a movie or just TV that get more intense. Oral, vaginal, and anal sex. The encounter is good w/ communication and trust. I would engage in this because *myself* and my partner both wanted to. Yes, because I like these things and so does my current partner.

16. Narrative 16: Desire

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere **private** where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more **meaningful** that way. Relationship or not.

b. ROMANCE

- i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be *kinky* at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

d. RISK

- i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

e. *DESIRE: describing desires, but limited discussion of pleasure, agency, or specific activities; rather passive*

- i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. *I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex.* It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he

cares about me and *what I want*. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

F. SUBJECTIVITY

i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. **I LIKE MY SEX TO BE KINKY AT FIRST BUT ROMANTIC. I LOVE IT WHEN A GUY IS SO SWEET AND CARING DURING SEX.** It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and **WHAT I WANT**. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort; self-concept)

i. I would be with someone I am comfortable with. we would be somewhere private where we won't be bothered. I like my sex to be kinky at first but romantic. I love it when a guy is so sweet and caring during sex. It makes me feel a lot better about myself that he cares about me and what I want. That's what makes sex good. I would because it's more meaningful that way. Relationship or not.

**Control**

1. Narrative 1: Romance

a. MADONNA/WHORE

i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be **after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom.** We would start in the bed, make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter! I would engage in this encounter because it would be **with a man I truly love <3.** Yes, because who wouldn't want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you and loves you

b. **ROMANCE: sex is good because it's with your husband; sex related to love and relationship**

i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom. We would start in the bed, make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter! I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you and loves you

c. PERMISSIVE

i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and

he carries me straight to the bedroom. We would start in the bed, *make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter!* I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you and loves you

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom. We would start in the bed, make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter! I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you and loves you

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom. *We would start in the bed, make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter!* I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't *want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you* and loves you

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom. **WE WOULD START IN THE BED, MAKE OUR WAY TO THE FLOOR, THEN OUR JACUZZI/BATH MAYBE THE KITCHEN COUNTER!** I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't **WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE BEST SEX WITH SOMEONE WHOSE ALL ABOUT YOU** and loves you

g. NEW DISCOURSE

- i. A good sexual/intimate encounter in my opinion would be after I get married & my husband carries me over the threshold of our house and he carries me straight to the bedroom. We would start in the bed, make our way to the floor, then our jacuzzi/bath maybe the kitchen counter! I would engage in this encounter because it would be with a man I truly love <3. Yes, because who wouldn't want to experience the best sex with someone whose all about you and loves you

2. Narrative 2: Permissive

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for sexual needs to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didnt realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

b. ROMANCE

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for sexual needs to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didnt realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

c. *PERMISSIVE: stereotypical "masculine" expression of sexuality; describing a friends-with-benefits situation and meeting sexual "needs," but no mention of desire or pleasure*

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for sexual needs to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didnt realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

d. RISK

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for sexual needs to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didnt realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for *sexual needs* to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didnt realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to eachother for **SEXUAL NEEDS** to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i

didn't realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort; mutuality; familiarity)

- i. We would go back to his room + it would probably occur late at nights. It's good because we're such good friends that we're super comfortable together. We usually go to each other for sexual needs to that is why it happened. basically we just get to the point. Well, i didn't realize #1 could be unrealistic or else I would chose something different. But I already did engage in that encounter.

3. Narrative 3: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include oral sex & penetration & kissing. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. I engage in this encounter because it feels good. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

b. ROMANCE

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include oral sex & penetration & kissing. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. I engage in this encounter because it feels good. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include oral sex & penetration & kissing. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. I engage in this encounter because it feels good. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

d. RISK

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include oral sex & penetration & kissing. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. I engage in this encounter because it feels good. yes, it would,

and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + *passionate* it would include *oral sex & penetration & kissing*. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its *full of passion* and love. I engage in this encounter because *it feels good*. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

**F. SUBJECTIVITY: INCLUDES PLEASURE, DESIRE; COMMUNICATES SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES; MODERATELY AGENTIC LANGUAGE**

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include **ORAL SEX & PENETRATION & KISSING**. be with someone **I AM INTERESTED** in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. **I ENGAGE** in this encounter **BECAUSE IT FEELS GOOD**. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because **I ENJOY THESE ENCOUNTERS**.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (familiarity)

- i. During a good sexual encounter it would be very intimate + passionate it would include oral sex & penetration & kissing. be with someone I am interested in (male only). It would occur in a bedroom, on a bed most likely. This encounter is good because its full of passion and love. I engage in this encounter because it feels good. yes, it would, and because it has happened various times before. and because I enjoy these encounters.

