

2014

EXAMINING SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND PRETENDING ORGASM

Chelsea Twiss

Eastern Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://dc.ewu.edu/theses>



Part of the [Psychiatry and Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Twiss, Chelsea, "EXAMINING SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND PRETENDING ORGASM" (2014). *EWU Masters Thesis Collection*. 229.

<http://dc.ewu.edu/theses/229>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Research and Creative Works at EWU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in EWU Masters Thesis Collection by an authorized administrator of EWU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jotto@ewu.edu.

EXAMINING SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND PRETENDING ORGASM

A Thesis

Presented To

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Clinical Psychology (Master of Science)

By

Chelsea E. Twiss

Spring 2014

THESIS OF CHELSEA TWISS APPROVED BY

_____ DATE _____
Theresa Martin PhD., GRADUATE STUDY CHAIR

_____ DATE _____
Russell Kolts PhD., GRADUATE STUDY COMMITTEE

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Abstract.....	vi
Introduction.....	1
Defining Sexual Satisfaction.....	1
The Importance of Sexual Satisfaction.....	3
“The Big O”.....	4
Female Sexual Dysfunction.....	6
Pretending Orgasm.....	9
Reasons for Pretending Orgasm.....	11
Current Study.....	12
Method.....	14
Participants.....	14
Materials and Procedure.....	14
Results.....	16

Pretending Orgasm and Sexual Satisfaction.....	16
Relationship Status.....	17
Gender Differences.....	18
Sexual Experiences.....	19
Supplemental Findings.....	19
Discussion.....	20
Limitations and Future Research.....	24
Conclusion.....	26
Appendix.....	28
References.....	35
Vita.....	39

Table List

Table 1. <i>Demographics</i>	28
Table 2. <i>Supplemental survey questions to the Pinney</i>	29
Table 2.1 <i>Responses for frequencies of sexual behaviors</i>	30
Table 3. <i>Frequency of females pretending orgasm</i>	31
Table 3.1 <i>Reasons for Pretending Orgasm</i>	32
Table 3.2 <i>Summary of Gender Differences</i>	33
Table 3.3 <i>Summary of Sexual Experiences</i>	34

Abstract

An article in popular women's magazine, *Cosmopolitan*, recently revealed a startling admission from its readers: 86% of respondents reported pretending orgasm during intercourse with a partner (Kylstra, 2011). Despite its apparent frequency, there is yet to be a study conducted investigating the relationship between pretending orgasm and overall sexual satisfaction (Ippolito, 2012). Sexual satisfaction is linked with important facets of life such as overall relationship satisfaction and general wellbeing. The present study examines the relationship between experiencing orgasm, pretending orgasm and overall sexual satisfaction.

Participants were Eastern Washington University college students recruited via an online survey website (Qualtrics), and who completed the Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory (Pinney, Gerrard & Denney, 1987) via the Sona Research Management System online. Questions regarding sexual practices, frequencies of sexual behaviors, relationship status and finally, frequency of and reasons for pretending orgasm were also included in the online survey. It was hypothesized that pretending orgasm would be negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction, and that experiencing orgasm would be positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction. Results from the study supported both hypotheses. Some additional significant findings regarding relationship status and pretending orgasm as well as partner satisfaction and gender differences were also observed.

Keywords: Sexual satisfaction, orgasm, pretending orgasm, faking orgasm, relationships, evolutionary theory

Understanding the self: Intimate and interpersonal relationships:

Examining sexual satisfaction & pretending orgasm

The current study investigates the behavior of pretending orgasm and its relation to sexual satisfaction. First, I will discuss the multiple and consequential benefits of sexual satisfaction. Then I will outline a cultural framework of the female orgasm, which provides context to the beliefs, expectations and behaviors our society holds around this issue. Pretending orgasm is also explained in this societal context. The current study also addresses gender differences around orgasm, gender-role expectations, biophysical as well as psychosocial aspects to orgasm and pretending orgasm and finally, the implications of this line of research in our society as a whole.

Defining Sexual Satisfaction

Perhaps you have heard songwriters of pop music try to explain sexual satisfaction in complex and poetic terms. But how do we operationally define what it means to be sexually satisfied? There are some reliable and valid measures used which attempt to quantify what lyricists ponder qualitatively in their songs. The Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory was constructed to reliably measure women's sexual satisfaction. According to Pinney, Gerrard, and Denney (1987), prior to the construction of the Pinney, most measures regarding human sexuality measured sexual *dysfunction* rather than sexual health and function.

Sexual satisfaction was also typically assessed through one rather generalized and antiquated global question: "Are you satisfied with your sex life?" The literature reveals that this kind of one-size-fits-all question generally yielded a more acquiescent response than what was actually experienced by respondents. Ultimately, history conveys that

much of human sexuality (female sexuality in particular) has been compartmentalized and generalized in research rather than explored from an esoteric and complex approach.

The Pinney was created with two primary factors in mind: psychosocial mechanisms and biophysical mechanisms. Essentially, both physical and psychological stimulation should be present in order to produce a sexually satisfying experience (Pinney, Gerrard & Denney, 1987). The Pinney particularly emphasizes the psychological aspect pertaining to the subjective experience of sexual satisfaction for women. Pinney, Gerrard, and Denney assert that previous measures of sexual satisfaction have found that it has been reliably related to the overall “quality” of the relationship with a sexual partner, the experience of “living in the here and now” as well as to agreement over the frequency and initiation of intercourse with a partner. Historically, the authors note that verbal communication about sex was not found to be reliably related to sexual satisfaction. The Pinney also strives to be a measure that can be used reliably regardless of relationship status. The Pinney ultimately yields two separate measures: A measure of overall sexual satisfaction in addition to a “satisfaction with partner” scale.

According to Webster’s Dictionary, the literal meaning of the word “satisfaction” in the English language is; “the fulfillment of one’s wishes, expectations, or needs, or the pleasure derived from this”. For the purpose of this study, sexual satisfaction is defined as the affective response resulting from the perceptions of one’s sexual relationship, fulfillment of needs, as well as the fulfillment of one’s partner’s needs and an overall positive evaluation of the sexual relationship (Offman & Mattheson, 2005).