4. Narrative 4: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be **in my room when no one else is home**. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insider her until she orgasmed. Hopefully she would do the same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would, but not with her. She is straight.

b. ROMANCE

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insider her until she orgasmed. Hopefully she would do the

same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would, but not with her. She is straight.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. *I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insider her until she orgasmed.*

Hopefully she would do the same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would, but not with her. She is straight.

d. RISK

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insider her until she orgasmed. Hopefully she would do the same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would, but not with her. She is straight.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. *I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my finger insider her until she orgasmed. Hopefully she would do the same,* but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. *It would be good because I get to have sex with her.* I would, but not with her. She is straight.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY: DESIRE, PLEASURE, AGENCY, AND ARTICULATION OF SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. **I WOULD KISS AND SUCK DOWN HER BODY UNTIL SHE WAS WET ENOUGH TO STICK MY FINGER INSIDER HER UNTIL SHE ORGASMED. HOPEFULLY SHE WOULD DO THE SAME,** but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. **IT WOULD BE GOOD BECAUSE I GET TO HAVE SEX WITH HER.** I would, but not with her. She is straight.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality)

- i. I'm in love with my best friend, Jessica. We would be in my room when no one else is home. There wouldn't be any special candles or lighting, honestly, Family Guy would be in the background. I would kiss and suck down her body until she was wet enough to stick my

finger insider her until she orgasmed. Hopefully she would do the same, but I wouldn't be upset if she didn't. It would be good because I get to have sex with her. I would, but not with her. She is straight.

5. Narrative 5: Desire

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone that I like and think is attractive. It would occur in a **private place**. I would engage in this encounter because I would want to and would most likely enjoy it. Activities that would be involved would be kissing and other things along those lines. Yes because it's something I enjoy.

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone that I like and think is attractive. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because I would want to and would most likely enjoy it. Activities that would be involved would be kissing and other things along those lines. Yes because it's something I enjoy.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone that I like and think is attractive. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because *I would want to and would most likely enjoy it*. Activities that would be involved would be kissing and other things along those lines. Yes because *it's something I enjoy*.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone that I like and think is attractive. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because I would want to and would most likely enjoy it. Activities that would be involved would be kissing and other things along those lines. Yes because it's something I enjoy.

e. *DESIRE: discussion of desire and pleasure but ineffective communication of specific activities*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with *someone that I like and think is attractive*. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because *I would want to and would most likely enjoy it*. Activities that would be involved would be *kissing and other things along those lines*. Yes because *it's something I enjoy*.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- I. A good sexual encounter would be with **SOMEONE THAT I LIKE AND THINK IS ATTRACTIVE**. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because **I WOULD WANT TO AND WOULD**

**MOST LIKELY ENJOY IT.** Activities that would be involved would be **KISSING AND OTHER THINGS ALONG THOSE LINES.** Yes because **IT'S SOMETHING I ENJOY.**

g. **NEW DISCOURSE**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone that I like and think is attractive. It would occur in a private place. I would engage in this encounter because I would want to and would most likely enjoy it. Activities that would be involved would be kissing and other things along those lines. Yes because it's something I enjoy.

6. Narrative 6: Permissive Discourse

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night after cuddling for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are foreplay of both sexes and the **just normal sex.** What makes it good is being with the person I like. I would engage to just have fun & feel good. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

b. **ROMANCE**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night after cuddling for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are foreplay of both sexes and the just normal sex. What makes it good is being with the person I like. I would engage to just have fun & feel good. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

c. *PERMISSIVE: unattached heteronormative sex just to "have fun and feel good"; includes a discussion of pleasure, but not of desire*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be *having sex with a male.* It occurs at night after cuddling for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are *foreplay of both sexes and the just normal sex.* What makes it good is being with the person *I like.* I would engage to *just have fun & feel good.* Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

d. **RISK**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night after cuddling for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are foreplay of both sexes and the just normal sex. What makes it good is being with the person I like. I would engage to just have fun & feel good. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night *after cuddling* for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are *foreplay of both sexes and the just normal sex*. What makes it good is being with the person *I like. I would engage to just have fun & feel good*. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