The Importance of Sexual Satisfaction

There is a small body of literature supporting the notion that sexual satisfaction contributes to greater overall satisfaction in multiple dimensions of life for women specifically. A 2011 cross-cultural study of middle-age to older couples in committed relationships lasting a duration of 1-51 years found that women's "sexual functioning" was a predictor of overall relationship satisfaction. This study also found that physical intimacy was a predictor of greater overall sexual satisfaction in both sexes (Heiman Lang, Smith, Fisher, Sand, & Rosen 2011).

Sprecher (2002) also supported the above findings that sexual satisfaction was associated positively with relationship satisfaction equally for both men and women in a longitudinal, interrupted time series design of couples in a committed relationship. Sprecher found that stability in sexual satisfaction co-varied with stability in factors such as love, commitment and relationship satisfaction at different times during the course of the study. This study also found that sexual satisfaction was associated with relationship stability.

Another recent study observed a positive correlation between sexual satisfaction and overall wellbeing for women (Davison, Bell, LaChina, Holden & Davis, 2009). If wellbeing and sexual satisfaction are related then not only are greater relationship satisfaction and stability a benefit of sexual function and satisfaction, but sexual satisfaction could even have influence over an individual's overall wellbeing and happiness.

“The Big O”

Historically, the orgasm has been defined as the climax and conclusion of sexual. Quite often, intercourse is concluded once the male in a heterosexual encounter orgasms. Rachel Maines, author of the book *The Technology of Orgasm* would argue that this mentality is maintained primarily by our androcentric culture in the United States; meaning that our culture primarily revolves around the male experience and preference for intercourse. The concept of the androcentric culture also revolves around the idea that intercourse consists of three main components: foreplay, intercourse and male climax. This expectation of intercourse is limiting in nature with regard to understanding the potential variability that could exist within a single sexual experience. According to Maines, the voice that is often missing with regard to our cultural script on intercourse is that of the human female.

From an evolutionary perspective, there has been much debate as to why women experience orgasm in the first place. If the purpose of evolution is to ensure the perpetuation and survival of our species, why do females experience orgasm if not to increase the chances of conception? It was once thought that perhaps female orgasm aided reproduction in some way. Endurably coined the “Upsuck Theory”, Baker and Bellis (1993) were not able to support the hypothesis that the contractions experienced during orgasm push sperm upward into the uterus with the goal of fertilization. The Kinsey Institute supposedly confirmed this myth during an experimental trial when a turkey baster filled with semen-like fluid failed to produce the aforementioned results when inserted during vaginal orgasmic contractions (Roach, 2008).

In the wake of the realization that female orgasm is not beneficial to reproduction, two hypotheses have been investigated: 1) that female orgasm is a function of mate selection with regard to mate-choice and 2) that there is no evolutionary purpose for the female orgasm, it is simply the remnants of a shared biological ontogeny with males, in whom orgasm is an adaptive function in reproduction (Puts, Dawood & Welling, 2012).

With regard to the aforementioned mate-selection/mate-choice hypothesis, a recent 2012 study by King and Belsky further investigated the evolutionary role of mate-choice and mate-selection in relation to female orgasm in modern culture. Findings indicated that females reported experiencing two main types of orgasms: “surface” orgasms and “deep orgasms” (in relation to genitalia). Contrary to expectations congruent with evolutionary theory, muscularity and aggression were not partner traits of females who experienced “deep orgasms.” However, those partners who were perceived as (1.) considerate, (2.) dominant, (3.) with a noticeably attractive smell, and (4.) as providing firm penetration were significantly related to the experience of “deep orgasms.” This study also leads readers to wonder the degree to which evolutionary theory plays a role in the explaining the female orgasm.

Puts and Dawood (2012) investigated the second evolutionary hypothesis, which states that the female orgasm exists as a vestigial phenomenon from a time when there was less biological distinction between the male and female sexes. This study investigated the timing and frequency of female orgasms in relation to various measures of the partner’s attractiveness (for example, facial attractiveness, facial symmetry, dominance and muscularity). Findings suggested that the female orgasm does not appear to function in a vestigial way. Rather, findings indicated that timing and frequency of

orgasm do relate significantly to the genetic quality (or attractiveness) of the mate, which serves to perpetuate the species via mate selection. In other words, men who are able to bring a woman to orgasm during intercourse are more likely to be selected as a desirable partner for reproduction and therefore the female orgasm serves as a vehicle for this selection process. Kaighobadi and Shackelford (2012) also asserted that attractiveness is a sign of “good genes” (a desirable quality in a mate according to evolutionary theory) and that women partnered with more attractive men reported more copulatory orgasms than women partnered with less attractive men.

Female Sexual Dysfunction

There have been substantive changes made to the most recent edition of the DSM with regard to disorders of sexual dysfunction compared to earlier editions. For example, the DSM V articulated more “gender specific” sexual disorders. Furthermore, the primary criteria for diagnosing female sexual dysfunction include (1.) symptoms persisting for six months or longer and (2). resulting in subjective psychological distress. In addition, when orgasmic difficulties are reported to be a related symptom, difficulties must occur 75-100% of the time throughout the six-month minimum duration (American Psychological Association, 2013). Essentially, difficulties could range from a lack of consistency in orgasm during intercourse to total anorgasmia.

Our ideas about what is “normal” when it comes to female sexuality lie primarily in the information we are exposed to through the media and the messages embedded in our cultural history. Often, inability to achieve orgasm through heterosexual intercourse on the part of the female was pathologized in some way throughout our culture’s history (Maines, 1999), resulting in a double-bind faced by women when it comes to discussing

sexual frustrations that can still be seen in our culture today through the diagnosis of varying sexual dysfunctions. If any difficulties regarding sexuality were voiced by a woman to her physician, historically, a diagnosis of either frigidity (lack of sexual arousal or desire) or hysteria (hyperactive sexuality) would have been assigned. Maines lists hysteria, frigidity, Chlorosis, and Neurasthenia as historical diagnoses for varying and generalized difficulties females faced when it came to intercourse and sexuality, primarily popularized during the Freudian era and the early 20th century.

One vehicle for sexual education in today's culture exists in what we are exposed to in the media. For example, many recent studies have explored the relationship between viewing pornography and sexual aggression. One recent study found that viewing violent pornography was related to increased likelihood of rape and exercising sexual force among a sample of 222 college males (Demare, 1988). Another study found that 195 female undergraduates reported more frequent intercourse behavior after being exposed to a pornographic film designed for female arousal (Mosher & MacIan, 1994). In a related study, both male and female college students endorsed the belief that many people watch pornography as a way to learn sexual techniques (Gordon & Krauss, 2010). In this study, men were also more likely than women to believe that female orgasms in pornography were real and that the women in pornography enjoy both the sex and their jobs. These studies exemplify the varying influence media (pornography in particular) can potentially have on sexual behaviors and attitudes.

This begs the question of what women are learning about their own sexuality as a result of media exposure. How frequently do Hollywood films advertise the androcentric culture's idea that intercourse be concluded upon the event of male (rather than female)

orgasm? Most films consistently depict a sudden and simultaneous orgasmic experience for both partners shortly after engaging in coitus. This is, in reality, not the common experience of most women engaged in sexual intercourse according to a study by Darling and Davidson (1991) investigating the preferred timing of partner orgasm for women. According to this study, a common complaint of women was the inability to achieve orgasm during intercourse at all. Furthermore, women who usually experienced orgasm *after* their male partner reported less overall sexual satisfaction. This could perhaps be the result of the average woman's inability to achieve the ideal sexual experience advertised so often in Hollywood films.

The film documentary, *Orgasm Inc: The Strange Science of Female Pleasure* is one example of how pathologizing female sexuality still exists quite prominently in our culture today. The documentary chronicles how pharmaceutical industries profit off the diagnosis of female sexual dysfunction (Canner, Benello, Ettinger, Helfand & Weiss, 2009). The film asserts that pharmaceutical companies even go so far as to define disorders themselves in order increase revenue. This documentary is one example of how anorgasmia (the inability to achieve orgasm) indicates some sort of sexual dysfunction under the definition of our cultural norms. Creating greater awareness around the subject can hopefully have positive implications for women who experience sexual frustration.

A 2011 study by Zietsch, Miller, Bailey and Martin also produced results which cast doubt upon diagnoses of female sexual dysfunction. Of 2,914 adult female Australian twins surveyed, there were weak to zero correlations between rates of orgasm during masturbation, intercourse, and other sexual activities and traits associated with a propensity toward sexual dysfunction as defined by medical practitioners (social class,

educational attainment, extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, impulsiveness, childhood illness, maternal pregnancy stress, marital status, political liberalism, restrictive attitudes toward sex, libido, lifetime number of sex partners, age at first intercourse, sexual fantasy and risky sexual behaviors to name a few of these traits). These findings would argue against the validity and etiology of the favored female sexual dysfunction diagnosis in the face of orgasm difficulties.

Laan and Rellini (2011) found that only half of the women experiencing orgasm difficulties report subjective distress - a criteria for all DSM V female sexual dysfunctions (American Psychological Association, 2013). This study found that lack of *consistency* in ability to orgasm during sexual activity with a partner was the main source of distress for women. Findings in this study indicated that orgasm consistency was positively correlated with sexual autonomy (defined as the extent to which one feels sexual behaviors are self-determined). This would indicate that sexual activity that is more self-focused, rather than partner-focused, may be more sexually satisfying for women. It may also be inferred that women who have never experienced orgasm really “don’t know what they’re missing”, so to speak, and therefore report less subjective distress. In other words, ignorance may be bliss and lead to more sexually satisfying encounters for women who have never experienced orgasm as opposed to those who experience orgasm inconsistently.

Pretending Orgasm

According to Wiederman (1997), the literature on the phenomenon of pretending orgasm is sparse. In Wiederman’s analysis of 161 young women, over half of the sample reported pretending orgasm during sexual intercourse. Women who reported pretending

orgasm did not differ significantly from those who did not endorse pretending orgasm on experimenter-rated facial attractiveness, self-rated body attractiveness or self-monitoring.

Participants in Wiederman's study who endorsed pretending orgasm were older on average, had engaged in more frequent sexual behaviors (such as fellatio and cunnilingus) and reported more sexual experience overall. Another study by Darling and Davidson (1986) confirmed these findings. It is to be noted that the findings in this study do not necessarily mean that older women pretend orgasm more often than younger women; rather, older women may be more likely to *report* having pretended orgasm during intercourse than younger women. Older women may also have more experience from which to report in general than do younger women.

Though the literature around this subject is lacking, it is important to point out the issue of female deception, which is often implied implicitly in language used in research about female sexuality. For example, many previous studies pertaining to pretending orgasm referenced in the current study tout titles with subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle) negative connotations: "trick or treat", "why females trick males", "award-winning performances in bed" and "counterfeit pleasures" to name a few. It is important to note that the current study strives to promote awareness around the idea of pretending orgasm that is nonjudgmental and non-biased in nature. It is, after all, understandable that at times pretending orgasm may be preferable to acknowledging that some sort of pathology or sexual dysfunction may be at play as our culture would have us believe (Maines, 1999).

Reasons for Pretending Orgasm

There has been some previous research conducted investigating the possible reasons behind the behavior of pretending orgasm. Korones, (2012) suggested in a *Psychology Today* article that research has found pretending orgasm to be circumstantial for most women. According to this study, motives behind pretending orgasm included hiding sexual insecurities and partner pleasing. Another study conducted in 2010 surveyed a sample of approximately 300 college students in the United Kingdom, both males and females. Results indicated that reasons reported for pretending orgasm ranged from “wanting the sexual encounter to end”, “perceiving orgasm was unlikely”, “avoiding the consequences of hurting the partner’s feelings” and also to please their partner (Meuhlenhard & Shippee, 2010). It is to be noted that while 50% of the women in this study reported pretending orgasm, 25% of men also reported having pretended orgasm. Most frequently, pretending orgasm occurred during penil-vaginal penetration intercourse. Dove and Wiederman (2000) also found that cognitive distractions were positively correlated with the event of pretending orgasm for women.

From an evolutionary standpoint, it is postulated that pretending orgasm is a strategic attempt at mate retention according to a study by Kaighobadi, Shackelford, and Weekes-Shackelford (2012). This particular study found that from a sample of 453 heterosexual college-age women in committed relationships, women who perceived a high risk of infidelity in their relationships also reported pretending orgasm more often. These same women who reported high risk for infidelity also reported participation in other more overt partner retention strategies, such as yelling at other women for looking at their partner and committing frequent intersexual negative inducements (expressions of

negativity toward other women whether vocally or behaviorally). Other studies have also supported the notion that pretending orgasm functions as an evolutionary mate retention strategy (Puts & Dawood, 2012).