F. **SUBJECTIVITY**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night **AFTER CUDDLING** for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are **FOREPLAY OF BOTH SEXES AND THE JUST NORMAL SEX**. What makes it good is being with the person **I LIKE. I WOULD ENGAGE TO JUST HAVE FUN & FEEL GOOD**. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

g. **NEW DISCOURSE** (familiarity)

- i. A good sexual encounter would be having sex with a male. It occurs at night after cuddling for a little bit previous, also it would occur on a bed at either my house or the male's. Activities involved are foreplay of both sexes and the just normal sex. What makes it good is being with the person I like. I would engage to just have fun & feel good. Yes, because it is ideal & already has happened.

7. Narrative 7: Romance

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. **The man approaches her** and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. **They makeout before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex**. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

b. **ROMANCE: replicates the "boy meets girl" story; encounter in service of forming relationship**

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. They makeout before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. *The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. They makeout before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more*

d. RISK

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. They makeout before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

e. *DESIRE*

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. *The woman likes the man a lot* and he seems very genuine *and would like to go on a date with him soon. They makeout* before the woman has to go home, but they don't have sex. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. **THE WOMAN LIKES THE MAN A LOT** and he seems very genuine and **WOULD LIKE TO GO ON A DATE WITH HIM SOON. THEY MAKEOUT BEFORE THE WOMAN HAS TO GO HOME, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE SEX.** This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

g. NEW DISCOURSE (consent)

- i. The 2 people meet in a bar setting and they have been staring at each other across the room. The man approaches her and they start talking and they seem into each other. Neither are drunk. The woman likes the man a lot and he seems very genuine and would like to go on a date with him soon. The makeout before the woman has to go home,

but they don't have sex. This encounter is good because they had a good conversation and got to know each other well. Yes if the convo is interesting because I would want to know this person more

8. Narrative 8: Madonna/Whore

a. MADONNA/WHORE: sex as part of a relationship, but no mention of love, romance, or sex as being in service of that relationship.

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

b. ROMANCE

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

d. RISK

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

e. *DESIRE*

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort, familiarity)

i. I would want to have sex with a person who I am in an intimate relationship with, in a place that feels comfortable. Yes, bc I do it already.

9. Narrative 9: Madonna/Whore

a. MADONNA/WHORE: privacy; sex in a relationship (but not in service of one); not wanting penetrative sex

i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be better in the morning. in a non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for

sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be better in the morning. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be *any where* private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be *better in the morning*. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be better in the morning. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be better in the morning. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be **BETTER IN THE MORNING**. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

g. NEW DISCOURSE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be any where private like at home with my boyfriend. It would be better in the morning. in an non-stressful environment. preferably anything except for sex would happen since it hurts me occasionally. Yes, this is something I would engage in realistically.

10. Narrative 10: Desire

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. When I am intimate it involves my **boyfriend**. There are many activities that are involved. We both like doing things that are more "out of the box." A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would

engage in this because it's something we are both interested in. Yes, I already do.

b. ROMANCE

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are many activities that are involved. We both like doing things that are more "out of the box." A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both interested in. Yes, I already do.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are many activities that are involved. We both like doing things that are more "out of the box." A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both interested in. Yes, I already do.

d. RISK

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are many activities that are involved. We both like doing things that are more "out of the box." A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both interested in. Yes, I already do.

e. DESIRE: describing pleasure and desire, but poor articulation of activities

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are *many activities* that are involved. We both *like doing things that are more "out of the box."* A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both *interested in*. Yes, I already do.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are **MANY ACTIVITIES** that are involved. We both **LIKE DOING THINGS THAT ARE MORE "OUT OF THE BOX."** A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both **INTERESTED IN**. Yes, I already do.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality; consent; familiarity)

- i. When I am intimate it involves my boyfriend. There are many activities that are involved. We both like doing things that are more "out of the box." A good encounter would be for me to climax. I would engage in this because it's something we are both interested in. Yes, I already do.

11. Narrative 11: Permissive

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be lots of fourplay before sex. It would be with my **boyfriend** it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. Many positions. **What makes this good is the way he does everything.** I would engage in this to meet my sexual needs. Yes, I do it almost daily.