Buss and Shackelford (1997) described the phenomenon of pretending orgasm as a mate retention strategy in more specific terms. The term “commitment manipulation” was meant to imply that pretending orgasm may happen as a strategy when the perceived risk of partner infidelity is high. Furthermore, Thornhill and Gangestad (2008) postulated that orgasm occurring outside the fertile window of the female reproductive cycle is an encouragement to the partner for his continued investment and commitment.

Darling and Davidson (1986) used open-ended questions when asking participants about reasons for pretending orgasm. Fifty-one percent of respondents in this particular study answered that they “feel guilty, but it is important to satisfy my partner.” Again we are presented with the blatant double-bind women are faced with when it comes to orgasm and sexual satisfaction as a result of Maines’ theory about the androcentric nature of our culture. The motives behind pretending orgasm may be deceptive in nature; however, a culturally implemented self-sacrificing and partner-pleasing framework exists at its core.

Current Study

It seems that many factors could potentially contribute to pretending orgasm during sexual intercourse for both males and females. Ippolito (2012) recently stated that the relationship between pretending orgasm and sexual satisfaction remain unknown. Given that both empirical research and popular media surveys document that at least half of women report pretending orgasm, it seems important to identify what relationship, if

any, this behavior has to female sexual satisfaction. Defining the significance and potential relationship pretending orgasm has with sexual satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, and ultimately overall wellbeing may help bring about awareness to sexually active women regarding the motivation behind pretending orgasm during intercourse with a partner. Simply educating men and women about the factors that contribute to greater sexual satisfaction for women could be the first step in fostering a greater understanding and awareness of female sexuality.

Raising awareness around the issue of pretending orgasm and the issue of female sexual satisfaction in our culture may ultimately benefit the lives of women and men as well as improving communication in sexual relationships and promoting a greater understanding of female sexuality as a whole. Masters and Johnson reportedly found in one study that women had the capacity to orgasm as many as 50 times consecutively (Bechtel & Stains, 1996). Yet the DSM V states that up to 10% of women will not experience orgasm once during a lifetime (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). To accept that women would prefer to pretend orgasm or that women may simply be sexually dysfunctional puts serious limitations surrounding what we could potentially discover about female sexuality. It is possible that more is known about our deepest oceans than about the capacity for female sexual response. It may be that our deeply embedded cultural beliefs and expectations about sexuality are what hinder our understanding as opposed to limitations surrounding female desire and arousal.

In conclusion, due to pretending orgasm being associated with negative relationship aspects such as aggressive mate retention strategies and potential avoidance on the part of women defending against potential pathologizing of the inability to achieve

orgasm, it was hypothesized that pretending orgasm would be negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction and that orgasm would be positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction.

Method

Participants

Participants were 371 college students recruited from Eastern Washington University through SONA Research Management System and directed to Qualtrics (an anonymous online survey). Ninety-one participants were excluded as a result of incomplete or insufficient data entry resulting in a final total of 280 participants. Psychology students were offered extra credit in exchange for participation. Of these participants, 73% were female (205 female, 73 male, 2 identified as transgender). With regard to relationship status, 43.9% of participants identified themselves as “single”, 46.8% as “in a relationship”, and 8.6% as “married.” This sample predominately identified as heterosexual (88.6%). Refer to Table 1 in the appendix for a complete presentation of participant demographics.

Materials and Procedure

Participants completed an anonymous online survey in exchange for extra credit in an undergraduate psychology class.

Demographic Information. Participants were first asked to identify their gender, age at last birthday, sexual orientation, relationship status and preferred gender of partner.

Sexual Satisfaction. Participants then completed the Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory (Pinney et al. 1987). The Pinney consists of 24 questions which are answered using a 5-point likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5)

(2 questions from the Pinney were accidentally omitted from this survey: “I wish my partner(s) were more loving and caring when we make love” and “I am satisfied with the amount of time my partner(s) and I spend together immediately after intercourse”, which consists of 22 questions).

The first half of this measure asked questions pertaining to the scale “general sexual satisfaction.” The latter half of the measure asked questions pertaining to the second scale, “satisfaction with partner.” The two scales together comprised “overall sexual satisfaction.” The responses to the “satisfaction with partner” scale were scored in reverse: “Strongly Disagree” (5) to “Strongly Agree” (1). Examples of questions included are: “I am satisfied with the amount of foreplay in my lovemaking” and “I wish my partner would communicate more when we make love.” The Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory has high convergent reliability (with other measures of sexual satisfaction) and high internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha=.92$).

Pretending Orgasm. Participants were asked questions about the likelihood and frequency of pretending orgasm during intercourse: “When I don’t achieve orgasm during a sexual encounter with my partner(s), I still pretend that I did” (1=“Strongly Disagree” – 5 = “Strongly Agree”). Participants were also asked questions about their beliefs regarding orgasm: “I feel that achieving orgasm is an important part of the sexual experience” and “I feel pressure to experience orgasm during sexual encounters with my partner(s).” The final set of questions in this part of the survey asked about reasons for pretending orgasm, which included: “wanting sex to be over”, “pleasing my partner”, “arousing my partner”, “inability to orgasm during sex” and “other.”

Frequency of Sexual Behaviors. The final series of survey questions concerned the frequency of engaging in certain sexual behaviors (including pretending orgasm) as seldom as “never” and as often as “daily.” Behaviors included: Vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, group sex, sexting, orgasm through masturbation, and use of erotica. Refer to table 2 and table 2.1 in the Appendix for the full spread of frequency of behavior and orgasm-related questions and responses.

Results

Pretending Orgasm and Sexual Satisfaction

It was hypothesized that pretending orgasm would be negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction. This hypothesis was examined using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation. Significant results were found which supported the primary hypothesis, $r(277) = -.15$, $p = .016$, $r^2 = .025$. Conversely, orgasm was strongly correlated with overall sexual satisfaction, $r(277) = .471$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .23$. Additionally, results of a t-test indicated that females ($M=1.69$, $SD=1.11$) pretend orgasm significantly more often than do males ($M=1.24$, $SD=.70$), $t(197) = -4.01$, $p < .001$. Results also indicated that age was negatively correlated with pretending orgasm, $r(270) = -.21$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .044$, meaning that older participants reported being less likely to pretend orgasm than younger participants.

After controlling for those who reported zero sexual partners, 62.2% ($N=143$) of male and female participants responded “never” to the question; “when I don’t achieve orgasm during intercourse, I still pretend that I did.” After excluding male responses, 56.4% ($N=97$) of females responded never pretending orgasm during intercourse. The remaining 43.6% of females reported pretending orgasm during intercourse. Refer to

table 3 in the Appendix for full responses of female frequency of pretending orgasm. Additionally, 59.8% ($N=52$) of participants chose “pleasing my partner” as the reason for pretending orgasm. All responses for “reasons for pretending orgasm” can be found on table 3.1.

Significant findings were also found in further exploration of the results yielded by the Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory and its subscales. There were significant negative correlations found between overall sexual satisfaction and feeling pressure to experience an orgasm during a sexual encounter with a partner, $r(247) = -.26, p < .001, r^2 = .068$, as well as “not minding” pretending orgasm during sexual intercourse with a partner, $r(249) = -.31, p < .001, r^2 = .096$.

Finally, a specific correlational analysis examining the primary hypothesis on pretending orgasm and sexual satisfaction was run excluding male participants and those who reported having zero sexual partners. This analysis examined three different ways of assessing pretending orgasm in comparison to sexual satisfaction: frequency of “faking orgasm” $r(156) = -.22, p < .05, r^2 = .048$, endorsement of the phrase, “I don’t mind pretending to achieve orgasm during sexual intercourse with my partner(s)”, $r(156) = -.29, p < .001, r^2 = .084$, and “When I don’t achieve orgasm during sexual intercourse, I still pretend that I did”, $r(156) = -.16, p < .05, r^2 = .026$. All three responses yielded stronger correlational results than the initial analysis which included men and those who had not experienced intercourse.

Relationship Status

There were also significant findings with regard to relationship status and pretending orgasm. Results of a one-way ANOVA found significant differences between

participants who identified as married, single and those in a relationship, $F(2, 270) = 5.17, p = .006$. LSD post-hoc tests found that married individuals ($M=1.73, SD=1.08$) were significantly less likely to pretend orgasm than single individuals ($M=2.61, SD=1.08$), or those in a relationship ($M=2.54, SD=1.32$).

Gender Differences

Significant findings with regard to gender differences in pretending orgasm as well as other sexual practices and experiences were found. Results of an independent samples t-test showed that males ($M=3.56, SD=.92$) reported enjoying viewing pornography significantly more than females ($M=2.54, SD=1.31$), $t(177) = 7.12, p < .001$. Males ($M=3.07, SD=1.09$) also reported feeling significantly more pressure to experience an orgasm during a sexual encounter with a partner than did females ($M=2.75, SD=1.18$), $t(134) = 2.09, p < .05$. Males ($M=3.87, SD=.92$) ($M=3.92, SD=.84$) were also significantly more likely than females ($M=3.32, SD=1.34$) ($M=3.47, SD=1.11$) to experience orgasm during masturbation, $t(175) = 3.81, p < .001$, and sexual intercourse, $t(164) = 3.58, p < .001$.

Males ($M=4.00, SD=.84$) also rated the importance of achieving orgasm during intercourse more highly than did females ($M=3.61, SD=1.00$) $t(146) = 3.19, p = .002$. Males ($M=2.93, SD=1.01$) were more likely than females ($M=2.08, SD=1.04$) to believe that their partner has pretended orgasm during intercourse $t(275) = 5.98, p < .001$. Males ($M=2.50, SD=1.14$) were also more likely than females ($M=1.69, SD=.93$) to find sex with multiple partners more satisfying than with one partner $t(106) = 5.45, p < .001$. Finally, females ($M=2.54, SD=1.18$) were more likely to endorse the statement, "I don't mind pretending to achieve orgasm when having sexual intercourse with my partner(s)"

than were males ($M=2.15$, $SD=1.00$) $t(144) = -2.67$, $p = .009$. Table 3.2 summarizing gender differences can be seen in the Appendix.

Sexual Experiences

With regard to the frequency of multiple sexual experiences, pretending orgasm was significantly negatively correlated with vaginal intercourse, $r(276) = -.140$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .02$, and number of sexual partners, $r(277) = -.156$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .024$. Pretending orgasm was significantly positively correlated with anal intercourse, $r(276) = .176$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .031$, oral sex, $r(274) = .193$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .037$, masturbation of partner, $r(277) = .186$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .035$, as well as vaginal $r(257) = .156$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .024$, and clitoral orgasm, $r(256) = .186$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .035$. The latter findings would indicate that women who have orgasms through intercourse or other sexual activity are also likely to pretend orgasm. Findings are summarized in table 3.3 of the Appendix.

Supplemental Findings

Furthermore, overall sexual satisfaction was significantly negatively correlated with discomfort in talking about sex, $r(246) = -.38$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .144$. Discomfort with talking about sex was also significantly positively correlated with endorsement of the statement, "I don't mind pretending to achieve orgasm during intercourse", $r(277) = .14$, $p = .024$, $r^2 = .02$. A negative correlation was also found between overall sexual satisfaction and use of erotica, $r(248) = -.11$, but did not reach the level of significance.

It is interesting to note that significant gender differences were also found on the "Satisfaction with Partner" scale on the Pinney. Results of an independent samples t-test indicated that males ($M=3.31$, $SD=.99$) were significantly more likely than females ($M=2.89$, $SD=1.13$) to desire more open communication about what he/she wants during

sexual intercourse, $t(272) = 2.77, p = .006$. Males ($M=3.31, SD=1.08$) were significantly more likely than females ($M=2.94, SD=1.17$) to endorse the statement “I wish my partner(s) initiated sex more often”, $t(271) = 2.34, p = .02$. Finally, males ($M=2.90, SD=.97$) were significantly more likely than females ($M=2.49, SD=.99$) to wish their partner(s) were more patient during sexual intercourse, $t(275) = 3.10, p = .002$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the behavior of pretending orgasm in relationship to sexual satisfaction. It was hypothesized that pretending orgasm would be negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction and that experiencing orgasm during intercourse would be positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction. Both of these hypotheses were supported in the current study. Pretending orgasm was significantly negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction for both males and females. Additionally, orgasm during intercourse was positively correlated with overall satisfaction for both males and females as well. Removing males and those who reported no previous sexual partners from the primary analysis strengthened the overall negative correlation between pretending orgasm and sexual satisfaction. This would make sense considering that previous studies as well as the current study have found that females are more likely to pretend orgasm than males and that pretending orgasm occurs most often during penal-vaginal intercourse (as opposed to other forms of sexual activity) (Meuhlenhard & Shippee, 2010).