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be lots of fourplay before sex. It would be with my boyfriend it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. Many positions. What makes this good is the way he does everything. I would engage in this to meet my sexual needs. Yes, I do it almost daily.

c. PERMISSIVE: appears agentic/empowered on the surface, but approach is masculine (focusing on meeting sexual needs) but still expresses a high degree of passivity in this encounter

- i. A good sexual encounter would be *lots of fourplay before sex.* It would be with my boyfriend it occurs *almost every day and wherever we are.* Either my place or his. Many positions. *What makes this good is the way he does everything.* I would engage in this *to meet my sexual needs.* Yes, *I do it almost daily.*

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would be lots of fourplay before sex. It would be with my boyfriend it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. Many positions. What makes this good is the way he does everything. I would engage in this to meet my sexual needs. Yes, I do it almost daily.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be *lots of fourplay before sex.* It would be with my boyfriend it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. *Many positions.* What makes this good is the way he does everything. I would engage in this *to meet my sexual needs.* Yes, I do it almost daily.

F. SUBJECTIVITY

- i. A good sexual encounter would be **LOTS OF FOURPLAY BEFORE SEX.** It would be with my boyfriend it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. **MANY POSITIONS.** What

makes this good is the way he does everything. I would engage in this  
**TO MEET MY SEXUAL NEEDS.** Yes, I do it almost daily.

g. **NEW DISCOURSE** (familiarity)

- i. A good sexual encounter would be lots of foreplay before sex. It would be with my boyfriend it occurs almost every day and wherever we are. Either my place or his. Many positions. What makes this good is the way he does everything. I would engage in this to meet my sexual needs. Yes, I do it almost daily.

12. Narrative 12: Permissive

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included. I would engage if I was attracted to this person/was really into them. Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

b. **ROMANCE**

- i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included. I would engage if I was attracted to this person/was really into them. Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

c. *PERMISSIVE: masculine approach to sex (attraction only); no mention of pleasure; poor articulation of activities*

- i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. *Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included.* I would engage if I was *attracted to this person/was really into them.* Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

d. **RISK**

- i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included. I would engage if I was attracted to this person/was really into them. Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

e. **DESIRE**

- i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. *Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included.* I would engage if I was *attracted to this person/was really into them.* Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

F. SUBJECTIVITY

i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. **KISSING, TOUCHING, AND EVERYTHING ELSE WOULD BE INCLUDED.** I would engage if **I WAS ATTRACTED TO THIS PERSON/WAS REALLY INTO THEM.** Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

g. NEW DISCOURSE (familiarity)

i. It would be with a guy. Either his place or mine, secluded as in no one in the room or room next door. Kissing, touching, and everything else would be included. I would engage if I was attracted to this person/was really into them. Yes. I have in the past. So its not like i would be doing anything out of the ordinary

13. Narrative 13: Madonna/Whore

a. MADONNA/WHORE: narrator positions herself as the madonna in contrast to the whore

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

b. ROMANCE

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

d. *RISK*

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

e. *DESIRE*

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

f. *SUBJECTIVITY*

i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it

completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (spontaneity)

- i. I would say that a good sexual/intimate encounter would take place with my boyfriend, anywhere that I guess it happens really. I don't think sex really occurs right when people plan it out. It just happens, to me. I'd say what makes the counter good is when a lot of feelings occur + kept occurring continuously. I don't really like the idea of just having sex, I think there is meaning behind it, and that's the only way that I would engage it, meaning. Like I said in question 1, I believe that myself I should say, don't have sex just to have sex. there's meaning behind it and the only way that I would engage in it completely is if it is with my boyfriend or a guy I have been with, not just one night stands.

14. Narrative 14: Romance

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, attracted to physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that **being intimate with someone is special** and fun. What I described has happened.

b. **ROMANCE: sex in service on increasing the bond of relationship**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, attracted to physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and fun. What I described has happened.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, attracted to physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be *touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse*. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and fun. What I described has happened.