Further gender differences with regard to pretending orgasm, sexual satisfaction and other sexual beliefs and practices were also examined as supplemental to the primary investigation. For example, females reported pretending orgasm significantly more than

did males, males endorsed the belief that their partner pretended orgasm significantly more than did females, and females were significantly more likely than males to endorse “I don’t mind pretending to achieve orgasm during intercourse”, although responses to this question were also significantly negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction as well. This information provides context around the issue of pretending orgasm and gender differences surrounding sexual experiences.

Results in this study regarding motives for pretending orgasm were consistent with past literature. The current study found that the primary reason for pretending orgasm was “to please my partner” which is consistent with the findings of Korones (2012) as well as Muehlenhard and Shippee (2010). This supported finding may indicate that primary reasons for pretending orgasm are “other focused” as opposed to “self-focused” in nature. This would also support the suggestion that pretending orgasm serves as an evolutionary mate-retention strategy. Laan and Rellini (2011) also found that sexual autonomy was positively correlated with orgasm. This finding would also support the idea that “other focused” sex can be detrimental to sexual enjoyment. Also supported by existing literature is the finding in the current study that females traditionally report pretending orgasm more often than do males. These results are also supported by Muehlenhard and Shippee (2010).

The results in the current study regarding the relationship between age and pretending orgasm is contrary to that supported in the current literature by Wiederman (1997) and Darling and Davidson (1986). The current study found that age was negatively correlated with pretending orgasm. Reasons for this contradiction may be that the participants in the current study were on average younger than other studies (the mean

age of this sample was 22), with 81.8% of the sample being 24 or younger. This may also help to explain why, contradictory to most studies regarding pretending orgasm (Kaighobadi & Shackelford, 2012), less than half (43.6%) of the females in the current study reported pretending orgasm at all. It is also to be noted that the Participants in the current study reported being less “sexually experienced” overall. Findings in the current study indicated that 44.7% of women reported “never” experiencing vaginal orgasm and 24.8% reported “never” experiencing vaginal intercourse. Furthermore, 57.3% of the sample reported having five or fewer sexual partners. This lack of sexual experience could also be related to the overall younger mean age of the sample. Also contrary to Weiderman’s study, number of sexual partners was negatively correlated with pretending orgasm in the current study, meaning that those who were more likely to pretend orgasm reported a lower number of sexual partners and vice versa.

The findings in the current study regarding relationship status are especially interesting through the lens of evolutionary theory on pretending orgasm. Married individuals were much less likely to pretend orgasm than those who were single or in a relationship. Furthermore, single participants in this study were more likely to pretend orgasm than those who were married or those in a relationship. This would support the evolutionary perspective that pretending orgasm is used as a mate retention strategy according to Kaighobadi and Shackelford (2012), Puts and Dawood (2012), as well as Buss and Shackelford (1997). This would also support the idea of commitment manipulation postulated by Buss and Shackelford asserting that pretending orgasm is a means to secure a mate’s ongoing provision of resources. This would make sense in the

context that outside of marriage, perceived threat to partner commitment would naturally be higher.

The current study found that males were more likely than females to engage in a number of different sexual behaviors particularly related to orgasm, such as viewing pornography, experiencing orgasm through masturbation and experiencing orgasm through sexual intercourse. Males, however, reported experiencing more pressure to achieve orgasm during intercourse than did females. In general, feeling pressure to achieve orgasm during intercourse was significantly negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction as well. These findings are consistent with Maines (1999) theory that our culture anticipates the sexual experience to be completed once the male during heterosexual intercourse experiences orgasm. This cultural belief may explain why males feel more subjective pressure to achieve orgasm during intercourse than do females. This would also explain why males rated achieving orgasm during intercourse as more important than did females and why females reported less distress at pretending orgasm during intercourse than do males. These findings speak to our deeply embedded cultural expectations about intercourse.

The findings regarding the frequency of sexual behaviors and pretending orgasm yielded multiple significant correlations. The most interesting of these perhaps is the significant positive correlations between pretending orgasm and oral sex, masturbation of partner and anal intercourse. Pham and Shackelford (2013) found that from a sample of 351 men, participants often perform oral sex as a benefit-provisioning mate retention strategy. Findings also indicated that men who spent more time performing oral sex and expressed more interest in performing oral sex on their partner engaged in more mate

retention strategies in general than less concerned men. It may be interesting to investigate whether or not this behavior can be generalized to both sexes.

Kaighobadi and Shackelford (2012) also found that Participants in their study on mate retention who reported pretending orgasm more frequently also engaged in other mate-retention behaviors such as endorsing “giving into my partner’s sexual requests.” Engagement in oral, anal and masturbatory sexual behaviors that are “other focused” rather than “self-focused” are consistent with mate retention strategies as well as partner pleasing behaviors frequently associated with pretending orgasm.

Limitations and Future Research

Lack of diversity in sexual orientation was one limitation of the current study. Of the participants in the current study, less than 10% identified their sexual orientation as being non-heterosexual. This statistic limits the variety and generalizability of this study, which primarily reports the heterosexual perspective with regard to sexual satisfaction and other sexual experiences. Future research would benefit from either a more diversified sample with regard to sexual orientation, or looking exclusively at non-heterosexual samples. Furthermore, many of the arguments in the current study are based upon evolutionary theory, which functions highly from a binary standpoint with regard to gender. This perspective in itself is limiting when viewing gender and sexuality on a continuum existing outside the male/female roles.

One limitation of this particular study is the involvement of self-report in assessing sexual satisfaction and sexual practices. In the current study, only 43.6% of participants reported having pretended orgasm with a partner in comparison to related

studies, which average at least 50% of participants reportedly having pretended orgasm with a partner (Kaighobadi & Shackelford, 2012).

A study by Chivers, Seto, Lalumiere, Laan and Grimbos (2010) investigated the agreement between self-report and physiological response in 132 academically or peer-reviewed laboratory studies published between 1976 and 2007 on sexuality. They found that when it comes to measures of self-report versus genital measures, there was a significant greater amount of disagreement for women as opposed to men. This finding would indicate that in research regarding sexual satisfaction as well as sexual beliefs and practices, women may be less likely to accurately report physiological arousal than men. This finding makes sense based upon Maines' argument that the androcentric expectations in our culture have led to a widespread fear of being pathologized for sexual dysfunction in women as well as women's lack of education about their own sexuality.

Another point to be noted with regard to the inconsistency in reporting pretending orgasm in this study as compared with similar studies would be that our mean age in this sample was 22 years old. Other studies have reported older individuals as being more likely to report pretending orgasm with a partner than younger individuals (Wiederman, 1997).

Future research may also further investigate the finding in the current study that males are significantly more likely than females to believe that their partner has pretended orgasm during intercourse. Male perceptions and judgments around females pretending orgasm may provide information and understanding around the stigma of pretending orgasm in our culture. Males also reported significantly greater desire to have their partner's sexual needs communicated to them more often. It would be interesting to

further investigate the relationship between these two findings more deeply in future research if a relationship does indeed exist.

It is also interesting to note that despite the wealth of literature surrounding pornography's prevalence in our culture's sexual edification, the current study found a negative relationship between use of erotica and overall sexual satisfaction. This would indicate that use of erotica *decreases* sexual satisfaction despite literature that asserts more positive views of pornography especially by males (Gordon & Krauss, 2010). Future research may also investigate this relationship more intensely.

Conclusion

The implications of this research have the potential to be powerful and important in our culture today. Challenging traditional views and assumptions of sexuality and gender differences regarding sexuality allows the potential for us to expand understanding of ourselves as sexual beings. Sexual satisfaction has been historically and repeatedly emphasized as an important facet of overall relationship satisfaction and general-wellbeing. Regardless of age, relationship status or gender, understanding the self is something that many people strive for. Ultimately, the primary goal of the current study is to promote discussion and awareness around one of the lesser-studied aspects of human sexuality and more specifically female sexuality in order to promote greater sexual satisfaction and understanding.

Upon presenting this research at a Symposium, I had the privilege of speaking with a woman about her own personal experience with orgasm difficulties. She reported that in her first marriage, due to her inability to achieve orgasm, she believed (and was encouraged by her partner to believe) that something was fundamentally wrong with her.

Imagine her surprise when, during her second and much more satisfying marriage, she discovered that she was in fact capable of achieving orgasm, and then some. It is because of stories like these that remain untold and lived by so many women that research like this is imperative in our own cultural evolution. What this current study strives for is to provide a foundation for future research in this controversial and historically disregarded way of thinking about female sexuality.

Appendix

Table 1

<i>Demographics</i>		
<i>Variable</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	229	81.8%
25-35	38	13.6%
35-51	8	2.8%
No Response	5	1.8%
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	205	73%
Male	73	26%
Transgender	2	<1%
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>		
Heterosexual	248	88.6%
Homosexual	9	3.2%
Bisexual	9	3.2%
Questioning	9	3.2%
No Response	5	1.8%
<i>Relationship Status</i>		
Single	123	43.9%
In a Relationship	131	46.8%
Married	24	8.6%
No Response	2	<1%

Table 2

Supplemental survey questions in addition to the Pinney

<i>Question</i>	<i>Response Style</i>
I am satisfied with my ability to make my sexual needs known to my partner	Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1)
When I don't achieve orgasm during a sexual encounter with my partner(s) I still pretend that I did.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I feel comfortable telling my partner(s) when I don't achieve orgasm during a sexual encounter.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I feel that achieving orgasm is an important part of the sexual experience.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I believe there may be times when my partner(s) has pretended to have an orgasm during a sexual encounter with me.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I believe my partner(s) cares whether or not I achieve orgasm during sexual intercourse.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I feel pressure to experience an orgasm during a sexual encounter with my partner(s).	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I enjoy viewing pornography.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I enjoy masturbation.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I am able to experience orgasm through masturbation.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I am more likely to orgasm during foreplay than during sexual intercourse.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I achieve orgasm during sexual intercourse.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I don't mind pretending to achieve orgasm when having sexual intercourse with my partner(s).	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
I find sex more satisfying with multiple partners than with one partner.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)
Talking about sex makes me uncomfortable.	Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1)

Table 2.1

Responses for frequencies of sexual behaviors

<i>Frequencies of Behaviors (%)</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>< Once per month</i>	<i>2-3 times per month</i>	<i>Once per week</i>	<i>2-3 times per week</i>	<i>Daily</i>
Vaginal Intercourse	24.8	14.7	14.4	13.3	29.9	2.9
Anal Intercourse	85.1	10.1	2.9	1.1	.70	0
Oral Sex	26.6	21.9	20.8	13.9	15.0	1.8
Masturbation of partner	33.6	19.1	21.7	12.6	11.9	1.1
Masturbation of self	32.6	15.9	15.6	13.4	15.6	6.9
Use of erotica	67.4	14.3	5.7	6.5	5.0	1.1
Use of sex toys	71.9	11.9	4.7	6.8	3.6	1.1
Multiple partner sex	92.8	4.0	1.1	1.4	.40	.40
Vaginal orgasm	44.7	14.8	12.1	12.8	14.0	1.6
Clitoral orgasm	39.1	11.3	14.5	14.5	16.4	4.3
Orgasm through masturbation	34.9	17.5	12.4	11.6	16.7	6.9
“Sexting”	55.6	19.3	10.2	6.5	4.4	4.0
<i>Number of Sexual Partners</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1-5</i>	<i>6-10</i>	<i>11-15</i>	<i>16-20</i>	<i>>20</i>
	17.6	57.3	14.7	5.7	1.1	3.6

Table 3

Female frequencies of pretending orgasm

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>%</i>
Never	97	56.4%
Less than once a month	40	23.3%
2-3 times a month	10	5.8%
Once a week	19	11%
2-3 times a week	6	3.5%
Total	172	100%

Table 3.1

Reasons for Pretending Orgasm

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Wanting to please my partner	52	59.8%
Inability to achieve orgasm	17	19.5%
Wanting to arouse my partner	8	11.5%
Wanting sex to be over	10	9.2%
Total	87	100%

Table 3.2

Summary of Gender Differences

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Male Mean</i>	<i>Female Mean</i>
Viewing Pornography	3.56	2.54
Pressure to experience orgasm	3.07	2.75
Orgasm during masturbation	3.87	3.32
Orgasm during intercourse	3.92	3.47
Importance of orgasm	4.00	3.61
Partner pretended orgasm	2.93	2.08
Pref. for multiple partners	2.50	1.69
Don't mind pretending orgasm	2.15	2.54