- d. RISK
  - i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, attracted to physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and fun. What I described has happened.
- e. *DESIRE*
  - i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, *attracted to* physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be *touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse*. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and *fun*. What I described has happened.
- F. SUBJECTIVITY
  - i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, **ATTRACTED TO** physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be **BE TOUCHING EACHOTHER, MAKING OUT LEADING TO INTERCOURSE**. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and **FUN**. What I described has happened.
- g. NEW DISCOURSE (comfort; good sex as sex that I've had)
  - i. A good sexual encounter would be with someone who I care deeply about, attracted to physically & mentally, and comfortable with. This would occur whenever and typically in a dark secluded area like a bedroom. Activities that would be involved would be touching eachother, making out leading to intercourse. Having someone who I am comfortable with makes this encounter good. I would engage to increase our bond. Yes, I feel that being intimate with someone is special and fun. What I described has happened.

15. Narrative 15: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would

most likely do it because we are in the mood or because we are alone. Ideally we would start slowly and increase intensity and roughness followed by a shower. Being with him makes it better than with someone else because I don't have to hold back. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions. Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would most likely do it because we are in the mood or because we are alone. Ideally we would start slowly and increase intensity and roughness followed by a shower. Being with him makes it better than with someone else because I don't have to hold back. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions. Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would most likely do it because we are in the mood or *because we are alone*. Ideally we would *start slowly and increase intensity and roughness followed by a shower*. Being with him makes it better than with someone else because *I don't have to hold back*. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. *I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions*. Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would most likely do it because we are in the mood or because we are alone. Ideally we would start slowly and increase intensity and roughness followed by a shower. Being with him makes it better than with someone else because I don't have to hold back. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions. Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would most likely do it because we are *in the mood* or because we are alone. Ideally we would *start slowly and increase intensity and*

*roughness followed by a shower.* Being with him makes it better than with someone else because *I don't have to hold back. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions.* Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

**F. SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITY: DISCUSSION OF DESIRE & PLEASURE; KNOWS BOUNDARIES, DESIRES/PREFERENCES; CAN COMMUNICATE DESIRES**

i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. **I AM NOT A FAN OF PDA OR PEOPLE KNOWING WHAT'S GOING ON SO BEING HOME ALONE IS IDEAL.** We would most likely do it because we are **IN THE MOOD** or because we are alone. Ideally **WE WOULD START SLOWLY AND INCREASE INTENSITY AND ROUGHNESS FOLLOWED BY A SHOWER.** Being with him makes it better than with someone else because **I DON'T HAVE TO HOLD BACK. HE KNOWS WHAT I LIKE AND I KNOW WHAT HE LIKES. I WOULD USUALLY PREFER A MESSAGE [MASSAGE] THEN KISSING THEN SEX IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS.** Yes, my boyfriend comes over often

g. NEW DISCOURSE (consent; mutuality; familiarity)

i. A good sexual encounter for me would occur with my boyfriend in my bedroom when no one was home. I am not a fan of PDA or people knowing what's going on so being home alone is ideal. We would most likely do it because we are *in the mood* or because we are alone. Ideally we would start slowly and increase intensity and roughness followed by a shower. Being with him makes it better than with someone else because *I don't have to hold back. He knows what I like and I know what he likes. I would usually prefer a message [massage] then kissing then sex in different positions.* Yes, my boyfriend comes over often.

16. Narrative 16: Romance

**a. MADONNA/WHORE**

i. It would be with someone I find very attractive and **someone who I have a good connection with.** This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being **meaningful**. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

b. **ROMANCE: sex as a quest for connection with a special person who sweeps her off her feet**

- i. It would be with someone I find very attractive and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. It would be with *someone I find very attractive* and someone who I have a good connection with. This could *happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me*. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. *I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on* as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because *I would be intrigued and interested in the person*.

d. RISK

- i. It would be with someone I find very attractive and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. It would be with *someone I find very attractive* and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

f. SUBJECTIVITY

- I. It would be with **SOMEONE I FIND VERY ATTRACTIVE** and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it an good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going

on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because **I WOULD BE INTRIGUED AND INTERESTED IN THE PERSON.**

g. **NEW DISCOURSE** (spontaneity)

- i. It would be with someone I find very attractive and someone who I have a good connection with. This could happen anytime day/night and where would not matter at all to me. To me it would make it a good encounter by me being surprised and swept off my feet. I'd engage with anyone who I knew wasn't a man whore or slept around [and] actually cared. I can imagine a bunch of craziness going on as well as it being meaningful. Yes, because I would be intrigued and interested in the person.

17. Narrative 17: Romance

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. It would be with a **boyfriend**. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) we would kiss, take off clothes and so forth. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner. Yes. **Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes.** Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

b. **ROMANCE: sex as related to love; sex in service of relationship**

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) we would kiss, take off clothes and so forth. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe *during the day* or at night (in the future as well) we would *kiss, take off clothes and so forth*. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

d. **RISK**

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) we would kiss, take

off clothes and so forth. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) *we would kiss, take off clothes and so forth*. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and *because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner*. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY**

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) **WE WOULD KISS, TAKE OFF CLOTHES AND SO FORTH**. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because **I WANT TO BE CLOSER TO HIM IN A PHYSICAL MANNER**. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

g. **NEW DISCOURSE** (consent)

- i. It would be with a boyfriend. It would happen in a bedroom, maybe during the day or at night (in the future as well) we would kiss, take off clothes and so forth. Consent would be acknowledged before which for one makes it good and also it's good because its with someone i'd love. i would do this because I love him (not just like) and because I want to be closer to him in a physical manner. Yes. Not right now because I don't have a boyfriend but in the future yes. Because if I feel I'm ready for it and we really love each other why not.

18. Narrative 18: Romance

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me **I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend**. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter. **What makes this good for me is that**

he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are sexually attracted to one another. Yes I would. I feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

**b. ROMANCE: sex with romantic partner; sex is good and OK because it's with him; sex as a major part of the relationship**

- i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter. What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are sexually attracted to one another. Yes I would. I feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

*c. PERMISSIVE*

- i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like *random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc.* The activities that we would start by doing is probably *kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter.* What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are *sexually attracted to one another.* Yes I would. I feel *this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.*

d. RISK

- i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter. What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are sexually attracted to one another. Yes I would. It feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

*e. DESIRE*

- i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would

occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably *kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter*. What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are *sexually attracted to one another*. Yes I would. I feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

**F. SUBJECTIVITY**

i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably **KISSING THEN SLOWLY GOING TO OUR SEXUAL ENCOUNTER**. What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because **WE ARE SEXUALLY ATTRACTED TO ONE ANOTHER**. Yes I would. I feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

**g. NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality)**

i. First, you feel safe with the person you're with and for me I would have to know him very well. I[t]'d be my boyfriend. Usually it would occur in a bedroom or like random places bathroom, kitchen, living room, etc. The activities that we would start by doing is probably kissing then slowly going to our sexual encounter. What makes this good for me is that he is my boyfriend and that I always feel it's okay to be having sex with me. We engage in this because we are *sexually attracted to one another*. Yes I would. It feel this day & age no one really waits till your married to have sex & sex is a big part in everyones relationship.

19. Narrative 19: Sexual Subjectivity

**a. MADONNA/WHORE**

i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a really good looking guy that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night. I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to do so. Yes. I have in the past and now. It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.

**b. ROMANCE**

i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a really good looking guy that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night. I

would engage in this encounter because I wanted to do so. Yes. I have in the past and now. It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a *really good looking guy* that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would *makeout/touch and then lead into having sex* and staying the night. I would engage in this encounter because *I wanted to do so*. Yes. I have in the past and now. It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.

d. RISK

- i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a really good looking guy that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night. I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to do so. Yes. I have in the past and now. It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a *really good looking guy* that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and *it feels better*. It would occur in either of our beds. We would *makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night*. I would engage in this encounter because *I wanted to do so*. Yes. I have in the past and now. *It is fun* and makes you feel good about yourself.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY: DESIRE; PLEASURE; AGENCY/COMMUNICATES SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

- i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a **REALLY GOOD LOOKING GUY** that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and **IT FEELS BETTER**. It would occur in either of our beds. We would **MAKEOUT/TOUCH AND THEN LEAD INTO HAVING SEX AND STAYING THE NIGHT**. I would engage in this encounter because **I WANTED TO do so**. Yes. I have in the past and now. **IT IS FUN** and makes you feel good about yourself.

g. NEW DISCOURSE (familiarity; self-concept)

- i. In a good sexual encounter, I imagine a really good looking guy that I have had feelings with for some time. That way the connection is more real and it feels better. It would occur in either of our beds. We would makeout/touch and then lead into having sex and staying the night. I would engage in this encounter because I wanted to do so. Yes. I have in the past and now. It is fun and makes you feel good about yourself.