Note: Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

Table 3.3

Summary of Sexual Experiences

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Relationship with Pretending orgasm (r)</i>
Anal Intercourse	.176
Clitoral Orgasm	.186
Masturbation of Partner	.186
Number of Sexual Partners	-.156
Oral Sex	.193
Vaginal Intercourse	.156
Vaginal Orgasm	-.140

Note: .5-1 (strong relationship), .3-.5 (moderate relationship), .1-.3 (weak relationship)

References

- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.
- Baker, R.R. & Bellis, M.A. (1993). Human sperm competition: ejaculate manipulation by females and a function for the female orgasm. *Animal Behaviour*, 5, 887-909.
- Bechtel, S. & Stains, L. (1996). *Sex: A Man's Guide*. New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group.
- Buss, D.M. & Shackelford, T.K. (1997). From vigilance to violence: Mate retention tactics in married couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 346-361.
- Canner, L. (Producer, Director), Benello, J.P., Ettinger, W., Helfand, J. & Weiss, M.N. (Producers). (2009). *Orgasm Inc.: The Strange Science of Female Pleasure*. United States: Astrea Media.
- Chivers, M.S., Seto, M.C., Lalumiere, M.L., Laan, E. & Grimbos, T. (2010) Agreement of self-reported and genital measures of sexual arousal in men and women: a meta-analysis. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 39, 5-56.
- Darling, C.A., & Davidson, J.K. (1986). Enhancing relationships: Understanding the female mystique of pretending orgasm. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 12, 182-196 doi: 10.1080/00926238608415405.
- Darling, C.A., & Davidson, J.K. (1991). Female sexual response and the timing of partner orgasm. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 17, 3-21.

- Davison, S.L., Bell, R.J, LaChina, M., Holden, S.L. & Davis, S.R. (2009). The relationship between self-reported sexual satisfaction and general well-being in women. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 6, 10 2690-2697 doi: 10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01406.x
- Demare, D. (1988). Violent pornography and self-reported likelihood of sexual aggression. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 22, 140-153.
- Dove, N.L. & Wiederman, M.W. (2000). Cognitive distraction and women's sexual functioning. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 1, 67-78.
- Gordon, A.K. & Krauss, S.W. (2010). Yes. Yes! Yes!! What do Mona's moans reveal about her sexual pleasure? In Monroe, D., *Porn-Philosophy for Everyone: How to Think with Kink*. (pp. 37-48) Malden: Blackwell Publishing LTD.
- Heiman, J.R., Lang, J.S., Smith, S.N., Fisher, W.A., Sand, M.S. & Rosen, R.C. (2011). Sexual satisfaction and relationship happiness in mid-life and older couples in five countries. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40, 741-753 doi: 10.1007/s10508-010-9703-3
- Ippolito, J.M. (2011). Women's Sexuality, Assertiveness & Relationship Satisfaction. Chestnut Hill College (Dissertation) *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering*. Retrieved from <http://gradworks.umi.com/34/92/3492238.html>.
- Kaighobadi, F., Shackelford, T. K., & Weekes-Shackelford, V. A. (2012). Do women pretend orgasm to retain a mate? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. doi: 10.1007/s10508-011-9874-6.
- King, R. & Belsky, J. (2012). A typological approach to testing the evolutionary functions of the human female orgasm. *The Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 5, 1145-60.

Korones, S. (2012). Faking It: Why so many women give Oscar-worthy performances in bed.

Psychology Today, 45, 2-39.

Kylstra, C. (2011) How to tell him you've been faking it. *Cosmopolitan*. Retrieved from,

<http://www.cosmopolitan.com/sex-love/tips-moves/how-to-tell-him-you-have-been-faking-it>.

Laan, E. & Rellini, A.H. (2011). Can we treat anorgasmia in women? The challenge in experiencing pleasure. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 4, 329-341.

Levin, R. J., (2006). Vocalised sounds and human sex. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 21, 99-107.

Maines, R. P. (1999) *The Technology of Orgasm: "Hysteria" the vibrator, and women's sexual satisfaction*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Mosher, D.L. & MacIan, P. (1994). College men and women respond to X-rated videos intended for male or female audiences: Gender and sexual scripts. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 2, 99-113.

Muehlenhard, C. L., & Shippee, S. K. (2010). Men's and women's reports of pretending orgasm. *Journal of Sex Research*, 47, 552-567.

Offman, A., & Mattheson, K. (2005). Sexual compatibility and sexual functioning in intimate relationships. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 14, 31-39.

Pinney, E.M., Gerrard, M. & Denney, N.W. (1987). The Pinney Sexual Satisfaction Inventory. *Journal of Sex Research*, 23, 2, 233-251. DOI 10.1080/00224498709551359

- Pham, M.N. & Shackelford, T.K. (2013). Oral sex as mate retention behavior. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 55, 185-188
- Puts, D.A., Dawood, K. & Welling, L.L.M. (2012). Why women have orgasms: An evolutionary analysis. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 5, 1127-1143.
- Roach, M. (2008). *Bonk: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Sprecher, S. (2002). Sexual satisfaction in premarital relationships: Associations with satisfaction, love, commitment and stability. *Journal of Sex Research* 39, 3, 190-196 doi: 10.1080/00224490209552141.
- Thornhill, R. & Gangestad, S.W. (2008). *The evolutionary biology of human female sexuality*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wiederman, M. W. (1997). Pretending orgasm during sexual intercourse: Correlates in a sample of young adult women. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 23, 131–135.
- Zietsch, B.P., Miller, G.F., Bailey, J.M. & Martin, N.G. (2011). Female orgasm rates are largely independent of other traits: Implications for “female orgasmic disorder” and evolutionary theories of orgasm. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 8, 2305-2316.

VITA

Author: Chelsea E. Twiss

Place of Birth: Saint Louis, Missouri

Undergraduate Schools Attended: Peninsula College, Central Washington University,
Eastern Washington University

Degrees Awarded: Associates of Arts, 2010: Peninsula College

Bachelor of Arts, 2012: Eastern Washington University

Honors and Awards: Graduated Magna cum Laude, Eastern Washington University

Professional Experience: Internship, Counseling and Psychological Services at Eastern
Washington University, Cheney, Washington 2013-201