20. Narrative 20: Sexual Subjectivity

a. MADONNA/WHORE

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with oral sex then actual sex. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother like. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

b. ROMANCE

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with oral sex then actual sex. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother like. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

c. PERMISSIVE

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with *oral sex then actual sex*. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother like. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

d. RISK

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with oral sex then actual sex. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother like. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

e. DESIRE

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with *oral sex then actual sex*. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact *we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother*

*like*. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

**F. SUBJECTIVITY: DISCUSSION OF DESIRE, PLEASURE, AND SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES ARE MENTIONED.**

- i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with **ORAL SEX THEN ACTUAL SEX**. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact **WE BOTH FOCUS ON EACHOTHERS NEEDS/WANTS AND KNOW WHAT EACHOTHER LIKE**. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.
- g. *NEW DISCOURSE (mutuality; familiarity)*
  - i. For a good sexual encounter to occur it would need to be with the kid I'm involved with at the moment. Would occur at night, after a fun night out with our friends. Activities would be start with oral sex then actual sex. This encounter makes it good because I am with him who I'm with at the moment and the fact we both focus on eachothers needs/wants and know what eachother like. Yes and I have before. That is typically what happens during the encounter with him and I so it's realistic.

21. Narrative 21: Romance

a. **MADONNA/WHORE :**

- i. We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.
- b. **ROMANCE:** Sex in service of relationship; agentic discussion of boundaries, but no discussion of desire
  - i. We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good

because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.

d. RISK

- i. We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. We would *hang out and maybe kiss a little*. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. *I like taking things slow* so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because *I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow*.

f. **SUBJECTIVITY**

- i. We would **HANG OUT AND MAYBE KISS A LITTLE**. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. **I LIKE TAKING THINGS SLOW SO NOT MUCH WOULD BE INVOLVED**. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because **I DO NOT LIKE DOING ANYTHING I DON'T WANT TO AND I LIKE GOING SLOW**.

g. NEW DISCOURSE

- i. We would hang out and maybe kiss a little. It would be with a guy I have been with for a while and I know he cares about me. I like taking things slow so not much would be involved. This would be good because I would be with him. I would engage in this to spend more time with him. Realistically yes because I do not like doing anything I don't want to and I like going slow.

22. Narrative 22: Sexual Subjectivity

a. **MADONNA/WHORE**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be **with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random** because **intamecy is important to me**. There would be a good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that it is satisfying as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both like to do this together.

b. ROMANCE

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because intamecy is important to me. There would be a good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that it is satisfying as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both like to do this together.

c. *PERMISSIVE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because intamecy is important to me. There would be a good amount of *foreplay leading up to the sex*. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. *The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done*. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that it is satisfying as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both like to do this together.

d. RISK

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because intamecy is important to me. There would be a good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that it is satisfying as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both like to do this together.

e. *DESIRE*

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because intamecy is important to me. There would be a *good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done*. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that *it is satisfying* as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both *like to do this* together.

**F. SUBJECTIVITY: DESCRIBING DESIRE AND PLEASURE;  
COMMUNICATING SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES; PLEASURE**

- i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because **INTAMECY IS IMPORTANT TO ME**. There would be a **GOOD AMOUNT OF FOREPLAY LEADING UP TO THE SEX. THE SEX WOULD BE PASSIONATE AND SOMEWHAT INTENSE. THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF ROUGHNESS AND SOFTNESS WOULD BE INCORPORATED AND MANY POSITIONS AND POSSIBLY NEW THINGS WOULD BE DONE**. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that **IT IS SATISFYING** as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both **LIKE TO DO THIS** together.
- g. *NEW DISCOURSE (consent; mutuality)*
  - i. A good sexual encounter would be with my boyfriend/someone I love rather than some random because intamecy is important to me. There would be a good amount of foreplay leading up to the sex. The sex would be passionate and somewhat intense. The right amount of roughness and softness would be incorporated and many positions and possibly new things would be done. I'd engage in this encounter for the obvious reason that it is satisfying as well as the benefits to a closer and more intoment relationship. Yes, I believe the man I'm with wants the same things and we would both like to do this together.